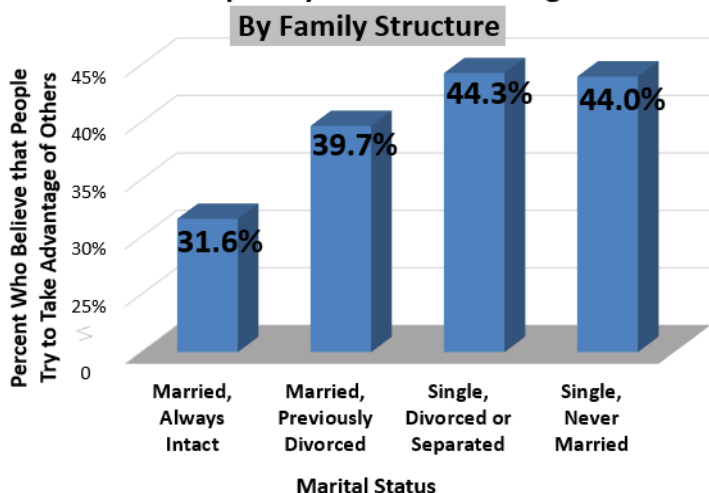


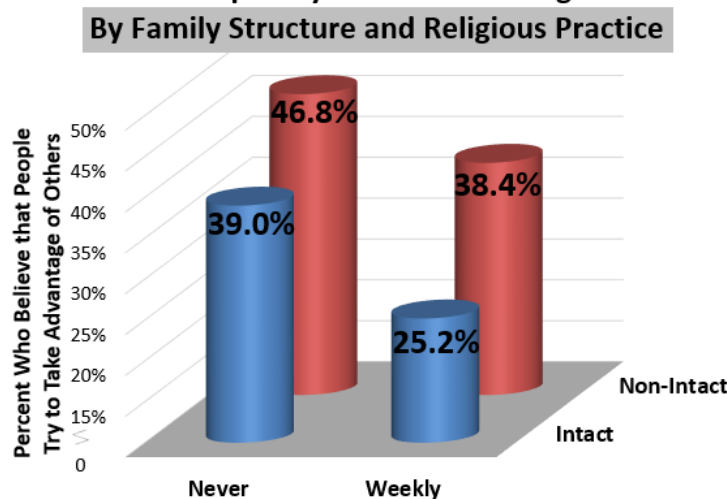
“Belief that People Try to Take Advantage of Others” By Family Structure and Religious Practice

Belief that People Try to Take Advantage of Others



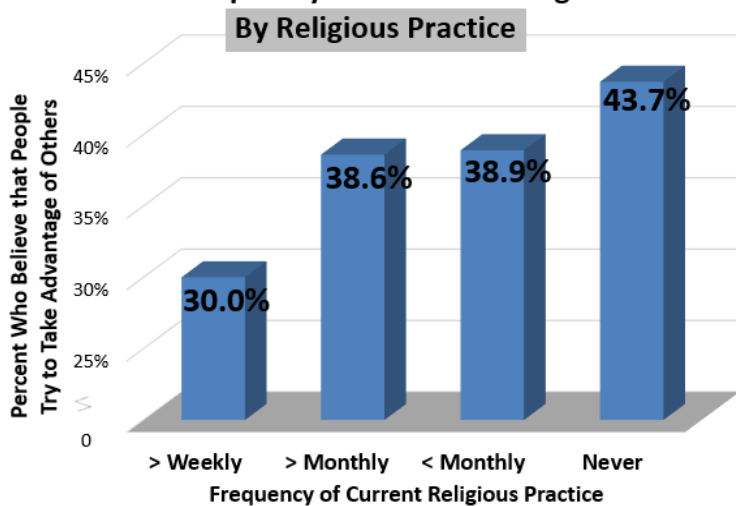
Source: General Social Survey, 1972-2006

Belief that People Try to Take Advantage of Others



Source: General Social Survey, 1972-2006

Belief that People Try to Take Advantage of Others



Source: General Social Survey, 1972-2006

These charts take the national data on the “belief that people try to take advantage of others” and splits it into four quadrants. It then illustrates the poles of each quadrant to highlight the difference in outcomes that correlate with the different poles of marital status and religious attendance.

The starting points are demographics that mark two major social institutions: marital status and religious attendance. Marital status is divided further into two groups: always-intact marriages and all other marital status categories.* Religious attendance is also divided into two groups: high and low worship of which the two poles “weekly attendance” and “never attends” are subcategories used in this chart.

The resultant four poles are 1) Americans in always-intact marriages who worship weekly; 2) Americans in always-intact marriages who never worship; 3) Americans in all other marital status categories who worship weekly; and 4) Americans in all other marital status categories who never worship.

* The “all other marital status categories” group consists of adults who are “married, previously divorced,” “single, divorced or separated,” and “single, never married.”

“Belief that People Try to Take Advantage of Others” by Family Structure and Religious Practice

Family Structure: According to the General Social Survey (GSS), 31.6 percent of always-intact married adults believed that, given the opportunity, most people would try to take advantage of others, followed by 39.7 percent of married, previously-divorced adults, 44 percent of single, never-married adults, and 44.3 percent of single, divorced or separated adults.¹

Religious Practice: According to the General Social Survey (GSS), 43.7 percent of adults who never attended religious services believed that, given the opportunity, most people would try to take advantage of others, followed by 38.9 percent of those who attended religious services less than once a month, 38.6 percent of those who worshiped between one and three times a month, and 30 percent of those who worshiped at least weekly.

Family Structure and Religious Practice Combined: According to the General Social Survey (GSS), 25.2 percent of adults in always-intact marriages who attended religious services at least weekly believed that, given the opportunity, most people try to take advantage of others, followed by 38.4 percent of all other adults who worshiped at least weekly, 39 percent of adults in always-intact marriages who never attended worship, and 46.8 percent of all other adults who never attended religious services.

Patrick F. Fagan, Ph.D.

Patrick Fagan is the Director of the Marriage and Religion Research Institute

Althea Nagai, Ph.D.

¹These charts draw on data collected by the General Social Survey, 1972-2006. From 1972 to 1993, the sample size averaged 1,500 each year. No GSS was conducted in 1979, 1981, or 1992. Since 1994, the GSS has been conducted only in even-numbered years and uses two samples per GSS that total approximately 3,000. In 2006, a third sample was added for a total sample size of 4,510.