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The Myth of Meritocracy: Factors Explaining Belief in Meritocracy Within the United States

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[this is an abstract placeholder for a project that will be submitted for publication elsewhere]

The Myth of Meritocracy: Factors Explaining Belief in Meritocracy Within the United States

Kaley Burg

This study examined data from the 2021 General Social Survey (GSS) to determine what factors influence participants' view of meritocracy within the United States. Based on existing literature that examines relative power and perception, this study sought to understand the connection between power and belief that America exists as a meritocracy, with the assumption that those belonging to groups deemed as wielding power in society should hold stronger beliefs in meritocracy. Results partially support this hypothesis. Using a multivariate linear regression analysis, those who are older or white assert stronger belief in meritocracy, while those with a greater social justice orientation show less belief in meritocracy.