

University of Nevada, Reno

**A Tale of Two Populisms: Concept and Measurement of Right-wing and Left-wing
Populist Attitudes**

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Social Psychology

by

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THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

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prepared under our supervision by

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Abstract

Populism is a powerful political force worldwide. Since WWII, populist parties have doubled their representation in governments including presidential and parliamentary roles. There is a consensus that populist movements or parties champion the will of the people, and the struggle of the ordinary people against the elite. Yet, there is a debate on how to measure populism at the individual level. Populist attitudes are difficult to conceptualize in terms of their factor structure, and existing measures often lack predictive power. One way to remedy these issues is to articulate how populist attitudes intersect with the left-right political spectrum. Populism usually occurs on the outer ends of the left-right political spectrum, entailing different views on society for the populist left and the populist right, respectively. Whereas the populist left views society as a struggle between the working class and the economic elite (e.g., bankers), the populist right perceives society as a clash between natives and the cultural elite (e.g., technocrats). The goal of this research is to develop two populist attitude scales: left-wing and right-wing. I conducted five studies to develop these two scales. Because the heart of populism depends on opposition to elites, the focus of Study 1 ($n = 111$) was to identify the types of elites (i.e., economic, cultural, political elites) people recognize using thematic analysis. Results indicated that economic elites (opponent of the populist left) and cultural elites (opponent of the populist right) were just as common as the political elite, as populist attitude measures almost exclusively focus on them. Study 2 ($n = 230$) used existing populism measures and reduced these scales to the best items, yielding a three-factor solution: anti-pluralism, anti-elitism, and people-centrism. Study 3 ($n = 250$) emphasized the construction of parallel scales for left-wing and right-wing populist

attitudes based on Study 1 themes and Study 2 items, and examined criterion variables. Study 3 results showed that left-wing populist attitudes were linked to a positive evaluation of left-wing groups, a greater willingness to engage in future unconventional and conventional activism, the beliefs that Biden should enact executive orders and that Trump was responsible for the January 6 insurrection. In contrast, right-wing populist attitudes were related to a positive evaluation of right-wing groups, a willingness to take up arms against the government, the beliefs that there was electoral fraud in the 2020 election, that Christians are discriminated against in the U.S., and that Trump was not responsible for the January 6 insurrection. Study 4 ($n = 200$) expanded the nomological net and finalized scale development. Left-wing populist attitudes were associated with civic nationalism and left-wing authoritarianism whereas right-wing populist attitudes were linked to right-wing authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, ethnonationalism, and nativism; both were related to conspiracy beliefs and collective narcissism. The first four studies comprised of U.S. samples. Study 5 ($n = 909$) tested the equivalence of these scales with a multi-national dataset (U.S., Canada, & Australia) and cross-validated a subset of nomological net and criterion variables, and found that the scales are psychometrically equivalent and cross-validated across three English speaking cultures. The discussion details the new understanding of populist attitudes and their relationship to society and democracy.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my son Rustam and wife Huong. You two are the most important people in my life. You two are my lifeblood.

I dedicate this dissertation to my (planned) future child, and to the one I lost before I had the chance to get to know them.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my mangy, freeloading housecat named “El Gato.” El Gato believes I live in his apartment rent-free.

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Populism as ideology	5
Chapter 3: A review of existing measures of populist attitudes	12
Chapter 4: The social psychology of populism	33
Chapter 5: Predicted factor structure and research overview	54
Chapter 6: Study 1	62
Chapter 7: Study 2	73
Chapter 8: Study 3	82
Chapter 9: Study 4	102
Chapter 10: Study 5	119
Chapter 11 General Discussion.....	138
References.....	155
Tables and Figures	170
Appendix A.....	209
Appendix B.....	210
Appendix C.....	214

Table of Tables

Table 1. <i>Predicted characteristics of right-wing and left-wing populism</i>	170
Table 2. <i>Item list of existing populism scales (Study 2)</i>	171
Table 3. <i>Items and their loadings from exploratory factor analysis (Study 2)</i>	174
Table 4. <i>Generic, right-wing and left-wing items sorted by identified factors (Study 3)</i> 176	176
Table 5. <i>Left-wing populism scale sorted by identified factors (Study 3)</i>	181
Table 6. <i>Right-wing populism scale sorted by identified factors (Study 3)</i>	182
Table 7. <i>Intercorrelations among the left-wing and right-wing factors (Study 3)</i>	183
Table 8. <i>Correlations for right-wing and left-wing populism to outcome variables (Study 3)</i>	184
Table 9. <i>Study 3 outcome variables: Groups, democracy and trust (Study 3)</i>	185
Table 10. <i>Study 3 outcome variables: Future activism (Study 3)</i>	186
Table 11. <i>Study 3 outcome variables: Other political opinions (Study 3)</i>	187
Table 12. <i>Multiple regression examining left-wing populism factors (Study 3)</i>	188
Table 13. <i>Multiple regression examining right-wing populism factors (Study 3)</i>	189
Table 14. <i>New reverse-coded items used and existing counterpart in Study 4 for the right- wing populism scale</i>	190
Table 15. <i>New reverse-coded items used and existing counterpart in Study 4 for the left- wing populism scale</i>	191
Table 16. <i>Intercorrelations among the left-wing and right-wing factors (Study 4)</i>	192
Table 17. <i>Validity correlations for right-wing and left-wing populism (Study 4)</i>	193
Table 18. <i>Validity correlations and right-wing populism factors (Study 4)</i>	194
Table 19. <i>Validity correlations and left-wing populism factors (Study 4)</i>	195
Table 20. <i>Psychometrics of full scale and factors across three countries (Study 5)</i>	196
Table 21. <i>Intercorrelation of populist factors across three countries (Study 5)</i>	197
Table 22. <i>Validity correlations for right-wing and left-wing populism (Study 5)</i>	198
Table 23. <i>Validity correlations and left-wing populism and right-wing populism factors (Study 5)</i>	199
Table 24. <i>Linear regression models for different forms of protest and confidence on society existing (Study 5)</i>	200
Table 25. <i>Linear regression models for people's perceptions of future elections (Study 5)</i>	201
Table 26. <i>Multiple regression examining left-wing populism facets (Study 5)</i>	202
Table 27. <i>Multiple regression examining right-wing populism facets (Study 5)</i>	203

Table of Figures

Figure 1 <i>Predicted factor structure for right-wing populism</i>	204
Figure 2 <i>Predicted factor structure for left-wing populism</i>	205
Figure 3 <i>Scree plot for Study 2 exploratory factor analysis</i>	206
Figure 4 <i>Predicted factor structure of the higher-order two-factor model</i>	207
Figure 5 <i>Predicted factor structure of the one higher order factor</i>	208

Chapter 1: Introduction

Populism is the belief that society is divided between two antagonistic groups: the people and elite. As a political force and as an ideology among voters, populism is a global phenomenon (Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Understanding populism and its consequences is vital for the social sciences, as populist upsurges can be a signal for the erosion of civic culture and democratic deconsolidation, but also a sign of unresponsive establishments that have disillusioned voters (Norris & Inglehart, 2019; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). Recent research, by developing an inclusive definition of populism (i.e., all instances of populism express the will of the people, and hold the view that society can be divided between the people and elite), has helped produce an understanding of populism at the mass-level (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017) and the individual-level (Akkerman et al., 2014). Yet, this definition can pigeonhole various manifestations of populism (Canovan, 2004) and fails to capture differences in the types of populism (see Hawkins & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

This concern is reflected in the conceptualization and development of populist attitudes, as existing scales in the literature struggle to differentiate themselves from related constructs (Castanho Silva et al., 2020; Rooduijn, 2019) and lack predictive power such as the contempt for non-political elite (Jungkunz et al., 2021). Because populism most notably occurs at the radical poles of the left and right political spectrum (Rooduijn & Akkerman, 2017), a starting basis for a better measure of populist attitudes can include its integration to the left-right political spectrum. The inclusion of the left-right political context may help differentiate populism from related concepts like

cynicism and improve predictive power such as contempt for different elites and establishments. Indeed, populism is best understood in the context of other ideologies (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018; see Meléndez & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019). Yet, current populist attitude scales do not assess the differences between the left-wing and right-wing populists with which populism may pair (e.g., Hawkins & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; March, 2017).

Left-wing and right-wing populist movements embrace different themes and characteristics (Kriesi, 2014; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013). Left-wing populists often call for economic equality, highlight the plight of the working class, and tend to be inclusive regarding different societal groups joining their cause (Algan et al., 2019; de la Torre, 2016b; Otjes & Louwense, 2015). By contrast, right-wing populists often embrace ethnonationalist ideas that entail the division of people between natives and non-natives, potentially tapping notions like nativism, nationalism, and opposition to globalization (e.g., Bonikowski, 2017; Norris & Inglehart, 2019; Rydgren, 2007).

Both types of populism have different conceptions of “the people” and “the elite,” and prioritize different issues that are unlikely to be captured with scales that lack the left-right context. For lacking the left-right context, these scales can be considered “context-poor.” Moreover, left-wing populism and right-wing populism are associated with different personality traits. Openness to experience predicts support for a left-wing populist candidate whereas neuroticism predicts support for a right-wing populist candidate (Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020, Table 4). Evidence from political parties also distinguishes left-wing and right-wing populism. Although populism on both the left and the right can erode checks and balances of democracy, left-wing populism can

occasionally enhance minority rights (Huber & Schimpf, 2017). Yet, little is known about the psychological differences between populism from the right and left aside from some findings about personality traits, other individual differences, and stances on certain issues like immigration or the influence of corporations (Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020; Akkerman et al., 2017).

The goal of this dissertation is to capture left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes using empirically validated scales. Current populist scales have not demonstrated sufficient discrimination from related attitudinal constructs such as political cynicism or simply anti-elitism (Castanho Silva et al., 2020; Rooduijn, 2019) and they lack predictive power like failing to support populists who hold office (Jungkunz et al., 2021). I argue that this is in part because currently available measures do not capture the contextual factors related to, and unique elements of populist subtypes. Rather than constructing another context-poor populist attitudes scale, this dissertation aims to add the left-right political dimension to flesh out the measurement of populist attitudes. In the same manner that Conway and colleagues (2018) have tapped authoritarianism from the left-wing (combining authoritarian tendencies with left-wing ideology) and showed important similarities and differences relative to right-wing authoritarianism, this dissertation aims to do the same for left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes.

Chapter 2 of this dissertation introduces the contemporary literature on populism, including its varying definitions across the literature, and the challenges of measuring populism as an attitudinal construct. Chapter 3 summarizes the measurement of populist attitudes as well as the predictions on the structure of the left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. Chapter 4 discusses the social psychological and individual differences

that may underpin populist attitudes as well as how left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes may be similar and different. Chapter 5 identifies the predicted factor structures of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes, lays out a theoretical rationale to designing items and provides an overview of the proposed studies. Chapter 6 examines qualitative data to determine which groups of people are considered “the elite,” because the core of populism begins with an opposition against a powerful group or establishment. Chapter 7 pools the most widely used scales in the literature and narrows them to the best set of facets/items via exploratory factor analysis. Chapter 8 integrates the qualitative findings of Chapter 6 with the best facets/items from Chapter 7 to create left-wing and right-wing populist inventories and examines the predictive power of these two scales. Chapter 9 provides additional confirmation for the factor structure and the nomological net for these two variants of populist attitudes. Chapter 10 confirms the measurement equivalence of these two populism scales across three of English-speaking nations (U.S., Canada, Australia) and cross-validates a subset of the criterion and nomological variables used in Study 3 and Study 4. Finally, Chapter 11 provides a general discussion, highlighting the major implications, limitations, and future directions.

Chapter 2: Populism as ideology

Populism is a contested idea. There has been much debate on the precise definition and conceptualization of populism. Populism can have several different meanings depending on the area of study. Populism can be defined as a positive force that mobilizes people toward a communitarian model of democracy, a strategy to gain constituents, a political style to represent certain political groups or as a discursive frame to give rise to political action (de la Torre & Mazzoleni, 2019; Hawkins & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Laclau, 2005; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Moffitt & Tormey, 2014). Whereas some authors might describe populism as synonymous to anti-immigration, authoritarianism, radicalism and xenophobia (e.g., Betz, 1994; Norris & Inglehart, 2019), others argue that these elements only apply to a subset of populist actors and supporters (Bonikowski, 2017; see Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2023). Others perceive populism as the heart of democracy and as a form of emancipation, mobilizing the disenfranchised to challenge the status quo (e.g., Laclau & Mouffe, 2014). Others, in contrast, do not view populism as an ideology, but rather as a form of communication to mobilize segments of the population (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014; Ostiguy, 2017). Most of the literature has focused on populism as an ideology at the elite level (politicians and political parties), and as a political style of politicians rather than as an attitudinal construct.

The ideational approach has become the leading framework in defining and conceptualizing populism and populist attitudes. Championed by Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser (2017), Mudde (2004, 2007), and Stanley (2008), it attempts to capture populism with a minimal definition. Proponents of this approach view populism as a

“thin-centered ideology,” which represents the notion that populism does not exist in its purest form. Rather, populism only exists when it is paired with “thick” ideologies like nationalism or socialism (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Stanley, 2008). A thick ideology is a set of beliefs that provides a substantive understanding of society, social groups and political matters. In other words, populism as an ideology is vague and unspecific without its association with another ideology. The core ideas of populism are given life once they are tied to a more substantive belief system. The thinness of populism indicates that it cannot provide explanations for various social issues like economic policies – only a substantive ideology can address those issues. For instance, socialist beliefs can shape the populist notion of the people versus the elite or issues that populists prioritize. In this context, socialist beliefs create a Marxist dualism of “haves” versus “have-nots,” while prioritizing working class issues. The ideational approach can be inclusive in determining which events, ideas and movements are instances of populism, and is conceptually relevant to various areas of research; populism can be treated as an ideology, a worldview or as discourse, for instance. The next section dives deeper into the aspects of populism based on the ideational approach.

Core Populist Ideas

The ideational approach to populism argues that there are two core ideas of populism. The first core idea of populism is the separation of society into the people and elite – two groups that are diametrically opposed to one another. “The people” are meant to represent a homogenous, virtuous, and pure group of people who are mobilized by political rhetoric, whereas the “elite” are described as powerful, but corrupt establishments in the domains of economy, culture, politics, or media (e.g., Canovan, 2002;

Mudde, 2004; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). This tension between the people and the elite is considered Manichaeic – the division between good versus evil.

The nature of this first component reveals that populist parties, regardless of the thick ideological position, typically harbor resentment of some social or political establishment. Interestingly, different populist movements across the political spectrum can view the same outgroup as the elite like the European Union (EU; Rooduijn & Akkerman, 2017). Whereas the populist left opposes the EU for its neoliberal agenda that economically harms workers, the populist right combats the EU because of its immigration and European integration policies (Pirro et al., 2018). The relationship between the people and the elite can be considered Manichaeic. Manichaeism entails the ideas that the people/ingroup are pure and good, but that the elite/outgroups are evil (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). Moreover, the Manichaeic division between “the people” and “the elite” is common to all instances of populism (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2017; Kriesi, 2014; Laclau, 2005; Otjes & Louwse, 2015). Therefore, any instance of populism has moralized undertones about the ingroup and outgroups (see Ditto & Rodriguez, 2021).

The second core idea is that populist movements and populist leaders serve (at least claim to) as the unmitigated voice of the people (e.g., Jagers & Walgrave, 2007). Populism is people centered (Canovan, 1999; Rooduijn, 2014), emphasizing the “will of people” (*volonté générale*). This will of the people highlights the thinness of populism: The claim to serve the people’s is often somewhat vague, and leaves it open who in any given context counts as “the people” and who does not. However, this lack of precision provides populists with great flexibility in mobilizing societal groups against the status

quo (Laclau, 2005). Populism can be an ignition for the mobilization of the masses in the name of another ideology like nativism or socialism (Bonikowski, 2017; March, 2017). For example, Donald J. Trump's brand of populism can be considered an attempt to mobilize his supporters on the basis of authoritarian and socially dominant views like calling Blacks and Latinos "bad hombres" who belong at the bottom of society (Pettigrew, 2017). Another example is broadly the populist left's call to action against the "oligarchical elites" in which "the people" unite against the global corporate power (Chou et al., 2022). In this case, socialist ideas are used by populist leaders, like Bernie Sanders to mobilize his supporters. However, the populist claim to serve the will of the people is not always a purely democratic notion: it may call for illiberal ideas like polarizing and adversarial politics, and majoritarianism over constitutional or minority rights (Bonikowski & Gidron, 2016; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Pappas, 2013).

Two populisms

These two core ideas, anti-elitism and people-centrism (will of the people), manifest differently across the left-right political spectrum. Right-wing populism concerns cultural issues surrounding globalization and diversity (Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Right-wing populists tend to embrace nativism – an exclusionary conception of the people or ingroup based on immutable features like ethnicity or race and a conceptualization of the elites as powerful people who support non-natives and gender/ethnic minorities (Mudde, 2004; Rensmann, 2017; Staerklé & Green, 2018). Despite economic woes (e.g., high unemployment), supporters of right-wing populism are not opposed to current economic systems like neoliberalism or capitalism (Betz, 1994). That is, these populists remain against non-natives and other minorities and the

elite who support inclusion instead of focusing on economic forces or systems. In terms of expressing the will of the people, the Tea Party movement in the U.S. mobilized conservatives and libertarians against economic bailouts for the elite (bankers, Democrats, and Hollywood) with implicitly racialized notions for “we the people” (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

Left-wing populism also emerges as a consequence of economic woes and globalization (March, 2017). Left-wing populists generally embrace some form of socialism creating a conception of the people based socioeconomic status (e.g., 99% vs. 1%). Unlike right-wing populists, left-wing populists may not have a deep-seated resentment toward cultural elites, but they harbor antipathy toward economic elites like major businesses or bankers (Akkerman et al., 2017). In times of financial calamities left-wing populists focus on economic forces rather than cultural ones. Though the populist left mistrusts the government as much as the populist right does (Akkerman et al., 2017), supporters of left-wing populism endorse economic equality, typically do not have nativistic or anti-immigration sentiments, and embrace multiculturalism. Minorities and other marginalized groups are seen as a part of a broader conception of the people/ingroup (March, 2017). Tea Party movement on the right, left-wing labor movements can be regarded as claiming to represent the will of the people. Specifically, the Occupy movement of 2011 and 2012, claimed to speak for the economically disadvantaged while maintaining an inclusive understanding of the bottom “99%” (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

Populist Attitudes

As an attitudinal construct (based on the ideational approach), populism can be

defined as the beliefs that society is divided into two homogeneous and oppositional groups, the “good people” and the “evil elite,” and that the people must express their sovereignty in politics, economics, and society over the elite (Akkerman et al., 2014). In many early studies, before research on populist attitudes grew to the volume it is today, researchers used proxies to tap populist attitudes such as low levels of institutional trust, (dis)satisfaction with democracy and opposition to minorities (Doyle, 2011; Norris, 2005). However, these variables are not necessarily or are only tangentially related to some forms of populism (cf. March, 2011; Mudde, 2007). Now, there are several elaborate scales that attempt to tap populist attitudes, with a consensus on anti-elitism being a factor (see Castanho Silva et al., 2020). Though the factor structures differ from one research group to the next, Castanho Silva et al. (2020) posit that all measures (at least in their study of seven populism inventories) tap three key ideas: people-centrism (will of the people), anti-elitism, and anti-pluralism; these three ideas vary in their themes and are contingent on different authors. For example, anti-pluralism can be defined by nationality (Oliver & Rahn, 2016) or by dividing people broadly into camps of good or evil (Castanho Silva et al., 2018). Despite the common themes, the sole consensus factor, anti-elitism (empirically through factor analysis), is arguably “over specified” as it does not predict support for populists who are currently in office nor for the disdain of non-political elites such as the economic elite (Jungkunz et al., 2021). Thus, the precise factor structure of populist attitudes is unclear, and the one common factor lacks predictive strength outside of anti-establishment politics.

Adding the left-right context into the measurement of populist attitudes could address some issues with current research such as the pigeonholing of diverse political

actors/supporters into one category (Canovan, 2004), improving predictive power and understanding the differential effects of populism subtypes. For the latter, precise populist attitudes scales might be able to tap the unique effects that various populist movements, beliefs, and leaders may have on democracy and society, and the distinctive psychological core of each populist sub-type. For example, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2017) indicated that populism, broadly, can be a negative and a positive for a democracy: populism can undermine liberal institutions, but at the same time increase voter turnout. Yet, these authors do not indicate which forms of populism can have this ambivalent effect on democracy or if certain types of populism have their own distinctive effects and consequences. Considering that populism must be understood within the context of its host ideology (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018), a suitable starting point in understanding populist attitudes is through the lens of left-wing and right-wing populism, as populism typically manifests from the fringes of the left-right political spectrum (Akkerman & Rooduijn, 2017).

Summary

Populism has several definitions in the literature with incompatible definitions, as some view it as the heart of democracy whereas others conceive it as a strategy utilized by politicians. The ideational approach has elucidated the nature of populism as an ideology, but not without its flaws like the pigeonholing of populists (and their supporters), and lack of consensus and predictive power as an attitudinal construct. I argue that integrating the left-right differences can improve the measurement of populist attitudes, as the nature of populism is better understood with additional political context.

Chapter 3: A review of existing measures of populist attitudes

Populism, as an individual-level ideology, is an emerging phenomenon (Rooduijn, 2019). Various authors have shown that the ideational approach's description of populist leaders and parties are comparable with the masses' populist beliefs (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2014; Castanho Silva et al., 2018; Oliver & Rahn, 2016; Schulz et al., 2018). Most of the available scales use the ideational approach as a starting point to conceptualize populist attitudes. However, there is no consensus on the factor structure such as the debate on whether the Manichaeic division is its own factor or whether it is an integral aspect of several factors (see Castanho Silva et al., 2020). No researcher has successfully integrated the left-right political context (see the Castanho Silva et al., 2018 section below for details). Most scholars do not even attempt this integration despite claims of utilizing the ideational approach which hold the idea that populism must have another ideology in order to materialize. Another concern with current assessments of populist attitudes is that they lack discriminant validity. Current measures of populist attitudes are often indistinguishable from measures of related constructs like political cynicism (see Castanho Silva et al., 2020; Rooduijn, 2019).

The difficult task is to take aspects of ideational approach to populism and identify the precise structure of populist attitudes, as the ideational approach can be considered a discursive framework rather than an attitudinal model (e.g., Erisen et al., 2021; Kenny & Bizumic, 2023). An argument can be made that the ideational approach is better suited to describe the ways in which populists communicate or run an electoral campaign rather than the attitudes which populists and their supporters hold. This might explain why there are several different conceptions of populist attitudes even though

nearly every author has indicated the use of the ideational framework to some extent. Some authors have the ideational framework as a central focus to scale development (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2014; Schulz et al., 2018) though others make use of scales that have used this framework in their own development (Oliver & Rahn, 2016), or cited ideas from it for their scale development (Hobolt et al., 2016; Stanley, 2011).

Before proceeding with the discussion of populist attitudes and the scales that measure them, an important note needs to be made. I use the term “dimension” to represent a latent, empirically derived construct that is observed through a set of items, such as a factor in a factor analysis. I use the term “facet,” to refer to an identifiable theme in a set of items, whose content varies in their meaning. For instance, some items might refer to the elites whereas others refer to groups that are considered outsiders. Populism scales may include different facets (different types of content, all related to populism), but not every facet may have its own dimension. That is, a unidimensional populism scale could be multi-faceted.

The first element of the ideational approach focused on the people – indicating that any measure of populist attitudes should center around “the people,” populist’s ingroup whom they consider pure and deserving (e.g., Schulz et al., 2018). The people are generally victimized by a powerful elite who populists view in a negative light. This suggests anti-elitism or anti-establishment sentiments more generally are an important element of populist attitudes. The conflict between the people and the elite is seen as intense and of moral significance or “Manichean” (e.g., Ditto & Rodriguez, 2021). The Manichean element is difficult to determine whether it is its own dimension (Castanho Silva et al., 2018), whether it is an element inherent to all dimensions of populist attitudes

(Schulz et al., 2018), a facet to one particular dimension (Oliver & Rahn, 2016), or a facet of a unidimensional conception of populist attitudes (Akkerman et al., 2014; Hawkins et al., 2012). Yet, some authors never even discuss this Manichean element as part of a populism inventory (Roccatò et al., 2019). In short, the first element suggests that there could be at least two dimensions or at least two facets: anti-elitism and people-centrism, but it is difficult to determine whether the Manichaeian aspect should be included.

The second important element of the ideational approach is the *volonté générale*, the generalized will of the People which is expressed or represented by some populist leader(s). This aspect of populism seems to be *centered* around the people, as it emphasizes the importance of the people's will. There seem to be two facets or factors: the notion that the people are pure/deserving and that the people's will must be expressed. The relationship of these two ideas as constituents of populist attitudes is unclear. Schulz et al. (2018) tap these two ideas with two separate dimensions: homogeneity of the people for the former, and sovereignty of the people for the latter. However, Akkerman et al. (2014) do not consider the purity of the people as a core feature. Others, such as Oliver and Rahn (2016), do not consider the people's will a facet or dimension at all. In sum, the will of the people is explicit in the ideational framework, but it is up for debate if there is a separate empirical dimension which captures people's beliefs about the purity of the people and beliefs about the sovereignty of the people; whether both constitutes separate dimensions, or whether both are merely facets of populism that may appear alongside other aspects of populism.

Castanho Silva and colleagues (2020) indicated that three themes can be

identified based on their review of seven scales in the literature: people-centrism, anti-elitism, and anti-pluralism. These authors highlight these as central themes of populism regardless of whether they are represented as separate factors or whether they appear as part of more comprehensive scales. The theme of people-centrism refers directly to items that express the “will of the people” (popular sovereignty; Akkerman et al., 2014; Hobolt et al., 2016; Schulz et al., 2018) as well as items that reference their admirable qualities (e.g., honest, e.g., Oliver & Rahn, 2016; Stanley, 2011). Anti-elitism is the most agreed upon theme, as scales reference an antagonism between the ordinary people, on one side, and the government and politicians, on the other side. Elchardus and Spruyt (2016) and Oliver and Rahn (2016) were exceptions in the literature as their scales also included items that reference hostility toward “experts” and “academics.” By broadening the notion of the elite beyond government, these research groups arguably included preferred targets by the right-wing, which might have shifted response in a partisan direction. Lastly, anti-pluralism is generally measured based on national identity or Manicheanism with the underlying idea that outgroups are excluded or are morally questionable (Castanho Silva et al., 2020).

Whereas these themes are common among a range of different conceptions of populist attitudes, there is no empirical evidence for the dimensionality of populist attitudes based on these themes; to date, researchers have not assessed these three themes of populism using three empirically derived dimensions. Despite that, the Castanho Silva et al. (2020) analysis does provide a suitable starting point to unearthing the dimensionality of populist attitudes. Thus, I hypothesize that populist attitudes from either ends of political spectrum are multidimensional with three dimensions: anti-pluralism, anti-

elitism, and people-centrism. I plan to use several different scales to test the hypothesized three-factor model of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. In the following section, I review those measures of populist attitudes, detailing their strengths, weakness, item content, and usage.

Hawkins et al. (2012)

Hawkins and colleagues (2012) developed one of the first direct measures of populist attitudes. These researchers utilized secondary data from two surveys: the nationally represented Cooperative Congressional Election Survey (CCES) and the Utah Colleges Exit Pool (UCEP), a survey representative of Utah. In both studies, the scale comprises of four items, one to express the Manichaeian view, two focusing on the will of the people as the central force in politics and, finally, a single item on the belief that powerful special interests control the U.S. Congress. This basic characterization of the four items was constant even though the CCES and the UCEP used slightly different items. Thus, populist attitudes were conceived with three important facets: the Manichaeian view, people-centrism, and anti-elitism. The CCES data included items like “Politics is ultimately a struggle between good and evil,” and “The politicians in Congress need to follow the will of the people” whereas the UCEP had items such as “Our government would run better if decisions were left up to successful business people” and “Elected officials would help the country more if they would stop talking and just take action on important problems.” Based on U.S. data, the items coalesced into one factor but with items showing modest internal consistency, $\alpha = .65$ (CCES) and $\alpha = .59$ (UCEP). This scale did not include any reverse-coded items, and was anchored on a Likert-type scale. The Hawkins et al. (2012) scale was related to lower levels of

education, identification with third parties, radical conservatism (weaker radicalism for leftists), and anti-immigrant stances. At the time of writing this dissertation, the Hawkins et al. (2012) paper was cited 385 times which includes other populism scholars who have designed their own scales, suggesting that this empirical work might serve as a reference point for much of the subsequent research. Limitations noted by the authors include the potential dimensionality issue with the Manichaeian view item fitting poorly; that is, items capturing the belief that politics is a struggle between good and evil did not necessarily fit well with items tapping people-centrism and anti-elitism. The authors also pointed out that the scale taps populism on the right-wing better than it does populism on the left-wing. Whereas strong conservatives showed higher levels of populist attitudes compared to moderate conservatives, there was no statistical difference in populist attitude between strong liberals relative to moderate liberals.

Stanley (2011)

Alongside the Hawkins et al. (2012) scale, the scale produced by Stanley (2011) galvanized research in understanding populism as an attitude. This paper has been cited by many scholars (165 at time of this writing) who developed populism scales (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2014; Oliver & Rahm, 2016, Schulz et al., 2018). Stanley (2011) posited that there are four aspects of populism: the homogeneity of the people/elite, the view that the nature of politics is stacked against the people by the elite, majoritarianism/sovereignty of the people, and Manichaeianism. This eight-item scale (four items reverse-coded; reliability not reported) captures the same elements from other scales mentioned previously, but has a unique difference: majoritarianism and sovereignty of the people are considered one theme whereas other scales either do not

combine these aspects or do not make specific references to majoritarianism. This scale was anchored on a Likert-type response. Scale and included items like “The ordinary people are divided by many different values.” and “Ordinary people are prevented from improving their lives by the actions of unaccountable elites.” Stanley (2011) utilized a representative Slovak sample ($n = 1,203$) to test his conceptualization of populist attitudes. Although this scale has attractive features like reverse-coded items, it has a major weakness: it lacks predictive power, as it could not predict populist voting (see Akkerman et al., 2014). Variables linked to national and economic issues were better predictors than the Stanley (2011) scale. Stanley (2011) argued that lack of predictive power could stem from context: (1) populists were already in office and (2) the scale was unable to disentangle populist attitudes from legitimate concerns from social, national, and economic issues.

Akkerman et al. (2014)

Akkerman and colleagues (2014) conducted a follow up study to the research of Hawkins and colleagues (2012). These authors conceived of populism as a single dimension which was measured using six items, tapping four different topics: the importance of the people’s will, the lack of compromise on political issues, resentment toward the elite and the Manichaeian division within the context of democracy. Sample items include, “The people, and not politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.” and “Politics is ultimately a struggle between good and evil.” Akkerman and colleagues tested their conception of populist attitudes using a sample from an existing Dutch panel ($n = 600$). The Akkerman et al. (2014) scale was also anchored on a Likert-type response format without any reverse-coded items, and was reliable ($\alpha = .82$). The

scale showed higher levels of populism in supporters of populist parties compared to supporters of traditional political parties, but some their findings could be considered a result of Type I errors because of the use of uncorrected *t*-tests because they compared mean populism scores across for two populist parties against four non-populist parties without accounting for the number of tests. A Bonferroni correction for eight *t*-tests would render three out of eight findings as non-significant.¹

Akkerman et al.'s (2014) scale does have some limitations. The items are considered double-barreled or “unfocused” as some items (e.g., “I would rather be represented by a citizen than by a specialized politician.”) tap multiple sentiments like the people’s sovereignty and also mistrust of politicians (Wuttke et al., 2020). Another issue with the theoretical consistency of populism is indicated by the unexpected high correlation between populism and elitism ($r = .48$) which contradicts the Manichaeic division between populism and elitism.² This problem could also be caused by the lack of reverse-coded items in both the populism and elitism scales, with response bias contributing to the positive correlation. Despite the weaknesses, with its at of this citing 1,126 citations it is the most cited measure of populist attitudes, and has been cited across many academic disciplines (e.g., sociology, political science, psychology).

Schulz et al. (2018)

Another populist was developed by Schulz et al. (2018). These authors collected two samples with a Switzerland nationwide sample ($n = 400$) and another from Zurich

¹A Bonferroni correction assumes independent comparison, and would likely be too conservative in the case of Akkerman et al.'s non-independent pairwise comparison. Yet, it highlights that the reported unprotected *t*-test are too liberal.

²I found a factor in Chapter 6 (Study 2) that somewhat resembles elitism, but discarded it, as it was unrelated to my hypotheses.

and nearby regions ($n = 1,260$); both samples were collected via online access panels and utilized a quota procedure for age and gender. Also operationalizing the ideational approach, their 12-item scale has three dimensions: anti-elitism, sovereignty of the people, and homogeneity of the people. Item responses were recorded via a Likert-type format and the scale did not contain any reverse-coded items. No reliability was reported for the full scale, but all three dimensions: anti-elitism ($\alpha = .86$ for nationwide; $\alpha = .79$ for Zürich), sovereignty of the people ($\alpha = .86$ for nationwide; $\alpha = .87$ for Zürich), and homogeneity of the people ($\alpha = .84$ for nationwide; $\alpha = .83$ for Zürich) were reliable. However, this homogeneity of the people dimension appears to be only weakly incompatible with the other two factors proposed by Schulz et al. (2018). For example, Jami and Kimmelmeier (2021) observed only very low correlations between Schulz et al.'s subscales of anti-elitism and sovereignty of the people.

This scale contained items like, “People like me have no influence on what the government does” from the anti-elitism sub-scale and “Ordinary people all pull together” from the homogeneity of the people sub-scale. Each dimension was measured with four items. Anti-elitism referred to the mistrust and perceived incompetence of the political establishment. The sovereignty of the people factor represented a belief in unrestricted popular sovereignty (i.e., majoritarianism, direct democracy), and homogeneity of the people facet indicated a belief that the people are virtuous and homogenous. Compared to Akkerman et al. (2014), this scale is more psychometrically sound as it has better reliability. Schulz and colleagues (2018) observed that items of the Akkerman et al. (2014) scale do not center around the “people” which they argue is vital for any conception of populism. Schulz et al. (2018) sought to remedy this weakness by creating

a homogeneity of the people component.

Castanho Silva et al. (2018)

Castanho Silva and colleagues (2018) developed a scale that taps three empirically determined dimensions, people-centrism, anti-elitism, and Manichaeian outlook, all derived from the ideational approach. The scale holds items like, “The will of the people should be the highest principle in this country's politics,” and “The people I disagree with politically are just misinformed” (reversed). People-centrism emphasized majoritarianism, anti-elitism represented mistrust of politicians and corporations, and the Manichaeian outlook signified a view of the world as good versus evil based on people’s political background. The scale by Castanho Silva and colleagues was also anchored on a Likert-type scale with three items reversed. Unlike other groups of scholars, these authors identified a separate Manichaeian facet. This contrasts with Akkerman et al. (2014) and Schulz et al. (2018), who found Manichaeian undertones in each of their items rather than a Manichaeian factor. Castanho Silva et al. (2018) were unable to replicate the homogeneity of the people factor of Schulz and colleagues (2018). Major strengths of the Castanho Silva and colleagues (2018) scale are its development based on student and online samples from 13 countries in Europe, U.S. and Latin America and the very fact it does include three reversed-coded items where other populism inventories include none. In a comparative measurement invariance study of populist scales (Castanho Silva et al., 2020), only the scale developed by Castanho Silva et al. (2018) was shown to have metric equivalence (i.e., factor loadings are equivalent across societies; see Putnick & Bornstein, 2016). However, the study by Castanho Silva et al. (2020) based this finding only on chi-square differences and did not examine scalar equivalence and fit indices; thus, it is

limited in understanding full breadth of what measurement invariance offers.

Castanho Silva et al. (2018) also created separate unidimensional scales for both left-wing and right-wing populism. The right-wing populism scale focused on a more nationalist understanding of the people like how the nation, its symbols, and taxes exist and function. Interestingly, their right-wing populism scale has many of items that seem like generic populism items assessing whether people agreed with ideas like: “The government and the elite it serves are the cause of the people’s problem,” or “Government officials use their powers only to mess with people’s lives,” and this scale was not included in these author’s final inventory.

Their left-wing populism scale emphasized the mistreatment of the working class by economic elites (e.g., big corporations) and political disenfranchisement of political groups. This scale introduced items that pertain to economic groups like “Politics is divided between the haves and the have-nots,” and their disillusionment of the political system, “The unemployed, underemployed, marginalized groups – these are the real people who should have more voice in politics.” Similar to the right-wing populism scale, the left-wing populism scale was not included in their final inventory which may have to do with some items being too specific to certain contexts. For instance, some items might only be relevant for individuals from developing countries that have a history of recent colonization, with items like, “International financial institutions colonize our country and accumulate wealth by exploiting the people.” More broadly, Castanho Silva et al. (2018) did not explain why/how these specific items were chosen or if the host ideology (left-right spectrum) interacts with their three-factor model (anti-elitism, people-centrism, Manichaeian view). For example, the Manichaeian view could have specific content that

would be different for the left-wing populism scale (the “good” working class people versus the “bad” big business and economic elite) and right-wing populism scale (the “good” natives versus the “bad” cosmopolitan elite).

Oliver and Rahn (2016)

Oliver and Rahn (2016) posited that populism is a multi-dimensional construct; following the ideational approach, they developed a scale with three factors: anti-elitism, mistrust of experts and national affiliation with nationally representative internet survey sample ($n = 1,063$) collected from the U.S. The scale contained 12 items (reliability was not reported and only a single reverse-coded item), and had items like, “Politics usually boils down to a struggle between the people and the powerful.” and “When it comes to really important questions, scientific facts don’t help very much.” This scale is also among the widely used/cited measures of populist attitudes. Anti-elitism referred to the marginalization of the people because of the political establishment, mistrust of experts indicated the skepticism of intellectuals and experts, and national affiliation represented the identification with one’s nationality. This scale differed from the others by using dichotomous items along with some Likert-type items, and was also the only scale that had a mistrust of experts factor. Despite the mixed scaling for the items, the authors did not make it clear how the scale was scored given the items with different response formats for the overall scale. According to the authors, it has no representation of the Manichaeian viewpoint outside of an item cross-loaded with anti-elitism and the mistrust of experts factor.

A major concern with this scale is that it taps right-wing sentiments that may not be related to populism, an issue that Oliver and Rahn (2016) raised themselves. The

national affiliation scale was comparatively similar for supporters of Donald Trump and Marco Rubio (a non-populist), meaning that national affiliation may be more of a feature of right-wingers than populists. Although the mistrust of experts scale was high among the supporters of right-wing populists (i.e., Donald Trump, Ben Carson, and Ted Cruz), it was lowest for supporters of Bernie Sanders – another populist whose supporters had the highest trust for experts even compared to supporters of other candidates including non-populists like Hillary Clinton. Thus, mistrusting experts may be a feature of right-wing populism rather than populism more generally. The pattern of findings also raises the possibility that mistrust of experts may be substantively unrelated to populism, but that it is merely an element of some forms of conservatism in the U.S.

CSES Scale (Hobolt et al., 2016)

The wave 5 questionnaire of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) provides another measure of populism. This scale is unidimensional with items tapping three facets: attitudes toward political elites, representative democracy and majority rule, and attitudes toward outgroups. The eight-item scale contains a single reverse coded item; no information on reliability or sample size was reported. Though Hobolt et al. (2016) does not detail the specifics on data collections (neither sample size nor sampling approach), they have data from countries in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia. Attitudes toward political elites pertain to perceptions of the elite (e.g., the elite are corrupt, the elite are the problem in society). Representative democracy and majority rule indicates the illiberal beliefs embedded in populism such as viewing compromise as a form of “selling out”, and believing that majority ideas should prevail even at the expense of minority voices. The last facet focuses on the exclusionary aspects of the

populist right such as having negative views on immigrants or others who are not citizens.

The attitudes toward political elite items run parallel to the anti-elitism items/facets found in other scales (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2014; Schulz et al., 2018). The latter two aspects somewhat differ from other conceptions of populist attitudes, but do have some overlap with existing scales. The representative democracy and majority rule aspects share some similarities with items from the Akkerman et al. scale (2014), as both scales include ideas of the people being uncompromising. Yet, majority rule also includes ideas of majoritarianism which are not assessed in other scales. The attitudes toward political elite items share some similarities to the national affiliation facet of the Oliver and Rahn (2016) scale because it emphasizes ideas around nationality.

Elchardus and Spruyt (2016)

This scale is unidimensional, consisting of a total of only four items (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016). These four items tapped sovereignty and homogeneity of the people (both with 1 item), anti-elitism, and anti-intellectualism. No items were reverse coded ($\alpha = 0.79$), and all items were assessed on a Likert-type scale with sample items like “Politicians should listen more closely to the problems the people have,” and “People who have studied for a long time and have many diplomas do not really know what makes the world go round.” This scale has been utilized in other studies, largely in political sciences, but some in psychology and broadly social sciences. These authors included an anti-intellectualism theme which is consistent with Oliver and Rahn’s (2016) mistrust of experts factor being an aspect of populism. The data were collected in Belgium but only the Dutch speaking population (Flemish) was utilized as the authors

argued that the political climate among the French speaking population was not comparable ($N = 2,330$).

Elchardus and Spruyt (2016) acquired data from the National Register and used sample weights on age, gender, and education to account for underrepresented populations (younger people, men, and people lower educational attainment). Moreover, the combined item for the anti-elitism and people-centrism facet being a singular dimension is unique to this particular scale (“Ministers should spend less time behind their desks, and more among the ordinary people”), as this item emphasizes the importance of being around the people and that their opinion is “worthier” (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016). At the same time, an item that taps two themes could be considered double-barreled. A strength of this paper is that Elchardus and Spruyt (2016) showed that populist attitudes were related to key constructs like anomie, declinism and relative deprivation.

Roccatto et al. (2019)

Roccatto et al. (2019) developed the populist orientation scale (POPOR) with an Italian quota sample, but unlike other scales, the authors’ theoretical rationale was unclear. The POPOR is a unidimensional measure, comprised of six facets – each measured with a single item: (1) anti-economic, financial, and intellectual establishment attitudes; (2) anti-political establishment; (3) conception of the people as homogeneous and virtuous; (4) consideration of the people as legitimated to take part directly in the political decision-making processes; (5) need for a strong leader; and (6) loss of relevance of traditional ideologies (the idea that the left-right political spectrum is irrelevant in today’s politics). Unlike previous scales, the POPOR uses forced choices in that responses were asked to select one of two opposing viewpoints. Half of the items in this six-item scale

were reverse-coded in that half of the items had the populist viewpoints (vs. non-populist view) as the choice on the left-end of the scale and the other half of items had the populist view as the right-end of the scale (e.g., “There are those who say that conflicts among people are inevitable because it’s just part of human nature. On the other hand, others think that ordinary people are basically good and honest and that it’s only because of those in charge that people are set against each other. Where would you place yourself between these opposing opinions?” These researchers utilized quota sampling to adjust for gender, age and area of residence (Italy) and interviewed respondents using computer-assisted web interviews methods ($n = 1,564$).

Roccatto et al. (2019) found that their scale had positive associations with perceived economic insecurity along with negative attitudes toward immigration and the European Union. One critical issue with this scale is the unclear theoretical focus. For example, it is unclear why the political anti-establishment facet is separate from the “anti-economic, financial, and intellectual establishment aspect.” This is somewhat inconsistent with other scales, as other scales focus typically focus on one elite at a time like the political elite (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2014). Moreover, the loss of relevance of the traditional ideologies (the idea that the left-right political spectrum is irrelevant in today’s politics), is surprising because populism, at least based on the ideational approach, only exists by having a host ideology that is rather traditional like liberalism, nationalism, or socialism (e.g., Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017; Stanley, 2008) and often appears among the radical flanks (Akkerman & Rooduijn, 2017).

Summary

The ideational approach has helped shape different conceptions of populist

attitudes such as the ones mentioned in this review. Despite the fact that there is some common ground, a clear consensus for its dimensionality has yet to emerge. The authors reviewed in this section generally used the same statistical tools to extract factors from their survey data (exploratory factor analysis) and assess reliability (Cronbach's alpha). used the same statistical techniques to ascertain their populism scales like Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency, and factor analysis for fit and dimensionality (if these statistical techniques were reported). There does seem to be consensus around the notion of anti-elitism. Nearly all scales have some version of it as an empirically determined dimension (e.g., Castanho Silva et al., 2018; Schulz et al., 2018) or a facet of a unidimensional scale (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2014; Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016). Even anti-elitism dimensions can contain different themes or facets depending on the scales. For example, the anti-elitism dimension of the Schulz et al. (2018) scale has facets that include one's low political efficacy ("Politicians are not really interested in what people like me think," and "MPs in Parliament very quickly lose touch with ordinary people"). Yet, the Castanho Silva et al. (2018) scale has an anti-elitism dimension focused more on government corruption ("Quite a few of the people running the government are crooked," and "The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking for themselves").

The other elements of populist attitudes varied more with other concepts. For instance, Akkerman et al. (2014) provided a singular populism scale arguing that they tapped Manichaeism in each item, whereas Castanho Silva et al. (2018) treated Manichaeism as a separate construct; both attempted to tap into the idea of people-centrism. In contrast, Schulz et al. (2018) had two separate subscales to represent people-centrism: the homogeneity of the people and the sovereignty of the people, and the

authors suggested that these two constructs can be somewhat independent from each other. No other model emphasized the people-centrism as having two separate components in the manner of the Schulz et al. (2018) scale. Oliver and Rahn (2016), Elchardus and Spruyt (2016), Hobolt et al. (2016) and Roccato et al. (2019) included scales like national affiliation or anti-intellectualism that are unique to their conception of populism, but arguably may represent other political ideologies (e.g., national affiliation may be an aspect of conservatism rather than a part of populism). Regardless, these populism scales struggle with identifying populists from non-populists, as items are not polarizing enough, and lack counter-balanced items (see Van Hauwaert et al., 2020).

The need for a better measure of populism

The present review of populism scales revealed some weaknesses. First, though all variants of populist attitudes share some conception of “the people” and “the elite”, populism must be paired with other ideologies to manifest, as it does not exist on its own (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Stanley, 2008). This is a major conceptual limitation: if on its own populism cannot exist, then attempting to tap populist beliefs or attitudes on its own may be a logical impossibility. Because scales are attempting to only capture the “thin” aspect of populism and not the “thick” ideology that populism is tethered to, they are essentially measuring a singular aspect of a belief system, irrespective of its context. This issue makes current scales, “context-poor,” for they are lacking the context that helps populism to be realized. Moreover, context-poor scales (like the ones above) fail to capture the nuances of populism. There is a myriad of populists over the course of history such as Juan Peron, Jean Marie Le Pen, Hugo Chavez, Bernie Sanders, and Donald Trump. Yet, most populists do not have some kind

of common history, ideology, program or social base (see Canovan, 2004). Arguably, populists with considerably different backgrounds are pigeonholed. And this pigeonholing may also be the case at the individual level, as supporters of these populists might not have much in common.

Related to the notion of being context-poor, none of these scales incorporated the differences between left-wing and right-wing populism. In the case of Castanho Silva et al., (2018), their scales were rather limited, as they did not integrate the three-factor model they proposed with the left-wing and right-wing scales, and these two scales have conceptual issues.³ The lack of context is a fundamental weakness because populism tends to occur on the left and right political fringe (Akkerman & Rooduijn, 2017). This entail profound differences in who are conceived as the people and the elite (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017), the exclusiveness or inclusiveness of their group (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013), and can interact with democracy in different ways (Hubert & Schimpf, 2017; Ivaldi et al., 2017). Instead, some authors have treated the left-right ideology as a separate element (Wettstein et al., 2020), or grouped respondents by which party they voted for (Akkerman et al., 2017) instead of integrating the contextual differences within the scale itself. Castanho Silva and colleagues (2018) have created separate scales for left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes, but these scales were limited because they were inconsistent with their three-factor conception of populist attitudes, and the logic behind them being singular scales (as opposed to the multi-dimensional one they proposed) was unclear, and were not included in their final iteration

³ The right-wing scale included items that were rather generic, and the left-wing scale included items that tapped ideas around decolonization as well. See the Castanho Silva et al (2018) section in this chapter for more details.

of the scale. At the time of this writing, other research did not utilize their left-wing and right-wing subscales (based on my examination of Google Scholar) – thus, these two scales are untested and potentially lack validity. Other scholars like the Oliver and Rahn (2016) scale or the Elchardus and Spruyt scale (2016) unintentionally measure right-wing ideas (Castanho Silva et al., 2020), and the Hawkins et al. (2012) has right-leaning bend to them.

Current scales also struggle to distinguish populists and non-populists directly, as they can only tap moderate populist attitudes (Van Hauwaert et al., 2020), but are unlikely to separate one type of populist from other populists. In the U.S. context, context-poor scales do real any differences between some populists such as supporters of Bernie Sanders and supporters of Donald Trump. The lack of context may explain some of issues present in the literature: current scales are not always diagnostic of populism (see Wuttke et al., 2020), have only anti-elitism as a common facet/dimension (Castanho Silva et al., 2020), and fail to predict support for populists when populists are in office and the contempt of non-political elites (Jungkunz et al., 2021).

Another issue concerns methodology. Most of the scales described in this section (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2014; Hawkens et al., 2012; Schulz et al., 2018; Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016) do not have any safeguards against response bias because of the lack of reverse-coded items. Moreover, aside from factor analysis and reliability, none of these scales have been successfully cross-validated with most of them failing their measurement invariance tests (see Castanho Silva et al., 2020; also see Van Hauwaert et al., 2020). And none of these scales ever examined the omega coefficient in determining if their construct is actually multidimensional or unidimensional (Revelle, 2010).

The last critical point is that the ideational approach is not without its flaws. More specifically, the ideational approach has been argued to only tap the fringe of right-wing European populists. For example, the notion of the people being “pure” – indicates racial or ethnic purity which is generally irrelevant among left-wing populists who are focused on social class issues such as Evo Morales (de la Torre & Mazzoleni, 2019).

In short, there are a number of scales in the populism literature. Though all authors have taken the ideational approach in developing populist attitudes, there is hardly a consensus on the factor structure which may be in part the ideational approach is better utilized as a discursive frame instead of a psychological one. Moreover, there are methodological issues (e.g., response bias), theoretical issues (e.g., failing to include the thick ideology that breathes life into populism) and validity issues (weak predictive power, lack of cross validation) that plague a promising literature.

I hope to address many of these concerns with the development of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes which include greater theoretical consistency, methodological rigor, and cross-validation. For instance, the development of these two scales directly addresses scales being context poor and utilizing the ideational framework incorrectly, as the political context is now integrated in the items. Moreover, more precise measures of populist attitudes will be less prone to unintentionally bending to the political right (see de la Torre & Mazzoleni, 2019), and will be able to differentiate members of the populist right and left (see Van Hauwaert et al., 2020; Wuttke et al., 2020). In the next section, I discuss the social psychology of populism and hypothesize differences and similarities between left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes.

Chapter 4: The social psychology of populism

The goal of this section is to examine the social psychological correlates of populism, with a particular focus on comparing and contrasting left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. Some social psychological constructs may be relevant to both variants of populism whereas some constructs may only relate to a particular type of populism. Moreover, given that some research focuses on broad populist attitudes – I will make predictions whether it should apply to either left-wing or right-wing populism or both.

In general, the lion's share of individual-level populism research stems from the political science literature. General populist voting and beliefs are linked to conspiratorial thinking, lower self-esteem, declinism (the belief that society is declining morally), low socio-economic status, strong protest attitudes, low political efficacy, and difficulties in finding a positive social identity (Castanho Silva et al., 2017; Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Schumacher & Rooduijn, 2013; Spruyt et al., 2016). Moreover, there are also cultural and individual differences related to populism (Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2021; Kenny & Bizumic, 2023; Obschonka et al., 2018; Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020). Though right-wing and left-wing populist voting have commonalities such as low levels of political trust (Bakker et al., 2016), there are notable differences between them like in terms of personality traits, and disparate evaluations of institutions and social groups (Akkerman et al., 2017; Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020).

Anti-elitism

Anti-elitism describes the dislike and mistrust of politicians, corporations, and other powerful political, economic, and societal actors (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2014). Arguably, anti-elitism and conspiratorial thinking are deeply intertwined. Conspiracy

theories can be described as explanations for important events which involve secret plots by powerful and corrupt groups (Goertzel, 1994). These explanations imply that any official account of certain events may not be the truth (Douglas et al., 2017). For example, gender conspiracy beliefs, the idea that gender equality is a secret plot to undermine traditional values (Marchlewska et al., 2019; see also Forgas & Lantos, 2021), may encourage supporters of right-wing populism to believe that evil cultural elites are out to destroy their traditions (Hameleers, 2021). The populist left also engages in conspiracy theories. For instance, Bernie Sanders' blaming of the elites as well as the general distrust for economic elites have conspiratorial undertones (see Hameleers, 2021; Oliver & Rahn, 2016).

The link between anti-elitism and conspiratorial thinking may be the result of populist politicians portraying their rivals as part of some conspiracy (e.g., Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008). A recent example might be Donald Trump's claim that he had won the 2020 Presidential election if it wasn't for rampant and systematic fraud aimed at keeping him out of power.⁴ Castanho Silva et al. (2017) noted that anti-elite sentiments in populist rhetoric and attitudes are "borderline" conspiratorial. In their study, populist and anti-elitist (the factor in their populism scale was also examined separately) attitudes were related to believing in conspiracies regarding globalism (i.e., global elites control world event outcomes), the control of information (elites suppress information from the public), and their personal wellbeing (concerns of the spread of diseases and mind-controlling technologies against the public). Notably, both the belief in conspiracies and

⁴There is no evidence that Donald Trump had won the 2020 Presidential election, nor is there any evidence of systematic voter fraud.

populist ideas may be fueled by cynicism about others, especially powerful people, combined with a high flexibility to think outside of conventional norms (Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2021).

The link between conspiratorial thinking and populist ideas is common for both left-wing and right-wing variants (Mancosu et al., 2017). Both types of populists have unfavorable views of the elite which should be linked to conspiratorial thinking, as the elite are often the central point of many conspiracies (Goertzel, 1994). Important to note is that though the populist left and populist right engage in conspiratorial thinking, they may target different elites in some instances. Both will suspect nefarious actions from the political elite, but the populist left will also be wary of the economic elite and the populist right will likely accuse the cultural elite that emphasize diversity (de la Torre, 2016b ; Marchlewska et al., 2019). Overall, supporters of populism across the political spectrum may engage in conspiratorial thinking because of their anti-elitist and cynical attitudes.

Manichaeian view

The Manichaeian view can be described as a worldview that simplifies the complexities of the social world, creating two moralized camps of good versus evil. Thus, populists are not only dividing members of society, but they refer to themselves, the people (ingroup) as “good” and outgroups like the elite as “evil” (see Ditto & Rodriguez, 2021).

Because the Manichaeian view also ascribes a sense of morality, this view may cause intense dislike of outgroups. More specifically, a Manichaeian take on the relationship between different societal groups presumes a moral order which takes the moral superiority of “the people.” This facilitates a view of those who presumably oppose

the people as being of lower moral standing, which may border on dehumanization.

Indeed, as Bandura and colleagues (1996) pointed out that social practices of categorizing people into ingroup versus outgroup does enable dehumanization and aggression.

This aspect of populism might also be related to cognitive rigidity (e.g., Jost et al., 2003a). Such rigid thinking can also be found in people high in either right-wing or left-wing authoritarianism (Conway et al., 2018), those who hold prejudices (Onraet et al., 2015) or high levels of ethnocentrism (Meeusen et al., 2013). However, it is important to note that only certain aspects of populist attitudes, like the homogeneity of the people, are linked to cognitive rigidity; anti-elitism and sovereignty of the people (people-centrism) are linked to cognitive flexibility (Jami & Kimmelmeier, 2021).

As with anti-elitism, the Manichaeian worldview embedded in populist rhetoric may attract conspiracy-minded individuals (Oliver & Wood, 2014). Those who endorse Manichaeian narratives about political events like financial crises believe these issues to be caused by self-interested political actors. In this sense, conspiracies about a secret cabal, for instance, may fit the Manichaeian worldviews of good versus evil (Oliver & Wood, 2014).

The Manichaeian perspective is an inherent element to both left-wing and right-wing populism (e.g., Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013; Roberts, 2022). This suggests that both forms of populism could moralize social groups which can be linked to dehumanization or at least negative evaluations of outgroups, cognitive rigidity, prejudice, and authoritarianism. Yet, one important qualifier is that the populist left is inclusive with regard to group membership; others can join their cause (e.g., March, 2017). This suggests that populist left might be less unfavorable to non-elite outgroups

like ethnic minorities than the populist right because the left-wing populists do welcome others and view social groups as more socially adaptable (e.g., Algan et al., 2019).

Another important qualifier is that although the right-wing beliefs are generally linked to cognitive rigidity (Jost et al., 2003a), but it is less clear for left-wing beliefs (Greenberg & Jonas, 2003; Jost et al., 2003a). Thus, these psychological constructs are linked to both variants, but could be stronger for the populist right compared to the populist left.

Anti-pluralism and majoritarianism

Pluralism represents the belief that society should contain a fair distribution of power and that politics must have compromise and consensus. In contrast, populists tend to favor majoritarian solutions to problems while ignoring the rights and beliefs of political opposition and minorities (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). Majoritarianism may also be viewed as the “tyranny of the majority” which calls for what the majority desires even if minority rights or their political systems’ checks and balances are infringed (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013; Pappas et al., 2009). Expressions of majoritarianism are a central aspect of populism which often uses tactics of direct democracy. These may include referendums like Brexit, or the rhetoric against economic austerity of the Greek left-wing populist party, Syriza (e.g., Grigoriadis, 2020; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). The more a particular policy or moral value is perceived to be popular, the more an idea can credibly represent the will of the people (Stanley, 2008). And populist leaders emphasize a particular idea or policy especially if it helps reinforce their authenticity as the will/voice of the people.

These two tendencies might be linked with social dominance orientation (SDO) – the belief that specifies people’s preference for group-based dominance hierarchies in

which dominant groups actively oppress subordinate groups as opposed to equality. (Ho et al., 2015; Pratto, et al., 1994). Moreover, people high in SDO view their social world as a zero-sum competition against outgroups (Duckitt et al., 2002). Within the lens of populism, “the people” might believe that they can justify their dominance in society through majoritarianism which could lead to the suppression of those who are not in support of “the people” (see Norris & Inglehart, 2019; Pappas, 2013). Populists may also desire their group (the people) to dominate their opposition (the elite and outgroups like non-natives) by utilizing majoritarian tactics (e.g., referendums) on issues or propositions that could undermine or hinder the rights or status of outgroups. The zero-sum perspective tethered to SDO might be linked to the anti-pluralism of populism. For instance, populists’ reluctance to compromise (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2014) could be due to belief that compromising will come at their expense. Potentially, a populist may believe that if outgroups benefit politically, it will harm the people/ingroup. Another implication is that populists may justify their group’s superiority because they are the majority (cf. Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). Thus, SDO may underpin the majoritarian and anti-pluralistic features of populism.

It is also critical to note that not all instances of majoritarianism are linked with SDO. In cases in which populism represents an emancipatory force (Andreucci, 2019; Laclau, 2005), it can be liberating rather than dominating. This may be based on which political ideology attaches with populism. More specifically, SDO might be more commonly a feature of right-wing populism, and in general, for many right-leaning beliefs (e.g., Pratto et al., 1994) than left-wing populism. The populist right typically favors a status quo that justifies existing inequalities (e.g., capitalism and free markets;

Betz, 1994) and reminiscence of an era in which their group was on top and certain ideas like diversity and inclusivity were not valued by the mainstream (e.g., Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Some members of the populist left, due to the direct focus on equality, might not endorse SDO related ideas (e.g., March, 2017). Yet, in some instances left-wing populist leaders might be high on SDO as well. A pertinent example might be Nicholas Maduro, a left-wing president of Venezuela— who has eroded the checks and balances in Venezuela to consolidate his and his follower’s power (Norris & Inglehart, 2019). In short, SDO may be a feature of right-wing populism, but the link between SDO and left-wing populism is much less clear.

The collective identities of populism (homogeneity of the people)

Collective identities form the initial basis of populism. Laclau (2005) indicates that the discursive nature of populism always begins with two empty signifiers: “us” and “them,” each of which represents different sociopolitical contexts. The nature of “us” and “them” is antagonistic with the former representing a conception of the “people” and the latter as the “elite.” These empty signifiers can be vague as a means to include more members within the “people” (Laclau, 2005). And the vague identity can also lead to populists treating the people as a uniform entity to which some people call the homogeneity of the people or finding a “common denominator” in the masses (Rooduijn, 2014; Schulz et al., 2018). This notion to divide the world between “us” and “them” might be strongly linked to the idea of social identity theory, which presumes that the tendency to distinguish between ingroups and outgroups is a spontaneous tendency common to all people (Tajfel, 1974; Van Bavel & Pereira, 2018). Arguably, this conceptualization of the “people” as homogenous and virtuous in populism research

(Schulz et al., 2018) may have to do with tendencies of creating ideal representations of the ingroup (e.g., Gaertner et al., 1993; Simon & Klandermans, 2001). That is, the idea of a homogeneous or “pure” people (Schulz et al., 2018) can foster a collective identity around shared grievances, adversaries, and involvement in societal matters (Simon & Klandermans, 2001).

Important to note is that right-wing populist movements or leaders will often champion an exclusionary conception of the people which limits who can be a part of the movement (Mudde, 2007). For example, Jean-Marie Le Pen and the French National Front party have argued that high quality standard of living like welfare and jobs can only be ensured if ‘aliens’ are excluded from the same opportunities as the natives (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013). The exclusionary feature of right-wing populism may entail a collective identity that is more consistent compared to the left-wing populist identity, as it is more explicit on who is a group member.

In contrast, left-wing populist movements or leaders may sometimes emphasize ethnopopulist rhetoric, a form of political action that emphasizes the will of an indigenous population, as in the decolonization rhetoric of Evo Morales (e.g., Andreucci, 2019; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). However, much more commonly left-wing populists emphasize the importance of multiculturalism, and a greater emphasis on socioeconomic groups, thus, having a more inclusive conception of “the people” (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). However, this “inclusive conception” of “the people” is still based on a distinction of “us” and “them.” This division is not ethnic-racial; instead, it is based on economic grounds like socio-economic status (SES) groups (i.e., have-nots vs haves).

The collective identity of “the people” and its antagonism toward the elite is also

enhanced by emotional experience. Sakki and Martikainen (2021) found that humor that elicits *schadenfreude* can enhance populist appeal such as mockery, derogation, and criticism of political opponents. Arguably, a populist call to action may encourage people to mobilize by collective resentment (Reicher et al., 2008).

Overall, all variants of populism delineate an identity to its adherents and its antagonists. The populist right tends to focus on a cultural, but exclusionary identity whereas the populist left tends to champion an inclusive identity based on economic terms. One potential implication is the types of nationalism and national identity both forms of populism could have. The populist right due to their exclusionary, indigenous ideas could have an ethnocentric view of nationalism, but the populist left should have a more inclusive or “civic” view on nationalism (see Saucier, 2014).

Vulnerabilities, personality, and individual differences of populism

Personality and other individual differences are linked to populist beliefs. These underpinnings of populism include traits, and vulnerabilities (e.g., low self-esteem, low life satisfaction). Personality traits have been linked with populism at the individual and regional level. Obschonka et al. (2018) examined voting for Trump and Brexit with samples from the US and UK, respectively, and found that the regional-level prevalence of neuroticism, anxiety, and depression predicted both support for Trump and Brexit and explained the vote gains from Romney, the 2012 Republican candidate for President, to Trump. That is, the vote gains of Donald Trump, over Romney, can be explained by these maladaptive tendencies. Thus, anxiety and fear can drive populist votes. Kenny and Bizumic (2023) reported that low emotional stability mediated the relationship between people-centrism and votes for One Nation – a right-wing Australian populist party.

Vasilopoulos and Jost (2020) also found that neuroticism predicted the endorsement of populist ideas. These findings on maladaptive personality traits might indicate that populist voting populations are generally unhappy (Nowakowski, 2021). Relatedly, Elchardus and Spruyt (2016) indicated that people who end up espousing populist sentiments tend to have lower life satisfaction, believe that society is leaving them behind (feelings of anomie) and society is also declining in its values and welfare overall (declinism). Thus, anxiety and unhappiness among other concepts like neuroticism/low emotional stability or anomie, may make some individuals inclined to vote for populist candidates.

Situations may amplify those maladaptive traits and characteristics associated with populism. Those who favor populist sentiments are discontented with their identity, and uneasy about globalization, the influence of economy and culture on the international stage, and the elite involved with it (Rensmann, 2017). Globalization might have induced heightened levels of stress or anxiety because of loss of manufacturing jobs and the economic woes that come from it (Colantone & Stanig, 2019; Guiso et al., 2019). Using Belgian data, Spruyt et al. (2016) examined found that support for populism was related to the lack of political efficacy, relative deprivation, cultural insecurity, and lower educational identification and economic position. The authors argued that support for populism can be viewed as a form of coping with various social, cultural, and economic threats paired with low self-esteem and a lack of a positive identity.

One interesting note is that these maladaptive traits might be more common for right-wing populists than for their left-wing counterparts. For example, Vasilopoulos and Jost (2020) found, with data acquired for the 2017 French Election, that neuroticism

predicted voting for Marine Le Pen (a right-wing populist candidate), but the same trait was unrelated to voting for Jean-Luc Mélenchon (a left-wing populist candidate). Though there is evidence of left-wing ideas, such as equalitarianism, being linked to maladaptive characteristics like facets of trait narcissism (e.g., Winegard et al., 2020), the link between left-wing populism and other maladaptive characteristics is unclear. Existing studies have thus not established the maladaptive features of left-wing populism, at least not at the individual level. Yet, because general populist ideas are linked to unhappiness and anomie – the perceived moral breakdown of society (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Nowakowski, 2021), it is possible the left-wing populism is associated with maladaptive traits. Thus, context-poor assessments of populism seem to be linked to unhappiness and anomie. At the same time, these context-poor measures lack the understanding of populism within the presence of its host ideology which helps breath populism to existence (see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2018).

Personality traits

Vulnerabilities or maladaptive characteristics are not the only individual differences related to populism. For example, voting for One Nation (a right-wing populist party in Australia) and anti-elitism (assessed with the Castanho Silva et al., 2018 scale) were related to the personality trait openness to experience (Kenny & Bizumic, 2023). Vasilopoulos and Jost (2020) also examined personality traits, authoritarianism, SDO, and system justification (the extent a person believes the political or social system is fair and legitimate even when it causes disadvantages for others; Jost et al., 2003b). Vasilopoulos and Jost found that higher levels of conscientiousness and authoritarianism were positively related to general populist attitudes, but negatively to SDO and system

justification. Supporters of Mélenchon (a left-wing populist candidate for president) were high in openness to experience, extraversion, and conscientiousness, whereas Le Pen (right-wing populist) supporters exhibited high conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Interestingly, Le Pen voters also were high in authoritarianism and SDO, but the opposite was the case for Mélenchon voters. Other authors have corroborated the findings of Vasilopoulos and Jost (2020) in that authoritarianism and SDO are psychological constructs related to right-wing populism (e.g., Van Assche et al., 2019; Van Hauwaert & Van Kessel, 2018; Womick et al., 2019). Overall, left-wing populist attitudes could be linked to higher levels of openness to experience, extraversion and higher conscientiousness whereas right-wing populist attitudes are linked to all Big 5 traits with the exception of openness.

Collective Narcissism

Collective narcissism (CN) may be another critical psychological characteristic that underpins populist attitudes and support. CN represents ingroup identification paired with emotional investment and unrealistically positive beliefs about the ingroup. CN can stem from many different forms of group identification such as nationality, ethnicity, religious creed or even gender (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). People high in CN may believe that their group is insufficiently recognized by outgroups (Golec de Zavala et al., 2019). They yearn for admiration for their group rather than themselves directly which may involve exaggerated ingroup greatness to compensate for personal shortcomings like low social status or self-esteem (Cichocka et al., 2017). Consequences of CN at the individual level include discrimination and hostility toward outgroups, hypersensitivity to insult, and exaggerations of malevolent intentions of other people. For example, Catholic

collective narcissism in a Polish sample was linked with the belief that gender studies is a secret plot to undermine Catholic values (Marchlewska et al., 2019).

CN is directly linked in populist rhetoric with slogans such as “America First” or “Make America Great Again” (Federico & Golec de Zavala, 2018), and support for populist parties like the *Law and Justice party* in Poland, leaders like Donald Trump, and movements such as *Brexit* (Marchlewska et al., 2018). CN seems to resonate with some of the insecurities or perceived threats faced by the right-leaning working class in Western Europe and the US (Betz, 1994; Mutz, 2018; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). CN has only been linked to right-wing populist leaders, parties, and movements; support for Bernie Sanders was not linked to collective narcissism (see Marchlewska et al., 2018). Because there are few studies that examined the link between CN and left-wing populism, the relationship between these two variables is unclear.

Ideologies and political tendencies associated with populism

Populism does not exist in its pure form; that is, without some host ideology, populism cannot manifest (Stanley, 2008). Documented extensively, the most commonly associated “thick” ideologies/political tendencies are nativism/ethnocentrism, authoritarianism, and socialism (e.g., Betz, 1994; Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2023; March, 2017; Mudde, 2007; Norris & Inglehart, 2019; Rensmann, 2017). Right-wing populists are often focused on the former two mentioned above, whereas the left-wing populists emphasize mostly socialism, but can embrace authoritarian tendencies.

Nativism

People high on nativism embrace national, racial, or ethnic demarcations between the “true” people of the country and the corrupt elites who support non-natives (e.g.,

Staerklé & Green, 2018). Nativism, within the context of populist ideas or politicians, entails an agenda that involves making decisions based on characteristics like race, ethnicity, or citizenship (Betz, 2019; Bonikowski, 2017), representing an exclusionary form of nationalism in which membership of a nation can only be held by having immutable characteristics or traits related with the majority or dominant group (Brubaker, 2009). Typically, nativism is a feature of right-wing populism in Western Europe (Betz, 1994), but can be seen in other parts of the world like in India or U.S. (Norris & Inglehart, 2019).

Authoritarianism

Authoritarianism is likely an element of both left-wing and right-wing populism, as it can be found in either right-wingers or left-wingers (Conway et al., 2018; Costello et al., 2022; but see Nilsson & Jost, 2020). Focusing on the right-wing, Adorno and colleagues (1950) theorized authoritarianism as a personality type that describes some people's penchant for fascism, prejudice toward outgroups, and obedience to authority. These authoritarian proclivities might stem from harsh childhood experiences, leading to excessive levels of ethnocentrism and nationalism as an adult. Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) represents people's preferences for the strict adherence to traditional values, aggression towards deviants, and submission to authority figures (Altemeyer, 1996). People high in RWA tend to be oversensitive to potential threats such as deviants and outgroups who are perceived to challenge their arrangement of society (Duckitt et al., 2002; Van Assche et al., 2019).

Left-wing authoritarianism (LWA) reflects the degree to which a person subscribes to highly left-wing viewpoints, is aggressive toward those who oppose their

values, and wishes to see the right-wing establishment overthrown (Van Hiel et al., 2006). Moreover, left-wing authoritarians seem to be just as punitive as right-wing authoritarians in terms of policies during the COVID-19 pandemic (Manson, 2020), and do vote for members of the Democratic party in the U.S. (Conway & McFarland, 2019). Given that populism, from either ends of the political spectrum, are often associated to far-left or far-right like authoritarianism, it is likely that these constructs are intertwined (Akkerman & Rooduijn, 2017; Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2023; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Moreover, the anti-pluralistic theme or populism might be tied to the authoritarian's focus on conformity and homogeneity (e.g., Feldman & Stenner, 1997). Both forms of populism may stem from rigid worldviews like believing meritocracy or having sense of predetermination (Costello et al., 2020; Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2022)

Need for a strong leader. Conforming to a perceived legitimate authority might be a tendency common to both populism and authoritarianism (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; see Son Hing et al., 2007). Broadly, populist voters support charismatic, but authoritarian strongmen (Homolar & Scholz, 2019; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). This may seem counterintuitive because populism seems to oppose authority. Specifically, Bakker et al. (2016) posited that the anti-establishment element of populism is diametrically opposed to the status quo whom authoritarians generally support. The same authors also argue that the general desire to conform to some perceived leader may make some populists authoritarian, but not in the favor of the status quo. Perhaps, populists may submit to anti-establishment charismatic strongmen who they hope will become the new establishment or at least challenge the elite and in doing so, assert the rights and dominance of the majority.

Socialism

Socialism is critical to left-wing populist movements because left-wing populism is focused on the proletariat – consistent with Marxism (March, 2007). There is a point of separation between left-wing populism and classical Marxism. Whereas the populist left emphasis an inclusionary anti-establishment mindset, expressing the will of people or Vox Populi, classical Marxists are not necessarily as focused on democratic mobilization (or even democracy for that matter) and are more concerned with ideological purity (see March, 2007).

In sum, nativism, authoritarianism, and socialism are often associated with populism. The populist right's identity and lens are focused on the exclusion of others based on immutable features (e.g., ethnicity), making them nativistic. In contrast, the populist's left identity and mindset is more class conscientious and less concerned with any form of purity (both the nativistic purity of the populist right and ideological purity of Marxism). Both features are likely linked to authoritarianism given that they stem from radical poles, and hold anti-pluralistic tendencies.

Sociological and cultural context of populism

The social context for populism also matters, which may involve a range of economic or cultural concerns and some event that triggers or exacerbates them. Populist attitudes can be considered a latent attitude that materializes or activities when there are pressing societal issues (Hawkins et al., 2020). For example, a populist upturn as well as the increased prevalence in populist attitudes can emerge because of the difficulties that segments of the population experience toward accepting changes in social values (e.g., multiculturalism), and adjusting to the economic calamities from modernization. As a

consequence, the members of the public no longer trust elite establishments. setting the stage for a populist movement (Betz, 1994; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Arguably, support for populism from either the right-wing or left-wing may be driven by the “losers” of globalization (Kriesi et al., 2006) who perceived injustice against oneself (Rothmund et al., 2020). In some sense, populism and populist attitudes can be considered a self-righteous response to a perceived injustice brought by the elite.

Interestingly, neoliberal economics drives much of the anti-elite beliefs.

Neoliberalism favors free markets, deregulation and the privatization of institutions and services (Harvey, 2005). Becker et al. (2021) conducted an experimental study in which the authors had respondents read that included neoliberal ideas (e.g., fewer government regulations on business, privatization of healthcare and education) or not (controls).

These authors found that exposure to neoliberal ideas increased levels of anti-elitism but did not increase prejudice toward immigrants. Moreover, the relationship between neoliberalism and anti-elitism was mediated by feelings of threat, unfairness, and hopelessness. Perhaps, neoliberal policies and ideas serve as a reminder of the growing social and economic issues populists are burdened by. It seems that economic grievances can amplify populist sentiments, but anti-immigration sentiments seem to emerge more directly from the globalization process, but not necessarily from other neoliberal ideas.

Both left-wing and right-wing populism can emerge from prevailing sociological/culture woes. Norris and Inglehart (2019) argued that the driving force behind the recent rise of populism, especially from the right-wing, is in part the demographic change in education (e.g., increased access of education to gender, and racial/ethnic minorities), diversity, and values which have undermined the “traditional” life. Right-wing populists

who perceived themselves to be abandoned by the changing norms may end up begrudging racial minority groups, immigrants, feminists and so forth, because they are discontent with their cultural identity, and uncomfortable with globalization and the establishment (Rensmann, 2017). Right-wingers tend to endorse populist ideas from a sense of cultural preservation (Jami, 2023).

The left-wing variant is unlikely to arise because of cultural issues from multiculturalism or globalization. Often, left-wing populism's inclusive conception of the people fosters a diverse coalition which can include women, members of the LGBTQIA community, and ethnic and religious minorities (March, 2017). Rather than emerging from cultural concerns, left-wing populist ideas emerge in the mainstream when austerity or other economic downturns occur (Stavrakakis & Katsambekis, 2014). Thus, left-wing populists focus more on a broader coalition, and desire economic equality and control such as stronger regulation on big businesses (Akkerman et al., 2017; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017).

Summary

Both variants of populism can have similar psychological tendencies because they share core populist features like anti-elitism. Because the elites are central to many conspiracies that populists are concerned for like globalization (Castanho Silva et al., 2017; Goertzel, 1994), I expect left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes to be linked to conspiratorial thinking.

The Manichaean dualism is also common among the two variants, creating an intense and moralized bifurcation between the people and the elite (e.g., Ditto & Rodriguez, 2021; Mudde, 2007; Roberts, 2022). This dualism may suggest that populists

of both types have a rather intense disdain/prejudice toward outgroups, and authoritarian tendencies – all of which are linked to some kind of black-white thinking (e.g., Feldman & Stenner, 1997; Jost et al., 2003a). Thus, I suspect that authoritarianism, and prejudice toward outgroups are linked to populist attitudes on both sides.

The link between populism and SDO could differ for the populist left and right. Anti-pluralism and majoritarianism are aspects of populism that could be linked to social dominance orientation for right-wing populists. Right-wing populists often exclude others from their ingroup and are generally nostalgic for a time when their group was on top of the social hierarchy (e.g., Betz, 1994; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Though the populist left can emphasize majoritarian ideas (e.g., Huber & Schimpf, 2017), their focus on egalitarianism (March, 2017) obscures its link to SDO. Thus, it is likely that SDO is certainly related to right-wing populism, but unclear for left-wing populism. Both also have a common associated tendency: authoritarianism which might stem from the fact that both populism and authoritarianism are features of the far-left and far-right and they both do demonstrate some form of anti-pluralism. The potential linkage between populism to authoritarianism might be driven by Manichaeian thinking as argued above.

Maladaptive traits should be common to both members of the populist left and right. They both have social or economic grievances (e.g., Oliver & Rahn, 2016) even though much of literature has focused on either general populist attitudes or the populist right. I predict that maladaptive characteristics: neuroticism, low well-being, low self-esteem, collective narcissism, unhappiness, and anomie are linked to both left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes.

There are also noteworthy patterns with regard to personality. Extraversion and

conscientiousness appear to be traits common to both forms of populism (Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020). Yet, left-wing and right-wing populists differ in the other characteristics. Vasilopoulos and Jost (2020) reported that support for left-wing populism was also linked to openness to experience, whereas support for right-wing populism was associated with agreeableness and neuroticism. At the same time, the interaction between far-right beliefs and low agreeableness predicted higher populist attitudes. Thus, Vasilopoulos and Jost revealed clear patterns with regard to extraversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience and neuroticism, which I expected to replicate with the two new populism inventories. Yet, the link between agreeableness and right-wing populist attitudes remains unclear and a matter to be explored in the present data.

The collective identities of populism can also lead to a difference. The populist right focuses on a cultural, but exclusionary identity which can make their form for national identity ethnocentric or ethnonationalist. Right-wing populism is generally associated with nativism – a focus on natives over those who were foreign born or whose ancestors are not indigenous (Young et al., 2019). In contrast, the populist left has an inclusive identity based on economic terms which might mean that the populist left should have a more multicultural or “civic” view on national identity. Left-wing populism is also typically linked to socialism for its Marxist conception of the proletariat (March, 2017). Both forms of populism and populist attitude can emerge from social or economic concerns, which is usually a product of neoliberal economics. Despite being a response to the same phenomenon, these two variants have different objectives with the populist left focused more on economics and the populist right focused on cultural issues.

See Table 1 for a summary of social psychological characteristics of both right-

wing and left-wing populism. The two types of populism are anticipated to have several areas of overlap such as conspiracy beliefs, authoritarianism, prejudice toward outgroups, collective narcissism, maladaptive characteristics (low self-esteem, low life satisfaction, low happiness, anomie). Left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes are expected to differ in terms of nativism, ethnonationalism, civic or inclusion nationalism, and some personality traits.

Chapter 5: Predicted factor structure and research overview

The goal of this chapter is to outline this dissertation's studies. In so doing so, I briefly discuss what others in the literature have done, my approach on item development, and the anticipated factor structure of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes.

Several authors have designed their own version of populist attitudes, leading to developed scales with different facets and dimensions. Many of these authors reported typical statistical techniques used in the social sciences like principal component analysis or factor analysis to justify their models. Sometimes authors combined their own items with those by other authors. Some scholars reported the reliability of their scale and subscales whereas others do not. Most contributors to this literature do not report the positive evidence for unidimensionality of their scales (e.g., the omega coefficient; Hayes & Coutts, 2020) or multidimensionality. Only for the Schulz et al. (2018) scale is there evidence for better fit with a three-factor model over a singular model (Wettstein et al., 2020). Aside from the work conducted by Castanho Silva et al. (2020) and Wettstein et al. (2020), rarely are scales checked for cross-national equivalence and validation. And even then, studies generally lack more comprehensive tests for validity and cross-validation such as scalar invariance (see Jungkunz et al., 2021; also see Van Hauwaert et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, items in these populism scales do provide a starting point. Rather than reinventing a new set of items, I decided to *modify* these inventories to suit the needs of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. These items are “context-poor” for they do not include the thick ideology that breathes populism into existence. Yet, they can be

adjusted to include a thick ideology – in this case, the left-right political spectrum. Thus, two new scales can be developed from existing items: one with items modified to account for the economic context of populism (left-wing) and another with items altered to consider the cultural context (right-wing).

This approach to scale development is known as *parallel construction* which has been utilized by others in developing scales for authoritarianism. Conway and colleagues (2018) took a measure of right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) and changed keywords in that scale to fit a left-wing context. For instance, items that emphasized a strong traditional leader from the RWA scale were changed to items that signified a mighty liberal leader for the left-wing authoritarianism (LWA) scale. This has helped realize LWA as a measurable concept, and has performed better than some existing conceptions of left-wing authoritarianism (e.g., Altemeyer, 1996; Van Hiel et al., 2006). The Conway et al. (2018) LWA scale did not have floor effects (see Altemeyer, 1996) nor was it only applicable to those who hold extreme left-wing views (see Van Hiel et al., 2006). Though there is a new measure of LWA developed by Costello et al. (2022), there is nothing about this inventory performing better than the Conway et al. (2018). However, the Conway et al. (2018) scale is clearly more economical in terms of scale development over the Costello et al. (2022) approach which designed items from scratch instead of modifying existing measures despite having no noticeable advantages.

In order to realize measures of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes, I used the parallel construction approach to take context-poor items and transform them with left-right context in mind. One important note for the parallel construction approach is that it serves as *starting point* for scale construction, not necessarily as an end goal to

have completely parallel scales. Conway et al. (2018) began with Altemeyer's (1998) 30-item measure for RWA, and constructed LWA items based on those RWA items. At the end of scale development, Conway et al.'s (2018) LWA scale contained only 20 items as opposed to 30 items. Thus, parallel construction provides a starting point for right-wing and left-wing populist attitudes, but the degree of parallel items does not need to be exact. Both left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes are likely to be multidimensional constructs. Castanho Silva et al. (2020) argued that even unidimensional scales cover multiple concepts and if those unidimensional scales contained more items, those scales would likely be multidimensional. Others like Van Hauwaert et al. (2020), Spruyt et al. (2016), and Wuttke et al. (2020) also posit that populist attitudes have multiple necessary components. Take the Akkerman et al. (2014) scale; though it has six items, many are double-barreled, tapping more than one aspect of populism (Wuttke et al., 2020). It could be the case that many of the shorter scales, like the Akkerman et al. (2014) scale, do not focus on the precise dimensionality and instead have the goal of measuring a concept with the fewest items possible. This also seems to be the case in the literature on the measurement of RWA and LWA in which many of the shorter scales take a subset of RWA items as opposed to systematically measuring each dimension (see Bizumic & Duckitt, 2018) or not concerning dimensionality but ensuring it functions, like it in its predictive power, similarly to a more in-depth scale (Conway et al., 2023). In other words, complex constructs like populism or authoritarianism are likely multidimensional, and it is a matter of fleshing out each dimension unless a short scale is absolutely necessary in some situations (e.g., to avoid response fatigue).

In a comprehensive summary of seven populism inventories, Castanho Silva et al.

(2020) found that most populism scales include items that tap three themes: people-centrism, anti-elitism, and anti-pluralism. People-centrism combines the glorification or romanticization of the people and popular sovereignty (Castanho Silva et al., 2018). In this theme, some items emphasize the positive characteristics of the people (e.g., honesty) whereas other items focus on the people having more say in political decisions. Anti-elitism emphasizes opposition toward the government and elected officials, but it can include other elites such as big business. Other scales have treated “experts” or “academics” as elites, though they are likely to be only considered an elite group through the lens of right-wing populists. Finally, anti-pluralism is generally measured by dividing people into good and evil, majoritarianism, or by national identity (Castanho Silva et al., 2018; Hobolt et al., 2016; Oliver & Rahn, 2016). Those who oppose pluralism might also view compromise as selling out on one’s principles (Akkerman et al., 2014). Thus, it seems that anti-pluralism includes elements of populism that disregards or expresses direct opposition to anything that could make politics more diverse. These themes of populism above were used as a starting point for both right-wing and left-wing populism scales.

Right-wing populism scale

Items in this scale focused on the notion of the people as “True [nationality]” – an identity common to right-wing populists who feel socially threatened and one that is often utilized by Donald Trump (e.g., Schertzer & Woods, 2021). Often, right-wing populist rhetoric juxtaposes indigenous or native people with the cultural elite (March, 2017). Thus, items utilized “True Americans,” as the populist identity in these items. Anti-elitism focused on cultural elites like bureaucrats, technocrats, experts, and academics. For anti-pluralism, items emphasized the division of people and lack of

recognition for other viewpoints, and majoritarianism in the context of cultural issues. Finally, the people-centrism facet can be described as the idea of “True [nationality]” having the most political power (see Figure 1).

Left-wing populism scale

Left-wing populism often supports the working-class against those who are seen as being in charge of the economy such as bankers and big business (Akkerman et al., 2017; March, 2017). Even when left-wing populist movements may occasionally have a cultural component to it, they all tend to focus on economics primarily (see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013).⁵ Left-wing populism should have the same factor structure as right-wing populism except the content emphasizes economic concerns rather than cultural issues. Anti-elitism focused on economic elites like bankers, the rich and affluent, and corporations. For anti-pluralism, items emphasized the division of people and lack of recognition for other viewpoints, and majoritarianism in the context of economic issues. Finally, the people-centrism facet can be described as the idea of the working class having the most political power (see Figure 2).

Putting it all together

Before I designed these scales, I sought to conduct two exploratory assessments. First, the heart of populism and populist attitudes begins with an opposition to the elite (Laclau, 2005; Mansbridge & Macedo, 2019). The populist left recognizes an economic elite whereas the populist right perceives a culture elite; both are aware of the political elite. Notwithstanding that there might be overlap, one can distinguish between an

⁵Two examples of ethnopopulism can be found in Latina America: Evo Morales and Hugo Chavez.

economic elite, cultural elite and a political elite.⁶ Yet, populism scales almost exclusively focus on the political elite. Thus, in the first exploratory study (Study 1), I asked respondents to indicate which elites they recognize, as a means to determine if non-political elites are just as salient.

Second, the existing scales in literature make a suitable starting point for left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. Though Castanho Silva et al. (2020) made an important observation regarding the three themes, they did not empirically test whether these themes will materialize from those seven scales through a statistical technique like factor analysis. The second exploratory assessment (Study 2) provides two goals: (1) to narrow down items and (2) confirm the precise dimensionality of those three themes – anti-elitism, anti-pluralism, and people-centrism. By the end of Study 2, I should have key terms for the left-right political context (Study 1) and the best set of items from the existing literature (Study 2). Next, I integrated the left-right political context onto populism scales using the parallel construction approach to create measures for left-wing and right-wing attitudes in Study 3 (see Conway et al., 2018). The last three studies are confirmatory assessments of dimensionality for these two news scales (Studies 3-5), predictive validity (Study 3 and 5), and theoretical validity – confirming the nomological net (Study 4 and Study 5). The next section provides the technical details for each study.

The present research

Study 1 utilized qualitative data in determining the types of elites that people perceive with thematic analysis with American data collected via Amazon's Mechanical

⁶ An example of this can be seen with euroscepticism with the European Union (EU; see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). Whereas the right-wing criticizes the EU for their immigration stances the left-wing believes the EU is responsible for economic struggles of the working class.

Turk (MTurk). Anti-elitism is the most agreed upon aspect of populist attitudes (Castanho Silva et al., 2020), and is central to any form of populist thinking, as without elites, populists would not have a formidable oppositional group to rally against (cf. Laclau, 2005). I hypothesize that for the populist left, the economic elite is more likely to be salient whereas for the populist right the cultural elite is more likely to be recognized. I also expect that both will certainly acknowledge the political elite as well. The goals of this study were to determine whether elites are perceived in the domains of politics, economy and culture, consistent with left-wing and right-wing populist rhetoric, respectively.

Study 2 deployed a survey via MTurk and had several objectives. I started with item compilation and exploratory assessment to narrow the existing scales in literature, and then identified the dimensionality of anti-elitism, anti-pluralism, and people-centrism. Study 2 included items from an exhaustive list of scales from existing research – most of the scales described in Chapter.

Study 3 started off with item generation for left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. Specifically, I engaged in parallel construction of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes by changing terms. For instance, terms like “members of congress” were changed to “scientist and academics” to fit the right-wing context or changed to “business professionals and bankers” to fit the left-wing context. I next confirmed the left-wing and right-wing populism factors, and tested the predictive validity of these two new scales using real-world outcomes like the examination of different group evaluations (assessments of a range of groups like immigrants, law enforcement, and Muslims), trust in various political institutions, future activism, and perceived integrity of U.S.

democracy. I also examined whether the proposed three-factor model for both left-wing and right-wing fits better than a one-factor model for left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. This evaluates whether these two forms of populist attitudes fit better with the hypothesized three dimensions or with one dimension. Finally, the last test of Study 3 is an examination of whether two forms of populist attitudes are better than a singular conception of populist attitudes. Study 3 also utilized U.S. data collected via MTurk.

Study 4 entailed another confirmatory analysis, and a focus on expanding the nomological net for these two populist attitude scales with another U.S. MTurk Sample. More specifically, Study 4 tested the link between these two populism scales to many social psychological processes such as the ones mentioned in the literature review (e.g., authoritarianism, nativism, collective narcissism). Moreover, Study 4 also determines if both left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes are better understood with three factors or a single factor, and if these two forms of populist attitudes are better than a singular conceptualization – similar to the analyses done in Study 3.

The goal of Study 5 was to test the replicability of these scales and their invariance across various national contexts. Populism has occurred in many democracies; thus, data collection focused on the U.S., Australia, and Canada. A subset of outcome variables – both real-world outcomes and theoretically relevant variables similar to Study 3 and 4 were used again. Not only was measurement emphasized but also the generalizability/cross-validation of the outcome variables and nomological net were tested. The final study also included a test regarding a hypothesized two-factor model of right-wing and left-wing populist attitudes versus a model of a single higher-order populist attitudes.

Chapter 6: Study 1

Study 1 is an exploratory assessment that examined who laypeople think of when they are being asked to name the elite. If different kinds of elites are salient to individuals on the political left and the political right, we can expect there to be differences in who they assume to be the elite. The observed differences will then inform the construction of parallel populism scales. Especially, any items or subscales pertaining to anti-elitism might focus on different groups — namely those that are most salient to individuals on the left and right. At the same time, one must expect there to be considerable overlap in who is being seen as the elite, especially as far as government is concerned. All existing scales have overwhelmingly focused on the political elite; yet they fail to recognize different forms of populism. Though anti-elitism is but one facet of populist attitudes, it is the most common aspect (Castanho Silva et al., 2018), the basis for any instance of populism to emerge (cf. Laclau, 2005) and the dualism between the people and the elite is at core of any definition of populism (Mansbridge & Macedo, 2019). Thus, determining who people view as the elite can elucidate different instances of populism. For this study, I recruited participants from Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk) because these respondents were more diverse (generalizable) and attentive than college students and are better at passing attention checks and completing the survey than other paid services like a USA consumer panel (e.g., Hauser & Schwarz, 2016; Zhang & Gearhart, 2020).

Method

Participants

A total of 111 respondents (40% female) were collected from Amazon’s MTurk. To ensure a high level of data quality, during data collection I removed all participants

who only completed part of the survey, had duplicate IP addresses, were not located in the US, or could not name their favorite movie (bots cannot answer this particular question). I also asked respondents for their birth year twice, once at the beginning and another at the end of survey. Those who reported different birth years were excluded. Based these ongoing quality checks during data collection, a total of 495 respondents were removed. Each respondent whose data were considered acceptable received \$0.75 for their participation. The median birth year for this set of respondents was 1988 (min = 1955, max = 1999) which at the time of this study (2022) indicates that the median age of respondents was 34. Most respondents were White (84.7%), followed by Black (7.2%), and all other groups (8.1%). Finally, respondents on average viewed themselves as moderates on a 1 (liberal) to 5 (conservative) scale ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 1.39$). About 77% of respondents hold a college degree or an advanced degree.

Procedure and materials

The survey was hosted on Qualtrics® which asked respondents who they viewed as the “elite” in an open-ended format. Participants were asked, “Today, there is a lot of talk of “elites.” We are interested in understanding who this is. In your own words, who are the elite? What types of people are they? You must list at least 3 examples. You may list up to 6 examples.” The part of the instruction that required participants to list multiple examples was an attempt to “probe” respondents – with the expectation that this could spur their thinking. Finally, basic demographic items (race/ethnicity, birth year, gender) as well as a 1 (liberal) to 5 (conservative) scale were collected at the end. All qualitative data were stored in a document which I analyzed via Qualcoder 3.1 (Curtain, n.d.) – an open-source software for qualitative data analysis similar to other qualitative data

analysis software like NVivo.

Analytical Framework

I used thematic analysis to find themes in respondent's view of the elite. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that can answer epistemologies and research questions (see Nowell et al., 2017). Moreover, this approach emphasizes the identification and analyses of themes found within a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The first step is to read through all relevant responses in the dataset before coding. I coded the data via the blended approach with a combination of the inductive and deductive approaches. Specifically, I developed codes based on theory (deductive), and detected themes as they emerged in the dataset (inductive; Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). The expectation was that there would be economic elites (the main focus of the populist left) and cultural elites, (the main focus of the populist right), and political elites (opposed by both left and right) perceived by respondents (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 11). However, I expected some elites to overlap and belong in multiple categories. Populism from either ends of the political spectrum can oppose the same elite but for different reasons like a CEO of a big tech company can be considered a cultural elite for the populist right for being "experts" (e.g., Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016), but an economic elite for the populist left for belonging to "big business" (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2017). In short, text was coded and organized by the type of elite (cultural, economic, political or hybrid). After coding, I searched for themes – a unifying element that brings codes together (Aronson, 1994). These codes and themes were then double-checked by another researcher.

Results

On average, participants reported 3.67 elites. About 34% of respondents reported

more than the three mandatory elites, and approximately 14% of them indicated six elites. The most common type of elite identified was members of the economic elite (165), followed by the cultural elite (143), then the political elite (99), and the “other elite” which consisted of largely vague references to power and influence (49). Note that some elite, as mentioned above, can fit into multiple categories.

In terms of cultural elite, respondents mentioned a range of different groups. Consistent with the literature (e.g., Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Oliver & Rahn, 2016), the cultural elite coding indicates experts in various areas like professors (3), teachers (3), scientists (2), lawyers (2), doctors (2), technocrats (1), as well those who are a part of the media (6). More specific examples in this theme included,

- “College Administrators,”
- “They are people viewed by the society to be enlightened,” (*sic*)
- “People who go to expensive colleges,”
- “Tech workers. The west coast liberal type,”
- “The educated people,”
- “Stephen Hawkings,”
- “Professors at top universities: Harvard, Yale, etc.,” (*sic*)
- “The second group of elites i think of are people that control media and things that we consume”. (*sic*)
- “Elites are people with vast knowledge of the contemporary world.”
- “I would consider anybody that is really good at what they do and in a field that takes a lot of training. Scientists, lawyers or experts of some kind.”
- “Scientists with international reputations.”
- “The over-educated (i.e., people with multiple degrees).”
- “People who to go ivy league schools.”

The-cultural elite also included those in areas of entertainment like celebrities (8), athletes (4), actors (4). While unclear how relevant these subgroups are to populist attitudes, these findings demonstrated that none of these perceived elite groups are a monolith.

Notions around the economic elite were detected with terms like billionaires (10), CEOs (7), Warren Buffet (4), and bankers (3), companies (3) as well as broad descriptors like wealth/y (19), rich (17) which could describe the economic elite (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2017; Engesser et al., 2017).

“They are a small group of powerful people who hold a disproportionate amount of wealth.”
 “The multimillionaires of the world with most of the cash flow.”
 “A group of people that are holding massive amounts of environmental wealth.” (*sic*)
 “The 1%, very rich people.”
 “The elite are people with privilege who have a lot of money.” (*sic*)
 “The people at the top of the food chain in the stock market.”
 “They are the 1%'ers and making money is all that matters to them.”
 “Rich people, like the top 1% are the elites because they can buy their way in or out of anything.”
 “CEOs of fortune 500 companies.”
 “Major corporate owners.”
 “People who are members of the uppermost class of society.”
 “Bankers and large institutional investment leaders.”
 “The banking cartel.”

The political elite also emerged in this exploratory study with the prominent descriptors being politicians (23), political (10), government (7), senators (5), Joe Biden (5), president (4), congress (3), and Trump (2).

“National political figures: Senators, Congresspeople, President.”
 “Politicians are the elites because they can get away with anything they want.”
 “They are the people who rule the world, like politicians.”
 “The first group of elites i think of are people that control the government.” (*sic*)
 “Those with political power.”
 “The politicians who are in charge of the law and in office.”
 “The president is an example, he belongs to an elite group of politicians.” (*sic*)
 “The elite are in the top ranks of Washington D.C., like the group of senators and representatives who have the most influence.”

“Government elites who control the principle institutions in the United States and whose opinions and actions influence the decisions of the policymakers.” (sic)

“Government careerists in bureaucracy.”

“Government Officials in High Positions (Example: president, senators, Supreme Court judges, etc.)”

Though not as prominent as the three above, a hybrid theme has emerged, i.e., elites who can be both a part of the culture and economics like Bill Gates (14), Elon Musk (11), Jeff Bezos (8) or Mark Zuckerberg (4).⁷ These individuals occupy roles in media, tech and culture. For instance, Jeff Bezos owns Amazon which yields significant cultural and economic influence. Jeff Bezos can be considered a cultural elite, as he is an expert/technocrat and also an economic elite because of the wealth Amazon produces. And these pairing of economics and culture can also be displayed based on a simultaneous focus on both status and wealth.

“Wealthy urbanites.”

“Elon Musk is an example of the elite. He is one of the richest people in the world. He seems to be very haughty. He developed the electric car Tesla, so he has influenced humanity in terms of technology and progression. He gives the impression of wielding a lot of power and influence.”

“Zuckerberg founder of Facebook and other social network runs.”

“CEOs of social media companies (facebook, twitter, instagram, youtube).”

“Bill Gates, chair the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the world's largest private charitable foundation and founder of microsoft.”

“Oprah Winfrey is an example of someone who is elite but they are mostly benevolent and altruistic versus power-hungry. She has amassed a huge amount of money, but she does certain things such as build schools in Africa in order to do good in the world.”

“The people who have the most wealth and status in the society.”

“They are people of wealth and status.”

“Elon Musk founder of Tesla and SpaceX.”

⁷ All four individuals mentioned above can be considered cultural and economic elite, as their companies are a part of big business and have an impact on culture. Bill Gates is the former CEO and co-founder of Microsoft, Elon Musk is the CEO of SpaceX and Tesla, and CTO of Twitter, Jeff Bezos is the founder and CEO of Amazon, and Mark Zuckerberg is the co-founder of Meta Platforms (formerly Facebook).

There is limited evidence regarding other hybrid elites like those belonging to the cultural-political elite (12), economic-political elite (8), and the elite who can fall into all three categories (5). Though these hybrid categories are limited, they do show that members of the elite do not necessarily have to belong to a single category.

The cultural-political elite involved taking sides in the U.S. “culture war” (e.g., Jacoby, 2014; see also Carney et al., 2008).

“I guess rednecks would consider people like the Clinton's the elite. Although their boy Shitstain is one too.” (*sic*)
 “Politically well-connected families, like the Kennedys”
 “Democrats”
 “The Biden family”
 “Trump inner circle”
 “The Clinton family”
 “Barack Obama, a Black President.”
 “Washinton DC people” (*sic*)

The economic-political elite was a small category, but the theme that emerged is the economic forces that have influence on the political stage like specific historically powerful families or more broadly “oligarchs.”

“Legacy families, like the Rockefeller.”
 “The Rothschild family.”
 “There the rich people in America that have influence on politicians.” (*sic*)
 “I would think about military industrialist elites.”
 “Oligarchs, including Koch brothers.”

The last theme represents statements that could be described as all of the above either generally, or with specific cases.

“GLOBAL ELITES.”
 “United nations.”
 “Donald Trump is another example of the elite. He is also rich, but even when he loses all of his money and goes bankrupt, his influence and

clout as an elite person can somehow get him out of such difficulties unscathed. He seems to get away with skirting the law because of his clout, such as with his taxes and with shady endeavors. He audaciously decorates his apartment in garish gold so that he can give the impression of being special and superior. (*sic*)

“The most powerful, rich or talented people with in a particular group.” (*sic*)

Finally, an “other elite” category did emerge, but was largely unspecific in who respondents may have referred to.

“People who have control over at least 1000 people or more.” (*sic*)

“A secret society of people who have an influence on the world.”

“ELITES ARE THOSE WHO HAVE VASTLY DISPROPORTIONATE ACCESS TO OR CONTROL A SOCIAL RESOURCES.” (*sic*)

“small group of powerful people.”

“They have significant influence, they can make things happen on a wide scale”

“I think about the people of every different generation's grip on national power and the military but segmented to firm government and increasing communist or democratic outputs.” (*sic*)

Politicians leanings and types of elites

I correlated the people’s self-placement on the left-right political spectrum (higher means greater right-wing identification) with the number of elites people have described. Those who placed themselves as left of center mentioned more economic elites (including hybrid elites) in general, $r = -0.233$, $p = .014$. Unexpectedly, people who viewed themselves as right of center did not report more cultural elites (not including those deemed theoretically irrelevant), $r = .105$, $p = .27$. As expect there was virtually no link between ideological self-placement and the number of political elites reported, $r = -.026$, $p = .79$.

Discussion

Study 1 showed that individuals from a U.S. convenience sample do have views

of the elites that clearly extends beyond politics, namely in economics and culture. Moreover, hybrid identities have emerged, mostly for cultural-economic elites and cultural-political elites, and less reliably for other cleavages (e.g., political-economic elite). The most commonly mentioned elite tended to be those pertaining to economics, followed by elites in the fields of culture and finally of politics. Arguably, the elite in the domains of economics or culture are more salient than those in the realms of politics, at least based on the frequency of the types of elites mentioned in this study. Because the instructions did not specify which elite subtypes participants should consider, these instructions were unlikely to prime or orient individuals toward any particular elite. This is important to note as most populism scales almost exclusively emphasize the political elite, and rarely try to gauge respondents' attitudes toward other elite. This may also suggest that scales have been targeting the least salient of the three types of elites which is consistent with the argument made by Jungkunz et al. (2021) that current scales contextualize "the elite" to mean "politicians," failing to capture attitudes toward, "non-political elites" like, journalists, academics/experts, bureaucrats, and corporate business leaders.

This study also provides justification for the development of right-wing and left-wing populism scales, as these two variants of populism are often antagonistic toward the cultural and economic elite, respectively (e.g., Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013). The correlational analysis also showed that left-wingers identified the economic elite. Unexpectedly, right-wingers did not identify more members of the cultural elite. Consistent with expectations, there was no link between the identification of political elite to the left-right political spectrum.

In terms of cultural elite, a major theme on academics and experts was found which included people like professors, college administrators, “people who go to expensive colleges,” and even those who have jobs that require higher education like tech workers, doctors and lawyers (cf. Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Another theme emerged with this coding, namely famous people with a focus on celebrities as well as actors and athletes. However, this theme is unlikely to be relevant to the cultural elite that populists rally against, as they do not relate to cultural issues, like immigration issues, the populist right rally against.

The economic elite theme largely consisted of those who have enormous capital. The theme varied with specific references like Fortune 500 CEOs, banks, major corporate owners, and members of the “1%” to generic references of those who have wealth and capital. These economic elite are likely the opposition to the worker focused populist left (March, 2017). Finally, the political elite theme focused on political actors, also varied in specificity, as some respondents focused on specific roles like policymakers and senators, whereas other respondents indicated broadly those with political power.

A limitation to this study is the qualitative nature of data analysis, as these results are subjective. At the same time, however, the coding was theoretically guided, and an additional researcher also examined the data. Moreover, they confirmed ideas consistent with left-wing and right-wing populist notions (cf., March, 2017; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). The online nature of this study may have presented another limitation, as I was unable to probe and extract greater detail and clarification from respondents. Yet, the results did demonstrate a broad pattern consistent with the literature and my predictions.

Importantly, this study established context for these two new populism scales, focusing on economic and culture, respectively. The economic theme demonstrated the salience of those with serious economic power like Fortune 500 CEOs, bankers or the 1%. The cultural theme showed that academics, experts, and others who hold some influence on society are viewed as the elite. Both scales will still contain items concerning politics, as that is a commonality between left-wing and right-wing populism (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2017).

Chapter 7: Study 2

Study 2 has several goals. The first goal is to determine the dimensionality of the three themes of populist attitudes: anti-pluralism, anti-elitism, people-centrism (see Castanho Silva et al., 2020). In doing so, items can be clearly attributed to one of the three themes. Though these three themes have been a part of various scales, to date there has yet to be a deliberate attempt to identify these three as dimensions empirically. The second goal is to identify items that can be modified with only a small change to fit the right-wing and left-wing populist context. For Study 2, I included all items from the Akkerman et al. (2014), Schulz et al. (2018), Castanho Silva et al. (2018), Oliver and Rahn (2016), Hobolt et al. (2016), Stanley (2011), and Elchardus and Spruyt (2016) scales. I did not use the items from Hawkins et al. (2012) because of their overlap with the Akkerman et al. (2014) scale. Similarly, I did not rely on the Roccato et al. (2019) scale because of the forced-choice nature of their items could not be easily translated to a Likert-type response format and because their theoretical focus was unclear. See Table 2 for all items used in this study.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited via MTurk in exchange for a modest financial reward of \$1.50; only those from the United States were eligible to participate. To tackle data quality with MTurk samples, stringent data exclusion criteria were utilized. Respondents who completed fewer than 50% of the survey items, had duplicate entries, were outside of the U.S. (based on IP address), failed more than one attention check were removed from analysis (e.g., Chmielewski & Kucker, 2020; Kennedy et al., 2020). Study 2

deployed four items for attention check, one of which requested respondents to, “Leave this item blank,” and another item had them select the choice, “Please select ‘Strongly disagree.’” The third attention check indicated to respondents to ignore the item and click on a blue ball which was the following item. And the last attention check required respondents to write a single sentence on what they thought the study was about. A total of 209 respondents were removed in this study because they failed at least one of the criteria above.

For exploratory factor analysis, appropriate sample size was based on the strength of the commonalities – the amount of a variable’s variance explained by the factor it loads on (Hair et al., 2014). That is, sufficient power can be achieved with a sample size of at least 200 if the commonalities are between .40-.70. I acquired a sample of 230 with an assumption that most commonalities will be around .40 to .70. The data contained a slight male majority (53%) with most respondents being around the age (in years) of 25-34 (38.7%) or 35-44 (27.0%). About 7% of the participants were below 25 years of age, and another 27% of respondents were 45 years or older. Most respondents were White (82.6%), followed by Black (7.8%), and all other groups (9.6%). Finally, respondents generally viewed themselves as moderates on a 1 (liberal) to 5 (conservative) scale ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 1.59$).

Procedure and materials

The survey was hosted on Qualtrics®. Respondents answered to the consent form, and proceeded to report demographic data: gender (male, female, and other), age (numeric), left-right views (“How would you place your political views on this scale, generally speaking?” anchored from 1 Left to 5 Right), marital status (single, married,

separated, divorced, widowed), religious attendance frequency (1 Never to 5 Always), race/ethnicity (White/European American, Asian/native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx and other), and education (1 Did not complete high school to 5 Advanced graduate work). All respondents were given existing populism scales though the order of the scales was randomized for each respondent. All populism items (61 items in total across all seven scales) were anchored on a 1 strongly disagree to 7 strongly agree Likert Scale. At the end of the survey, participants were thanked and paid for taking the survey. I used R to conduct all analyses.

Analytical framework

For exploratory factor analysis (EFA), I deployed the minimum average partial (MAP) and parallel analysis, very simple structure (VSS), and the eigenvalues > 1 heuristic (Hair et al., 2014; Revelle & Rocklin, 1979; Zwick & Velicer, 1986). MAP is a test for detecting the number of components based on the lowest average squared partial correlations. Parallel analysis determines the number of factors to keep based on the comparison of observed versus random data. VSS is a test on how well the factor matrix fits the correlation matrix, testing the utility of the correlation matrix when seeking factor solutions. MAP, parallel analysis, and VSS were utilized in addition to the eigenvalues > 1 rule of thumb to extract factors because eigenvalues can over-estimate the number of factors (Ruscio & Roche, 2012).

Items with a minimum loading of .40, were retained if the second highest loading did not exceed half of their biggest loading across all factors. I choose .40 as cut-off because it can be considered “minimally acceptable” in assessing factor structure, and because a factor loading of .40 indicates that 16% of the variance of the item is accounted

for by the factor (see Hair et al., 2014). My decision to use .40 as a cut-off was because I believe the explanation of 16% of the variance in an item is non-trivial. Another requirement for retaining items for a particular target factor was that the items had to be theoretically relevant. This additional criterion was introduced because of the heterogeneity in the content across existing populism scales (see Chapter 3).

Results

Exploratory factor analysis

With less than two percent of the data missing, I used hot-deck imputation to impute scores for respondents. Both MAP and parallel analysis revealed that five factors could be extracted, though VSS indicated 3 factors, and the eigenvalues > 1 rule of thumb suggested 4 factors (see Figure 3). I examined the five factors with EFA with Principal Axis Factoring and a Promax rotation in R using the *Psych* package (Revelle, 2010). I used the Promax rotation to allow factors to correlate.

However, the fifth factor was rather incoherent in terms of loadings and difficult to interpret. The fifth factor, accounting for only 3% of the overall variance, contained only two suitable items based on the inclusion criteria (both items from the Castanho Silva et al. scale: “Government officials use their power to try to improve people’s lives” and “Quite a few of the people running the government are crooked”). The factor is incoherent empirically as both items loaded in the same direction despite the fact that the first item was intended to be reverse-coded (see Castanho Silva et al., 2018).

In a second modeling attempt I restricted my EFA model to four factors. See Table 3 for detailed EFA results. The first factor, making up 20% of the variance, seemed to capture various aspects of anti-pluralism, as it contains items that emphasize

Manichaeian thinking, majoritarianism, homogeneity of social groups, and the lack of acknowledgement for diversity or complexity. For example, the item, “You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics,” indicates this dualistic thinking between good versus evil. The items, “Although Americans are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same,” and “Ordinary people all pull together” emphasize homogeneity, and items like, “People who have studied for a long time and have many diplomas do not really know what makes the world go round,” and “I’d rather put my trust in the wisdom of ordinary people than the opinions of experts and intellectuals” seem to tap the lack of recognition for different ideas.

Surprisingly, the first factor also seemed to contain items that resemble pro-elite and pro-establishment sentiments. Items (five total) like “most politicians are trustworthy,” “Ordinary people are unable to make the correct decisions about the future of our country,” and “People at the top usually get there because they have more talent and work harder” are not theoretically consistent with populism because they are antagonistic to anti-elitist ideas and are loading positively on the anti-pluralism factor instead negatively. I decided to remove these five items from further consideration.

The second factor, accounting for 13% of the variance, resembles anti-elitism, containing items that represent cynical assessments of government officials with items like, “Politicians are the main problem in the United States,” “Corruption such as bribe taking is widespread among politicians in the United States,” and “The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.” Also, anti-elitism holds items that describe one’s powerlessness and alienation with regards to the political process such as, “People like me don’t have much say in what government does,” “The

system is stacked against people like me,” and “Members of Congress very quickly lose touch with ordinary people.”

The third factor, accounted for 7% of the variance, seems to indicate people-centrism, as it focuses on the will of people. This sub-scale is the most straight forward with all items containing themes around the will of the people such as, “The people, not the politicians, should make our most important policy decisions,” and “The people should be asked whenever important decisions are taken.”

Inspection of the fourth factor revealed it to be not relevant to the three themes of populist attitudes; rather, it seemed to be a measure of elitism and pluralism and explained 4% of the variance. The two items loaded on this factor were, “Ordinary people can really use the help of experts to understand complicated things like science and health,” and “Democracy is about finding compromise between different interests and opinions.” Due to theoretical irrelevancy to the themes argued by Castanho Silva et al. (2020), I did not retain this factor. More specifically, populists are not pluralistic nor compromising theoretically (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017) and these items did not load on the anti-pluralism factor as reversible items. Ultimately, I decided to keep the first three factors and only a subset of items that are theoretically consistent along with the remove of items that represent trust in government found in the anti-pluralism factor (Castanho Silva et al., 2020).

Psychometrics

The measure of anti-pluralism consisted of seven items with good reliability ($\alpha = .87$) and unidimensionality ($\omega = .74$). The 15-item anti-elitism scales also posed substantial reliability ($\alpha = .88$) and decent unidimensionality ($\omega = .68$). And the six-item

assessment of people-centrism mirrored the results of the other two facets ($\alpha = .80$; $\omega = .71$). The correlations of the scales varied. Anti-pluralism was moderately linked to anti-elitism ($r = .34$) and more modestly to people-centrism ($r = .20$). The association between anti-elitism and people-centrism was strong ($r = .46$). All coefficients were statistically significant at $p < .01$.

Discussion

Study 2 provided a starting basis for the items that were used to measure left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. These items were modified to fit the left-right context. Based on the EFA results, I argue that the names of three factors should be: anti-pluralism, anti-elitism, and people-centrism consistent with the summary of populism scales as indicated by Castanho Silva et al. (2020). Thus, each theme has its own dimension. Consistent with others in the literature (e.g., Castanho Silva et al., 2018; Oliver & Rahn, 2016; Schulz et al., 2018), I was able to generate a model that mapped on the three dimensions outlined by Castanho Silva et al. (2020).

The anti-pluralism dimension is unlike the dimensions that others have detected. I showed that various dimensions/facets from different authors could be combined into a single factor⁸. For example, the Castanho Silva et al. (2018) scale has a dimension for Manicheanism and the Schulz et al. (2018) scale has a dimension for the homogeneity of the people. In the anti-pluralism factor, Manicheanism and homogeneity of the people are each a single “ingredient.” Unlike these two factors, the anti-pluralism dimension also holds items that assess majoritarianism consistent with Stanley (2011) and Hobolt et al.’s

⁸ The term “dimension” or “factor” represents a latent, higher-order or underlying construct that is observed through a set of items. The term “facet,” describes some content of a scale such as an item or two that represents as unique aspect of populist attitudes, but is not an underlying or higher-order construct

(2016) conception of populist attitudes. Interestingly, this scale did not capture all forms of anti-pluralism. The Oliver and Rahn (2016) scale contained the national affiliation dimension as a form of anti-pluralism, but none of the items were retained.

The anti-elitism factor is consistent with the literature (Castanho Silva et al., 2020). This factor emphasizes two facets: a cynical view of the status quo and government, and the helplessness and estrangement one may perceive with regards to the political process. This particular dimension and its two facets were tapped by other scholars' scales. For instance, the Schulz et al. (2018) and Hobolt et al. (2016) scales both have items that assess a pessimistic view of the government, and the powerlessness populists feel when they think about politics. Other scales like ones designed by Akkerman et al. (2014) and Castanho Silva et al. (2018) only tapped the cynical assessment of government facet of anti-elitism. The Oliver and Rahn (2016) scale seems to only tap the powerlessness in the political process facet of anti-elitism.

The people-centrism factor captures the idea of *volonté générale*, as all items emphasize the people's say in politics consistent with Akkerman et al. (2014) and Hobolt et al. (2016). This conception of people-centrism is slightly different from that of the factor of the same name in the Castanho Silva et al. (2018) scale and items in the Elchardus and Spruyt (2016) scale. Specifically, these two sets of researchers have items that involve the need for politicians to listen more closely or spend more time with the people. It also somewhat differs from the sovereignty of the people dimension in the Schulz et al. (2018) scale, because their dimension has some emphasis on voting directly on referendums.

Arguably, these findings help draw closer to a consensus on what populist

attitudes should consist of. Rather than having each set of investigators develop their own set of factors to measure populist attitudes, researchers can draw on the findings of this study to decide which items/factors to utilize. This integrative analysis of various scales in literature can be considered a reliable set of information in the dimensionality of populist attitudes. Thus, those who still prefer to measure populism without the left-right context can do so with the items found in this study.

Chapter 8: Study 3

The review of the populism literature revealed three themes: anti-pluralism, anti-elitism and people-centrism, which subsequently emerge as separate factors in Study 2. Moreover, a qualitative study supported that there are some differences in the kinds of elite that are salient to individual on the left and the political right. Assembling these findings now enabled me to construct a new set of populism scales: one to assess left-wing populist attitudes and another to assess right-wing populist attitudes.

In Study 3, I adopted Conway et al.'s (2018) parallel construction approach which indicates that items would only need a small modification such that a change of only a few terms would have the item refer to a left-wing or a right-wing context. A primary tool was to change the referent. The right-wing items contain a collective identity around "true Americans," and antagonism toward cultural elite which can include academics and scientists, and left-wing items hold notions around "the working class" with opposition against the economic elite like bankers and people in big businesses. Thus, whenever an item had the term, "the people," it was changed to "True American" to fit the right-wing populist context, and "the working class" to fit the left-wing populist context. Moreover, some of items that had the term "government" or "politics" were changed to focus on culture for the populist right and on economics for the populist left. I did not change all content for terms "government" or "politics" because issues around these also matter both forms of populism. For instance, the original item in the Schulz et al. (2018) scale is, "**People** like me don't have much say in what **government** does." To fit the populist right context, I changed it to "**True Americans** don't have much say in **what happens to American culture.**" And to fit the populist left context, I modified that original item to,

“**Members of the working** class don’t have much say in what happens to the **American economy**.” Another example of an item I modified is from the Hobolt et al. (2016) scale, “Most **politicians** do not care about the **people**.” This item was changed to, “Most **cultural elites** do not care about **true Americans**” to fit the populist right context and “Most **economic elites** do not care about **members of the working class**” to fit the populist left context.

I used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess the overall fit of these two scales, as these two scales are constrained to three hypothesized factors: anti-pluralism, anti-elitism, and people-centrism. The goal is to confirm that the same factor structure exists on the left and right. I started with maximum likelihood estimations to determine model fit followed by a second estimation with diagonally least weighted squares as a robustness check and as way to examine model fit when these two inventories are anchored on an ordinal scale as opposed to an interval scale. The latter also required a much larger sample to converge.⁹ I also planned to balance the number of items per factor so that each has the same number of items, as anti-elitism has many items leftover from the Study 2 EFA¹⁰. The reduction in items may also help with method bias as there are fewer items for respondents to complete, decreasing participant fatigue. The parallel construction approach entails method bias because the two new scales are closely worded (see Podsakoff et al., 2012). I also examined whether the proposed three-factor model for both left-wing and right-wing fits better than a one-factor model for left-wing

⁹ To sufficiently compute the asymptotic covariance matrix of WLSMV, an additional 180 respondents were needed. This calculation is based on the number manifest variables (30) multiplied by the number of categories on the 7-point Likert scale minus 1 (6).

¹⁰ This is not an issue present in the broader populist attitudes literature. My decision to balance the items in each factor contribute equally for the total scale.

and right-wing populist attitudes as well as an examination of whether two forms of populist attitudes are better than a singular conception of populist attitudes.

There are three other design choices to note. First, I removed some items due to redundancy and being too closely worded. The item, “What people call compromise in politics is really just selling out on one’s principles” was both used in the Akkerman et al. (2014) and the Hobolt et al. scale (2016). The Hobolt Scale et al. (2016) also had an item that was nearly identical to an item in the Schulz et al. (2018) scale with only the word “the” separating the two. Similarly, an item in the Schulz et al. (2018) scale and the Akkerman et al. (2014) were nearly identical whereas the former focused on congress, and the latter focused on the federal government. And finally, the Schulz et al. (2018) scale and the Oliver and Rahn (2016) scale both had an item that differed slightly. The former had an item, “People like me have no influence on what the government does,” and latter had an item, “People like me don’t have much say in what government does” that were closely worded. The decision to decide which version of the item to keep was purely based on my judgement on which items would be easier for respondents to comprehend (see Table 4)¹¹.

Second, I included two items that did not originally make the cut-off in Study 2. Despite the mediocre overall fit, I decided to include them in the confirmatory factor analysis model in Study 3 which were an item by Oliver and Rahn (2016), “I’d rather put my trust in the wisdom of ordinary people than the opinions of experts and intellectuals,” and another item by Schulz et al. (2018), which indicates, “ordinary people all pull

¹¹ I was aware of the few duplicate/closely worded items in Study 2 when I conducted the exploratory assessment. I decided that sorting and removing items would be more appropriate for the theory testing of Study 3 than in the exploratory assessment of Study 2.

together.” These two items were compelling to include in Study 3, as integrating them with the left-right context could improve these generic but potentially useful items. Thus, it is possible that these items could perform better once they were modified to include the left-right context. Furthermore, these items were also easily modifiable as they referred to specific groups. The term “ordinary people” was easily changed to “working class” or “true Americans,” and “experts and intellectuals” were changed to “business professionals and bankers” for the left-wing scale, and “scientists and academics” for the right-wing scale. Both items were from the anti-pluralism scale.

In an initial attempt to address questions of validity, I also examined key criterion variables in this study. I included evaluations of different societal groups – some left-wing and some right-wing, satisfaction with democracy, trust in institutions (federal government, the legal system, the new media, the local government, and banks), future activism (conventional and unconventional activism, violent activism), and a series of beliefs: whether Joe Biden should use more executive orders, belief in 2020 electoral fraud, perceived Christian discrimination and whether Trump was responsible for January 6 insurrection.

The first four outcomes were included because both forms of populism have different evaluations of social groups – negative views of outgroups, the populist leader’s role in encouraging activism, and the complicated, but generally negative views of constitution and democracy (e.g., de la Torre, 2016a; Homolar & Scholz, 2019; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Norris & Inglehart, 2019; Pappas, 2013). The belief that Joe Biden should utilize more executive orders is intended to tap majoritarianism and illiberalism (a way to bypass the ordinary process of legislation with its checks and

balances). The belief that that Christians are being discriminated against is to measure the perceived cultural threat often linked to the populist right (e.g., Betz, 1994; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). Beliefs in 2020 electoral fraud tapped the conspiratorial elements of populism (e.g., Castanho Silva et al., 2017), and finally, whether one believes Donald Trump was responsible for the January 6 insurrection represented a point of separation between the populist left and right. The populist left is expected to believe Trump is responsible whereas the populist right should believe the opposite.

Method

Design of the left-wing and a right-wing populism scale

The items from Study 2 were adapted to include left-wing and right-wing populist contexts, namely, an economic focus for left-wingers (e.g., working class versus bankers and Big Business) and a cultural factor for right-wingers (e.g., True Americans versus experts and bureaucrats) consistent with the notion of parallel construction (see Conway et al., 2018). See Table 4 for the original item from the Study 2 results and the modified versions of those items. The right-wing and left-wing scales each had 30 items, five of which were reverse-coded items. More specifically, the two scales each contained nine items for anti-pluralism, 17 items for anti-elitism, and four items for people-centrism. Within each of the two scales, two of the anti-pluralism items and three of the anti-elitism items were reverse coded in an attempt to control response bias. All five items were adapted from other items that were part of their respective scales, but re-worded in a way to convey the opposite meaning from the original.

Participants

Participants were recruited from MTurk consisting of an American sample with a

final sample size of $N = 255$ after utilizing the same data quality checks in Study 2 (a total of 119 respondents were removed). These MTurkers were compensated \$1.80 for their participation. Approximately, 52.5% of the sample identified as male, and most respondents identified as White (78.4%), followed by Asian (7.8%), Black (6.3%), Latino/Hispanic (5.9%), and “other” (1.6%). This sample was relatively moderate on political views ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 1.48$) on a 1-5 left-right identification scale and were on average born on the year, 1984 ($SD = 13.06$), indicating that on average respondents were about 37-38 years in age. Finally, most respondents had attained at least a high school diploma (87.8%).

Procedure

The survey was hosted on Qualtrics®. Respondents were given a consent form, and then answered demographic items. All outcomes and populism items were measured on a 1 to 7 Likert scale. Participants were asked a range of questions pertaining to these two populism scales and outcomes variables.

Outcomes. See Appendix A for the items that comprise evaluations of groups, activism, and trust in institutions; the single item variables are described in this section. Evaluations of various groups was measured with a total of 12 items: one for right-wing targets (e.g., “Your overall view of American patriots”, “Your overall view of law enforcement/police”, $\alpha = .88$), and another for left-wing targets (“Your overall view of immigrants?”, “Your overall view of LGBTQ+ members”, $\alpha = .90$); both measures contained 6 items. These two measures were anchored on a 1 *Extremely negative* to 7 *Extremely positive* Likert-type scale.

Trust in various institutions scale (e.g., “To what extent do you trust the Federal

Government?"), and "To what extent do you trust the news media?") contained 5 items and also had high reliability ($\alpha = .93$). This variable was anchored on a 1 *Do not trust at all* to 7 *Trust completely on a* Likert-type scale.

Unconventional future activism was assessed with 4 items ($\alpha = .90$; e.g., "How likely do you think you will do any of the following forms of political actions?: Attending peaceful demonstrations"). Conventional future activism was measured with a single item that indicates whether one would contact government officials in the future, and violent future activism was tapped by a single item that asked respondents to what extent they would be "picking up arms" against the government in the future. These measures were anchored on a 1 very unlikely to 7 very likely Likert scale.

A single item was to measure satisfaction with American democracy from 1 *Not satisfied at all* to 7 *Completely satisfied*. Five other single items assessments were utilized in this study that asked to what extent respondents agree/disagree on whether President Biden should rely more on executive orders, the legitimacy of 2020 electoral fraud claims, perceived discrimination against Christians in the US, and whether Donald Trump was responsible for the January 6 insurrection. These five items were anchored on a 1 *Strongly disagree* to 7 *Strongly agree* Likert-type scale.

Analytical Framework

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assess model fit and predicted factor structure. In the evaluation of dimensionality, adequate model evaluation was based on the following criteria: a confirmatory fit index (CFI) of .90 or higher; a Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI; also called Non-Normed Fit index) of .90 or higher; a RMSEA with 90% confidence interval falling below .10 (e.g., MacCallum, et al., 1996), an SRMR of

.08 or lower (e.g., Kline, 2011; Schreiber et al., 2006). Analyses were conducted with R. To estimate the models, the first method used was maximum likelihood (ML) to assess model fit while assuming interval-level of measurement. A second estimation relied on diagonally least weighted scores with robust standard errors (WLSMV), which only assumes an ordinal level of measurement.¹² The advantage of utilizing WLSMV after the ML is that if there are discrepant results between the two estimation methods, then the measurement assumptions of ML are violated. Moreover, little discrepancy also indicates that items perform sufficiently at the interval level.

Results

Both the right-wing and left-wing scales were tested in separate CFA models. Moreover, both scales were tested as a three-factor model of anti-elitism, anti-pluralism, people-centrism. My goal in both models is to use CFA to confirm that a three-factor approach is suitable for both scales and as a tool for item selection in order to balance these scales so that each factor has the same number of items.

CFA and psychometrics

Left-wing scale. I first tested a CFA model for left-wing populist attitudes (LWP) with a ML estimation, and found a rather poor fit, CFI = .683, TLI = .657, RMSEA = .091, 90% [.085, .096], SRMR = .134, even though findings were RMSEA were more promising, RMSEA = .091. In light of this poor fit, I then decided to remove items in order to improve fit, balance and shorten the number of items in the scale.

¹² Due to power considerations, a WLSMV estimation was only possible when the scales were balanced, and each dimension was tapped by four items. Note also that WLSMV utilizes a polychoric correlation matrix.

For the left-wing populism (LWP) scale, six items were removed because they did not fit the factors they were assigned to well. This included all five reverse-coded items. Another nine items were removed because they could load on to other factors based on modification indices or because they caused issues pertaining to model fit such as model convergence and multicollinearity. Important to note that no items were ever re-assigned to different dimensions. Because the anti-elitism dimension still had seven items compared to the anti-pluralism (four) and people-centrism (four) factors after removal, I retained only the best four anti-elitism items in order to have a balanced scale.

After item reduction, all three factors (anti-pluralism, anti-elitism, and people-centrism) contained 4 items and the overall 12-item scale produced decent fit statistics regardless of the estimation method: maximum likelihood, CFI = .949, TLI = .934, RMSEA = .068, 90% [.051, .085], SRMR = .047, and diagonally least weighted scores with robust standard errors (WLSMV), CFI = .967, TLI = .958, RMSEA = .039, 90% [.012, .060], SRMR = .046.

All three factors, anti-pluralism ($\alpha = .75$ and $\omega = .72$), anti-elitism ($\alpha = .78$ and $\omega = .76$), and people-centrism ($\alpha = .78$ and $\omega = .73$) had satisfactory psychometric properties, as did the full scale ($\alpha = .88$). The overall scale contained 12 items with an overall Mean of 4.96 (SD = 0.96). All the factors were strongly correlated with each other at $p < .001$, anti-pluralism and anti-elitism ($r = .72$), anti-pluralism and people-centrism ($r = .48$), and anti-elitism and people-centrism ($r = .50$). See Table 5 for this 12-item LWP scale.

Right-wing scale. Initial model fit for the right-wing populism (RWP) scale was also poor, but better than the LWP scale, CFI = .790, TLI = .753, RMSEA = .087, 90%

[.082, .092], SRMR = .101. This scale also had items removed because they contributed to poor fit (five items), mostly the newly reversed-coded items, and/or were cross loaded with other factors (seven items) based on modification indices. As with the LWP scale, I did not re-assign any items to new dimensions, and I retained the four best items for the anti-elitism factor. The model, containing 12 items ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 1.22$), produced decent fit statistics with both maximum likelihood, CFI = .948, TLI = .932, RMSEA = .085, 90% [.069, .101], SRMR = .052, and WLSMV, CFI = .943, TLI = .926, RMSEA = .063, 90% [.046, .081], SRMR = .048. See Table 6 for this 12-item scale.

All three factors, anti-pluralism ($\alpha = .87$ and $\omega = .79$), anti-elitism ($\alpha = .78$ and $\omega = .76$), and people-centrism ($\alpha = .90$ and $\omega = .86$) had good psychometric properties, as did the full scale ($\alpha = .91$). All the factors were strongly correlated with each other at $p < .001$, anti-pluralism and anti-elitism ($r = .51$), anti-pluralism and people-centrism ($r = .61$), and anti-elitism and people-centrism ($r = .63$).

Model comparisons. I next compared the three-factor model of LWP to a single-factor model. The three-factor model produced better fit regardless of estimation methods, ML: $\Delta\chi^2 = 92.72$ ($df = 3$), $p < .001$, WLSMV: $\Delta\chi^2 = 41.33$ ($df = 3$), $p < .001$. The RWP three-factor model also performed better than a single-factor model, ML: $\Delta\chi^2 = 119.22$ ($df = 3$), $p < .001$, WLSMV: $\Delta\chi^2 = 66.22$ ($df = 3$), $p < .001$. The last model comparison had all 24 items load on a single factor of populist attitudes versus a models that had 12 items load on a left-wing factor and 12 items load on a right-wing factor. The dual-factor model performed better than a single-factor model of populist attitudes with

ML estimations, $\Delta\chi^2 = 473.95$ ($df = 1$), $p < .001$.^{13,14}

Comparison of the scales

The resulting 12-item LWP and RWP scales were mostly parallel to each other in terms of items. The anti-pluralism subscales used three parallel items across left-wing and right-wing populism, that is, items that were the same as summarized in Table 4. However, the anti-pluralism subscales differ in one item: The RWP subscale used the item, “In politics, what people call compromise on religious lifestyle issues is really just selling out on one’s principles.” In contrast, the LWP anti-pluralism subscale used this unique item, “You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their views on inequality.”

For the anti-elitism subscales, LWP and RWP each used four items that were not parallel to each other (see Table 5 and 6). However, the people-centrism subscales were perfectly parallel; that is, the items on this LWP and RWP subscale only differ with regard to the terms and referent. On the whole, seven of the twelve items were parallel across both scales.

Relationship between the scales. The total scores of the LWP and the RWP scales were highly correlated, $r = .58$, $p < .001$. The size of this correlation may be inflated because of response bias due to the ill fit and subsequent removal of reversed-coded items. Another contributor may be method bias as the use of structurally similar items may have sparked similar responses (see Podsakoff et al., 2012). Regardless, it is

¹³ Due to power concerns, I could not use WLSMV as an estimation method.

¹⁴ Though it would have been desirable to test higher-order populist attitudes factors with all six factors, but the modest sample size did not allow for this comprehensive and Study 3 and Study 4. However, I do conduct this test in Study 5 with a large multi-national dataset.

possible it is plausible that there are individuals who are simultaneously high on both left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes.

I next examined inter-correlations among the factors. Left-wing anti-pluralism was strongly correlated to every right-wing factor ($p < .01$): anti-pluralism ($r = .52$), anti-elitism ($r = .50$), and people-centrism ($r = .43$). Left-wing anti-elitism was moderately linked to right-wing anti-elitism ($r = .19, p = .002$), much more strongly linked to right-wing anti-pluralism ($r = .60, p < .01$) and unrelated to right-wing people-centrism ($r = .30, p < .01$). Left-wing people-centrism was also strongly to all right-wing factors ($p < .01$): anti-pluralism ($r = .34$), anti-elitism ($r = .44$), and people-centrism ($r = .43$). A correlation matrix with all of the above summarized can be found on Table 7.

Validity tests

Correlations

LWP was unrelated to right-wing identification, $r = -.02, p = .70$, whereas RWP was strongly related to right-wing identification, $r = .42, p < .001$. Neither scale was significantly correlated with education and gender. LWP was related to age, $r = .29, p < .001$, though RWP was unrelated to age, $r = .12, p = .051$.

See Table 8 for correlations between RWP and LWP to outcome variables. Next, I examined the correlated correlation coefficients between left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes to various dependent variables to determine whether the effect size differences exist between these two variants of populism. My rationale for examining effect size differences was to ensure that the scales have predictive differences, especially for outcomes in which they are both significantly related, including two peaceful activism variables, willingness to take arms against the government, whether Biden should utilize

more executive orders, believe that there was 2020 Electoral fraud, and whether respondent perceived Christian discrimination. I utilized the approach by Meng et al. (1992) to determine if the absolute sizes of the correlations to outcome variables differed between right-wing populist and left-wing populist attitudes.

Right-wing populist attitudes had a stronger association to the willingness to take arms against the U.S. government ($p = .003$), the belief that there was electoral fraud in the 2020 U.S. presidential election ($p < .001$), and the belief that Christians were being discriminated against ($p < .001$) compared to Left-wing populist attitudes. Left-wing populist attitudes had a stronger relation to future unconventional activism ($p = .004$), support for Biden's use of executive orders ($p = .002$), and the degree to which Trump was responsible for the January 6 events ($p < .001$) compared to RWP. The two scales did not differ reliably in their correlation with participants' plans for conventional activism ($p = .052$).

Multiple regression

Tables 9 through 11 reveal the predictive power of these two scales in the regression models. All the regression models controlled for right-wing identification, gender, race/ethnicity, education, and age.

As anticipated, the Left-wing populism scale predicted positive evaluations of left-wing groups, negative evaluations of right-wing outgroups, unconventional and conventional future activism, the belief that Joe Biden should use more executive orders, and the belief that Donald Trump was responsible for the January 6 insurrection. Though in the expected direction, left-wing populism was not statistically related to low satisfaction with democracy and low trust in institutions.

The right-wing populism scale predicted negative evaluations of left-wing outgroups, positive evaluations of right-wing groups, the belief that there was voter fraud in the 2020 U.S. presidential election, the belief that Christians are discriminated against in the U.S, the belief that Donald Trump was not responsible for the January 6 insurrection, and that they would be willing to take arms against the U.S. government. The RWP scale did not predict unconventional and conventional activism, and, unexpectedly, the RWP scale predicted *higher* satisfaction with democracy, and higher trust in institutions.

Factor-level analysis. I next conducted a series of multiple regression models, testing for the right-wing and left-wing populism facets separately. I controlled the same demographic variables as the previous regression models for the full scales. This set of analyses allows me to examine differential predictive strengths for each subscale. See Table 12 and Table 13 for LWP and RWP factors results, respectively.

Left-wing populism factors. Surprisingly, Anti-pluralism was linked to the positive evaluation of right-wing groups and satisfaction with American democracy, greater trust in institutions, the beliefs that there was electoral fraud, and perceived Christian discrimination. However, this factor went in the expected direction for the willingness in engaging in future unconventional and conventional activism and the willingness to take arms against the government, and that Joe Biden should use more executive orders. It was unrelated to the evaluation of left-wing groups.

Anti-elitism was negatively related to the evaluation of right-wing groups and satisfaction with American democracy, low trust in institutions, as anticipated. Interestingly, it was negatively related to the willingness in engaging in future

conventional activism. People-centrism was only inversely linked to the willingness to take arms against the government and to the belief that Biden should use more executive orders. Neither of these two results were expected.

Right-wing populism factors. Anti-pluralism predicted the negative evaluations of left-wing groups, positive evaluations of right-wing groups, the willingness in engaging in future unconventional and conventional activism and taking up arms against the government, the beliefs that there was electoral fraud, and perceived Christian discrimination. These findings were expected. Unexpectedly, anti-pluralism also predicted more trust in institutions, more satisfaction with democracy, and that Joe Biden should use more executive orders.

Anti-elitism was linked to low satisfaction with democracy, low trust in institutions, and positively related to the beliefs that there was electoral fraud in 2020 and Christians are being discriminated against which were all expected. Surprisingly, anti-elitism was also linked to the negative evaluation of right-wing groups. People centrism was associated with the positive evaluation of right-wing groups and inversely linked to the belief that Biden should use more executive orders as hypothesized. Unexpectedly, people-centrism was related to trust in institutions.

Discussion

This study entailed the confirmation of the left-wing and right-wing populism scales. The results showed that the three factors of populism: anti-pluralism, anti-elitism, and people-centrism were coherent components for the order higher right-wing and left-wing populism attitudes, producing two new measures through parallel construction (Conway et al., 2018). I used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess the viability

of these two scales. The overall fits for these two scales are consistent with the overall literature with the average fit statistic across seven other populism scales being CFI = .934, TLI = .88, RMSEA = .066, and SRMR = .044 (see Castanho Silva et al., 2020). Despite the high correlation between the two and their fit results being on par with the broader literature, they do have differential predictive power.

These two CFA models share some commonalities. Both CFA models began with thirty items, including newly generated reverse-coded items with the goal of selecting four items per factor. Both models yielded poor fit initially, and required the reduction of items in order to attain adequate fit and to avoid convergence issues. Neither model ended up with suitable reverse-coded items. In the end, both models yielded acceptable fit. Moreover, both three-factor models performed better than single-factor models, consistent with the notion that populist attitudes from either end of the political spectrum are multidimensional. In other words, left-wing and right-wing populism are better conceptualized as a multidimensional construct. I also found that two-higher order populist attitudes (LWP, RWP) have better fit than singular conception of populist attitudes. Even though I removed many items from both models, I generated a three-factor model for two new populist attitudes scales based on the hypothesized dimensions of anti-pluralism, anti-elitism, and people-centrism.

The two scales are somewhat parallel. They differed on a single item that was retained in the anti-pluralism factor. The difference is that the right-wing scale contains an item that taps the lack of compromise whereas the left-wing scale contains an item that describes Manicheanism. Nevertheless, both scales still have items that describe the homogeneity of the people/ingroup, majoritarianism, and the disregard of other

viewpoints. The two scales were not at all parallel for anti-elitism. Despite that, both scales focused on the cynical view of the elite and their estrangement in politics. The people-centrism scales were exactly parallel and described the importance of the people making political decisions. In the end, the scales share seven items that are parallel except for the referent. The need for the scales to be 100% parallel is not required as, this approach by Conway et al. (2018) only serves as a starting point for scale development; their left-wing authoritarianism scale only utilized 66% percent of the Altemeyer (1998) scale. An important point to make is that even though degree of parallelism varied across the three-factors, all factors were strongly correlated with their counterparts. Thus, even though left-wing anti-elitism and right anti-elitism shared no common item, they were still highly correlated. The high correlation between the anti-pluralism and people-centrism subscales could be an issue of method bias given that they are so closely worded (Podsakoff et al., 2012). However, the high correlation between the two did not impact differential predictive power of the two scales.

Those high on left-wing populist attitudes had a negative evaluation of right-wing groups, a positive evaluation of left-wing groups, low satisfaction with democracy and trust in institutions, a greater willingness in future unconventional and conventional activism, the beliefs that Biden should invoke more executive orders and that Trump was responsible for January 6. These findings for the left-wing populist scale show clear predictive power and are largely in line with the literature (cf. Akkerman et al., 2017, March, 2017; Rensmann, 2017).

In contrast, those high on right-wing populist attitudes had a positive evaluation of right-wing groups, a negative evaluation of left-wing groups, high satisfaction with

democracy and trust in institutions, a willingness to take arms against the government, the beliefs that there was electoral fraud in 2020 elections, that Christians are discriminated against in the U.S., and that Trump was not responsible for January 6. These results are generally consistent with the literature on right-wing populism with the exception of higher satisfaction with democracy and trust in institutions (cf. Betz, 1994; Mudde, 2010; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). These surprising findings may have to do with the idea of democracy and related institutions as traditional hallmarks of American culture. That is, those who lean to the populist right may like these ideas because it represents American tradition and fits with their cultural views, but these right-wing populists may not necessarily be satisfied with those in power, especially those who are perceived to be antagonistic toward their values. Indeed, conservatives generally seem happier about society compared to liberals (Napier & Jost, 2008). Another possibility is that right-wing populism is not necessarily synonymous with right-wing radicalism even when both seem to be intertwined (e.g., Berning & Ziller, 2017; Heiss & Matthes, 2017). For instance, Javier Milei, a right-wing populist politician in Argentina, has his ideas rooted in right-wing libertarianism as opposed to far-right radicalism (Kestler, 2022).

The factor-level analysis highlighted the nuances between various populist dimensions. In both scales, the anti-pluralism factor predicted a greater range of political beliefs and future behaviors. Both anti-pluralism subscales were related to the nearly the same set of outcomes. This may suggest that anti-pluralism is perhaps the nexus for populist right and populist left beliefs. Moreover, this anti-pluralism factor for both scales predicted trust in institutions and satisfaction with democracy which may suggest that aspects of populism are not necessarily against society and its structures and institutions.

Surprisingly, the left-wing anti-pluralism also predicted the positive evaluation of right-wing groups. I speculate that economic anti-pluralism is also common for right-wingers as well or they may view themselves as working class as well (see Betz, 1994; Norris & Inglehart, 2019).

Both anti-elitism factors predicted low satisfaction with democracy and low trust in institutions, and the belief there was 2020 electoral fraud. The right-wing anti-elitism factor also predicted perceived Christian discrimination. Surprisingly, this factor also predicted a negative evaluation of right-wing groups. The left-wing scale had some surprising results as well, predicting lower forms of conventional protest, less willingness to take arms against the government, and the belief that Biden should not be using more executive orders. The lack of mobilization may have to do with feelings of powerlessness in the political process.

The people-centrism factor was not a significant predictor for both scales; people-centrism seems to have the weakest in explanatory power among the three factors. The only exception was that the right-wing people-centrism factor predicted the belief that Biden should not be using more executive orders and positive evaluation of right-wing groups. The absence of findings could be because each factor attempts to explain the same variability in the outcome variables. The other possibility is that the criterion variables were simply better predicted by anti-pluralism and to a lesser extent anti-elitism over people-centrism.

There are a couple of important limitations to note. First, neither scale contained reversed-coded items which can make results prone to response bias, despite my best efforts to incorporate some. For instance, the high correlation between left-wing and

right-wing populist attitudes could be an indication of that. Yet, differences did emerge between left-wing and right-wing populism; this is an issue I plan to tackle in Study 4 by developing new reverse-coded items. The other limitation is the drastic reduction of items, but the size of both scales is consistent with others populism scales in the literature which typically can be around 15 items or fewer (see Castanho Silva et al., 2020).

Furthermore, I made no changes to which items measure which dimensions, nor did I change the factor structure from the Study 2 EFA results. These two are critical points, as the content the factors were the same ones found in Study 2 and utilized the same content – items to underpin the factors. Consistent with the state-of-the-art practices when more than 20% of the items are removed in a CFA, as described by Hair et al. (2014), I conducted additional CFA models in Study 4 and Study 5 to provide sufficient verification of the three-factor models of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes.

Overall, Study 3 showed substantial evidence for predictive validity as well as evidence for structural validity and sound psychometrics for these two scales. That is, both scales demonstrated links to key outcomes and have good fit statistics and reliability. However, this study did not examine the nomological net of the two scales, nor successfully include reverse coded items which I plan to address in Study 4.

Chapter 9: Study 4

The main goal of Study 4 is to re-test the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) models developed in Chapter 8. Because I removed many items from the CFA model from Study 3 and because I wanted to examine the fit of these newly developed reverse-coded items, it was necessary to conduct another set of CFA models. More specifically, the removal of many items is unusual for a CFA model and requires an additional test to confirm the factor structure (see Hair et al., 2014). That is, whether right-wing and left-wing populist attitudes can be measured with 12 items across three factors: anti-pluralism, anti-elitism, and people-centrism should be reassessed. The other reason as to why I conducted another CFA was to include reverse-coded items and check how well they fit in the three-factor model to tackle the response bias issue. In the case that these new reverse-coded items do not cohere with the scales, they will be discarded. Regardless of the successful implementation of reverse-coded items, I plan to conduct another CFA model in Study 5 to provide one last verification of these two three-factor models. I again tested whether the proposed three-factor model for both left-wing and right-wing fits better than a one-factor model for left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes and whether two forms of populist attitudes are better than a singular conception of populist attitudes.

I developed three reversed-coded items per factor for each scale for a total of nine reverse-coded items, consistent with parallel construction approach, as there was minimal change to the items. For example, the item, “True Americans should be asked whenever important decisions are taken” had a reversed version, “True Americans should not be a part of important policy decisions.” My goal for these items is to replace, or at least be suitable alternatives to their non-reversed counterparts. These reverse-coded items and

their counterparts were both included they were presented in different orders so that for some pairing, participants encountered the reverse-coded item before the original item, and for other pairings after the original item. See Table 14 and 15 for new reverse-coded items in the right-wing populism (RWP) scale and the left-wing populism (LWP) Scale. I prioritized the inclusion of reverse-coded items to ensure that results were not contaminated by acquiescent responding. If such a response bias is present, the size of negative correlation might be artificially reduced, and the size of positive correlations inflated.

Another goal of Study 4 was to expand on the nomological net of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. The nomological net is a set of laws which describes the nature of a construct like how it is measured and connected to other constructs (Preckel & Martin, 2017). The nomological net has important theoretical propositions for a given construct. For instance, if one is high on right-wing populist attitudes, then they must also be high on nativism and if a person is high on left-wing populist attitudes, they should believe in civic nationalism. My hypotheses in Chapter 3 (Table 1) report the theoretical propositions between various constructs and how they correspond to left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. The nomological net criteria were assessed via Pearson correlation coefficients. The correlations show how two constructs covary. A large positive correlation indicates that people high on populist attitudes are also high on important constructs, satisfying the theoretical proposition. Whereas Study 3 ascertained the predictive validity of these two scales, Study 4 addressed the nomological net by examining the convergent validity (what they should be related to) and divergent validity (what they should be unrelated to) of these two scales.

I examined several critical political ideologies and tendencies associated with populist attitudes: authoritarianism from both ends of the political spectrum, social dominance orientation (SDO), nativism, ethnonationalism, civic nationalism (inclusive nationalism), collective narcissism and conspiracy beliefs (Castanho Silva et al., 2017; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Norris & Inglehart, 2019; Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020). I expected authoritarianism, collective narcissism and conspiracy beliefs to be correlated with both variants of populist attitudes. For authoritarianism specifically, I measured right-wing authoritarianism and left-wing authoritarianism and expected them to be linked to right-wing populism and left-wing populism, respectively. I also predicted that left-wing populism would be linked to civic nationalism, but inversely to nativism, ethnonationalism. Finally, Right-wing populism is anticipated to be inversely related to civic nationalism, but positively to nativism, ethnonationalism, and SDO. Thus, civic nationalism is the key political tendency that separates right-wing and left-wing populist attitudes.

I also examined several individual differences related to mental health like well-being, self-esteem, life satisfaction, given that populists are generally unhappy and believe society is failing and leaving them behind (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Marchlewska et al., 2019; Nowakowski, 2021; Obschonka et al., 2018) and the Big Five personality traits (Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020). The two forms of populist attitudes are both expected to be linked negatively to self-esteem, well-being, and life satisfaction. For the Big Five traits, I anticipated that right-wing populism will be linked to conscientiousness, extraversion, and neuroticism whereas left-wing populism should be related to openness, extraversion and conscientiousness.

Method

Expansions of the scales

Based on thorough consideration, with the goal of protecting the validity of my findings from the hazards of response bias, I tested included these new reverse-coded items. See Table 14 and Table 15 for the items tested in this study.

Participants

Participants were recruited from MTurk consisting of an American sample again ($N = 424$). I removed 143 respondents for duplicates, completing fewer than 50% of the survey items, and were outside of the United States. This leaves a total of $N = 271$ respondents (59% male and 41% female). Most participants were White (80.1%), followed by Asian (12.1%), Black (4.4%), and Latino/Hispanic (3.3%). About 95% of the sample reported having at least some college education. The median birth year for respondents was 1985, indicating that on average respondents were about 37-38 years in age. Finally, respondents generally reported themselves as moderates on the left-right scale ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 1.58$).

Data check

Because of the unusually high correlation between RWP and LWP ($r = .78$)¹⁵ and collinearity issues with CFA model convergence, in Study 4 I had concerns about data quality that were considerably unusual compared to the previous studies. I utilized standard practices for data quality checks as mentioned in Study 2 (Chmielewski &

¹⁵In Study 3, the two scales were correlated at, $r = .58$. I did not include the new reverse-coded items in this correlation estimation. Surprisingly, these reverse-coded items were mostly correlated positively with their non-reversed counterparts.

Kucker, 2020; Kennedy et al., 2020).

A total of 71 respondents were either removed because they had completed the study in less than four minutes ($n = 16$) which was expected to take 11 minutes based on piloting of the study, and mean completion time was about 10 minutes. Study 4 deployed five items for attention check, two of which requested respondents to, “Leave this item blank,” and three other items had them select a choice such as, “Please select ‘Strongly disagree.’”¹⁶ I removed most participants because they failed at least one attention check ($n = 55$). Even then, the correlation between the two scales remained unchanged ($r = .78$). The remaining participants received \$2.10 upon completion of the study.

Procedure and materials

The survey was again hosted on Qualtrics®. Participants provided consent, and then answered the same demographics from the previous studies. Participants completed the two measures for populist attitudes. As in Study 3, these reverse-coded items and their counterparts were both included and were presented in different orders so that some reverse-coded items come before and some after the original items. Next, participants were asked a range of questions pertaining to theoretically relevant and related constructs such as authoritarianism (see below). All criterion variables and populism items were measured on a 1 disagree to 5 agree Likert scale.

Political Measures. Several notably important constructs were assessed. Right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) was measured by the very short authoritarianism scale by Bizumic and Duckitt (2018) which contains six items (three reversed; $\alpha = .69$) such as,

¹⁶Attention checks were utilized in every study. I describe them here extensively because of poor data quality. The first three studies did not have extensive data quality issues.

“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.” Left-wing authoritarianism (LWA) was tapped using the LWA-4 scale created by Conway et al. (2023) which has four items ($\alpha = .89$; e.g., “This country would work a lot better if certain groups of Christian troublemakers would just shut up and accept their group’s proper place in society”) with no reverse-coded items. SDO was measured by an eight-item measure (e.g., “Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups”) developed by Ho et al. (2015), with half of the items reverse scored ($\alpha = .84$). Nativism was assessed by a five-item index (e.g., “immigrants take important social services away from real Americans”) which included one reverse-coded item ($\alpha = .79$) created by Young et al (2019). Ethno-nationalism was measured by a six-item measure ($\alpha = .91$; e.g., “My first loyalty is to the heritage of my ancestors, their language and their religion.”) by Saucier (2014). Civic nationalism ($r = .47$; e.g., “Ours should be a plural nation celebrating diversity and allowing for many different cultures”) was also measured using a two-item scale by Saucier (2014). The conspiracy thinking scale (Brotherton et al., 2013) contained 15 items ($\alpha = .96$; e.g., “The power held by heads of state is second to that of small unknown groups who really control world politics”). Collective Narcissism scale was comprised of nine items (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009) with items (one reversed; $\alpha = .90$), like “Not many people seem to fully understand the importance of my group.”

Individual difference measures. Life satisfaction was assessed with the Riverside Life Satisfaction scale (e.g., “I am satisfied with where I am in life right now.”) which was developed by Margolis et al. (2019), and included six items (half reversed; $\alpha = .77$). The World Health Organization five-item index (no reverse-coded items; $\alpha = .78$)

was used to assess well-being like “I have felt cheerful in good spirits” (see Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2020; Topp et al., 2015). Self-esteem was measured by the single item self-esteem questionnaire (“I have high self-esteem”; Robins et al., 2001). Finally, a 10-item measure of the Big Five personality inventory, designed by Rammstedt and John (2007), was used with half the items reversed to measure openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. All measures can be found in Appendix B.

Analytical Framework

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to confirm the scales in this study, utilizing the same criteria to assess model fit from Study 3. Specifically, I re-tested the three-factor model of anti-pluralism, anti-elitism, and people-centrism for both left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. All three factors for both the left-wing and right-wing scales were assessed with four items each as well as the reversed-coded items (eight items for each scale). I used both maximum likelihood (ML) and diagonally least weighted scores with robust standard errors (WLSMV) as estimators for the models.

To test the links between left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes and constructs in the nomological nets, Pearson correlation analyses were used. Pearson correlations help establish convergent/divergent validity with other variables (e.g., right-wing populism has a link to nativism, but should not be linked to civic nationalism). Considering that these two populist attitudes were highly correlated, I also conducted a series of regression analysis, allowing me to identify the unique effects of each form of populist attitudes.

Results

Neither scale retained the newly constructed reverse-coded items due to poor

factor loadings and ill fit, confirmed by an inspection of modification indices. These new reverse-coded items did not fit the three-factor model well nor did they load on the intended factor negatively. The left-wing reverse-coded items were largely uncorrelated with their non-reversed counterparts. Only the items, “A person’s views on inequality do not determine if they are good or bad (reversed),” and “You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their views on inequality (original)” were inversely related, but only modestly, $r = -.17$, $p = .014$. None of the reverse-coded items in the right-wing scale were inversely linked to their original counterparts. Thus, the analysis proceeded with the same items as emerged from Study 3.

Right-wing scale

The RWP model produced mixed results regardless of whether ML, CFI = .914, TLI = .888, RMSEA = .089, 90% [.071, .108], SRMR = .064, or WLSMV, CFI = .882, TLI = .848, RMSEA = .073, 90% [.053, .092], SRMR = .060, was used as the estimation method. With ML, TLI and RMSEA were subpar whereas CFI and SRMR were acceptable. With WLSMV, neither CFI nor TLI were acceptable, yet RMSEA and SRMR were adequate, hence the mixed results. Despite this concern, the overall scale had acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .88$). The overall scale also contained 12 items (identical to Study 3) with an overall $M = 3.64$ ($SD = 0.73$). All three factors, anti-pluralism ($\alpha = .84$ and $\omega = .81$), anti-elitism ($\alpha = .76$ and $\omega = .73$), and people-centrism ($\alpha = .77$ and $\omega = .74$) had reasonable psychometric properties. All correlations were statistically significant at $p < .001$. Anti-pluralism and anti-elitism were strongly linked ($r = .53$), as was the link between anti-pluralism and people-centrism ($r = .60$). The correlation between anti-elitism and people-centrism was also strong ($r = .60$).

Left-wing scale

The LWP model also yielded mixed results irrespective of whether ML, CFI = .899, TLI = .870, RMSEA = .082, 90% [.063, .102], SRMR = .064, or WLSMV, CFI = .910, TLI = .884, RMSEA = .062, 90% [.041, .083], SRMR = .062, was utilized. In the maximum likelihood model, CFI and RMSEA were close to acceptable cutoffs, TLI was poor and SRMR was adequate. In contrast, the WLSMV model has sufficient CFI, RMSEA, and SRMR, but poor TLI. The overall scale also contained 12 items (identical to Study 3) with an overall $M = 3.75$ ($SD = 0.62$) and sound internal consistency ($\alpha = .85$ and $\omega = .75$). With the exception of the omega coefficient for anti-pluralism, all factors had acceptable psychometrics: anti-pluralism ($\alpha = .66$ and $\omega = .58$), anti-elitism ($\alpha = .69$ and $\omega = .67$), and people-centrism ($\alpha = .75$ and $\omega = .71$). All correlations were statistically significant at $p < .001$. Anti-pluralism and anti-elitism were strongly linked ($r = .52$), as was the relationship between anti-pluralism and people-centrism ($r = .60$). The link between anti-elitism and people-centrism was also strong ($r = .57$). These correlations can be found in Table 16.

Model comparisons. The three-factor model of LWP produced better fit than single-factor model of LWP regardless of estimation methods, ML: $\Delta\chi^2 = 22.89$ ($df = 3$), $p < .001$, WLSMV: $\Delta\chi^2 = 8.947$ ($df = 3$), $p = .03$. The RWP three-factor model also yielded better fit than a single-factor model, ML: $\Delta\chi^2 = 76.49$ ($df = 3$), $p < .001$, WLSMV: $\Delta\chi^2 = 32.35$ ($df = 3$), $p < .001$. The last model comparison used all 24 items comparing a model in which all items load on a single factor of populist attitudes versus a models that has 12 items load on a left-wing factor and 12 items load on a right-wing factor. The dual-factor model performed better than a single-factor model of populist

attitudes with ML estimations, $\Delta\chi^2 = 35.01$ ($df = 1$), $p < .001$.

Relationship between the scales

The two scales were highly correlated, $r = .78$, $p < .001$, as mentioned above. All the correlations between the different factors across both scales were significant ($p < .001$; see Table 16). Left-wing anti-pluralism was strongly linked to all three right-wing factors: anti-pluralism ($r = .68$), anti-elitism ($r = .52$), and people-centrism ($r = .55$). Left-wing anti-elitism showed the highest correlation to right-wing anti-elitism ($r = .74$), followed by right-wing people-centrism ($r = .53$) and anti-pluralism ($r = .40$). Left-wing people-centrism was also strongly correlated to all right-wing factors: anti-pluralism ($r = .42$), anti-elitism ($r = .54$), and people-centrism ($r = .68$).

Validity tests

See Table 17 for all Pearson correlation coefficients for the nomological net. Consistent with my expectations, right-wing populist attitudes were strongly linked to RWA, social dominance orientation, nativism, ethnonationalism, conspiracy beliefs, collective narcissism, and extraversion. The negative relationship between RWP to civic nationalism was expected albeit not significant. However, the associations between RWP to self-esteem and well-being, were not consistent with expectations, as populists have a sense of anomie and alienation from society (e.g., Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Jami & Kimmelmeier, 2021). That is, they believe society is leaving them behind, and are cynical to those who lead society. Right-wing populist attitudes were inversely linked to conscientiousness and not linked to neuroticism ; both observations were inconsistent with my predictions (e.g., Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020). In short, there was superb evidence for the validity of the RWP scale when it came to political tendencies like

RWA, but poor evidence in terms of mental health or personality traits linkages.

As anticipated (see Table 17), left-wing populist attitudes were associated with LWA, conspiracy beliefs, civic nationalism, collective narcissism, and extraversion. Inconsistent with my expectations, left-wing populist attitudes were also correlated to ethnonationalism, nativism, self-esteem, well-being, low conscientiousness, and low openness (cf., Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013; Jami & Kimmelmeier, 2021; Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020). Left-wing populist attitudes were also linked to social dominance orientation, which is interesting, as I was unsure of the relationship between these two constructs at the end of the literature review.

Because these two populism scales were largely correlated to many of same variables in the same direction, I next conducted some tests of effect size differences using the Meng et al. (1992) approach – the same technique used in Study 3. Surprisingly, the two scales did not differ in the strength of their relationship to LWA ($p = .78$). The effect size differences did emerge in that right-wing populist attitudes had stronger correlations with RWA ($p < .001$), social dominance orientation ($p < .001$), nativism ($p < .001$), ethnonationalism ($p < .001$), conspiracy beliefs ($p = .01$), and collective narcissism ($p < .001$) than left-wing populist attitudes. Right-wing populist attitudes also had a stronger positive relationship ($p = .03$) to extraversion compared to left-wing populist attitudes. The two did not differ in self-esteem and well-being.

I next conducted a series of regression models with scales as a means to isolate the unique variance of each scale. See Table 17 for beta coefficients as well. The regression results for right-wing populist attitudes are generally supportive of my predictions, and nearly identical to the zero order correlation results. Consistent with my

predictions, right-wing populist attitudes were associated with RWA, social dominance orientation, nativism, ethnonationalism, low civic nationalism, conspiracy beliefs, collective narcissism, and high extraversion. Surprisingly, right-wing populist attitudes were still linked to LWA.

The regression results paint a clearer picture of left-wing populist attitudes with the politically focused variables. As expected, left-wing populist attitudes were linked to LWA, conspiracy beliefs, and civic nationalism. Importantly, left-wing populist attitudes were unrelated to ethnonationalism, but negatively related to nativism, and RWA. The only unexpected outcome was the nonsignificant relationship between left-wing populist attitudes and collective narcissism. Left-wing populist attitudes were unrelated to all mental health and personality variables.

Factor-level results

For the right-wing populism scale (see Table 18), anti-pluralism tended to have bigger effect sizes for nearly all criteria compared to anti-elitism and people-centrism. The RWP factors were in lockstep in terms of directionality with the overall scale. All three right-wing factors were linked to RWA, SDO, nativism, ethnonationalism, conspiracy beliefs, and collective narcissism. The factors also confirm some of my expectations: anti-pluralism was linked neuroticism, both anti-pluralism and anti-elitism were associated with extraversion. All the factors, against my predictions, were linked to self-esteem and well-being. Surprisingly, people-centrism was related to life-satisfaction, and both anti-pluralism and anti-elitism were associated with low conscientiousness.

The LWP factors (see Table 19) mirrored those results of RWP with anti-pluralism typically having the strongest effect sizes. As hypothesized, all three factors

predicted LWA, collective narcissism, and conspiracy beliefs. Both anti-pluralism and people-centrism predicted civic nationalism and both anti-pluralism and anti-elitism were related to extraversion which were consistent with my predictions. There are some notable contradictions to my hypotheses as well: all three factors were linked to self-esteem, RWA, SDO, nativism, and ethnonationalism, and both anti-pluralism and people-centrism were associated with well-being.

Discussion

Study 4 had several goals. Specifically, I sought to provide additional confirmation to the factor structure and psychometrics of the RWP and LWP scales, link them to their nomological net variables, and add reverse-coded items into the models as a means to safeguard against response bias. There was mixed evidence for these goals.

The goal of confirming the factor structure of RWP and LWP was largely successful. Despite needing to address response bias concerns, the factor structure for both scales were replicated. Although model fit was a bit mixed with some fit indices being a bit below the ideal cutoff scores, the best models in Study 4 were identical to those found in Study 3 in terms of dimensionality and items. I also engaged in model comparisons which showed that both LWP and RWP are better conceptualized as a three-factor model as opposed to being a unidimensional model. Finally, I also found that two-higher order populist attitudes (LWP, RWP) have better fit than singular conception of populist attitudes. In this sense, conceptions of right-wing and left-wing populist attitudes as three-factor models and the items that measure them have some robustness at least in two US convenience samples. Moreover, the psychometrics were adequate in this Study 4, showing now that these two scales and their factors can be reliable and unidimensional.

The correlations of the RWP scale were similar to previous research with regards to its relationship to RWA, SDO, nativism, ethnonationalism, conspiracy beliefs, and collective narcissism (cf., Castanho Silva et al., 2017; Cichocka, 2016; Golec de Zavala et al., 2019; Rydgren, 2007; Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020). However, links between RWP to self-esteem, well-being and conscientiousness were the reverse of what was expected. Equally surprisingly, RWP was unrelated to neuroticism and low life satisfaction (cf. Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020). These findings provide an interesting contrast. Right-wing populist attitudes in line with theoretical expectations to all of its politically focused nomological net variables based on theory, but were not consistently related with the personality traits and mental health variables.

The LWP scale yielded mixed results, but was linked to important nomological criteria as well. The most important validity correlation is the one with the inclusiveness aspect of left-wing populism (e.g., March, 2017; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017) which was tapped by the idea of civic nationalism, an inclusive form of national spirit (Saucier, 2014). This is a major point of separation as inclusiveness is the most fundamental difference between the populist right and left (Algan et al., 2019; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013). Moreover, the links between left-wing populist attitudes to LWA, collective narcissism, SDO, and conspiracy beliefs are consistent with my expectation based on the literature (cf., Akkerman et al., 2017; Castanho Silva et al., 2017; De La Torre, 2016a; Golec de Zavala et al., 2019). Yet, the links between left-wing populist attitudes to ethnonationalism, nativism, self-esteem, well-being, conscientiousness and openness went in the opposite direction (cf., Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013; Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020). Though I lack a

compelling explanation, I speculate that it likely has to do with which variables were used to measure left-wing populism in previous studies, such as using support for a particular candidate which are not the same as an actual measure of populist left attitudes. It is possible that support for a left-wing populist candidate is not equivalent to holding left-wing populist attitudes.

With a few exceptions, the LWP and RWP factors were related to nomological net variables in the same direction as the combined scales. Anti-pluralism in both scales tended to be the strongest factor linking with nomological net variables, followed by anti-elitism and people-centrism. There were several peculiarities, as the right-wing people-centrism factor was positively, but not significantly, linked to civic nationalism and life satisfaction, and these two observations are difficult to explain. Aside from that deviation, the three RWP factors were in lockstep. The three factors for LWP were similar in directionality except for a couple of variables. Interestingly, the LWP anti-elitism factor was inversely, though not reliably, related to civic nationalism, and only the LWP anti-pluralism factor had a negative link to life satisfaction. Again, these small deviations are difficult to explain as I expected the factors to be similar in directionality.

The objective to include reverse-coded items was not achieved. All reverse-coded items contributed to poor model fit either via poor factor loadings or were cross-loaded, as indicated by modification indices. The lack of reverse-coded items is a persistent problem in the broader populist attitudes literature. Across two studies, I was unable to develop scales that include some safeguards to response bias. This lack of a safeguard may have distorted some of the findings in Study 4 given the large correlation between RWP and LWP. For instance, some of the inconsistent findings for LWP, like its

correlation to ethnonationalism may be a product of response bias given that neither scale contained reverse-coded items.

To counter this problem, I then conducted regression analysis to predict the nomological net variables while including both left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. The results for the for political tendencies were more consistent once the variance of both forms of populist attitudes were accounted for. In these models I found that right-wing populist attitudes were related to RWA, SDO, nativism, ethnonationalism, low civic nationalism, conspiracy beliefs, collective narcissism, and higher extraversion. These findings were as expected. The left-wing scale also had more consistent results when the right-wing scale was accounted for. Left-wing populist attitudes were linked to LWA, low nativism, civic nationalism, and conspiracy beliefs. The Left-wing scale was no longer linked to ethnonationalism. All of these findings were expected as well. The only unexpected result was the null results between left-wing populist attitudes and collective narcissism.

There are some limitations to note. The study is likely prone to response bias as no reverse-coded items could be included as part of the LWP and RWP scales, and response bias may explain some of the unusually high correlations, especially for outcome variables that also had no reverse-coded items. Moreover, the validity correlations, outside of the politically focused ones, were rather inconsistent. Study 5 tests several other validity correlations and criterion variables, as well as a test of the measurement equivalence of these scales in different political contexts, essentially cross-validating these two scales. Most importantly, Study 5 tests the conceptualization of populist attitudes, whether populist attitudes can be divided by the left-right political

spectrum (Figure 4) or if a singular conception of populist attitudes is better (Figure 5), testing whether those six factors across the two scales fit with two higher order-conceptions of populism (LWP, RWP) with a single conception of populist attitudes.

Chapter 10: Study 5

Study 3 was used to establish these the left-wing populist (LWP) and right-wing populist (RWP) scales, providing initial support for predictive validity. Study 4 provides additional support to factor structure of the two scales and links them to key nomological net variables which showed some evidence for convergent and divergent validity. Critically, both of those studies shown via model comparisons that both LWP and RWP are more suitable with three-factors as opposed to a single factor, and that the 24 items used to measure populist attitudes are better utilized with two higher-order populist attitudes (LWP, RWP) instead of a singular, broad one higher-order view of populist attitudes.

The main purpose of Study 5 is to provide another comprehensive test of the dimensionality, including a model comparison to assess if the six factors are more compatible with dual populist attitudes (Figure 4) or with one broad form of populist attitudes (Figure 5), and to test the equivalence of these two scales across multiple countries. This provides further empirical evidence that my proposed dual model of populist attitudes is better than a singular model. This model, which includes all six factors, was not testable in previous studies due to power concerns, but it was testable with a large multi-national dataset. I also sought to cross-validate and replicate the nomological net findings and criterion/outcome variables with a multi-national dataset. By confirming this model across three English-speaking countries, Study 5 can establish the statistical equivalence of the two scales which is a necessary step toward comparability in cross-national data.

Data were collected from U.S., Canada, and Australia. These particular countries

were selected because they are all democratic which is a necessary condition for populism to emerge (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017), have either a rise in populism (USA) or populism has been a longstanding element in their politics (Canada and Australia; Norris & Inglehart, 2019) and English speaking which required minimal changes. All of the changes were simply orthographical because of the way in which English is written in each society, and contextual for the right-wing scale. For the latter, rather than having the term “True American,” I changed the term to “True Australian” and “True Canadian” to fit the Australian and Canadian context, respectively.

For the nomological net, I sought to replicate the findings for left-wing authoritarianism, right-wing authoritarianism, nativism, ethnonationalism, and civic nationalism, and to link them to other important constructs such as relative deprivation, anomie, and low political efficacy. These latter three concepts may be better suited to tackle the populist’s general sense of social cynicism and disenfranchisement (e.g., Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2021) more directly than the quality-of-life variables from Study 4 (i.e., self-esteem, well-being, life satisfaction).

For outcome variables, I included items that assessed whether respondents believed society will cease to exist in a 100 years and if economic inequality can destroy society, as populists generally perceive society is eroding (e.g., Betz, 1994; Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). I included items on future activism to determine if there is behavioral intent linked to populism, and beliefs of electoral integrity and media coverage that were broader than those used in Study 3 (for example, there was an item on perceived 2020 voter fraud and another regarding Trump’s responsibility for the January 6 insurrection). Broad items are better suited in a cross-national context.

Method

Participants

Participants were attained from Prolific, consisting of samples from the U.S., Canada, and Australia and were paid \$1.75 USD. I decided to use Prolific as opposed to MTurk because Prolific has better data quality (see Peer et al., 2021). About 300 respondents were collected for each country which is satisfactory for each group in a multigroup factor analysis (e.g., Kline, 2011; Putnick & Bornstein, 2016). The final sample was $N = 909$ (at least 301 respondents per country) after data quality checks; I excluded those who failed more than a single attention check. The attention checks were the same items deployed in Studies 2-4. I did not have to remove participants for completing fewer than 50% of the survey, having duplicates, completing the study too fast or completing the survey with an IP address outside of the three countries.

American Sample. A total of 306 Americans were recruited, but four participants were removed for failing attention checks. The remaining 302 respondents were majority White (69.5%) followed by Black (8.3%), none-White Hispanic (7.0%), Asian (6.3%), multiracial or “Other” (6.6%), and Native American (2%). Most respondents identified as women (52.3%), held a college or an advanced degree (51.9%), and were around the ages of 25 to 54 (70.5%). On a 1 left to 5 right political identification scale, the sample seemed to lean center-left ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 1.19$).

Canadian Sample. The Canadian sample consisted of 307 respondents, but one respondent failed the attention checks. The remaining 306 participants indicated that they are White (56.8%) followed by, Asian (30.3%), Black (4.9%), multiracial or “Other” (4.6%), “First Nation” (1.6%) and non-White Hispanic (0.3%). A slight majority of

respondents identified as women (51.6%). About two thirds of respondents held a college or an advanced degree (67.6%), and nearly all of them were between 18 to 44 years of age (84.1%). On the political identification scale, the sample generally identified as moderates ($M = 2.42$, $SD = 1.06$).

Australian Sample. A total of 306 Australian respondents took the survey, but five of whom failed the attention checks. Most participants indicated that they are White (66.4%) followed by, Asian (20.9%), multiracial or “Other” (8.0%), Blacks (2%), non-White Hispanics (0.6%) and Aboriginals (0.3%). About 49.5% of respondents identified as women and another 48.2% indicated they identified as men. About 61.8% of respondents held a college or an advanced degree, and nearly all of them were between 18 to 44 years of age (81.1%). On the political identification scale, the sample generally identified as moderates ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 0.95$).

Procedure and materials

The survey was hosted on Qualtrics®. Respondents were given a consent form, and then answered questions concerning the same demographic information mentioned in the previous studies. All respondents completed both the RWP and LWP scales though the order was randomized. That is, some participants completed the LWP scale and the RWP scale second and vice-versa. Afterwards, respondents completed a set of criterion variables as well as some of the ideological measures and individual difference measures which were presented in a randomized order.

Nomological net variables. I utilized a three-item measure on relative deprivation ($\alpha = .78$; e.g., “If we need anything from the government, people like me always have to wait longer than others,” Bos et al., 2020), two item scales for both internal ($r =$

.71; e.g., “I am good at understanding and assessing important political issues,”) and external political efficacy ($r = .67$; e.g., “Politicians strive to keep in close touch with the people.”) which were developed by Groskurth et al. (2021). Participants also completed a 12-item measure of anomie with two factors, one regarding society ($\alpha = .80$; e.g., “People think that there are no clear moral standards to follow”) and another government/ leadership ($\alpha = .85$; “The government uses its power legitimately” [reversed]) which contained four reverse-coded items (Teymoori et al., 2016). The other assessments of validity correlations were right-wing authoritarianism (RWA; $\alpha = .77$), left-wing authoritarianism (LWA; $\alpha = .87$), ethnonationalism ($\alpha = .88$), nativism ($\alpha = .87$), and civic nationalism ($r = .68$) which were the same items as in Study 4. All items were anchored on a Likert scale with choices from 1 *strongly disagree* to 7 *strongly agree*.

Criterion variables. I measured four items on future political activism which examined either future unconventional activism ($\alpha = .84$; e.g., “With current politics in mind, how likely in the future are you to join a strike?”), future conventional activism, (two items; $r = .55$; “With current politics in mind, how likely in the future are you to donate to a political group or campaign?”), and an item assessing whether in the future they will encourage others to take political action, confidence in society lasting existing in 100 years and whether economic inequality will ruin society, and five items assessing the perceived legitimacy of the next electoral cycle. The latter five items assessed whether people believe votes will be counted fairly, whether TV news and journalists favor the establishment, respectively, perceptions that politicians are bought by special interests, and another on the suppression of non-establishment candidates. Though these variables can fit into a single score based on reliability ($\alpha = .74$), they were not

particularly unidimensional ($\omega = .54$). I decided to test each item individually. The activism and election items were scored on a 1 *extremely unlikely* to 7 *extremely likely* Likert-type scale whereas the confidence items were on 1 *extremely unconfident* to 7 *extremely confident*. All survey items not used in a previous study can be found in Appendix C.

Analytical Framework

I first examined the two higher-order factor model (Figure 4) versus the single higher-order factor model (Figure 5). Afterward, I tested for the statistical equivalence of the scales across the three countries. For measurement invariance/multigroup factor analysis (MGFA), the same criteria used in Study 3 and 4 were deployed to determine model fit. To assess improvements in model fit when testing a sequence of nested models, changes in CFI and RMSEA were used to determine if invariance was met (e.g., Chen, 2007; Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). Specifically, a .01 change in CFI indicates noteworthy differences between models whereas a .015 change in RMSEA signifies meaningful differences in model fit. If a model failed the measurement invariance tests, a follow up analysis with the alignment method could be utilized to determine the degree of non-invariance for the failed metric and scalar invariance tests (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014; Muthén & Asparouhov, 2018). If the degree of non-invariance exceeded 25% then its approximate invariance is unacceptable, and thus cannot yield reliable means (Cieciuch et al., 2018).

Both scales were subjected to four measurement models testing for configural, metric, scalar, and residual invariance with each model having more stringent constraints than the previous model (see Putnick & Bornstein, 2016; Fischer & Karl, 2019).

Configural models test whether the same underlying dimension can be identified in different samples. Metric models assess if scale intervals are also equivalent across samples, that is whether factor loadings are of the same magnitude across societies. Scalar models determine if any mean differences between countries are due to the latent factor, not from measurement error. Finally, residual invariance models test if residual variances are similar across groups which indicates that error variance is similar across all groups. I tested the invariance of both LWP and RWP scales with maximum likelihood (ML) first followed by diagonally least weighted squares with robust standard errors (WLSMV).

Finally, I tested the intra-class correlations (ICC) of the RWP and LWP scales across the countries tested. A large ICC suggests that there is substantial variance between countries, rather than within countries. If ICC is low or nonexistent, then there are little differences across countries. The criterion variables were predicted by linear regression models whereas the validity tests were examined with Pearson correlations. I controlled for the same variables, but also countries, and right-wing and left-wing authoritarianism, as authoritarianism has a complex relationship with populism (e.g., Bonikowski, 2017; Bakker et al., 2016; Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2023). Thus, I wanted to ensure that these two populism scales indeed have predictive power beyond authoritarianism.

Results

One-factor vs two-factor model test: proposed model.

I tested two various conceptions of populist attitudes seen on Figure 4 (two higher-order factor model) and 5 (one higher-order factor model). I utilized a MGFA with maximum likelihood only as the inclusion of both LWP and RWP items were too

demanding for WLSMV given the sample size of each country.¹⁷ Although the two-factor model converged, the left-wing people-centrism factor had a negative variance using maximum likelihood which I then addressed by constraining this particular factor to zero as recommended by Chen and colleagues (2001).¹⁸

The two-factor model had mediocre fit, CFI = .841, TLI = .822, RMSEA = .091, 95% [.087, .095], SRMR = .092. Whereas RMSEA was acceptable, SRMR was a bit over its acceptable cutoff and CFI and TLI were rather poor; the latter two fit indices were especially poor as they penalize model complexity (e.g., Kenny, 2015). The one-factor model produced unacceptable fit across all indices, CFI = .794, TLI = .769, RMSEA = .104, 95% [.100, .107], SRMR = .122. Model comparison indicated that the two-factor model produced better fit, $\Delta\chi^2 = 554.02$ ($df = 0$). I then checked if this pattern was the case for each country individually. Indeed, the two higher-order factor model fit better than the single higher-order factor in the USA sample, $\Delta\chi^2 = 267.37$ ($df = 0$) as well as the Canadian sample, $\Delta\chi^2 = 151.6$ ($df = 0$) and the Australian sample, $\Delta\chi^2 = 135.05$ ($df = 0$). In short, the two higher-order conceptions of populist attitudes performed better than the single higher-order factor of populist attitudes regardless of if it was with the unified sample or with each country individually.

Modification indices. Because model fit was mediocre for the two-factor model,

¹⁷ To sufficiently compute the asymptotic covariance matrix of WLSMV, an additional 144 respondents were needed for each country. This calculation is based on the number manifest variables (24) multiplied by the number of categories on the 7-point Likert scale minus 1 (6). Given that WLSMV and maximum likelihood produced similar findings across models and due to budget constraints, no further data was collected.

¹⁸ I examined the scaling, normality, and outliers of all items prior to constraining left-wing people-centrism factor to zero. Other concerns that may contribute toward negative variance like sample fluctuations or model identification were not applicable.

I examined modification indices to understand the sources of poor fit. This is one of the few times in which applying modification indices are applicable (versus removing items of poor fit) as the items are closely worded (Brown, 2015). Note the items were closely worded because they were constructed on with parallel construction approach (Conway et al., 2018). According to modification indices, correlating the items, “Although members of the working class are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same.” and “Although true [national identification] are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same,” as well as these two items, “The working class should be asked whenever important decisions are taken.” and “True [national identification] should be asked whenever important decisions are taken.”, and correlating left-wing and right-wing anti-elitism factors could substantially improve model fit. The only item (RWP scale) that was removed was, “The government is pretty much run by a few bureaucrats and so-called “experts” looking out for themselves,” because this item loaded on both left-wing and right-wing anti-elitism factors.¹⁹ These modifications produced noticeably better overall fit, CFI = .903, TLI = .889, RMSEA = .073, 90% [.069, .077], SRMR = .075.

Measurement invariance and psychometrics

Left-wing maximum likelihood model. I next checked if the scales are equivalent across cultures. The LWP scale produced a configural model with mixed results, CFI = .919, TLI = .895, RMSEA = .090, 90% [.081, .098], SRMR = .056.

¹⁹ Because removal of this item substantially improved model fit, I wanted to examine if this affects the correlation between RWP and LWP. I found that removing this item slightly lowers the correlation between the two scales, $r = .39, p < .001$. The correlation of the two scales when no items are removed is similar, $r = .42, p < .001$

Although CFI, RMSEA and SRMR were adequate, TLI was below its acceptable cut-off. The metric model produced better fit than the configural model, CFI = .920, TLI = .907, RMSEA = .084, 90% [.076, .092], SRMR = .059 as all fit indices were at their acceptable cut-offs. The scalar model, CFI = .910, TLI = .905, RMSEA = .085, 90% [.078, .093], SRMR = .062 and residual model, CFI = .904, TLI = .911, RMSEA = .082, 90% [.075, .090], SRMR = .066, were both satisfactory. From one model to the next, Δ CFI and Δ RMSEA were not past the cut-off ranges, showing evidence for invariance.

LWP WLSMV model. Results from the WLSMV analyses generally mirrored the results from maximum likelihood. The configural model produced acceptable fit with the exception of TLI: CFI = .922, TLI = .899, RMSEA = .065, 90% [.055, .074], SRMR = .050. The metric model produced exceptional fit, CFI = .953, TLI = .946, RMSEA = .047, 90% [.037, .057], SRMR = .053, as did the scalar model, CFI = .942, TLI = .940, RMSEA = .050, 90% [.041, .059], SRMR = .057. Lastly, the residual model was also satisfactory, CFI = .938, TLI = .942, RMSEA = .049, 90% [.040, .057], SRMR = .062. Again, there was no meaningful Δ RMSEA to suggest the lack of invariance, but Δ CFI was from the metric model to the scalar model indicated slight invariance.

Right-wing maximum likelihood model. The RWP scale produced a configural model with satisfactory results, CFI = .956, TLI = .943, RMSEA = .073, 90% [.064, .082], SRMR = .044. The metric model produced similar fit, CFI = .953, TLI = .946, RMSEA = .071, 90% [.063, .080], SRMR = .055. The scalar model, CFI = .939, TLI = .936, RMSEA = .078, 90% [.070, .086], SRMR = .060 had a Δ CFI that exceeded the cut-off, but a Δ RMSEA that was acceptable. Finally, the residual model, CFI = .935, TLI = .939, RMSEA = .076, 90% [.068, .083], SRMR = .061, was satisfactory. Δ CFI and

Δ RMSEA were not past cut-offs with the exception of the Δ CFI in the scalar model.

RWP WLSMV model. The WLSMV generally mirrored the results from maximum likelihood estimation. The configural model produced satisfactory fit, CFI = .947, TLI = .932, RMSEA = .060, 90% [.051, .069], SRMR = .041. The metric model produced exceptional fit, CFI = .963, TLI = .957, RMSEA = .048, 90% [.038, .057], SRMR = .050. The scalar model, CFI = .949, TLI = .946, RMSEA = .053, 90% [.044, .062], SRMR = .055 was satisfactory, but Δ CFI was past its cutoff. Lastly, the residual model was also satisfactory, CFI = .948, TLI = .952, RMSEA = .050, 90% [.042, .059], SRMR = .058. Again, Δ CFI and Δ RMSEA were not past cut-offs except for the Δ CFI in the scalar model. Nevertheless, the models produced acceptable fit. Because the scales both showed strong evidence of invariance in nearly every model, I decided not to proceed with additional analyses aimed at alignment optimization.

Psychometrics. Both scales were reliable: LWP ($\alpha = .86$) and RWP ($\alpha = .89$) with the total sample. The total sample seemed to hold higher populist left attitudes ($M = 4.43$, $SD = 0.94$) compared to their populist right attitudes ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.08$). The factors were mostly sound except for both anti-pluralism factors. For the LWP scale, anti-pluralism was poor ($\alpha = .59$ and $\omega = .39$), yet both anti-elitism ($\alpha = .79$ and $\omega = .73$) and people-centrism ($\alpha = .88$ and $\omega = .85$) were respectable. For the RWP factors, anti-pluralism was mediocre ($\alpha = .69$ and $\omega = .68$), yet both anti-elitism ($\alpha = .81$ and $\omega = .79$) and people-centrism ($\alpha = .92$ and $\omega = .90$) were superb. See Table 20 for psychometrics of each country. In short, across all three countries the results were uniform. The means for LWP and RWP were fairly similar in all three countries. All scales and sub-scales had adequate reliability and unidimensionality. In all three countries, only left-wing anti-

pluralism was somewhat poor, $\alpha = .57-.61$ and $\omega = .33-.54$.

Factor intercorrelations across samples. See Table 21 for correlations with a unified sample and for each country. Broadly, the factors for RWP have stronger correlations with each other across all three countries than the LWP dimensions. Moreover, anti-elitism may be the element that binds left and right populists as both anti-elitism factors generally had a stronger correlation with each other across the entire sample than the other pairs did. The American subset had the weakest intercorrelations between the LWP and RWP factors whereas the Australian subset had the highest correlation among the LWP and RWP factors. Among the LWP factors, anti-pluralism tended to be modestly related to RWP factors compared to left-wing anti-elitism and people-centrism. This pattern is similar among the RWP factors in which, right-wing anti-pluralism was only modestly related to LWP factors compared to right-wing anti-elitism and people-centrism.

Validity tests.

Correlations. The two scales were still highly correlated ($r = .42$) but not as high as the previous two studies. Right-wing populist attitudes were negatively linked to education ($r = -.16$), as were left-wing populist attitudes ($r = -.08$). Right-wing populist attitudes were linked to right-wing identification ($r = .46$), whereas left-wing populist attitudes were marginally related to left-wing identification ($r = -.06, p = .068$).

See Table 22 for the summary of the validity correlations for both scales and Table 23 for all factor-level results. As anticipated, LWP was correlated with relative deprivation, left-wing authoritarianism, both forms of anomie, and negatively with external political efficacy (cf., Bos et al., 2020; Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Van Prooijen

& Krouwel, 2020). There was no reliable association between LWP and internal political efficacy and civic nationalism (cf., Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013; Van Prooijen & Krouwel, 2020). LWP was also weakly linked to right-wing authoritarianism, nativism, and ethnonationalism. For RWP, the expected correlations emerged for all outcome variables except high internal political efficacy; it was linked to relative deprivation, low external political efficacy, right-wing authoritarianism, nativism, ethnonationalism, both forms of anomie, and low civic nationalism.

The factor-level results, in both scales, found that that anti-elitism generally had largest effects sizes in terms of political disenfranchisement/marginalization (the first five variables on Table 23). Specifically, left-wing anti-elitism was more generally linked to relative deprivation, low internal and external political efficacy, and feelings of anomie. Right-wing anti-elitism was also had the most consistent correlations among these variables, predicting all but internal political efficacy.

Interestingly, both forms of anti-pluralism were consistently linked to political tendencies. Left-wing anti-pluralism had the largest association to left-wing authoritarianism and civic nationalism among the LWP factors. Right-wing anti-pluralism yielded the biggest relationships with right-wing authoritarianism, ethnonationalism and low civic nationalism between the three RWP factors. Right-wing anti-elitism had a slightly larger link to nativism than right-wing anti-pluralism. In both scales, people-centrism had some linkages to some political tendencies and political disenfranchisement variables, but this factor did not demonstrate a noticeable pattern.

Linear regression. The intraclass correlations were rather low ($ICC = 0.00-0.08$), suggesting that countries do not differ in terms of the means of the outcome variables;

hence, I determined that an ordinary least square regression model was appropriate. In each model, I controlled left-right ideological self-placement, country, both left-wing and right-wing authoritarianism, gender, ethnicity, education, and age. See Tables 24 through 27 for all models including factor-level regression models.

The first column on Table 24 indicated that LWP was negatively related to confidence of society existing in the next 100 years, but RWP was unrelated to this idea. Surprisingly, right-wing authoritarianism was also related to this lack of confidence. The second column indicated that LWP was associated with the confidence in the idea that economic inequality will destroy society. The last three columns pertain to two different types of future activism and whether one will encourage others to get involved in activism. In these models, LWP was linked to all three outcomes whereas RWP was inversely related to conventional activism and encouraging others to be involved in activism. A critical differentiation does occur between LWP and left-wing authoritarianism, as both variables pointed in opposite directions for conventional activism and encouraging others to be involved in activism models.

Table 25 summarizes findings for outcome variables pertaining to future election cycles. The first column reveals that both RWP and LWP are negatively related to the idea that votes will be counted fairly in the future. On the second and third column, respectively, both RWP and LWP are linked to the view that TV news favors the political establishment, and that the political establishment tries to suppress outsiders. Moreover, the last two column indicates that both versions of populism believe that in the next election cycle politicians will be bought by special interests, and that journalists do not provide fair coverage of the news. These pattern of results contrast with left-wing

authoritarianism, as it was marginally linked to perceptions of votes being counted fairly, the lack of perceived establishment bias, and perceptions of fair journalism. For right-wing authoritarianism, it was largely unrelated to outcome variables but was linked to believing politicians are *not* bought.

Table 26 indicates that among the left-wing subscales, anti-elitism was generally the strongest predictor for non-activism related variables. Anti-elitism predicted the lack of confidence in society existing in 100 years, the confidence that inequality will erode society, that votes will not be counted fairly, that the news will favor the establishment, that the establishment will suppress outsiders, that politicians will be bought, and that journalists will be impartial. For future activism, both anti-pluralism and people centrism were generally better predictors than was anti-elitism. Specifically, Anti-pluralism was a predictor of all three outcomes whereas people-centrism was related to unconventional future activism and encouraging others to get involved in the political process.

Table 27 holds the results for the right-wing factors. Interestingly neither anti-pluralism nor people-centrism were predictors of future of activism and in general, were inconsistent in their linkages to outcome variables. Only the right-wing anti-elitism scale was a consistent predictor. This factor predicted unconventional future activism, as well all five variables pertaining to elections: that votes will not be counted fairly, that the news will favor the establishment, that the establishment will suppress outsiders, that politicians will be bought, and that journalists will be impartial. Moreover, anti-elitism also predicted low confidence in society existing in 100 years, and the confidence that high inequality will erode society.

Discussion

The goal of Study 5 was to examine these two scales across an international sample. I collected data from the United States, Canada, and Australia. In doing so, I tested the one-higher-order factor model over the two-higher-order factor model, investigated scale equivalency as well as conducted validity and criteria tests.

I tested a one higher-order factor model over a two higher-order factors model with multigroup factor analysis. Though the two higher-order factors model largely produced a model with mixed fit statistics, it was much better than the alternative one higher-order factor of populist attitudes. And this pattern was fairly consistent when I examined each country individually. Therefore, there is empirical evidence that populist attitudes come in two different forms: one for the left-wing and one for the right-wing rather than having these six factors being a part of a singular conception of populist attitudes.

The measurement invariance/MGFA results generally support the compatibility of the scales across three English-speaking cultures. The LWP scale produced configural models that were generally mediocre with some fit indices being acceptable and some of them being a bit below the cut-off point. Despite that, the metric, scalar and residual models showed that the scales are equivalent across cultures and had suitable overall fit statistics even as model stringency increased. The exception was the WMSLV scalar model having a $\Delta CFI = 1.1$, barely below the cutoff. Thus, the conception of left-wing populist attitudes has evidence of cross-national usability.

The RWP scale also had reasonably strong model fit across both estimation methods. The only issue was the drop off in CFI from the metric model to the scalar

model. Both the maximum likelihood and WMSLV models had a ΔCFI exceeding 1 (see Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). Because this was the only evidence challenging the notion of lacking invariance, I did not pursue the alignment method (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2014; Muthén & Asparouhov, 2018), as model fit was generally exceptional and ΔRMSEA never exceeded its cut-off. In short, RWP is generally invariant and suitable for cross-national research.

The validity tests were largely consistent with my expectations. Both LWP and RWP were related to relative deprivation, low external political efficacy, and two conceptions of anomie. This pattern of characteristics is consistent with the idea that populists are feeling disenfranchised from society (e.g., Elchardus & Spruyt, 2016; Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2021). These are the key ways in which the two variants of populism should be rather similar to one another. Relatedly, these two variants were correlated with one another, but were much smaller than what was reported in the previous two studies. Given the range of concepts like anomie, that both variants are linked to, it should not be a surprise that they are correlated.

However, there are points of differentiation as well. RWP was much more strongly related to right-wing authoritarianism, ethnonationalism, and nativism compared to LWP. Whereas RWP was inversely, though not significantly, linked to left-wing authoritarianism, LWP was significantly related to left-wing authoritarianism. The final point of distinction emerges with regards to civic nationalism. LWP had a null relationship to civic nationalism, whereas RWP was strongly inversely related to civic nationalism which highlights the latter's opposition to inclusion.

The factor-level results showed an interesting dichotomy: for variables pertaining

to political disillusionment, anti-elitism had the strongest linkages, but for political tendencies and beliefs, anti-pluralism had the strongest and most consistent linkages. This was the case for both the RWP and LWP scale. This may suggest that anti-elitism is the aspect of populism that entails the cynical views of the elite, and the downtrodden views of the people. Anti-pluralism had the strongest and most robust correlations to political beliefs. Left-wing anti-pluralism was linked to left-wing authoritarianism and civic nationalism whereas right-wing anti-pluralism was associated with right-wing authoritarianism, ethnonationalism and low civic nationalism. This may suggest that this factor may be a nexus in which “thick” ideologies connect to populism. After all, anti-pluralism does indicate who the people oppose such as “scientists,” “racial and sexual minorities,” “bankers,” and the “rich and affluent.”

The linear regression models also showed evidence of criterion validity, especially for LWP. LWP predicted the lack of confidence in society existing in the next 100 years, and confidence in that inequality will destroy society in the future. Moreover, LWP was also linked to future activity for different forms of future activism, the belief that votes will not be counted in the future, that TV news favor the establishment, the view that the establishment will suppress political outsiders and that politicians will be bought by special interests as well as the perception that journalists are unfair. Important to note is that in all models left-wing authoritarianism was controlled for, showing the predictive strength of LWP and how it is a separate construct from left-wing authoritarianism.

Yet, the predictive strength of RWP was not as consistent as LWP. Although RWP was unrelated to any of the confidence variables, and inversely related to all

instances of future activism, it predicted, in the expected direction, all variables pertaining to future elections. People high on RWP believed that in future elections: votes will not be counted fairly, TV news will favor the establishment, the establishment will suppress outsiders, politicians will be bought by special interests, and the lack of partiality from journalists in the future. Critically, RWP, with election related variables, had a much higher predictive strength than right-wing authoritarianism, indicating evidence for RWP being its own psychological construct.

The factors also present some interesting findings in terms of predictive prowess. In both scales, anti-elitism, was the most prominent predictor for outcomes regarding the future of society and elections. Yet, anti-pluralism and people-centrism were better predictors of future activism. Thus, the skeptic in a populist can be found in their anti-elite tendencies and views, but the willingness to participate in any form of activism is dictated by their anti-pluralistic and people-focused views.

There are limitations in Study 5. Though many of the variables assessed future viewpoints (i.e., next election) or future behaviors (i.e., activism), the nature of this study does not allow for any inference of causality. Other issues are the limited number of countries and relatedly, the lack of a non-English speaking sample. Populism has been rather frequent on virtually every continent except Africa (e.g., Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Norris & Inglehart, 2019), but this study only had countries from North America and Australia. Moreover, even with successful measurement invariance results, there is no guarantee that the scale will maintain its comparability across cultures without tests from non-English speaking populations like India, Germany, Brazil, Chile, Spain, or Greece.

Chapter 11 General Discussion

The goal of this dissertation was to contribute to both method and theory, and innovate the measurement of populist attitudes. In doing so, this dissertation proposed two new populism scales to account for the differences of populist attitudes across the left-right political spectrum. Moreover, the left-wing and right-wing populism scales addressed some key issues like predictive validity.

Contributions to the literature

From a theoretical standpoint, when developing their inventories scholars of populist attitudes have failed to take seriously a key aspect of the ideational approach. The ideational approach argues that populism has some commonalities across various manifestations but that it does not manifest without some kind of host ideology (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). The latter aspect of the ideational approach is critically left out on many scales. Although scholars have argued that their scales utilized this framework (Akkerman et al., 2014; Castanho Silva et al., 2018; Oliver & Rahn, 2016; Schulz et al., 2018), these academics designed context-poor scales that have failed to include the host ideology that populism latches onto. In this sense, their scales are only partially theoretically consistent with the ideational framework. Specifically, their scales do tap the “thin” or common elements to all forms of populism, but not the “full” and unique ideologies that help bring populism to existence. Yet, these authors provided items that clearly function as a steppingstone toward scales – scales that include the “full” ideology such as the left-wing and right-wing populism inventories in the present research.

My approach was animated by the goal to achieve a theoretically meaningful

application of the ideational approach to populist attitudes. I conducted five studies in this dissertation to tackle this theoretical issue by incorporating the left-right political context within the measurement of populist attitudes. I choose the left-right context for my scales as populism often emerges within the fringes of the political left and right (Akkerman & Rooduijn, 2017).

To develop these scales, I began with two exploratory assessments. First, I determined if cultural and economic elites were salient in the first place. This was critical as measures of populist attitudes focused almost exclusively on the political elite (Jungkunz et al., 2021). Results indicated that lay individuals indeed recognize non-political elites. Generally, participants who identified as left of center reported more economic elites whereas those who identified right of center noted slightly more cultural elites. This provided justification for the economic (left-wing) and cultural (right-wing) context of populism. The second exploratory study was an integrative study examining the three themes of populist attitudes: anti-pluralism, anti-elitism, people-centrism, as theorized by Castanho Silva et al. (2020). I conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) which found that each theme or facet emerged as its own factor. Anti-pluralism indicates the lack of recognition of different ideas and values, majoritarianism and Manicheanism. Anti-elitism describes the disdain of those in power and powerlessness one feels relative to the elite. People-centrism characterizes the people's desire to have the most say in the political process.

I followed the parallel construction approach by changing the referents in existing scales to capture different constructs (Conway et al., 2018). This approach has been useful in reviving research in left-wing authoritarianism; by simply changing keywords in

a right-wing authoritarianism scale to fit the left-wing context, one can successfully capture left-wing authoritarianism. I took existing, context-poor scales of populist attitudes and incorporated the left-right/economic-cultural context to develop two new measures of populist attitudes. Relying on the parallel construction approach, I showed that researchers can change the terms on context-poor scales and actually incorporate the host ideology into populist attitudes. This ultimately led to a successful and importantly, theoretically consistent usage of the ideational approach. Others can utilize the notion of parallel construction to combine a “thick” ideology with a “thin” one (populism in this case). Relatedly, another key contribution of this research is the utility in developing scales through minimal changes of previous scales through parallel construction (Conway et al., 2018). Thus, researchers do not have to construct entirely new measures from scratch and instead, can build on existing measures and with modest changes, they can measure new concepts. Novel and worthwhile concepts can be developed sooner, potentially facilitating the production of future research.

An example of a novel concept that could be constructed with the approach utilized in this study is a measure of centrist populist attitudes. Though populism emerges on the radical fringes of the political spectrum (Rooduijn & Akkerman, 2017), there are a few centrist populists like Emmanuel Macron (France) and the Action of Dissatisfied Citizens (ANO), a political party in Czechia (Havlík, 2019; Perottino & Guasti, 2020). Both forms of centrist populism emphasize the importance of technocrats, a focus on being outsiders in their political context, and a pushback against other forms of populism. Though ANO clearly has illiberal tendencies, such as the focus on majoritarianism like their left-right counterparts (Havlík, 2019), this is not the case for Macron. Perottino and

Guasti (2020) argue that centrist or technocratic populism transcends the left-right political dimension which may suggest that additional context may be necessary to tap centrist populist attitudes.

With the left-wing and right-wing scale, some previous research can be reassessed. For instance, Norris and Inglehart (2019) argued that the rise of right-wing authoritarian-populism occurred because of the resistance to cultural change by members of society who hold traditional values. In their research, they used mistrust of institutions as a measure of populist attitudes instead of an *actual* measure of populist attitudes. Now with this new measure of right-wing populist attitudes, the link between right-wing populism to traditional and religious values can be thoroughly tested. This scale could be used to determine if there is a link between right-wing populist attitudes to Christendom as well as if right-wing populist attitudes also has link to religious values in Islamic and Hindu societies.

The validity of two populisms

Many scholars have concluded that all instances of populist attitudes, like those on the left or right ends of the political spectrum, can be measured by context-poor scales (e.g., Akkerman et al., 2017; Akkerman et al., 2014; Wettstein et al., 2020). Only Castanho Silva et al. (2018) developed scales to measure left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. Yet, these authors seem to have treated those two scales as an afterthought in their study, as they focused more on the context-poor version of their scale. Moreover, my examination of the citations of the Castanho Silva et al. (2018) via Google Scholar showed that their left-wing and right-wing scales were not utilized in other studies at the time of this writing. Their left-wing and right-wing scales do have

flaws in terms of content, and it was unclear why they were unidimensional compared to these author's multi-dimensional context-poor scale.²⁰

This dissertation produced evidence for a dual model of populist attitudes via structural, nomological, and predictive validity. In terms of structural validity, Studies 3-5 conducted model comparisons, testing the idea of a singular conception of populist attitudes versus the proposed dual model. In Study 3 and Study 4, model comparisons showed that left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes are better suited than having all 24 items load a single factor that represents all populist attitudes.

Study 5 provided a model comparison to determine if all six factors were better underpinned with the left-right conceptions of populist attitudes or with a broad, all-encompassing form of populist attitudes. Results indicated that the six factors showed a better fit with the two-higher order factors of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. This pattern also held when performing this model comparison in the American, Canadian and Australian data sets separately.

There was also evidence to support the nomological validity of both scales. The nomological net represents theoretical propositions. For instance, if a person is high on left-wing or right-wing populism, then they should be high on anomie. I was able confirm the theoretically predicted connections of the two forms of populist attitudes with related constructs. In terms of political tendencies, the nomological net was rather straightforward; other findings for the nomological net were mixed. Across Study 4 and Study 5, Right-wing populist attitudes (RWP) were linked to right-wing authoritarianism, social

²⁰ Chapter 3 details the issues of the left-wing and right-wing scales from Castanho Silva et al. (2018).

dominance orientation, nativism, ethnonationalism, conspiracy beliefs, collective narcissism, low civic nationalism, relative deprivation, low external political efficacy, and both forms of Anomie as anticipated. Left-wing populist attitudes (LWP) were mostly theoretically consistent with political tendencies; LWP was associated with left-wing authoritarianism, conspiracy beliefs, civic nationalism, collective narcissism, relative deprivation, low external political efficacy, and both facets of Anomie. Though LWP did have unexpected links to right-wing authoritarianism, nativism and ethnonationalism, those associations were corrected once RWP was controlled for. There was a lack of findings for high internal political efficacy for both scales. Overall, among political tendencies, the two scales were consistently linked to key theoretical constructs.

However, the results were mixed for non-political constructs. Neither scale was linked to low levels of mental health nor to the predicted personality traits. Instead, both scales were associated with higher self-esteem and well-being and were unrelated to life satisfaction which was inconsistent with my expectations (cf. Spruyt et al., 2016). Similarly, aside from the links between RWP to both extraversion, the findings with regard to personality were unexpected (cf. Vasilopoulos & Jost, 2020). Another possibility is that populist attitudes are linked to this low happiness variables, but only through a mediator. In Study 5, I found that low political efficacy, anomie and relative deprivation were associated with both variants of populist attitudes; these variables may serve as mediators for low happiness. Put in plain language, populist attitudes are linked to constructs like anomie which leads to *unhappiness*. Yet, populist attitudes on their own do not seem to be linked to unhappiness.

One important note is that the literature on which I based some of my hypotheses

relied on vote choice or context-poor measures as indicators of populist attitudes. Arguably, past research findings might have been at least in part the result of poor measurement of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes. To illustrate beyond the unexpected findings with mental health and personality traits, consider the study by Marchlewska et al. (2018) which examined feelings about different populist candidates and their link to collective narcissism. These authors found that collective narcissism was linked to positive feelings about Trump, but was unrelated to positive feelings about Bernie Sanders despite the broader literature viewing the latter as a populist as well (e.g., Oliver & Rahn, 2016). In this dissertation, however, LWP was related to collective narcissism which contrasts the findings from Marchlewska et al. (2018). Arguably, a more precise measure of populist attitudes can thus address discrepancies or inconsistencies about the nomological net of populist attitudes.

These two measures of populist attitudes also demonstrated their predictive prowess. LWP and RWP differ in what they predict, highlighting their distinctiveness. In Study 3 and Study 5, I found that both LWP and RWP have different views of outgroups, different preferences for political activism, and different social beliefs.

Members of the populist left view right-wing groups unfavorably, prefer to engage in peaceful forms of activism whether it was joining in on strikes or contacting representatives as well as encouraging other to be involved in the political process; they believe that Joe Biden should utilize more executive orders, that Donald Trump was responsible for the January 6 insurrection, that society will not exist in 100 years and that inequality can destroy society. The populist right views left-wing groups poorly, prefer non-peaceful activism – they reported a willingness to take arms against the government,

believe that there was electoral fraud in the US 2020 presidential election, perceived Christian discrimination and do not consider Donald Trump responsible for the January 6 insurrection. This pattern shows clear predictive differences between the two such as their preferred methods of activism like the focus on grassroots by the populist left (see Ivaldi et al., 2017), and different views on society (e.g., March, 2017; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013; Norris & Inglehart, 2019).

There was also convergence of key outcome variables. Both LWP and RWP predicted skepticism on future elections. Members of the populist left and the populist right believe that in future election, votes will not be counted fairly, the news will favor the establishment, the establishment will suppress outsiders, politicians will be bought, and journalists will not be impartial (e.g., Mancosu et al., 2017; Mansbridge & Macedo, 2019; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Kriesi et al., 2006). These findings also demonstrate that populist attitudes are a unique construct, as some scholars indicate concerns that populist attitudes are not distinct from related concepts and lack predictive power (Jungkunz et al., 2021; Rooduijn, 2019). In the present research, Study 5 controlled for authoritarianism, a closely related concept (see Bakker et al., 2016; Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2023; Norris & Inglehart, 2019), and Studies 3-5 controlled for participants' self-identification along the left-right political spectrum. I demonstrated that the measures of left-wing and right-wing populism explain variance beyond authoritarianism and self-identification. In other words, populism is clearly distinct from these well-established constructs. Arguably, a measure of partisanship might have explained additional variability. Yet, authoritarianism might be treated as proxy for partisanship. Conway and McFarland (2019) showed that left-wing authoritarianism is a

predictor of support for Democrats like Hilary Clinton and Barack Obama, whereas right-wing authoritarianism explains variability in support of Republicans like John McCain and Donald Trump.

Relatedly, this dissertation also sought to clarify the relationship between authoritarianism and populism. The anti-pluralistic views of populism are reminiscent of the cognitive rigidity and threat sensitivity of authoritarianism (e.g., Conway et al., 2018). Indeed, populists view despised outgroups as evil and lacking wisdom whereas the authoritarians were broadly opposed to anyone who challenges their arrangement of society (Van Assche et al., 2019). These two aspects of populism and authoritarianism may explain as to why those who are high on both characteristics seem to be the most antithetical democracy and outgroups (Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2023). Specifically, the moralizing Manichaeian undertones of populist attitudes might be an amplifier of authoritarianism's anti-democratic tendencies. It is likely that authoritarianism could determine when a populist movement or party is harmful to society (see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Norris & Inglehart, 2019).

There were some unexpected findings in terms of predictive validity. The left-wing populism scale was unrelated to satisfaction of democracy and trust in institutions which highlight the ambivalent dualism between populists and society (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). The right-wing scale predicted *greater* satisfaction with democracy and trust in institutions. These results are inconsistent with literature as many populist right parties and supporters have some radical anti-government stances (Mudde, 2007; Norris & Inglehart, 2019). It is possible that the right-wing scale separates populism from radicalism, as there are right-wing libertarian populists like the

Argentinian politician Javier Milei (Kestler, 2022).

Are populist attitudes multi-dimensional?

One persistent issue in the literature is whether populist attitudes are multi-dimensional or unidimensional (Castanho Silva et al., 2020; Wuttke et al., 2020). And aside from a single investigation by Wettstein et al. (2020) in which these authors determined that the Schulz et al (2018) scale was multi-dimensional, there are no other studies to determine the dimensionality of populist attitudes.

In this dissertation, Studies 2-5 all suggest populist attitudes are multi-dimensional. Even though the two scales ($r = .42-.78$), and their dimensions were highly correlated ($r = .19-.72$), the data suggested that two measures of populist attitudes and their six factors produced better model fit than a unidimensional measure of populist attitudes. Study 2 had various conceptions of populist attitudes as a part of an integrative exploratory analysis. In this analysis, three coherent dimensions were detected as opposed to a single dimension which shows distinctive elements of populist attitudes. Study 3 and 4 directly tested the superiority of populist attitudes as a multi-dimensional construct via model comparisons. Both studies showed that right-wing populist attitudes are better suited as a three-dimensional construct instead of a unidimensional one. The very same could be said about the dimensionality of left-wing populist attitudes based on its own model comparisons.

The high correlations between the scales warrant further investigation. There is the possibility that some people could entertain both forms of populism. In the 2016 U.S. electoral cycle about 12% of the voters who initially supported Bernie Sanders, switched to Donald Trump once Sanders lost the Democratic primary (Schaffner & Ansolabehere,

2017). Thus, some individuals may seek to join any populist movement, as both the populist left and the populist right have a common enemy: the political elite. Another possibility is that after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, communist parties maintained their worker-focused economics, but also catered to social conservatism to acquire votes. Indeed, Betz (1994) indicated that after the fall of communism, some communist parties, like France Communist Party, promoted race-based policies against non-Europeans. Therefore, one can hold nativistic cultural beliefs and worker-focused economic views. These speculations may draw a parallel to the idea of “wild card” authoritarianism which describes those high on both left-wing and right-wing authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1996). Just as those who are wild-card authoritarians hold nihilistic views and seem to even more punitive than other authoritarians (Smith, 2019), this may be the case with people high on both right-wing and left-wing populist attitudes or “wild-card populists.” A future study could examine whether populism may interact with other political beliefs or tendencies beyond authoritarianism (Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2023). The final point regarding the dimensionality of populist attitudes has to do with the idea that populist attitudes might be “non-compensatory” (Wuttke et al., 2020). The non-compensatory approach argues that one must score high on all dimensions of populist attitudes in order to be considered a populist. One of the ways to tap populist attitudes as non-compensatory is to multiply the scores of the three factors as opposed to averaging them (see Castanho Silva et al., 2018). The latter is more consistent with psychology which is the standard practice for combining factors and has worked in multidimensional constructs. Wuttke et al. (2020) found that the Castanho Silva et al. (2018) and the Schulz et al. (2018) scale vary in their correlations to other populist attitudes depending on the

operationalization strategy. The discrepancy found in these scales may have to do with low scale coherence broadly rather than the need of being non-compensatory. For instance, the homogeneity of the people factor in the Schulz et al. (2018) scale was seemingly incoherent with the other two factors in the scale with regards to predictive abilities and internal structure (see Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2021).

Response bias concerns

In both Study 3 and 4, I adapted reverse-coded versions of nearly each item and placed these items at different parts of inventory, some were at the beginning of the inventory and others were closer to the middle or at the end. Yet, those reverse-coded items routinely produced poor model fit and were rarely inversely correlated to their non-reversed counterparts. A consequence for the lack of reverse-coded items is the lack of safeguards to response bias. The consequence of lacking safeguards to response bias may have influenced some unexpected positive findings such as the link between LWP and ethnonationalism and RWP to left-wing authoritarianism. At the same time, I was able to identify key negative outcomes such as the inverse pattern between RWP and civic nationalism and the low levels of trust in votes being counted fairly in both scales. Thus, results in the present research are likely not undermined by response bias.

Importantly, the failure to include suitable reverse-coded items may not be a fatal flaw. Weijters and Baumgartner (2012) indicated that reverse-coded items are often confusing to participants and should be used sparingly. Others such as Dalal and Carter (2015) and Hughes (2009) argued that reversed-coded items are actually psychometrically poor compared to non-reversed items. I attempted to develop reverse-coded items through parallel construction; not all reverse-coded items included a

negation. Despite a variety of reverse-coded items in Study 3 and Study 4, very few of these items were negatively correlated to their non-reversed item pair and none loaded negatively on the intended factor.

Limitations

There are some limitations that were not addressed in any of the five studies. All studies were correlational in nature which leaves no room to discuss causality of populist attitude. Though studies have utilized populist rhetoric and discursive frames in an experiment to manipulate voter persuasion and political mobilization (e.g., Bos et al., 2020; Hameleers et al., 2018) no evidence exists that a contextual manipulation can increase populist related outcomes. To my knowledge, populism as an attitude has never been experimentally manipulated in a laboratory or survey-type setting.

Another limitation is the use of Amazon's Mechanical Turk and Prolific, as these sites are yet another form of convenience sampling. One consequence of such sampling is the over-representation of educated groups. Each sample of this dissertation included an overwhelming majority of respondents who were highly educated. Given that education is a protective factor for radicalization (e.g., Sas et al., 2020), the effects reported on this research may have underestimated the true effects sizes. Had the research included a much larger share of low-education respondents, the samples would have likely included more radical individuals, which would have likely enhanced the correlations. Put differently, because my samples may have suffered from a range restriction, there is reason to believe that the present research may have only scratched the tip of the populist iceberg.

The nature of the over-educated samples may have entailed a unique limitation in Study 1. The first investigation provided respondents with open-ended items and asked

them to write out their answers as to who they believe are the elite. The notion of elites could elicit negative emotions from many respondents (see Castanho Silva et al., 2017; Becker et al et al., 2021). Yet, participants were surprisingly moderate in their answers; there was rarely any foul language and no obvious forms of hate speech. Some respondents may have felt restrained because of the fear of violating Amazon's Term of Service or from the concern of not being compensated for completing the study. Another explanation is that the sample was highly educated (77.4% of respondents indicated they have at least a bachelor's degree) which generally makes them less prone to radicalization (e.g., Sas et al., 2020) implying that these respondents were less disposed to providing radical or hateful responses.

There are other concerns with the data quality of MTurk. For instance, Kelley and colleagues (2022) argued that some MTurkers "role-play," pretending to respond as someone else as opposed to themselves. Smith et al. (2016) also indicated that MTurk respondents have a tendency to put little thought into each item and provide identical responses to items in the same item set. This issue may be attributed to gist reading in which respondents only attempt to get at the theme of the items instead of carefully observing each item (see Hauser et al., 2019). Given that the two populism scales were closely worded, it is possible that the high correlations between the two were the result of respondents only focusing on the gist of the item. Despite that, MTurk participants are generally more attentive than student samples (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016), and can be similar to the composition of the diversity of nationally representative samples (e.g., Huff & Tingley, 2015; Levay et al., 2016). Random sampling would likely produce a more generalizable set of results, though MTurk samples can have similar political views to the

mass public (Clifford et al., 2015).

The last limitation is the generalizability and utility of these scales in non-English speaking contexts. The present research has solely focused on Anglo-Celtic cultures which suggests that future validation studies are necessary. Despite the rigors of measurement equivalence tests, there are no guarantees that these scales can be adapted and used in other countries like Greece, Chile or India. For instance, the item in the RWP scale, “The will of true [national identity] should always prevail, even over the rights of racial and sexual minorities” may not be as relevant in the right-wing religious-based populism of India or Turkey (Rogenhofer & Panievsky, 2020) as it is in the Western societies tested in the present research. Still, many, if not the vast majority of these items in these two scales could be statistically equivalent in other countries. All items, even the items mentioned above, must be tested before they are discounted as an item that taps populist attitudes in different cultures. Relatedly, my approach to designing these two scales emphasized the Western conceptions of left-wing and right-wing populism. For instance, there is a decolonization emphasis in addition to the economic focus among left-wing populists in Latin America (de la Torre, 2016b). Evo Morales, former president of Bolivia, focused on enfranchising the indigenous population. As with religious right-wing populism, anti-colonial left-wing populism was not captured in this study. The scales do have key overlaps, but nevertheless will need future validation in these political contexts.

Future Research

This dissertation does pave the way for some new and exciting areas of research. For instance, can these conceptions of populist attitudes be used to predict actual populist vote shares during election times? Although I have variables that tested peoples’ views

on future elections and activism, the ideal dataset to answer this research question could be addressed in the next U.S. presidential election. I could potentially test if populist attitudes indeed explain some of the variance in vote shares for populists like Donald Trump. Another research question I have is, “Are these populist attitudes mediators for radical group membership such as those who belong to or identify with ANTIFA or the Proud Boys?” There are some alleged links between populism and radicalism or authoritarianism, but many of these studies have not utilized precise measures for populist attitudes (e.g., Norris & Inglehart, 2019). I hope to test these any links, as populism may have both positive and negative effects on democracy, such as giving a voice to underrepresented groups while also hindering minority rights, (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017) which suggests that the connection between radicalism and populism is unclear.

Some other interesting ideas may also include the examination of the prevalence of populist attitudes and how they map onto structural changes to democracy. That is, does the high prevalence of left-wing or right-wing populist attitudes in a society predict the deconsolidation or enhancement of democracy or other liberal institutions longitudinally? Another study could focus on the predictive validity of the two scales with regard to voting. A study with multiple timepoints may test if high levels of populist attitudes at time₁ (before an election) will predict populist voting at time₂ (the day after voting). These could be tested with longitudinal data that is collected in waves.

Because the samples in the present research were largely White, a future study should also examine if the left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes are coherent with a non-White group. Some interesting and widely used concepts like the moral foundations,

have not been robust in non-White samples even within ethnic groups in the US (Davis et al., 2016). Thus, a future study should verify the robustness of these two scales with samples that are non-white. Relatedly, future studies could utilize sample weights to render the sample more similar to a national sample in order to test the validity of left-wing and right-wing populist attitudes in a more representative manner.

And finally, future studies might help us understand the very real differences between the populist left and right at the psychological level. For instance, populist attitudes can be an amplifier for authoritarian tendencies, but this is exclusively found for right-wing authoritarians (Jami & Kemmelmeier, 2023). I would like to investigate this with left-wing authoritarianism in the future.

Conclusion

Populism is a growing force around the world, affecting nascent and longstanding democracies. Because of this, I deployed five studies to elucidate the nature of populist attitudes for right-wingers and left-wingers. I showed that political elites were not the only elite group who are salient to lay individuals, extracted a more precise understanding of the attitudinal structure of populism, and successfully constructed and validated two separate measures across three countries. These two new scales offer scholars a tool to measure the types of populism that can undermine democratic foundations and to identify potential corrective force for the marginalized. Moreover, this study can also be used as a template for the development of future measures of populist attitudes especially as the political world continues to evolve.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1

Predicted characteristics of right-wing and left-wing populism

Psychological Characteristics	Right-Wing Populism	Left-Wing Populism
Conspiracy Theories	+	+
Cognitive rigidity	+	+
Authoritarianism	+	+
Prejudice	+	+
Social Dominance	+	(?)
Ethnonationalism	+	-
Civic Nationalism	-	+
Nativism	+	-
Neoliberal beliefs	-	-
Collective Narcissism	+	+
Self-Esteem	-	-
Life-Satisfaction	-	-
Happiness	-	-
Anomie	+	+
Big 5 Personality		
Openness	00	+
Conscientiousness	+	+
Extraversion	+	+
Agreeableness	00	00
Neuroticism	+	00

Note: +indicates positive relationship; -indicates negative relationship; (?) indicates inconsistent empirical findings or theory; ?? indicates untested; 00 indicates null relationship

Table 2*Item list of existing populism scales (Study 2)*

Akkerman et al. (2014)

1. The politicians in the Federal Government need to follow the will of the people.
2. The people, and not politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.
3. The political differences between the elite and the people are larger than the differences among the people.
4. I would rather be represented by a citizen than by a specialized politician.
5. Elected officials talk too much and take too little action.
6. What people call “compromise” in politics is really just selling out on one’s principles.

Schulz et al. (2018)

1. Members of Congress very quickly lose touch with ordinary people.
2. The differences between ordinary people and the ruling elite are much greater than the differences between ordinary people.
3. People like me have no influence on what the government does.
4. Politicians talk too much and take too little action.
5. The people should have the final say on the most important political issues by voting on them directly in referendums.
6. The people should be asked whenever important decisions are taken.
7. The people, not the politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.
8. The politicians in Congress need to follow the will of the people.
9. Ordinary people all pull together.
10. Ordinary people are of good and honest character.
11. Ordinary people share the same values and interests.
12. Although Americans are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same.

Castanho Silva et al. (2018)

1. Politicians should always listen closely to the problem of the people.
2. Politicians don’t have to spend time among ordinary people to do a good job.
3. The will of the people should be the highest principle in this country’s politics.
4. The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.
5. Government officials use their power to try to improve people’s lives.
6. Quite a few of the people running the government are crooked.
7. You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics.
8. The people I disagree with politically are not evil.

9. The people I disagree with politically are just misinformed.

Oliver and Rahn (2016)

1. I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of ordinary people than the opinions of experts and intellectuals.
2. When it comes to really important questions, scientific facts don't help very much.
3. Ordinary people can really use the help of experts to understand complicated things like science and health.
4. People like me don't have much say in what government does.
5. Politics usually boils down to a struggle between the people and the powerful.
6. The system is stacked against people like me.
7. It doesn't really matter who you vote for because the rich control both political parties.
8. People at the top usually get there because they have more talent and work harder.
9. People at the top usually get there from some unfair advantage.
10. It would be unwise to trust the judgments of the American people for today's complicated political issues.
11. I generally trust the collective judgments of the American people, even for complex political issues.
12. I generally consider myself to be different than most Americans.
13. I generally consider myself to be like most other Americans.
14. Being an American is important to me.

Elchardus and Spruyt (2016)

1. The opinion of ordinary people is worth more than that of experts and politicians.
2. Politicians should listen more closely to the problems the people have.
3. Politicians should spend less time behind their desks, and more among the ordinary people.
4. People who have studied for a long time and have many diplomas do not really know what makes the world go round.

Stanley (2011)

1. The ordinary people are divided by many different values.
2. The people who belong to the political elite are divided by many different values.
3. Ordinary people are prevented from improving their lives by the actions of unaccountable elites.
4. Not all politicians are the same; some genuinely care about what the people want.
5. Democracy is about finding compromise between different interests and opinions.
6. Ordinary people are unable to make the correct decisions about the future of our

country.

7. The majority of politicians are honest people.
8. Modern politics is in essence a struggle between the good, honest people and the evil elite.

Hobolt et al. (2016)

1. What people call compromise in politics is really just selling out on one's principles.
 2. Most politicians do not care about the people.
 3. Most politicians are trustworthy.
 4. Politicians are the main problem in the United States.
 5. The people, and not politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.
 6. Most politicians care only about the interests of the rich and powerful.
 7. The will of the majority should always prevail, even over the rights of minorities.
 8. Corruption such as bribe taking is widespread among politicians in the United States.
-

Table 3*Items and their loadings from exploratory factor analysis (Study 2)*

Loadings	AP	AE	PC	CP
Akkerman et al. (2014)				
1. AK1			0.68	
2. AK2		0.24	0.43	
3. AK3		0.26	0.28	
4. AK4	0.21	0.22	0.40	
5. AK5		0.42	0.27	0.27
6. AK6	0.60			-0.22
Schulz et al. (2018)				
<i>Anti-elitism</i>				
1. SCH1a	-0.23	0.59		
2. SCH2a		0.45		
3. SCH3a		0.66		
4. SCH4a		0.44		
<i>Sovereignty of the People</i>				
5. SCH1s		0.27	0.46	
6. SHC2s			0.51	
7. SHC3s			0.53	
8. SHC4s			0.50	
<i>Homogeneity of the People</i>				
9. SHC1h	0.52		0.35	
10. SHC2h	0.36		0.41	
11. SHC3h	0.56	-0.21	0.40	
12. SCH4h	0.69		0.27	
Castanho Silva et al. (2018)				
<i>People-centrism</i>				
1. CAS1PC	-0.33	0.28		0.42
2. CAS2PC	0.69	0.20	-0.35	
3. CAS3PC			0.57	
<i>Anti-elitism</i>				
4. CAS1A		0.46		
5. CAS2A	0.67	-0.23		0.43
6. CAS3A		0.64		
<i>Manicheanism</i>				
7. CAS1M	0.56			
8. CAS2M				0.25
9. CAS3M				0.29
Oliver and Rahn (2016)				
<i>Mistrust of experts</i>				
1. OLI1ME*	0.60		0.37	
2. OLI2ME*	0.76	0.21		
3. OLI3ME				0.58

Anti-elitism				
4. OLI1a		0.59		
5. OLI2a		0.41		
6. OLI3a		0.54		
7. OLI4a		0.55		
8. OLI5a*	0.69			
9. OLI6a		0.56		
National Affiliation				
10. OLI1NA	0.54	0.27	-0.42	
11. OLI2NA	0.42		0.49	
12. OLI3NA	0.52	0.42	-0.33	
13. OLI4NA	0.37		0.35	
14. OLI5NA	0.37	-0.27	0.40	
Elchardus and Spruyt (2016)				
1. ELCH1	0.45		0.44	
2. ELCH2	-0.30		0.30	0.37
3. ELCH3		0.30	0.27	
4. ELCH4	0.53	0.24		
Stanley (2011)				
1. STAN1				0.32
2. STAN2	0.49			0.28
3. STAN3		0.50		
4. STAN4	0.30	-0.20		0.51
5. STAN5			0.22	0.46
6. STAN6*	0.64		-0.20	
7. STAN7*	0.79			0.28
8. STAN8	0.48	0.35		
Hobolt et al. (2016)				
1. CSES1	0.70			
2. CSES2		0.63		
3. CSES3*	0.81	-0.26		
4. CSES4	0.21	0.47		
5. CSES5		0.23	0.47	
6. CSES6		0.34		
7. CSES7	0.58			
8. CSES8		0.58		

Note: Bold items were kept for Study 3; loadings print cutoff at .20; AP = anti-pluralism; AE = anti-elitism; PC = people-centrism; EP = elitism and pluralism; *indicates that items were not kept for theoretical purposes despite adequate factor loadings.

Table 4

Generic, right-wing and left-wing populism scales sorted by identified factors (Study 3)

Anti-Pluralism

1. Although Americans are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same. (SCH4h)
 - a. Although **true Americans** are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same.
 - b. Although **members of the working class** are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same.

2. In politics, what people call compromise in politics is really just selling out on one's principles. (CSES1, AK6)
 - a. In politics, what people call compromise **on religious lifestyle issues** is really just selling out on one's principles.
 - b. In politics, what people call compromise on **quality-of-life issues** is really just selling out on one's principles.

3. I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of ordinary people than the opinions of experts and intellectuals. (OLI1ME)
 - a. I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of **true Americans** than the opinions of **scientists** and **academics**.
 - b. I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of **the working class** than the opinions of **business professionals** and **bankers**.

Reversed version of Item 3

4. I'd rather put my trust in the opinions of experts and intellectuals than the wisdom of ordinary people. (OLI1ME)
 - a. I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of **scientists** and **academics** than the opinions of **true Americans**.
 - b. I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of **business professionals** and **bankers** than the opinions of **the working class**.

5. The will of the majority should always prevail, even over the rights of minorities. (CSES7)
 - a. The will of **true Americans** should always prevail, even over the rights of **racial and sexual** minorities.
 - b. The will of **working people** should always prevail, even over the rights of **the rich and affluent**.

6. Ordinary people all pull together. (SCH1h)
 - a. **True Americans** all pull together.
 - b. **The working class** all pull together.

7. You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their politics. (CAS1M)
 - a. You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their **views on religion**.
 - b. You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their **views on inequality**.
 - c.

Reversed version of Item 7

8. You cannot tell if a person is good or bad if you just know their politics. (CAS1M)
 - a. You cannot tell if a person is good or bad if you just know their **views on religion**.
 - b. You cannot tell if a person is good or bad if you just know their **views on inequality**.

9. People who have studied for a long time and have many diplomas do not really know what makes the world go round. (ELCH4)
 - a. **Scientists and academics** do not really know what makes the world go round.
 - b. **Business professionals and bankers** do not really know what makes the world go round.

Anti-Elitism

1. Quite a few of the people running the government are crooked. (CAS3A)
 - a. Quite a few of the people **with influence on American culture** are crooked.
 - b. Quite a few of the people **running the economy** are crooked.

2. Corruption such as bribe taking is widespread among politicians in the United States. (CSES8)
 - a. Corruption such as bribe taking is widespread among **scientists and experts** in the United States.
 - b. Corruption such as bribe taking is widespread among **business professionals and bankers** in the United States.

Reversed version of Item 2

3. Corruption such as bribe taking is very rare among politicians in the United States. (CSES8)
 - a. Corruption such as bribe taking is very rare among **scientists and experts** in the United States.
 - b. Corruption such as bribe taking is very rare among **business professionals and bankers** in the United States.

4. Members of Congress very quickly lose touch with ordinary people. (SCH1a)
 - a. **Scientists and academics** very quickly lose touch with ordinary people.
 - b. **Business professionals and bankers** very quickly lose touch with ordinary people.

5. People like me don't have much say in what government does. (OLI1a, SCH3a)
 - a. **True Americans** don't have much say in **what happens to American culture**.
 - b. **Members of the working class** don't have much say in **what happens to the American economy**.

Reversed version of Item 5

6. People like me do have much say in what government does. (OLI1a, SCH3a)
 - a. **True Americans** do have a say in **what happens to American culture**.
 - b. **Members of the working class** do have a say in **what happens to the American economy**.

7. It doesn't really matter who you vote for because the rich control both political parties. (OLI4a)
 - a. It doesn't really matter who you vote for because the **cultural elite** control both political parties.
 - b. It doesn't really matter who you vote for because the **economic elite** control both political parties.

8. People at the top usually get there from some unfair advantage. (OLI6a)
 - a. The **cultural elite** at the top usually get there from some unfair advantage.
 - b. The **economic elite** at the top usually get there from some unfair advantage.

9. The system is stacked against people like me. (OLI3a)
 - a. The system is stacked against **true Americans**.
 - b. Business professionals and bankers are the main problem in the United States.

10. Politicians are the main problem in the United States. (CSES4)
 - a. **Scientists and academics** are the main problem in the United States.
 - b. **Business professionals and bankers** are the main problem in the United States.

11. Ordinary people are prevented from improving their lives by the actions of unaccountable elites. (STAN3)
 - a. **True Americans** are prevented from improving their lives by the actions of unaccountable **cultural** elites.
 - b. **The working class** are prevented from improving their lives by the actions of unaccountable **economic** elites.

12. The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves. (CAS1A)
 - a. The government is pretty much run by a few **bureaucrats and so-called “experts”** looking out for themselves.
 - b. The government is pretty much run by a few **wealthy business people and bankers** looking out for themselves.

13. The differences between ordinary people and the ruling elite are much greater than the differences between ordinary people. (SCH2a)
 - a. The differences between **true Americans** and the ruling elite are much greater than the differences between **true Americans**.
 - b. The differences between **the working class** and the ruling elite are much greater than the differences between **the members of the working class**.

14. Politicians talk too much and take too little action. (SCH4a)
 - a. **Bureaucrats and so-called “experts”** talk too much and take too little action.
 - b. **Wealthy business people and bankers** talk too much and take too little action.

15. Politics boils down to a struggle between the people and the powerful. (OLI2a)
 - a. Politics boils down to a struggle between **true Americans** and the **cultural elite**.
 - b. Politics boils down to a struggle between the **working class** and the **economic elite**.

16. Most politicians do not care about the people. (CSES2)
 - a. Most **cultural elites** do not care about **true Americans**.
 - b. Most **economic elites** do not care about **members of the working class**.

Reversed version of Item 5

17. Most politicians do care about the people. (CSES2)
 - a. Most **cultural elites** do care about **true Americans**.
 - b. Most **economic elites** do care about **members of the working class**.

People Centrism

1. The politicians in Congress need to follow the will of the people. (AK1, SHC4s)
 - a. The politicians in Congress need to follow the will of **true Americans**.
 - b. The politicians in Congress need to follow the will of **the working class**.
2. The people should be asked whenever important decisions are taken. (SHC2s)
 - a. **True Americans** should be asked whenever important decisions are taken.
 - b. **The working class** should be asked whenever important decisions are taken.
3. The people, not the politicians, should make our most important policy decisions. (SHC3s, CSES5)
 - a. **True Americans**, not the politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.
 - b. **The working class**, not the politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.
4. The will of the people should be the highest principle in this country's politics. (CAS3PC)
 - a. The will of **True Americans** should be the highest principle in this country's politics.
 - b. The will of **the working class** should be the highest principle in this country's politics.

Note: Numbered items = generic populist items; a = right-wing populism items; b = left-wing populism items

Table 5*Left-wing populism scale sorted by identified factors (Study 3)*

Left-wing Populism**Anti-Pluralism**

1. Although members of the working class are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same.
2. You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their views on inequality.
3. The will of working people should always prevail, even over the rights of the rich and affluent.
4. I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of the working class than the opinions of business professionals and bankers.

Anti-Elitism

1. It doesn't really matter who you vote for because the economic elite control both political parties.
2. The government is pretty much run by a few wealthy business people and bankers looking out for themselves.
3. Members of the working class don't have much say in what happens to the American economy.
4. Corruption such as bribe taking is widespread among business professionals and bankers in the United States.

People Centrism

1. The politicians in Congress need to follow the will of the working class.
 2. The working class should be asked whenever important decisions are taken.
 3. The working class, not the politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.
 4. The will of the working class should be the highest principle in this country's politics.
-

Table 6

Right-wing populism scale sorted by identified factors (Study 3)

Right-wing Populism**Anti-pluralism**

1. Although true Americans are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same.
2. In politics, what people call compromise on religious lifestyle issues is really just selling out on one's principles.
3. The will of true Americans should always prevail, even over the rights of racial and sexual minorities.
4. I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of true Americans than the opinions of scientists and academics.

Anti-elitism

1. Most cultural elites do not care about true Americans.
2. True Americans are prevented from improving their lives by the actions of unaccountable cultural elites.
3. The government is pretty much run by a few bureaucrats and so-called "experts" looking out for themselves.
4. The differences between true Americans and the ruling elite are much greater than the differences between true Americans.

People-centrism

1. The politicians in Congress need to follow the will of true Americans.
 2. True Americans should be asked whenever important decisions are taken.
 3. True Americans, not the politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.
 4. The will of true Americans should be the highest principle in this country's politics.
-

Table 7*Intercorrelations among the left-wing and right-wing factors (Study 3)*

Scale	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(1) Left anti-pluralism	.48	.72	.52	.50	.43
(2) Left anti-elitism		.50	.19	.60	.30
(3) Left people-centrism			.34	.44	.43
(4) Right anti-pluralism				.51	.61
(5) Right anti-elitism					.63
(6) Right people-centrism					

Note: all correlations are statistically significant at $p < .05$.

Table 8*Correlations for right-wing and left-wing populism to outcome variables (Study 3)*

	Left-wing Populism	Right-wing Populism
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>		
Evaluation of:		
Left-wing groups	.22	-.26
Right-wing groups	.07	.58
Democracy Satisfaction	.08	.37
Trust Institutions	.07	.28
Future Activism:		
Unconventional	.47	.32
Conventional	.23	.12
Take Arms against Gov't	.34	.49
Biden Executive Orders	.40	.20
2020 Electoral Fraud	.29	.61
Perceived Christian Discrimination	.17	.47
Trump Responsible for Jan. 6	.05	-.31

Note: All correlations (bolded) above .12 are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 9*Study 3 outcome variables: Groups, democracy and trust (Study 3)*

	Evaluation of Left-wing Groups	Evaluation of Right-wing Groups	Satisfaction With Democracy	Trust In Institutions
Right-wing Populism	-.45***	.57***	.32***	.26**
Left-wing Populism	.45***	-.26***	-.12	-.07
<i>Controls</i>				
Left-Right identification	-.28***	.31***	.13*	.02
Gender (male = 0)	-.08	-.01	.04	-.02
Race (White American = 0)				
Asian American	-.02	-.12**	-.10 ⁺	-.10 ⁺
African American	.10 ⁺	-.01	.05	.10 ⁺
Latino/a	-.01	-.06	-.10 ⁺	-.10 ⁺
Other	-.10*	-.03	-.10 ⁺	-.12*
Education	.22***	.14*	.33***	.35***
Age	.08	-.01	.14*	.02
<hr/>				
R^2	.37	.57	.32	.25
N	251	253	254	254

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Note: Entries reflect standardized regression coefficients.

Table 10*Study 3 outcome variables: Future activism (Study 3)*

	Unconventional Future Activism	Conventional Future Activism	Take Arms Against Gov't
Right-wing Populism	.00	-.08	.30***
Left-wing Populism	.41***	.27**	.13 ⁺
<i>Controls</i>			
Left-Right identification	.05	.01	.17**
Gender (male = 0)	-.03	.06	.00
Race (White American = 0)			
Asian American	-.11*	-.06	-.11*
African American	.05	.00	-.01
Latino/a	-.04	-.06	.04
Other	-.08	-.05	-.13*
Education	.24***	.20**	.25***
Age	.18**	.00	.12*
<hr/>			
R^2	.31	.26	.37
N	254	254	254

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Note: Entries reflect standardized regression coefficients.

Table 11*Study 3 outcome variables: Other political opinions (Study 3)*

	Biden Executive Orders	2020 Electoral Fraud	Perceived Christian Discrimination	Trump Responsible for Insurrection
Right-wing Populism	.12	.44***	.32***	-.38***
Left-wing Populism	.33***	.07	.05	.24**
<i>Controls</i>				
Left-Right identification	-.14*	.33***	.36***	-.24***
Gender (male = 0)	-.02	.00	-.01	.02
Race (White American = 0)				
Asian American	-.07	.02	.00	.01
African American	.11 ⁺	-.08	.05	.15**
Latino/a	-.02	.04	.06	.02
Other	-.12*	.04	.06	.02
Education	.29***	.04	.01	.24***
Age	.22***	-.07	-.17**	.11 ⁺
R^2	.29	.48	.37	.29
N	254	254	254	254

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Note: Entries reflect standardized regression coefficients.

Table 12*Multiple regression examining left-wing populism factors (Study 3)*

Left-Wing Populism facets:	Anti-Pluralism (β)	Anti-Elitism (β)	People-Cent. (β)
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>			
Evaluation of:			
Left-wing groups	.11	.02	.12
Right-wing groups	.25***	-.33***	-.03
Democracy Satisfaction	.37***	-.44***	-.09
Trust Institutions	.38***	-.46***	-.08
Future Activism:			
Unconventional	.56***	-.13*	-.05
Conventional	.35***	-.14*	-.02
Take Arms against Gov't	.58***	-.26***	-.15*
Biden Executive Orders	.65***	-.13*	-.23**
2020 Electoral Fraud	.30**	.04	.01
Perceived Christian Discrimination	.16*	.02	.08
Trump Responsible for Jan. 6	.15 ⁺	-.06	-.08

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; people-cent. = people-centrism; all regression models controlled for left-right identification, race, gender, education, and age.

Note: Entries reflect standardized regression coefficients.

Table 13*Multiple regression examining right-wing populism factors (Study 3)*

Right-Wing Populism facets:	Anti-Pluralism (β)	Anti-Elitism (β)	People-Cent. (β)
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>			
Evaluation of:			
Left-wing groups	-.24***	-.06	-.05
Right-wing groups	.60***	-.19***	.10 ⁺
Democracy Satisfaction	.60***	-.32***	.06
Trust Institutions	.53***	-.33***	.10
Future Activism:			
Unconventional	.37***	.02	-.01
Conventional	.24*	-.09	.01
Take Arms against Gov't	.60***	.02	-.09
Biden Executive Orders	.51***	-.01	-.18*
2020 Electoral Fraud	.46***	.20**	-.07
Perceived Christian Discrimination	.20**	.16*	.09
Trump Responsible for Jan. 6	-.08	-.13 ⁺	-.03

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; people-cent = people-centrism; all regression models controlled for left-right identification, race, gender, education, and age.

Note: Entries reflect standardized regression coefficients.

Table 14

New reverse-coded items used and existing counterpart in Study 4 for the right-wing populism scale

Anti-pluralism

1. Although true Americans are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same.
2. **Although Americans have a lot in common, when it comes down to it they are very different from each other. (R)**
3. In politics, what people call compromise on religious lifestyle issues is really just selling out on one's principles.
4. The will of true Americans should always prevail, even over the rights of racial and sexual minorities.
5. **The will of true Americans should not prevail over the rights of racial and sexual minorities. (R)**
6. I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of true Americans than the opinions of scientists and academics.
7. **I trust the wisdom of scientists and academics more than the opinion of those who call themselves true Americans. (R)**

Anti-Elitism

1. Most cultural elites do not care about true Americans.
2. **Most cultural elites value the interests of true Americans. (R)**
3. True Americans are prevented from improving their lives by the actions of unaccountable cultural elites.
4. The government is pretty much run by a few bureaucrats and so-called "experts" looking out for themselves.
5. **The experts and bureaucrats in government are looking out for true Americans. (R)**
6. The differences between true Americans and the ruling elite are much greater than the differences between true Americans.
7. **There are few differences between true Americans and the ruling elite. (R)**

People Centrism

1. The politicians in Congress need to follow the will of true Americans.
 2. True Americans should be asked whenever important decisions are taken.
 3. **True Americans should not be a part of important policy decisions. (R)**
 4. True Americans, not the politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.
 5. **Politicians, instead of true Americans, should make our most important policy decisions. (R)**
 6. The will of true Americans should be the highest principle in this country's politics
-

Note: bolded items represent reverse-coded (R) items versions of the of the item above it numerically.

Table 15

New reverse-coded items used and existing counterpart in Study 4 for the left-wing populism scale

Anti-Pluralism

1. Although members of the working class are very different from each other, when it comes down to it they all think the same.
2. **Although members of the working class have a lot in common, when it comes down to it they are very different from each other. (R)**
3. You can tell if a person is good or bad if you know their views on inequality.
4. **A person's views on inequality do not determine if they are good or bad. (R)**
5. The will of working people should always prevail, even over the rights of the rich and affluent.
6. I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of the working class than the opinions of business professionals and bankers.
7. **I'd rather put my trust in the wisdom of business professionals and bankers than the opinions of those who consider themselves the working class. (R)**

Anti-Elitism

1. It doesn't really matter who you vote for because the economic elite control both political parties.
2. **Which political party you voted for matters if you want to reduce the control of the economic elite. (R)**
3. The government is pretty much run by a few wealthy business people and bankers looking out for themselves.
4. Members of the working class don't have much say in what happens to the American economy.
5. **Members of the working class have a lot of say in what happens to the American economy. (R)**
6. Corruption such as bribe taking is widespread among business professionals and bankers in the United States.
7. **Business professional and bankers in the United States are not corrupt. (R)**

People Centrism

1. The politicians in Congress need to follow the will of the working class.
 2. The working class should be asked whenever important decisions are taken.
 3. **The working class should not be asked whenever important decisions are taken. (R)**
 4. The working class, not the politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.
 5. **Politicians, not the working class, should make our most important policy decisions. (R)**
 6. The will of the working class should be the highest principle in this country's politics.
-

Note: bolded items represent reverse-coded (R) items versions of the of the item above it.

Table 16*Intercorrelations among the left-wing and right-wing factors (Study 4)*

Scale	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
(1) Left anti-pluralism	.52	.60	.68	.52	.55
(2) Left anti-elitism		.57	.40	.74	.53
(3) Left people-centrism			.42	.54	.68
(4) Right anti-pluralism				.53	.60
(5) Right anti-elitism					.60
(6) Right people-centrism					

Note: All correlations are statistically significant at $p < .05$

Table 17*Validity correlations for right-wing and left-wing populism (Study 4)*

	Left-wing Populism		Right-wing Populism	
	r	β	r	β
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>				
<i>Political tendencies</i>				
Left-wing Authoritarianism	.48	.24	.49	.30
Right-wing Authoritarianism	.47	-.18	.70	.84
Social Dominance Orientation	.23	-.54	.58	.99
Nativism	.36	-.26	.59	.79
Ethnonationalism	.52	-.08	.70	.77
Civic Nationalism	.17	.58	-.07	-.53
Conspiracy Beliefs	.67	.21	.75	.58
Collective Narcissism	.39	-.09	.56	.63
<i>Mental Health and thriving</i>				
Self-Esteem	.31	.21	.30	.14
Well-being	.32	.14	.32	.21
Life Satisfaction	.02	-.03	.04	.07
<i>Big-5 Personality Traits</i>				
Openness	-.17	.11	-.28	-.36
Conscientiousness	-.13	.14	-.23	-.34
Extraversion	.17	-.10	.27	.35
Agreeableness	.26	-.11	.39	.48
Neuroticism	.04	-.13	.12	.22

Note: All bolded correlations and betas significant at $p < .05$.

Table 18*Validity correlations and right-wing populism factors (Study 4)*

Right-Wing Populism facets: Centrism	Anti-Pluralism	Anti-Elitism	People
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>			
<i>Political tendencies</i>			
Left-wing Authoritarianism	.62	.28	.28
Right-wing Authoritarianism	.76	.45	.51
Social Dominance Orientation	.67	.40	.33
Nativism	.59	.49	.39
Ethnonationalism	.76	.40	.58
Civic Nationalism	-.08	-.11	.01
Conspiracy Beliefs	.74	.54	.58
Collective Narcissism	.68	.27	.39
<i>Mental Health and thriving</i>			
Self-Esteem	.31	.13	.29
Well-being	.26	.17	.39
Life Satisfaction	-.01	-.01	.16
<i>Big-5 Personality Traits</i>			
Extraversion	.33	.10	.24
Agreeableness	.49	.18	.28
Conscientiousness	-.29	-.19	-.08
Neuroticism	.17	.11	-.01
Openness	-.41	-.10	-.13

Note: All correlations (bolded) above .15 are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 19*Validity correlations and left-wing populism factors (Study 4)*

Left-Wing Populism facets: Centrism	Anti-Pluralism	Anti-Elitism	People
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>			
<i>Political tendencies</i>			
Left-wing Authoritarianism	.64	.24	.31
Right-wing Authoritarianism	.50	.36	.32
Social Dominance Orientation	.27	.27	.04
Nativism	.26	.44	.20
Ethnonationalism	.61	.28	.40
Civic Nationalism	.22	-.04	.26
Conspiracy Beliefs	.67	.54	.47
Collective Narcissism	.58	.18	.22
<i>Mental Health and thriving</i>			
Self-Esteem	.35	.18	.25
Well-being	.33	.13	.31
Life Satisfaction	-.06	.04	.07
<i>Big-5 Personality Traits</i>			
Extraversion	.22	.05	.16
Agreeableness	.40	.08	.17
Conscientiousness	-.16	-.13	-.03
Neuroticism	.05	.06	-.01
Openness	-.26	-.13	-.05

Note: All correlations (bolded) above .16 are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 20*Psychometrics of full scale and factors across three countries (Study 5)*

	α	ω	$M (SD)$
United States of America			
<i>Full Scales</i>			
(1) Left-wing populism	.87	.74	4.57 (0.97)
(2) Right-wing populism	.91	.77	3.51 (1.20)
<i>Factors</i>			
(1) Left anti-pluralism	.61	.33	3.95 (1.04)
(2) Left anti-elitism	.81	.74	4.88 (1.29)
(3) Left people-centrism	.89	.85	4.89 (1.20)
(4) Right anti-pluralism	.72	.67	2.61 (1.17)
(5) Right anti-elitism	.84	.82	3.99 (1.45)
(6) Right people-centrism	.94	.92	3.93 (1.60)
Canada			
<i>Full Scales</i>			
(1) Left-wing populism	.85	.73	4.50 (0.93)
(2) Right-wing populism	.89	.73	3.57 (1.04)
<i>Factors</i>			
(1) Left anti-pluralism	.57	.54	3.95 (1.04)
(2) Left anti-elitism	.78	.69	4.73 (1.24)
(3) Left people-centrism	.89	.86	4.81 (1.20)
(4) Right anti-pluralism	.67	.50	2.71 (1.07)
(5) Right anti-elitism	.78	.76	3.99 (1.24)
(6) Right people-centrism	.93	.90	4.01 (1.44)
Australia			
<i>Full Scales</i>			
(1) Left-wing populism	.84	.70	4.23 (0.88)
(2) Right-wing populism	.88	.69	3.41 (0.99)
<i>Factors</i>			
(1) Left anti-pluralism	.61	.37	3.87 (1.02)
(2) Left anti-elitism	.78	.66	4.51 (1.19)
(3) Left people-centrism	.86	.81	4.32 (1.17)
(4) Right anti-pluralism	.68	.66	2.75 (1.02)
(5) Right anti-elitism	.79	.76	3.77 (1.22)
(6) Right people-centrism	.89	.87	3.69 (1.32)

Table 21*Intercorrelation of populist factors across three countries (Study 5)*

Scale	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Unified Sample					
(1) Left anti-pluralism	.33	.55	.18	.17	.17
(2) Left anti-elitism		.51	.18	.50	.28
(3) Left people-centrism			.19	.35	.43
(4) Right anti-pluralism				.52	.52
(5) Right anti-elitism					.63
(6) Right people-centrism					
United States of America (n = 302)					
(1) Left anti-pluralism	.44	.61	.09	.16	.16
(2) Left anti-elitism		.51	.15	.46	.35
(3) Left people-centrism			.17	.37	.39
(4) Right anti-pluralism				.56	.78
(5) Right anti-elitism					.89
(6) Right people-centrism					
Canada (n = 306)					
(1) Left anti-pluralism	.28	.49	.17	.14	.17
(2) Left anti-elitism		.57	.17	.53	.41
(3) Left people-centrism			.18	.35	.40
(4) Right anti-pluralism				.47	.76
(5) Right anti-elitism					.84
(6) Right people-centrism					
Australia (n = 301)					
(1) Left anti-pluralism	.26	.57	.29	.19	.27
(2) Left anti-elitism		.40	.24	.51	.40
(3) Left people-centrism			.26	.30	.40
(4) Right anti-pluralism				.55	.81
(5) Right anti-elitism					.84
(6) Right people-centrism					

Note: All correlations for unified are significant at $p < .05$; for the three subsets all correlations above .14 are statistically significant at $p < .05$.

Table 22*Validity correlations for right-wing and left-wing populism (Study 5)*

	Left-wing Populism	Right-wing Populism
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>		
Relative Deprivation	.42	.38
Internal Political Efficacy	-.01	-.04
External Political Efficacy	-.43	-.22
Anomie (social)	.39	.40
Anomie (leadership)	.53	.33
Left-wing Authoritarianism	.31	-.05
Right-wing Authoritarianism	.13	.50
Nativism	.08	.52
Ethnonationalism	.18	.50
Civic Nationalism	-.01	-.39

Note: All correlations (bolded) are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 23*Validity correlations and left-wing populism and right-wing populism factors (Study 5)*

Left-Wing Populism factors:	Anti-Pluralism	Anti-Elitism	People Centristism
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>			
Relative Deprivation	.28	.43	.35
Internal Political Efficacy	.03	-.07	.02
External Political Efficacy	-.11	-.57	-.32
Anomie (social)	.18	.46	.29
Anomie (leadership)	.17	.65	.41
Left-wing Authoritarianism	.35	.15	.25
Right-wing Authoritarianism	.03	.13	.13
Nativism	-.09	.21	.05
Ethnonationalism	.14	.10	.18
Civic Nationalism	.09	-.13	.03
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>			
Relative Deprivation	.26	.41	.29
Internal Political Efficacy	-.06	-.04	.00
External Political Efficacy	-.02	-.38	-.13
Anomie (social)	.28	.45	.28
Anomie (leadership)	.11	.47	.25
Left-wing Authoritarianism	-.08	-.03	-.03
Right-wing Authoritarianism	.51	.39	.39
Nativism	.44	.46	.42
Ethnonationalism	.49	.37	.41
Civic Nationalism	-.45	-.33	-.24

Note: All correlations (bolded) above .07 are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 24

Linear regression models for different forms of protest and confidence on society existing (Study 5)

	Society exists In 100 years	Inequality Destroys	Unconvent. Activism	Convent. Activism	Encourag. Activism
Right-wing populism	-.04	.01	-.06	-.12**	-.10**
Left-wing populism	-.17***	.38***	.26***	.09*	.22***
Controls					
Right-wing authoritarianism	-.16***	.05	-.03	.07 ⁺	.07 ⁺
Left-wing authoritarianism	.02	.08*	-.03	-.06	.05
Left-right identification	.10*	-.14***	-.30***	.28***	.25***
Gender (male = 0)	-.10**	.06 ⁺	.13***	.01	.03
Race (White = 0)					
Asian	.03	.04	-.10**	-.07 ⁺	-.17***
African	.02	.02	.00	.00	.01
Latino/a	.05	.03	.03	-.04	.00
Native/Indigenous	-.10**	.06 ⁺	-.06*	.02	.04
Other	-.03	.04	.00	-.03	-.03
Education	.01	.02	.13***	.20***	.17***
Age (18-24 = 0)					
25-34	-.07 ⁺	-.03	-.07	-.06	-.08
35-44	-.04	-.03	-.04	-.01	-.12**
45-54	-.04	.04	-.01	.03	.00
Over 55	-.07 ⁺	.00	-.06	.06	-.06
Nationality (USA = 0)					
Canada	.11**	.01	.05	-.07 ⁺	-.02
Australia	.12**	.04	.02	-.11**	-.09*
<i>R</i> ²	.15	.23	.23	.15	.17
<i>N</i>	882	882	881	882	882

⁺*p* < .10, **p* < .05; ***p* < .01; ****p* < .001.

Note: Entries reflect standardized regression coefficients.

Table 25*Linear regression models for people's perceptions of future elections (Study 5)*

	VCF	NFE	ES	PB	JAF
Right-wing populism	-.25***	.09*	.19***	.11**	-.18***
Left-wing populism	-.10**	.20***	.24***	.35***	-.10**
Controls					
Right-wing authoritarianism	-.08*	-.03	-.03	-.13**	.02
Left-wing authoritarianism	.06 ⁺	-.14***	-.09*	-.03	.09*
Left-right identification	-.19***	.07	.09*	.02	-.18***
Gender (male = 0)	-.08**	-.12***	-.05	-.09**	-.02
Race (White = 0)					
Asian	-.01	-.11**	-.07 ⁺	-.01 ⁺	.06
African	-.08*	-.06 ⁺	.00	-.04	.00
Latino/a	.04	-.09**	-.10**	-.08*	.10**
Native/Indigenous	-.05	-.03	.00	.02	-.08*
Other	-.01	.05	-.04	.02	-.00
Education	.03	.02	.07*	.05	-.02
Age (18-24 = 0)					
25-34	-.03	-.06	-.02	.07	-.03
35-44	-.01	-.10*	-.10*	.04	.07 ⁺
45-54	.00	-.04	-.07 ⁺	.10*	.07 ⁺
Over 55	.06 ⁺	-.13**	-.13**	-.05	.09*
Nationality (USA = 0)					
Canada	.17***	-.05	-.17***	-.19***	.21***
Australia	.21***	-.09*	-.19***	-.24***	.05
R^2	.29	.14	.21	.24	.18
N	882	881	882	882	882

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. *Note:* Entries reflect standardized regression coefficients. ⁺ VCF = votes counted fairly; NFE = news media favors establishment; es = establishment suppresses outsiders; PB = politicians are bought; JAF = journalists are bought

Table 26*Multiple regression examining left-wing populism facets (Study 5)*

Left-Wing Populism factors:	Anti-Pluralism (β)	Anti-Elitism (β)	People Centristism (β)
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>			
Confidence society will exist	.12**	-.31***	-.03
Confidence Inequality harms society	.08*	.32***	.08*
Future Activism:			
Unconventional	.16***	-.02	.17***
Conventional	.12**	-.14***	-.08 ⁺
Encourage others	.12**	-.04	.15***
Votes Counted Fairly	.11**	-.34***	.00
News favors Establishment	-.07 ⁺	.25***	.10*
Establishment Suppresses outsiders	-.12**	.35***	.13**
Politicians are bought	-.08*	.50***	.04
Journalists are Fair	.12**	-.32***	.00

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. All regression models controlled for right-wing authoritarianism, left-wing authoritarianism, left-right identification, gender, race, education, age and nationality.

Note: Entries reflect standardized regression coefficients.

Table 27*Multiple regression examining right-wing populism facets (Study 5)*

Right-Wing Populism facets:	Anti-Pluralism (β)	Anti-Elitism (β)	People Centrist (β)
<u>Dependent Variables:</u>			
Confidence society will exist	.04	-.30***	.12**
Confidence Inequality harms society	-.05	.32***	-.06
Future Activism:			
Unconventional	-.06	.09*	.04
Conventional	.01	-.16***	.06
Encourage others	-.06	-.02	.07
Votes Counted Fairly	-.09*	-.32***	.05
News favors Establishment	-.07	.31***	-.04
Establishment Suppresses outsiders	-.05	.39***	-.01
Politicians are bought	-.08*	.45***	-.07
Journalists are Fair	.04	-.30***	.01

⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. All regression models controlled for right-wing authoritarianism, left-wing authoritarianism, left-right identification, gender, race, education, age and nationality.

Note: Entries reflect standardized regression coefficients.

Figure 1

Predicted factor structure for right-wing populism

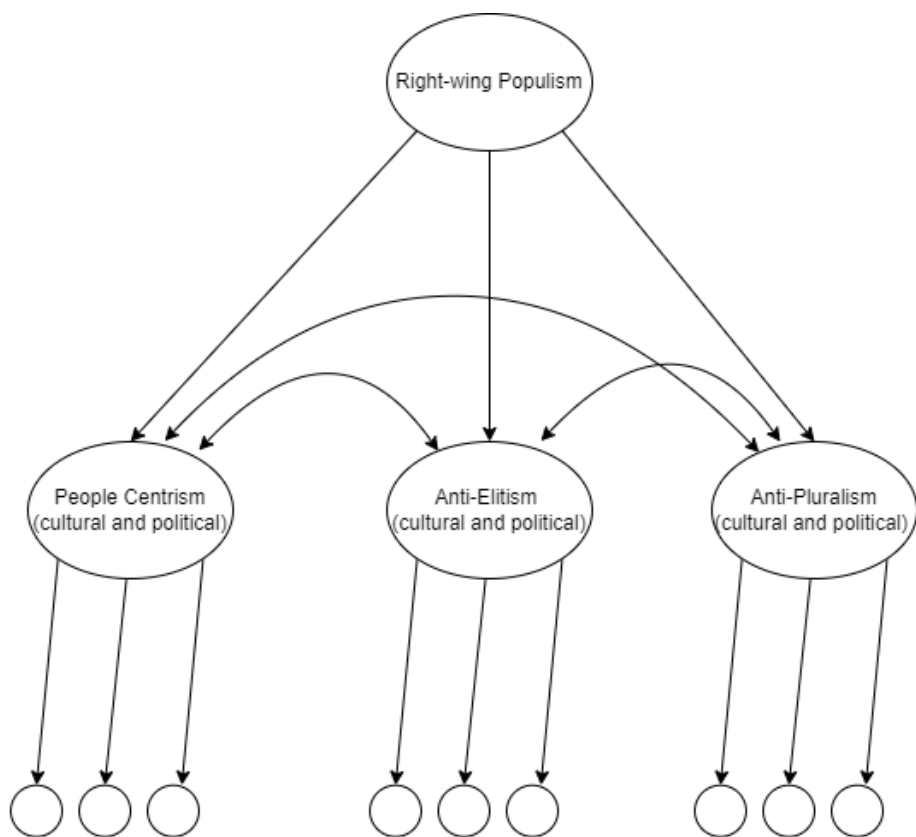


Figure 2

Predicted factor structure for left-wing populism

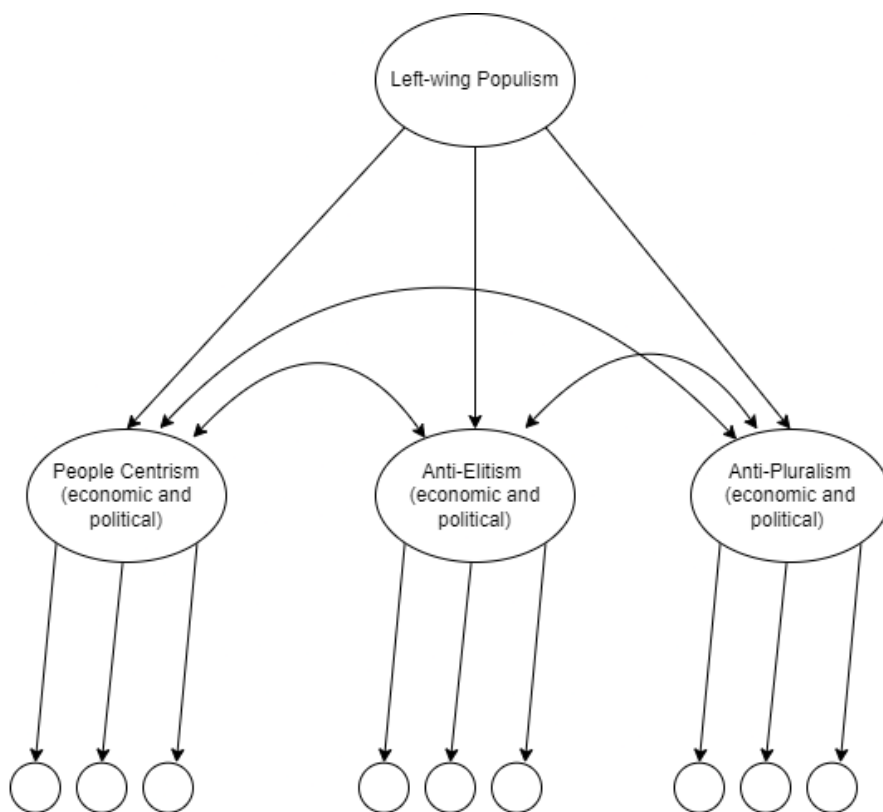


Figure 3

Scree plot for Study 2 exploratory factor analysis

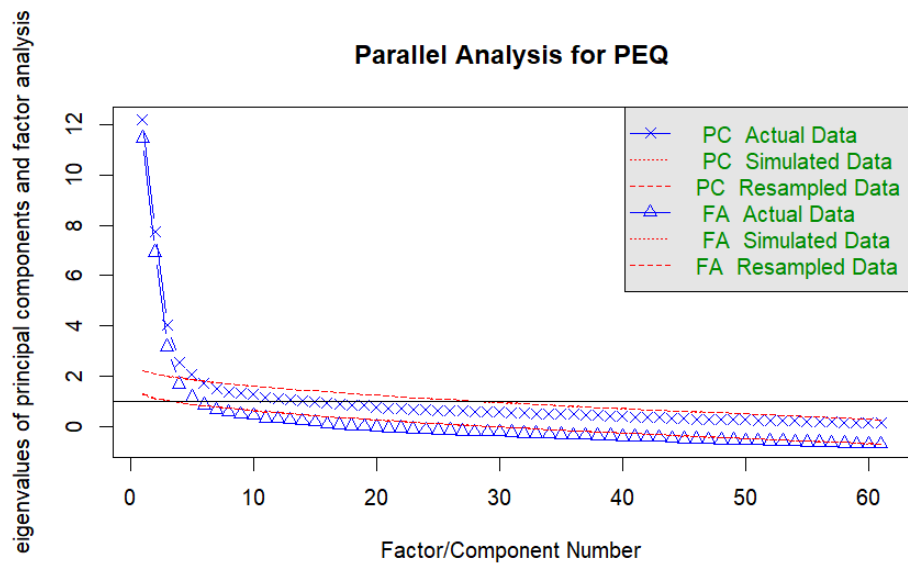


Figure 4

Predicted factor structure of the higher-order two-factor model

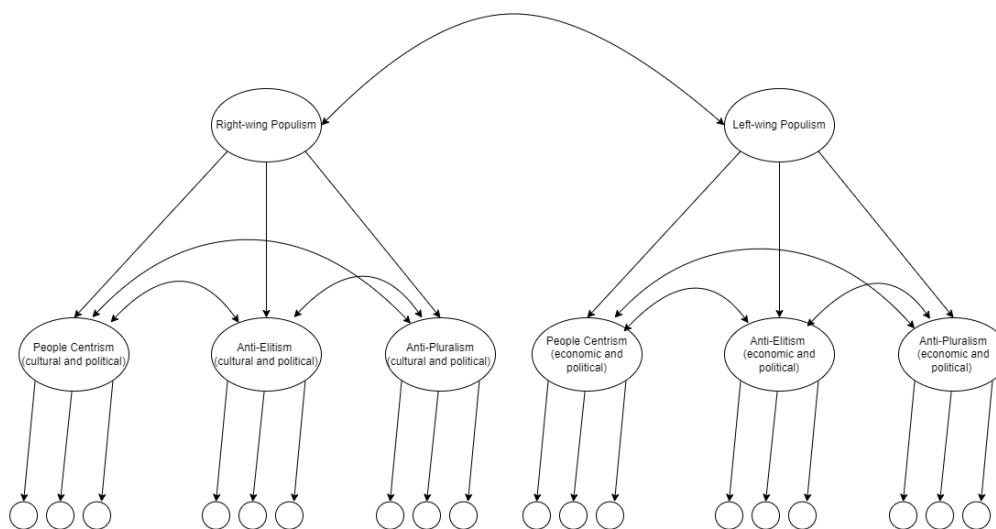
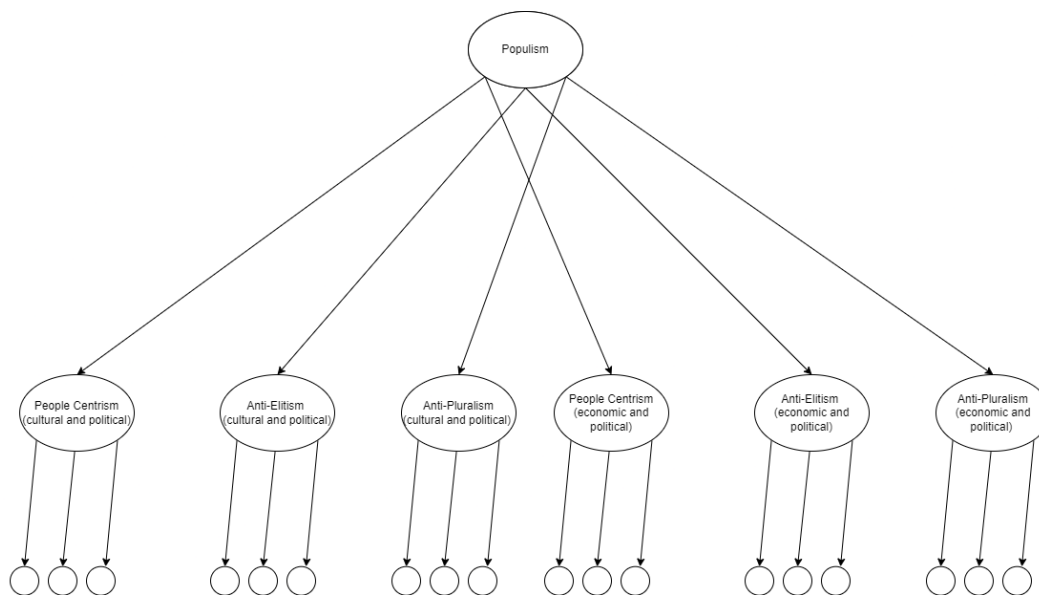


Figure 5

Predicted factor structure of the one higher order factor



Appendix A

The following items below were used in Study 3. Here is the evaluation of left-wing groups items:

- Your overall view of immigrants
- Your overall view of ethnic minorities
- Your overall view of Muslims
- Your overall view of LGBTQ+ members
- Your overall view of ACLU
- Your overall view of Critical Race Theory (CRT)

This next set of items covers the evaluation of right-wing groups.

- Your overall view of American patriots
- Your overall view of Wealthy
- Your overall view of Wall Street
- Your overall view of National Rifle Association (NRA)
- Your overall view of the Proud Boys
- Your overall view of law enforcement/police

There were five items for the trust in institution variables.

Please indicate to what extent you trust each of the following institutions:

- Federal Government
- The legal system
- The news media
- The local government
- Banks

There were six items that pertained to activism:

How likely do you think you will do any of the following forms of political action?

- Joining in boycotts
- Attending peaceful demonstrations
- Joining strikes
- Contacting a government official
- Organizing political activities, events and protests
- Picking up arms against the US government

Appendix B

The following 15 items tap conspiracy beliefs, and this scale comes with a unique set of instructions. Please see below for details.

Instructions: There is often debate about whether or not the public is told the whole truth about various important issues. This brief survey is designed to assess your beliefs about some of these subjects. Please indicate the degree to which you believe each statement is likely to be true on the following scale:

1. The government is involved in the murder of innocent citizens and/or well-known public figures, and keeps this a secret.
2. The power held by heads of state is second to that of small unknown groups who really control world politics.
3. Secret organizations communicate with extraterrestrials, but keep this fact from the public.
4. The spread of certain viruses and/or diseases is the result of the deliberate, concealed efforts of some organization
5. Groups of scientists manipulate, fabricate, or suppress evidence in order to deceive the public.
6. The government permits or perpetrates acts of terrorism on its own soil, disguising its involvement.
7. A small, secret group of people is responsible for making all major world decisions, such as going to war.
8. Evidence of alien contact is being concealed from the public.
9. Technology with mind-control capacities is used on people without their knowledge.
10. New and advanced technology which would harm current industry is being suppressed.
11. The government uses people as patsies to hide its involvement in criminal activity.
12. Certain significant events have been the result of the activity of a small group who secretly manipulate world events.
13. Some UFO sightings and rumors are planned or staged in order to distract the public from real alien contact.
14. Experiments involving new drugs or technologies are routinely carried out on the public without their knowledge or consent.
15. A lot of important information is deliberately concealed from the public out of self-interest.

A total of nine items were to measure collective narcissism.

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

Eight items were used to assess social dominance orientation.

1. An ideal society requires some groups to be on top and others to be on the bottom.
2. Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.
3. No one group should dominate in society.
4. Groups at the bottom are just as deserving as groups at the top.
5. Group equality should not be our primary goal.
6. It is unjust to try to make groups equal.
7. We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups.
8. We should work to give all groups an equal chance to succeed.

Five items were used to measure nativism.

1. America would be stronger if we stopped immigration.
2. America would be better off if we let in all immigrants who wanted to come here.
3. When jobs are scarce, people should prioritize hiring people of this country over immigrants.
4. Immigrants take jobs away from real Americans.
5. Immigrants take important social services away from real Americans.

Six items were used to measure ethnonationalism and two items for civic nationalism.

1. My first loyalty is to the heritage of my ancestors, their language and their religion.
2. The homeland of my people is sacred because of its monuments to our ancestors and heroes.
3. My ancestors once lived in a golden age with glorious and beautiful

achievements.

4. I honor the glorious heroes among my people who sacrificed themselves for our destiny and our heritage.
 5. United by common heritage and ancestry, my people have been divinely chosen for a special mission in the world.
 6. Those who share my ancestors, religion, and language should make ourselves a separate nation.
1. Ours should be a plural nation celebrating diversity and allowing for many different cultures.
 2. I value being a citizen of a nation that is diverse, with more than one religion, language, and ethnicity.

Six items were used to assess life satisfaction.

1. I like how my life is going.
2. I am content with my life.
3. I am satisfied with where I am in life right now.
4. If I could live my life over, I would change many things.
5. Those around me seem to be living better lives than my own.
6. I want to change the path my life is on.

Five items were utilized for well-being.

1. I have felt cheerful and in good spirits.
2. I have felt calm and relaxed.
3. I have felt active and vigorous.
4. I woke up feeling fresh and rested.
5. My daily life has been filled with things that interest me.

Four items were used to measure left-wing authoritarianism.

1. Our country desperately needs a mighty and liberal leader who will do what has to be done to destroy the radical traditional ways of doing things that are ruining us.
2. That our country really needs is a strong, determined leader who will crush the evil of pushy Christian religious people, and take us forward to our true path.
3. Our country will be great if we honor the ways of progressive thinking, do what the best liberal authorities tell us to do, and get rid of the religious and conservative “rotten apples” who are ruining everything.
4. This country would work a lot better if certain groups of Christian troublemakers would just shut up and accept their group’s proper place in society.

Six items were used to measure right-wing authoritarianism.

1. It's great that many young people today are prepared to defy authority.
2. What our country needs most is discipline, with everyone following our leaders in unity.
3. God's laws about abortion, pornography, and marriage must be strictly followed before it is too late.
4. There is nothing wrong with premarital sexual intercourse.
5. Our society does NOT need tougher government and stricter laws.
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.

This last set of items pertains to the Big-5 personality traits. All items begin with: "I see myself as someone who ..."

Extraversion

1. is reserved.
2. is outgoing, sociable.

Agreeableness

1. is generally trusting.
2. tends to find fault with others.

Conscientiousness

1. tends to be lazy.
2. tends to find fault with others.

Neuroticism

1. is relaxed, handles stress well.
2. does a thorough job.

Openness

1. has few artistic interests.
2. has an active imagination.

Appendix C

Relative deprivation was assessed with three items.

1. If we need anything from the government, people like me always have to wait longer than others.
2. I never received what I in fact deserved.
3. It's always the other people who profit from all kinds of benefits.

Two items were used to measure internal political efficacy and external political efficacy

1. I am good at understanding and assessing important political issues.
 2. I have the confidence to take active part in a discussion about political issues.
-
1. Politicians strive to keep in close touch with the people.
 2. Politicians care about what ordinary people think.

Six items were used to measure social anomie.

1. People think that there are no clear moral standards to follow.
2. Everyone thinks of himself/herself and does not help others in need.
3. Most people think that if something works, it doesn't really matter whether it is right or wrong.
4. People do not know who they can trust and rely on.
5. Most of the people think that honesty doesn't work all the time; dishonesty is sometimes a better approach to get ahead.
6. People are cooperative.

Six items were used to assess leadership anomie.

1. The government works towards the welfare of people.
2. The government is legitimate.
3. The government uses its power legitimately.
4. Politicians don't care about the problems of average person.
5. The government laws and policies are effective.
6. Some laws are not fair.

There were seven items that pertained to activism:

With current politics in mind, how likely in the future are you to

boycotts

Sign a petition

Joining strikes

Attend peaceful demonstrations

Contacting a government official

Donate to a political group or campaign

Encourage others to take action about political issues