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ISBN 978-3-319-69607-2 ISBN 978-3-319-69608-9 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69608-9

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017956912

Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

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Chapter 1
Introduction

"Old enough to fight, old enough to vote" was a slogan used by voting advocates to lower the voting age to 18 nationally, the same age that one could be drafted into U.S. military service. The story of youth voting in the United States is of one frequent of struggle, and still is today. The Twenty-Sixth Amendment to the Constitution continues to be the quickest ratified amendment in American history; yet since its passage in 1971, states have found ways to discourage voting by increasing voter registration barriers for young people. Youth voter turnout in the United States has variously increased and decreased over the years with little explanation of or research about what encourages young people to vote.

In 2008, America saw record numbers of young people turn out at the polls. It was perhaps the highest number of young voters, 18 to 24-year-olds, to turn out in a presidential election in years. Expectations were high since an unprecedented number of young people also turned out to primaries and caucuses earlier in the year, and it was hoped that the election would be a change from the 1990s. In the election of 2008, 48.5% of young people (18–24) turned out to vote—the highest youth voter turnout since 1971. Nevertheless, with all of the focus on whether or not young people would turn out and shift the course of the election, the media continued to highlight only the "low" voter turnout of America's youngest voters.

But 2008 was not the beginning; youth turnout increased from 32.3% in 1996 to 41.9% in 2004 (Census Bureau 2009). Recent trends in increased youth turnout need to be explained, which current voting behavior models fail to do because of their focus on *nonvoting* rather than *voting*.

This is the story of those young people who *do* vote and *why* they vote; it is also an attempt to explain the major differences between these young people and their disengaged counterparts. If we look at what encourages and engages youth who cast ballots, perhaps we can provide opportunities and possibilities to engage young voters. Traditionally, the voting and civic engagement literature has emphasized why young people do not vote, citing such factors as lack of stability, limited investment in politics, and age related barriers. While these are tested and widely cited explanations for why young people do not vote, it is only half of the story.

B. Gentry, *Why Youth Vote*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69608-9_1

Young people who do vote know their political beliefs, they know who they are as political persons, and choose to act on those beliefs and values. Young people who have a political identity are more likely to vote than those who have not developed an identity. Learning to be a political person is a process, and for many this process takes years, an evolution that begins in childhood and continues throughout adulthood. The creation of a political identity is a socialization and internalization process.

We learn about our world through parents, schools, media, and peers; we also learn about the *political* world in much the same way. We become socialized to our political environment over time through a variety of circumstances. By the time we reach a voting-eligible age, we will have seen four presidential elections, although we were not cognizant enough to remember the early ones. On the other hand, developing into our own political personhood requires that we individualize as well. While socializing can provide common ways of knowing about our political world, individualization involves the formation of our own unique set of beliefs. Individuation is a process wherein we begin to see the world differently from how our parents, peers, teachers, and media experts see it. This process traditionally begins in adolescence and continues through adulthood and is critical to our becoming political individuals and separating ourselves out as unique, setting boundaries between our beliefs and the beliefs of others; socialization is becoming a part of the political world.

Understanding the deeper aspects of identity and identity formation is the key to knowing why young people vote. The formation of a political identity and understanding the process of becoming a political person is the central element of this book. A variety of sources, from interviews to focus groups to national data can help us to better understand the process of individuation and assess its validity as an explanation for youth voting. People form a political identity in a political context or environment. Two major contexts for this research include the presence of inspirational candidates and the political independence of individuals. Sometimes political leaders and candidates can encourage identity formation in young potential voters if those leaders tell the story of their own political identity and describe their own process of becoming a political person. On the other hand, one's identity can often be formed around his or her partisan affiliation. However, political independence itself—a disassociation from mainstream party structure—can also be an affirmed and discernible identity.

Identity and Voting

Since 18-year-olds gained the right to vote in 1971, overall voter participation rates have declined across most demographics. This trend is not found solely in the United States but in other Western democracies as well (Franklin 2004). When it became apparent that 18-year-olds did not turn out at rates similar to the rest of the population, scholars began to question the differences in voter participation among

different age groups (Converse and Niemi 1971). Other scholars began to focus on positive environmental factors that may increase the civic engagement of youth, such as parents as examples and discussion of politics with others (Flanagan 2003; Gimpel et al. 2003)—influences on youth voting behavior that are more about the process of socializing youth to become participants in our democracy. My goal is to bridge the gap between voter participation (which does not necessarily reflect civic engagement) and civic engagement (which does not necessarily precipitate voting) by recreating a political identity variable that measures the status of development of political identity in the individual and serves as a psychological assessment of an individual's perception of who he or she is politically. The more someone knows about himself politically, the more likely he will participate in the political process and eventually vote; concomitantly, the less a person knows about himself politically, the less likely he is to participate in politics, voting, or civic life. Those with a consolidated identity are more likely to be able to stand up for their beliefs, address adversity, and act on their commitments and affiliations.

This study uses psychology to understand the behavior of voting. Our identity, which has many facets, not only determines who we are but also what we do. Political scientists take for granted political party affiliation, ideology, and political beliefs without considering how and why these are formed. Political identity is a concept that unites what we take for granted with an understanding that there was a formation process of identity development and how it affects voting behavior.

Why Study Young People?

Scholars often cite characteristics of youth to explain why youth do not participate. Youth participation rates are notoriously low, both in presidential and off-year elections, hovering below 50% in presidential elections since 1972 and below 30% in off-year elections (Census Bureau 2009). Youth have particularly low political knowledge and political interest, suggesting that age increases both interest and knowledge in the political system (Campbell et al. 1960). Young voters are difficult to contact and difficult to keep in touch with since their living situation is ever changing; some live with their parents, others move away to college, and still others move out to start their own lives, changing residences along the way. Such movement makes it difficult for scholars to study, survey, or sample young voters consistently and with confidence (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Highton and Wolfinger 2001). Nevertheless, this group has the potential to provide us with insight into how interactions with the political system are unique for each individual. It is during the years of early adulthood when one officially interacts with the political system as a voter, and there are many "firsts" for youth to overcome: registration, finding the polling place, and gaining political information about the process and candidates (Plutzer 2002; Highton and Wolfinger 2001).

Youth are also under-sampled as participants because we tend to acknowledge them as nonparticipants and focus our efforts on explaining the *lack* of turnout

rather than reasons *for* turning out. The problem lies in how youth are perceived as voters. Traditionally, more than 50% of youth fall into the category of nonvoters. This categorization has labeled youth in such a way that to study youth voting is to ask the question "Why do youth not vote?" rather than "What factors encourage youth voting?" The assumption that young people will vote once they have "grown up" inadequately considers how this process happens psychologically or politically.

Considering where a person is in his or her life cycle suggests that voting is a result of individual experiences, not just a person's environment. We need to better understand the early stages of a person's political life. The most serious criticism leveled at young people is their lack of participation compared to other age categories. Yet many of the reasons and measures for why *older* groups turn out to vote seem not to accurately describe youth life phases and motivations, such as marriage, residency, and socioeconomic status.

Youth bring a unique perspective to politics—they are actors in their initial stages of political life. Young people are also a varied group, consisting of everyone from young partisan leaders to the confused, apolitical youth, but despite this wide variation, young people are often lumped into a single category of "youth," and are not studied with regard to the variation among them. The typical explanations of differences between youth are demographic variables of race, gender, income, residential stability, and education. We fail to look inside the individual for an explanation and fail to try and understand what is happening within the person.

In this work, I look to the development of a political identity, perceptions of inspiration, and political independence to explain voter behavior and participation. I explore this developmental process with a new concept—political ego identity.[1] Political ego identity takes into account the process by which one develops an identity and the resources of knowing who one is politically. The four major components of a developed political ego identity are:

- knowledge of who one is politically,
- a period of questioning to find out one's identity,
- actions taken to discover, confirm, or reaffirm an identity,
- the importance politics plays in an individual's life (salience).

As noted above, those with a cohesive political ego identity know who they are politically and are more likely to participate in elections; similarly, those who have not developed a political ego identity are less likely to participate in politics.

Political context plays a role in how individuals are socialized to interact with the political system. One major hypothesis this research explores is that inspirational leaders increase youth voter participation. Inasmuch as this is true, weak political party identifications of youth also create a fertile political context for inspirational leaders who can inspire a new generation of voters to believe in politics. Young

[1] I will use political ego identity and political identity interchangeably.

people who are not partisan are more likely to participate in the political process if they have an inspirational leader who inspires them; this does not mean that partisans themselves cannot be inspired, but is does posit that their commitment to the party often encourages their participation in elections without inspiration playing so great a role. Inspirational leaders act as role models for young people as they offer alternatives to the status quo, suggest a variety of new ways to participate, and provide a set of beliefs that young people can adopt as their own.

I also explore youth identification as political Independents and what effect such identification has on electoral participation. For political Independents, youth are either developing a political identity and have not yet decided between the parties; they choose independence as a default, or they are developed Independents who have committed to that identity. For developed Independents, there is a need for political stimulation in the political environment to turn them out, as the limitations inherent in a two-party system offer fewer alternatives for those who are pursuing an identity, which tends to decrease the salience of a political identity.

This work treats political identity as a process rather than an outcome by which people become aware of their political beliefs, values, and goals. The development of a political identity, I argue, increases youth participation. Where young people are in the developmental process affects their likelihood of voting.

The Intersections of Contribution and Theory

Traditional Explanations for Youth Non-voting

As reported in the voting behavior literature, the reasons vary as to why young people *do* not vote: lack of stable commitments to the community, differences between generations, availability of resources, party affiliation, political interest, and efficacy. Early scholars in the voting behavior literature suggest that those who are affiliated with a party (partisans) are more likely to vote than others (nonpartisans). Those with more intense affiliations are the most likely to participate, and those with the least (Independents) are least likely (Campbell et al. 1960). Traditionally, parties would work to encourage interest in the election, inform their voters about candidates, take voters to the polls, and make sure those favorable to the party knew where to vote or how to get registered. Parties worked as organizing mechanisms within communities across the United States.

Putnam argues that young people today are less engaged than they were generations earlier and cites television as one of the major reasons (2000). Television breaks down the social interactions in society as more and more people choose to watch television in their free time than to engage in other types of activities, such as civic associations or bowling leagues. Other generational explanations suggest something is “different” about the youth of today, inasmuch as they seem to be less

engaged in traditional forms of political participation, such as writing a letter to the editor or an elected official. However, this does not mean that they are not engaged. Zukin et al. highlight the differences in participation between political and civic involvement, where young people today are participating within their communities and not at the voting booth or interacting with politicians (2006).

Research on the youngest generation, generally understood to be the Millennials (also known as Generation Y and Dotnets)—who graduated in 2000 or later and came of age during the turn of the century—suggests a different picture from what we know about Generation X. Dalton's work in *The Good Citizen* explores different philosophies about what it means to be a good citizen and explains that many of the differences in generational participation are due to shifts in those philosophies. Where the Greatest Generation considered voting, military service, paying taxes, and obeying the law to be the definition of a good citizen, Generation Y (Millennials) consider making the world and the United States a better place, buying or boycotting products for political purposes, and truly understanding another's point of view as valuable to the meaning of a good citizen (Dalton 2009, 38). These different types of citizenship produce very different sorts of participation between the generations. But Dalton's work suggests we look at the more hopeful side of the picture rather than the dismal fact that young people do not vote because they are engaging in other political behaviors.

Surprisingly, few scholars discuss the development of the political self. Political Scientist Eric Plutzer discusses political development but not necessarily political identity. He contends a life-cycle approach is a better explanation for why young people do not vote since they have not yet had experiences interacting with the political system. From a Downsian perspective, the costs for voting (such as registering to vote or finding a polling place) the first time outweigh the benefits for any individual, and those costs must be overcome before an individual can eventually vote. In Plutzer's argument political development is not *within* individuals as they bring forth their political selves but is rather *gained* through developing experiences necessary for first-time participation. I argue, however, that am individual needs to do some preliminary work before he or she can interact with the political system, and that work is self-discovery.

Civic Engagement

Whereas the voting behavior literature focuses solely on voting and characteristics of voters and non-voters, the civic engagement literature discusses the process of becoming an active citizen and comes closest to a developmental approach to political identity. Civic engagement literature discusses different behaviors—volunteering in the community, engaging in public discussions about social problems, and emphasizes issues of global importance. One major distinction between political and civic behaviors is interaction with governmental entities to cause policy change. Political behaviors require interaction with the political system; civic behaviors

work outside the political system to solve immediate and tangible community and social problems. This distinction is perhaps why young people prefer civic rather than political engagement.[2]

In many ways, the study of civic engagement look at why young people participate in their communities and often plays an advocacy role by using research to find ways to encourage youth participation in civic action. Civic engagement research examines environmental elements to explain democratic and community behaviors. Communities with a competitive political environment, open political discussions, and ethnic diversity are more likely to produce citizens who participate. On the other hand, communities with one major party, little political discussion, and ethnic homogeneity are more likely to have young people who believe politics is already decided, the discussion is closed, and everyone believes the same things politically (Gimpel et al. 2003).

Other explanations about the degrees of civic engagement go beyond the environmental approach and focus on interactions among young people, organizations, and leaders. Constance Flanagan (2003) argues that youth involvement in community organizations is a reciprocal relationship. Young people involved in community organizations better understand the social order and community organizations gain new ideas and manpower because they have interacted with organizations that provide services and are therefore better informed about the institutions involved in communities. Values that young people learn in community organizations include connecting and identifying with others, interacting with institutions within communities, and learning how their actions, thoughts, and words can make a difference (Flanagan 2003).

What young people receive out of their civic engagement often varies. In a study by Miranda Yates and James Youniss, young people can develop the personal opinions and understanding of a wider political world when reflection on their engagement is brought into the classroom. They argue that reflection is a valuable aspect of encouraging thoughts about how the world works, about individual responsibility, and about how we relate to others (1996). Their assessment of identity and community service ties in very closely with how one develops a political identity; however, they fail to connect service learning to political behaviors in adulthood. The value of their research is to point to the connections between general identity development and how civic engagement offers opportunities for political awareness.

Though the civic engagement research arises from a developmental perspective, its emphasis is placed on environmental circumstances that encourage development of citizens, not on individuals or an individual's internal development of an identity. The focus on youth civic engagement fails to see development throughout the life cycle and does not accurately connect civic behaviors developed in youth and political behaviors of adults.

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[2] For a previous discussion of identity development as it connects civic and political engagement, please see Gentry, Bobbi. 2013. "Bridging the Gap between Political and Civic Engagement: A Theory of Political Identity." McCartney, Alison et al, eds. *Teaching Civic Engagement*. Washington, D.C.: American Political Science Association Publications.

Socialization through education, community service, and other social institutions encourages youth to participate in a democracy. Whereas the voting behavior literature is focused on the individual and the outcome behavior of voting, the civic engagement literature focuses on the environment and what it provides to the individual and the process of acquiring and sustaining many different political behaviors, neither of which addresses identity specifically but rather focuses on behaviors.

Identity as a Psychological Approach

In adult psychological development, one of the major issues in transitioning between adolescence and adulthood is the ability to define oneself. Developmental psychologist Erik Erikson's early work (1994[1967]) on psychosocial development discusses a pivotal time for the individual: the identity crisis phase, during which one defines their "sense of inner identity" as the "style of one's individuality" (50, 87).

> The young person, in order to experience [identity] wholeness, must feel a progressive continuity between that which he has come to be during the long years of childhood and that which he promises to become in the anticipated future; between that which he conceives himself to be and that which he perceives other to see in him and to expect of him. (87)

Emphasizing the importance of the individual within an environment that has particular historical, cultural, and social connections, Erikson argues that identity is not just about individuals but also concerns the interaction of individuals with their social environment. We develop our identity based on our social surroundings, which include a variety of fully formed individual identities on which we can choose to model ourselves and develop our own identity. While culture, history, and our environment do play some role in the identities available to us, we are able to adapt and develop our own unique political identities.

From the psychological literature, James Marcia discusses how one goes through different statuses to form a positive self-identity, how individuals create their own identities and how the choices of identity are not made for them (1991). In Marcia's original framework (1964, 1980), the political identity variable is a component of overall identity development. Individuals are classified into four different statuses: achievement, moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion. Individuals who have cohesive psychological identities, those who know who they are and what they stand for, are in the identity achievement status. Those who are experimenting with their identities and exploring different aspects of their identities but have not yet decided on a cohesive identity are in the moratorium status. Individuals experiencing foreclosure status have an identity, but the identity is based on others' expectations, such as those of parents or mentors. Diffusion status exists when individuals have no idea who they are and are making no effort to define their identities. The adult development literature proposes that as individuals move from adolescence to adulthood, they form more cohesive political identities.

However, Marcia was challenged regarding his measurement of a political identity development. While he included this element as part of the larger measure of identity development, he acknowledged problems with this aspect of the measure. Perhaps one of the greatest challenges was to find individuals who were fully developed in their political identities. Further research based on Marcia's identity development has branched out in various directions, but little research has analyzed political identity development and its consequences.

Ego identity continues to be a field of research where psychologists link the individual to the larger world. Adaptation has occurred in the psychological measures of identity, as more recent measures of ego-identity (Adams 1998) use survey analysis instead of in-depth interviews to assess the identity status of larger samples. Political scientists benefit from the ego identity literature as they attempt to understand the larger literature of political identity (Kroger 2000; Hoover et al. 1997; Yoder 2000). Much of the developmental psychology literature tends to dismiss political identity development due to the fact that many young people are either not interested in politics or they tend to fall into the diffusion identity status (Waterman 1982), where they avoid commitments to politics and do not pursue a period of searching for a political identity. Other studies suggest that even though college offers time for experimentation in different aspects of identity, after college many people seem to fall into a foreclosure status, simply mirroring their parents' political identity (Waterman 1982). Again, the focus of this literature is not in examining why youth tend to be in the diffusion status but rather in looking at the *process* for development of a political identity, including why developing a political identity tends to be more difficult than developing other aspects of an overarching identity.

Identity salience refers to the perceived importance of the identity or prioritization of one identity over another. Sheldon Stryker and Richard Serpe (1994) suggest that there is a difference between identity salience and identity centrality. Identity salience involves our ranking of identities with an element of unconscious choice, or the importance of this aspect of our identity. Identity centrality, on the other hand, is conscious prioritization of identities wherein we distinguish between the central and the peripheral. Identity salience happens because our prioritization of identities becomes so ingrained and reinforced that we fail to realize our consistent prioritization of identities. Different people prioritize their identities in the order they find works for them and their life, but context also plays a role. If we consider different aspects of our identity as different hats, then we have different hats for different contexts. During election years, one may get their old dusty political identity hat out of the closet and try it on again, or one may wear their political identity hat all the time (as many politicians do). But we need to realize that political identity is only a part of the overarching identity and to understand, as Ronald Inglehart notes, that "politics is a peripheral aspect of most people's lives" (1997), which may make it difficult to study political identity in the American context but allows for a unique opportunity to place the focus on the individual's self-definition as a viable place to search for answers to political behaviors.

Political ego identity is different from political party affiliation (even though there are elements that overlap), in that political identity encompasses all of the

beliefs about politics, individuals' evaluations of policy issues, and behaviors as consequences of those commitments. Whereas political party affiliation, at least in the American context, is attachment to an ideology and party principles, political ego identity includes how the individual interacts, believes, and behaves in ways that may well be beyond the understanding focused solely on political party affiliation. One can affiliate with a political party and yet have not achieved a political identity; and one can develop a political identity without necessarily having a firm commitment to a particular political party and its principles.

Inspirational Candidates and the Youth Vote

Candidates play a key role in leading public opinion and highlighting the concerns of the public, while at the same time following public opinion. Leaders have the opportunity to promote a set of policies that people can easily adapt as their own. In a way, leaders are political role models who suggest visions for the future, speak out about the alternatives they offer to the political status quo, and introduce and encourage participatory activities for followers to engage in. Inspirational leaders engage in these activities particularly well and tend to influence beliefs, commitments, and behaviors of their followers.

The leadership literature fits well into the identity development literature by means of a role model figure. Leaders are not typical role models with whom a person can interact. Leaders are abstract role models because there is rarely direct exchange between the role model and the individual. The individual soaks up the beliefs, commitments, and behaviors of the role model without ever being able to touch, have a conversation with, or question the leader directly. Taking on the identity of the role model without critically analyzing and questioning the role model is precisely the concern of many people about inspirational leaders and their connection with followers. However, the leadership literature does not take into account political identity and leaders as identity role models as a way to explain the concern of leaders' effects on their followers—especially young followers.

The leadership literature suggests that leaders have characteristics that draw voters to them (Cherulnik et al. 2001). As social theorist Max Weber noted, charisma is a type of authority vested within individuals, in both their spirit and rhetoric ([1922]1978). In a larger context, Weber argues that charismatic leaders possess a type of revolutionary will and have the possibility to be independent outside the "regular party machine." Developments in research from this perspective suggest charisma as a characteristic that can be used to understand leader-follower dynamics (Gardner 2003; Post 1986; Yukl 1999).

Characteristics of candidates have been a consistent variable used to understand voter preferences. Assessment of leadership, knowledge, ability to care, morality, and inspiration are measured in the American National Election Survey during pres-

idential election years.[3] Though Bartels finds that leader trait assessment does not affect voting behavior of those who are highly partisan, it does seem to affect individuals who are not attached to parties and have little ideological attachment (2002). This may make an interesting case for youth, some of whom have strong partisan ties and others who are still developing. Larry Bartels argues that trait assessment did not have an effect on presidential elections between 1980 and 2000, but he does note that in close elections, such as in 2000, traits may decide an election. Perhaps the ability to be swayed by the candidates is closely linked to the formation of an identity, where fully developed individuals are less likely to be swayed and the less developed more likely to be influenced.

As Anthony King contends, the argument in the literature is not whether character assessments exist or have an effect, but rather that character assessments affect voting behavior to the point at which it changes elections (2002). Character traits, King hypothesizes, have an effect on electoral outcomes when voters perceive large differences between candidates, when voters' ties to the party are weakest, when voters see there are few other differences such as performance or policy, when a large number of individuals are influenced by these characteristics, and when the election is close (2002, 41–42). King focuses on the direct effects of leader personality traits on the voting public but fails to see the direct effect of leadership traits to gain committed volunteers.

In more recent times, the focus on the individual candidate rather than the party platform has increased, which political scientist Martin Wattenberg argues is candidate-centered politics (1991). This shift led to major political consequences for political parties, elections, and voters. Wattenberg finds evidence that when political party attachment weakens, voters preferring candidates over parties and campaigns that emphasize the individual rather than the policy differences (1991). If the focus is on the individual who has concrete ideas about the world and provides an example of a role model identity, then in modern campaigns candidates play a more significant role in shaping the perspectives and identities of others.

Leader-follower relations go beyond the original notion of simply charismatic leaders with followers who must obey; they also take into account the *interactions* between charismatic leaders and their followers. As Jerrold Post argues, "all leaders—especially charismatic leaders—are at heart the creation of their followers" (1986). Post describes leaders as "mirror-hungry," such that they need audiences to confirm their strength, confidence, and omnipotence; followers, on the other hand, have an "ideal-hungry personality." Post notes the circumstance of societal crisis wherein "otherwise mature and psychologically healthy individuals may temporarily come to feel overwhelmed and in need of a strong and self-assured leader" (1986, 683). However, the leadership literature does not necessarily discuss the specific effects of leaders on youth, or the use of inspiration to encourage participation of groups.

[3] However all five trait assessments are not always surveyed: "really cares" was not gathered in the 1980 election, and "inspiring" was not assessed in the 2000 election. See Bartels "The Impact of Candidate Traits in American Presidential Elections" 2002.

Political Independence: Developed or Default Identity

Political party changes may be understood as a source for shifts in the political identity development of youth (especially with regard to partisanship) and a focus on candidate-centered politics, rather than party-oriented politics. The focus for this research has aimed to explain the differences in young Independents and how their differences predict and affect their voting decisions. In his recent look at 40 years of the political party literature, political scientist Morris Fiorina notes that partisanship in the electorate was weakening even when party organizations and partisans in government were strengthening (2002). For youth voters, the evidence suggests that Independents are less likely to vote but fails to explain the relationship between developed Independents and default claims of independence. Could there be Independents who vote and Independents who do not? What are the differences among these Independents?

Campbell et al. suggest, in their original work *The American Voter*, that partisanship has an important influence on turnout. Fifty years have passed since this seminal work on voting behavior was published, and partisanship remains a valuable tool in the study of voter turnout, but what if there were something deeper than partisanship to explain voting behavior? In the 1970s, Abramson (1976, 1979) evaluated declines in partisanship and concluded that they were severe enough that parties no longer seem to be present in the American mind, which was especially true for the youngest voters. As partisanship waxes and wanes, how we form our political identity changes.

While partisanship may be changing, parties have also ebbed and flowed in their strength in recent decades. Regarding declines in partisanship in 1964 and 1972, Bartels explains that voters "abandoned their parties [due to] unpopular presidential candidates" (2000, 40). Youth also played a major role in the resurgence of political parties due to their increased partisanship in the 1980s and 1990s (42). The intersection of young people, political parties, and voting behavior produces interesting research because young people do have substantial influence on their political environment, just as their environment also shapes them.

In a larger discussion of resurgence or death of political parties in the United States, authors disagree over how faithful voters are to the party affiliations or whether those affiliations can be swayed. Youth voters are perhaps some of the most volatile voters because they have newer relationships with the political parties and are not cemented in their beliefs. For Steven Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen, the decline in voter turnout is due greatly to the expansion of the electorate, which they attribute to youth voters. People are also less likely to turnout if they do not have a strong affiliation with or strong emotions about the success or failure of parties, so some of the declines in turnout have happened as a consequence of declines in partisan identification (2002). Youth may also be a part of that decline since young people are less likely to affiliate with a political party unlike older voters.

Young people's affiliation *with* a political party could also be the study of young people's *lack* of party affiliation and claims of Independence. Thomas Patterson

notes in his book *The Vanishing Voter* that "the rise of the independent voter has contributed to the fall in election turnout and interest" (2009, 44). I argue that there are some distinctions among youth Independents. Independence is sometimes claimed due to lack of information or lack of experience with the political system, but the reasoning behind the claims of independence by youth can better be explained as a function of development. The distinction between young people who vote and those who do not is a consequence of political identity development rather than the typical forces attributed to youths' absence at the polls.

The Argument

Why do people ages 18–24 vote? To answer this question, I analyze the mechanisms that encourage and discourage youth participation and turnout. This age range is unique from other age categories in how they interact with politicians, election officials, and the electoral system itself, which yields three compatible explanations for whether or not youth vote: personal political identity, inspirational leaders, and political independence.

First, I define a developed political ego identity as a combination of behaviors and attitudes. A person with a fully developed political ego identity has (1) a self awareness of who he or she is politically; (2) experienced a period of questioning where he or she has considered different types of identities, labels, and beliefs and has settled on specific commitments; (3) engaged in behaviors to express his or her political identity, such as political discussions, working on a political issue, or writing about his or her political label or beliefs, and (4) reached the point where he or she considers politics as an important aspect of life. I have modified James Marcia's statuses to take into account the uniqueness of what a political identity means with regard to voting behavior. The modified statuses are: fully developed, somewhat developed, exploration, and diffusion. The statuses are developmental in that each level has achieved a new aspect of identity development. As a person goes through the developmental process, he or she (1) becomes more firm in his or her commitments to partisanship or rejection of partisanship; (2) has policy beliefs that are specific and numerous; and (3) believes politics is salient to his or her life.

Fully developed individuals have gone through each of these steps. They can say that they know who they are politically, have gone through a period of serious questioning about who they are by evaluating different policy positions, have practiced their identity, and believe politics is an important part of their lives. Individuals with fully developed identities are most likely to vote because they are clear about where they stand and how they fit into the political system of parties and policies. Yet, fully developed individuals need not be solely mainstream identities: they may well be revolutionaries. Young people who know who they are and yet do not fit into mainstream politics will often develop an identity outside the mainstream. However, as political identity pertains to voting, those who are more likely to vote are individuals

who do fit within the mainstream political system—in other words, fully developed partisans.

Somewhat Developed individuals know who they are politically, which makes them more likely to vote. Something is missing, however, for these Somewhat Developed individuals: typically, they have not questioned their identity even though they have already decided on their political identity. But they have lower levels of development of partisan identification, policy evaluations, and salience than people who are fully developed. Explorers think that a political identity is important enough to have and are considering political alternatives through practice. This makes the explorers the third most likely to vote, since they can use voting as a way to practice alternative identities. They are also clear in their expression that politics is an important part of their lives, which is why they are struggling to discover who they are politically. Explorers have not yet settled on their political identity, which makes them difficult to activate in the electorate, both by parties and candidates.

Individuals in the Diffusion status have none of the characteristics of a developed identity and are the least likely to vote: not only do they *not* see politics as important in their lives, they are also *not* secure in who they are as political *persons*, this makes them insecure in their political *actions*. Diffusions generally follow an avoidant style of action wherein they simply will not engage in thoughts or behaviors that would confront their indecision. They will tend to avoid situations that would lead to confrontation including conversations with friends, listening to the news, or being in any conversations in which they are uncomfortable. Each level in development of an identity is crucial to how identity comes about and eventually is settled upon. A person who can say that she knows who she is politically is clear in her identity and self definition, but this is not a complete picture of development. The person also has to go through the process of developing behaviors that support their commitment to that identity.

For the purposes of voting behavior, salience (feeling that politics is important in your life) plays a major role in political identity. Because political identity is but one way to define oneself, if it is not as salient as other identities (worker, student, parent), then it is less likely that the individual will vote. Considering politics to be an important part of a person's life and a part of who a person is will push those who are developed politically to become involved politically. While politicians and political scientists may think that a political identity is extremely important to who they are, for others in the population, as Inglehart notes, politics and their political identity may be peripheral to other aspects of their lives. For our purposes, salience is crucial in affecting voting behavior since the individual who feels that politics is more central to his or her life is more likely to want to participate in behaviors that confirm that specific identity.

Questioning who one is politically by evaluating issue preferences and comparing these preferences to the positions of the candidates is valuable because it allows the individual to intellectually pursue alternatives. A period a self questioning through issue evaluation allows the individual to examine critically what policies they believe in and which party they identify with. Robert Dahl notes the distinction

between people in the political stratum and apolitical stratum: those in the political stratum are rational—they think about and consider what their interests are, just like those who are more developed in their political identity (2005)—while individuals in the apolitical stratum have unexamined loyalties and personal attachments and fail to critically analyze why that is the case—similar to Explorers or Diffusions. The development process that questioning provides to political identity is the mental work that is done to decide eventually on what policy issues are important, where individuals stand politically in relation to parties, and how they deal with new and conflicting information.

The discovery process includes acting out one's identity for two purposes: to "try on" alternatives to see which identity fits and to have the world be reflective to the identity. Whereas a person can question his or her own identity, practicing an identity is inherently a public act in which an individual can get feedback from the outside world. Practicing behaviors can come in many forms, from political discussions to signing petitions to voting. Behaviors allow us to act out who we are politically while also getting feedback. How political identity bridges the gaps between civic engagement and voting behavior is the development of an identity and belief system during the younger years of civic engagement, when one can engage in a variety of behaviors and experiment about what one believes. People of different political identity statuses will engage in behaviors that affect their identity; strong identifiers will reaffirm their identity, while explorers will use behaviors as a discovery process. Each of the four components to the political identity complement and reinforce one another such that individuals are more likely to know who they are politically if they have questioned or have been challenged about what they believe in, have experimented with different behaviors, and if they feel the political aspects of their identity are important piece to who they are.

Young people who have achieved a developed political ego identity status are more likely to engage in the political process. In addition, those who believe politics is important to their lives are also more likely to vote. Conversely, those who are either Diffusion or in Exploration are much less likely to vote. Explorers are likely to engage in voting to practice their identity and experiment with different aspects of their political beliefs, but they are even less likely to vote because they have not settled on who they are politically, which makes it difficult to decide on a candidate or to make the decision to vote at all. Diffusion status individuals want nothing to do with politics, have had very little exploration of political alternatives, and have made no commitments in the political realm. This approach is especially applicable to young voters as they go through the process of developing an identity; while this variable may be applied to older voters, it is especially significant to young voters who are in the transition period of identity development.

The lack of identity in young people will help explain why young people do not participate in politics, are less likely to take a stance on political issues, and show high rates of political apathy. Why would one engage in an activity that has little meaning in one's life? Identity may be the key to disentangling the differences between voters and nonvoters in the youth population and can bridge the gap between civic engagement and voting behavior, both of which overlook political

identity as a variable. While there may be developed nonparticipants—individuals who know who they are politically but choose not to participate—they are likely to engage in other political behaviors.

In addition to looking within the individual, *Why Youth Vote* also examines the surrounding environment in which the person develops. I expect that by offering hope, creating new politics, and acting against the status quo, an inspirational candidate will create higher turnout among 18- to 24- year-olds. Not only do candidates pursue young voters in media, but they also make appeals to youth voters about the future, break old ties, develop "new politics," and elicit emotional responses. Inspirational candidates interact with youth by engaging in a new politics, as young voters are finding their own political identity; the two actions complement one another. The newness of politics to the youth voter is confirmed by inspirational candidates. Inspirational candidates encourage identity development in young people through creating interest, discussing political issues, promising new politics as young people are developing their own new politics, focusing on ideas and emotion, and helping young people speak a political language that communicates their political identity. For young people developing a new political identity, an inspirational candidate provides a political identity role model. Therefore, youth voters and youth volunteers become more important to an inspirational leader and will increase turnout by participating in the campaign and by voting. Inspirational leaders more directly affect youth than they do seasoned voters because youth lack experience with voting, articulating major issues, and developing political identities. Inspirational candidates are also more likely to pursue new segments of the electorate to help them create a winning coalition. These candidates are therefore more likely to go outside of the traditional bounds of party identification and pursue individuals in the exploration status.

A third factor influencing youth turnout is political independence and what it means to youth. Weakening party identification leads fewer young voters to identify with parties, which plays a role in forming youth political ego identity and makes inspirational leaders possible. There are two types of political Independents—youth who have not yet developed a political identity claiming Independence as a default, and developed political Independents who have developed a political identity that does not fit with either of the two political parties. Harvard Institute of Politics Youth Survey has found partisanship to be changing among young people, where other factors such as religion seem to a better indicator of voting patterns rather than political parties (2004). Inspirational leaders offer the possibility of creating a new politics when they are not bound by the mechanisms of party machinery.

In the United States, the party machinery is weakening with fewer volunteers working for parties and more working for candidates. Political parties are also limited in their resources which make them less likely to pursue non-partisan identifiers. As a consequence, explorers—traditionally large portions of youth—are not pursued as voters. However, parties are more likely to pursue strong partisans than weak partisans because these people are already committed to their identity, therefore, it is easier to find and access these people partisans. For voting behavior in particular, it matters how the youth has decided to be Independent, either con-

sciously or as a default identity, as to what affects their turnout in elections. The difference in the two types of Independents is due to the level of political development; developed Independents are more likely to turnout in elections than default Independents.

The Complexities and Contribution

The major question asks, "what makes youth participation in presidential elections more likely?" For the initial concept, personal political identity plays a major role in who votes and who does not. Those who know who they are politically are much more likely to vote than their counterparts who are either unsure, uninterested, or unengaged in the process of figuring out what they believe in, stand for, and care about politically. *Why Youth Vote* identifies four statuses of self-conceptualization: Fully Developed, Somewhat Developed, Explorers, and Diffusions. The challenge in studying a new variable and its contribution to our understanding of voting behavior is measuring it with reliability and validity. Successful testing of a new theory for understanding voting behavior is to have a strong theory backed up by evidence. For this work, political identity development will be measured with two different protocols: the American National Election Survey (ANES), and one-on-one interviews with youth. The combination of qualitative and quantitative data analysis will provide a richer understanding of the theory and many different types of evidence.

Inspirational candidates are more likely to get youth to participate in elections. But our focus is on the individual youth voter, if they do not feel inspired by their choice candidate or the selection of candidates, then they are not as likely to vote compared to a youth who believes that the candidate is inspirational. While there are objective measures of leadership, leader effects must be measured within the individual. Objective measures would suggest certain leaders are more influential than others, consider Kennedy, Gingrich, Reagan, and Obama. But objective assessments do not get voters to the polls. In order to get individuals to vote, leaders must make them feel inspired. Inspiration in the end must be felt by people subjectively. Young individuals must be convinced that the leader does inspire them and gives them hope, which may be different for each person. Measures of presidential inspiration include the combination of variables from the ANES and evaluation of presidential nomination speeches.

The concept of political independence is considerably more difficult because instead of looking solely at partisanship and nonpartisans we have to question their motives in taking on these identities. The why, in the case of partisan choice or active non-affiliation, is inherently open-ended and has many potentially different explanations. From what we know about who participates and who does not, partisans overwhelmingly participate in presidential elections. Partisans who weakly and strongly identify with the parties are more likely to participate than Independents who claim to be solidly independent or who lean toward one party. Why, then, study political independence? The purpose is to look more closely at the number of youth

who claim to be Independent and how different types of Independence might influence voting. Developed Independents know who they are politically and choose not to identify with either party. On the other hand, default Independents do not know who they are politically but feel nevertheless pressured to choose when asked about their partisanship and would rather not say that they do not know. Developed Independents are more likely to participate because they are committed to an identity; default Independents are not.

The Chapters Ahead

As you can see, this introductory chapter lays about the arguments that will flow throughout the book and how they are intertwined in eventually and cohesively explaining the behavior of youth in American presidential elections. Chapter 2 deals specifically with the new concept of political identity development and its consequences on youth voting behavior. Relevant literature, the theoretical basis for the theory, how one can measure such work, and the application of bivariate analyses to test the validity of the measures will be presented. Chapter 3 develops the conceptualization of what leaders actually do to engage citizens in a variety of behaviors, but the theory used suggests the power of leadership relies not in the leaders themselves but the reaction of individuals to leaders and their subjective association with feelings of hope and subjective assessment of inspiration. In addition, this chapter is also a warning about the aspects of leaders that youth do get caught up in and the hesitation that anyone in a democracy should have about such leaders.

Chapter 4 specifically discusses Independents and what encourages these individuals to claim Independent status. Rather than directly studying partisanship, which has often revealed that those who are partisans are more likely to participate in elections than nonpartisans (Campbell et al. 1960; Rosenstone and Hansen 2003), there are different types of Independents who need different encouragements in order to participate. In addition, I address why so many youth in particular are Independents and why they might be stating that they are Independent rather than directly choosing a political party to affiliate with. Chapter 5 evaluates all of these explanations for youth voting against the traditional measures of voting in logistic regression analyses. Chapter 6 puts all of this work into perspective by discussing the value of studying youth as the beginning point of one's political life. Each of these explanations is interconnected and draws on different aspects of youth behavior and development as political citizens. In addition, this work provides suggestions about how we can encourage development of a political identity in the youth of today.

Chapter 2
Political Identity: Meaning, Measures, and Evidence

Identity shapes many of aspects of life, from how we see the world to how we behave. The concept of a *political identity* can best be understood as an inner narrative of one's political self. Identity is the story that we tell ourselves and others about who we are, who we were, and who we foresee ourselves to be. But how does this concept work when trying to understand identity in terms of politics? As noted in the introduction, political identity is complicated in both meaning and how it can best be defined. Much of the literature on identity admits that a political identity is a vague concept inherently difficult to measure (Valde 1996). However, part of the challenge and the reward for both political science and psychology is the development of a better theory to conceptualize political identity.

There are two basic elements of political identity—identity development as a process and identity as a status. Identity development is the process that individuals go through to acquire their beliefs, preferences, self-identification as political people, and self-knowledge. During the identity process, people fall into different categories of diffusion, explorer, somewhat developed and fully developed. Political ego identity is knowing and caring about a set of political issues, having a set of organized beliefs about the political system, and engaging in political behaviors that support particular beliefs. This definition also accounts for the level of importance politics has to a person's life. If politics is important, then these individuals are more likely to have a highly developed identity status.

Distinguishing Political Identity from Identity Politics

In order to distinguish political identity from identity politics, we must first understand the root of each. Political identity is a concept associated with developmental and social psychology and appears in the developmental psychology literature as the creation of a self concept and presentation of that concept to the outside world. Identity politics, however, is rooted in adaptations of identity from political science,

B. Gentry, *Why Youth Vote*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69608-9_2

which takes into account power structures, group dynamics, and social construction (Hoover 1997). Political identity is focused on the individual and his or her internalization of a sense of self; political identity does take into account social interactions of the individual: the focus is on how individuals create their understanding of themselves and redefine themselves according to expectations from the outside world. On the other hand, identity politics is a part of understanding groups, especially political groups, whose identity is socially constructed and marginalized. Identity politics focuses on the external and social aspects of identity not on the individual internalized aspects. The fundamental break between the psychological concept of identity and the political science concept of identity is where the focus is placed. For the purposes of understanding voting behavior, our focus is on the psychological concept of identity.

Identity politics takes into account the concept of power and the use of power by groups to overcome marginalization. For political scientists, power relations are a focus of how political groups interact with one another, with government, and within themselves. Hoover notes that reducing identity to power is a reductionist view of understanding identity (1997, 7). Identity politics focuses on the socially constructed identity rather than the internalization of an identity. Scholars in identity politics view identity as something that is forced on the individual from the society at large and is represented by those external attributes of race, gender, and ethnicity. Identity politics does not take into account the process by which one develops an identity but the outcome of identity for study of political purposes. Whereas political identity theorists consider the process of human development within the individual, those who study identity politics focus on the social construction and deconstruction of identity as a political concept.

Political Identity as Individual or Social?

Individuals are not an island onto themselves, where they figure out who they are with no influence from others. As political scientist Kenneth Hoover notes, "in each application, identity as a phenomenon appears to involve a tension between particular and universal elements, and a recognition that identity resides in the space between individual drives and social responses" (1997, 59). Identity, while constructed by the individual, has consequences when the individual's identity interacts with society. Society becomes a reflection of the identity in the individual and can limit how individuals may wish to express their identity. Hoover also warns us about the balance of culture and group based identities as they interact with the ego (1997, 61–65). Social identities, when they become overwhelming, can weaken the ability for individual development because a person becomes limited by the group or social identity and fail to distinguish himself or herself as an individual.

Where the present study differs from what other scholars have presented is that I propose we understand the development of the self to understand voting behavior rather than the outcomes of demographic or stability characteristics. Voting is an

expression of one's political self, while on the other hand, nonvoting can also be an expression of one's political self. However, the major differences in these choices of behavior are really about how developed one is in his or her political identity. More important, these individuals have to know about themselves within the political world. Traditionally, when voting is considered a habit, the focus lies in the acquisition of resources (Plutzer 2002) rather than the development of one's political identity. However, identity can influence who develops the habit of voting and who does not. The development of self-concepts includes asking ourselves what we believe in politically, how we develop who we are politically, and do we actively think about it. Do young people know who they are politically? I consider both active self-questioning and self-reflection to be extremely important to political identity development, especially higher levels of development, and voting behavior. Can this development *not* happen and result in a person's voting nevertheless, or can someone who is highly developed still not vote? While these scenarios are possible, they are not likely. Young people who have not developed their political identity will tend not to vote; on the other hand people with developed political identities are more likely to vote.

People with fully developed political ego identities have (1) a self awareness of who they are politically; (2) experienced a period of questioning wherein they have considered different types of identities, labels, and beliefs, and have settled on commitments; (3) engaged in expressions of their political identity by discussing politics, working on political issues, or writing about their political label or beliefs; and (4) reached the point where they consider politics as an important part of their lives. Each of these aspects of a developed identity can vary over time as one moves through his or her life.

Two of the major concepts in the psychological literature on identity development are commitment and crisis. While commitment is easier to measure than crisis/questioning, both are valuable tools to understanding the behaviors of individuals. Measures within political science are exceptional in that they do study a number of commitments, such as partisanship, ideology, policy positions, opinions about campaigns, and political discussions. However, the process for eventually deciding upon commitments is absent. This leaves room for a contribution, since many of the measures within political science look at commitments without recognizing that these commitments developed over time and within certain circumstances.

A more difficult measure to create is one based on crisis where questioning was present. Questioning offers alternative selection that is inherent in identity. An individual with a fully developed identity has made a choice about who he or she is politically rather than simply assuming an identity. For example, focus group participants who are fully developed say, "as I grew older I'm always questioning different ideas." The larger part of questioning is that it differentiates those who have discovered who they are by choosing between alternatives versus one who assumes an identity due to outside influences. The focus is how much input the individual had in his or her own identity development: Was the person an active creator of their own identity? Or did they collect aspects of others' identities and use them as an empty mask with little substance? The individual's creation of their identity is often

assessed by asking how different his or her identity is from their parents or friends. The identity process requires that we, as individuals, eventually separate ourselves from others (individualize and differentiate) and be able to articulate what makes our own identity different from those that surround us.

Why is questioning important to voting? If a young person have questioned who she is politically and have come to a conclusion about who she is, then she is more conscious and more clear about what she believes in. This consciousness makes me more likely to vote because I am more confident in my conscious decisions about politics. Take for example, young people who begin college with little idea about who they are, but they know from their high school government class that they believe in more gun control and like that government provides grants for higher education. During college, these young people are asked to confront their beliefs on a wide variety of issues: environmental protection, more or less government regulation of business, and the change in college tuition rates are a few examples. There are many of opportunities on campus for youth to become involved in issues both political and social. In their classes, they are questioned about what they believe in and what they think about, which is really a more structured form of self-questioning. This period of youth is also the time where young people are questioning their place in the world as well as reconciling who they have been, who they are, and who they will be. Questioning reveals alternatives and allows young people to forge their own identity: *not* questioning their identity skips a part in the development process, where having doubts about what one believes in is normal. Therefore, a lack of questioning creates less coherence in one's identity because questioning allows for reconciling the disparate parts of an identity and the ability to address clear contradictions between one's beliefs and actions. An identity that has not been personally tested through questioning will not hold up against external confrontation or in complex situations, such as making decisions. A period of questioning increases the likelihood of voting because individuals are more sure about what they believe and are therefore more likely to act on their beliefs. A person who has not gone through a period of questioning when confronted by choices and contradicting evidence is likely to be perplexed by his or her lack of self-knowledge with regard to who he or she is politically. When asked about self-questioning, they say, "I was just still learning but as I get older, you know what I'm saying, I'm still learning."

The assumptions of political socialization scholars suggest there is a foundation for commitments set up early on in life that continues to be built upon as one accumulates experiences with the political world (Beck 1977; Greenstein 1970). Fred Greenstein criticizes the political socialization literature on two fronts: a lack of focus on the process of socialization and the failure to use political socialization to predict behavior. He argues that "behavior is a joint function of situational stimuli and psychological predisposition," meaning that we must take into account an individual's behavior in the context of his or her environment (1970, 974). Paul Allen Beck suggests that there are many different agents of political socialization but agrees with Campbell et al. (1960) that parents tend to be the most influential source of political socialization. However, Beck notes that while we understand the different agents of socialization, more work needs to be done regarding learners'

contributions to their own socialization, precisely what the psychological literature helps to define.

In psychology, an ego identity refers solely to the individual's development of self: how individuals conceptualize themselves, the theory of the self, and the continuity of the self. Ego identity is inherently personal and involves the development of how individuals see themselves more specifically, how they come to think of themselves. The theory of the self suggests that if we have a running tally of who we were, are, and will be, then we are likely to consider our responsibilities and actions (Moshman 1999). Continuity is how we tie all of the disparate pieces of ourselves together to form a coherent story. Identity is the story that we tell ourselves about who we are, and some parts of this story are better developed than others at certain points in our lives.

With political identity, we may not have yet fully developed the commitments to partisanship or independence, ideology, or political beliefs when we are 18 years old, but we may as we grow older. In this case, we can consider political identity as a maturation process. Still others may never develop political commitments or have a period of questioning. Treating political identity as a process rather than as an outcome allows for periods of transition wherein one is developing the commitments to political aspects of life. In much of the psychological literature, there is a significant lack of development in the area of political identity (Waterman 1982; Marcia 1964; Meilman 1979). For many people, developing a political ego identity is in fact more difficult than developing an occupational, religious, or ethnic identity. Augsto Blasi and Kimberly Glodis contend that we develop commitments on parts of our identity that we find most central to our understanding of ourselves (1995), meaning that we develop the aspects of ourselves that we find of value and importance.

Identity forms within a context of identity opportunities and limitations. Interestingly, the meaning of political concepts, institutions, and parties develops from the context in which a person grows up; consider the example of Democrats in the South. "Yellow dog Democrats" were purportedly willing to vote for a dead, yellow dog before they would vote for a Republican. In this context, what being a Democrat meant for Southerners was fundamentally different than what it meant for the Northerners of the same (postbellum) era. Partisan identity was shaped by individuals' conceptualization of what their partisanship meant by being in the environment of the South. The circumstances of the environment shape the individual. However, the individual is the one with final say about who they are. James Côte and Anton Allahar discuss the problems of environments that currently restrict youth development. They argue that postindustrialist countries actually have lower rates of youth identity development due to the nature of institutions and as rites of passage into adulthood become more ambiguous (1996, 71).

Part of the difficulty of developing a political identity is the higher level of abstraction inherent in politics, which is lower in, say, occupational identity choices. While there is a level of abstraction, there are also components of politics that make sense to the average person, such as political problems of the day, perhaps something national like the economy, or maybe local policy issues like road upkeep.

However, aspects of politics are theoretical like what makes a good society, are humans inherently good or evil, and what the role of government in society is. Beck notes that the transmission of political identity is usually through political objects rather than political abstractions (1977, 125). The politics, when not framed in concrete terms, can be difficult to identify with and therefore can hinder political identity development.

Scholars such as Harold Grotevant question whether or not a person can have an achieved identity in one domain and not another (1987), meaning, for example, "I have an achieved occupational identity but a weak or nonexistent political identity." Political identity as noted in the psychological literature has been difficult to measure compared with occupational, religious, relationship, and gender-role identities (Marcia 1964; Marcia et al. 1993; Waterman 1982). Literature suggests that within the domain of the political identity many people seem to be diffuse, meaning they do not have a commitment nor are they searching to find one (Archer 1991; Waterman 1982; Schwartz 2001).

Commitment is a clear concept in political science and is expressed through the ability to answer: Does one have standing commitments to political beliefs about parties, policies, political problems, and the understanding of politics? Do young people have these commitments or not? Do they only have commitments in some areas and not in others? Are these commitments rigid or fluid? Was there some questioning involved? If not, why not? Did someone else simply suggest ideas and they followed them?[1]

Often in political science we choose to look at the product of identity rather than how people developed their politics. Looking at the development of identity can actually help us to better understand other long-measured variables of voting behavior and why some variables tend to have more credence than others. The development of identity gives some explanation as to how people eventually decide on a party identification and why others do not.

The literature on identity development places political identity as one of many aspects of the individual, which makes it all the more difficult to study because different aspects of our identity compete for our attention, having priority over others. However, this work attempts to create a political identity variable that measures only the aspects of one's identity that are political.

Political Ego Identity

Unlike the social identity literature, the psychological identity literature refers to the individual. *Psychological identity* is formed from experiences of the individual and construction by the individual, but it is not socially constructed. Even though a psychological identity is developed throughout one's life, the consolidation of an

[1] Commitment can be measured by many of the variables found on the American National Election Study—questioning however cannot.

individual's identity usually occurs in early adulthood between the ages of 18–21 (Marcia 2002).

Political identity is that which encompasses our political selves. While there are many different aspects of an individual's identity, political identity refers to only the aspects of an overarching identity that are political, such as beliefs about what a "good society" means or how much government regulation is appropriate. Many people engage in politics differently, from formal groups petitioning government for resources to informal community organizations attempting to improve the lives of its citizens. Politics needs to be understood on the individual level: we need to find out how the average person thinks about and engages with politics. Part of the discussion with political identity is to consider different constructions of a political identity and how politics can be inherently individualized.

There are major components to having a political identity, including self-competence, self-knowledge, and a belief that politics is important in one's life. Self-competence refers to the individual's assessment of his or her ability to engage with politics. In the political science literature, self-competence is normally measured with internal efficacy, inherent in such questions as "Do politicians listen to me?" (Niemi 1991). Second, individuals must have some belief system and knowledge about their beliefs. Self-knowledge is a particularly important concept since the discussions of political knowledge hinge on the ideas about factual knowledge and political sophistication rather than what an individual believes about politics. Self-knowledge is what inherently comes first, based in beliefs about the world and politics that stem from how the individual sees the world and their place in it. Self-knowledge for youth may be particularly difficult since they may have not been asked about their own thoughts regarding politics and their political world. Part of the exploration process in identity consolidation is to engage in self-questioning about what issues are of particular importance to the individual. The notion of importance of politics comes from the psychological concept of salience, how prevalent the political identity is compared with the other aspects of one's identity.

Aspects of Psychological Identity

Identity formation, commitment, and salience are aspects of identity. Full identity formation generally occurs in the transitional phase between adolescence and adulthood, but, for some, full identity achievement does not come until later years of adulthood, if ever. Identity is a complex mixture of different identities; consider a single individual and the number of identities he or she has as a student, worker, citizen, sibling, family member, and significant other. Each identity provides an element of role expectations and fulfillments in addition to the internalization of beliefs about the identity. James Marcia's original development (1964) of occupational and ideological features—including religious and political—fails to take into account the many different aspects of life and identity. Developments on Marcia's original measure have branched out to include sex roles, ethnic identity, and relational

identities; however, little work has been done on improving our understanding of a political identity. Identity formation is the process by which one acquires an identity, presents that identity to the social world, and adapts to the reactions to that presentation. The formation process takes into account past, present, and future context. In the political context, the political identity formation process is the acquisition of a political identity. The formation process for political identity development takes into account knowledge about politics from childhood: family discussions about politics, parental modeling of reading the newspaper, watching the news, and going to the polls; future orientations such as what direction the youth wants politics to go and how they think the world should be; and present context of politics, such as the political institutions of government and parties, an individual's circumstances, and current relationship to politics, such as efficacy and salience.

Linkages of Identity Statuses and Behavior

The focus of this research is to answer the question whether or not political identity status can be linked to voting behavior and whether certain identity statuses encourage voting behavior in youth. The consolidation of an identity may represent the greatest difference among 18 to 24 year old participants and non-participants in the electoral system. This argument differs from current assertions in political science because it integrates a process model of development and tests different statuses that relate to whether or not a young person will vote. Different statuses of political identity development can also be recognized in differences of voting behavior among young adults. This comparison allows us to see how identity can shape the likelihood for someone to vote. In much of the psychological development literature, the period of greatest identity development occurs between adolescence and early adulthood (Marcia et al. 1993; Moshman 1999) which is precisely the time when many young people are not participating in politics. The reason for nonparticipation, I argue, is that these young people are still developing their political identity and have not yet decided who they are politically.

Philip Converse, in his discussion of mass politics, noted the difficulty to study and quantify belief systems of the public (1964, 206). However, he also suggested three aspects of belief systems that impact the structure: logical, psychological and social. The psychological aspect includes psychological "postures that are central of belief elements" (211). Converse identified the components that many psychologists find when looking at different identity statuses within identity development, as he identified ideologues, near-ideologues, and ideology by proxy (216). The interest in understanding belief systems stemmed from the ability to predict voting behavior, however the focus was not on the process of belief system development. Much of the difficulty found in psychology is also found in political science around how individuals develop an identity, if they do so at all.

In the psychological literature, identity statuses have been linked to many different types of behaviors in children, adolescents, and adults. However, the missing

link is an analysis of political identity and its effect on voting behavior. The acquisition of identity is a slow process by which an individual comes to know and decide who he or she is. This process begins in late childhood and early adolescence and continues well into adulthood (Erikson 1994). Marcia notes "the greatest change in identity status occurs between 18 and 21 years of age" (1980, 164). Commonly, a crisis of identity in older adults is referred to as a midlife crisis, wherein individuals reexamine their lives and commitments, and at times redefine who they are. Given this context, we are able to connect different identity statuses with different characteristics an individual might display and different behaviors one might engage in.

Erik Erikson saw identity development as a stage in the life cycle of human development and concluded, "In no other stage of the life cycle, then, are the promise of finding oneself and the threat of losing oneself so closely allied" (1994, 244). Part of the concept of political identity is the development of the individual as their own unique person with attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs about politics. Individuals can be differentiated in their identity statuses in attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs based on whether they have commitments, have overcome a period of inner turmoil where they question these components of an identity, and eventually decide who they are.

In distinguishing statuses, Marcia maintains, "*Behaviorally*, one who has an identity appears to others as committed to certain beliefs and values (an ideology) and is directed in terms of a vocational path (an occupation). One who lacks an identity appears to others as directionless and vague or superficial" (1991, 529, italics original). With in-depth interviews, Marcia found that we can tap into different aspects of identity to determine one's identity status. How individuals explain their beliefs, how these beliefs came about, and the actions an individual takes to commit to those beliefs were originally studied by open- and close-ended questions. The major contribution of Marcia's work was to provide a clinical assessment of identity such that practitioners and researchers could have an objective assessment of identity development and the characteristics of four identity statuses. Further growth from Marcia's work has produced an entire discussion of adolescent and adult development. However, much of the work done by psychologists has not focused on the relationship of behaviors to identity statuses but rather the cognitive, relational, and role characteristics of each status.

Much of the identity work in psychology has been about theory development—especially about what an identity is and what it means to the individual. It is in hindsight that people usually assess behavior in relation to identity rather than attempting to predict future behavior based on identity statuses. David Moshman explains the relationship between identity and behavior: "an identity is not just an attempt to describe one's typical behavior, but is an account of the core beliefs and purposes that one construes as explaining that behavior" (1999, 79). While identity may guide our actions, we also construct an identity from how we have behaved and received feedback from others based on that behavior. The process of identity construction is understudied in the field (Schwartz 2001); however, progress has been made on the theoretical aspects of identity development such as characteristics of each status and behaviors in controlled settings (Waterman 1982). Eventually, the

individual must create a cohesive self where the parts of identity seem to fit together, thereby create continuity between thoughts and actions within a particular environmental setting. As individuals take on their identities, they begin to achieve different levels of identity development. The individual does not develop this identity in a vacuum, but instead in a highly complex environment with different people, institutions, and cultural circumstances.

Within identity development, scholars believe two identity elements are extremely important: commitment and crisis (Erikson 1994; Marcia 1964). Commitment is often based on the attachments one forms to social groups, belief systems, and attitudes. A person is defined as committed politically if he or she expresses attachment to and can identify with certain party, ideology, and set of opinions (Marcia 1964; Marcia et al. 1993). The term crisis, however, is more difficult to understand. Crisis encompasses questioning one's beliefs, searching for alternative identifications, and inner turmoil about not reaching a resolution surrounding who one is and what he or she stands for. Crisis can result from individuals searching on their own or being questioned by others about their beliefs and attachments. Baumeister identifies two different types of identity crisis: deficit and conflict. Deficit occurs with little to no interaction with others; this is where inquiry and identity consolidation are the result of individual discovery. Conflict occurs when different definitions of self are incompatible, and in order to overcome the crisis the individual must resolve this conflict (1991a, 519–520). In theory, commitment and crisis are straightforward issues; in practice, however, the presence of commitment and crisis becomes more difficult to assess.

Philip Meilman finds that as age increases, the presence of political commitment and crisis increases, meaning that as we age, we are both more likely to make commitments to politics and also to engage in questioning about politics (1979, 231). But the commitments Meilman is referring to are not the same as commitments found in the voting behavior literature, such as commitments to community or social ties, but rather identity commitments to beliefs and a political outlook. The commitment to a political identity means commitment to beliefs and to actions within the political realm.

Identity development also tends to interact with the conscious and unconscious choices we make about what is important to our lives and what behaviors we engage in. Those aspects of our identity that we consciously feel are central to our lives may not be as important subconsciously. Claims about what aspects of our lives we think are most important may not be manifested in how we act. Richard Serpe finds that there is a relationship between identity and salience where "commitment will have a greater impact on identity salience than the converse" (1987, 51); in other words, our commitments often place aspects of our identity within a priority spectrum, but the importance of our identity does not seem to have as much influence on our commitments. Serpe also argues that "the great possibilities for personal choices…the stronger the relationship between commitment and identity salience" (1987, 46). The more choice I have in politics then the more likely I am to have a commitment to my political identity and, in turn, the more important my political identity is.

Political scientists have also linked personality to political actions. Kristen Monroe and Connie Epperson (1994) find that political actions are limited based on our personality dispositions. Their study focuses on narratives from World War II and individuals' discussions of their actions toward Jews. They consider the notion that "ethical political actions arise spontaneously, resulting from deep-seated dispositions that form one's central identity" (1994, 219). Once identity is decided upon, actions that follow seem much clearer because that individual has committed to his or her identity and will therefore engage in behaviors to reaffirm that identity.

Political behavior is directly linked with a developed political identity, Elizabeth Cole and Abigail Stewart (1996) define as "a pattern of beliefs related to the social and structural relationships that connect the individual to social groups…, the political realm is personally relevant, and that collective actions are the best responses to social problems" (132). Their measure of political identity includes political salience, collective orientation, system blame, ideology, and power discontent. With their work on black and white women who graduated from college twenty years earlier, their findings suggest that having a political identity only affects white women's midlife political participation in a variety of areas. However, they also find student activism and feelings of social responsibility account for midlife political participation of both white and black women (135). Yet political identity is not just racial and partisan identity; it is the internalization of political knowledge to create a coherent, self-conscious, political self. In the focus groups conducted with 18 to 24 year olds, there is clear differentiation between those who are committed and those who are not. For example, a person with a fully developed political identity said "I think that my actual involvement comes…from family and my background. My more philosophical views are from academic studies." For a young person with a diffuse identity, said "I'm on the back benches just watching [politics]." Commitment is often expressed with clear answers to questions and an obvious self-confidence.

As social beings we are consistently dealing with feedback about ourselves, which has the possibility of influencing a change in our identity. Those who are sure about their identities are much less likely to change their behaviors than those who are exploring different identities or who are wavering on where they stand with regard to particular issues. William Swann and Craig Hill relate behavior with an identity as "people infer who they are by observing their recent behaviors and the reactions of others and translating this information into appropriate self conceptions" (1982, 59–60). They find that individuals are active in their maintenance of self-conceptions and will refute and undermine information that disconfirms those self-conceptions (1982, 66). For young people developing a political identity, the reaction of others about who one is politically reveals the importance (to the individual) of others' recognizing and acknowledging the identity of the individual. The role that other people play, especially the role peers play, in shaping the young person's identity is that of reaction, which the young individual adapts to.

In looking at the process of identity development through time, Waterman finds that college is an important time for youth to begin developing political identity commitments. However, many youth seem not to be interested in politics (1982,

347). He goes on to observe as young people transition into adulthood they are strengthening their identity, but not addressing new identity issues or identity possibilities (1982, 349). This may very well be the distinguishing factor in older and younger adults in their identity development. Young adults are trying to find their way in the political world and are looking to find those commitments. The next step in the developmental process is to see how those commitments fit into the overarching identity of a person, which is where individuals come to decide how their political identity ranks in order of importance.

Under Marcia's original framework different characteristics and reactions to questioning have been found in each of the identity statuses. Based on these characteristics found in the psychological literature, we can identify different political identity statuses and create a typology of how individuals within each of those statuses may score on a political identity and salience scale.

Achievement Status

Individuals who have achieved an overarching identity are likely to display certain characteristics: maintaining flexibility in thoughts and actions, being more reflective about their actions, and willing to take responsibility for what they have done (Marcia 1980). Erikson's understanding of an achieved identity meant one's settling on an identification that would eventually lead to commitments (1994). He describes fully developed identities displayed as a "sense of psychosocial well-being. Its most obvious concomitants are feeling of being at home in one's body, a sense of 'knowing where one is going,' and an inner assuredness of anticipated recognition from those who count" (1994, 165).

Marcia's early work suggests that individuals who have reached achievement status have particular characteristics. He suggests a person with an achieved identity has evaluated their past beliefs and has solidified an identity that they then act upon (1966, 552). Two important components Marcia identifies early on in the ideological dimension of identity are evaluation and resolution. We have come to measure identity through psychological testing—in-depth interviews, tests of coherence, anxiety evaluations, and measures of conformity. Achievements tend to be feel greater autonomy and internal locus of control—they feel in control of their lives and outcomes (Marcia 1993, 25); they are also found to be effective decision makers (Schwartz 2001).

There do tend to be gender differences in statuses with regard to political identity development. Men tend to excel in achieving a political ideology, whereas women tend to be foreclosed (see discussion below, Matteson 1993, 89); but on other aspects of identity development women are more likely to be highly developed, such as with relationship identities. Women tend to be more foreclosed in political identity development derives from the social support for women: there is social support for religious, occupational, interpersonal, and relationship aspects to an identity, but there is little societal support for women to develop their identity politically

(Burns et al. 2001). D. R. Matteson also found that within identity development, girls are more likely to believe that stability is important, and girls in committed statuses (achievement and foreclosure) are more likely to be popular.

In a review of the research, Alan Waterman found different accounts of political identity development in a few different studies. However, in each of the studies males tended to be more developed in their political ideology than women (1982, 350). While there may be variation between domains of an identity, those who are achieved have commitments in many different domains, such as occupation, relationship, and life style commitments. Those with a large number of commitments are more likely to be either achieved or foreclosed (Schwartz 2001, 27). Stryker and Serpe warn, however, that "having an identity does not automatically activate a full range of possible role-related behaviors" (1983, 59).

People who have achieved an identity are often identified as trusting, having feelings of aliveness, and exhibiting "lower discrepancies between the actual and ideal self" (Hoegh and Bourgeois 2002). As part of Erik Erikson's human development theory, certain factors are needed to transition to the next level of development. Dana Hoegh and Martin Bourgeois identify factors that precede identity development and are consequences of identity development—or lack thereof. For an individual to develop an identity, he or she must live in a secure environment where parents provide structure but are not overbearing. In addition, individuals must learn the basic aspects of trust in others so that they can eventually trust themselves. Hoegh and Bourgeois remark, "Personal ego development is demonstrated by the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughtfulness, non-defensiveness and independent thinking" (2002, 579). As a consequence of achieved identity development, individuals in this status are more likely to develop intimacy and acquire adult relationships.

Moratorium Status

In the scale of identity development, following closely behind identity achievements are those in the moratorium status. "Moratoriums" are individuals who are in between commitments, though they do often display an exploratory need to resolve their commitments and eventually settle on an identity. Moratoriums are also reflective and willing to take responsibility for their actions; Ruthellen Josselson notes that individuals experiencing moratorium status begin to exhibit autonomy in thoughts and actions (1980, 197). Erikson perceived such individuals as having identity in many forms and not necessarily deciding on any specific commitments (1994). He found moratoriums as exploring the world without settling on commitments and having difficulty keeping commitments. In his work, Erikson considered moratoriums as experimental and wanting to sample different identities. Marcia saw the status of moratorium characterized as an "active struggle to make commitments" and evidence of a crisis period (1966, 552). Moratoriums are pursuing courses of

action to make commitments—eventually. They often express a tension for not having settled on an identity and feel pressure to settle eventually.

Within psychological testing, moratoriums tend to rate high on anxiety scales. Marcia explains there is such high anxiety in this status because moratoriums feel pressure to decide who they are and to settle on commitments (1993, 24). This tension is often captured on anxiety scales as the individual in moratorium at times feels that there is no right answer and cannot decide which avenue of action or inquiry to pursue. David Moshman argues that once a person enters moratorium status, they can never return to a foreclosure status, suggesting that the questioning begun during the moratorium stage cannot be reversed (1999).

Foreclosure Status

Foreclosure status has tended to be one of the most studied identity statuses, mainly because scholars would like to discover ways to encourage higher levels of identity development. This status is often typified by individuals mimicking those they look up to, whether parents or leaders. Marcia identified "foreclosures"—individuals in this type of status in politics—saying, "he is what his parents are with little or no personal stamp of his own" (1964, 30). Characteristics Marcia found in foreclosures were need for authority, desire for strong leadership, and deep convictions regarding obedience (1964, 142). Debra Roker and Michael Banks find that foreclosures, in schoolgirls, are less likely to be found in public schools (as compared with private schools), where different and competing viewpoints exist (1993). This evidence suggests that just the presence of alternative viewpoints from their parents' will offer opportunities for political identity development. Another look at foreclosure defined as "identity [that] is conferred rather than achieved" and links this status with high authoritarianism (Hoover 1997, 35). Foreclosures' need for structure and assurance of a steady future often encourage them to support institutions and regimes wherein these assurances are met.

With specific reference to political ideology, Archer notes the gender differences in identity development where men are more likely to be in the foreclosure status, women in the diffusion status (1991, 523). Jane Kroger finds differences in parenting styles result in different identity outcomes: Young people who have families that avoid difference in identity or opinion often have little exploration of identity. Young people in foreclosure have families who repress thoughts and ideas that would challenge their parents and these parents are often overly involved to the port where they do not let their children become their own person (1993a, 9). Marcia's original conceptualization of foreclosures were those who exhibited commitments without crisis or without questioning those commitments (1966, 552). Foreclosures tend to be prematurely committed to an identity with little or no gathering of new information or consideration of alternatives. Premature commitment to an identity tends to make foreclosures more resistant to change (Marcia et al. 1993, 184). However, there is some differentiation in the field: Meilman argues that there is a different

type of foreclosure found in adolescence, which he defines as a "*self determined foreclosure*, to account for subjects who were highly committed to their views but who had neither experienced a crisis nor had adopted their parents' views" (1979, 230, italics original). Kroger also finds differences between firm and developmental foreclosures, where firm foreclosures are steadfast in their commitments and developmental foreclosures are open to consideration of alternatives (1995, 322).

Diffusion Status

"Diffusions" are individuals generally characterized as not interested in or engaged with politics and society. Côte and Allahar, in linking the individual to the larger society, explain: When adults in society have ambiguous identities, they are less able to be identity role models and encourage self-discovery in young people (1996, 71). They argue that, in a postindustrial society, government and the economy benefit from youth identity confusion because it is easier to subjugate and control them (160). Roker and Banks find differences in identity development in girls based whether they attend public or private school: while girls find a wider range of ideologies in public schools, when it comes to political identity many girls lack interest or feel outside of the political system (1993, 299). Marcia found a person experiencing diffusion status will exhibit one of two different approaches: he will either be uninterested in the ideology of politics, or he will adopt a "smorgasbord approach in which one outlook seems as good to him as another" (1966, 552). In general, diffusion statuses tend to have an external locus of control wherein they believe that others are making all the decisions affecting their lives (Marcia et al. 1993, 25). Like "moratoriums," who have anxiety about making decisions, diffusions also have high levels of anxiety, which can also be explained by the tension involved in making decisions. However, Waterman finds diffusion statuses tend to persist into adulthood around religious and political ideology rather than in occupation, such that when one begins in the diffusion status in areas of ideology he or she is more likely to stay in this status through adulthood (1993, 60).

Identity Processing Styles and Identity Statuses

Identity statuses differ not only in the assessment of identity but also in the style of processing. Michael Berzonsky and Linda Kuk argue that "the various identity statuses differ in the social-cognitive processes they use to solve personal problems, make decisions, and process identity-relevant information" (2000, 82). Three different processing styles emerge from the research: information-oriented, normative, and avoidant-oriented. The information-oriented processing style is closely associated with higher levels of identity status development and includes individuals who "actively seek out, evaluate, and use self-relevant information" (83). The normative

processing style requires that the individual live up to the expectations and prescriptions of a significant other, whereas the avoidant style includes individuals who dodge personal problems and decisions (83). Self-exploration became a key component in assessing the information-oriented processing style, suggesting that questioning and self-reflection are key components to how people process information about themselves (92). Self-exploration is therefore a key component to higher levels of identity development.

Political Identity Particulars

In the original conceptualization of identity, Erik Erikson divided identity into occupational and ideological aspects. James Marcia's development from Erikson's work was to break down ideology into religious and political components (1964). However, many scholars of identity development have found it difficult to study political identity development and often find young adults in either foreclosure or diffusion statuses when it comes to political identity. Kroger argues that political aspects of self, over time, are becoming the "least important to self definition" (1993b, 369). From 1984 to 1990, she finds fewer university students in the achieved status and more in the foreclosure status. This shift, she believes, is closely related to the changes in political and economic climate, where in 1984 there was stability, optimism and opportunity; in 1990, uncertainty and recession (1993b, 373).

Distinguishing Political Ego Identity from Party Identification

Political ego identity is fundamentally different from political party affiliation, in that it encompasses all of the beliefs about politics, the individual's place within politics, and behaviors as consequences of those commitments. Where political party affiliation is more of a label, political identity includes how the individual interacts, believes, and behaves in ways that may well be beyond any understanding focused solely on political party affiliation. One can affiliate with a political party and yet not have achieved a political identity, and one can develop a political identity without necessarily having a firm commitment to a particular political party and its principles. Consider, for example, someone who is a Democrat but has no clear opinions about politics and has very little political knowledge, including who the current vice president is—much less any party affiliation. This person who has little political confidence or awareness would score extremely low on identity development. All he may know about politics is that there are two political parties: he will have little knowledge of what the parties stand for, or what he stands for. For Campbell et al., these individuals are typical voters, but for purposes here these individuals would fall into the lowest identity status diffusion—and would therefore be the *least likely* to participate in elections. On the other hand, as Converse found,

individuals who are most sophisticated in political knowledge and most active in politics declare themselves to be Independents (1964, 217). These individuals take on no political party affiliation but nevertheless are highly developed politically.

Party identification is one of the most studied variables of the sociological aspects of voting behavior. If we look back to *The American Voter* (Campbell et al.), we find that partisan identification was the variable with the most explanatory power for voter turnout and is defined as "the individual's affective orientation to an important group-object in his environment" (1960, 121). For Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes, partisanship takes into account solely the affective portion (or feelings) of an identity and lacks a deeper meaning of identity and the process by which one acquires an identity. Aldrich explores a changing partisanship that is now a more distanced relationship between party and voters, where party is no longer an aspect of ordinary life (1995, 168). We study partisanship in the form of affiliation, which then relates to behavioral outcomes. Political ego identity takes into account our commitments, our explorations between alternatives, and knowing who we are. Partisanship, while it is a commitment, does not inherently imply that alternatives were explored, nor does it mean that a partisan knows who he or she is politically. Partisanship is a surface-level identity that acts as a cue to political behavior; political identity, on the other hand, looks at deeper connections to belief structures, policy preferences, and self-reflection.

One can also have a political ego identity and not adopt a political party affiliation. A person can know who he or she is politically and not make commitments to either of the two major political parties because neither party represents the person's identity. Developmentalists measure affiliation with a political party as a commitment, but this assumption—that higher levels of identity development require commitment to a political party—is flawed. Survey format questions on identity development require commitment to a political party (Marcia 1964; Adams 1998). However, commitment can be measured in other ways and need not be commitment to an organization; people can instead commit to ideology and beliefs that do not coincide available with options from the two political parties. In the psychological literature, measures of political ego identity have generally been considered much weaker than measures of occupational and religious ideology (Marcia et al. 1993). The difficulty in measuring the political aspects of identity as they pertain to young people is that young people seem to lack interest and to have few clear beliefs or commitments (1993, 55). Partisan identity is but one aspect of the larger concept of political ego identity that takes into account commitments, such as partisanship, ideological commitment, and policy preferences. However, the identity scale used in the present study does not include partisanship as a variable because partisanship is too easily acquired: evidence of a developed political identity requires greater in-depth self-knowledge, reflection, and questioning.

Distinguishing Political Ego Identity from Ethnic Identity

In the developmental psychology literature, the concept of ego identity began with Erik Erikson, who split the ego identity into two components: occupational and ideological (1994). James Marcia further delineated the aspect of ideology into two components: political and religious. New formations in the ego identity literature have focused on developing new domains of identity, which include interpersonal interactions, sex roles, and ethnic identity (Schwartz 2001). In comparison, ethnic identity and political identity are domains of a larger ego identity. Political identity is an older concept and has a longer measurement history, than ethnic identity.

Ethnic identity pertains to those aspects of one's identity that are racial, ethnic, and cultural: the social processes to achieve an ethnic identity, the belonging to an ethnic group, and the distinguishing elements between groups (Sears and Levy 2003; Quintana et al. 2006). Not all of a person's ethnic identity is political, and not all of one's political identity is ethnic. However, there are spheres that overlap. Those aspects of ethnic identity that are political should be included in an analysis of political ego identity. Knowing who one is should not be limited by a narrow understanding of identity that excludes difficult to measure variables, which is why there should be an expansion of the understanding of ethnic identity. In studying political identity and its interaction with ethnic identity, there may be clearer evidence of ethnic elements of a political identity in ethnic minorities than with ethnic majorities (Beck 1977; Sears and Levy 2003), but scholars have to be careful that they are studying aspects of political identity and not a larger identity.

Scope of This Research

The scope of this study includes specifically young voters (ages 18 to 24) because they are the youngest and actual first-timers in any total voting cohort. But this does not mean that they all have questioned or know who they are politically. Nor does it mean that each young person is a blank slate. But for a large majority of young people, this period is when they begin to develop other aspects of their lives, such as occupations and lifestyles, and it is when they usually begin to make decisions for themselves away from their parents' influence. For some young people, ages 18–22 are college years, a time to experiment with many different aspects of life, including politics, social spheres, occupational choices, and decisions about who they really are. There are those who are still questioning, and there are clearly people who will lead the young Republicans and young Democrats on campus. Fully developed political identities are those who know who they are and what they stand for, who engage political debate with others and asked questions about themselves, and who seem certain in their political outlook. However, certainty at a young age can seem dangerous-especially since it is unclear whether individuals are thinking for themselves or are accepting someone else's thoughts.

Civic Engagement and Identity Development

For aspects of civic engagement and political participation, identity formation is vital when one is exploring alternative identities, having confrontations with others, and making commitments. For youth who are participating in civic activities, opportunities for exploring alternatives, such as working for nonprofits, is a way for the individual to experience other ways of looking at the world and seeing others' circumstances. When the civic engagement is school based, the civic opportunities and later classroom discussions of engagement opportunities offer confrontation of different beliefs about the world for both the student and his or her peers (Flanagan 2003). Periods of self-reflection in journal entries, measured by changes in how students perceive the world and their role within it, allow the individual to make commitments about what they think is important, how they think about the social situation, and how they define themselves in context (Yates and Youniss 1996).

In the process of forming an identity, one goes through a period of crisis and eventually settles on commitments. Differences between statuses are based on evidence of crisis and commitments. Periods of crisis occur when one's beliefs, self-conception, and behaviors have gone through some type of conflict, whether it is inside the individual or as conflict with others in an attempt to define one's self. Commitment, or how invested an individual is in the identity, is another aspect of identity that compliments confrontation (Yoder 2000). But civic engagement offers more alternatives to people more than a simple political party identification. The many different ways to participate civically[2] offer better opportunities to define oneself and provide an explanation as to why youth consider civic engagement and political engagement as distinct. This may also reveal why a political identity is more salient in other Westernized nations, where greater choice in political parties and more alternatives politically (through policy, political beliefs, or political groups) are prevalent.

The Intersection of Political Science and Psychology: Promises and Limitations

Questions about identity development are usually expressed as: Has the individual committed to his or her political identity? Has there been a period of exploration wherein the individual has sought out alternatives, considered different points of view, and searched for new information? But the real-world data do not seem to assess exploration very well. For political science, we have been measuring different levels of commitment for more than 80 years. However, as mentioned above, the limitation in the political science literature is the level of exploration. What this notion of exploration provides us with is a closer look at the development, how the

[2] However, voting in this work is considered political engagement.

individual came to make these commitments. Have they invested much time in considering the alternatives, or did they simply become what their parents were?

As an example, Philip Converse and Georges DuPeux (1962) suggest that different individuals develop partisan attachments with and without information from their parents, but those who do not have information about their parents' party affiliation are less likely to develop attachments to party. Some of the work on the effects of parental influence on partisanship has to do directly with levels of exploration. If an individual does not want to explore alternatives, he or she will simply settle on his or her parents' affiliation rather than discover commitments to parties on his or her own. But the only question the political science literature seemed to raise was regarding the relationship between parents and children rather than about the development of an identity the children achieved on their own.

Conceptualization of Identity

Identity is the personal understanding of self, how individuals see themselves in the world. All of the power to define oneself lies within the individual, but that does not mean that the self is not altered by outside factors. We are in essence the product of our environments. In particular, the political environment from which we come plays a role in how we see the world and how we see ourselves interacting with that world. More generally, the political world in the United States is limited by two national parties, but there is also the possibility to be an Independent.[3] When scholars think about politics, they generally consider two aspects of politics: ideology and partisanship. Ideology in the U.S. politics falls between conservative and liberal on two types of policy areas—social and economic (Lane 1967). While this may be an oversimplification for many political scientists, for much of the population politics is simplified into two choices.

When a person has a political identity, he or she is able to make decisions more quickly, evaluate information and adapt to it, and explains his or her feelings and thoughts about particular issues. For a political identity in particular, there are certain levels of comfort that go along with having an identity, such as being comfortable expressing who one is politically. Yet the most important part of political identity development is how one acquires a self-concept. How do I answer if asked who I am politically? What is my political identity? It might seem 'at first' that many people would identify themselves in the typical partisan fashion, but yet this is the individual reacting to the expectations of the outside world. In surveys of politics, how we tend to identify people *is in terms of partisanship*. But there are many other aspects of identification that come into play when discussing *who one is politically*, such as ideology and issues. Part of what is missing from the available data is

[3] The topic of Independents and identity development will be discussed in chapter 4 and deals directly with the question of identity development and how one can be Independent in addition to being highly developed in an identity.

an open-ended question asking who one is politically. Identity is deeper than superficial, partisan labels; we take many things into account when we answer who we are politically. This work explores the elements included in different levels of identity development on a continuum, from little to no development to fully developed.

There are many different ways to understand identity, which is why I distinguish political ego identity from other forms of identity. Political ego identity is the self-conceptualization of political aspects of one's own life—more simply put, the aspects of me that are political. Importantly, this distinction is where identity is constructed; I argue that while identity may be *influenced by other factors*, it is *constructed by the individual* rather than by society or social groups. In the end, what is of importance to my study is how individuals think of themselves politically. What is the story that individuals convey to others and to themselves about who they are politically? The narrative we use to inform and justify our actions is political identity. But political identity is simply a part of an overarching identity that takes into account other aspects of one's life: career, family, relationships, religion, and others. Our narratives are constructed within particular contexts and languages that both expand and limit our understanding of ourselves. But in the end, it is the individual who holds the answers to his or her life.

Thinking about the models and considering what the characteristics of an achieved identity are, there are clear indicators that distinguish the different statuses. The statuses in this study are somewhat different from Marcia's original conception (achievement, moratorium, foreclosure, and diffusion): we will explore the statuses of fully developed, somewhat developed, exploratory, and diffusion. Three of Marcia's original concepts are represented: "fully developed" is akin to achievement; "exploratory" correlates with "moratorium"; and diffusion is used for the same concept Marcia set forth. "Somewhat developed" stands in for foreclosure, however because a foreclosed individual still has an identity, even though his or her identity may not be as developed as people who have questioned who they are politically. What is often missing in what Marcia terms "foreclosure" is individuation. The individual seems to mimic others around them rather than individualize his or her identity. Foreclosures do, in fact, have an identity, and that identity is currently somewhat developed, but these individuals have not yet gone through periods of self-questioning and struggle that would result in a more developed identity. They are, therefore, somewhat developed.

Exploration is seeking information while believing there is value in politics. A person has to be interested in finding out who he or she is and must be interested in the political world in order to be a part of it. Salience, defined as being interested and feeling that politics is important to one's life, is an integral part of exploration; salience encourages exploration of alternatives in the process of finding one's place.

I use two measures to assess levels of political identity development: an identity status measure and a salience measure. The identity status measure examines evidence of commitments to policy issues and ideology, and sets forth a crude assessment of exploration through discussions of politics. The salience measure taps into interest in politics and public affairs to gather evidence about the importance of

politics to one's life. A full explanation and detailed construction of the measures is included in appendices. Following are explanations and examples for each status.

Typology of Political Ego Identity Statuses

Fully Developed

Fully developed individuals know who they are politically and believe politics is important to their lives. They score high on both political identity and salience scales and exhibit many of the behaviors related to their commitment to politics; as a consequence, individuals with fully developed identities are more likely to vote than those with any of the other statuses. Take, for example, a youth activist whose set of beliefs favors increasing environmental protection, expanding government transparency, and wanting the United States to be more active in human rights around the world. This person expresses his or her beliefs both in thoughts and in actions. He or she has thought through what issues are especially important and then takes steps to express specific commitments to causes. People with a fully developed political identities have commitments to a set of beliefs, are aware of the political world, are self-aware in what they believe politically, and view politics as an important part of life.

Based on information gathered in focus groups, I have found that fully developed individuals tend to be older, more sure of themselves, and have a sense of confidence when they talk about politics. One example includes a fully developed interviewee saying "I try to be involved positively in the system of government of which I am a member." They know what areas of politics they care about and are certain when they say that they do have a political identity. When asked if their identity is still under development, they clearly answer no, I know who I am. There were very few fully developed, focus-group participants within the age category of 18 to 24. All of those who were fully developed noted a sense of struggle in the formation of their identities. The struggle, however, was more externalized than I had previously surmised. Two individuals noted struggles with their parents over politics that had changed their relationship, but they were certain about what their political convictions and were not going to change because they disagreed with their parents, however uncomfortable the situation became (Gentry 2010).

Somewhat Developed

As a replacement for foreclosure, I have the status of "somewhat developed". Somewhat developed captures some level of commitment to beliefs, self-knowledge, and policy preferences, while at the same time the term implies lower levels

of salience than those who are fully developed. While somewhat developed individuals are developed in their identity, this does not necessarily mean that politics is important in their lives. Somewhat developed individuals have not become fully developed for many different reasons, but from my interaction with these focus group participants—I observed that somewhat developed individuals tended not to individualize their own political identity from others—meaning there did not seem to be any personalization of the identity. Somewhat developed individuals relied on others for their self-definition, and while they did accept this definition, they seemed to give little thought as to what they, believe. One focus group participant noted "[M]y mom was always Democrat… so I was obviously very influenced by her…I have a pretty similar outlook to my mother." Somewhat developed individuals are *not* as committed to their political beliefs or believe politics to be as important to their lives as fully developed individuals report and exhibit. A participant with a somewhat developed identity stated that he was interested in politics, but that he "floats in the middle" of politics. However, they do display more commitments and greater awareness than their less developed counterparts.

In terms of questioning one's political identity, somewhat developed individuals may not have questioned their political commitments. One participant admitted to not questioning their beliefs, but said "most of the time I feel like a Democrat … very rarely do I side with the Republican candidate." Consider the youth who grew up in a Republican household, where the parents were partisan and had strong beliefs about specific political issues, such as oppressive government regulation and the need for particular social services. Somewhat developed individuals are more committed to a political identity than they are self-aware: they can identify what they believe in and what commitments they have to a political party or ideology, but they are less able to identify why they have these beliefs and commitments. Often, these individuals will say that they have always known who they are politically, and searching for alternatives was not an important component to their development.

In the focus groups, there arose a particularly clear example of a somewhat developed individual: a young man said that there were no clear differences between what his friends and parents thought and what he thought. Much of the influence on somewhat developed individuals' political identity comes from their environment—mainly people who were around them. In the lives of the somewhat developed, there seems to be no disagreement between parents or friends about politics. The somewhat developed appear to follow the crowd and not create waves or disagree with others. They exhibit significantly less turbulence in their acquisition of a political identity because they have disagreed very little with others who seemed to shape their identity and because politics was usually a conversation that was avoided. Somewhat developed individuals reveal signs that they have explored what other people think and have accepted it without serious questioning of what they believe or how they are different.

Explorers

Explorers have not yet developed the commitments that either the fully developed or somewhat developed statuses have, but this does not mean that they are not attempting to figure out who they are politically. Explorers, like Marcia's moratoriums, believe that the development of commitments to their political identity is important, but they have not yet settled on commitments. Explorers would score low on the political identity scale compared to the more developed statuses, but they also exhibit medium to high levels of salience. Exploring new identities includes engaging in behaviors of discovery and attempting to try on different identities to see which one fits. One of the most common statement by explorers was that they are always questioning, therefore never deciding upon an identity. Explorers will answer "I still got a lot to learn," "I felt helpless," and "I feel like I am a baby [when it comes to politics]." However, their likelihood of voting is much lower than that of their developed counterparts because they have not yet formed commitments.

Voting could be an exploratory behavior, but explorers are more likely not to vote. A typical youth explorer may seem confused about politics and yet believe that politics is important enough that they want to become more developed. With few stable commitments and little self-awareness, this youth seems to be meandering through the political process searching for an identity. The most important distinction between explorers and the other statuses, in the focus groups, is their assessment of their identity as continually underdevelopment. An explorer would say, "I think…I would continuously question my own political identity." When asked whether or not they had a political identity, many would say, "I guess but then again may be not." Explorers tended to have less coherent discussions on politics or were timid about expressing their ideas, yet they were interested in and even eager to hear what others thought about politics.

Diffusions

Of all the individuals different statuses, diffusions, who have few if any commitments and care little about politics, are the least likely to vote. Comparatively, they score exceptionally low on both political identity and salience scales. While there may be different reasons for diffusion—indifference, alienation, ignorance, or disgust—in the end, they are the least likely to vote because they have little to no commitments and do not find politics to be that important to their lives. An example of alienation of a person with diffusion status is expressed as, "I just feel like there is no one really worth being interested in." A typical diffusion-status individual will exhibit avoidant behaviors rather than exploratory or committed behaviors. One participant described their identity as "an observer." These youth do not see the importance of politics nor do they strive to become self-aware or to create commitments. There are many varieties of each type of identity status, and diffusions could

generally be from two different categories: those with no interest in politics (passively avoidant) and those who are alienated from the political system (actively avoidant).

Typically, diffusion youth find other things to occupy their time, avoid situations where they may be confronted with politics, and are reluctant to engage in discussions of politics; when asked they often answer "I don't know." Most commonly diffusions are jaded—meaning they were more turned off by politics as opposed to never having been turned on to politics (Gentry 2010). The sense from diffusions was that politics is corrupt and there is nothing they can do about it. They would say, "Politics does not really matter"—indicating a low sense of personal efficacy. Diffusions liked to disagree with and be confrontational toward others in the focus group by questioning why others thought what they did, but when asked how *they* felt, they said that they did not know.

Explaining the Process of Development

The steps of the developmental process of a political identity are socialization, exploration, judgment of others' politics, self-questioning, and coherence. Socialization, illustrated in Fig. 2.1, is the first element of the process wherein external forces shape a young person's identity. Where people grow up, their economic and social circumstances, their parents, school situation, and friends all contribute to the first formation of the political being. As the cornerstone of the entire developmental process, socialization—specifically, the amount of political socialization by external forces—provides a foundation for the future of the political identity. Socialization can be extensive or minimal; different degrees of socialization lead to different levels of identity development. For higher levels of identity in young adulthood, many fully developed individuals were previously socialized to be interested in, engaged in, and a part of politics. From my research with young people in focus groups, parental encouragement to have knowledge about politics played a major role in the successful early development of an identity by people in their young adult years. Parents, however, were not the only force of socialization that mattered—schools also seemed to play a role, with social studies teachers discussing politics and mock elections in the early years of education. From the focus groups, those in the lower statuses often noted that they did not discuss politics in their homes, schools, or communities—for them, socialization of other factors such as vocation or social status were more important than political identity development. After the stage of socialization, individuals who have no socialization or minimal socialization often end up in the diffusion status because they have not been socialized to think that politics is important or because other aspects of their overarching identity are more important than their political identity. For individuals who have been extensively socialized in their environment, they tend to progress to the next stage of political identity development—exploration.

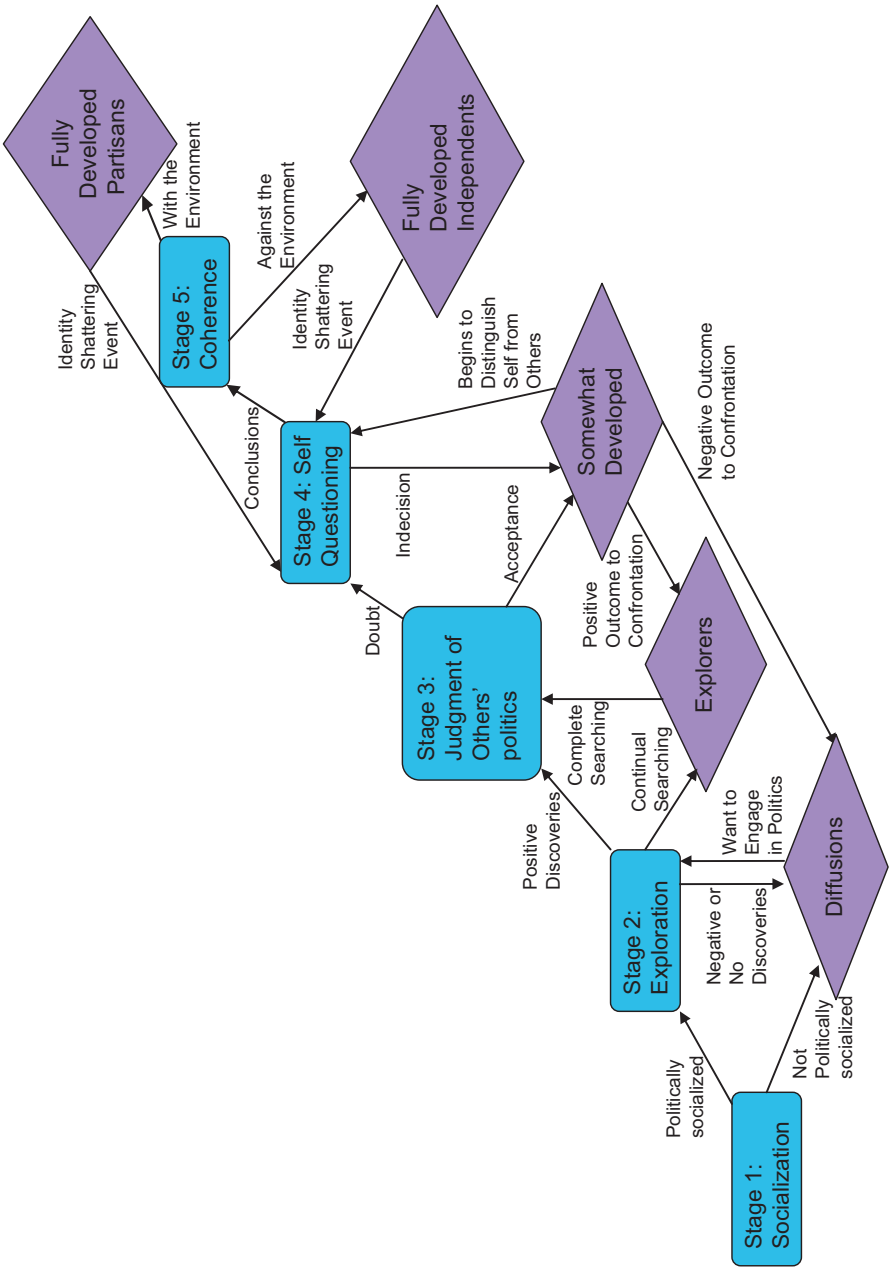


Fig. 2.1 The process of political identity development

Exploration of alternative ideas from parents, teachers, and peers is a key component to a cohesive and highly developed identity. A part of the exploration process is finding out about how the political system works and what the major issues of debate are. Exploration can be an extensive look or may be minimal to non-existent. Some diffusions have not explored the political possibilities and therefore are not interested or engaged in continuing to find out who they are politically. For individuals who are somewhat developed, the exploration element of the development process is extremely minimal to the point where their exploration amounts to finding out what other people's ideas are and accepting them, not necessarily developing their own ideas.

As the flowchart suggests (Fig. 2.1), three possibilities happen in the exploration stage. Individuals may explore what their political environment has to offer and may be disappointed to the point that they do not want to interact with any aspect of politics. These diffusions are often put off by what they find in the political environment and never continue to the other stages. Another pathway as a consequence of exploration is to continue to search within the political environment, thus becoming explorers. The status of explorer may be momentary or ongoing; a person may choose to explore continually what the political environment has to offer without ever deciding how he or she feels about what others' politics are and without ever deciding on his or her own political identity. Scholars in psychology expect that exploration is a transition status where one will eventually achieve further development (Marcia 1980; Kroger 1993). However, in the context of elections an individual may explore during every election cycle and see what the political environment has to offer without ever deciding what he or she believes. People who only pay attention to politics during presidential elections have few opportunities to explore their political identities. The decision to vote becomes particularly difficult because all the candidates offer believable options, so potential voters cannot decide which candidate to support; they have not judged the value of others' politics and have not determined politics of their own. A third alternative is to move on to the judgment stage after a person has discovered what the political environment has to offer and feels confident that they have enough information to judge others' politics.

Young people tend to develop a political identity in two ways during the judgment stage, either through struggle or acceptance. After exploring what options are available in the political environment, individuals begin to make judgments about what others' believe based on whether or not they agree or disagree. At this point in development, there can be an enormous amount of struggle with others—or an absence of struggle altogether because the individual accepts others' beliefs. Explorers exist between the exploration and doubt/acceptance stages because they are unable to make decisions about whether or not they disagree. What makes this stage different from exploration is that exploration is about knowledge and facts, whereas judgment deals directly with how the individual reacts to the information found in the exploration phase and continues to gather information—not necessarily factual—about what other people believe, such as those who were important socializers in the past or experts of the present. Two pathways of judgment are doubt and

acceptance, where doubt leads to the next level of development, and acceptance leads to the somewhat developed status.

From the information gathered in focus groups, individuals who accept what their parents or friends tell them about politics do have an identity and are likely to vote because others tell them to, but they have little individuation—meaning they are unclear about where their identity ends and where others' begin and they are unable to differentiate their identity from others' political identity whom they have accepted. The practice of doubting what others believe and disagreeing with them is a part of distinguishing one's own identity from others and allows for the individual to say, "This is how my identity is different." Fully developed individuals often doubt socializers and experts, which leads them to this higher level of development. Focus group participants who were fully developed often discussed the judgment stage as a difficult period wherein they disagreed with parents and peers, which at best leads to an agreement to disagree and at worst shunning of the topic of politics or the individual attempting to attain an identity.

Where exploration is the discovery of facts about the political environment and judgment was about the discovery of interpersonal information, self-questioning is the element of the process that distinguishes the somewhat developed from the fully developed individuals. At this point in the process, individuals must look inward to figure out what they believe—which is often seen as an inner turmoil. Whereas judgment was about the external struggle with others who may disagree, self-questioning is the struggle with oneself about who one is and what one cares about. This point is where people individualize themselves from others and begin to articulate who they are to the outside world. Such people are questioning what they actually believe in and whether or not they care about politics at all. In this stage, the importance of politics (salience) becomes personalized—politics is not just important for politics' sake—but politics is personally important to the individual. The two pathways that result from the period of self-questioning are indecision about what one believes and conclusions about what one believes. Indecision leads to the somewhat developed status; although the person has gone through all of the other stages of development, he or she has not finally decided upon the person that he or she is. Still not knowing what they believe, stand for, and identify as leads to a somewhat developed status. While individuals may draw conclusions about what they believe, who they are, and how they identify themselves, these conclusions are disparate pieces to the identity puzzle. Conclusions to the internal struggle of what one believes then lead the individual to consolidate the different aspects of his or her political identity into a coherent whole.

For those individuals in the higher levels of identity development, there is evidence of cohesion—meaning that people are comfortable in their own political skin and are willing to hold opinions that will differ from others, even though disagreement may be uncomfortable. The process of development is not just finding out who they are, but in a way also defending their beliefs. Political persons at this point begin to merge the parts of themselves that were their early socialized foundation, who they are after self-questioning, and develop a sense of self that they are comfortable with into the future. Coherence of a political identity does not suggest that

individuals are rigid in their beliefs, but it does mean that when new information comes along, it does not create a crisis of character; rather, these individuals take information in and process it against their current knowledge of themselves. In essence, this stage allows for individuals who have a coherent, whole identity to reevaluate their world continually. For politics, this may only be every 4 years, but highly developed individuals in the last stages of development are open to new information because they are secure in their political identity. Often, rigidity occurs when individuals are insecure about their beliefs and they must protect their identity from outside factors that might question their identity or point out inconsistencies. People at this last stage see how all of the disparate parts of their political beliefs fit together as a complete whole. This stage can also be understood as the consolidation of the self, wherein the malleable elements from self-questioning become more stark.

The final outcomes of coherence actually have to do with the interaction within the political environment. While development is not dependent on how well the environment fits the individual, how the individual eventually fits into the environment does matter. Individuals who not only have coherence with their identity but also whose identity reasonably fits into the political environment become partisans. Individuals whose identity does not fit with the environment or who do not feel represented by the partisan options tend to become fully developed Independents. While the final stage may be coherence the outcome greatly depends on how these individuals are able to relate with and accommodate their beliefs to the electoral choices available. Alternatives within the process model include different pathways to statuses. Somewhat developed individuals, when confronted about their accepted beliefs, have two reactions: they can reconsider their position of acceptance and begin to explore again, thereby taking on the status of explorers. They may also progress to the stage of self-questioning, when they begin to see distinctions between what they believe and what others believe. In this way, the somewhat developed person is slowly undergoing part of the process of individuation. But when the confrontation of their accepted beliefs completely destroys their identity to the point where they no longer know who they are and are not pursuing ways to figure out who their political self is, then these individuals become diffuse. Diffusions may leave their status if they become interested in the politics or want to begin engaging with the political world, which leads them to the exploration stage. Explorers may eventually feel as though they have completed their investigation of politics and, based on that decision, can move on to the third stage of judgment. There are also times where fully developed individuals can undergo an identity crisis and begin to question themselves about their beliefs. In everyday terms, people at middle age go through some sort of midlife crisis wherein they question their existence. In terms of a political identity, identity-shattering events can be wars, economic crises, or political scandals that make the person question his or her identity and affiliations.

What Is Different About Youth Participants and Nonparticipants?

In the end, this argument about youth identity development seeks an answer to what encourages young people to vote. While much of the literature about voting behavior suggests stability issues and demographic differences between voters and nonvoters, scholars still apply these explanations to a *lack* of youth turnout. However, as Highton and Wolfinger found, these typical explanations tend not to stand up when comparing youth to one another (2001).

I argue it is perhaps not the demographic or stability variables that affect voting behavior of young people, but rather the psychological development of a person's identity. Social, residential, or economic situations are secondary to a person's psychological awareness of self and commitments to aspects of politics. Does the young person know who he or she is politically? What matters most, what informs the decision to vote most forcefully, are an individual's beliefs, commitments, and feelings of importance—their political identity.

Studying identity development of youth is particularly valuable to the research on voting behavior because this research focuses on the process by which we become political creatures: if we can identify the steps within the process, we can intervene to affect that process toward voting on Election Day. Young adulthood is a crucial time in the formation of both voting behavior and identity. For voting behavior, eighteen is the first time that youth are able to participate in the electoral process by casting a ballot. The first few years of adulthood also seem to influence whether or not the individual will vote in the future. For identity development, young adulthood is the time where active formation of one's overarching identity begins to occur. Which is why it is valuable to study young people in particular. Young adulthood is a time to be experimental in order to figure out the type of person we are and we want to be. Considering identity development to be a life-long process, we are each architects of ourselves. Childhood tends to be when we become socialized to the norms of society and where we begin to build the foundation of our political selves. Adolescence and young adulthood is the time when we are building the structural components of our political selves; later adulthood is when we are putting the final touches on who we are or a time when we remodel. Compared with other aspects of identity development, such as vocational or even religious identity, political identity development seems to be the most difficult and drawn out of the identity processes.

Chapter 3
Inspirational Leaders, Personal Narrative, and Youth Identity

Inspirational Leaders and the Youth Vote

Inspirational leaders turn out young people on Election Day in two important ways: they encourage participation through promises of hope and feelings that change can happen, and they give form to the vague identities of young people, which indirectly supports higher levels of identity development. When leaders inspire youth and make youth feel hopeful, they are directly increasing turnout. Older counterparts, unlike young people, have experience with the political system and have at one time or another been disappointed by leaders' not fulfilling promises. Older Americans are less likely to fall for the appeals of newness and change. Evidence shows that youth are more likely to turn out to the polls when they believe a leader is inspirational and the leader makes them feel hopeful.

Leaders, especially inspirational ones, are integral to youth identity development because they articulate their political identity to youth. This example narrative provides a sample identity to youth who might not otherwise have developed. Leaders, by their example, work as identity role models for young people and ask youth to believe in issues and concerns the youth deem important. In a way, inspirational leaders are confronting youth with political alternatives and are explaining what the major issues of current debate are. In election years when there is an inspirational leader, young people can feel as though they are a part of the campaign and as a consequence begin to figure out what they believe. Inspirational leaders tap into youth networks to connect with young people and ask them to be a part of a larger movement. Identity development happens indirectly through interaction with inspirational leaders because these leaders display their own political identity and in turn become identity models for youth. The combination of offering an identity from which to adopt and model as one's own as well as the targeting of youth as members of an inclusive campaign allows inspirational leaders to reach more young people than other types of leaders.

An inspirational leader is a type of charismatic leader who promises new politics, engages voters (especially those who were previously disengaged), encourages others to act, discusses hope, makes universal appeals, and supports inclusive

B. Gentry, *Why Youth Vote*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69608-9_3

politics (anyone can join as long as he or she believes). Inspirational leaders include many different leaders throughout time: Gandhi, Reagan, Hitler, JFK, and RFK. Inspirational leaders make a special effort not only to target youth but also to include them as a major part of the campaign. Their appeals to new politics and change are often the hallmarks of the campaign that young people want to be a part of. Hope in something different and the promise of a new future is what draws young people to inspirational candidates. But inspirational candidates, by the nature of their character, tend to be people who, through their beliefs, actions, and articulation of their own identity, encourage participation in others. The common theme in inspirational campaigns is "You too can be a part of this movement and make a change in the world." Inspirational leaders have a reciprocal relationship with their young followers—meaning that both get something out of the relationship. Leaders make appeals that youth want to be a part of, and youth in turn act on these appeals to propel the leader into power.

Youth who have little familial input or socialization from society as to what to believe about politics and what is politically possible are more likely to develop an identity when inspirational leaders are present. These leaders are not solely someone to look up to; they are someone who says exactly what the young person is feeling but in a more articulate fashion. Inspirational leaders can act as a template from which to build an identity, and they bring to the forefront the major issues of the day for young people to think about and form an opinion on. Truly inspirational leaders allow their followers to develop their identity and become an independent, rather than dependent, political person. As a consequence, these leaders indirectly help young people to develop their own identities, which in turn increases youth turnout in the polls. False inspirational leaders prefer that young people simply follow them, like sheep.

The Intersection of Identity Development and Leadership

Young people, as they are on the journey to developing their beliefs, preferences, and commitments, have influential identity models that they will use to develop their own identities. However, some young people will simply take on the role of follower and not develop beyond what their role models (whether they be politicians or parents) think and become paralyzed when they have to make decisions for themselves. Young people that are fully developed will take into account what the role model had to offer and adapt it to one's own understanding and belief system—in essence personalizing the identity template.

Political leaders can act as abstract role models for youth who are attempting to develop an identity. What political leaders provide to young people is not only a reason to participate but a figure to look up to when there may be no other political role model in one's life. Inspirational leaders provide a reason to participate through words and actions. They exemplify what is to be done and they also articulate their own identity to others. These two pursuits encourage young people to develop their own identity and participate.

In addition, peers also play a role in influencing the concept of a leader as transformative, inspirational, and convincing. Friends and peers work to convince their fellow young people about the leader and what that leader can do for people like them. Friends can be influential in encouraging others to vote and, indeed, to vote for a specific candidate. In a way, young people who have been activated or inspired by the leader spread their enthusiasm to others, which can have a ripple effect. Leonie Huddy suggests the interaction between leaders and identity as "one's perceived similarity to the prototypic group member that plays a key role in the formation and development of social identity" (2001, 134). Not only does the role model embody the characteristics that the group would like to assume, but he or she also acts in ways that sanction certain types of behaviors which influences others to act.

One aspect of development of identity has to do with whether or not role models are present. Role models are individuals we look up to, and, when we are very young, attempt to mimic them. Consider the political example of children who watch political television (such as news networks or programs) with their parents and perhaps yell at the television the same way that their parents do, or the number of children of politicians who become politicians themselves. These children are learning the roles of what being political means. For our purposes though, we see that role models occur throughout one's life; these are the people that we look up to, admire, attempt to mimic, and who seem to be a guiding force in our thinking. Much of the leadership literature in political science argues that the same modeling is true for political leaders as it is for parents (Meindl 1995; Bass 1988). These leaders are individuals to whom people attach because they epitomize the political party or they articulate what we are thinking. Role models within psychology play a similar role to leaders within political science; the larger difference is that role models tend to be personal—meaning there is a perceived connection between the followers and the leader. Leaders tend to be more abstract figures: only a select few actually know who the leader really is, but the effect of the leader can be enhanced by group interaction (Meindl 1995).

While presidential candidates are certainly not rock stars, they can be celebrities in their own right, as we witnessed with the presidential election of 2008. Some criticized Obama for his celebrity status (Kellner 2009). He was also a role model for many young people. The concern about role models is whether or not they allow the individual followers to think for themselves. Concern for the status of political celebrities is about identity. The criticism concerning identity centers around what followers of the celebrity leader actually do: Are these individuals thinking for themselves? Is there some manipulation going on between the leader and followers? Do the followers have identities of their own, or are they substituting the leaders' wishes *as* their own? Do the role models allow for identity development of the individual follower? Or is the follower simply parroting the role model?

Not everyone is affected equally by inspirational leaders. Young people who have strong political backgrounds are often just as cautious about inspirational leaders as many older adults are. However, many young people growing up in families where politics is rarely discussed and in school environments that avoid politics can be influenced by inspirational leaders. These leaders act as abstract role models—individuals who epitomize what a political identity is and express the confidence

that having a political identity can have. For a political identity, inspirational leaders are role models of political identity and add another component to how one learns about the political world and the possible identity options.

Meaning and Interaction of Leadership

Targeting by Candidates: How to Convey a Personal Narrative

How youth voters are targeted by candidates is another difference between these voters and older voters. Different appeals to different voters are strategic moves for candidates; just as candidates adapt speeches to different audiences, they also differ in their appeals to different age groups of voters. While competitive elections increase turnout of all age groups (Wolinetz 2006), youth are not always the target of appeals or policies. However, what makes youth different from other age cohorts is how they are approached and if they are approached at all. Amy Dreger argues that often what occurs between youth voters and candidates is a cycle of mutual neglect, whereby youth voters rarely come to the polls to vote and, as a consequence, politicians in regular elections rarely pursue these voters because it would be a waste of limited resources (1999). This vicious cycle occurs in elections where candidates need not pursue youth voters. In competitive elections, candidates must pursue potential voters from as many demographic categories as possible in order to increase their base of supporters. How these candidates target voters is very different with regard to what issues to raise, how to phrase appeals, and choice of rhetoric.

In elections, candidates must pursue targeted campaigns to voters (Farrell and Webb 1998), and targeting of youth voters by campaigns requires different strategies than appeals to capture older cohorts. Kevin Bondelli (2007) argues that youth-targeted campaigns mobilize youth voters better when they are outside the traditional campaign structures and focus on peer-to-peer contact, which is one-on-one interaction with someone near their age. In addition, young people are more likely to vote if they are simply asked to do so and if the asking is less scripted and more informal (Bennion 2005).

The appeal of political leaders is based on what they provide in articulation of beliefs, worldviews, and policy preferences that the American public can understand and either accept or reject. However, for individuals developing politically, these articulations early in their political development can be some of the early building blocks for developing their own sets of beliefs. But in the end, role models cannot answer for the individual the most pressing question: What is my place in the political world?

Leaders can best articulate their own personal identity, which youth can mold themselves after, is often through a personal narrative. Politicians attempt to create a coherent self by merging the past with the present in an attempt to explain what the future holds. The power of a president to tell stories was embodied with Reagan. Lewis articulates Reagan's ability as "Reagan uses story-telling to direct

his policies, ground his explanations, and inspire his audiences" (1987, 281). Politicians must be clear about their political selves to convince the public about who they are. During election time, politicians are competing in their personal narratives and the use of those narratives to convince the public to choose a candidate and vote. Politicians often seem to have a strong sense about who they are politically, which is often captivating and engaging for their audience. Their identities often seem to overshadow less-well-formed identities that are searching for some coherence and resolution to indecision. Politicians in a way are trying to convince the public that their personal narratives match each individual's own narrative.

Charismatic Leadership and Opinion Leaders

Max Weber defined a charismatic leader as one who works outside the boundaries of the routine happenings and tends to create new dynamics of politics. He defined this type of leader by setting the leader in the context of charisma: "the term charisma will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities" (1978, 358). In Weber's terms, charisma means some exceptional character traits that people are drawn to and will follow. Compared with Weber's other types of authority, only the charismatic authority is created from the individual's endowment of power. Traditional authority comes from the following of immemorial customs and legitimacy of authority based on following customs. Different from charismatic and traditional authority, legal or rational authority comes from normative, legal rules, and authority is vested in the one who issues commands (1978, 328). Charismatic authority is not based in any historical sense of legitimacy and is found in the great person. Whereas authority in the traditional or legal sense is legitimized by rules outside the individual, charismatic authority is found in the perceived power of the individual and is outside the traditional rule structures that legitimize other types of authority. While traditional and legal authorities can be legitimized without followers, the essence of charismatic power relies in the followers to acknowledge a leader's power.

Weber, in his discussion of authority states, "the basis of every system of authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a *belief*, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige" (1978, 382). For charismatic authority, the belief is in the extraordinary character of the individual which makes him different. As Weber suggests, validity of charisma is measured according to the "recognition by those subject to it" (1978, 386). The charismatic leader needs the masses to legitimize his authority. Charismatic authority, unlike traditional or legal, is based more on emotion. As a consequence, the leader must consistently be spectacular, promise the most, employ "propaganda measures in the competition for leadership," and present a utopian component (1978, 389). Charismatic leaders exist because of the belief of their followers not of legal or traditional rules or roles and they tend to defy the old rules and attempt to create a

revolution. However, because charismatic leadership is based on emotion (and not reason), these leaders must continually fulfill the needs of their followers and staff in both their material and idealistic needs.

Grounding the discussion of leaders in voting behavior, Converse agrees that there are leaders who convince others to act politically. However, Converse sees that opinion leaders are much closer to home—literally—than inspirational presidential candidates. Converse considers differences among opinion leaders and average citizens, and limits his definition of those who are opinion leaders to Ideologues. Ideologues in Converse's categorization of the American public are the most knowledgeable and the most active people in the political environment (1964). Ideologues encourage the participation of others and often engage others in conversations about politics. Additionally, Converse saw that husbands were overwhelming figures in shaping the politics of their wives. While Converse was correct in his assessment of opinion leaders as guides to others and as cues for appropriate behavior, he is not particularly specific about leadership (1964, 231). In his mention of charismatic leaders, Converse notes how they are inherently ideological and communicate to others the recognizable principles of the ideology (1964, 213).

Political candidates also want to achieve this type of personal connection with their potential voters. As Laszersfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet note, personal contacts matter when attempting to convince a person to vote (1968, 151–56). In more recent presidential elections, candidates attempt to connect with youth through many different forms of media for the purposes of making the personal connection that will encourage the young people to vote. To target and encourage turnout of young people, candidates themselves seem overwhelmed with the new and changing media markets for youth and as a consequence hire political consultants to make strategic appeals to youth. In the Pew Research Center's assessment of the 2016 campaign, presidential candidates had controlled messaging and little public participation (2016, 9). In 2012, both Romney and Obama had elements of their campaign website dedicated to young Americans; however, in 2016, none of the candidates had pages of their site dedicated to any group (12). Considering social media is a way to connect with young people, the shift to fewer mediums and less interactivity with the campaign may affect youth turnout. Political consultants with advances in polling technology have been at the forefront of social science research in developing new ways to analyze and understand voters. Political leaders not only pursue young people on the basis of youth issues and emotional appeals, but they also look for youth in mediums where young people are comfortable and can therefore be more successful in gaining young voters and volunteers.

Transformational Leaders and Inspiration

What may attract young people to strong inspirational leaders is the fact that the leaders are sure of themselves and have the appearance of self-confidence. While the concept of leadership may at times be elusive, Meindl, Ehrlich, and Dukerich

contend that there are certain processes that occur as the romanticized conception of leadership is being formed (1985, 99). In organizational behavior, a romanticized conception of leadership refers to the association between leaders and outcomes when there is a lack of direct information about organizational events; in other words, when there is not clear explanation for success or failure within an organization, the leader is often ascribed "control and responsibility—with events and outcomes to which they can be plausibly linked" (1985, 80). In addition to ascribing responsibility, Meindl, Ehrlich, and Dukerich find that there are some psychological effects to leadership as well, including selective perceptions.

With these selective perceptions, people ignore information that would change their view of the leader, believe information that confirms their support of the leader, and work to maintain their conceptualization of the leader (1985, 99). While their work originally studied leadership in the business world, their conception of a romanticized leadership can clearly be applied to inspirational leadership in the political world. Political leaders, and presidents in particular, are often criticized for their successes and failures in policy with little explanation as to alternative explanations. Meindl, Ehrlich, and Dukerich point to moments where leaders are associated with the outcome, large fluctuations in organizational performance (for good or bad), and surprising events (1985, 90–93). In politics, leaders can change the course of events or at least be perceived that they can, and they can be seen as omnipotent by followers who imbue the leader with superhuman abilities beyond what is actually possible (Heclo 1981).

In an assessment of transformational leadership, Francis and Bass determine the use of inspiration in leadership and suggest what makes leaders transformational is that they "articulate a realistic vision of the future" (1990, 151). By providing such a vision to individuals in the political environment, transformational leaders are leaders who not only epitomize inspiration within themselves but inspire others to act as well. These leaders inspire loyalty, command respect, consider what each person needs to be effective, and stimulate others intellectually (1990, 153–54). A leader comes to be seen as inspiring through their vision; furthermore, transformational leaders not only provide a vision but will also offer a way to achieve that vision with actions their followers can take. Empowering followers to not only become a part of the vision but also to be a part of the solution is particularly important with transformational leaders.

Within the organizational leadership literature, two types of leaders are often juxtaposed: transactional and transformative. Transactional leaders tend to be the standard for leaders who maintain the status quo and who perform adequately with little change within the organization. Transformative leaders, on the other hand, work to make substantive changes within the organization, especially with regard to the behavior of subordinates. Transformative leaders tend to help their subordinates—or, in the political leadership sense,—followers realize that they are a part of a vision, and that they have the responsibility to create change too (Table 3.1).

In a deeper investigation into transformational leaders, Micha Popper delves into the context, consequences, and political aspects of leadership (2005). Shifting from the emphasis on transformational leaders in business, Popper focuses on how leaders

Table 3.1 Typology of leadership: three constructions

Type of leader	Charismatic	Transformational	Inspirational
Author	Weber	Bass	Gentry
Characteristics of the leader	Exceptional power	Communicates high expectations	Promises new politics
	Superhuman	Uses symbols to focus efforts	Encourages others to act
	Perceived as divine origin of charisma	Expresses important purposes in simple ways	Creates inclusive politics—Anyone can join as long as they believe
	Demands new obligations	Provides vision and a sense of mission	Engages voters
	Authority opposed to traditional or bureaucratic authority	Coaches and advises	Discusses hope
	Authority that is foreign to all rules		Makes universal appeals
Leader-follower relations	Devotion and absolute trust from followers	Instills pride in employees	People trust the leader, but are also able to think for themselves
	Leader must fulfill ideal and material needs of followers	Relationship built on respect and trust of leader and of followers	Leader encourages others to act who then attempt to get others involved
	Leader's power comes from belief	Gives personal attention to each employee	Followers are able to model their identity from the leaders' example
	Two types of followers: Staff and masses		
Consequences	These leaders can create democratizing movements	Promotes intelligence, rationality, and careful problem solving	Leader articulates their purpose through a personal narrative
	Masses begin to favor people who are spectacular, promise the most and employ effective propaganda	Employees can think for themselves and be creative in the pursuit of the mission	Followers have an identity role model
			Leaders encourage participation through their presence and identity development of followers
Examples	Ancient prophets, military leaders, Napoleon	World renowned CEOs	Presidential candidates, movement organizers

transform society. He argues what transformational leaders actually do is to change their followers by changing their followers' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (2005, 9). By identifying three types of leadership, Popper explains the different types of relationships between leaders and followers. The regressive relationships emphasize projection and transference between the leader and followers wherein the leader is fulfilling the needs of security and certainty of their followers without allowing them to be independent (2005, 36–45). Followers, in this sense, project their life aspirations onto the leader and transfer their identity to the leader and receive little in return. Developmental relationships involve leaders who act like good parents and encourage "independence rather than dependency" (2005, 47). These leaders focus on empowering their followers to believe in their own abilities and will support their followers' intellectual development to solve problems. In my articulation of leadership, inspirational leaders empower their followers to act and find opportunities for followers to participate.

The symbolic leader is one who is no longer a person but a symbol of meaning. "History is replete with examples of leaders whose personality, words, and behavior became symbolic representations, representing some transcendental essence beyond the concrete personality of the leader himself" (Popper 2005, 51). Take for instance the example of Reagan in the twenty-first century as a symbol of fiscal responsibility, military strength, and approachability. The essence of a successful transformational leader is one who causes followers to become empowered and make decisions on their own. In my own terms, an inspirational leader is one who not only articulates a vision but also allows followers to be a part of that vision and find ways through their individual decisions to make the vision possible. Inspirational leaders cannot have a regressive relationship with their followers because a crucial part of inspiration is to allow followers to think and act for themselves.

Bernard Bass also finds that part of transformational leadership involves the leader encouraging followers to trust in themselves and in the greater mission (1990). Distinguishing between transactional and transformational leadership, Bass finds that transactional leaders simply explain expectations and intervene when these expectations are not met. At the very basic level, transactional leaders focus on the task at hand and only interact with followers during short exchanges such as a reprimand or expectation (1990, 20). Transformational leaders, on the other hand, will *include* followers in their purpose and mission; as a consequence, followers put in extra effort to achieve the mission (1990, 21). Leaders can be transformational in a number of ways, from inspiring followers, and meeting their emotional needs, to intellectually stimulating them (1990, 21). What Bass finds in organizational psychology is also true in politics: followers continue to work for the leader because they internalize the mission and see their own responsibility in carrying it out. What political leaders provide is a "shared" vision of a different political future that the followers can become a part of and be instrumental in achieving. Leaders in this context provide the vision while followers implement it.

One characteristic of being a transformational leader is to have the ability to inspire others. Bass argues that inspiring leaders encourage followers "to exert themselves beyond their own expectations and self-interest" (1988, 22). Just as a

transformational leader provides the vision to followers, inspiration encourages the actions of followers through emotional and symbolic appeals. Inspirational leaders consider how to simplify and communicate complex ideas into symbolic terms that followers can identify with and understand. Bass considers the fact that public impression of candidates does matter (1988, 24). The significant distinction Bass makes between charismatic leaders and inspirational leaders is the component of intellectual stimulation. Inspirational leaders intellectually stimulate their followers to think for themselves and prevent "habituated followership characterized by the blind unquestioning trust and obedience such as seen in charismatic leader-follower relations" (1988, 28).

Whereas charismatic leaders tend to care about the attachment followers have to them and how followers fulfill the leaders' self-interest, inspirational leaders need followers who can think for themselves and act independently of the leaders' direct supervision. In terms of identity, inspirational leaders would not want followers to blindly mimic their own identity but would instead encourage followers to discover their own initiative and identity. Followers of inspirational leaders can question the leaders' actions without fear of reprimand and can help the leader realize their vision by thinking of innovative ways to achieve their purpose.

Considering candidates and how candidates affect voting patterns, Rahn, Aldrich, Bogida, Sulluivan, Ferejohn, and Kuklinski argue personal qualities of candidates affect the publics' final vote judgments (1990). In their attempt to argue that all voters use personal qualities of the candidates to assess competence as a political leader, they find "personal qualities on affect is greater than the impact of competence" (1990, 153). Voters' subjective feelings about the candidates are more important than the objective assessment of candidate competence in the position. Voters take many different aspects of a candidate into account when attempting to assess leadership qualities, including the traditional markers such as party affiliation, ideology, and issues; but personal qualities—feelings about the candidates—are also key indicators of leadership potential. Charismatic or inspirational characteristics matter when choosing a leader, and at times these questions about personal qualities are also assessments of a leader's potential.

A candidate's style of politics also shapes voter perceptions. Rosenberg, Bohan, McCafferty, and Harris argue, "How a political candidate looks and speaks has a significant impact on that candidates chances of being elected—style shapes image and image affects the vote" (1986, 108). Two characteristics they investigated were nonverbal cues and attractiveness of candidates. Nonverbal cues often include eye contact, body posture, and personal distance (1986, 110), which can affect how a candidate is perceived in front of an audience. In testing their hypothesis on attractiveness of candidates, they held constant a candidate's party affiliation and issue approaches. Based on results of their experiment, appearance does matter when deciding whom to vote for; how candidates present themselves matters when there seems to be little difference in issues between the candidates. Based on their assessments, participants believed attractive candidates were a better fit to hold public office and lead.

In their study of presidential traits of candidates, Warren Miller and Merrill Shanks note that only certain characteristics mattered in the 1992 election. With

many different traits to assess, the only evaluations that seemed to influence voters were perceptions of the candidate as honest and inspiring, and whether or not people felt that the candidate cared about people like them (1996, 425). Partisanship, however, does bias candidate trait assessments (1996, 420). Based on these results we begin to see the role that emotion plays in candidate assessment and the level of importance that voters place on these emotional appeals. However, voters must also feel that the candidate is someone who will listen to people like them; people need to feel from candidates that they will be represented in their democracy. Successful candidates will not only rely on the inspirational characteristics but will also acknowledge the role of honesty and inclusion in their connection to American voters.

Certain traits and campaign rhetoric seem to attract youth voters, including inspiration, feelings of hope, and promises of change. Inspirational leaders are more likely to turn out youth voters based on the characteristic of inspiration. Some youth need to be inspired to be mobilized to vote. While the characteristics of honesty and efficacy may be present in candidates, these characteristics do not evoke action on the part of the youth voters. Inspirational candidates by their very nature arouse emotion and action in others.

Even as partisan loyalties began to erode in the 1960s, new fascination with presidential candidates began to rise, not just in the mind of the electorate but for political scientists, as well. Donald Stokes argued that changes in American voting behavior were due to the emphasis on candidates. Short-term electoral change, he believed, stemmed from the turnover of political personalities (1966, 25). By looking at mass media, Stokes claimed,

> if the political effects of issues and personalities in the wider environment depend partly on what the electorate hears and how it is disposed to react to what it hears, it follows that changes in communication and response tendencies can at times alter the political effects of a stimulus which has not itself changed (1966, 25).

The judgments of presidential candidates was not only about which party they belonged to and what policies they hoped to create or supported, but the person that the candidate was, or at least the person that candidates hoped to portray.

A deepening concern in political science about the movement toward candidate-centered elections was that the less well-educated American public would focus on superficial characteristics of candidates rather than substance. Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk found several important peculiarities in this claim by examining how voters as information processors consider attributes of the candidates including assessments of competence, integrity, reliability, and charisma (1986). Their findings suggest even educated citizens assess candidates' personal qualities to determine their vote decision. Based on the amount of information available, voters who follow politics are more likely to have information based on candidate characteristics and make decisions based on candidate dispositions (1986, 527). Evaluations of candidates from presidential election years tend to be based on what the respondent based previous evaluations of candidates, but only in the dimensions of competence, integrity, and reliability (1986, 529). In their minds, the American public has an idea about how a president ought to look and act, and what personality characteristics they should have, but these ideal expectations of presidents are affected by the avail-

able candidates, the political environment, and how the media portrays candidate dispositions (1986, 533–535).

While charisma does not seem to be a characteristic studied by political scientists from year to year, the role that charismatic and inspirational characteristics play for youth voters can have a major effect on the electoral outcome and participation rates of youth. There may also be serious consequences for youth voters who vote for candidates who inspire them in one election year but who fail to vote in later years when there are no candidates who are charismatic or inspirational. Youth may be less likely to vote if there are no charismatic candidates on the ballot.

Concern for leader-follower relations and how leaders allow followers to disagree is based in political history and psychology. Adolph Hitler is cited as the basis of concern over political leaders' being charismatic or inspirational; Hitler was able to convince his followers of his beliefs and in addition was able to continue to recruit young minds through manipulation. Leonie Huddy writes of this manipulation: "there is abundant evidence from everyday politics that political and national identities can be manipulated by the words and actions of political leaders, can shift in intensity with normative support for a movement's goals, and can vary in salience across settings" (2001, 148). Another basis for the concern often comes from the example of cult leaders whose followers are deeply dedicated to the leader's cause seemingly without complaint or disagreement. Concern for both of these types of leaders resides in the idea that individuals' thoughts are being manipulated and so the individual is not thinking or existing as his or her own person. However, another basis for concern exists in emotional manipulation as well. While these two concepts can be theoretically separated, in reality emotion and thoughts are very much interconnected.

Uneasiness about emotional manipulation is deeply founded in leader-follower relations and links directly to identity. Erik Erikson warns about the consequences of merging one's own identity with a leader's identity in order to feel complete (1994, 168). A significant consequence includes lack of a fully developed identity of a person of any age. Adherence to the wishes of the leader based on emotional attachment is often a major concern with the manipulation of young people. While inspirational leaders, in order to be inspirational, cannot by their nature pursue fear as a motivator for action, charismatic leaders can. The distinction between inspirational and charismatic leaders is based on how the leader encourages individuals to act, whether through manipulation or encouragement. Inspirational leaders will encourage followers to act for themselves and pursue causes because the individual agrees with them; charismatic leaders will sway followers to pursue causes because, in the end, the leader wants them to.

There is a fine line to be drawn about the role and responsibility of leadership. Leaders may choose to pursue causes that are selfish and self-serving rather than for the greater good. For presidential candidates, it can be difficult for us to see whether they are attempting to act selflessly to pursue democracy or whether their actions are self-interested. In addition to the fine line between motives, there is also the question of how a leader elicits followers' participation, through encouragement or manipulation. An inspirational leader works through encouragement and social net-

works to elicit participation of followers. Other, more nefarious leaders work through manipulation, emotional or social. The question is not only about how the leader goes about inducing participation but for what purpose.

Influential figures are often criticized for their ability to affect young people. Erikson notes, "youth can attach itself to seemingly utopian world images which somehow prove to be realizable in part, given the right leader—and historical luck" (1994, 182). Youth, in a way, seem more susceptible because they are more likely to believe in change and possibility of new politics than their older (and perhaps more jaded) counterparts. However, as Erikson suggests, true leaders not only attract youth but "create significant solidarities" (1994, 191). Belief in an inspirational leader is limited when the solidarity is only with or among young people. This spread of belief in the leader is particularly important to the creation of an inclusive environment that propels inspirational candidates to power.

The real challenge for candidates in the American political system is to break rules about partisanship and become leaders that anyone would want to affiliate with. Some candidates, such as Reagan and Obama, have attempted to target partisanship as the problem of politics in the United States. Green, Palmquist, and Schickler articulate that partisan change is often the result of the "social group composition of its leadership and, by extension, its public persona" (2002, 13). Inspirational leaders shift the composition of the party and change the perception of partisanship and politics in the public's mind. While presidential candidates of all levels of inspiration do provide a face to the party they represent, inspirational leaders change the concept of the party by providing a new persona and expanding the nature of true involvement by individuals of all characteristics. Consider the growth of the Republican Party in 1984 as an example of the changing political perception of Reagan as a candidate, especially among young people.

Inspirational leaders reshape the persona of political parties to include more people in them and in some ways reshape who participates in the party activities. Many campaigns use youth as door-to-door correspondents, mobilizers, and, from my experience, as volunteers carrying a lot of the weight with setup of political events. However, inspirational leaders seem to give youth more chances to be a part of and move up in the campaign hierarchy (Gentry 2008).

As Wattenberg notes, politics has change to be candidate centered and not party centered. The perception of politicians as celebrities is an odd combination. From what we know about young people's role models, politicians tend to rank near the bottom. Pew Research Center finds that today's youth (Generation Next) are less likely than older people to mention a politician as a role model or hero (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2007, 9). "Only 8% of young people named a current or former elected official when asked who they admire most. Politicians are much more popular with the older generations (20%)"; many mentioned Ronald Reagan as one of the most admired people (2007, 10). Young people today are more likely than older generations to mention a person that they know personally rather than someone they do not. Clearly, presidential candidates must overcome the problem that many young people do not see them as viable role models. The challenge for inspirational leaders is twofold: creating a persona that feels

like someone whom young people would want to know and trust, while still achieving the characteristics of someone who can lead.

Inspirational leaders are abstract role models for youth. Many young people who may be inspired to work for the candidate or become voters for the candidate will never meet or know the candidate personally. In such a way, inspirational candidates are creations of what the followers believe. James Meindl considers the social construction of leadership, where leaders are in essence the creation of their followers. The social construction of leadership suggests the creation of a leader is through interfollower relationships rather than the sole creation of the leader (1995, 330). This model focuses on how followers construct their understanding of the leader and the ways in which they communicate these constructions to their peers. In essence, "leadership is very much in the eyes of the beholder: followers—not the leader—and not researchers—define it" (1995, 331). When the emphasis is shifted to the followers' creation of the leader, then peers tend to play a larger role in understanding what leadership qualities are important, how people assess charisma, and what role leaders play in a more decentralized construction. Much of the emphasis on creation of the leader in followers' minds is how leaders are then able to control contexts and circumstances in order to shape their reputation as a leader rather than through actions (1995, 333). In the context of inspirational leadership, the social construction model complements the identity development model because it not only accounts for the lack of interaction with the leader, but points also to how peers play a role in shaping the identity of the leader and as a consequence the identity of the youth followers.

The Peer Influence and Inspirational Leaders

Peers tend to play a role in influencing youth on many different subjects, from styles of dress to acceptable behaviors. However, little research has been done on the effect peers have on the influence of leadership. Again, the hesitation about inspirational leaders and what effect they may have on the American public stems from fear about mob mentality, the manipulation of emotions, and the bandwagon effects. Bandwagon effects may very well be in play when we discuss the role of social networks and their ability not only to influence whether or not someone votes, but also to determine what party or person they vote for. When the latest fad is a political leader, the same effects that one might expect from other aspects of youthful peer influence also play a role.

Effective inspirational leaders actively encourage spreading the word about the leader: "Tell your friends and get them involved as well." Young people's feelings about needing to belong can at times make them susceptible to leaders who promise change, a brighter future, and inclusion in a group. Leaders have often satisfied the need to belong by creating bonds of friendship between followers and by enhancing social networks of friendship by expanding them. Inspirational leaders, unlike cult leaders, rely on spreading the message through as many followers as possible and

see the inclusive nature of the group as a resource. Cult leaders, while inclusionary toward obedient followers, often cut ties between less obedient followers and those outside the cult. For an inspirational leader to become successful his or her message must be spread as far and as quickly as possible.

Peer networks work as a muffled sounding chamber, and the message is never as clear as the leader articulated it, but some elements of the message are communicated. Popper notes, "As with a contagious disease, people transmit to each other attributions of leadership, relay stories, and supply information that is not always accurate until finally a character is built" (2005, 31). Political campaigns actually compound this muffled message due to the necessary vagueness of the campaign message—for example, general appeals to a wide audience, such as Obama's "Yes We Can." Campaign messages need to be vague enough to be inclusive without offending anyone—again, tapping into the ability to include believers in the campaign. Aside from the diehard volunteers, what most people remember from the campaign message is very little context with lots of emotion. Opinion leaders in these youth peer groups are individuals who have an achieved political identity and are then pushing their friends to decide their political identity.

The limitation of not actually knowing the candidate in person is overcome by the media interaction the American public receives. As Stokes notes, "in a sense, the only real candidate stimuli are those which reach the voter via mass media and interpersonal conversation, stimuli which rarely are complemented by direct voter contact with the candidate" (1966, 25). The power of peers in the indirect interaction between the candidate and the voter is to shape the information that the voter takes in and these stimuli can be biased, ill-informed, and patently wrong. Peer influence can be especially dominant when young people have little interest in or interaction with news media (Wattenberg 2008). Peers then become the sole stimulus from which the young person receives information about the candidates, which makes this influence difficult to fight against.

In youth, peers tend to play a larger role in influencing perceptions and assessments about the world. This influence does not stop at the latest trends in music or clothing but also expands to other aspects of life as well, including politics. The impact of inspirational leaders can be expanded through word of mouth and personal connections that young people have to one another. Inspirational leaders engage potential voters who in turn engage their friends and peers. There is a ripple effect of engagement through the initial leader influence, which then becomes much larger as young people interact with and influence one another to vote for the candidate or participate in some way with the campaign. From my research, young volunteers said they were able to get their friends involved and could influence many of their friends who would not have voted in the 2008 election (Gentry 2008). Young people readily admit that they either voted or participated in the campaign because a friend asked them to. The personal contact and influence of peers works to convince young people to vote and also influences their perception of the leader. In a way, the inspirational leader needs only to activate a specific few who are influential in their peer group. These young opinion leaders then engage in convincing others that the

leader is inspirational and that others will be a value to the campaign. The emotional nature of inspirational leadership excites enthusiasm in the believers, which activates followers of the initial followers to become involved. In these ways, peers have a major influence on who votes and play a significant role in convincing others that the leader is inspirational, which indirectly influences youth to vote because they have something to believe in.

Evidence of Inspirational Leadership Effects on Youth Turnout

The perception of a leader as inspirational in an election makes it more likely that the youth will vote. Inspirational leaders not only encourage youth voting, but encourage youth to vote for them.

The data below are from two different studies of inspirational leadership. The first study investigates the direct relationship of how youth assess presidential candidate traits and whether or not these youth turned out to the polls. The two trait assessments include whether or not the candidate makes one feel hopeful and whether or not the candidate is seen as inspiring. The first study begins with 1980 as the year these trait-assessment questions were placed on the American National Election Study. The second study involves the examination of inspirational leadership based on inspirational messages of presidential candidates from 1972, when youth gained the right to vote, to 2016. Content analysis is used to evaluate the presence of inspirational messages by candidates of both major parties. Content analysis is the study of specific terms and phrases used in written or oral speech to examine patterns and themes as well as a comparison of different written and oral speeches to one another (Krippendorff 2004). For this inspirational message research, a wide variety of concepts are studied, such as "we politics," youth, hope, change, and mentions of the future.

Characteristics Study

There are two ways to study the influence of leadership on youth turnout: look at how the individual assesses the qualities of an aspiring candidate for the presidency, and examine how the leader makes the individual feel. Both of these assessments are available from the ANES questions of trait assessment and affective feelings. For this research, trait assessment of both Democratic and Republican candidates as "inspiring" is assessed by the choice of an answer: extremely well, quite well, not too well, or not well at all. Another way to study the power of inspirational leaders is to assess how they make individuals (who may become followers) feel. Individuals answer whether or not the leader makes them feel hopeful.

Table 3.2 Cross-tabulations between feelings of hopefulness for either candidate and voting of 18–24 year olds, 1980–2004

	Either candidate		Tau-c
Turnout	Hopeful	Not Hopeful	
Voted	52.6% (439)	28.1% (79)	0.18*
Did not vote	47.4% (396)	71.9% (202)	

N = 1116, *p < 0.01 Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004

Two specific questions from the American National Election Study were used to analyze the effect of inspirational leaders on whether or not a young person turned out to vote. Inspiration is measured by the question: "In your opinion does the phrase inspiring describe [candidate name] extremely well, quite well, not too well, not well at all?" (ANES 2005). Feelings of hopefulness are measured by the question: "Has [candidate name] because of the kind of person he is or because of something he has done made you feel hopeful?" (ANES 2005). I assess the data using four different crosstabs of youth turnout and perceptions of inspirational candidates. The first crosstabs examined turnout and perceptions of the Democratic candidate, the second of the Republican candidate. The same analysis was conducted for whether or not the presidential candidates made the respondents feel hopeful. The preliminary results suggest turnout is positively related to feelings of hopefulness and inspiration.

Feelings of hopefulness about either candidate seem to encourage voter turnout of 18–24 year olds (N = 1116). Both Democratic and Republican candidates encourage youth participation when they elicit feelings of hopefulness. Democratic candidates tended to produce a stronger relationship, which is probably due to a higher number of young voters leaning toward the Democratic party in general. However, Republican candidates also fared well when they encouraged feelings of hope.

As seen in Table 3.2, young people who feel that the candidate is hopeful are more likely to vote than not. Young people who felt that either candidate made them feel hopeful were more likely to vote (52.6%) than not (47.4%). If neither candidate elicits feelings of hopefulness then the proportion of young people that would vote decreases (28.1%) but increased proportion of those that would stay home on election day (71.9%). The effect of feelings of hopefulness on voting is positive and significant, but simply measuring whether or not the individual votes is the first step. If the candidate is to make a real impression on the youth voter, the candidates must not only get youth to vote, but encourage the youth to vote for *them*.

While it may be possible for youth to vote against an inspirational leader that makes them feel hopeful, often the sense of hopefulness encourages voting for the candidate that elicits this response from youth voters. In interviews with youth volunteers during the 2008 election, these young people are more committed to their sense of partisanship and responsibility to work for the party than they are to be moved by emotional responses to the candidates. Young Republicans often admitted that Obama was both inspiring and able to elicit feelings of hopefulness in them, but they would vote for McCain out of loyalty and common policy stances. In this way,

the emotional appeals of candidates can be tempered by commitments to partisanship and policy preferences.

The next step in the research is to analyze the relationships between feelings of hopefulness and actually voting for a candidate. Candidates who create hopefulness in voters will encourage these voters to turnout for them. In theory, the relationship between voting for a particular candidate is mitigated by how each candidate makes the young person feel; if the outcome, for example, is voting for a Democratic candidate, then we would expect the relationship with feeling hopeful for the Democratic candidate is positive. However, the young person would not necessarily feel hopeful about the Republican candidate.

Young people who say that the candidate makes them feel hopeful are more likely to vote for that candidate. The relationship between a young person feeling hopeful about the Democratic candidate and then voting for that candidate is moderately positive and significant. On the other hand, feelings of hopefulness about a Republican candidate resulted in a small negative relationship with voting for a Democratic candidate; meaning that if I feel hopeful about the Republican candidate then I am not likely to vote for the Democratic candidate. As a consequence, the need for young people to feel hopeful about the candidate is important for turning them out to the polls. The largest category of young people is particularly telling: 202 participants reporting not feeling hopeful resulted in their not voting (71.9%). If young people do not feel hopeful about either candidate, then they are not likely to vote at all (Tables 3.3 and 3.4).

Table 3.3 Cross-tabulations between feelings of hopefulness and voting democratic of 18–24 year olds, 1980–2004

	Candidate type			
Voting democratic	Republican candidate		Democratic candidate	
	Hopeful	Not hopeful	Hopeful	Not hopeful
Did note vote for democratic candidate	88.4% (428)	70.3% (440)	63.7% (360)	93.2% (509)
Vote for democratic candidate	11.6% (56)	29.7% (186)	36.3% (205)	6.8% (37)
Pearson's R	0.22*		0.36*	

N = 1110, *p < 0.01, Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004

Table 3.4 Cross-tabulations between feelings of hopefulness and voting republican of 18–24 year olds, 1980–2004

	Candidate type			
Voting republican	Republican candidate		Democratic candidate	
	Hopeful	Not hopeful	Hopeful	Not hopeful
Did note vote for republican candidate	67.6% (327)	92% (576)	89% (503)	73.3% (400)
Vote for republican candidate	32.4% (157)	8% (50)	11% (62)	26.7% (146)
Pearson's R	0.31*		−0.20*	

N = 1110, *p < 0.01, Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004

Table 3.5 Cross tabulation between either candidate trait assessment of inspiring and voting of youth 18–24 years old, 1980–2004

	Either candidate		
Turnout	Inspiring	Not inspiring	Tau-c
Voted	45.8% (298)	37.3% (91)	0.07*
Did notvVote	54.2% (352)	62.7% (153)	

N = 860 for rating of Republican candidates and N = 845 for rating of Democratic Candidates, * indicates $p < 0.05$ Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004

Voting Republican and feeling that the Republican candidate makes you feel hopeful are moderately and positively related, whereas feeling that the Democratic candidate makes you feel hopeful is slightly and negatively related to voting for the Republican candidate. Young people who feel hopeful about the Democratic candidate are not likely to vote Republican. These results suggest it is important for candidates of both parties to be conscious of the need to make youth feel hopeful for their candidacy in order to not only get youth to vote, but to vote for them.

Measuring how the candidate makes youth feel hopeful focuses on the consequence of the candidate's ability to inspire. However, another way to assess candidate ability is to directly measure the voters' perceptions of the candidate as an inspirational leader. To do so, I use the question from the ANES that asks participants to assess whether "inspiring" describes the candidate extremely well, quite well, not too well, or not well at all. Based on these assessments, we can determine whether the individual feels that the candidate is inspirational and where they place a candidate on an ordinal scale.

An interesting twist in the data is the different effects that Democratic and Republican candidates individually had on youth turnout. While both candidates had a positive relationship between voter assessments of being inspiring and turnout, the results were small and did not reach levels of statistical significance. Again, the relationship between voting and inspirational leaders is different from what we would expect and further analysis is needed to determine whether or not being inspiring affects voting in general or voting for a candidate in particular.

In their assessment of the candidates, inspiration seems to have a greater effect when young people believe that "inspiring" describes the candidate extremely well. For both Republicans and Democrats, more young people do not vote (62.7%) if they do not think that "inspiring" describes the leader either extremely well or quite well, than those that do vote (37.3%) (Table 3.5).

But more young people are likely to vote (45.8%) when they think one of the candidates is inspiring than if they think neither is inspiring (37.3%). The relationship is small but statistically significant ($p = 0.02$). In the end, the perception that a leader is inspiring encourages young people to vote. But does this perception affect who the young person votes for?

For Democratic candidates, young voters' assessment of whether a candidate is inspiring does have a small positive relationship, which is statistically significant,

Table 3.6 Cross tabulation between candidate trait assessment of inspiring and voting democratic of youth 18–24 years old, 1980–2004

	Candidate type			
Turnout	Republican candidate			
	Extremely well	Quite well	Not too well	Not well at all
Did not vote for democratic candidate	94.1% (95)	86% (259)	75.1% (251)	78.1% (118)
Voted for democratic candidate	5.9% (6)	14% (42)	24.9% (83)	21.9% (33)
Tau-c	−0.12*			
	Democratic candidate			
Did not vote for democratic candidate	60.8% (59)	74.4% (247)	89.5% (291)	94.8% (128)
Voted for democratic candidate	39.2% (38)	25.6% (85)	10.5% (34)	5.2% (7)
Tau-c	0.23*			

N = 853 for Republican candidates, N = 839 for Democratic candidates, *p < 0.01, Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004

with youth voting Democratic (Tau-c = 0.23). The data for Democratic voting is particularly telling and seems to confirm the argument that youth nonvoters are likely to be interested in and inspired by Democratic candidates. Fewer young people, however, seem to vote Democratic than I originally thought, and what the assumption in mass media often is (Table 3.6).

Even though they find the candidates to be inspiring, young people still are less likely to vote Democratic, even though the relationship is positive. There is also a statistically significant negative relationship between thinking Republican candidates are inspiring and voting Democratic (Tau-c = −0.12, $p < 0.01$), which makes sense. Young people will vote for the candidate that inspires them; if a Republican candidate inspires them, then they will not vote Democratic (Table 3.7).

When looking at the data for voting Republican, similar patterns arise. Young people who think Republican candidates are extremely inspiring are more likely to be voting for them (40.6%) than those who think "inspiring" does not describe the candidate well at all (4%), and those who think the Democratic candidate is inspiring are less likely to vote for the Republican candidate (8.2%) than those who think "inspiring" does not describe the candidate well at all (22.2%). While both relationships are statistically significant, they are still small, suggesting other variables may be important to assessing influences to voting for candidates. Voting in general is affected by feelings of hopefulness that candidates elicit from potential voters rather than thinking the candidates are inspiring. As the hypothesis suggests, young people are more likely to vote for a candidate if they think the candidate makes them feel hopeful. All in all, the data suggest that there are clear relationships between assessments of candidate traits and how candidates make young people feel.

Table 3.7 Cross tabulation between candidate trait assessment of inspiring and voting republican of youth 18–24 years old, 1980–2004

	Candidate type			
Turnout	Republican candidate			
	Extremely well	Quite well	Not too well	Not well at all
Did not vote for republican candidate	59.4% (60)	75.7% (228)	86.5% (289)	96% (145)
Voted for republican candidate	40.6% (41)	24.3% (73)	13.5% (45)	4% (6)
Tau-c	0.23*			
	Democratic candidate			
Did not vote for republican candidate	91.8% (89)	88.3% (293)	72.9% (237)	77.8% (105)
Voted for republican candidate	8.2% (8)	11.7% (39)	27.1% (88)	22.2% (30)
Tau-c	−0.14*			

N = 853 for Republican candidates, N = 839 for Democratic candidates, *p < 0.01, Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004

Recent Evidence of Hopefulness 2008, 2012, 2016

Taking a specific look at recent election years, we can evaluate the candidacy of Obama which epitomized inspirational leadership in modern times. In addition, looking at a second presidential election with a previously inspiring incumbent can help to explain if hope and inspiration wane. Lastly, looking at 2016, we can see what happens after a hopeful or inspiring presidency.

While questions of hopefulness remained on the American National Election Study, questions of inspiration did not. However, how frequently the presidential candidate made one feel hopeful was available. If the candidate encouraged hope in the young person, they were more likely to vote for them. Both Republican candidates and Democratic candidates benefit from young people thinking the candidate makes them feel hopeful. In 2008, how frequently the candidate made you feel hopeful was not significant. Therefore, what matters in getting youth to choose you as a candidate is simply making them feel hopeful about you or your candidacy.

In 2012, whether the candidate made a young person feel hopeful mattered. Young people who felt hopeful about the Democratic candidate voted for them 85.7% (144, Chi-Square = 110.586, p = 0.000) rather than voting for the Republican candidate (11.9%, 20) or another candidate (2.4%, 4). The same is true of the Republican candidate, where young people voted for Romney 72.5% (50, Chi-Square = 75.457, p = 0.000) rather than the Democratic candidate 26.1% (18) or another candidate (1.4%, 1).

How often the candidate made the young person feel hopeful also impacted who they would vote for president; however, frequency of hopeful feelings did not impact whether a young person voted. There are interesting differences between the frequency of a Republican candidate making the young person feel hopeful and Democratic candidates. For the Republican candidate, young people seem to be dif-

ferently affected. For young people who said that they never had the Republican candidate make them feel hopeful, still voted for the candidate (100%, 1, Chi-Square = 18.013, p = 0.021, N = 69). From there, the variation makes more sense the higher the frequency of the candidate making the young person feel hopeful, then the higher the number of young people voting for the Republican candidate with Some of the time producing 44% voting for the candidate, About half the time at 92.3%, Most of the time at 91.3% and Always at 80%.

The Democratic candidate had a steady increase of voting for them as the perceived frequency of the candidate making the young person feel hopeful increased. If the candidate always made the young person feel hopeful then they would vote for the Democratic candidate 100% over the Republican candidate or another candidate (Chi-Square = 18.354, p = 0.005, N = 168). However, if the candidate only made the young person feel hopeful some of the time, their vote was up for grabs by the Republican or another candidate at 71.7% voting for the Democratic candidate. About half of the time (87.5%) and most of the time (92%) creating feelings of hopefulness increased the likelihood of voting for the Democratic candidate. This suggests that feelings of hopefulness may be better captured by Democratic candidates and Republican candidates may rely on other feelings to persuade young people to vote for them.

For 2016, there was no question about whether a candidate made the respondent feel hopeful, but there continued to be the frequency question. The pattern remains significant and impactful even in 2016 as frequency of hopeful feelings increases so does the number of young people who vote for that candidate other the others. Even with the impact of candidates outside of the two major parties, hopefulness does impact who young people vote for. Though 2016 did seem like a year with two disliked candidates, both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump inspired hope in young people.

Presidential Speech Study

Inspirational leaders are charismatic, and as such they arouse emotion and attachment, encourage others to become active, engage voters (especially those who were previously disengaged and new voters), create a new politics, and make universal appeals, support inclusive politics (anyone can join as long as he or she believes), and instill hope. Charisma is a trait that creates a desire to be around the person, draws people to the person, and makes an emotional connection with others. Though inspirational leaders are charismatic, there is another element to them—encouraging activity in others.

Though all ages are drawn to an inspirational leader, youth are especially drawn because they are less likely to be skeptical and more likely to believe in change. Because inspirational leaders promise something new, they have an effect on young people, who are discovering their own politics. At a time when young people are developing their political identity, inspirational leaders ask them to focus not on themselves with “me politics” but instead encourage a “we politics” that asks what *we* can do to create change. Inspirational leaders utilize togetherness as a force of political change, which encourages others to act.

In an attempt to study the distinctions between inspirational leaders and other types of leaders, I analyze presidential candidate speeches at the national conventions for both parties from 1972 to 2016. To study inspiration and youth turnout, I analyze the content of speeches by all candidates and then examine what percentage of young people in a national exit poll voted for each candidate. The choice of speech analysis is an objective observation of leaders' appeals such as hope, "we politics", connection with youth, and change. An inspirational leader will appeal to emotion using verbs that are about we politics (much more frequent use of third person references), discuss youth, and promote a "new politics."

For specific speeches, I chose nomination speeches based on the fact that these speeches are the culmination of a campaign; if a candidate is inspiring, then this is the moment to show how inspiring they can be to the nation as a whole. More Americans watch the national convention nomination speeches than many other speeches during the campaign. To be able to compare leaders through time, a common ground needed to be assessed. While the specific effect of a speech on an individual cannot be measured, this measure of inspirational candidates' *language* does play a role in encouraging young people to vote and vote for them.

Methods

Each one of the 24 speeches was entered into Altas.ti (version 5.2) for analysis and word counts. All of the speeches were retrieved from the American Presidency Project[1] and were adapted for analysis. Only the words of the presidential nominee were included even though some speeches included audience cheers and feedback sequences between candidates and the audience. Each speech was placed in a word file and copied as primary documents to the Hermenetic Unit (individual unit of word analysis) and included author's name, a measure of time (year), and indicator of party.

Word counts were included for each of five areas: "we politics", hope, change, youth, and future. We politics analysis included the words we, our, together—all of which suggest people coming together to work on politics. Word counts of hope included hope, hoping, and hopes, but excluded hopelessness and hopeless due to the differences in connotation. To analyze change, only the single word was included in the analysis, while there were instances of changes and changing, it was not clear whether or not the candidate was discussing the concept of change in particular or simply discussing the changing world. Discussions of youth included young, youth, and youngsters, but excluded younger and youngest since these distinctions generally were talking about siblings and not actually discussions of young people. Finally, future was coded with future and its plural form. The "word chuncher" output/counts are included in Table 3.8.

[1] Location of all speeches: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/nomination.php.

Table 3.8 Cross-tabulation of voting and feelings of hopefulness of republican candidate, 2008

For whom did young person vote for president	Does republican candidate make you feel hopeful?	
	No	Yes
Republican candidate	14.3% (11)	48.6% (17)
Democratic candidate	84.4% (65)	51.4% (18)
Other candidate	1.3% (1)	0% (0)

N = 112, Pearson's Chi-Square = 15.302, p = 0.000

Table 3.9 Cross-tabulation of voting and feelings of hopefulness of democratic candidate, 2008

For whom did young person vote for president	Does democratic candidate make you feel hopeful?	
	No	Yes
Republican candidate	56.7% (17)	13.4% (11)
Democratic candidate	43.3% (13)	85.4% (70)
Other candidate	0% (0)	1.2% (1)

N = 112, Pearson's Chi-Square = 22.038, p = 0.000

Results

The following analysis includes both scatter plots[2] of the number of mentions of each of the context words and the percentage of youth who voted for that candidate. The total percentage includes nonvoters, voters for third parties, and voters for the two major parties. For the analyses, voters for the two major parties were the sole focus. In addition, correlations were created to analyze the relationship between word counts of key terms and youth turnout. In addition, percentage of youth vote by candidate was analyzed (Tables 3.9 and 3.10).

An interesting outcome of the data analysis is the number of "we politics" mentions; candidates across partisan lines, in an attempt to connect with the American public, are likely to mention we, our, and together. The three speeches of unusually high number of we politics included Clinton's 1996 speech and the two speeches by Bush and Kerry in 2004, after September 11th. Change tends to be skewed toward more mentions by Republicans rather than Democrats, whereas mentions of the future are more represented by Democrats. Speeches including mentions of the youth were predominately from Democratic candidates (Table 3.11).

Each inspirational rhetoric category was analyzed for bivariate correlation and significance. In order to control for speech length, each inspirational rhetoric category was divided by the total number of words in each speech to acquire a specific percentage of inspirational rhetoric used by each candidate. Some surprising results emerged: "We politics" is negatively related to youth turnout but was not a significant indicator of turnout. "Change" surprisingly was not significant but was a positive relationship between the percentage of the speech that mentioned change and

[2] Please see appendices for scatter plots.

Table 3.10 Cross tabulation between candidate trait assessment of hopeful and vote choice of youth 18–24 years old, 2016

	Candidate type				
Turnout	Republican candidate N=				
	Never	Some of the time	About half the time	Most of the time	Always
Republican candidate	11% (10)	51.7% (15)	62.5% (5)	93.3% (14)	100% (5)
Democratic candidate	83.5% (76)	27.6% (8)	37.5% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Other candidate	5.5% (5)	20.7% (6)	0% (0)	6.7% (1)	0% (0)
N = 148, Chi-Square 75.926, p = 0.000					
	Democratic candidate				
Republican candidate	70.9% (39)	16.3% (7)	15.3% (2)	3.6% (1)	0% (0)
Democratic candidate	20% (11)	69.8% (30)	85.7% (12)	92.9% (26)	100% (8)
Other candidate	9.1% (5)	14% (6)	0% (0)	3.6% (1)	0% (0)

N = 148, Chi-Square = 67.838, p = 0.000

Table 3.11 Presidential nominee speech word count at national conventions 1972–2016

Candidate name	Party	Change	Future	Hope	We politics	Youth	Total words	Time	Turnout by candidate	Youth turnout
McGovern	Dem	0.08% (2)	0% (0)	0.08% (2)	2.92% (76)	0.08% (2)	2600	1972	46%	49.6%
Nixon	Rep	0.11% (5)	0.11% (5)	0.09% (4)	3.82% (166)	0.05% (2)	4348	1972	52%	49.6%
Carter	Dem	0.07% (2)	0.07% (2)	0.07% (2)	4.37% (128)	0.14% (4)	2932	1976	51%	42.2%
Ford	Rep	0.10% (3)	0.10% (3)	0% (0)	3.35% (97)	0.03% (1)	2895	1976	47%	42.2%
Carter	Dem	0.04% (2)	0.56% (26)	0.11% (5)	2.3% (107)	0.06% (3)	4655	1980	44%	39.9%
Reagan	Rep	0.02% (1)	0.09% (4)	0.06% (3)	3.6% (167)	0.02% (1)	4640	1980	43%	39.9%
Mondale	Dem	0.08% (2)	0.70% (17)	0.04% (1)	3.35% (81)	0.12% (3)	2418	1984	40%	40.8%
Reagan	Rep	0.08% (4)	0.26% (13)	0.14% (7)	3.24% (164)	0.10% (5)	5061	1984	59%	40.8%
Dukakis	Dem	0% (0)	0.22% (7)	0.09% (3)	3.19% (102)	0.28% (9)	3194	1988	47%	36.2%
HWBush	Rep	0.27% (11)	0.07% (3)	0.10% (4)	2.56% (106)	0.14% (6)	4139	1988	52%	36.2%
Clinton	Dem	0.16% (7)	0.16% (7)	0.23% (10)	3.2% (142)	0.09% (4)	4436	1992	43%	42.8%
HWBush	Rep	0.27% (13)	0.06% (3)	0.02% (1)	2.24% (109)	0.08% (4)	4872	1992	34%	42.8%

(continued)

Table 3.11 (continued)

Candidate name	Party	Change	Future	Hope	We politics	Youth	Total words	Time	Turnout by candidate	Youth turnout
Clinton	Dem	0.04% (3)	0.14% (10)	0.09% (6)	4.16% (291)	0.17% (12)	6994	1996	53%	32.4%
Dole	Rep	0% (0)	0.05% (3)	0.03% (2)	1.66% (96)	0.07% (4)	5771	1996	34%	32.4%
Gore	Dem	0.11% (6)	0.20% (11)	0.07% (4)	2.66% (146)	0.04% (2)	5487	2000	48%	32.3%
WBush	Rep	0.07% (3)	0% (0)	0.15% (6)	3.5% (144)	0.12% (5)	4118	2000	46%	32.3%
Kerry	Dem	0.04% (2)	0.12% (6)	0.08% (4)	3.99% (206)	0.19% (10)	5166	2004	54%	41.9%
WBush	Rep	0.30% (15)	0.18% (9)	0.28% (14)	5.3% (266)	0.08% (4)	5021	2004	45%	41.9%
Obama	Dem	0.32% (15)	0.15% (7)	0.11% (5)	2.95% (137)	0.17% (8)	4651	2008	66%	44.3%
McCain	Rep	0.23% (9)	0.10% (4)	0% (0)	2.64% (105)	0% (0)	3971	2008	32%	44.3%
Obama	Dem	0.11% (5)	0.35% (16)	0.29% (13)	3.21% (144)	0.11% (5)	4481	2012	60%	38.0%
Romney	Rep	0.04% (2)	0.31% (13)	0.04% (2)	2.77% (114)	0.07% (3)	4107	2012	37%	38.0%
H. Clinton	Dem	0.11% (6)	0.09% (5)	0.03% (2)	3.47% (187)	0.14% (8)	5389	2016	55%	39.4%
Trump	Rep	0.01% (1)	0.01% (1)	0% (0)	2.72% (140)	0.05% (3)	5133	2016	37%	39.4%

N = 24, Source of all speeches: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/nomination.php, Youth Turnout Data Retrieved from Census Bureau Table A9: Reported Voting Rates in Presidential Election Years, by Selected Characteristics: November 1964–2016

the percentage of youth turnout by candidate; which suggests that the more time candidates mention change in an election year, then the more likely young people are to vote for the candidate. Mentions of hopes, hope, and hopeful also turned out to be a significant correlate of voting, however mentions of the future did not convince young voters to vote for a candidate. One key indicator for youth voting for a candidate was the number of times that they mentioned youth in their speech. This outcome arguably is due to presidential candidates specifically targeting young people in their nomination speech and inspiring young people to vote for them.

Bivariate correlations of the inspirational rhetoric were significant, but not in all cases; perhaps there are other factors that may account for youth turnout. Time may be an intervening variable that would suggest increases in certain years, such as the first year 18 to 21-year-olds gained the right to vote or a year with an inspirational leader. Incumbents may also depress overall turnout of young people who might be more excited to vote when there is a more open election (Table 3.12).

Table 3.12 Correlation coefficients of inspirational rhetoric word count in speech by turnout for candidate

Inspirational rhetoric	Correlation with youth turnout by candidate	Significance
Change	0.183	0.393
Future	0.147	0.495
Hope	0.43	0.036*
We politics	0.367	0.078
Youth	0.540	0.006**

N = 24, Source of all speeches: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/nomination.php, Youth Turnout Data Retrieved from Census Bureau Table A9: Reported Voting Rates in Presidential Election Years, by Selected Characteristics: November 1964–2016

Conclusions

While many of the variables did not prove to be significant, there are things to learn from these analyses. When it comes to youth turnout, youth are affected by appeals of hope and youth targeting by candidates at the nominating convention speech. Candidates may appeal to young people with other strategies, such as peer-to-peer contact, contact from the campaign, and mediums other than the acceptance speech at a national convention.

The data do suggest a relationship between the language of candidate nomination acceptance speeches. Presidential candidates may appeal to youth in other ways—by creating YouTube videos, playing the saxophone on national television, or appearing on Saturday Night Live. The party or campaign may focus more on appeals to youth rather than the presidential candidate in this single appearance since the candidate has many different constituencies to appeal to in a convention speech.

Candidate mentions of "hope" and "youth" have a significant relationship with youth turnout, which does explain some of the reason why Obama's 2008 campaign strategy including young people worked so well. Youth are drawn to making a difference and making a name for themselves in the political world, and part of the process of youth development may include making the world anew. To figure out who they are politically, youth need to distinguish their beliefs from those of their older counterparts. The mention of change in a campaign may signal to the electorate—and to youth in particular—that they can be involved in a movement for transformation.

The year also plays a role in youth turnout. Since 1972, turnout of youth in presidential elections has declined, but with a few notable moments of increased participation. Only time will tell whether the trend of "moments of participation" or an overall rise in electoral participation of youth after 2008 will take hold. The years in which youth participation was above 40% were years where candidates seemed to pay more attention to youth and pursue them as voters. The first election when 18–20 year olds received the right to vote, participation of 18–24 year olds rose. In 1992, Clinton went on late night television and worked the talk show circuit in an attempt to speak directly to the public and to pursue youth voters in contexts where

they were comfortable. Obama, in 2008, made an effort to pursue youth voters and made direct contact with youth in a variety of mediums, such as YouTube, texting, e-mailing, and social networking sites. These particular years included both political candidates and in turn spurred youth engagement in politics.

In the end, this analysis suggests a less direct relationship between presidential candidate speeches and their effects on youth turnout. However, appeals to change are significant. Studying candidate speeches may not be the best way to measure whether or not people perceive a candidate to be inspirational: the influence of inspirational candidates happens not necessarily in the speeches that they give but the relationship that they create with their followers. The relationship between young people and inspirational candidates thrives on the hope that the candidate instills in individuals—hope for the future, hope for the new, hope for discovering their own political identity. These data suggest that the relationship between candidate speeches and youth turnout are not as simple as they first appear.

Based on these two studies, inspirational leadership does have a relationship to youth voting in that inspirational leaders encourage electoral participation. The warnings of theorists on leader-follower relations should be heeded, inasmuch as leaders must allow their followers to think, act, and be themselves. In Popper's terms, leaders should have a developmental relationship with their followers wherein they encourage the identity development, self-reflection, and positive actions of their followers. Leaders should be role models for youth who are continuing to develop their own identity but should not constrain that development to such a point where youth followers become exact replicas of their inspiring leader. A balance needs to be struck on the responsibility of a leader to encourage electoral participation and identity development of youth, while still allowing young people to find their own identity. Inspirational leaders indirectly encourage participation since the very presence of the leader as an identity role model for young people inspires them to find their own personal political narrative.

Chapter 4
Political Independence of Youth

One of the most common assumptions about young people is that they are liberal and always vote Democratic. Winston Churchill once said, "Show me a young Conservative and I'll show you someone with no heart. Show me an old Liberal and I'll show you someone with no brains." Churchill is wrong. The connection of young Independents to youth voting behavior is that Independents as a whole are less likely to vote when compared to partisans. Young people are also more likely to identify as Independents, which would suggest that one explanation for a lack of youth turnout is due to the higher numbers of Independents among youth who are less likely to vote.

However, there are two types of Independents—developed and default. Developed Independents have chosen to be Independent because they have gone through the identity development process and have actively decided that they identify as Independent. On the other hand, default Independents identify as Independent because they know little about the other options and feel the need to choose something to identify with. In a way, default Independents are not honest with themselves and others concerning their political identity. As a consequence, default Independents have a difficult time making a choice about which party to affiliate with or to make the choice to be Independent. The way to distinguish between the active-choice Independent versus Independent-by-default is through analysis of identity development. To better understand what encourages young people to vote, it is useful to distinguish between developed Independents who are more likely to vote because they know who they are politically and default Independents who are less likely to vote because they have lower levels of identity development.

The number of Independents who choose not to affiliate with either party brings into question what role partisan identification plays as part of an identity. These Independent young people may have fully developed a political identity that is not a partisan one. Thinking back to the other aspects of identity development discussed in previous chapters, partisanship can be one component to identify a person's political identity development. However, there are alternate pathways to higher levels of development, and an Independent may be a person who has fully developed his or

B. Gentry, *Why Youth Vote*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69608-9_4

her identity. These developed Independents may lack a level of belonging within the environment: though people know who they are politically, their identity is based on a lack of identification with a political party. On a methodological point, an unavoidable question is how we measure the point at which a person has achieved a developed political identity without developing a partisan identity. Can identity be measured in other ways that allow for people who are Independents? Can development be measured in another way to account for a lack of affiliation and commitment to a party? How does one decide when one has become fully developed rather than just somewhat developed?

Due to the limitations of the cross-sectional data available, it seems that one would need to distinguish between fully developed and somewhat developed identities based on partisan affiliation, but how does one then account for the one-third of the youth population who claims to be Independent? What identification as an Independent may mean for one person may not mean the same for another. For example, one person may identify as an Independent because she is disgusted with the two political parties, whereas another person may identify as an Independent because his views are not represented by either party.

Beginning with the meaning of political independence, this chapter moves through the reasons as to why young people may claim to be Independent, and then I evaluate Independents based on their level of identity development. I use ANES data to identify youth who say that they are Independent and analyze how independence might affect youth voter turnout.

The connection of political independence to political identity development is in how there are, for our purposes, two different types of Independents—those who have higher levels of development and actively choose not to affiliate with the political parties available in the American system versus those who claim to be Independents out of a lack of self-knowledge for why they choose to be Independent. Distinguishing between these different types of Independents may also explain why some young people choose to be partisans later in life and others remain Independent identifiers. To better understand youth and their choice to be Independents, I analyze young people who identify as Independents and look to see how both identity development and inspirational leaders work to turn out these young people. The focus continues to be on why youth vote; disentangling identity development of young Independents will shed more light on which young Independents vote and which do not.

Since the 1950s, the shifting of the American public away from parties seemed to be concentrated in youth no longer identifying with one of the two political parties (Kaufmann et al. 2008). Even when young people did identify, as partisan their commitment to partisanship was not as strong as that of their older counterparts (Miller 2001). Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes describe young adults as having voted too few times to have "a sure indication of party allegiance" (1960, 126). From their national sample surveys between 1952 and 1957, young people (21–24 year olds) were the largest group to say that they were Independents; roughly 31% of 21–24 year olds claimed to be Independent versus only 15% of individuals over age 70 (1960, 162). Miller and Shanks (1996) find similar levels of

independence when comparing generations. Pre-New Dealers, whose first election was either before 1920 or from 1920 to 1928, were more likely to identify with parties than their post-New Deal counterparts, who came of voting age between 1968 and 1988. Thirty-five percent more people claiming to be Independent occurred in the younger generations rather than the older (1996, 96). Explanations for the shift away from parties were based on generational changes such as higher education rates, breakdowns in social institutions such as families, and major scandals in politics that turned young people off of politics altogether (Miller and Shanks 1996; Bennett and Rademacher 1997; Dennis and Owen 1997). Still other explanations (Wattenberg 1996, 2008; Fitzgerald 2003) deal directly with the parties as institutions that shifted their interactions with the public away from personalized contact with the public via door-to-door visits to impersonalized contact through mass media. For the parties, the interaction with the American public was and continues to be largely mediated through political consultants who construct the imagery of politics. At the same time, young people began to be more cynical and distrustful of politics, politicians, and media. The explanations for larger shifts of young people toward claiming to be politically Independent are focused on reactions to the political environment rather than the individual. Change is occurring in how young people identify themselves and what they perceive political independence to mean. One young person noted, "I think I would say that it lets me engage with the government on my own terms and other institutions how I'd like to". Another focus group member suggested independence had to do with independent thinking, "not having to worry about the thoughts and beliefs of other people in your party or that your associated with uh I feel like political independence is that someone whose politically independent."

Political independence intersects with levels of identity development during the development process when individuals begin to categorize themselves within the political environment. Some individuals in the somewhat-developed status take an identity from their parents or from identity models rather than figuring out their identity on their own. In the somewhat-developed status, it is easier to adopt an identity without the difficult questioning and self-doubt about political identity. Somewhat developed individuals have a superficial affiliation with party in that they take on an affiliation, usually what their family members are or were, without going through the steps to become their own political person—that is, by judging the opinions of others and self-questioning. If adopting a political identity is so easy, then adopting a partisan identity should raise substantial questions about socialization of partisanship. Consider the political socialization literature that suggests even children claim partisanship without knowing what the parties are (Beck 1977; Campbell et al. 1960). Does a person need to know anything about politics before he or she claims to be a partisan?

In the context of identity development, to ascertain different levels of development two pieces of identity are evaluated: evidence of questioning and evidence of commitment (Marcia 1991). This evaluation is what makes partisanship difficult to measure: Is the act of saying that you are partisan sufficient enough to prove that you have a commitment? Or can you have a political identity that is Independent

and by the same token mean that you refuse to commit to parties or the partisan system? In the literature of identity development, the refusal to commit is often categorized as a characteristic of diffusion; however, there are many different individuals who are Independents who have commitments to their beliefs, maintain policy preferences, and know their political identity. For both the voting behavior literature and the identity development literature, the presence of political independence is a challenge to disentangle.

Since the 1960s, young people have consistently been identifying as Independent rather than partisan, and I believe they are doing so for two reasons—either they do not want to be affiliated with the political parties out of disgust, or they do not want to claim they are partisan. One political independent is developed of enough to choose to identify as such, and the other is doing so as a default choice. Both conceptualizations of young political Independents place at the center how the individual understands and constructs his political identity.

Political Independence: Developed or Default Identity

This study sets forth two different categories of Independents, those who are highly developed in their beliefs and worldview are developed Independents who know their identity and choose not to affiliate with either of the two political parties. Those who choose to be Independent because they have not yet chosen an identity and do not know who to affiliate with are default Independents. Erikson argues that there is a social and historical context that influences the development of identity (1994), which is important to take into account where political parties are concerned, as they help young people develop their political identity. Parties provide examples of identities, policy beliefs, acceptable behaviors, and a sense of purpose to some young partisans; in these ways, political parties encourage development of individual identity.

For some young people, parties are a commitment and increase the importance of a political identity. Serpe suggests for the relationship between salience and commitment, "the greater possibilities for personal choices… the stronger the relationship between commitment and identity salience" (1987, 46), meaning the availability of choice increases the likelihood of commitment to an identity and the importance that identity is. However, this is a problem for a political identity that is limited by the political environment based on the number of alternatives (Schwartz 2001). In the American context, limitations in choice may decrease the salience of a political identity where politics is limited to two political parties and discussions of politics are limited by the availability of alternative viewpoints. Where political scientists might say that too much choice leads voters to increased information costs, psychologists argue that choice allows for more self discovery and a more solid commitment to a final choice. I argue that while there may be a longer period of uncertainty as a person tries to discover his or her political commitments, more choice is good for political identity because a person can feel that their thoughts are represented by the system options.

Political party changes may be understood as a source for shifts in the political identity development of youth (especially partisanship) and focus on candidate-centered politics rather than party-oriented politics. The focus for this research is to explain the differences in young Independents and how that affects their voting decision. In his recent look at forty years of political party literature, Fiorina notes partisanship in the electorate was weakening even when party organizations and partisanship in government were strengthening (2002). For youth voters, the evidence suggests Independents are less likely to vote but fails to explain the relationship between developed Independents and default claims of independence.

Many youth find being politically Independent more appealing than saying they are partisans because they are sick of partisan bickering in Congress and politicians who do little for them. Young people can choose not to be partisan because partisans have ignored them as a constituency. Vote targeting of a political party would focus attention and appeals on likely voters, who are not young people. Young people as a result of being ignored choose not to vote, otherwise known as the cycle of mutual neglect (Dreger 1999).

Young people sometimes claim independence when they lack information or experience with the political system, but such claims of independence can better be explained as a function of development. Youth who are conscious of their political choices are more likely to be developed. If they are Independents, they are evaluating the political parties once they have a developed identity and do not feel as though that identity is represented by the political parties. These developed Independents have coherence within themselves but find little coherence of their identity with options available in the political environment. Those who are less well developed are default Independents and are less likely to vote. Developed Independents can be characterized by high levels of political knowledge about parties and candidates but believe neither party represents their views. The most important distinction between developed and default Independents is their level of identity development—developed Independents know who they are politically, have a set of political beliefs, and, as a consequence, vote. Default Independents have little understanding about who they are politically, are unclear about their political beliefs and, as a consequence, fail to vote. Both sets of Independents find that the label better describes their identity than a set partisanship, but the distinction is based on how developed their identity is. I attempt to distinguish these two types of Independents with their level of identity development by looking at a dataset of youth Independents from the ANES.

What Is Political Independence?

Political independence can mean many different things to many different people, but there are common understandings of what political independence means today. Two major forms of independence include being an independent thinker or not affiliating with either political party (Keith et al. 1992). To be a political Independent today may be a reaction to partisan politics in Washington or the lack of a need for party to inform

one's decisions on political issues and cues for whom to vote. Political independence is not a new phenomenon of the youngest generation, but it does seem to be the case that many young people, when they first enter the electorate, claim to be Independents. There is no single explanation as to why young people are more likely to claim they are Independent than their older counterparts, but the common explanation is that young people have not yet developed the attachment to party that older voters have (Campbell et al. 1960, 126). This explanation suggests that as youth grow older they create ties to one of the parties and continue to vote for their party as diehard fans (not so different from supporting a sports team through the good and the bad seasons). Political identity development can help shed some light on why young people claim to be Independent and can also explain why differences in voting patterns of Independents is largely based on where they fall on the identity development continuum.

The socialization literature would seem to contradict this assessment by Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes that young people lack a partisan identity. Much of the socialization literature finds that young people become socialized to support one party or another. Lazarsfeld et al. (1968) found that young people actually fall under the influence of their families to vote for a particular party. Two examples the researchers highlight are

> "two *first voters* who took over the family pattern at the very beginning of their voting careers: "Probably will vote Democratic because my grandfather will skin me if I don't" and "If I register I will vote Republican because my family are all Republicans so therefore I would have to vote that way" (142)

These two first time voters are heavily influenced by their families with little questioning of what they wanted from a party and a candidate. They knew who they were politically without much questioning on their own or of their families—so on the political identity scale they would rank as somewhat developed. Cues for first time voters on which policies to care about, what the candidates and parties stand for, and what they know, feel, and think about politics can be challenging. Just as Plutzer notes, the costs for entering into the political system for first timers can be extremely high (2002). However, the costs are extremely high for youth voters not because they have to figure out how the political world works but because they must be introspective about what they believe. Youth voters must come to grips with how they fit into the political system and may have to go against family expectations. It is no wonder that politics can become easily overwhelming for young people—they have to figure out what they care about first.

Keith, Magleby, Nelson, and Orr reason that the nonpartisanship of the Independent voter is exaggerated, and much of the literature on partisanship and independence fails to look at the follow-up question regarding whether or not respondents lean toward one party or whether they are pure Independents. Instead of a growing number of Independents, they argue there are a growing number of hidden partisans (1992, 4). Even those who do claim to be Independent have lower levels of interest and participation. In the nineteenth century, being an Independent meant thinking independently from what others did or thinking on one's own and being willing to express those thoughts without the fear of being ostracized by others, going against the crowd regardless of the consequences, and standing up for

what one believed (7). To illustrate this type of Independent, Keith, Magleby, Nelson, and Orr quote Dole from 1891: "As on the playground, some do not care always to go with the crowd, or even prefer to be by themselves. Such as these, who think for themselves, and dare to stand alone, make the Independents in politics" (1992, 7). But this esteemed Independent of the nineteenth century does not seem to exist today, since much of the evidence we have about Independents explains that they are not thinking about, engaging in, or being interested in politics.

In their explanation of political independence and youth, Keith, Magleby, Nelson, and Orr find, "Not until 1964 were people under the age of 29 significantly more likely than the entire population to be Pure Independents" (1992, 116). Cohorts who came of age in the Vietnam and Watergate eras were more likely as youth to be Independent than any generation before it; however, as they aged, these cohorts were more likely to be partisan. Younger generations who came of age after 1976 were not as averse to being partisan but more likely to be Independent than cohorts coming of age in 1960 (1992, 125). In addition to comparing generational difference, Keith, Magleby, Nelson, and Orr evaluate the interaction of education and political independence as an explanation and discover that the growing numbers of Pure Independents, Independents who do not lean toward either party, were "most common at the lower end of the educational distribution" (133). College educated young people tended to be the closet partisans who said they were Independent but when probed answered that they leaned toward one of the two parties.

In their conclusion, Keith, Magleby, Nelson, and Orr discuss the fact that the measure of partisanship and independence has not been threatened, but that scholars need to consider what different types of Independents mean and who they are. With growing cynicism toward the parties as institutions, people become less likely to identify with the parties outright. However, when probed, leaners do appear and are fundamentally different from Pure Independents in their likelihood to vote, their interest in politics, and whether they have opinions. In this study's explanation of a political identity development and political Independents, Keith, Magleby, Nelson, and Orr's work complements the developed Independents who would rather not identify with the political parties, and default Independents are the Pure Independents who seem to have little knowledge about the political system or their place in it.

If parties are considered social institutions where belonging matters, not belonging can ostracize young people who feel that the parties do not represent them. Schwartz maintains that "social institutions are most likely to attend to those individuals whose personality attributes reflect the characteristics and beliefs of social institutions," while others risk being alienated (2001, 35). Strong partisans often feel at home in parties and believe that the parties represent their interests, beliefs about government, and fulfill their need to belong. However, Wattenberg argues being an Independent who is alone in the world intellectually battling the parties, is a myth; now, more young people are frustrated with political parties as institutions and the divisive partisanship that they see in government (1996). As social institutions, parties in the electorate no longer seem to dictate how one should behave in order to belong to the political order. In American politics, parties are weak because they lack social connections to communities compared to other countries (Crotty 2006b).

Wattenberg argues that the decline of American parties is happening because "it is increasingly difficult for Americans to see the relevance of political parties in this candidate-centered age of mass media" (1996, x–xi). The shift away from partisan identities to identifying with candidates has had major consequences for the two major parties. While many Americans disagreed with the opinion that we no longer need parties, a majority (Strong Partisans 58.6%, Weak Partisans 74.2%, Independents 82.9%) did believe "the best rule in voting is to pick a candidate regardless of party label" (16). In reference to Independents, Wattenberg finds that Independent nonpartisanship is as stable as partisanship (29). Identifying two types of Independents, he says there are the no-preference Independents and those who clearly state "I'm an Independent" (38).

Partisanship, Independence, and Voting

Since Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes's seminal work on the American electorate, one of the major predictors of turnout is whether or not an individual affiliates with either one of the political parties (1960, 143). Partisanship informs and influences American politics by shaping the debate around partisan views and providing cues to voters in the booth. Parties in American politics seem to make politics easier, and, in a way, parties make knowledge about politics more accessible than the rigorous policy debates that happen in Congress or the infighting between each of the branches of government. But the public has grown to dislike parties for a variety of reasons, ranging from disappointing wars to disappointing candidates to political gridlock as a result of the partisan infighting that seems to get little done in terms of outcomes for the public (Wattenberg 1996). People have slowly become more cynical about political parties, especially young people who believe the future is open for possibilities and who hope that change can happen during an election year. For a variety of reasons people are unhappy with the parties and the party system. There is a growing number of Independents in the general population. Part of the disgust with political parties is the animosity between parties (Smith 2016). This disappointment has reshaped the commitment to political parties as a part of a political identity. For political identity, the negative connotation of parties can affect whether or not a person chooses to commit to a political party or at least admit that he or she identifies as partisan.

The trends toward diminished identification with political parties occur at the same time as declines in national voting patterns. Rosenstone and Hansen describe the changing nature of partisanship from 1954 to 1992 as weakening ties of the American public to parties. During the period of 1952–1964, about a third of Americans considered themselves strong partisans, and this number dropped in the 1970s by about 9 percentage points (2002, 151). Patterson blames the increase of the Independent voter on the "fall in election turnout and interest" (2009, 44); arguing that partisanship is what turns out voters because parties help to show voters what stake they have in elections in addition to rooting for a side (2002, 46).

Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes find that young voters and new voters (who have never previously voted) enter into the electorate and do not yet have a concrete party allegiance because they have voted so few times (1960, 126). These new voters tend to react more to the political times than their older counterparts and as a consequence are more likely to drift away from and between parties (1960, 154). While there do tend to be more young people who are Independent (24% of 21–24 year olds versus 15% of those over 70 [1960, 162]), Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes believe that there is a life-cycle change that in their youth, young people tend to lean Democratic and as they age they become more Republican (1960, 155).

Schattschneider explores the role of parties in governance and how parties sway voters to cast a ballot for them. In his historical analysis, Schattschneider explains that parties liberalized the franchise to get support from potential voters. But he shortchanges partisanship, saying that "movement of voters in and out of the electorate is more important than the shift from party to party" (1942, 49). Much of what Schattschneider saw of party government was how interests were consolidated into policy or thwarted policy initiatives. In his understanding of American political parties, Schattschneider was clear about what the parties were not: "The concept of the parties as a mass association of partisans has no historical basis and has little relation to the facts of party organization" (1942, 54). Where he makes the greatest distinction is being partisan versus being a member of a party: there is no obligation to the party and parties seem not to be in control of who its members are (1942, 56). This fundamental difference between American political parties and the parties of Europe is the open membership of American parties, where all a person has to do is say that he or she is a member. This sense of belonging to a party without responsibility or obligation to it is superficial affiliation. Other times, identifying as partisan with little knowledge about the parties, candidates, or issues also leaves one with little foundation on which to base an identity.

Belonging is a strong pull to parties who tend to fulfill a type of social identification need on the part of the electorate. Green, Palmquist, and Schickler argue that "party identification is a genuine form of social identification" (2002, xi) and expand on Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes's original conception of partisanship and partisans as failing to pay attention to new information. Green et al. claim partisan identification is developed from the family environment or adult socialization (2002, 6). Rather than seeing partisanship solely as an identification with parties, people tend to ask what social groups belong to which parties and into which of these social conglomerates they best fit (2002, 8). From an individual identity perspective, individuals manage their self conceptions and how he or she fits into parties' social groups. Green, Palmquist, and Schickler find that for young people the process of matching which groups belong to which party and where they fit into that scheme is a learning process (2002, 10). Independents, they argue, tend to find politics less engaging than partisans (2002, 46). Partisan change does happen, but only gradually. Partisan changes in adulthood may come from where one lives and with whom one interacts (71). Green, Palmquist, and Schickler point out some elements of a developmental process, explaining "Although teenagers are strongly influenced by their parents' party affinities, this imprint fades over time as young adults are exposed to other influences and develop their own views" (82).

Whereas Green, Palmquist, and Schickler are studying the social context of belonging, sorting out social groups of the parties, and balancing the self conception with identification, I am focused on the self conception and how the individual develops his or her own identity. While our focus is different, Green, Palmquist, and Schickler and I agree that identity development is a process where youth is a turbulent period of finding oneself and then figuring out where one fits into the scheme of parties. Our greatest difference is that Green, Palmquist, and Schickler assert that young people are sorting out their social identity and the social groups associated with parties, whereas I argue young people are sorting out their own identity and then choosing to affiliate with either one of the parties or not at all. With a focus on Independents in this chapter, the focus is necessarily on the importance of the development of their self-conception as an Independent; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler would say that the Independent did not see themselves as identifying with the parties' social groupings.

The tension in this work is how partisans engage in exploration and self questioning rather than blind acceptance of an identity. If a person has a fully developed identity, then one of the major characteristics inherent in that is flexibility, not rigidity. Rigid partisans would seem to have the common characteristics of a somewhat developed identity in that they fail to see alternative points of view, are emotionally and intellectually tied to their partisanship with no room for change, and do not take in contradictory information that would perhaps make them question their identity (Zaller 1992). However, Green, Palmquist, and Schickler, in their work with partisan social identities, argue that partisans are not as rigid as once thought, but that these partisans do take in contradictory information that then reshapes their behavior (2002). But these are the somewhat developed individuals in my measure; the rigid partisans for our purposes here are more likely to vote than the malleable explorers who are interested in politics and are trying to find where they fit in.

Engaging in the discussion of partisan identification and voting, Bartels maintains that partisan loyalties have rebounded since the declines of 1960s and 1970s (2000, 35). This rebounding has been due to a resurgence of partisanship in "younger and better educated voters" who perhaps were not around during the disappointing and unpopular candidates in 1964 and 1972 (40). The shifts in American parties have come not from major demographic changes but from changes in the national political environment such as whites in the South sorting themselves into the Republican Party and African Americans in the South sorting into the Democratic Party. Bartels finds people under age 40 to be less partisan between 1952 and 1984 but not thereafter (41). There is resurgence after 1984 for youth voters to vote as partisans in congressional elections. Lumping all individuals under age 40 into one youth category is deceiving, since there are major shifts toward commitment to partisanship after age 25. To better understand the youngest voters in the population, we must study their levels of partisanship at the crucial moment of identity development in young adulthood.

In a retrospective look at parties and their relation to the American public over the past forty years, Fiorina contends that major changes in the political environment have reshaped partisanship and disagrees with Bartels that partisanship is on

the rise. Looking at the trends throughout the twentieth century, Fiorina evaluates the changes in parties as organizations and major restructuring of government as a result of Progressives. Major revisions in civil service and welfare benefits took the power out of the hands of the parties and placed them into the hands of government officials. Changes in elections to direct primaries also took power away from partisan leadership and placed more power in the hands of the public; while we still see that the party leadership does continue to play a role in national primaries for the presidency, such as with Obama, the public has a voice. Parties as organizations were attempting to compensate in the 1980s for major declines of partisanship in the electorate (2002, 104). Fiorina explains that party identification today needs to account for candidate positions, which can be different from the party line (104). Parties today are different organizations than classic parties and work to house the most advanced campaigning strategies (103) rather than be mass organizations of people working to get the party into government.

To Fiorina, even though the Rockefeller Republicans (socially liberal and economically conservative policy preferences) and Southern Democrats (socially conservative and economically liberal policy preferences) have aligned with their modern parties, this realignment does not mean that partisanship means more today than it did in the 1950s (107). The influence of partisan identification cannot be denied, but today there are other intervening factors, including how candidates portray themselves as partisan or bipartisan, how the candidates stand on issues, and the lack of mobilization of potential voters by parties. Fiorina concludes, "I see no persuasive evidence that party in the electorate is stronger today than in the 1950s" (109). While the role of parties in the electorate may be changing, partisanship does not necessarily seem to have a greater influence on the vote outcome than it did in previous times, and today's voters are more likely to be convinced by candidates to vote.

The Interaction of Parties with Political Identity

Parties provide a social context to the development of a political identity. The problem for a political identity development is the limitation within the political environment based on the number of alternatives (Schwartz 2001). Limitations in choice may decrease the value of a political identity in the American context where politics is limited to two political parties or the choice to be Independent. And discussions of politics are limited by the availability of alternative viewpoints, making it more difficult to define oneself politically if it is outside the typical two-party system, but youth of today are defying the typical partisan labels.

In early work with the declines of partisan identification, Paul Abramson notes that there are two explanations for changes: political inexperience (life-cycle) or socialization (generational). Evaluating both explanations, Abramson utilizes data between 1952 and 1974 and finds that if we control for the length of time in the electorate, young adults have more partisan attachment than their older counterparts. At the same time, the political environment at this time was not

conducive to formation of strong party loyalties. For political Independents, Abramson notes "young Independents were more likely to retain their Independence than were young partisans to retain their partisan loyalties" (1976, 475). In terms of identification, Independents seem to be the most stable group. Even though Abramson concludes that the generational explanation provides a better understanding of the changes in young people's partisanship, he does note that the decrease in strong identifiers cannot be explained by generational changes alone. The larger consequences brought to light in this book suggest that leaders can take advantage of weak partisan ties of youth and make broad appeals to garner youth support. In addition, the political environment in which a young person grows up has an effect on his socialization and, later, identification with a political party or as an Independent.

In a later study, Abramson evaluates youth partisanship from both the life-cycle and generational perspectives, finding that the life-cycle explanation is not correct when it comes to gains in strength of partisanship (1979, 91). Focusing specifically on the development of youth partisanship, Abramson notices the role of socialization in early development of partisanship and argues that once partisan strength is established in early adulthood it generally remains stable throughout one's life time (91). In his assessment of the 1970s, Abramson found that youth were much less likely to identify as partisans than their youthful counterparts of the 1950s and 1960s. Noting early declines in partisan identification, Abramson does provide a foundational view of what has been happening since the 1970s—a slow partisan decline as the youngest cohorts enter the electorate and are not as attached to parties. In his critique of Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes' articulation in *The American Voter*, Abramson completely discounts the aging process (life-cycle model) as an appropriate explanation of how youth develop partisan loyalties. However, he fails to provide adequate evidence for generational or period effects, and in the end he does not explain why partisanship is changing in the youngest cohorts.

The unique difference between partisan identity and political identity that is one can have partisanship without a cohesive political identity and vice versa. Partisanship as a weaker form of identification is a surface level commitment and can be one of many aspects to a political ego identity, which has deeper structures and meanings. A person can be a partisan even without knowing who he or she is politically because he or she has simply adopted the partisanship of his or her parents and donned the outer shell of partisan identification without reflecting on larger questions about beliefs or policies.

Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet discuss development in terms of how an individual develops vote choice in a complex environment of cross-pressures (1968, xxxvii). Party loyalty continues to trump the influence of political leaders as revealed in Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet's study; however, the many influences on political decision making can alter the final vote decision. The observation that people often vote along the same historical lines as their family is a crucial finding in their work. However, at times individuals reconcile those family pressures with other pressures from their social environment and their identities to make a final decision.

How people identify themselves matters, and their self conception can at times be more important than how social groups or their political environment tell them to think. As for partisans, Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet make two important claims about how 25% of respondents agree whole-heartedly with their parties (37) and how partisans' interaction with the party is crucial to how we understand party influence. "The partisan is assured that he is right; he is told why he is right; and he is reminded that other people agree with him, always a gratification and especially during times of doubt" (88). A consequence of being a partisan is this self-assuredness that comes from belonging to a party, but Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet's work done on the 1944 election does not seem to fit parties today.

For Independents, there tend to be many cross-pressures wherein they see benefits from both sides of the aisle and may feel pressured to choose one even though they may disagree with other aspects of the possible options in candidates or policies. Those who are cross-pressured—for example, identifying as a Democrat because of one's social status or occupation, but aspiring to higher occupational and social roles that they view to be in conflict with traditional tenets of the Democratic Party. These individuals, therefore, feel pulled in two directions with their current identity and their identity to which they aspire—and nonpartisans can feel a sense of uncertainty when it comes to making the decision to vote and whom to vote for. On the other hand, partisans are constantly reminded of their contribution and what else they can do to get their party into office, even if they do not wholeheartedly agree with everything the party stands for. For Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet, identification is important in two ways: the self conception of a person about his status and how individuals eventually reconcile the cross-pressures of partisan identification to vote for a candidate.

Evidence from Partisan Identification

More recent work on the youngest generation of voters suggests identification with the parties is to the benefit of the Democrats. The Pew Center for Social Research found that from 2007 to 2008, "58% of voters under age 30 identified or leaned toward the Democratic Party" (Keeter et al. 2008, 1). Since 2004, one of the largest shifts in the electorate toward the Democratic Party occurred with an 11% advantage over Republicans. Compared to the Baby Boomers or Generation X when they were young, Generation Y is more progressive and more likely to identify with the Democratic Party. The fact that Keeter, Horowitz, and Tyson's research at Pew only identifies Democrats and Republicans limits their ability to analyze a generation that identifies as Independent. The forced partisan categories fail to present the larger picture of dynamics within identification and exaggerate the number of partisans.

Changes in partisan identification shifted in the 2008 race, and larger and larger portions of voters are more willing to say that they were Independent rather than

identify with one party or the other. Immediately after the election, Gallup estimates included 28% identifying with Republicans, 33% with Democrats and 37% with Independents (Gallup 2017). The percentage of individuals identifying with Independents increased by five points from the 2006 election and increased ten points from the 2004 election. The major change in both elections was diminished identification with the Republican Party. However, the measures for Democratic and Republican leaners have changed very little. Since the 2004 election, there has been an even split of both party leaners at 48%, whereas in the 2006 election the shift was 39% Republican leaners to 49% Democrat. In 2008, the numbers stayed pretty much the same with 40% Republican and 51% Democrat (Gallup 2017), but it is crucial to understand with leanings that more and more individuals are not portraying themselves as party leaners. For the 2008 election, Jones notes that the Democrats have the identification advantage, which has been the largest since 1983 (2009). What Jones fails to address is the growing number of individuals identifying as Independents. The high for the Democratic Party was 36%, compared with the Republican at 28%—which leaves room for 36% of the public identifying as Independent.

Changes in the electorate include the number of young people who are less likely to identify with either party or who choose to be Independent. As the Harvard Institute for Politics Survey of Youth notes, young people are better measured with other identifiers, such as policy preferences and ideology, and are much less likely than their older counterparts to identify with a political party (2008). In 2004, Harvard's Youth Survey of Politics and Public Service noticed a major change in identification: "Over half of all young people defy traditional left-right political labels, instead their political affiliations and typology are predicated on their level of religiosity" (Harvard Institute of Politics 2008, 10). Young Americans today separate out into traditional liberals, traditional conservatives; those who are the centrists tend to separate out further into secular centrists and religious centrists. Growing numbers of youth are not identifying with parties but with secular centrists; in the 2004 poll only 23% of college students were secular centrists, whereas in 2008 they made up 42% of young Americans (Harvard Institute of Politics 2004, 2008).

In my analysis of Independents, I find that there are Independents who are not at the lowest levels of identity development but are all over the spectrum. The assumption that young Independents are nonvoters because they are of the default identity is not necessarily true. With data from the ANES, I test my hypothesis that developed Independents are more likely to vote than their default counterparts. In addition, I address the assumption that young Independents are less likely to vote than partisan cohorts. With the identity scale, I am distinguishing between what I call default Independents due to their lack of self knowledge and low levels of salience, and developed Independents who are knowledgeable about the political world and know their own identity and who are likely to vote.

Evidence from the ANES of Identity Statuses by Independence

The political identity scale from the second chapter was used again to analyze the differences between young (18–24) partisans and Independents. The scale ran from 0 to 12 and then the statuses were established at precise thresholds within the scale. Diffusions are between 0 and 3, Explorers between 4 and 6, Somewhat Developed at 7 to 9, and Fully Developed from 10 to 12. To account for the possibility that one can have commitments to ideas, ideology, and beliefs and not be partisan, I created this identity scale where young Independents had the possibility of being in the highest level of development (Table 4.1). Data analysis suggests a large number of Independents are around the lower levels of development on the identity scale.[1] The median of level of development for pure political Independents was 5 (18.3%), strong partisans on the other hand had higher medians for Democrats 8.5 (16.1% in 8 and 9) and for Republicans 11 (19%). Independent leaners have a median of 6 (Democratic Leaners 17.2%, Republican leaners 15.8%). Weak partisans had a higher mode of identity development at 7. Independent youth are more likely to be in the two lowest levels of development in the scale and less likely to be in the highest levels of development than are partisans.

An interesting element of the revised scale is the higher number of Independents than partisans in the second-to-highest category of development. While partisans do dominate the highest category of development within the scale—fully developed Independents are conscious about who they are and about the political world. With this knowledge, we begin to see the variety of young Independents who exist. Overall there is a nice spread of Independents throughout the Identity scale, suggesting there are many different levels of development with Independents and not just the extremes of default and developed Independents.

When the identity development scale (used in Table 4.1) is separated into the four distinct statuses, the patterns between partisans and Independents become more stark (Table 4.2). Independents tend to be diffusions more than any other category (32.3%), whereas strong Democrats tend to be somewhat developed (11.5%) and strong Republicans are more frequently fully developed (15%). Diffusions are most likely to be Pure Independents, which suggests some validity to the assertion that many Independents have little knowledge about the world and about themselves. There is clear evidence of a small population of fully developed Independents (9%). Weak partisans often fall into the identity status of somewhat developed for weak Republicans (17.3%) and either somewhat developed (24.7%) or diffusion (25%) for weak Democrats. Some variation in the Independent leaners exists, where Independent Democratic leaners are almost evenly split between all four statuses and Independent Republican leaners are more likely to be explorers (15.8%). Overall, Independents again are more likely than other partisan identifiers to fall into the two lowest levels of identity development.

[1] For ANES questions included in the political identity development scale please see Appendix A.

Table 4.1 Percentages of identifiers in each point of the identity scale 1972–2004

Political identity scale	Strong Democrat	Weak Democrat	Independent-Democrat	Independent	Independent-Republican	Weak Republican	Strong Republican	Total
0	0% (0)	0% (0)	0.4% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0.1% (1)
1	0.8% (1)	1.4% (4)	2.0% (5)	1.4% (3)	1.1% (2)	0.5% (1)	0% (0)	1.2% (16)
2	0.8% (1)	2.9% (8)	2.5% (6)	5.5% (12)	2.7% (5)	2.7% (5)	0% (0)	2.8% (37)
3	3.4% (4)	6.8% (19)	4.5% (11)	11.4% (25)	3.3% (6)	2.2% (4)	1.3% (1)	5.4% (70)
4	3.4% (4)	9.3% (26)	9.4% (23)	16.9% (37)	13.6% (25)	8.6% (16)	5.1% (4)	10.3% (135)
5	12.7% (15)	9.7% (27)	9.4% (23)	18.3% (40)	11.4% (21)	10.8% (20)	13.9% (11)	12% (157)
6	14.4% (17)	12.9% (36)	17.2% (42)	16% (35)	15.8% (29)	9.2% (17)	7.6% (6)	13.9% (182)
7	12.7% (15)	18.3% (51)	16.4% (40)	10% (22)	14.7% (27)	15.1% (28)	7.6% (6)	14.4% (189)
8	16.1% (19)	14% (39)	13.9% (34)	7.3% (16)	10.9% (20)	16.2% (30)	11.4% (9)	12.8% (167)
9	16.1% (19)	12.9% (36)	9% (22)	5% (11)	13% (24)	16.2% (30)	15.2% (12)	11.8% (154)
10	7.6% (9)	4.3% (12)	8.6% (21)	5% (11)	7.1% (13)	10.8% (20)	8.9% (7)	7.1% (93)
11	9.3% (11)	4.7% (13)	4.5% (11)	3.2% (7)	4.3% (8)	7% (13)	19% (15)	6% (78)
12	2.5% (3)	2.9% (8)	2% (5)	0% (0)	2.2% (4)	0.5% (1)	10.1% (8)	2.2% (29)
Total	118	279	244	219	184	185	79	1308

N = 1308, Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004

Table 4.2 Percentage of identifiers in each status of the identity scale

	Political identity scale				
Partisanship	Diffusion	Explorers	Somewhat developed	Fully developed	Total
Strong Democrat	4.8% (6)	7.6% (36)	10.4% (53)	11.5% (23)	9.0% (118)
Weak Democrat	25% (31)	18.8% (89)	24.7% (126)	16.5% (33)	21.3% (279)
Independent-Democrat	18.5% (23)	18.6% (88)	18.8% (96)	18.5% (37)	18.7% (244)
Independent	32.3% (40)	23.6% (112)	9.6% (49)	9% (18)	16.7% (219)
Independent-Republican	10.5% (13)	15.8% (75)	13.9% (71)	12.5% (25)	14.1% (184)
Weak Republican	8.1% (10)	11.2% (53)	17.3% (88)	17% (34)	14.1% (185)
Strong Republican	0.8% (1)	4.4% (2)	5.3% (27)	15% (30)	6% (79)
Total	124	474	510	200	1308

N = 1308, Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004

Table 4.3 Youth voter turnout by partisan and independent based on identity status

	Political identity status				
	Diffusion	Explorers	Somewhat developed	Fully developed	Tau-c
Partisans					0.24*
Did not vote	64.6% (31)	55.3% (110)	47.6% (140)	24.2% (29)	
Voted	35.4% (17)	44.7% (89)	52.4% (154)	75.8% (91)	
Independents					0.40*
Did not vote	90.8% (69)	70.4% (193)	49.1% (106)	26.3% (21)	
Voted	9.2% (7)	29.6% (81)	50.9% (110)	73.8% (59)	
Total	46.9% (310)	53.1% (351)	60.2% (389)	39.8% (257)	

Partisans N = 661, Independents N = 646, * $p < 0.01$, Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004

The next step in the investigation of identity development and Independence is to look at the behavior of these young people. Are Independents more likely to vote than their partisan counterparts? Based on data from Table 4.3, Independents are less likely to vote (39.8%) than their partisan counterparts (53.1%); however, there is more variation in the types of Independents.

In the two lowest statuses, Independents are more likely not to vote (60.2%) rather than to vote (39.8%). The tipping point—meaning the point at which more young people in each status are more likely to vote than not—also changes for Independents when they reach the somewhat developed status rather than the fully developed status for partisans (Table 4.3). This finding means that Independents can be less well developed and still vote, whereas partisans, in order to be more likely to vote, need to be in the highest-level status. The relationships between identity status and youth voting behavior are positive and significant for both partisans and

Table 4.4 Percentage of identifiers in each status of the identity scale, 2008

	Political identity scale				
Partisanship	Diffusion	Explorers	Somewhat developed	Fully developed	Total
Strong Democrat	50% (2)	9.6% (5)	15.8% (15)	7.7% (3)	13.2% (25)
Weak Democrat	25% (1)	26.9% (14)	16.8% (16)	10.3% (4)	18.4% (35)
Independent-Democrat	25% (1)	23.1% (12)	25.3% (24)	28.2% (11)	25.3% (48)
Independent	0% (0)	13.5% (7)	16.8% (16)	5.1% (2)	13.2% (25)
Independent-Republican	0% (0)	19.2% (10)	12.6% (12)	17.9% (7)	15.3% (29)
Weak Republican	0% (0)	5.8% (3)	8.4% (8)	17.9% (7)	9.5% (18)
Strong Republican	0% (0)	1.9% (1)	4.2% (4)	12.8% (5)	5.3% (10)
Total	4	52	95	39	190

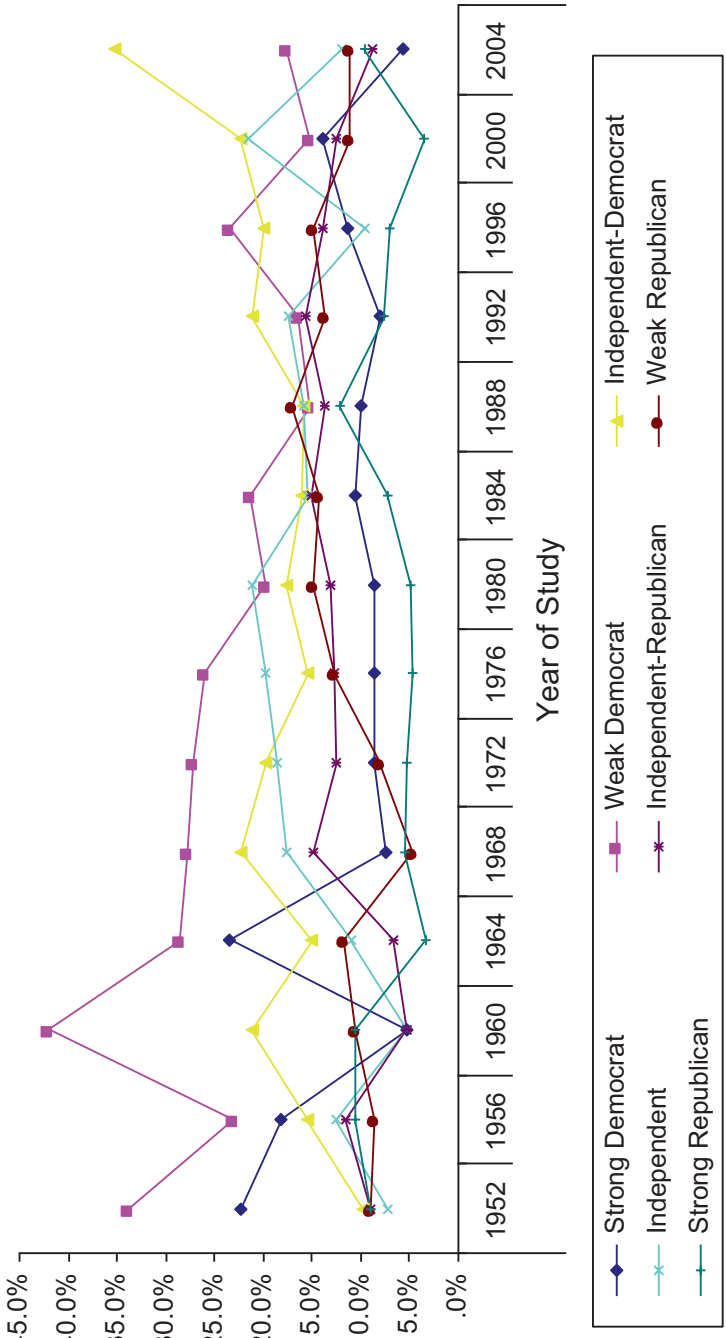
N = 190, Source: American National Election Study 2008 Data

Independents. More than one-third of youth Independents are more likely to vote than not, which suggests the evidence for young people as politically Independent and nonvoters is not entirely correct.

Evidence of Change in Youth Partisan Identification from 1952 to 2004

Looking at the number of youth who identify with political parties, there have been some major shifts through the years as young people have become more likely to say that they are political Independents. From 1952 to 2004, the trend is that more young people are likely to say that they are Independent: 7.1% in 1952 versus 21.5% in 2000 (Table 4.4). The largest increase of youth claiming to be Independent occurred between 1968 and 1972, which were the presidential election years where the expansion of voting rights to include 18–20 year olds passed.

Graph 4.1 illustrates the changes that occur between years, and shows the high number of weak Democrat identifiers increases throughout the years. From 1960 to 1980 the proportion of youth identifying as Independents continues to rise, until 1984, when Republicans made gains in the proportion of youth who either identified as weak Republicans, Strong Republicans, or Independents who leaned toward the Republican Party. In 1996, the proportion of Independents dropped to a low of 9.6% but rose dramatically to the largest percentage of Independents at 21.5% in 2000—only to be followed by another drop to 12% in 2004. Often the largest percentages of identifiers for most years are Independent-Democrats or weak Democrats. While there have been major shifts throughout the late twentieth century into the twenty-first, the evidence reveals that more young people have identified as Independent or as Independent leaners than they do as partisans.



Graph 4.1 Percentage of young partisans by year (Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File, 1952–2004, N = 2410)

Table 4.5 Percentage of identifiers in each status of the identity scale, 2012

	Political identity scale				
Partisanship	Diffusion	Explorers	Somewhat developed	Fully developed	Total
Strong democrat	0% (0)	14.8% (13)	17.9% (42)	20.7% (38)	18.3% (93)
Weak democrat	0% (0)	17% (15)	19.6% (46)	23.4% (43)	20.5% (104)
Independent-democrat	0% (0)	12.5% (11)	16.2% (38)	16.8% (31)	15.7% (80)
Independent	100% (1)	35.2% (31)	18.7% (44)	8.2% (15)	17.9% (91)
Independent-republican	0% (0)	9.1% (8)	6.8% (16)	10.3% (19)	8.5% (43)
Weak republican	0% (0)	9.1% (8)	11.9% (21)	11.4% (21)	11.2% (57)
Strong republican	0% (0)	2.3% (2)	8.9% (21)	9.2% (17)	7.9% (40)
Total	1	88	235	184	508

N = 508, Source: American National Election Study 2012

Evidence from 2008, 2012, and 2016

Interestingly, Diffusions seemed to identify with Democrats rather than claim independence or a Republican identification. Obama may have activated those youth to identify with the party. Independents compared to partisan leaners or partisan identifiers were the least likely to have a Fully Developed identity (5.1%). Making a comparison across years, 2008 had the least Republican identifiers (9.5% for Weak Republicans, and 5.3% for Strong Republicans). The percentage of young people who identified as Independent (13.2%), in 2008, were more than in 2004 (12%), but less than 2000 (21.5%). A political environment that is heavily impacted by an inspirational candidate resulted in Republicans being more developed in their identities. Republican leaners and identifiers tended to be in the Fully Developed category, more so than their Democratic counterparts (Table 4.5).

In 2012, Independents have the highest number of young people in the Diffusion and Explorer Status. The only Independent also was the only Diffuse identity in 2012. Clearly, there is a difference between Independents who have not chosen an identity and those who have. These young Independents are the least likely group to fully developed in their identities (8.2%). However, unlike data from previous years, Strong Democrats (20.7%) and Weak Democrats (23.4%) are more likely to be Fully Developed. Their Republican counterparts have a smaller percentage of young people that identify as Republican and are less likely to be in the Fully Developed category. This shift may happen due to a lack of a Republican president as a role model (Table 4.6).

In 2016, there were no youth Diffusions; however, trends stayed the same. Pure Independents were the most likely to be Explorers (39.6%) and the least likely to be Fully Developed (7.7%). The percentage of Independents is similar to previous years (16.2% vs 16.7%), which seems to suggest that the number of Independents among

Table 4.6 Percentage of identifiers in each status of the identity scale, 2016

	Political identity scale				
Partisanship	Diffusion	Explorers	Somewhat developed	Fully developed	Total
Strong democrat	0% (0)	9.4% (5)	17.5% (32)	17.6% (16)	16.2% (53)
Weak democrat	0% (0)	17% (9)	19.1% (35)	15.4% (14)	17.7% (58)
Independent-democrat	0% (0)	11.3% (6)	14.2% (26)	22% (20)	15.9% (52)
Independent	0% (0)	39.6% (21)	13.7% (25)	7.7% (7)	16.2% (53)
Independent-republican	0% (0)	7.5% (4)	9.3% (17)	11% (10)	9.5% (31)
Weak republican	0% (0)	13.2% (7)	16.9% (31)	12.1% (11)	15% (49)
Strong republican	0% (0)	1.9% (1)	9.3% (17)	14.3% (13)	9.5% (31)
Total	0	53	183	91	327

N = 327, Source: American National Election Study 2016

Table 4.7 Youth voter turnout by independence based on identity status, 2008

	Political identity status				
	Diffusion	Explorers	Somewhat developed	Fully developed	Tau-c
Partisans					0.189**
Did not vote	0% (0)	48.9% (22)	43% (34)	16.2% (6)	
Voted	100% (4)	51.1% (23)	57% (45)	83.8% (31)	
Independents					0.192
Did not vote	0% (0)	71.4% (5)	75% (12)	0% (0)	
Voted	0% (0)	28.6% (2)	25% (4)	100% (2)	
Total voted	100% (4)	48.1% (25)	51.6% (49)	84.6% (33)	190

Partisans N = 165, Independents N = 25, ** $p < 0.05$, Source: American National Election Study 2008

young people is staying pretty consistent through the last 40 years. More young people in 2016 identified as Strong Democrats (16.2% vs 9%) and Strong Republican (9.5% vs 6%), which suggests 2016 intensified partisan divides in young people. For identity statuses, Weak Democrats are the more likely to be Somewhat Developed and Strong Democrats are the most likely to be Fully Developed (Table 4.7).

Examining the data, 2008 defies the logic of identity status and voting behavior in two major areas: Diffusions who identified as partisans voted (at 100%), and Fully Developed Independents also voted at 100%. Due to the small number of pure Independents, there is not a meaningful relationship between Independents and Partisans. Partisans followed the pattern of increased voting behavior with more highly developed identities, and Independents did not seem to follow any pattern except that Fully Developed Independents are more likely to vote than their less developed counterparts (Table 4.7).

Table 4.8 Youth voter turnout by independence based on identity status, 2012

	Political identity status				
	Diffusion	Explorers	Somewhat developed	Fully developed	Tau-c
Partisans					0.066
Did not vote	0% (0)	55.6% (25)	32.4% (57)	35.3% (59)	
Voted	0% (0)	44.4% (20)	67.6% (119)	64.7% (108)	
Independents					0.359*
Did not vote	100% (1)	85.7%(24)	67.6% (25)	35.7% (5)	
Voted	0% (0)	14.3% (4)	32.4% (12)	64.3% (9)	
Total voted	0% (0)	32.9% (24)	61.5% (131)	64.6% (181)	

Partisans N = 388, Independents N = 80, * $p < 0.01$, Source: American National Election Study 2012

Table 4.9 Youth voter turnout by independence based on identity status, 2016

	Political identity status				
	Diffusion	Explorers	Somewhat developed	Fully developed	Tau-c
Partisans					0.282**
Did not vote	0% (0)	69.2% (9)	32.1%(36)	11.7% (9)	
Voted	0% (0)	30.8% (4)	67.9% (76)	88.3% (68)	
Independents					0.359*
Did not vote	0% (0)	80% (4)	57.1% (8)	20% (1)	
Voted	0% (0)	20% (1)	42.9% (6)	80% (4)	
Total voted	0% (0)	27.8% (5)	65.1% (82)	87.8% (82)	

Partisans N = 202, Independents N = 24, * $p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, Source: American National Election Study 2016

A stark difference in voting behavior can also be seen in the 2012 data, as the variation in identity status of partisans and Independents affects voting behavior. For Fully Developed young people, young Independents (64.3%) are just as likely to vote as their partisan counterparts (64.7%). The major difference in turnout between Independents and partisans is in the lower development of identities. Independents who are in the lower levels of identity development are less likely to vote. Independent Explorers voted at 14.3% rather than partisan Explorers, who voted at 44.4%. In an incumbent presidential election, partisanship affected who voted; however, fully developed youth of any identification are more likely to vote regardless of partisan identification (Table 4.8).

Identity status does affect differences in turnout between Partisans and Independents. Partisans of every identity category are more likely to vote than Independents. Independents who are Fully Developed (80%) are more likely to vote than Explorers (20%) and Somewhat Developed Independents (42.9%). Partisans are also affected by their identity status, Explorers are the least likely to vote (30.8%) compared to Somewhat Developed (67.9%) and Fully Developed Partisans (88.3%).

Even though there are only a few Pure Independents, there are significant differences between identity categories and their impact on voter turnout; in addition, partisans are also affected by which identity category they fall into (Table 4.10).

Larger Questions for Consideration of Independents and Voting Behavior

Regarding political identity development, should Independents be counted as developed or not developed? "Independent" could be considered a label; however, the larger question is whether or not being Independent is a conscious choice to align or not align with the parties appears to be a part of developed identity. A default choice of Independent would not be considered a part of a developed identity, but a forced choice would, possibly because respondents do not want to admit that they do not know where they belong.

Partisanship could be considered a commitment made by the individual, and, if he or she is likely to make such a commitment, then he or she has a more developed identity. Here is where typical measures may not fit. So let us consider different types of Independents: developed and default. A developed Independent could be considered as having a commitment to be nonpartisan. However, the trick is to distinguish between developed Independents and individuals who choose "Independent" because they are undecided. The best way to study this concept for young people and how independence may affect their voting behavior is based on how developed their identity is. To better understand Independents and especially young Independents we must look past the claim of independence to a deeper level of self knowledge and self questioning in an attempt to understand why some young people actively choose to be Independent and do so consciously, versus the claim to be an Independent as a default position while the young person figures out who he or she is.

Conclusions of Political Independence

As we have seen Independents were historically perceived as individuals who thought deeply about politics and who could think independently of the party lines (Keith et al. 1992, 6). However, in other periods of American history, parties were formidable forces that shaped what America thought about, influenced what Americans considered politics to be, and mobilized Americans. To not be partisan in a time when parties seemed to rule politics meant stigmatization of Independents. Party systems did tend to provoke a certain diehard quality for those who belonged and to ostracize those who did not. The change in the conceptualization of Independents came after Americans as a population began to see parties as less important in politics (Wattenberg 1991). Instead of stigmatizing Independents as

Table 4.10 Percentage of young identifiers by year on American national elections survey

Party identification	1952	1956	1960	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980	1984	1988	1992	1996	2000	2004
Strong Democrat	22.3%	18.3%	5.3%	23.5%	7.4%	8.7%	8.7%	8.6%	10.6%	10.1%	8.0%	11.3%	13.9%	5.6%
Weak Democrat	33.9%	23.1%	42.1%	28.6%	27.8%	27.1%	26.0%	19.8%	21.2%	15.3%	16.5%	23.5%	15.3%	17.6%
Independent-Democrat	9.8%	15.4%	21.1%	15.1%	22.2%	19.7%	15.5%	17.6%	16.1%	15.9%	21.2%	20%	22.2%	35.2%
Independent	7.1%	12.5%	5.3%	10.9%	17.6%	18.7%	19.9%	21.2%	15.4%	15.9%	17.5%	9.6%	21.5%	12%
Independent-Republican	8.9%	11.5%	5.3%	6.7%	14.8%	12.5%	12.6%	13.1%	15%	13.8%	15.6%	13.9%	12.5%	8.8%
Weak Republican	8.9%	8.7%	10.5%	11.8%	4.6%	7.9%	12.6%	14.9%	14.3%	16.9%	13.7%	14.8%	11.1%	11.2%
Strong Republican	8.9%	10.6%	10.5%	3.4%	5.6%	5.4%	4.7%	5%	7.3%	12.2%	7.5%	7%	3.5%	9.6%

Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File, 1952–2004, N = 2410

individuals who knew little about politics, partisans began to be seen as people who pushed their beliefs with little concern for what others thought. From the focus group data, many young people mentioned being Independent meant thinking for oneself or being sick of the political parties; whereas being partisan had the connotation of being pushy about one's beliefs. For those who began to claim Independent as their partisan identification, they seemed to be saying that there is more to political life than just saying that you are a Democrat or Republican.

There are many explanations as to why there has been such an increase in young Independents from the increase in education to media to the growth of candidate centered politics. With more education than generations who came before, young people today have more access to information and more knowledge about the world—yet that does not always translate into more information about politics. Many young people still claim that they do not vote because they do not have enough information about the candidates or issues (Bogard et al. 2008). Youth today seem to believe that political independence means being an independent thinker and a person who does not want to be a member of the parties—it is unclear whether they believe the reason to identify as a political Independent is because one disagrees with the parties. Disgust with partisanship and the need to be unique seems to drive more young people to identify as Independents.

Media also tends to play a role in exaggerating the power of Independents in a single election. As Patterson notes, the shift in the media toward a candidate-centered emphasis increases the number of Independents (2009). Media does tend to focus on the swing voters who, in close elections, may decide the outcome. The emphasis is placed on a set of voters who are going to make the major difference in the final election outcome; however, as Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet suggested, getting voters toward the end of the election cycle means targeting voters who are not interested, invested, or engaged in elections. The growing focus on Independent voters may have encouraged some young people to not identify with the political parties, but from my own research and focus groups with young people the appeal is twofold—not wanting to identify with parties and believing that being an Independent means you think for yourself (Gentry 2010).

As this research suggests, there is a wide variety of Independents at many different developmental levels; however, there is some clear distinction between individuals who are more developed than others. Developed Independents are more likely to vote than their default counterparts. The level of development for an Independent to vote is less than it is for partisans, suggesting that partisanship does still play a role in who votes and who does not. In the next chapter, Independents will be tested against the partisan counterparts to see whether identity development and inspirational leaders have more influence on their voting behavior than that of partisans.

Chapter 5
Bringing it All Together: Multivariate Analysis

While there have been many general explanations for why young Americans do not vote in presidential elections, there are fewer explanations as to why young people *do* vote. As discussed, scholars have a variety of reasons why young people do not vote—from too many distractions, to lack of an investment in the political system (meaning many different things—from the fact that young people do not pay taxes to the fact that they are not committed to improving their communities), to the assumption that they have not gone through the life-cycle changes that might encourage participation.

There are other explanations for what might encourage youth political participation and, most important, this study has maintained that much of the voter behavior literature leaves out the crucial bit of knowledge—knowledge about oneself. If we do not know who we are politically, participation becomes more difficult because we have little self-knowledge and the system becomes overwhelming with options and information it has to offer. Knowing who I am makes it easier to evaluate outside information—knowing what I believe allows me to better understand how new information fits with what I already know. More important, those who are confident about their political identity and can clearly say that they know who they are as political beings are the most likely to participate in voting.

What makes this study of youth voting particularly different is how it examines turnout with young people are in the developmental process of a political identity. Young adulthood is the culmination of breaking with childhood and looking toward the future to the adult that youth want to become. Young people, at this point in their lives, may have already found their political identity or they may be at the other extreme of avoiding politics altogether. The major contribution of this work is the process of political identity development and how development affects the behavior of voting. As I argued in Chaps. 3 and 4, there are other factors that can help the developmental process along—such as inspirational leaders who act as identity role models or political independence that is a conscious portrayal of an identity. I expect that identity development will have different effects for partisans and Independents.

B. Gentry, *Why Youth Vote*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69608-9_5

As a culmination of this work on youth voting behavior, this chapter examines all three explanations in different multivariate models to account for the value of each hypothesis on voting behavior of young people. A complete model that accounts for all three hypotheses is included in the final models. Political identity, inspirational leaders, and political independence are all tested against traditional explanations of youth turnout to see whether the identity theory survives against the older traditional explanations. The process begins with an explanation of how the original political identity scale was constructed, modified and finalized; we then look at how each of the three explanations in this research explains some of the variance of youth turnout. There is then a test of these explanations against the typical explanations of youth turnout to see how much identity theory accounts for turnout beyond the traditional measures.

There are many different explanations for youth turnout. Much of the focus has been on why youth do not vote rather than what might encourage youth participation. Youth engagement (discussions, debates) in politics with others, such as parents or peers, does seem to encourage participation. Interest in politics is another key variable but not one that is an end in itself; interest can be a means to an end—as part of the political identity.

For our focus here, much of this multivariate analysis is what influences individuals either to vote or not. Each of the three arguments within this work has been taken into account in a variety of ways from the identity scale and statuses, roles that leaders play in youth turnout, and the differentiation between developed (conscious) and default Independents. In addition to the variables from the arguments in this research, many of the typical explanations of low voter turnout, especially low youth turnout, are controlled for. Some of the typical explanations, such as ideology and levels of interest, are built into the scale of identity development.

Why Use Multivariate Analysis?

Each of the hypotheses has undergone bivariate statistical analysis. Higher levels of identity development are positively related to voting in young people. Inspirational leaders increase youth turnout in general, and inspirational candidates encourage youth voting. Independents come in many varieties, but more highly developed young Independents vote at higher rates than less developed young Independents.

Logistic regression is a tool of choice, due to the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable; one either votes or does not. Determining the probability one will vote requires using a method that appropriately deals with only two outcomes (Pollock 2009; Field 2005; Knoke et al. 2002; Pampel 2000; Lottes et al. 1996). Here, logistic regression tests the possibility that identity development and salience, inspirational leaders, and political independence affect voting behavior while controlling for the traditional measures.

Modeling

The purpose of using an index for political identity and salience is to create a single measure that incorporates all of the behaviors and attitudes of relevance. The goal is to develop a measure of political identity that accurately depicts one's identity status. "Youth voting" refers to voting patterns of people between the ages of 18 and 24, which is standard in the voting literature. Choosing to study 18–24 instead of people 18–30 is more efficacious because the range is more descriptive of individuals who are the youngest voting age, have lower voting rates than other age cohorts including 25–30 year olds, and are just beginning to participate in the political process.

Bringing it All Together: Identity, Leaders, and Independents

To begin analyzing identity development against control measures to better account for the effect of identity on youth voting, the identity development scale from the ANES, as a tool, needed some revision as many participants did not answer all of the questions included on the scale. The processes for modification are included below. Identity development can be affected by inspirational leaders because they provide a personal narrative of their own identity development. Acting as identity role models, these leaders work to encourage young people to vote through their exemplary identities and by using emotional appeals.

The next step in the analyses is to test identity development and inspirational leadership along with the control measures in order to account for the amount of influence on which young people vote. In the final tests, the interaction term Independent (as a dichotomous variable) is used with political identity development to test its effect on turnout. Each theory is tested to provide the most comprehensive explanation of what encourages young people to vote.

Identity Versus Control Measures: Evidence from the ANES

Control Variables

The controls for this type of study are typical controls for turnout such as gender, race, income, education, marital status, and residency, as measured by years within a community. Each of these elements has different influences on the likelihood of voting and therefore needs to be held constant when looking at the influence of my variables of interest. Women are often more likely to vote than men (after 1980), which requires that gender be held constant (Conway 2000). Race has long played a role in whether or not an individual will turnout; our reference variable here will be whites, since they tend to vote more frequently than other races. Educational

attainment tends to play a role in influencing voting behavior: as the number of years in education increases so does the likelihood of voting (Rosenstone and Hansen 2002). Generally, being married increases turnout; however, being married at a young age tends to have an adverse effect on youth turnout (Highton and Wolfinger 2001). Higher personal and family incomes tend to increase turnout, perhaps because it tends to increase other resources as well, such as access to information, education, and free time (Gimpel et al. 2003; Verba 1995). Longer residency within a community often increases turnout because the individual has some knowledge of local bureaucracy and politics, and, therefore, may be better equipped to both register and vote. What does not need to be held constant is age, since the parameters of the study limit the ages to between 18 and 24. The reason each of these variables is taken into account is their influence in changing the odds of youth turnout.

Political Ego Identity Components on the ANES

Political identity is understood to lie on a continuum, yet *political* identity can also be placed into four categories or statuses: fully developed, somewhat developed, explorers, and diffusions. In order to measure the degree to which one knows oneself politically, it is useful self-placement assessments on policies, ideology, self-awareness, and exploration. As noted in the previous chapter, Independence can be a type of fully developed identity, and in the identity scale is treated as such. Those who say that they identify with a party or are conscious Independents have a commitment to ideology, and take clear policy stances are fully developed. Those who identify themselves as political party leaners, and have fewer policy stances, list fewer problems facing the nation, and mention fewer candidate differences are somewhat developed. Salience, which refers to how important an identity is to a person's life, must be measured through question proxies. Those who think politics is an important part of their lives are more likely to say that they find politics interesting and that they follow public affairs. In the analysis, an interaction effect between political identity development and salience will be tested to explain the increased probability of voting.

The models are each constructed with the typical explanations in turnout: gender, race, marital status, educational level, income, and residency added first to the model. Then there are explanations to account for what identity, salience, and the interaction between them can contribute. Model 1 includes only the traditional explanations, whereas Model 2 includes identity along with the traditional variables. Model 3 includes identity and interest in elections, and Model 4 includes the identity scale along with two measures of salience: interest in the election and interest in public affairs.

Of the control variables in Model 1, only education (Exp(B) = 1.65) and income (Exp(B) = 1.20) affected whether or not a young person would turn out to vote. None of the other characteristics of gender, race, marital status, or residency measures were significant predictors of turnout. When the Identity Development Scale is added as a predictor of youth turnout in Model 2, a better explanation for youth

Table 5.1 Logistic regression models of traditional explanations for voter turnout against identity development scale with policy indicators, 1972–2004

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Gender	0.02 (0.13)	0.12 (0.13)	0.18 (0.13)	0.20 (0.13)
White	0.15 (0.15)	0.07 (0.16)	0.11 (0.16)	0.12 (0.16)
Married	−0.11 (0.13)	−0.04 (0.14)	−0.10 (0.14)	−0.12 (0.14)
Education	0.50** (0.05)	0.35** (0.06)	0.33** (0.06)	0.32** (0.06)
Income	0.18** (0.06)	0.19** (0.06)	0.19** (0.06)	0.19** (0.06)
Residency	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Identity development scale	–	0.21** (0.03)	0.17** (0.03)	0.16** (0.03)
Interest in election	–	–	0.44** (0.10)	0.37** (0.11)
Interest in public affairs	–	–	–	0.12 (0.08)
Constant	−2.70** (0.28)	−3.62** (0.32)	−3.68** (0.33)	−3.71** (0.33)
−2 Log likelihood of model	1524.59	1466.68	1448.87	1446.56

N = 1203 ** indicates significance at the 0.01 level * indicates significance at the 0.05 level
Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004. Standard errors are in parentheses

turnout is captured, with a decrease in the −2 Log likelihood of 57.91, meaning we are better able to predict turnout of young people when we take identity into account. Education remains as a significant indicator turn out (Exp(B) = 1.42, p = 0.01) and so does income (Exp(B) = 1.21, p = 0.01); but identity status also is significant when controlling for the typical explanations for voting behavior (Exp(B) = 1.24, p = 0.01). Again, gender, race, marital status, and residency were not significant.

When the variable of interest in the election is added to the second model, identity development retains its significant effect on youth voting behavior. Education remains a significant indicator of youth turnout (p = 0.01), as does income (p = 0.01). However, both identity development and interest in the election are also significant predictors in Model 3. The shift in the third model suggests that there may be interaction effects that need to be taken into account with Identity Development and Interest. Theoretically, this makes logical sense because as one's identity becomes more solidified, it also becomes more important to one's life (Table 5.1). Both of these indicators together, knowing who I am politically and thinking politics is an important part of my life, would increase youth voting.

The importance of politics to an individual's life can also be measured by his or her level of interest in public affairs, so while the ANES does not directly measure the importance of politics to a person's life, the general relevance of politics to one's life can be assessed by the level of interest measure. In Model 4, interest in public affairs is included in the equation to account for the other aspect of salience. Adding interest in public affairs did not significantly adjust the −2 Log likelihood by very much from the previous model (change in −2 Log likelihood = 2.31), nor was the variable a significant predictor. As with the previous models, Education

(Exp(B) = 1.37, p = 0.01) and Income (Exp(B) = 1.21, p = 0.01) continue to be significant indicators to turnout. Both the identity development scale and interest in the election are highly statistically significant. For a single increment increase in the identity scale, the odds that a young person will vote increases by 28% and for an increase in interest in the election the odds increase by 45%.

Based on the previous influence of political identity development on youth voter turnout before the salience measures were added, perhaps there is an interaction effect between identity and salience. Theoretically, this could be true, since one who is fully developed had to go through the political identity process where they had to explore the political world, make judgments about it, question themselves, and eventually settle on their own political identity. An individual going through the process might develop interest in politics, but this does not discount individuals who may or may not be interested in politics. Sometimes people are somewhat developed: they know who they are politically but are not interested in politics, usually because their identities are not of their own making.

Different Models of Analysis

The questions available on the American National Election Study greatly limit the possibility of accurately measuring political identity development. Based on the data available, the full identity scale variable only included cases from 1972 to 2000 with a sample size of 1203. No questions on the ANES ask about self questioning and commitment to a personal political identity or even, most basically, knowing oneself politically. One major critique of this measure is that it simply captures what important aspects other scholars have already noted, such as internal efficacy, political knowledge, and interest. While the ANES is a good place to begin to test measures of identity development against control variables, other data needed to be collected to further test the validity of these concepts.

Inspirational Leaders and Youth Turnout

The second theory in this work argues that inspirational leadership increases youth turnout. Leaders encourage young people to participate in presidential elections both directly and indirectly. I test the theory of inspirational leadership against the typical indicators of youth turnout to better understand the influence of inspirational leaders when these standard measures are held constant. As discussed in Chap. 3, inspirational leaders not only increase general turnout but actually have a greater effect on getting young voters to vote for the *specific* candidates who display these characteristics. Therefore, three dependent variables will be tested to account for the different outcomes of general voting and voting for the Democratic or Republican candidate.

Table 5.2 Logistic regression coefficients within models for youth turnout with traditional explanations, inspiring candidates, and hopeful feelings

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Gender	0.13 (0.13)	0.22 (0.16)	0.31* (0.16)	0.20 (0.17)	0.18 (0.17)
White	0.08 (0.16)	−0.05 (0.19)	−0.21 (0.18)	−0.07 (0.19)	0.01 (0.20)
Married	−0.04 (0.14)	−0.19 (0.18)	−0.30* (0.18)	−0.23 (0.18)	−0.24 (0.18)
Education	0.35** (0.06)	0.34** (0.07)	0.30** (0.07)	0.31** (0.07)	0.31** (0.07)
Income	0.19** (0.06)	0.16** (0.07)	0.17** (0.07)	0.16* (0.07)	0.17* (0.07)
Residency	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Democrat	–	–	–	–	0.35* (0.20)
Republican	–	–	–	–	−0.02 (0.21)
Identity	0.22** (0.03)	0.27** (0.04)	0.27** (0.04)	0.25** (0.04)	0.24** (0.04)
Either candidate inspiring	–	0.30* (0.18)	–	0.14 (0.19)	0.14 (0.19)
Either candidate hopeful	–	–	0.76** (0.20)	0.74** (0.21)	0.67** (0.21)
Constant	−3.66** (0.32)	−4.18** (0.43)	−4.30** (0.42)	−4.38** (0.44)	−4.35** (0.45)
−2 Log likelihood	1470.42	943.86	973.92	928.30	912.00

Models 1: N = 1209, Model 2: N = 798, Model 3 = 834 & 4; N = 793, Model 5 = 772
**indicates significance at the 0.01 level, *indicates significance at the 0.10 level
Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004. Standard errors in parentheses

The original control model includes the measures of gender, race, marital status, educational categories, income percentiles, and residency in the community by year. As expected, educational level and income are significant indicators as to which young people will go to the polls. For an increase in educational level there is an increase in the odds of young people voting by 42% ($p = 0.01$). As income increases so do the odds of a youth voting by 21% ($p = 0.01$). Similar to the influences of the control variables in the identity status measures, increases in education and income do tend to increase which young people vote when taking into account inspirational leaders (Table 5.2).

Controlling for the typical explanations of youth turnout, inspirational leadership also increases the odds of a young person voting. The more young people believe that "inspiring" describes the candidate, the more likely they are to vote. Even though educational status and income are still significant indicators ($p = 0.01$ and $p = 0.02$, respectively), finding the characteristic of "inspiring" in either candidate increased youth turnout by 35% ($p = 0.01$). Identity remains significant when inspirational leadership is included and seems to have a greater effect when also accounting for the inspirational characteristic of leadership (31% turnout increase for a single increase in the identity measure).

In Model 3, the level of hopefulness that the candidate made the individual feel was assessed against the control variables. While education and income remain as significant indicators of youth turnout, assessment of either candidate as creating hopeful feelings did increase youth turnout. When young people believe that either candidate makes them feel hopeful, this increases their odds of voting by 114%. In this model, gender and marriage seem to have an effect that does not occur in any other model of inspirational leadership.

The effect of feelings of hopefulness about the candidate is larger than simply thinking that the candidate is inspiring. This finding leads to ask why there would be such a large difference between subjective assessments of candidates' characteristics and what the individual feels. Could youth feel hopeful about a candidate who is not inspirational? It is possible that the same individual who feels hopeful about a candidate does not think that the same candidate is inspiring. Hope measures positive beliefs about the future that the candidate can bring. These assessments of inspiration measure the level that candidates activate the individual voter. In the end, the individual feels hope about the candidate based on their leadership characteristics, while "inspiring" measures one aspect of a candidate's characteristics. In such a way, the hopeful measure is more of a holistic approach to the traits that the candidate offers rather than only measuring being inspiring as a trait.

When all control measures, inspirational leadership characteristics, and feelings of hopefulness are taken into account, the effect of assessing either candidate as inspiring does not retain significance. Education and income remained significant indicators ($p = 0.01$, $p = 0.03$, respectively). However, even with the control measures and accounting for two different aspects of inspirational leadership, only the effect of either candidate creating hopeful feelings is significant ($p = 0.01$). The effect that leaders have on young people is to make them believe in their candidacy, which is somewhat different from a leader having the quality of being inspiring. If young people agreed that the candidate made them feel hopeful, then it increased their odds of voting by 104%.

When voting for candidates, young people may be less affected by the emotional appeals of inspirational leadership and yet still vote for other reasons, such as partisanship. Therefore, I account for the effects of partisanship when voting for both Democrats and Republicans in order to assess the true appeal of the candidates' characteristic of being inspiring and the feelings of hopefulness that candidates elicit.

Analyzing the general vote, individuals who affiliated with either the Democratic Party or with the Republican Party, were more likely to vote than if they were Independents. When accounting for partisanship, the only statistically significant relationships are candidates' creation of hopeful feelings. When young people feel hopeful for either candidate, they are 95% more likely to vote ($p = 0.06$) versus thinking either candidate is inspiring, which does not have a significant impact on youth turnout ($p = 0.48$). If a young person identifies as a Democrat, then he or she increases his or her odds of voting by 41% ($p = 0.08$).

Bringing it All Together: The Effect of Young Independents

Each of the three theories accounts for an aspect of what might encourage young people to vote in presidential elections. By bringing all of the explanations for encouraging youth turnout, I create five different models.

Two explanations for what might encourage political Independents to vote were identity status and salience. Young Independents could either be default Independents or conscious Independents. In my bivariate findings, there were clear differences between partisans and Independents in their likelihood to vote. But there were also differences between the higher levels of development and lower levels of development in Independents, where the higher developed Independents were more likely to vote than their default counterparts. Based on these findings, additional analyses need to be run for the traditional explanations of turnout against the effect of being Independent.

The first model addresses the influence of being Independent against traditional measures of turnout (Table 5.3). In this model, only three indicators affect youth voting to a level of acceptable statistical significance. Education increases the odds that a young person will vote by 63% ($p = 0.01$). Income also increases the odds for a young person to vote by 18% ($p = 0.01$). Being an Independent does affect voting behavior of young people by decreasing the odds that a young person will vote by 39% ($p = 0.01$). The commitment to partisanship does tend to increase voting behavior, but there may also be an interaction between Independence and identity development.

Table 5.3 Logistic regression coefficients within models for youth turnout with traditional explanations, identity development scale, inspiring candidates, hopeful feelings, and independents

Variable	Model 1	Model 2
Gender	0.01 (0.11)	0.25 (0.17)
White	0.14 (0.13)	0.00 (0.19)
Married	−0.04 (0.12)	−0.28 (0.18)
Education	0.49** (0.04)	0.29** (0.07)
Income	0.17** (0.05)	0.16* (0.07)
Residency	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Identity status	–	0.15** (0.05)
Interest in election	–	0.44** (0.15)
Interest in public affairs	–	−0.01 (0.10)
Either candidate inspiring	–	0.11 (0.19)
Either candidate hopeful	–	0.52* (0.22)
Independent	−0.50** (0.11)	−0.83 (0.55)
Independent X identity	–	0.09 (0.07)
Constant	−2.18 (0.25)	−3.67** (0.54)
−2 Log likelihood	2023.16	901.40

Model 1 N = 1596, Model 2 N = 731 **indicates significance at the 0.01 level *indicates significance at the 0.05 level
Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004. Standard errors are in parentheses

Model 2 takes into account the main effects of the three theories within this research: identity development, inspirational leaders, and Independence. All of these variables are included in the model, as are the traditional measures of voting behavior to test for which variables are the most accurate indicators of youth turnout. In this model some interesting findings come into view. The variable of identity status does stand up to scrutiny when accounting for typical explanations for voter turnout. A single point increase in the identity status scale increases voting behavior by 44% ($p = 0.01$). Of the control measures, education continues to increase youth turnout by 35% ($p = 0.01$) and income increases turnout of young people by 17% ($p = 0.03$). Interest in the election tends to matter more than interest in public affairs and increases turnout by 57% ($p = 0.01$) (Table 5.3).

Of the Inspirational leadership measures, thinking either candidate makes the individual feel hopeful increases voting by 68% ($p = 0.02$). Being Independent does have a significant effect on turnout by decreasing youth turnout by 68% ($p = 0.05$), but the interaction between independence and identity needs to be assessed. When the interaction effect of identity and independence was taken into account, no additional variables were significant including the interaction ($p = 0.29$).

Interest and Education: 2008 Multivariate Analysis

While the identity scale does not hold in this model, some of the challenge is how few young people were included in the analysis. However, salience or importance of politics did impact whether or not young people turned out to vote. Young people who are interested in the election are 1.3 times as likely to turnout than those that are not interested ($p = 0.005$). Education also plays a role, for every increase in educational attainment, young people are more likely to vote by 58.2% ($p = 0.014$). In 2008, interest in the election impacted who voted and who did not. However, in modeling, the identity development scale did increase the predictability of who would vote by 5.5% (Table 5.5).

Perceptions of candidates that make the individual feel hopeful also did not hold for 2008. However, controlling for identity, the identification as an Independent does decrease the likelihood to vote by 22.7% ($p = 0.033$). Interest and educational level also impact youth voter turnout. If a young person is interested in the election accounting for the common explanations of youth turnout, identity, and impact of leaders, then they are almost twice as likely to vote ($p = 0.035$) than their uninterested counterparts. The level of educational attainment also impacts turnout with every increase young people are 49.4% ($p = 0.033$) more likely to vote.

Table 5.4 Logistic regression models of traditional explanations for voter turnout against identity development scale with policy indicators, 1972–2000

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Gender	−0.100 (0.342)	−0.065 (0.345)	−0.100 (0.356)
White	−0.382 (0.354)	−0.518 (0.367)	−0.473 (0.378)
Married	0.694 (0.579)	0.658 (0.581)	0.567 (0.607)
Education	0.548** (0.176)	0.488** (0.181)	0.459** (0.187)
Income	0.055 (0.136)	0.057 (0.142)	0.113 (0.149)
Residency	0.004 (0.006)	0.004 (0.006)	0.004 (0.006)
Identity development scale	–	0.151 (0.084)	0.099 (0.088)
Interest in election	–	–	1.307** (0.470)
Constant	−0.364 (0.461)	−1.537** (0.827)	−2.233** (0.905)
−2 Log likelihood of model	205.789	197.564	197.300

N = 166 ** indicates significance at the 0.01 level * indicates significance at the 0.05 level
Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004. Standard errors are in parentheses

Table 5.5 Logistic regression models of traditional explanations for voter turnout against identity development scale, inspirational leaders, and independence

Variable	Model 4	Model 5
Gender	−0.113 (0.358)	−0.159 (0.368)
White	−0.463 (0.381)	−0.471 (0.388)
Married	0.544 (0.610)	0.504 (0.621)
Education	0.463** (0.187)	0.401** (0.188)
Income	0.112 (0.150)	0.170 (0.157)
Residency	0.004 (0.006)	0.004 (0.006)
Identity development scale	0.087 (0.093)	0.084 (0.094)
Interest in election	1.285** (0.483)	1.055* (0.502)
Does the democratic candidate make you feel hopeful?	0.127 (0.380)	−0.029 (0.397)
Does the republican candidate make you feel hopeful?	0.164 (0.418)	0.208 (0.432)
Independent	–	−1.227* (0.574)
Constant	−2.219* (0.928)	−1.751* (0.961)
−2 Log likelihood of model	197.300	192.472

N = 166 ** indicates significance at the 0.01 level * indicates significance at the 0.05 level
Source: American National Election Study 2008. Standard errors are in parentheses

Identity, Income, Education, and Interest: 2012 Multivariate Analysis

In an election with an incumbent, identity status did play a role until Interest in an election is also accounted for. For the race of Obama and Romney, education, and income were factors that increased turnout for youth voters by 63.3% (p = 0.00) and 19.9% (p = 0.034) respectively. Identity also increased turnout, when holding traditional explanations constant, for every point increase in the identity scale young people were more likely to vote by 16.7% (p = 0.008). However, when salience (importance

Table 5.6 Logistic regression models of traditional explanations for voter turnout against identity development scale, 2012

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Gender	−0.036 (0.221)	0.006 (0.224)	0.029 (0.230)
White	−0.079 (0.225)	−0.199 (0.232)	−0.074 (0.239)
Married	−0.107 (0.356)	−0.055 (0.359)	−0.136 (0.365)
Education	0.491** (0.104)	0.433** (0.106)	0.415** (0.109)
Income	0.181* (0.086)	0.164 (0.087)	0.182* (0.089)
Residency	0.014 (0.014)	0.015 (0.014)	0.018 (0.015)
Identity development scale	–	0.154** (0.058)	0.107 (0.060)
Interest in election	–	–	1.080** (0.264)
Constant	−1.950** (0.451)	−3.176** (0.659)	−3.573** (0.685)
−2 Log likelihood of model	477.039	469.917	452.697

N = 381 ** indicates significance at the 0.01 level * indicates significance at the 0.05 level
Source: American National Election Study 2012. Standard errors are in parentheses

of politics as measured by interest) is accounted for only education (51.4%, p = 0.00), income (19.9%, p = 0.041) and interest are impactful. Those that are interested in a presidential election with an incumbent are almost twice as likely to participate than those who are not at all interested (p = 0.00). Interestingly, for 2012, income played a role, there were stark differences between the candidates in how they portrayed their income levels and background. Obama touted the examples of just getting by like his car that had a hole in the bottom, and Romney was heavily criticized for not understanding the middle-class due to his economic background. For young people in an election with an incumbent, income matters unlike in 2008 (Table 5.6).

Education, Interest and Independence also impacted youth turnout for 2012. Even though Income was impactful in the traditional variable model and the model with identity, it did not impact youth turnout when accounting for inspirational leaders or independence. A single increase in educational attainment increases youth turnout by 51% and 53.4% (p = 0.00). Interest also doubles the likelihood of a young person voting in an election with Obama as an incumbent (p = 0.00). Being an independent decreases the likelihood a young person will turnout, even accounting for identity, by 72.7% (p = 0.00) (Table 5.7).

Identity Matters: 2016 Multivariate Analysis

Of the traditional explanations, only Education impacts voter turnout in 2016 (p = 0.47); however, when taking into account Identity, Education was no longer a significant variable predicting youth voting. For every single point increase in the identity development scale young people are 48.4% more likely to vote (p = 0.00). Even including interest in the equation, Identity continues to impact which young people vote, for each increase on the identity scale a young person is 44.9% more likely to vote (p = 0.00) (Table 5.8).

Table 5.7 Logistic regression models of traditional explanations for voter turnout against identity development scale, inspirational leaders, and independence

Variable	Model 4	Model 5
Gender	−0.032 (0.236)	−0.110 (0.242)
White	−0.114 (0.257)	−0.095 (0.263)
Married	−0.151 (0.370)	0.128 (0.382)
Education	0.412** (0.109)	0.428** (0.112)
Income	0.165 (0.090)	0.135 (0.092)
Residency	0.018 (0.015)	0.022 (0.015)
Identity development scale	0.105 (0.061)	0.058 (0.064)
Interest in election	1.035** (0.266)	1.005** (0.271)
Does the democratic candidate make you feel hopeful?	0.341 (0.286)	0.220 (0.294)
Does the republican candidate make you feel hopeful?	0.582 (0.301)	0.458 (0.305)
Independent	–	−1.298** (0.363)
Constant	−3.788** (0.713)	−3.021** (0.758)
−2 Log likelihood of model	448.551	434.874

N = 381 ** indicates significance at the 0.01 level * indicates significance at the 0.05 level
Source: American National Election Study 2012. Standard errors are in parentheses

Table 5.8 Logistic regression models of traditional explanations for voter turnout against identity development scale, 2016

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Gender	0.075 (0.304)	0.180 (0.324)	0.198 (0.326)
White	0.557 (0.314)	0.318 (0.336)	0.287 (0.340)
Married	−0.564 (0.459)	−0.536 (0.481)	−0.522 (0.484)
Education	0.259* (0.130)	0.168 (0.137)	0.151 (0.138)
Income	0.115 (0.113)	0.038 (0.120)	0.062 (0.122)
Residency	−0.004 (0.003)	0.003 (0.020)	0.000 (0.002)
Identity development scale	–	0.395** (0.087)	0.371** (0.089)
Interest in election	–	–	0.610 (0.400)
Constant	−0.670 (0.644)	−4.119** (1.018)	−4.310** (1.032)
−2 Log likelihood of model	258.466	235.137	232.849

N = 223 ** indicates significance at the 0.01 level * indicates significance at the 0.05 level
Source: American National Election Study 2016. Standard errors are in parentheses

Independence and the presidential candidate's impact[1] on young people did not significantly predict which young people would vote. Identity remained a significant factor in each model and increases the likelihood of a young person voting by 43.1% ($p = 0.00$) even accounting for other factors. Independence did not decrease youth voting in 2016 to the point of being substantively significant in the model. In an election with two strong personality candidates, identifying as an Independent may have been a

[1] Due to changes in the ANES questions, only frequency of hopefulness was included in the questions for 2016, which may change the patterns of output.

Table 5.9 Logistic regression models of traditional explanations for voter turnout against identity development scale, inspirational leaders, and independence

Variable	Model 4	Model 5
Gender	0.199 (0.330)	0.154 (0.333)
White	0.293 (0.354)	0.248 (0.357)
Married	−0.509 (0.514)	−0.456 (0.519)
Education	0.146 (0.141)	0.139 (0.141)
Income	0.062 (0.123)	0.064 (0.123)
Residency	−0.001 (0.020)	0.001 (0.020)
Identity development scale	0.370** (0.090)	0.358** (0.091)
Interest in election	0.622 (0.406)	0.596 (0.409)
How frequently does the democratic candidate make you feel hopeful?	−0.017 (0.135)	−0.023 (0.136)
How frequently does the republican candidate make you feel hopeful?	−0.026 (0.164)	−0.033 (0.163)
Independent	–	−0.724 (0.492)
Constant	−4.207** (1.182)	−3.913** (1.196)
−2 Log likelihood of model	232.817	230.666

N = 223 ** indicates significance at the 0.01 level * indicates significance at the 0.05 level
Source: American National Election Study 2016. Standard errors are in parentheses

way for young people not to identify with the parties or the candidates. In 2016, Identity matters despite impacts of traditional variables, candidates, and claims of Independence.

Based on the evidence available, all theories of youth voting do tend to stand up to scrutiny. When accounting for the common variables that affect youth turnout: identity, feelings of hopefulness and independence all affect whether or not a young person will go to the polls on Election Day. Having an identity does increase youth turnout. As young people begin to develop who they are politically, they become more likely to vote. While thinking that a candidate is inspiring does not necessarily hold up with the other measures, part of the reasoning is that assessment of the candidate as inspiring is captured in how the individual feels about the candidate on the whole, making the individual feel hopeful about the future. Independence does tend to decrease youth turnout, as many scholars predict. These results are promising, especially with the value that Identity Status adds as a measure to predict the turnout of young people. While the level of identity and independence did not interact, there may still be evidence that there are substantive differences in what encourages partisans to get to the polls versus what may encourage a young person who identifies as an Independent.

As people age, they are more likely to be in the higher levels of development unless there is a crisis event that makes these individuals question their identity. Based on the data from Chap. 2, many more adults are in the somewhat and fully developed statuses rather than in the explorer or diffusion categories. These early differences between adults and youth may help to distinguish the fact that identity matters when studying young people, and other factors come into play when studying older adults. While further analysis requires that young people and adults in the same sample be compared based on their levels of identity development or identity statuses, results suggest how adults feel about the specific act of voting and its importance to their lives seems to trump all other measures of identity and independence.

Chapter 6
Conclusions

Identity development as a process provides an explanation for what gets young people out to the polls on Election Day and what makes youth voters different from older voters. The process of development happens over time and generally happens with stops and starts. Young people who understand the significance of the way they act and think politically have a developed identity. Developing a political identity gives young people confidence to act in the political arena and makes them feel self-confident enough to make a difference in politics.

Why Youth Vote has approached youth voting behavior by looking through a lens of potential voters rather than consistent nonvoters. If we study the young people who do participate versus the ones who do not, then we get a better picture of what encourages youth participation. In this interdisciplinary work, the purpose was to identify what political identity development might look like and how it interacts with inspirational leaders and claims of political Independence. The evidence suggests that political identity is a valuable measure to explain at least some of what encourages and discourages youth voting behavior. More work is still needed to discover how political identity might affect other types of political and civic behavior.

While the concept of political identity is a holistic approach to comprehending the many elements of a political individual, there are some limitations in capturing a psychological concept with close-ended questions. Political identity development as a measure does hold up against traditional explanations of youth turnout, or lack of turnout. As seen in Chap. 5, identity remains a statistically significant indicator of youth turnout.

The surprising element in this work has been the outcomes for inspirational leadership. Inspirational candidates do tend to increase voting for them, but the simple presence of an inspirational leader in an election does not necessarily mean more young people will turnout. Inspirational rhetoric also has mixed results. The only significant piece of inspirational rhetoric was the use of the word "change." More uses of the word increased youth turnout in those years. Future work in this area may investigate the relationship between candidates and turnout of youth for the

B. Gentry, *Why Youth Vote*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69608-9_6

candidates. Two different types of assessment are taking place. In the case of inspiring others, candidates are assessed on how much that trait describes them. In the case of hopefulness, the assessment is based on how the individual feels. In the former, the leader is under study, and in the latter the effect of a leader's inspirational nature is assessed by how he or she affects the young person. How young people feel about the leader does have a clear relationship to which young people will turnout. Feeling hopeful about the candidate increases the odds that a young person will turn out.

Political identity also informs us about what makes political Independents different from one another and at the same time different from partisans. While the claim of political independence is known to decrease turnout in general voting behavior, it also tends to decrease youth voting. Political identity further informs us that there are variations that exist between political Independents. The fully developed Independents are more likely to vote than their partisan counterparts. However, this evidence must be weighed against the larger numbers of young political Independents who are in the lowest level of development and are more likely not to vote than their partisan counterparts.

Independents continue to be a mystery to much of political science, partially because we believe that partisanship is so central to turnout. While being associated with a party does increase youth turnout, assessing where a young person is in his or her development is also crucial. There are two types of young political Independents: developed and default. A developed Independent is conscious about his or her choice of political independence and has gone through the process of gathering information about the political environment and about himself or herself. These young Independents will likely remain Independent into later adulthood because it is part of their political identity. Default Independents, on the other hand, seem to choose to be Independents without much information about the political world or how they fit into it. These defaults feel pressured to choose an identification, but they are unwilling to say that they do not know. In essence, political independence is a holding place for defaults while they figure out their political identity, if any. Focus group interviews reveal that the appeal of political independence derives from the association of thinking for oneself. Independence, in this way, is a reaction to the assimilation of partisanship and partisan views or dislike of partisan fighting. Young people interviewed were interested in thinking for themselves, even if they did not know what they thought about politics. Independence has been associated with the freedom to choose, and without rules and pressures of partisanship.

The political implications of this work inform how we think about what it means for an individual to be a political person and how that political person develops. Development of a political identity is the key contribution. However, there are additional possibilities for what identity, inspirational leadership, and political independence may mean for future studies in youth voting behavior. Most basically, it brings the importance of the individual under scrutiny. While there are other aspects of identity studied in political science, this work does not study group identity development but rather the development of the individual identity. Self-development is critically important because even though we are social beings, putting individuals

at the center of the analysis is critical for understanding individual voting behavior.

The Larger Implications of Political Identity Development

Political Identity may be used to better understand the information bias and why it is such a complicated concept. Much of the literature argues that there is a partisan bias to the information that is received by individuals, wherein they fail to process information against their partisan beliefs and readily take in information that confirm their beliefs (Zaller 1992; Green et al. 2002). However, there may be an identity bias present due to the need to preserve one's mental self and continue to confirm coherence within oneself. A person may have particular biases to information that contradicts their state of identity. The implications of this argument suggest that bias is not solely based on partisanship but also on the beliefs and worldview of the individual. However, identity also allows for more malleability in what one believes, suggesting that our political identities are complex creations of only one aspect of the individual. When a person is fully developed, he or she is not rigid in his or her beliefs and is able to take in new information to form a coherent political identity.

Information processing is different as more-developed identities become solidified. More-developed identities are less likely to change are a result of new information, whereas less-developed identities are more likely to take in new information. Between different statuses there are stark variations based on how the individual relates to information. The difference between a diffusion status individual and an explorer is grounded in the reaction to new information. Where diffusions end up reacting either by avoiding or distrusting any additional information, explorers feed on new information and will attempt to gather new information to take it in and soak it up. In this way, explorers are more open to processing latest information, whereas diffusions are less open. Somewhat-developed individuals, even though they may have reached their current state of identity by accepting what others have said about the world, are actually less likely to process new information because this information may force them to confront their acceptance of previous information. Uncertainty about what to believe may lead somewhat developed individuals to question what they think and to reevaluate their beliefs and identity. Somewhat developed individuals are actually more fragile in their identity status because they lack self-certainty. Fully developed individuals, while they are not as open as explorers to additional information, are open to questioning their identity. However, unless some new information breaks the foundation of their identity, fully developed individuals are more likely to take the new information and adapt it to the larger identity they have already built.

The development of a political identity is more difficult than the development of, say occupational or religious identities. Two explanations for this difficulty in development are the complicated nature of politics and the personal relevance of politics. Active participation of children in politics is rare and often epitomized by mock

presidential elections in school, once every 4 years. Even though religion is particularly abstract, special efforts have been taken by religious institutions to make religion accessible to its youngest participants. Political institutions focus on those they serve: adults. Schools today are less likely to teach civic skills than they were 50 years ago. Because the political world is particularly complicated, people learn about the political world and their political selves from others. Through socialization, young people become acquainted with the political world and political actors. However, less political socialization from school and their parents has resulted in many more young people having lower levels of identity development. Developing what is particularly different about themselves can be particularly difficult if politics remains abstract because institutions and role models either are not available or are not elucidating the political maze.

Influence of Other Actors on Political Identity Development

Other circumstances also play a role in how one defines oneself politically. The political circumstances in which one grew up plays a role in future experiences and expectations of how politics works. Consider how currently the two youngest generations, Xers and Millennials, had two very different childhoods and grew up in different circumstances where politicians made promises. Xers are much more jaded about politics and tend to be more conservative—in some part due to the Reagan revolution that happened when they were young. Their Millennial counterparts tend to be more optimistic and liberal: they grew up during the prosperous Clinton era which was full of scandal. While both generations are distrustful of politicians in general, they approach politics in different ways based mainly how they can either make a difference or disengage.

Parents, peers, and schools all tend to play a major role in socialization of young people. Parents provide the foundation from which we build our political world. Parents are often socializers of morality and can provide the basis of our personal politics and how we begin to form our political identity. Our interaction with peers leads us to question our foundation through the interaction with different viewpoints. We generally choose to be friends with people who have similar interests, backgrounds, and perspectives as our own, so in a way, the friends we choose actually complement our political foundation. Schooling does play a role in development, but generally supports the status quo (Merelman 1991). Schooling tends to be generalized enough so as to support the political system that exists rather than to question it. Much of the teaching through the final years of high school is on American history rather than American politics, and few textbooks cover history in a political way. However, college does seem to be the place where aspects of one's political life come into question and one engages in discussions with those who may believe different things. College for many can be a thought-provoking experience where we try to figure out what we believe in. College offers the wide-open environment to experiment with who we are while we try to reconcile who we were and

who we will be. But for many others college is not the path that they pursue: jobs and families are their endeavors. Non-college youth are an understudied population in the United States, which is some of the reason is that college students are an easily targeted group and are easy to connect with. But these two groups may be fundamentally different in how they develop politically.

Voting and Identity

The assumption with voting is that the individual has to gain political information about the outside world. I am arguing that individuals have to gain political information about themselves—what they believe, how they place certain beliefs in context with policies, and how that then shapes whether or not they vote. Individuals must have a certain amount of self-competence and self-confidence in order to vote. Even if their vote will not change an election, individuals need to believe that their vote was the right one and that voting was the right thing to do.

Youth of today, with more college education than any other generation before them, often articulate that they do not have enough information to make an educated decision about whom to vote for (Bogard et al. 2008). The challenge then becomes how do we encourage youth to gather information about the candidates? How do we encourage acquisition of more knowledge about politics? Information today is more easily accessible than ever before, but young people seem not to seek it out or seem confused about how to look for it—or are perhaps overwhelmed by the myriad of sources for it. If young people are saying that they do not have enough information about the candidates, policies, or politics, and the information is easily accessible, the logical question is what else is there to do? Do young people need to know that the information is easily available? With search engines this excuse seems easy to overcome. What else keeps youth from accessing the information available to them? These questions need to be disentangled to get to the real reasons as to why young people do not gather information about the candidates. However, googling and going to candidates' websites will never result in a young people finding their own political identity—this comes with much more time, reflection, and thought. Perhaps what young people are saying is that they do not have enough knowledge about what they believe in or stand for, and therefore they refrain from participating.

A Note on the Interaction Between Political Identity Development and Social Identity

Could I feasibly conceptualize that part of identity development to fit into a specific social grouping such as Green, Palmquist, and Schickler in Partisan Hearts and Minds suggest as partisanship? Is part of finding one's identity discovering what

social group one belongs to? Several times when I have presented this theory, this specific point was raised, but I hesitate to consider social groups as a part of conceptualizing identity development. Is part of identity development deciding which social group one is a part of? This literature generally focuses on race and ethnicity—precisely what Green, Palmquist and Schickler are saying is the crux of the information missing from our understanding. How I perceive identity is that it is very much the product of the individual rather than a product of society or social group. How I understand identity is in terms of the individual's development and reaction to the outside world. The individual's identity growth comes from within the individual rather than from society. Social identities, however, are outside of the individual created by a social group for general purposes of identification, not because the group wants individuals to develop their sense of self. Whereas a personal identity comes from within, the social identity is adopted from outside sources.

Consequences of Inspirational Leadership

Inspirational leadership employs the use of emotional appeals versus tempered commitments. While inspirational candidates can work to encourage youth voting, the youth whom these candidates may be affecting the most are individuals who have not yet developed the commitments to what they believe and who they are politically. In this sense, identity development can help to detect who is more persuadable during election time. Identity commitments seem to take away the uncertainty of not knowing where one belongs and also take away from the influence of others. Several interviews with young volunteers in the 2008 presidential race identified with a party before they volunteered. While there were some young people who were moved by the candidate, more young people were socialized by their parents to become a participant in politics and to see the value of partisanship.

In the complex political environment where inspirational leaders are replacing parties, individuals can adopt a political identity of the political leader without questioning or examining how one might differ from this leader. Many of the concerns about the 2008 Obama campaign was precisely about this phenomenon of identity acceptance without questioning. The concern was that young people were not voting based on their critical analysis of politics and what they stood for politically, but rather because an inspirational leader was involved and convinced youth to believe in his platform. Many were concerned that young people were not critically examining their own beliefs and political interests, or that they knew little about what they believed in besides the leader.

For identity theorists, role models are major influences on adoption of a cohesive set of beliefs, but for identity development to fully occur the individual has to be able to distinguish themselves from the role model. Often, role models for politics are parents, which is why so many young people adopt the party and candidate choice of their parents.

The role of inspirational leaders today is to provide a set of problems and policy solutions, encourage people to identify with the leaders, and encourage participation (all three of which are components of a political identity that is adopted rather than developed). The language change from being a partisan to being a candidate supporter is an indicator of the shift from party-centered to candidate-centered campaigns. Looking at paraphernalia of both 2008 and 2016 presidential campaigns, there was little reference to parties and much more reference to the individual candidate. Whether the candidate-centered references were in the form of buttons, stickers, or signs, the emphasis was on following a candidate without regard to party and the party's set of beliefs. Being a candidate supporter is the new type of identity that is being reshaped in present times, but the warnings to youth to examine their identification with any inspirational candidate were warnings about not taking on a political identity without truly questioning the similarities and differences between the candidate and themselves.

The competition between parties and candidates for identifiers and loyalists lies inherently in the problem of defining who we are politically. At the heart of the matter, the political context in which people discover what they believe in, how they define themselves politically, how important politics is to their lives, and how they engage in actions to confirm and reaffirm their identity are all in flux, making it more difficult to develop a political identity.

While some of the variables in this research did not prove to be significant, there are things to learn from this analysis. When it comes to youth turnout, youth are affected by appeals other than what is presented at the nominating convention. Candidates may appeal to young people with other strategies such as peer-to-peer contact, contact from the campaign, and other mediums rather than the acceptance speech at a national convention. The peer effect of asking other young people to vote for a particular candidate needs to be studied. Peers do play a major role in young adults' lives as they attempt to navigate the world and look to their friends for advice about how to act.

The language of presidential nomination speeches does matter, and the percentage of mentions of the word "change" actually increases youth turnout. Presidential candidates may also appeal to youth in other ways—whether creating YouTube videos, playing the saxophone on national television, or appearing on Saturday Night Live. The party or campaign may focus more on appeals to youth rather than on the presidential candidate in this nomination appearance since the candidate has many different constituencies to appeal to on this single night.

The consequences of inspirational leaders on democracy include short-term and long-term outcomes. One consequence is for young people who are developing an identity as the inspirational leader gains recognition. These inspirational leaders can help shape identities of an entire generation of young people. In the short term, the positive effects of inspirational leaders include increasing turnout of young people and encouraging young people to find their own political identity. In the long term, inspirational leaders can have a negative effect if their young adherents become disenchanted with the unfulfilled promises and disappointments with the leader.

Those who are disenchanted may be less likely to participate in the future precisely because they had high hopes that were quickly dashed.

The 2008 Candidates Beyond Party

In the 2008 election, both presidential candidates portrayed themselves as beyond parties and highlighted their own qualities in the context of what makes a good leader. While Wattenberg argues this is an ongoing trend for candidate-centered campaigns and elections, 2008 seems to be the culminating point to proclaim oneself to be beyond the party label. McCain portrayed himself as a maverick who could buck the party when he felt it necessary, and he consistently told the public in his campaign speeches and in the presidential debates that he was willing to work on bipartisan legislation and had done so in the past. McCain has long held this title as maverick in the Republican Party, but he ran his campaign on his uniqueness and attempted to highlight moments in his career where he went against his party. For example, in the first presidential debate, McCain notes, "I have a long record and the American people know me very well and that is independent and a maverick in the Senate" (McCain and Obama, September 26, 2008a). The Obama campaign in response to the McCain-as-maverick needed to delegitimize McCain's claims and did so by tying McCain to Bush during the first debate, when Obama noted that he had "a better recipe for economic growth than the policies of President Bush—that John McCain wants to [sic] follow" (McCain and Obama, September 26, 2008a).

McCain has been considered by many as the old maverick who split with his party on major issues such as campaign finance reform, immigration reform, and tax cuts (York 2008). Yet McCain in the 2008 election had to carefully navigate the playing field in getting his party behind him. McCain's appeals to the Republican Party were to recruit establishment members to support his candidacy while at the same time attempting to convince the American public that he was the maverick that his history portrayed him to be. The challenge for McCain in the 2008 election was to promote an image to the American public that McCain was the McCain from the 2000 primaries that appealed to many Independent voters, but also to secure the Republican base. The image of maverick seemed disingenuous to the American public because McCain did not keep with his image of independence when he was pandering to and accepting support from the ultraconservative Republican establishment, such as Reverands Falwell and Hagee. In the 2008 race, McCain seemed unable to reestablish himself as the maverick he was in the 2000 campaign, partially due to Obama's appeal (Tumulty 2007).

Obama's appeal in the 2008 election was that he appeared apart from traditional partisan politics. Not only was Obama not in the Senate during the vote for the Iraq war, but he also was a new face to national politics. Obama represented a new face for the Democratic Party that many of the other primary candidates did not. Obama was new and fresh for the party (Turow 2004), something different to the politics of old. Obama was a young senator of mixed-race heritage who could not be blamed

for decisions made before he was in national office. Obama was appealing as a fresh face in national politics with some background in local and state offices. Tumulty's comment early in the primary season would pave the road for how the race between the two final candidates would pan out. She noted, "Democrat Barack Obama has staked a claim to the 2008 version of McCain's 2000 theme of running as a high-minded alternative to traditional politics" (2007). Obama's image as an alternative to traditional politics was upheld by his opposition to the war when it was politically risky (September 26, 2008).

Both candidates claimed to be independent from the parties with their own individual thoughts and beliefs; in the second presidential debate Obama noted, "You're not interested in hearing politicians pointing fingers," which highlighted the disgust Americans had with traditional partisan infighting (October 7, 2008). Establishing himself as different, not just different from party but different from politics, was to point to "politicians in Washington who haven't done anything" with alternative energy and many other issues of concern to the public for 30 years, while noting McCain was there for 26 of those years. Obama tapped into two big aspects of what made Americans fed up with politics—partisan fighting and feeling that nothing was getting done in Washington. While both of these reflect disgust with parties, there are deeper issues pertaining to disgust with politics.

Obama was successful in articulating that he was beyond party because he was not part of the policy-making decisions with which many Americans were upset, mainly the Iraq War; in addition to speaking out about the war, he had little political baggage (unlike Hillary Clinton), made promises of hope and opportunity, reflected disgust that Americans were feeling about politics and political parties, and had a unique racial and community service background.

The question can be raised whether or not Obama was successful because he was beyond parties or outside Washington politics. In the end, Obama argued that he was both. During the primaries, he portrayed himself as the new kid on the block of presidential politics and a new face to the Democratic Party. In the Democratic primary debate, Obama distinguished himself as what the people are looking for as "someone who's going to solve problems and not resort to the same typical politics that we've seen in Washington" (Obama, January 21, 2008). In addition, Obama made claims that he could do things differently and get work accomplished by including the American public, as he noted: "I wouldn't be running if I didn't think that I could bring the country together most effectively, that I can overcome the special interests of Washington most effectively that I can inspire the American people to get involved in their government most effectively" (Obama, January 21, 2008). Obama had aims of being an inspirational leader and his appeal to voters was to include them in the political discussions, inform them that they not only had a say in politics, but that they also had opportunities to make a difference in the campaign and in the country.

One larger question about inspirational leaders is whether they are able to sustain engagement of young people in elections. An issue with inspirational leaders has to do with their appeals to emotion and the fluidity of emotions. Not all elections will have an inspirational leader who will activate young people. Will these young

people then be likely to vote in future elections without an inspirational leader? At this point it is unclear because of the limited numbers of young people who are able to be analyzed in panel studies. However, I argue for two explanations to sustaining participation of young people: if youth were solely activated by emotional appeals, then he or she will not continue to vote in later elections. If youth are inspired by the inspirational candidate and develops their identity from that leader's identity model, then they will continue to vote after the initial election precisely because they had developed an identity.

Developed and Default Political Independence of Youth

One key aspect of the effort to understand Independents is to distinguish between more developed Independents and less developed Independents. While one may choose to be Independent for a variety of reasons, how one concludes that he or she is Independent has many different avenues and only some of these avenues result in highly developed Independents. Converse found that there were Independents who were highly developed in their identity, knew about the political world, and yet chose not to affiliate with either political party (1964). In his measure of political sophistication, he found "among the most highly sophisticated, those who consider themselves 'independents' outnumber those who consider themselves 'strong' partisans, despite the fact that the most vigorous political activity, much of it partisan, is carried on by people falling in this cell" (1964, 227). My explanation to Converse's finding is that these individuals who choose not to affiliate with either of the two political parties, but who nevertheless participate in a variety of political activity and are highly sophisticated about politics, are actually developed Independents.

Young people who are developed Independents are more likely to remain Independent than their less-developed counterparts, default Independents. We see a shift in the number of Independents as people age in part because they develop an identity along with an acquisition of partisan identification. Many young people tend to fall into the categories of Diffuse or Explorers because they have not yet formed judgments about the political system—or, as Bogard, Sheinheit and Clarke find, young people will actively admit that they do not vote because they do not have enough information (2008). For Explorers, the continual seeking of information is part of the process of development; however, for Diffusions the lack of a commitment to even search for information is a consequence of a lack of socialization or a disappointment with the political system.

Schattschneider once noted, "Democracy is not to be found in the parties but between the parties" (1942, 60), and he was right about where many Americans find themselves. Little did he know that his assessment of parties would come to fruition with many different types of identification and the growth in the number of Independents. Many Americans continue to find themselves somewhere between the parties rather than with them. Opinions about policies also are not housed in one partisan articulation, but Americans, and especially youth, find that both parties

have something to offer and it is through compromise that much of the work of government gets achieved.

Some of the explanation in the weakening of partisan identities can also be explained by socialization. Family influence in partisan socialization that Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet (1968) found in the 1950s has changed. Many parents of the youngest voting cohort to date (Generation X) came of age during the turbulent political years of the 1960s and 1970s. As Miller and Shanks determined, the post-New Deal generation had high number of Independents in their youth, but later they became partisan (1996). Parents are key socializers of identity, and if the political socialization is minimal or lost altogether, then young people have to engage with politics on their own. While some parents act as guides on how to act and engage with the political world, other parents avoid political discussions altogether. In essence, there are residual effects of turbulent political times on identity of those who experienced them and how these people then socialize their children.

In my qualitative work with young volunteers in the 2008 campaigns and focus groups with young people, I found that the highly developed young people mentioned a lot of parental socialization to politics. Whether parental involvement was discussing politics over the dinner table, watching news shows together, or taking their children to the voting booth; parents who were actively involved and supportive of their child's socialization tended to produce children who had fully developed identities at earlier ages. Many young people who developed their identity at an early age were also fully developed partisans rather than Independents. However, I believe that many of these young partisans did not question their own identity as children because they did not have the cognitive capacity to do so. The later development of these partisan children came when they had to interact with their peers and individuals within society who disagreed with their perspective. Growth of a developed identity came as a consequence to the questioning.

Get Out the Vote Drives Targeting Youth: Nonpartisan Organizations and Independents?

More recently, candidates are focusing on how to get young voters (and others) out to vote; this has led to targeting campaigns with varying success. But many of these new get out the vote (GOTV) campaigns tend to be bipartisan rather than partisan; the rise of Independents among the youth may be due to the fact that there have been increasing number of GOTV campaigns that are bipartisan or nonpartisan rather than partisan. Youth-targeted campaigns have flourished without the parties due to the growing concern that young people are not turning out to the polls and that there are serious consequences for democracy when young people do not vote. Because parties have chosen not to focus on youth, because it is both too expensive and youth are less likely than their older counterparts to vote, bipartisan campaigns targeting youth voters have no partisan prodding at all.

One explanation for the number of Independents recently may have to do with changes in the political system as a whole. When parties lost their patronage power in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they lost ties that bound potential voters to them. In the twentieth century shifts in how the parties connected with voters changed enormously as political consultants became a major force in national politics in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Shifts in media also exacerbated a social disconnect between people and the parties. Targeting campaigns for candidates became narrower and mainly were made up of mailings and television advertisements rather than direct contact from volunteers. Volunteer forces were focused on leaners and consistent voters who could be persuaded to vote for the candidate rather than the party.

Parties, with resources being funneled into budgets for political consultants, have much less influence in registering and encouraging voters to go to the polls than they did a century ago. To fill the connections to young voters, voter registration and turnout drives have been increasingly nonpartisan. Consider many of the voter registration efforts focused on young voters—Rock the Vote, Vote or Die, or college initiatives to get students registered—all of these examples of GOTV drives are inherently nonpartisan. While partisan campaigns for registration and voting were openly biased about which side they wanted to win, nonpartisan campaigns would like to register and have as many people, and especially young people to vote as possible.

These nonpartisan campaigns may be having a greater effect than simply encouraging young people to vote, but they also may be influencing how and whether they identify as Independents. Voter mobilizing forces of the early twentieth century were dominated by partisans for partisan reasons, but today mobilization campaigns are shared between partisan and nonpartisan campaigns. Young people are more likely to be targeted by appeals from nonpartisan organizations to register and vote. Youth who have not yet identified with a party may choose to identify as Independent. If the state where the registration is taking place requires that individuals register with a party, then they may choose not to. If partisans were coming to the door to register new voters, the young person may feel pressured to register with their party. Perhaps the lack of pressure to register with a party leaves little influence on the young person to register and then vote for a particular party. More research needs to be done on the effects of nonpartisan voter registration drives, but clearly voter registration is no longer monopolized by parties. If parties fail to reach out to youth voters, then nonpartisan outreach programs will.

Consequences for the American Public

The context through which individuals come to know who they are politically is changing. With an increased emphasis on candidate over party, identifications among the public are becoming more amorphous. The context of weakening parties in the electorate over the past 30 years has created a vacuum wherein Americans

have little connection to what parties mean and how parties may shape their identity. Encouraging participation in the political system is encouraging people to ascribe to a set of beliefs. In the past, the set of beliefs was put forward in party platforms and in recognition of what the two political parties stood for. Today, much greater emphasis has been placed on candidates articulating the platform for individuals to believe in and follow. The difficulty is when the focus changes from parties to individuals; policy becomes the articulation of a campaign rather than a cohesive consistent platform that is long lasting.

The changing political context makes it more difficult for citizens to know their own political identity—knowing who they are politically, questioning their beliefs, and engaging in behaviors that confirm their identity. Developing a political identity includes opportunities to question available alternatives in beliefs, labels, and policy decisions. Parties with platforms provided the American public with clear alternatives between the two parties and allowed more opportunity for Americans to place themselves on a political party spectrum. Parties previously provided easy self-definition; you were either a Republican or a Democrat. Parties oversimplified the process for identity development because adoption of the party identification did not mean you had to do any other questioning about who you were politically. Or, more frequently, saying that you identify with this particular party does not mean that you adhere to all aspects of the party platform. Early studies in voting behavior focused on partisanship as a key identification (Lazersfeld et al. 1968; Campbell et al. 1960). If an individual grew up in a Democratic household, more than likely he or she would be a Democrat, but simply adopting a political definition of party label did not require questioning of policies, politics, or candidates. Easy acceptance of a political definition allowed individuals to participate in the democratic process with little information other than partisan cues. But developing a true political identity requires more than defining oneself as a partisan.

Shifting identification to independence may be a new opportunity for individuals to define who they are politically but could also mean that their identity is simply taking on the Independent label because they do not want to be identified with the political parties. If the Independent label is simply reactionary, meaning "I'm not either one of those partisans," then the identity again is simple. An Independent who says "I agree with these policies of this party and those policies of that other party and have this opinion about this issue that neither party seems to address," is much more complex in how he or she defines his or herself and how he or she understands politics.

Part of the reason people either participate in politics or do not is precisely this issue of knowing who they are politically. People who are able to define themselves through their political beliefs, policy stances, and meaningful associations are much more likely to participate in the political process. In a democratic society, we hope that citizen identifications are not simply labels, but thought out, conscious, identities based on a period of self-questioning and reflection. Individuals who base who they are politically solely on who their parents were are not fully developed individuals politically. In Dahl's understanding, those who adopt political affiliations without examining their loyalties belong to the apolitical stratum (2005). Engaging

in politics requires some aspect of questioning, conflict, and difference of ideas. Whereas parties 30 years ago offered stances that were clear to voters to easily identify with and then participate, today's inspirational leaders are taking the place of parties as the basis for identification.

How America May Not Know Who It Is Anymore, and Why It Matters

The changing environment by which people are figuring out who they are politically, discovering their political beliefs, engaging in the body politic, and dealing with more amorphous political distinction has made it more difficult for people psychologically. This is especially true for young people who have grown up in an environment of political independence where, since 1968, more than a third of Americans identify themselves as Independent rather than with either political party.

Candidates in the 2008 and 2016 election actually claimed to be beyond party, which was seen not only in the rhetoric but also in their campaign paraphernalia. This phenomenon of candidate-centered elections and campaigns are not particularly new, but the emphasis on the two major candidates shrugging off parties is. In the 2008 campaign, volunteers were more likely to say that are a candidate supporter rather than a partisan, (Gentry 2008).

Participants in the electoral system should be conscious to examine their political identity and how they came to develop it. Whether one's loyalties are to parties or candidates or a combination, these affiliations need to be examined. During the transitional period of youth, participants in the political system need to examine their identity, how they fit into politics, and how they established their beliefs. Self-reflection—careful thinking about one's beliefs and definitions—is needed to be an informed citizen, but Americans may not spend the time analyzing what they stand for or why their beliefs exist. Self-definition in the political world is important to how people view themselves in the political world and how they inform others about where they stand. Self-identification must be carefully crafted with thoughtful, critical questioning of who we are as individuals. Generations of Americans who lack a political identity will have far dire consequences than simply who will participate in elections.

Certainly, one criticism of the political identity scale could be that it is redundant—it measures variables well established in the field and puts them all into one scale. On the contrary, these are components that help a person to understand who they are and what they stand for politically. Where this research has original insight is the process of development rather than assuming people are political creatures as soon as they become adults.

From what we know now, one way in which youth may be different from their older counterparts, and making them less likely to vote, is their level of political

identity development. However, I do not generalize in saying that more youth are found in the lower levels of development. Rather than stating youth do not vote due to stability variables, I take a deeper look into how a person becomes political and attempt to look at the process and outcomes of this development on youth political participation. One bold direction this research will take is to argue that the years when more youth participation is evident are also years when youth are more fully developed in their political identities, whether from parental guidance, self-questioning, or the role that political leaders may play in acting as a role model for youth struggling to find out who they are.

Linking Civic Engagement and Voting Behavior Through Identity Development

Political identity links civic engagement and voting behavior through different aspects of reinforced participation. Internalizing the value, behaviors, and beliefs about participating in one's community and through voting have similar foundations. Civic engagement links the individual's actions in the community and can enhance one's interest in solving larger political and social problems. The most significant link between civic engagement and voting behavior is connecting of the individual with the political system. Civic engagement offers more of a hands-on approach to encourage people of all ages, but especially young people, to become active in their communities, whereas voting is much more an abstract, 18-and-older task. The link between these two activities is the individual. Through civic participation an individual learns how the political system works, who makes the decisions, what he or she believes in, and what he or she thinks society should be like. Youth are not only getting information about the political system, they are also learning information about themselves and their views about the world, which is exploration of an identity.

Civic engagement allows for concrete knowledge about the political system and how the individual fits into it, in addition to moments of confrontation about socialized beliefs. Forming a cohesive political identity requires that the identity must come into confrontation with alternative viewpoints. As Yates and Youniss note, students who participate in community service at a soup kitchen become confronted about their opinions on poverty and its causes (1996, 279). Confrontation of previous beliefs about the world, how one defines oneself and the political order are valuable stimulants for a more cohesive identity. Confrontation is needed for individuals to acknowledge their beliefs about themselves and the political world and to know as well that there may be differences in what they believe and what others believe.

Forming a political identity requires moments of transitioning and defining oneself. Civic engagement in adolescence offers moments of focus on the often-latent identity of civic and political life. Participation at a younger age offers opportunities wherein an individual defines himself or herself and gives a reflective element to

transitioning between how the he or she looks at the world. Participation becomes a crucial aspect to developing an identity as young people find what they believe in, gain more knowledge about how the world works, and engage in behaviors that might otherwise be nonexistent. Civic engagement allows youth to look beyond themselves and to see a larger world to connect with. But in a youth's life, just as with politics being peripheral to many adults' lives, civic engagement is one of many different opportunities available to define oneself. Those who support civic engagement should acknowledge the occasions where self-definition and transcendence is possible.

Political identity can also help to explain why an individual would choose not to engage in civic or political life later. Negative experiences during civic activities may make an individual not want to continue participating, making reinforcement a key to continued action. If the experiences or the reactions to one's behavior are negative, then the individual will be less likely to engage in the future. For example, if a student working in his or her community at an outreach center and has a negative experience with the director or with patrons, then he or she is less likely to want to go back into that environment, which can further affect civic engagement and have a negative influence on later political engagement. The individual may come to think, "This is just not for me, nor is it characteristic of me." Civic engagement may also be perceived as work rather than as a rewarding experience from which one can learn. This topic gets into the deeper debate about voluntary versus mandatory community service in schools. This may certainly not turn all students off, but some may perceive civic service as something to do simply because it is required.

The major component of civic engagement to identity development is internalization of beliefs and self-reflection. If an individual sees the civic opportunity as another requirement rather than an opportunity to consider what's going on in the world, then they will be less likely to continue to participate. Careful criticism of civic engagement programs should take into account the costs of turning some students off to civic and political life altogether versus the rewards of opening a student's eyes to community and political experience. Centrality is another reason why some might choose not to engage in civic life later on. If the civic and political identity are not central to the individual, then his or her identity may be formed from other aspects of his or her life, and politics becomes peripheral. If a civic or political identity is not a central or salient part of one's life, other priorities will come up. As we develop into adulthood, this aspect of centrality also plays a role as we age and take on new identities.

Identity can also explain the differences in opinion of young people about civic versus political engagement. Civic engagement encourages participation directly through community activities, institutions of government, and volunteerism. For early identity development there need to be direct relationships between the individual and society. Civic engagement provides those opportunities. Some of the difficulty with developing a political identity is that much of politics—political parties, political ideology, and policy—can be abstract. Engaging in civic life has more concrete connection to identity and placing the individual in context of a larger

world. Political engagement offers far less concrete activity, save for interactions with political parties and political volunteers.

A theory for building a bridge between civic engagement in adolescence that encourages later voting behavior is identity development (Gentry 2010). The connection of political identity to voting behavior helps us understand another element of electoral behavior that is deeper than our current measures and takes into account differences based on youth. Identity can foster civic engagement through consciously encouraging better civic engagement through developing youth's political identity. Political ego identity can also be studied under changes in political circumstances that may affect a generation of young people and their development as political beings.

Civic engagement is a field that could benefit from more emphasis on political identity. Programs geared toward civic engagement should take into account more than just self-reflection and should encourage youth to be clear about what they believe, what they think, and how that may change through their participation. Self-definition, self-reflection, and positive feedback about the civic and political behaviors we pursue are major components to studying a new variable that not only bridges civic engagement and future political engagement but also illuminates the peculiarities of what it means to be young and transitioning toward the political person one will be.

Voter Registration Laws and Youth Turnout

Another avenue of study for youth turnout is the limitations on college student registration and absentee ballots. No analysis of voter turnout can ignore the role of legal barriers to registration and voting to explain poor turnout. Certainly, one of the primary ways to discourage youth turnout is to make the voting process more difficult. Scholars such as Rosenstone and Wolfinger (1980) pointed out early on that legal barriers to registration depress turnout. Legal barriers for young people are often proposed by local boards of election to avoid voter fraud and prevent young people from voting in two locations. The major laws that affect youth turnout are those concerning residency, registration, and absentee ballots.

Residency requirements make it difficult for college students to register in the communities where they attend college, especially since many college students do not have a form of identification that has their college residence on it. As the Pace Institute's analysis of these laws suggests, states in which students have the *choice* of where to register have the highest registration and turnout of young people (2004). Students can at times be caught in a catch-22 where they cannot register in the county where they go to college, but the county where their parents' reside does not permit students living away from their parents to vote (Gentry 2004). Tight residency requirements ask that young people change their identification (driver's licenses or nondriver's identification) to match their current residence, which may change frequently. The continued burden to change their driver's license every time

the student moves, actually, deters students from registering in their college town. There are a few additional reasons why young people should be given the choice to register where they live from 9 to 12 months out of the year.

While some registrars may be very difficult when dealing with college student voters, the benefits that college students give to the community are immense. Considering budgets and federal monies to the area, college students, for the purposes of the U.S. Census, are counted as residents where they go to college. As a consequence, the states and localities that house these college students get additional funds from the federal government based on the number of residents in the area (Census Bureau 2009). Federal funds for programs and interstate systems go to the same localities that may deny college students the right to vote where they are counted by the Census to live. In addition, issues of reapportionment at the federal level and redistricting at the state level are based on population densities, which are based on Census counts. At the most basic level, college students who are denied the opportunity to vote in the college towns are denied representation.

Students not only contribute to the tax base for federal monies but college and university students also bring in and pay local taxes, which can contribute to their college communities. College students work in the communities where they attend college in addition to the money that is brought in to the community from the college or university itself. Around the country, college students pay local and state taxes for purchases in those communities, and when they work, they also pay state and local taxes on income. But money is not the only factor: college students also volunteer in the communities where they attend college. For all that students and higher education institutions bring to communities across the country, students continue to be denied access to register where they attend school or at least have a choice in where they consider home.

Absentee ballots also tend to be a difficult and onerous process for young people. While there has been at least some research into how these laws affect college students, there is a lack of research concerning how these laws affect individuals who are not in college—which are half of the 18–24 population. The process for absentee ballots can not only be time consuming, but also require the information be sent to the county registrar months in advance of the election date.

Final Thoughts

The voting behavior literature is missing the most crucial bit of knowledge about youth voting—the knowledge about oneself. Incorporating the aspects of identity development into attempts to understand youth turnout is not only valuable but essential to distinguishing what makes young people different. The life of this work is inherently positive: there are ways to study what encourages youth voting. While I have attempted to be neither prescriptive nor suggest that everyone be developed in their identity, I do see this contribution of identity development as an interdisciplinary approach to why youth vote.

Political identity development does not need to be linear. While my model in Chap. 2 is presented in a two-dimensional format, I see identity development as inherently cyclical. People go through stages of development and may have crises serious enough to entirely shift their status. For youth voting behavior, political identity development is influential in explaining why some youth vote and why youth voting is valuable to understand and study. Young people in the higher statuses of identity development do turnout more than lower statuses. Inspirational leaders encourage youth participation when they inspire hope in others. Young Independents are not all the same, and those who are more developed in their political identity are more likely to participate than their default counterparts. In the end, politics is not the focal point of many people's lives, and their political identity is but one part of the larger personality. For young people, identity matters.

Appendices

Appendix A. Construction of the Scale and ANES Data Questions

Political Ego Identity Components on the ANES and Coding

Traditional Variables:

Gender: Coded as Male = 0, Female = 1

Race: 1948–1998: INTERVIEWER OBSERVATION OF RACE 2000 AND LATER: What racial or ethnic group or groups best describes you? 1972 AND LATER (exc. 2002): In addition to being American, what do you consider your main ethnic group or nationality group?

Coded: White = 1, Non-white = 0

Married: 1952: Are you married? 1956 AND LATER: Are you married now and living with your husband/wife (2002: spouse)-- or are you widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never married?

Coded: Married = 1, Never married, divorced, separated, widowed, and partners = 0

Education: 1952–1972: How many grades of school did you finish? 1974 AND LATER: What is highest grade of school or year of college you have completed? Did you get a high school diploma or pass a high school equivalency test? 1974,1976: Do you have a college degree? (IF YES:) What degree is that? 1978–1984: Do you have a college degree? (IF YES:) What is the highest degree that you have earned? 1986 AND LATER: What is the highest degree that you have earned?

Coded 7 categories 1 = 8th grade or less, 2 = High school, no diploma, 3 = High School Diploma, 4 = High School Diploma plus non-academic training, 5 = Some college or Associates Degree, 6 = Bachelors Degree, 7 = Advanced Degree

Income: 1952,1956–1960: About what do you think your total income will be this year for yourself and your immediate family? 1962: Would you tell me how much income you and your family will be making during this calendar year, 1962. I mean, before taxes. 1964,1968: About what do you think your total income will be

B. Gentry, *Why Youth Vote*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69608-9

this year for yourself and your immediate family. Just give me the number/ letter) of the right income category. 1966,1970: Many people don't know their exact (1966/1970) income yet; but would you tell me as best you can what you expect your (1966/1970) income to be--before taxes? You may just tell me the letter of the group on this card into which your family income will probably fall. 1972–1990, 1992 LONG-FORM,1994-LATER EXC. 2000 TELEPHONE: Please look at this card/page (2000 FTF: the booklet) and tell me the letter of the income group that includes the income of all members of your family living here in [previous year] before taxes. This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest, and all other income. (IF UNCERTAIN:) What would be your best guess?

1992 SHORT FORM: Can you give us an estimate of your total family income in 1991 before taxes? This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest and all other income for every member of your family living in your house in 1991. First could you tell me if that was above or below $24,999? (IF UNCERTAIN: what would be your best guess?) (IF ABOVE/BELOW $24,999:) I will read you some income categories, could you please stop me when I reach the category that corresponds to your family situation? 2000 TELEPHONE: I am going to read you a list of income categories. Please tell me which category best describes the. total income of all members of your family living in your house in 1999 before taxes. This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest, and all other income. Please stop me when I get to your family's income.

Coded: by percentiles 1 = 0–16 percentile, 2 = 17–33 percentile, 3 = 34–67 percentile, 4 = 68–95 percentile, 5 = 96–100 percentile

Residency: How long have you lived here in (1986 AND LATER: your present) (1984: this) city/town/township/county (2002: community)?

Coded by number of years

Political Identity Scale Questions on the ANES

A_{1a} Correct Democratic Party Placement on Ideology Scale: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I'm going to show you (1996 AND LATER: Here is) a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place the Democratic Party 7 point ideology scale?

Coded: 1 = Extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal 0 = Moderate, middle of the road, slightly conservative, conservative, extremely conservative

A_{1b} Correct Republican Party Placement on Ideology Scale: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I'm going to show you (1996 AND LATER: Here is) a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place the Republican Party 7 point ideology scale?

Coded: 0 = Extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, Moderate, middle of the road

1 = slightly conservative, conservative, extremely conservative

A_{1c} Knows Party with House Majority before Election: 1958–1968: Do you happen to know which party had the most Congressmen in Washington before the election this/last month? (IF NECESSARY:) Which one? 1970 AND LATER: Do you happen to know which party had the most members in the House of Representatives in Washington before the elections (this/ last) month? (IF NECESSARY:) Which one? (2000, 2004: DON'T PROBE DK)

Coded: 0 = Incorrect, Don't Know, no, 1 = Correct party mentioned

A_2 Politics is Too Complicated: Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.

Coded: 0 = Agree, 1 = Neither, 2 = Disagree

A_3 Say in What Government Does: People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

Coded: 0 = Agree, 1 = Neither, 2 = Disagree

A_4 Self Placement on Ideology Scale: ALL YEARS EXC. 2000 TELEPHONE,2002: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is (1972,1974: I'm going to show you) a 7-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this? (7-POINT SCALE SHOWN TO R) 2000 TELEPHONE: When it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, moderate or middle of the road, slightly conservative, extremely conservative, or haven't you thought much about this? 2002: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. When it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, moderate or middle of the road, slightly conservative, extremely conservative, or haven't you thought much about this?

Coded: 0 = Don't know, 1 = Liberal, Conservative, Middle of the Road

A_5 Opinion Better off if US is unconcerned with the rest of the world: 1956–1960: (Same introduction as in VCF0805 [CARD WITH RESPONSES SHOWN]). 1968,1980: Now I'd like to read some of the things people tell us when we interview them (1968: and ask you; 1980: As I read, please tell me) whether you agree or disagree with them. 1972: I'd like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of these next six statements. 1976: I am going to read you two statements about US foreign policy and I would like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement 1984–1988,1992: I am going to read a statement about US foreign policy, and I would like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree. 1990,1994-LATER: Do you agree or disagree with this statement. ALL YEARS: 'This country would be better off if we just stayed home and did not concern ourselves with problems in other parts of the world.'

Coded: 0 = Don't know, no opinion, 1 = Agree or Disagree

A_6 Government Health Insurance Scale: There is much concern about the rapid rise in medical and hospital costs. Some (1988,1994-LATER: people) feel there should be a government insurance plan which would cover all medical and hospital expenses (1984 AND LATER: for everyone). (1996,2004: Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1). Others feel that (1988,1994–1996: all) medical expenses should be paid by individuals, and through private insurance (1984 AND LATER: plans) like Blue Cross (1984–1994: or [1996:some] other company paid plans). (1996,2004: Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And of course, some people have opinions somewhere in between at points 2,3,4,5 or 6.) Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this? (7-POINT SCALE SHOWN TO R)

Coded: 0 = Don't know, no opinion, 1 = Placement on scale (1–7)

A_7 Opinion By Law when should Abortion be allowed: ALL YEARS EXCEPT 2000 TELEPHONE: There has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. (RESPONDENT BOOKLET) Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view? You can just tell me the number of the opinion you choose. 2000 TELEPHONE:I am going to read you a short list of opinions. Please tell me which one of the opinions best agrees with your view. You can just tell me the number of the opinion you choose.

Coded: 0 = Don't Know, No opinion, 1 = Opinion (never, in certain cases, when reason is established, always)

A_8 Defense Spending Scale: Some people believe that we should spend much less money for defense. (1996,2004: Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1.) Others feel that defense spending should be greatly increased. (1996,2004: Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7.) (2004: And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2,3,4,5, or 6). Where would you place yourself on this scale or haven't you thought much about this? (7-POINT SCALE SHOWN TO R).

Coded: 0 = Don't Know, No Opinion, 1 = Placement on 7 point scale

A_9 Did the US Do the Right Thing by Getting Involved in the War: 1952: Do you think we did the right thing in getting into the fighting in Korea 2 years ago or should we have stayed out? 1964,1966: Have you been paying attention to what is going on in Vietnam? (IF YES:) Do you think we did the right thing in getting into the fighting in Vietnam or should we have stayed out? 1968–1972: Do you think we did the right thing in getting into the fighting in Vietnam or should we have stayed out?

Coded: 0 = Don't know, 1 = Yes or No

A_{10} Opinion How should US Proceed in the Current War: 1952: Which of the following things do you think it would be best for us to do now in Korea? (OPTIONS CORRESPONDING TO CODE CATEGORIES READ TO R) 1964–1970: Which

of the following do you think we should do now in Vietnam? (OPTIONS CORRESPONDING TO CODE CATEGORIES READ OR SHOWN).

Coded: 0 = Don't Know, 1 = Pull out, peaceful settlement, stronger stand

A_{11} Opinion Guaranteed Jobs and Income: 1956–1960: 'The government in Washington ought to see to it that everybody who wants to work can find a job.' 1964,1968: In general, some people feel that the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on his own." Have you been interested enough in this to favor one side over the other. (IF YES:) Do you think that the government -- 2002: Some people feel the government in Washington should see to it that every person has A JOB AND A GOOD STANDARD OF LIVING. Others think the government should just LET EACH PERSON GET AHEAD ON THEIR OWN. Which is closer to the way you feel or haven't you thought much about this?

Coded: 0 = Don't know, no opinion, 1 = Govt to see everyone has a job or get ahead on own

A_{12} Opinion Government Assistance with Medical Care: 1956,1960: Around election time people talk about different things that our government in Washington is doing or should be doing. Now I would like to talk to you about some of the things that our government might do.

Of course, different things are important to different people, so we don't expect everyone to have an opinion about all of these. I would like you to look at this card as I read each question and tell me how you feel about the question. If you don't have an opinion, just tell me that; if you do have an opinion, choose one of the other answers. 'The government ought to help people get doctors and hospital care at low cost.' 1962: Now on a different problem. 'The government ought to help people get doctors and hospital care at low cost.' Do you have an opinion on this or not? (IF YES:) Do you agree that the government should do this or do you think the government should not do it. 1964,1968: Some say the government in Washington ought to help people get doctors and hospital care at low cost; others say the government should not get into this. Have you been interested enough in this to favor one side over the other? (IF YES) What is your position?

Coded: 0 = Don't know, no opinion, 1 = help people or stay out

A_{13} Urban Unrest Scale: There is much discussion about the best way to deal with the problem of urban unrest and rioting. Some say it is more important to use all available force to maintain law and order -- no matter what results. Others say it is more important to correct the problems of poverty and unemployment that give rise to the disturbances. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this? (7-POINT SCALE SHOWN TO R).

Coded: 0 = Don't know, Haven't thought much about it, 1 = Placement anywhere on scale

Set of Opinions Variable Creation: A_5-A_{13} added together, with a minimum of 0 and maximum of 5. The only available number of questions for all years was 3 opinions so in recoding the maximum was shifted to 3 by coding 4s and 5s as 3s.

A_{14} Discuss Politics with Family and Friends: Do you ever discuss politics with your family or friends?

Coded: 0 = No, 1 = Yes

Salience Questions on the ANES

Interest in Elections: Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you, would you say that you have been/were very much interested, somewhat interested, or not much interested in (1952–1998: following) the political campaigns (so far) this year?

Coded: 0 = not much interested, 1 = somewhat interested, 2 = very interested

Interest in Public Affairs: 1964 AND LATER: Some people seem to follow (1964: think about) what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all? 1960, 1962: We'd also like to know how much attention you pay to what's going on in politics generally. I mean from day to day, when there isn't any big election campaign going on, would you say you follow politics very closely, fairly closely, or not much at all?

Coded: 0 = Hardly at all, 1 = Only now and then, 2 = Some of the time, 3 = Most of the time

2008 Data

Traditional Variables:

Gender: Coded as Male = 0, Female = 1

Race: In addition to being American, what do you consider your main ethnic group or nationality group?

Coded: White = 1, Non-white = 0

Married: Are you married now and living with your (husband/wife) -- or are you widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never married?

Coded: Married = 1, Never married, divorced, separated, widowed, and partners = 0

Education: What is highest grade of school or year of college you have completed? Did you get a high school diploma or pass a high school equivalency test? What is the highest degree that you have earned?

Coded 7 categories 1 = 8th grade or less, 2 = High school, no diploma, 3 = High SchoolDiploma or GED, 4 = Some college, 5 = Associates Degree, 6 = Bachelors Degree

7 = Advanced Degree

Income: Please look at the booklet and tell me the letter of the income group that includes the income of all members of your family living here in 2007 before taxes.

This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest, and all other income.

Coded: by percentiles 1 = first quintile as identified by US Census, 2 = second quintile, 3 = third quintile, 4 = fourth quintile, 5 = fifth quintile

Residency: How long have you lived here in this community (years)?

Coded by number of years

Political Identity Scale Questions on the ANES

A_{1a} Correct Democratic Party Placement on Ideology Scale: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place the DEMOCRATIC PARTY on this scale?

Coded: 1 = Extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal 0 = Moderate, middle of the road, slightly conservative, conservative, extremely conservative

A_{1b} Correct Republican Party Placement on Ideology Scale: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place the REPUBLICAN PARTY on this scale?

Coded: 0 = Extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, Moderate, middle of the road

1 = slightly conservative, conservative, extremely conservative

A_{1c} Knows Party with House Majority before Election: Do you happen to know which party had the most members in the House of Representatives in Washington BEFORE the election (this/last) month?

Coded: 0 = Incorrect, Don't Know, no, 1 = Correct party mentioned

A_2 Politics is Too Complicated: I'd like to read you a few statements about public life. I'll read them one at a time. Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each of them. 'Sometimes, politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.' Do you AGREE STRONGLY, AGREE SOMEWHAT, NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, DISAGREE SOMEWHAT, or DISAGREE STRONGLY with this statement?

OR

How often do politics and government seem so complicated that you can't really understand what's going on? ALL THE TIME, MOST OF THE TIME, ABOUT HALF THE TIME, SOME OF THE TIME, or NEVER.

Coded: 0 = Agree, 1 = Neither, 2 = Disagree

A_3 Say in What Government Does: People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

OR

How much can people like you affect what the government does? A GREAT DEAL, A LOT, A MODERATE AMOUNT, A LITTLE, or NOT AT ALL?

Coded: 0 = Agree, 1 = Neither, 2 = Disagree

A_4 Self Placement on Ideology Scale: Where would you place YOURSELF on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

Coded: 0 = Don't know, 1 = Liberal, Conservative, Middle of the Road

A_5 Opinion Better off if US is unconcerned with the rest of the world: Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with this statement: 'This country would be better off if we just stayed home and did not concern ourselves with problems in other parts of the world.'

Coded: 0 = Don't know, no opinion, 1 = Agree or Disagree

A_6 Opinion Government Spending on Public Schools: Should federal spending on public schools be INCREASED, DECREASED, or kept ABOUT THE SAME?

Coded: 0 = Don't know, no opinion, 1 = Opinion

A_7 Opinion Government Spending on Science and Technology: Should federal spending on science and technology be INCREASED, DECREASED, or kept ABOUT THE SAME?

Coded: 0 = Don't Know, No opinion, 1 = Opinion

A_8 Opinion Government Spending on the Environment: Should federal spending on protecting the environment be INCREASED, DECREASED, or kept ABOUT THE SAME?

Coded: 0 = Don't Know, No Opinion, 1 = Opinion

A_9 Opinion Death Penalty: Do you FAVOR or OPPOSE the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?

Coded: 0 = Don't know, 1 = Favor or Oppose

Set of Opinions Variable Creation: A_5-A_9 added together, with a minimum of 0 and maximum of 5.

A_{14} Discuss Politics with Family and Friends: Do you ever discuss politics with your family or friends?

Coded: 0 = No, 1 = Yes

Salience Questions on the ANES

Interest in Elections: Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you have been VERY MUCH interested, SOMEWHAT interested or NOT MUCH interested in the political campaigns so far this year?

OR

How interested are you in information about what's going on in government and politics? EXTREMELY INTERESTED, VERY INTERESTED, MODERATELY INTERESTED, SLIGHTLY INTERESTED, or NOT INTERESTED AT ALL?

Coded: 0 = Not much interested, 1 = Somewhat Interested/Slightly Interested/Moderately Interested, 2 = Very Interested/Extremely Interested

2012 Data

Traditional Variables:

Gender: Coded as Male = 0, Female = 1

Race: In addition to being American, what do you consider your main ethnic group or nationality group?

Coded: White = 1, Non-white = 0

Married: Are you married now and living with your (husband/wife) -- or are you widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never married?

Coded: Married = 1, Never married, divorced, separated, widowed, and partners = 0

Education: What is highest grade of school or year of college you have completed? Did you get a high school diploma or pass a high school equivalency test? What is the highest degree that you have earned?

Coded 7 categories 1 = 8th grade or less, 2 = High school, no diploma, 3 = High SchoolDiploma or GED, 4 = Some college, 5 = Associates Degree, 6 = Bachelors Degree,

7 = Advanced Degree

Income: Please look at the booklet and tell me the letter of the income group that includes the income of all members of your family living here in 2007 before taxes.

This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest, and all other income.

Coded: by percentiles 1 = first quintile as identified by US Census, 2 = second quintile, 3 = third quintile, 4 = fourth quintile, 5 = fifth quintile

Residency: How long have you lived here in your present community (years)?

Coded by number of years

Political Identity Scale Questions on the ANES

A_{1a} Correct Democratic Party Placement on Ideology Scale: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place the DEMOCRATIC PARTY on this scale?

Coded: 1 = Extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal 0 = Moderate, middle of the road, slightly conservative, conservative, extremely conservative

A_{1b} Correct Republican Party Placement on Ideology Scale: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place the REPUBLICAN PARTY on this scale?

Coded: 0 = Extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, Moderate, middle of the road

1 = slightly conservative, conservative, extremely conservative

A_{1c} Knows Party with House Majority before Election: Do you happen to know which party had the most members in the House of Representatives in Washington BEFORE the election (this/last) month?

Coded: 0 = Incorrect, Don't Know, no, 1 = Correct party mentioned

A_2 Politics is Too Complicated: 'Sometimes, politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.' Do you AGREE STRONGLY, AGREE SOMEWHAT, NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, DISAGREE SOMEWHAT, or DISAGREE STRONGLY with this statement?

Coded: 0 = Agree strongly/Agree somewhat, 1 = Neither agree nor disagree, 2 = Disagree somewhat/Disagree Strongly

OR

How often do politics and government seem so complicated that you can't really understand what's going on? [ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, ABOUT HALF THE TIME, SOME OF THE TIME, or NEVER / NEVER, SOME OF THE TIME, ABOUT HALF THE TIME, MOST OF THE TIME, or ALWAYS]?

Coded: 0 = Always, Most of the time 1 = About Half the time, some of the time, 2 = Never

A_3 Say in What Government Does: People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

OR

How much can people like you affect what the government does? A GREAT DEAL, A LOT, A MODERATE AMOUNT, A LITTLE, or NOT AT ALL?

Coded: 0 = Agree, 1 = Neither, 2 = Disagree

A_4 Self Placement on Ideology Scale: Where would you place YOURSELF on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

Coded: 0 = Don't know, 1 = Liberal, Conservative, Middle of the Road

A_5 Opinion Better off if US is unconcerned with the rest of the world: Do you AGREE or DISAGREE with this statement: 'This country would be better off if we just stayed home and did not concern ourselves with problems in other parts of the world.'

Coded: 0 = Don't know, no opinion, 1 = Agree or Disagree

A_6 Opinion Government Spending on Public Schools: Should federal spending on public schools be INCREASED, DECREASED, or kept ABOUT THE SAME?

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Coded: 0 = Don't know, 1 = Favor or Oppose

Set of Opinions Variable Creation: A_5-A_9 added together, with a minimum of 0 and maximum of 5.

A_{14} Discuss Politics with Family and Friends: Do you ever discuss politics with your family or friends?

Coded: 0 = No, 1 = Yes

Salience Questions on the ANES

Interest in Elections: Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you have been [VERY MUCH interested, SOMEWHAT interested or NOT MUCH interested/ NOT MUCH interested, SOMEWHAT interested or VERY MUCH interested] in the political campaigns so far this year?

Coded: 0 = Not much interested, 1 = Somewhat Interested 2 = Very Interested/

2012 Data

Traditional Variables:

Gender: Coded as Male = 0, Female = 1

Race: In addition to being American, what do you consider your main ethnic group or nationality group?

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Coded: 0 = Don't Know, No opinion, 1 = Opinion

A_8 Opinion Government Spending on the Environment: Should federal spending on protecting the environment be INCREASED, DECREASED, or kept ABOUT THE SAME?

Coded: 0 = Don't Know, No Opinion, 1 = Opinion

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Set of Opinions Variable Creation: A_5-A_9 added together, with a minimum of 0 and maximum of 5.

A_{14} Discuss Politics with Family and Friends: Do you ever discuss politics with your family or friends?

Coded: 0 = No, 1 = Yes

Salience Questions on the ANES

Interest in Elections: Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you have been [VERY MUCH interested, SOMEWHAT interested or NOT MUCH interested/ NOT MUCH interested, SOMEWHAT interested or VERY MUCH interested] in the political campaigns so far this year?

Coded: 0 = Not much interested, 1 = Somewhat Interested 2 = Very Interested

Appendix B. Discussion of Interaction Effects from Chapter 6

Three different types of interaction effects might be occurring at once, the interaction between identity and interest in an election where a person's place in the identity process affects youth voter turnout based on a person's level of interest in the election. Another interaction may be one's political identity affects whether or not a

Table 1 Logistic regression models and interaction effects for youth turnout with traditional explanations, political identity measure with policy, and salience

Variable	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Gender	0.20 (0.13)	1.23 (0.13)	1.13 (0.13)	1.24 (0.13)
White	0.12 (0.16)	1.18 (0.16)	1.19 (0.15)	1.16 (0.15)
Married	−0.12 (0.14)	0.84 (0.14)	0.88 (0.13)	0.82 (0.13)
Education	0.32* (0.06)	1.42* (0.05)	1.45* (0.05)	1.46* (0.05)
Income	0.19* (0.06)	1.21* (0.06)	1.23* (0.06)	1.22* (0.06)
Residency	0.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)	1.00 (0.00)
Identity Development Scale	0.19* (0.06)	_____	_____	_____
Interest in Election	0.46* (0.18)	_____	_____	_____
Interest in Public Affairs	0.20 (0.15)	_____	_____	_____
Identity Scale X Salience	−0.01 (0.02)	1.04* (0.01)	_____	_____
Identity Scale X Interest in Election	_____	_____	1.09* (0.01)	_____
Identity Scale X Interest in Public Affairs	_____	_____	_____	1.05* (0.01)
Constant	−3.91* (0.45)	−2.99* (0.29)	−2.91* (0.28)	−2.94* (0.28)
−2 Log Likelihood	1446.14	1495.67	1591.84	1557.18

Model 5: N = 1203, Model 6: N = 1243, Model 7:N = 1310, Model 8: N = 1278 *indicates significance at the 0.01 level. Source: American National Election Study Cumulative File 1952–2004. Standard errors are in parentheses.

young person votes based on their level of interest in public affairs. Both aspects of salience might be combined to account for a total level of importance of politics to one's life based on current events (interest in the election) and the general importance of politics (interest in public affairs). Both political identity development and levels of interest in politics will account for some portions of voter turnout even if identity or salience is controlled for. Therefore, I include in the model the single variables in with the interaction effects to account for the individual influence of both identity and salience (Jaccard 2001).

When only the interaction effect is included in the analysis, the interaction between identity development and the salience measure is significant. Of the control measures, education and income remain consistently valuable to understanding youth turnout. The choice of including the main effect variables with the interaction effects is a difficult one to make, but should also be driven by theoretical considerations. Often the choice is about whether or not the main effect and the interaction when accounted for actually decrease the significance of both effects (Jaccard 2001; Pollock 2009). I chose to run the logistic regression with the main effects and interaction effect (in Model 5 of Table 1) because I think that voting behavior is affected by the level of identity development when salience varies. For example, if a young person has a fully developed identity but does not thing that this election is interesting then they are much less likely to vote. On the other hand, if an explorer believes that this election is important but does not yet have a more developed identity then

they are most likely to vote then those explorers who do not think politics or this election is interesting. When all of the effects are accounted for, only identity development and interest in elections continue to be significant when the interaction effect between them is also included. However, the interaction effect is not.

significant ($p = 0.52$). However, when each of the interaction effects is taken into account without the main effects of the components to salience, and identity development, then each interaction effect is a significant indicator of youth turnout.

Of the three additional models run without the main effects (Models 6, 7, 8), the interaction between the Identity scale and salience is the when included in the model has the smallest −2 log Likelihood (1495.67). Each increment increase in the interaction between identity and salience increases the odds of youth voting by 4 percent. Of all the models with interactions, the most accurate model is the one that included the main effects along with the interaction effect of Identity and Salience, whereas the closest interaction model without the main effects is Model 6. The interaction model with identity development and salience makes sense because a young person is more likely to vote when he or she feels the importance of the politics measured by specific interest in the election and general interest in public affairs and has a developed identity.

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