REASONING and CHOICE

Explorations in Political Psychology

Paul M. Sniderman,
Richard A. Brody,
and Philip E. Tetlock

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Drawing on a multitude of data sets and building on analyses carried out over more than a decade, *Reasoning and Choice* offers a major new theroretical explanation of how ordinary citizens figure out what they favor and oppose politically. Reacting against the conventional wisdom, which stresses how little attention the general public pays to political issues and the lack of consistency in their political opinions, the studies presented in this book redirect attention to the processes of reasoning that can be discerned when people are confronted with choices about political issues.

These studies demonstrate that ordinary people are in fact capable of reasoning dependably about political issues by the use of judgmental heuristics, even if they have only a limited knowledge of politics and of specific issues. An important point is that both the well educated and the less educated use heuristics in political reasoning, but that the well educated tend to employ different heuristics and take into account more factors in their consideration of issues. A number of other important themes in public opinion and political psychology research are addressed, including the question of how consistency in belief systems should be interpreted, the interdependence of affect and cognition in political reasoning, the importance of education as a determining factor in a person's reasoning skills, and the importance of considering the dynamics of the reasoning process.

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To

SUSAN SNIDERMAN
MARJORIE J. BRODY
and
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Preface

At first opportunistically, then programmatically, a growing band of us have worked to develop an account of how people reason about political choices. Though we are acutely aware of the limitations of our approach, we do believe it is on the way to becoming a perspective on public opinion and political psychology. So we have brought together a selection of research papers, both to lay out our general approach and to present some of our specific results.

Most of these studies are being published for the first time, whereas the remainder have been scattered through professional journals. This volume thus provides our colleagues in political science, public opinion, and political psychology their first chance to see and assess what we have been up to, all in all.

Typically, a book in public opinion offers a focused analysis of a specific problem – say, voting – relying either on one set of interviews or on multiple sets using the same questionnaire. Here we have drawn together triply independent studies: concerned with different problems, drawing on separate samples and even sampling frames, assessing different variables or assessing the same variable in different ways. These studies, though, grow out of a common framework, and so far as the results of each confirm the others, confidence in the overall argument should be increased. So far as the results of these studies are mutually confirmatory, although samples, variables, and measures differ, then the overall set of studies should convince even if each study itself is only partly persuasive.

Beyond this, the ideas we have been working on have changed by virtue of working on them. This holds particularly for the phenomena we want to account for. At the outset, the dependent variables were all familiar; now, in the studies of persuasibility, for example, we have somehow managed to land on new ground, and our exploration of it remains preliminary. The measure of our progress is thus twofold: The cumulation of studies has led to increased support for the core of our account of reasoning and choice, and to increased awareness of complexity at the periphery.

Our debts run in two directions. So far as data are concerned, we are part of the community of social scientists who benefit from the National Election Studies and the General Social Survey, operated by the Center for Political Studies of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan and the National

Opinion Research Center, both supported by grants from the National Science Foundation. In addition, we ourselves have benefited from the support of the National Science Foundation (Grant No. SES 8508937), which underwrote the costs of data collection for the analyses reported in Chapters 11, 12, and 13.

Data aside, we are in debt to colleagues for ideas and encouragement. At the head of the list is Percy Tannenbaum, director of the Survey Research Center at the University of California, Berkeley. He has given us assistance at every step, and indeed is responsible for the original suggestion that Sniderman and Tetlock should initiate a research program in political psychology at the Center. Our colleagues at the Center have as much to answer for. Our debt to Merrill Shanks will become even more obvious in subsequent publications, but it already cannot be concealed, as Chapters 11 through 13 will make plain. As director of the Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, he developed the programming that has allowed us to integrate experimental design and survey research in a new way. For that matter, we are in arrears to Michael Hout; and proud of it: One always owes one's friends.

Finally, we want to thank the *British Journal of Political Science*, the *American Political Science Review*, the *American Journal of Political Science*, and the University of Illinois Press for reprint permission. We are additionally and especially indebted to two people for assistance in preparing the manuscript – indeed, so much so that however much were we to say they had helped, they might justifiably say that they had helped even more. So we will just express our sincere appreciation to Mark D. Spranca and Lani Kask.

1

Introduction: major themes

One of the most striking features of the study of Americans' thinking about politics has been the submergence of politics itself. How people figure out their positions on specific issues has become a minor chord: The major chord in the analysis of public opinion, endlessly repeated, is how little attention they pay to politics, how rarely they think about even major issues, and how often they have failed to work through a consistent or genuine position on them. Why, then, ask how people make any particular political choice when the whole point to appreciate is how unlikely they are to have given it any thought?

In contrast, the argument of this book is that ordinary people do reason through their choices over a range of issues. By reason, we do not mean self-conscious acts of cerebration, merely that people can occasionally take advantage of shortcuts in judgment to figure out dependably what they favor politically. Nor should this be taken to imply that the public is well informed and politically aware. On the contrary, the whole thrust of our argument is to understand how people's modest level of political information, plus their similarly modest abilities to process it, conditions how they reason about political choices.

We write from the premise that if you want to understand how people reason about political choices, you must examine how they reason about actual choices before them. Has the eruption of AIDS excited a public backlash against gays? To what extent are Americans only giving lip service to the principle of racial equality? To what extent are they capable of making a genuine commitment to the value of tolerance? How is it possible for ordinary citizens to put together a liberal or conservative perspective on political issues and the political process when they cannot give a coherent definition of either liberalism or conservatism? How easily can people be talked out of the positions they take on an emotionally charged issue like race? Is the ordinary American prepared to treat blacks and whites alike, or are there still two standards of what is fair – one for whites and the other for blacks? These questions constitute the stuff of politics. How the public grapples with them is the subject of our book.

Our argument builds on six major themes: the revolt against minimalism, the concept of consistency, the role of feelings as well as beliefs in political

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reasoning, the "heterogeneity" assumption, the role of education in democratic citizenship, and an account of not merely the statics but also the dynamics of reasoning and choice. All of the studies explore most of these themes, and some all of them, so a brief sketch of our major themes is in order.

THE REVOLT AGAINST MINIMALISM

The standard picture of public opinion, as our own effort got underway, was roughly this. The public's knowledge of politics was paper thin, its views on public issues arranged higgledy-piggledy, its understanding of political abstractions like liberalism or conservatism as a rule superficial or nil. Against this backdrop, it made little sense to inquire into the structure of reasoning and choice on political issues.

Following Converse's (1964) seminal study of mass belief systems, systematic analysis concentrated instead on three topics. The first was attitude consistency, understood as the predictability of a person's position on one issue given knowledge of his position on another. The second was the stability of opinions over time, understood as the consistency of preferences on political issues given the mere passage of time. The third was the so-called levels of conceptualization – a scheme for scoring the reasons that citizens give for liking (and disliking) presidential candidates and the two major political parties, to measure the quality of their political thinking. All three lines of research seemed to converge: The political opinions of the public tended to be minimally consistent, minimally stable, and rest on minimal levels of comprehension of political abstractions. To oversimplify, all three lines of research tended to depict the ordinary citizen as muddleheaded, unable to put his political opinions together consistently, or empty-headed, lacking genuine opinions altogether – or both.

Predictably, a counterattack on minimalism was launched. A number of sharp sallies were directed at issues of measurement, particularly on the assessment of stability over time (e.g., Achen, 1975; Judd and Milburn, 1980), but the frontal assault on minimalism was spearheaded by Nie, Verba, and Petrocik (1976) in *The Changing American Voter*. Not surprisingly, a furor ensued, centering on meticulous analysis of the consequences of seemingly innocuous changes in question wording (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus, 1978; Bishop, Tuchfarber, and Oldendick, 1978), with the counterattackers themselves thrown back on the defensive. In Chapter 2 we survey this exchange; here we want to direct attention to a piece of research, pivotal in shaping our research program.

In an exemplary study, Stimson (1975) struck out in a new direction in the analysis of constraint and complexity in mass belief systems. Rather than asking simply whether the issue preferences of mass publics tend to be consistent, he reframed the question, investigating how consistency in reasoning and choice varies with "cognitive ability." As measures of consistency he used correlation coefficients, summarized in the form of factor analyses and, as a measure of cognitive ability, combined a person's level of formal education and amount of political information: Yoking the two together, Stimson gave a strong demonstra-

tion that the issue preferences of the most cognitively able are well organized, those of the least able only minimally so.

From our perspective, Stimson's analysis demonstrated how arguments over minimalism – and this embraces critiques as fully as defenses – were systematically misleading. The mistake was to suppose that the analytic problem was how to characterize the political reasoning of the public as a whole: It was, as he showed, misconceived to argue that the average citizen could, or could not, pull his political ideas together, because the extent to which mass belief systems are organized varies markedly and predictably across mass publics. Moreover, and this was the second major contribution of Stimson, the consistency of mass belief systems depends heavily on "cognitive factors," among them, formal education and political information.

This double contribution of Stimson opened the door for our own effort, making plain both that substantial segments of the mass public could tie their political ideas together and that whether, and how far, they did so is not a constant but varies with, among other things, the amount of schooling they have had.

All the same, the Stimson analysis was a halfway house. One way to see this point is to contrast the account of political reasoning offered for the most politically aware and the least. Stripped to essentials, it came to this: An explanation could be offered for the politically aware but not for the politically ill-informed, because the most striking feature of the latter's ideas was precisely that any given idea element has scarcely anything to do with any other. Stimson, of course, recognized that information is not an either–or proposition: It is a matter of degree. Yet the continuum, in his account, runs from well organized to poorly to hardly at all. This seemed to us a mischaracterization. The political ideas of the less well educated and the less well informed, we concede, tend to be more loosely, and sometimes even haphazardly, tied together. But it is important all the same to explore the possibility that the less well informed and less well educated, rather than simply failing to organize their thinking about politics, organize it in different ways.

One implication, supposing this plausible, is that the conventional mode for characterizing the structure of belief systems is misleading. The standard procedure is to calculate the predictability of one idea element given a knowledge of others, using a correlation coefficient to summarize the connectedness of pairs of ideas. There had been warnings about computational pitfalls (e.g., Barton and Parson, 1977), but the deeper problem is not statistical but conceptual. Belief systems, we reasoned, acquired structure through reasoning about choices. To see the structure they possessed, it was necessary to identify how people managed choices – that is, the considerations that they took into account and the relative weights they placed on them. The standard approach in effect asked: To what extent is one idea element connected to another *on the assumption the connections are approximately the same for everyone.*

From our perspective, idea elements could, and likely were, connected in a variety of ways depending upon both the characteristics of the problem that a person was trying to work through and the characteristics of the person trying to

work it through. Political choices pose problems, and the object of political psychology accordingly is to give an account, not simply of how people recollect their preferred solution to a problem, but of how they figured it out in the first place.

The analogy to problem solving offers a clue to the organization of belief systems. To speak in terms of problem solving is to imply that political choices presented to people come organized: It would be a fool's errand to try to explain how the average person imposes a structure on political choices were they not already structured. One basis of this structure, as we argue in Chapters 5 and 8, is the dynamics of the two-party system, in competition for popular support.

But granted that political choices are organized by the structure of political competition, the question remains: How are substantial numbers of the public able dependably to figure out what they favor and oppose politically? The evidence is compelling that citizens, even well-educated citizens, tend to pay only intermittent attention to politics and to possess a fund of information about politics conspicuous for its thinness. If so, how can they work out what they favor and oppose politically?

People, we reasoned, can dependably figure out what they favor and oppose provided that they find an effective way to simplify the choices before them. A central aim of our program of research, accordingly, has been to identify some of these judgmental shortcuts, or heuristics. An example, a simple affective calculus, is set out in Chapter 3, where we suppose that one basis on which people make up their minds how to react to AIDS is how they feel toward homosexuals. Analogously, in Chapter 4, we show that one basis on which people decide whether they favor or oppose government assistance for blacks is how they feel toward blacks. The groundwork laid, Chapters 5 and 6 offer more complex versions of heuristic inference.

Partly, complexity in the analysis of heuristics is necessary to guard against overproliferation of heuristics. So in Chapter 5, we consider the example of the "desert heuristic," a shorthand rule for deciding whether a person or group deserves assistance according to whether they can be held responsible for occasioning the problem before them. On a conventional analysis, this desert heuristic then operates as a rule to simplify judgments, with people deciding that a group or person is entitled to government assistance if the problem they are suffering arose from external causes and, conversely, that they are not entitled to assistance if the problem arose from internal reasons. As we show in Chapter 5, though, this simplification is misleading, for not only do people's views about what the government should do for a group follow from their judgment about why the group has a problem but, just as commonly, their judgments about why the group has a problem follow from their views about what the government should do. Chapter 6 takes up a more positive task, offering an example of what we take to be a properly specified heuristic. Here we will only remark that it is by avoiding an argument over whether reasoning should be modeled as either affect-driven or as cognition-driven, and insisting instead on the interdependence of the two, that we transform a judgmental shortcut previously interpreted as producing mispercep-

tion in the form of false consensus into a heuristic that yields reasonably accurate estimations of others' policy preferences.

Chapter 2 sets out our developing theory of political reasoning and heuristics. It rests on a double-winged contention: First, citizens compensate for a lack of information about political issues by relying on shortcuts in reasoning, or heuristics, and second, the heuristics that they take advantage of systematically vary according to their level of political information and awareness. This double-winged contention constitutes the heart of our critique of minimalism.

THE ROLE OF CONSISTENCY

Once the mainstream research paradigm in social psychology (e.g., Abelson, 1968), an interest in belief system consistency has largely evaporated. Partly this is because analytic perspectives in the social sciences are subject to fashion, which paradoxically ensures that ideas and arguments will fall into disrepute precisely because they have been successful. Partly an interest in consistency fell out of the analysis of mass belief systems because the characteristic they most conspicuously seemed to lack was exactly consistency.

Yet willy-nilly, in an effort to get a grip on how people reason about particular choices, we found ourselves reconsidering the role of consistency. But rather than having a descriptive goal of estimating the extent to which the elements of mass belief systems are connected one to another, our interest was to take advantage of the idea of consistency to give a causal account of how these connections arise.

Hence our interest in the so-called principle–policy puzzle, which is set out in Chapter 4. The analytic problem, as previous research had defined it, was to explain why Americans, and particularly well educated Americans, supported the principle of racial equality but not policies actually to achieve it. The usual explanatory maneuver, attributing a lack of consistency in political ideas to a lack of awareness and information about politics, was ruled out, because the slippage between support for principle and for policy was largest, not among the least educated but among the most, who are on average the most politically aware. On closer examination, the answer to the puzzle became clear: The reason the most educated failed to give as much support to policies to achieve racial equality as to the principle of racial equality is because educated conservatives in particular take exception to these policies – quite consistently, from a conservative point of view.

The analysis of the principle–policy puzzle thus taught a double lesson. First, what seemed to be an example of inconsistency – of supporting the principle of racial equality but not policies to realize it – was, more deeply considered, in fact an instance of consistency, if not between principle and policy, then between political ideology and policy preference. Second, political awareness and sophistication, so far from maximizing consistency across the board, favor constraint selectively; specifically, it is the least, not the most, educated who tend to

maximize proximal consistency, bringing immediately adjacent elements such as principle and policy into congruence, whereas the most educated maximize distal consistency, ensuring that parts of belief systems at some distance from one another such as general ideology and specific issue preference fit properly together.

But is it not perverse to suggest that education promotes inconsistency? Consider, for the sake of argument, a voting decision about whether to reduce property taxes.[1] Define as the field of decision the range of considerations that each voter regards as relevant for making his or her decision. The size of the field of decision will covary with the level of the voter's political awareness, being more comprehensive the better informed the voter is, less inclusive the less aware and sophisticated the voter is. The relevance of considerations in the field will of course vary: The more immediate the connection between considerations and choice is, the more proximal; the less immediate, the more distal. Putting these two propositions together, it follows that the more sophisticated the voter, the more likely he or she is to take account of distal as well as proximal considerations. Given that the considerations voters take into account are not redundant – that is, are imperfectly correlated – it will frequently be the case that the less, not the more, sophisticated maximize consistency, proximally conceived. After all, the advantage of being sophisticated lies precisely in enjoying a greater chance of being aware of considerations that, though relevant for making a choice, are not immediately or obviously so.

There is also a deeper point here. As we observe in Chapters 2, 3, and 5, the structure of belief systems may analytically be defined over two dimensions: differentiation, understood as the number of evaluatively distinct dimensions of judgments that an individual takes into account in interpreting events or in making judgments, and integration, conceived as the strength of connections among idea-elements (cf. Tetlock, 1986). The analysis we offer, in Chapter 7, of judgments about tolerance illustrates the dimension of integration. The fundamental concern is to identify conditions under which the connections among relevant idea-elements are maximally detected, such that if a person accepts belief 1, she accepts also belief 2. In terms of the problem we analyze in Chapter 7, the object is to identify conditions under which people are most likely, if they accept the principle of political tolerance, to accept as well the principle of racial tolerance; and the argument we make is that consistency is obtained by judgments of similarity to a category prototype.

The second aspect of consistency, differentiation, is as consequential as the first. By differentiation we have in mind the ability to make connections between anterior considerations and a present choice: The larger the number of anterior considerations one takes into account in making up one's mind, the more differentiated one's judgment. Differentiation increases factors relevant to making a choice, by enlarging the field of decision, whereas integration decreases them, by maximizing connections across idea-elements. This duality of consistency offers a clue to a long-standing paradox of political sophistication: On the one hand, integration, by reducing the number of functionally independent considerations,

favors simplicity of structure; on the other, differentiation, by increasing the number of considerations taken into account in making a choice, favors complexity. It only remains to remark that differentiation and integration represent not opposing tendencies – because both represent a common drive to make associations among elements of a belief system – but rather contrasting phases of judgment.

THE ROLE OF AFFECT IN POLITICAL REASONING

The studies that follow lay the foundation for a theory of reasoning and choice. We say theory not to lay a claim for the scope of what has so far been accomplished – indeed, the whole point of our surveying this set of studies both here and in the chapter to follow is to help make explicit what is yet to be worked out, both conceptually and empirically – but rather to indicate how, analytically, one thing led to another.

Skeptical of minimalism, our interest fell naturally on consistency. But consistency how construed? The obvious construction, and the one we favored initially, was of course cognitive consistency. But to construe consistency in this way only increased the implausibility of minimalism. The paradigmatic problem, from a minimalist perspective, is to assess the consistency between issue preferences, taken as pairs. Take two issues – whether the federal government should assure fair treatment in employment for blacks and whether the level of spending for defense should be increased. Citizens are scored according to their success in matching the pattern of position taking appropriate for an ideologically sophisticated voter – either favoring the first and opposing the second, or opposing the first and favoring the second. From a causal point of view, however, the solution is radically underdetermined.

How is it possible that a person could reason from a belief about, say, proper levels of federal spending to a position on the risks of pornography? In terms of manifest content, the two issues are quite independent. The reasoning must then be indirect, with positions on the two issues following not by association one with the other but by entailment from a higher-order construct. But the suggestion of deductive inference is not more plausible than that of paired association: It asks us to suppose that the positions we take on issues, so far as we arrive at them through reasoning, are the product of logical entailment. This is an excessively cerebral account of political thinking, minimizing the role of affect, or feelings, in political reasoning.

But just what is meant by the term *affect?* Three distinctions need to be remarked. The first is between state and trait: Feelings may be characterized as emotion experienced at a given moment, as when a victim of a holdup experiences fear, or alternatively, as a disposition regularly to experience an emotion, as when a person is prone to chronic anxiety. The second distinction is between qualitative and quantitative. A manifold of emotions can be discriminated, vari-

eties of anxiety, hope, anger, esteem, pride; alternatively, quantitative considerations may dominate, with the emphasis merely on the extent to which a person's feelings are positive or negative. Finally, emotions may be diffuse, the classic example being a chronic anxiety readily excited, or focused, a selective emotional response to a specific object, say, a particular person.

To rehearse our own usage, our conception of affect falls away from state and toward trait; is quantitative rather than qualitative, and focused rather than diffuse. In assessing affect we concentrate on people's feelings toward politically salient groups – on the extent to which people like (or dislike) liberals and conservatives, for example, or on the extent to which they like (or dislike) blacks and whites – in an effort to understand how people's thinking about politics shapes, and is shaped, by their likes and dislikes.

Our aim has been to explore the relationship between affect, so conceived, and political rationality. Two discriminably different roles of affect are center stage. So far as the less sophisticated are concerned, affect can serve as a calculational crutch. In general, liking (or disliking) a particular group can supply a handy basis for deciding whether to support or to oppose a policy dealing with the group. More specifically, one way people can compensate for a lack of information about politics is to base their policy preferences on their likes and dislikes, and the less information they have about politics, the more likely they are to do so. It does not follow, however, that the reasoning of the politically sophisticated is free of affect. On the contrary, one of our fundamental arguments is precisely that a telltale feature of the politically aware is how pronounced and supportive their likes and dislikes are. Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5 give an account of the role of affect particularly in the reasoning of the less sophisticated, Chapter 6 gives an account of its role in the reasoning of the more sophisticated.

THE "HETEREOGENEITY" ASSUMPTION AND EDUCATION

The next two themes, hetereogeneity and education, though independent analytically, run side by side empirically, so we deal with them together. The core thesis could not be simpler: People make up their minds in different ways; conversely, the insistence that people make up their minds about political choices more or less in the same way has reinforced the impression that ordinary citizens are ill-equipped for democratic citizenship.

The studies that follow put flesh and blood on this thesis. Chapter 8 presents a critique of the standard thesis of ideological innocence and a reconceptualization of the role of ideological reasoning. As usual, consistency is our starting point, in this case a striking lack of it in the thinking of the public, as reported by Conover and Feldman (1981). They demonstrate that there is virtually no correlation between people's feelings toward liberals and their feelings toward conservatives. But in what sense can citizens be said to have a grip on ideology if they do not even understand that if one likes liberals, one should at least like conservatives less?

We want to argue not that Conover and Feldman gave the wrong answer to the question but rather that they asked the question the wrong way. It does not make sense to ask how the public as a whole reasons about political choices unless one is prepared to assume that people by and large make up their mind the same way – that is, in weighing a choice, that people take account of more or less the same considerations and attach more or less the same weight to them. But consider the problem of ideology and public opinion. Though a part of the public gets their ideological likes and dislikes perfectly crossed up, as we show indirectly in Chapter 5 and directly in Chapter 8, a part also gets them organized consistently. Moreover, the likelihood that an ordinary person will put his ideological likes and dislikes together consistently depends on the number of years of formal schooling he has had. What Conover and Feldman do is to lump everyone in the public together, ignoring the systematic variation in consistency of ideological likes and dislikes, producing thereby a portrait of political thinking that is true for the average citizen but false for most citizens.

An analogous argument is made, initially in Chapter 2 and then in detail in Chapter 7, to show that conventional representations of how the public as a whole thinks about a cornerstone value of democracy like tolerance scrambles together different patterns of reasoning characteristic of the less and more educated. Rather than rehearsing the details of the causal analysis here, we want to call attention to a normative claim, underlying many of the analyses presented in this book. That claim concerns the connection between education and democratic citizenship.

It should not count against an important idea that it has been neglected. One such idea, both important and neglected, is John Dewey's intuition about the role of schools in a democratic society. He supposed not that ordinary people started off fit for democratic citizenship but rather that they are capable of becoming so, and that in the process of their acquiring an aptitude for citizenship, one social institution looms as central: the schools.

Dewey recognized that men and women could develop their capacities outside of schools, but took the position all the same that education in democratic citizenship was doubly tied up with the educational system. On the one side, citizens acquired through formal schooling not simply relevant information they required to reason about political choices, but more fundamentally the ability to manipulate information efficiently and to gather it effectively after they had left school. On the other side, quite apart from efficiencies in information processing, schools directed the minds of citizens to certain values – among them, openness of mind, a respect for science and empirical knowledge, an awareness of complexity and possibilities for change, and tolerance, not only of people but of points of view. Dewey spoke in a mixed mood, sometimes describing how education fitted men and women for democratic citizenship, sometimes predicting how, rightly organized, education could equip them for citizenship. But whether as description or prescription, Dewey staked much on the role of education in a democratic society.

Dewey's wager has won little attention from students of politics, and still less respect. The indifference to it is odd considering the seminal research of sociologists, among them Stouffer (1955), Selznick and colleagues (e.g., Selznick and Steinberg, 1969), and Hyman and colleagues (e.g., Hyman and Wright, 1979), who have made a strong case for the enduring effects of education on basic values, inhibiting religious and racial intolerance on the one side and promoting political toleration on the other.

Yet even the classic studies of education and tolerance, we believe, underestimate the impact of schooling on reasoning about choices. The first generation of research established that the extent to which people are committed to the value of tolerance is a function of, among other things, the amount of their formal education. Call this the main effect of education. What we are concerned to explore is the interactive effect of schooling – that is, the extent to which education not only affects reasoning about choices in its own right but also affects the way other factors affect reasoning.

Without remarking the details of the findings, we want to note that the overall line of argument has a double contribution to make. The first is causal: We want to understand how citizens reason about choices in politics, to understand, that is, what considerations induce them to make the choices they do. The second is normative: The concern here is the extent to which individuals, thanks to education, *can* do what, as citizens, they *ought* to do.

In Chapter 3, we survey the public's reactions to AIDS, investigating whether the epidemic has triggered a backlash against homosexuals. Consistent with classic research on the main effects of education, we find that the better educated a person is, the less likely he or she is to be homophobic. But it is of course also true that education does not eliminate intolerance: Nontrivial numbers of people who have had the advantage of an excellent education are homophobic all the same. But as we take pains to make clear in Chapter 3, schooling makes a double contribution: Not only are the better educated less likely to be homophobic, but even when they are, they are also less likely to base their reactions to AIDS on their feelings toward homosexuals.

Now, we certainly do not mean to claim that education is an all-purpose emollient, softening the impact of irrational prejudices: Our results on affect are consistent, applying to a variety of groups, but it does not follow that a person who has succumbed to a deep prejudice will be released from its grip merely owing to formal schooling. Nor do we intend to preempt the causal question as to just why years of formal education are correlated with reasoning about political choices. There are many possibilities, and indeed we are struck by the confidence of some who are certain that it is not education itself that is at work, but rather a factor only gratuitously correlated with it, such as inherited intelligence, income, social status, or a combination of these. Much depends on a meticulous sorting through of causal alternatives: The normative case we are making for the contribution of education to democratic citizenship would fall away if the speculation about intelligence were vindicated. And even setting aside the risk of spuriousness, it

would be an obvious contribution to identify just what there is about schooling – more information? skill in abstraction? reinforcement of open-mindedness? – that equips citizens for democratic citizenship.

DYNAMICS

The largest number of our studies focus on the statics of political belief. The analytic problem, so stylized, is to account for the choices people make, absent external pressure, to select one alternative against another – after all, the whole point in the design of the standard opinion interview is to ensure that neither the question asked, nor the questioner asking it, tips the scales to influence the respondent to answer one way rather than another. The standard survey interview thus supplies a picture of how people reason when the pressures on them to favor one alternative against another are neutralized.

This representation is manifestly one-dimensional. But we were required to view the problems of reasoning and choice in these terms so long as our only opportunities for analysis were for secondary analysis. As surveys that we designed went into the field over the last few years, we have had the chance to explore a new dimension.

Substantively, the objective is to examine the interaction of situational factors and individual characteristics; methodologically, it is to marry the internal validity strengths of experimental design and the external validity of survey research.

The studies on the dynamics of reasoning that we have included here, though only a selection from our ongoing research, illustrate well new opportunities in survey research. In Chapter 11, for example, building on a classic experimental design, we ask to what extent an appeal to the law can actually generate popular support for racial policies to help blacks. In Chapter 12, in contrast, we take advantage of a quasi-experimental design, to ask to what extent people can be talked out of the positions they have already taken on racial issues by means of counterarguments. Finally, in Chapter 13, we wring yet another variation on our theme of variations by introducing a technique to assess to what extent and under what conditions the public discriminates against blacks in deciding what public benefits they are entitled to.

Through this new approach, we have deepened our analysis of a number of the questions we set out to explore. Most obviously, there is the issue of understanding to what extent, and in what sense, the public at large is in fact committed to democratic values. In Chapter 3, we exploit a (gruesome) natural experiment, comparing the public's reactions to the rights of homosexuals before and after the AIDS epidemic. But our program of research did not tackle directly the dynamics of reasoning – in the specific sense we intend the term – until the studies reported in the last three substantive chapters were launched.

From our perspective, to assess the dynamics of reasoning requires exploration of the interplay of people and their situations. Put concretely, it is not enough to see how people make choices in an artificially neutral setting; it is necessary to

examine how they choose under pressure. After all, we rarely make up our minds in a vacuum: There is usually someone tugging at our sleeve to favor *X*, or to oppose *Y*.

Programmatically, our analysis of the dynamics of reasoning has been set in the context of a matrix of persuasibility defined over three dimensions: source effects, message effects, and receiver effects (McGuire, 1969). Chapter 11 thus examines the interplay of source and receiver effects, analyzing who is most responsive to an appeal to the law as a persuasive symbol. Chapter 12, in contrast, explores the interaction of message and receiver effects, examining who can most readily be talked out of their position on a racial issue by counterarguments. Chapter 13 further explores the interaction of message and receiver effects, though now exploiting a strictly experimental design and concentrating not on gross but rather on quite subtle variations – appropriately enough since the subject is subtle racism.

The chapters on the dynamics of reasoning, based as they are on studies that we ourselves have had the opportunity to design, break new ground, both substantively and methodologically. But there are strong threads of continuity that run through the studies gathered together here. To cite only the most obvious, and important, the studies of the dynamics of reasoning allow us to explore the relation between education and democratic citizenship from a fresh perspective.

Consider the analysis we offer in Chapter 11 of the role of law as a persuasive symbol. As we show there, an appeal to the law to support a policy designed to assist blacks has its maximum impact on people with two characteristics: On the one hand, their attitudes toward blacks are uncommonly negative; on the other, their level of education uncommonly high. The detail of the argument is set out in Chapter 11, but the thrust of it can be summarized here: Education increases the odds not only that people will say and do the socially desirable thing, but also that they will desist, at least temporarily, from doing the socially undesirable thing if it is called to their attention.

Notice we speak of education influencing not only what people say but also what they do. A pedant could – and would – deny that we are in a position to say anything whatever of behavior, if only because all one can observe in the course of an interview is what another person says. In Chapter 13 we try and make plain just how pedantic this objection is. The fundamental problem that concerns us there is racism. Racism is manifestly a troubling term – troubling because it has become a term of polemical abuse and lacks the properties we look for in scientific hypotheses or classifications (e.g., well-defined rules of inclusion and exclusion and testability). Here we take racism to involve not merely and exclusively a tendency by whites to evaluate blacks negatively, but also and vitally, a disposition to treat them differently – and worse – merely by virtue of the fact of group membership. One could take the position that this business of blacks being treated differently and worse is inherently off limits in an opinion survey – since surveys traffic only in opinions. As against this, we will identify under what conditions granting a claim to a public benefit or right is contingent on the race

of the claimant. More specifically, we will prove that a critical determinant of whether people acknowledge that blacks are entitled to the same rights as others is education. It is thus a measure of the importance that we attach to the relation between schooling and democratic citizenship that we want to suggest that education not only combats racial prejudice but also inhibits racial discrimination.

The chapters that follow are presented as independent studies. It is thus not necessary that they be read in strict sequence, although Chapter 2 should be read first, because it offers a theoretical framework for the substantively focused studies that follow.

2

The role of heuristics in political reasoning: a theory sketch

Chapter 2 sets out a theory sketch, laying out some of the principal arguments that under-pin our research program. The term *theory sketch* we employ to give fair warning: Our ideas are still in the process of development.

It is commonplace to observe that empirical studies are undertaken to test theories – commonplace and quite wrong so far as political analysis is concerned. It puts the cart before the horse: It supposes that we have already been blessed with an assortment of high-grade theories, and our task is only to decide which of them is correct; it would be too kind to characterize this supposition as an exaggeration. The task is precisely to develop a set of arguments that deserve to be characterized as a theory.

Following Popper, we believe the right way to do this is any way that works. In our case, we have focused continuously on a puzzle: How can citizens figure out what they favor and oppose politically given how little they know about politics? But our focus is not in the abstract: Always we have attacked our puzzle in the context of a specific data set.

That strategy has liabilities, especially when the data have been collected for other purposes. It also has strengths. A proper theory, from our perspective, has three functions: It must identify the key independent variables; it must give an account of the covariation of independent and dependent variables; and it must explain under what conditions a given set of causes is most, and least, likely to account for any given effect. It is not difficult to manage either of the first two freestanding; it is rather harder to accomplish the third absent data.

This chapter thus ploughs some of the ground covered in the introduction, but more narrowly and deeply, concentrating on how people can work through political choices approximately rationally notwithstanding their shortfalls in information – Simon's puzzle as we call it. The conceptual key to resolving Simon's puzzle, we shall argue, is the notion of heuristics, or judgmental shortcuts. Just what it means analytically to say that people take advantage of heuristics we shall try to make plain, for we shall argue not only that people take advantage of heuristics to compensate for a lack of information, but also that the particular heuristics they take advantage of depend on the amount of information they have. All the same, we are keenly aware of points of ambiguity and incompleteness in our ideas: In assessing the theory sketched in Chapter 2, much depends upon whether it is compared with the ideal – or the alternatives.

How does the average American figure out what he favors and what he opposes politically? How ordinary people manage this – if, indeed, they can manage it – is a deep puzzle, because the one thing that public opinion researchers are in

This chapter prepared by Paul M. Sniderman, Richard A. Brody, and Philip E. Tetlock.

agreement on is that the average citizen tends to pay only occasional and then usually superficial attention to politics. Not surprisingly, he or she tends to know and understand relatively little about it. But if ordinary people know and understand so little about politics, how can it be possible that they frequently figure out what they are for and against politically? When we set out on this series of studies, it was commonly agreed that ordinary citizens knew little about the processes of American politics. It was also agreed that they knew and cared little about the basic principles of democratic theory. In short, the public was thus represented not merely as an unreliable defender of democratic values, but as potentially their most dangerous opponent – lacking in an appreciation of civil liberties, superficial in their commitment to them (e.g., Stouffer, 1955; McClosky, 1964). Without wishing to reject this portrait of the general public altogether, we do want to revise it significantly, to introduce and accent a balancing element of citizen rationality and responsibility.

Plainly, there is a close connection between our substantive and normative concerns – between understanding how, on the one hand, citizens are capable of reasoning about political choices approximately rationally, notwithstanding their knowing little about politics, and how, on the other, they are capable of understanding and adhering to democratic principles, imperfectly to be sure but genuinely nonetheless. The patterns of reasoning we uncover, together with the connections between political attitudes and the world of politics we observe, suggest positive answers to questions that others have answered in the negative. Accordingly, in this chapter, we shall outline an account of how citizens, notwithstanding their informational shortfalls, manage to reason about a range of political choices.

A STARTING POINT: MINIMALISM

Let us start by acknowledging the most influential perspective on public opinion, which supplied the intellectual context out of which our own research developed – and against which it reacted.

Early and late, opinion surveys have demonstrated that the average citizen's knowledge of much of politics is minimal (Luskin, 1987). To be sure, because the average citizen is ignorant about many issues does not mean that he or she is ignorant about all of them; indeed, as Elkins (1982) has suggested, a political division of labor may operate, with few citizens knowing much about most issues but a great many knowing a good deal about the one or two of particular concern to them. Even so, large numbers of citizens plainly lack elementary pieces of political information. Classic studies of public opinion report that two in every three Americans would not recognize the Bill of Rights even if it were read to them (Lane and Sears, 1969). Not less important, sizable numbers of the public are woefully ill-informed about major issues, including issues frequently and visibly in the news. To cite an especially vivid example, nearly 40 percent of one survey sample believed Israel to be an Arab nation (McGuire, 1985).

Findings such as these, repeatedly and vividly illustrating the threadbare informational base of mass political opinions, have laid the foundation for a compelling model of belief systems. The major premise of this model – minimalism, as we call it – is this: Given that most citizens tend to know little about politics and to pay little attention to it, their opinions about it tend not to be neatly or consistently arranged. On the contrary, many of their political opinions are at sixes and sevens – so much so that their views about even intimately related issues may have scarcely anything to do with one other. Consistent with this, their reactions to politics tend to be capricious – so much so that their views about an issue at one election may have scarcely anything to do with their views about it at the very next election.

Elsewhere we have surveyed the evidence for the minimalist model of public opinion (Sniderman and Tetlock, 1986c). Here we should like to comment on the minimalist model in broader terms, to assess it as a research program.

Curiously, its most obvious feature has been its least remarked – namely, its irony. Converse's seminal article (1964) popularized the concept of belief systems. But what, concretely, was the message of his research? Quite simply, that connections in mass belief systems were triply lacking: horizontally, between opinions on issues; vertically, between superordinate concepts like liberalism–conservatism and specific preferences on concrete issues; and temporally, between positions taken at differing times. The connections within belief systems thus triply severed, any given idea-element tends to have little to do with any other. In short, the seminal article that introduced the concept of belief system declared that the principal feature of belief systems is precisely the absence of system.

Minimalism is thus a research program whose first step is also its last. How many times can one observe that mass belief systems are poorly organized? And having said this, what remains to be said? So far as minimalism is correct, with its emphasis on the tenuousness of connections between one idea-element and another, it makes little sense to study the internal dynamics of belief systems: To say, descriptively, that the constituent elements of political belief systems are only minimally connected is to say, causally, that each has minimal influence on the others. Nor, to put the point more broadly, does it make sense to suppose that the public reasons through its position on political issues – on the off chance it has in fact put together a genuine position. There is, after all, little reason to investigate how citizens figure out their views on the major issues of the day, if you doubt either that they have genuine opinions about many of them, or that their views about any one have much to do with their views about any other.

It is of course no argument against minimalism that its implications are unpalatable: A consequence is not false because it is undesirable. So it is necessary to underline the empirical limits of minimalism.

Minimalism, we should emphasize, has provoked countless critiques and countercritiques.[1] But notwithstanding the quality of the argumentation, little progress has been made. Take the problem of opinion stability. Very briefly: On

one side, it is argued that the minimal levels of stability of political opinions that have been recorded are evidence of the lack of attitude crystallization on the part of many in the general public (Converse, 1970); on the other, it is argued that these results reflect the limitations of the questions that people are being asked, not of the people themselves (Achen, 1975; Erikson, 1979). The issue may thus seem to have been usefully narrowed: Just what is the magnitude either of stability or of constraint coefficients, rightly calculated? But debate over measurement has proved intractable; for a choice with respect to methodology has turned out to hinge on a prior choice with respect to ontology.

Consider the well-known exchange between Judd and Milburn and Converse. On the one side, Judd and Milburn (1980), taking as their starting point the classical test theory assumption that a measurement of a person's attitude toward any issue is a compound of two parts – the person's true attitude plus measurement error – argue that the error portion must first be purged before calculating the relation between one element of a belief system and any other. Doing so, they show that the connections between elements of mass belief systems, far from being loose, are impressively tight. On the other side, Converse, invoking the classic problem of overcontrolling in survey research, argues that by removing what they have characterized as error variance, Judd and Milburn have eliminated the very wobbliness and inconsistency of response that are the heart of the matter; hence the Judd–Milburn results are artifactual.

The debate between these positions has been inconclusive, from our point of view necessarily so, because the root issues are not methodological but ontological: The propriety of techniques for estimating the facts depends on prior assumptions about the facts of the matter. Believe, with Converse, in the instability of mass opinions, and his is the better procedure. Believe, with Judd and Milburn, in the coherence of public opinion, and theirs is the better. Methodological assumptions hinge on ontological ones.

Accordingly, the root question to ask of the minimalist model is this: What things, according to the model, are there in a belief system? Chiefly, according to Converse, issue preferences – opinions, for example, about government responsibility for housing, American policy overseas, urban renewal, and the like. Given the indefinitely large number of issues of consequence in politics, the ontological commitments of minimalism would seem numerous indeed.

But also remarkably meager: In practice the minimalist model proceeds as though a belief system contains opinions on specific issues, and not much else. Values of many sizes and shapes are thus excluded – the importance people attach to achievement and hard work, to protecting liberty and equality, to preserving tradition, to assuring diversity and change. Excluded also are differences among people in optimism and altruism, their views of their fellow man, the scope of religion, the proper place of science. Left out as well are their sympathies and hostilities toward an array of social groups – businessmen, blacks, the poor, welfare recipients – and their attitudes toward fundamental political institutions and symbols, including the system of law and political representation. Converse

has sketched a two-tier model of belief systems, incorporating superordinate political abstractions as well as specific opinions. But the crux of Converse's analysis is precisely that superordinate abstractions lack importance in mass belief systems: The average citizen, he has repeatedly argued, is not likely to have a clear understanding of concepts like liberalism–conservatism; not likely to give a satisfactory account of their meaning; not likely to make use of them in thinking about politics.

The minimalist model, we freely acknowledge, has much to recommend it, above all the emphasis it places on the small fund of information about politics that ordinary people have to work with; the superficial, indeed, often erroneous understanding that they frequently have of abstract political concepts; and the by-no-means uncommon tendency of ordinary people to express an opinion on issues precisely to cover up the fact that they have not troubled themselves to form one.[2] What commends minimalism is thus its salutary spirit of skepticism, both about the amount of information citizens have to back up their political opinions, and about the effort they devote to thinking through their positions on issues of the day.

While valuing this note of skepticism, we nonetheless want to outline a different perspective on political belief systems, not because we doubt that there are issues about which the public has only the most superficial opinions, but because we believe that there are issues about which it possesses strong convictions concerning what should, and should not, be done. Quite simply, no one supposes that citizens characteristically take positions for or against busing on a whim. Nor are their views on abortion, the death penalty, AIDS, and a host of other issues a matter of mere caprice. Minimalism thus sidesteps a fundamental question: How is it possible that given how little citizens know about politics, they nonetheless can frequently figure out what they are for and against politically?

SIMON'S PUZZLE: THE ROLE OF HEURISTICS

Suppose, for the sake of argument, you believe both that ordinary people know very little about politics and that all the same they frequently, and reliably, can figure out what they are for and against politically. How can this be possible?

Plainly, citizens operate under a double constraint: limited for one thing in the amount of their information about politics; limited for another in their ability to manipulate it. Given this double constraint, it is a puzzle indeed how they can work through choices approximately rationally – Simon's puzzle as we call it, in deference to Herbert Simon's pioneering work on decision making with limited information and processing capacity (e.g., Simon, 1957, 1985).

Simon's puzzle is tailor-made for the study of reasoning about political choices. There is an abundance of evidence that the average citizen knows little about politics. It is also perfectly plain that members of the general public also know little about political abstractions – a form of ignorance that would seem to make their overall ignorance of politics especially debilitating, because they tend

to lack precisely those abstract ideas that facilitate the organization, processing, and retrieval of politically relevant information (cf. Converse, 1964). The conventional view of public opinion thus emphasizes both how impoverished is the information that members of the public possess about politics, and how inept they are at manipulating the information they do happen to have at hand. We do not dispute the first, but we question the second.

Our focus is on how people can manipulate the information about politics they do possess, in order to figure out what they are for and against politically. We want to understand, to offer a concrete example, how people can figure out what liberals and conservatives stand for on the major issues of the day – even though they may be quite unable to define or explain what liberalism and conservatism stand for as systems of ideas. Or, to offer a second example, we want to carry away some sense of how a sizable portion of the public can manage to support the value of tolerance as a matter of principle – even though only a minuscule proportion of the public can give a satisfactory account of the principle of tolerance itself.

Our argument, most broadly put, is this: Citizens frequently can compensate for their limited information about politics by taking advantage of judgmental heuristics. Heuristics are judgmental shortcuts, efficient ways to organize and simplify political choices, efficient in the double sense of requiring relatively little information to execute, yet yielding dependable answers even to complex problems of choice. Heuristics thus represent a way to resolve Simon's puzzle. Insofar as they can be brought into play, people can be knowledgeable in their reasoning about political choices without necessarily possessing a large body of knowledge about politics.

The notion of heuristics – if not necessarily the term – has a long history. It is featured in classic studies of decision making in general (e.g., Simon, 1957; Tversky and Kahneman, 1974; Kahneman, Tversky, and Slovic, 1982), and is surely implicit in classic studies of reasoning about political choices – what else, after all, is party identification but a judgmental heuristic (Campbell et al., 1960)? So it is of some importance to describe how this approach adds to already established practice.

Conventionally, the analysis of political choice involves a two-part strategy: first, to identify the considerations that people take into account in reasoning about a political choice, and second, to estimate the weight or importance they attach to these considerations, in making up their minds. This analytic strategy embodies a nearly unchallenged assumption[3] about how reasoning about political choices should be analyzed. The assumption is one of causal homogeneity: It is simply assumed that people tend to make up their minds in more or less the same way, so much so that only one causal model is required – one set of causal factors, the same for all members of the public, arranged in one causal sequence, the same for all.

It is trivially true that everyone makes up her or his mind in her or his own way. The idea we want to explore, in contrast, is that there are systematic differences

in the decision rules that different portions of the public employ in reasoning about political choices. This exploration thus requires a double specification: On the one hand, it is necessary to spell out what rules of judgment, or heuristics, people take advantage of and, on the other, to specify just who is likely to make use of a given heuristic and who another. In turn, this double specification can be accomplished in two ways: either by demonstrating interactions between decision rules and a succession of characteristics of the individuals making a decision (or of situations in which they make a decision) or by exploring in depth the interaction between decision rules and a specific characteristic of an individual over a range of decisions.

Tactically, we want to concentrate on the interaction between decision rules and political sophistication over a range of decisions. To say this is a tactic is to say it is a matter of convenience: It has seemed more profitable to work out a class of causal accounts in some detail than to explore a wider set of interactions, scattershot. We do not doubt that a number of factors besides political sophistication, both situational and dispositional, can come into play. To cite only the most obvious example, people can be motivated to be more thoughtful, analytic, and complex in their thinking when they care a lot about the issue as against a more erratic, visceral, and simplistic response when they are indifferent to it (Chaiken, 1980; Payne, 1982; Tetlock, 1985a; Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). Yet our strategy will be to focus on one factor in particular – political sophistication. Differences between people in their levels of political awareness and information seem to us a good bet to affect systematically their reasoning about political choices, ramifying through their calculations about candidates, values, and issues.

Our core thesis, then, is twofold: On the one side, people take advantage of heuristics to compensate for a lack of information; on the other, the particular heuristics they take advantage of depend on the amount of information they have.

THE SOPHISTICATION INTERACTION HYPOTHESIS

Imagine, to take a flagrantly (hence usefully) extreme case, that we are attempting to understand how two people make up their minds which presidential candidate to vote for: One of our two voters is extremely knowledgeable about politics, thoroughly versed about the political backgrounds of both candidates, uncommonly sophisticated about the ideological commitments of both parties; in contrast, our other voter barely looks at the sports page, let alone the front page, and though not without some sense of how things are going in the country as a whole, is lackadaisical in the attention he pays to the policy commitments of either the competing candidates or of their parties. Does it make sense, we want to ask, simply to assume that these two very different sorts of people – one extremely well informed and sophisticated about politics, the other not – make up their mind about how to vote in the same way?[4]

Obviously not. Surely, it is worth considering whether, in making up one's mind, the person who is politically very sophisticated will tend to take account of

a different range of considerations, or give different weights to the same consideration, than the politically inattentive and ill-informed person. The very notion of political sophistication, after all, carries with it the suggestion that a person knows how to go about making up his or her mind, certainly as against a person who is politically naive or simply ignorant (see Luskin, forthcoming).

Partly this is so because political sophistication is a "bundle" concept: It packs together related, if distinguishable, properties including a tendency to pay close attention to politics, to have ready at hand banks of information about it, to understand multiple arguments for and against particular issue positions, and to recognize interrelationships among those arguments. Indeed, it is precisely because political sophistication implicates so many facets of information processing that it is likely to play a role of high centrality in reasoning about political choices. Differently put, our expectation is that political sophistication not only affects reasoning about political choices in its own right, but in addition affects how other factors affect reasoning about political choices. Of course, just because political sophistication bundles together a number of lower-order concepts, it is arguable which of these is causally preemininent. Is it the actual amount of political information that a person possesses that matters? Or one's schema for organizing it? Or style of reasoning about it? Or perhaps level of intelligence? Opinion is sharply divided on these alternatives,[5] but for our purposes which of these (moderately intercorrelated) variables best captures the true meaning of political sophistication is a secondary issue. The primary task is to see whether there is a systematic interaction between the decision rules people use in reasoning about political choices and their level of political sophistication, and for this purpose we have chosen, as an index of political sophistication, education: It is the handiest proxy, partly because it manifestly covaries with political awareness and information, partly because it is both well measured and invariably measured.[6]

What might it mean to say that how people make up their minds about political choices systematically varies depending on whether they are politically sophisticated? To see what is involved, let us focus on the role of affect in political reasoning.

By affect we have in mind people's likes and dislikes toward politically relevant groups: How positively do they feel toward blacks, for example? How negatively toward liberals? This is only a slice of emotional responses to politics (cf. Marcus, 1988), but some slices cut deep, as we shall see.

Take as a paradigmatic case racial policy reasoning. Ordinary people may have trouble putting their ideas together consistently in some domains of politics; indeed, they can fail to form any idea at all, let alone one consistent with their other opinions. No one, however, supposes that the public is similarly handicapped on issues of race: The average citizen knows what she thinks about increasing government spending to assist blacks, about busing, about affirmative action. Nor is it, surely, a complete mystery how ordinary people can manage to figure out what they are for and against on issues of race, even though many of

them can be quite at sea when it comes to figuring out their position in other policy domains. Part of the answer must be that they have a reliable guide, ready to hand. Suppose that a person wants to figure out what she thinks about increasing federal government spending for blacks. It is not necessary that she have elaborated a theory of government, specifying services that alternative levels of government, federal, state, and local, are competent and obliged to supply. It suffices that she knows that she dislikes blacks: Dislike blacks and it follows immediately that she should oppose an increase in government spending to benefit them.

This form of reasoning may be described as affect-driven,[7] and an obvious calculus is built in to it. A person is not required to be acquainted with the particular details of a specific policy to figure out whether he or she is for or against it. It suffices to know that a policy aims to help or hurt blacks: People may then support or oppose it, consistently and coherently, simply according to whether they are hostile or sympathetic to blacks. An affective heuristic of this form reconciles the virtues of simplicity and generality, allowing people to figure out, more or less immediately and more or less dependably, what they are for and against not only with respect to a specific policy but – in the case of race, at any rate – across a full policy domain. So long as they have their feelings toward a group to guide them, people can be politically knowledgeable without having much knowledge of politics.

Suggesting that a person's likes and dislikes can color their policy preferences is hardly original. If our aim is to develop a theory of reasoning about political choices, it is not enough to identify the variables that can influence political reasoning – it is necessary to establish the conditions under which they are most, and least, likely to do so.

The advantage of affect-driven inference is the accessbility of feelings, and the immediacy of inference from them. Ordinary citizens may sometimes be at a loss to remember what they think about an issue, but not whether they very much dislike blacks and, supposing they dislike them, whether they want them to receive special help. And just because of the accessibility of affect and the immediacy of inferences based on it, people who otherwise might have difficulty figuring out what their position is on a particular issue, lacking either a connective tissue of relevant opinions or the supportive cognitive and ideological skills to knit opinions together, are particularly likely to take advantage of affective inferences to figure out what they are for and against. There is thus good reason to expect a systematic interaction between affect-driven political reasoning and political sophistication, such that the less sophisticated a person is, the more likely his or her reasoning about political choices is likely to be affect-driven.

So specified, this expectation nicely conforms to a commonplace of contemporary opinion – namely, that the more ignorant and less sophisticated tend to lean on their emotions, using them as a crutch to figure out, dependably and economically, their preferences on public policies. It would, however, be wrong to infer from this that the reasoning of the more sophisticated citizen is free of affect.

On the contrary, what distinguishes the politically sophisticated is not the absence of affect but rather the use they make of it.

Rather than consider how people figure out what they themselves think about an issue, let us try a back-door approach, and consider how they work out what others think about it. For the sake of argument, suppose we consider how ordinary citizens can figure out what liberals and conservatives stand for. It cannot, as rule, be by relying on their knowledge of liberalism and conservatism as systems of ideas: That is exactly the kind of knowledge that is out of the reach of all but a small fraction of the general public. If substantial numbers of ordinary citizens are to be able to estimate the preferences of liberals and conservatives, they must take advantage of information they more commonly possess.

The most crucial of these materials, we have become persuaded, is their knowledge of where they themselves stand on an issue, plus their feelings toward liberals and conservatives. Combine these in the right way, and you have a remarkably efficient formula for estimating the issue preferences of politically salient groups – the likability heuristic.

Structurally, the pivotal feature of the likability heuristic is the bipolar organization of affect. Knowing simply how you feel about liberals, or about conservatives, will not do the trick. The heuristic yields accurate estimates if and only if people appreciate that liking the one entails liking the other less.

It is something of a metaphysical question whether the likability heuristic is driven by a person's emotional attachment to one of the ideological poles, or by his rejection of the other, though given the common tendency to positivity (Sniderman, Brody, Siegel, and Tannenbaum, 1982) – to liking both sides – we would stress the importance of knowing that in politics it is perfectly proper and indeed mandatory to dislike alternative programs. However that may be, the crucial property of the heuristic is simultaneously to take account of a person's cognitions, in the form of his opinion on a relevant issue, weighted by his affect toward liberals and conservatives, in the form of the difference in the extent to which he likes the one as compared with the other.

How the likability heuristic works is worth considering, because the problem of accurately estimating the political preferences of others is more complex than it seems. Take, for the sake of illustration, the example of a person, herself liberal on the issue of abortion, estimating the stands of liberals and conservatives on abortion. There is, fairly obviously, no trick in figuring out that conservatives take the other side of the issue: Knowing the side that she is on, and knowing also that she dislikes conservatives, she will tend to maximize the difference between her position and theirs – a so-called contrast effect. The more interesting puzzle is how people can accurately estimate the preferences not of their opponents but of their allies. It is a puzzle because an egoistic point of reference, estimating what others believe on the basis of what I myself believe, would seem to guarantee that though I would recognize the difference between my position and that of people I dislike, a contrast effect, I might well fail to appreciate the difference between my position and that of people I like, an assimilation effect. If so, I

should always be in danger of exaggerating the similarity of other's opinions to mine, the so-called false-consensus effect. To put the problem concretely, the difficulty is coming up with a prediction formula, a judgmental heuristic, that allows a moderate liberal to recognize that, on a given issue, most liberals are to his left and permits a moderate conservative similarly to recognize that, on a given issue, most conservatives are to her right. It is just such a prediction problem that the fine grain of the likability heuristic is designed to handle.

But who is most likely to make use of a judgmental shortcut like the likability heuristic? Surely not the least sophisticated, because a requirement of the effective use of the heuristic is precisely to have organized, in a politically coherent way, both one's feelings and one's beliefs. The likability heuristic is plainly a rule of thumb that is of most use to those who already know their way around politics. This may sound like a contradiction, if the role of a heuristic is to help people compensate for a lack of information. But even people who are relatively sophisticated about politics – say, one-third or one-quarter of the population – are short of political information: Their comparative advantage is not that they have a stupendous amount of knowledge, but that they know how to get the most out of the knowledge they do possess. And one of the ways they manage this is to take advantage both of cognitions and of affect.

Feelings are thus an integral element of political reasoning, and rightly arranged, are part and parcel of the efficiency of the reasoning of the politically sophisticated. It follows, if we may make this point in passing, that there is something narrow and misleading about the conventional view of ideological reasoning in particular – a view that supposes that thinking about political abstractions like liberalism and conservatism is itself a matter of abstraction and deduction. This is altogether too cerebral a representation of ideological thinking, at any rate from our point of view. Political reasoning can be a matter of cold cognition, but commonly it is not and need not therefore be irrational. On the contrary, observation makes plain that reasoning about political choices is rooted in people's feelings as well as their beliefs – in fact, it is both fueled and facilitated by knowing whom one likes and whom one detests; and, we would emphasize, this is true of the politically engaged and not simply of the politically apathetic – indeed, the politically engaged stand out precisely by their heightened, and organized, feelings about political issues and persona.

If so, we are in a position to restate the sophistication–affect interaction hypothesis. On the one hand, so far as feelings toward a group taken by itself (e.g., blacks, homosexuals) are considered, the less politically sophisticated citizens are, the more their reasoning about policies regarding the group is to be affect-driven. On the other hand, so far as feelings toward pairs of political relevant groups (e.g., liberals vs. conservatives, Democrats vs. Republicans) are concerned, the more sophisticated citizens are, the more likely their reasoning about policies regarding the groups is to be affect-driven.

The interaction between sophistication and affect is one side of the sophistication interaction hypothesis. The other is the interdependence of sophistication and

cognition. The paradigm of cognition-driven reasoning, so far as politics is concerned, is ideology: Abstract ideological schemas, like liberalism and conservatism, are the prototype of efficiency in political information processing, supplying a fairly general but densely elaborated set of constructs in terms of which political information can be effectively organized, stored, and retrieved (Luskin, 1987). There is very nearly complete agreement, we must confess, that the political thinking of Americans is "innocent of ideology," to borrow a provocative phrase (Kinder and Sears, 1985) – an agreement founded on repeated demonstrations, qualitative as well as quantitative, of the public's minimal levels of political information, concept formation, and constraint. But without deprecating the results of this research, we want to suggest that an answer to the question of whether Americans are innocent of ideology cannot be found in these studies since the question they are asking is a different one. Their objective is to estimate the importance of ideological considerations in the political thinking of the public, taken as a whole. But this is not, really, what we want to know. Grant that many, even a majority, of ordinary citizens have a dim understanding of an abstract political ideology, but suppose – what is surely not unreasonable – that the political reasoning of perhaps one-fifth to one-third of the public is, if not dominated, then at least informed by ideological considerations. Put the whole of the public into one calculation, however, and the resulting estimates will show ideology to be of trivial importance in reasoning about political choices. But that is simply because there are proportionately more who make no use of political ideology, who have been thrown into a heap with the proportionately fewer who do, leading to the quite erroneous conclusion that scarcely anyone does. So it seems to us vital to ask when, rather than whether, ideological considerations are most, and least, likely to be a factor in reasoning about political choices.

Put this way, one should obviously expect an interaction between political sophistication and cognition-driven reasoning, such that the more politically sophisticated citizens are, the more weight they are likely to attach to abstract cognitive considerations in making up their minds about political choices. But this line of reasoning leads to conclusions, particularly about the relation between attitudes toward political principles and attitudes toward policies intended to realize those principles, that are far from obvious.

The problem we have in mind here is the well-known "principle–policy" puzzle. The problem is general, applying to a number of policy domains, but it has been best defined and has provoked the sharpest controversy over its proper interpretation in the area of race. As Mary Jackman (1978, 1981) initially observed, and as Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo (1985) have subsequently documented, American attitudes toward issues of racial equality have seemingly moved at two autonomous levels. At the level of principle, opinion has moved in a progressive direction, with increasing numbers of Americans ready to support racial equality; however, at the level of policy, attitudes have moved only modestly in a positive direction and, indeed, in some respects have scarcely moved at all. No less pertinently, the amount of schooling a person has had is correlated

strongly, and positively, with the level of his or her support for racial equality at the level of principle; however, there is no relationship between education and the willingness to support racial equality at the level of policy. Thus the concatenation of two questions constitutes the principle–policy puzzle: Why are Americans willing to support the principle of racial equality, but not specific policies to achieve it? And why is education seemingly a source of support for racial equality at the level of principle but not at that of policy?

The answer to both aspects of the puzzle, Jackman has argued, is that Americans' support for the principle of equality is superficial. Education thus teaches them that they ought to endorse the principle of racial equality – but this reflects no more than a verbal habit, a sense of what is the socially desirable thing to say. So they are willing enough to favor racial equality if there is no cost in doing so; but unwilling to do so if they must actually make an effort and give up something of value to do so.

Without wishing to deny the element of dissembling in political thinking in general, and perhaps particularly in reactions to issues of race, we believe that the key to the principle–policy puzzle lies in the connection between political sophistication and the structure of cognitive inference in reasoning about political choices. Following the lead of cognitive developmental theorists (e.g., Harvey, Hunt, and Schroder, 1961), we suppose that the complexity of a cognitive structure is expressed in two related but distinguishable ways: differentiation and integration. Differentiation refers to the number of evaluatively distinct dimensions of judgment an individual takes into account in interpreting events or in making choices. In contrast, integration refers to the number of conceptual connections among differentiated idea-elements. So defined, both integration and differentiation should be more characteristic of the more than of the less politically sophisticated. Broadly put, then, our hypothesis is that the most and the least sophisticated tend to differ in the range of considerations they take into account in making up their minds about a particular policy: The least sophisticated tend to have a fairly narrow focus, concentrating on the most obviously relevant considerations; in contrast, the most sophisticated tend to take in a wider range of factors, attending not only to proximal considerations but to more distal, less immediately or obviously pertinent ones as well.

With this hypothesis in mind, consider the principle–policy puzzle again. How people feel about the principle of racial equality is the most obviously relevant consideration in deciding whether they should favor a policy to achieve it. By comparison, a less obviously relevant consideration is their overall political orientation, although so far as its relevance is appreciated, liberals should be more inclined to support and conservatives more inclined to resist the use particularly of the federal government to achieve racial equality. Our hypothesis about cognitive complexity, then, yields a paradoxical prediction: Minimizing complexity, by narrowing the focus to immediate relevant considerations, tends to maximize consistency between principle and policy; maximizing complexity, by enlarging the range of considerations, to minimize consistency between principle

and policy. Hence, the most educated should fail to support racial equality at the level of policy more than the least educated, not because of a tendency to dissemble as Jackman suspects, but instead because of their greater capacity to bring to bear a wider range of considerations, most particularly ideology. In a word, the root of the principle–policy puzzle is not dissembling on the part of the politically sophisticated but rather their aptitude in putting their ideas together consistently.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

The studies that follow – a selection from our overall research program – cover a range of political phenomena: Has the AIDS epidemic triggered a backlash against homosexuals? Is the average American capable of a principled commitment to the value of tolerance? How can mass publics figure out what liberals and conservatives stand for on the major issues of the day, even if they do not understand what liberalism and conservatism stand for? How pliable are the preferences of Americans on major issues: How easy is it to talk them out of support for racial equality? How difficult is it to talk them out of opposition to it? How do voters take advantage of recent information to compensate for a lack of broader knowledge of politics? Are Americans really innocent of ideology, or is a substantial portion of the public in fact capable of ideological reasoning? How fixed over time is the commitment of Americans to the political parties?

The studies that follow thus stand on their own, each aiming to make a contribution to the substantive phenomena it analyzes. But put together, they give a fair representation of the strengths, and limits, of the research program we have had underway over the past decade.

Research programs – examination and development of core arguments, analyzed across a variety of substantive contexts and a range of data sets and over an extended period of time – are rare in the study of public opinion. So, without prejudging the merits of any of the specific studies, we think it is important to underline the reason that we have drawn them together. The fundamental issue is one of validity – or more exactly, of cross-validation.

In the ordinary course of events, with any given study typically being limited to a single survey (or, in the case of voting studies, being confined to a series using the same measures), it is difficult to judge how much confidence one should place in the results. Would the findings differ in some telling respect if different measures of key constructs had been used? If a different policy domain had been analyzed? If a different population had been sampled? It is important to field answers to these questions, not merely out of abstract principle, but because the very core of our view of reasoning about political choices holds that there is at least one systematic interaction, such that the structure of both affective and cognitive inferences varies according to people's level of political sophistication. But given the inherent uncertainty that attaches to an interaction hypothesis, particularly when the data set deployed to test the hypothesis is the very set that first suggested it, there is an exigent need for cross-validation. Consider the

sophistication-affect interaction hypothesis, applied concretely. The hypothesis originated in a study of racial policy reasoning, reported in Chapter 4. Briefly, we show that dislike of blacks counts for more in shaping the reasoning of the least politically sophisticated than of the most sophisticated about racial policy. Obviously, it is of some importance to know if this finding should be generalized. Is it true, more or less across the board, that the political thinking of the least sophisticated about whether to assist a particular group is more likely to be driven by their primitive feelings of like or dislike for that group? Or is the finding we observe about race restricted either to the policy domain of race or, possibly, even to the specific measures we employed to measure affect and policy preferences? As it happens, we are in a better position to answer this question than is ordinarily the case; for we have also surveyed the quite different issue of whether the AIDS epidemic is triggering a backlash against homosexuals and show, in Chapter 2, the interaction between political sophistication and the structure of affective inferences on issues of AIDS matches that for the issue of race. The group affect–political sophistication interaction hypothesis has thus been cross-validated in a quite different setting from that of racial policy – in fact, a triply different setting, the issue, the sample, and the measures all varying.

Our overarching theme – that people compensate for a lack of information about politics by taking advantage of judgmental shortcuts or heuristics – is pursued throughout. We have, however, quite deliberately limited the number of specific heuristics that we have formulated. To give an especially vivid example of what the supposition of a specific heuristic entails, we present, in Chapter 6, a fairly intimate quantitative portrait of the likability heuristic, contrasting this judgmental shortcut for figuring out what others think with, among other things, obtaining knowledge of their opinions directly or, alternatively, estimating their preferences by simply guessing. We have also formulated the "desert heuristic," a rule for deciding when people deserve assistance. Apart from the analysis of affective and ideological inferences, this completes the tally of specific heuristics we have formulated. We emphasize the limited number of heuristics we have formulated because there is nothing, in our judgment, so likely to diminish the utility of an analytic approach emphasizing judgmental shortcuts than the claim to have discovered a new one nearly every time out. As with scalpels, the notion of heuristics works best if used sparingly.

There is a deeper argument against the multiplication of heuristics. Why suppose that large numbers of ordinary people are capable of effectively organizing and simplifying political choices? The very factors that militate against the plausibility of supposing that they know much about politics – their lack of attention to politics and the like – similarly militate against the plausibility of supposing that they will be clever at working out shortcuts in judgment to compensate for their lack of political information. The point, though, is not that the average citizen is so shrewd that he or she can devise clever tricks to compensate for their lack of political knowledge; it is, rather, that the world of politics is so organized that the average citizen can pick up effective shortcuts in judgment

(cf. Gibson, 1979). People are thus capable of effectively organizing their reasoning about political choices because those choices come to them already organized. As Neisser (1976) has remarked in a broader context: "We have been lavishing too much attention on hypothetical models of the mind and not enough on analyzing the environment that the mind has been shaped to meet." In the same spirit, but confining ourselves to reasoning about political choices, we want to underline how our emphasis, for example, on the bipolarity of affect, which is at the heart of the analysis both of preference estimation in Chapter 6 and of ideological reasoning in Chapter 8, is rooted in the structure of contemporary American politics: To say that the politically sophisticated understand that to like liberals entails disliking conservatives, and the other way around, is to make a comment about politics itself, and not simply people's perceptions of it.

But having underlined these qualifications, we are persuaded that organizing an account of reasoning about political choices around the notion of judgmental heuristics is a useful step. Such an account calls attention to a general question – Simon's puzzle, as we have called it. No less pertinently, it asks for a causal account: What are the ways that people make up their minds about political choices, and considering there can be more than one way, when are different decision rules put to use? Instructively, concepts that seem to be of little use descriptively in the study of public opinion can prove to be of marked value causally, the concept of consistency being an especially good example of this. At the outset of this research, given that we began with a presumption in favor of minimalism, it seemed to us that the most that could be done with the idea of consistency in the study of mass belief systems was to note its absence. But in developing our "process" model of reasoning about political choices, we distinguish in Chapter 3, 4, 5, and 6 between cognitive and affective consistency, in Chapter 4 between proximal and distal consistency, and in Chapter 7 between principled and situational consistency. As if all this were not enough, in Chapter 10, we examine the temporal consistency of a core political orientation, while in Chapters 11, 12, and 13 we explore situational determinants of consistency, in an analysis of the pliability of issue preferences of the strength of partisanship.

Not that the focus on consistency is meant to slight the fact that many, indeed perhaps most, of us walk about with our political opinions casually arranged. In the spirit of McGuire's (1968) "loose linkages" model of belief systems, we tend, cognitively, to be sloppy housekeepers, unlikely to insist on keeping our beliefs about politics tidy and in order. But this is not to say that we are incapable of putting our political beliefs in order: If we find ourselves in situations where the positions we take matter, we can tighten the linkages between our political ideas, even if only temporarily. McGuire's model thus leads us to expect marked differences in consistency across situations. Accordingly, in Chapter 12, we introduce a new operational paradigm – the counterargument technique – to assess, for the first time directly, the pliability of issue preferences under pressure.

Our account of reasoning about political choices is an incomplete one – necessarily so given our interactionist perspective. We have concentrated on demon-

strating a systematic interaction with levels of political sophistication in political thinking. No doubt, there are still other factors to take into account in developing our theory sketch. The studies that follow put some flesh on this sketch. They represent our effort to make sense of the ordinary citizen's effort to make sense of politics.

3

Values under pressure: AIDS and civil liberties

Place and time organize, if not the answers we give to questions, at any rate the questions we ask. Living where and when we do, it was natural, even inevitable, to ask about the impact of AIDS.

Stouffer's (1955) pioneering study on tolerance of communists and nonconformists, conducted at the height of McCarthyism, had documented shockingly low levels of support for civil liberties on the part of the average citizen. To see just how shocking, it is worth citing a concrete example: Asked whether a clerk in a store – an ordinary clerk, in a perfectly ordinary store – should be fired if he is a communist, two-thirds of the public agreed (Stouffer, 1955, p. 43). And Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus (1979), in the most innovative study of tolerance since Stouffer, concluded that any apparent increase in political tolerance since the 1950s was an illusion.

For all its merits, we had found the Sullivan study unpersuasive, for reasons we detail in Chapter 7. The gut of the issue, as it seemed to us, is to what extent ordinary people were actually capable of supporting the value of tolerance: The burden of Sullivan's argument is that the public supplied little protection to assure toleration of unpopular groups – apart, that is, from disagreeing about which groups should not be tolerated. The outbreak of AIDS afforded a grotesque, but useful, opportunity to assess the reactions of ordinary people when confronted – suddenly, unexpectedly, and undeniably – by a deadly threat.

It is not enough to learn whether a person favors civil liberties in the abstract. It is necessary to know how he reacts in controversial cases – whether he is prepared to stand by basic rights under pressure or whether he yields in the face of threats. So much is plain from previous studies of tolerance, if not from common sense. And yet the study of threats to tolerance has been very largely the study of fantasized threats. Subversives have been a problem from time to time, but the threat of internal subversion was blown out of proportion by McCarthy. It is, accordingly, worth asking how the public will react when they come face to face with a chilling threat that is not fantasized but genuine. AIDS is just such a threat – unexpected, lethal, and associated in the public mind with stigmatized groups.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

There is a long and distinguished tradition of research on public opinion and civil liberties (e.g., Stouffer, 1955; Prothro and Grigg, 1960; McClosky, 1964; Nunn,

This chapter prepared by Paul M. Sniderman, Barbara Kaye Wolfinger, Diana C. Mutz, and James E. Wiley.

Crocket, and Williams, 1978; Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus, 1979, 1982; Gibson and Bingham, 1985). But this body of research has two limitations.

First, the public's reaction to issues of civil liberties is most important in the face of an extraordinary threat, when pressure builds for intolerant reaction. Public opinion studies, however, have concentrated on public attitudes toward the rights of groups in ordinary circumstances, when it is politics-as-usual (e.g., Davis, 1975; Nunn, Crockett, and Williams, 1978; McClosky and Brill, 1983). The point is not that the public's attitudes toward civil liberties are inconsequential in ordinary circumstances. After all, the burden of nearly all previous research is precisely that a large portion of the public fails to respect the rights of a wide array of groups even in the absence of pressure to violate them. All the same, it is important to see what happens when commitments to civil liberties come under pressure. To test a boat's seaworthiness, you must try it in a squall.

Second, to characterize the public's reaction under stress requires knowing the public's opinions before, as well as after, a threat presents itself; quite simply, the fact that people may support the rights of a group in ordinary circumstances is no guarantee they will do so when a controversy blows up. Only studies involving comparisons over time allow conclusions about the steadfastness of values under pressure. Unfortunately, this is precisely what the few studies that focus on public attitudes toward the rights of particular groups during actual controversies typically lack (e.g., Stouffer, 1955; Gibson and Bingham, 1985).

Accordingly, this study has been designed to take advantage of parallel surveys, one conducted before the eruption of AIDS, the other after it. The AIDS epidemic undeniably raises civil liberties issues, most obviously (though by no means exclusively) for homosexuals and for persons suffering from it. This study's design thus provides a rare opportunity to assess the event-sensitivity of attitudes toward civil liberties.

Specifically, this study focuses on two questions. First, to what extent have citizens weakened their commitment to civil liberties for homosexuals under the impact of AIDS? Second, to what extent will ordinary citizens give considerations of civil liberties weight in deciding how to treat persons with AIDS? Both questions matter, to the student of public policy as well as of democratic theory. Given exigencies of AIDS politics, it is of some importance to understand how citizens make up their minds about such issues as mandatory testing for AIDS and protection of the rights of AIDS victims.

DATA AND METHODS

This study is designed around parallel surveys of public attitudes toward homosexuals. Both surveys are cross-sectional samples of the adult population of California, administered by the Field Institute. One was conducted through personal interviews in June 1977 (n= 1,034), before the discovery of AIDS as a disease; the other through telephone interviews in December 1985 (n= 1,005), after AIDS had become an epidemic.

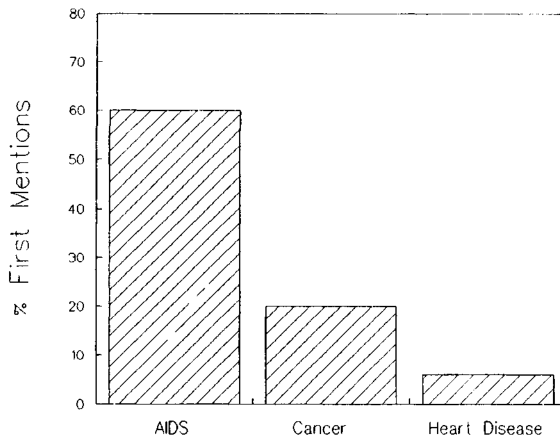


Figure 3.1. Perceptions of the most serious health problems facing California. The question read, "In respect to the serious diseases or medical problems facing California today, which two or three do you think are the most serious?" Only first mentions are displayed.

Both 1985 and 1977 samples were subject to weighting by region, sex, and age, thus ensuring conformity between sample statistics and population parameters for the three attributes. Details of sample construction are presented in Appendix 1. The average completion rate for the two surveys, based on the universe of households contacted, is approximately 50 percent. Interviewing mode effects are discussed in Appendix 2, which shows our findings are not biased by the use of telephones for the second interview.

PUBLIC AWARENESS, APPREHENSION, AND KNOWLEDGE

To appreciate public opinion on AIDS issues, it is necessary to appreciate the extent of public concern about and knowledge of the disease.

Concern

AIDS is a household word. In 1985, we interviewed 1,005 people; 4 of them had not heard or read about AIDS. To put this in context: People are more likely not to know who the president of the United States is than not to have heard of AIDS.

And not only is the general public aware of AIDS. They are also concerned about it. Figure 3.1 presents some evidence on current levels of public apprehension about AIDS. The sample was asked to name the most serious diseases or medical problems facing California today. They had to name a disease themselves, not simply pick one off a list supplied. By concentrating on the first disease that came to their minds, we have a stringent test of the extent to which AIDS, as compared with other serious diseases, is uppermost in people's minds.

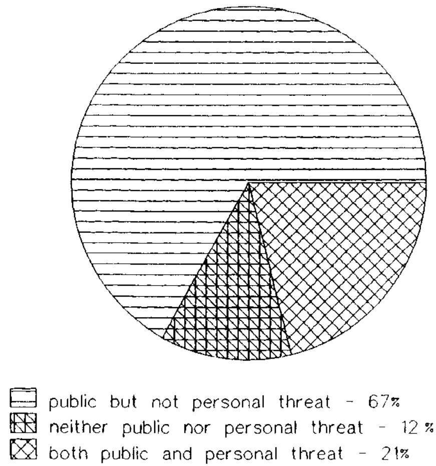


Figure 3.2. AIDS: public or personal threat? Two dichotomous measures of concern were used in Figure 3.2. For "public threat," the questions were the same as in Figure 3.1, but any mention of AIDS was counted rather than first mentions only. For "personal threat," the question read, "Now in respect to your own situation, which two or three serious diseases or medical problems are you most concerned about getting?" Again, any mention of AIDS was counted as a personal threat.

As Figure 3.1 shows, AIDS is the health problem most likely to be mentioned first, far surpassing cancer and heart disease, the two next most salient diseases. In fact, though AIDS is responsible for far fewer deaths than either heart disease or cancer, it is almost three times as likely to be mentioned as the former, and eight times as likely to be mentioned as the latter.

And not only does a majority of the public perceive AIDS to be a serious threat. They perceive it to be an immediate one. Indeed, nearly 80 percent believes AIDS is a threat to the general public right now, while an additional 10 percent believes it will be in the next few years.

It is one thing for people to perceive AIDS as a serious public health problem, quite another for them to perceive it as a threat to themselves. Figure 3.2 illustrates, in the form of a pie graph, the proportions of the public who view AIDS as a public threat, as a personal threat, as both a public and a personal threat, and as not a public or personal threat. Plainly, AIDS is seen as a public health problem, not a personal threat. Approximately 20 percent sees it as a threat both to the general public and personally. By contrast, 67 percent sees AIDS as a threat to the public but not personally, while only a minuscule proportion – less than 1 percent – sees it as personal threat but not a public one.

Ignorance

Nearly everyone has heard or read about AIDS. But how well informed are they about the disease? How much do they know about who gets it and how they get it?

Table 3.1. *Knowledge of how AIDS is transmitted*

	Percentage responding			
Do you think a person can get AIDS	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely
Through sexual relations with a person who has AIDS	92	6	1	0
By receiving a blood transfusion from a blood donor who has AIDS	94	4	1	1
By using the same hypodermic needle that a person who has AIDS has just used	90	8	1	1
By being exposed to the saliva of a person who has AIDS	37	34	16	8
By kissing a person who has AIDS	26	33	23	15
By working in the same office with someone who has AIDS	2	11	29	56
By using unclean public toilets	11	22	25	38
By shaking hands with a person who has AIDS	7	23	67	1
By drinking from a glass used by a person with AIDS	14	34	24	23
By being nearby when someone who has AIDS has just sneezed	6	18	30	42
By giving blood to a bloodbank or hospital	20	12	16	51
By eating food that has been handled by a person who has AIDS	8	25	29	33

AIDS has been a gay disease in the public mind. When asked who is likely to get it, more than eight in ten said homosexuals. Only a minority understood that AIDS is also a disease of drug addicts and hemophiliacs: Only 33 percent mentioned the former; about 23 percent, the latter. Taken by itself, this might suggest that AIDS was perceived by heterosexuals as a disease that does not endanger them. A feeling of safety, however, tends to be offset by ignorance of how it is spread.

To assess ignorance, respondents were read "a list of ways that some people say you can get AIDS." These included both ways that genuinely put a person at risk (e.g., receiving a blood transfusion from a blood donor who has AIDS) and ways that do not (e.g., giving blood to a blood bank or a hospital). After each, respondents were asked whether it is very likely, somewhat likely, not too likely, or not at all likely that a person can get AIDS in this way.

The problem, as Table 3.1 shows, is not that people are unaware of how AIDS is spread but rather that they are ignorant about how it is *not* spread. Look, for example, at opinions about whether AIDS can be transmitted by having intimate sexual relations with a person with AIDS: 92 percent estimates that this is very likely; another 6 percent somewhat likely. Corresponding numbers appear for

sharing hypodermic needles with a person with AIDS and receiving blood from a person with AIDS: 90 percent regards the former, and 94 percent the latter, as quite likely to be ways to get AIDS. In short, nearly everyone knows how AIDS is, in fact, spread.

But many do not know how it is *not* spread. Look, for example, at opinions about giving blood: One in three believes that the chances of getting AIDS by giving blood to a bloodbank or hospital are good – a staggering number considering the question plainly is about giving, not getting, blood. Moreover, a third believes the chances are good of getting it by eating food that has been handled by a person with AIDS – or merely by shaking hands. Nearly 50 percent thinks that drinking from a glass used by a person with AIDS puts you at risk; 33 percent, that using unclean public toilets does so; 13 percent, that working in the same office as someone with AIDS does so. Or consider fears about public toilets: One in three believes it is either very or somewhat likely that unclean public toilets can be a source of AIDS. In short, substantial numbers of the public are ignorant of how AIDS is *not* spread.

This ignorance testifies not to the absence of a correct theory of how AIDS is transmitted but to the presence of a false one. The person who believes that AIDS can be spread merely by being in the presence of a person with it believes a fortiori that it can be spread by casual contact.

Establishing how many people have a badly mistaken idea of how AIDS is not transmitted is plainly of some importance. It would be one thing if most people got most things right about how AIDS is transmitted – after all, anybody can make a mistake – but quite another if a great many got a great many things wrong. Accordingly, two measures of the numbers of mistakes were calculated. To measure false negatives, respondents were given a point each time they failed to recognize that an actual cause of AIDS is, in fact, a cause. An unequivocal answer was required. Thus, a respondent had to say that it is "very likely" that sharing a hypodermic needle with a person with AIDS is a way the disease is spread in order to be counted as knowledgeable. To measure false positives, respondents were given a point each time that they said AIDS is transmissible in ways it, in fact, is not transmitted. Only items with a clearly right or clearly wrong answer were included. Accordingly, the "saliva" and "kissing" items were not included in either index because of some element of genuine uncertainty attaching to them. Again, answers had to be unequivocal: Respondents had to say, for example, that it is "not at all likely" that AIDS is spread through sneezing.

As Figure 3.3 shows, nearly everyone knows most of the ways that AIDS is transmitted. Specifically, eight out of every ten get it entirely correct, identifying sex, needle sharing, and receiving blood transfusions as sources of AIDS. On the other hand, as Figure 3.3 (lower panel) also shows, roughly equal numbers make many mistakes as make a few. The rectilinearity of the distribution suggests that knowledge about AIDS is not cumulative: Realizing that the disease is not spread by one form of casual contact does not bring with it an appreciation that it is not spread by other forms of casual contact. As a consequence, only a small propor-

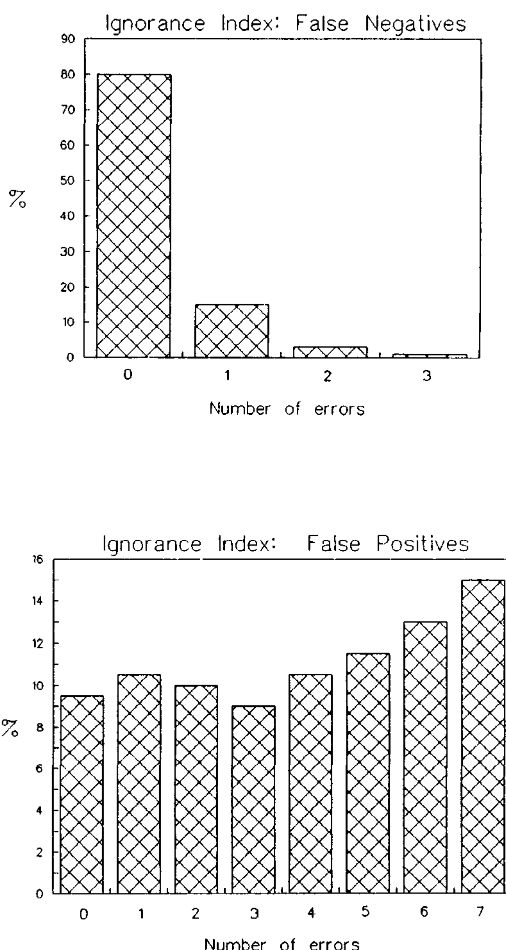


Figure 3.3. The distribution of ignorance. The ignorance index of false negatives consisted of questions 1, 2, and 3 from Table 3.1. Zero points were given for each correct "very likely" answer. One point was given for each "somewhat likely," "not too likely," or "not at all likely" answer. The ignorance index of false positives consisted of questions 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 as described in Table 3.1. Zero points were given for each "not at all likely" answer and one point for each "very likely," "somewhat likely," or "not too likely" answer.

tion of the population has an understanding of the principles of AIDS transmission; in fact, fully 60 percent believes that AIDS is spread in a majority of the ways it is not spread.

There are, then, two kinds of ignorance: being unaware of how AIDS is spread and of ho'v it is not spread. The two are correlated, but negatively rather than positively ($r = -.14$). Both also are related to education, not surprisingly. What

is surprising is that one is correlated positively with it, the other negatively. Thus, the more schooling people have had, the more likely they are to be aware of how AIDS is *not* spread, but the less likely they are to be aware of how it *is* spread.

Education seemingly reduces one kind of ignorance but increases the other. This apparent paradox exposes a response bias in risk estimation. The less schooling a person has had, the harder it is for her to have confidence in discriminating between a true source of AIDS and a false one. Hence, the more likely she is to suspect that something – anything – may be a cause of AIDS. This aspect underlies the pseudoparadox of education seeming both to increase and to decrease knowledge. Apprehensive guessing promotes the likelihood that any conceivable source of AIDS will be perceived as an actual source of it, with contradictory consequences: increasing the likelihood of a correct answer when people are asked about a true source of AIDS; decreasing the likelihood of it when they are asked about a false source of it.

CHANGES IN ATTITUDES TOWARD HOMOSEXUALS' RIGHTS

Students of public opinion are accustomed to observing that the general public pays little attention to many issues of public policy, even issues that dominate their very chances of survival (e.g., nuclear war). AIDS is a powerful exception to this rule of indifference. Moreover, there is much ignorance about it, typically taking the form of a belief that AIDS can be spread by casual contact. Add apprehension to ignorance and you would seem to have a potentially explosive combination.

One of our aims in undertaking this study was to determine if the public has become more intolerant of homosexuals under the impact of AIDS. Figure 3.4 displays, in graphic form, public attitudes toward the civil liberties of homosexuals as they were in 1977, on the left side, and as they are now, on the right side.

Although we feared a backlash, support for the rights of homosexuals has gone up, not down. Consider opinion on whether gay fathers should be disqualified from having custody of their children in the event of divorce. In 1977, only around 50 percent of the public approved of a gay father getting custody – "even if the court (found) him fit in all other ways to take care of the children"; very nearly 40 percent disapproved. By 1985, however, 61 percent approved and only 31 percent disapproved. This is not an isolated result. Take the parallel question, whether a lesbian mother should be allowed custody. In 1977, only around one-half of the public approved and one-third disapproved. By 1985, though, two-thirds approved and only one-quarter disapproved.

A liberal trend on antidiscrimination laws is also evident. In 1977, less than a majority of Californians (45 percent, to be exact) approved of a "law that would make it illegal to discriminate against homosexual persons by anyone selling or renting housing in California." By 1985, such a law had the backing of a solid majority (55 percent) of the public. Or consider opposition to homosexual teach-

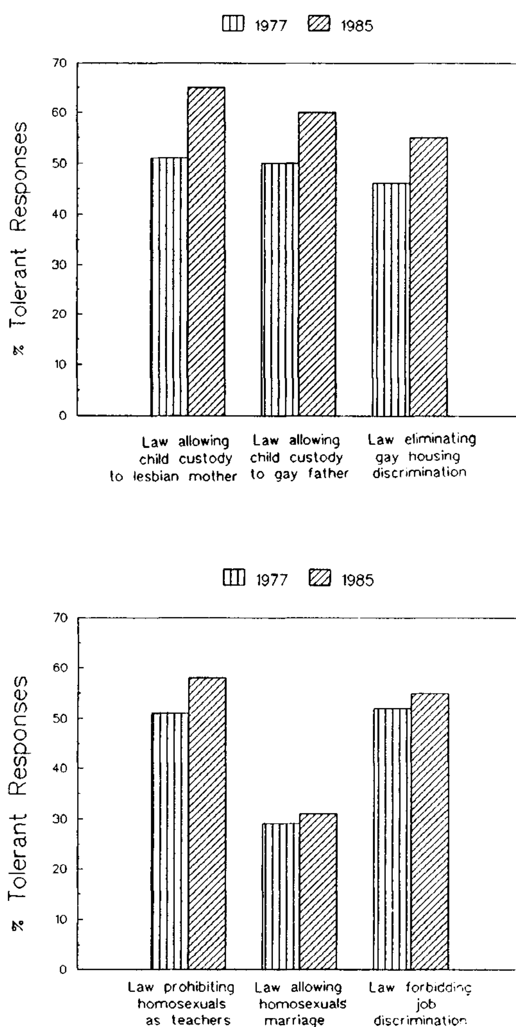
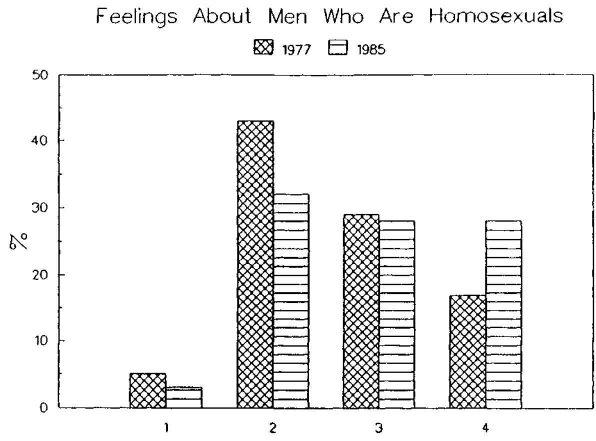
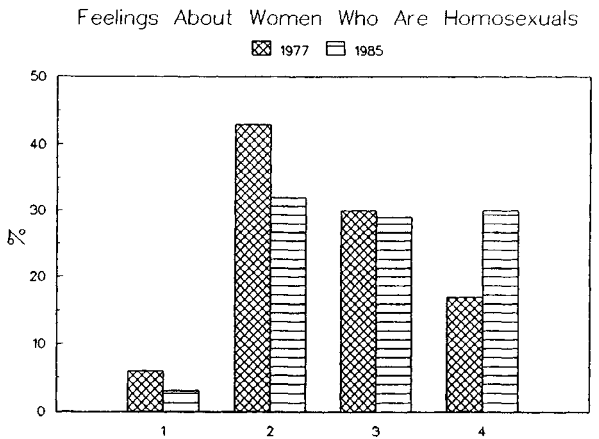


Figure 3.4. Increases in support for civil liberties of homosexuals. Wording of questions appears in Appendix C.

ers. In 1977, a bare majority opposed "a law against allowing persons who are homosexuals to teach school in California." By 1985, a solid majority (59 percent) had formed against it.

On a number of fronts, the public has become more supportive in its attitudes toward the civil liberties of homosexuals, AIDS notwithstanding. True, there is no more support for legalized gay marriages now than earlier, and only slightly more support for antidiscrimination laws now than eight years before. Moreover, the amount of change is not enormous; substantial opposition to civil liberties and





1. Punished and kept away from normal people
2. Tolerated, but only if they don't publicly show their way of life
3. Accepted by society and protected by law from discrimination
4. Approved by society and allowed to live their own homosexual lifestyle

Figure 3.5. Positive and negative feelings about male and female homosexuals. The question read, "Which of the following statements best describes how you personally feel about men/women who are homosexuals?"

civil rights for homosexuals remains. Yet such caveats miss the point. There was every reason to fear a public backlash against homosexuals under the pressure of AIDS. But none has occurred. In fact, just the opposite: Supporters of gay rights were in the minority only ten years ago and now they constitute a majority.

Table 3.2. *National trends in attitudes toward homosexuals' civil liberties, 1977–85*

	1977	1980	1982	1984	1985
Favors free speech for homosexuals					
Yes, %	62	66	65	68	67
No, %	35	31	31	28	30
Don't know, %	4	3	4	4	3
Accepts homosexuals as college teachers					
Yes, %	49	55	55	59	58
No, %	46	41	41	37	39
Don't know, %	4	4	4	4	3

It is not just attitudes toward abstract, or political rights that have changed. Figure 3.5 depicts trends in public feelings toward homosexuals. Respondents were asked "Which of the following statements best describes how you personally feel about men who are homosexuals?" Four alternatives were read: Homosexuals should be (1) "punished and kept away from normal people"; (2) "tolerated, but only if they don't publicly show their way of life"; (3) "accepted by society and protected by law from unfair discrimination against them because of their homosexual lifestyle"; and (4) "approved by society and allowed to live their own homosexual lifestyle." Respondents were asked which best described their feelings toward men who are homosexuals and toward women who are homosexuals. As Figure 3.5 shows, fewer citizens are negative or grudging in their attitudes toward homosexuals; more are positive, even approving; and both the decrease in negative feelings and the increase in positive ones apply across the board, that is, as much to lesbians as to gays.

Granted this positive trend, what interpretation should be placed on it? Is the increase in support for homosexuals perhaps a sympathetic reaction to AIDS? Alternatively, would there have been a still larger increase if not for AIDS?

Table 3.2 presents national trend data bearing on these questions from the General Social Survey (NORC) on two issues: free speech for homosexuals and homosexual college teachers. The time series begins in 1977 and runs, in annual or biannual increments, through 1985 – the same interval covered by the two California samples, but with intermediate years included.

The trends for both items in the national samples parallel those from the California samples: Support for gay rights increases over the same period, and by about the same margin. The national data extend as well as corroborate the California data, by allowing us to see whether the overall trend in this period was in any way altered with the emergence of AIDS. The pattern is plain: The rate of increase in support for gay rights is approximately the same (taking account of sampling tolerances) after the identification of AIDS as before it. Thus, in 1977, 62 percent supported free speech for homosexuals; that went up to 65 percent in 1982; and up again to 67 percent in 1985. Similarly, in 1977, 49 percent said that a homosexual should be allowed to teach in a college; that rose to 55 percent in

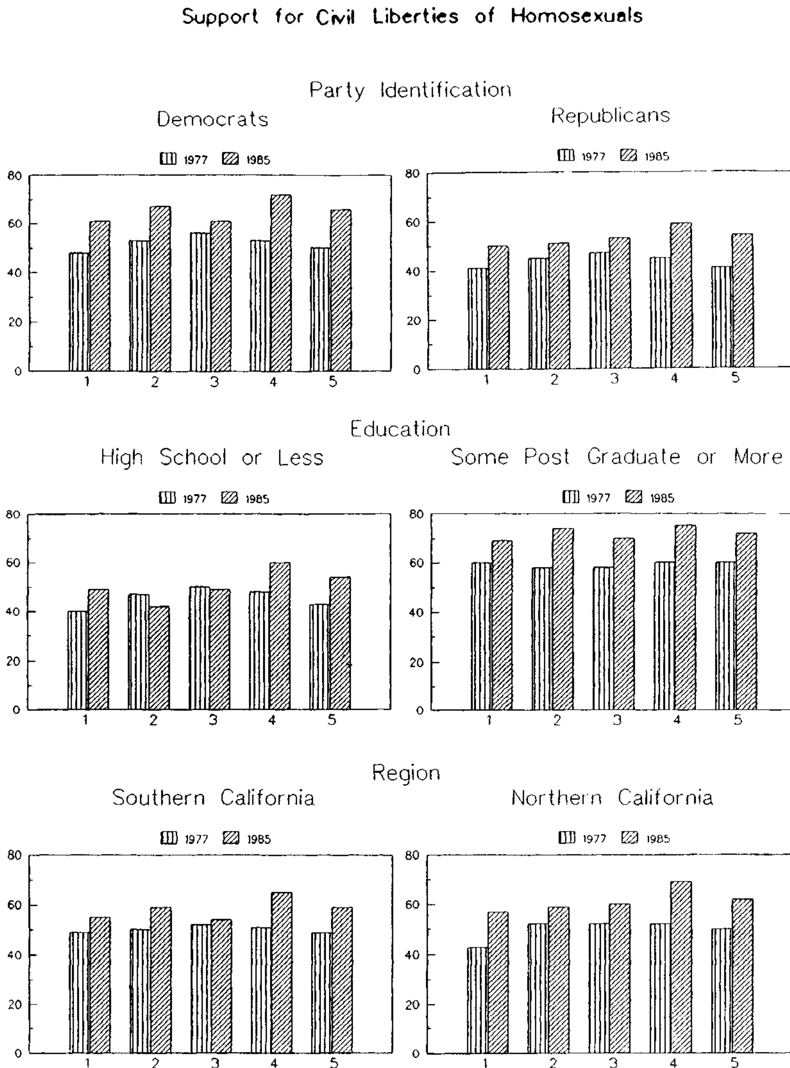


Figure 3.6. The generality of changes in attitudes toward homosexuals. Same question wording as described in Figure 3.5.

1982; and rose again to 58 percent in 1985. To be sure, the public did not change its view of the desirability of homosexuality over this period: An unwavering majority – three in every four – continued to regard homosexuality as "almost always wrong." All the same, the public has become steadily, if slowly, more supportive of the rights of homosexuals and seems to have done so not because of but regardless of AIDS.

It is, all the same, important to see if these newly positive attitudes toward homosexuals are widely diffused through the society. After all, the aggregate

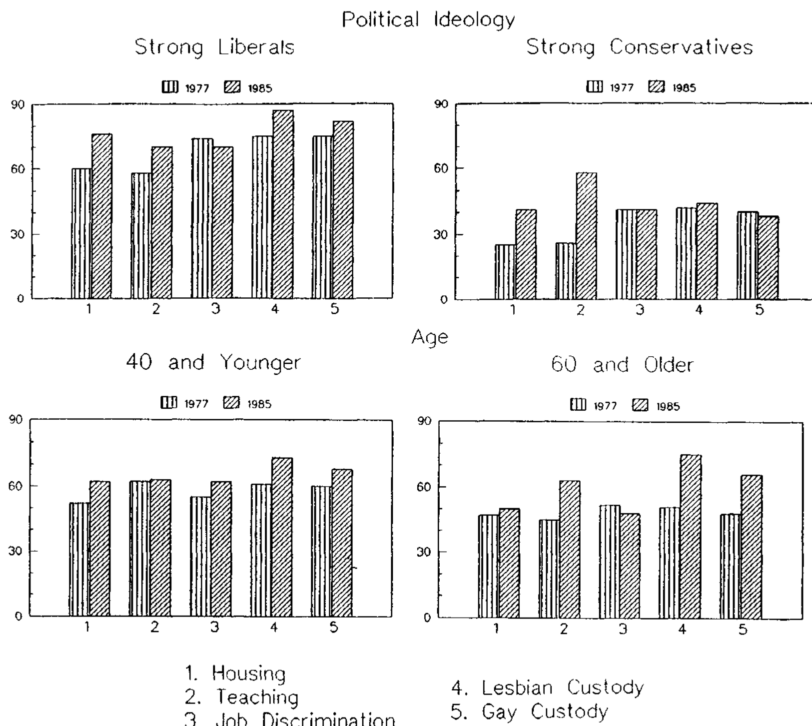


Figure 3.6. (*cont.*)

trend may obscure off-setting movements: a backlash in some parts of society masked by an increase in support in other parts. Accordingly, Figure 3.6 compares attitudes of different social and political strata, in 1977 and 1985.

Take partisanship. Notice, first, that Democrats are more likely to support civil liberties of homosexuals than Republicans, both in 1977 and in 1985. But – and this is the point to emphasize – both Democrats and Republicans are more likely to support gay rights in 1985 than in 1977. Moreover, the increase in support among Republicans tends to be sizable – indeed, sufficiently so as to make them as supportive of gay rights in 1985 as Democrats were in 1977. Similarly, there is more support for gay rights, not only among the most educated, those with postgraduate training, but also among the least, those with a high school degree or less. For that matter, the trend is positive, not only in northern California but in southern California as well. The trend toward tolerance is an across-the-board affair. Not that it is equally strong in all parts of the society: Some from particular backgrounds or outlooks have resisted it, conservatives being in this respect especially notable. Nor has the trend to tolerance shown itself on all issues with equal strength. Attitudes on such issues as anti–job discrimination laws have been resistant to change. Still, the main point is that public support for homosexuals has increased, not in one narrow stratum of society but in many of its principal parts as defined by education, age, geography, and politics.

This is welcome news to anyone who values a tolerant society. But scapegoating of homosexuals is not the only risk. As pressing a concern are the rights of persons suffering from AIDS, homosexual or not. To what extent does the public support their rights? To what extent is it prepared to override them?

RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH AIDS

AIDS has raised a cloud of civil rights issues. Should health departments be required to disclose to school boards the names of children and employees with AIDS? Should the names of people exposed to the AIDS virus be listed on the public record? Should victims of the disease be quarantined? Or tattooed? Or evicted from their apartments? Or fired?

Figure 3.7 displays public attitudes toward the rights of persons with AIDS in a variety of situations. A glance at it suggests the public takes a mixed position – indeed, seems of two minds about the civil rights of persons with AIDS. Sometimes, a clear majority supports the rights of those with AIDS, sometimes not.

Consider the issue of eviction. When asked if landlords have the right to evict renters with AIDS, very nearly 80 percent says no, while only about one in seven, or 15 percent, replies yes. The picture is much the same with respect to job security. Sixty percent of the sample says no, employers should not have the right to fire an employee because that person has AIDS. Conversely, only 25 percent says yes, the employer should have a right to dismiss someone with the disease. In short, commanding majorities in the public wish to protect persons with AIDS from arbitrary eviction or firing.

To guard against any inclination to dismiss this as superficial or inconsequential, it is worth recalling that similarly sizable majorities, only a generation ago, took the position that ordinary store clerks who were communists – hardly a national security risk – should be fired (Stouffer, 1963, p. 43). In contrast, consider opinion on whether children with AIDS should be allowed to go to school. Children's safety taps deep psychological roots, yet over 50 percent of the general public is in favor of letting children with AIDS attend school and less than 30 percent is opposed to it.

A quite different impression of the public's position, however, is suggested by attitudes about testing. Respondents were asked if "people who cook for restaurants or schools be required to take a test to verify that they have not been exposed to AIDS?" There is no mistaking the dominant view on this issue. Fully two-thirds of the public believes that people who cook for restaurants or schools should be required to take a test to verify that they have not been exposed to AIDS. Conversely, less than a third opposes mandatory testing for food handlers. Clearly, mandatory testing and disclosure raise fundamental civil liberties concerns. But this does not deter a commanding majority from supporting mandatory testing.

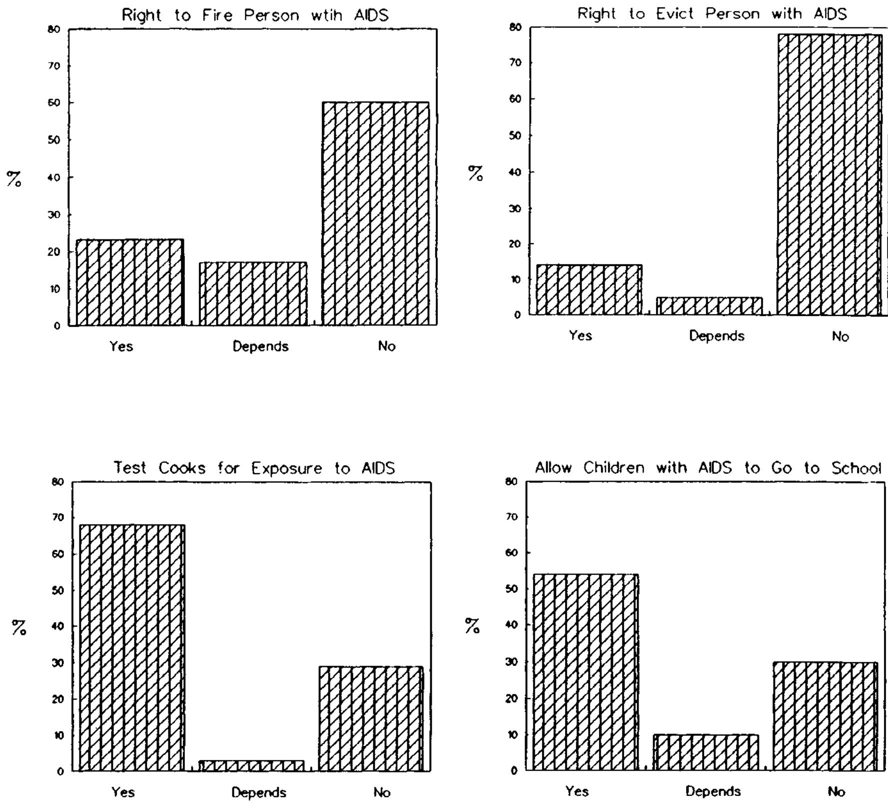


Figure 3.7. Attitudes toward AIDS policy issues. For *Right to fire person with AIDS*, the question read, "Should employers have the right to fire an employee specifically because that person has AIDS?" For *Right to evict person with AIDS*, "Should landlords have the right to evict renters who have AIDS from their buildings?" For *Test cooks for exposure to AIDS*, "Should people who cook for restaurants or schools be required to take a test to verify that they have not been exposed to AIDS?" For *Allow children with AIDS to go to school*, "Should children with AIDS be allowed to go to school or not?"

Policy reasoning: principal considerations

The average citizen's decision about whether to support the rights of persons with AIDS is likely to rest on two kinds of considerations. One of these is itself a family of considerations – ignorance and its brothers and cousins, fear and intolerance. Fairly obviously, the less people know about how AIDS is transmitted, the more likely they are to believe that it can be spread through casual contact; and the more likely they are to believe this, the more likely they are to favor measures to identify, report, isolate, or control people infected with AIDS in ways that deprive them of rights they would ordinarily enjoy. Moreover,

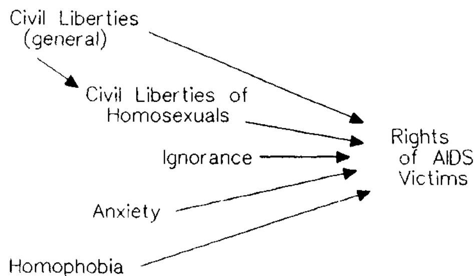


Figure 3.8. Simplified causal model of attitudes toward persons with AIDS.

people who are ignorant of AIDS are also likely to be especially fearful of it; and it cannot be supposed that their fear of AIDS will increase their solicitude for the rights of persons suffering from it. Nor should it be forgotten that AIDS is associated in the public mind with homosexuals, a controversial and unpopular group in any case. Homophobia, it must be supposed, will also play a role in shaping public attitudes toward the rights of persons with AIDS.

But here are also considerations on the other side, promoting rather than undercutting support for the rights of persons with AIDS. Most obvious of these is support for gay rights. The more committed a person is to gay rights, the more likely he or she is to support the civil liberties of persons with AIDS. A concern for civil liberties can express itself in different ways: in support for civil liberties of homosexuals specifically, or for civil liberties more broadly conceived – as support, for example, for free speech. And the more committed a person is to civil liberties, whether broadly or narrowly conceived, the more likely he or she should be to back the rights of persons with AIDS.

How do these various factors tie together in reasoning about AIDS policies? Figure 3.8 lays out a causal model of policy reasoning, simplified for clarity. The logic of the model's layout is quite straightforward; still, one or two comments are in order.

This model plainly is recursive (or causally unidirectional), in conformity with common practice. A variable may be an effect of a variable to its left, a cause of a variable to its right, not the other way round. The model presupposes that citizens may arrive at a position by two routes; by a low road or by a high road. The low road is centered on homophobia and anxiety; the high road, on considerations of civil liberties. Both are important in their own right, in addition to influencing how ignorant people are likely to be of how AIDS is spread. As this model suggests, ignorance is assigned a causally prominent role based on the expectation that insofar as people believe AIDS can be transmitted through casual contact, their response to persons with it will be restrictive rather than supportive.

How citizens think through a position on policy – what considerations they take into account and what weight they give them – is inevitably not uniform or identical from one person to another. Research on issue preferences on racial

issues suggests that the structure of policy reasoning itself varies with education, specifically that the more schooling people have had, the less likely their reasoning about racial issues is to be affect-driven, that is, dominated by their feelings toward blacks (Sniderman, Brody, and Kuklinski, 1984; Sniderman, Hagen, Tetlock, and Brady, 1986). The model is accordingly designed to assess this hypothesis of heterogeneity in policy reasoning as a function of education.

Figures 3.9a and 3.9b offer a graphic but partial representation of a causal model. The complete set of coefficients is presented in Appendix 3.D Table 3.A.4. The dependent variable is a composite index, summing together opinions on whether landlords should be able to evict renters with AIDS and whether employers should be able to fire employees with AIDS. We shall call it the Protection Index, since it indicates to what extent people are willing to protect AIDS victims from possible discrimination. Following convention, causal arrows represent the impact (if statistically significant) of a variable on successive variables, the magnitude of impact being indicated by the (unstandardized) regression coefficient. Item wording for variables introduced into the model is given in Appendix 3. The model is estimated first for the poorly educated (Figure 3.9a), then for the well educated (Figure 3.9b).

Notice first in what way and what kind of ignorance matters. It is of no importance if people believe that AIDS is not spread in ways that it is; but it is of considerable importance if they believe it is transmitted in ways that it is not. Specifically, the greater the number of ways a person believes that AIDS can be transmitted that, in fact, are ways it is exceedingly unlikely to be transmitted, the more likely he or she is to score low on the Protection Index. Moreover, ignorance among the most educated is as costly as among the least. To be sure, the more educated a person is, the less likely he or she is to believe that AIDS is spread by casual contact ($r = -.24$). But the cost of an error is the same for both: Ignorance undercuts support for the rights of persons with AIDS as effectively among the most educated as among the least.

Beyond this, it is plain that the considerations people take account of in working out a position on dealing with persons with AIDS depend significantly on education. Thus, among the poorly educated, anxiety has a substantial impact: The more fearful people are of getting AIDS, the more likely they are to oppose protective policies for persons who have it. Among the well educated, however, anxiety has no effect: People who worry about getting AIDS are neither more, nor less, likely to favor landlords being able to evict or employers being able to fire persons with AIDS.

There is a parallel point. Among the poorly educated, homophobia plays a significant role in policy reasoning – indeed, a triple role. First, it directly discourages protective actions, such as laws protecting people with AIDS from eviction or firing. Second, it strengthens apprehension about getting AIDS, and thereby discourages support for protective policies. Third, it reinforces opposition to civil liberties for homosexuals, and thereby discourages support for protective policies.

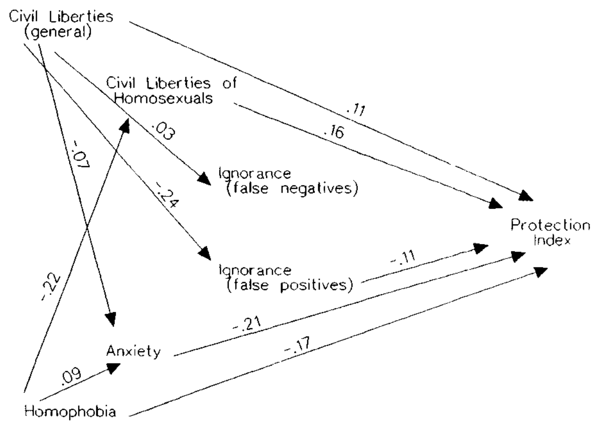


Figure 3.9a. A causal model of attitudes toward protection of the civil liberties of AIDS victims among the poorly educated (unstandardized betas, n = 299).

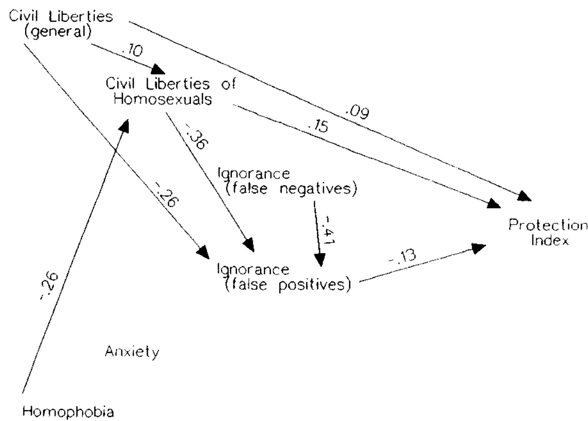


Figure 3.9b. A causal model of attitudes toward protection of the civil liberties of AIDS victims among the well educated (unstandardized betas, n = 323).

Now, consider the well educated (Figure 3.9b). Homophobia does not directly discourage support for protective policies. Nor does it inhibit support indirectly, by either stoking fear about AIDS or undercutting support for civil liberties in general. True, homophobia is not entirely toothless among the well educated: It does, for example, undermine support for civil liberties for homosexuals. All the same, education does triple duty: It decreases the likelihood that people will be homophobic; that they will be anxious about getting AIDS; and finally, that frankly emotional considerations such as homophobia or fear, even if present, will dominate reasoning about AIDS policies.

In short, education promotes protection for the rights of persons with AIDS both by decreasing the likelihood that people will take the "low road" and base their judgment on such emotional factors as anxiety and homophobia and by increasing the likelihood they will take the "high road" and base their judgment on such cognitive considerations as support for civil liberties.

Testing food handlers

As a public policy issue, AIDS can be viewed in different lights – as a civil liberties issue, for example, or as an issue of public health. AIDS is neither unique nor especially uncommon in this respect: Many issues can be framed in obviously distinguishable, even radically different, ways. Thus, defense spending may be framed as an issue of national security or, alternatively, of jingoist foreign policy. Such "framing" effects are potentially of importance, both in establishing the determinants of policy preferences and, more broadly, in understanding how it is possible to perform acts seemingly inconsistent with one's opinions, without actually being inconsistent.

Figures 3.10a and 3.10b present a causal analysis of opinions about whether cooks in restaurants and schools should be tested to verify that they have not been exposed to AIDS. Framing an issue differently need not alter entirely the causal processes underlying opinions about it. Consider the role of ignorance, for example. With respect to protecting persons with AIDS, it is ignorance of how AIDS is *not* spread, not of how it is spread, that counts. And the same is true with respect to mandatory testing. It is erroneously supposing that AIDS is transmitted in ways it is not – not failing to appreciate that it is transmitted in ways it in fact is transmitted – that stokes support for testing.

In addition, there is the striking parallelism of the differential role of emotional factors in shaping policy reasoning depending on education. Thus, anxiety about getting AIDS undercuts opposition to protecting the rights of persons with the disease among the least – but not among the most – educated. Similarly, anxiety undercuts opposition to mandatory testing among the least educated (Figure 3.10a) but not among the most educated (Figure 3.10b).

In one sense, it is perfectly obvious that the way the issue of AIDS is framed makes a difference. After all, put the issue one way, and a clear majority of the public is solicitous of the rights of persons with AIDS; put it another way, and a still clearer majority is not. But what does this suggest about how the framing of the issue affects the causal processes underlying opinions about it?

The framing of an issue like AIDS might make a difference in two different ways. One of these runs as follows. Some fraction of the public is prejudiced against homosexuals. All the same, they feel some inhibition against openly expressing or acting on their homophobia, at any rate under normal circumstances. But AIDS provides a socially acceptable cloak, to dress up and disguise prejudice against homosexuals. Or, more exactly, people may express hostility against gays legitimately – hostility they would otherwise be under pressure to

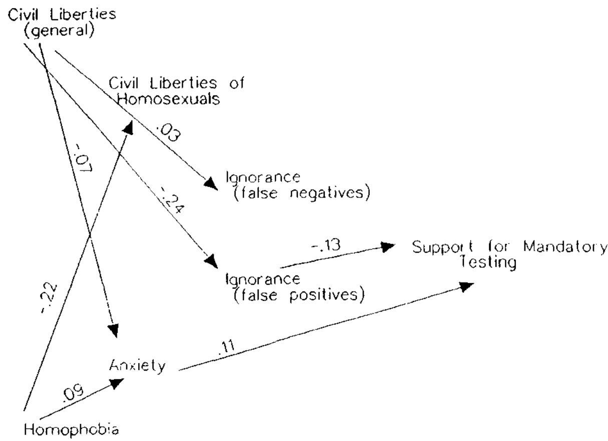


Figure 3.10a. A causal model of attitudes toward mandatory testing among the poorly educated (unstandardized betas, $n = 299$).

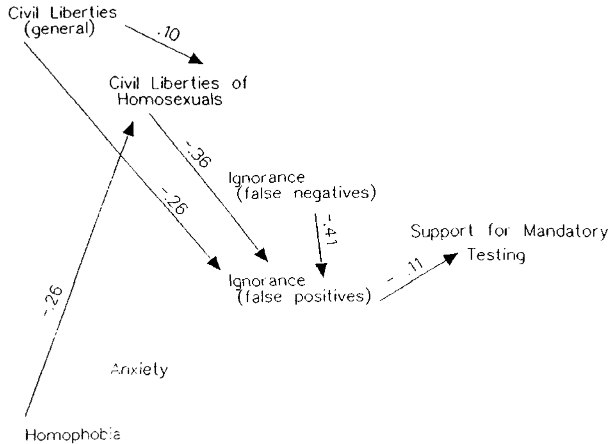


Figure 3.10b. A causal model of attitudes toward mandatory testing among the well educated (unstandardized betas, $n = 323$).

suppress – if the issue of AIDS is suitably framed as a need for mandatory testing and other "preventive" measures in order to prevent the disease from spreading and protect public health.

It is clearly off the mark to conceive of framing effects in this way, as Figures 3.10a and 3.10b show. If framing the issue as one of public health rather than civil liberties has the effect of legitimating the expressions of prejudice, then homophobia should play a still more important role in shaping attitudes about mandatory testing. But as Figures 3.10a and 3.10b both demonstrate, there is no statistically significant path between homophobia and attitudes about mandatory testing of food handlers, in the case of either the least or the most educated.

Moreover, a second strand of evidence, having to do with the role of anxiety, ties neatly together with the first. The more fearful of AIDS a poorly educated person is, the more likely he or she will favor testing of food handlers – hardly surprising considered by itself and consistent with anxiety's role in undercutting support for persons stricken by AIDS. What is surprising is the magnitude of anxiety's impact on attitudes toward testing as compared with attitudes about the rights of persons with AIDS. If framing is important insofar as it legitimizes the expression of emotional factors, anxiety must be expected to play a larger role in conditioning attitudes toward testing food handlers than toward eviction or firing of people with AIDS. As Figure 3.10a shows, the facts are the other way round. The impact of anxiety is weaker, not stronger, in the case of attitudes toward mandatory testing. In short, it seems on several counts wrong to suppose that framing effects matter by dint of licensing the expression of prejudices and fears.

But framing effects do matter in a different way. Quite simply, the considerations people take into account in making up their minds depend on how the issue is framed. As we saw (Figures 3.9a and 3.9b), the more supportive a person was of civil liberties, either in general or for homosexuals specifically, the more likely he or she was to support protecting persons with AIDS. In contrast, considerations of civil liberties are nearly irrelevant when people come to make up their minds about testing, despite the quite enormous civil liberties implications of mandatory testing. The person who is strongly supportive of civil liberties considerations is no more likely, for this reason, to oppose mandatory testing than the person who is indifferent to or even contemptuous of them.

CONCLUSION

Our findings show a considerable steadfastness in the commitment of citizens to civil liberties in the face of the AIDS epidemic – a finding worthy of note in a research literature preoccupied with demonstrations of the superficiality of the public's understanding of and support for the value of tolerance. Our findings also expose the limits of that commitment. Both aspects deserve attention.

A major factor in sustaining tolerance in the face of pressure is education. "There is something about people with more schooling," Stouffer contended, "which equips them to make discriminations, to appreciate the principles of civil rights, and to handle a value conflict in a more tolerant way than others" (1955, p. 202). It is worth understanding why this is so.

To begin with, education builds support for the rights of persons with AIDS by building support for civil liberties. Specifically, the more schooling people have had, the more likely they are to favor civil liberties, both in general and for homosexuals specifically ($r = .39$ and $.29$, respectively). And, the more likely they are to favor civil liberties, the more likely they are, in turn, to oppose suggestions that employers should be able to fire or landlords evict people with AIDS (Figures 3.9a and 3.9b).

But there is a further point. Not only does education inculcate habits of mind that promote tolerance of persons with AIDS. It also combats those habits of

mind that undermine tolerance. Thus, the more educated people are, the less likely they are to be ignorant of how the disease is spread ($r = -.24$). On top of this, the more educated they are, the less likely they are to be homophobic ($r = -.12$). And each of these effects of education – cutting ignorance and combatting bigotry – encourages support for the rights of persons with AIDS (Figures 3.9a and 3.9b).

Of course education is not foolproof. However much schooling people have had, some of them will be homophobic. Even so, the more schooling people have had, the less important is homophobia in shaping reactions to persons with AIDS. The same is true of anxiety about getting AIDS. Although homophobia and anxiety undercut support for the rights of persons with AIDS among the poorly educated, neither has a statistically significant impact among the well educated (Figures 3.9a and 3.9b). The lesson of these results, put broadly, is this. Education plays a prophylactic role: It reinforces tolerance and undercuts bigotry in two ways – directly by inhibiting the frequency of aversive factors like homophobia; and indirectly by inhibiting the strength of their impact.

All the same, there are sharp limits to the public's commitment to civil liberties: Although a large majority supports the rights of persons with AIDS, a still larger majority favors mandatory testing. From one point of view, this may seem only one more illustration of the tendency of the average citizen to support democratic values at the level of principle only to desert them at the level of policy (cf. Jackman, 1978; Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo, 1985) – another illustration, if you like, of the disjunction between attitudes and action. We should like to suggest an alternative tack, by taking account of the importance of framing effects.

Many citizens hold competing values: They care, for example, about public health and about civil liberties. In this there is no cognitive inconsistency, at any rate not in the abstract. But the considerations they care about can come into conflict in particular situations. The effect of framing is to prime values differentially, establishing the salience of the one or the other. Framing thus tends to guarantee a disjunction between acts and (some) attitudes, not because the attitude is not sincerely held, but because it has not been primed while a competing value has. The consequence, as we have seen, is that a majority of the public supports the rights of persons with AIDS when the issue is framed to accentuate civil liberties considerations – and supports as well mandatory testing when the issue is framed to accentuate public health considerations.

Support for the rights of persons with AIDS has so far prevailed over fear and intolerance, evidence that good ideas do stand a fighting chance against bad ones. Looking to the future, however, it is difficult to be optimistic. AIDS cases have doubled and redoubled, doubling and redoubling through 1991, accounting by 1995 for as many deaths as heart disease and cancer combined. The result will be to place the average citizen under still more pressure – pressure to stop the spread of the disease by any means necessary, pressure to scapegoat homosexuals and other groups for introducing it. It is difficult, in these circumstances, to be confident that the public will persist in its support for gay rights and the rights of

persons with AIDS – difficult partly because fear and intolerance are bound to be excited, difficult still more fundamentally because the value of tolerance, in addition to being vulnerable to the intolerance promoted by fear, is vulnerable as well to the altogether legitimate value of public health.

APPENDIX 3.A: SAMPLE DESIGN AND SAMPLING ERRORS

The 1985 sample was stratified by county, based on 1980 census data on residential telephone incidence, updated with data on new telephone installations at the state level and current projects of households by county. Within geographic areas, telephone numbers were randomly selected by systematic sampling proportionate to local prefix allocation density, to correct for nonlisted telephone biases. Within households, respondent selection was systematic, focusing first on the youngest adult male. Up to four callbacks were made, on different days or times of the day, to reach an adult in each household.

The 1977 sample was based on a cluster sample design. There were 240 primary sampling units (PSU), weighted in proportion to population. Within PSUs, key addresses were selected in two ways: by random selection from telephone directories and by a special method of cluster formation to take account of nontelephone households. Cluster households were systematically listed, to eliminate interviewer selection biases; and within households, systematic selection criteria of age and sex were applied.

Both 1985 and 1977 samples were subject to weighting by region, sex, and age. The average completion rate, based on the universe of households contacted, is approximately 50 percent. For those unfamiliar with the Field Poll, Constantini and Davis (1986) provide estimates of bias since 1948, emphasizing the dependability of the data both in absolute and in comparative terms.

APPENDIX 3.B: INTERVIEWING MODE

The 1985 interviews were conducted over the telephone; the 1977 interviews, face to face. What difference is this likely to make? And, in the event it does make a difference, how will it affect the principal findings we have reported?

Telephone and face-to-face interviewing arguably differ in a number of respects relevant to our study. Some evidence suggests, for example, that phone samples tend to be somewhat better educated, younger, and better off economically than personal interview samples (Groves and Kahn, 1979). This sampling bias does not, however, threaten the finding of increases in tolerance over time. For the increases show up not merely for the samples taken as a whole but within each of their principal parts – comparing just the well educated in 1985 with the well educated in 1977, the poorly educated in 1985 with the poorly educated in 1977 (see Figure 3.6).

A different and potentially decisive issue is the relation, if any, between interviewing mode and self-disclosure biases.

Considerable research on the relation between interviewing method and self-disclosure has been done (e.g., Schuman and Presser, 1981; Bradburn et al., 1981). Schuman and Presser, for example, find that telephone interviews facilitate the expression of socially undesirable or personally embarrassing statements. For example, respondents are more likely to disclose arrests for drunk driving in phone interviews than in face-to-face ones. These disclosure effects, though small, are worth consideration.

Our concern of course lies with a potential interaction between interviewing mode and the expression of antihomosexual opinions. Californians, we found, are less likely to express antihomosexual opinions in 1985 than they were in 1977. Now, in 1985 they were interviewed over the phone, in 1977 face-to-face. So insofar as interviewing modes make a difference, the 1985 figures are slightly biased upward, the 1977 figures slightly biased downward. But of course these biases would reduce, rather than inflate, the finding we observed of greater tolerance in 1985 than in 1977. In short, the tolerance findings reported in our chapter show up in spite of, not because of, interviewing mode effects.

APPENDIX 3.C: ITEM WORDING

Figure 3.4

Law allowing child custody to lesbian mother or gay father: "Would you approve or disapprove of a law allowing a lesbian mother/gay father the right to be granted custody of the children in a divorce if the court finds her/him fit in all other ways to take care of the children?"

Law eliminating gay housing discrimination: "Would you approve or disapprove of a law that would make it illegal to discriminate against homosexual persons by anyone selling or renting housing in California?"

Law allowing homosexual marriage: "Would you approve or disapprove of a law that would permit homosexual people to marry members of their own sex and to have the regular marriage laws apply to them?"

Law forbidding job discrimination: "Would you approve or disapprove of a law that would forbid discrimination against homosexual persons for other kinds of jobs or employment in California?"

Figures 3.9 and 3.10

Ignorance (false positives) and ignorance (false negatives): Variables used are described in Figure 3.4.

Protection Index: This index was comprised of the questions from Figure 3.7 dealing with the right to evict and the right to fire persons with AIDS. One point was given for each tolerant answer, creating a three-point scale.

Support for mandatory testing: Wording of the question is as it appears on Figure 3.7.

Civil liberties (general): "I am going to read the description of various types of people. For each description I would like you to tell me whether you think a person like this should or should not be allowed to make a public speech in your community. (1) A member of the Communist party; (2) a person who believes that blacks are genetically inferior to other persons; (3) a member of the Ku Klux Klan. Next I am going to read these same descriptions again. This time I would like you to tell me whether you feel a book written by this type of person should or should not be available for general public reading at your local public library." One point was given for each tolerant answer, so that a seven-point scale was created.

Civil liberties of homosexuals: The civil liberties questions described in Figure 3.4, with the exception of the question dealing with homosexual marriage, were used to create a five-point scale of tolerant responses.

Anxiety: "How worried are you that you or someone that you are close to might get AIDS?" Responses included very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, and not at all worried. Scoring responses created a four-point scale ranging from low to high anxiety.

Homophobia: The questions dealing with feelings toward male and female homosexuals described in Figure 3.5 were used to create an eight-point scale ranging from the most positive to the most negative feelings toward homosexuals.

Age: Coded as actual age in years.

Income: "Now we don't want your exact income, but just roughly could you tell me if your annual household income before taxes is under $10,000, $10,000 to $20,000, $20,000 to $30,000, $30,000 to $40,000, or more than $40,000." Further probes were asked of those who responded, so that a ten-point scale consisting of $5,000 intervals was created.

Ideology: "Generally speaking, in politics do you consider yourself a conservative, liberal, middle-of-the-road, or don't you think of yourself in these terms?" If the respondent was a liberal or conservative, he or she was asked: "Do you consider yourself a strong or not very strong conservative/liberal?" If the respondent was middle-of-the-road, he or she was asked: "Do you think of yourself as closer to conservatives or closer to liberals?" If the respondent didn't think of himself in these terms, the question was asked: "If you had to choose, would you consider yourself as being conservative, liberal, or middle-of-the-road?" Responses were coded on a seven-point scale ranging from strong conservative, moderate conservative, leaning conservative, to middle-of-the-road with symmetric responses for liberals on the upper half of the scale.

Party identification: "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or what?" If respondent answered Democrat or Republican: "Would you consider yourself a strong or not very strong Republican/Democrat?" If the respondent answered independent, no preference, or don't know on initial question: "Do you think of yourself as closer to the

Republican or Democratic parties?" Responses were used to create a seven-point scale ranging from strong Republican, moderate Republican, lean Republican to independent, with symmetric scoring for Democrats on the upper end of the scale.

APPENDIX 3.D

Table 3.A.1. *Comparison of unstandardized betas in causal diagrams*

	Protection Index		Mandatory testing	
Relationship	Figure 3.9a poorly educated	Figure 3.9b well educated	Figure 3.10a poorly educated	Figure 3.10b well educated
Age				
Anxiety	−.01	[a]	[a]	[a]
Ideology	−.02	[a]	−.02	[a]
Party identification	.02	−.02	.02	−.02
Civil liberties for homosexuals	[a]	−.01	[a]	−.01
Protection Index	−.02	−.01	[b]	[b]
Mandatory testing	[b]	[b]	[a]	−.01
Income				
Civil liberties (general)	.19	[a]	.19	[a]
Ignorance (FN)	−.03	[a]	−.03	[a]
Mandatory testing	[b]	[b]	.04	[a]
Party identification				
Ideology	.20	.59	.20	.59
Mandatory testing	[b]	[b]	−.06	[a]
Ideology				
Homophobia	−.25	−.16	−.25	−.16
Civil liberties for homosexuals	[a]	.13	[a]	.13
Ignorance (FN)	[a]	.09	[a]	.09
Mandatory testing	[b]	[b]	[a]	.08
Civil liberties (general)				
Ignorance (FN)	.03	[a]	.03	[a]
Ignorance (FP)	−.24	−.26	−.24	−.26
Anxiety	−.07	[a]	−.07	[a]
Civil liberties for homosexuals	[a]	.10	[a]	.10
Protection Index	.11	.09	[b]	[b]
Homophobia				
Civil liberties for homosexuals	−.22	−.26	−.22	−.26
Anxiety	.09	[a]	.09	[a]
Protection Index	−.17	[a]	[b]	[b]

Table 3.A.1 *(cont.)*

Relationship	Protection Index: Figure 3.9a poorly educated	Protection Index: Figure 3.9b well educated	Mandatory testing: Figure 3.10a poorly educated	Mandatory testing: Figure 3.10b well educated
Civil liberties for homosexuals				
Ignorance (FP)	[a]	−.36	[a]	−.36
Protection Index	.16	.15	[b]	[b]
Anxiety				
Protection Index	−.21	[a]	[b]	[b]
Mandatory testing	[b]	[b]	.11	[a]
Ignorance (FP)				
Ignorance (FN)	[a]	−.41	[a]	−.41
Protection Index	−.11	−.13	[b]	[b]
Mandatory testing	[b]	[b]	−.13	−.11

Note: Only relationships between variables that were significant in at least one of the four analyses are included. FN = false negatives and FP = false positives.
[a] Indicates beta not significant.
[b] Indicates variable not included in this model.

4

The principle–policy puzzle: the paradox of American racial attitudes

Hypocrisy is a strategic form of inconsistency. The appearance of saying two things, one at odds with the other, dissolves once it is realized that one is not meant – indeed, is said in order to cover up the other.

It is widely believed that white Americans commonly succumb to just this form of inconsistency on the issue of race. The most compelling empirical evidence for this belief comes from studies of the "principle–policy puzzle." As Jackman (1978) first noted and as others have since confirmed (e.g., Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo, 1985), Americans show far higher support for the principle of racial equality than for policies to realize it – a disparity easily read as evidence that their support for the principle is insincere or superficial. It is, obviously, of some importance to determine whether the gap between principle and policy is evidence of insincerity. If it is, much of the appearance of a decline in racism is no more than appearance, a sham.

The chapter that follows presents a solution for the principle–policy puzzle. The puzzle arises not because education fails to engender genuine respect for mainstream values – as Jackman maintains – but for just the opposite reason: More deeply respecting and understanding these values, well-educated citizens are more likely to appreciate when they come into conflict with one another.

Americans seemingly have a weak grip on democratic values. The root difficulty is not that people reject such values – on the contrary, nearly all accept them, stated in the abstract – but that they are not ready to stand by basic principles in specific controversies. This gap between abstract and concrete reflects, it is commonly agreed, a certain lack of thoughtfulness about politics on the part of mass publics, a failure to reason from the general to the specific. We suggest, however, that the cause of this gap is not always thoughtlessness but that indeed it may be just the opposite: What *appears* as a gap for some Americans results precisely from their being thoughtful.

To develop this thesis, we examine the nature of policy reasoning among citizens at large. Specifically, the study reported herein focuses on the process by which people translate commitment to racial equality at the level of principle into support for it at the level of policy. Our analysis of this process helps explain why education may build support for the value of equality without at the same time increasing support for policies designed to realize it.

This chapter prepared by Paul M. Sniderman, Richard A. Brody, and James H. Kuklinski.

It has long been recognized that citizens may favor a general principle and yet fail to support it in a specific setting. Thus classic studies of democratic values (e.g., Stouffer, 1955; Prothro and Grigg, 1960; McClosky, 1964) document much higher levels of public support for values (like freedom of expression) as abstract principles than in specific applications (like permitting a communist to give a speech to high school students). Similarly, research on ideology reports weak relationships between people's self-proclaimed ideological locations and their preferences on specific issues, including such issues as Medicare, decriminalization of marijuana, and government guarantees of employment (cf. Levitin and Miller, 1979).[1]

Principle and policy preference, it seems, are only weakly linked in the minds of the general citizenry. But if the link is a "reasonable" one, then those with more instruction in reasoning – the more educated – should be better able to make the connection and establish the linkage. If so, the more educated should be more likely both to have learned democratic principles and to have translated support for these principles into support for specific policies to realize them.

Studies of American racial attitudes bear out the first expectation but not the second. On one hand, repeated surveys reveal that the more education white Americans have had, the more likely they are to favor the principle of racial equality: to believe that blacks should have the right to marry whomever they wish, to have an equal chance to get a job, to use the same parks and public facilities as whites, in a word to enjoy equality of opportunity – at work, off the job, and in politics (Hyman and Wright, 1979, appendix C). On the other hand, Jackman (1978) shows that although the more educated are indeed more likely to favor the principle of racial equality, they are *not* in fact appreciably more likely to back efforts by government to promote racial equality.

In Jackman's view (1978, 1981), the answer to this apparent anomaly is social desirability. Education, she argues, helps people learn the right thing, the socially desirable thing, to say. So, when the well educated are asked about the abstract principle of equality, they disproportionately say they support it. When it is a matter of concrete action, however, many of them show their true colors. While schooling may teach people the right thing to say, in her view it is conspicuously less efficacious in getting them to believe it.

There is little reason to doubt that social desirability biases explain part of the anomaly, as Jackman suggests; it is not at all clear that they explain all of it. The problem, quite simply, is the absence of any measure of them. Jackman infers such biases are at work, but can point only to evidence that is circumstantial. Accounting for "inconsistent" support of principle and policy by simply labeling it hypocrisy seems an unsatisfactory solution, at least until alternative explanations have been considered.

One such explanation, suggested by Margolis and Hacque (1981) and Kuklinski and Parent (1981), focuses on problems of measurement and validity. They note that the racial policy items developed by the Center for Political Studies (CPS) and used by Jackman combine two issues: rights for blacks and the role of

national government. The weak and anomalous relationship between education and support for policies to promote equality, they suggest, may stem from the fact that these items, rather than addressing each of the issues by itself, raises them simultaneously.

As Margolis and Hacque admit, this "confounding," itself difficult to verify, does not prove Jackman's thesis wrong: One explanation's truth does not depend on the other's falsity. Moreover, a methodological debate about item validity gives short shrift to the substantive question that interests us. The exchange is valuable, nonetheless, for it raises the possibility that people may bring several considerations to bear when evaluating racial policies of the national government. It convinces us, in short, of the need to explicate as complete a model as we can of how people might reason in this policy area.

POLICY REASONING: SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND A PROPOSED MODEL

One way to characterize the process of policy reasoning is to distinguish two aspects of the organization of policy preferences: differentiation and integration. Differentiation refers to the number of separate considerations brought to bear in deriving a policy preference. Integration refers to the extent to which these antecedent considerations are themselves interrelated.

The two dimensions are analytically distinguishable – each making explicit a distinct sense in which belief systems may be said to be organized – but empirically correlated: The more intellectually sophisticated citizens are or, generally, the more education they have had, the more differentiated, and the more integrated, will be their reasoning about racial policy. Or so we would hypothesize.

More specifically: It is reasonable to suppose that Americans have general preferences to fall back on in guiding reactions to government policies intended to promote racial equality. Among these are their attitudes toward the general principle of racial equality. Also pertinent, at least potentially, are their overall political outlooks: the extent to which they are, in general terms, friendly or hostile to governmental intervention – that is, whether they are liberal or conservative. A final factor is, quite simply, the extent to which the average American likes (or dislikes) blacks.

For our hypothesis, the more intellectually sophisticated the individual (and education is a handy if imperfect measure of cognitive sophistication), the more likely he or she is to see interconnections among the various general attitudes bearing on racial policy. Most especially this should mean seeing the connection between one's overall outlook on politics and his or her attitudes toward the general principle of racial equality; and it is in this sense we expect that the more intellectually astute the individual, the more integrated the process of policy reasoning.

In addition, the more sophisticated should take account of a broader range of considerations in forming an opinion. The relevance of one's attitude about the

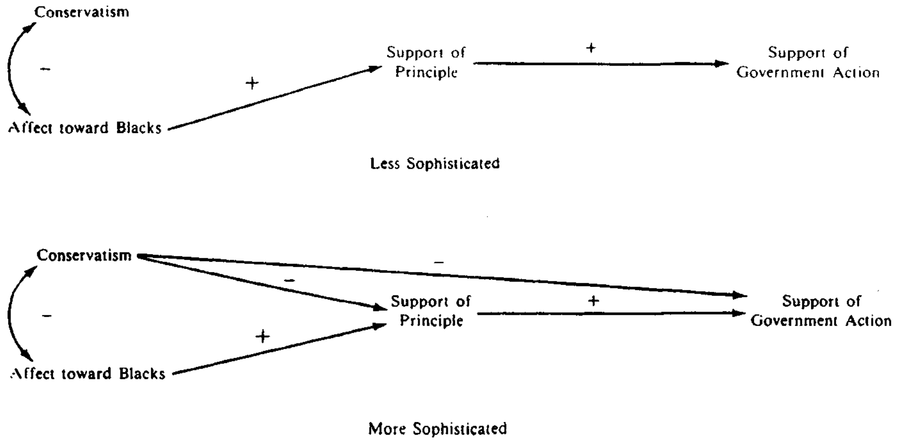


Figure 4.1. Hypothesized sources of support of governmental racial policy.

general principle of racial equality to the issue of racial policy is obvious; that of one's general outlook on politics is less so – and so likely to be appreciated by the well educated but overlooked or minimized by the less educated. In turn, if the former show greater differentiation in their policy reasoning, then the correspondence between their stands on the general principle of racial equality and their stands on specific policies may be no greater than that among the less sophisticated; for in forming preferences on racial policy the astute are more likely to bring to bear considerations in addition to – and imperfectly correlated with – their views on the general principle of equality.

For clarity, we have summarized our expectations diagrammatically. Figure 4.1 represents two patterns of policy reasoning about race: The first we expect to characterize the process by which less sophisticated citizens derive preferences on racial policy, the second that of the more sophisticated. The first pattern illustrates a comparative lack of both integration and differentiation. In contrast, the second illustrates greater cognitive complexity in the sense both of the grounding of preferences in a broader range of antecedent considerations and of an appreciation of the connections among these considerations themselves. The two path diagrams are, of course, ideal-typical – simplified to call attention to contrasting processes of policy reasoning.

DATA AND MEASURES

Attitudinal data to test our general hypotheses come from the 1972 and 1976 National Election Studies. The two surveys play complementary roles in our analyses: The first allows us to evaluate competing models of policy reasoning on the racial equality issue; the second permits us to cross-validate the initial results.

For the purpose at hand two constructs are pivotal: attitudes toward racial equality – first at the level of principle, then at the level of policy. In choosing empirical indicators of these two constructs, we follow the example of Jackman (1978).[2]

Support for the principle of racial equality

1. Which of these two statements would you agree with:
   a. White people have a right to keep black people out of their neighborhoods if they want to.
   b. Black people have a right to live wherever they can afford to, just like anybody else.
2. Are you in favor of desegregation, strict segregation, or something in between?

Support for government action

1. Should the government in Washington see to it that black people get fair treatment in jobs or should it leave these matters to the states and local communities?
2. Do you think the government in Washington should see to it that white and black children go to the same schools or should it stay out of this area as it is not its business?

Our measures of liberalism–conservatism and affect toward blacks – the two other constructs in the array of models to be examined – are, respectively, CPS's seven-point self-placement scale and its feeling thermometer on blacks.

ANALYSIS: 1972 DATA

What is the structure of policy reasoning among citizens at large?[3] And more specifically, does this structure vary as the level of education varies? An especially useful technique to answer these questions is Joreskog's general method for the analysis of covariance structures (1969, 1970, 1973). Combining the measurement perspective of psychometrics with the structural equations perspective of econometrics, this technique simultaneously measures the theoretical constructs of a model and estimates the relationships among them.

The advantages of Joreskog's general method have perhaps been better advertised than its risks and requirements. In particular, because the covariance structures model simultaneously estimates the factor loadings and the structural relationships among the factors (it is a full information technique), the slightest change in specification can alter all the parameter estimates.[4] Then, too, more than one model can fit the data, as judged by common test criteria. Examining only one model essentially "submerges" this potential problem, and thus can lead to erroneous substantive conclusions. Given these intrinsic features of the technique, it is desirable both to elaborate a full array of alternative models and to confirm the initial results on an independent set of data.[5]

Our theoretical concern recommends testing eight alternative models (Figure 4.2). For convenience, the eight models may be grouped into three basic types:

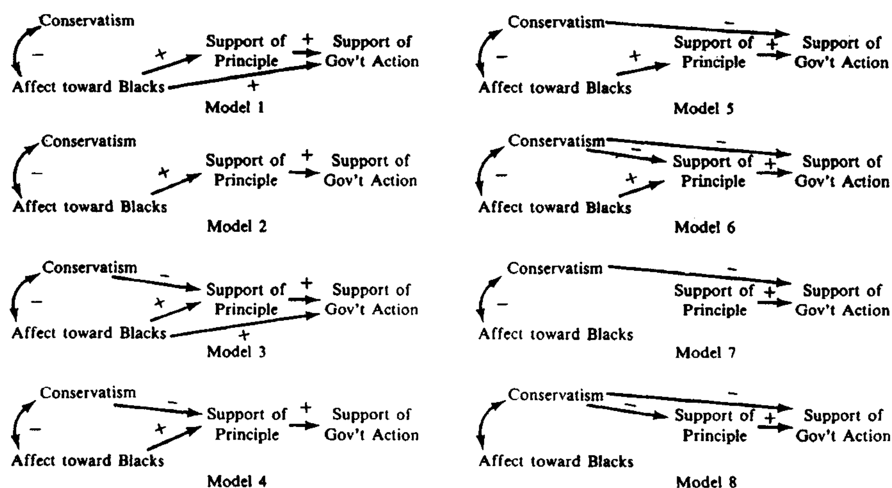


Figure 4.2. Alternative models of policy reasoning on the racial equality issue.

affective, mixed, and cognitive. On this classification, models 1 and 2 are affective, as each represents attitudes toward racial equality at the levels of principle and policy as derivatives, directly or indirectly, of feelings toward blacks. The last two models are cognitive, as they treat attitudes toward racial equality as stemming from ideology, with feelings toward blacks not entering at all. This last restriction seems to us implausible, and models 7 and 8 have been included only for the sake of completeness.

An extended word about the four mixed models is in order. Models 3 and 4 differ fundamentally from models 5 and 6. The decisive point of difference is whether ideology directly affects attitudes toward policy. Drawing a connection between two general orientations is difficult; determining how a general orientation like liberalism or conservatism bears on policy, in the absence of explicit cues, is more difficult. Accordingly, we expect that models 3 and 4 better fit the less well educated, models 5 and 6 the well educated.

For any given model, the appropriate (initial) test is the chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio, with low ratios indicating a good fit.[6] Table 4.1 reports chi-square tests for the eight models among three educational groups: those with fewer than twelve years of schooling (low); those having completed high school (moderate); and those with more than twelve years of schooling (high). Presumably these educational groupings tap different levels of sophistication.

In a general way it is evident that the predominantly affective models do rather better at accounting for the policy reasoning of the poorly educated than for that of the well educated. As Table 4.1 shows, all of them provide a good fit for the least educated, as shown by the chi-square to degrees of freedom ratios. But as we move from low to high education, the predominantly affective models do ever

Table 4.1. *Tests of alternative models, by education group, 1972*

Model	Level of education		
	Low	Medium	High
Affective			
1	12.54/9	23.48/9	61.25/9
2	12.96/10	23.69/10	62.11/10
Mixed			
3	10.38/8	7.79/8	31.55/8
4	10.91/9	7.83/9	35.65/9
5	6.65/9	5.64/9	25.17/9
6	5.89/8	4.54/8	4.92/8
Cognitive			
7	21.57/10	34.39/10	57.22/10
8	20.54/9	20.13/9	31.86/9
N	220	297	370

Note: Entries are ratios, chi-square/degrees of freedom.

more poorly. The purely ideological models, on the other hand, do not account for policy reasoning among any of the three education groups.

Model 6 is the most appropriate among the highly educated; the chi-square test alone does not, however, point to a single best model among the other two education groups. In the latter instances, as many as six models meet the chi-square criterion. Indeed one plausible conclusion is that the same model, 6, applies equally well to all three groups. Fortunately, the LISREL program provides two additional measures of fit – the root mean square residual and the derivatives of the fitting functions.[7] These criteria, when used in conjunction with the chi-square test, identify models 5 and 4 as the most appropriate among the least and moderately educated, respectively.

Figure 4.3 shows the three final models, along with their estimated coefficients. To assure the reader that the final models were not chosen arbitrarily, given the chi-square tests, we have also included model 6 for all three groups. Quite clearly, the discussion that follows applies whether we are talking about the coefficients of model 6 for all three education groups or about the coefficients of the models that the residual and derivative tests identified.

Moving from left to right, in order of cause and effect, we see first that the connection between conservatism and affect toward blacks is either nonexistent or weak. Where it appears, among the moderately and the well educated, the sign is as expected: negative. But it is the weakness of the relationship between being conservative and disliking blacks, not its direction, that stands out.

Second, there is a direct link between affect toward blacks and attitudes toward racial equality at the level of principle – but not at that of policy. Moreover, the former is present and the latter absent for all three educational strata. This finding

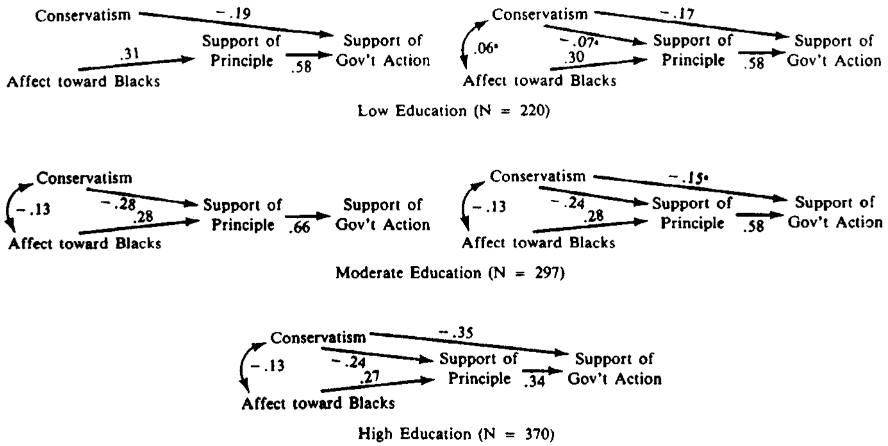


Figure 4.3. Structural coefficients of final models, by education group, 1972. Entries are standardized coefficients; disturbance terms have been omitted for clarity. Not significant, all other reported coefficients significant at $p \leq .05$.

suggests that, regardless of sophistication, affect indirectly conditions support of national racial policies.

Third, a prime source of support for government action in behalf of racial equality is commitment to the principle of equality itself. This runs counter to suggestions (like Jackman's) that support for the principle of racial equality amounts to lip service only (1981, p. 201). For, quite simply, the more people favor equality in principle, the stronger their support for efforts to realize it in practice; and this is true whether they have had a lot of schooling or only a little.

Finally, and for our purposes most important, the role that ideology plays in policy reasoning varies dramatically by educational stratum. Consider the well educated. There is a direct link between liberalism–conservatism and support for governmental action to ensure equality. The well educated, then, offer an illustration of a causally integrated and structurally differentiated model of policy reasoning: integrated insofar as antecedent considerations are connected; differentiated insofar as policy preferences depend not on one antecedent but several.

The poorly educated present a rather different picture. In the first place, there is no link between conservatism and support for the principle of equality. In the second, though there is a link between conservatism and policy, it is a weak one. Indeed, there is reason to wonder whether the link actually exists, as we shall see. In short, for the poorly educated the structure of policy inference, compared with that of the well educated, tends to be both less integrated and less differentiated.

Those with a moderate amount of education occupy an intermediate position between those with a good deal of education and those with only a little. Or, more exactly, their reasoning about racial policy in this instance is more integrated than that of the poorly educated (witness the connection between conservatism and

support for the principle of equality) and less differentiated than that of the well educated (witness the absence of a link between conservatism and support for government action).

That the moderately educated hold an intermediate position is a strong hint that variations across education are continuous. It is not hard to slip into thinking of the differences in policy reasoning we have observed between the well and the poorly educated as qualitative, not quantitative, the more so as discussion tends to be phrased in terms of links being present or absent. But speaking this way can be quite misleading – certainly if it is taken to mean that the poorly educated use one logic in arriving at their preferences, whereas the well educated follow a different one.[8]

A REPUBLICAN: 1976

Although no other NES study includes all the items used in the 1972 study, the 1976 survey provides all the components, except one, to cross-validate the 1972 findings. The missing item, the question on fair treatment in jobs, belongs to the Support for Government Action Index. Having only one item, the question on schools, to measure the theoretical construct, we were left with two options: Either assume that the one remaining item perfectly measures the underlying theoretical construct or incorporate an estimate of reliability into the model. Estimating reliability would seem preferable to assuming it; accordingly, we chose to constrain the factor loading (or epistemic correlation) to be the same as that in 1972. This procedure may not be ideal – the 1972 loading of the school question depends on the inclusion of the very item that is missing in 1976 – but at least it uses the best available information about measurement error (Knoke, 1979).[9]

Figure 4.4 shows the final models, along with their parameter estimates.[10] The similarity between the 1976 and the 1972 findings is striking. For the well educated, the constituents of policy reasoning – liberalism–conservatism, affect toward blacks, and support for the principle of equality – are all woven together in 1976 just as they were in 1972. Looking at the poorly educated, we see the disappearance of a further link still: between liberalism–conservatism and support for government actions to promote equality. The removal of this last link represents a difference from 1972. But this link, though present in 1972, was very weak statistically and suspect theoretically. And, on the broad point at issue, both the 1976 and the 1972 analyses confirm that, for the poorly educated, ideology plays only a minor role, at most, in shaping reactions to specific policies on race.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

A focus on how citizens reason from the general to the specific presupposes a considerable coherence to their beliefs. This may not always be a reasonable presupposition to make; but it is plausible here, for Americans' racial attitudes have an uncommon degree of organization.

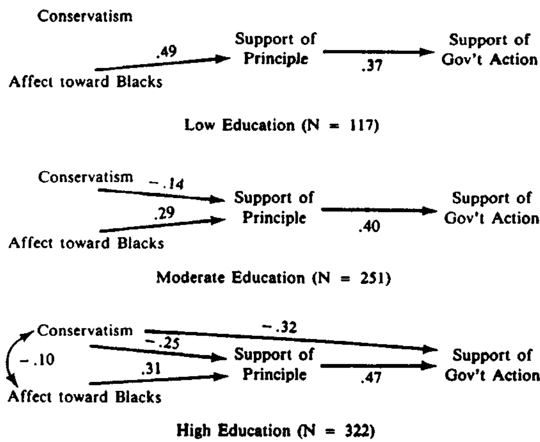


Figure 4.4. Structural coefficients of final models, by education group, 1976. Entries are standardized coefficients; disturbance terms have been omitted for clarity; all reported coefficients are significant at $p \leq .05$.

Since Converse's seminal paper (1964), the notion of belief systems in mass publics has been a problematic one – problematic because of a lack of depth and organization to the political thinking of the average citizen. But in his original study (1964, p. 235), Converse himself pointed out that racial attitudes of the mass public were highly constrained – indeed, more constrained than the political beliefs of elites. Subsequent research (e.g., Sears, Hensler, and Speer, 1979; Carmines and Stimson, 1982) has emphasized not only the solidity of racial attitudes but also their centrality – that is, their pivotal role with respect to an array of policy concerns, including nonracial (or not manifestly racial) issues. And this uncommon degree of constraint means, among other things, that the person who failed to finish high school, as well as the one who graduated from college, may well have a set of connected, coherent ideas about issues, allowing us to compare how people of different levels of sophistication reason their way from general principle to specific policy, at least about the issue of race.

With this caveat understood, we take our findings to recommend the utility of examining democratic values at two levels: principle and policy. From the standpoint of democratic theory, perhaps the most instructive observation is the most straightforward: Policy preferences are grounded in principle in the case of race. The person favoring racial equality at an abstract level is, for this reason, ready to back efforts to realize it. This finding offers empirical support to a larger thesis: The values of democratic citizenship, far from only amounting to empty pieties, may sustain opinion on specific, even controversial, policies.

But if principle and policy are related, the relation is not quite what it is commonly supposed to be. Common sense would suggest the relation between principle and policy to be strongest among the most sophisticated. Not so: It is as strong among the least educated.

This result may seem paradoxical. After all, should not the most sophisticated be best able to work out the logical implications of abstract principles? But this apparently paradoxical result is actually a predictable consequence of the fact that the belief systems of the sophisticated are cognitively complex; and complex in the specific sense of being differentiated. The more differentiated an idea system – that is, the broader the range of considerations taken into account in arriving at a preference – the less important, on average, any one consideration is likely to be, including principle.

Of course, what is principle and what is government policy may change over time. Political observers have long recognized that issues may move from policy agenda to official principle, and it is precisely this kind of movement that may be taking place with respect to attitudes toward public accommodations.[11] Ensuring blacks' right to public facilities appears to be in the process of change, from being an item of partisan and ideological debate to becoming a part of the societal understanding of equality. In short, to suggest that attitudes toward racial equality are organized at two levels is not at all to deny that issues may move between them.

What it means to say that racial attitudes are organized – that in the racial domain there is policy reasoning – may be made clearer by considering the findings of Carmines and Stimson (1982). They are persuaded of the centrality of racial attitudes. Nonetheless, they show that organization of political beliefs varies monotonically with "cognitive ability" (a joint measure of education and political information), and that there is evidence of organization in any significant degree only for citizens in the upper levels of cognitive ability. In contrast, we report evidence of policy reasoning at all educational levels, including those with less than high school education.

Reflection reveals the reason for such different impressions: the focus of analysis. Carmines and Stimson analyze interconnections of an assortment of policy preferences including jobs, tax reform, legalization of marijuana, women's rights, withdrawal from Vietnam, controlling inflation, and protecting the rights of persons accused of crimes. In contrast, we focus on connections between general orientations and policy preferences; these are, in Conover and Feldman's (1981) terms, "vertical" linkages, as opposed to connections among issue preferences, or "horizontal" linkages of the kind Carmines and Stimson have examined. And a lack of horizontal constraint is not proof of a lack of vertical constraint; as our findings have shown, attitudes toward racial policy are embedded in deeper-lying feelings and political orientations, even among the least educated.

Our results also suggest the potential utility of distinguishing between affective and cognitive linkages. Quite simply, the less schooling a person has had, the more important affect is in establishing a framework for his ideas about race policy. This should not be taken to mean that the political beliefs of the poorly educated are held together by "emotion," not "reason." By affect we mean not such deep-seated emotions as fear or hate, but rather feelings toward specific groups – for integration, the extent to which one likes blacks. Perhaps one reason

that many citizens are capable of policy reasoning, at least when the policies concern a salient social group, is that, although they may not know much about politics, they do know whom they like. This general emphasis of ours on policy reasoning – and the particular emphasis on affect toward blacks and conservatism – may appear to bolster the concept of "symbolic racism" (see, e.g., Kinder and Sears, 1981; Sears and Citrin, 1982). Closer examination suggests caution. The concept of symbolic racism, measured by an additive index, combines antiblack attitudes and conservative values. But these two components are only weakly correlated, as we have seen. For both NES studies, 1972 and 1976, the correlation is only .13 at its largest (Figures 4.3 and 4.4).[12] In our view, the two should not be added together into one index; the concept of symbolic racism is less useful, or more complex, than has been supposed.

A final remark on policy reasoning. The average citizen sometimes fails to link principle and policy for perfectly obvious reasons: His knowledge of politics is threadbare, his thinking is muddled, and his responses are insincere. No doubt, ignorance and insincerity lead many Americans to approve a principle like equality while failing to support efforts to realize it. But failing to link principle and policy may result precisely from thinking the issue through. Citizens do have more than one idea in their heads: They value more than one thing, have more than one value. Equality is one value. But many have other values besides, more deeply rooted than equality and perhaps inconsistent with it. One of these is conservatism. Education has promoted tolerance – political, racial, civil; about this Stouffer (1955) has been proved right. Yet education also strengthens a capacity to make connections among ideas. Ironically the institution that offers a schooling in democratic ideas, thereby promoting integration at the level of principle, under appropriate circumstances can check it at the level of policy.

5
Reasoning chains

Our account of reasoning and choice is centered on the notion that people compensate for informational shortfalls by taking advantage of judgmental shortcuts, or heuristics. The notion of heuristics is a strategic notion, simple and evocative, and there are gains to centering a theory on such a strategic notion, among them clarity and coherence. But there are also risks.

The most serious risk is that heuristics become a buzzword, with every correlation between independent and dependent variables being taken as evidence of a new judgmental shortcut. To warn about this risk is the purpose of this chapter: It demonstrates empirically not only that a judgmental shortcut can be a means to determine the position to take on an issue, but that the "heuristic" can also be itself a consequence of the policy preference.

The analysis of this chapter is set within a larger metaphor, the notion of a chain of reasoning. Such a notion is familiar enough – the idea that first we start with basic premises, then work our way to an appropriate conclusion. But however familiar, the metaphor of a chain of reasoning seems to us misleading; misleading particularly in suggesting that people, starting with the most basic premises of an argument, work their way to a conclusion by moving systematically from the more general to the more specific. As against this presumption of orderly deductive inference, we shall try to show that political reasoning tends to be rather more lively, with people often starting at the beginning of an argument, then skipping directly to its conclusion, and only then filling in the intermediate steps in the argument.

Citizens do not choose sides on issues like busing or abortion whimsically. They have reasons for their preferences – certainly they can give reasons for them (Elkins, 1982). But how is this possible? Citizens as a rule pay little attention to politics, indeed take only a modest interest in it even during election campaigns when their interest in politics is at its height (Campbell et al., 1960). And since they pay little attention to politics, it is hardly surprising that they know little about it. Many, in fact, are quite ignorant of basic facts of political life, such as the identity of the party that controls Congress or indeed the name of the congressman who represents them (Miller and Stokes, 1963; Erikson, Luttbeg, and Tedin, 1988). Which, of course, raises a question of some interest: How do citi-zens figure out what they think about political issues, given how little they commonly know about them?

This chapter prepared by Paul M. Sniderman, Michael G. Hagen, Philip E. Tetlock, and Henry E. Brady.

Issue preferences in mass publics might not be capricious. But it is far from obvious in what sense they are considered judgments – or, indeed, just what people do consider in determining their positions on an issue. The problem, it might seem, is that mass publics know too little about political issues – too little, certainly, to be said to reason their way to a position on an issue. This is, no doubt, true in some sense, but not in any obvious or straightforward sense. Who, after all, has a sufficiency of knowledge to make the calculations necessary to establish which positions on issues of the day he or she should adopt? The problem, if we might say so, is not that mass publics know too little, but that no one knows enough.

But whether people are knowledgeable or not, they do work out positions on political issues; and the question is how do they manage to do that. Our argument, broadly, is this. Decisions about which position to take on a political issue are complex decisions; and because of this complexity, they need to be simplified if they are to be managed effectively. This thesis of simplification is, of course, a familiar one, with its roots sunk in the notion of bounded rationality introduced by Herbert Simon (1955). But what we should like to do here is to focus on some of the means for simplification, or heuristics, that citizens use to figure out their positions on particular political issues. The purpose of this chapter, accordingly, is to identify and analyze a number of issue heuristics and to show who is likely to take advantage of which of them, and to demonstrate how, thanks to such heuristics, citizens can figure out what they think about political issues without necessarily knowing very much about them.

REASONING CHAINS

It is not plausible to suppose that members of the mass public walk about fully stocked with opinions on issues of the day. Certainly, it is not reasonable to suggest that, asked their opinion, all they need do is remember where they have stored it and then retrieve it. Often, asked their opinion about an issue, they need to work it out – sometimes on the spot.

But how can they do this? It is possible that they work out their position on each issue in an ad hoc way; possible but unlikely. Broadly speaking, they will follow some chain of reasoning. And their starting point, in any chain of reasoning, will be some general considerations (Zaller, 1984). There are unlikely to be a great many of these, given how little attention citizens characteristically pay to politics. And, to provide a basis for on-the-spot calculations, such considerations must be easily accessible.

Consider a specific issue – whether or not government should assist blacks and other minorities – to see what might be involved in policy reasoning among the mass public. What general considerations might citizens take advantage of in order to work out their position on this issue? One, obviously, is some general set of beliefs such as liberalism or conservatism. A person who is liberal in outlook, asked his position on government assistance for blacks, might consult his general

outlook and decide to support such assistance. Similarly, a person who is conservative might, guided by his general outlook, decide to oppose it. Needless to say, this kind of inference is familiar; indeed, it is the very prototype of policy reasoning (cf. Peffley and Hurwitz, 1985).

A second kind of inference is affective rather than cognitive in character, a matter of one's feelings rather than one's beliefs. If a person dislikes blacks, then he should be inclined to oppose government assistance for them; but if he likes them, then he should be inclined to favor assistance for them. In either case knowledge of policy issues is not required, except for an awareness of whether a policy is intended to help blacks. Such an affective calculus can be exceedingly efficient. The mass public, though notorious for lacking consistency in its views on public policy, is as consistent in its opinions on issues of race as political elites are in their opinions generally (Converse, 1964).

But, it must be admitted, the policy issue of interest to us here – whether or not government should assist blacks – has another aspect to it, conceivably separate from race and affect toward blacks. And that is people's views about whether, as a general principle, government should provide assistance. Decisions about whether others should be helped are indeed fairly general, and certainly they can be complex. It should not, therefore, come as a surprise to find evidence that people, faced with decisions about whether others deserve help, commonly fall back on a specific rule of judgment to help them decide. This rule, briefly, runs as follows. A perception that some person or group is in need gives rise to a search for causation (why does the need exist?). In turn, the causal conclusions that people reach have important implications for their reactions to the needy individual or group. Weiner's (1980) attribution–emotion–action model of helping behavior is the best-known example of this theoretical approach. Weiner distinguishes two basic dimensions of causal attributions for need. The first is locus of causality: Did the need arise as a result of some internal characteristic of the actor or some aspect of the external environment? The second is controllability of the cause: Is the source of the need under the volitional control of the actor or of others? Different attributional interpretations lead to different emotional reactions: for instance, pity and sympathy (when the need is seen as the result of an internal, uncontrollable cause or of an external cause, whether controllable or not); or disgust and anger (when the need is seen as the result of an internal, controllable cause). These emotional reactions, in turn, respectively motivate approach (helping) or avoidance (neglecting) behavior. Thus, seeing a man stagger in a subway station, people will come to his assistance if they believe him to be an epileptic, avoid him if they believe him to be drunk.

Somewhat so, we should like to suggest, citizens make up their minds about whether blacks *deserve* help. Specifically, should they attribute blacks' problems to the situation in which blacks find themselves, then they should be inclined to favor government assistance for blacks; if not, they do not favor it. This rule we shall call the desert heuristic.

There are, then, a number of means at hand for citizens to figure out their positions on the issue of government assistance for blacks – among them, ideology, affect, and the desert heuristic. It would be a mistake, however, to fail to recognize that these aids to judgment can themselves be related to one another. A person who dislikes blacks is likely to attribute their problems to characteristics of blacks themselves, a weakness of will perhaps; in contrast, a person who likes blacks is likely to attribute their problems to the situation with which they find themselves faced. Then, too, a person who is conservative is likely to attribute the problems of blacks to their failure, for example, to work hard; in contrast, a person who is liberal is likely to attribute the condition of blacks to the discrimination blacks face.

It is not hard to see how these elements might fit together and form a chain of reasoning. People might consult their overall outlook on politics in order to make a determination about whether blacks' problems are to be attributed to the situation in which blacks find themselves or, alternatively, to blacks' personal qualities; and base their opinion on the issue of government assistance for blacks, in turn, either on their political outlook or, additionally, on their understanding of why blacks have problems. Then again, the way they account for blacks' problems might be rooted in their feelings toward blacks; and their opinion about the issue of government assistance, in turn, might follow from either their affect toward blacks or, additionally, from their understanding of why blacks have problems.

On this view of how people reason about policy, they move from abstract to specific. Their starting point can be ideology, or affect toward blacks, both being early in the causal chain. Then, moving from general to specific, they fix their attribution of the reasons that blacks have problems – the so-called desert heuristic. Finally, with this in place, they arrive at the most specific belief, at the end of the chain of reasoning, their opinion on the issue of government assistance for blacks.

This chain of reasoning, in its general shape, has the advantage of conforming to the common view of how people reach conclusions about political issues. This is particularly obvious in its emphasis on how people proceed, in hierarchical fashion, from relatively abstract or general considerations to increasingly specific ones. As we shall show, however, this view has the disadvantage of being wrong. And it is the purpose of this chapter to make plain the several ways in which it is wrong, in order to expose the different ways in which citizens might arrive at a common political position.

MEASURES

The data analyzed here are based on the 1972 American National Election Study (NES). The 1972 NES data come from interviews with a stratified random sample of 2,705 respondents that is representative of the voting-age population of the United States.

In order to maximize the number of questions that could be asked, the NES investigators developed two interview schedules, each of which was administered to one-half of the respondents. Each of the half samples is itself representative of the population of voting-age Americans. The two forms had approximately 80 percent of the items in common. Unfortunately, several of the items central to our analysis were among those that appeared on only one form of the questionnaire. Accordingly, one-half of the total sample was not available for the analysis reported here.

It does not seem prudent to assume that blacks and whites are interchangeable, at any rate with respect to their views on racial policy. Rather the reverse: Not only are they different in their levels of support for government action specifically to assist blacks; they also differ in the reasons they favor (or oppose) such action. Unfortunately, the number of blacks in the 1972 NES sample is small, and only one-half of them, in any event, were asked the questions relevant to our analysis of policy reasoning. There are, in short, too few blacks to analyze in any depth. So the analysis here is restricted to white respondents.

Our analysis focuses on the following variables:

1. Opposition to various government policies intended to promote racial equality,
2. Causal attributions for racial inequality,
3. Affect toward blacks,
4. Political ideology,
5. Causal attributions for poverty, and
6. Educational background.

Opposition to racial equality policies

The 1972 NES survey included six items tapping public preferences on racial policy. The six covered a range of issues and levels of abstraction. Among them are government efforts to promote racial desegregation of hotels and restaurants; segregation as a principle; government efforts to require school desegregation; open housing; and government assistance for blacks and other minorities.

These items have been scored in a standard manner. Respondents who said that the government should support the right of black people to go to any hotel or restaurant they can afford, for example, received a score of one on that item, and those who said that government should stay out of this matter received a score of five.[1] We have then proceeded to assume in our principal components analyses and structural equation models that the items are linearly related to one another. This approach amounts to two separate assumptions: first, that under some scoring rule the variables are linearly related to one another; and second, that the scoring we have chosen produces the appropriate interval scale. Some rather complicated methods for making a joint test of these two assumptions have recently been developed, but we know of no way to test them separately (Brady, 1986). Indeed, we are not sure that it is meaningful to ask them questions separately (Duncan, 1984).

Table 5.1. *Principal components analysis of racial policy items*

	Loading
Should the government support the right of black people to go to any hotel or restaurant they can afford, or should it stay out of this matter?	.70
Are you in favor of desegregation, strict segregation, or something in between?	.69
Do you think the government in Washington should see to it that white and black children go to the same schools or stay out of this area as it is not its business?	.67
Which of these statements would you agree with: White people have a right to keep black people out of their neighborhoods if they want to; or black people have a right to live wherever they can afford to, just like anybody else.	−.65
Should the government in Washington see to it that black people get fair treatment in jobs or leave these matters to the states and local communities?	.59
Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every possible effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks and other minority groups. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help minorities because they should help themselves. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?	.52

Because of the difficulty of testing these assumptions, we have simply presumed in this chapter that our linear modeling and interval-level measurement assumptions are good approximations to the truth. Our justification for this is that there is some evidence that these are often reasonable assumptions and that if they do fail, the principal result is a reduction in the apparent strength of relationships in the data (Brady, 1986). Consequently, the cautious reader might want to focus more on the relative strength of relationships than on their absolute size.

Principal components analysis of the responses our subsample gave to the six questions dealing with preferences on racial policies revealed one major dimension to racial policy preferences.[2] This component explains 41 percent of the variance in the items. The text for each of the items and their loadings on the resulting component are present in Table 5.1.

Our measure of racial policy preferences consists of scores computed for each respondent based on the six items and their loadings on the principal component. Respondents with high scores *oppose* government action to protect the right of blacks to go to any hotel or restaurant they can afford; to see to it that white and black children go to the same schools; to ensure that blacks get fair treatment in jobs; and to improve the social and economic position of blacks and other minorities. In addition, high scorers prototypically favor strict segregation and believe that whites have the right to keep blacks out of white neighborhoods.

Table 5.2. *Principal components analysis of causal attributions for racial inequality*

	Loading
A small group of powerful and wealthy white people control things and act to keep blacks down.	.73
It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; that if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.	−.62
Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.	.59
Black Americans teach their children values and skills different from those required to be successful in American society.	−.37
The differences are brought about by God; God made the races different as part of His divine plan.	.10
Blacks come from a less able race and this explains why blacks are not as well off as whites in America.	−.07

Causal attributions for racial inequality

Our subsample was asked, in the course of the interview, for their views on the causes of racial inequality in America. They were presented with six possible explanations, and asked their opinion of each. The battery of questions began with the following preamble:

> We've asked questions like this of quite a few people by now, both blacks and whites, and they have very different ideas about why, on average, white people get more of the "good things in life" in America than black people. I will read you some of the reasons people have given, including some things that other people don't agree with at all. For each I'd like you to tell me whether you agree a great deal, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree a great deal.[3]

It cannot be pretended that the mass public has thought long and hard about the causes of racial inequality. Indeed, this is just the sort of question – removed from daily experience, yet of evident importance and therefore difficult to confess ignorance of – likely to evoke "nonattitudes." Some respondents will agree with an explanation – indeed, with virtually any and all explanations, however they might contradict or conflict with each other – in order to avoid the appearance of ignorance. To eliminate this problem of acquiescence (which would distort our principal components analysis of these items), we excluded from our analysis respondents who agreed with all, or all but one, of the six "explanations"; 16 percent of the sample were eliminated on this account.[4] Our principal components analysis distinguished one major dimension of causal attributions for racial inequality.[5] It explains 28 percent of the variance in the items. The text for each of the items and its loading on the component are presented in Table 5.2.

Scores computed for each respondent on the basis of the six causal attributions and the principal component make up our measure of explanations for racial

inequality. A person with a low score agrees that racial inequality is the product of exploitation by whites and the legacy of past slavery and discrimination, and disagrees that blacks do not try hard enough to succeed or that they fail to teach their children the values necessary to succeed in America. One with a high score believes the reverse: Whites do not keep blacks down, and blacks themselves are to blame for their condition.

Affect toward blacks

Affect is measured using the standard NES "feeling thermometers." Scores on individual thermometers range from 0, representing "cool" or negative feelings toward the person or group in question, to 100, representing "warm" or favorable feelings, with 50 representing the neutral point of the scale.

Feeling thermometers suffer biases, perhaps the most prominent being "positivity" bias – that is, a tendency to think well, or at any rate speak well, of others (Sears, 1982). It would seem no more than prudent to take this into account in assessing feelings toward blacks. Accordingly, each respondent's score on the thermometer for whites was subtracted from his or her score on the thermometer for blacks, in order to capture feelings toward blacks in particular, rather than response tendencies in general. A respondent with a positive score feels more favorable toward blacks than toward whites; one with a negative score feels more favorably toward whites than toward blacks.

Political ideology

To measure ideology, we employ responses to the NES question that asks respondents to place themselves on a seven-point scale on which a score of one represents "extremely liberal" and a score of seven, "extremely conservative."[6] We should note that the caution we already advanced regarding the assumption that our measures have been scored so as to produce an interval scale apply here once again, to our single-item measure of ideology. Our justification for this assumption is, once again, that there is evidence that it is often reasonable and that if it is not valid, the price is a reduction, not an inflation, of the apparent strength of relationships in the data (Brady, 1986).

We are far from unaware, moreover, of the limitations of ideological self-identification as a measure of ideology. Nonetheless, the limitations of ideological self-identification are not so crippling as they might ordinarily be, given our interest in comparing reasoning chains of the well educated on the one side and the poorly educated on the other.

Causal attributions for poverty

We are interested in assessing the role of causal attributions for racial inequality – the so-called desert heuristic – in the reasoning of the mass public about racial policies. To carry out our analysis, we shall need exogenous variables to help

Table 5.3. *Principal components analysis of causal attributions for poverty*

	Loadings	
	Lack of opportunity	Lack of effort
The poor are poor because the American way of life doesn't give all people an equal chance.	−.65	.06
The seniority system in most companies works against poor people – they're the last to be hired and the first to be the fired.	−.64	−.22
People are poor because there just aren't enough good jobs for everybody.	−.62	.12
Good skilled jobs are controlled by unions and most poor people can't get into the skilled unions.	−.60	−.20
Poor people didn't have a chance to get a good education – schools in poor neighborhoods are much worse than other schools.	−.59	−.11
The poor are poor because the wealthy and powerful keep them poor.	−.54	−.00
With all the training programs and efforts to help the poor, anyone who wants to work can get a job these days.	.58	−.39
Most poor people don't have the ability to get ahead.	−.33	−.52
Many poor people simply don't want to work hard.	.31	−.67
Maybe it is not their fault but most poor people were brought up without drive or ambition.	−.14	−.76

identify our models of the public's reasoning chains. Accordingly, following Feldman we analyzed the responses our subsample gave to ten questions about the causes of poverty in general (Feldman, 1982). The battery of questions began with the following:

As you know, even though America is a wealthy nation, there are still many people living here who are poor. I will read you some reasons people have offered to explain why this is so, including some things that other people don't agree with at all. For each I'd like you to tell me whether you agree a great deal, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree a great deal.

Principal components analysis distinguished two dimensions of causal attributions for poverty, similar to those discovered by Feldman.[7] The first explains approximately 28 percent of the variance in the items, the second 16 percent. Although an oblique rotation using the PROMAX method was used (*SAS User's Guide*, 1979), the two components are correlated at only .03. The text for each of the ten items and their loadings on each of the two dimensions are presented in Table 5.3.

The first component measures beliefs about the extent to which a lack of equal opportunity causes poverty in America. It reflects, in the terms of our desert heuristic, a belief that (at one extreme) poverty is to be attributed to the individual himself or herself – the internal attribution, or that (at the other extreme) it is to be attributed to his or her external circumstances, the external attribution. Thus, a person who receives a high score on this measure attributes the conditions of the poor to the American way cf life, the seniority system, educational disparities, unions, a lack of good jobs, and exploitation by the wealthy and powerful, and rejects the notion that anyone who wants to work can get a good job. The second component measures the tendency to explain poverty in terms of the work ethic. A high score indicates a belief that the poor are poor because they lack drive and ambition and because they do not want to work hard.

Education

We have a particular interest in exploring the connection between cognitive complexity and cognitive structure in mass belief systems. We have found education to be a satisfactory (though of course not ideal) measure of cognitive complexity. The original NES measure of education has been recoded to form three categories: those who failed to complete high school; those who graduated from high school but did not go to college; and those who attended at least some college.

In order to highlight differences across levels of education, we have estimated our models separately for each category. We have chosen to include education in this way, rather than as an interval-level variable interacting with each term of our equations, in order to simplify exposition and interpretation. We have also chosen to present our results using unstandardized regression coefficients, so that we can compare the magnitudes of the effects across the three educational levels. For those who wish to standardize the coefficients, the standard deviations have been included in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 reports univariate statistics – mean, standard deviation, and range – for the measures to be analyzed, and does so for three levels of education separately: less than high school, high school graduates, and some college or more. Their values provide some flesh and bones for the unstandardized regression coefficients estimated subsequently.

THE ROLE OF HEURISTICS IN POLICY REASONING: A FIRST APPROXIMATION

The fundamental problem we should like to understand is this. How can members of the mass public develop consistent responses to policy issues, given how little they often know about politics? What are some of the specific mechanisms on which they rely? How exactly do they achieve consistency, at any rate in reasoning about policy issues focused on salient groups like blacks?

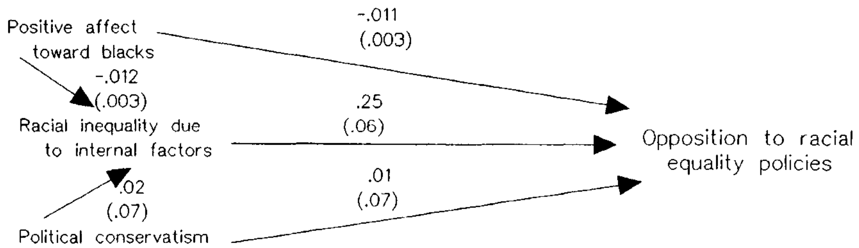
Table 5.4. *Univariate statistics for variables in the models, by education*

	Less than high school (*N* = 180)	High school graduates (*N* = 210)	At least some college (*N* = 214)
Opposition to racial equality policies			
Mean	0.32	– 0.07	– 0.51
Standard deviation	0.95	0.90	0.89
Minimum	−1.73	−1.61	−1.73
Maximum	2.33	2.33	2.33
Racial inequality due to internal factors			
Mean	0.21	−0.07	−0.28
Standard deviation	0.99	0.93	1.00
Minimum	−2.81	−2.35	−2.56
Maximum	2.27	2.00	2.06
Positive affect toward blacks			
Mean	−22.40	−14.74	−11.74
Standard deviation	23.53	17.91	20.28
Minimum	−97.00	−97.00	−97.00
Maximum	55.00	20.00	35.00
Political conservatism			
Mean	4.22	4.21	3.96
Standard deviation	0.87	0.97	1.30
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	7.00	7.00	7.00
Poverty due to lack of opportunity			
Mean	0.02	−0.10	0.08
Standard deviation	1.07	0.97	1.02
Minimum	−2.47	−2.35	−2.38
Maximum	3.94	2.31	2.67
Poverty due to lack of effort			
Mean	−0.01	−0.10	−0.16
Standard deviation	1.04	1.01	1.01
Minimum	−2.63	−2.48	−2.54
Maximum	2.12	2.27	2.04

Note: For each variable, people with high scores possess "more" of the specified attitude than do people with low scores. For details about how each variable was measured, see the second section of the text.

Our expectations can be summarized briefly. We expect citizens' reasoning about issues of racial policy to start with considerations acquired (for many) early in their socialization to politics – their feelings toward blacks and their overall outlook on politics. In addition, their view of the reasons for racial inequality is likely to enter into their chain of reasoning. Speaking broadly, whether they attribute blacks being worse off to internal or to external factors will depend partly on how they feel toward blacks and what their overall outlook is. Specifi-

Less than high school



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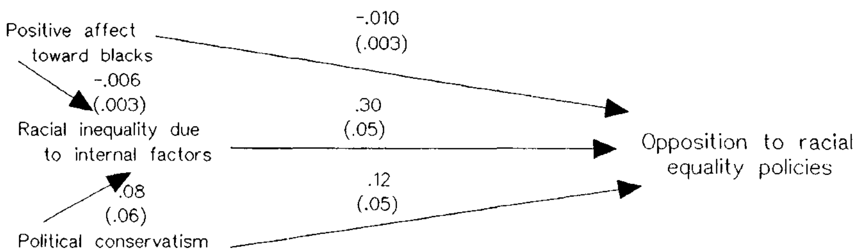

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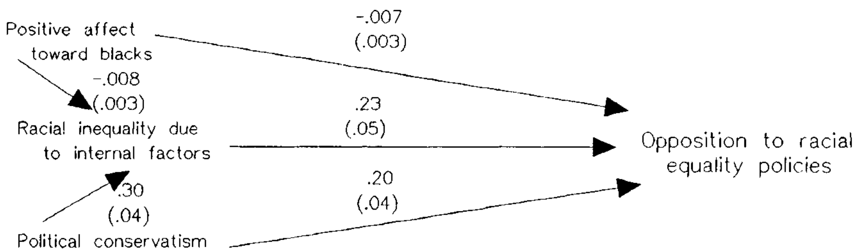


Figure 5.1. Parameter estimates for a recursive model of racial policy preferences.

cally, they should be more likely to attribute racial inequality to external factors if they like blacks or if they are liberal; conversely, they should be more likely to attribute it to internal factors if they dislike blacks or are conservative.

Figure 5.1 presents a conventional (recursive) analysis, by level of education, of this model of policy reasoning. Unstandardized regression coefficients appear outside the parentheses, their standard errors inside them.

Three findings stand out. First, the reasoning chains of the less educated are indeed affect-driven. What they think, both about what government should do for blacks and about why blacks have problems, depends on how they feel about blacks, with ideology having very little impact on either. For the less educated a

one standard deviation increase in positive affect toward blacks causes scores on our measures both of belief that racial inequality is due to internal factors and of opposition to racial equality policies to decrease by one-quarter of their standard deviations. At the same time, the impact of conservatism on these measures is statistically insignificant and substantively negligible – a one standard deviation change in conservatism has at most about a 2 percent change in either of them.[8] Among the poorly educated, racial policy preferences and beliefs about why blacks are worse off derive from feelings about blacks, not from political ideology.

The second finding stands in sharp contrast to the first. The reasoning chain of the well educated is suffused with ideology, not affect. For the well educated, a one standard deviation increase in affect toward blacks causes both the "racial inequality due to external factors" and "opposition to racial equality policies" measures to decrease by only about 16 percent of their standard deviations – about 10 percent less than for those with less than a high school education. But a one standard deviation change in political conservatism causes our measure of causal attributions for inequality to increase by 40 percent of its standard deviation and "opposition to racial equality policies" to increase by 30 percent of its standard deviation. Preferences on racial policy for the well educated are derived mostly from their ideological orientations, and only secondarily from their feelings toward blacks. Similarly, whether they attribute blacks being worse off to internal or external factors depends mostly on whether they are liberal or conservative.

The causal impact of affect and ideology varies with education; not that of the desert heuristic. Regardless of whether respondents had a lot or only a little schooling, their preferences on racial policy seem to derive to some extent from their explanations of racial inequality – and, moreover, seem to do so more or less to the same extent.

This finding, however, is worrisome, the more so the more one reflects on it. Here we have assumed that people adopt a certain position on racial issues *because* they favor a certain explanation of racial inequality. But is this necessarily so? Is it not reasonable to make the argument the other way around – to argue, that is, that the so-called "explanation" might in fact be no more than a rationalization of the policy of preference?

Questions of reciprocal causation cannot be dealt with in a recursive formulation. It is therefore necessary to consider alternatives to one-way causation – to consider, specifically, whether people's explanations of racial inequality might be a consequence, as well as a cause, of their own preferences on racial policy. That is the task to which we now turn.

AFFECT-DRIVEN POLICY REASONING

People start at the beginning of a chain of reasoning, work their way to its intermediate links, then finish at the end. So, starting with their feelings toward blacks, if they dislike blacks, they can attribute the problems of blacks to blacks' failings, and then, wind up concluding that the government should not help blacks.

This is one view of how people proceed along a chain of reasoning. But consider people whose opinions on policy are dictated by their feelings. How are they likely to arrive at their policy preferences?

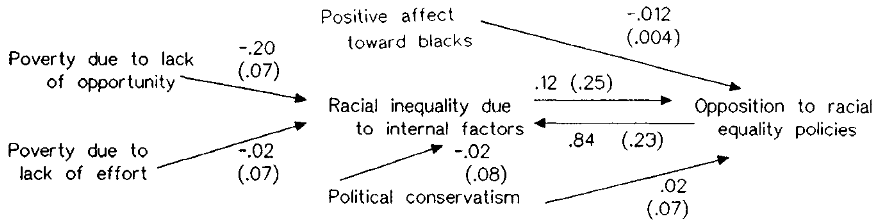
Immediately, we should like to say. They are likely to pass from their dislike of blacks at once to opposition to government assistance for them. No intervening step is necessary, because the inference from affect to policy preference is so obvious. And this suggests, in turn, that so far as policy reasoning is affect-driven, we should expect people to start with their feelings toward blacks, the first link in the chain of reasoning, then jump directly to their opinion on policy, the last link. They do not, that is to say, reason conscientiously, completing each step in the argument, but rather begin at the beginning and then jump immediately to the end.

And what do they do, having reached the end? They double back, and complete the intermediate steps in the chain of reasoning. This is indeed how we should expect them to proceed, considering the three links in the chain: affect toward blacks, explanation for racial inequality, and preference on the issue of government assistance for blacks. The first and last, after all, are familiar, and frequently rehearsed. Not so the intermediate link: How often do citizens discuss alternative theories of inequality?

If this surmise is correct, causality flows in two directions – *from* issue preferences as well as *to* them. Issue preferences, that is to say, can be causes as well as effects. If so, we shall need to estimate both the causal link from explanation to policy preference and the causal link from explanation to policy preference and the causal link from preference to explanation. To do this, we rely upon two-stage least squares regression. As exogenous variables, we shall make use of the (Feldman) measures of causal attributions for poverty, one assessing the extent to which poverty is attributable to lack of equal opportunities, the other the extent to which poverty is attributable to lack of effort. These two measures, but especially the first, suit our purposes well. How people account for racial inequality should be deeply influenced by how they account for economic inequality in general. Finally, we shall treat affect toward blacks as an exogenous variable to identify the affective component of preferences on the issue of government assistance for blacks, because our aim is to catch hold of the working of affect-driven policy reasoning. This requires us to assume, for the moment, that affect toward blacks does not directly influence attributions for racial inequality but is related to attributions only through its influence on policy preferences, which in turn might affect attributions.

Figure 5.2 lays out estimates for a nonrecursive, affect-driven model of racial policy preferences, estimated separately for respondents with different levels of education. Consider first the causal arrows going from left to right. In this direction, the model is certainly identified, and confirms the findings of the recursive estimates. Specifically, affect has a much greater impact on policy reasoning for the less educated (about twice as much) as for the well educated; ideology has a much greater impact for the well educated than for the less well

Less than high school



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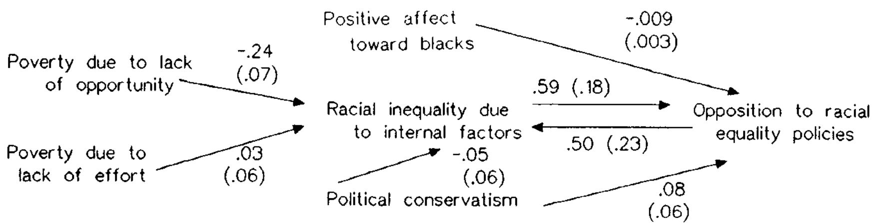


More than high school

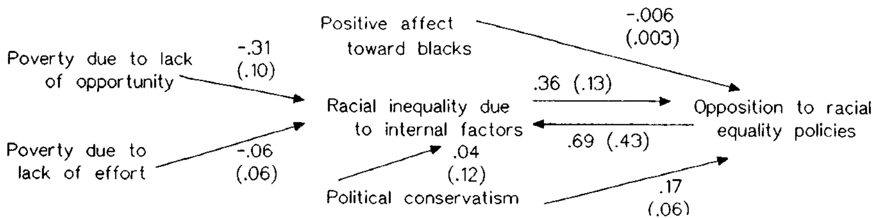


Figure 5.2. Parameter estimates for a nonrecursive model of racial policy preferences (affect-driven).

educated; and explanations for inequality (the so-called desert heuristic) have a very small impact for the most poorly educated – indeed, the effect is statistically and substantively insignificant. Now, consider the causal arrow running from right to left, that is, from policy preference to inequality explanation. In the recursive estimation, where causality can run in one direction only, we had supposed, in line with common sense, that people's views on racial policy are (in part) derived from their explanations for racial inequality. This is clearly wide of the mark; and we can see just how far off it is when we allow for the possibility of reciprocal causation, that is, allow for the possibility that policy preferences influence inequality explanations as well as the other way around. As Figure 5.2 shows, the impact of issue preferences on inequality explanations is at least as heavy as the impact of the latter on the former, and commonly far heavier. This

is most evident among the least educated and among the most educated. In both cases, the influence of preferences on explanations outweighs the influence of explanations on preferences.[9] To be sure, we assume there to be no direct link between affect and explanations, as modeled; and the absence of this link might account for the size of the impact of policy preference on inequality explanation. This seems unlikely, however, given the robustness of the finding.[10] For the well educated, the size of the impact of policy preference on inequality attribution is more than double the size of the impact of inequality explanation on policy preference.

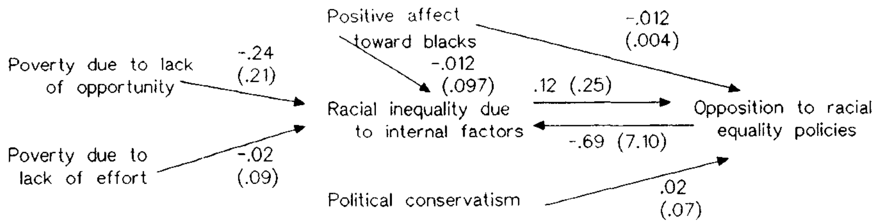
This is a novel result; and it is worth trying to make clear what it suggests about how people actually think through political questions. It is easy enough to say that people dislike a group and therefore decide it should not be helped. But what does this actually mean causally – what happens first, what second, what third? The notion of a chain of reasoning implies – certainly, is ordinarily understood to imply – that people start at the beginning of the chain, taking account first of the most fundamental, or general, considerations; then take account of intermediate ones; then, having attended to general and to intermediate, arrive at their position on a specific issue. And following this image of a chain of reasoning, we should suppose that people would start with their feelings of blacks, proceed to take into account their view of why blacks are worse off than whites, and putting these considerations together, figure out their position on whether government should assist blacks. But this, our results suggest, is very likely not how things work at all. Indeed, it might be nearer the mark to say that citizens, so far as their reasoning about policy is affect-driven, start at the beginning of the chain, taking account of their feelings toward blacks. Then, rather than working their way along the chain hierarchically, from general to specific, they skip over the intermediate links of the chain and go straight to its end. Having reached the end of the chain, they work their way backwards and fill in the missing links. That is to say, not only do they reason forward, from general to specific; they also reason backward, from specific to general. And, because they can reason both forward and backward, with affect guiding them, they can indeed figure out what they think about questions, such as the reasons for racial inequality, they might not ordinarily think about.

COGNITION-DRIVEN POLICY REASONING

If the reasoning of some people is affect-driven, then it is only natural to suppose that the reasoning of others is cognition-driven. But what does it mean to say this?

Figure 5.3 lays out a model of cognition-driven policy reasoning. It is like the model of affective reasoning, except in one decisive respect: Our third exogenous variable (in addition to the two types of explanations for poverty) is ideology, not affect. We can now estimate the causal link between affect toward blacks and explanations of inequality, while assuming that ideology does not directly influence explanations.

Less than high school



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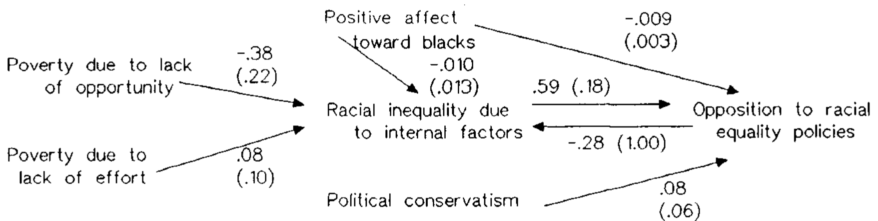

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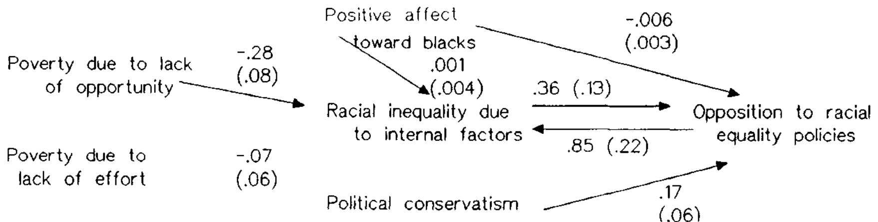

Figure 5.3. Parameter estimates for a nonrecursive model of racial policy preferences (cognition-driven).

Our aim, as before, is to examine the relation between explanations for racial inequality and racial policy preferences, and specifically to determine which way causality runs. Consider the well educated. Belief that racial inequality is due to internal factors has a significant impact on racial policy preferences; and policy preferences have a significant impact on belief that racial inequality is due to internal factors. The relation between inequality explanations and policy preferences is a two-way street, with causal influence running in both directions. But, just as before, the size of the "backward" reasoning effect is substantially larger than that of the "forward" reasoning effect.

The results for the poorly educated, in contrast, are a wash. Both the relation between explanations and preferences, and the other way around, fail to reach statistical significance. This result is not, however, surprising. This particular

model focuses on that portion of the variance in racial policy preferences associated with ideology. Not surprisingly, that portion is exceedingly small; in fact the effect of political conservatism on opposition to racial equality policies is not significant in the case of the less educated.[11] Indeed, the connection between ideology and preferences is only significant in the case of people whose education continued on after high school. But, of course, this is only another way of saying that a cognition-driven model might apply well to the policy reasoning of the best educated and quite poorly, if at all, to that of the less well educated.

IDEOLOGY AND QUASI-IDEOLOGY: THE ROLE OF HEURISTICS

There is a warehouse of findings showing that the average citizen is unfamiliar with ideological constructs; is often unable to define or explain them; and is anyway not much interested to make use of them in the actual business of trying to sort out politics – for example, in evaluating political parties or presidential candidates (Campbell et al., 1960; Levitin and Miller, 1979; Kinder, 1983). And if this holds for the mass public taken as a whole, then surely it cannot fail to apply to the less educated and less politically sophisticated members. In what sense, then, might their reasoning about policy be ideological or quasi-ideological?

Ideology is abstract, difficult to comprehend; not so the desert heuristic. The fact that blacks are less well off than whites might be explained in terms of their circumstances of life or in terms of some aspect of their own makeup – no special training or skill is required to make one or the other attribution; nor is any required to discern the political implications of making one or the other. Attributions for racial inequality provide people with a simple, easy-to-execute heuristic for evaluating the legitimacy of appeals for assistance. The socioeconomic position of blacks might be attributed to some deficiency or failing of blacks themselves. If so, following Horatio Alger, they should help themselves. Alternatively, racial inequality might be attributed to some external force. If so, some assistance might be in order.

And not only is this desert heuristic simple: It is also a prominent element in American popular culture. Moreover, we suspect that attributions in the case of needy *groups* are more available – because more automatic or well-rehearsed – than in the case of specific *individuals*. For in the case of groups, the attributions people offer are more likely to be scripted, drawing on stereotypes about the group in question and expressing widely shared beliefs about the causes of success and failure.

And it is the availability of scripted attributions to explain major political events or trends that helps to make intelligible an otherwise baffling puzzle: How can the less educated and politically unsophisticated part of the mass public manage to make sense of a realm of life, such as politics, about which their knowledge is superficial and their interest desultory – and, moreover, to make sense of it in terms that have an ideological, or at least quasi-ideological, temper?

Very briefly: The desert heuristic pivots around external versus internal definitions of responsibility; these alternative attributions of responsibility offer condensed versions, highly simplified and easily learned, of liberalism and conservatism.

The desert heuristic is widely but not universally accessible. On the one side, it is not a requirement that one be especially well educated, that one have attended college, to make use of it. On the other, it is a drawback if one is not somewhat educated: Those with less than a high school education make little use of the desert heuristic. Yet, with this qualification, the heuristic is readily available to the mass public. Accordingly, prepackaged attributions allow many citizens, unable or unmotivated to master a political ideology, to mimic it.

BELIEF SYSTEM CONSTRAINT AND CONSISTENCY

Our findings also bear on a second issue of general importance: bases of constraint in mass belief systems.

Mass belief systems, of course, have become notorious for lacking constraint, or organization (Converse, 1964). And it is indeed difficult to suppose that the average citizen, asked his position on an issue, carefully consults his or her other opinions and views in order to take the position most consonant with his or her overall outlook. It is not obvious how to explain belief system constraint because it is not altogether obvious that there is very much to explain.

These grounds for skepticism, and others besides, could be elaborated. All the same, we should like to say a word about how far, and how, mass belief systems are organized.

A causal theory of belief system organization should address at least three questions. First, what are the basic elements, the constituent parts, of belief systems? Second, how can they be connected? And third, under what conditions are they likely to be connected in one way, under what conditions in another? There is nothing novel in these questions, at any rate not in the first two. The third question, however, might be on a somewhat different footing. For the accepted position is, broadly, that it makes sense to ask about the organization of mass belief systems *in general*. So, in calculating constraint, one calculates correlations across issue preferences for the sample taken as a whole (Converse, 1964). It is a commonplace to do this. But does it make sense? Our results suggest not. For how closely core elements in mass belief systems are connected varies enormously, depending on (among other things) education. So, too, does what is connected to what.

This is a simple finding – who, after all, doubts that the more schooling one has had, the more adept one is at putting ideas together? It is also, as it seems to us, a fundamental finding because it implies that any portrait of the organization of beliefs of the mass public *taken as a whole* is likely to be false for many, possibly most, of its members. How, exactly, is it likely to be misleading? Suppose our interest is in belief system constraint, defined (in the traditional way)

as issue preference connectedness. Estimates of constraint based on the sample taken as a whole are likely to be wrong – but wrong about the well educated and the less well educated in opposite ways, underestimating constraint for the former, overestimating it for the latter.

Connections among elements in belief systems vary markedly, as we have seen, depending on education. But what, more precisely, does this imply? Not only that the strength of connections varies, but also that the bases (or causal mechanisms) responsible for them differ, too.

What holds the belief systems of the less educated together? What serves as glue to give them some measure of coherence? One form of glue, our results suggest, is affect. People can adopt their opinions or beliefs on the basis of their likes and dislikes; and they can do so without necessarily knowing very much about politics. Thus, in the case of racial policy, a person might take the position that government should not help blacks, that they should take care of their problems on their own, because he or she dislikes them; or, alternatively, that government should help blacks because he or she likes them.

Belief systems, then, can be affect-driven. Additionally, they can be cognition-driven. Again, in the case of racial policy, the more educated a person is, the more likely he is to base his position on assistance for blacks on his overall political outlook, favoring government assistance if he is liberal, opposing it if he is conservative.

The distinction between affective and cognitive consistency seems to us an instructive one; also, we must emphasize, a dangerous one. The danger lies in a temptation to pose a false choice between them. This temptation can take many forms, but perhaps the one most significant politically is this. The politically aware and sophisticated, it can be argued, rely on cognitive inference; the unsophisticated and unaware, on affective inference. The sophisticated rely, so to speak, on "head think," or rationality; the unsophisticated on "gut think," or irrationality.

This is a mistake.[12] As we have seen, the well educated, in working out their opinions about racial policy, take into account both their beliefs *and* their feelings. A mark of being politically aware and sophisticated is, briefly, a readiness to take advantage of a variety of means to achieve consistency – and that includes feelings as well as beliefs.

CONCLUSION

There is, we think, an enigma in public opinion research. On the one hand, there is good reason to believe that citizens typically pay minimal attention to politics; and that, not surprisingly, they often have only minimal knowledge of it. On the other hand, there is also reason to suppose that a good many citizens can figure out what they think about issues, particularly about issues that have an obvious moral component – abortion, for example. But how can they know what they think about a political issue, given how little they know about politics?

This question is worth reflection. It is hard to see how citizens can manage effectively to figure out their positions on issues; harder still to see how they do so from the dominant perspective on the belief systems of mass publics (Converse, 1975). From that perspective, citizens might well have opinions on quite a large number of issues. Their beliefs about any particular issue, however, are not likely to have much bearing on their beliefs about any other issue. The belief systems of the average citizen, accordingly, tend to be untidy: a miscellany of opinions, minimally connected. And yet, notwithstanding this emphasis on the minimal coherence of mass belief systems, it is commonly supposed that, for the average citizen to figure out on any given occasion what he thinks about an issue, he need only remember his preferred position. In fact, it has become commonplace to assume that the proof of his having a genuine opinion or attitude about a political issue is his ability to remember it perfectly on a subsequent occasion (Converse, 1964; but see Achen, 1975).

It is not altogether obvious, as Feldman has remarked, that anybody sincerely believes this proposition (Feldman, 1985). Except as a methodological stratagem, it is difficult indeed to suppose that the world is divided up into two, and only two, kinds of people: those who can be said to have formed a genuine opinion on a subject because they repeat exactly what they said the last time they were asked about it; and those who must be supposed never to have known what they thought because they have subsequently changed their minds.

Accordingly, we should like to attempt, briefly, a fresh look at how belief systems work, which might give a more plausible, and systematic, account of how people establish their positions on political issues.

Our starting point is this. It is not reasonable to suppose that citizens generally have formed discrete opinions on a large array of issues and, asked their opinion about a particular one, need only retrieve it. It is instead more plausible to suppose that, asked their opinion about an issue, they must often figure out what they think about it. In figuring out their position, they cannot attend to a great many factors. As Simon (1985, p. 301) has remarked, "At any given moment, only a little information, drawn from the senses and from long-term memory, can be held in the focus of attention."

Because attention is a bottleneck, people are likely to attend only to a small number of factors – or, to use Zaller's term, considerations. But to just what sort of considerations are people likely to attend? And why are they more likely to pay attention to some rather than to others? For our part, we think that affect plays a prominent role. Partly also, we suspect, it is because people tend to avoid clutter (Harman, 1985). They prefer to have their beliefs coherent, other things equal; and their likes and dislikes provide an especially obvious basis for that coherence. So they need actually to know very little about politics: only whether they like or dislike a group, and whether a particular policy is intended for the group's benefit or not.

It would, of course, be quite wrong to suggest that policy reasoning is always affect-driven. Rather, calling attention to the role of likes and dislikes is a way of

making a more general point; and that is that if citizens are to work out their positions on particular political issues effectively, they are likely to take advantage of some aids to judgment, or heuristics, to simplify political choices, thereby making the task manageable.

The notion of heuristics seems to us a useful one. Principally this is so because it calls attention to rules people follow in making judgments; and though not all judgments are reducible to rules, many are. Heuristics, then, help illuminate the causal dynamics of belief systems, so far as people take advantage of strategies of simplifying choices otherwise too complex to manage – strategies, moreover, that are suitable precisely because citizens characteristically do not have high levels of political knowledge and awareness. Furthermore, the notion of heuristics calls attention to the differential utilization of aids to judgment, since these aids themselves differ in accessibility. Ideological inferences tend to be complex, hence most utilized by the most sophisticated. Affective inferences, in contrast, tend to be immediate; hence most relied on by the least sophisticated.

Our findings, we would suggest, have underlined the role that people's likes and dislikes, their affect, play in organizing their belief systems. It is easy to see how this process works in the case of racial issues: People can determine whether they favor or oppose a policy intended to assist blacks merely on the basis of whether they dislike blacks. But affect might play a larger, and less obvious, role. Indeed ideological inference might itself be an example of an affective calculus.[13] Be that as it may, we are persuaded that a fundamental means by which mass publics manage a measure of consistency in belief systems is by adjusting their opinions and beliefs to their likes and dislikes. This emphasis on affective consistency is particularly fitting for analysis of political preferences. Politics, perhaps particularly, is an area given to "hot" rather than "cold" cognition.

It would be, we think, a mistake merely to enumerate various heuristics – a mistake partly because they are likely to proliferate endlessly, a mistake more fundamentally because it is necessary to understand how these aids to judgment are themselves interrelated. It is, that is to say, necessary to understand how people work their way, step by step, through a chain of reasoning. And to understand how they manage this, one must establish what they do first, then second, then third.

The idea of "reasoning backward" is a good example of this. As our results suggested, some people start with their feelings toward blacks, then skip straight to the end of the chain, to a position on the policy of assistance for blacks. Inference for them is from feelings to preferences, more or less immediately. Then, the final step is reasoning backward, to an explanation of why blacks are worse off than whites. This elaboration of the steps people take in figuring out what they think about a political issue clarifies (among other things) the difference between reasoning backward and rationalization. Rationalization carries the suggestion that a person's answers are produced in order to conceal his true motive or state of mind, perhaps even from himself. People reason backward, however, not to disguise their motives, but to complete missing links in their chains of reasoning.

There is an additional implication of our findings worth mention. The better educated, we saw, base their policy preference about government assistance for blacks partly on their explanation of why blacks are worse off than whites; and, additionally, they base their explanation of why blacks are worse off on their policy preference. They reason, that is to say, forward *and* backward; and this is of some importance because connection between two elements in a belief system, say *A* and *B*, will be tight if *A* is understood to imply *B* and *B* is understood to imply *A*. The point precisely about political reasoning is that beliefs about politics (and feelings toward political actors) mutually entail one another. So a conservative outlook implies an attribution of personal, not external, responsibility for dealing with problems, as does a conservative stand on the issue of government assistance. Similarly, a dislike of blacks implies an opposition to government assistance and, though we have not shown this, such opposition on policy might also imply a feeling of dislike for blacks. It is, in sum, wrong to think of political reasoning as a matter of hierarchical inference – of beginning, that is, with the most general considerations and then proceeding to increasingly specific ones. Rather, reasoning operates backward as well as forward. This circularity of reasoning, we suspect, helps account for the robustness of the political thinking of the better educated and more sophisticated.

A general caveat is in order. There is a limit to the information to be gleaned from a cross-sectional survey, whatever the statistical technique exploited. In the end, experimental analysis, specifically designed to demonstrate what happens first, what second, is necessary to confirm our conclusions.

Race, moreover, is not an ordinary issue in American politics.[14] It is by no means certain that our analysis of policy reasoning about the issue of race will apply, without modification, to public opinion on other issues. Nevertheless, the fundamental findings of this chapter, highlighting the ways in which citizens simplify otherwise unmanageably complex political choices, should apply widely. Otherwise it would be quite inexplicable how people so often figure out what they think about political questions given how little they so often know about them.

6
The likability heuristic

The heart of our research program centers on the notion of heuristics, and this chapter supplies the fullest specification we have managed of a judgmental shortcut – the likability heuristic.

So named to underline the role of likes and dislikes in impression formation, the likability heuristic has a property that deserves particular emphasis: Follow the rule of predicting what others believe by taking account of what you believe, weighted by your feelings toward them, and you will be right, by and large. In contrast, the customary account of how likes and dislikes shape impression formation provides an explanation of how people go wrong, particularly by exaggerating the similarity of others they like to themselves – the so-called false-consensus effect.

It remains for us an unexploited paradox that it can be easier, as a comparison of this chapter with Chapter 8 will suggest, to get a grip on people's political thinking by investigating what they think others think as against what they themselves think.

The study of public opinion consists, with few exceptions, of the study of the beliefs and preferences of individual citizens. This chapter explores a new subject: not what individuals themselves believe, but what they believe others believe. Two questions concern us. First, to what extent can citizens estimate accurately the position of politically strategic groups on major issues? Second, how can they figure out what such groups stand for, given how little they know about politics?

These two questions are worth considering. Citizens, it turns out, are remarkably accurate in estimating the issue positions of strategic groups in politics, including groups like liberals and conservatives about which one might well suppose the mass public to be ignorant. Given how much citizens do *not* know about politics, it is worthwhile establishing that there is an aspect of politics – and an important one – about which they *are* knowledgeable.

The analysis of attitude attribution, of how people estimate what others think, provides new insight into the workings of mass belief systems. The accepted view of their operation is, broadly, that most citizens do not understand political abstractions such as liberalism or conservatism and that they do not (because they cannot) put together a consistent, or constrained, set of opinions on issues of the day (e.g., Converse, 1964, 1975; Levitin and Miller, 1979). But in what sense,

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then, do the beliefs of the mass public form a "system"? What is the glue that holds them together? What provides citizens with the means and motive to achieve a measure of coherence in their views about political issues, given how little attention they are likely to pay to politics and how little information about it they are likely to possess?

Our argument is that citizens can draw an impressively accurate map of politics, of who wants what politically, of who takes the same side and who lines up on the opposing side of key issues. Citizens can accomplish this, we argue, by relying on their political affect, their likes and dislikes of politically strategic groups.

We focus on the operation of an affective calculus or, as we call it, a *likability heuristic*. This calculus is organized around people's feelings toward groups such as liberals and conservatives. Clearly, many in the mass public lack a firm understanding of political abstractions. All the same, many know whom they like, and, equally important, they also know whom they dislike. If coherent, these likes and dislikes can supply people with an affective calculus to figure out the issue positions of strategic groups. We suggest that in this way many in the mass public can figure out who wants what politically without necessarily knowing a lot about politics.

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF LIBERALS AND CONSERVATIVES

Many, although not all, issues offer a choice between liberal and conservative positions, expressible in the familiar metric of the standard seven-point National Election Studies (NES) issue scale. In this metric, the smaller the number arithmetically (or the farther to the left graphically), the more liberal the position; the larger the number (or the farther to the right), the more conservative the position. After being asked to place themselves on these seven-point issue scales, respondents are asked to place others as well. In addition to being asked to locate the presidential candidates and the political parties on issues of the day, in 1972 and 1976 respondents were asked to locate a variety of groups, among them liberals and conservatives. Because respondents were also asked how liberal or conservative they themselves were, it is a simple matter (in principle at least) to compare the positions that liberals and conservatives characteristically take with the positions attributed to them.

Table 6.1 shows, first, the average position attributed to "most" liberals (and conservatives), then the mean position actually held by them,[1] on four issues: government guaranteed jobs, protecting rights of the accused, dealing with student unrest, and controlling inflation. Clearly, on all issues except controlling inflation, the public understands liberals to be on the left, although how far to the left varies somewhat, and they appreciate that conservatives are on the right. To this extent there is general understanding that liberals and conservatives represent distinguishable policy alternatives on a number of issues.

Table 6.1. *Attributed and actual positions of liberals and conservatives*

	Liberals				Conservatives			
	Attributed		Actual		Attributed		Actual	
		N		*N*		*N*		*N*
Government guaranteed jobs (1976)	3.12	1,127	3.91	286	4.92	1,158	5.30	457
Rights of accused (1976)	2.87	1,142	3.45	292	4.43	1,160	4.61	479
Student unrest (1972)	2.73	761	3.62	195	5.23	767	5.40	250
Government inflation (1972)	3.51	653	2.41	184	3.62	689	2.59	275

To be sure, citizens perceive liberals to be farther to the left on some issues than others, the most extreme of these being student unrest, and conservatives to be on the right on three of the four issues (again the inflation issue is an exception) and furthest to the right on the issue of student unrest. There is, then, a general understanding that liberals and conservatives represent distinguishable policy alternatives as well as an appreciation of which of them wants what.

The issue of inflation is one obvious exception, but the reason is obvious, too. Respondents are asked *if* government should try to control inflation, not *how* it should do so. As phrased, this question does not contrast liberal and conservative positions, and the results only reflect the fact that both liberals and conservatives dislike inflation even more than they are perceived to dislike it.[2]

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS

These observations about the overall realism of ideological maps are not, of course, conclusive. Fortunately, the NES surveys also ask respondents to estimate the positions of the two major parties on an array of issues. Therefore, far from having to make a case based on four issues only, we have ten issues to examine in 1976, and fifteen in 1972. Moreover, all of the issues in the 1976 survey are in the 1972 survey, and observing consistencies in attitude attribution over time, as well as across issues, will buttress our initial impression that the effects observed are systematic.

The 1972 and 1976 NES surveys afford a generous representation of policy concerns: economic, welfare, racial, social, lifestyle, and even (in 1972) Vietnam (Table 6.2). The results for the Democratic party are clear-cut; plainly, the general public is aware of where Democrats characteristically stand on major issues. On nearly every one, they place Democrats on the left, where Democrats in fact are, judged either by policy statements of the party or by the attitudes of

Table 6.2. *Attributed and actual positions of Democrats and Republicans in 1972 and in 1976 (NES seven-point scale)*

	Democrats				Republicans			
	Attributed		Actual		Attributed		Actual	
		N		*N*		*N*		*N*
Government guaranteed jobs (1)	2.91	933	3.95	604	4.55	931	4.72	417
Tax rate (1)	3.42	810	3.85	594	4.49	825	4.22	418
Vietnam (1)	2.73	1,003	3.28	632	4.46	1,019	4.22	405
Marijuana	4.33	1,589	5.28	1,293	5.26	1,639	5.47	863
Busing	3.83	1,690	5.98	1,275	4.91	1,755	6.52	867
Government medical insurance	3.14	677	3.50	565	4.63	683	4.48	398
Pollution	2.73	814	2.16	599	3.09	844	2.16	399
Equality for women	3.08	1,676	3.44	1,302	3.51	1,698	3.53	871
Vietnam (2)	2.70	817	3.21	533	4.54	847	4.09	392
Government guaranteed jobs (2)	3.19	748	3.98	489	4.42	762	4.84	331
Rights of accused	3.41	1,366	3.92	981	4.17	1,411	4.48	706
Minority aid	3.18	1,499	3.96	1,017	4.20	1,521	4.55	722
Tax rate (2)	3.47	681	3.78	465	4.38	698	4.13	317
Urban unrest	3.07	738	2.91	481	3.95	741	3.38	331
Student unrest	3.77	727	4.53	470	4.69	747	5.26	332
Government guaranteed jobs (1)	2.90	1,293	4.03	743	4.48	1,288	5.00	549
Rights of accused	3.30	1,147	4.06	760	3.95	1,158	4.51	574
Busing	3.38	1,181	5.90	827	4.10	1,190	6.35	594
Minority aid	2.99	1,228	4.12	757	4.13	1,229	4.62	567
Government medical insurance	2.88	1,046	3.52	707	4.71	1,032	4.72	554
Government guaranteed jobs (2)	3.09	1,254	4.24	711	4.72	1,244	5.12	555
Urban unrest	3.05	1,167	2.97	708	4.12	1,154	3.65	512
Marijuana	4.26	960	4.74	793	4.70	972	5.03	562
Tax rate (2)	3.45	1,155	3.90	772	4.56	1,145	4.56	557
Equality for women	3.10	1,135	3.16	823	3.58	1,130	3.27	602

its partisans. Indeed, if anything, the general public perceives Democrats to be more liberal than they are.[3]

This awareness that the Democratic party is on the left does not reflect a blind judgment, made in the same way for every issue; for example, on the issues of legalizing marijuana and busing, Democrats are not perceived as being as far to the right as they actually are. All the same, it is these two issues on which Democrats are – and are perceived to be – least liberal.

There is also an appreciation of the conservatism of Republicans and the Republican party. Thus, Republicans are perceived to be on the right on twenty

Table 6.3. *Attributed and actual positions of blacks and whites*

	Blacks				Whites			
	Attributed		Actual		Attributed		Actual	
		N		*N*		*N*		*N*
Busing (1976)	3.59	1,442	3.95	148	5.86	1,506	6.32	1,515
Rights of accused (1976)	2.39	1,306	3.57	127	4.14	1,366	4.35	1,423
Minority aid (1976)	1.91	1,405	2.44	144	4.71	1,406	4.56	1,396
Government medical insurance (1976)	1.73	1,063	2.67	118	3.63	1,272	4.16	1,358
Government guaranteed jobs (1976)	2.36	1,357	2.84	127	4.26	1,378	4.78	1,363
Rights of accused (1972)	2.63	1,630	3.20	176	4.52	1,661	4.27	1,741
Government guaranteed jobs (1972)	2.36	839	2.05	88	4.43	850	4.56	857

of the twenty-five issues. Pollution and the role of women, two issues where they are perceived to be on the left, reinforce rather than contradict this impression of reality perception, because in these two cases, where there is agreement that Republicans are not on the right, they in fact are not, to judge from what Republicans themselves believe.

Nevertheless there is a qualification: Although Republicans are understood to be on the right, they are not perceived to be so far to the right as Democrats are perceived to be to the left. Only on one issue, legalizing marijuana, are Republicans located more than one scale point from the right of the midpoint. In contrast, Democrats are located more than one point to the left on six issues. This difference should not be exaggerated: The mean position was 4.3, or approximately a third of a scale step from the midpoint; the mean position attributed to Democrats was 3.25, or three-quarters of a step. In a word, both are located on the correct side, although the Democrats tend to be perceived as further from, and Republicans as closer to, the center.

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF BLACKS AND WHITES

Not only do citizens, on average, accurately attribute attitudes for liberals and conservatives and Democrats and Republicans, but they also do so for a number of other groups, of which blacks and whites are an especially striking example. Table 6.3 shows the positions attributed to blacks and whites and those actually held by them on a number of issues in 1972 and 1976.

On all seven of the issues (counting 1972 and 1976) for which data are available, the general public perceives blacks to be on the left. In fact, blacks are

Table 6.4. *Attributed positions of liberals and conservatives by ideology, 1976*

	Liberals		Moderates		Conservatives		"No Thought"	
		N		*N*		*N*		*N*
Of liberals								
Government guaranteed jobs	3.27	254	3.34	316	2.56	464	3.88	132
Rights of accused	2.95	263	3.04	323	2.44	406	3.54	134
Of conservatives								
Government guaranteed jobs	5.05	262	4.67	326	5.28	326	4.28	134
Rights of accused	4.70	266	4.19	329	4.64	411	3.93	134

on the left on all of these issues, with the exception only of busing, and, instructively, it is the very issue on which they are perceived to be least liberal.

Much the same is true for whites, except for the political direction being the other way around. Whites both are and are perceived to be on the right on most of these issues. This sense of white conservatism, though, is relatively muted, except for busing and minority aid, which refer explicitly to race. Again, the issue on which whites are least conservative – government and medical insurance – is the issue on which they are perceived, correctly, to be most liberal.

In addition to this element of reality perception, attitude attributions for blacks and whites show signs of the left shift: Blacks are perceived to be more liberal, whites to be less conservative, than they are. This shift seems more pronounced for blacks than for whites, just as it was more pronounced for liberals than for conservatives, for Democrats than for Republicans. However this may be, the dominant finding is, again, the accuracy with which the general public can figure out the position of blacks and whites on issues, including nonracial issues.

EXPLAINING ATTITUDE ATTRIBUTION

Determinants of attitude attribution

To this point, we have focused on attitudes attributed to strategic groups by the general public taken as a whole. But of course there must be substantial differences in the attributions of attitudes *within* the public.[4] After all, it would be quite remarkable if conservatives had exactly the same view of what liberals stand for as liberals themselves; remarkable because what people believe others believe must in some sense depend on what they themselves believe.

Table 6.4 shows the positions attributed to liberals and conservatives, in 1976, by liberals and conservatives and, in addition, by moderates and by those unwilling (or unable) to describe themselves as either liberal or conservative. Clearly

there is a connection between what people believe others believe and what they themselves believe. Just as clearly, the connection is far from straightforward. Thus, conservatives perceive liberals to be markedly more liberal than liberals perceive themselves to be, indeed, more liberal than they actually are. The reverse, however, is not true: Liberals do not emphasize how conservative conservatives are; if anything, conservatives perceive themselves to be more conservative than liberals perceive them to be.

Why should conservatives emphasize how far to the left liberals are and also how far to the right they themselves are? Conversely, why should liberals minimize how far to the left they are and also not emphasize how far to the right conservatives are? Nor are these the only questions to consider. Notice the responses of "No Thought" respondents (Table 6.4, col. 4). They are willing to offer estimates of what liberals and conservatives stand for, but in what sense can they be said to have a meaningful idea of what liberals and conservatives stand for if they do not have a meaningful idea about whether they are themselves either liberal or conservative? They are, most probably, merely guessing, as the tendency of their estimates of both liberal and conservative attitudes to hover around the scale midpoint suggests. (The midpoint, after all, *is* the safest guess.)[5]

Moreover, it is surely not plausible to suppose that the "No Thought" respondents are the only ones who are guessing, which suggests in turn the usefulness of sorting respondents, according to levels of political knowledge, on the assumption that the more knowledgeable should be less likely to guess than the less knowledgeable. Accordingly, Table 6.5 presents perceptions of liberals and conservatives, by liberals and conservatives, using years of schooling as a surrogate for political awareness and cognitive complexity.

As Table 6.5 shows, conservatives spread the alternatives, that is, emphasize how far apart liberals and conservatives are on issues, and they are more likely to emphasize the difference between the two, the better educated they are. In a word, conservatives tend to accentuate *both* how conservative conservatives are and how liberal liberals are. Nor is this to be viewed as politically strategic behavior on the part of liberals (again unless they are well educated) who do not emphasize how conservative conservatives are.

This is peculiar: Why should conservatives stress, while liberals (unless well educated) minimize, how far apart liberals and conservatives are? The most likely explanation is how they feel toward each other: Dislike is a good reason to emphasize differences, and as Table 6.6 shows, there is a profound difference between liberals and conservatives in this respect.

Conservatives dislike liberals; how much is very much a function of how conservative they are. Thus, the least conservative place liberals at just under 50 degrees on a feeling thermometer, whereas the most conservative place them at a frosty 34 degrees. Similarly, liberals do not like conservatives; however, they do not dislike them nearly as much as conservatives dislike liberals. To be sure, the more liberal they themselves are – or the more educated they are – the less favorably they feel toward conservatives. Even so, given the same degree of

Table 6.5. *Attributed positions of liberals and conservatives by ideology and education*

	Actual Position		Liberals 0–11 Grades		Liberals 12–13 Grades		Liberals > 14 Grades		Conservatives 0–11 Grades		Conservatives 12–13 Grades		Conservatives > 14 Grades	
		N		*N*		*N*		*N*		*N*		*N*		*N*
Of liberals														
Government guaranteed jobs	3.91	286	3.50	46	3.55	130	2.65	78	3.19	67	2.66	218	2.03	119
Rights of accused	3.45	292	3.10	48	3.11	136	2.59	79	2.72	60	2.57	219	2.10	126
Of conservatives														
Government guaranteed jobs	5.30	457	4.81	48	4.87	134	5.51	80	5.18	67	5.17	222	5.52	123
Rights of accused	4.61	457	4.21	48	4.55	140	5.27	78	4.59	64	4.40	220	5.08	126

Note: Measures of ideology: liberal (1,2,3), conservative (5,6,7)

Table 6.6. *Average thermometer score by ideology and education, 1976*

	Education					
	0–8 Grades	9–11 Grades	High school diploma	1–3 years college	4 or more years college	Total
Average feelings toward liberals						
Extreme liberal and liberal	75.4	60.9	68.0	71.6	74.2	70.4
	(13)	(19)	(37)	(33)	(44)	(146)
Slightly liberal	68.3	60.6	58.5	61.3	60.4	60.5
	(9)	(9)	(50)	(38)	(41)	(147)
Moderate	55.9	51.1	52.1	53.3	53.3	52.8
	(30)	(45)	(169)	(104)	(64)	(412)
Slightly conservative	54.2	46.1	48.9	49.8	44.7	47.8
	(13)	(18)	(82)	(44)	(77)	(234)
Conservative and extreme conservative	49.2	41.9	36.7	36.2	32.1	37.3
	(26)	(21)	(89)	(50)	(60)	(246)
"No thought"	55.1	53.4	52.5	54.0	52.2	53.4
	(70)	(77)	(141)	(120)	(9)	(317)
Total	56.6	51.9	50.9	53.0	50.8	52.0
	(161)	(189)	(568)	(289)	(295)	(1,504)
Average feelings toward conservatives						
Extreme liberal and liberal	69.6	54.7	50.1	42.9	38.2	47.4
	(14)	(19)	(36)	(33)	(44)	(146)
Slightly liberal	55.0	45.0	52.2	49.6	47.0	49.7
	(8)	(10)	(50)	(38)	(41)	(147)
Moderate	62.3	58.5	57.8	57.5	58.1	58.2
	(33)	(46)	(181)	(106)	(64)	(430)
Slightly conservative	71.7	67.4	62.4	66.4	62.3	64.0
	(13)	(19)	(82)	(45)	(77)	(236)
Conservative and extreme conservative	65.6	68.3	70.7	73.4	74.0	71.2
	(29)	(23)	(92)	(50)	(60)	(254)
"No thought"	53.8	58.9	56.4	61.0	51.3	56.5
	(79)	(81)	(145)	(20)	(8)	(333)
Total	60.0	59.6	59.2	59.2	57.7	59.1
	(176)	(198)	(586)	(292)	(294)	(1,550)

Note: Sample sizes are in parentheses.

ideology or schooling, conservatives dislike liberals far more than liberals dislike conservatives.

These findings are suggestive. One is tempted to conjecture that conservatives emphasize how liberal liberals are because they dislike them so. It is surely a

natural response to see one's opponents in politics as more extremist the greater one's dislike for them. Liberals, however, do not repay the compliment: They tend to minimize how conservative conservatives are because they dislike conservatives less than conservatives dislike liberals.

In sum, how liberal (or conservative) a person perceives liberals and conservatives to be depends on whether he is himself liberal or conservative. In addition, it depends partly on how he feels toward liberals and conservatives. Finally, it depends on how much knowledge of liberals and conservatives he has or, conversely, how much he must resort to guessing. But how do these factors fit together? And, supposing more than one causal process is at work, which is the most important, which the least – or more exactly, which process is the most important for what kind of individual?

We argue that two major processes and two minor ones are at work. One of the major processes is reality perception. The other is a likability heuristic; that is, a calculus based on a person's beliefs weighted by his or her likes and dislikes. We think this heuristic is intriguing, because it suggests how, even if they do not necessarily know a lot about politics, people may nonetheless figure out who believes what. To see just how this heuristic is formed and how it operates alongside reality perception, we have developed a formal model of attitude attribution.

A model of attitude attribution

Attitude attribution depends on a person's own beliefs, plus his or her likes and dislikes. In this sense it is the interconnections of three variables – attribution, belief, and affect – that we should like to understand. But if there are two causal factors, there are more than two causal processes. Attributions may reflect reality perception, or guessing, or a calculus, among other possibilities. To capture the interplay of these alternative causal processes, a formal model of attitude attribution is required. In addition, it is necessary to develop a model that goes beyond the notion that people simply place groups (or candidates) where they actually stand and that they combine this placement with their own position to calculate their utility or feelings for the group.[6] More is needed than simply adjusting for the different ways that people use seven-point scales (as in Aldrich and McKelvey, 1977). A model of attitude attribution must take into account the interrelationships among a person's own beliefs about an issue, his or her feelings toward a group, and the actual position of the group. Models of this sort are not found in the rational choice literature (e.g., Riker and Ordeshook, 1973) or in works on psychometric scaling (e.g., Torgerson, 1958). Instead, one must look to the research on psychological balance and consistency (e.g., Abelson et al., 1968). Unfortunately, although rich in qualitative findings, this literature is weak in formal descriptions of psychological balance (but see Osgood and Tannenbaum, 1955; Heider, 1958; and Rosenberg and Abelson, 1960). The following model tries to remain faithful to the qualitative results of this research while providing a quantitative basis for fitting the NES data.

We assume that individuals consider (we leave unspecified the exact mental process by which this consideration occurs) the "true" position of each group T_{ij}. This true position may vary from person to person (hence the subscript i), for reasons discussed in a moment, as well as from group to group (j). If people just cared about accuracy, then they would try to minimize the discrepancy or squared distance between where they place the group P_{ij} and where the group actually stands.[7] They would try to minimize their inaccuracy:

$$a(P_{ij} - T_{ij})^2, \; a \text{ greater than zero.} \qquad (1)$$

The parameter a in this equation and similar parameters d and e introduced later represent the weights people place on minimizing each type of imbalance or inconsistency. The obvious solution to minimizing inaccuracy as described by equation (1) is to set $P_{ij} = T_{ij}$, which would be, from the individual's perspective, an *accurate* placement of the group.

But what is the value of T_{ij} in this case? If the individual is fully informed, T_{ij} will probably reflect some common "baseline" image of the group, T_j; if the person is not very knowledgeable and has no image of the group, then T_{ij} will be nothing more than a guess. On seven-point scales, guessers should gravitate to the middle of the scale, or zero if the scale has been centered by subtracting four from all responses, as we shall assume throughout the rest of this discussion. Hence, the value of T_{ij} would be expressed by the following equation:

$$T_{ij} = F_iT_j + (1 - F_i)0 = F_iT_j \qquad (2)$$

where F_i is the probability of not guessing.

Accuracy is only one concern; consistency is another. There is, it is generally acknowledged, a strain to consistency in belief systems. But with respect to what, precisely, is consistency maximized? It is reasonable, as a starting point, to suggest that people will want to bring their placement of a group into line with their own beliefs B_i and their feelings A_{ij} about the group. At the same time, they will want to bring their feelings about the group into line with their perceptions of it; that is, there might be a simultaneous relationship between feelings about a group and perceptions of it.[8]

First of all, consider how people might try to bring perceptions in line with feelings. Many individuals might want to believe that the world, or at least some groups, agree with them, so that they will strive to minimize the following quantity:

$$d(P_{ij} - B_i)^2, \; d \text{ greater than zero.} \qquad (3)$$

This can be done by setting P_{ij} equal to B_i. Of course, other individuals may want to believe that certain groups disagree with them so they will endeavor to maximize this quantity, or more simply they will set d to some negative quantity and they will minimize equation (3). In this case, they will choose P_{ij} to be as far away as possible from B_i.

This way of putting things has a point of ambiguity worth clarifying. Equation (3) assumes that people tend to bring the views of groups they like into line with

their own – an assumption, however, that can mean two rather different things. It may refer to a systematic tendency to perceive other groups' views as similar to one's own – the so-called false-consensus effect (Ross, Greene, and House, 1977) – or alternatively, to a tendency to tailor perceptions about groups to one's feelings about them. The following linear form, specifying the quantity d, provides a suitable way to distinguish these two ways that belief may be of importance:

$$d = b + cA_{ij}. \tag{4}$$

In this equation, A_{ij} is positive if one likes a group and negative if one dislikes it. The constant b, if it is positive, represents a false consensus effect, and c, hypothesized to be positive, represents a more focused or partisan effect.

As people try to reconcile their perceptions with the feelings they express to the interviewer, they will also try to reconcile these expressed feelings with their true feelings $A_{ij}*$. This requires minimizing the following quantity:

$$e(A_{ij} - A_{ij}*)^2, \ e \text{ greater than zero.} \tag{5}$$

The quantity $A_{ij}*$ is, by definition, unobserved, but it seems reasonable to suppose that it will be a function of the observable characteristics, X_{it}, of the individual:[9]

$$A_{ij}* = \Sigma_t X_{it} \alpha_{tj}. \tag{6}$$

Combining equations (1) through (6), we obtain the following choice problem:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Minimize } \{a(P_{ij} - F_i T_j)^2 \\ &+ (b + cA_{ij})(P_{ij} - B_i)^2 \\ &+ e(A_{ij} - \Sigma_t X_{it} \alpha_{tj})^2\} \\ &\text{with respect to } P_{ij} \text{ and } A_{ij}. \end{aligned} \tag{7}$$

In words, this amounts to choosing P_{ij} in order to have an optimal tradeoff between the inaccuracy in the first term and one's desire for agreement or disagreement with the group in the second term and simultaneously choosing A_{ij} in order to have an optimal tradeoff between the desire for agreement or disagreement in the second term and the need to be consistent with one's true feelings in the last term. The solution to this minimization (or balancing) problem can be found by taking the partial derivatives of equation (7) with respect to P_{ij} and A_{ij} and setting the results equal to zero. After some algebraic manipulation this yields the following system of equations:

$$\begin{aligned} P_{ij} &= [aF_i T_j \\ &\quad + (b + cA_{ij}) B_i]/(a + b + cA_{ij}) \\ A_{ij} &= -(c/2e)[P_{ij} - B_i]^2 + \Sigma_t X_{it} \alpha_{tj}. \end{aligned} \tag{8}$$

Of course, if this is to be a true minimum, the diagonal elements of the Hessian (the matrix of second partial derivatives) must be greater than zero, and the determinant of the Hessian must be greater than or equal to zero (see Intriligator, 1971). This imposes the following constraints on the parameters of this model:

$$a + b + cA_{ij} > 0; e > 0 \quad (9)$$
$$\text{and } e(a + b + cA_{ij}) - c^2(P_{ij} - B_i)^2 \geq 0.$$

If A_{ij} is standardized to run between -1 and $+1$ and if the parameter a is set to 1 to determine the scale, then a necessary condition for a minimum, given the possibility that A_{ij} can equal -1 is that $(1 + b - c)$ be greater than 0.

Other models are also possible. If it is assumed that all perceptions about a group and its opposite (e.g., liberals and conservatives) are made simultaneously, then the choice problem has to be expanded by adding new terms for each type of perception and new terms for affect toward the opposite group. In Appendix 6.A we show that the solution to this minimization problem is different for the feelings equation but exactly the same for the perception equation. As a result, we can go ahead and estimate the perceptions equation with nonlinear two-stage least squares (Kelejian and Oates, 1979, chap. 8) without obtaining biased estimates.[10] We will also report the results of the feelings equation because we have found that our estimates do not change very much when we estimate the entire system of equations.

Estimating and testing the model

Some decisions must be made about operationalizing P_{ij}, B_i, and A_{ij}. For ease of interpretation, the first two are centered by subtracting four from all values. Affect, at least initially, is indexed as the difference between feeling toward group j and feeling toward its polar opposite j', divided by 100. This approach provides a measure of affect that runs from -1 to $+1$, with a natural zero point that represents the case where the two affect scores are equal.[11] Finally, the likelihood of not guessing, F_i, is represented by a linear function of knowledge about public affairs:

$$F_i = g + hK_i. \quad (10)$$

In this equation, h is assumed to have a positive sign because guessing decreases as knowledge increases.

None of the questions on the 1976 National Election Study is a really good measure of political knowledge. Consequently, we developed a proxy of knowledge by summing up answers to a series of questions about whether the respondent followed public affairs (a four-point scale starting at zero for "hardly at all" to "most of the time"), heard about the campaign on radio, read about the campaign in magazines, watched the campaign on television, or read a daily newspaper (all scored zero for no and one for yes). This eight-point scale is used to represent knowledge.

The usual assumption of an additive error term is made so that the perceptions equation in equation system (8) becomes:

$$\begin{aligned} P_{ij} = {} & [gT_j + hT_jK_i \\ & + (b + cA_{ij})\, B_i]/(a + b + cA_{ij}) \\ & + \text{error}. \end{aligned} \quad (11)$$

In this version, only gT_j and hT_j can be estimated so that an additional identification condition is necessary to obtain the three parameters g, h, and T_j. We have assumed that 10 percent of the population guesses, $E[F] = .90$, at the average knowledge level $E[K]$.[12] This figure is consistent with the results obtained from the technique described in Appendix 6.B. This method assumes that the observed responses on a question are the net result of two processes: A fraction of the respondents $(1 - \alpha)$ actually have an opinion and are drawn from parametric distributions with location and spread parameters that vary across issues, and the remaining respondents (α) only guess by choosing a response from a distribution with location and spread parameters that are fixed across issues. By making some assumptions about the shape of each distribution, this method yields estimates of the parameters of each distribution and the fraction of guessers. For a sample of fifty placements (the current limit of the computer program), the fraction of guessers is estimated to be approximately 8.5 percent, with a standard error of a few percentage points. We have rounded this off to 10 percent in our calculations.

The system of equations (8) should be estimated by a method such as nonlinear two-stage least squares, but it is instructive, and of some practical use, to know if the less complicated (and less expensive) method of nonlinear ordinary least squares yields the same results. Tables 6.7 and 6.8, therefore, summarize the results of both methods applied to the equations for liberal and conservative and Democratic and Republican placements on the government-guaranteed jobs scale. For the X_{it} variables we chose union membership (one if a member, zero otherwise), race (zero if black, one otherwise), income (the twenty-point NES scale), and education (highest grade level completed divided by seventeen to create a scale running from zero to one). These variables have the great advantage of being truly exogenous to the model, and they were used along with B_i, B_i^2 and the knowledge variable described earlier as instruments for a two-stage least squares estimation.

A quick glance at Tables 6.7 and 6.8 indicates that the crucial coefficients of the endogenous variables, c and $c/2e$, are both statistically significant whether nonlinear ordinary or two-stage least squares is used to estimate the models. In fact, it looks as if the magnitudes of these coefficients, especially the magnitude of c, is generally bigger for the two-stage estimates. This suggests, and many other runs confirm, that we can treat the nonlinear ordinary least squares estimates as conservative measures of these important coefficients. As a result, the empirical work not reported in Tables 6.7 and 6.8 but referred to later is based upon nonlinear ordinary least squares estimates.[13]

The final column of Tables 6.7 and 6.8 reports one measure of overall success: The multiple Rs, depending on the issue and group, range from .27 to .35 for the perceptions equation, and from .38 to .48 for the feelings equation. The average multiple correlation for nonlinear OLS estimates of the perceptions equation across all 1976 issues for liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans, and blacks and whites is .32. This is encouraging, given the nature of the data. A less obvious and stronger confirmation is this: Our theory about how

Table 6.7. *Attributed positions of government on guaranteed jobs, 1976*

Attributed Positions	N	Estimation method	Estimated quantities gT_j	hT_j	b	c	Derived T_j	h	Multiple R^a
Liberals	966	N2SLS	.192	−.217	.083	.464	−1.040	.209	
			(.195)	(.040)[a]	(.066)	(.260)			
		NOLS	.163	−.208	.083	.493	−1.021	.204	.349
			(.187)	(.036)	(.035)	(.051)			
Conservatives	966	N2SLS	−.150	.205	.172	.943	1.018	.201	
			(.200)	(.037)	(.055)	(.182)			
		NOLS	−.183	.219	.109	.562	1.062	.206	.305
			(.183)	(.034)	(.034)	(.082)			
Democrats	1,136	N2SLS	−.750	−.089	.245	1.394	−1.348	.066	
			(.528)	(.092)	(.124)	(.223)			
		NOLS	−.707	−.106	.128	.615	−1.398	.076	.319
			(.156)	(.030)	(.029)	(.058)			
Republicans	1,136	N2SLS	−.338	.141	.157	.999	.439	.321	
			(.171)	(.031)	(.048)	(.102)			
		NOLS	−.115	.122	.034	.517	.577	.214	.272
			(.137)	(.026)	(.027)	(.060)			

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.
[a]Multiple Rs are only available for NOLS.

Table 6.8. *Feelings toward left and right groups on government-guaranteed jobs, 1976*

Feelings toward	N	Estimation method	$c/2e$	Intercept	Union	Race	Income	Education	Multiple R^a
Liberals	966	N2SLS	.00838	.130	.0669	−.221	−.00686	.198	
			(.0014)	(.049)	(.0211)	(.033)	(.00182)	(.059)	
		NOLS	.0107	.137	.0606	−.211	−.00632	.198	.477
			(.0008)	(.049)	(.0208)	(.033)	(.00180)	(.059)	
Conservatives	966	N2SLS	.0085	−.0231	−.0746	.2175	.0080	−.185	
			(.0022)	(.0548)	(.0021)	(.0356)	(.0019)	(.062)	
		NOLS	.0088	−.0206	−.0742	.216	.0080	−.185	.385
			(.0011)	(.0519)	(.0218)	(.035)	(.0019)	(.062)	
Democrats	1,136	N2SLS	.0056	.421	.0738	−.237	.0066	−.0713	
			(.0011)	(.036)	(.0161)	(.025)	(.0014)	(.0445)	
		NOLS	.00646	.423	(.0707)	−.233	−.00646	−.0707	.473
			(.00068)	(.036)	(.0158)	(.025)	(.00136)	(.0444)	
Republicans	1,136	N2SLS	.00308	−.361	−.0894	.244	.00687	.0668	
			(.00143)	(.043)	.0160	(.027)	(.00139)	(.0455)	
		NOLS	.00613	−.314	−.0862	.224	.00651	.0584	.453
			(.00079)	(.038)	(.0159)	(.0253)	(.00138)	(.0450)	

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.
[a]Multiple Rs are only available for NOLS.

perceptions are formed, summarized in the first equation in system (8), predicts that there is no intercept term. As a matter of common experience, however, a linear regression without an intercept term almost always fits a set of data worse than one with an intercept term; one would usually expect the same to be true with a nonlinear equation. Yet, when four different issues were run with an intercept term, the result was changing signs and an average t-statistic for the intercept of only 1.455. Another test involved comparing some of the nonlinear equations in Table 6.8 with linear equations with an intercept, a belief, an affect, and an interaction term. Despite their additional free parameter, the linear equations did no better than the nonlinear equations.

But our real interest is understanding the process by which people arrive at an estimate, or impression, of what liberals and conservatives stand for on major issues. Perhaps the first term to note is T_j in Table 6.7. It indicates the extent to which estimates are reality-oriented – that is, if people correctly place liberals on the left and conservatives on the right. By this standard, preferences are indeed reality-oriented in every instance. (It is worth observing in passing that this holds not only for placement of liberals and conservatives; it is true as well for estimates of the parties and, what is more, for estimates of blacks and whites.)

The values of hT_j and h are also of interest. Except for one case, the first are all statistically significant in Table 6.7, and the derived values of h always have the proper sign. Moreover, the pattern for all thirty-four equations for 1976 is similar. This result provides confirmation at the individual level of our earlier finding that some respondents guess when they are asked to place groups on the seven-point scales.

This is not to say that people's impression of what a group stands for on a particular issue is unconnected with what they themselves think about that issue and how they feel toward those groups. Indeed, the results of Table 6.7 give a remarkably explicit and definite idea of what the connections are. Thus, one possibility is that estimates of what people think others think are systematically biased – the so-called false consensus effect – such that people are inclined to think that most groups agree with them more than they in fact do. Examining the coefficient b, we see that it is never negative, indicating the absence of any significant tendency to emphasize disagreement. If we look at Table 6.9, which summarizes a large number of nonlinear ordinary least squares estimates, the value of b is always positive, or nearly so,[14] with an average value of .176 across all of the 1976 issues and groups and an average standard error of only .032 (for an average t-statistic of 5.43). This implies that there is a tendency for people to draw the world toward themselves.

But people also understand the world of politics in terms of their feelings, and this is reflected in the value of c. The value of this parameter is not only statistically significant in the expected direction in all of the equations presented in Table 6.7; it is significant in every one of the thirty-four equations for 1976 in Table 6.9. Moreover, the average value of c across all the issues is .548, with an average standard error of .079, for an average t-statistic of 6.96, and the first

Table 6.9. *Estimates of attitude attribution equations*

	NOLS with guessing		NOLS with separate affect measures		NOLS with guessing		NOLS with separate affect measures	
	b	c	c_1	c_2	b	c	c_1	c_2
Liberals and conservatives								
Government-guaranteed jobs	.097	.538	.701	−.331	.116	.510	.599	−.478
	(.035)	(.049)	(.103)	(.137)	(.034)	(.085)	(.191)	(.202)
Rights of accused	.255	.586	.736	−.409	.288	.747	.981	−.477
	(.037)	(.059)	(.108)	(.135)	(.042)	(.101)	(.152)	(.174)
Blacks and whites								
Busing	.375	.584	.701	−.331	.340	.610	.599	−.478
	(.065)	(.084)	(.103)	(.137)	(.039)	(.157)	(.191)	(.202)
Minority aid	.094	.281	.308	−.208	.311	.892	1.295	−.504
	(.024)	(.043)	(.054)	(.066)	(.037)	(.116)	(.135)	(.145)
Rights of accused	.192	.424	.619	.025	.462	.675	1.100	.128
	(.031)	(.063)	(.081)	(.100)	(.048)	(.194)	(.221)	(.242)
Medical insurance	.151	.248	.267	−.195	.5381	.066	1.193	−.821
	(.021)	(.049)	(.059)	(.069)	(.044)	(.185)	(.240)	(.252)
Government-guaranteed jobs	.142	.408	.412	−.319	.299	.563	.879	−.187
	(.030)	(.052)	(.063)	(.081)	(.036)	(.147)	(.172)	(.182)
Democrats and Republicans								
Government-guaranteed jobs (pre)	.118	.523	.532	−.472	.019	.485	.517	−.421
	(.028)	(.055)	(.084)	(.095)	(.025)	(.055)	(.082)	(.1081)
Rights of accused	.340	.692	.981	−.284	.255	.780	.910	−.560
	(.037)	(.079)	(.121)	(.146)	(.036)	(.064)	(.099)	(.138)
Busing	.098	.536	.546	−.544	−.041	.384	.343	−.457
	(.035)	(.049)	(.074)	(.088)	(.028)	(.056)	(.078)	(.094)
Minority aid	.165	.530	.658	−.303	.026	.536	.719	−.257
	(.028)	(.059)	(.091)	(.107)	(.026)	(.056)	(.076)	(.094)
Medical insurance	.056	.455	.619	−.196	.006	.415	.478	−.248
	(.023)	(.056)	(.081)	(.090)	(.023)	(.053)	(.078)	(.094)
Government-guaranteed jobs (post)	.125	.555	.653	−.370	.004	.538	.623	−.412
	(.031)	(.055)	(.082)	(.099)	(.025)	(.051)	(.070)	(.096)
Urban unrest	.266	.606	.767	−.200	.191	.719	.910	−.374
	(.034)	(.090)	(.135)	(.155)	(.032)	(.057)	(.082)	(.102)
Marijuana	.179	.588	1.035	−.117	.101	.298	.569	.015
	(.027)	(.079)	(.096)	(.106)	(.025)	(.076)	(.096)	(.097)
Tax rate	.205	.658	.763	−.504	.102	.472	.607	−.258
	(.030)	(.066)	(.104)	(.134)	(.026)	(.063)	(.088)	(.103)
Women	.220	.239	.653	.337	.184	.553	.807	−.207
	(.030)	(.111)	(.134)	(.146)	(.032)	(.076)	(.107)	(.115)

Note: b: "False consensus effect." *c:* Coefficient of feelings towards group being placed minus feelings towards opposite group. c_1: Coefficient of feelings towards group being placed. c_2: Coefficient of feelings towards opposite group. Standard errors are in parentheses.

condition in equation system (9) is met in every case. Two points deserve specific mention. First, it is the interaction of affect and belief, and not the independent effect of either, that is telling. Second, it is the combination of feelings toward liberals and toward conservatives that matters. The first point is straightforward, the second less so; and so we should like to say a further word about it.

Various operationalizations of affect have been tried, and the functional form of the first equation in system (8) varied, allowing assessment of an array of rival formulations. For example, it might be supposed that what matters is the absolute level of one's feeling toward the group being placed on the scale, and that one's feeling toward the opposite group is irrelevant. Columns three and four of Table 6.9 present the nonlinear ordinary least squares results when the absolute levels of affect (divided by 100 so that they run from zero to one) toward the two groups are included separately in an equation like (11). The result is clear-cut: The coefficient of affect toward the opposite group, c_2, averages approximately $-.32$, with an average standard deviation of about .13. This compares favorably with the average coefficient of affect toward the group being placed, c_1, of .70, with an average standard deviation of approximately .10. As political – and, above all, ideological – choices tend to be two-sided (e.g., liberal vs. conservative), affect toward polar groups is especially effective in estimating whether these groups are on one side or the other to the extent that it involves a preference for one of the sides, as against the other.[15]

Yet affect might be thought less important if it could be shown that the impact of perceptions on affect was markedly greater than the impact of affect on perceptions. This relative importance of these two effects can be determined by comparing the derivatives $\delta P_{ij}/\delta A_{ij}$ for the perceptions equation and $\delta A_{ij}/\delta P_{ij}$ for the feelings equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \delta P_{ij}/\delta A_{ij} &= -c[B_i - F_i T_j]/(1 + b + cA_{ij})^2 \\ \delta A_{ij}/\delta P_{ij} &= -2(c/2e)\,[P_{ij} - B_i]. \end{aligned} \qquad (12)$$

For simplicity, we evaluate this for a neutral respondent, $A_{ij} = 0$, who does not guess, $F_i = 1$, and we assume a one-point discrepancy in each of the bracketed terms. These terms index the degree to which there is imbalance between either a person's beliefs and the true position of a group or between beliefs and perceptions of the group. If the average values of b and c are taken from the nonlinear ordinary least squares results reported in Table 6.9, then b is .176 and c is .548. With these values, a conservative estimate of the absolute impact of a change in affect on perceptions is .40 – or a movement of at least 27 percent in the typical standard deviation (1.5) of these perceptions in the sample. This figure is nearly doubled when the larger estimates for b and c from nonlinear two-stage least squares are used. If the larger estimates from this method are used for calculating the average value of $(c/2e)$ as .01, then a liberal value for the absolute impact of a change in perceptions on affect is .02 – or a movement of no more than 8 percent of the typical standard deviation (.25) of this affect measure.

The impact of affect on perceptions, this suggests, is at least three times larger than the impact of perceptions on affect, and possibly as much as five or ten times larger.

CONCLUSIONS

It is only prudent to wonder if citizens have genuine opinions on issues involving abstract or ideological preferences (such as the role of government in housing) as opposed to doorstep concerns (such as busing) (Converse, 1970). If it is difficult to credit that citizens know what they themselves believe about such issues; surely it is harder still to credit the idea that they know what others believe about them. This skepticism is understandable. Certainly, many in the mass public have only a minimal knowledge about politics and hold many ideas about it that are only minimally interconnected. All the same, the general public is remarkably accurate at figuring out the issue positions of groups, including liberals and conservatives, who would hardly seem to be highly salient to the general public.

To be sure, the notion of accurately attributing attitudes raises complex issues. The fundamental problem is not the absence of standards of accuracy. Instead it is a plethora of them. Is the liberal position the position held by most liberals? Alternatively, is it the position held by the most liberal? Is the Democratic position the one reflected in the views of Democrats? Or is it the one embodied, in some sense, in the party itself? Is the position of blacks the position characteristic of most blacks? Or is it the one held by black activists, that is, by blacks who characterize blacks for whites. These are complex questions, but whatever their ultimate answer, we have seen that a substantial part of the mass public can correctly locate the positions of key groups as either on the left or on the right on a number of major issues. How is this possible?

Much of the answer, it seems to us, turns round the role of groups in organizing political thinking. This is, of course, far from an original hypothesis: It was at the center of the so-called sociological approach of the Columbia school (e.g., Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee, 1954) and, although less central, nonetheless consequential in the so-called psychological approach of the Michigan school (Campbell et al., 1960). But it is not enough to say that relying on groups is a device for economizing on information, a way to get round the minimal knowledge that many citizens have about politics. Certainly it is not reasonable to suggest that groups, characteristically, organize the political thinking of mass publics by serving as reference groups, for there are many groups, and many of them (like liberals and conservatives) are not especially salient. How, then, can citizens make sense of groups – that is, know which is relevant to which issue and which stands for what – without having to know a great deal about them? Surely it is no more plausible to suggest that the average citizen monitors closely the political positions of an array of groups than to suggest that he or she attends carefully to other aspects of politics.

A portion of the mass public – not surprisingly, the best-educated portion – is capable of reality perception, of attributing attitudes to a group on the basis of knowledge of the group's true position, but they also accentuate their attributions by taking into account their feelings toward groups. Others must rely more heavily on an affective calculus, or likability heuristic, and to the extent they rely on this calculus, they can be remarkably accurate in figuring out the issue position of strategic groups in politics. It would seem worthwhile, therefore, to consider the properties of this likability heuristic and thereby perhaps to throw light on just how groups organize the political thinking of mass publics.

The likability heuristic has two components – first, a person's own beliefs on an issue, and second, the person's feelings toward the pair of opposing groups whose issue positions he or she is estimating. This heuristic can be an effective calculus, in the same sense that incrementalism in budgeting can be: In the one case, a person need only take last year's budget and add some amount to it; in the other, a person need only take where he or she stands, weighted by her or his feelings toward a pair of groups. In short, both are intellectual shortcuts, ways of effectively simplifying questions too complex to address in their own terms. But how, exactly, does the likability heuristic work? Why does it yield accurate estimates of what others believe?

There is, of course, no necessity that attributions be accurate. Indeed, often attributions are not accurate, as research on "false consensus" (cf. Ross et al. 1977) and on candidate perception (cf. Granberg and Brent, 1974; Page and Jones, 1979; and Brent and Granberg, 1982) testifies.[16] There is, it seems, a strong tendency in the attribution of attitudes to suppose that others agree with oneself. Nor should this be surprising, considering that this effect is observed, characteristically, when people are asked about the views of "others like yourself" or "other people in this part of the country." Similarly, false consensus shapes the perception of candidates, thanks in part to the efforts of candidates to blur their stands on issues and thereby invite agreement from across a spectrum of positions (Page, 1978). In short, people are likely to exaggerate how much "others" – defined either positively or vaguely or both – agree with them.

Why, then, are many in the mass public able to accurately attribute attitudes to Democrats and Republicans, to blacks and whites, even to liberals and conservatives? Liberals and conservatives (and Democrats and Republicans) have, and emphasize, political identities; identities, moreover, that have been developed in contradistinction to one another (liberals vs. conservatives, Democrats vs. Republicans). Because they are competitors there are incentives – certainly, there is permission – for a person who likes liberals to dislike conservatives, and the other way around. What allows citizens to simplify political calculations efficiently is this two-sided, "us versus them" character of politics; the more attached they are to their side – and the more opposed they are to the other – the more they appreciate the differences between the issue positions of the two sides. What

counts, then, is not how people feel toward groups, one by one; rather it is how they feel toward *pairs* of opposing groups.

Admittedly, this is not the usual way to think of the relation between rationality and affect (or likes and dislikes). Customarily, the two are supposed to be opposed to each other, as though one obstacle to making sense of politics is having intense likes and dislikes. Our findings, however, suggest just the reverse. The person who has the least success in figuring out what the other side stands for is the one who does not dislike them; to understand that the other side really does stand for policies at odds with your own, you should dislike them. More fundamentally, taking account of your likes and dislikes helps ensure the accuracy of attitude attribution to the extent it accentuates the difference between your side and the other. Thus, a liberal who likes his side and very much dislikes the other tends to emphasize *both* how conservative conservatives are and how liberal liberals are. Otherwise, the tendency to presume agreement (false consensus) would get the upper hand, if not in a person's perception of the other side, then in his perception of his own.

The notion of affective consistency is potentially a fruitful one, or so it seems to us (Sniderman and Tetlock, 1986c). It seems, without it, hard to understand just what holds mass belief systems together, what serves as their glue. The mass public surely does not command much abstract knowledge of politics and as a rule does not even pay much attention to it. It seems implausible, therefore, to suppose that the general public is able, or at any rate willing, to assemble complex cognitive hierarchies of political ideas. In contrast, likes and dislikes are easy to form and, even more important, easy to remember. Accordingly, affect can be a quite efficient way of encoding and storing what is after all the most vital political information: Who and what one is for or against.

There should be no need of a lengthy warning on the dangers of reifying affect or of laying out a false choice between affective and cognitive consistency. It should suffice to observe that affect itself may be the residue of long biographies of cognitive transactions. Nonetheless, likes and dislikes can provide a certain cement to mass belief systems, and so supply a foundation, not only for estimating the preferences of others, but also for inferring one's own (Sniderman, Brody, and Kuklinski, 1984).

However that may be, the mass public is remarkably accurate in attributing positions to strategic groups on major issues. Partly this is a matter of reality perception, of having a knowledge of the group's actual position, but partly it is the result of an intellectual shortcut, a likability heuristic, which allows many in the mass public to figure out who stands on the left, and who on the right, without necessarily knowing a lot about politics or ideology. Accordingly, it may be a mistake to suppose that ideological reasoning, in this sense, is altogether outside the reach of many of the mass public – a mistake because ideological reasoning, at its core, involves an understanding of who wants what, and many citizens can figure this out, thanks to the role of groups in organizing their political thinking.

No doubt this is a partial understanding of ideology; all the same, it is an understanding of a particularly important part of it.

APPENDIX 6.A: AN EXPANDED CHOICE PROBLEM

Assume that people choose all their perceptions about and feelings for a group at the same time. To describe this situation, we add the subscript m, for issues, to the perceptions, P_{ijm}, true positions, T_{jm}, beliefs, B_{im}, and all of the constants in equation (7). In addition, we use primes to represent the opposite group so that we have $P_{ijm}{}', T_{jm}{}', A_{ij}{}'$, $A_{ij}{}'^{*}$, and primes on all of the constants. The minimand is then:

$$\begin{aligned} Q = {} & \Sigma_m a_m (P_{ijm} - F_i T_{jm})^2 \\ & + \Sigma_m a_m{}' \,(P_{ijm}{}' - F_i T_{jm}{}')^2 \\ & + \Sigma_m (b_m + c_m A_{ij})(P_{ijm} - B_{im})^2 \\ & + \Sigma_m (b_m{}' + c_m{}' A_{ij})(P_{ijm}{}' - B_{im}{}')^2 \\ & + \Sigma_m e_m (A_{im} - A_{im}{}^{*}(^2 \\ & + \Sigma_m e'_m (A_{im}{}' - A_{im}{}'^{*})^2. \end{aligned} \tag{13}$$

When this quantity is minimized, the resulting equations are:

$$\begin{aligned} P_{ijm} &= [a_m F_i T_{jm} \\ & \quad + (b_m c_m A_{ij})\, B_i]/(a_m + b_m + c_m A_{ij}) \\ A_{ij} &= -\Sigma_m (c_m/2em)(P_{ijm} - B_i)^2 + A_{ij}{}^{*} \end{aligned} \tag{14}$$

with similar equations for the primed quantities. Notice that the perceptions equation is exactly the same as in equation (8), and the feelings equation is similar except that the first term on the right-hand side is now a summation over all issues for the group, which suggests that the estimates of the feelings equations reported in the text will be biased unless these additional terms are uncorrelated with those terms in equation (8).

APPENDIX 6.B: THE FRACTION OF GUESSERS

It is not common to treat guessing as a bias, perhaps from a reluctance to second guess respondents. But given the demonstrated limits of mass understanding of political abstractions, it behooves us to consider it. The NES surveys may subtly encourage people who know where they stand on an issue also to tell the interviewer where they think groups stand on this issue, even though they are only guessing, because people may feel that knowing where these groups stand is a necessary concomitant of having their own view, and the survey only asks about the groups after asking individuals to place themselves on the scale. This approach may encourage people to place groups, even though they know very little about where the groups stand.

For example, consider the following model. Assume that a large number of people, for example, I, are asked to respond to each of M items on a sample survey. (We could index items by both the group, j, and the issue, m, but in this appendix, we simplify matters by just using m.) Further suppose that each item has $K + 1$ categories ($k = 1, \ldots, K + 1$). Assume that for each item, α of the respondents guess when they provide a response.

For the nonguessers, assume that they all share a common underlying dimension and that their response to question m is based upon their value for this unobserved random variable Y_m with respect to some unobserved "category boundaries" X_k, which are assumed to be the same across all M questions. These categories are assumed to be such that X_{k+1} is greater than X_k for all k, and it is assumed that X_o is minus infinity and X_K+1 is plus infinity. Specifically, a nonguessing person i will respond with the k'th category on the m'th question if Y_{im}', the person's specific value for Y_m' is greater than X_k-1 but less than X_k. Represent person i's choice of the k'th category on the observed scale by setting q_{ikm} equal to one and q_{ijm} equal to zero for $j \neq k$. Then the probability π_{km} that q_{ikm} equals one for a nonguesser can be expressed as:

$$\begin{aligned} \pi_{km} &= \text{Prob}(q_{ikm} = 1) \\ &= \text{Prob}(X_{k-1} < Y_m < X_k) \\ &= F_m(X_k) - F_m(X_{k-1}) \end{aligned} \tag{15}$$

where $F_m(.)$ is the cumulative distribution function of Y_m.

Assume that for these nonguessers the F_m can be parameterized by a location parameter, μ_m, a spread parameter, σ_m, and a common measure of kurtosis, γ, so that we can write the following:

$$V_{km} = (X_k - \mu_m)/\sigma_m \tag{16}$$

$$\begin{aligned} W_{km} &= \text{sgn}(V_{km})\ |V_{km}|\gamma \\ F_m(X_k) &= G(W_{km}) \end{aligned}$$

where $G(.)$ is chosen to be some absolutely continuous distribution function. If γ is one and if $G(.)$ is the cumulative normal, then F_m is just a normal distribution with mean μ_m and standard deviation σ_m, but much more general distributions are possible with this formula. One interesting subcase is the class of exponential power distributions discussed by Box and Tiao (1973, pp. 156–9).

Assume that a similar story holds for the guessers except that they have a common distribution across all items with a location parameter μ^*, a spread parameter σ^*, and a kurtosis parameter γ^*. Then the probability π_k^* of a guesser being in category k will be:

$$\begin{aligned} \pi_k^* &= \text{Prob}(q_{ikm} = 1) \\ &= \text{Prob}(X_{k-1} < Y_m < X_k) \\ &= F^*(X_k) - F^*(X_{k-1}) \\ &= G^*(W_k) - G^*(W_{k-1}) \end{aligned} \tag{17}$$

with:

$$W_k = \text{sgn}(V_k)\ |V_k|\gamma^*$$
$$V_k = (X_k - \mu^*)/\sigma^*$$
$$F^*(X_k) = G^*(W_k)$$

where $F^*(.)$ is the cumulative distribution function of Y^* for the guessers and where $G^*(.)$ is chosen to be some specific absolutely continuous distribution function.

With this notation, we can write the probability ϕ_{km} that any member of the sample, whether guesser or nonguesser, is in category k of question m as follows:

$$\phi_{km} = \alpha\pi_k^* + (1 - \alpha)\ \pi_{km}. \tag{18}$$

The probabilities ϕ_{km} can be written as a function of the unknown parameters:

α - the proportion of guessers,
μ_m - the location parameters for the nonguessers,
μ^* - the location parameter for the guessers,
σ_m - the spread parameters for the nonguessers,
σ^* - the spread parameter for the guessers,
γ - the kurtosis parameter for the nonguessers,
γ^* - the kurtosis parameter for the guessers,
X_k - the common category boundaries,

and we represent these parameters by the vector θ so that $\phi_{km} = \phi_{km}(\theta)$. The observed probabilities in the sample are:

$$p_{km} = \Sigma_i q_{ikm}/I \tag{19}$$

so that once the forms of $G(.)$ and $G^*(.)$ have been chosen, the statistical problem is to choose the unknown parameters θ so as to obtain the best fit between the $\phi_{km}(\theta)$ and the observed p_{km}.

In this situation, minimum chi-square and maximum likelihood are asymptotically equivalent (at least in terms of first-order efficiency; see Rao, 1973). Hence we choose to solve the following problem, which turns out to be easier to solve than the maximum likelihood estimation problem:

$$\text{Min}\Sigma_m(\phi_m - p_m)\ \Omega^{-1}(\phi_m - p_m)' \tag{20}$$

where we define:

$$\phi_m = (\phi_{1,m}, \ldots, \phi_{km}, \ldots, \phi_{k+1,m})$$
$$p_m = (p_{1,m}, \ldots, p_{k,m}, \ldots, p_{k+1,\text{m}})$$
$$\Omega = \text{Var}(p_m).$$

Var(P_m) can be further defined in the following terms:

$$\text{Var}(p_{km}) = \phi_{km}(1 - \phi_{km})/I, \text{ and} \tag{21}$$
$$\text{Cov}(p_{km}, p_{lm}) = -\phi_{km}\phi_{lm}/I.$$

It can be shown that minimizing equation (20) yields consistent estimates of the parameters. Moreover, these estimates will be asymptotically normal, and this makes it possible to undertake the statistical hypothesis testing described in the text.

A computer program has been written to minimize equation (20) when $G(.)$ and $G^*(.)$ are assumed to be the logistic distribution. This program obtains starting values by assuming that α is zero, that the scale is symmetrical and that γ is one. Then, a series of Gauss-Newton and gradient iterations are used to find the minimum of the generalized least squares form in equation (20).

By using this method for a sample of fifty placements (the current limit of the computer program), the kurtosis parameter for the distributions of the non-guessers is .987, with a standard error of approximately .01 and the category boundaries when symmetry is imposed are −4.17, −2.48, −1.0, 1.0, 2.48, and 4.17 versus −4.13, −2.45, −1.0, 1.0, 2.52, and 4.18 when symmetry is not imposed (with standard errors approximately .10). Finally, the fraction of guessers is estimated to be approximately 8.5 percent, with a standard error of a few percentage points.

7

Democratic values and mass publics

Easily the most imaginative rethinking of political tolerance since Stouffer's seminal study has been offered by Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus – imaginative, but possibly misleading.

Employed as a supplement, their analysis can be a valuable corrective, particularly in underlining that even people broadly disposed to tolerate others can find a particular group unacceptable to them. But Sullivan and his colleagues have adopted a more ambitious stance, taking the position that their conceptualization and analysis of political tolerance should replace the alternatives.

The fundamental premise of their approach is that political tolerance is sui generis. So they insist that, to be politically tolerant, a person must be willing to put up with a group they dislike, this being a root conception in the origin of political toleration of religious heterogeneity. For our part, a twentieth-century conception of tolerance has advantages over a seventeenth-century one: It is unreasonable, simply put, to insist that for a person to be racially tolerant, he or she must dislike blacks.

From our perspective, if the task is to understand how far ordinary people can undertake a commitment to a cornerstone value like tolerance, it is crucial to appreciate the nexus among forms of tolerance: political, racial, religious, and social. So in this chapter we supply a demonstration of how forms of tolerance that appear in their manifest content to be about quite different things – an acceptance of the political rights of controversial groups in one case and an acceptance of blacks in the other – share a common core because they share common causes.

The stakes in the analysis of tolerance are not insignificant. Notwithstanding its departure from Stouffer in terms of measurement, the analysis of Sullivan and his colleagues echoes Stouffer's pessimism in terms of democratic theory; indeed, their analysis greatly amplifies it since they reject Stouffer's prophecy of a more tolerant citizenry through education and socialization. As against this pessimism, we have persuaded ourselves, and would like to persuade you, that ordinary citizens are capable of making a principled commitment to the value of tolerance.

The more tolerant citizens are of the rights of others, the more secure are the rights of all, their own included – hence the special place of political tolerance in contemporary conceptions of democratic values and democratic citizenship.

This conception of tolerance has come under attack, not of course as undesirable, but instead as unrealistic. The public's support for the principle of tolerance, it is claimed, is not itself principled. People may be willing to tolerate

This chapter prepared by Paul M. Sniderman, Philip E. Tetlock, James M. Glaser, Donald Philip Green, and Michael Hout.

groups they like. But when it comes to those they dislike and fear, it is another matter altogether: Then the average citizen is all too likely to show just how intolerant he or she is (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus, 1979, 1982).

This revisionist thesis now dominates research on tolerance. However, we have become persuaded that it suffers a double weakness: On the one side, it overestimates the extent to which citizens' emotions – and their dislikes especially – dominate their political reasoning; on the other, it underestimates the extent to which they are capable of supporting a value like tolerance in a principled manner. This chapter, accordingly, has two major objectives – one negative, one positive. The negative objective is to rattle the bones of the revisionist thesis by establishing the extent to which, and the various ways in which, opinions of citizens on issues of tolerance are consistent. The positive, and more fundamental, objective is to demonstrate that substantial numbers of the general population are indeed capable of making a principled commitment to democratic values like tolerance – a demonstration of relevance to political psychology and democratic theory alike.

THE EMOTIVIST THESIS

Background

Americans now appear more tolerant politically than a generation ago. In 1954, only one-quarter of the population was prepared to allow an admitted communist to have a job even as a store clerk, hardly a sensitive position from a national security point of view; in 1973, 57 percent of them would do so – by no means an overwhelming consensus but a clear majority (Nunn, Crockett, and Williams, 1978, p. 43). But this change, which might seem to signal a growth in tolerance, is an illusion, Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus (1979) have argued. It reflects not an increase in the public's tolerance of politically nonconformist groups in general, but rather a decrease in their concern about, and hence a decrease in their intolerance of, groups on the left in particular. Ask Americans about groups they dislike and fear now, as they once disliked and feared communists, and they will show that they are as intolerant now as they were a generation ago.

The problem with the classic studies of tolerance, it follows, is the problem of pseudotolerance: people appearing to be tolerant of particular groups because they like or are simply indifferent to them. Consider, for example, the familiar hypothesis that political liberalism promotes political tolerance (e.g., Lipset and Raab, 1970). But, Sullivan and his colleagues point out, studies of tolerance following the Stouffer paradigm (e.g., Nunn et al., 1978) have focused on toleration of left-wing groups – communists, socialists, and the like. This focus on groups on the left, they go on to suggest, gives an edge to people on the left; for it is surely easier to support the rights of a group on the same side of the fence as oneself. See to it that liberals are asked to put up with groups on the right, as conservatives have been asked to put up with those on the left, and it becomes

apparent, in the words of Sullivan and colleagues, that "the levels of tolerance among liberals, moderates, and conservatives are only *marginally* different" (Sullivan et al., 1982, p. 186, emphasis in original).

There is another consideration: the relation between education and support for civil liberties. The classic studies of tolerance (Stouffer, 1955; Nunn et al., 1979) claim that schooling is an engine for political tolerance. The revisionist analysis of Sullivan and his colleagues calls this into question. The relation between education and a genuine commitment to tolerance, they contend, is weaker than had been supposed – far weaker, in fact (Sullivan et al., 1982, pp. 114ff.). The less educated tend to dislike groups on the left; the more educated, groups on the right. Hence, when asked only about groups on the left, the well educated will, misleadingly, appear to be markedly more tolerant than the less educated.

The revisionist view, then, has a deeply pessimistic cast to it; a pessimism that invites cynicism about the willingness of the average citizen to embrace, disinterestedly and consistently, a foundational value of democratic politics – tolerance. It had been disturbing when Stouffer and others (e.g. Prothro and Grigg, 1960; McClosky, 1964) documented the general public's indifference or outright opposition to civil liberties in the fifties; indeed so disturbing that it prompted a reinterpretation of democratic politics in the form of the so-called theory of democratic elitism, which stressed the role of political elites as guardians of democratic values (Bachrach, 1967). Still, there was reason to hope for improvement. An increasingly educated citizenry might contribute to tolerance. So, too, might a more liberal climate of opinion. Not so, according to the revisionist view. Americans are more educated, while the overall climate of opinion – as reflected in laws and social practice – has become more open-minded. Yet the mass of citizens are no more tolerant now than they were in the heyday of McCarthyism (Sullivan et al., 1979).

If the revisionist view is valid, the principal contribution that citizens can make to a tolerant society is to disagree about whom they do not want to tolerate. It is thus worth examination.

Definition of the emotivist thesis

What is distinctive about the revisionist view? Not the contention that disliking or feeling threatened by a group promotes intolerance. Stouffer had himself pointed this out and, in truth, no one has ever supposed otherwise. Rather, what gives the revisionist view its distinctive cast is the idea that political tolerance is the willingness to put up with ideas or people you dislike. After all, the revisionists point out, it takes no tolerance to put up with people you agree with, who want to do what you in any case approve of.

This emotivist thesis, which holds that a person should not be said to be tolerant of a group unless he dislikes it, is intuitively appealing. Certainly, it would be odd to describe a person as committed to the value of political tolerance on the ground that he supports the right of fascists to hold a public rally, if he is himself

a fascist and wants to attend the rally. Hence, the acid test of commitment to civil liberties, Sullivan and colleagues contend, is an individual's willingness to defend the rights of groups he or she dislikes.

The emotivist thesis offers an empirically grounded and normatively provocative account of the nature and limits of political tolerance. It is, accordingly, worth scrutiny both at a descriptive and at a prescriptive level.

CONSISTENCY

For empirical guidance we rely on a uniquely comprehensive survey series, the General Social Survey, conducted by the National Opinion Research Center.[1] The General Social Survey provides the best source of American opinion on diverse aspects of tolerance (political, racial, sexual, and social) over the past generation. The results are reported from the 1977 General Social Survey, and selectively cross-validated for 1980 and 1984. Since the analysis involves issues of racial tolerance, it focuses on whites only.

Our point of departure is political tolerance. Attitudes toward the rights of five groups were assessed: people who are against all churches and religion; people who believe that blacks are genetically inferior; people who admit they are communists; people who advocate doing away with elections and letting the military run the country; and people who admit they are homosexual. The five are heterogeneous politically. Some are on the left, such as admitted communists; others are on the right, such as militarists and racists; still others, though nonconformist, are not necessarily politically nonconformist, the homosexuals and atheists.

Attitudes toward the range of rights each group should enjoy were assessed. Specifically, respondents were asked three questions about each group: Would they support the right of a member of the group to make a speech in their community? Should a member of the group be allowed to teach in a college? And should a book written by a member of the group be removed from their public library if other people in their community wished it to be removed? All in all, then, the questions cover a range of groups and issues that have historically excited popular intolerance in America.

The minimalist version

In its simplest version, the emotivist thesis hinges on a double contention: first, that in making judgments about the rights of particular groups, people are fundamentally expressing their feelings, positive or negative, toward that group; and second, that how they feel toward one group has nothing necessarily to do with how they feel toward other groups. If so, there is no reason to expect consistency in people's attitudes toward civil liberties across groups.

One way of addressing this issue is to construct a series of measurement models and examine the relationship between the observed measures of tolerance and some underlying attitudinal dimension. Using LISREL, a factor analytic tech-

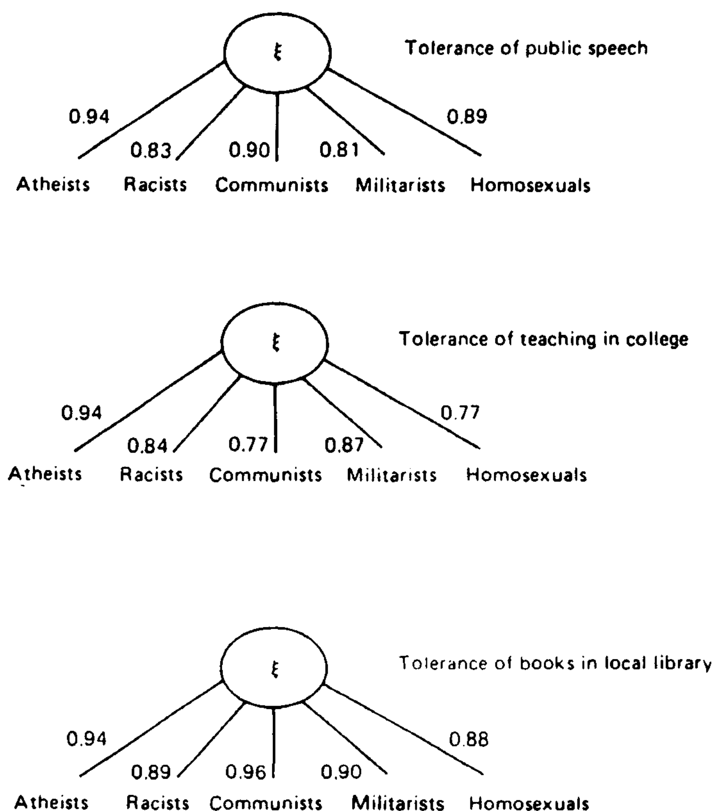


Figure 7.1. Measurement models of political tolerance, by activity, 1977. Entries are the standardized epistemic correlations between each indicator of group tolerance and the underlying tolerance factor for the activity in question. Number of cases = 1,454. Estimates obtained by the method of maximum likelihood. Standard errors range from 0.019 to 0.022. Source: General Social Survey.

nique that estimates the epistemic correlations between indicators and factors, we may see whether the relationship between observed tolerance toward any specific group and one's underlying or "true" level of tolerance varies widely from group to group.[2] It would strongly support the emotivist thesis, for example, if the correlations turned out to vary according to the ideological character of the group in question, for this would indicate that the "glue" holding the cluster of responses together is in fact group affect. Alternatively, it would bolster the emotivist thesis to observe a pattern of weak factor loadings, for this would suggest that the common topic of discussion that runs through all the questions, namely civil liberties, does little to generate consistency.

Neither turns out to be the case. As shown in Figures 7.1 and 7.2, the epistemic correlations across the various group referents and forms of expression are re-

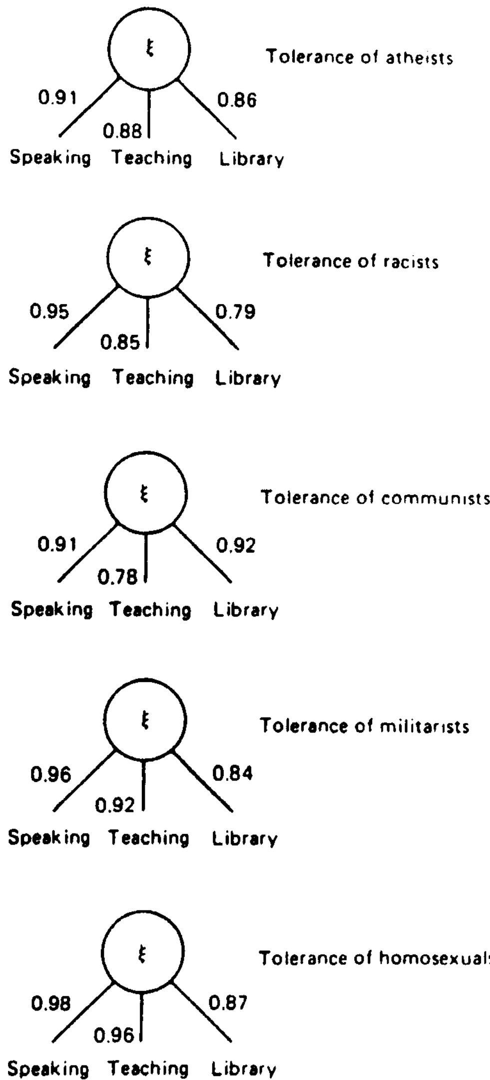


Figure 7.2. Measurement models of political tolerance, by group, 1977. Entries are standardized epistemic correlations between each indicator of tolerated activity and the underlying tolerance factor for the group in question. Number of cases = 1,454. Estimates obtained by the method of maximum likelihood. Standard errors range from 0.019 to 0.022. Source: 1977 General Social Survey.

markably strong and stable. There is little evidence that the expression of underlying tolerance in observed responses differs across groups or acts. For example, the loadings for the free-speech questions range from .81 to .94, with racists at .83 and communists at .90.

The LISREL results thus demonstrate quite clearly that consistency of response overwhelms both group- and act-centered inconsistency; and the emotivist thesis, though well positioned to give an account of cross-act consistency, is poorly placed to account for cross-group consistency.

However, the emotivist thesis can be taken to mean not merely that citizens' attitudes toward the civil liberties of groups depend heavily on whether they like or dislike particular groups but, additionally, that people's likes and dislikes of groups are themselves determined by a systematic consideration – their outlook on politics, for instance. This version of the emotivist thesis does imply consistency, over both acts and groups; so it merits attention in its own right.

A maximalist version

Clearly Sullivan and his colleagues have this more complex version of the emotivist thesis in mind. They thus take pains to show that people's likes and dislikes of political groups make sense politically: Liberals are more likely than conservatives to dislike, and therefore have more reason to be intolerant of, groups on the right; conversely, conservatives are more likely than liberals to dislike, and therefore have more reason to be intolerant of, groups on the left.

By a similar line of reasoning, Herson and Hofstetter (1975) speak of "discriminating intolerance." Some in the general public, they point out, are intolerant of the political right but not of the political left, while others are intolerant of the left but not of the right. McCutcheon (1985), relying on the powers of latent class analysis, has revived the core of the Herson and Hofstetter approach.

The pivotal suggestion here is that public support for the value of tolerance is frequently strategic – or, less flatteringly, hypocritical: Citizens support the rights of groups on their side of the political fence, and oppose the rights of groups on the opposite side. Accordingly, the key consideration is not how the general public, taken as a whole, responds to issues of civil liberties, but rather how people of opposing points of view respond to them. Table 7.1 shows, for liberals and for conservatives separately, the extent of consistency in support for civil liberties for atheists, communists, racists, militarists, and homosexuals. The selected statistic is odds ratios, the figures for liberals appearing in the left column, the figures for conservatives in the right. These ratios are defined formally in Appendix 7; here, let us remark informally that the ratios give an estimate of the likelihood of people responding consistently to pairs of groups, either tolerating both or refusing to tolerate both. As a summary statistic the ratios have two favorable features: Like unstandardized regression coefficients, the ratio ensures that comparisons of liberals and conservatives are not biased by differences in the variance of their tolerance scores; unlike standardized regression coefficients, the ratios are symmetrical.

If the more complex version of the emotivist thesis holds, then conservatives should uphold the rights of groups on the right, the racists or militarists, while opposing the rights of groups on the left, the communists and atheists; conversely,

Table 7.1. *Log odds ratios for tolerance pairings (1977 General Social Survey)*

	Liberals	Conservatives
Atheist/communist	1.58	1.17
Atheist/racist	1.01	1.08
Atheist/militarist	1.11	1.16
Atheist/homosexual	1.47	0.94
Communist/racist	0.80	0.95
Communist/militarist	1.36	1.09
Communist/homosexual	1.31	1.23
Racist/militarist	0.89	0.98
Racist/homosexual	1.02	0.78
Militarist/homosexual	1.28	0.98

Note: Numbers represent the log of the odds ratio of the various item pairs. Odds ratios are defined formally in Appendix 7. The variables used in this analysis are whether a respondent will allow a member of a particular group the right to speak in public. Liberals are those respondents who described their political views as "extremely liberal" or "liberal"; Conservatives as those who described their political views as "extremely conservative" or "conservative." The analysis is restricted to white respondents.

liberals should uphold the rights of groups on the left, while opposing those of groups on the right. Nothing like this is the case, as Table 7.1 shows. The signs of the odds ratios for conservatives and for liberals are, in every case, identical – evidence of the consistency of their readiness to tolerate or to refuse to tolerate pairs of groups, whether the overall point of view of the group is congruent (e.g., atheists and homosexuals; racists and militarists) or incongruent (e.g., communists and racists; militarists and homosexuals), and whether the individual's own point of view is liberal or conservative.[3]

These results, by demonstrating consistency, undermine the maximalist version of the emotivist thesis. But they address only one of two ways that consistency may be conceived. On the one hand, consistency may be defined as the similarity of judges across objects judged; or, on the other, as the similarity of objects judged across judges.

To see the difference, consider the logic of a beauty contest. This particular contest has two judges, Bob and Ted, and two contestants, Alice and Carol. As it happens, Bob gives higher marks to both Alice and Carol than does Ted (consistency in sense one) yet both Bob and Ted give their highest scores to Alice, their lowest to Carol (consistency in sense two). It is, in short, possible both for Bob to find all women more beautiful than Ted, yet for both men to agree on which woman is the more beautiful, which the less.

As with beauty contests, so with issues of tolerance: One may ask if the person who is most tolerant of one group will be the one most tolerant of other groups. Alternatively, one may ask if the group that liberals find hardest to put up with is also the one that conservatives find most difficult to tolerate. The first kind of consistency is proof only of the consistency of individuals' levels of tolerance

relative to one another. Liberals and conservatives, however, may play favorites all the same: Each may give more support to groups on their side, less to groups on the other side.

This second view of consistency – as similarity over groups rather than over individuals – is less familiar than the first, but is no less important. It is, for example, just this sense of consistency that is at issue in the charge that IQ tests are racially biased; for the root of the charge is that some items are easy for whites but hard for blacks, while other items, which are equally valid and could have been used, would have been easy for blacks but hard for whites.

The issue here is whether certain groups are easy for conservatives but hard for liberals to tolerate whereas others are just the other way round. To get empirical leverage on this problem, Figure 7.3 maps variation in acceptance levels of the rights of different groups, first for liberals and then for conservatives. Groups are arrayed in order, from easiest to hardest to accept. If the emotivist thesis is correct, the group easiest for liberals to accept should be hardest for conservatives to accept, whereas the group easiest for conservatives to accept should be hardest for liberals to accept.

The first, and most obvious, result in Figure 7.3 is that conservatives offer less support for the rights of every group. Indeed, liberals typically offer at least as much support to the group they support least as conservatives offer to the group they support most. Figure 7.3 holds a second, and still more important result: namely, that the groups that conservatives find it easiest to accept are the very same ones that liberals find it easiest to accept. Conversely, the groups that give conservatives the most trouble tend also to be the ones that give liberals the most trouble. Consider, for example, attitudes toward the availability of controversial books in libraries. Liberals are most supportive of racists, least of militarists and homosexuals. And conservatives? They, too, are most supportive of racists, least of militarists and homosexuals. Or consider attitudes toward teaching. Liberals are most supportive of homosexuals, least of militarists. Likewise, conservatives are most supportive of homosexuals, least of militarists. Finally, look at attitudes toward free speech. Both liberals and conservatives find homosexuals to be the hardest to stomach, and militarists to be the easiest.

In sum, the evidence runs against the idea that citizens play favorites and judge issues of civil liberties according to whether a group is on their side of the political fence or not. Instead, they show a strong tendency to consistency–consistency, moreover, not only with respect to the ordering of individuals across groups, but also with respect to the ordering of groups by individuals.

"PRINCIPLED" VERSUS "SITUATIONAL" TOLERANCE

Two objections to this showing of consistency can be made, one possibly obvious, the other assuredly not. Let us take up the obvious one first.

So far, the evidence shows responses to tolerance questions have a strong tendency to consistency, variously defined. But notice that all the questions refer

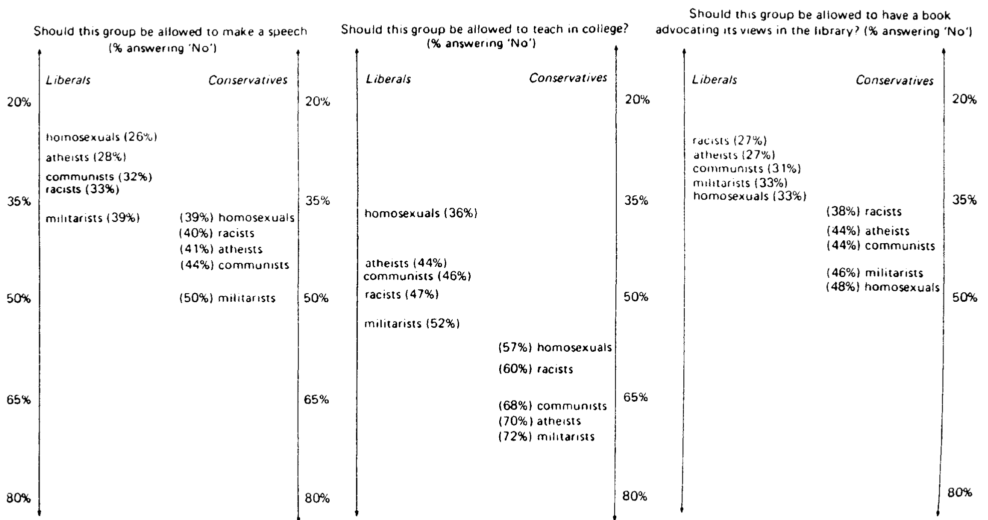


Figure 7.3. Percentage intolerant, by group to be tolerated, for liberals and conservatives.

to one kind of tolerance, political tolerance, and no other. Notice, also, the repetition in measurement: First, three questions are asked about one group, then the same three about a second group, then about a third, fourth, and fifth group. Apart from referring to different groups, each trio of items is (nearly) identical in wording and the three are asked, moreover, one right after the other. It is, accordingly, only natural to wonder if this barn-door style of measurement exaggerates the tendency to respond consistently. If so, the evidence we have surveyed may be read as proof, not of coherent attitudes toward issues of tolerance on the part of ordinary citizens, but rather of measurement error on the part of survey researchers.

The second objection turns on a fundamental question: What does it mean to say that a person supports the value of tolerance on principle? Consider toleration of free speech for atheists and for socialists. Broadly speaking, it is obvious that one person may support free speech for both out of a principled commitment to freedom of speech while another may do so because he happens, for different reasons, to agree with atheists and to agree with socialists. This is an obvious enough point, but one with a by-no-means obvious lesson. Despite the fact that one of these people is acting out of a principled commitment to tolerance whereas the other is not, the two are indistinguishable; both are consistent in their support of tolerance or, still more exactly, both are equally consistent.

Let us put the problem more formally. Suppose there are four ways for people to be tolerant. Then, one can conceive a sixteen cell table, one cell of which (+ + + +) contains the count of people consistently tolerant, in the sense of giving affirmative responses to all four forms of tolerance. At the other extreme is a cell (− − − −) containing the count of people consistently intolerant, in the complementary sense of giving negative responses to all four forms of tolerance. Less obviously, respondents in the consistently tolerant cell (+ + + +) belong to two distinct sets: The first consists of people consistent out of a commitment to the principle of tolerance; the second, of people consistent for reasons special to each of the specific forms of tolerance rather than thanks to a general principle consistently applied. The first we shall call "principled" consistency, the second "situational" consistency.

The difference between principled and situational consistency matters greatly, not only for the understanding the nature of the public's support for tolerance but also for the development of democratic theory. To borrow from *Murder in the Cathedral,* it is not enough to know that citizens have done the right thing; it is important to learn if they have done it for the right reason. The problem, however, is that principled consistency and situational consistency are, in terms of observed responses, indistinguishable.

A twofold analysis, then, is called for: first, to investigate the linkage between kinds of tolerance dissimilar in content and measurement; and second, to distinguish empirically between principled and situational consistency.

Fortunately, in addition to questions on political tolerance, the General Social

Survey asks questions on racial tolerance, assessing attitudes about interracial marriage; socializing with blacks in homes; the "pushiness" of blacks; and fair housing. Unlike the so-called Stouffer items, the racial tolerance items are varied in content, format, and response alternatives. Our analysis, then, crosses three forms of political tolerance ("speak," "books," "teach") with four racial tolerance items, yielding twelve combinations; and does so for three groups – militarists, racists, and communists – selected to assure variety of political points of view and insure that it is not easier for liberals to be tolerant consistently than it is for conservatives. Hence, so far as consistency between racial and political tolerance obtains, it cannot be attributed to mere similarity of content or method of measurement.

To carve an empirical distinction between principled and situational consistency, we shall rely on Duncan's (1979) response consistency model. The model's mathematical logic is laid out in detail in Appendix 7. Its basic objective is straightforward. The model aims to estimate the proportion that possess a set of attributes simultaneously above and beyond the proportion expected to do so given the frequency of the attributes and the intercorrelations among them.[4]

A final point merits emphasis. Certain factors should strengthen a tendency to principled tolerance. Two in particular come to mind: education and liberalism (Sniderman, 1975; McClosky and Brill, 1983). Notice, however, this is no humdrum affair of finding out if education, or liberalism, encourages tolerance – an already familiar result. Rather, the crucial question is whether either, or both, predisposes the average citizen consistently to support tolerance *on principle*.

The principled consistency analysis, then, hinges on nine sixteenfold tables (three education groups by three categories of liberalism–conservatism), yielding a total of 108 analyses, the analyses being separate but not independent given that consistency is constrained across education and ideology within combinations of political and racial tolerance. The analysis of these sixteenfold tables yields the "principled consistency" ratios ( ), set out in Table 7.2. These ratios indicate the bonus of support for tolerance due to principled consistency.

The t ratios, accordingly, record how education and liberalism promote tolerance over and above their sizable effects on each tolerance item, taken separately. Take more educated liberals. The t of 2.38 indicates that more than twice as many well-educated liberals are consistently tolerant than would be the case in the absence of principled tolerance. Throughout Table 7.2, the largest principled consistency ratios are obtained for the better-educated liberals. This is a remarkable result, for it signals not simply that well-educated liberals are more likely to be tolerant, but rather that *they are the most likely to be tolerant on principle notwithstanding the fact that they are the most likely to be tolerant in any event*.

Table 7.2. *Principled consistency effect ratios (τ) by form of civil tolerance and racial tolerance item for persons at the extremes of education and political views*

	Less than 12 years education		More than 12 years education	
Racial tolerance item	Conservative	Liberal	Conservative	Liberal
Free speech				
Interracial marriage[a]	1.12	1.69	3.50	5.33
Black dinner guest[b]	1.41	1.69	3.74	4.48
All white neighbourhood[c]	1.43	1.72	2.84	3.41
Blacks shouldn't push[d]	0.40	0.83	1.37	2.78
Library book				
Interracial marriage	1.40	2.21	3.67	5.88
Black dinner guest	1.62	1.71	3.07	3.29
All white neighbourhood	0.97	1.10	2.08	2.36
Blacks shouldn't push	0.91	0.97	2.37	2.52
College teaching				
Interracial marriage	1.34	2.65	3.49	6.91
Black dinner guest	1.29	1.88	3.51	5.09
All white neighbourhood	0.99	1.70	2.41	4.13
Blacks shouldn't push	1.00	1.62	1.63	2.65

[a]"Do you think there should be laws against marriages between (Negroes/blacks) and whites?"
[b]"How strongly would you object if a member of your family wanted to bring a (Negro/black) friend home to dinner?"
[c]"White people have a right to keep (Negroes/blacks) out of their neighborhoods if they want to, and (Negroes/blacks) should respect that right."
[d]"(Negroes/blacks) shouldn't push themselves where they're not wanted."

Both education and liberalism, then, provide a bonus for tolerance, in the form of principled support. But education's bonus is bigger than liberalism's, at any rate as both have been assessed. So each row of Table 7.2 shows the principled consistency ratio is greater for more-educated conservatives than for less-educated liberals.

How is it possible for ordinary citizens to achieve some measure of principled consistency? Plainly, it is not plausible to suppose that they have a strong grip on the abstract concept of tolerance and are capable as well of rigorous reasoning from it. But recent research (e.g., Rosch, 1978) on prototypes suggests how citizens can put together a consistent position on issues of tolerance notwithstanding how little they typically know about abstract political concepts. From this point of view, to make judgments consistently about issues of tolerance it suffices to be able to summon to mind a particularly vivid example, or prototype, of tolerance, then determine whether the particular issue one is being asked about – say, letting a group use the local high school – is similar to it. The LISREL factor analysis showed free speech consistently to be the highest loading item (Fig-

ure 7.1); and "letting someone say what's on their mind" does seem a vivid, paradigmatic example of tolerance. Accordingly, it may supply the basis for consistency: The greater the similarity between it and some subsequent situation, the more likely a tolerant response. If so, no mysterious powers of cerebration on the part of the average citizen need to be assumed. Instead citizens learn what to call tolerant the same way they learn to apply a wide range of "fuzzy set" natural categories to complex, ambiguous, real-word events – on the basis of judgments of similarity. Concretely, they learn what is tolerant the same way they learn what is yellow (cf. Quine, 1969, p. 122).

Table 7.2 permits exploration of this natural category approach by presenting consistency effect ratios for each racial and political tolerance item. The racial tolerance items vary in similarity to the prototype of free speech. The most similar is interracial marriage: Both involve claims to officially validated rights – to talk freely, in the one instance; to choose freely, in the other – that do not conflict with competing rights. The issue of social intimacy with blacks is, by comparison, less similar; for it sets up the prospect of competing claims between the member of the family inviting a black friend home to dinner and the respondent who may have a different preference – and may have a claim to have that preference go unchallenged within his own home. Less similar still is the issue of fair housing, for it involves competing rights, not merely competing claims. Thus, the housing issue is defined by a conflict between the right of a prospective home buyer to purchase a home in any neighborhood and the claim on the part of current residents that they have a right to keep the neighborhood from changing. And least similar of all to the issue of free speech is the "blacks pushing" item; it alone does not make an appeal to some familiar right.

A reading of Table 7.2 suggests that similarity is indeed the basis of principled consistency; for the more similar the type of racial tolerance and the prototype of political tolerance, the larger the principled consistency ratios (t). Thus, interracial marriage tends to be the racial tolerance item most likely to evoke principled consistency, followed by black dinner guest, all white neighborhood, and blacks should not push, in that order.

A further buttress for the hypothesis that similarity-based judgments permit even citizens at large to achieve some principled consistency is the finding that education more strongly elicits principled consistency when the political tolerance items refer to free speech than otherwise. For example, take the ratio of principled consistency on the interracial marriage item among more educated liberals to the principled consistency on that item among less educated liberals for each of the political tolerance items. The result is [5.33/1.69 =] 3.14 for free speech, 2.64 for library book, and 2.60 for college teaching.

There is, then, reason to believe that citizens put together a consistent position on different forms of tolerance on the basis of judgments of similarity. But whatever the means, the point to stress is the kind of consistency they can achieve. An exceedingly stringent standard has been specified – stringent because it simulta-

neously involves three criteria. First, people must give tolerant responses to each of a battery of political and racial tolerance items. This is the conventional test of consistency and, strikingly, not a demanding one by itself with respect to tolerance. As seen in Table 7.2, even among less-educated conservatives (the group least likely to be tolerant on any of the items), there is a substantial minority who give four tolerant responses. Second, consistency arising because the tolerance items are positively correlated is discounted. The principled consistency ratios measure the extent to which observed consistency exceeds that expected on the basis of pairwise correlations. As Table 7.2 showed, nearly all of them are significantly greater than 1.0, indicating a surplus consistency attributable to the generalization of tolerance. Third, as a matter of construct validity, principled consistency should correlate with education and liberalism. As Table 7.2 shows, this clearly is the case.

Why do we set stringent standards for consistency? Quite simply, to drive home the finding that substantial numbers of the public at large put together a consistent position in favor of diverse forms of tolerance, both racial and political; and, equally important, that the degree of consistency they achieve is evidence of a commitment to the principle of tolerance, consistently applied.

The burden of previous research on tolerance has been to stress the numbers of citizens who are opposed to, or who are indifferent to, or who misunderstand principles of civil liberties. Our results point in a very different direction. The Duncan response consistency model shows that substantial numbers of the general public not only support different forms of tolerance consistently but that they do so on principle.

A CONCLUDING WORD

The emotivist thesis leads us to expect selective patterns of intolerance. People should play favorites, granting basic civil liberties to groups relatively close to them on the political spectrum and denying those same liberties to groups relatively distant from them. We observe, however, exactly the opposite pattern in our data. The person notable for tolerance of a group on the political left tends to be also notable for tolerance of a group on the right. Then, too, the groups that a person on the left finds it most difficult to put up with tend to be those a person on the right finds it hardest to tolerate, while the groups that a person on the left finds it easiest to put up with tend also to be those a person on the right finds least objectionable. In short, a hallmark of public attitudes toward issues of tolerance is consistency, both over groups and across individuals and over individuals and across groups – consistency, moreover, that is not merely a function of reactions to particular groups and issues but rather is a product also of a principled commitment to tolerance as a value.

It may be objected that our findings, rather than challenging the emotivist conception of tolerance advanced by Sullivan and his colleagues, simply go past it. After all, the root assumption underlying their conception is that an indispens-

able first step in assessing tolerance is to assure that people are being asked about groups they in fact strongly dislike and, in turn, that assurance can only be given by using their "content-controlled method," which is not available in the studies we have analyzed.

In fact, our findings demonstrate that the problem is just the other way round: Their conception of tolerance cannot be assessed properly using their method. The fundamental flaw is this. Sullivan and his colleagues say that a person cannot be said to be tolerant of a group unless he dislikes it and is nonetheless willing to put up with it; hence their content controlled method restricts attention to reactions to disliked groups. They take this position for an understandable reason: They fear falsely concluding that an intolerant person may appear tolerant because he liked or was simply indifferent toward the group in question. In short, they assume that tolerance is the natural, first response of people, a response they would be inclined to make except *in the case of groups they strongly dislike*.

Sullivan and his colleagues, however, assume too much. In order to tell if dislike is in fact a necessary condition of tolerance, it is necessary to take account of people's reactions not only to groups they dislike but also to groups they are indifferent to or possibly even like. And what we are thus able to show using our approach, which they are unable to show using theirs, is precisely that it is not true that people must dislike a group in order to be intolerant of it; and to suppose that they must reflects a profound misunderstanding of the nature of tolerance. The person who does not honor and protect the rights of those whose point of view clashes with his own is for this very reason a bad bet to protect the rights even of those whose point of view supports his own. On the other hand, the person who goes out of his way to support the rights of those he agrees with will also, and again for this reason, be a good bet to support the rights of those he disagrees with. To make this point as briefly and as graphically as possible: It is the racial bigot, not the person committed to racial tolerance, who is the more likely to oppose free speech for racists.[5]

In a word, dislike is not a necessary condition of tolerance; for the person loosely attached to the value of tolerance it can suffice that a group is out of the ordinary or merely unfamiliar to excite an intolerant response.

It is also vital to appreciate that the Sullivan et al.'s approach focuses too narrowly on the fact that nearly everyone dislikes some group, and thereby overlooks the far more important fact that some people dislike many more groups than do others and that some groups warrant dislike more than others do.

There is a double mistake here. On the one side, it is misleading to equate the person who has difficulty putting up with one particular group but is otherwise prepared to accept all the other groups regardless of their political outlook or character and the person who is unwilling to tolerate nearly any group that is, or gives an appearance of being, different, unfamiliar, or threatening. Yet, by focusing on reactions to only one or at most a few groups, this is just what the Sullivan approach does. It may be true that no one is perfect; it does not follow that everyone is equally imperfect.

The second mistake is this. Even if it is true that everyone is unwilling to put up with some particular group, it does not follow that everyone is intolerant. Quite simply, it is intolerant to refuse to accept as legitimate a group merely because its ideas are different; it is by no means intolerant – indeed it may reflect an effort to defend tolerance – to refuse to accept as legitimate a group because its conduct is violent and illegal. It is thus intolerant to refuse to tolerate socialists, but tolerant to refuse to tolerate terrorists. Sullivan's approach, by confining attention only to the fact that there is some group a person is unwilling to put up with, hopelessly confounds the two.

The emotivist thesis has given new force to the old idea that the public is ill-equipped – even unequipped – for democratic citizenship. The ordinary run of citizens, its adherents maintain, is bound to play favorites, rewarding friends and punishing enemies, so much so that even given favorable social and political circumstances they cannot deepen their commitment to tolerance as a value (Sullivan et al., 1979).

The fundamental question is whether ordinary citizens are capable of subscribing to tolerance – indeed, to democratic values generally. It would be foolhardy to suppose that they are uninfluenced by their likes and dislikes, their hopes and fears. The test is rather the relative consistency with which they protect and honor the value of tolerance. And our findings demonstrate that substantial numbers of them now do have a commitment to tolerance – a limited and imperfect commitment to be sure, but a genuine one all the same.

APPENDIX 7.A: A NOTE ON ESTIMATION

The model is a "log-linear model with structural zeros" (Goodman 1968; Fienberg 1980, pp. 142–50). It estimates the proportion of situationally consistent responses in the following way. Cross-classify persons from some subgroup of interest, say liberals with one or more years of college, according to whether they have given a tolerant response to four tolerance items. The result is a sixteen-cell table like Table 7.A.1, which presents both the observed and expected frequencies for one of the subtables we analyzed. In such a table we measure the association between a pair of items, say racial tolerance and tolerance of free speech for racists, controlling for the other two (tolerance of free speech for communists and quasi-fascists) using the odds ratio:

$$\theta_{ij} = F_{11ij} F_{22ij} / F_{12ij} F_{21ij} \quad (1)$$

(for $i = 1, 2; j = 1, 2$) where F_{11ij}, F_{22ij}, F_{12ij}, and F_{21ij} are expected frequencies under some (as yet unspecified) model. A subscript equals one for an intolerant response and two for a tolerant response. The first subscript refers to racial tolerance, the second to tolerance of racists, the third to tolerance of communists, and the fourth to tolerance of militarists. The odds ratios for the observed fre-

Table 7.A.1. *Observed and expected frequencies from cross-classification of liberals with more than twelve years of education and conservatives with less than twelve years of education according to responses to four tolerance items, United States, 1977*

Tolerance (coded) of			Observed frequencies of racial tolerance[a]		Expected frequencies of racial tolerance	
Communists[b]	Militarists[c]	Racists[d]	Intolerant	Tolerant	Intolerant	Tolerant
Liberals with more than 12 years of education[e]						
1	1	1	1	5	3.94	7.97
1	1	2	1	0	1.13	2.44
1	2	1	0	4	0.75	2.44
1	2	2	1	1	0.63	2.20
2	1	1	0	6	0.96	6.16
2	1	2	0	5	0.73	4.96
2	2	1	1	8	0.73	7.51
2	2	2	0	103	1.62	94.78
Conservatives with less then 12 years of education[e]						
1	1	1	30	14	30.58	13.12
1	1	2	17	7	14.97	6.84
1	2	1	3	0	3.18	2.20
1	2	2	2	3	4.60	3.39
2	1	1	2	6	3.31	4.51
2	1	2	5	8	4.28	6.21
2	2	1	1	2	1.38	3.02
2	2	2	5	14	5.25	13.66

Note: [a]"Do you think there should be laws against marriages between (Negroes/blacks) and whites?" A "Yes" response is considered to be intolerant (scored 1); "No" is considered tolerant (scored 2).
[b]"Suppose this admitted communist wanted to make a speech in your community. Should he be allowed to speak or not?" A "Not allowed" response is considered to be intolerant (1): a "Yes" response is considered tolerant (2).
[c]"Consider a person who advocated doing away with elections and letting the military run the country. If such a person wanted to make a speech in your community, should he be allowed to speak or not?" A "Not allowed" response is considered to be intolerant (1); a "yes" response is considered tolerant (2).
[d]"If such a person [one who "believes blacks are genetically inferior"] wanted to make a speech in your community claiming that blacks are inferior, should he be allowed to speak or not?" A "Not allowed" response is considered to be intolerant (1): a "Yes" response is considered tolerant (2).
[e]Liberals identified their political views as "extremely liberal" or "liberal"; conservatives identified their political views as "extremely conservative" or "conservative."

quencies are undefined because of the presence of zeros in some of the cells. Using the expected frequencies for highly educated liberals we obtain: $\theta_{11} = 1.07$, $\theta_{12} \doteq 1.07$, $\theta_{21} = 1.07$, and $\theta_{22} = 5.69$. The numerator of θ_{22} includes the expected number of consistently tolerant responses (F_{2222}); none of the other odds ratios depend on the extent of consistent tolerance. Because the odds ratios that

do not depend on consistent tolerance are all equal (although some differences may appear in practice because of rounding errors), i.e., $\theta_{11} = \theta_{12} = \theta_{21} = \theta^*$, we may suppose that situational consistency exerts a constant effect on all liberals with some postsecondary education and that θ^* measures that effect. If there was no normative consistency, we would expect θ_{22} to equal θ^* also; therefore our estimate of the effect of normative consistency on overall consistency is the ratio: $\tau = \theta_{22} / \theta^*$. We call this number τ the normative consistency ratio. Using the data for more-educated liberals we obtain a normative consistency ratio of 5.33; for less-educated conservatives we obtain a ratio of 1.12.

The normative consistency ratios are multiplicative parameters, so a τ greater than 1.0 indicates a positive effect and a τ near 1.0 indicates a weak effect. These numbers may also be transformed into percentage change factors. In general, any normative consistency ratio can be turned into a percentage change factor by subtracting one from the ratio and multiplying by 100 (i.e., $\Delta\% = (\tau - 1) \times 100$). For example, the 1.12 for less-educated conservatives indicates that, because of normative consistency, there are 1.12 as many conservatives without a high school diploma who give tolerant answers consistently as we could expect based on our knowledge of the pairwise correlations among tolerance items – that is, normative consistency increases overall consistency among less educated conservatives by 12 percent [$(1.12 - 1) \times 100 = 12\%$]. In a similar manner we calculate that normative consistency increases overall consistency among more educated liberals by 433 percent [$(5.33 - 1) \times 100 = 433\%$].

We can also estimate the number of situationally consistent responses. It is the frequency that would make θ_{22} equal θ^*:

$$F_{2222s} = \theta^* (F_{1222} F_{2122} / F_{1122}). \tag{2}$$

Our estimates of the number of situationally consistent responses are 17.77 for more-educated liberals and 13.70 for less-educated conservatives. The number of normatively consistent responses is the difference between the expected number of consistent responses and the number of situationally consistent ones:

$$F_{2222n} = F_{2222} - F_{2222s}. \tag{3}$$

Our estimates of the number of normatively consistent respondences are 77.01 for more-educated liberals and 9.33 for less-educated conservatives.

These calculations require that the expected frequencies satisfy the constraint $\theta_{11} = \theta_{12} = \theta_{21} = \theta^*$. This can be accomplished within the framework of log-linear models. We form nine sixteenfold tables: one for each combination of political views [recoded to a trichotomy of liberal ("extremely liberal" or "liberal"), middle of the road, and conservative ("extremely conservative" or "conservative")] and education [recoded into a trichotomy of less than 12 years, 12 years, and more than 12 years of schooling]. We combine the nine tables into one large $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 3$ cross-classification of racial tolerance (Y) by tolerance of racists (R) by tolerance of militarists (M) by tolerance of communists (C) by education (E) by political views (P). Then we fit a log-linear model that

includes all pairwise effects: [*YR*] [*YM*] [*YC*] [*YE*] [*YP*] [*RM*] [*RC*] [*RE*] [*RP*] [*MC*] [*ME*] [*MP*] [*CE*] [*CP*] [*EP*] to a table with a "structural zero" in each of the nine consistency cells (Fienberg, 1980, pp. 148–52). Because of the large number of cells with small counts, we add .25 to each frequency before beginning the fitting procedure. This increases total N by $(2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 3)/4 = 36$, so we use $wt = (f + .25) \times (N/(N + 36))$ as a weight. Degrees of freedom can be saved by using dummy variables to control variation in consistency across categories of education and ideology (dummy variables cannot be used in computer programs like SPSSX HILOGLINEAR or Goodman's ECTA that employ the iterative proportional fitting algorithm to arrive at expected frequencies; programs like GLIM and SPSSX LOGLINEAR can accommodate covariates and dummy variables). There is one degree of freedom for the main consistency effect that applies to all combinations of education and ideology, two degrees of freedom for the interaction between consistency and education, two for the interaction between consistency and ideology, and four for the three-way interaction among consistency, ideology, and education. The model we use eliminates the three-way interaction.

More complicated models may also be used. For example, this model could be relaxed to allow the associations between pairs of tolerance items to depend on ideology or education or both. In principle, any higher-order interaction that involves no more than two tolerance items is acceptable. As long as this principle is adhered to, the constraint $\theta_{11} = \theta_{12} = \theta_{21} = \theta^*$ will hold and the normative consistency ratio τ can be calculated for each combination of education and ideology.

To decide among the alternative forms of the response consistency model we use the likelihood ratio chi-square statistic: $L^2 = 2 \sum f \log_e (f/F)$, where f is the observed frequency and F is the expected frequency in each cell and the sum (Σ) is over all cells in the $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 3$ table (Goodman, 1970, 1972). Model selection was facilitated by the use of the *bic* index of fit (Raftery, 1986).

8
Ideological reasoning

A syllogism dominated research on ideological reasoning as our own research got under way. Its major premise – ideological reasoning centered on abstract categorization and deductive inference; its minor premise – mass publics were neither able nor motivated to handle abstraction or deduction, at any rate so far as politics was concerned. And from these two premises, the familiar conclusion – that ordinary Americans were innocent of ideology – followed naturally, it seemed inevitably.

This chapter reports a different view of ideological reasoning. It is a view that is deliberately less cognitive, less cerebral. Political thought is not just thought: It excites and expresses people's gut feelings, their anxieties and their aspirations, their likes and their dislikes. And when attention is paid to the affective as well as the cognitive character of political thinking, we want to suggest, it will become clear that more of the mass public can respond to ideological reasoning than is customarily supposed.

A widely accepted conclusion of research on political behavior – indeed, perhaps the most widely accepted conclusion – is that most Americans are "innocent of ideology" (Kinder and Sears, 1985). The average citizen pays little attention to politics, so not surprisingly knows little about it; takes inconsistent positions on issues or fails to take one altogether; and has an understanding of abstract political ideas that is egregiously superficial and impoverished (e.g., Wolfinger, Shapiro, and Greenstein, 1980; Erikson, Luttbeg, and Tedin 1988) Consequently, political ideologies like liberalism and conservatism exceed the reach of all but a small minority – perhaps no more than a tenth – of the American public (e.g., Campbell et al., 1960; Converse, 1964, 1975).

Evidence of ideological innocence continues to pile up (e.g., Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus, 1978; Hagner and Pierce, 1982), obscuring, however, a major anomaly. Americans may be unable to give a definition of liberalism or conservatism; nonetheless, many of them think of themselves as liberals or conservatives.[1] What is more, their ideological identifications are not whimsical or capricious but remarkably solid and fixed (Converse and Markus, 1979). And, not less important, the ideological identifications of Americans, by molding their perceptions of candidates, mold their voting behavior itself (Shanks and Miller, 1985).

This chapter prepared by John E. Chubb, Michael G. Hagen, and Paul M. Sniderman.

How is it possible for citizens to lack ideology, yet be guided by it – to be unable to explain the principles of liberalism or conservatism, yet maintain a liberal or conservative outlook? That is the anomaly we explore in this chapter.

In our view, the anomaly can be considerably resolved by recognizing the extent to which, and the way in which, reasoning about politics is rooted in people's feelings as well as in their beliefs. Ideological reasoning, it is commonly supposed, involves mastery of superordinate abstractions, like liberalism or conservatism. Such an approach represents ideological reasoning as a purely cognitive process, requiring marked skills in both abstraction and deduction, and is hence outside the reach of most members of the general public. This approach is one-sided: It emphasizes cognition, or thought, but neglects affect, or feeling. We shall sketch an alternative conception of ideological reasoning that recognizes the importance of people's feelings, their political likes and dislikes, in organizing their thinking about politics.

There is nothing novel in underlining the importance of feelings, or emotion, in political thinking. Traditionally, there was much respect for the power of ideology to excite passionate attachment and override moderation in political reasoning (e.g., Shils, 1956; Bell, 1961; and Lipset, 1985). More recently, there has been renewed interest in the affective character of political judgments (e.g., Conover and Feldman, 1981, 1986). But if our interest in affect is not original, our conception of its role more nearly is.

It is commonly supposed that feelings cloud political judgment; and, indeed, it has been specifically argued that citizens feel no inconsistency in simultaneously holding conservative positions on some issues and liberal ones on others precisely because they see no inconsistency in simultaneously liking both liberals and conservatives (Conover and Feldman, 1981). But there is an alternative supposition, for unless ideological feelings are typically illogical, there are circumstances under which feelings may facilitate or reinforce political judgment. In particular, the more consistent those feelings are with ideological beliefs and the more intensely they are held, the more ideologically coherent may be political reasoning. That, at any rate, is the proposition that we shall develop and attempt to support.

In doing so it is necessary, first, to challenge a couple of important conceptions of ideological feelings and identifications that differ from our own – one because it appears to exaggerate the illogical character of ideological feelings or affect, and the other because it obscures important differences between affect and ideological identification. Although each of these conceptions retains a certain amount of merit, their empirical weaknesses admit alternative conceptions, one of which we then propose: a simple rational model of political reasoning that includes two parameters, one for position and the other for intensity, or more specifically, one for ideological identifications and the other for ideological feelings. To explore the model's usefulness, we then validate a measure of ideological affect, demonstrating that although ideological likes and dislikes are clearly distinguishable from ideological identifications, they behave in ways that

are eminently reasonable. The measure and the model of which it is a part turn out to have notable implications for issues of political reasoning and for American politics more broadly.

The first implication is that the notorious lack of consistency in mass belief systems – especially between abstract concepts (like liberalism and conservatism) and specific opinions (about particular issues, for example) – may be less serious than is customarily thought, and where inconsistencies exist, significantly less irrational. By our estimates, *one-fourth* of the public makes strong connections between their ideological identifications and their positions on the issues, and the entire public shows a propensity to do so independent of cognitive ability but dependent upon the consistency and intensity of ideological feelings.

Beyond this, it turns out that the conventional interpretation of ideological orientations as a stable, long-term force is misleading. Ideological identification is indeed slow and steady in its pattern of change, but ideological affect is not: It is volatile and variable. Ideological affect also appears to have a previously unsuspected and politically significant asymmetry. Conservatives have stronger ideological feelings than liberals; they are more intense. Less symmetrical and more labile than ideological identification, ideological affect, from our perspective, adds a potentially useful dimension to our understanding of American politics.

TWO MODELS OF IDEOLOGICAL IDENTIFICATION

The renewal of interest in the affective character of ideology has grown out of empirical analyses of two relationships: first, between ideological identification and two measures of ideological affect – feelings toward conservatives and feelings toward liberals; and second, between these three and positions on issues. The most notable analyses of these relationships (Levitin and Miller, 1979; Conover and Feldman, 1981) both agree and disagree: They agree wholeheartedly that ideological identification and affect have only tenuous connections to issue positions, but they disagree fundamentally on the relationship between ideological identification and affect.

The Levitin–Miller model, depicted in Figure 8.1, treats ideological identification and ideological feelings (as well as an indicator of "ideological closeness") as multiple indicators of a single concept, ideological location. Although the model is not derived from a systematic measurement analysis, it is based on a direct and sound analogy to the measurement of party identification. As in the case of partisanship, ideological location is determined first by an individual's self-perception: in this case, by his position on a seven-point scale ranging from "extremely liberal" to "extremely conservative." Levitin and Miller use these responses to classify people as liberal (positions 1, 2, or 3), moderate (position 4), or conservative (positions 5, 6, or 7). Next, and again as in the case of partisanship, the strength of attachment is gauged. Liberals and conservatives are subdivided by their responses to questions that ask whether they "feel close" to

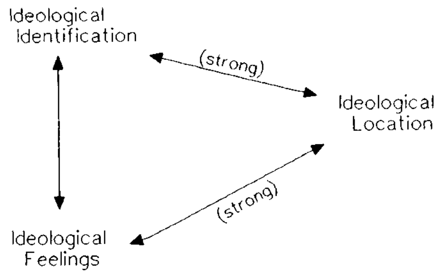


Figure 8.1a. Schematic version of Levitin–Miller model of ideological location.

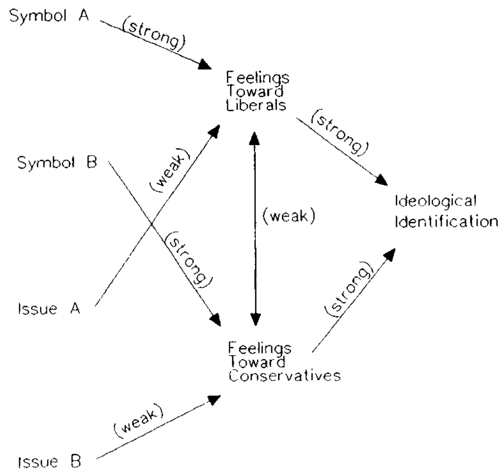


Figure 8.1b. Schematic version of Conover–Feldman model of ideological identification.

liberals or conservatives while moderates are distinguished by the relative strength of their feelings toward liberals and conservatives as indicated by "feeling thermometers." The result is a seven-point scale of ideological location on which two-thirds of the adult population could be positioned in 1972 and 1976 (Levitin and Miller, 1979, p. 754).

The justification for the Levitin–Miller model is straightforward. If all of the indicators are measuring essentially the same thing – and Levitin and Miller assume that roughly they are – reliability is usually enhanced by combining them into a comprehensive measure of one concept. The only question is how the indicators should be combined, and for that, the measurement of party identification provides a model. To be sure, this approach acknowledges that the indicators are not best viewed as interchangeable and therefore suitable for an additive index, but the separate properties of the indicators are nonetheless lost in the combination. Still, the measure turns out to have considerable external validity,

being strongly related, for example, to perceptions of the ideological commitments both of presidential candidates and the political parties. It has, however, only a loose connection to issues.

The Conover–Feldman model, depicted in Figure 8.1, is a critique of the Levitin–Miller model. Although both models begin with the premise that ideological identification is bound up with ideological feelings, the connection is specified very differently in the two. Whereas the Levitin–Miller model takes identification and affect to be coequal indicators of ideological location, the Conover–Feldman model takes ideological identification to be a dependent variable caused by ideological affect. In the Conover–Feldman model there is no ambiguity about the roots of ideological identification: They are affective. This is a point that Conover and Feldman go on to support in their empirical analysis. Ideological feelings are demonstrated to depend far more on feelings about major social groups than on positions on the issues, and to mediate virtually all of the relationships between issue positions and group feelings on the one hand, and ideological identification on the other (Conover and Feldman, 1981, p. 631).

But this is not the only, nor the most fundamental, difference between the two models. Conover and Feldman also contend that ideological feelings show little tendency to consistency. In the mind of the general public, they contend, liking liberals does not imply disliking conservatives, and vice versa. That is to say, feelings toward liberals and feelings toward conservatives tend to be largely orthogonal: They have distinct causes (symbol A and issue A or symbol B and issue B but not both, as in Figure 8.1) and are only weakly related. People may be simultaneously both liberal and conservative in their sympathies – without being inconsistent. So, from Conover and Feldman's perspective, it really is not an anomaly that ideological identification is widespread while ideological consistency and sophistication are scarce: Ideological identification and sophistication, quite simply, have little to do with each other.

TOWARD AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL: TWO SUGGESTIVE FINDINGS

In our view, each of these models errs in specifying the relationship between ideological affect and ideological identification – Conover and Feldman in dismissing the unidimensional structure of ideological affect, and Levitin and Miller in assuming that ideological feelings and identifications are nearly one and the same. Both models, as a result, lead to underestimation of the relationship between ideological identification and issue preferences in the political thinking of citizens, and overestimation of the political incoherence of their ideological likes and dislikes. For each model there is plain evidence that alternative specifications are in order.

Consider first the issue of the dimensionality of affect. Conover and Feldman challenge the assumption that the mass public's understanding of ideological labels is bipolar in structure. Instead, they suggest, citizens use different concepts

to define "liberal" than to define "conservative." Drawing on Kerlinger's theory of criterial referents (1967; 1984), Conover and Feldman argue that an ordinary citizen's understanding of liberalism is organized around one set of attitude objects and conservatism is organized around a quite different set – and that the two overlap little, if at all. For example, women's liberation or other "radical" movements may come to mind when one thinks of liberalism but not when one thinks of conservatism. Big business or other elements of "capitalism" may be criterial with respect to conservatism but not so for liberalism. This is in fact what Conover and Feldman (1981, pp. 635, 639) find by regressing conservative and liberal feelings toward major social political groups, and by categorizing respondent explanations of the meanings of the ideological labels. Liberalism and conservatism are, to use Kerlinger's term, dualistic. "Each," Kerlinger would say, "is an attitude system in its own right, a system that is relatively orthogonal to the other system" (1984, p. 34).

If this is so, ideological identification, which Conover and Feldman contend is rooted in ideological feelings, is quite different from ideology as it has been traditionally conceived. Liberalism and conservatism are not opposing ends of a continuum; they are not even on the same continuum. This, it is most important to recognize, is a more fundamental criticism of the unidimensional model of ideology than the familiar one that ideology entails multiple dimensions, different ones for different issue areas (e.g., Weisberg and Rusk, 1970; Coveyou and Piereson, 1977; Asher, 1980). From Conover and Feldman's perspective, on any given dimension liberalism and conservatism are not opposing points of view. It should be no wonder, then, that ideological feelings have little relationship to issue positions. Ideological affect lacks the very structure – liberal versus conservative – that is most basic to the conventional, cognitive concept of ideology.

The evidence that Conover and Feldman present is impressive, and it comports well with similar evidence that has been gathered about the meaning of party identification (e.g., Weisberg, 1980). But is their interpretation necessarily implied by evidence that feelings toward liberals and feelings toward conservatives do not, ceteris paribus, have their strongest relationships with the same reference groups? We think not. It is one thing to say that conservatism and liberalism have different concerns, the former, say, attaching priority to order, the latter to equality. It is quite another to say that liberalism and conservatism are not, and are customarily not perceived to be, opposing political positions.

Consider, for the sake of argument, the political parties. The programs of the Republican and Democratic parties are not mirror opposites. It is not the case, for example, that because the Republican party is especially committed to assuring national security that the Democratic party is therefore opposed to it. Moreover, the programs of the two parties are made attractive partly through artful touches of ambiguity (Page, 1978). Nonetheless, the logic of party competition is, and is commonly understood to be, bipolar: It is illogical, despite the tendency of some people to do it, to express enthusiasm and support for the Republican party and then do exactly the same for the Democratic party.

Table 8.1. *Unstandardized coefficients for regression of feelings toward conservatives on feelings toward liberals, by education, 1972–84*

	Education			
Year	Less than high school	High school graduate	College graduate	Total sample
1972	−.07	−.30*	−.34*	−.23*
	(.04)	(.03)	(.06)	(.02)
1976	.03	−.22*	−.56*	−.22*
	(.05)	(.03)	(.05)	(.02)
1980	−.12*	−.20*	−.57*	−.27*
	(.06)	(.04)	(.06)	(.03)
1984	.16*	.03	−.40*	−.05*
	(.05)	(.03)	(.05)	(.02)

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses. Models were estimated with (unreported) constant terms.
*p < .05, two-tail test.

Much the same holds for ideology. Liberalism and conservatism are alternatives, thanks to the logic of political competition. To favor one is to oppose the other. To support a liberal policy implies one should oppose the conservative alternative; or more exactly, it is understood to imply this by people who understand the structure of American politics. Liberalism and conservatism may very well embody disparate concerns. But it simply does not follow that the two points of view are therefore orthogonal, in the sense that one could, with respect to any given dimension, take the liberal side and the conservative one, without inconsistency.

The strongest evidence adduced in support of the argument that people fail to appreciate the opposition between liberalism and conservatism is the simple correlation between evaluations of the two. In 1976, it was a mere −.17 (Conover and Feldman, 1981, p. 630). Even allowing for attenuation due to the unreliability of the feeling thermometers, this correlation suggests that liberalism–conservatism and, by extension, ideological identification are not bipolar: Liking conservatives is not strongly associated with disliking liberals, at least not for the population as a whole.

But is this the proper test of bipolarity? Does a dimension lack bipolarity if the objects that anchor it are not evaluated as opposites unconditionally, or is the proper determining test whether these objects are evaluated as opposites under appropriate conditions? Given that there are obvious conditions under which we would not expect polarization, we think the more appropriate test is the latter. To begin with, ideological concepts are complex. It is no mystery if people with little schooling, for example, fail to understand that liking conservatives implies disliking liberals and the other way round. In Table 8.1 we see that this conjecture is supported. During the last four presidential years, persons with less than a high

Table 8.2. *Unstandardized coefficients for regression of feelings toward conservatives on feelings toward liberals, by ideological identification, 1972–84*

Year	Ideological identification			
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	None[a]
1972	−.13*	.07	−.20*	.22*
	(.04)	(.04)	(.05)	(.04)
1976	−.11*	.13*	−.32*	.22*
	(.06)	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)
1980	−.15*	.02	−.35*	.12*
	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.04)
1984	−.00	.32*	−.21*	.30*
	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses. Models were estimated with (unreported) constant terms.
[a]Includes "don't know" and "haven't thought much about it" responses.
*p < .05, two tail test.

school education harbored virtually unrelated feelings toward liberals and conservatives while those with a college education felt quite oppositely toward them. In between, and closest to the average relationship for the whole population, are high school graduates: Every one-degree increase in their feelings toward one ideological group is associated with one-fourth of a degree decrease in their feelings toward the other.

What does this imply for the dimensionality of ideological feelings? Does it support the conclusion that liberalism–conservatism is not a bipolar dimension and therefore that each should be employed as a separate indicator of mass ideology, as recommended by Conover and Feldman (1981, p. 641)? Not at all. The results indicate that ideological feelings can be characterized by a single dimension along which we find some persons – the better educated, most obviously – having more polarized feelings than others.[2] It may be sensible, therefore, to preserve the traditional, bipolar conception of ideology even when we consider its affective dimension.

One way to do this, of course, is via a concept such as ideological location proposed by Levitin and Miller (1979). A left–right continuum can be used to characterize both feelings and beliefs. And given that the two are strongly correlated – in 1976 feelings explained 36 percent of the variation in identification (Conover and Feldman, 1981, p. 629) – ideological likes, dislikes, and identifications could be employed as multiple indicators of a single concept. There is, though, one important problem: Ideological feelings and identifications do not measure the same thing.[3] This fact is suggested immediately by the simple relationship between the two, and will become quite apparent in the subsequent analysis.

In Table 8.2 we report the bivariate relationship between feelings toward liberals and feelings toward conservatives for different categories of identification

for each of the last four presidential election years. Consonant with Levitin and Miller, we classify as liberal anyone selecting positions 1, 2, or 3 on the identification scale, as moderate anyone choosing position 4, and as conservative anyone picking 5, 6, or 7.[4] If the identification scale and the feeling thermometers are tapping essentially the same trait, feelings should be polarized – that is, negatively related – for liberals and conservatives, but unrelated for moderates. Roughly, this is what we find, but only roughly.

If identification and feelings were measuring similar things, the feelings of self-identified liberals and of self-identified conservatives would be mirror images of each other. With commensurate variations in intensity, liberals would like other liberals and dislike conservatives whereas conservatives would feel essentially the opposite. That, however, is not the case. Conservatives are more polarized in their ideological feelings than liberals. Averaged across the four elections, conservatives reduce their evaluations of liberals a little more than one degree for every four degrees they raise their evaluations of themselves. Liberals, in sharp contrast, do not drop their evaluations of conservatives by a full degree until they increase their warmth toward their own side by more than ten degrees. In other words, the ideological likes and dislikes of conservatives are two-and-a-half times as responsive to each other as those of liberals. This is a potentially important finding for more than one reason and justifies further attention. But for present purposes it underscores a potentially substantial difference between ideological feelings and identification: An extreme identification does not imply polarized feelings. As a result, it may not make sense to combine them into a comprehensive measure as Levitin and Miller do: They may well be measuring different things.

AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL OF AFFECT, IDENTIFICATION, AND IDEOLOGICAL REASONING

Political reasoning, we want to argue, can profitably be viewed as a process of approximately rational choice. Individuals choose among political alternatives – candidates, issue positions, and so forth – by consulting their preferences on value dimensions that are affected by the choice. They choose the alternative that is closest to their ideal or bliss point in a space identified by the number of dimensions relevant to the choice. If ideology is the only dimension that matters to an individual, the decision process is straightforward: The alternative that is perfectly consistent with the individual's ideological position is chosen, provided it is available. If, however, ideology is not the only dimension at stake in a decision, the process is less straightforward. The individual not only has to take into account multiple values but may have to make tradeoffs among them.

Consider an individual choosing an issue position where ideology comes into conflict with another dimension, say self-interest (narrowly defined). In this example the individual is a solid conservative (a six on the ideological identification scale) with a solid self interest (a six on a seven-point self-interest scale) in

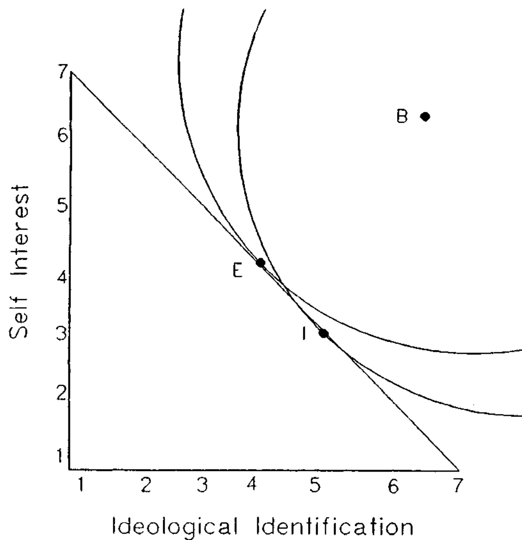


Figure 8.2. Ideological choice with different intensities.

a liberal policy – for example, import protection for the industry in which this individual works. His choice problem, graphed in Figure 8.2, is determining the policy option closest to his bliss point, *B*. He cannot have his ideal point because his self-interest (in this case) and his ideology (as it is conventionally understood) are inconsistent. He can endorse a liberal position in order to further his self-interest or sacrifice his self-interest in order to preserve his ideological integrity. He can also give a little on both. If we assume that the two dimensions are perfectly compatible, and negatively related (either by logic or reality), the individual must choose an issue position from those along the diagonal defined by the complementary pairs: (7,1), (6,2), and so on.

Which point along the diagonal is chosen depends on how the individual makes tradeoffs between the dimensions. If the individual values equally increments of the same size on the two dimensions, the individual will be indifferent among all alternatives that are equidistant from his ideal point. His indifference curves will be circular and, in this instance, he will choose alternative *E* with coordinates (4,4). If, however, the individual does not value increments of the same size equally, his indifference curves will not be circular, and he will not choose *E*. An individual who feels intensely about his ideology will have elliptical indifference curves, reflecting his willingness to concede relatively large amounts of his preferred outcome on another dimension to remain relatively close to his preferred outcome on the ideological dimension. In this case the ideologically intense individual chooses outcome *I* with coordinates (5,3). But, absent any information about ideological intensity, there would be no way to determine this. Multidimensional choices require tradeoffs, and tradeoffs cannot be made without intensities.

This elementary point is frequently lost in the conceptualization of ideological reasoning. It is presumed, for example, that a rational individual who identifies himself as an extreme conservative (by choosing position 7 on a self-identification scale) will choose an extreme conservative position (or something quite close to it) on issues to which liberal–conservative ideology is directly relevant. If the individual prefers more conservative positions to less conservative positions generally, he should also prefer them specifically. But this does not necessarily follow. It depends on how intensely the general ideological position is held. An individual may well identify with an ideological position yet not do so intensely; he simply may not attach great value to ideology. Previous conceptualizations of ideological reasoning implicitly treat the ideological identification scale as if it were a cardinal utility scale telling us not only something about an individual's ideological preference ordering but about his intensities as well. Logically, that is unwarranted.

Ideological reasoning is properly viewed as a matter of satisfying the intensity as well as the order of ideological preferences – and preferences on other dimensions. Thus, an individual who identifies with an ideological position and feels strongly about it is more likely to take positions on issues that are consistent with his ideological identification than is an individual who takes the same ideological position but does not feel strongly. The individual who does not feel strongly about ideology derives more satisfaction (or utility) by choosing according to his preferences on dimensions on which he feels more strongly. Because research has analyzed ideological preferences without taking into account ideological intensity, it may be no wonder that the relationship between ideological identification and issue positions appears to be weak.

To explore this line of argument empirically it is necessary to measure ideological intensity or how strongly ideological positions are valued. This is no easy task: There are logical obstacles to gauging and comparing individual intensities, and in any case, the NES surveys do not explicitly ask respondents how strongly they feel about their ideological positions or identifications.[5] Still, the surveys ask respondents how they feel about liberals and conservatives, and in those responses may lie indicators of ideological intensity. That, at any rate, is the assumption that we shall make, and of course evaluate empirically. Specifically, we assume that the intensity of ideological preferences can be gauged by the relative strength of an individual's feelings about his own ideological side and his ideological opponents. Or to say the same thing in a more familiar way, we take the consistency and polarization of liberal and conservative affect to be a proxy for ideological intensity. If our model has any merit – and political reasoning is a function not only of where people stand but how intensely they feel – the relationship between ideological identifications and issue positions ought to vary with this affective measure of ideological intensity.

MEASURING IDEOLOGICAL INTENSITY

Before the model of ideological reasoning can be put to use, it is necessary to validate our measure of ideological intensity or affect – in particular, to establish

that feelings toward liberals and conservatives should be employed in a single measure that both exhibits the logical properties of intensity and is distinguishable from ideological identification itself. For purposes of interpretation it will also be useful to gain some insight into the sources of its variation, that is, the conditions under which ideological affect is most and least pronounced.

Operationally, our measure of ideological affect is the difference between an individual's thermometer rating of the group with which he identifies and his thermometer rating of the opposing side. For example, a self-identified conservative – for our purposes, someone who chooses position 5, 6, or 7 on the ideological self-placement scale – who rates conservatives at 80 and liberals at 20 on their respective feeling thermometers receives an ideological affect score of 60. A self-identified liberal who provides the opposite responses also scores a 60. In other words, our measure is without ideological direction: Individuals whose feelings toward the two types do not differ are scored 0 while individuals whose feelings differ maximally are scored 100.[6] This is especially important to note for it means that intensity itself is not expected to bear a direct relationship to political positions or beliefs that are scaled left to right; intensity is rather expected to work through ideological identification. Finally, moderates – individuals at position 4 on the self-placement scale – and individuals who report that they "haven't thought much about" their ideological identification are given the affect score equal to the absolute value of the difference between their feelings toward liberals and conservatives. For all ideological types the measure premise is the same: The intensity of ideological preferences is a function of the consistency of ideological feelings and identifications on the one hand, and of the polarization of feelings about the alternatives on the other.

What, then, is associated with the consistency and polarization of ideological affect? And, do the patterns of association suggest that the measure is a suitable proxy for intensity? An affirmative answer to the latter would appear to hinge on two findings: that the measure is actually capturing an aspect of ideological orientations that is distinct from ideological identification (or its extremity), and that the measure varies in logical ways with factors that ought to be associated with liberal – conservative ideology, specifically education and party identification. We explore these issues by estimating the following model of ideological affect for the 1976, 1980, and 1984 presidential years,

$$Y = B_o + B_i \Sigma_i^6 X_i + B_{jk} \, {}_k\Sigma_j X_k X_j + e \qquad (1)$$

where:

Y	=	Ideological Affect
X_i	=	Liberal, Conservative, No Identification, Ideological Extremity, Education, Partisan Strength
X_j	=	Education, Partisan Strength
X_k	=	Liberal, Conservative, No Identification
B_o	=	Constant
B_i	=	First-order coefficients
B_{jk}	=	Interaction coefficients
e	=	error

These equations both fit with and depart from established expectations. They fit with expectations by focusing on variables – ideological identification, education, and party identification – either already demonstrated to be causally relevant or readily inferable to be so. They depart from established expectations by predicting that the relationship between these variables on the one side and ideological affect on the other is not linear. Based on the differences between ideological identifications and feelings observed earlier, the connection between ideological affect and ideological identification is expected to be asymmetric, and that between affect and both education and partisanship to be interactive with the direction of identification.

To capture this hypothesis of ideological asymmetry, ideological identification is broken into two components, extremity and direction. Ideological extremity is the distance, in absolute terms, of an ideological identification from the middle of the scale, or position 4.[7] For example, both extreme conservatives (position 7) and extreme liberals (position 1) are scored 3 on ideological extremity while moderates (position 4) and individuals without identifications are scored 0. The direction of identification is measured with dummy variables. When moderates are used as a baseline, dummy variables indicate individuals who choose positions 1, 2, or 3: liberals; positions 5, 6, or 7: conservatives; and those who report that they "haven't thought much about it": "no identification." The effects of the other variables are assumed to depend on these categories of identification; hence, interaction terms are specified between the dummy variables and education and partisan strength. The number of years of schooling (0 to 17) indexes education, which is also expected to have a first-order relationship with affect. Finally, because ideological affect is measured with left-right direction, the party identification scale is folded over at its midpoint (exactly as ideological identification was manipulated) to form a measure, partisan strength, that also lacks left – right direction. It too should have first-order as well as interactive effects.

The model was estimated using ordinary least squares for the complete election season samples in the 1976, 1980, and 1984 National Election Study surveys.[8] The unstandardized and standardized coefficients and the standard errors are reported in Table 8.3. *Caution is due in interpreting the coefficients because the effects of most variables are conditioned by interactions, and these must be aggregated before many of the partial effects can be stated.* But properly assembled – and allowing for some variation over time (that will be addressed subsequently) – the estimates support several conclusions about ideological affect.[9]

First, ideological affect indexes political logic, not illogic. It increases noticeably with education, a one-year increase producing a 2-point increase in affect. The difference between a high school diploma and a college degree is about 8 points of ideological intensity or roughly one-third of a standard deviation (see Table 8.7). Second, ideological feelings and ideological identification are not one and the same. More extreme ideological positions are indeed associated with more polarized ideological feelings: A 1-unit increase in ideological extremity yields a

Table 8.3. *Parameter estimates for model of ideological affect, 1976–84*

	1976		1980		1984	
Liberal	−46.80*	(8.44)	−52.56*	(11.84)	−52.75*	(8.62)
	−.79		−.79		−.90	
Conservative	−25.53*	(7.34)	−39.52*	(10.23)	−43.56*	(7.76)
	−.52		−.72		−.83	
No identification	2.38	(6.31)	−4.46	(9.06)	−5.80	(6.75)
	.05		−.09		−.11	
Ideological extremity	10.73*	(1.14)	13.29*	(1.44)	12.76*	(1.14)
	.44		.55		.50	
Education	.38	(0.39)	.25	(0.57)	.35	(.40)
	.05		.03		.04	
Partisan strength	.87	(0.96)	−.73	(1.45)	1.41	(1.02)
	.04		−.03		.06	
Education – liberal	2.46	(0.57)	1.51**	(0.80)	2.51*	(0.58)
	.56		.31		.59	
Education – conservative	1.64*	(0.50)	1.84*	(0.71)	2.12*	(0.53)
	.44		.46		.58	
Education – no identification	−.55	(0.48)	−.34	(0.68)	.27	(0.51)
	−.12		−.07		.06	
Partisan strength – liberal	1.36	(1.57)	5.44*	(2.16)	1.31	(1.59)
	.05		.17		.05	
Partisan strength – conservative	−.19	(1.37)	3.25**	(1.88)	2.15	(1.39)
	−.01		.13		.10	
Partisan strength – no identification	.29	(1.28)	2.83**	(1.74)	1.03	(1.33)
	.01		.11		.04	
Constant	5.23	(5.32)	13.78**	(7.86)	5.66	(5.55)
R^2	.16		.20		.16	
N	1838		1351		1901	

Note: First line entries are unstandardized coefficients and (standard errors); second line entries are standardized coefficients.
$*p \leq .05$, two tail test.
$**p \leq .10$, two-tail test.

10- to 15-unit increase in ideological affect, nearly half a standard deviation (see Table 8.7). But – and this is the important point – the direction of one's ideology matters a great deal. Identifying liberal has a greater dampening effect on ideological affect than identifying conservative: In 1976 the difference is 21 points,

in 1980 13 points, and in 1984 9 points.[10] (Having no identification is statistically indistinguishable from identifying with the moderate position.) In addition, the conditioning effect of partisanship and education differs across identification groups. This asymmetry is important not only because of the distinction between identification and feelings that it underscores but also because of a second conclusion that it suggests. Contemporary conservatives and liberals may take opposing positions on the issues and hold generally opposing beliefs but their feelings are not mirror opposites: All things being equal, conservatives have more polarized feelings than liberals. Having allowed for differences in education, which matter a lot, and in partisanship, which have significant consequences only in 1980, it appears that contemporary conservatives have more ideological affect than liberals.

Given the complexity of the model specification, it is useful to highlight this conclusion, and the others, by calculating the predicted ideological affect values for different types of individuals. For the three presidential election years of 1976, 1980, and 1984, the predicted affect of self-identified conservatives and of self-identified liberals is reported (see Table 8.4) for each of several disparate categories of education (12 and 16 years), partisan strength (0 and 3), and ideological extremity (1 and 3). The predictions describe the explicable range of ideological feelings, covering temperatures from 0 (or less) degrees, which includes independent, nonextreme individuals with a high school education, to 50 or more degrees, individuals who are strongly partisan conservatives or liberals with a college education. Partisan strength accounts for part of this variation, the average difference in predicted ideological affect between strong and weak partisanship being 8.2 degrees. Education and ideological extremity explain progressively more. On average, affect is predicted to differ by 9.4 degrees between the college educated and those persons with high school diplomas, and by 25.8 degrees between ideological extremists and those identifiers who are only 1 point from being moderates. All of these effects are somewhat stronger for self-identified liberals than conservatives in 1976 and 1980, serving to reduce the differences in affect between liberals and conservatives as individuals register increases in partisan strength, education, and ideological extremity. Yet, throughout the range of reinforcing conditions, the affects of liberals and of conservatives differ. Where reinforcement is absent, conservatives average 10.9 degrees more affect than liberals; where reinforcement is at its maximum, conservatives average 6.9 degrees more.

These results recommend against the treatment of ideological affect as a dualistic trait (Conover and Feldman, 1981, p. 641). The fact is that when ideological affect is gauged by the consistency and polarization of feelings toward the opposing sides of the traditional ideological spectrum, it varies predictably with ideological identification, education, and partisanship. In other words, ideological affect conforms to conventional ideological logic: The more politically aware and committed the citizen, the more bipolar is his or her ideological affect. The results also indicate that it could be misleading to combine measures of ideological identification and feelings (e.g., Levitin and Miller, 1979) as if they indicate

Table 8.4. *Predicted ideological affect for selected polar types, 1976–84*

Education	Ideological extremity	Partisan strength	1976 Liberal	1976 Conservative	1980 Liberal	1980 Conservative	1984 Liberal	1984 Conservative
College graduate (16 years)	Extreme (3)	Strong (3)	42.8	46.2	49.4	61.1	45.1	50.6
		Independent (0)	36.1	44.2	35.2	53.6	37.0	39.9
	Nonextreme (1)	Strong (3)	21.3	24.8	18.8	30.5	19.6	25.1
		Independent (0)	14.7	22.7	4.6	23.0	11.5	14.4
High school graduate (12 years)	Extreme (3)	Strong (3)	31.4	38.1	42.4	52.7	33.7	40.7
		Independent (0)	24.7	36.1	28.2	45.2	25.6	30.0
	Nonextreme (1)	Strong (3)	10.0	16.7	11.8	22.2	8.2	15.2
		Independent (0)	3.3	14.7	−2.3	14.6	0.0	4.5

Note: Predictions are derived from parameter estimates reported in Table 8.3.

the same thing. At least in 1976 and 1980 they do not. And if they are more closely related in 1984, the implication is not that they should be regarded as multiple indicators but rather that, because they behave differently over time, they should be kept distinct.

To be sure, these results do not demonstrate that ideological feelings, organized in our fashion, measure ideological intensity. But they are consistent with such an interpretation. In addition, the results do not demonstrate that there is more to be learned about mass ideology by employing our model of ideological reasoning as opposed to the more affective model proposed by Conover and Feldman or the more conventional model proposed by Levitin and Miller. These things remain to be seen. It is time to consider, therefore, a problem of ideological reasoning – the inconsistency of ideological identifications and issue positions – that our model may help to resolve, if it is properly operationalized and valid.

IDENTIFICATION, AFFECT, AND ISSUE PREFERENCES

In our view, ideological feelings are a reflection of the intensity with which ideological positions are held. If this is so, they should contribute an important element to the process of political reasoning. Whereas ideological identification is arguably a reflection of an individual's nominal political preferences, it is not, unless we are willing to make strong assumptions about the scale, a measure of the strength of the preference. Because rational choice depends on preferences and intensities alike, ideological affect should make a clear contribution to political reasoning: It should condition the relationship between general political preferences, as measured by ideological identification, and specific issue positions.

To test this expectation we estimate the following four models:

$$Y_i = B_o + B_1 I + e \quad (2)$$

$$Y_i = B_{+} B_1 I + B_2 IA + e \quad (3)$$

$$Y_i = B_o + B_1 I + B_2 IE + e \quad (4)$$

$$Y_i = B_o B_1 I + B_2 IA + B_3 IE + e \quad (5)$$

Where:

Y_i	=	Position on Issue i
I	=	Ideological Identification
A	=	Ideological Affect
E	=	Education
B_0	=	Constant
$B_{1,2,3}$	=	Coefficients
e	=	Error

The first model (equation 2) gauges the bivariate relationship between issue position and identification. The second (equation 3) describes the extent to which the relationship is conditioned by affect. The third (equation 4) compares the degree to which the connection between issue position and identification is

dependent upon the leading alternative source of consistency, education. And the final model (equation 5) evaluates the relative conditioning influences of affect and education. Affect and education are measured as they were previously whereas identification and issue positions are measured on 7-point scales shifted so that their midpoints (originally 4) are 0. It is important to note that because education and affect have no direct impact on issue positions – for example, higher education and greater ideological intensity per se do not move issue positions to the left or the right – they are specified in the models only as interactions with ideological identification.[11] The models were estimated by ordinary least squares for all issues used in the 1976, 1980, and 1984 National Election Study surveys. Because the pattern of coefficients is practically the same for all issues, only the results for two issues that also appear on all three surveys – government guarantee of jobs and aid to minorities – are reported in Table 8.5.[12] To facilitate the comparison of coefficients estimated in different units and in different populations, the results are reported as elasticities.

The estimates for model 1 describe the prevailing wisdom that issue positions are fairly insensitive to ideological identifications. Although all of the coefficients are statistically significant, issue positions are inelastic relative to ideological identifications. In 1976 and 1980 a 1 percent change in identification is associated with one-third or less of a percent change in issue position. In 1984 issue positions are considerably more responsive but it would be imprudent to challenge the conventional wisdom that on the basis of one year's evidence. Generally, changes in ideological identification are not matched by equivalent changes in issue positions – and they also explain little of their variation, on average 6.8 percent.

But is it appropriate to generalize from the bivariate relationship? The estimates for models 2 and 3 indicate that it is not. The results from model 2 demonstrate that the relationship between issue positions and ideological identifications is not uniformly inelastic; it depends on the intensity of ideological affect. The interaction between identification and affect adds a statistically and substantively significant increment to the explanation of issue positions in every instance. Indeed, issue positions are on average less responsive to identification alone (.19) than to its interaction with affect (.21), and in 1980 and 1984 – years of generally high ideological affect, as we shall see – much less responsive. Similar results are obtained when the effects of identification are conditioned by education. The interaction between identification and education usually, though not always, makes a statistically significant contribution to the explanation of issue position. When it does, it is comparable in magnitude to the impact of the interaction of affect and identification, and it too tends to overwhelm the impact of identification alone. This is not to say that the addition of either education or affect to the bivariate equation increases substantially the amount of variance in issue positions that ideology explains. It does not; the adjusted R-squared increases, but by barely a percentage point. As we shall see, however, the conditional effects of identification on issue positions, particularly those conditioned by affect, are striking.

Table 8.5. *Estimated elasticities for models of issue positions, 1976–84*

	Government guaranteed jobs				Aid to minorities			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
1976								
Identification	.20*	.15*	.13	.16*	.28*	.22*	.32*	.36*
Identification – affect		.08*		.09*		.10*		.11*
Identification – education			.08	.00			.04	−.14
Adjusted R^2	.07	.08	.07	.08	.07	.08	.07	.08
1980								
Identification	.31*	.14*	.02	.05	.14*	.04*	.05	−.05*
Identification – affect		.24*		.24*		.15*		.14*
Identification – education			.27*	.09			.17*	.09
Adjusted R^2	.09	.11	.09	.11	.06	.09	.07	.09
1984								
Identification	.44*	.24*	−.09	.03	.66*	.35*	−.42	−.26
Identification – affect		.29*	.27*			.40*		.36*
Identification – education			.53*	.21			1.04*	.60*
Adjusted R^2	.07	.09	.07	.09	.05	.06	.05	.06

Note: Models were estimated with (unreported) constant terms.
*$p \leq .05$ two-tail test of unstandardized regression coefficient.

In model 4 we try to sort out the importance of affect and education as sources of issue-identification consistency. Is it cognitive ability that enables people to align their general and their specific beliefs or is it affective intensity that induces them to do it? The evidence is plainly that it is affect more than education that brings ideological identification to bear on the choice of issue positions. Whereas the coefficient of the interaction between affect and identification is always statistically significant, the coefficient of the interaction between education and identification is seldom significant.[13] The average elasticities also differ: .20 for the affect interaction, and .14 for the education interaction (or only .05 if one unusually high value in 1984 is deleted). Identification alone fares no better than it does in interaction with education: It too is seldom significant, and its elasticity is small and irregular. The implication, then, is plain. The responsiveness of issue positions to ideological identifications depends on ideological affect.

But precisely how responsive are issue positions to more general positions and to the intensity with which they are held? That is a bit difficult to glean from the elasticities of interaction terms. And it is a bit difficult to appreciate when the introduction of ideological intensity into a model of issue positions raises the explained variance to less than 10 percent. The impact of intensity is perhaps easiest to grasp when the relationship between identification and issue positions (i.e., model 1) is estimated for groups of people with different levels of ideological affect (as in Table 8.6). People with relatively high levels of affect exhibit a close match between their ideological identifications and their issue positions, whereas persons with no (or perverse) affect exhibit none. Individuals with zero affect typically change their issue positions by only one-fifth of a point on a 7-point scale for every 1 point change in identification. By contrast, individuals with high affect, 26 degrees and higher (and less than half of standard deviation above the mean, see Table 8.7) change their issue positions by more than half a point in response to the same 1-point shift ideology.

These results seem well worth recognizing. To begin with, they reveal how seriously a simple linear relationship between ideological identification and issue positions may misrepresent the ability of the American public to reason from the general to the particular. It is not the case that Americans, all in all, are poor at this. Some are and some are not, and the variation is substantial. This is obvious enough. But what was not at all obvious is that what distinguished the ideologically consistent from the inconsistent is the intensity of ideological feelings. Even as compared to formal schooling, ideological affect appears to be an important source of consistent ideological reasoning. It follows then – and this is a second implication worth recognizing – that prevailing estimates of the level of ideological consistency in the population may be misleadingly low. If consistency between general and specific political positions does not demand extensive knowledge and advanced reasoning but rather only consistent and moderately polarized feelings about the ideological alternatives, more people may be able to achieve it. If we estimate directly from Tables 8.6 and 8.7, that is obviously the case. Persons with ideological affect less than half a standard deviation above the mean

Table 8.6. *Unstandardized coefficients for regression of issue position on ideological identification, by ideological affect, 1976–84*

	Ideological affect				
	−100 to −1	0	1 to 25	26 to 100	All
1976					
Government guaranteed jobs	.34*	.23*	.25*	.60*	.42*
Aid to minorities	.22	.39*	.32*	.56*	.43*
N	72	773	518	476	1,842
1980					
Government guaranteed jobs	.00	.09	.34*	.65*	.45*
Aid to minorities	.00	.03	.14	.53*	.32*
N	67	409	434	433	1,343
1984					
Government guaranteed jobs	.14	.21*	.23*	.52*	.37*
Aid to minorities	.06	.11	.21*	.44*	.28*
N	120	689	532	561	1,900

Note: Models estimated with (unreported) constant terms.
*$p \leq .05$, two-tail test.

(the 26 to 100 category) display a tight connection between their ideological identifications and their issue positions. That is at least 25 percent of the public and more than twice the portion of the public that is traditionally estimated to exhibit ideological consistency (e.g., Kinder and Sears, 1985).

DISCUSSION

Americans are seen by students of public opinion as innocent of liberalism and conservatism, yet in quite remarkable numbers see themselves as liberals or conservatives. That is the anomaly we wished to call attention to and to explore.

This anomaly can be resolved in two quite different ways. One, the increasingly common way, is to suppose that ideological identification is an expression primarily of people's feelings, not an indication of their belief in a set of political programs and policies. Ideological identification, on this view, may say something about how a person sees himself but scarcely anything about how he sees politics.

The anomaly can be resolved in a second way. On this view, people's perceptions of themselves as liberals or conservatives, far from being politically meaningless because they are rooted in their likes and dislikes, tend to be meaningful in part precisely because they are rooted in their feelings. This second view, we have become persuaded, is an important correction to the first. Ideas matter when they are not just a matter of formal belief. Even more, people can make sense of ideas insofar as they engage them emotionally. Citizens may be unlikely to master political concepts like liberalism and conservatism through abstract thinking. But they can put them to use if they know whom they like – and dislike – politically. It is a mistake, in short, to overintellectualize ideology, to suppose that because people cannot define a concept they cannot make use of it. Indeed, as we have seen, in translating a general outlook into issue preferences consonant with it, getting straight whom you like matters as much, and perhaps more, than going to college.

Consistent and polarized likes and dislikes can be thought of as a measure of intensity, a proxy for the depth of feelings attached to ideology. If an individual formally takes an ideological position but is indifferent in his feelings toward those that share and those that oppose his view, he is not someone who holds his position intensely or someone who should be expected to be strongly influenced by it. This follows from the simple assumption that rational political choice (or behavior) is a function not only of positions or preferences but of the intensity with which they are held.

Our contention is that ideological reasoning has two facets – one cognitive, the other affective. In contrast, the classic studies of the sixties (e.g. Campbell et al., 1960) tended to reduce ideology to the former, whereas the recent studies of the seventies and eighties (e.g. Conover and Feldman, 1981) reduced it to the latter. Both, we believe, are mistakes, though for opposite reasons: The first because it

overemphasizes, the second because it underemphasizes the role of ideas in political thinking.

Both approaches, moreover, underestimate the role of ideological reasoning in mass publics, again in different ways. On the one hand, the approach of the sixties undercounts the proportion able to engage in ideological reasoning, supposing that only a tenth at most have the competence to do so whereas the correct proportion, on our estimates, may be nearer a fourth. On the other hand, the approach of the seventies underestimates the political significance of people's ideological perceptions of themselves by supposing that they reflect only politically incoherent likes and dislikes and not a tendency to take a systematic stance, either liberal or conservative, on major issues. Our contention that ideological reasoning has two facets – one cognitive, the other affective – has the advantage of helping make clear how a large fraction of the general public can work out a consistent outlook on politics, without necessarily being exceptionally well informed about politics or uncommonly adept at abstract thinking.

This conceptualization of ideological reasoning may also enhance our understanding of American politics more broadly. Political scientists, not to mention political pundits, are fond of tracking the general outlook of the American public. In recent years they have disagreed about how much, if at all, the Republican surge in electoral support has been accompanied by an ideological shift toward conservatism (e.g., Lipset, 1985). Indeed, the disagreements go so deep as to invite the suspicion that commentators are talking about different things altogether.

If our analysis is correct, that may well be true, for ideological orientations appear to have both long- and short-term components. To see this, consider the differing patterns of change (see Table 8.7) in ideological identification and affect over the years 1972 to 1984. Ideological identification indicates a very gradual movement of mass beliefs away from liberalism and toward conservatism. Allowing for the large number of moderates who in 1980 apparently chose to declare no identification (and thereby inflated the mean identification), the modal ideological position of the general public shifted steadily, albeit slowly, to the right. Ideological affect, however, displays a different trajectory. Over the same period it rose – and fell – in step with the ideological pitch of presidential politics. Thus, peaks for ideological affect are found in 1972, when the McGovern candidacy crystallized the differences between left and right, and in 1980 especially, when the Reagan candidacy took stridently conservative stands on the role of the federal government. In contrast, valleys are unmistakable in 1976, for the low-key Ford and Carter contest, and in 1984, when Reagan, running as an incumbent, toned down the ideological rhetoric to emphasize the ideologically neutral theme of economic prosperity. Distinguishing between long-run trends and short-run changes promises a richer analysis of the ideological crosscurrents of American politics. To speculate, some of Ronald Reagan's success in the 1980 election may have derived not from his ability to change the ideological identifications of voters, for there is little evidence of this, but rather from his ability to excite the ideological feelings of conservatives. Reagan, that is to say, may have exploited

Table 8.7. *Ideological change, 1972–84*

	1972	1976	1980	1984
Liberal identification, %	19	16	17	18
Moderate identification, %	27	26	20	24
Conservative identification, %	27	28	29	30
Ideological identification[a]				
Mean	.103	1.54	.199	.164
Standard deviation	1.087	1.244	1.124	1.140
Ideological affect				
Mean	18.0	14.6	19.2	15.7
Standard deviation	23.3	24.7	24.9	22.8
Intense liberal, %[b]	8	6	6	7
Intense moderate, %[b]	5	4	5	5
Intense conservative, %[b]	15	12	16	13

[a]Seven-point scale with moderates at zero; excludes nonidentifiers.
[b]Percent of respective identification group with ideological affect greater than 25.

the conservative edge in ideological affect that we have demonstrated. Table 8.7 provides evidence in support of that conclusion. The conservatives' lead over liberals in ideological identification is considerably less than two to one (the ratio averages 2.10). What is especially interesting about this comparison is not its reiteration of the conservative edge in ideological affect but rather the further finding that the conservative edge was unusually high in 1980 (a ratio of 2.67), the very year that informed observers judge to have been one of unusual ideological passion, at least on the right, in national politics.

It is, in short, easy to miss the different ways in which ideology matters to mass publics – easy because either of two misconceptions are tempting. Ideology may be conceived as consisting in abstract ideas and reasoning, without importance being attached to feelings, to likes and dislikes; or it may be conceived as consisting precisely in such feelings, without importance being attached to ideas and beliefs. Either conception is a misconception, underestimating the importance of ideological reasoning in mass publics.

9

Information and electoral choice

It cannot be said that everyone thinks that understanding how citizens think is of value. On the contrary, there is a school of analysts who hold either that citizens do not in any substantial sense think about political choices or that, whether they do think about them or not, the only thing worth knowing about citizens is what they do or fail to do. So viewed, the study of public opinion reduces to the analysis of voting.

Most of the chapters in this book focus on what citizens believe and feel. So it seemed to us worthwhile seeing if our overall scheme had any merit applied to voting. The chapter that follows is an initial attempt to do just this. There is much about our application that seems to us incomplete and unsatisfactory. But its limitations notwithstanding, we think it calls attention to the principal question that a theory of voting should address – namely, what are the *different* ways in which voters make up their mind.

Voting studies have highlighted citizens' low levels of political information – indeed, so much so as to obscure the variance among them. Some members of the public are knowledgeable about politics, follow it closely, understand who stands for what politically; others are ignorant of politics, pay little attention to it, have only a weak grip (or none at all) on who stands for what. So what we should like to explore here is the obvious yet somehow overlooked suggestion that people who are quite well informed about politics and those who pay scarcely any attention to it may not make up their minds about who to vote for in the same way.

This seems to us a worthwhile undertaking for a number of reasons, two of which deserve particular mention. The first concerns the proper shape of a theory of voting. The established practice in electoral research is to aim at *one* single model of voting: to develop a uniform explanation for the electorate as a whole. This is not an obviously winning strategy, for different people make up their minds in different ways. And what is needed is a kind of explanation that takes account of this heterogeneity. Or, to put the point more exactly, it is necessary to consider whether there are pivotal factors that not only condition the voting decision in their own right, but also condition the conditioning influence of other causal factors. It is not likely there are many such pivotal factors; but information is quite likely to be one of them.

There is a second reason to focus on information, normative rather than causal. It is a commonplace that information assists rational choice and, by implication,

This chapter prepared by Paul M. Sniderman, James M. Glaser, and Robert Griffin.

that the well-informed voter may be capable of it but the poorly informed one is not. This is by no means a foolish idea. Still, what we should like to explore is not merely the relatively straightforward suggestion that voters who are well informed make up their minds in different ways than those who are poorly informed; but also the more challenging idea that precisely by making up their minds in a different way, voters who are *not* well informed about politics – as well as those who are – may make electoral choices that are approximately rational.

THE STRUCTURE OF ELECTORAL CHOICE

Electoral choices can be organized in two different ways: either as a referendum on the incumbent or as a choice between competing candidates.

Consider. A presidential campaign pivots around two candidates, often an incumbent and a challenger. How can voters approach this choice? The first is for voters to focus on the incumbent, and make a judgment about his past performance. If voters judge the incumbent's record to be satisfactory, they should support him. If the record looks poor to them, voters should consider the alternative. Voters may focus on many aspects of his record or few; interpret the notion of a record broadly or narrowly. It comes down, all the same, to voting the incumbent up or down – that is the choice being offered.

Alternatively, an electoral choice may take the form of an evaluation of the competing candidates. This evaluation may focus on many aspects of the candidates' claims or few; focus on what they have done or are likely to do. However that may be, on this second approach the nub of an electoral choice is comparison of alternatives.

The first kind of choice, then, focuses on the incumbent; the second on both candidates, challenger as well as incumbent. The first involves evaluating the candidates serially, beginning with the incumbent; the second evaluating them simultaneously. And because these choices differ in the form they take, they differ as well in the information they require and in the way they are made.

Imagine two hypothetical voters. One is exceedingly well informed about politics, a daily and devout reader of the *New York Times,* who follows closely the major issues of the day, both national and international. The second, a *Daily News* fan, is hardly overburdened by the amount of time, or effort, she devotes to public affairs – in fact, looks only at the sports page and cares next to nothing about politics. Is it plausible to suppose that these two voters, asked to make a choice about who should be president of the United States, would make up their minds in the same way?

Implausible, it seems to us. It is not reasonable to suppose that the voter who is exceedingly well informed about politics and the one who is largely ignorant of it would enumerate potentially relevant considerations with the same exhaustiveness; or frame alternative considerations with the same precision; or foresee consequences of alternative choices with the same distinctness; or coordinate calculations, both about alternative means and alternative ends, with the same exact-

ness. It is, in short, not plausible to suppose that the well-informed voter and the poorly informed one go about the business of making up their minds in the same way.

Consider how the nature of the choice may vary with a voter's informational level. Presidential elections typically pit an incumbent against a challenger. The incumbent has a prominence the challenger finds hard to match. He has been in the most visible public office for four years. The media have focused on the incumbent for his term; and focus more on him during the campaign in his double role as both president and candidate, highlighting information about his policies and performance. By contrast, the public knows less about the challenger – indeed, may have known next to nothing about him before the nomination. So the challenger lags behind in public awareness.

But not uniformly. Some voters are politically knowledgeable. They have some overall sense of the political landscape; they know, broadly, who stands for what and who opposes whom. So they are less likely to see the challenger as having come from nowhere; more likely to perceive him distinctly. They may know more about the incumbent – he has had, after all, the benefit not only of his term in office but also his run for it. All the same, the well-informed voter is able, and inclined, to compare directly incumbent and challenger to form a vote choice that best advances his interests.

The poorly informed voter is not so fortunately placed. The president is perhaps a familiar enough figure, at any rate in broad outline. Not so the challenger. Before his nomination he was in all probability not well known, and possibly even unknown, at least to voters who habitually pay little attention to politics. Poorly informed voters, moreover, face an uphill battle in overcoming their lack of information about the challenger, partly for the very reasons that lead to their lack of information in the first place. And the consequence is that the incumbent tends to have a prominence that the challenger finds hard to match, especially among voters who are not politically informed or attentive.

Which suggests that the way in which voters make up their minds may vary with informational and attentional levels. Well-informed voters can hinge voting decisions on a comparison of incumbent and challenger – a comparison they can make in terms, not only of personal attributes, but of policy commitments. Precisely because they are well informed, they know something of the policy commitments of the two major parties, at any rate in broad outline. In consequence, they are capable of picking up the policy preferences of the candidates and placing them in the context of the long-term differences in ideological orientation that have distinguished the two major parties over the past fifty years or so. Poorly informed voters, however, are unlikely to make up their minds in quite this way. Certainly, it is unreasonable to suppose that they follow politics sufficiently closely to track carefully the issue commitments of the parties or candidates. But they are in a position to form an opinion about whether the president is doing a satisfactory job. They know how they are faring – maybe not a magnanimous basis for political judgment, but by no means an irrelevant one.

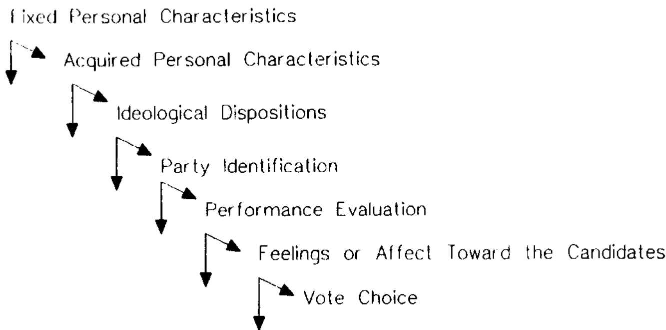


Figure 9.1. The Shanks–Miller model.

And poorly informed or not, they can form a judgment of how the president is doing in broad terms and of whether things are going well in the larger society, at any rate economically, and vote accordingly.

A POINT OF DEPARTURE: THE SHANKS–MILLER MODEL

Voting is a field of study repeatedly, and profitably, ploughed. So it is only common sense to recognize and take advantage of the labor of others. The recent model of voting developed by Shanks and Miller (1985), displayed in schematic form in Figure 9.1, seems to us especially suggestive.

The overall structure of the Shanks–Miller model features a single strand causal chain. In this respect, the model exemplifies a consensual approach in the study of voting, specifying one sequence of variables, arranged in temporal order, the same for all voters *ex hypothesi:* Variables furthest removed (in time) from the vote are furthest to the left; those closest to the vote are furthest to the right. The causal chain begins with fixed personal characteristics – gender, for example; ends with the vote choice; and, in between, sets of intervening factors (e.g., partisanship, candidate images) are laid out, in causal (or temporal) order.

The ordering of variables, as displayed in Figure 9.1, is far from decorative: it is rather a concise and hopefully exact representation of the causal relations supposed to hold among variables in the model. Specifically, a variable may be a cause of a variable to its right but only an effect of a variable to its left.

The Shanks–Miller model illustrates well some of the principal conventions of recursive, multistage accounts of voting. But it also has several features that recommend it particularly. The first is its specific analytic objective: to compare the relative importance of two images of the voting decision. One way is to see it as calculus concerning policy. On this view, elections come down to a public judgment – however calculated – on the policy direction that government should take or avoid taking. A second, and quite different image, is to view the voting decision as hinging on performance evaluation. On this view, what is decisive is

not the public's opinion of the policy direction that government should follow but rather its judgment of how good a job the incumbent has done. The distinction between these two images – policy direction and performance evaluation – is potentially of considerable importance to us.

The Shanks–Miller model has a second feature of interest to us, though this is a case of a negative rather than a positive property. The Shanks–Miller model excludes a class of variables other voting models commonly include. These are the so-called issue proximities – a set of variables defining the (mean) discrepancies between the policies a voter prefers and those he perceives the candidates support. This omission seems to us a helpful simplification. So much evidence has piled up on voters' low levels of political information and attention that it is hard to credit them with an altogether steady grip on their own position on many issues, let alone the positions of candidates. Moreover, it is not obvious in just what sense people's perceptions of where they stand on issues and of where the candidates stand are independent. For many voters derive their sense of what candidates think should be done partly from their own beliefs about what should be done. Indeed, it may be more plausible to conceive of the final arrangement of positions attributed to candidates that takes shape in the voter's mind as a result – rather than a cause – of the decision he or she has reached; which is to say that issue proximities, in the case of candidates, can give the appearance of a rational calculus without operating, in fact, as a causal mechanism. Shanks and Miller, in short, have reason to argue that "relatively few citizens actually compare 'issue distances' when they come to a vote decision" (1985, p. 35).

The Shanks–Miller model, though it serves well as a point of departure, for our purposes needs modification in two principal respects. The first, and more superficial, is this. In Figure 9.1 ideological dispositions precede party identification. On this view, the former is cause, the latter effect. It is by no means obvious that this is the most plausible view to take. There is much evidence on two points. First, many voters acquire a party identification early in their life, as a result of everyday socialization to politics. And second, relatively few acquire ideological orientations, and those few tend to do so at a later point in their lives, typically not before attending college. So it seems more reasonable to suppose that party identification precedes, temporally and causally, ideological orientation, not the other way round.

The second, and more fundamental, difference is this. The Shanks–Miller model assumes that acquired personal characteristics should be located very nearly at the beginning of the causal chain and – what makes this assumption crucial – further assumes that there is one set of variables, arranged in one sequence, the same for all respondents. But how much sense does it make to presume a uniformity of causal sequence? Why suppose that all voters make up their minds in the same way? We have argued that it makes more sense to suppose they take account of different considerations, or make different use of the same considerations, depending on how politically well informed they are. And, if we are right in this, the assumption of a single, fixed causal sequence should be

scuttled. It is instead necessary to allow for differing effects of various independent variables for voters of differing levels of information.

MEASURES

Some of these measures we deploy are quite familiar – party identification, for instance, and ideological self-identification. Others are less so, and so deserve a word of description.

Two questions tapping retrospective voting concerns were asked. The first involves judgments about the past performance of the incumbent. Specifically, respondents were asked if they approved or disapproved of the way Carter was handling his job as president; and then, if they approved (disapproved), whether they did so strongly or not. This question, then, directly assesses performance evaluation, yielding a 5-point measure, with a range of 0 to 4 and a mean of 2.4, scored so that the higher the number the more negative the evaluation.

The second measure tapping retrospective voting concerns the past performance, not of the incumbent, but of the economy. A voter with even minimal political information can make a determination that too many people are out of work, or that gasoline is too expensive, or that the standard of living is lower than it should be. To get a grip on this kind of judgment, we take advantage of a question on national economic conditions. Specifically, respondents were asked whether, in their opinion, the economy has gotten much better, somewhat better, stayed about the same, become somewhat worse, or become much worse. This variable has a range of 0 to 4, with a mean of 3.2, and is scored so that a larger number indicates a more negative judgment.

Rather than focus on whether the incumbent has done a satisfactory job, the voter may try to determine which of the two candidates will, in his judgment, do the better job. And one way to capture this kind of judgment is to measure the voter's comparative evaluations of the candidates. Accordingly, we have put together a six-item index of comparative competence. This index is based on a list of words or phrases that people use in evaluations of political figures; six were read, with respondents being asked whether each describes the candidates extremely well, quite well, not too well, or not well at all. The six were weak, knowledgeable, inspiring, solve our economic problems, provide strong leadership, and develop good relations with other countries. The comparative competence index was scored such that the larger the number, the stronger the tendency to judge Reagan more favorably than Carter and, conversely, the smaller the number, the stronger the tendency to judge Carter more favorably than Reagan. The competence index has a range of 0 to 12, with a mean of 7.0.

Voters, moreover, may be driven by public policy goals, at any rate when the candidates themselves differ fundamentally in their policy objectives, as Reagan and Carter did. To tap this kind of consideration, a policy index was built. The policy index focuses on four issues: government spending for social services, government job guarantees, government aid to minorities, and defense spending.

Opinions on these issues, it should be observed, are correlated significantly and positively. The policy index is so scored that a larger number indicates a conservative orientation, a smaller number a liberal one. The index has a range of 0 to 24, with a mean of 13.9.

A final point. Conceptually, we speak of variations in information level. Operationally, however, we focus on variations in formal schooling. This may seem arbitrary, even unjustified. Education, clearly, is not the same thing as information level. But the two are highly correlated all the same. The person with considerable formal schooling, on average, is better able to pick up political information than the person with minimal schooling – and what is more, better able to put it to use. Moreover, there is mounting evidence that education has a profound impact on the organization of policy reasoning in mass publics. Somewhat so we expect it to organize the voting choice, too.

VOTING

To what extent do voters make up their minds in different ways depending on their level of education? Figure 9.2 lays out two causal models of vote choice: The first concerns the poorly educated, that is, those with less than a high school diploma (upper panel); the second the well educated, that is, those with some college or more (lower panel). The variables in each are the same, and laid out in the same arrangement. Their causal impact on the vote is indicated (as is customary) by unstandardized regression coefficients, accompanied (in parentheses) by their standard errors, with statistically insignificant paths omitted.

Obviously, impressions of the candidates are a prime consideration in deciding how to vote. But as we have suggested, there are two different ways to form such impressions. One alternative is to focus on the incumbent, voting for (or against) him depending on approval (or disapproval) of his performance in office. Alternatively, a voter may compare both candidates in one or more respects, and on the basis of this comparison choose between them. The incumbent approval measure captures the first sort of judgment; the relative competence measure, the second.

Look first at the poorly educated, and compare the impact of incumbent approval as against relative competence on their voting decision. Both matter. But clearly one predominates: Judgments about the incumbent are a more important consideration than a comparison of the two candidates.

This reliance on judgments of the incumbent's performance gives to the choice process of the less well educated a flavor of retrospective voting; for the dominant consideration is whether the incumbent is doing a satisfactory job, not whether the incumbent or the challenger might do the better job in the future. This impression of retrospective voting, moreover, is strengthened on further examination of Figure 9.2. Look at the less well educated's view of national economic conditions: It, too, has a direct impact on the voting decision. Its impact is modest – not surprising considering the limitations of a one-item measure. But notwith-

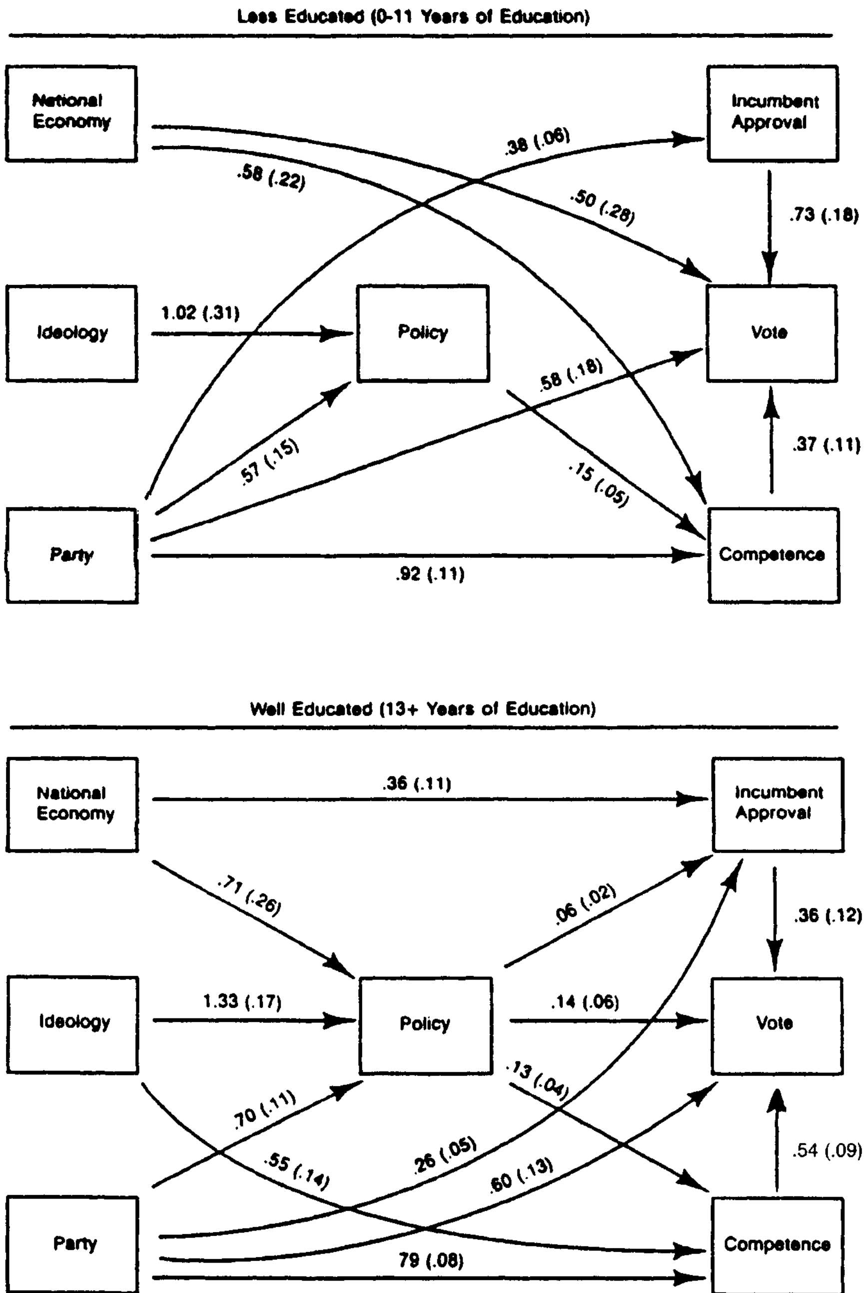


Figure 9.2. A model of vote choice by education, 1980.

standing these, a judgment about how well the economy is doing enters directly in the voting calculus of the poorly educated.

The results for the well educated, however, are quite different. Look first at the role of candidate judgments. It is not the impression of incumbent performance that is the dominant consideration in voting; rather it is a comparison of the two candidates' qualities. So in this respect the kinds of considerations about candidates that drive the voting choice are different for the poorly educated and for the well educated: For the former it is incumbent approval; for the latter, comparative competence.

There is a second point of difference between the poorly and the well educated. As we saw, national economic conditions have a direct impact on the vote choice of the less well educated. Not so for the well educated: There is no statistically significant, direct connection between national economic conditions and vote choice for those who have some college education or more. Which is not to say their view of national economic conditions has no impact; for as Figure 9.2 shows, it is an indirect consideration for them, having an influence on the vote insofar as it has an influence on their assessment of the candidates and their views on policy. In short, by this standard as well, the poorly educated give direct evidence of retrospective voting, the well educated do not.

Consider, now, prospective voting. One expression of it is a vote based on policy orientation. There is no evidence for this kind of voting among the poorly educated. Certainly, there is no significant connection between the policy index and the voting decision for them. It is of course arguable that the poorly educated – precisely because of their lack of education – are unlikely to organize their opinions on issues in the unidimensional, liberal – conservative fashion the policy index presupposes. Accordingly, we analyzed opinions on individual issues, taken separately and put together in various combinations. These analyses, too, testify to an absence of prospective voting, as indicated by policy-driven electoral choice, among the poorly educated.

It is quite different for the well educated. Opinions on major issues are indeed a consideration of direct relevance to their vote. Moreover, the policy opinions of the well, but not of the less well, educated are rooted in broader, political orientations, as indicated by their tendency to put together ideological self-images and issue preferences consistently. This is a difference of no small significance; for it is complex, and burdensome, to vote prospectively, issue by issue, on an ad hoc basis. Making calculations instead in broad policy tendencies – liberal or conservative – economizes on the costs of information required and minimizes the uncertainty of predictions ventured. Finally, the impressions that the well educated form of candidates, and rely on in deciding how to vote, are grounded in their views on policy in a way that reactions to candidates among the less well educated are not. Thus, among the well educated comparative assessments of the relative competence of the two candidates are, in part, a product of policy opinions; in contrast, among the less well educated, judgments of incumbent performance – the crucial aspect for candidate evaluation for them – are not connected to policy stands.

These are some of the particularly salient differences between how the well and the less well educated decide for whom to vote. There are points of similarity, too – the role of party identification, for example. Still, it is worth asking what the differences that we have observed may amount to.

DISCUSSION

Some of our results suggest that the less well educated are more likely than the well educated to take advantage of retrospective voting. Fiorina (1985), of course, found just the opposite: that (so far as systematic differences are evident) retrospective voting tends to be the mark of the well educated, not the less educated; the person who is interested in politics, not the one who is disinterested in it; the person who is well informed about politics, not the one who is poorly informed about it. Why this difference?

Part of the explanation, as it seems to us, lies in the properties of (relatively) complex idea systems. It would seem obvious that the person who is well educated, who follows politics closely, and who has considerable information about it should be good at putting his ideas together – certainly as compared with the person who is not especially educated, attentive, or informed. But what does it mean to say a person is apt at putting ideas together? Among other things, that they see connections between different considerations, including considerations that may be relatively remotely (or at any rate not immediately or self-evidently) connected. And because of this tendency to see and to make connections among different considerations, decision making tends to be characterized by a broad focus of attention: Much is relevant in making up one's mind for whom to vote. Or, more colloquially, the better-informed voter tends to take account of nearly everything including the kitchen sink. And because of this "kitchen sink" quality of taking account of diverse considerations, the connection between any given consideration and the vote will tend to be strong for the better educated – when examined at a bivariate level. This credits the impact of any given consideration, which may be quite small, with some of the impact of all other considerations with which it is correlated, some of which will be quite large. Analyzed at a multivariate level, however, the picture will change, since the differential weight of (correlated) considerations will be evident.

There is another consideration. We have seen evidence of voting based on performance evaluation among the less well educated, and of voting based on policy direction among the well educated. It is tempting, then, to suggest that the former engage in prospective and the latter in retrospective voting. But this puts the distinction between these two kinds of voting too starkly; or more exactly, overlooks the difference between direct and indirect effects. Thus, the less well educated do take account of national economic conditions as a direct consideration in deciding for whom to vote; the well educated do not. But the latter take account of national economic conditions as a consideration in deciding their issue preference, which in turn they consult in casting their vote. Now, if taking account of the condition of the economy is a mark of retrospective voting, who

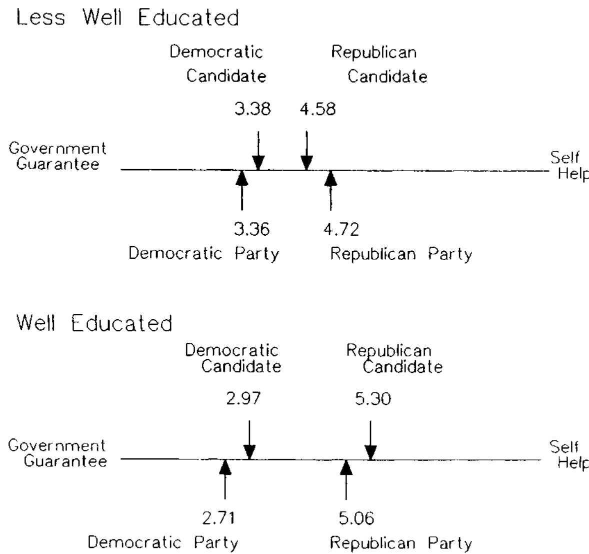


Figure 9.3. Mean positions attributed to candidates and parties, 1980.

should be said to be voting retrospectively: the less well educated who take account of it directly, or the well educated who take account of it indirectly? A false choice, as it seems to us.

Still, it seems worthwhile to consider what, more exactly, the notion of prospective voting entails. Consider, therefore, how well-educated persons tend to make up their mind. On the one side, they take as a prime consideration their views on policy. Also, they give great weight to how the two candidates stack up, compared with one another. On the other side, they attach less importance to their assessment of the incumbent's performance as an immediate basis for making up their minds. And, consistent with this, they do not take the condition of the economy as a direct consideration in casting their vote.

How, then, might the decision making of the well educated be characterized? It is not uncommon to imagine a Downsian space: Voters compare candidate issue positions and pick the one that best matches theirs. The emphasis, here, is on the perception of similarity between the candidates' issue positions and theirs. But one can look on this space from a different perspective, focusing not on similarities between candidates and voters, but concentrating instead on dissimilarities between candidates. From this angle, voters compare candidate issue positions with their eye on not how small is the difference between their views and those of the candidate they support but rather on how large is the difference in views between the two candidates. And looking from this angle provides a glimpse of how well-informed voters tend to make up their minds.

Figure 9.3 displays the positions attributed to the two presidential candidates and the two political parties, in 1980, on the issue of government guarantees for

jobs. The (mean) positions attributed to the candidates and parties are shown separately for voters with different levels of education – first, the less well educated, then the well educated.

The differences between the well and the less well educated are striking. Thus, the well educated see the Democratic candidate and the Democratic party as further to the left than do the less well educated; and, what is more, see the Republican candidate and the Republican party as further to the right than do the less well educated. In a word, the well educated accentuate the differences between the parties and between the candidates; the less well educated minimize them.

This tendency to accentuate dissimilarities between candidates or parties seems to us the mark of the well-informed voter; indeed, it may not exaggerate to say that the mark of the person who understands American politics is precisely that he accentuates – that is, that he exaggerates – the differences between the parties and the candidates who represent them. This is not at all to say that it is always right to accentuate such differences. Quite the contrary. But the person who makes the opposite mistake, who minimizes rather than accentuates the differences between the parties, is very much worse off. For he winds up supposing both parties are centrist – a double mistake; for he perceives both the Republican party to be far less conservative than it in fact is and the Democratic party to be far less liberal than it in fact is. In a word, accentuation enhances the structure of issue conflict; failing to accentuate obscures it.

And accentuation matters because it provides a basis for prospective voting. For even the well-informed voter is sure to lack political information – lacks the information, certainly, to make confident predictions about future actions of successful candidates. Indeed, the very notion of prediction, in the face of so much uncertainty, has been hard to credit; accordingly, many observers have found it more plausible to suppose instead that the sophisticated voter will engage not in prospective but retrospective voting. But in what sense does prospective voting involve a prediction about the future? Only in the sense that one candidate's policy direction is expected to differ from the other's. Now, it would surely be a matter of reading tea leaves to predict the policy choices of the successful candidate except in the context of the issue differences of the political parties. But seen as representatives of their parties, the candidates can be judged comparatively, in context, rather than absolutely, out of context. And, as representatives of their parties, the policy loyalties of the candidates can be predicted; for this prediction is grounded in the dynamic of the American party system. So the well-informed voter, operating as a prospective voter, exploits aspects of the record that are as definite and dependable as those aspects of the record on which the retrospective voter relies. In short, the difference between prospective and retrospective voting is not that the former involves a prediction about the future whereas the latter does not. Both involve a bet that the future will look like the past. They differ only in the aspect of the past they focus on: The prospective voter takes account of dissimilarities in policy; the retrospective voter, of the performance of the incumbent.

Insofar as the well informed hinge the voting decision on a comparative assessment of the candidates, including their policy commitments as well as their personal characteristics, they may be thought of as optimizers. How, then, should the decision of the less well educated be characterized? What strategy, if any, are they following?

Consider how less well educated persons make up their mind. For one thing, they take as a prime consideration the performance of the incumbent, voting for him if they find his performance satisfactory, against him if not. For another, they take into consideration the state of the economy, voting for the incumbent if they find it satisfactory, against him if not. Moreover, in getting some sense of how the less well educated make up their minds, what they do not take into account counts as much as what they do. And especially notable in this respect is their failure to base their vote on their views on policy issues – even, it seems, on longstanding issues.

Accordingly, it would be farfetched to characterize the voting decisions of the less well informed voter as optimizing. For their decisions do not hinge on a comparative assessment of candidates with respect either to policy commitments or to personal characteristics. Rather, it seems fairer to describe their decision rule this way. Decide whether the incumbent's performance is satisfactory – a judgment that can be made either by focusing on his performance directly or on the overall state of the country, as reflected, for example, in the state of the economy. If his performance is satisfactory, support him. The less well informed, though not optimizers, may nevertheless be satisficers.

Now, the use of labels like optimizing and satisficing should certainly be accompanied by a warning. Partly this is because attaching one label to the decision making of the well informed and another to that of the less well informed carries with it a suggestion that the two are making qualitatively different kinds of decisions; and, as a general rule, an empirical analysis that requires demonstration of differences of kind rather than degree has one foot in the grave. So it is important to point out that it is possible to develop a quantitative and not merely qualitative account of voting along the lines we have sketched. Such an account would center on voters' focus of attention. Briefly: The better educated and more aware voters are, the broader their focus of attention – that is, the wider the range of considerations they would take into account in casting their vote; conversely, the less educated and the less aware voters are, the narrower their focus of attention.

But what, more exactly, might it mean to say narrow? What kind of considerations are included? What kind excluded? The less well educated voter, we would suggest, focuses on the terms of the choice, narrowly defined. So he or she, in a presidential campaign, takes the incumbent as primary consideration; and excludes considerations whose relevance is not immediate and obvious. In this sense, the calculations of the less well educated involve a strict calculus. In contrast, well-educated and better-informed voters have a wider focus. They take account of considerations that are at least one remove from the explicit choice. So

they see connections, for example, between their votes and anterior considerations like policy commitments that require some imagination and thoughtfulness to detect – anterior considerations, moreover, that are only imperfectly correlated both with one another and with more immediately relevant considerations. In this sense, the calculations of the well educated involve a loosely rather than strictly elaborated calculus.

There is another consideration. Analyses of voting are at risk of being framed in either–or terms – not always, but often. So it is sometimes asked: Do citizens vote retrospectively? Or do they vote prospectively? Such choices are false choices. The question is not whether voting is retrospective or prospective, but the conditions under which it tends to be the one or the other.

We have tried to illustrate what part of the answer to this question might look like. No doubt, also, the answer is debatable in parts. The measures were those at hand, not those we would have devised given a free hand. Moreover, the causal relations among variables may be conceived differently, and not just in the garden-variety sense of causal relations that supposedly run in one direction arguably running in another. Our model of voting choice hinges on a contrast between two variables, incumbent approval and comparative competence, both at the end of the causal chain. This is an instructive contrast, for a first cut at analysis. It is not, however, an obviously optimal approach for continued analysis. Part of the difficulty is this. The two variables, incumbent approval and comparative competence, are highly intercorrelated and the causal relation between them has not been specified. It is of course possible to overcome this by stipulation. But this is not an appealing strategy and indeed, in our judgment, concentrates on the wrong end of the causal chain; for the point to explore, we think, is the role of party identification, at the beginning of the causal sequence, as against candidate images, at the end.

This has been an exploratory essay, an effort to see what it might mean to say that the structure of choice and the process of choosing are interdependent. And we think our broad argument is a step in the right direction, for it seems to us unreasonable, and unenlightening, to insist that the well-informed voter and the poorly informed one make up their minds in quite the same way. If we are right in this broad argument, it is important to call attention to one of its implications for the study of voting.

That implication concerns the assumption of heterogeneity. To say that voters make up their minds in different ways and, further, that these differences may themselves be systematically accounted for is to say that voters are in some respect systematically heterogenous. This contention may seem plausible on its face – we think so, certainly. But it flies directly in the face of current analytic practice. Thus, it is customary to elaborate a model of voting for voters taken as a whole. This is the approach that Shanks and Miller take, for instance; indeed, the approach that nearly all voting analysts have taken. This approach entails, of course, the assumption that there is no systematic interaction: that how voters decide for whom to vote does not systematically differ depending on some par-

ticular characteristic of theirs. And it is precisely this assumption that we believe is wrong: At a minimum, it is unreasonable to insist that a person who is extremely well informed about politics will make his voting choice in the same way as a person who habitually pays only minimal attention to public affairs.

It is of course tempting to suppose that this reduces to a matter of some making up their minds well, and others not. This is, however, a temptation to resist.

Elections organize collective choices. But as we have seen, these choices can typically be organized in two rather different ways. One alternative is to treat the decision to be made as hinging on a comparison of the two candidates; the other, as a judgment to be made about the incumbent. And, as we have also seen, the well-informed voter tends to organize the voting choice the first way; the less well informed voter, the second.

These are quite different ways of going about the business of making up one's mind for whom to vote. But the difference between them is not that the well-informed voter who practices the first is making up his mind the right way, whereas the less well informed voter who practices the second is doing it the wrong way. Whether voters are sufficiently informed to behave approximately rationally is a joint product, not just of their capacities for choice, but of the structure of the choice they are making. So the well-informed voter is able to locate the candidates against the background of the competing political parties and the points of view they represent; and it is this that enables him to bring to bear his preferences. Otherwise, he would be at sea; for he is only well informed by comparison with others who know even less about politics. But how about less well informed voters? Are they incapable of making a rational choice because of their lack of information? Not if our analysis is correct. The poorly informed voter, to be sure, lacks the information to make the kind of choice the well informed voter can – that is, a choice that turns on comparison of the candidates, for instance, with respect to their policy commitments. All the same, the less well informed voter may have the information he needs provided he treats the choice before him as a choice for or against the incumbent; for poorly informed or not, he is in a position to judge if the incumbent's performance is satisfactory – satisficing is, after all, the decision strategy par excellence given a lack of information. In these alternative ways, the choices of voters can be approximately rational because of, not merely despite, their shortfalls in information.

10

Stability and change in party identification: presidential to off-years

How does the minimalist argument and our revision of it apply to so basic a political orientation as one's sense of partisanship? Those who first argued the minimalist position treat partisan identification as exceptional, indeed unique, among political attitudes: It is hypothesized to be learned early and well; to resist erosion even in the wake of vote defection; and to strengthen over the citizen's political life cycle. It is the principal long-term force that, in the electoral setting, affects the way we think about issues, candidates, and campaigns and, in non-electoral settings, affects our responses to the performance of officials and political institutions. In sum, partisanship is considered the one real and reliable guide to the American voter confronting the buzzing confusion of American politics.

This view of partisanship has been revised by recent scholarship: The meaning of "independence" has undergone sustained scrutiny. The consensus emerging from these investigations holds that "independence" is a mixed category; the independent-partisans (so-called leaners) are very different from independents who feel close to neither major party (so-called pure independents). The consensus breaks down when confronting the question of whether to treat leaners as "hidden partisans" or as independents who, with their statement of partisanship, announce their intended vote. The following chapter enters this dispute by examining the interelection stability of leaners' partisanship.

In addition to scrutinizing the meaning of independence, revisions of the original view of partisanship challenge the assumption that it is the "unmoved mover" among political attitudes. The consensus emerging from this research is that partisanship, in some of its particulars and for some citizens, is subject to being updated. Changes in partisan identification can be observed within as well as between elections. The likelihood of change is greater for those with a moderate level of education than it is for those with either a high or low level of education; in this respect partisan attitudes behave like most attitudes. The strength component of partisan identification is more labile than the directional component; while less than a tenth of the voters change their direction of partisanship during an election campaign or between the presidential and midterm elections, nearly half of them will adjust the strength of their partisanship.

The following chapter seeks the sources of change in individual partisanship.

Heuristics and heterogeneous decision rules appear to affect even the most basic political attitudes. In this chapter the concept of party identification is explored in order to determine whether it qualifies for the theoretical role into which it is cast in models of the vote decision.

This exploration reveals that the partisanship of the individual voter is unexpectedly labile from one election to another. When considering the strength of

This chapter prepared by Richard A. Brody.

their attachment to one or the other political party, voters appear to ask themselves: How satisfied am I with the incumbent president? Satisfaction with the incumbent is more concrete – more "available" – to the voter than is the more abstract notion of strength of identification. The availability heuristic is one of the standard judgmental shortcuts that people use to organize their responses.

This study also reveals that the voting public is not uniformly likely to use the availability heuristic in considering the strength of its partisanship. In these two surveys those identified with the Republican party are much more likely than are Democrats to adjust the strength of their partisan attachment to conform to their degree of economic satisfaction and general affect for the incumbent president (Eisenhower or Nixon). With a Republican in the White House, perhaps the president's fellow partisans are especially prone to consider incumbent performance relevant to the strength of their partisanship. The study also explores sources of differences between Democrats and Republicans.

THE PROBLEM OF PARTISAN IDENTIFICATION

Considering its centrality as a concept in voting research, it is remarkable that virtually all that we know about the stability of the individual's partisan identification comes from the 1956, 1958, 1960 panel.[1] To be sure, this panel has been subject to an impressive array of analyses (Dreyer, 1973; Dobson and Meeter, 1974; Pierce and Rose, 1974; Dobson and St. Angelo, 1975; Converse, 1976; Knoke, 1976; Brody, 1977). Each of these analyses is sound; yet collectively they yield confusion on crucial conceptual questions.

1. Is partisanship stable in the long run, that is, is it independent of one's vote intention or vote in a given election?
2. Are the direction and strength of identification equally stable?
3. If they are not and strength is more labile than direction, does this reflect:
   a. Response/measurement error? (Dreyer, 1973)
   b. Systematic increases in strength over one's partisan life-span? (Converse, 1969)
   c. Systematic decreases in strength in extended periods of perceived misfeasance by political leaders? (Converse, 1976)
   d. Variable responses to leadership performance, candidate choice, or other short-term electoral forces? (Brody, 1977).
4. Are partisan independents (so-called leaners) partisans or independents? Over time do leaners persist in their identification with a party or are these citizens simply expressing a candidate preference? If leaners change their identification, are they more likely to move toward or away from the party toward which they once leaned?

The suitability of party identification for the many analytic roles in which it has been cast, since its development in the 1950s, depends on answers to questions such as these. Cross-sectional data from each of the surveys since 1952 have been exploited for the kinds of answers such data can provide. The stability or volatility of individual partisanship cannot be examined in successive cross-sections. Thus, the most fundamental questions about the most fundamental "long-term" electoral force have only been explored in one panel surveyed at a particular moment in American electoral history. With data from a second panel we can

proceed further to consider the validity of the assumptions about the stability of party identification.

CAVEATS

This preliminary comparative analysis of the 1956–8 and 1972–4 panels cannot answer any of the key questions about party identification definitively. Properly speaking, these data cannot address some of these questions at all. For example, Converse (1976) is convincing on the point that increases in the strength of identification over the partisan life cycle move at a glacial rate; we would not expect such increases to be detectable in two-wave, two-year panels. Thus these data will not permit us to take part in the debate over "generational" versus "life-cycle" processes in the strengthening–weakening of identification (Abramson, 1975; Converse, 1976; Abramson, 1977).

Worse yet, from the perspective of clearing up confusions, we have but two two-year panels with which to work. This means that plausible rival explanations will comfortably coexist in the data (if not in the breast of the analyst). For example, suppose we wished to choose between one explanation of observed change based on "period effects" (Converse, 1976) and another based on the operation of short-term electoral forces (Brody, 1977; Macaluso, n.d.). The period effect explanation might argue that a two-year decline in strength was part of a general period of decline – of the sort that gives heart to prophets of realignment. The individual, under this explanation, would come to deprecate the parties and disassociate himself or herself from them. An explanation based on the operation of short-term electoral forces would argue that a two-year decline in the strength of partisanship could result from the concatenation of perceived poor performance by the party in power and the selection of an unpopular candidate by the opposition party – perhaps 1968 qualifies as an example. In the long-run these two explanations are likely to lead to unique predictions. But with only two data points, we are unlikely to be able to choose one over the other.[2]

The best we can hope for with two two-year panels is to render wildly wrong hypotheses implausible and to provoke further research on this most important variable.

Having set the scene and warned the reader, I will offer a preview of what is to follow. Four tasks remain: to consider the two periods under study, in order to identify analytic opportunities and drawbacks inhering in these cases; to examine in detail the two-party identification turnover tables that the panels yield; to attempt to account for observed changes in presidential to off-year partisanship; and to essay the significance of my findings.

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE TWO PERIODS

There are many striking parallels between the periods covered by these two panels.[3] Both periods begin with the second-term, landslide, victory of the

incumbent presidential candidate of the Republican party and end with a strong Democratic showing in the off-year Congressional elections. The landslides, moreover, could not have happened without substantial defection to the Republican incumbent of voters identified with the Democratic party; those who identified to some degree with the Democratic party were a majority (51 percent) of the electorate in both 1956 and 1972.[4]

The parallels begin rather than end here: Both of these periods included events that raised substantial doubts about the quality of the administration's performance in foreign policy, domestic economic policy, and administrative ethics and morality. To be sure, on the whole, the problems of the Eisenhower administration pale in comparison with those of the second Nixon administration. Nevertheless, problems they were; they were treated as failings by the media and they were responded to as failings by the mass public.

In foreign policy, the Soviet Union's Sputniks I, II, and III were a rude challenge to the complacent American belief that we were first in science and, through that vehicle, first in military power. From the perspective of the gap between expectation and observation (Brody and Page, 1975), the Soviet space shots of 1957 might be judged more influential on public opinion than the continuing agony of Vietnam, which dominated foreign policy news from 1972 to 1974 – Vietnam had little shock value left by President Nixon's second term. Recession was a dominant theme in the economic news of both periods: The drawing down of inventories, a decline in federal expenditures for defense, 3.7 million persons unemployed, and a $9 billion decline in real gross national product were associated with the first Eisenhower recession (1953–4). In the period here under consideration, the second Eisenhower recession took place. An overexpansion of plant capacity coupled with a drop in demand for U.S. exports hit American industry, especially that sector engaged in the production of durable goods. The trough of this particular business cycle is placed in April 1958; as we shall see it coincides with the lowest point of Eisenhower's "popularity."

The first Nixon administration had its economic woes but following the election, the economy appeared to be heading for serious trouble. Real economic growth declined about 2 percent in 1974 and inflation continued at about 12 percent; the term "stagflation" was coined to describe this situation. These indicators only begin to tell the story. This period includes a 28 percent net loss on the stock market; 7.5 percent unemployment; housing starts down 40 percent, and new car sales off 35 percent. To combat these problems, the administration initiated the United States' first system of general wage and price controls in peacetime. Despite the "Phase II" controls, consumer prices continued to rise throughout the period. Phase II was replaced after less than three months of operation with the more permissive Phase III in January 1973 but prices continued to increase. To this gloomy picture we must add dollar devaluation in 1973 and the energy crisis in November and December 1973 following the Yom Kippur War in the Middle East. In sum, the economy was in trouble and the Nixon

administration's interventions were not noticeably successful in turning this situation around.

Finally, the ethical and moral problems of both administrations can be briefly noted. Watergate is too recently with us to need recounting here. The parallel in the Eisenhower period is the Sherman Adams–Bernard Goldfine incident. From our vantage point, nearly twenty years later, and with Watergate as a comparison, this incident appears very minor. But in its time it drew sustained media coverage and brought into the White House the kind of scandal that had been the subject of Republican campaign attacks on Democratic administrations.

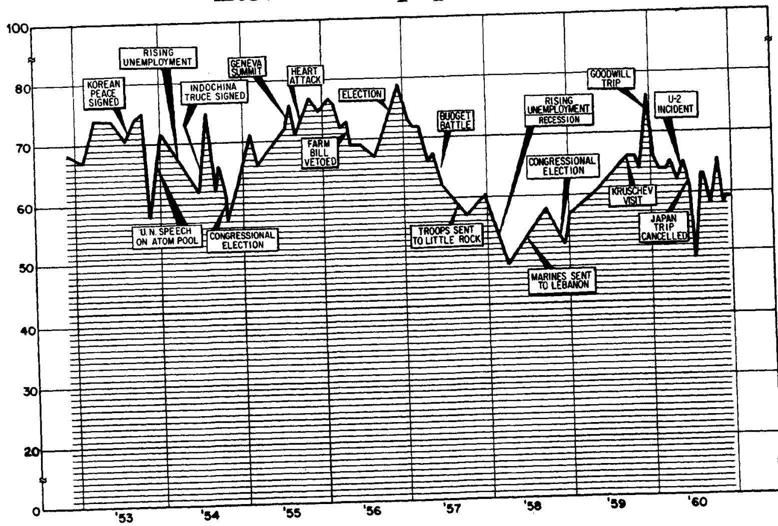
In sum, in areas that matter to the public, both administrations, during their respective reelection to off-year election periods, gave the impression that things were going badly. In 1972–4 they were much worse than they were in 1956–8 but this lesser malperformance was different in degree, not in kind. Striking evidence for this assertion can be seen in the trends in public opinion during the two periods. Figures 10.1 and 10.2 reproduce the AIPO (Gallup) trends in the approval rating for the entire Eisenhower and Nixon presidencies. Figure 10.3 compares the trends in approval for the two twenty-four month periods under review. The overall data in Figures 10.1 and 10.2 show that these two periods are the only periods of sustained decline suffered by Eisenhower and Nixon. Figure 10.3 confirms our expectation that Nixon's decline was steeper and deeper than Eisenhower's. Regression estimates indicate that Nixon's average monthly decline in approval over the twenty-four months was twice that of Eisenhower's.[5] But Eisenhower was hardly immune to the effects of accumulating evidence of poor policy performance. Thus, 1956–8 is simply a milder version of 1972–4.

The wholly fortuitous comparability of the periods covered by the two panels is fortunate indeed. It means that our main comparative hypothesis is that if perceived poor performance affected partisanship in the Eisenhower panel, the effect will be amplified in the Nixon panel. But this very comparability raises questions about the generalizability of the results. I will mention some of these questions here and leave others until their relevance is indicated by points of interpretation in the data analysis.

The data analyses will show that the partisanship of Republicans is less stable than that of Democrats. Is this because a Republican was in the White House? Because Republicans are a minority of identifiers? Because the presidential elections with which the panels began were landslides? If any or all of these conditions were reversed would the dynamics of individual partisanship be different? Your guess is as good as mine. With but two cases that share all of these characteristics, there are no means by which to disentangle causal influence. The third wave of the two panels once again maintains the similarity of the two cases; 1976 like 1960 "reinstated" the majority party in the White House by a hairbreadth margin.

Enough of what we cannot do. What can be done should be of interest. I will begin with an analysis of the turnover in partisanship before investigating potential causes of that turnover.

Eisenhower popularity



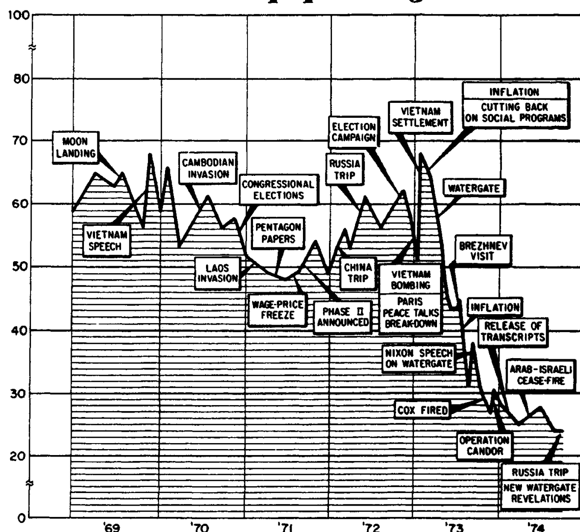


Figure 10.1. (*above*) Eisenhower popularity. Source: The Gallup Opinion Index, Report no. 125.

Figure 10.2. Nixon popularity. Source: The Gallup Opinion Index, Report no. 125.

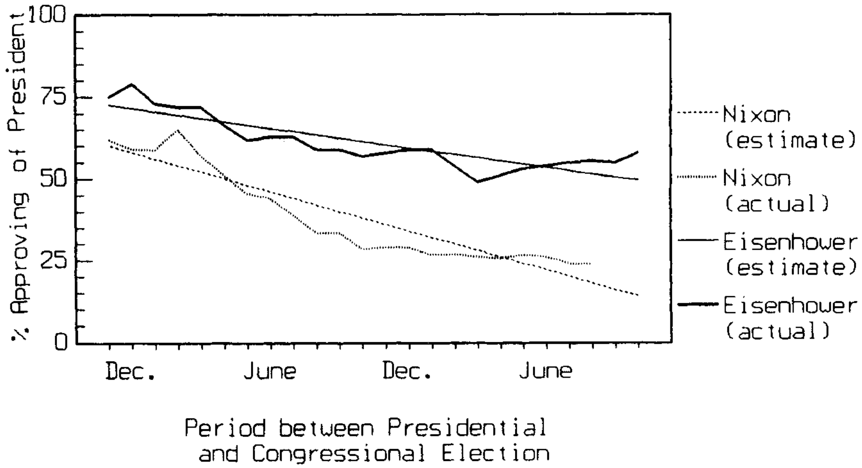


Figure 10.3. Trends in presidential popularity. For actual estimates, see Figures 10.1 and 10.2. The estimates are drawn from the regression of popularity on time.

TURNOVER IN INDIVIDUAL PARTISANSHIP: PRESIDENTIAL TO OFF-YEAR

Despite relatively high stability in the cross-section,[6] both of these panels show a great amount of turnover. Slightly more than half of the cases (54.3 percent in 1956–8 and 52.5 percent in 1972–4) are found on the main diagonal of the turnover matrices. Interviewees on the main diagonal gave exactly the same set of responses to the party identification probes in both waves of the panel. The balance of the two samples (558 respondents in the 1956–8 panel and 366 respondents in 1972–4) responded differently in direction or strength of identification when they were reinterviewed at the time of the Congressional election.

Off-diagonal and main-diagonal response patterns are not uniformly distributed in the samples. They are, as Converse (1969) would lead us to expect, more or less related to initial strength of identification. Table 10.1 shows us that "independent partisanship" is the least stable response pattern – one more "intransitivity" for Petrocik (1974) to consider – but its stability has increased markedly in recent times.

Gross response stability–instability is not a very interesting variable. Rather than consider changes, per se, we will want to know whether the place people end up, which is to say, the direction and extent of movement, is simply a matter of pure happenstance (Dreyer, 1973) or whether it reflects political forces operating upon the individual and upon the collectivity. In the analyses that follow, I will distinguish between the direction and strength of partisanship (Campbell et al., 1960, p. 122). If we assume for the time being that "independent partisans" are partisans, an individual will be considered "directionally stable" if he or she

Table 10.1. *Response stability and strength of identification*

	Strength of identification			
Panel	Strong	Not strong	Partisan independent	Pure independent
1956–8				
%	69	55	28	39
N	446	464	198	114
1972–4				
%	64	51	43	50
N	207	287	173	103

Note: Strength of identification on initial panel wave; entries are percentage of the category *N* found on the main diagonal.

Table 10.2. *Stability of direction of partisanship in two presidential-to-off-year panels*

	Panel	
	1956–8	1972–4
Directionally stable, %	88.8	84.9
Directionally nonstable,[a] %	11.2	15.1
N	1108	667[b]
Statistics	$x^2 = 5.87$; $df = 1$; $p < .02$	

[a]A change to "pure independent" or to any degree of identification with the "opposition" party is considered "directionally nonstable"; all other patterns are considered directionally stable.
[b]Only 1972 "Form II" respondents who were reinterviewed in 1974 are here included. Those who were "pure independents" initially, are excluded.

responds as a partisan of a given party (strong, not strong, or independent) on the first wave of the panel and expresses any degree of identification with the same party on the second wave. Directionally stable respondents may exhibit lability in their strength of identification by giving a different strength response on the second wave. "Directionally nonstable" respondents are those who are partisan on the first wave and pure independent or identified with the other party on the second.[7] With these distinctions in mind, we can consider turnover in the two panels.

Table 10.2 demonstrates that both the 1956–8 and 1972–4 panels show a very high level of directional stability. Nearly 90 percent of those identified with one of the major parties in 1956 was identified with that party two years later.[8] The Nixon panel shows marginally (albeit, with these sample sizes, significantly) greater directional nonstability than the Eisenhower panel.

Table 10.3. *Distribution of strength of identification in two panels*

Panel	Strength of initial identification			
	Strong	Not strong	Lean	*N*
1956–8, %	40.3	41.9	17.9	1108
1972–4, %	31.0	43.0	25.9	667
Statistics		$x^2 = 22.73$; $df = 2$; $p < .01$		

Table 10.4. *Stability of direction of partisanship controlling for initial strength of identification*[a]

Panel	Initial strength of identification		
	Strong	Not strong	Lean
1956–8			
%	95.3	90.5	70.2
N	446	464	198
1972–4			
%	94.2	85.7	72.3
N	207	287	173
Statistics			
x^2	0.35	4.07	0.19
p_{x^2}	ns	.05	ns

[a]Entries are percent "directionally stable."

Two factors, singly or in concert, could produce this interpanel difference in directional stability: If stability is associated with strength of identification and the distribution of strength is different in the two panels, we would expect differences in directional stability. Alternatively, or in addition, the two periods could affect those with the same strength of affiliation differently. In this case, we would observe interpanel differences in the rate of directional stability when we hold constant initial strength of identification. Table 10.3 documents that the distribution of strength is different in the initial waves of the two panels. The Nixon panel has a much larger proportion of independent partisans. Table 10.4 shows us that the rate of directional nonstability is different only for those classified as "not-strong" identifiers. Combining the information in these two tables, we find that half of the four-percentage-point greater directional nonstability in the Nixon panel is due to the higher proportion of independent partisans and half is attributable to the differential nonstability of the "not-strong" identifiers.

In passing we should note that Table 10.4 also illustrates conceptual problems associated with the proper classification of independent partisans (leaners): To be sure, leaners are less directionally stable than other sorts of partisans but seven in

Table 10.5. *Stability of direction of partisanship controlling for initial direction of partisanship*

Panel	Initial direction of identification			
	Democrats	Republicans	x^2	P_{x^2}
1956–8				
%	94.9	80.8	53.86	.0001
N	630	478		
1972–4				
%	89.9	77.4	19.59	.001
N	397	270		
Interpanel statistics				
x^2	8.57	1.10		
P_{x^2}	.005	ns		

Note: Entries are percent "directionally stable."

ten are stable.[9] Those who argue that these respondents should be considered "independents" are taking the short end of 70:30 odds. It is likely that leaners are a heterogeneous lot – most are partisans whose initial disposition is to refer to themselves as "independent," others are simply choosing the response pattern that fits their candidate preference. It seems appropriate for political science to put solution of the problem of classification of leaning partisans high on its research agenda (Keith et al., 1977).

Strength of identification and the period of the panel both affect directional stability. What about party itself? As a general proposition we would expect Republican identifiers to be more directionally stable than Democratic identifiers. Republicans are better educated, more homogeneous ideologically, more interested in politics, older, and, therefore, likely to have been identified with their party longer. All of these factors are thought to contribute to stability of partisanship but they do not in these cases.

Table 10.5 shows that Republicans in both panels are much more likely to be directionally nonstable than are Democrats. Republicans in the Eisenhower panel are nearly four times as likely as Democrats to move to the opposition party or to become pure independents. In the Nixon panel Republicans are twice as likely as are Democrats to change the direction of their identification. This interpanel difference reflects the presence of a significant period effect on the stability of Democratic identification. Although nine Democrats in ten were directionally stable between 1972 and 1974, this is a lower level than we would have expected based on the rate of stability in the Eisenhower years.

These data give rise to curiosity about whether the party differential in stability simply reflects differences in initial strength of identification. Table 10.6 is designed to satisfy this curiosity. We find in these data, on the whole, that Republicans in the Eisenhower panel were more weakly identified with their party than

Table 10.6. *Distribution of strength of identification in the initial wave of two panels, controlling for initial direction of partisanship*

	Initial strength of identification			
Survey	Strong	Not strong	Lean	N
1956				
Democrats, %	41.4	44.8	13.8	630
Republicans, %	38.7	38.1	23.2	478
1972				
Democrats, %	29.7	46.6	23.7	397
Republicans, %	33.0	37.8	29.3	270
Interparty, intrapanel statistics				
1956–8	$x^2 = 16.90$; $df = 2$; $p < .005$			
1972–4	$x^2 = 5.40$; $df = 2$; $.05 < p < .10$			
Interpanel, intraparty statistics				
Democrats	$x^2 = 22.64$; $df = 2$; $p < .001$			
Republicans	$x^2 = 4.02$; $df = 2$; $.10 < p < .25$			

were Democrats with theirs. This is not the case in the Nixon panel; indeed, in 1972 a slightly higher proportion of Republicans than Democrats responded as strong identifiers. In other words, the party differential in directional stability (Table 10.5) in the Eisenhower panel could be due to differences in initial distribution of strength but the differences in the Nixon panel cannot. A comparison of the panels within party groups shows that the greater directional nonstability exhibited by Democrats in the Nixon period compared with Democrats in the earlier panel could be due to differences in the distribution of the strength of identification. A less dramatic (statistically not significant) version of the same phenomenon is observed among Republicans in the two panels.

Do these differences in strength distributions account for the observed differences in directional stability? Table 10.7 indicates that the answer is yes for intraparty comparisons across the panels and no for interparty comparisons within the panels. In every case, with the possible exception of strong identifiers in the Nixon panel,[10] Democrats are more likely to be directionally stable than comparable Republicans. Even taking account of the differences in the initial distribution of the strength of affiliation, we cannot escape the conclusion that, *contrary to expectations forged from the sociodemographic correlates of partisanship, Republicans (in these two instances) are more likely to shift the direction of their partisanship than are Democrats.*

How can we explain this fact? We may note that far and away the largest interparty differences are found among partisan independents and speculate that, given the Eisenhower and Nixon landslides, the self-proclaimed "leaning" Republicans were really long-term Democrats who were reporting their vote intention rather than their partisanship. We would need prepanel data on partisanship in order to test this possibility but we have no such data.[11]

Table 10.7. *Stability of direction of partisanship controlling for initial direction and strength of partisanship*

Panel		Initial strength of identification		
		Strong	Not strong	Lean
1956–8				
Democrats		97.3	95.7	85.1
		(261)	(282)	(87)
Republicans		92.4	82.4	58.6
		(185)	(182)	(111)
1972–4				
Democrats		96.6	90.3	80.9
		(118)	(185)	(94)
Republicans		91.0	77.5	62.0
		(89)	(102)	(79)
Intrapanel, interparty comparisons				
1956–8	χ^2	5.76	22.89	16.37
	P_{χ^2}	.02	.001	.001
1972–4	χ^2	2.91	8.82	7.58
	P_{χ^2}	.10	.01	.01
Intraparty, interpanel comparisons				
Democrats	χ^2	0.00	5.57	0.31
	P_{χ^2}	ns	.025	ns
Republicans	χ^2	0.03	0.74	0.40
	P_{χ^2}	ns	ns	ns

Note: Entries are percent "directionally stable."

The absence of reliable pre–first-wave data notwithstanding, I find unconvincing the contention that Republicans are less likely to be directionally stable because they include in their number many prelandslide Democrats. In the first place, Republicans of all degrees of attachment to their party are disproportionately likely to be nonstable. Indeed, 1956 strong Republicans make a slightly larger contribution to the total pool of nonstable partisans than do 1956 independent Democrats. We can also note that 1956 Republican leaners, who left their party in 1958, were not differentially likely to remain pure independents or Democrats in 1960.[12]

We cannot exclude the possibility that Republicans of all strengths of attachment who changed the direction of their identification on the second wave were former Democrats who matched identification and vote in the Eisenhower and Nixon landslide elections. But rather than ending analysis, proffering such an explanation would simply change its focus to one of trying to distinguish these voters from those Democrats who defected to the Republican candidate without changing their party in the process.

To this proposed explanation of the interparty difference in directional stability, I prefer (*ergo caveat lector*) an entirely different family of explanations. These

Table 10.8. *Destination of nonstable partisans in the 1956–8 and 1972–4 panels*

Destination	Panel		χ^2	P_{χ^2}
	1956–8	1972–4		
"Pure independence," %	33.9	63.4	19.43	.005
Opposition party, %	66.1	36.6		
N	124	101		

begin with the proposition that partisanship is a political attitude and as such is subject to the laws of attitude change. In this context this proposition would argue that the direction and strength of identification stem from primary and secondary political socialization (Converse and Campbell, 1960; Jennings and Niemi, 1974) and that changes in these components of partisanship are responses to the same sorts of short-term forces that have been found to affect candidate choice (Stokes, Campbell, and Miller, 1958; Campbell et al., 1960; Stokes, 1966).

Since these are presidential to off-year panels, the set of short-term forces is restricted. The candidate components are absent,[13] but the party/governmental performance components are present and need to be considered. I have in mind specifically group-related attitudes, the perception of the party in power as manager of the government and performance, and expectations of performance in domestic and foreign policy.

To these potential short-term influences on partisanship we ought to add a less explicit notion reflecting the property of the times (a period effect). The sorts of epochal forces upon which Burnham (1976) relies in his forecast of the breakup of the party system could be presaged by or seen at work in the dynamics of individual partisanship. Table 10.2 should dispel any notion of massive, rapid breakdown in partisanship but that does not mean that epochal forces are not at work.

I will postpone until the next section an examination of the operation of short-term forces on partisanship. Before leaving this discussion of directional stability, we can consider whether the evidence before us is consistent with notions of epochal changes in the party system.

We can distinguish two types of partisan directional change as indexed by the "destination" of those who shift their partisan loyalty: Those who move to the opposition party may disapprove of their old party or its leadership but they do not evince disapproval of the party system, as such. By contrast, those who move to pure independence are, at least for the time being, dealigning themselves from the party system.

If the behavior of those who change their direction of partisanship is to be consistent with the assumptions of proponents of epochal change, we should observe an increase in the likelihood of movement to pure independence in the Nixon panel compared with that in the Eisenhower panel. The latter is squarely in the

Table 10.9. *Destination of nonstable partisans in the 1956–8 and 1972–4 panels controlling for party or origin*

Destination	Democrats		Republicans	
	1956–8	1972–4	1956–8	1972–4
"Pure independence," %	40.6	75.0	31.5	55.7
Opposition party, %	59.4	25.0	68.5	61
N	32	40	92	61
Interparty, intrapanel comparisons				
1956–8	$x^2 = 0.52$; $df = 1$; $P < .50$			
1972–4	$x^2 = 3.08$; $df = 1$; $P < .50$			
Intraparty, interpanel comparisons				
Democrats	$x^2 = 7.36$; $df = 1$; $P < .01$			
Republicans	$x^2 = 7.90$; $df = 1$; $P < .01$			

Table 10.10. *Destination of nonstable partisans in the 1956–8 and 1972–4 panels controlling for strength of original partisanship*

Destination	Strong		Not Strong		Lean	
	1956–8	1972–4	1956–8	1972–4	1956–8	1972–4
"Pure independence," %	14.3	66.7	29.5	58.5	44.1	66.7
Opposition party, %	85.7	33.3	70.5	41.5	55.9	33.3
N	21	12	44	41	59	48
Interpanel, intrastrength comparisons						
Fisher's Exact	$P = .003$		$x^2 = 7.26$; $P < .01$		$x^2 = 5.44$; $P < .025$	

middle of the "steady-state" period in recent partisan history; the Nixon panel begins twelve months into a period of accelerating antiparty forces (Converse, 1976). Moreover, this tendency should hold irrespective of initial direction or strength of partisanship. Tables 10.8, 10.9, and 10.10 indicate that the assumptions of the proponents of epochal change are supported in these data. The likely destination of directionally nonstable respondents in the two periods is very different. In the Eisenhower panel, those who change partisan direction are likely to move to the opposition party and, thus, display a continuing commitment to the party system; by contrast, those changing direction in the Nixon panel are very likely to dealign themselves. Table 10.9 shows that these findings hold for partisans of both parties; Table 10.10 indicates that the finding is valid irrespective of the strength with which the respondent's initial partisanship was held.

Here is evidence for partisan dealignment at the individual level. But the reader must not lose sight of the fact that these findings apply to relatively few partisans

Table 10.11. *Lability of strength of partisanship among directionally stable partisans in the 1956–8 and 1972–4 panels*

Lability of strength	Panel 1956–8	Panel 1972–4
Maintained strength, %	62.9	62.4
Changed strength, %	37.1	37.6
N	984	566
x^2	0.001 ns	

Note: Respondents who do not give exactly the same sequence of responses to the party identification questions but who do not identify themselves as "pure independents" or with the opposition party at the time of the second wave are classified as having changed strength. Those who give the same sequence of responses on both waves are classified as having maintained strength.

(Table 10.2). Bearing in mind that we are only talking about 10 to 15 percent of the electorate, it appears that political parties are a less attractive object of identification in the mid-1970s than they were in the mid-1950s (Nie, Verba, and Petrocik, 1976; Pomper, 1977).

When all is said and done there is only so much that one can do with 10 to 15 percent of the electorate. Fortunately, our analysis of the dynamics of individual partisanship does not have to end with the consideration of directionally non-stable partisans. If the *direction* of partisanship is stable for nine voters in ten between presidential and congressional elections, these voters' *strength* of identification shows a much higher likelihood of change.

Table 10.11 shows us that more than one-third of directionally stable partisans changes its strength of identification between the presidential and off-year elections. This is equally true of both panels; there is no distinction between the two periods in this respect.

In Table 10.11 all strength changes are lumped together. A less grossly aggregated approach reveals both interpanel and interparty differences that suggest the effect of political events on the strength and direction of partisan attachments. In other words, this approach yields data consistent with the hypothesis that party identification responds to short-term electoral forces.

Before I can begin to demonstrate that this is the case, the problem of classifying strength changes must be addressed. Operationally, we have no difficulty classifying a changed strength as "stronger" or "weaker." In the turnover table depicted in Figure 10.4, all respondents in cells along the main diagonal have "maintained" their Wave I strength of identification in Wave II; those below the main diagonal "strengthened" their Wave I identification; and those above the main diagonal "weakened" their Wave I identification at the second wave.

The conceptual question is complicated by persistent "intransitivities" in the strength scale. In important respects, including candidate support, "independent"

Wave I Strength	Wave II Strength: Strong	Not Strong	Lean
Strong	Maint.	Weaker	Weaker
Not Strong	Stronger	Maint.	Weaker
Lean	Stronger	Stronger	Maint.

Figure 10.4. Classification of types of lability.

partisans appear more partisan than not-strong identifiers (Petrocik, 1974; Keith et al., 1977). With present measurement technology there is no final answer to the question of whether moving from a "not-strong" identification to "partisan independence" is actually a "weakening" change and whether the reverse pattern of movement produces a "stronger" sense of attachment to one's party. But because the operational solution is both conventional and convenient and because leaners exhibit a greater propensity to change partisan direction (Table 10.4), I will classify the lability of partisan strength according to the scheme in Figure 10.4.

When we add the possibility of changing the strength of one's partisanship to our analysis, do the substantial differences in response stability between Democrats and Republicans persist? In a word, yes: Tables 10.12, 10.13, and 10.14 show that five of the six interparty comparisons reach statistical significance and the sixth (strong identifiers in the Nixon panel) does not miss by much. Every interparty, intrapanel comparison shows Republicans more likely than Democrats to weaken in their strength of identification or to change it altogether. We also note in these that, when strengthening the sense of attachment to one's party is a logical possibility, Democratic identifiers are much more likely to move in this direction than are Republicans. In both of these panels we see evidence of the operation of forces that tend to affect Republican and Democratic partisans in precisely opposite ways – Republican identification was substantially eroded in these periods while Democratic identification was left unaffected or even augmented.

These data also bring to light a period effect that cuts across party lines. Those partisans who were less than strong identifiers (Tables 10.13 and 10.14) when first interviewed in 1972 show a higher likelihood than those observed in the Eisenhower panel of weakening or changing the direction of their partisanship. This period effect compounds the change in the strength of identification (Table 10.3) and the change in the attractiveness of the party system (Table 10.8) between the two panels.

Table 10.12. *Stability and change in the direction and strength of partisanship – initially strong partisans*

	1956–8		1972–4	
Stability–change	Democrats	Republicans	Democrats	Republicans
Maintained, %	77.8	56.8	68.6	58.4
Weakened, %	19.5	35.7	28.0	32.6
Changed direction, %	2.7	7.6	3.4	9.0
N	261	185[a]	118	89

Interparty, intrapanel statistics
1956–8 $x^2 = 23.25$; $df = 2$; $p < .001$
1972–4 $x^2 = 3.84$; $df = 2$; $.10 < p < .25$

Interpanel, intraparty statistics
Democrats $x^2 = 3.61$; $df = 2$;
Republicans $x^2 = 0.37$; $df = 2$; $p > .75$

[a]Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.

Table 10.13. *Stability and change in the direction and strength of partisanship – initially not strong identifiers*

	1956–8		1972–4	
Stability–change	Democrats	Republicans	Democrats	Republicans
Strengthened, %	34.8	18.1	26.5	9.8
Maintained, %	54.6	56.0	52.4	47.1
Weakened, %	6.4	8.2	11.4	20.6
Changed direction, %	4.3	17.6	9.7	22.5
N	282[a]	182	185	102

Interparty, intrapanel statistics
1956–8 $x^2 = 32.03$; $df = 3$; $p < .001$
1972–4 $x^2 = 20.69$; $df = 3$; $p < .001$

Interpanel, intraparty statistics
Democrats $x^2 = 11.05$; $df = 3$; $p < .02$
Republicans $x^2 = 12.71$; $df = 3$; $p < .01$

[a]Percentages may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.

Partisanship in the Nixon period differs from partisanship in the Eisenhower period in three respects that materially affect the party system. First, the distribution of partisanship has shifted away from strong identification and, as always, weaker means less stable identification. Second, apart from strong identifiers, those in comparable strength categories in the Nixon period show higher rates of erosion than were present in the Eisenhower panel. Third, those partisans who

Table 10.14. *Stability and change in the direction and strength of partisanship – initially partisan independents*

	1956–8		1972–4	
Stability–change	Democrats	Republicans	Democrats	Republicans
Strengthened, %	50.8	36.0	33.0	24.0
Maintained, %	34.5	22.5	47.9	38.0
Changed direction, %	14.9	41.4	19.1	38.0
N	87[a]	111	94	79
Interparty, intrapanel statistics				
1956–8	$x^2 = 16.37$; $df = 2$; $p < .001$			
1972–4	$x^2 = 7.62$; $df = 2$; $p < .05$			
Interpanel, intraparty statistics				
Democrats	$x^2 = 5.81$; $df = 2$; $.05 < p < .10$			
Republicans	$x^2 = 6.02$; $df = 2$; $p < .05$			

[a]Percentage may not total to 100.0% due to rounding.

change direction are now more likely than they were in the 1950s to reject identification entirely and move to pure independence.

Apart from documenting these differences between the two periods, there is no further interpanel analysis I can perform. This is to say I can, like others before me, note a weakening of the place of party in the affections of the individual but, for lack of data, I cannot explain it.

I can within the panels investigate whether noncandidate short-term forces affect the dynamics of individual partisanship. It is to these investigations that I now turn.

POLICY PERFORMANCE AND THE DYNAMICS OF INDIVIDUAL PARTISANSHIP

Assuming that the change data offered thus far reflect the presence of more than simple test–retest response unreliability (Dreyer, 1973; but cf. Brody, 1977, and Brody and Rothenberg, 1988), we can look to the notion of short-term electoral forces to guide our investigations. Absent candidate forces, our attention is directed to performance evaluations. Tufte (1975) has shown that votes in the off-year elections are sensitive to evaluations of presidential performance; it should not tax credibility to argue that such evaluations also affect one's sense of attachment to a political party. If this proposition is true, questions can be raised about the suitability of party identification for some of the conceptual–analytic roles in which it is cast.

It will be sufficient for this chapter to explore one or two plausible measures of performance evaluation as potential correlates of party identification change.

I have selected a measure of "satisfaction with one's family financial situation" to employ as a test variable in both Eisenhower and Nixon panels. In addition, in the Nixon panel I will consider the relationship to the stability of partisanship of a summary measure of Nixon's standing with the respondent in 1972 and 1974.

The test item selected for 1956 and 1958 reads:

We are . . . interested in how people are getting along financially these days. So far as you and your family are concerned, would you say that you are pretty well satisfied with your present financial situation, more-or-less satisfied, or not satisfied at all. (Campbell et al., 1971, pp. 39, 201)

The financial satisfaction item for 1972 and 1974 reads:

How satisfied are you with the income you (and your family) have: (1) Delighted (2) pleased (3) mostly satisfied (4) mixed (5) mostly dissatisfied (6) unhappy (7) terrible. (Miller, Miller, and Kline, 1975, p. 224)

The summary measure of Nixon's standing with the respondent in 1972 and 1974 is the "feeling thermometer" ratings of Nixon on the two panel waves. (See e.g., Miller, Miller, and Kline, 1975, p. 207.)

The family financial satisfaction items offer a tough test of the short-term force hypothesis. Only about half of those experiencing a financial problem, as their most acute personal concern, believe that the government ought to aid in its solution. For *this group* (and this group alone) the perceived quality of governmental performance in the area of personal finances is related to support for the incumbent and feelings of political cynicism. But for the *other half,* those who believe they ought to handle their own financial problems, personal financial problems have no political relevance (Brody and Sniderman, 1977; Sniderman and Brody, 1977). Based on these considerations, I would expect that for more than half of the respondents, the replies to the family financial probes have no political meaning but I do not know which respondents fall into this group.[14] The inclusion of irrelevant cases (random noise) makes the exploration of the relationship of financial satisfaction to the dynamics of individual partisanship a very conservative test of the effects of policy performance on partisanship.

Consider the 1956–8 panel: Republican partisans who expressed anything less than satisfaction with their financial situation in 1956 were much more likely than those who were satisfied to weaken or change the direction of their identification over the period of the panel. By contrast, the degree of financial satisfaction offers no insight into the stability of Democratic partisanship in this period.[15] Table 10.15 bears a bit more scrutiny: Relatively few Republicans in 1956 express outright dissatisfaction with their financial situation – only one in seven will offer this response. But nearly 40 percent of this group will actually leave the Republican party over the next two years. This rate of defection is double that of the group of Republicans who express satisfaction with their financial situation. Financially satisfied Republicans are twice as likely as their fellow partisans who are "not satisfied at all" to strengthen their sense of affiliation with their party. Moreover, unlike those Republicans with a different degree of financial satisfac-

Table 10.15. *Financial satisfaction in 1956 and stability of partisan indentification in 1956–8*

	Financial satisfaction		
Stability–change	Not satisfied	More-or-less	Pretty well satisfied
1956 Democrats			
Strengthened, %	24.4	29.3	27.7
Maintained, %	46.7	42.2	41.1
Weakened, %	20.7	17.3	20.8
Changed direction, %	8.1	11.2	10.4
Total, %	99.9	100.0	100.0
N	135	249	231
Statistics	$x^2 = 3.16$; $df = 6$; $p = .79$		
1956 Republicans			
Strengthened, %	12.7	19.5	24.1
Maintained, %	25.4	31.0	37.5
Weakened, %	23.8	23.0	19.0
Changed direction, %	38.1	26.4	19.0
Total, %	100.0	99.9	100.0
N	63	174	232
Statistics	$x^2 = 14.50$; $df = 6$; $p = .02$		

tion, the *inter*party difference in the pattern of stability–change in identification for the financially satisfied fails to achieve statistical significance ($X^2 = 7.41$; $df = 3$; $.05 = p = .10$). Without the stimulus of a negative impression of performance, Republicans are not more likely than Democrats to move away from their party.

For a couple of reasons caution is in order about the conclusion that these data offer evidence that short-term forces affect the stability of partisanship: In the first place, many cases (over one-third) are "misclassified" by the proposition that the satisfied maintain or strengthen and the dissatisfied weaken or change partisanship. More troubling is the fact that the finding does not replicate in 1958. The association between expressed financial satisfaction in 1958 and the 1956–8 pattern of stability–change in identification, for both party groups, is not significantly different from chance.

The association between satisfaction and stability of identification in 1958 fails to reemerge because those Republicans who changed their expression of satisfaction during the period show a different pattern of stability–change than those who were satisfied or dissatisfied on both occasions.[16] In Table 10.16 we see that the twice satisfied and twice dissatisfied are quite different in the dynamics of their partisanship. We note again that twice-satisfied Republicans look very much like Democrats in party dynamics. But inexplicably, those Republicans who formerly were less than satisfied but who reported being "pretty well satisfied" in 1958 do not "reward" their party with a heightened sense of affiliation. If anything, these

Table 10.16. *Change in financial satisfaction 1956–8 and changes in party identification*

	1956 Republicans[a]				
Stability–change	"Not satisfied" 1956 and 1958	Changed to "not satisfied"	Changed to "satisfied"	"Satisfied" 1956 and 1958	1956 Democrats[b]
Strengthened, %	4.5	21.7	13.3	26.9	27.7
Maintained, %	40.9	34.8	33.3	38.8	42.8
Weakened, %	13.6	13.0	25.3	17.9	19.4
Changed direction, %	40.9	30.4	28.0	16.4	10.1
Total, %	99.9	99.9	99.9	100.0	100.0
N	22	46	75	134	614

[a]Republicans who said in 1958 that they were "more or less satisfied" (N = 191) are here excluded.
[b]1956 Democrats show no relationship between changes in financial satisfaction and stability–change in identification and are included here for comparison.

Table 10.17. *Financial satisfaction 1972–4 and stability–change in partisan identification*

	1972 Democrats		1972 Republicans	
Stability–change	Not satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Satisfied
Strengthened, %	19.7	20.9	8.3	13.1
Maintained, %	56.2	57.1	39.7	54.5
Weakened, %	14.3	11.5	20.7	17.2
Changed direction, %	9.9	10.4	31.4	15.2
Total, %	100.1	99.9	100.1	100.0
N	203	182	121	145
Statistics	$\chi^2 = 0.67$; $df = 3$; $p = .88$		$\chi^2 = 12.56$; $df = 3$; $p = .006$	

Note: See n. 19 for the criteria by which "satisfied/not satisfied" respondents are distinguished.

Republicans are more likely to move away from the party during the period than are Republicans whose impression of their financial situation changed in the other direction. One can imagine inertial forces at work here that keep the newly satisfied from rewarding and the newly dissatisfied from punishing. Without a capacity to explore this or other, simpler explanations, I am reluctant to go beyond observing that financial satisfaction and the dynamics of identification are apparently linked. The linkages are complex and I lack the data to satisfactorily explore the complexity.

In the more recent panel the picture is simpler: In both 1972 and 1974 satisfaction with family income is directly related to stability–change in Republican identification; moreover a simple criterion applied to turnover in satisfaction yields a dichotomous measure of income satisfaction that is strongly related to Republicans' sense of affiliation with their party.[17]

Table 10.17 reports these data. Once again, as in the Eisenhower panel, the pattern of stability–change in the Democrats' sense of identification with their party is unaffected by personal economic satisfaction. By contrast, Republicans appear to be strongly affected: Those who are satisfied with their economic situation are half as likely to change the direction of their identification and half again as likely to strengthen their sense of Republican party affiliation as those who, by this standard, are economically dissatisfied. Perhaps, the greater clarity of the economic issue – for example, its coverage by the media and the degree of government intervention – is the source of its more straightforward impact on Republican partisanship in the Nixon period compared with that in the Eisenhower period.

Thus far, I have examined the effect of one putative short-term force and found it helpful in explaining the dynamics of Republican identification. The picture should become even clearer if I employ a measure of performance evaluation that covers a broad spectrum of issue areas (albeit, with no specificity) and which has

Table 10.18. *Attitudes toward Nixon in 1974 and stability–change in Democratic partisanship, 1972–4*

Stability–change	1974 Nixon thermometer rating[a]		
	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Strengthened, %	20.5	21.2	18.2
Maintained, %	60.1	55.8	47.0
Weakened, %	12.3	17.3	10.6
Changed direction, %	7.1	5.8	24.2
Total, %	100.0	100.1	100.0
N	268	52	66
Statistics	$x^2 = 19.75$; $df = 6$; $p = .003$		

[a]See n. 20 for scaling criteria.

Table 10.19. *Attitudes toward Nixon in 1974 and stability–change in Republican partisanship, 1972–4*

Stability–change	1974 Nixon thermometer rating[a]		
	Negative	Neutral	Positive
Strengthened, %	8.8	22.2	9.8
Maintained, %	42.2	44.4	56.1
Weakened, %	17.6	14.8	18.2
Changed direction, %	31.4	18.5	15.9
Total, %	100.0	99.9	100.0
N	102	27	132
Statistics	$x^2 = 12.69$; $df = 6$; $p = .048$		

[a]See n. 20 for scaling criteria.

demonstrated political relevance for most persons in the electorate. Candidate thermometers are for the individual voter an expression of the net result of short-term forces and, of course, the long-term effect of party identification.

If we simplify the thermometer into an ordinal scale – positive, neutral, and negative[18] – we find that President Nixon's 1974 rating on this scale is strongly associated with the pattern of stability–change in the partisanship of both Democrats and Republicans between 1972 and 1974.[19] Tables 10.18 and 10.19 present the data. In Table 10.18 we see that the one Democrat in six who continued to rate Nixon positively in the fall of 1974 was much more likely to change direction of partisanship than those Democrats who remained or became negative in the wake of Watergate. Table 10.19 shows that the four Republicans in ten who had changed their evaluation of Nixon to negative by 1974 were also likely to diminish or even change their sense of affiliation with their party; two-thirds of those who continued to rate Nixon positively maintained or strengthened their partisanship. Since both financial satisfaction and general attitudes toward Nixon are re-

Table 10.20. *Coordinate and contrary evaluations and the dynamics of Republican identification 1972–4*

	Not financially satisfied 1972–4		Financially satisfied 1972–4	
Stability–change in identification	Positive attitude toward Nixon 1974	Negative attitude toward Nixon 1974	Positive attitude toward Nixon 1974	Negative attitude toward Nixon 1974
Strengthened, %	7.1	9.4	11.1	10.5
Maintained, %	35.7	45.3	48.9	63.2
Weakened, %	17.9	24.5	17.8	14.5
Changed, %	39.3	20.8	22.2	11.8
Total, %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	56	53	45	76
Statistics	x^2 = 18,35; $df = 9$; $p < .05$			

Note: Twenty-seven Republicans who were neutral toward Nixon in 1974 are here excluded.

lated to the dynamics of Republican partisanship, we can examine the effects on partisanship when short-term forces operate in the same direction (i.e., in a coordinate or reinforcing fashion) and compare it with the effects when they act in a contrary (cross-pressure) direction.

It should be noted that for Republicans financial satisfaction is associated with evaluation of Nixon. Leaving aside the handful who are neutral toward the just-resigned President, we find that a strong majority (62.8 percent) of those classified as financially satisfied remained positive in their rating of Nixon. Among those classified as financially not satisfied, a majority (51.4 percent) expressed a negative evaluation of Nixon in 1974.[20] Table 10.20 demonstrates that the expected occurs: Republicans who are doubly dissatisfied (with Nixon in general and with their financial situation in particular) are three times as likely to forsake their Republican identification as are the doubly satisfied. The doubly dissatisfied are about twice as likely to change their party allegiance, as those who are cross-pressured. Each of these expressions of satisfaction has about equal power to move partisanship. When negative opinions reinforce each other, we observe extreme movement; reinforcing positive attitudes support a "standing decision"; and when the two evaluations are mutually at odds, we see reduced movement.

We can also note in Table 10.20 that neither of these expressions of satisfaction gives us a handle on the *strengthening* of Republican identification. The one Republican in ten who heightened his or her sense of affiliation with the GOP between 1972 and 1974 is equally likely to express any combination of the two evaluations. For the other 90 percent, the likelihood of maintaining one's direction and strength of identification with the party, or of giving in to the antiparty pressures of the day, is related to the pressures to which one is subject.

Clearly much about the dynamics of partisanship remains unexplained. But I have found out enough about both Democrats and Republicans to feel secure with stating that party identification changes; that the changes are not random; that identification changes more rapidly than life cycle or generational hypotheses would lead us to expect; and that identification changes in response to the sorts of electoral and political forces that generally affect political attitudes and behaviors.

These findings appear to be valid in both the "steady state" of the 1950s and in more recent, more tempestuous times. Republican identification appears more subject to these pressures – whether this is because there is something unique about Republicans, per se, or because they are the minority party, or because their party controlled the White House, I cannot know.

The finding that the summary evaluation of Nixon (as represented by the 1974 thermometer) is related to the pattern of stability–change in Democratic identification suggests that Republicans are not unique and that investigation of the specific components of that evaluation may illuminate attitude change among Democrats as well.

It remains for me to briefly consider the relevance of these findings for the roles that "party identification" can play in electoral research.

THE STABILITY OF INDIVIDUAL PARTISANSHIP AND THE ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

With the preceding I have sought to establish three interrelated points. First, party identification is not only a cause but an effect of political perceptions and evaluations. Second, the strength component of identification is stable for fewer voters than is the directional component. Third, individual responses to successive probes of party identification reflect the operation of politically relevant forces; differences in responses are not simply measurement error. Assuming concurrence in these propositions, how should we change our way of doing business?

In original formulation and subsequent usage, direction and strength of party identification are assumed to be relatively stable. Depending upon the partisanship and political involvement of the family constellation, one is socialized to a preference for a party and an initial strength of attachment to that party (Campbell et al., 1960, pp. 146–67). The longer one is a member of a party, the more strongly one feels attached to it. To be sure, for some individuals, a change in life circumstances can bring a change in partisanship but, on the whole, one's commitment is a "standing decision." Apart from changes in the life of the individual that affect her or his partisanship, we are told that "only an event of extraordinary intensity can arouse any significant part of the electorate to the point that its established political loyalties are shaken" (Campbell et al., 1960, p. 151).

These assumptions are still asserted (e.g., Miller, 1976). Indeed, one cannot conceive of "normal vote" analyses or any analyses that begin with a control for partisanship without assuming that party identification is the unmoved mover.

The demonstrated stability (Table 10.2) of the *direction* of identification, even in the face of "events of extraordinary intensity" between 1972 and 1974 should be a comfort to those who have assumed and who wish to continue to assume that party identification is a standing decision. But the warrant for treating the *strength* component in the same way would seem to be absent. The individual change data, from the period that included the "extraordinary events" of the second Nixon administration and from the much less extraordinary period of the Eisenhower panel, would argue that the strength responses to the party identification probes are a composite of old habits and new impressions and are a judgment about the present attractiveness of the party.

Apart from simply wanting to bring our assumptions into accord with the facts, treating both components of identification as equally stable can lead to specification errors. Which is to say that causal influence that in reality may belong to one or another short-term force can mistakenly be attributed to party identification, under the assumption that party identification cannot itself be caused by these forces and with analytic procedures that capitalize on partisanship as an exogenous variable (Brody, 1977).

The data from the panels suggest that normal vote analyses (as currently practiced with the three types of "independents" equated) are subject to two sorts of specification errors. The normal vote equation overstates the effect of party by treating the difference between strong and not-strong identifiers as resulting from a stable disposition. It understates the effects of party by treating partisan independents as pure independents and not as partisans. These errors, in the 1950s when the distribution of strength of identification showed a higher proportion of strong identifiers than leaners, would tend to understate the role of issue evaluations and other short-term forces. In the 1970s, with partisan independence a more popular stance, normal vote analyses will tend to understate the role of partisanship in the voting decision.

None of these problems is cataclysmic but given the analytic centrality of party identification, our understanding of electoral politics at the individual level and changes in electoral politics at the system level can be affected if we handle it incorrectly. Taking the steps necessary to understanding how to get it right should be a high priority.

11

The American dilemma: the role of law as a persuasive symbol

The chapters so far have drawn on the two broadly available survey series: the National Election Studies and the General Social Survey. Both have a definite shape to their data designs – fixed-instrument and face-to-face interviews. In contrast, the succeeding chapters draw on surveys we have ourselves designed, and these have a deliberately different shape – variable instrument and over the telephone.

The first feature is crucial, the second merely material. Our interviews have been conducted over the telephone since this is, at the moment, the easiest way to take advantage of computer-assisted interviewing. But the key is computer-assisted interviewing.

The decisive advantage of computer-assisted interviewing is variability. Introductions to questions can vary. The wording of the actual question can vary. So, too, can the order of questions and the formatting of responses. In the chapters that follow we illustrate how to capitalize on this variability to illuminate aspects of reasoning about political choices hitherto out of sight.

We start, in Chapter 11, with the most straightforward form of variation. The questions we want to address are these. To what extent can ordinary citizens be rallied in support of a policy intended to assist blacks if they know that the policy is not merely a possible course of action but has actually the force of law? And supposing the law can operate as a persuasive symbol, why are some people more willing to rally behind it than others?

The key to addressing these questions, we are persuaded, is integrating experimental design and survey research. Most generally, the idea is to combine the internal validity strengths of experimental design with the external validity strengths of representative sampling. This is by no means an original goal, and has traditionally been accomplished by the so-called split ballot. In the split ballot design, separate forms of the questionnaire are prepared, each including one variation of a question, with the different forms being randomly assigned to respondents. Now, this design can accommodate an experiment of the kind we report in Chapter 11. But it cannot accommodate either the complexity of variations we report in Chapter 12 with the counterargument technique and in Chapter 13 with the "laid-off worker" experiment or the number of separate manipulations, complex or simple, embedded in a single study. It should be emphasized that thanks to computer-assisted interviewing, the variations are invisible to the respondent and effortless for the interviewer.

It is a premise of our culture that law can serve as a persuasive symbol, that the law can instruct us, as citizens, not only with respect to our rights but also with respect to our obligations. But there is certainly room for debate over how well founded this intuition is, if not in the abstract, then in the context of the most

This chapter prepared by Paul M. Sniderman, Thomas Piazza, Philip E. Tetlock, and Peter J. Feld.

divisive issue in American politics – the issue of race. Can the law serve as a tool of civic education, to shame people out of their prejudices and instruct them on the civil rights and common humanity of all citizens? Or is the law impotent, unable to change the hearts and minds of citizens on an issue as emotionally charged, and as politically divisive, as the issue of race?

The role of the law has been at the center of national debate over the American dilemma, and changing conceptions of the law's role have marked changes in the very terms of the debate. The classic position – that the law, in and of itself, is powerless to change the hearts and minds of citizens – found its seminal expression in the majority opinion for the Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson,* upholding segregation:

> The argument [against segregation] also assumed that social prejudices may be overcome by legislation. . . . We cannot accept this proposition. . . . As was said by the Court of Appeals of New York in People v. Gallagher, 93 N.Y. 438, 448, "this end can neither be accomplished nor promoted by laws which conflict with the general sentiment of the community upon whom they are designed to operate."

The court's reasoning was in harmony with the contemporary views of the sociologist William Graham Sumner and his famous dictum, "Stateways cannot change folkways." The contrary position – that the law could serve as a persuasive symbol – was supported by prominent social scientists such as Kenneth Clark and Thomas Pettigrew and undergirded the logic of the Court's opinion in *Brown v. Kansas,* striking down *Plessy v. Ferguson.*

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the potential power of law as a persuasive symbol that can reshape the attitudes of ordinary citizens on contemporary issues of race. We shall concentrate on two questions: First, to what extent can the public at large be induced to favor a policy designed to assist blacks if they are informed that the policy is not merely a proposal, a potential course of action, but already has the democratic seal of approval and the force of law? Second, what factors in people's makeup and circumstances encourage them to be open to persuasion – why, that is, can some people be persuaded to support a policy to assist blacks but others cannot?

SPECIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

Let us make plain more exactly the question we want to explore. The first issue is causal. If there is a connection between what the law defines as right and proper and what the public accepts as right and proper, which way does causality flow?

Most commonly, when we invoke the normative power of the law, it is most commonly with respect to prohibition, to persuading people not to do what they otherwise would do. The mood, paradigmatically, is negative imperative: "It is against the law to park here: Do not park here," with the understood corollary being that to violate the prohibition is to risk punishment. Although the negative or prohibitive function of law is manifestly important, our interest here is in its positive, or supportive, function: To what extent can citizens be induced to regard

a public policy as right and proper if, as a matter of law, it has been agreed that it is right and proper?

So conceived, a connection between public policy and public attitudes plainly is causally ambiguous: A change in the law may generally precede a change in public opinion, in which case the former is cause and the latter effect, or, alternatively, a change in the law may generally follow a change in public opinion, in which case the causal order is reversed. Notice that this formulation is elliptical: Even if changes in elite opinion lead changes in public opinion, elites may nonetheless wait for comparable changes among the mass public before they are willing to voice their tolerance by enacting legislation. The evidence is mixed, although Burstein (1979) has put together an impressive argument that the landmark civil rights legislation of the 1950s and 1960s generally became law only after a substantial public majority had been assembled in support of each proposal's principal goals. But even supposing that a change in public attitudes in general precedes, and occasions, a change in public policy, the question remains whether the taking of an authoritative decision can induce further support for the policy.

It should be admitted at the outset that the historical record by no means encourages the idea that ordinary Americans are open to persuasion on issues of race. To be sure, there has been a sea-change in American racial attitudes over the past half-century (e.g., Hyman and Sheatsley, 1956, 1964; Burstein, 1979; Greely and Sheatsley, 1971; Lipset and Schneider, 1978; Taylor, Sheatsley, and Greely, 1978; Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo, 1985), but this change has been confined very nearly entirely to support for the principle of racial equality: At the level of actual policies – employment opportunities for blacks, open housing, busing, government spending – the rate of change has been glacial, with policy preferences changing either with conspicuous modesty over the past thirty years, or not at all (Schuman et al., 1985, pp. 88–9).

The question, however, is not whether the mere enactment of a law is guaranteed to induce a change in public attitudes. Ordinary citizens chronically pay minimal attention to politics, and consequently possess minimal information about it, and there can be no reason to expect that taking an authoritative decision would affect their attitudes if they are unaware of it. What we want to determine, therefore, is how they will react to a policy if they know that it has properly become a law, passed by the nation's highest deliberative bodies: the House of Representatives and the Senate.

But what policy in particular? Some racial issues are "gut issues": Once people take a stand on them, whether pro or con, they are so attached that they are unlikely to be swayed by any appeal. As we will see in Chapter 12, affirmative action and busing are paradigmatic examples of this. But conventional wisdom to the contrary notwithstanding, people do not have their feet set in cement with respect to every racial issue. In particular, there is a fair amount of room for persuasion in attitudes toward government assistance for blacks, as we shall also show in Chapter 12. It would a fortiori be self-defeating to select a policy with

which a large majority is already in agreement, since even if an appeal to the law would in other circumstances be persuasive, in this circumstance the people who might otherwise have responded to an appeal to support the policy start off already in support of it. The larger the preexisting majority, the more stifling the ceiling effect.

As it happens, a racial policy that fits these guidelines is "set-asides," the policy that requires a percentage of government contracts be assured for businesses owned by minorities. This is an issue on which there is an approximately fifty–fifty split in the mass public, so there is no problem of a ceiling effect, and it is, moreover, an issue about which feelings are not so inflamed that people hold their positions intransigently, so there is, psychologically as well as statistically, room for change.

Set-asides, in fact, are a particularly interesting area for investigation. The policy, which sets explicit quotas for minority businesses, structurally belongs to the family of affirmative action programs. But set-asides, rather than being seen as violating common standards of fairness, which presume that everybody should be treated alike, tend to be perceived as exemplifying a norm of generosity. Support for set-asides reflects a desire of many to provide a helping hand and "piece of the action" for minority members who conform to the work ethic.

It should go without saying that we have aimed to ensure that our analysis is not colored by our own views of the strengths and weaknesses of set-asides as a public policy. What we want to determine is how far the ordinary American is open to persuasion on a major issue of race if he learns that the policy is not merely a possible course of action to consider but one that has properly, and after deliberation, been made into law.

HYPOTHESES

There are at least two commonsense reasons to expect that the law can serve as a persuasive symbol. First, so far as citizens attach a positive value to a law and perceive in the process of making a law the making of an authoritative decision as to what is right and proper, they should be inclined to view positively a policy that has become a law. Second, it seems only reasonable to expect that the people most easily influenced about what stand to take on a policy issue are those whose opinions about public policies are flimsiest and least well formed. Let us translate both commonsense expectations into formal hypotheses.

Consider the balance triad, introduced by Heider (1958): *P, O, X,* where *P* stands generically for the primary perceiver, *O* for the other person or object, and *X* for a third object connected both to *P* and to *O*. Let *P* stand in this case for the average citizen, *O* for the law as an institution, and *X* for a racial policy intended to assist blacks. Figure 11.1 describes the postulated relations for the triad, where a plus sign indicates positive sentiments, of liking, trust, support, and so forth, and a minus sign the converse.

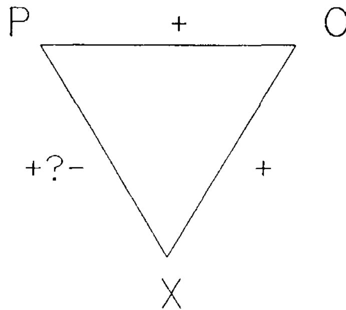


Figure 11.1. A balance triad: citizens (*P*), the law as an institution (*O*), and a racial policy to assist blacks (*X*).

The balance triad was formulated by Heider for the analysis of sentiments and subsequently supplied the underpinning for balance models of attitude change, formalized by Abelson and Rosenberg and Harary and Cartwright, among others (Abelson et al., 1968). The causal implication is this: Given that there is a tendency to psychological balance – that is, that there is a preference that sentiments should fit together harmoniously, without stress for change – then if *P* likes *O,* and *O* likes *X,* then *P* also should be inclined to like *X*. Pictorially, supposing a positive bond between *P* and *O,* balance can be achieved, in Figure 11.1, by establishing a positive association between *P* and *X*. It is possible that if a strong negative relation were to hold between *P* and *X,* the positive association between *P* and *O* could be overturned or, alternatively, the positive association between *O* and *X* could be cancelled – that is, the information that Congress had passed a law authorizing set-asides would be discounted. There are thus three patterns of change possible, but the most probable pattern is the one that entails the least resistance (McGuire, 1969, for principle of least resistance) and, in the circumstances, that plainly is to support the policy of set-asides.

The other commonsense expectation also can be given a more exact interpretation. A person's opinions can be arrayed along a continuum according to how central or well formed they are. Some are definite, well anchored in supportive information, and tied to numerous, relevant and well-rehearsed beliefs; in contrast, other opinions are superficial, transient, barely formed, sometimes no more than an effort to appear to possess an opinion rather than to express an already formed one. Following Converse (1975), this continuum of opinion development may be called "crystallization": the better developed an opinion, the more crystallized it is. The concept of crystallization thus has three aspects relevant to an analysis of persuasibility. In general, the more crystallized an opinion, the more ego-involving and well rehearsed it is; the more deeply it is embedded in supportive information; and the more thoroughly it is enmeshed in a network of supportive beliefs. For each, and all, of these reasons, it should be expected that the less crystallized a person's political beliefs, the more amenable they are to persuasion, other things equal.

It is of course true that every person has, by this standard, some relatively less developed, or less crystallized, opinions and some more developed or crystallized ones. But beginning with Converse's (1964) seminal article on belief systems, it has been plain that crystallization is a property not only of beliefs, considered one by one, but of belief systems, taken as a whole. The mass public can be stratified by political sophistication, and the likelihood that their beliefs in general will be well developed and well organized will covary with their level of political awareness and information. In short, other things being equal, it should be expected that the more politically aware people are – and hence the better crystallized their belief systems in general – the less vulnerable to a persuasive effort they will be.

RESEARCH DESIGN

For empirical support, we shall take advantage of a random-digit telephone sample of English-speaking adults in the five-county San Francisco–Oakland Bay area. A total of 1,113 adults were interviewed by the Survey Research Center of the University of California, Berkeley. A description of sampling and weighting procedures is given in Appendix 11.A. The interview schedule was computer-driven, using the CASES system of computer-assisted telephone interviewing (Shanks and Tortora, 1985). CASES supplies a general-purpose interviewing platform facilitating variation in question wording, order, probe, and formatting (Piazza, Sniderman, and Tetlock, 1990). The data analysis focuses on whites (N = 769), with blacks and other minorities (including Hispanics and Asians) set aside.

To influence the stands that respondents took on the issue, one half of the time the question was phrased:

> The Congress of the United States – both the House of Representatives and the Senate – have passed a law to ensure that a certain number of federal contracts go to minority contractors.
>
> We'd like to know what you think. Do you think that such a law is a good idea or a bad idea?

The other half of the time, the question was the same except that it began:

> Sometimes you hear it said that there should be a law to ensure . . .

There are thus two experimental conditions. One explicitly gives the force of law to federal contract set-asides; the other is studiously neutral, with respondents randomly assigned to the one or the other. Notice especially the terms of reference in the appeal to law: not simply to "Congress," but more specifically, and formally, spelling out the two branches – the House and the Senate – in order to accentuate the formal, institutional context.

FINDINGS

What difference does it make when a policy to assist blacks is represented not as a policy option but as enjoying the force of law? As Table 11.1 shows, there is

Table 11.1. *Impact of an appeal to law on attitudes toward set-asides*

Position on set-asides	Experimental source condition: Congress	Neutral
Support		
%	57	43
N	228	159
Oppose		
%	43	57
N	172	209
Statistics	chi-square (*df* = 1): 14.3	

significantly more support for set-asides when it is identified as a law: Thus, 57 percent of respondents who receive the Congress treatment rate it "a good idea," as compared with 43 percent who receive the neutral treatment (p = .01).

But why suppose that the people who are swayed are in any way influenced by the reference to Congress? Why not suppose, more parsimoniously, that they would have been influenced by a reference to any positively valenced person or figure?

As a suspicion, this must be accorded a respectable measure of plausibility. The experienced survey researcher has had drummed into his or her head instances of major changes in the proportions of respondents agreeing or disagreeing with a question because of seemingly minor variations in wording, ordering, or formatting. And if even apparently innocuous variations can evoke significantly different response patterns, then surely attributing a position to any of an array of positively valenced sources should induce conformity to it, in some degree.

This suspicion, plausible as it is, can in fact be dismissed. Over a series of studies we have carried out an array of source attribution experiments varying both the source to which we have appealed, and the opinion we have tried to manipulate (Piazza et al., 1990). Let us set out a few examples, and the results typically obtained. In the Bay Area survey, on two separate occasions, a neutral introduction of a position (" Sometimes you hear it said . . . ") was contrasted with an attribution to positively valenced reference groups. On one occasion, when assessing people's opinions about the right of assembly, the question ran:

> Many thoughtful people, after serious study and discussion, have come to the conclusion that members of extreme political groups should not be allowed to hold public rallies in our cities.

On a subsequent occasion, when assessing people's opinions about freedom of expression, the question ran:

> Many community organizations of parents and concerned citizens feel that books that preach the overthrow of the government should not be available in the public library.

Remarkably, on both occasions, it made not a whit of difference whether a standard, neutral introduction was employed: The same proportions of people agree and disagree with the test items in the neutral condition and in the positive source condition.

"Remarkably," we say because we certainly expected both manipulations to make a difference at the zero order: In designing the variations, we had deliberately made them heavy-handed – "many thoughtful people, after much study and discussion" – in order precisely to maximize their impact, and it surprised us, we should say candidly, that the variations had no impact whatever.

But perhaps these null findings are specific to the kind of issue on which we attempted to manipulate opinion: The "law" experiment took as its subject opinions on a specific racial issue, whereas the two "social influence" experiments took as their subject opinions about fundamental issues of tolerance: It is at least conceivable, even if unlikely, that the former are less crystallized than the latter. Alternatively, perhaps the different results may reflect the different directions in which we are attempting to influence opinions: In the case of the "law" experiment the object is to induce people to support assistance for blacks, which may be construed as giving the socially desirable response, whereas the two "social influence" experiments take as their aim to induce people to take intolerant positions, which may be construed as giving the socially undesirable response. If so, the results may demonstrate that the power of a respected source is asymmetrical: It can get people to comply with social norms, but not to violate them.

To disarm both objections, an experiment was designed and carried out on a representative sample in Lexington, Kentucky. There were three experimental conditions. In the baseline, or neutral, condition, respondents were simply asked:

> Now I want to ask about government assistance for blacks. Which of these positions comes closer to your opinion: Should the government do more to help blacks, or should blacks rely more on themselves?

In the other two conditions, respondents were told either that:

> Scientific surveys have shown that a majority of your fellow citizens believe that government should do more to help blacks

or

> Scientific surveys have shown that a majority of your fellow citizens believe that blacks should rely more on themselves.

Respondents were of course assigned at random to treatment conditions. Thus, the Lexington experiment parallels the "law" experiment in assessing change in opinions on a specific racial policy, and, in addition, influence attempts are made in both directions – that is, to encourage people to support government assistance for blacks and to reject it. But notwithstanding our best efforts, the differences between treatment conditions were trivial, with a large majority of respondents always rejecting government assistance for blacks.

Given the variety of sources and subjects we have explored, and having found a significant difference at the zero order only in the "law" experiment, we are inclined to reject the view that mere attribution of a position to a positively valenced source in general significantly increases public support for political positions. Conversely, the finding that a reference to Congress carries people into support for a racial policy that they would otherwise oppose suggests that respect for the authoritative making of law can serve as a persuasive symbol.

But this is only the beginning of the inquiry, not its end. Why, it surely must be asked, do some people change their mind owing to an appeal to the law, but other people do not? Unless we understand what characteristics distinguish people who change in the face of an appeal to the law from those who do not, we do not understand what induces change.

The most obvious explanation is the "crystallization" hypothesis. As we remarked, the hypothesis holds, roughly, that the less well formed and well organized a person's beliefs, the more vulnerable he or she should be to a persuasive appeal from a positive source. On this view, the absence of an already worked-out position to anchor them allows people to be moved by a persuasive appeal: The larger the connected network of belief, the greater the ballast.

Various tests of the "crystallization" hypothesis are conceivable. Respondents could be scored in terms of the absence of issue preferences, the assumption being that the people who are most likely to be moved on the issue of racial set-asides by an appeal to the law as a persuasive symbol are those who have not formed an opinion on similar issues, one way or another. As it happens, this maneuver, which is reasonable in principle, is unworkable so far as racial issues are concerned. And the reason, quite simply, is that relatively few Americans lack opinions about issues of race. In the Race and Politics Study, of five racial issues ranging from government spending to busing, 90 percent of whites had an opinion on all five, after probing, while only 4 percent lacked an opinion on two or more.[1] Purely from an actuarial point of view, then, it cannot be the case that lacking an opinion altogether on racial policies is a major reason why people's attitudes toward set-asides shift in the face of an appeal to the law.

A more useful tack is to focus on measures, not of whether people have developed opinions at all, but rather of the depth of those opinions and the closeness of connections among them. For this purpose, years of formal schooling is a useful proxy: Though not itself a measure of political sophistication, it is significantly correlated with all measures of sophistication (Luskin, 1987), and deploying it in this chapter provides yet another point of comparison with the analyses of other chapters.

Table 11.2 accordingly shows the impact of the experimental manipulation on opinions on set-asides for people of differing levels of education. If the crystallization hypothesis is correct, then the manipulation should have the greatest impact on the beliefs of the relatively less well educated, and its weakest on the beliefs of the comparatively well educated.

Table 11.2. *Support for set-asides as a function of an appeal to law, by level of education*

Level of education	Experimental source condition		
	Congress	Neutral	Chi-square (*df* = 1)
High school, %	54	48	0.7
Some college, %	49	41	1.5
College graduates, %	63	46	4.4
Graduate education, %	72	39	16.3

Education does indeed make a difference in persuasibility, but in just the opposite way that the crystallization hypothesis suggests: The experimental manipulation is most effective in influencing the opinions of the well educated, not the poorly educated. This is a surprising result – certainly, it was to us: Whatever our other points of skepticism about minimalism, which we have not hesitated to express in other chapters, on this point we had supposed it to be correct.

Since there is an element of surprise in the result, it is worth examining the findings of Table 11.2 closely. Education has been broken into four categories for a reason that will become apparent shortly. Looking first at the least well educated – people with a high school degree or less – we see that 54 percent of those receiving the law manipulation think that set-asides are a good idea, as compared with 48 percent of those receiving the neutral introduction – no substantial difference at all. Essentially the same is true for those with some experience of college, with 49 percent of those receiving the law manipulation favoring set-asides, as compared with 40 percent of those in the neutral condition. However, as we look at the reactions of college graduates, we see at once there is a change: Now, a statistically significant gap separates the reactions of those in the treatment and those in the neutral conditions, with 63 percent of the former, as against 46 percent of the latter, favoring minority set-asides in federal contracts. But it is among the exceptionally well educated, and we have isolated them for just this reason, that the impact of the manipulation is strongest, with 72 percent of those in the law condition supporting set-asides, as compared to 39 percent of those in the neutral condition.

It will not do, given the pattern of these results, to run the standard arguments on influenceability, which presuppose that the least cognitively sophisticated are the most vulnerable to persuasion, and this applies not simply to the crystallization hypothesis, which we have discussed, but to a family of other hypotheses, including authoritarianism,[2] which we have not explicitly discussed. The uncommonly fine-grained distribution at the upper end of the education gradient which our Bay Area sample supplies[3] makes plain that the relation between schooling

Table 11.3. *Support for set-asides as a function of an appeal to law, depending on attitudes toward blacks*

	Experimental source condition		
Attitudes toward blacks	Congress	Neutral	Chi-square (*df* = 1)
Most positive quintile, %	74	61	2.9
Second most positive, %	59	58	0.0
In between, %	54	42	1.7
Second most negative, %	55	42	2.4
Most negative quintile, %	47	25	8.8

and persuasibility is the very opposite of what we had supposed it would be. Moreover, the design of the law experiment rules out other maneuvers to save the appearances. Thus, it is difficult to argue that the less sophisticated failed to change because, given their lack of political awareness and sophistication, they were unlikely, for that very reason, either to fail to be aware of or to fail to comprehend the suggestion that they should support set-asides because they were the law of the land: The fact that they were told, in the course of the question itself, that Congress had indeed made a formal law of set-asides, rather than depending upon this being part of their stock of knowledge of politics, assured their awareness of the key consideration, and the fact that the reference to Congress was by design quite simple assured that they would not fail to be influenced simply by a failure on their part to understand a complex argument.

But even if one grants this, a proponent of the crystallization hypothesis, reluctant to concede the case, might argue that the education results are spurious. On this view, the positive association between greater education and a greater propensity to yield to a persuasive symbol masks the true causal relation between dislike of blacks and refusal to support policies to help them even if they have properly been passed into law. How, exactly, might this work? Education and a dislike of blacks are negatively correlated, and therefore, the best educated may be the most responsive to an appeal to the law to assist blacks because they are most sympathetic to them.

Table 11.3 provides a test of this line of reasoning. Drawing together responses to questions about characteristics of blacks, we have built an index of Negative Perceptions of Blacks. This index (Spearman–Brown reliability .72) summarizes responses to four questions: whether most blacks have a chip on their shoulder; whether blacks are more violent than whites; whether black neighborhoods tend to be run down because blacks simply don't take care of their own property; and whether, if blacks would only try harder, they would be just as well off as whites. Table 11.3 is arranged to show the extent to which an appeal to the law as a persuasive symbol induces support for set-asides depending on how favorable or unfavorable people's attitudes toward blacks is.

The results, it is at once apparent, run counter to the spuriousness counterargument. Among those most favorable in their perceptions of blacks, there is a suggestion – though not a statistically significant one – of an increase in support for set-asides induced by a reference to the law; no difference whatever is evident among either the second or third quintiles (and this is worth emphasis) as we turn to people whose overall attitude toward blacks is plainly negative. There is clear evidence that an appeal to the law as persuasive symbol actually encourages support for set-asides. Indeed, as Table 11.3 shows, the more negative are people's perceptions of blacks, the more efficacious is an appeal to the law in encouraging them to support a policy designed to assist blacks.

This result is potentially of some importance, so it is crucial to be clear about just what is and is not being asserted. The finding does *not* show that a person whose attitude toward blacks is negative is more likely to support set-asides than a person whose attitude toward blacks is positive. Rather, the point is that it is among people who are most negative in their views of blacks, precisely because they would otherwise be unlikely to support a policy to help blacks, that an appeal to the law as a persuasive symbol is the most efficacious.

It is worth taking a moment to consider this succession of results – the positive correlation of persuasibility with education, and its negative correlation with positive attitudes toward blacks. Each is surprising in itself, but considered together, we may perhaps make out the underlying process actually at work.

Myrdal's (1944) powerful idea of an American dilemma teaches the deep and subtle lesson that a pressure to change can arise because of, and not despite, unchanging sentiments toward blacks. Translated to the specific problem before us, Myrdal's point is that an inducement to change and to support policies to assist blacks arises when people realize that their feelings toward blacks and standards of fair play are in conflict. One way that these standards of fair play are registered is by being recorded in a law, for to enact a rule or policy into law is precisely to recommend that it be taken as fair. But of course the conflict between an aversion to blacks and a respect for law will not be felt equally by all people. Many conflicts can arise between people's attitudes and their circumstances from moment to moment, and the more aware, the more thoughtful, the better informed people are, the more likely they are to take note of such conflicts and be motivated to resolve them. If so, the better educated are more likely to be aware when their attitudes and societal standards come into conflict, and more motivated to adjust their attitudes to those standards (e.g., Selznick and Steinberg, 1969). Putting together these considerations, then, suggests the hypothesis that it can pay to preach to the unconverted – at least if the unconverted are well educated.

This line of argument has, we believe, two advantages: First, it folds together two separate findings, and treats them as interdependent aspects of one underlying process. Moreover, as part of drawing together these findings, it generates an unusually precise prediction: If this line of argument is valid, then the impact of a reference to Congress should hinge on a person's attitude toward blacks and

Table 11.4. *Impact of an appeal to the law on support for set-asides by education and attitudes toward blacks (correlation coefficients)*

Education	Attitudes toward blacks		
	Positive	Midrange	Negative
High school	−.23 (38)	0.0 (64)	.29 (71)
Some college	.13 (77)	.07 (96)	−.18 (52)
College graduate and beyond	.17 (161)	.25 (120)	.66 (47)

level of education jointly and not separately. The key test is thus an interaction, with the reference to Congress having its strongest impact on people who are most negative toward blacks *and* most educated. Table 11.4 is laid out especially to test this prediction of interaction: The impact of an appeal to the law on attitudes toward set-asides is summarized in the form of Pearson product-moment coefficients, a separate coefficient being calculated for each value of people's attitudes toward blacks and level of education, taken both separately and jointly. To conserve cases and insure that the correlation coefficient is being calculated on the largest number of cases possible not merely for the columns and the rows but, critically, for the cells, both conditioning variables – attitudes toward blacks and level of education – are trichotomized.

The results are striking. Considered one at a time, in isolation from the other, the role played by people's attitudes toward blacks, or their level of education, in potentiating an appeal to law as a persuasive symbol is barely discernible: Inspection of coefficients by columns and rows shows that the impact of the appeal, at its maximum, for people whose attitudes toward blacks are negative *or* who are well educated, is modest. The reason for this is apparent once one scans the interior of the table: In general, the appeal to the law makes little difference, most coefficients hovering around zero or being trivial in size. There is a spectacular exception, however: Provided that a person both dislikes blacks and is well educated, an appeal to the law as a persuasive symbol has an enormous impact – r = .66.

DISCUSSION

The idea that the issue of race raises a dilemma for Americans is part of the intellectual furniture of thoughtful and well-educated Americans. It is accordingly worth considering what it customarily is taken to mean and how, on reflection, it should be understood.

Myrdal's idea of an American dilemma has three key components, worth distinguishing. First, as he remarked in a famous passage, the problem of race

> is a problem in the heart of the American . . . an ever-raging conflict between, on the one hand, the valuations preserved on the general plane which we shall call the "American Creed" . . . and, on the other hand, the valuations on specific planes of individual and group living [including] economic, social, and sexual jealousies . . . [and] group prejudices. (1944, p. xlvii)

There are thus, broadly, two sets of forces or valuations – those supportive of the American Creed and those supportive of race prejudice – and so the conflict takes the form of a mutually exclusive choice, either–or. Second, these two sets of values conflict with one another, not simply in the sense of being logically opposing, but more fundamentally in the sense of being psychologically at odds. Myrdal insists accordingly that there cannot be *awareness* of a simultaneous commitment to both: Indeed, to conceal not only from others but from themselves "*people will twist and mutilate their beliefs of how social reality actually is*" (p.xlix, italics in original). Third, the conflict is not just interpersonal but also intrapersonal. As he remarks: "*The moral struggle goes on within people and not only between them*" (p.xlviii, italics in original). In short, Myrdal contends that reasoning about the issue of race takes the form of a bipolar, intrapersonal conflict between unreconcilable alternatives. His contention has become familiar – so much so as to seem self-evident. But it is not obvious that the first and third premises are even approximately correct.

To see where part of the problem lies, consider an issue taken from the domain of civil liberties – for example, whether a political demonstration, which raises a risk of violence and disorder, should be allowed. It is natural to think of this issue as entailing a choice, or tradeoff, between two opposing values – liberty and order: The more importance a person attaches to the former, the more likely she will reply, yes, the demonstration should be allowed since people ought to be able to express their political opinions; conversely, the more importance a person attaches to the latter, the more likely he will reply, no, the demonstration should not be permitted since it will only cause harm under the circumstances. So far, the choice parallels Myrdal's characterization.

But consider the intrapersonal relation between the importance that people attach to the ostensibly conflicting values of liberty and authority: There is a sizable – and negative – correlation between the pair, say, on the order of .35 or .4. The crucial implication is of course that people who value highly one of the two negatively correlated values are unlikely to value highly the other. To be sure, people who attach approximately equal weights to the "opposing" values, suitably scaled, are at least potentially in a state of conflict, but these are most likely people who place a high value on neither.[4] Differently put, those who value highly either of the ostensibly conflicting values are generally in a state of consistency, not conflict.

The implication is fairly devastating for the way that Myrdal's dilemma is ordinarily conceived. Quite simply, the dilemma – the necessity to choose between equivalently valued but mutually irreconcilable objectives – is not a dilemma at all. There is no particular reason to believe that substantial numbers

of ordinary Americans are acutely distressed by the distance between their understanding of what is fair and their own awareness of the circumstances of blacks, if only because the more committed they are to a "fair opportunity for everybody," the less likely they are to be prejudiced. The point, if we may emphasize, is not that they are unable to cope with inconsistency, say, by means of rationalization – which manifestly they are – but rather they are not likely to suffer it, to find themselves impaled on the horns of a dilemma.

It is necessary to think of Myrdal's dilemma in a different way. For if it is true ideas are so arranged in people's minds that they are ordinarily not in conflict, it is also true that people will, from time to time, find themselves facing a conflict because of the circumstances in which they find themselves. Our experiment simulated this situation when we caused respondents to take note that, if the judgment of Congress is a guide, the policy of set-asides has been determined to be fair.

Normally, the respondents in our study who hold a negative view of blacks are unlikely to experience a contradiction between their sense of fairness on the one side and their opposition to set-asides on the other. It is the revelation that Congress thinks otherwise, and has given this program legal sanction, that excites the value conflict.

It is just this lesson – that the dilemmas posed by race arise not in people's thinking in the abstract but rather in the interplay between their ideas and circumstances – that helps make intelligible law's power as a persuasive symbol. For an appeal to the fact that set-asides are indeed the law is most persuasive to those who would otherwise be least sympathetic to them and who are, by virtue of their education, most able to grasp the clash between the thrust of the law and the thrust of their own sentiments.

Our findings thus illustrate that the dilemmas posed by race arise not in people's thinking in the abstract but rather in the interplay between their ideas and circumstances. Myrdal's dilemma needs to be understood thus, not as an enduring conflict within the hearts and minds of Americans, but instead as an intermittent collision between their convictions and their circumstances.

APPENDIX 11.A: SAMPLE SELECTION AND OUTCOME

Sample design

A stratified random-digit telephone sample of English-speaking adults in the five-county San Francisco–Oakland Bay area was selected. The procedure can be summarized as follows.

A list of telephone prefixes was assembled corresponding to the target area. This comprised all prefixes in the 415 area code, except those known to be reserved for commercial or government use or with virtually no residential numbers.

The 422 prefixes on the list were divided into two groups: 64 prefixes corresponding to the cities of Oakland and Richmond, and the remaining 358 prefixes.

For each of the prefixes, several four-digit random numbers were generated by computer. These random numbers, appended to the prefix, constituted the sample of telephone numbers. Twenty random telephone numbers were generated for the prefixes in the Oakland–Richmond group, and ten numbers were generated for prefixes in the other group. Each prefix, therefore, served as a sampling stratum. The probability of selecting a given residential telephone number was 2 per 1,000 in the Oakland–Richmond strata, and 1 per 1,000 in the remainder of the strata. The cities of Oakland and Richmond are close to 50 percent black, and the purpose of oversampling those areas was to obtain additional black respondents for the analysis.

At each selected household, one English-speaking adult (aged eighteen or over) was selected to be interviewed. The selection was carried out by listing all eligible adults and having the computer designate one of them, based on a random number unknown in advance to the interviewer. No substitutions were allowed.

Response rate

A total of 4,860 telephone numbers were called. Of those, 3,225 (66.4 percent) were considered ineligible for the study. Most of the ineligible numbers were not in service or were nonresidential numbers. There were 95 numbers (2.0 percent) belonging to non-English speaking units; these were excluded by design from the study, in order to avoid the costs of translating the questionnaire into other languages and of training bilingual interviewers. There were also 177 numbers (3.6 percent) that never answered after a minimum of 10 calls; most of these are known to be disconnected business numbers, although a small proportion could be residential.

From the remaining 1,635 eligible telephone numbers, interviews were completed with 1,113 adults. The response rate, therefore, was 1,113 of 1,635, or 68.1 percent.

Weighting

The data analysis was carried out using a weight for each case. The weight adjusted for the following inequalities in the probability of selecting respondents: sampling stratum; number of adults in the household; and number of telephone lines.

Since respondents in the Oakland–Richmond strata had twice the probability of being selected, their responses were weighted down to one-half of those from the other strata.

Since the probability of selecting a given adult was inversely proportional to the number of eligible adults in the household, each respondent was weighted by the number of eligible adults in his or her household.

Households with more than one telephone line (not counting extensions) had a greater chance of being selected. In the interview we asked how many distinct telephone numbers there were in the household. Respondents were weighted inversely proportional to that number.

The product of each of these three adjustments was scaled so that the number of weighted cases was equal to the number of actual cases. Weights were scaled separately for whites, for blacks, and for all cases combined. When whites are analyzed separately, for instance, the reported number of white respondents is equal to both the weighted and the unweighted number of whites interviewed.

12

Ideology and issue persuasibility: dynamics of racial policy attitudes

As war is too important to be left to the generals, methodology is too important to be left to methodologists: The connection between how we carry out inquiries and what we want to inquire after is too intimate.

Chapter 12 offers testimony on the intimacy of the connections between substance and method. Our point of departure was substantive skepticism. Nowadays many say they are in favor of racial equality; surely not all are genuinely committed to it. But how can we tell who means what they say? And what might it mean for a person to mean what he or she says?

A test suggested itself. A person means what he says if he persists in it even in the face of pressure to take it back. Persistence, so understood, is a standard of sincerity, and sincerity is just what we should like to establish more firmly on the issue of race. And if that is our substantive goal, then a method for its accomplishment follows: First give people an opportunity to declare themselves in favor of assistance for blacks, then try to talk them out of it. The chapter that follows lays out the method of counterargument. The procedures are described in detail in our study of issue persuasibility that follows and so we want only to say a word about our general objective here.

Schematically, our objective is to have the survey interview selectively mimic conversation. Conversations in natural settings can involve an interplay of pressures – to take a position, to avoid taking a position, to give up a position. The conventional political survey interview, however, is deliberately designed to minimize such pressures. The result: a sample of behavior in a relatively uncommon situation. In contrast, our aim is to sample a wider range of situations, including those in which a person's actions actually evoke a reaction from another.

The counterargument technique is an initial stab at this. And it certainly has limitations, perhaps the most important of which is an inability to rank objectively the strength of alternative counterarguments. But of course every technique has limitations, and this one has at least the merit of opening up a new field for study – namely, political persuasibility: Who can be talked out of their positions on political issues, and why? We accordingly offer this chapter as prolegomenon: an introduction to a new approach to a new problem.

Traditionally, the aim of public opinion research has been to determine what positions citizens have taken on issues of the day, and why. In contrast, the purpose of this study is to establish how readily they can be talked out of the positions they have taken, and why.

A medium-sized mountain of research has shown that the average citizen's issue preferences are often shallow, and the organization of her or his beliefs

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more slovenly than systematic (e.g., Converse, 1964, 1975; Kinder and Sears, 1985; Sniderman and Tetlock, 1986c). It is, accordingly, not reasonable to suppose that mass publics are necessarily wedded to the first position on an issue they happen to espouse. On the contrary, there would appear to be maneuvering room aplenty for the average citizen to be persuaded to amend her or his opinion according to circumstance.

Racial policy attitudes, we would suggest, provide an ideal opportunity for a first cut at an analysis of persuasibility for two reasons. The first is this. It would, obviously, mean little to show that the average citizen can be talked out of positions on issues on which they had not taken a genuine position in the first place – by no means a rare occurrence (e.g., Converse, 1970, 1975; Erikson, Luttbeg, and Tedin, 1988; Schuman and Presser, 1981; McGuire, 1985). No one, however, supposes that racial attitudes are nonattitudes. At the very time Converse demonstrated the minimal levels of constraint characteristic of policy attitudes generally, he took pains to show the marked constraint characteristic of racial policy attitudes (Converse, 1964). Public attitudes toward racial issues, all agree, are deeply felt and highly organized; indeed, so much so, Carmines and Stimson (1982) suggest, as to be the glue that holds mass belief systems together.

There is a second reason to focus on racial policy attitudes. Barely a generation ago, only a minority favored racial equality; now, the principle wins majority support, sometimes overwhelmingly (e.g., Hyman and Sheatsley, 1956, 1964; Greeley and Sheatsley, 1971; Taylor, Sheatsley, and Greeley, 1978; Burstein, 1979; Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo, 1985). Public support for the principle of racial equality has outpaced support for specific policies intended to realize it. But indisputably, change at the level both of principle and of policy has occurred.

The significance of the change, though, is far from indisputable. Many feel that the change in white racial attitudes has been either superficial or disingenuous (e.g., McConahay and Hough, 1976; Jackman, 1978, 1981; Jackman and Muhe, 1984; Kinder and Sears, 1981). On this interpretation, white Americans are willing enough to express support for the principle of equality so long as doing so has no costs; but asked to back policies to achieve racial equality, they back away. It is also frequently observed that merely because old-fashioned racism has gone out of style does not mean that Americans are no longer racist. Far from it; racism has instead found new, more contemporary, and socially acceptable forms of expression (e.g., McConahay, Hardee, and Batts, 1981; McConahay, 1986).

Obviously, it is important to gauge the strength of Americans' commitment to racial equality, and one of the best ways of doing so, we would suggest, is to see how readily white Americans can be talked out of support for policies to achieve racial equality. Previous research has not ignored the issue of persuasibility. There is thus a line of studies on opinion instability as a function of question order; question wording, including issues of balance and filtering; and question format, including the number of response categories and response styles (Bishop, Tuchfarber, and Oldendick, 1978; Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus, 1978; Schu-

man and Presser, 1981). The thrust of this research, however, has been methodological. Our concern, in contrast, is substantive. Moreover, our study focuses on a form of persuasibility that has not previously been studied and is of particular relevance to politics. Typically, the public comes to a controversial political issue with an established sympathy for one or the other side. The political struggle boils down to each side attempting to persuade those who are initially opponents or on the sidelines to become supporters, while trying to ensure that its own supporters are not similarly snared by the opposition. Accordingly, our approach is to establish the balance of forces on an issue, and then assess which side is more likely to give way under the pressure of counterargument, and why.

How many who favor one side of an issue would change their minds under the pressure of a counterargument? Why is it easier to talk some people rather than others out of a position on an issue? And – a connected but distinguishable question – why is it easier to talk people out of some political positions than out of others? Exploring these questions yields two sets of results, one anticipated, one not. Attitudes on racial issues turn out to be markedly elastic, especially with respect to issues involving government action. This we expected. What we did not anticipate was an asymmetry in persuasibility; it is easier, it turns out, to talk supporters of government action out of their position than opponents. Still more fundamentally, the reason for this is that it is easier to persuade conservatives who have taken a position with respect to government action that is inconsistent with their overall outlook to return to the fold than it is to persuade liberals who are similarly inconsistent to come back to the fold. This is, we think, an intriguing anomaly: Why should conservatism provide a reason to change one's mind under the pressure of a counterargument but not liberalism? And to account for it, we develop, and test, a model of ideology and issue persuasibility.

PLIABILITY OF OPINION

The Race and Politics Survey is based on a cross-sectional survey of the San Francisco–Oakland Bay area.[1] The survey was conducted in the summer and fall of 1986 by the Survey Research Center (University of California, Berkeley), taking advantage of the Computer-assisted Telephone Interviewing Facilities (CATI) developed by the Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, University of California, Berkeley.[2] The sources are described in Chapter 11. The analysis will focus on whites.

A useful starting point is attitudes about the issue of government assistance for blacks. Since our aim is to demonstrate the elasticity of policy preferences, our questions parallel previous measures. Thus, following the National Election Studies, we asked:

> Some people think that the government in Washington should increase spending for programs to help blacks. Others feel that blacks should rely only on themselves. Which makes more sense to you?

It would of course be surprising not to find the Bay Area more liberal on racial issues than the country as a whole. The results are just as one would expect: In the Bay Area, a majority of whites supports government assistance for blacks, by a margin of 5 to 4; however, by a comparable margin, in the country as a whole a majority of whites favors the alternative position, namely that blacks should help themselves.[3]

But how firm is majority support for government help for blacks? To answer this question, after respondents' issues positions were assessed, each was presented with a counterargument, in an effort to change her or his mind. Concretely, in the case of the issue of government assistance for blacks, respondents who favored increased spending programs for blacks were asked:

> Would you still feel the same way even if government help means people get special treatment just because they are black or would that change your mind?

On the other hand, respondents who believed blacks should help themselves were asked:

> Would you still feel that way even if it means that blacks will continue to be poorer and more often out of work than whites or would that change your mind?

The first chart, A, in Figure 12.1 presents the distribution of preferences on the issue of government help for blacks, as initially assessed. Here, the majority is clear-cut, and liberal: 57 percent in favor of government help, 43 percent opposed. Subsequent distributions, though, show the impact of counterarguments. B, for example, illustrates the balance of preferences under the pressure of a counterargument for a conservative position on the issue. Specifically, the number initially conservative is added to the number of those initially liberal who changed their position when given a counterargument. The consequence: Instead of a majority in favor of a liberal policy, a still larger majority – nearly three in four – favors the conservative position. Now, consider the opposite situation, the balance of preferences under the pressure of a counterargument for a liberal position. C thus adds to the number initially liberal the number of those initially conservative who changed their position when given a counterargument. The consequence: Nearly three in four favor a liberal position. But of course the crucial question is this: If both sides are confronted with a counterargument, which winds up the loser? The last chart, D, shows the result. Before counterarguments, a majority favors government assistance for blacks, by a margin of about 5 to 4. After, the majority is still 5 to 4 – but in support of the opposite policy: against rather than for increased government spending for blacks. In sum, a liberal majority turns into a conservative one.

Given the loose linkages of mass belief systems, not infrequently a person who is liberal in overlook takes a conservative position on a specific issue, and vice versa. Obviously, it should be easier to talk someone out of a liberal position on a racial issue if they are basically conservative, just as it should be easier to talk them out of a conservative position on a particular issue if they are basically liberal.[4]

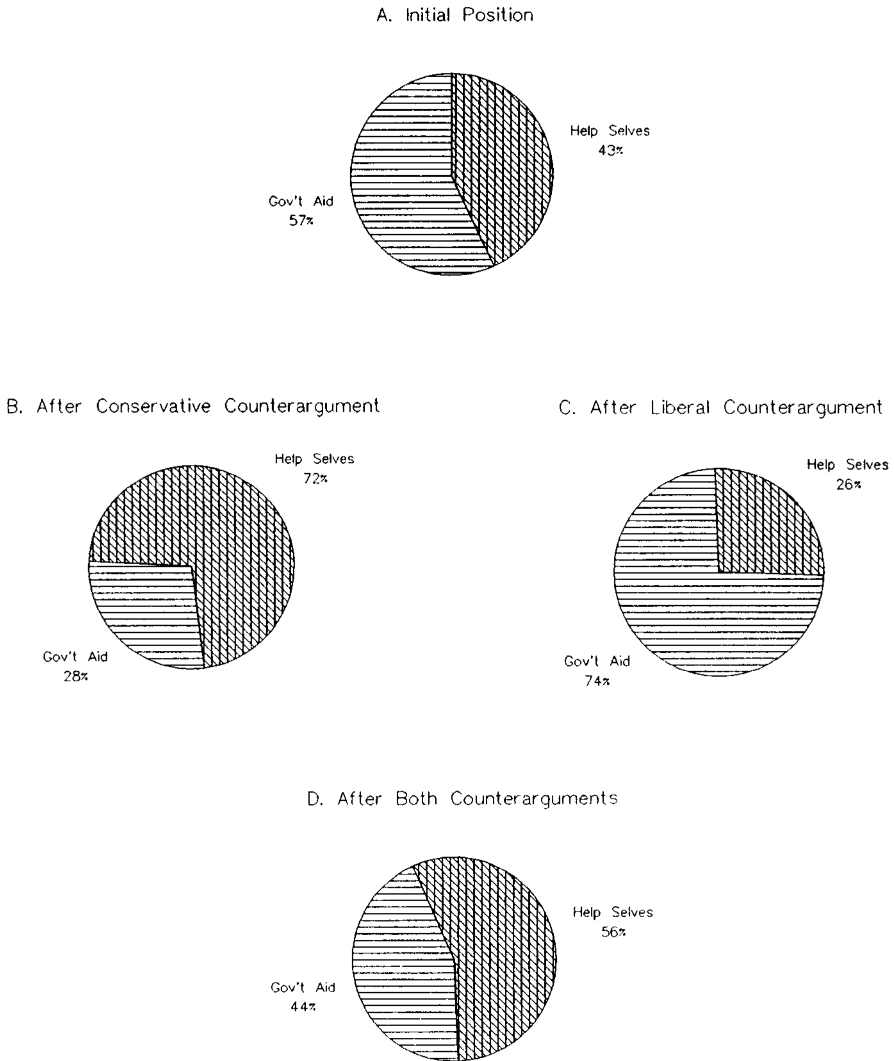


Figure 12.1. Support for government aid for blacks before and after counterarguments.

Figure 12.2a shows the relation between liberalism–conservatism and persuasibility with respect to an initially liberal position; Figure 12.2b, between liberalism–conservatism and persuasibility with respect to an initially conservative position. Remarkably, Figures 12.2a and 12.2b are a study in contrasts. Figure 12.2a shows that the more conservative people are in their overall outlook, the more likely they are to abandon an initially liberal position under the pressure of a conservative counterargument. The reverse, though, is not the case. Liberals

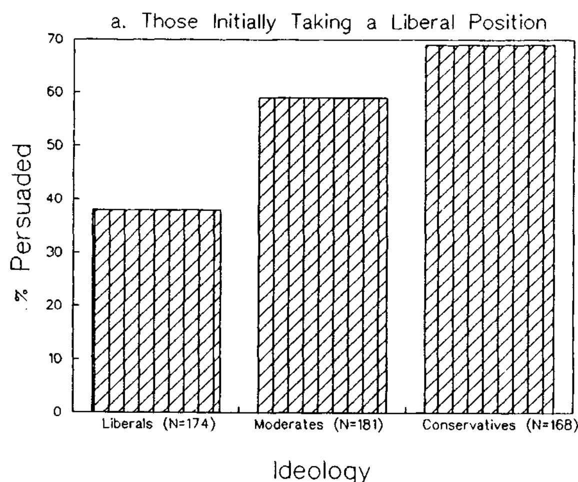


Figure 12.2a. Percent persuaded to change position by ideology: those intially taking a liberal position.

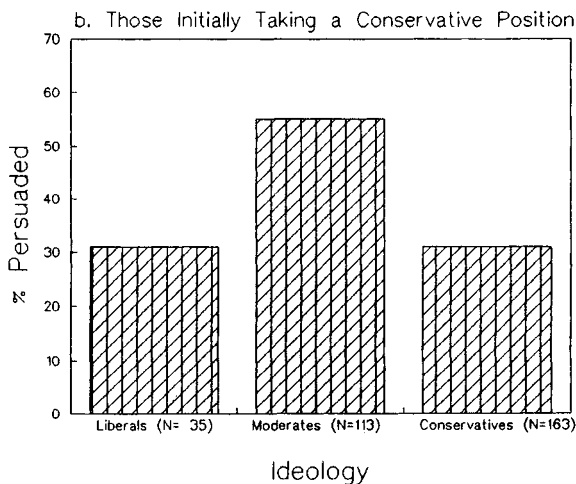


Figure 12.2b. Percent persuaded to change position by ideology: those initially taking a conservative position.

who happen to take a conservative position on this issue are not more likely to come home under the pressure of a liberal counterargument. Rather Figure 12.2b shows that liberals are no more likely than conservatives to change their minds.

There is thus an anomaly – in fact, a double anomaly. First, it is easier to talk supporters of government help for blacks out of their position than to talk opponents out of theirs. Second, it is easier to get conservatives to give up an initially

liberal position with respect to government help for blacks than to get liberals to give up a conservative one. What accounts for this double asymmetry?

A MODEL OF PERSUASIBILITY

We suppose that, in any given influence situation, there are two kinds of reasons for a person to change his mind. Either he finds the particular counterargument persuasive; or he finds counterargument itself persuasive. The difference between the two is critical. The first is contingent on the specific content of the counterargument – that is, it is "topic-bound." The second, rather than being topic-bound, involves a general, or "topic-free," susceptibility to influence (Hovland and Janis, 1959).

Minimally, the distinction between topic-free and topic-bound is a useful reminder that some people are systematically persuasible, others only selectively. But how do the notions of topic-bound and topic-free persuasibility apply to the specific problem before us?

Consider people who take a liberal position on the issue of increased government spending for blacks. There is overwhelming evidence of the loose linkages of mass belief systems: The stands the average citizen takes on specific issues are only imperfectly related to her or his overall political orientation (Levitin and Miller, 1979; Conover and Feldman, 1981). It follows that a nontrivial fraction of those taking a liberal position on the government spending will, nonetheless, be conservative in their overall orientation. And given a counterargument appealing to their general outlook, they should be especially likely to find it persuasive.

There is a second consideration. One aspect of conservatism is the importance it attaches to the preservation of established ideas of right and wrong; the maintenance of respect for authority; the religious basis of morality and society (McClosky, 1958). Our shorthand term for this constellation of values is conformity – a not unreasonable usage considering that it extolls obedience to established practice on the one hand while repudiating deviance and disorder on the other. And conformity and persuasibility, previous research suggests (e.g., McGuire, 1968), should be positively related; that is, the more importance a person attaches to obeying authority and the more apprehensive she is about being or seeming deviant, the more likely she is to yield to a counterargument designed to be persuasive and delivered by a credible source.

Conservatives who have taken a liberal position on government spending have thus two reasons to change: Their overall conservatism, which increases the likelihood they will find a counterargument persuasive; and the importance they attach to conformity, which increases the likelihood they will find counterargumentation persuasive.

Now, consider those who have taken a conservative position on government spending for blacks. A nontrivial[5] fraction of them will be liberal in their overall outlook, thanks to the looseness of mass belief system linkages. How are they motivated to change under the pressure of a counterargument?

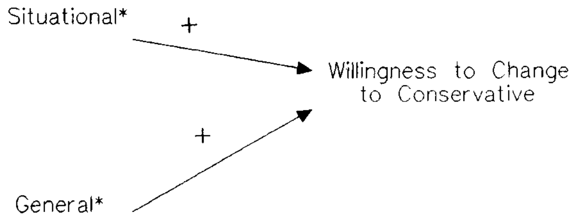


Figure 12.3a. Counterargument against an initially liberal position.

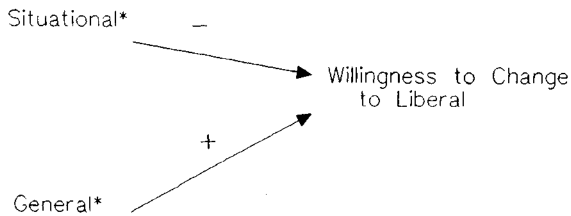


Figure 12.3b. Counterargument against an initially conservative position.

Plainly, they have a reason to change so far as counterargument appeals to their overall liberal outlook. But so far as liberals are less likely to attach importance to the value of conformity, they are more likely than conservatives to resist counterargumentation in general. If so, there is a strong asymmetry between the case of a counterargument against a liberal position (Figure 12.3a) and the case of a counterargument against a conservative position (Figure 12.3b).

In the case of people who have initially taken a liberal stand on a racial policy issue, the two forms of persuasibility should reinforce one another, to the advantage of conservatives. For the more conservative people are in their policy preferences, the more likely they should be to find the content of the counterargument persuasive; and in addition, the more that people value conformity, the more likely they should be to find counterargumentation itself persuasive (Figure 12.3a). In the case of people who have initially taken a conservative stand on a racial policy issue, however, the two forms of persuasibility, rather than reinforcing one another, should work at cross-purposes (Figure 12.3b). On the one hand, the more liberal people are in their policy preferences, the more persuasive they should find the content of the counterargument. On the other hand, the more liberal they are in point of conformity, the less susceptible to counterargumentation they should be. In short, one facet of liberalism supplies a reason to change, another supplies a reason not to change, so that each tends to cancel the other out. The two-component model of persuasibility would thus account for the anomalous asymmetry in persuasibility between liberals and conservatives.

Table 12.1. *Comparison of effect of Policy Index and Conformity Index on change to a liberal or conservative position on government assistance (probit coefficients)*

	Equation 1:1 – change to conservative position if initially liberal		Equation 1:2 – change to liberal position if initially conservative	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Policy	.37	.10	−.25	.09
Conformity	.26	.07	.24	.10
Education (in years)	−.05	.03	.05	.03
Constant	−1.27	.58	−1.26	.70
N	424		301	

Notes: Dependent variable coded 1 if changed position, 0 if no change. Policy Index coded 1 to 5, with 5 the most conservative. Conformity Index coded 1 to 5, with 5 the most conformist.

AN INITIAL APPLICATION: GOVERNMENT HELP FOR BLACKS

The first step is to define two measures, one of which would indicate susceptibility to argumentative content, the other to argumentation in general. Let us take them in turn.

Liberals and conservatives support trademark policies. A liberal tends to favor governmental activism in the domestic sphere – policies to attack the problems of big cities, to alleviate the problems of the poor, and to extirpate the roots of crime. Or more exactly, because neither liberals nor conservatives are loath to make use of government when it suits their purpose, liberals characteristically champion fiscally redistributive policies in these areas. In contrast, conservatives typically favor spending less, not more, for welfare; so, too, for social problems in big cities, health care, and the like. This domestic spend–save dimension, though not the only aspect of liberalism–conservatism, is all the same an integral one. So we have put together a four-item index to assess it, for convenience called the Policy Index, constructed so that the higher the score the more conservative the respondent.

Liberals and conservatives are divided not only by policy preferences, but also by values, among them the value of conformity, as we observed. Accordingly, we fashioned a three-item index to assess this aspect of conservatism, christened the Conformity Index and constructed so that the higher the score the more conservative the respondent. The Policy Index is to serve as a measure of topic-bound persuasibility, the Conformity Index as a measure of topic-free persuasibility.

Table 12.1 reports the results of an analysis to test the two-component model. The dependent variable, willingness to change one's initial position on the issue

of government help for blacks, is scored as zero (unwilling to change) or one (willing to change). The Policy Index and the Conformity Index are both scored from one to five, with five being the most conservative (Appendix 9). Years of education is also included, as a general control for cognitive sophistication. Because the dependent variable is dichotomous, a probit analysis was carried out.

Consider, first, the reasons why people can be talked out of support for government help for blacks. As equation 1:1 shows, when the probability of respondents withdrawing from an initially liberal position is regressed on the Policy Index and Conformity Index, the coefficients for both are significant and positive. That is, the more conservative respondents are in their policy preferences, or in their attachment to conformity, the more likely they are, in the face of a counterargument, to withdraw from a liberal position.

Now, look at the reasons why people can be talked out of opposition to government help for blacks. When the probability of respondents withdrawing from an initially conservative position is regressed on the Policy Index and Conformity Index, both coefficients are significant *but they have opposite signs* (equation 1:2). The more liberal that respondents are in point of policy preference, the more likely they are to change their minds and to withdraw from an initially conservative issue position. But the more liberal they are in point of conformity, the less likely they are to change their minds. It is strong evidence for the model that, consistent with its prediction, variables that are similarly signed with respect to talking people out of a liberal position on a racial issue are oppositely signed with respect to talking them out of a conservative position, notwithstanding the fact that the two variables are themselves positively correlated ($r = .36$) in both.

Here, then, is a way to account for the anomalous asymmetry in persuasibility between liberals and conservatives. It is not, as might have been supposed, that liberalism means little on the highly charged issue of race. Its impact is small at the zero order, not because it does not matter, but because it matters in opposite ways that cancel one another out. And the result is that conservatives under pressure are strongly inclined to return to the fold but liberals are not.

A FURTHER TEST: FAIR TREATMENT IN JOBS

It is necessary to determine if the findings apply narrowly to the issue of government aid for blacks or to racial policy issues more broadly. To this end, we shall examine attitudes toward the government's responsibility to assure blacks fair treatment in jobs.

Following the lead of the National Election Studies measure of attitudes on the issue of government responsibility for fair treatment, we asked:[6]

> Some people feel that the government in Washington ought to see to it that blacks get fair treatment in jobs. Others feel that this is not the government's business and it should stay out of it. How do you feel? Should the government see to it that blacks get fair treatment in jobs or should it stay out of it?

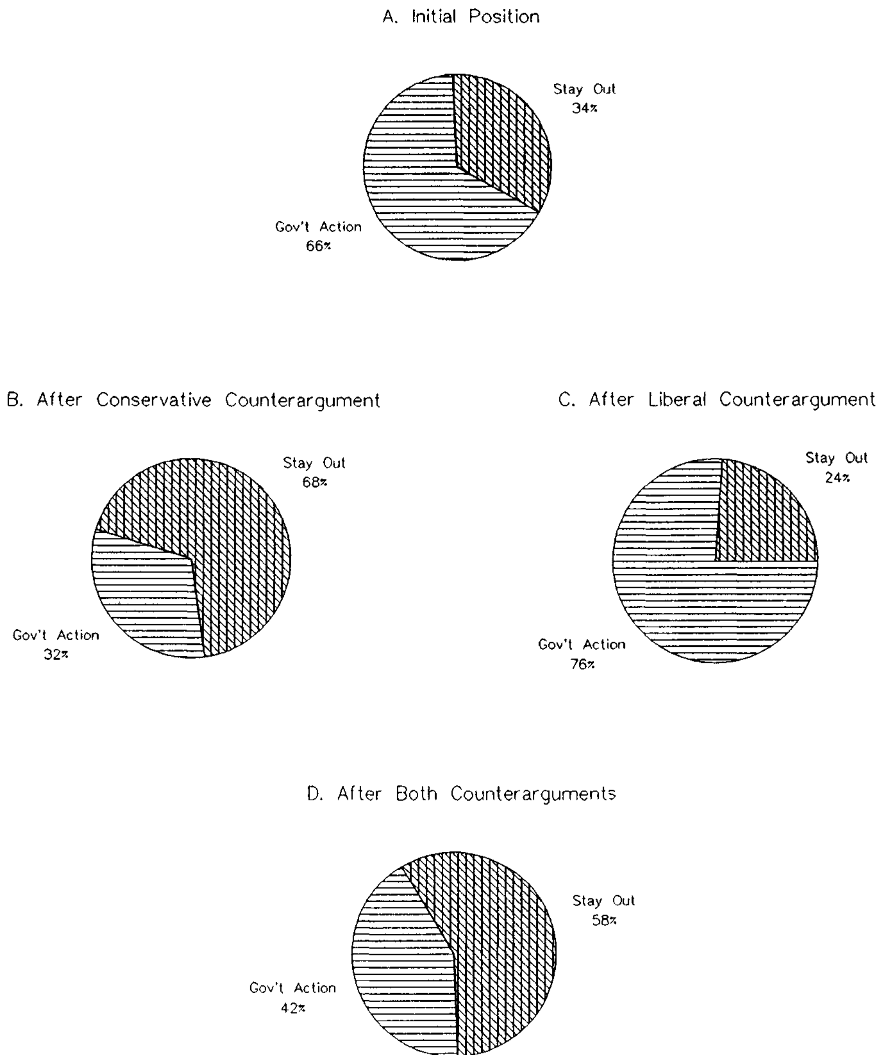


Figure 12.4. Support for fair treatment in jobs for blacks before and after counterarguments.

After respondents had taken a position on the issue of fair treatment, they were presented with a counterargument, in an effort to change their minds. Specifically, those saying that government should see to it that blacks get fair treatment in jobs were asked:

Would you still feel the same – even if it means that government will have more say in telling people how to run their lives, or do you think that might change your mind?

Table 12.2. *Comparison of effect of Policy Index and Conformity Index on change to a liberal or conservative position on fair treatment in jobs (probit coefficients)*

	Equation 2:1 – change to conservative position if initially liberal		Equation 2:2 – change to liberal position if initially conservative	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Policy	.26	.08	−.36	.11
Conformity	.19	.07	.39	.12
Education	−.06	.03	−.01	.03
Constant	−0.56	.54	−1.03	.82
N	488		262	

Notes: Dependent variable coded 1 if changed position, 0 if no change. Policy Index coded from 1 to 5, with 5 the most conservative. Conformity Index coded 1 to 5, with 5 the most conformist.

Conversely, those saying that government should stay out of it were asked:

Would you still feel the same way even if it means that some racial discrimination will continue?

Again, opinion is elastic: 47 percent of those taking a position on the issue of fair treatment changed their minds in the face of a counterargument. Again, too, there is an asymmetry in persuasibility: 49 percent of those favoring government responsibility for fair treatment for blacks changed their minds, compared with 29 percent of those believing the government should stay out of it. Figure 12.4 illustrates the different majorities that would obtain, depending on whether one- or two-sided counterarguments are made. And, again, the key result is this. Before counterarguments, a substantial majority of whites in the Bay Area favors a liberal policy on fair treatment in jobs; after counterarguments, a still larger majority favors a conservative one. The issue of fair treatment in jobs is thus well suited to test our causal model of ideology and issue persuasibility.

Consider, first, those initially favoring government responsibility for fair treatment for blacks. Our expectations are twofold. First, the more conservative their overall policy preferences, the more persuasible they should be. Second, and similarly, the more importance they attach to conformity, the more persuasible they should be. Both expectations are upheld, as Table 12.2 shows. The coefficients for the Policy Index and the Conformity Index are both significant, and both positive.

Now, consider those initially opposing government responsibility for fair treatment. For them, the model predicts that the more liberal their policy preferences, the more persuasible they should be; *but* the more liberal their basic values (as indexed by anticonformism), the less persuasible they should be. As equation 2:2 shows, there is indeed a reversal of signs, just as the hypothesis predicts. People are inclined to give up an initially conservative stand on the issue of fair treatment

in jobs insofar as they score liberal on the Policy Index; however, they are disinclined to do so insofar as they score liberal on the Conformity Index.

In short, the analysis of the issue of fair treatment in jobs supports that of the issue of government assistance, both with respect to the elasticity of opinion and, still more fundamentally, with respect to the ideological sources of persuasibility.

A FINAL TEST: SET-ASIDES

According to our model, conformity plays a double role. Insofar as it is an aspect of conservatism, it supplies a reason to support conservative policies; but insofar as it taps a general susceptibility to influence, it may supply a reason to support liberal ones under the pressure of a counterargument.

To provide a final test of this reasoning we conducted an experiment on attitudes toward federal contract quotas for minority contractors, or set-asides. The question on set-asides was administered in two different conditions. One version – the "authority treatment" – read as follows:

> The Congress of the United States – both the House of Representatives and the Senate – have passed laws to ensure that a certain number of federal contracts go to minority contractors. We'd like to know what YOU think. Do you think that such a law is a good idea or bad idea?

The other version – the "neutral condition" – was identical save for the first part of the question, which read "Sometimes you hear it said that there should be a law that a certain number . . . "

Briefly, our expectations are these. The value of conformity figures as part of a conservative outlook. So we should expect those who value it to be unsympathetic to the use of government to guarantee contracts for minority businessmen, other things equal. But in real life things often are not equal. Sometimes situational pressures favor public support for a policy, sometimes not. Thus, the authority treatment favors support for set-asides, the neutral condition does not. And, consistent with the two-component model of persuasibility, we should expect that those who attach special importance to the value of conformity should be especially susceptible to an authority manipulation.

How well do these expectations hold up empirically? Attitudes toward set-asides were put into a probit analysis with the Conformity Index, the Policy Index, and Years of Education as a control, first in the neutral condition, then in the authority treatment. Table 12.3 presents the results of these analyses.

Look first at the outcome in the absence of pressure to favor set-asides. As equation 3:1 shows, the more conservative people are in both respects, the more likely they are to oppose set-asides. In short, conservative policy preferences and conformist values make parallel contributions.

Now, consider the outcome when pressure is exerted to favor set-asides. Given the authority manipulation, those who score high on conformity (though ordinarily disposed to oppose set-asides) are just as likely as those who score low on it

Table 12.3. *Comparison of effect of Policy Index and Conformity Index on support for minority contract set-asides for two versions of question (probit coefficients)*

	Equation 3:1 – sometimes you hear it said		Equation 3:2 – Congress has passed a law	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Policy	.41	.09	.30	.08
Conformity	.17	.08	−.06	.08
Education (in years)	.04	.03	−.04	.03
Constant	−2.32	.60	−.21	.61
N	374		387	

Notes: Dependent variable coded 1 if agreed, 0 if disagreed. Policy index coded from 1 to 5, with 5 the most conservative. Conformity index coded 1 to 5, with 5 the most conformist.

to support them, as equation 3:2 shows. Notice that the authority manipulation supplies a reason for liberals as well as for conservatives to support set-asides more than they otherwise would. Yet those who attach special importance to conformity, as a result of the pressure put upon them, wind up supporting them as fully as those who are not conformist in outlook. Then, too, although both the Conformity Index and the Policy Index are associated with opposition to set-asides in the neutral condition, only the Policy Index is so in the authority treatment – further evidence that it is the outlook tapped by the Conformity Index, and not conservatism in general, that reflects a general susceptibility to influence.

QUALIFICATIONS

First, a verbal quibble. We have spoken of people having changed their minds and meant by this that they say they have changed them. Saying that you have changed your position on an issue need not be the same as changing it. But it is precisely getting people to say they have changed their mind that is the chief aim of political argumentation. No less important, change has been assessed in complementary ways – the overturning of established positions by counterargument and, additionally, the fully randomized authority manipulation. And the point to underline is that the model of ideology and persuasibility that we have developed was vindicated for both ways of assessing change, a result that silences concern about self-selection biases.

An essential question to consider, though, is the limits of our analysis of persuasibility. One concerns elasticity of preferences across issues. We have seen that opinion on a number of racial policy issues is remarkably elastic. But it would be a mistake to suppose it is similarly pliable on all. Affirmative action is a case in point. Respondents were first asked:

Some people say that because of past discrimination it is sometimes necessary for colleges and universities to reserve openings for black students who don't meet the usual standards.

Others are against such quotas. What's your opinion – are you for or against quotas to admit some black students who don't meet the usual standards?

Then, if they favored quotas, they were asked:

Would you still feel that way, even if it means fewer opportunities for qualified whites, or would you change your mind?

Or, if they opposed quotas, they were asked:

Would you still feel that way, even if it means that hardly any blacks would be able to go to the best colleges and universities, or would you change your mind?

Racial quotas are not popular: Nearly four times as many whites oppose an educational quota as support it – a finding worth reflection considering that the Bay Area is one of the most liberal parts of the country. But the key consideration is not the distribution of preferences on the issue of affirmative action but rather the readiness with which positions on the issue can be reversed. Figure 12.5 illustrates the elasticity of opinion on educational quotas.

As Figure 12.5 shows, on both sides of the issue comparatively few change their minds. To be exact, 17 percent of those favoring educational quotas, and 23 percent of those opposing them, change their minds after a counterargument – equivalent numbers, taking account of chance. Nor is this surprising. Affirmative action is a highly charged issue: It is the prototype of a racial issue about which people on both sides have strong feelings. And given the strength of these feelings, people on both sides of the issue are resistant to change. Public opinion about affirmative action has little slack. So notwithstanding the lopsided distribution of preferences on the issue, neither side is likely to surrender its position under pressure.

A second limit on our analysis is evident if we look at fair housing, a civil rights issue on the old, rather than the new, agenda. Following the lead of the General Social Survey, respondents were asked:

Suppose there were a community-wide election on a general housing law and that you had to choose between two possible laws. One law says that homeowners can decide for themselves who to sell their houses to, even if they prefer not to sell to blacks. The second law says that homeowners are not allowed to refuse to sell to someone because of race and color. Which law would you vote for – (that homeowners can decide for themselves who to sell to, or that homeowners cannot refuse to sell to someone because of race or color)?

A majority of whites in the Bay Area are in favor of a law prohibiting discrimination in the sale of houses on the basis of race. In fact, the majority is one-sided: 74 percent in favor of a prohibition on discrimination, 26 percent in favor of homeowner discretion.

Those favoring homeowners deciding for themselves were asked:

Would you feel differently if, as a result of that law, it turned out that blacks were prevented from moving into nice neighborhoods?

Those taking the opposite position were asked:

Would you feel differently if it turned out that a new government agency had to be set up to enforce that law?

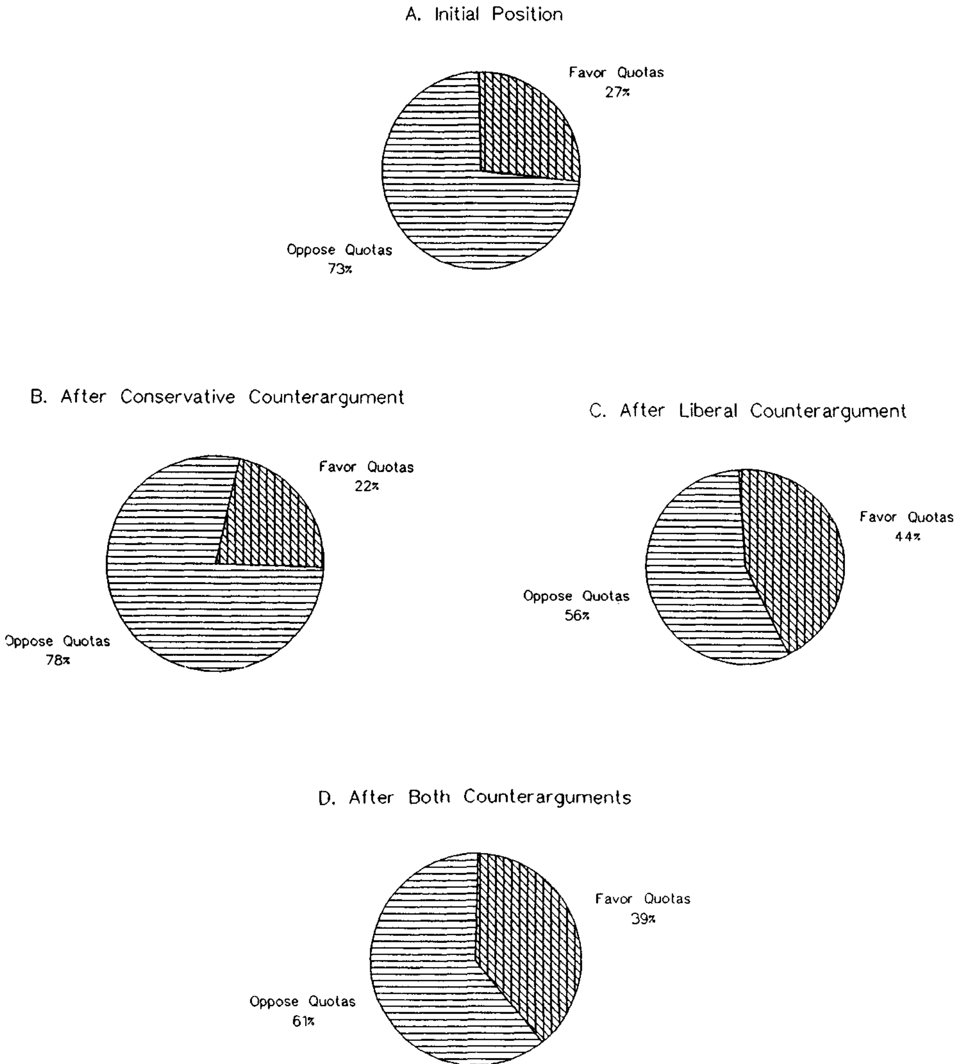
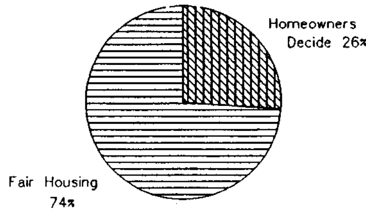


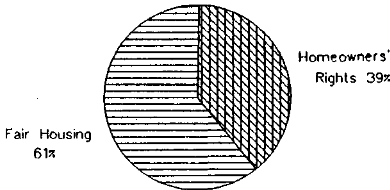
Figure 12.5. Support for college quotas for blacks before and after counterarguments.

Gunnar Myrdal supposed that when racial prejudice and bigotry came openly into conflict with the fundamental American values of freedom and equality, it would be prejudice that would give way and the fundamental values that would prevail. Fair housing is a classic example of the kind of issue he had in mind. An appeal to spend more money on behalf of blacks does not have the same moral leverage as an appeal to let them have the same rights as whites. Hence, one should be able more readily to talk opponents of fair housing out of their position

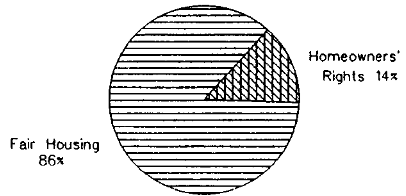
A. Initial Position



B. After Conservative Counterargument



C. After Liberal Counterargument



D. After Both Counterarguments

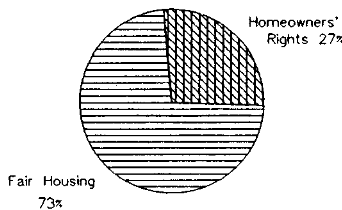


Figure 12.6. Support for fair housing for blacks before and after counterarguments.

than its supporters out of theirs. This is indeed the case: As Figure 12.6 shows, only 18 percent of those supporting fair housing changed their minds after being given a counterargument, as compared to 41 percent of those initially opposing it.

Two implications should be emphasized. First, it might have been conjectured that the minority side of an issue, so far as it consists of people resisting the general tide of opinion in the society, is less susceptible to pressure, and conversely, that a majority, so far as it is augmented by changes in the fashionable-

ness of opinion in the society, is inherently vulnerable to it. But both the issues of fair housing and affirmative action show the minority position is not, *qua* minority position, held more zealously than the majority position. Second, it is tempting to think of racial policy issues as more or less alike. Our results, however, suggest that on racial policy issues formulated in explicitly ideological terms (e.g., government spending), conservatives may have an edge, but that on racial policy issues formulated in civil rights terms, they do not.

CONCLUSION

We believe that the study of persuasibility throws fresh light on the operations of mass belief systems, a light that both reinforces and extends previous research. It reinforces it by confirming in a new way the pliability of public opinion; it extends it by exposing more clearly some of the dynamics of opinion change.

One result is to underline the genuine complexity of public opinion. As we have seen, a large majority can be mobilized for government help for blacks or for government assurance of fair treatment for blacks in jobs – or for the very opposite policies. In short, contradictory majorities can be assembled *given exactly the same people with exactly the same attitudes*. This is of course an especially dramatic illustration of a principle intuitively familiar to the experienced opinion researcher, and that is the elasticity, or contextual variability, of public opinion.

Some part of this variability is testimony to the shallowness of opinions – even opinions about salient and controversial issues such as racial policy. But, instructively, the pattern of change shows signs of being systematic and politically relevant. So we have seen that conservatives who have taken a position on racial issues inconsistent with their overall outlook are markedly more ready to change it in the face of a counterargument than are liberals who are similarly situated; and there are other factors as well, besides ideology, that systematically strengthen or inhibit susceptibility to persuasion.

Fairly obviously, the more we can learn about the dynamics of belief systems in general and the susceptibility of their component elements to influence in particular, the better off we shall be. But a study of the elasticity of racial policy attitudes raises questions of interest in their own right, most notably concerning the commitment of Americans to racial equality. The issue here is asymmetry; it is frequently suggested that support for racial equality is superficial – never, however, that opposition to it is similarly shallow. Now, our results show that substantial numbers can be induced to give up their positions on both sides of racial issues under the pressure of a counterargument. Moreover, it is by no means the case that it is always easier to talk people out of support for racial equality than out of opposition to it. Sometimes it is – in the case of government spending for blacks and government responsibility for fair treatment in jobs – but just as often it is not. Thus, it is easier to talk people out of opposition to fair housing than out of support for it. And in the case of affirmative action, it is hard

to get any sizable number to change their position on either side of the issue. No less consequentially, our analysis has shown that for the issues on which it is easier to talk people out of support for racial equality than out of opposition to it, the reason for this is not insincerity but ideology: It is easier to get conservatives to give up a position inconsistent with their outlook than liberals. And it is this which accounts for the conservative position winding up the winner after counterarguments.

This connection between ideology and issue persuasibility seems to us potentially of importance in understanding the dynamics of public opinion on some racial issues. The American political culture has witnessed strong pressures in behalf of racial equality over the last generation. But the importance conservatives attach to the value of conformity has undercut this two ways, one previously established, the other not. First, insofar as an attachment to conformity has impeded awareness and understanding of the emergence of a new outlook on race in American society, the right may have suffered fewer deserters on racial policy issues than it otherwise would have (Sniderman, 1975). Second, as we have seen, insofar as conformity facilitates persuasibility, the right is better able to bring deserters back into the fold.

A final point, both substantive and methodological. We have become persuaded that to take account of the dynamics of opinion calls for a new conception of survey research, a conception of survey research not as passive but as active – indeed, as interactive. Among the methodological reasons to explore an interactive approach, one deserves particular mention. In this interactive approach the dependent variable is the subject of efforts to change it; so instead of having to explore a labyrinth of simultaneous equations in search of a causal Minotaur, one has direct knowledge of what is cause and what is effect. And among the substantive reasons to take advantage of an interactive approach one also deserves particular mention, for it applies to the study of the dynamics of political belief generally. It is not enough, we are convinced, to study people's reactions to political issues only in situations – such as the conventional survey interview – in which pressures are artificially minimized or neutralized. In reality, political choices are a product both of individual predispositions and of situational pressures. So it is essential to investigate the dynamics of political belief under pressure. To that end, this study has introduced a method for analyzing whether, and why, people will abandon their political positions under the pressure of counterargument.

APPENDIX 12.A: CONSTRUCTION OF MEASURES

The Policy Index is composed of the following four items:

This country faces many problems, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems. For each one, please

tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on them, too little money, or about the right amount.

(sp2) How about spending on solving the problems of big cities?
 (1) Spending too much
 (3) Spending about the right amount
 (5) Spending too little
(sp3) How about spending on halting the rising crime rate?
 (1) Spending too much
 (3) Spending about the right amount
 (5) Spending too little
(sp4) How about spending on welfare or public assistance for the poor?
 (1) Spending too much
 (3) Spending about the right amount
 (5) Spending too little
(ideo) In general, when it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as a liberal, a conservative, a moderate, or what?
 (1) Liberal
 (3) Conservative
 (5) Moderate

Items were scored so that the higher a respondent's score, the more conservative her or his orientation. The scoring of the questions on spending on big cities and welfare therefore were reversed, and the measure of ideology was recoded to place moderates in the middle. The mean of the four items was taken, resulting in a five-point index. Respondents who had replied to less than two questions were scored as missing data.

Policy Index: Mean = 2.87 S.D. = .843 Minimum = 1 Maximum = 5.

The Conformity Index is composed of the following three items:

(va2) How about following God's will – is that very important, somewhat important, or not important to you?
 (1) very important
 (3) somewhat important
 (5) not important
(va4) How about preserving the traditional ideas of right and wrong? Is that very important, somewhat important or not important to you?
 (1) very important
 (3) somewhat important
 (5) not important
(op4) Respect for authority is one of the most important things that children should learn. Do you basically agree or basically disagree with that statement?
 (1) very important
 (3) somewhat important
 (5) not important

The direction of scoring on the three items was reversed so that respondents who felt traditional authority was very important scored the highest. The questions about the importance of following God's will and of preserving the tradi-

tional ideas of right and wrong were recoded to three-point measures. Responses to the importance of teaching children respect for authority were recoded so that the more conservative answer was scored as three while the more liberal response was scored as one. The mean of these three items was taken and then multiplied by five-thirds to create a five-point scale.

Conformity Index: Mean = 4.19; S.D. = .877; Minimum = 1.67; Maximum = 5.

13

The new racism and the American ethos

Racial prejudice refers to how some people feel and think about blacks, racial discrimination to how they treat them. Plainly, the public opinion survey is well-suited for the study of prejudice; but consensually, it is not suited for the study of discrimination, since by definition an opinion survey only records opinions, not behaviors.

We want to urge a less self-denying ordinance, a slight relaxation of the definition of discrimination. Our interest is politics, so by racial discrimination we shall mean a person honoring a claim for government assistance for a white but refusing to honor exactly the same claim, made on exactly the same grounds, for a black.

Chapter 13 introduces a technique for the assessment of racial discrimination, so defined. As with Chapters 11 and 12, the technique capitalizes on computer-assisted interviewing. The key experiment – the "laid-off worker" experiment – makes particularly plain how our introduction of planned variations has burst the constraints of the traditional paper-and-pencil split-ballot technique. In the laid-off worker experiment five attributes of an unemployed worker are randomly varied: race, gender, age, marital–parental status, and work history. Because each is varied independently of the other, there are ninety-six different combinations in all, far more than could possibly be accommodated in the traditional technique.

One word of caution. Chapter 13 reports initial results. We have a high degree of confidence in them, but they do not represent our complete analysis of discrimination. In particular, it would be unwarranted – indeed, flatly wrong – to infer from the results of the laid-off worker experiment that racial discrimination no longer occurs. On the contrary, subsequent studies will demonstrate that racial double standards are still practiced. Our broader aim is thus not to demonstrate that discrimination persists – which is surely obvious – but rather to identify the conditions under which it occurs and the characteristics of the individuals most likely to engage in it.

It is now a commonplace among commentators on race and American society that the old racism, rather than being overcome, has merely been replaced by a new racism. This new racism is subtler than the old. Instead of open bigotry, racism is now covert, concealed in a defense of traditional American values, but no less pernicious.

This chapter assesses the validity of the new racism thesis, concentrating particularly on the claim that the new racism is rooted in values held up as quintessentially American: self-reliance, individual initiative, hard work, and individual achievement among them.

This chapter prepared by Paul M. Sniderman, Thomas Piazza, Philip E. Tetlock, and Ann Kendrick.

THE NEW RACISM THESIS

It is sobering to realize that only thirty to forty years ago a majority of white Americans believed that whites should have the first chance at jobs, with blacks deserving to be considered only if there were jobs left over. For that matter, majorities of whites believed that blacks should not be allowed to drink from a water fountain that whites might subsequently touch, or rent a hotel room that whites might later sleep in, or eat at a restaurant table where whites might subsequently eat (e.g., Cantril, 1951; Corbett, 1982). Although race prejudice has by no means disappeared, an overwhelming majority of whites now support equal treatment of whites and blacks (e.g., Hyman and Sheatsley, 1956, 1964; Greeley and Sheatsley, 1971; Lipset and Schneider, 1978; Taylor, Sheatsley, and Greeley, 1978).

But race as a political issue has hardly gone away; indeed, with issues like affirmative action and busing coming to the fore, it has, if anything, become more divisive. So an initial reaction of optimism has been overtaken by one of pessimism. Blatant racism, it is conceded, is on the wane. But it has been replaced, many fear, by a new form of racism, subtler, less apparently racial, but no less pernicious (Pettigrew, 1979; Kinder and Sears, 1981; McConahay, Hardee, and Batts, 1981; McConahay, 1986).

The new racism thesis represents a new view of the relation between racism and the American Creed. In his famous formulation, Myrdal (1944) had proposed that there was a conflict between "the entire American Creed of liberty, equality, justice and fair opportunity for everybody" on the one side, and the irrational impulses, jealousies, and traditions underpinning racial prejudice and discrimination on the other. The new racism thesis, however, turns this view on its head: Far from the Creed being at odds with racism, it holds that antiblack affect has combined with key elements of the Creed to produce the new racism (McConahay, 1986, p. 98).

Proponents of the new racism thesis thus locate the susceptibility to racism in distinctively American values – in Kinder and Sears formulation, the "traditional American moral values embodied in the Protestant Ethic" (1981, p. 416). McConahay and Hough (1976) have spelled these out:

> The values that appear to be most important for producing symbolic racism are those associated with what we call American civil Protestantism. Specific expressions of these values may be multidimensional, but they are, we would hypothesize, derived from the secularized versions of the Protestant Ethic . . . : hard work, individualism, sexual repression, and delay of gratification, with a large dose of patriotism and reverence for the past thrown in. (p. 41)

Ironically, then, what is new about the new racism is the involvement of traditional values (Kinder, 1986; Sears, 1988).

So formulated, the new racism thesis holds, first, that the average American's reactions to racial issues are often rooted in an aversion to blacks, typically acquired in early socialization, reinforced by a commitment to traditional values.

But as McConahay (1988) observes, because racial prejudice is now regarded as socially undesirable, it follows that people are under pressure either to inhibit overt expression of antiblack sentiments or behavior or, alternatively, to camouflage them so that they are defensible on socially acceptable grounds ("I'm not opposed to helping him because he's black, but because he's not putting out an effort on his own"). But of course people sometimes will find themselves in situations in which it is permissible to express negative racial attitudes; indeed, as McConahay emphasizes, it is not necessary that they know they can express antiblack sentiments with impunity; it suffices that the situation be "characterized by racial ambiguity. That is, a context in which there is a plausible, nonprejudiced explanation available for what might be considered prejudiced behavior or intended behavior" (1988, p. 100).

Hence the conception of the new racism as subtle, indirect, disguised (cf. Pettigrew, 1979): So far from being overt and unambiguous, as bigotry used to be, it tends to conceal itself in the cloak of socially acceptable values. In social psychological terms, people feel free to express the new racism only under conditions of attributional ambiguity – that is, when they can invoke a plausible nonracial justification for discriminating against blacks. As a result, the new racism is both hard to identify and easy to defend.

This argument directs attention to the potential importance of covert, or hidden, racism. Thus far it has not been possible to detect covert racism in a conventional survey interview. Now, drawing on computer-assisted interviewing, we shall present a method for doing so. Our objective is thus to determine under what conditions, and why, Americans continue to practice a racial double standard, adhering to one standard of what is fair when a claim for a public benefit or a right is made by a white, and another and harsher standard when it is made by a black.

ANALYSIS

This chapter draws on the same data set, the Race and Politics Survey (RAP) of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay area, as Chapters 11 and 12. In addition, we shall take advantage of a national cross-section, drawn from the familiar National Election Studies (NES) series. The two surveys were conducted at a similar time, during the summer and fall of 1986. Moreover, a number of items in the RAP survey deliberately duplicate or correspond closely to items in the NES study. Our primary concern, in comparing the two samples, is to demonstrate that the results from the Race and Politics Survey correspond to those of the NES at all points the two can be compared.

CONSERVATISM AND RACIAL POLICY PREFERENCES

Conservatism has repeatedly been show to be correlated with opposition to policies to help blacks (e.g., Sears and Kinder, 1971; Sears, Hensler, and Speer, 1979;

Table 13.1. *Correlations between liberalism–conservatism and racial policy preferences (whites only)*

Correlation coefficient of liberalism–conservatism with	Survey	
	RAP	NES
Increase government spending for blacks	−.30	−.23
Government assurance fair treatment	−.27	−.17
Set-asides	−.15	
Affirmative action in education	−.17	−.17
Busing	−.23	
Number of cases	669	1232

Note: Liberalism–conservatism is ideological self-identification, scored 1 = liberal, 2 = moderate, 3 = conservative.

Sniderman, Brody, and Kuklinski, 1984; Sniderman, Hagen, Tetlock, and Brady, 1986). Indeed, the very familiarity of the finding recommends it as a benchmark for comparison of the RAP and NES surveys. Accordingly, Table 13.1 details, for both surveys, the relation between ideological self-identification and attitudes toward a range of racial policies, taking as a measure of association the standard product moment correlation coefficient.

The findings of the two surveys are manifestly consistent, both with one another and with previous research. As Table 13.1 shows, in both RAP and NES surveys, conservatives are more likely than liberals to oppose increased government spending to assist blacks, to resist government assurances of fair treatment in employment for blacks, to reject set-aside provisions for minorities in the awarding of government contracts, and to oppose affirmative action and busing. It should be observed that the conservative objection to government assistance for blacks does not take the form of objecting to a few specially controversial policies, such as affirmative action or busing: Rather their opposition is systematic, across the board.

THE LAID-OFF WORKER EXPERIMENT

How, exactly, shall we tell if a person is a racist? This was hardly a problem for the dominative or old-fashioned racist – his bigotry is overt, crude, unmistakable. But the whole point about the new racism – what makes it at once distinctive and pernicious – is precisely that it is "more indirect, more subtle, more procedural, more ostensibly nonracial" (Pettigrew, 1979, p. 118). And what it means to say that the new racism is "indirect" and "subtle" is of course that it is covert – not an objection to blacks per se but rather an objection grounded in values that, *on their face,* have nothing to do with race.

The problem is twofold. First, we want to make plain just what the heart of racism consists in, both as it is commonly understood by thoughtful observers and

as it is specifically interpreted by the proponents of the new racism argument. Second, we want to devise a practical and acceptable method – acceptable whatever a person's political viewpoint – to determine whether racism does underlie Americans' attitudes on issues of race.

What, exactly, is called for to detect racism in American politics? Suppose, for the sake of argument, that the new racism argument is broadly on the right tracks – suppose, that is, both that racism nowadays takes the form of a conjunction or alliance between conservative values and aversion to blacks and, what is more, that racism nowadays, rather than being overt, tends to be disguised, subtle. Assuming this, what if we ask a person we know to be politically conservative whether he favors increasing government spending to help blacks, and he replies, no, he is very much opposed to this. Should we therefore label him a racist? Surely not, because his opposition to increasing government spending may not be inspired by racism at all but simply by conservatism, in and of itself. But suppose we were to ask him about increasing government spending, but this time for the benefit not of blacks but of whites, and he were to say, yes, he is in favor of lending them a hand. Then, we should surely (and rightly) describe him as racist.

Now, clearly this hypothetical procedure is unworkable – it would capture only racists who lack altogether the wit to see what we are up to[1] – but it does lay bare the crux of the issue. Racism, as we shall define it, consists in a double standard – one standard of what is right and fair for whites, another and harsher standard for blacks.

This surely is the nub of the matter: To withhold from a black a benefit or a right that one would willingly afford a white is racism. But insofar as racism in America in the 1980s and 1990s is subtle or disguised, the likelihood that it will be expressed depends upon the situation or context in which a person finds himself. The new racism thesis thus predicts that the average citizen is more likely to respond negatively to blacks when he or she is supplied with a pretext, and this pretext characteristically takes the form of "stereotypical symbols of blacks' violation of traditional values" (Kinder and Sears, 1981).

For our part, we shall define as racism the willingness to honor a claim to a public benefit in the case of a nonblack but not in that of a black, although the two are otherwise alike. To determine under what conditions, and to what extent, this occurs, paying due attention to the risk that racists will conceal their sentiments should they divine what is going on, we shall marry the advantages of a general population survey and a genuine experimental design.[2]

The "laid-off worker" experiment was designed specifically to examine how far the honoring of claim to a public benefit or right is swayed by the race of the claimant. Respondents were told that a worker[3] at a nearby company had been laid off. The person laid off was then described. The person is said to be either black or white; a man or a woman; in his or her early twenties, mid-thirties, or early forties; single, a single parent, married, or married and has children; and either a dependable worker or not a dependable worker. Respondents were then asked how much help in finding a new job the government should give.

The description of the laid-off worker (e.g., black or white, male or female) was determined by computer-generated random numbers. Because the value of each personal attribute is selected randomly, the impact of each personal characteristic is independent of each of the others, allowing us to pry apart personal characteristics that are sometimes correlated in people's perceptions of reality (e.g., black and undependable). The dependent variable is scored 0 for "none at all," 5 for "some," and 10 for "a lot," so in the analysis that follows, the higher the score, the more positive (or in favor of assistance) the response.

Given the manipulation of the personal characteristics of the claimant, (approximately) one-half of the sample is asked how much assistance the government should supply to a laid-off worker who is black, and one-half a laid-off worker who is white. No one, it should be observed, has any way to figure that although he is being asked about, say, a black claimant, others are being asked about a white one. Finally, since the questions being asked are identical in every respect (thanks to random variation) except for the race of the beneficiary, and since the two halves of the sample, being randomly assigned, are themselves identical (apart from chance variation), then it is necessarily the case that if there is more willingness to help a white who is out of work than a black, as reflected by a larger score on average for claimants who are white than black, the explanation must be racial discrimination.

To what extent, then, do people's judgments about whether a claim to government assistance should be honored depend upon who is making the claim? Still more crucially, to what extent do conservatives treat the claims of blacks to assistance differently, and worse, than those of whites, as the new racism argument suggests?

Let us start by considering what difference the gender and race of a claimant makes. Table 13.2 thus shows the results from two 2 (race) by 2 (gender) analyses of variance, separate analyses of variance being performed for self-described liberals and for conservatives, with interaction effects being assessed after the main effects have been removed.[4]

Consider the reactions of liberals. Two things are plain. First, it makes a difference to them whether the person who is asking for assistance is a man or a woman. Liberals are significantly more negative in their reaction to white males who are out of work ($Y = 4.4$), as compared to their reaction to white females ($Y = 6.1$, difference significant at the .01 level). In short, liberals are more likely to favor government assistance if the claimant is a woman than if a man. But if the gender of the claimant makes a difference for liberals, race does not. Their reactions to a black and to a white who need a new job are virtually identical, the mean being 5.4 in the case of the former and 5.3 in the case of the latter. In short, contrary to the prediction of Dovidio and Gaertner that liberals will react differentially to blacks because of the ambivalence they harbor toward them, the judgments of liberals about whether government should assist someone do not appear to be in any degree influenced by the color of the person in need of assistance.

Table 13.2. *Government help for unemployed by claimant's race and gender (whites only)*

Claimant	Male	Female	Total
Liberals (N = *244)*			
White	4.4	6.1	5.3
Black	5.2	5.5	5.4
Total	4.8	5.8	5.3
Significance level of ANOVA effects			
Race .93			
Gender .02			
Interaction .07			
Minimum cell N 54			
Conservatives			
White	3.7	3.2	3.5
Black	4.9	5.2	5.1
Total	4.3	4.2	4.3
Significance level of ANOVA effects			
Race .00			
Gender .79			
Interaction .41			
Minimum cell N 49			

Note: Government help scored 10 = a lot; 5 = some; 0 = none at all.

Now, consider the reactions of conservatives. The new racism thesis predicts, quite unequivocally, that conservatives will react with less sympathy to a claim for government assistance if it is made by a black than by a white. And Table 13.2 indeed shows that the race of the claimant makes a strong difference for conservatives – but just the other way round: They are more likely to favor help if the person out of work is black ($Y = 5.1$), less likely to favor it if he or she is white ($Y = 3.5$). But if the race of the claimant makes a difference to conservatives, the gender of the claimant does not. In contrast to liberals, conservatives are neither more nor less likely to favor government assistance if the person out of work is a woman than a man. Quite simply, conservatives are more likely to help a black male than a white male (mean scores of 4.9 and 3.7, respectively); more likely as well to help a black female than a white female (scores of 5.2 and 3.2, respectively). In sum, not only do conservatives not react as the new racism argument predicts they will react, but in fact they react in just the opposite way to what the new racism argument predicts – favoring blacks rather than penalizing them. Indeed, conservatives take almost as liberal a stand as liberals on the question of government assistance, notwithstanding their conservatism.

It does not exaggerate to say this is a striking, even surprising, finding, so it is essential to investigate it further. The key step to take, in order to explore the

Table 13.3. *Government help for unemployed by claimant's race and marital–parental status (whites only)*

Claimant	Single	Single parent	Married	Married with child
Liberals (N = *244)*				
White	4.5	6.4	4.7	5.6
Black	4.8	5.6	5.5	5.6
Significance level of ANOVA effects				
Race .96				
Marital-par .10				
Interaction .60				
Minimum cell N 20				
Conservatives (N = *212)*				
White	3.0	3.8	3.3	3.7
Black	4.4	4.8	5.8	5.3
Significance level of ANOVA effects				
Race .00				
Marital-par .53				
Interaction .68				
Minimum cell N 19				

Note: Government help scored 10 = a lot; 5 = some; 0 = none at all.

new racism argument in more depth, is to determine to what extent conservatives are likely to withhold assistance from a black claimant if presented with "stereotypical symbols of blacks' violation of traditional values."

Surely not the least way that blacks are nowadays perceived to be violating traditional values is by failing to keep the nuclear family intact. Much is made of this in current commentary, and in fact rates of illegitimacy, single-parent homes, unemployment, and crime among blacks are alarmingly high. Although this may well be disquieting to many, it is likely to be particularly vexatious to most people with a conservative outlook. With this in mind, one of the characteristics of the laid-off worker that was deliberately manipulated was the marital–parental status of the claimant: So the laid-off worker was described variously as single, a single parent, married, or married with children. The idea behind the manipulation of course is that by labeling a black as a single parent – as a person, that is, who has failed to keep the nuclear family intact – the conservative will be supplied with exactly the sort of "stereotypical symbol of blacks' violation of traditional values" that the proponents of the new racism argument contend excites and cloaks a negative reaction to blacks.

Table 13.3 accordingly displays the extent to which liberals and conservatives favor government assistance for a laid-off worker depending on the marital–parental status of the claimant. As a glance at the results shows, the new racism argument again misses the mark. It is not that the family situation of black claimants makes no difference to conservatives: There is some tendency for them

to favor government assistance for a black who is married as against one who is single. But the crux of the new racism argument is that conservatives, if supplied with a situational pretext that would justify a negative reaction, will pick up on it far more frequently in the case of blacks than of whites – this is, after all, the heart of the charge of racism. But this prediction clearly is not confirmed by the results: So far from conservatives being more likely to respond especially negatively to blacks when supplied with a pretext for doing so, they respond more positively to a black single parent ($Y = 4.8$) than to a white single parent ($Y = 3.8$) For that matter, conservatives are more likely to favor assistance for a black who is married ($Y = 5.8$) than for a white ($Y = 3.3$). The new racism argument thus doubly misses the mark: On the one side, conservatives do not punish blacks distinctively for the violation of a traditional value like preserving the nuclear family, which clearly contradicts the prediction of the new racism argument that conservatives will take advantage of such a pretext to express their deep dislike of blacks; on the other, so far as conservatives take account of race, it is to benefit, not penalize, blacks whatever their parental or marital status, which hardly fits the characterization of conservatives as racist.

But why, one must surely ask, are conservatives more likely to favor government assistance for a black claimant than for a white one? Is it something about blacks in general, or some more specific, restricted factor that is at work? To see what is going on, it is helpful to recall classic findings showing that responses to blacks are highly contingent on "social responsibility" cues. An example will give the flavor of these findings. Thus, in one experiment subjects were presented with a picture of a black male, then asked to describe his personal characteristics. In one condition of the experiment, the man in the photograph wore a t-shirt; in the other, a tie. Wearing a t-shirt, the black was perceived to be lazy, undependable, unintelligent; wearing a tie, the very same person was perceived to be industrious, reliable, intelligent (Hyman, 1969). With this specifically in mind, the work history of the claimant was systematically varied in the laid-off worker experiment: In one condition, the claimant is described as a dependable worker; in the other, as an undependable worker. Table 13.4 documents the impact of the claimant's race and work history on judgments about the extent to which he or she is entitled to government assistance.

Looking first at liberals, we see that neither the race nor the work history of the claimant is regarded as a relevant consideration in judging whether the government should assist a person who has been laid off in finding a new job. Simply put, it makes no difference to liberals, so far as the question of government help is concerned, whether the person who has lost his job is black or white, or whether he has been a conscientious worker or an undependable employee.

Looking now at conservatives, we see at once the explanation for their greater support for a black claimant than a white claimant. It is not that they favor special treatment for blacks in general: It is rather they distinctively wish to give a hand to the person who is *both* black and a dependable worker. Notice that it is necessary that the claimant be both, in order to elicit this reaction from conserva-

Table 13.4. *Government help for unemployed by claimant's race and work history (whites only)*

Claimant	Dependable	Undependable	Total
Liberals (N = *244)*			
White	5.5	5.1	5.3
Black	5.2	5.6	5.4
Total	5.3	5.4	5.3
Significance level of ANOVA effects			
Race .90			
Work history .97			
Interaction .40			
Minimum cell N 46			
Conservatives (N = *212)*			
White	3.5	3.4	3.5
Black	6.0	4.0	5.2
Total	4.7	3.7	4.3
Significance level of ANOVA effects			
Race .00			
Work history .03			
Interaction .03			
Minimum cell N 43			

Note: Government help scored 10 = a lot; 5 = some; 0 = none at all.

tives: If he is black but not a dependable worker ($Y = 4.0$), or if he is white whether he is a dependable worker or not ($Y = 3.5$ and 3.4, respectively), they will tend to be opposed to government assistance for him; conservatives swing around and favor more government assistance if, and only if, the claimant is both hardworking and black ($Y = 6.0$).

Why should conservatives respond so positively to a hard-working black? Because, simply put, they tend to see a hard-working black as an exception. Table 13.5 shows that, in both the RAP and the NES surveys, that conservatives tend to expect blacks to be irresponsible. Specifically, the more conservative people are, the more they believe that blacks are not as well off as whites because they are not trying hard enough; that black neighborhoods tend to be run down "because blacks simply don't take care of their property"; and that "most blacks on welfare could get a job if they really tried".

Because conservatives expect blacks in general to be unreliable and untrustworthy, they tend to see a black who is dependable as an exception. "This one," they say to themselves, "is not like the others; he is really trying." And perceiving him to be an exception – perceiving him to be a person who exemplifies the values of individual effort and striving they admire – they make an exception for him. So, precisely because they think less of blacks in general, paradoxically conservatives wind up wanting to do more for them.

Table 13.5. *Correlations between liberalism–conservatism and racial perceptions (whites only)*

Correlation coefficient of liberalism–conservatism with	Survey	
	RAP	NES
Blacks don't try hard	.19	.22
Neighborhoods run down	.23	
Blacks on welfare	.23	.19
Number of cases	709	593

Note: Liberalism–conservatism is ideological self-identification, scored 1 = liberal, 2 = moderate, 3 = conservative. See Appendix 9 for full text of the other RAP survey items. The NES does not contain all of the RAP questions.

There is, it should be observed, a sizable body of experimental social psychological literature that lends support to the violation-of-expectation model sketched here. For instance, Jones and McGillis (1976), in their correspondent inference theory, argue that people make stronger internal (personality trait) attributions for behavior that violates "target" or "role" expectancies. This would suggest that conservatives, with negative images of blacks in general, may actually perceive the "dependable" black as more dependable than the dependable white worker, hence their greater likelihood of favoring government assistance for the black. Alternatively, Parducci's (1968) range–frequency model of judgment leads to the same prediction, albeit via a different line of reasoning. According to his model, people automatically compare the stimulus person mentioned in the question with a population distribution of relevant others. The stimulus "dependable black worker" will elicit more favorable reactions from persons with negative images of blacks than from persons with positive images of them because a dependable black worker is a much more distinctive stimulus (lying a greater distance from the population median or mean) for the former than for the latter group, deviant or outlier observations eliciting stronger affective responses according to Parducci's theory.

The laid-off worker experiment thus yields the surprising finding that so far as conservatives react differently on the basis of race to claims of government assistance, it is to compromise their conservative principles to give an extra measure of help for blacks who are making a major personal effort to improve their condition. But there is also a second, equally striking finding or more accurately, a result of the "Sherlock Holmes's dog that did *not* bark" variety, a result that is striking because of what did not happen.

Consider the design of the laid-off worker experiment. Respondents, in one experimental condition, are asked how much assistance the government should afford an "undependable" black in finding a new job. Here, we have manifestly

supplied respondents a peg on which they can hang a negative response: Conservatives have a socially acceptable pretext – indeed, from their point of view a personally salient reason – to react strongly and negatively to the suggestion that such a person deserves government assistance. But, as Table 13.4 makes plain, conservatives do *not* seize on this pretext to express hostility to blacks: They are, to be sure, opposed to granting a great deal of government assistance for an undependable black ($Y = 4.0$), but no more so than they are opposed to such assistance for an undependable white ($Y = 3.4$). Not to put too fine a point on it, we waved a red flag (a lazy black in need of government assistance), and all the same did not evoke a reaction.

In short, the new racism's claim that conservatives will engage in racism given a socially legitimate pretext, or even simply a situationally ambiguous context, is falsified.

QUALIFICATIONS

This falsification of the new racism thesis is especially consequential, because this study is the first appropriately designed to test the idea of covert or disguised racism in political judgments in a representative sample. It may, however, be objected that the results of the laid-off worker experiment are artifactual. Merely telling respondents that a laid-off worker is black may tip them off to the purpose of the experiment: Hearing this, the more biased among them give a more positive response than they otherwise would, precisely in order to cover up their negative feelings toward blacks.

This objection, though plausible at first, misses the mark on reflection: If it were correct, then merely mentioning whether a claimant is black would trigger a positive response from conservatives; however, conservatives favor more assistance for a laid-off worker who is black if, and only if, the claimant is both black and a dependable worker.

There is, though, a second and more compelling objection. Respondents are told whether a black is or is not dependable. But in real life, the danger is precisely that a judgment about an individual will be made not on the basis of his or her actual qualities but rather on the irrelevant basis of her or his race: So seeing a person is black, conservatives tend to perceive him as undependable. Put differently, conservatives may very well not discriminate against a black *if* they know that he is a hard worker; but the whole point, a critic may say, is that conservatives are predisposed to believe that a black is *not* a hard worker.

Consider the logic of this objection, however. Conservatives encounter, in one condition of the laid-off worker experiment, an undependable black. This black, it should be emphasized, is described as – not merely inferred to be – undependable. A crucial comparison, then, is how conservatives react to an undependable black, as compared with a dependable white – that is, after all, precisely the comparison that maximizes their legitimate opportunity to respond negatively to blacks. But, as a glance at Table 13.4 shows, there is no difference whatever in

the way that conservatives treat the two: They are opposed to the government taking on responsibility for helping a hard-working white find a new job ($Y = 3.5$) just as they are opposed to it assisting an undependable black ($Y = 4.0$). Which is as it should be: From the perspective of a conservative, the point is to resist expansion of governmental activism. This is a principle they subscribe to and consistently support, making an exception to it only when they confront what is (from their point of view) itself an exception – a hard-working black.

There is, however, one quite fundamental qualification, and this must be driven home. The laid-off worker experiment demonstrates that whites, in judging how much assistance government should supply to a person who has lost his job, do not penalize a black because he is black. But this is not to say, and should not be taken to imply, that blacks are not discriminated against because they are black. There is, as we have shown elsewhere,[5] a world of difference between how whites react to an individual who is black and how they react to blacks taken as a whole. And it is easy, once one stops and thinks about it, to see how this difference arises. When people are judging the claims of a particular black, their attention is called to the individuating characteristics of a particular person – on what sets him or her apart: marital status, attitude toward work, and the like, and not simply race. But of course this is precisely the opposite of a situation that facilitates a stereotypical response. In contrast, when asked their view of what should and should not be done in behalf of blacks generally, which is what characteristically is asked in studies of American racial attitudes, respondents are free to take advantage of racial stereotypes. In short, judgments about racial policy may be driven by racial stereotypes, even if judgments about individual blacks are not.

There is a final objection that needs to be weighed. It may be argued that our analysis should have focused not on political conservatism but specific conservative or traditional values, because in their definitions of the new racism proponents refer to the latter, not the former (e.g., Kinder and Sears, 1981). It seemed to us that a focus on ideological self-identification was the best measure to employ because it has in fact been the measure that proponents of the new racism argument have employed in making a prima facie case for their views. Moreover, the concept of "traditional American values" is hardly free of ambiguity, as we have already had ample occasion to observe. But notwithstanding this, it is obviously worth the effort to construe the new racism argument in the most generous terms, to assess its validity not in terms of one measure only but rather drawing on as many as possible. So we should like to extend our analysis to take account of specific traditional values.

Given the vagaries of the notion of traditional values, the broadest coverage possible would seem the most desirable. Accordingly, we shall look at the connection, if any, between racism and a wide assortment of traditional values, among them the importance of preserving traditional ideas of right and wrong, individual achievement, competition, adherence to God's will, strengthening law and order, respect for authority, and – so as to leave no stone unturned – oppo-

Table 13.6. *Government help for unemployed by claimant's race for supporters of traditional values (whites only)*

Values	Race of claimant			
	Black	White	Difference	*N*
Preserve traditional ideas of right and wrong (very important)	5.3	4.3	1.0[a]	584
Maintain respect for America's power in the world (very important)	5.4	3.6	2.8[a]	299
Always be the best at what you do (very important)	5.5	4.3	1.2[a]	400
Respect for authority important for children to learn (agree)	5.3	4.1	1.2[a]	624
Strengthen law and order (very important)	5.2	4.1	1.1[a]	511
Getting ahead depends on birth rather than on hard work (disagree)	5.2	4.1	1.1'	578
Welfare or public assistance (spending too much)	4.4	3.3	1.1[a]	151
Solving problems of big cities (spending too much)	4.3	3.2	1.1	50
Compete against others (very important)	4.9	5.0	−0.1	99

Note: Government help scored 10 = a lot; 5 = some; 0 = none at all.
[a]Difference significant at .05 level.

sition to welfare, opposition to spending on the problems of big cities, and even the importance of maintaining respect for America's power in the world. Because the new racism thesis contends that contemporary racism consists in a conjunction of antiblack affect and traditional values, it ought to be the case, if the thesis is indeed correct, that proponents of traditional values will practice a racial double standard, to a greater or lesser, but in any event detectable, degree. A test of the thesis is supplied in Table 13.6, drawing on the laid-off worker experiment. In this table, we compare the average amount of help to be given to black and to white unemployed persons; each comparison is based on those respondents who gave a traditionalist answer to an indicator of traditionalism in the survey.

Plainly, adherents of traditional values do *not* penalize black claimants for being black. Indeed, so far as the race of the laid-off worker makes any difference to them, they favor more, not less, government assistance for the laid-off worker who is black. The rightmost column of Table 13.6 reports the difference between the mean response to a black and to a white claimant for proponents of each traditional value; a positive sign indicates greater support for assistance for a black claimant and a negative one greater support for a white. The differences are small, but wherever they are statistically significant (in seven of the nine comparisons), they indicate more, not less, support for a black claimant. The point, it should be emphasized, is not that proponents of traditional values are *distinc-*

tively more likely to favor help for a black than a white – much the same holds for those not committed to traditional values (data not shown) – but rather the absence of an instance when commitment to a traditional value, however defined, is accompanied by a significantly more negative reaction to a black than to a white claimant in the laid-off worker experiment.

In short, across a range of values, it is not the case that proponents of traditional values react more negatively to a black in need of government assistance than to a white similarly in need.

CONCLUSION

What broader light do our findings shed on the contemporary debate about the character of modern racism? As we read it, two theses are at the heart of the debate.

The first is that contemporary racism tends to be covert, in contrast to old-fashioned race prejudice that was blatant. Indeed, the distinguishing feature of modern racism is precisely that it is "more indirect, more subtle, more procedural, more ostensibly nonracial" (Pettigrew, 1979, p. 118). The thesis of covert racism thus holds that many whites are ready to discriminate against blacks given a socially acceptable pretext, and second, that this pretext characteristically takes the form of "stereotypical symbols of blacks' violation of traditional values" (Kinder and Sears, 1981, p. 416), or by perceptions of blacks as "violating cherished values" (McConahay and Hough, 1976, p. 38; see also Crosby, Bromley, and Saxe, 1980; McConahay, 1986).

The second thesis is the thesis of conservative racism. Modern racism, it is claimed, involves an alliance between hostility to blacks and core values of the American ethos – for example, the ethic of self-reliance and individual achievement (e.g., Kinder and Sears, 1981; Kinder, 1986). The claim is thus that traditional, ostensibly nonracial values inspire opposition to racial equality.

The two theses – the covert character of contemporary racism and its alliance with traditional American values – are argued both together and apart. Thus, Dovidio and Gaertner (1986) assert the first and deny the second, Kinder (1986) and Sears (1988) deny the first and assert the second, while McConahay (1986) and Pettigrew (1979) assert both. Our findings bear on both theses, in all three combinations.

The thesis of covert racism needs to be assessed experimentally, because it is otherwise impossible to disentangle the influence of the color of a claimant's skin and the availability of a pretext for refusing assistance. The laid-off worker experiment is the first to investigate whether the claim of a black to a public benefit will be rejected on the grounds of race if a situational pretext is supplied. The experiment tested this thesis not once but twice, once using the stereotypical symbol of "the lazy and irresponsible black," the other using the symbol of the "broken" black family.

Now, if substantial numbers of whites are simply waiting for a moral justification or excuse in order to express their hostility toward blacks, as the new racism thesis suggests, either or both of these stereotypical symbols of blacks' violation of traditional values should elicit a negative reaction. The findings, however, show that whites respond the same to an undependable black worker as to an undependable white one; they likewise respond to a black single parent as to a white single parent. In the laid-off worker experiment, furnishing respondents with a pretext to respond negatively to a black does not in fact lead them to do so. This finding cannot be read, under any construction, as consistent with the hypothesis of covert racism.

As for the thesis of conservative racism, we have seen that political conservatives are more likely than liberals to oppose government efforts to help blacks; and their opposition tends to be systematic, not confined to policies dealing with especially strategic objectives (e.g., economic incentives) or especially controversial means (e.g., affirmative action). Moreover, political conservatives are also more likely than liberals to endorse negative stereotypes about blacks that have direct relevance to central public policy choices. Conservatives are thus more likely than liberals to perceive blacks as irresponsible, as unwilling to make an effort to get ahead, and as too willing to take advantage of welfare programs.

These findings are consistent with the thesis of conservative racism. But it begs the question to read the relation between conservatism and opposition to government assistance for blacks as proof of racism. To do this is to dismiss the possibility that conservatives object, in part at least, because such policies offend their conception of what government should and should not do. Moreover, though conservatism and negative images of blacks are correlated, the strength of this correlation should not be exaggerated. It is true that three in every four conservatives agree that "most blacks who are on welfare could get a job if they really tried," but it is worth observing that one in every two liberals agree as well. In short, not the least objection to the conservative racism thesis is its underestimation of the liberal endorsement both of pejorative images of blacks and of opposition to "new agenda" racial policies like affirmative action and busing.

Still more fundamentally, this study has turned up evidence directly at odds with the claim that modern racism takes the form of a fusion of antiblack affect and traditional values. The laid-off worker experiment demonstrated that blacks are *not* singled out for especially negative reactions. Moreover, the absence of discriminatory judgments of claims to public benefits is true not only of the public taken as a whole, but in addition true also of those committed to traditional values.

It would be wrong to infer from this that proponents of traditional values, or indeed their opponents, decline to discriminate against blacks in all circumstances. It would be wrong to draw this inference, partly from a decent respect of the limitations of one study, partly because there is reason to believe (e.g., Rossi and Nock, 1982; Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo, 1985) that reactions to blacks on

issues where there is the possibility of personal contact between blacks and whites (e.g., fair housing) may be quite different.

There is a double lesson, however, that should be drawn from this study. First, notwithstanding the din of assertions that large-scale racism remains and powerfully expresses itself in subtle and indirect ways, the evidence shows that the claims of a black to government assistance are not treated differently and worse than those of a white – even when a pretext for doing so is at hand. Second, and more important for the future, this study introduces a methodology for detecting racial double standards. This methodology marries the inferential virtues of experimental design with the descriptive strength of survey research. Although a marriage of the two has long been regarded as desirable in the abstract, the crucial problem has been how to consummate it in practice: One means for doing so, we have attempted to demonstrate, is computer-assisted interviewing. The result is not merely a technological breakthrough, but the opening of a range of new phenomena to investigate, as we shall try to make plain in the next chapter.

14

Retrospect and prospect

Some stocktaking is in order. Two different questions need consideration. The first is how far we have traveled; the second, where we must set out for next.

Our concern, frankly, is with the second question. Having put all our cards on the table in the last thirteen chapters, we shall offer a fairly speedy answer to the first. Still more important, precisely because we believe we have made limited but genuine progress, it cannot suffice to continue asking the same questions: It is necessary to at least sketch the new questions that have emerged from our research.

We have assembled these studies to contribute to a more satisfactory explanation of how people figure out what they favor and oppose politically. The criteria of a more satisfactory explanation are various, so we want to comment on the account of reasoning and choice we have developed.

THE FIRST STANDARD OF PROGRESS

There are two quite different ways of determining if a research program is making headway: One is if old questions are being disposed of, the other if new questions are cropping up. Let us comment on each, in order.

So long as minimalism held sway, a theory of political reasoning was unnecessary. Why develop an account of how people work out their position on a political issue if the fundamental point to appreciate is that they are unlikely to have one? Without concluding that minimalism is wrong on all counts – it is in fact a useful baseline model in many circumstances – we have become persuaded that large numbers of people can dependably figure out what they favor and oppose on issues that matter to them. It simply will not do to imply that the ordinary person takes a position on an issue like abortion by mentally flipping a coin, approving of abortion if it comes up heads, opposing it if it lands tails. Nor do most people whimsically choose their position on capital punishment, or on pornography, or on a host of controversial and politically consequential issues.

What we have therefore attempted to sketch out, in the studies we have drawn together here, is a theory of reasoning and choice. Let us characterize the principal features of our account.

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As a first approximation, we should characterize our objective as causal rather than descriptive. By a causal explanation we have in mind, approximately, an account that identifies the conditions under which independent and dependent variables come to be connected. This focus on the conditional character of explanation has left its stamp on the architecture of our analysis.

Consider the analysis of people's likes and dislikes of liberals and conservatives, set out in Chapter 8. Conover and Feldman (1981), for example, are right in describing the correlation between feelings toward liberals and feelings about conservatives, in the public as a whole, to be negligible. But although arithmetically correct for the public as a whole, that turns out to be a description that is false for most of the people in it: Once it is appreciated analytically that the covariation between people's feelings about conservatives and liberals is itself a function of their level of political sophistication and when this is taken into account statistically, it turns out that feelings toward liberals and conservatives are positively correlated among the least politically aware, negatively correlated among the most. Arriving at the correct description (in this case, of the relation between feelings toward liberals and conservatives) hinges on coming up with a theory of how the relation between the two arises. Our aim is accordingly not to provide a description but to supply a causal account.

Granted that our aim is to work out an account of political reasoning, what actually do we need a theory of? It is, we have suggested, Simon's puzzle: How can people figure out dependably what they favor and oppose politically, given that they are limited in their information about politics, plus limited in their ability to manipulate it? Our answer is by exploiting a range of readily accessible cues, including not only a person's beliefs but also her or his likes and dislikes. Converse had narrowed the focus of attention, through the artistry of his analysis, to policy preferences: specific beliefs about particular issues, or the largest of political abstractions. Our intentions are more pluralistic and inclusive. So we have aimed to underline the affective as well as cognitive elements of political belief systems.

This objective is easily misunderstood: Discussions of affect and cognition seem to excite a cat-and-dog fight over ontological priority (Zajonc, 1984; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). It is not completely obvious that this argument is a genuine scientific question in any circumstances. Much hinges on definitions. It should, however, be clear that the problem of priority between cognition and affect is a pseudoproblem at the level of analysis of political belief systems: There is simply no way of empirically cleaving the two, of measuring people's feelings without also measuring some aspect of their beliefs, and vice versa. So it has seemed to us more profitable to focus on how people take advantage of all the information at hand to them, both in the form of beliefs and of feelings, to work out judgmental shortcuts.

The notion of judgmental shortcuts or heuristics is tailor-made for Simon's puzzle: Because the problem that preoccupies us is how people can compensate for informational shortfalls, the strategy of simplifying the choices before them

to make them manageable is patently one to explore. But additionally, the notion of heuristics – set out in detail – can provide a satisfyingly causal account of how people figure out what they favor and oppose politically.

The likability heuristic, which is the judgmental shortcut we have most thoroughly worked out, exemplifies most vividly the features we are after in constructing an explanatory account. The emphasis falls, first, on identifying the constituents of the heuristic, then on providing an account of the exact rule according to which they are to be combined.

It is worth emphasizing how exactly a person has to put together his own beliefs and likes and dislikes, to see the power of heuristics as an explanatory tool. Combining the same elements in the ordinary way can produce a rule for how people get things systematically wrong in predicting the preferences of people and groups they like – the so-called false-consensus effect.

The theory of reasoning we are putting forward has a final feature worth remarking: It is at its core a cognitive-interactionist account. How people compensate for a lack of political information, we are persuaded, itself depends on how much information they have about politics. This is a fundamental point, so we want to make it two ways, first negatively and then positively.

To begin with the negative, the standard explanation for how people make a political choice hinges on a crucial, if silent, maneuver. The aim of analysis is to identify the considerations the public takes into account, and the weight they place on each, on the assumption that everyone makes up his or her mind by following approximately the same decision rule – that is, placing the same weight on the same considerations.

It may be difficult, in retrospect, to credit the presumption that most people make up their minds about political questions more or less the same way. But the presumption seemed for a long time self-evident. We say the presumption of causal homogeneity seemed self-evident, since it stood right in plain sight, in the statistical tests employed, without having to be explicitly and self-consciously argued for. As against this, the argument of these studies is that there is a systematic interaction between political reasoning and political sophistication: The more sophisticated and aware tend to make up their minds about political choices in different ways from the less. Indeed, evidence of two classes of interaction with sophistication has been set out: The cognition-sophistication interaction and the affect-sophistication interaction. We are not aware of strong evidence in favor of the affect-sophistication interaction outside our own studies, but support for the cognition-sophistication interaction is increasing. Moon (1990), for example, has developed his own argument that high- and low-information voters take advantage of different cues in making up their minds. Moreover, Krosnick and Weisberg (1988) and Jacoby (1989), among others, have worked up their own analysis of ideological reasoning, presenting a view congenial to our analysis in Chapter 8.

We are far from suggesting that our argument has been corroborated in detail, whether by us or by others. We are all too aware of how preliminary and incom-

plete it is. But the theory we are developing has virtues worth recording. It has, for one thing, the merit of being grounded in multiple data sets; multiple policy domains (race, ideology, AIDS, political tolerance); and multiple methodologies (secondary analysis, original surveys, experimentation and quasiexperimentation). It has, for another, the merit of being driven by a central and coherent focus – how people simplify choices to overcome informational shortfalls – which has yielded (at the time) nonobvious implications, the most strategic of which is that the ways that people compensate for a lack of information themselves vary depending on their level of information. We should be surprised if the presupposition of causal heterogeneity, which underlies our own approach, is not as fruitful for others as it has been for us.

A SECOND STANDARD OF PROGRESS

One standard in assessing progress, we have suggested, is coming away with a clearer idea of how to explain what we want to explain. A second and no less important standard is coming away with a clearer idea of what we should want to explain.

The studies we have gathered here describe a clear trajectory, as between first and second standards of progress. Beginning with data sets designed by others, the aim was to give a causal account conventionally conceived. But the further we have progressed in our program of research, and particularly the more opportunity we have had to design our own studies, the more exigent it has become to turn from a static view of choice and explore its dynamics.

The term *dynamics* has had a fairly specific – and restricted – meaning in the analysis of public opinion. Roughly, it connotes continuity of belief over time. The emphasis in the analysis of the dynamics of political preferences falls thus on rates of change in natural settings over extended periods of time, typically periods of years. This was the way we ourselves conceived of the study of dynamics at the outset, and is in fact the framework for the analysis of stability and change in party identification set out in Chapter 10.

There is a fairly tight fit between this conception of dynamics as the natural history of the morbidity and mortality of belief and the design of empirical inquiry, for it capitalizes on survey panels, where the same individuals are interviewed and reinterviewed. But as our research on reasoning and choice proceeded, and particularly as we worked through our cognitive-interactionist perspective, we were led, simultaneously, to a different conception of dynamics and, more fundamentally, to an explanatory framework harkening back to Kurt Lewin. As he had remarked (1936): "Every psychological event depends upon the state of the person and at the same time the state of the environment, although their relative importance is different in different cases." More succinct is his classic formulation: Behavior = *f* (Person, Environment)

The nub of the explanatory enterprise, so conceived, is the analysis of the interaction of people and situations. But the conventional survey interview, though

well equipped to assess variation among individuals, is poorly equipped to assess variation across situations. The controlling aim, after all, has been to assess people's enduring dispositions – their attitudes, opinions, feelings, and the like – and the standard opinion interview has undertaken to accomplish this precisely by neutralizing the situational pressures on respondents to give a particular response to a question.

The architecture of observation, we are suggesting, superimposes itself on the architecture of explanation: More familiarly, what you take to be an explanation analytically tends to be constrained by what you take in empirically. So it is worth trying to be clear about what goes on in a public opinion interview, conventionally conceived, not because it does not involve observation of a person's behavior in a situation but because it involves observation of behavior in an odd situation indeed.

What type of situation is the standard public opinion interview? Both content of the questions and behavior of the questioner are obsessively scrutinized, in an effort to minimize the pressure on respondents to give any particular answer. And where the "demand characteristics" of questions cannot be eliminated, then they are religiously balanced, in an effort to ensure they cancel out. Hence the famous introductory phrase in survey research: "Some people think *X* (whatever *X* is), but other people think *Y* (where *Y* is the opposite of whatever *X* is)."

As against this, we want to point to a rather different conception of the survey process. What we want to achieve, at the limit, is to evaluate the responses of a random sample of persons in strategically contrasting situations. The interview needs accordingly to be designed to assess not only variations among individuals but also covariation between individual and situational variations.

To make clear what we have in mind, we want to give a concrete example. Fairly obviously, a person who dislikes blacks may not reveal this in all circumstances: People usually wish to present themselves in a favorable light, and the person who dislikes blacks will sometimes see that openly expressing his dislike will count against him. But then again, he will sometimes find himself in a situation where it is permissible to vent his hostility to blacks. To see that the expression of racial animus is in this sense situationally contingent is part of commonsense psychology, and it was the object of Chapter 13 to move from common sense to systematic analysis. There, we report on a study specially designed to analyze the interplay of individual characteristics and situational factors, the nub of the study being to assess whether conservatives in particular react more negatively to blacks when they are supplied with a situational pretext for doing so. Here, we want only to underline that to understand the dynamics of racism it is not enough to identify who dislikes blacks most and who least, but it is necessary to determine in what circumstances a dislike of blacks governs people's responses, and in what circumstances it does not.

This idea of the interplay of individual characteristics and situational factors is fundamental; so much so that we want to offer another illustration deliberately drawn from the work of others. An imaginative study by Kuklinski and col-

leagues (Kuklinski et al., 1990) is particularly worth mention. The problem they consider is the slippage between principle and policy for democratic norms: Why do so many people support the idea of free speech in the abstract but not in a concrete, controversial case? They give the problem an original twist by asking, in effect, whether the slippage is greater when people are guided primarily by their feelings toward the groups they are being asked to tolerate or, alternatively, by reflection on the consequences of tolerating, or failing to tolerate, a group or act. Now, it might be supposed that the answer is obvious: Feelings subvert logical inference while reflection will make it plain to a person that he should at least say the socially desirable thing – in this case, to support tolerance. Indeed, it is not uncommon to speak as though a failure to apply a democratic principle to a concrete case on its face reflects a failure to think things through carefully, to understand the ideas at issue and their implications (McClosky and Brill, 1983). Yet Kuklinski and his colleagues find that reflection need not promote support for democratic values: Indeed, they find that when people think about the consequences of their choice they become less, not more, tolerant. Kuklinski's contribution is doubly ingenious: first, in concretizing the interplay of choice and circumstance, and second, in yielding results that are both unexpected and instructive.[1]

It is easy to see intuitively how people's behavior is a product both of their enduring dispositions and of the particular situations in which they find themselves. But particular examples aside, it is necessary to find a way to think about the interaction of individual characteristics and situational factors systematically.

The systematic analysis of the interplay of individual and situational factors can be formulated in terms of a matrix of persuasibility (McGuire, 1969). This matrix can be extended over a number of dimensions, but three seem to us specially salient: source, message, and receiver effects. We should like to say a word about what we have learned about each, in this, the first round of studies.

At the outset, in planning the initial round of experiments on the dynamics of reasoning, the analysis of source effects struck us as an obvious and easy target. If it was not obvious that we can talk people out of a position by attributing it to a source in low repute, it seemed very nearly self-evident that we could bowl people over by attributing a point of view to a widely esteemed figure. So we launched into our initial manipulations. Our expectations were straightforward: A point of view would either be attributed to a prestigious source or to a neutral one, with the measure of influence being the increase in the proportion endorsing the viewpoint in the former condition as compared with the latter. This was a natural design, particularly because several generations of survey research have supplied vivid testimony to the readiness of people to alter answers as a consequence of even minor variations in question wording, ordering or formatting. So the initial round of "manipulations" were designed with a neutral condition "Sometimes you hear it said," being contrasted, for example, with "Many thoughtful people, after serious study and discussion, have come to the conclusion that . . . "

Or, to offer another example, a neutral "Sometimes you hear it said" is contrasted with "Many community organizations of parents and concerned citizens feel that . . . " To our astonishment, however, these "source manipulations" have failed to have a significant main effect, apart from the exception reported in Chapter 11. And it is worth taking a moment to be clear about what this does and does not suggest.

To begin with the negative, the absence of source manipulation effects surely should not be taken as evidence of the absence of social influence effects. Our opinions are not conjured up from thin air: We believe what we believe, partly owing to what others around us believe, partly owing to what we believe others around us believe – which includes not only people with whom we interact, but also those with whom we identify (Hyman, 1942).

More positively, an interview should be regarded as (at least) a two-party conversation. For it is by exploiting the repertoire of conversational maneuvers that the dynamics of reasoning and choice can best be understood. Consider the source manipulation that had an impact – the appeal to law as a persuasive symbol, analyzed in Chapter 11. Why should the reference to Congress have influenced the reasoning of a significant number, even though attributing positions to other positively valenced sources did not?

One possibility is self-presentation. To take a position on an issue because it is the law is a perfectly respectable thing to do – indeed, the argument of Chapter 11 was that an appeal to the law can be persuasive because the law defines what is legitimate. On the other hand, to adopt a position merely because it is the majority point of view is not prima facie similarly legitimate. If so, then to yield openly to our appeals to the majority's point of view, or to the position of "thoughtful and responsible citizens," would have seemed, perverse as it may sound, to be a confession that one does not have an opinion of one's own. Alternatively, the crux of the matter may be judgments of relevance. The respondent, told that a majority of his fellow citizens favor *X*, then is asked, does he favor *X?* It is at least possible that he does not see the two as connected, that he interprets the question as a two-part communication: "Many people think this, but I want to know what you think?"

Both hypotheses are plausible, but the second seems to us the better bet. In thinking of an interview as a conversation, we would underline the pace of the interaction: A question is asked, an answer immediately given; another question, another answer, with rapidity being a defining characteristic of the exchange. We suspect that the very pace of the interchange may help to sever the connection between the two parts of the question. It actually takes just a moment's thought to see that *because* most other people take a particular position on an issue, one may want, *for that very reason,* to do likewise. The inference, to do as others do, is not immediate. That the crux of the matter is grasping, on the spot, the connection between what others think and what one should oneself believe is suggested by the fact that social influence manipulations of the kind we have

described, so far as they have a discernible impact, tend to have a larger effect on the most educated and a smaller impact (or typically, none at all) on the least educated.

However this may be, message effects dominate source effects if the counterargument results are any guide. As we saw in Chapter 12, sizable proportions of people can be talked out of their position on issues of race by means of a counterargument, and this pliability of preferences characterizes both opponents and proponents of government assistance for blacks. But of course this is consistent with our speculation about the problem of perceiving the relevance of source manipulations, since a counterargument consists precisely in the presentation of an obviously relevant reason to change one's position.

The understanding of the dynamics of reasoning, assessed in random samples of representative populations, is only getting underway, but we want to venture a broad observation about the interdependence of dimensions of the matrix of persuasibility. Chapter 13, which centers on the investigation of the new racism, provided an especially vivid example of why it matters both when an interaction does and does not take place. After all, the heart of such a notion of a subtle racism is that even though certain types of people will treat blacks fairly in some circumstances, the very same people will react negatively to them given a pretext for doing so.

The hypothesis of a new racism thus hinges on dimensional interactions, particularly between message and receiver and source and receiver, and it is worth sorting some of them out to see just what we mean by the interdependence of the dimensions of persuasibility. The key idea is that a person with traditional values, who might otherwise be mute about his dislike of blacks, will express it if he has at hand an ostensibly nonracial justification for it.

What does it mean to assess an hypothesis like this? In Chapter 13, the laid-off worker experiment was designed to determine if people with a traditional outlook would in fact respond more negatively to a black than to a white, if they had a reason to think they could get away with this. The laid-off worker was accordingly sometimes black and sometimes white, and sometimes described as a dependable worker and sometimes as not a dependable worker. To test the hypothesis of subtle racism was to test the independence of message and receiver effects: Are people with a conservative outlook especially inclined to react negatively to blacks when they have an apparently nonracial justification for doing so?

As Chapter 13 demonstrates, there is in fact a pronounced interaction between whether the beneficiaries of a policy are to be blacks and the respondent's level of education, though not his or her political ideology, nicely illustrating the interdependence of message and receiver effects. For that matter, Chapter 11 shows that an appeal to the law as a persuasive symbol has more impact the more educated respondents are, clearly illustrating the interdependence of source and receiver effects. A focus on the interactions of source, message, and receiver effects thus offers a theoretical template for the analysis of interaction of persons and their situations.

The analysis of this interaction represents one-half of the research program we see in prospect. Let us say a word about the other half.

Our focus has, so far, been fixed on the smaller parts of belief systems – beliefs and likes and dislikes of politically salient groups – in an effort to understand under what conditions, and by what means, they come to be connected. It is, however, surely necessary to attend to the larger parts of belief systems as well – most obviously, though not exclusively, personal and social values.

It should be said that the focus on the smaller parts of belief systems – most often specific beliefs about particular issues and how they do or do not fit together – has had a very distorting effect. Concentrating on the small parts of belief systems, and ignoring the large, has exaggerated the political incompetence of the general public. It is as though people were judged not to know much about their economic assets, all in all, because they knew only vaguely how much small change they carry in their pockets on any given day. People may indeed be foggy about specific, discrete, narrowly circumscribed beliefs, yet clear-sighted about their basic values.

Research in political psychology has focused on, as it were, psychological small change, in the form of specific opinions about discrete political issues, while paying comparatively little attention to basic values. Partly this myopic focus on the small has been involuntary: The principal data sets available for analysis, particularly the series of the National Election Studies, have emphasized the assessment of opinions, at the expense of values.[2] But partly the comparative indifference to values is calculated, a judgment that explaining belief or behavior in terms of deeper-lying values amounts to not explaining them at all (e.g., Barry, 1978). And minimally, it must be conceded that the invocation of values, as an explanatory category, if not precisely tautological, often verges on it: Just what is being added when a person is said to support a policy designed to achieve equality because he or she believes in equality?

Yet we are persuaded that our account of reasoning and choice must be extended to take account of values and want now to say a word about this extension – on the understanding that, since the argument is unavoidably prospective, the conclusions are inherently speculative.

The metaprinciple that gives a distinctive color to our causal account is the principle of least effort: We suppose there is a strong tendency to resolve problems of reasoning and choice in the simplest way possible. Which is the reason, of course, for the appeal of values as an explanatory category: A value is a simple but general consistency generator. The explanatory gain is thus not that support for a *particular* policy to realize equality can be accounted for by appeal to support for equality as a value, but rather that support for an *indefinitely large number* of specific policies designed to promote equality can be accounted for by reference to only one general value. And the gain goes further: It would be hard to explain how the average person keeps a myriad of specific opinions about particular policies well organized, given how little attention he or she tends to pay to political issues; it is considerably easier to give an account of how the average

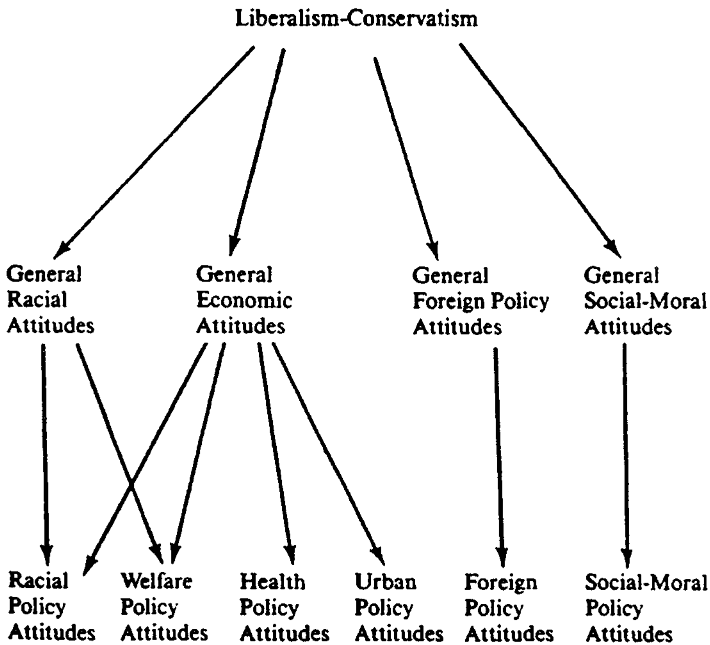

Figure 14.1. Structural model of hierarchical constraint.

person could keep track of a small number of general values, which in turn give him direction on how to respond to a large number of specific issues.

There is thus an obvious harmony between values as an explanatory category and our emphasis on judgmental shortcuts. But the fit is deeper. We have always been wary of emphasizing heuristics. The danger, as it seemed to us, is an endless proliferation of them. But if there are a great many of them, then even if each simplifies the task of judgment, the task of keeping track of and coordinating *them* will become inordinately complex. Framing the analysis of belief systems at the level of values, however, suggests how this coordination problem may be overcome.

For perfectly straightforward reasons, people are more likely to achieve consistency with respect to basic values than with respect to opinions about specific issues. Specific issues come and go. Absent an overarching ideological orientation to serve as an organizing intellectual framework, which is of course precisely what mass publics tend to lack, one is forced to go by manifest content; and judging solely on the basis of manifest content, it is often hard to see how any given issue is connected to any other. Conversely, the "logic" of values is easier to sort out, partly because values engage people more deeply, partly because they reflect more enduring concerns. It is not necessary to graduate from college, for example, to understand that if you attach uncommon importance to respect for authority, you should also attach uncommon importance to conformity as a value.

But the easier it is to see the connections between values, the more likely that people's values will fit together consistently. And this overall fit simplifies the problem of coordination because the influence of each value in a consistent set tends to reinforce the influence of each other.

The mutual reinforcement of values falls out of Peffley and Hurwitz's (1985) hierarchical model of belief systems. There, they distinguish between horizontal constraint, connections among beliefs at comparable levels of specificity, and vertical constraint, connections between more general idea elements to more specific. Figure 14.1 supplies a schematic representation of belief systems, so conceptualized.

Connections between idea-elements are represented by arrows. The arrows are of two sorts: straight, depicting causal connections, and curved, indicating spurious connections. Thus, constraint vertically between general values and specific issue preferences is represented by straight arrows, constraint horizontally across specific issue preferences by curved arrows.

Of course, the general message of Figure 14.1 is that connections between specific issue preferences are incidental to the connections between these specific preferences and the deeper-lying common values that give rise to them. Two features of this model deserve to be remarked, the first noted by Peffley and Hurwitz, the second not. The first is the principle of mediated inference. The connection between the capstone value of a belief system (in this case, liberalism–conservatism) and specific beliefs about particular issues is not direct: Instead there is a compound connection, consisting of a causal path first from liberalism–conservatism to a general value, then a path from the general value to the specific issue preference. This principle of mediation, in turn, has a fundamental implication for the assessment of constraint in belief systems. Taking either the covariation across issue preferences (as Converse does) as the index of constraint or between ideological orientation and issue preference (as, e.g., Levitin and Miller do) as the index of constraint systematically underestimates constraint in mass belief systems: Given the arithmetic of causal models, which takes the covariation between any two variables to be the cross product of the strength of the separate paths connecting them, it will inevitably be the case that the links between separated variables tend to be weak even though the links between adjacent ones are strong. Peffley and Hurwitz have thus come up with an explanation for why mass belief systems will appear weakly constrained even if they are strongly constrained link by link.

The second feature is of equal interest. Consider the causal connections between general racial and economic attitudes and specific issue preferences on particular racial and economic issues. Obviously, people's stands on specific racial issues are partly determined by their general racial orientation; similarly, their stands on specific economic issues are partly determined by their general economic orientation. More interestingly, their stands on specific racial issues turn out to be also determined by their general economic orientation, and their stands on specific economic issues determined partly by their general racial orientation. This second source of determination we shall call "cross-bracing."

Cross-bracing, we suspect, is a significant structural feature of political belief systems. It is only a matter of suspicion, because the problem of cross-bracing is an item for a future research agenda; but it is well to say now why it deserves to be the subject of research. Most simply put, our intuition is that people can dependably figure out their stands on specific issues insofar as they have directionally consonant but empirically nonredundant cues on which to draw. Values matter as a source of guidance, we are suggesting, partly because formally irrelevant ones can be engaged. That formally irrelevant values can supply guidance gets one out of the box of having to presuppose that people can deduce correctly consonant issue preferences given only one formally relevant cue. And since the multiple values a person can draw on tend themselves to be consonant, the influence of each tends to reinforce the influence of each other. To put the causal metaphor in more homely terms, we suppose that the advantage of having multiple values tends to be that one's sleeve is plucked in a certain direction by one value, one's other sleeve by another, while one is pushed from the back by yet another. The point of value pluralism, then, is that although the link between any given value and the issue preference to be associated with it tends always to be imperfect, just insofar as one can draw on multiple but consonant values, the linkages between one's issues preferences and one's values *tout court* are tightened.

Viewed now from start to finish, the movement of our research can be described as follows. Our starting point was to understand how people can figure out what they favor and oppose politically given how little they know about or attend to politics. The key in doing this was to focus on how they manage to simplify the choices before them by taking advantage of judgmental shortcuts, or heuristics. To put our core contention about how people manage to simplify choices in brief, we have argued that how people compensate for a lack of political information itself depends on the level of their information about politics; so the particular heuristics that people tend to take advantage of tend to covary with their level of political sophistication. Following this up has taken us in two different directions – one outward, moving from processes of inference internal to individuals to situational incentives and pressures that influence the dynamics of political reasoning; the other, downward, moving from specific opinions to deeper-lying values.

It is now for others to decide the validity of this movement.

Notes

CHAPTER 2

1. For a review of critique and countercritique from a minimalist perspective, see Luskin, 1987.
2. The classic discussion is Converse, 1970. For an ingenious and updated application of the argument, see Fletcher and Chalmers, 1989.
3. For an important exception, see Rivers, 1988. His concern, however, is to devise an exploratory data analytic technique to detect differences in decision rules; ours, in contrast, is to formulate a theory sketch that is sufficiently specific, though admittedly sketchy, to predict systematic differences in decision rules.
4. For another and particularly vivid example of the politically sophisticated taking into account a different range of considerations, see Fletcher, 1989.
5. Luskin mounts an uncommonly impressive parade of measures of political sophistication; see Luskin, 1987; see also Luskin and Bolland, 1986.
6. For an illustration of how education tightens the connections between underlying values and attitudes toward a wide range of civil liberties issues, see Fletcher, 1990.
7. By way of warning, affect-driven reasoning can be specified in more than one way, depending the organization of affect, as we shall make plain shortly.

CHAPTER 4

1. The mean correlation between ideological location and position on nine specific issues is r = .29 for 1972 and r = .27 for 1976 (Levitin and Miller, 1979, p. 766).
2. The scoring rules are these: Assign a four to a pro-integration response, a two to an in-between response, and a zero to an anti-integration response. Respondents answering "don't know" to either or both questions are excluded from the analysis. Our practice in this respect departs from Jackman's assignment of missing cases to a neutral or middle category (1978, p. 311). On the Government Action Index, we award a four to a pro-integration response, a zero to an anti-integration response. Respondents unable to answer one or more questions are excluded. Also excluded are those who say, in answer to a "filter" question preceding each item, that they lack enough interest in the issue to favor one side or the other.
3. Throughout the analyses that follow, for obvious reasons, nonwhite respondents have been excluded.
4. Two related matters are robustness and the asymptotic properties of the maximum likelihood estimates. No one has yet determined how (almost inevitable) violations of the multinormality assumption affect the parameters. Nor do the desirable properties of the maximum likelihood estimates – consistency, efficiency, and asymptotic nor-

mality – hold for small samples. For these reasons, we replicated all analyses using two alternative techniques. First, we estimated unweighted least squares (ULS) parameters using the LISREL program. Unlike maximum likelihood, the ULS estimation procedure does not depend on distributional assumptions. (Unfortunately, LISREL V does not provide standard errors of the ULS parameters.) Second, we completed multiple regression analyses, first using our own coding scheme and then using Jackman's, which includes respondents who did not answer all questions. In each instance, the substantive conclusions reported herein remained intact.

5. Of course, these features are always desirable though rarely followed. Alternative model testing and replication become especially prudent, though, when using the Joreskog method, as the common name "*confirmatory* factor analysis" implies.
6. Ratios close to 1 may indicate "overfitting"; in such instances, replication is essential to ascertain the stability of the model, i.e., to determine its general applicability. Another chi-square test, designed to choose among alternative models, is chi-square j − chi square i/degrees of freedom j − degrees of freedom i, where relatively high ratios recommend choosing model j over model i. This chi-square difference test applies when the models are nested, which is not true of those in Figure 4.2.
7. Joreskog and Sorbom (1981, pp. 1.36–1.42) discuss these tests in some detail.
8. We can now see more clearly how positing a single model only may lead to erroneous conclusions. For example, had the hypothesis been that model 6 applies to the best educated, and it alone tested, the appropriate conclusions would have been reached, since the connection between conservatism and support of principle is statistically insignificant. On the other hand, had only model 5, say, been tested among the moderately educated, the erroneous conclusion would have been that the moderately educated respond to the racial equality issue in affective terms alone (because the unreported connection between conservatism and support of government action in model 5 is statistically insignificant and the link from conservatism to principle constrained to zero).

   Because users of regression analysis normally report unstandardized coefficients when making across-group comparisons, the reader may question why we have not followed this practice here. The answer lies with the nature of Joreskog's technique: The unmeasured constructs in our LISREL models lack an intrinsically meaningful metric. We nonetheless assured ourselves that the reported results represent the causal structures underlying the models, first by comparing the variances on each indicator across the three education groups, and second, by examining the unstandardized coefficients of our multiple regression analyses. The regression estimates are shown in Figure 4.N.1.
9. When squared, the epistemic correlation (or factor loading) gives a measure of reliability. To keep our presentation simple, we have not reported the factor loadings, though they are available upon request.
10. We have not reported all earlier steps, although, of course, we followed the same procedures as before, including an examination of the unstandardized regression coefficients, which are shown in Figure 4.N.2.
11. The 1972 NES survey includes this question on public accommodations: "Should the government support the right of black people to go to any hotel or restaurant they can afford, or should it stay out of this matter?" Adding the public accommodations item to the original two government policy items results in the original model no longer fitting the data. What does apply – to all three education groups – is a model that allows the error terms of the accommodations item to be correlated with those of the two items composing our support-of-principle measure. Substantively, this suggests that the use of the national government to ensure access to public hotels and restaurants is now seen as both a matter of principle and a matter of policy intervention. We

recommend extreme caution in interpreting this single result but it is nonetheless suggestive.

12. We have checked the intercorrelation of the two items of the symbolic racism index in the Sears and Citrin study itself. There, too, their correlation is trivial – only .17.

CHAPTER 5

1. For each item used to assess preferences on racial policy, respondents who said that they were not interested in the issue or who said "don't know" were rescored to the center of the scale for that item.
2. The analysis presented a second component with an eigenvalue slightly greater than the conventional critical value of 1.0. The eigenvalue of the first component, however, was more than twice that of the second, while the eigenvalue of the second component was only slightly larger than that of the third. The eigenvalues decreased gradually from that point. Moreover, the second component extracted was substantively indistinct from the first. For both of these reasons, the second component was discarded and only the first was employed in our analysis.
3. For another treatment of these items, different in methodology and in focus, see Sniderman and Hagen, 1985.
4. People who said "don't know" in response to a question were placed at the center of the scale for that item.
5. This analysis also produced a second component with an eigenvalue slightly greater than the conventional critical value of 1.0. The eigenvalue of the first component, however, was substantially larger than that of the second, whereas the eigenvalue of the second component was only slightly larger than those of the third and fourth. Again, the eigenvalues declined gradually from there. Only the first component was employed in our analysis. A principal factors solution yields almost identical results.
6. People who responded "don't know" or "haven't thought much about it" were rescored to place them at the center of the scale.
7. People who said "don't know" in response to a question were placed at the center of the scale for that item. A principal factors solution yielded almost identical results.
8. These calculations are based upon information from Figure 5.1 and Table 5.4.
9. Note that our measures of racial policy preferences and of explanations for racial inequality are both computed from scores based on our principal component analyses. Thus the units of the two scales are similar and the unstandardized estimates of their effects on one another are comparable. Note as well that the two measures have standard deviations that are approximately equal.
10. Evidence of robustness can be found by comparing Figure 5.2 to the estimates for the well educated in Figure 5.3.
11. It is the lack of a connection between our instrument – ideology – and policy preferences among the poorly educated that is responsible for grossly inflating the standard error of the estimated effect of policy preferences on explanations for inequality.
12. For an extended discussion of possible limits on our ability to distinguish cognitive and affective explanations, see Tetlock and Levi, 1982.
13. For relevant evidence see Chapters 6 and 8 of this volume.
14. For a penetrating analysis of some respects in which racial issues differ from many other issues in American politics, see Carmines and Stimson, 1980.

CHAPTER 6

1. Liberals are defined as respondents scoring 1, 2, or 3, conservatives 5, 6, or 7 on the NES ideology scale. To make the comparison between attributed and actual positions

we assume that the seven-point NES scales form interpersonally comparable interval scales. For every issue and group, about one-third of the respondents do not make placements, so that our discussion only applies to the remaining two-thirds.

Tables 1 through 3 are based on the following sampling conventions: For 1972 the entire unweighted sample was considered (for a total of 2,705), while in 1976 only those people who were interviewed in both the preelection and postelection survey were considered (for a total of 1,855).

Attributed positions: Each attributed position is based on all people in the sample who placed the group on the scale. Owing to the way the NES surveys were constructed, this automatically excludes people who do not place themselves on the issue scale. At the same time, it includes some people who do not identify themselves with one of the two groups being placed. For example, 15 percent of the sample places liberals and conservatives on issue scales even though they do not place themselves on the liberal–conservative identification scale. It is reasonable to include these people because it seems quite possible to know where liberals, conservatives, Democrats, Republicans, whites, or blacks stand without being in these categories.

Actual Positions: Actual positions include those people who place themselves on the issue scale and who identify with the group.

These rules lead to different numbers of people for almost every cell in these tables, but we have found no reason to suspect that this creates any systematic biases for the subsequent analyses.

2. The responses to this question seem different from any other in a variety of ways. Accordingly, the inflation item is omitted from subsequent analysis.
3. This left-shift appears to be an important asymmetry in the way that people perceive the left and the right, but proving its existence requires an extended examination of the properties of seven-point scales and a justification for our use of the "actual positions" in Tables 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 as the baselines for measuring where groups stand. We shall explore left-shift in another study.
4. Tables 6.4, 6.5, and 6.6, it should be emphasized, are typical of those we obtained for many other issues, for both 1972 and 1976, and for Democrats and Republicans and blacks and whites.
5. One of the major points of this article is that many people "construct" their responses to questions based upon definite cognitive or affective cues including, sometimes, the "true" positions of groups. Guessers also use such cues, but they do not use any information about a group's true position. Equation (2) and Appendix 6 provide a detailed definition of what we mean by guessing.
6. The entire spatial modeling tradition beginning with Downs (1957) through Davis, Hinich, and Ordeshook (1970) and continuing with Enelow and Hinich (1984) has assumed that people could place candidates (and by implication, other political objects, such as social or political groups) in an n-dimensional space. Empirical research in this tradition, such as the work of Page (1978), follows this lead although it often assumes that candidate positions are ambiguous or uncertain.
7. Equation (1) and subsequent equations use the square of the Euclidian distance as a measure of discrepancy between two points in people's psychological space. There is a long tradition of doing this in both psychometrics (see, e.g., Coombs, 1964) and political science (e.g., Davis et al., 1970). This equation also assumes that people minimize a function. For a defense of minimum and maximum principles in the social sciences, see Samuelson (1972).
8. Most of the social psychological research on perceptions simply assumes that feelings cause perceptions (see, e.g., Kinder, 1978; and Granberg, Brent, and King, 1981), but the rational-choice literature assumes just the opposite. Consequently, our model will test for the direction of causality between feelings and attributions. One could go one

step further and assume that people's own beliefs are also endogenous, and we are sympathetic with this notion, but beliefs are probably more solidly grounded than feelings or attributions; rational-choice theorists would probably assume that beliefs are exogenous with respect to affect and attributions; and our perceptions or attributions equation is still identified even if beliefs are endogenous (see n. 10).

9. These true feelings may also vary with the true position of the group, but this effect will be captured in the variation of the coefficients α_{ij}. True feelings may represent the residue of cognitions as an individual repeatedly encounters information about a group, makes judgments about the group from this information, and then forgets the facts on which the judgment was based. How often, for example, do we forget the details of a book while remembering that we liked or disliked it? Feelings may also represent the result of social influence processes in which affect – possibly based upon cognitive judgments by opinion leaders – is communicated throughout a social network. Each of these mechanisms suggests that feelings are based upon prior ratiocination, but that the results of these cognitive processes are economically stored in our feelings.
10. If beliefs are endogenous and they enter equation (7) as the square of the difference between observed and true beliefs (i.e., in the same way as feelings in equation [5]), then it is easy to see that the partial derivative of the resulting minimand with respect to perceptions will be identical to that obtained for equation (7). Consequently, the perceptions equation will still be identified and identical to equation (8).
11. The values of B_i and P_{ij} are also assumed to form interpersonally comparable interval scales, and the values of A_{ij} are assumed to form an interpersonally comparable ratio level scale.
12. With this assumption, equation (10) can be written as:

$$E[F] = .9 = g + h\,E(K).$$

From estimates of gT_j, hT_j, and $E[K]$, an estimate of the quantity z, described by the following equation, can be obtained and used to estimate T_j as $(z/.9)$:

$$z = g\,T_j + h\,T_jE[K] = (g + h\,E[k]).$$

13. This work is also based upon using education instead of attention to the media as the proxy for knowledge. For theoretical reasons we prefer the former, but the empirical results seem quite similar.
14. The only exception that we have managed to uncover, ransacking all the combinations of issues and groups, is the position of Republicans on busing. In addition, b is insignificantly positive in four other cases.
15. Although the results in Table 6.9 also suggest that feelings toward the group being placed are somewhat more important than feelings toward the opposite group, for two reasons we have chosen to use only the difference in affect in the equations reported in Tables 6.7 and 6.8. First, taking the difference provides a natural zero point for our affect scale. Second, and more important, if feelings toward both groups are included in our model, then it becomes impossible to obtain statistical identification. As a result, we have chosen what is probably, given the results in Table 6.9, only a slightly misspecified model in order to achieve the benefits of an identified model.
16. Our finding of accuracy, however, is consistent with the pioneering analysis of *Voting* (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee, 1954), which focused (as we did) on popular perceptions of politically strategic groups.

CHAPTER 7

1. The General Social Survey (GSS) provides exemplary opportunities for cross-validation. We have taken advantage of them, examining two other years, 1980 and

1984, and focusing on selected comparisons, the results of which always sustain the findings reported from 1977. In particular, the 1977 GSS does not include a Stouffer item series on socialists, but the 1980 and 1984 surveys, among others, do. Analyses of these data, not reported here, confirm principled consistency holds for attitudes to socialists, too.

2. Because the tolerance measures are dichotomous, the standard errors and chi-square associated with the maximum likelihood estimates are unreliable. The estimates themselves are still reliable, as the data are not highly skewed (see Joreskog and Sorbom, 1984).
3. It is worth remarking that the ratios for liberals are higher than for conservatives for several group pairs (e.g., atheists and communists, militarists and homosexuals), a point we shall return to and build on in our analysis of principled consistency.
4. It is worth considering the logical fitness of latent class analysis employed by McCutcheon in "A Latent Class Analysis," the alternative response model to Duncan's. The details of McCutcheon's latent class analysis are puzzling – Table 7.2, for instance, fails to sum as it should – but the more vital point to grasp is that latent class analysis is a methodologically inappropriate technique for the assessment of consistency. It is an inappropriate technique because it presumes that principled consistency accounts for all of the correlations. In contrast, the Duncan technique discounts the zero order correlations on behalf of principled consistency, taking as principled only that consistency that cannot be accounted for by the pairwise correlations among items. In short, we have chosen the technique that makes it hardest, not easiest, to confirm our principal hypothesis.
5. To be specific: 70 percent of those who strongly disagree with the proposition that white people have a right to keep black people out of their neighborhood if they want to, and that blacks should respect that right, agrees that a person who believes that blacks are genetically inferior should be allowed to speak; by comparison, only 50 percent of those who strongly agree that whites should, as a matter of principle, be entitled to segregate their neighborhoods believes that a spokesman for the inherent inferiority of blacks should be allowed to present his point of view. This finding that racists are less likely than nonracists to support the rights of a racist group certainly runs counter to the suggestion of "opportunistic tolerance" implicit in Sullivan et al.'s argument. On the other hand, the data on atheists at first appears to run counter to the finding on racists. In brief: 95 percent of persons with no religious preference endorses free speech for atheists, compared with 61 percent of persons stating a religious preference. Similar differences, moreover, hold for questions on teaching and books. On fuller examination, however, these results fail to support the emotivist thesis; for atheists are more likely to endorse the civil liberties of all groups by margins that are only slightly smaller than the margin of their greater support for atheists' civil liberties.

CHAPTER 8

1. In public opinion surveys that do not provide respondents an explicit opportunity to confess their ignorance about ideological labels, virtually all of the adult population can be categorized liberal, moderate, or conservative. In surveys such as the National Election Studies that invite respondents to admit their unfamiliarity with ideology, a full three-fourths of the population chose an ideological position.
2. Although it is not appropriate to compare standardized (correlation) coefficients across populations (that may differ in variance as well as in structure), the negative correlations between liberal and conservative evaluations also increase sharply with education. In fact, only the correlation for persons without high school educations is close to

the value(−.17) that Conover and Feldman (1981, p. 630) cite as evidence against bipolarity; the others range up to and in excess of .60.

3. Conover and Feldman would also contend that a multiple indicator approach is at odds with the causal relationship between feelings and identifications, the former being the "cause" of the latter. And, given the model specification they are employing, they are probably correct. But because all causal tests are specification-dependent, the causal ordering of affect and identification may still be questioned. We do this by reconceptualizing both affect and identification; measuring affect quite differently from Conover and Feldman; and validating a more cognitive conception of identification. In this context, it is inappropriate to view identification as a function of affect (or vice versa). Affect and identification have distinct properties that should not be lost by having one subsume the other, as cause subsumes effect. Our view is that ideological identification and affect are reciprocally related and should not be causally ordered.
4. The decision to classify only responses at point 4 as moderate can be challenged as too restrictive – though so too can any decision about a nominal measurement boundary. Our decision employs the literal interpretation of the survey item that labels position 3 and 5 "slightly liberal" and "slightly conservative" respectively. It also avoids creating asymmetries out of unavoidably arbitrary decisions about the "folding point" of the scale.
5. For individuals, intensities can only be gauged via comparisons among alternatives (e.g., Von Neumann–Morgenstern utilities), and for collectivities they cannot, strictly speaking, be gauged at all: The utilities of different individuals are not comparable. Preference scales that are analyzed in survey research are based on the assumptions, typically only implicit, that the distances between scale points are equal – i.e., they measure intensity as well as order – and that they measure the same degrees of preference for every individual (e.g., a scale score of 5 has the same meaning across all respondents). Our measure cannot overcome the formal obstacles to interpersonal comparisons of intensities, but it does provide an approximate measure of intensity for individuals.
6. In some years the maximum is only 97 or 98 because higher values are reserved for missing data codes. Negative affect scores (potentially as low as −100) do, however, enter in: They are reserved for those rare individuals who apparently feel more warmly toward the opposition than toward their own side.
7. The justification for folding the scale at the midpoint is discussed in n. 4.
8. The larger number of collinear interaction terms in the equations could have caused serious estimation problems, but they did not. The consequence of multicollinearity is inefficient estimation, a problem that manifests itself in unstable and implausible coefficients and in large standard errors. The coefficients for these models, however, are fairly stable across three samples, are of plausible magnitudes, and in virtually all instances carry appropriate signs. In addition, the variables expected to have the strongest effects (the education interactions, the ideological dummies, and ideological extremity) have coefficients that are statistically significant. The coefficients that are nonsignificant are primarily ones that were expected to be weak. Only the interactions of liberals and conservatives with partisan strength in 1976 and 1984 failed to achieve significance against expectations. To be sure, efficiency might be enhanced by culling from the model those variables that are least important and nonsignificant. But since the results are overwhelmingly consistent with substantive expectations and are free of major symptoms of multicollinearity, we choose to present the estimates of the full models implied by our argument.
9. It is important to note that none of the indicators employed in this analysis are corrected for measurement error, which is known to be substantial. This accounts for some of the failure of the models to explain variance in the dependent variable.

10. The negative coefficients on the ideological direction dummies are the correct sign, *given the other parameters in the model,* and the difference between them leaves conservatives with a higher level of affect than liberals, as predicted. This is especially clear in Table 8.4.
11. Such a specification, while perhaps uncommon, raises no uncommon issues of interpretation. The interaction terms will provide unbiased estimates of the extent to which the impact of ideological identification varies with levels of ideological affect and with years of formal education unless relevant terms have been excluded from the model. Because affect and education have no noninteractive effects and are therefore irrelevant, their exclusion from the model will not be a source of bias. The interaction terms could yield estimates with less than ideal precision, a consequence of multicollinearity in specifications such as equation 5. But that did not prove problematic. The parameter estimates across the equations and the issues (including ones unreported) were basically stable, predictable, and significant – results that would not obtain given serious multicollinearity.
12. A third issue that appears on all three surveys – busing – has such a badly skewed distribution that the results for it, while structurally the same as those reported, are too weak to provide a representative illustration of the results for the rest of the issues.
13. These results hold generally, not only for these issues.

CHAPTER 10

1. This statement is true only for the United States; on partisanship in European polities, there is a burgeoning literature, much of which is based on panel data. (See, e.g., Butler and Stokes, 1975; Budge, Crewe, and Farlie, 1976; and Crewe, Sarlvik, and Alt, 1977). Data used in this study are drawn from the 1956–8 and 1972–4 panels made available through the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. The consortium bears no responsibility for the uses to which they are here put.
2. Brody and Rothenberg (1988) have added to the series by examining the stability of the strength of partisanship during the 1980 election. The intraelection dynamics of partisanship are essentially similar to the *inter*election dynamics described in this essay.
3. Material for this section is drawn from the press and the Encyclopedia of American History (Morris, 1976).
4. Included in this figure are 7 percent of the 1956 electorate and 11 percent of the 1972 electorate who are classified as "independent Democrats"; further along in this paper I present the evidence to support this aggregation decision. Using the same aggregation criteria, identified Republicans were 37 percent of the 1956 electorate and 33 percent of the 1972 electorate.
5. The upturn in approval of Eisenhower in the months just preceding the 1958 congressional election are included in the regression but they tend to mislead the comparison. Over the first seventeen months of the period the rates of decline in approval of Eisenhower were much more similar to that for the Nixon period, % app = 77.45 − 1.64 (%/mo.); $R2$ = .91. Eisenhower's great popularity is reflected in the size of the constant term; the slope parameter indicates that this popularity was sensitive to popular perceptions of the quality of his performance in a manner little different from that which affected Nixon's popularity.
6. The sum of the absolute values of the within category differences for the seven-step party identification scale for 1956 and 1958 is 13.6 percent; for 1972 and 1974 it is 15.5 percent. The distribution of partisanship in the two pairs of cross-sections is not markedly different.

7. Respondents classified as "pure independents" on the initial wave of a panel will not be considered further here. How should we classify their movement? Dobson and St. Angelo (1975) label it as "intraparty" but it could as well be labeled "interparty." The discussion of results will be more straightforward if these cases are set aside.
8. This fact coupled with the overall high level of turnover raises questions about Dreyer's (1973) application of the "black–white" attitude change model to party identification (see Brody, 1977). As I understand Converse's nonattitudes model (Converse, 1970; Pierce and Rose, 1974), it would not predict such a high level of directional stability for off-diagonal cases. For a direct test of the black–white model of intraelection partisan change, see Brody and Rothenberg (1988).
9. The data from the three waves of the 1956–8–60 panel show the 1956 leaners hardly less directionally stable when another two-year period is considered (Brody, 1977, table 3). Normal vote analyses typically treat leaners as independents (Converse, 1968a; Boyd, 1972; Miller and Levitan, 1976). Those who treat the increase in independents as a symptom of decay of the party system base this judgment, inter alia, on the increase in the number of independent partisans (Nie, Verba, and Petrocik, 1976; Pomper, 1977).
10. If we employ a test of the difference (D) between two proportions (Blalock, 1960, pp. 176–9), Democratic and Republican strong identifiers in the 1972–4 panel show different rates of directional stability (D = 5.6 percent; $z_D = 1.77$; $p_z = .04$).
11. Respondents were asked in 1958 and 1974 if they had ever changed their partisanship; the lack of utility of this retrospective measure of change can be gauged by noting that a majority of those who manifestly changed their direction of identification (comparing their stated identification on the two waves of the panel) claim never to have changed their identification at any time. In 1958 70.8 percent of the directionally nonstable make this claim; in 1974 the comparable figure is 58.3 percent.
12. If we follow 1956 directionally nonstable Republicans into the 1960 wave of the panel, we find the following array:

	1956 Strength of Identification			
1960 destination	Strong	Not strong	Lean	Statistics
Remained out of party, %	61	74	69	$x^2 = 0.75$;
Came back to party, %	38	26	31	$df = 2$; p. 75
N	13	31	45	

13. Students of congressional elections will recognize the arrogant arbitrariness of this statement. There are no nationwide candidate, short-term forces, but who is to say that change in partisanship is not related to the particularities of given congressional races?
14. In 1972, the data show half of the sample experiencing an economic problem as most important and half of these believing that government ought to help with its solution. Thus, at that time, personal financial plight was known to be politically relevant for about one-quarter of the population. This group could be larger or smaller in the data here considered to an unknown degree.
15. These findings are not a spurious reflection of a correlation between economic satisfaction and initial strength of identification: For neither party group is the association between strength of identification (1956) and financial satisfaction statistically significant (for Democrats: $X^2 = 8.58$; $df = 4$; $p = .05$; for Republicans: $X^2 = 2.67$; $df = 4$; $p = .10$) and such association as exists is in the wrong direction. Independent

Democrats in 1956 are proportionally the least satisfied and the most likely to change their identification; leaning Republicans while most likely to change, show the highest proportion satisfied. These findings give me warrant to pool the samples within parties and, thus, work with as many cases as possible.

16. As these things go, responses to the financial satisfaction probes show middling stability: 51 percent of the cases are on the main diagonal and for the 1956–8 turnover table Tau-B = .31. It shows less stability than party identification (Tau-B = .72) and is in the middle of the range reported by Converse in his paper on "Attitudes-Non-Attitudes" (Converse, 1970).
17. Respondents are classified as "not satisfied" if in 1974 they responded "mostly dissatisfied," "unhappy," or "terrible" to the probe or if their 1974 rating was in any degree less satisfied than their 1972 rating. If neither of these conditions obtained, a respondent was classified as "satisfied." Following these criteria, 48.1 percent of the 773 members of the panel were labeled "not satisfied" and 51.9 percent were classified as "satisfied."
18. Ratings between 51 degrees and 97 degrees are classed as "positive," those between 0 degrees and 49 degrees are considered "negative," and those of 50 degrees are classified "neutral."
19. I have chosen to present only the 1974 thermometer ratings for the sake of simplicity. 1972 ratings have no power to forecast the dynamics of Democratic identification; the association, for Democrats, between the trichotomous 1972 thermometer and their pattern of stability–change in identification is positive but falls short of statistical significance ($X^2 = 5.24$; $df = 6$; $p = .51$). The 1972 ratings of Nixon by Republicans show virtually no variation; only 6.7 percent of Republican identifiers rated Nixon less than 51 degrees in 1972.
20. For the fourfold table produced by cross-tabulating the two dichotomies, $X^2 = 4.69$; $df = 1$; $p = .05$.

CHAPTER 11

1. The five issues: government spending to help blacks; fair housing; government assurance of fair treatment in jobs; affirmative action in education; and busing.
2. Thus, the standard expectation is that the more authoritarian a person is, the more vulnerable to a persuasive communication he will be, at any rate if the communication is attributed to a positive source. Because education and authoritarianism are closely correlated (for a variety of reasons, Selznick and Steinberg, 1969), the former should serve as a reasonable proxy of the latter.
3. The five-county sampling frame includes an uncommon number of universities and colleges.
4. More exactly, these will be people who place only a medium value on both cases, because the greater the correlation between the two, the more densely packed will be the main, or consistency, diagonal.

CHAPTER 12

1. Elasticity is an apt term, we think, notwithstanding its different usage in economics. Nomenclature aside, we wish to call attention to how issue commitments expand and contract under pressure.
2. For an introduction to the Computer-assisted Survey Methods Program, see Shanks and Tortora, 1985.
3. The actual percentages are: in the BAS, 54.2 percent favor government assistance, while 40.7 percent favor black self-reliance; in the NES, 41.5 percent favor govern-

ment assistance, while 58.5 percent favor black self-reliance. The NES statistics are calculated after eliminating those selecting the exact midpoint on the seven-point scale, to make the response alternatives comparable.

The wording of the NES item runs as follows: "Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every possible effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks and other minority groups. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help minorities because they should help themselves."

Then respondents are handed a card which shows a seven-point scale anchored at one pole by the phrase "Government should help minority groups" and the other pole by the phrase "Minority groups should help themselves."

4. Consistent with previous research, a sizable minority takes a position on the issue that does not jibe with their overall outlook. Thus, the correlation between ideological self-identification and issue preference on government spending for blacks is .34.
5. In this context, it is useful to recall, first, that the overall liberal–conservative measure's distribution is symmetrical (i.e., not sharply skewed), and second, that its relation to preferences on the issue of government help for blacks is also symmetrical (i.e., approximately similar proportions of liberals and conservatives take a position on the issue consistent with their overall outlook). Hence, it is not plausible to attribute the asymmetry in counterpersuasibility to asymmetries in intensity, or strength, either with respect to the univariate distribution of liberalism–conservatism preferences or the bivariate distribution of liberalism–conservatism and issue preferences with respect to government spending for blacks.
6. Typically, measures of racial policy preference have focused on the federal government. Thus, the National Election Studies racial policy items ask whether "the government in Washington" should undertake this or that policy. Consequently, some have suggested that a reluctance to support policies intended to achieve racial equality may reflect not opposition to racial equality but instead suspicion of the federal government (Margolis and Hacque, 1981). Similarly, it could be argued that the opposition of conservatives to such policies reflects a disinclination to strengthen the federal government, not a reluctance to help blacks.

   To assess these possibilities, an experiment was performed. Respondents were asked about the issue of fair treatment in jobs in one of two ways. In one treatment condition, the question referred to "the government in Washington," in the other to "state and local government." Analysis (not reported here) shows the alternative question forms evoke the same reactions. Given their equivalence, the two forms have been combined.

CHAPTER 13

1. As a practical matter, to ask respondents to judge whether a series of groups – blacks, whites, women, etc. – are, or are not, entitled to a particular form of government assistance is to encourage them to treat groups mentioned subsequently in the same way they said the group mentioned first should be treated. For example, if the series starts by asking whether blacks should get a particular benefit, and a respondent says they should not, he or she is then under some pressure to say the same about the next group, whether that is her or his true preference.
2. For additional discussion of the methodology, see Piazza, Sniderman, and Tetlock, 1990.
3. Actually three such workers were described. We are analyzing here responses only to the first claimant, to sidestep the possibility that respondents might have caught on to the intent of the experiment through repetition.
4. This is the default treatment using SPSSx ANOVA. Parallel analyses using log-linear and regression methods were performed. The results are presented using analysis of

variance, partly because it is the established method for experimental designs, more fundamentally because it makes most comprehensible a substantive interpretation of interaction terms.

5. See Chapter 11, this volume.

CHAPTER 14

1. The tentative explanation that Kuklinski and his colleagues advance is as intriguing as the finding they uncover. Relying on open-ended inquiries, they argue that the reason that consideration of the consequences of toleration undercuts tolerance is because it increases the salience of competing values – a line of argument that strongly supports the explanation we gave of the principle–policy puzzle in Chapter 4.
2. Recently, the NES surveys have embraced measures of values, among them individualism and egalitarianism – a development for which a number deserve credit, though none more than Stanley Feldman. See Feldman, 1988.

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