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Disease Phobia Scale

This seven-item scale measures fear of diseases. On a sample of 49 community college students the scale had an alpha reliability of .72. This measure correlates with other measures as follow: high school grade point average -.05, age -.18, gender -.24, liberal politics -.45\*\*, conservative politics .58\*\*, Income .35\*. In this study 32% of the subjects had high scores on this scale and 36% had high scores on conservatism.

Positive correlations:

Religious fundamentalism .55\*\*, Social Disenfranchisement .55\*\*, In-group Elitism .54\*\*, Government Serving the Wealthy .47\*\*, Environmental Consumption .40\*\*, Miscellaneous Conservative Beliefs .84\*\*, Hypothetical Conservative Tribal Beliefs .75\*\*.

Negative correlations:

Kindly Religious Beliefs -.55\*\*, Low Social Disenfranchisement -.40\*\*, Egalitarianism -.60\*\*, Government Serving the Common Good -.53\*\*, Sustainable Community Endorsement -.57\*\*, Miscellaneous Liberal Beliefs -.67\*\*, Hypothetical Liberal Tribal Beliefs -.44\*\*

Disease Phobia Scale

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement below using this code:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral or between 2 and 4	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

1 2 3 4 5     1. I worry about diseases coming into our area from foreign places.

1 2 3 4 5     2. People of different language, skin color or nationality are more likely to carry disease than people like me.

- 1 2 3 4 5     3. People living in foreign lands are more likely to carry infectious diseases than people in our nation.
- 1 2 3 4 5     4. People in other states are more likely to carry infectious diseases than people in my state.
- 1 2 3 4 5     5. People in other towns or cities are more likely to carry infectious diseases than people in my town.
- 1 2 3 4 5     6. There may be times when we may need to take military action to keep groups of diseased people from invading our country.
- 1 2 3 4 5     7. (As a hypothetical primitive society resident). We must be very concerned about keeping diseased people from other nearby tribes (communities) from coming into our territory.

## Discussion.

This scale was developed from items in a study of over 60 psychological traits hypothesized by the author to differentiate liberal from conservative worldviews (McConochie, 2010). Part of the underlying theory stems from the work of biologist Randy Thornhill (Thornhill, et al, 2009). This biological theory posits that the conservative worldview evolved to protect in-groups from disease pathogens in neighboring territories against which the local group does not yet have immunity.

The findings from this study are considered to support this theory. The disease phobia scale correlates robustly and consistently with traits measured in the study. These traits correlate as predicted with liberal and conservative political orientation. The scale also correlates substantially directly with liberal and conservative political orientation in the directions predicted.

## References.

McConochie, W., (2010), Research report: Sixty-four Psychological Facets of Conservative and Liberal Worldviews, [Politicalpsychologyresearch.com](http://Politicalpsychologyresearch.com), Publications Page, Publication # 30.

Thornhill, R., Fincher, C., Aran, D., (2009). Parasites, democratization and the liberalization of values across contemporary countries. *Biological Reviews*, 84, 113-131.