

Our Sense of Fairness Is Beyond Politics

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What do the haves owe to the have-nots? Should a society redistribute resources from some people to others? These questions are central to the economic policy differences between left and right. The opposing views might seem completely irreconcilable. But a new paper in the journal *Cognition* suggests that people of all political stripes have surprisingly similar views about redistribution, at least in the abstract.

Daniel Nettle at Newcastle University and Rebecca Saxe at MIT presented 2,400 people in the U.K. with stories about how an imaginary village could divvy up the food people grew in their gardens. A simple graphic allowed the participants to say how much food they thought should go from villagers who had more to those who had less.

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