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Why people are poor/wealthy: powerful frames

Attribution Theory observes that people have a compelling need to explain things, and those explanations break down into things internal to the self or to an outside force. Attribution Theory neatly parallels work by George Lakoff that U. S. conservatives and Republicans take a "stern father" approach to issues, finding individual fault for almost any problem, while Democrats and liberals look to external forces. Mediated portrayals of poverty tend to enforce the former view rather than the latter. Through secondary analyses of many polls, the researcher confirms that political ideology and party align at highly significant levels with how respondents answer the question "Why are people poor?" and also "Why are people wealthy?" The connections were remarkably strong and consistent across the surveys analyzed. The author concludes that one's approach to wealth/poverty is a strong and resilient frame, often very difficult to change, through which political and economic information is sorted, stored, and applied.