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   CITIZEN DEMANDS AND POLITICAL REALITY: A
DYNAMIC MODEL OF POLITICAL DISCONTENT.

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CITIZEN DEMANDS AND POLITICAL REALITY:

A DYNAMIC MODEL OF POLITICAL DISCONTENT

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By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, Americans have been witness to a
series of social and political convulsions which have perhaps perma-
nently put to rest the complacency of earlier and easier times. While
the 1950s were not as carefree as our popular reconstructions would
suggest, they were nonetheless a time of relative political stability
and moderation. There were stirrings of the changes which were to
follow, but the days before and during Camelot gave us little reason
to anticipate dramatic changes in our sociopolitical environment.
Such changes were imminent, however, and the character of mass politics
in the United States prepared to change as well.

It would be both futile and redundant to attempt a comprehensive
listing of the major events and personalities that defined the American
political experience during the 1960s and early 1970s. A few of these
stand out, however, and they help us to understand the intense passions
that characterized the era. Beginning with the assassination of a
president who promised us something new, and continuing through the
resignation in disgrace of a president whose political career was vir-
tually synonymous with the political trends of two decades, we were
swept along from crisis to apparent crisis--with little or no oppor-
tunity for relief or reflection. The moral crusade against the

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obvious villain of racial injustice was gradually displaced by a bitter

war whose villain was less visible to much of the population. Soldiers,

students, and politicians died in the name of causes we did not always

understand. Violence on the battlefield was paralleled by the vio-

lence of the ghetto slum and the college campus. When, at last, our

passions and divisions seemed about to pass, we became consumed with

a political scandal that looked as though it would never be resolved.

And in the midst of these moments of drama, almost hidden but

working their will on our politics nonetheless, were issues and con-

cerns that shaped our personal lives in more direct ways--problems of

crime, racial tension, inflation and unemployment, changing morals

and lifestyles, among others. As the decade of the 1970s draws to a

close, much of the drama has been replaced by a more or less constant

tension which seems, in many ways, to be the legacy of our earlier

passions. Time goes on, and the political environment continues to

change in ways that are not readily apparent--but we have certainly

put much more than time between ourselves and the politics of the 1950s.

The events of the era have captured the attention of a concerned

electorate, and they have captured the imagination of a new generation

of political and social analysts as well. Our conventional under-

standings of politics and political behavior could not easily be sus-

tained by the changes which were observed during the 1960s. This is not

to say that our earlier estimates of citizen indifference and inatten-

tiveness were necessarily wrong, but rather that we underestimated--

or at least failed to emphasize--the potential for change in response

to visible and salient stimuli from the environment.

Two clusters of attitudes and behaviors came to be of particular interest to scholars who attempted to understand the dynamics of American politics. Easily the broadest and most popular set of concerns dealt with the voting patterns of the American electorate. Such a focus comes naturally in a political culture where the most common form of political participation--and perhaps the most highly valued-- is that which occurs in the voting booth. In particular, we attempted to describe and explain the forces which shape individual voting behavior and, as our data began to suggest an unsuspected complexity to this act of political choice, we searched for explanations that could accommodate the evidence of change. Similar and related questions were asked about the processes of political learning, macro-level phenomena that took their shape from the many actions of individual citizens, and the linkages which existed between citizens and their political leaders and institutions. We have come a very long way in theoretical terms since the 1950s, but there is much that remains imperfectly understood--including the circumstances under which crisis appears to have given way to a rather new and different state of suspicious interaction between citizens and their polity.

A second area of political investigation concerns that suspicion and its implications. The study of "alienation" and "disaffection" has intellectual roots which clearly precede the contemporary era, but the apparent diffusion and intensification of such orientations has provided a new sense of urgency to the study of these phenomena.

Political discontent is a matter of some moral concern in a democratic culture, but its study also presumes "the practical necessity that governments obtain the support of influential elements in society."[1] The discontent of many segments of American society is evident in both their stated feelings about government and the occasional behavioral challenges to the legitimacy of our political institutions. Instances of the latter were most visible in the direct action of university students and urban blacks in the last decade, although particular dissatisfactions may be acted out in more moderate ways (e.g., support for third-party candidates for public office, the "tax revolt" which has recently captured many headlines and the attention of decision-makers).

Even when frustrations are not acted upon, however, there can be little doubt that the traditional American ambivalence toward politics and politicians has been replaced by a more pervasive negativism and suspicion. In 1977, sixty percent of a national sample believed that "people running the country don't really care what happens to you"; the figure in 1966 had been 26 percent. Nor do Americans believe that their voices and opinions carry much weight when decisions are made and favors are distributed: 61 percent believed that "what you think doesn't count much anymore" (compared to 37 percent eleven years earlier).[2] While the analysis which follows will indicate that recent trends in political discontent are not related in any simple or direct way to the changes in voting habits among the American electorate, they are nonetheless a significant component of contemporary political change in this country. Yet these changes, their origins and their implications,

remain uncertain; it is doubtful that this brief but persistent chapter in American political history has run its full course.

This study is concerned with what I will call "political discontent," although this phenomenon will be placed within the context of other manifestations of political and social change as well. Americans have become increasingly likely to evaluate their political leaders and institutions in negative terms. Unfortunately, there are numerous concepts and measures which have been used to describe these negative evaluations, and the resulting ambiguity of thought and language serves poorly our efforts to understand contemporary changes and their meanings. The single most familiar of these concepts is probably "political alienation." It is certainly true that some Americans are alienated from their political system, and it is probably true that more Americans are alienated today than was true fifteen years ago. However, familiarity does not in this case yield either clarity or understanding in the study of American public opinion. As I will argue below, the concept of political alienation has come to represent too many different ideas to too many scholars for it to suit the purposes of this study. At the same time, there are a number of similar concepts—including disaffection, dissatisfaction, and illegitimacy—whose meanings are equally ambiguous.

I will use the concept of "political discontent" in much the same way that it has come to be used in other studies. It represents a more inclusive or generic term intended to encompass the variety of negative citizen evaluations which we will be reviewing. As such, it allows us

to consider the findings of numerous studies without becoming over-
whelmed by an unmanageable number of concepts and measures. Our inter-
est in these studies will be guided by the effort to describe and ex-
plain one particular manifestation of political discontent: political
trust (and its opposite, "mistrust" or "cynicism"), defined as the an-
ticipated quality of government outputs. This particular evaluative
dimension is one which, along with political alienation, is familiar
to political scientists. In contrast to alienation, its conceptual
meaning is at least somewhat less ambiguous, and it can be measured
with a standard battery of survey items. Political trust has occasion-
ally been defined as either equivalent or similar to the concept of po-
litical "support"; we will consider the notion of support in greater
depth in the following chapter and throughout this report.

The theoretical justification for our focus on manifestations of
political discontent is both moral and practical, although the emphasis
here will be on the latter. As we will see in Chapter II, the presumed
systemic implications of political discontent have been viewed both
with alarm and with approval. Its presence is thought to be a stimu-
lant to social change which can ultimately benefit both society and the
individual citizen, but its persistence over long periods of time may
result in instability and confusion in decision-making.

One of the major implications of recent empirical research on po-
litical behavior is that citizens are capable of evaluating their gov-
ernment according to the perceived closeness of fit between their own
political values and governmental performance with respect to those
values. In fact, under certain facilitating conditions, such evaluations

may actually be the rule rather than the exception. This interpretation is rather different from our earlier understanding of political trust (or support) as the product of childhood learning, moderated only somewhat by adult awareness of the seamier side of political life. The traditional model is not altogether implausible, but our review of the relevant literature will lead us to the conclusion that the model is also incomplete. Most importantly, we will discover that political cynicism is an orientation which is susceptible to changes in the political environment. Both children and adults responded to the events of the 1960s by withdrawing a substantial measure of support for some of the central actors and institutions of American politics. And there is no evidence that this support has been or is about to be replaced.

The most significant empirical task of this study will be to demonstrate that political discontent is a function of the perceived "match" between citizen expectations or demands and governmental performance. The central proposition around which our analysis will be organized is

> that political trust (or cynicism) will vary according to an individual's belief that the political system and its representatives are generating outputs which are or are not consistent with his politicized values.

In particular, we will attempt to elaborate upon previous research in order to demonstrate that negative political evaluations—in this case, political cynicism—will result when citizens believe that their participatory, partisan, or policy demands are being frustrated by political leaders and institutions.

Standing alone, such an analysis would promise to add a rather modest increment to our understanding of political discontent (although

we would be well served by any study which achieved an improved fit

between our concepts and our measures of those concepts). Beyond the

examination of these static relationships, however, we hope to develop

a _dynamic_ model of political discontent and, in the process, to estab-

lish the priority of considering the constant interaction which occurs

between citizens and the world around them. We are in the midst of con-

siderable social and political change, and it would be ironic if our

explanations of these changes did not explicitly recognize their effect

on our observations.

The data with which we will test our model are derived from the

1972 national election survey conducted by the Center for Political

Affairs at the University of Michigan. Our consideration of environ-

mental and attitudinal change must therefore be indirect and inferential,

for the analysis of change cannot be executed with cross-sectional data

such as these. However, our review of the literature on contemporary

political change--the manifestations of which include much more than

the growth of discontent--will provide us with considerable evidence

which should inform our analysis. Within the limitations imposed by

the data, I will attempt to show that rising levels of cynicism can be

traced to changes in the character of citizen demand upon the political

system.[3] And changes in citizen demand, as I shall argue, can best be

understood in terms of transformations in the political and social en-

vironment within which both citizens and decision-makers must act.

Students of voting behavior, notwithstanding their tendency to de-

bate the relative weights of different explanatory variables in a par-

ticular election (as well as the efficacy of their research strategies),

are coming to appreciate the need for such an approach. Miller and
Miller speak of the search for "conditional" explanations of voting be-
havior, reflected in such questions as

> Do we understand why the predictive power of a given
> factor is at the observed level? Do we understand why
> change in predictive capacity occurs? Does our theoret-
> ical understanding permit us to predict changes in the
> predictive capacity of such factors as party identifi-
> cation and issue voting?[4]

Similar queries should accompany the study of political discontent. In
particular, we must focus on the impact of political events and the per-
sonalities who provide meaning and expression for these events. This
is not a simple task, nor is it one that this study will be able to
attempt directly. Our observations will, however, be placed within the
context of recent events and trends which have themselves been described
and analyzed in numerous studies. And, most importantly, we will pro-
pose a dynamic model which links micro- and macro-level phenomena in
explicit recognition of the interaction between them.

Rather than permit our model to rest solely on speculation, how-
ever, we will consider one way in which recent trends may have impli-
cations for the future. That is, we will examine the extent to which a
unique generational perspective has been shaped by these events and by
the experiences of young Americans since the early 1960s. The concept
of a political generation is not especially new, although its potential
relevance for understanding political change in any era has made sev-
eral scholars curious about the significance of generational change in
this era. There is some evidence that a peculiar generational outlook
was formed among young people who reached political maturity during

the Great Depression, and that these groups produced the Democratic

majority which dominated electoral politics for several decades there-

after. In the current period, our political parties have failed to

capture or to maintain the loyalties of a growing proportion of the

American electorate. The weak partisanship of youth is apparently a

phenomenon related to the life-cycle and to maturational processes, but

the persistent independence of Americans under age 35 has led some

analysts to suspect that a generational outlook has developed among

this group. We will search for such an outlook--based as it would be

in the interaction between youth and their environment--and attempt to

link it to the diffusion of political discontent.

Finally, we must consider the relationship between political dis-

content and political behavior. While our data will prevent a thorough

consideration of this relationship, it remains our ultimate theoretical

justification for studying the attitudes and values of individual citi-

zens. To the extent that we are able to establish that feelings of po-

litical discontent are associated with behaviors designed to eliminate

the causes of that discontent, then we may begin to appreciate the im-

plications of the observed growth of cynicism (and of political inef-

ficacy) in the United States. Our political system has, however, re-

mained remarkably stable despite the many disruptive events of the past

fifteen years--and despite the growing skepticism of its members.

Whether this can continue indefinitely is a matter of considerable con-

cern, and we shall begin this study by considering the possibilities.

Our first task will be to examine the concept of political "sup-

port," whose two dimensions (specific and diffuse) have often been

thought to subsume most of the manifestations of political discontent we will be reviewing. It is particularly important to consider political trust in this context, for the decline in trust among Americans has come to be seen as evidence of declining "support" itself--with all the potential for system change that such a trend implies.

We will then move to a review of two surprisingly independent literatures, both of which are concerned with identifying the origins of citizen evaluations of their political system. First, we will examine the literature concerning the political socialization of pre-adults, for it is here that attitudes of positive support (including trust) are thought to have their origins. Next, we will review the studies which attempt to identify the sources of political discontent (including mistrust) among adults. As we shall see, neither of these categories of explanation can adequately account for the rising levels of discontent that have been documented--among children and adults-- over the past fifteen years in the United States. More recent studies, however, do begin to suggest that there is an intimate relationship between changes in the sociopolitical environment and changes in political discontent. We will use these findings and their interpretations in an attempt to develop a dynamic model of political discontent and, within the limitations imposed by our data, to devise an empirical test of our argument.

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL SUPPORT AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

For scholars who attribute systemic significance to the thoughts

and actions of individual citizens, it is something of a truism that

a political system cannot operate effectively in the absence of some

minimal level of loyalty or allegiance on the part of its members.

Indeed, the very existence of a political system is thought to be

imperilled by the presence of widespread discontent among citizens.[1]

In a democratic system, it is particularly important that there exist

a positive relationship between the rulers and the ruled.[2] Apart from

the normative aspects of this relationship, however, it has been

suggested that the persistence of governments and the effectiveness

of authoritative decision-making are constrained by the affective

bonds that tie citizens to their political leaders and institutions.

The theme is a common one in the literature, and it provides a

plausible and convenient rationale for the investigation of citizens'

attitudes toward political objects. Perhaps most familiar among these

attitudes is Easton's concept of support, defined simply as "feelings

of trust, confidence, or affection, and their opposites, that persons

may direct to some (political) object."[3] Political objects which

serve as referents for the attitude of support include (a) the po-

litical community: "that aspect of a political system that we can

identify as a collection of persons who share a division of political

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labor";[4] (b) the regime: "that part of the political system that we may call its constitutional order"--its underlying goals, rules of the game, and structures of authority;[5] and (c) the authorities: "those members of a system in whom the primary responsibility is lodged for taking care of the daily routines of a political system."[6] For Easton, the decline of support for any of these objects may inhibit the system's ability to make and implement binding decisions for society.[7]

Gamson's formulation of the concept of <u>political trust</u> (referring to "the general expectations people have about the quality of the product that the political system produces")[8] parallels the concept of support. For Gamson, the importance of political trust is evident with respect to two kinds of political phenomena. In the first place, he argues, trust helps us to understand how political leaders are able to solve problems on behalf of their constituency. Leaders must be able to depend upon the cooperation of citizens, to the extent that decisions can be made without the necessity of prior consent from citizens; and there must be considerable latitude in the range of decisions (and the individual sacrifices they might entail) which will be acceptable to system members. When there is a high level of trust among citizens, decision-makers are more free to pursue collective goals.[9] But when trust is low, individuals and groups may be encouraged to demand immediate fulfillment of the government's obligations to them. Especially when this results in the mobilization of portions of the population, the government may be required to divert its resources toward efforts to control the discontented groups--and away from the problems which caused the initial discontent.[10]

Conceptualized in this way, political trust resembles Easton's "diffuse support," which "forms a reservoir of favorable attitudes or good will that helps members to accept or tolerate outputs to which they are opposed or the effect of which they see as damaging to their wants."[11] "When the supply in the reservoir is high, leaders are able to make new commitments on the basis of it and, if successful, increase support even more. When it is low and declining, leaders may find it difficult to meet existing commitments and to govern effectively."[12]

Gamson also contends that political trust can help us to understand how some citizens come to engage in political activity in order to press their demands upon political decision-makers.[13] He explains that inactivity, while it may be an expression of low trust or of alienation, may also be a sign of confidence or high trust in government.[14] Thus, while citizen confidence and inactivity may provide leaders with the flexibility to govern, it may also prove to be an obstacle to groups interested in change. "High trust in the authorities who man the political system implies some lack of necessity for influencing them."[15] With flexibility in decision-making comes the danger of rigidity and resistance to change on the part of decision-makers.[16]

Presumably, then, we may see citizen discontent as an important source of political change—although with certain qualifications.

> The rise and fall in the number of distrustful citizens
> over time is a sensitive barometer of social conflicts
> and tensions. . . . Under the right political conditions,
> distrustful groups, which exist in all societies, may
> produce the kind of creative tensions needed to prompt
> social change, but under other conditions, these same

tensions either may lead to violent disruption or in-
discriminate and cruel repression. . . . Rising distrust
is often a stimulant to social change, but its conse-
quences depend on the response it provokes from leaders
and other elements of the society.[17]

A democratic political system cannot survive for long
without the support of a majority of its citizens.
When such support wanes, underlying discontent is the
necessary result, and the potential for revolutionary
alteration of the political and social system is en-
hanced. . . . While discontent that exists only for a
short time and acts as a catalyst for needed change
may reflect a functional political system, extended
periods of widespread political malaise suggest that
the normal means by which conflict is managed in the
political system are not fully operative.[18]

Such views as these suggest, along with Gamson, that there is an

important link between the attitude of political trust (or support)

and the political activities in which individuals engage. A high level

of trust may perhaps be accompanied either by inactivity or by politi-

cal behaviors which do not challenge the authority of decision-makers

or inhibit the scope or character of their decisions. When the bulk

of a system's members can be characterized as supportive, then we

might expect that the system will be able to persist and to make

decisions—to reward and punish its members—with limited popular

interference. However, the actions of government often will be un-

satisfactory to some segments of the population, either because they

are perceived to impose a hardship or because they appear to do too

little to alleviate hardships experienced by citizens. Under such

conditions, we might expect that groups or individuals will act to make

their dissatisfaction known to decision-makers, and to seek relief

from the perceived hardship. When such action characterizes a large

or significant part of the citizenry, the range of alternative decisions

open to government may be effectively circumscribed (including the
alternative of inaction with respect to a particular grievance)--
yet there would seem to be no imminent danger to the political system
itself, or to the authority of decision-makers. But when perceived
hardships persist over long periods of time, we would expect discontent
to increase in intensity, and perhaps in scope as well. The result
might be more than simply an appeal for relief; the potential for
action aimed at fundamental political change would seem to be signi-
ficantly enhanced.

Such arguments as these make a number of assumptions about the
nature of the attitudinal relationship between a citizen and his
government, about the origins of these attitudes, and about their
consequences both for the individual and the political system of which
he is a part. Despite some important areas of agreement, however,
the literature on political discontent is neither easily nor concisely
summarized. In fact, what was once taken as the conventional wisdom
about the nature and the causes of discontent, has come in recent years
to be replaced by a new orthodoxy emphasizing the importance of child-
hood and adult interactions with the world of politics. But with new
interpretations come new disputes and new ambiguities, both conceptual
and methodological.

My specific purpose here will be to explore the degree to which
discontent has its origins in the political preferences and policy
choices of individual citizens--and in citizens' evaluations of how
the government and its representatives have responded to their demands

and expectations. In addition, I will investigate the mechanisms

by which discontent is channelled into political action (or inaction)

within different segments of the population. But first it will be

necessary to examine the concept of political "support," a concept

(or, more accurately, a theory) with which numerous hypothesized

manifestations of political discontent have been linked.[19] While

there is a danger that our discussion will merely add to the con-

ceptual confusion which characterizes this area, the greater danger

is that which is posed by imprecision and ambiguity.

A Note of Caution: The Levels-of-Analysis Problem

The ideas with which we have begun our discussion of political

discontent, and the directions in which we will be taken by the

subsequent analysis, carry with them an assumption which should be

made explicit. In general, political analysis of the attitudes and

behaviors of individual citizens carries with it the implication

that these phenomena have some ultimate impact upon the political

system to which the citizens are attached. This assumption is ob-

viously not unique to the study of political discontent, but its

clarity in this instance is quickly illustrated by the concepts which

were introduced above.

Efforts to empirically investigate the links between individual-

and system-level phenomena are inevitably constrained by the difficulty

of obtaining appropriate data. This is particularly true when our focus

is upon concepts, such as political support and discontent, which are

essentially _psychological_ in nature. While such orientations are assumed to imply predispositions to action consistent with the orientation,[20] the empirical accuracy of this assumption remains problematic. Thus we are faced with the problem, first, of establishing the covariation between individual thought and individual action, and, second, of assessing the importance of aggregated individual actions for system performance or persistence.[21] A proper investigation of the relationship between attitudinal support and systemic phenomena would probably require survey-derived aggregate indicators of support across some "representative" sample of polities, with data accumulated over a sufficient period of historical time in order to provide variation in both independent and dependent variables. Even with such data, however, the plausibility of an explicit causal link between the two would be difficult to establish.

Nevertheless, the importance of supportive attitudes for political systems remains a common theme in the literature. Efforts to assess the relationship cross-nationally typically emphasize the aggregate _causes_ or _consequences_ of supportive attitudes.[22] A more common, if also more limited, approach has been to study the link between attitudes and behavior at the individual level, within a single political system. Thus, if we find that supportive attitudes are negatively associated with behavioral indicators of opposition to the government or its leaders,[23] we might conclude that these attitudes are indeed "vital inputs for the operation and maintenance of a political system."[24] Despite the limitations inherent in this strategy, it clearly has the potential to enhance our understanding of mass political support and

discontent. At the very least, we have begun to appreciate the extent
to which these orientations are an expression of the relationship
between citizens and their government--a relationship more complex
and firmly grounded in the political life of a nation than we once
believed. The ultimate significance of this relationship may even-
tually tell us much about the political differences among nations.

THE NATURE OF POLITICAL DISCONTENT: A REVIEW

The effort to describe and clarify the attitudinal relationship
between citizens and their government has taken on a special urgency
in contemporary America where, as we shall see, the evidence of politi-
cal discontent is abundant. Most scholarly (and many jounalistic)
attempts to deal with this relationship are undertaken with one eye
toward the future, that is, with a concern for the possible implica-
tions of negative evaluations for the behavior of the individual
citizen and for the operation of the political system. The passages
cited above are representative of this concern, as efforts are made
to link together popular attitudes, behaviors, and societal outcomes
in a rough sequence of hypothesized cause and effect. While this
sequence is not entirely speculative, however, we must keep in mind
for the moment that there is--or there should be--nothing in the
way we conceptualize political discontent which compels us to any par-
ticular conclusion about its effects upon individual behavior or systemic
outputs. Such a conceptual union would obscure the difference between
attitude and behavior, while also minimizing our awareness that other

factors might exert an influence upon the ways in which attitudes

of discontent are played out in the political arena.

In a very similar way, studies of citizen discontent are under-
taken with the other eye toward the past, as they attempt to under-
stand the origins of the particular attitudes under examination.
And once again, it is fair to say that such efforts have not been
without reward, for there is a substantial and growing body of empirical
evidence which increasingly informs our ideas about the nature of
those attitudes. Yet we must again be cautious in the way we concep-
tualize our attitudinal variable, for it is easy to infuse the concept
with preconceived notions about the origin of the attitude. In some
instances, the overlap of cause and effect may seem unavoidable. For
example, if we are interested in citizen reactions to the policy out-
puts of political decision-makers, we will try to conceptualize (and
operationalize) the dependent variable in a way which hopefully cap-
tures the essence of such citizen-elite interaction. But if all of
this seems obvious, it is important to note that there is no consen-
sual interpretation in the literature about the causes--or even the
very nature--of political discontent among citizens.[25]

To appreciate the problem, we must begin with the work of David
Easton, whose explication of the concept of support has had a great
impact upon research in this area. In particular, we must take note
of Easton's distinction between two basic types of support, "each
of which may vary independently"--probably having "independent deter-
minants as well as different consequences for the functioning of a
system."[26]

> Some types of evaluations are closely related to what
> the political authorities do and how they do it. Others
> are more fundamental in character because they are directed
> to basic aspects of the system. They represent more en-
> during bonds and thereby make it possible for members
> to oppose the incumbents of offices and yet retain res-
> pect for the offices themselves, for the way in which
> they are ordered, and for the community of which they
> are a part.[27]

The distinction is one between what Easton calls specific and diffuse

support. This is not, however, simply a matter of definition, for each

type of political support is defined in terms of its hypothesized

"independent determinants" and "different (systemic) consequences."

In place of conceptual definitions, we are given a theory of rather

impressive scope.

Most centrally, Easton is concerned with the systemic consequences

of political support. He is intrigued by the apparent paradox that

political systems are able to persist and function quite effectively

(authoritatively allocating values), even during periods when signi-

ficant numbers of citizens are "opposed to the political authorities,

disquieted by their policies, dissatisfied with their conditions of

life. . . ."[28]

> It is the unpredictability of the outcome of the
> relationship between political dissatisfaction and ten-
> sion on the one hand and the acceptance of basic politi-
> cal arrangements on the other that constitutes a persis-
> tent puzzle for research. Transparently, not all ex-
> pressions of unfavorable orientations have the same de-
> gree of gravity for a political system. Some may be
> consistent with its maintenance; others may lead to
> fundamental change.[29]

For Easton, this paradox calls for a recognition that support is "not

all of a piece,"[30] with the implication that each type is quite

differently related to individual behavior directed at fundamental

political change.[31] I will consider the behavioral significance of
political support below, but it seems most useful to clarify the dis-
tinction between specific and diffuse support in terms of their res-
pective origins and content--for it is these differences which ex-
plain their different implications for individual behavior and system
persistence.

The roots of specific support are in the satisfactions which
citizens feel they obtain from the outputs of the political system
and the performance of the political authorities (as these are per-
ceived by citizens). We saw above that support can be directed toward
any of three categories of political objects. Specific support, on
the other hand, is more limited in that it "is directed to the per-
ceived decisions, policies, actions, utterances or the general style
of . . . authorities."[32] Therefore, specific support is linked at its
origins to the actions (and the perceived outcomes of actions) of
political decision-makers, and it is limited in its scope by that
fact. Citizens whose dissatisfactions are directed toward the behavior
of individuals, and not toward the institutions through which they
govern, are not likely to lend their energies in behalf of fundamental
political change directed at those institutions.

As we have already seen, diffuse support consists of "a reservoir
of favorable attitudes or good will that helps members to accept or
tolerate outputs to which they are opposed or the effect of which
they see as damaging to their wants."[33] In contrast to specific
support, diffuse support can be directed toward different objects
and, when it is low, it may presumably lead to efforts to change the

institutional and procedural foundation of the political system.
The frequent coexistence of low specific support and high diffuse
support is at the heart of the puzzle which Easton attempts to solve.
The answer is clear when we understand that diffuse support is inde-
pendent of the outputs and performance of political authorities, at
least in the short run. Diffuse support represents attachments to
political objects for their own sake, and these attachments will prove
more lasting and durable for that fact.[34] The performance of the
authorities, and the citizen satisfactions which it generates, may
prove to be quite variable over relatively short periods of time;
diffuse support will rarely manifest such variability, either at the
individual level or in the aggregate. Where, then, may we look for
the origins of diffuse support?

Easton suggests that diffuse support may be the product of both
political socialization and direct experience.[35] The extent to which
childhood (and subsequent) political socialization involves the learn-
ing of supportive attitudes has been a topic of considerable specula-
tion and research, and I will consider that literature momentarily.
For the moment, it is sufficient to note the proposition that "children
who begin to develop positive feelings toward the political authorities
will tend to grow into adults who will be less easily disenchanted
with the system than those children who early acquire negative, hos-
tile sentiments."[36] That is, individuals who have acquired supportive
sentiments at an early age will be more likely to tolerate the de-
privations and dissatisfactions—perceived as the results of govern-
ment policy—which may confront them as adults. But, as Easton notes,

diffuse support may also result from the direct experience of indivi-
duals in the world of politics. In this sense, diffuse support is
the product of political outputs and the performance of the authorities--
but only as such evaluations may evolve over a long period of time.
Eventually, supportive sentiments with substantive roots become dis-
associated from elements of system performance; they come to take on
a life of their own as generalized attitudes toward one or another
set of political objects.[37]

It is this relationship between output and affect--however
tenuous at any single point in time--that begins to obscure the dis-
tinctions which Easton has so carefully drawn. And he acknowledges
the qualification: ". . . if discontent with perceived performance
continues over a long enough time, it may gradually erode even the
strongest underlying bonds of attachment."[38] Diffuse support directed
toward the political authorities (usually expressed in the form of
trust or confidence in them) may involve a generalized feeling that the
authorities can <u>normally</u> be trusted to take care of one's interest--
the result of performance satisfaction built up over time and across
successive sets of authorities. Or the reverse process may occur.

> Occupants of the authority roles begin to lose their
> moral authority to commit the resources of the system,
> and the process may prove to be cumulative. In time, .
> disaffection may occur not because of what each succeed-
> ing set of authorities is perceived to have done but
> simply because they are perceived to be authorities--
> and authorities are no longer thought worthy of trust.
> In this sense diffuse support for them will have dimin-
> ished. Loss of specific support for political authorities--
> the incumbents of the roles--has thereby become converted
> into a decline in support for one part of the regime.[39]

It seems, then, that output or performance dissatisfaction may generalize in two senses: (a) feelings of low (or high) specific support for the political authorities may generalize over time to feelings of low (or high) diffuse support for those authorities; and (b) this process of generalization may continue until it comes to embrace the authority roles themselves, the institutions and processes of the regime, and perhaps the political community as well.[40] Gamson, whose attention is also on political trust as diffuse support, makes the same point as Easton: ". . . dissatisfaction (with the outcome of a given decision) begins to be generalized when an undesirable outcome is seen as a member of a class of decisions with similar results."[41] But this process is one which is said to occur over time, as negative outputs and the dissatisfactions they generate accumulate in the political consciousness of the individual. Such a diffusion of distrust involves the identification of individual error with institutional error, and that threshold appears to be one which is not easily crossed by many citizens.[42]

We might regard the origins of political support in the general terms suggested in Figure 1. This figure stresses the relatively independent origins of each type of support as conceptualized by Easton. The variability of specific support and the durability of diffuse support—and the fact that they are able to exist in contradiction to each other—can be traced back to these very different origins. I have also noted the cumulative impact which perceived satisfactions with system outputs are believed to have upon diffuse support.

How, then, should we view the relationship between specific and

FIGURE 1

THE ORIGINS OF POLITICAL SUPPORT

PERCEPTIONS OF

    system outputs

    authority performance ⟶ specific support

    personal experience

                      (cumulative)

POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION ⟶ diffuse support

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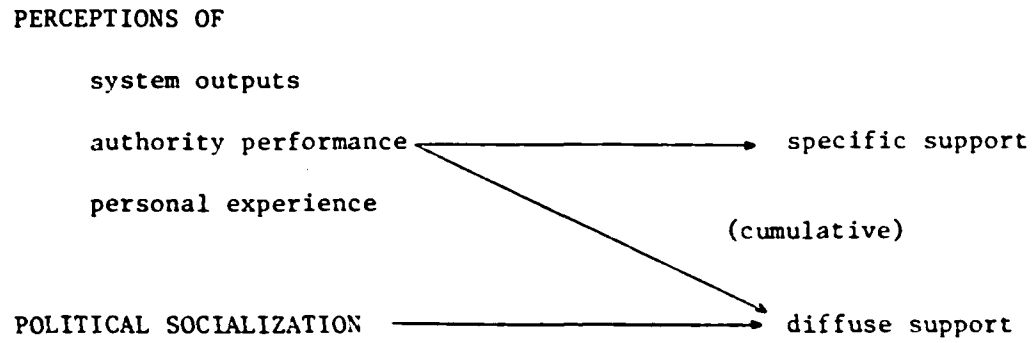
diffuse support? Despite the hypothesized independence of their respective causes, the long-term impact of system outputs upon diffuse support introduces the probability that it will at some point begin to covary with specific support.[43] While this particular causal sequence involves only a spurious relationship between the two, there is some speculation in the literature that a more direct relationship may exist. Easton and Dennis, as noted above, suggest that early-learned diffuse support will operate so as to insulate citizens from disenchantment with the system; Gamson argues that high levels of trust make specific political failures or defeats more tolerable and acceptable.[44] Aberbach and Walker, while not explicitly invoking the diffuse-specific distinction, believe that there are "feedback loops" in the process by which political trust is generated or maintained. For example, a high level of trust may predispose a person to view system outputs positively[45]--thereby perhaps maintaining a higher level of specific support than would otherwise have been true.[46]

In sum, it is diffuse support which is often seen as the affective orientation most consequential for any political system. Diffuse support, especially as it is directed toward the regime and the political community, permits decision-makers the flexibility of making policy decisions which require some citizens to accept momentary deprivations (whether substantive or psychological). In particular, citizens who are characterized by a high level of diffuse support are not likely to engage in behaviors directed at fundamental system change. Thus, it is functional for any political system to encourage the development of diffuse support among its members. The fact that

political systems do tend to persist, despite the conflicts which accompany their day-to-day operations, suggests that they may be rather successful in that task.[47]

> Socialization plays a vital part in enabling some
> kind of political system to persist. . . . (W)e may in-
> terpret socialization as one of a number of major kinds
> of response mechanisms through which a political system
> may seek to cope with stress on its essential variables.
> . . . (S)tress will occur in any political system when
> there is a danger that one or both of two conditions
> may prevail: that the relevant members of the system
> will be unable to make decisions regularly for the so-
> ciety; or if they are able to do so, that they do not
> succeed in getting them accepted as authoritative by
> most members most of the time. . . .[48]

One source of such stress is the absence of some minimal level of diffuse support for the political system.[49]

It is this theoretical perspective which proved to be most influential in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when political socialization research began to emerge as an intellectual growth industry. Why should we study political socialization? Because it helps to explain the origins of citizen attachments to their political system—attachments which, in turn, permit the system to function more or less smoothly as it rewards some citizens and deprives others by virtue of its policy decisions. In particular, why should we study the political socialization of children? Because this is a period of formative political growth, especially with respect to those attitudes which are of such overpowering significance for political systems. Dennis states this thesis clearly: "The major goal of political socialization . . . is to generate diffuse support."[50]

Political research conducted among adult citizens during this period

indicated a relatively high degree of attachment to the American political system.[51] It did not seem to be much of a leap of faith to presume that these feelings had their roots in the political learning of the young child. Even as discontent began to spread among Americans in the 1960s, it was believed that the foundation provided by these early socialization residues would insulate the system from serious upheaval and from efforts directed at fundamental political change. Only when discontent persisted, with no evidence of abatement, did the suspicion begin to develop that the foundation of diffuse support might be in danger--that perhaps specific dissatisfactions among Americans had generalized to the point of posing a genuine threat to the system.

We will soon return to these issues when we discuss the nature of contemporary political discontent, but it should be useful to provide some background into the political socialization literature. Easton's hypothesis that the origins of diffuse support might be found in childhood learning was reinforced by plentiful evidence that many children did indeed begin to feel such sentiments at an early age. The attitudes and behaviors of adults seemed to fit so comfortably within this general theoretical framework that the importance of political socialization seemed almost self-evident. And, as we will see, early efforts to understand the nature of political discontent among adults did little to disturb this view.

CHAPTER III

THE ORIGINS OF POLITICAL SUPPORT: POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

To begin with, what do we mean by "political socialization"? It has been defined in a number of ways,[1] most of which need not concern us here. It seems reasonable to follow the lead of Easton and Dennis, who define political socialization rather broadly as "those developmental processes through which persons acquire political orientations and patterns of behavior."[2] It is not unusual for socialization to be viewed as a process whereby the "political culture" or the "dominant values and norms" are passed from one generation to the next in such a way as to produce individual conformity and system maintenance. Obviously, this need not be the case. While there is ample evidence that intergenerational continuity rather than change is the rule with respect to many political orientations,[3] it is equally clear that this aggregate pattern obscures a much higher incidence of individual-level change or discontinuity.[4] Findings such as these have gradually broadened our view of the processes of political learning, and we have come to recognize the complexity of forces which operate on the ·individual to produce whatever configuration of political attitudes and behavior we might witness at a single point in time--from childhood through the adult years. In particular, there is a growing appreciation of the extent to which independent or autonomous learning takes

place as the result of an individual's personal interactions with the
political environment.

> But for the possibility of independent learning we could
> scarcely account for many instances in which new genera-
> tions adopt political positions and orientations in
> direct conflict with preceding generations. . . .
> The maturing generation may turn out differently from
> its predecessors . . . because of some unique combina-
> tion of experiences and personality predispositions on
> the part of children that leads them to interpret life
> differently.[5]

Having acknowledged the significance of independent learning, however,

we should have no illusions about the central thrust of early re-

search into the political attitudes of preadults. Whether couched in

Eastonian language or not, the findings seemed to provide confirmation

for the idea that supportive attitudes were learned early and provided

a foundation upon which much later learning was built.

It was discovered, for example, that political learning begins in

early childhood with the development of basic social and political

attachments. These include attachments to the nation and to national

symbols such as the flag, partisan attachments, and identifications

with various social groups (e.g., race, religion, social class). These

early orientations are essentially affective or emotional in content,

beginning to develop before the child has sufficient political informa-

tion or knowledge upon which to base "objective" judgments--even before

the child is cognitively capable of using such information for making

judgments. Particularly important in the development of feelings of

diffuse support are the early orientations the child begins to form

about political authorities and their roles.[6] Research indicated that

the child begins to view politics and government in highly personalized

ways, with first impressions involving visible authorities such as the
president and the policeman. Initial impressions also appear to in-
volve highly favorable judgments, as political authorities are seen in
unambiguously positive or benevolent terms. In addition, political
authorities (especially the president) are seen as having considerable
importance and power. As with early-learned attachments, children
generally begin to form their impressions of political authorities and
authority roles with little or no concrete understanding of how the
government actually operates.

The patterns of early learning were not found to be immutable,
however. As the child grows older, he or she begins to add informa-
tion and cognitive content to the basic feelings and identifications
which have been acquired earlier. Children become better able to deal
with the abstraction of "government" in other than personal terms--
developing, for example, an ability to distinguish between incumbent
authorities and the roles which they occupy. With increasing political
awareness and cognitive sophistication comes a movement away from ide-
alization of political authorities, as the child comes to hold a more
"realistic" view of our leaders. Increasing cognitive abilities and
realism also accompany the child as he enters into adolescence. Most
of the political learning during this period need not concern us at
this point, but it is important to note that increasingly realistic
appraisals of political authorities do not bring the adolescent to the
point of negative appraisal. Adolescents are increasingly like adults
in many of their political beliefs and attitudes, but their affective
orientations toward the political system remain rather positive.[7]

In sum, it is obvious that political learning occurs throughout childhood and adolescence, and we are increasingly aware of changes that occur during the adult years as well. But it is both the timing and the content of the early-learned attachments just described which are often thought to bind the citizen to his or her political system in an enduring way.

> Even though the older child may see authority in more critical and less enthusiastic terms, early idealization may create latent feelings that are hard to undo or shake off.[8]

> . . . the positive side of adult orientations toward political leaders is learned before attitudes of political cynicism are adopted; and these positive orientations seem to have more bearing on adult political behavior than do the negative orientations.[9]

Thus, as we have already seen, individuals who have acquired supportive sentiments at an early age--and this seems to include most American children--are thought to be more likely to tolerate the deprivations and dissatisfactions which they will encounter in the adult world of politics.

The assumptions, usually explicit, which underlie this argument have been characterized by Searing and his associates as (a) the primacy principle: "that what is learned earliest in life is learned best, and is least likely to be displaced by subsequent experiences";[10] and (b) the structuring principle: "that orientations acquired during childhood structure the later learning of specific issue beliefs."[11] More in keeping with the spirit of the argument made by students of political socialization, the structuring principle specifies that early-learned positive support will inhibit the later emergence of negative

support. A variant of the structuring principle will draw our atten-
tion in the analysis to follow, as we examine the extent to which po-
litical support structures the learning of "behavioral support" or the
behavioral outplay of attitudinal support (which may or may not be the
product of political socialization). For the moment, however, I would
like to consider the plausibility of the primacy principle--an assump-
tion whose validity underlies any investigation of the political atti-
tudes of children.

A common way of conceptualizing the content and the timing of po-
litical learning is to understand that the two are closely related, and
that it is the combination which establishes the primacy or durability
of what is learned.[12] Three general classes of political belief are
often distinguished according to their level of generality: "basic
attachments and loyalties; general beliefs about political institutions;
and beliefs about specific programs, personalities, or events."[13]
Figure 2 illustrates the life stage at which these categories of po-
litical orientations appear most likely to be learned by the individual.

As we have seen, the early childhood years appear to be the most
significant for the development of basically emotional attachments and
loyalties--including the personalized and benevolent images of political
authorities which are thought to underlie feelings of diffuse support
for the structure of authority as conceptualized by Easton. And these
early attachments and images are presumably the most likely of all ex-
plicitly political learning to endure--as a result of both the early
stage at which they are learned and the nature of what it is that is
learned (including the likelihood of nearly universal reinforcement,

FIGURE 2

SCOPE OF POLITICAL ORIENTATION
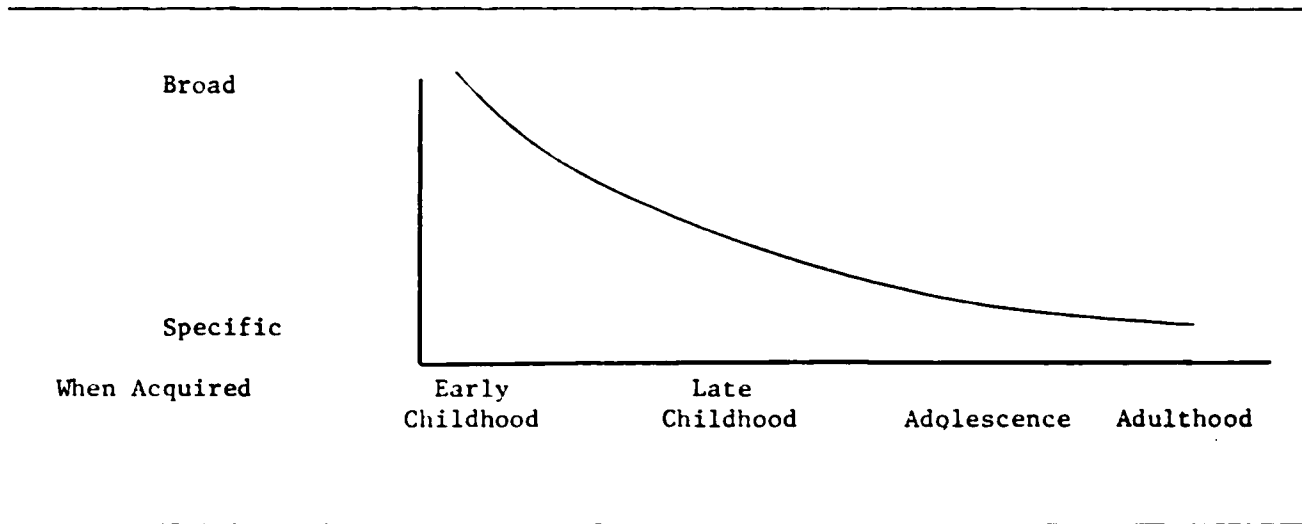
Source: Robert Weissberg, Political Learning, Political Choice,
and Democratic Citizenship (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.:
Prentice-Hall, 1974), p. 30.

both social and internal through the cognitive processes noted above).

> If politics involves a choice of alternatives among
> different ways of organizing and governing political
> life, and each individual begins life with the full
> array of choices before him, we can readily see that
> by adolescence most Americans have narrowed down the
> range of political alternatives. . . . Almost without
> notice, political socialization goes on and as it hap-
> pens one alternative after another becomes politically
> unreasonable and impossible.[14]

Chief among the alternatives which are implanted during the socializa-

tion process, at least in the United States, is a strong sense of

loyalty and support for our political system and its institutions and

leaders.[15]

The recent literature has created considerable skepticism, how-

ever, about the validity of the primacy principle. In the first place,

we have become more sensitive to the distinctions in categories of po-

litical learning just noted, and to the fact that different orientations

are likely to develop during different stages of the life cycle. But

what can we say about the durability or persistence of the political

loyalties and identifications learned in childhood? Cross-sectional

studies have shown a diminution of the virtually universal positive

feelings as children mature and become better able to deal with the

complexities and realities of political life. But even in adolescence,

the frequency of negative evaluations falls below that found among

adults.[16] And even with the emergence of realism in late childhood and

adolescence, and the development of skepticism (if not cynicism) in

adulthood, the persistence of high levels of diffuse support has often

been accepted as a "given."

Much of the validity of the primacy principle in this instance

depends upon how we conceptualize and operationalize diffuse support.
In addressing this particular problem, we again encounter uncertainties
and ambiguities about this theoretically important concept. The con-
cept of political trust, which Gamson and many others have interpreted
as an expression of diffuse support for the regime or the authorities,
is perhaps the most frequently employed (although with numerous indi-
cators), both in studies of adults and in many studies of preadults.
As useful as it might be to prepare an inventory of concepts and opera-
tional measures used in this regard, such an effort would serve little
purpose for this investigation. In addition, it is difficult even to
reach a summary judgment about the durability of early-learned supportive
sentiments, in large measure because of the absence of longitudinal data
covering a sufficiently lengthy period of time.

The bulk of the empirical research involving the study of politi-
cal support seems to provide little evidence that these attitudes are
as durable as we have been led to believe. The gradual changes in the
direction of more qualified support that occur as the child matures
suggest a clear process of adjustment to political realities which
seems to compel at least a modest qualification of the primacy princi-
ple.[17] But a challenge may be based upon far more substantial evi-
dence. For example, Vaillancourt has demonstrated that the stability
of children's attitudes--including their perceptions of political
authorities--was sufficiently low over time to raise the question of
whether we are measuring "real" attitudes at all.[18] Attitudes or be-
liefs which are not crystallized in the mind of the individual can
hardly be expected to endure.[19] It may be, however, that the criterion

of persistence is too exacting a standard by which to judge the significance of early-learned support. It may be more reasonable to expect that changes in orientation will occur as the individual becomes more cognitively sophisticated, better informed about politics, and more aware of the disappointments that occasionally must be expected at the hands of government decision-makers. It might be argued that such changes as these are nonetheless constrained by the fundamental attachments learned earlier--by "latent feelings that are hard to undo or shake off." Even this less rigid criterion, however, appears to be open to challenge.

Socialization to System Support: Some Qualifications

The central empirical finding to emerge from research into political learning during childhood is that most children do appear to be socialized into a system-supportive frame of mind during this period in the life cycle. As we have seen, early impressions about political authorities are almost unequivocally positive, and other attitudes which develop during childhood are consistent with this overall tendency.[20] The significance of findings such as these was in their apparent ability to explain the generally supportive orientations (or at least the absence of regime-challenging attitudes and behavior) of American adults. Notwithstanding the adjustments that were made as individuals matured, a foundation for widespread political support was seen in this pervasive benevolent imagery of the American child.

The inevitability of such imagery among children, however, has been rather persuasively dismissed by additional research on a broad

number of fronts. The benevolent imagery reported in the early studies

was derived from data collected primarily among white, middle-class

children. Further, these initial readings were taken during an his-

torical period of relative tranquility in American politics, and dur-

ing the administrations of two unusually popular presidents.[21] Thus,

the early studies were limited by both the milieu and the historical

period in which they were conducted.[22] Jaros and his associates dis-

covered dramatically less positive evaluations of political authority

among Appalachian children, noting in addition that these impressions

are generally static rather than developmental.[23] Although the timing

and developmental pattern of racial differences vary from study to

study, it also appears that black children are less likely to develop

and/or retain positive system orientations.[24] Data collected in other

nations, where children are not likely to have overwhelmingly idealized

views of the chief of state, further undercut the argument that bene-

volent imagery is a universal trait of early childhood.[25] Finally, it

appears that even those children whose system orientations were found

to be most positive in the early studies are quite capable of exhibiting

less favorable sentiments when changes in the political context seem

to warrant them. It is perhaps in this last set of findings that we

may locate the nature and the origins of political support among

children.

For the moment, however, let us concentrate on the extent to which

supportive sentiments are differentially distributed throughout the

population. It is virtually impossible to summarize the findings of the

socialization literature without doing injustice to the variety of pat-
terns which various investigators have discovered--a state of affairs
which continues to inhibit the evolution of genuine theory in the sub-
field. Virtually every empirical study suffers to a greater or lesser
degree from some sort of sampling bias, if sometimes only for the fact
that researchers are dependent upon access to preadults.[26] Most
studies involve samples which are in no way representative of any known
population. Results and conclusions derived from widely disparate
samples, studied in various settings at different points in time, and
employing different measurement instruments, will invariably be rather
eclectic. There are instances, however, where the results from these
studies do seem to lead to similar--though sometimes not identical--
conclusions.

A case in point is the evidence pointing toward somewhat different
patterns of childhood learning associated with socioeconomic status or
class factors. The early studies indicated that small children react
to their political system in different ways according to their class
backgrounds, and that the developmental patterns mentioned above look
somewhat different for children from different social strata. For ex-
ample, Greenstein found lower-status children consistently more likely
to be favorable in their evaluations of the job performance of visible
political authorities. He argues that such idealization is an "imma-
ture" pattern of political response, indicating that lower-status chil-
dren are more deferential toward leaders and thus less fully capable
of effectively participating in politics.[27] Similarly, Hess and Torney

found working-class children more likely to see the political system
in personal terms and to feel a higher degree of attachment to the
authority figures who represent it.[28] Class differences in feelings
of political efficacy were also evident as early as the third and
fourth grades (with higher-status children more likely to feel effica-
cious), and these differences increased with age.[29] Hess and Torney,
however, did not observe significant class differences in basic attach-
ment to the nation; all groups at all age levels were quick to indi-
cate feelings of patriotism and national loyalty.[30]

In addition to the basic observation of class-related attitudinal
differences, it was discovered that there were different developmental
patterns associated with social class.

> At each age level lower-class children lag behind their
> middle-class age cohorts in reaching political maturity.
> Thus, as a middle-class child begins depersonalizing and
> de-idealizing political authority, the lower-class child
> persists in his more naive and benevolent imagery. Though
> some evidence suggests that eventually the lower-class
> child catches up, the lower-class child nevertheless
> spends a few extra years accepting the highly positive
> political images. Assuming that the longer something is
> accepted early in life, the more likely its persistence,
> this continuation of paternalistic orientations may be
> significant despite subsequent contrary learning.[31]

Do class differences become less substantial, or perhaps even
disappear altogether, among older children? As usual, this is a ques-
tion not easily answered by the impressive variety of empirical studies
available to us. Part of our problem lies in the different kinds of
indicators which are used to measure supportive sentiments among older
children and adults. For example, asking a high-school student
whether the president is "my favorite of all" might prove to be

embarrassing to all concerned. At any rate, the general thrust of the
literature seems to be that social class differences in such indicators
of system affect as political trust are relatively insignificant among
adolescents.[32] The literature which examines political trust among
adults, which we will examine later, also is occasionally inconsistent
on the question of status differences, but again the overall pattern
appears to be one of minimal differentiation.[33]

What interpretation may we give to the class differences in po-
litical support among children? Providing an answer to this question,
of course, brings us much closer to an understanding of the origins
of support among all children. The most common conclusion provided by
socialization research involves a basically cognitive-developmental
model of political learning, with class differences arising out of
the different levels of politicization that may be said to character-
ize children from different social backgrounds. For example, Greenstein
found higher-status children to have a much higher sense of issue ori-
entation, in that they were more likely to use substantive criteria
in their evaluations of political parties; in addition, higher-status
children were more likely to select public figures as both positive and
negative exemplars.[34] Hess and Torney find participation in political
discussions and concern with political issues to be more frequent among
higher-status children.[35] And, as we have seen, the lower-status child
is less quick to develop an ability to deal with an abstract rather
than a personalized political system--an ability which may be associ-
ated with cognitive maturity.[36]

Thus, we might conclude that there are status differences associated with the development of cognitive maturity--with the ability to perceive political realities and to adjust one's affective relationship with the system accordingly. Why should this be the case? The explanation offered by Hess and Torney is probably typical.

> Between social classes the exercise of control and
> regulatory patterns in the family structure differ con-
> siderably. Working-class parents are more likely to be
> imperative in their control, showing more concern with
> obedience, external behavior and appearances than with
> internal states and feelings. They are less likely to
> give reasons for their commands or to encourage the child
> to make his own decisions in family matters. They ap-
> pear to be less concerned with the child's opinion and
> to give him fewer alternatives for action or for thought.
> This type of parental behavior produces external com-
> pliance (at least in the early years), depressed verbal
> and conceptual abilities, and lessens the tendency to be
> reflective in problem-solving situations. These attitudes
> and orientations are clearly relevant to the acquisition
> of political behavior and attitudes.[37]

According to Greenstein, lower-status children not only are less likely to possess intellectual skills, but "also are equipped with a weaker desire to use such skills"--the latter at least partly a function of the kinds of parent-child relationships just described.[38]

What these patterns do not tell us, however, is much about the processes through which early personalization and idealization of political authority initially emerge. Despite some class differences in childhood attitudes toward the system and in subsequent developmental patterns, the early studies nonetheless made it clear that supportive sentiments were by far the rule rather than the exception at all status levels. Hess and Torney argued that "the young child's highly

positive image of the President exists because of feelings of power-

lessness and vulnerability in the presence of powerful authority."

To compensate for these feelings, the child is likely to see the

president as "benign and nurturant."[39] On the other hand, it has been

suggested that positive feelings about political authority might

simply be a generalization of attitudes toward members of the immedi-

ate family, especially feelings about the father.[40] A much less com-

plicated pattern of political learning would be the direct transfer of

system attitudes from parents to children, most likely involving a

process of imitation; the benevolent imagery of younger children could

be the product of parents' efforts to shield their offspring from the

"harsh realities" of political life. The more qualified and realistic

attitudes that begin to develop as the child matures may then be seen

as the product of both cognitive development and situational learning:

the increasing amounts of politically relevant information acquired by

the growing child interacting with his or her increasing ability to

process that information and to form "rational" judgments or affective

relationships on the basis of it.[41] A typical view:

> The pattern of common positive outlooks during the
> early childhood years and more diverse positions later
> on suggests there may be some common characteristics of
> early childhood, related either to individual develop-
> mental processes or to the impact of certain socializing
> agents or messages, which lead to indiscriminately posi-
> tive outlooks toward political authorities and symbols.
> By late childhood or early adolescence, however, partic-
> ular outlooks reflect the picture of the political world
> one has from one's position as a young black, a young
> Chicano, or a middle-class white. . . . The early posi-
> tive orientations may be unrelated to concrete percep-
> tions and evaluations of the political world, but more

> reflective of the particular needs of the young child
> and his ability to perceive and think about the po-
> litical world.[42]

The early socialization studies seemed to favor a developmental

interpretation of this sort, with status differences (as well as dif-

ferent learning patterns associated with intelligence[43]) appearing to

affirm the importance of "politicization" and parental reinforcement

for such development. However, as I noted earlier, subsequent re-

search began to cast doubt upon these formulations. In particular, the

findings of Jaros and his associates have done much to dispute the

validity of some of the learning processes described above. Most damag-

ing to the thesis of status differentiation was the discovery that

lower-class Appalachian children were disproportionately cynical

about politics and unlikely to view political authority in especially

positive terms--patterns that characterized younger children as well

as adolescents.[44] These authors conclude that these relatively static

(and pervasive) negative images of political authority suggest "the

operation of a pervasive socialization agent early in the lives of

these children."[45] It is the identification of this agent, and a com-

parison of how it does or does not operate in different social and

cultural environments, which may be able to inform our understanding

of the character of childhood learning.[46]

The fact is that early political learning is not "indiscrim-

inately positive," nor is it necessarily true that social group differ-

ences invariably support the view that one must be "politicized" in a

conventional sense before one is able "realistically" to evaluate the

political system and its representatives. While we are again constrained

by a sometimes contradictory literature, there have been a number of studies examining racial differences in political socialization which might help us to clarify the origins of political support. Abramson has rather admirably reviewed most of the empirical evidence of racial differences in political support--in this case referring to political efficacy and political trust--among children. His interpretation of the findings provides us with a clue as to how we might better understand the development of supportive sentiments among both children and adults.[47]

It was a standard conclusion based upon early socialization research that all children shared an idealization of political authorities during early childhood, with young black children being little or no less supportive than young whites. Similarly, as children began to mature and to become better able to make informed judgments about their political system, these positive orientations were seen to decline among blacks and whites alike.[48] But examination of the patterns of political learning for different racial groups began to alert us to the possibility that the dynamics of learning might not be identical for all children. Abramson concludes that the literature is rather convincing in its demonstration that black children are less politically efficacious than white children--differences which .do not appear to be the spurious result of differences in class background. While the magnitudes of racial differences are not always comparable, this may be the result of the setting in which data were gathered, the age of the children being questioned, and methodological differences in both measuring instrument and analysis. Abramson notes that a few

studies have found blacks to be equally or even more efficacious than

whites, but that these findings are generally based upon "atypical"

samples.[49] As I have already indicated, however, the appropriate con-

ceptualization and measurement of political efficacy are matters of

some dispute in the literature. As a result, I will concentrate, for

the moment at least, upon political trust as an indicator of political

support.[50]

Abramson notes that racial differences in political trust have

been found only irregularly in empirical studies of children and ado-

lescents, but that the general pattern changes somewhat in studies con-

ducted during and after the summer of 1967.[51] These more recent

studies have been more consistent in locating a relatively higher

level of mistrust among black preadults--with differences once again

not simply the reflection of social background differences between

blacks and whites. The fact that trust has apparently fallen at a much

sharper rate among blacks during this period[52] suggests that differen-

ces in such factors as social background, family environment, and cog-

nitive development are simply not sufficient explanations for the ob-

served patterns. Similar racial differences are evident in indicators

of system support other than political trust. While the magnitude of

racial differences again varies from study to study, black children

have generally been found in recent years to have less favorable ori-

entations toward the political system along a variety of attitudinal

dimensions[53]--including the idealization of such authority figures as the

president and policeman. Further, racial differences have been evident

even among young children.[54]

How may we explain these racial patterns and, in particular, to what may we attribute the changes observed in recent years? Laurence suggests that we look to processes of selective socialization: "the socialization of each group is related to the position the group occupies within American society."[55]

> Despite any changes in race relations in recent years, black and white still occupy different positions in this society and the "politically relevant social patterns" related to being black are different from those related to being white. In obvious terms, the world in which the black child grows up is not the same as that in which the white child lives. The black child's position as a black in this society gives him a different reality and a different self-interest. . . .[56]

Abramson offers a similar explanation, as he attempts to provide some content to the different "realities" encountered by blacks and whites. His "political-reality explanation" rests upon three assumptions: (1) that blacks have less capacity to influence political leaders than whites have; (2) that political leaders are less trustworthy in their dealings with blacks than in their dealing with whites; and (3) that black children know these facts and/or they are indirectly influenced by adults who know these facts.[57] Abramson is aware of the difficulty in providing empirical support for the first two assumptions, but the reality of racial inequality--social, economic, and political --is beyond serious conjecture.

It is the verification of the third of Abramson's assumptions which poses the greatest puzzle for political socialization research. We know that parent-child correspondence in attitudes of political cynicism is not high,[58] although it may still be true that parents are the primary agents in transmitting favorable attitudes toward the system--

while also refraining from communicating their own negative perceptions
and experiences to their children. Given the negative perceptions of
even young blacks, however, this possibility does not seem especially
likely. Jennings and Niemi speculate that the generally less cynical
attitudes of adolescents, when they are compared with their parents,
may reflect the influence of civic training and nonconflictual politi-
cal information which is characteristic of elementary and high-school
education. They are unable to specify, however, any single aspect of
the educational process which bears responsibility for these outcomes.[59]
It seems doubtful that the observed changes in political trust/cyni-
cism in recent years can be adequately accounted for by similar changes
in classroom instruction.

Abramson notes that black children could learn about political
realities from other sources, for example, from black adults other
than their parents.[60] Such a process has been hypothesized by Orum and
Cohen, who suggest that political learning among young blacks may be a
reflection of subcultural values.

> . . . children (may) reflect the behavior and feelings
> taught them by their parents, peers and educational
> institutions; while the latter, in turn, transmit values
> which are part of a subculture within the larger so-
> ciety.61

If there is indeed a black subculture which can effectively instill
the "norms" of inefficacy and cynicism (among other social and politi-
cal values) among black children, and if this value solidarity has
evolved only since the late 1950s and early 1960s, then the thesis of
Orum and Cohen may provide a plausible explanation for changes in po-
litical support among black children over the past decade or so. But

the explanation is only a beginning. For example, there is nothing in this view to explain the absence of a strong parent-child correspondence among blacks. Nor does it explain (or even document) the selective perception which would have to operate in order for young blacks to ignore the political cues which they receive from outside the subculture,[62] for example, from the mass media and from experiences in integrated schools.[63] The subcultural thesis simply does not provide us with an adequate understanding of _how_ subcultural norms might be learned, although it remains a promising avenue of inquiry for future research.

We are left, therefore, with the hypothesis that black children have come to adopt less than fully supportive political orientations because they have less reason to feel supportive than white children do. This explanation seems plausible, but we are looking for a broader explanation of political support than such a view provides. In particular, we are faced with two sets of empirical findings in search of an explanation. First, why is it that some groups of _white_ children have been found to have negative feelings toward the political system? And second, how might we explain the decline in supportive sentiments that has taken place in recent years among white and black children alike? Perhaps Abramson's political-reality explanation may be expanded to accommodate these additional findings.

We should remember the first significant empirical challenge to the original conclusion of universal benevolent imagery among children: the study of Appalachian white children by Jaros and his associates. In an area characterized by "poverty and isolation," children simply did

not exhibit very warm feelings toward objects of the American political system. The authors describe Appalachia as an area marked by a set of subcultural norms quite different from those of middle-class America[64] --a portrait rather similar to the black subculture hypothesized by Orum and Cohen. We might compare the results of this study with the apparently anomalous results derived from what Abramson calls "atypical" samples which examine racial differences in efficacy and trust. For example, Rodgers finds no significant racial differences on either attitude in his study of schoolchildren in a rural, economically depressed southern county. He attributes this finding to the influence of the "political milieu,"[65] and he concludes that "low efficacy and high cynicism are community norms in the sample area."[66] The group differences uncovered by Jaros and Kolson--with Amish children unexpectedly having more positive attitudes toward the president than either black or non-Amish white children--may also be attributed to the cultural peculiarities of the sample.[67] Most other studies which have generated anomalous results perhaps may be understood in terms of the historical period (i.e., pre-1967) or the community milieu in which the data were gathered.[68]

All of this brings us no closer, of course, to specifically identifying the processes by which area or subcultural norms might be transmitted to or received by children, even assuming that such norms exist in the first place. Abramson offers a number of consequences which should be empirically verifiable if the assumptions of his political-reality explanation for racial differences in efficacy and trust are accurate. One of these may be useful as we try to unravel the complex

learning processes which surely characterize all children. Abramson

suggests that "(f)eelings of political effectiveness and political

trust should be lower among blacks who understand political realities

than among those who do not."[69] Greenberg, for example, found that a

"correct" perception of racial realities was negatively related to

support for political authorities among black schoolchildren.[70] He

concludes that as blacks become better informed and more sophisticated

about politics, they will come to exhibit lower levels of political

support[71]--presumably because they will see that they have less objec-

tive reason to support the American political system. Consistent with

their subcultural explanation of racial differences, Orum and Cohen

found that black children and adolescents who scored high on a mea-

sure of "black consciousness"--which we might interpret as a measure

of alertness to the objective political reality of black Americans as

well as an indicator of sensitivity to the norms which may be trans-

mitted within the subculture--also tended to differ more sharply from

whites in their feelings of political cynicism.[72]

Rodgers' analysis found that blacks who were more highly politi-

cized (as measured by frequency of discussion about politics with

family and peers) were also somewhat more cynical--though not less

efficacious--than blacks who were not politicized.[73] We might compare

this to the different patterns of cognitive development associated

with social status discussed above. A more gradual introduction to

political realities may be characteristic of lower-status children, who

are less likely to be equipped with intellectual skills, and less likely

to receive direct political cues within the family environment (as well as receiving less reinforcement within the family for the continued development of political skills and knowledge acquired elsewhere). Among blacks, a sense of racial identity and the congruence of political values acquired in childhood may be sufficient (or may have recently become sufficient) to overcome these obstacles to "realistic" political learning. Much the same sort of process may characterize the learning of negative political orientations among some white children.

It is impossible to ignore the evidence that maturation is to some extent determinative of the ways in which children perceive the political world; a child's ability to evaluate political objects is associated with his ability to understand and to comprehend those objects[74] --and the latter clearly changes as the child matures and acquires more information about political "realities." This process may be slowed by factors which inhibit the cognitive development of some children,[75] for example, lower-status children and perhaps Jaros' Amish children.[76] But it may also be true that the learning process can be accelerated by environmental cues of sufficient intensity and clarity.[77] While the natural tendency of children may be to adopt positive (i.e., "immature") political orientations, political learning does not occur in a vacuum. It seems reasonable to conclude that "natural" development may be interrupted by situational factors which originate from either the immediate or the external environment. While young blacks or deprived whites may not be fully able to comprehend or articulate the rationale behind their negative feelings--while they may not

be individually politicized—they nonetheless seem capable of respond-
ing to whatever cues they do receive. Whether the political realities
which are thus communicated to the child are objectively "real" or not,
they are in some fashion perceived and responded to.[78]

That external events can impinge upon political learning is evi-
dent in more recent studies which examine the attitudes of preadults
in the wake of the turbulent events of the 1960s and early 1970s. For
example, Arterton's study of high-status children (grades 3-5) in late
1973 found feelings toward the president, and to a lesser extent toward
the policeman, to be much more negative than had been true even of
older children in the Easton sample. A related study in early 1975
found some moderation of these feelings, but the overall pattern re-
mained essentially negative.[79] With an earlier and more limited
sample of seventh-grade whites, Greenstein discovered a much more mod-
est decline in idealization, although he argues that the methodology
of earlier studies may not have permitted children to demonstrate
their capacity for critical evaluations of political leaders.[80] It re-
mains difficult to determine precisely how such orientations are
learned by children; neither Arterton nor Greenstein found a very de-
tailed understanding of Watergate in their samples. But whatever
learning processes are involved, it seems clear that children are cap-
able of responding to the political environment, perhaps as mediated
by other agents of political socialization.[81]

Sigel and Brookes urge that we take both environmental and matur-
ational factors into account in our effort to understand the origins
of political support.

> . . . children, like adults, are not insulated from his-
> torical changes and, in spite of their high system affect,
> their views of politics as well as their interest in it
> are affected by the events on the political scene. . . .
> (W)e venture a guess that children's political orienta-
> tions are partially determined by events of the day and
> partially by changes in their cognitive development. If
> our guess is correct, then it is imperative that po-
> litical attitudes and levels of support be examined
> within the context of the historical period in which
> they occur. . . .[82]

Unlike most, these authors attempt to make an empirical distinction

between diffuse and specific support, accepting the standard view

that diffuse support is not likely to change markedly over time in

response to political events and dissatisfactions, although "(s)teady

exposure to government malperformance on a large scale may have a

more deleterious effect on young people's system affect than on

older people's. Young people's greater idealism causes higher expec-

tations of their government, and they lack the historical perspective

of having seen the system weather other crises."[83]

Consistent with their expectations, the most general measures of

system affect reflect generally positive feelings toward government,

with evidence of maturational effects.[84] In addition, there is no evi-

dence that such indicators of "diffuse" support are much affected by

the passage of time and the political events of the period. But

students were more negative in their second reading in terms of their

willingness to judge the government in general, and the president in

particular, as "unresponsive"--an indicator of "specific" support.[85]

This rise in negative support appears to be associated with an in-

crease in political interest among all age groups over the two-year

period. Sigel and Brookes conclude that this group of children became

politicized in a very short period of time, and they argue that
changes of this magnitude are not generated by the family or school
per se--but from "changes in the political climate of the time."[86]

A similar study by these same authors, this time involving high-
school seniors in 1974, uncovered a relationship between students' sat-
isfaction with government performance and what is referred to as "po-
litical affect." In something of a contrast to the earlier study, this
relationship extended beyond affect directed toward the incumbent gov-
ernment, and included feelings toward the system in general, as well
as its basic institutions.

> Associations such as these strongly suggest that the
> "reservoir of good will" on which system stability
> allegedly rests is much more quickly depleted than has
> often been assumed. . . . (F)ew of the dissatisfied
> feel very warm or enthusiastic about the nation and
> its system.[87]

Sigel and Hoskin note that adolescents (and probably adults as well)
seem capable of distinguishing among those elements of the political
system which are primarily responsible for their discontent.[88] But
the potential for generalization of specific discontents seems clear.

Several other studies have attempted to demonstrate that political
support among preadults is in some measure a response to political
stimuli--to "political reality," at least as it is perceived by the
individual. When children are younger, less politicized, and/or less
cognitively capable of relating directly to the substance of politics,
stimuli may most often be mediated by more proximal agents of politi-
cal socialization--although this need not always involve intentional
transmission of political cues such that the child may be said to

have been "indoctrinated."[89] Whatever communications processes operate

as American children learn about politics, these cues are in many in-

stances received and they often form the foundation upon which gener-

alized political judgments are based.

It is wrong to assume that children and adolescents have no

experiential basis for learning directly about politics, or for test-

ing the information which may have been received from other sources.

> Since children and adolescents can test their political
> learning through their own experiences, preadult politi-
> cal socialization is therefore an exchange between the
> messages the child receives . . . and the child's own
> independent learning, motivation, and ability to make
> connections among experiences.
> Political events can become part of a child's po-
> litical experience. . . . Salient events . . . can
> stimulate political learning and sensitize preadults
> to the political information coming from the family and
> school. Therefore, salient events deserve study as
> agents of political socialization.[90]

Campbell attempts to assess the relative significance of "messages"

transmitted from several agents or sources of political socialization

--including events (again, Watergate)--for the learning of political

trust. While these various factors explain only a moderate amount of

the variance in political trust, it is nonetheless true that feelings

about Watergate are related to trust independently of the influences

from other sources.[91] In addition, other aspects of the preadult's

personal experience--whether or not such experiences are overtly polit-

ical--may help to shape his or her orientations toward political author-

ities or the system in general. For example, Weissberg found a group

of adolescent delinquents to be most hostile toward the police and the

courts, presumably a function of their own personal (and unfavorable)

contacts with these agents of the regime.[92] Abravanel and Busch

found that, among the college students in their sample, those who had

worked for a party or candidate were more likely to feel mistrustful

than were nonparticipants.[93] Jennings and Niemi found a tendency for

unfavorable daily contacts between students and teachers or administra-

tors to spill over and diminish students' trust in national political

authorities.[94] Children may also learn about the political world from

their direct contacts with certain political authorities, such as the

policeman; the evidence does not, however, appear to support this

proposition.[95]

Before leaving the subject of political socialization and its

effects on the learning of political support, I would like briefly to

address two questions which will concern us again as we consider the

nature and the origins of support among adults. The first question in-

volves the extent to which preadult expressions of support are actu-

ally manifestations of partisan sentiment. Is the distribution of

mistrust or discontent at any particular moment in time a function of

the respective partisan identities of the discontented and of the

most salient political authorities (i.e., those who are equated in the

respondent's mind with the "government" or "politicians" or whatever

the interview stimulus might be)? We will see that the political dis-

content of some adults can be explained in this manner. Is the same

effect evident among preadults?

Again, the evidence suggests that this is a partial—but not com-

plete—answer. Sears reminds us that the developmental pattern of

declining positive evaluations coincides with the development of the child's partisan identity. More specifically, he argues that the evidence suggests a pattern of highly "partisan" socialization among black children in recent years.[96] The most persuasive evidence of discontent among blacks, according to Sears, comes in response to measures whose "manifest content" concerns feelings of attachment to the political system—but to which blacks clearly seem to be responding in terms of their racial or political partisan identities.[97] To the extent that this is true, we may be measuring nothing more than discontent with specific political authorities, although the possibility remains that such feelings may be generalized to embrace more fundamental aspects of the political system. Some studies of preadults have indeed picked up some traces of such specific partisan judgment, although the weight of the evidence suggests that this is insufficient to account for the over-time changes which have occurred among both children and adults. In any case, we will have to take into account the scope of political discontent—in particular, the political objects toward which it is directed—as we attempt to assess its contemporary meaning and its potential consequences.

It is the observed change in measures of political support which raises the second question which we must address. We have seen that studies conducted in the post-1967 period reflect increasing racial differences in feelings of political trust, a pattern which may indicate that young blacks have begun to respond to an unfavorable set of "political realities."[98] But we have also found evidence of changing levels of support among white preadults—changes which in many

instances appear to be linked to specifically political judgments and experiences (whether experienced directly by children, or mediated by the family or other agents of political socialization). Presumably, changes in the political environment have come to be evaluated as representative of a less acceptable "political reality" affecting many or even most groups in our society.[99] This is not to say that the realities facing (or perceived by) all social groups are identical, or equivalent in their effects upon political discontent. Wright reminds us that the same factors which account for recent trends in discontent may not be the same as those which help to explain the relative distribution of discontent among various groups in the electorate.[100] To the extent that we may reach a conclusion from the recent socialization literature, however, we might conjecture that individuals' perceptions of political "realities" are associated with both the distribution of and the over-time variations in political discontent among Americans.

What does this tell us about the primacy or persistence of early-learned feelings of political support? The answer seems obvious: Changes may occur not simply because the lessons of childhood are in-adequately learned or forgotten, but because they are associated with changes in the political environment. Entman and his associates, commenting on the volatility of political trust at the individual level among their sample of college students, reach an increasingly plausible conclusion:

> . . . (M)ost past investigations of political alienation
> have considered it in substantial isolation from politics.
> They have put the onus of alienation on the individual and
> portrayed the alienated as deviants whose abnormality

needed explanation. There has often been an implicit
assumption of a steady-state match between citizens'
policy demands and government outputs. Therefore some-
thing had to be wrong with the individual for him to
feel inefficacious or distrusting toward the government.

Whatever validity this view had in the past, it has
little currently. Many citizens have been far from sat-
isfied with the policies of their government, and this
led to a secular decline in political trust since 1964.
Their supposedly long-lasting socialization into diffuse
support had not been enough to prevent a sharp rise in
distrust; nor has that rise had much to do with social
backgrounds or psychological characteristics, except in-
sofar as these factors influence policy preferences. For
the current group of young people . . . socialization and
background characteristics seem even less influential.
And even for children, the "benevolent leader" is no
longer the object of universal trust and reverence.

If political socialization has such little long-term,
stable effect on people's political attitudes, perhaps it
has been poorly conceived. People and their attitudes
change, and events change with them and through them.
"Socialization" is no more a static process, unchanging
in content, form, and effect, and "alienation" is no more
a static state of being, constant in its roots and impli-
cations, than is history itself.[101]

Whether this volatility reflects inadequate measurement of diffuse sup-

port, or the inadequacy of the concept itself, is a question which

will concern us shortly. But first, let us examine the ways in which

political support and discontent among adults have been conceptual-

ized and explained.

CHAPTER IV

THE ORIGINS OF POLITICAL SUPPORT AMONG ADULTS

As we have seen, early research into the political attitudes of
preadults gave us a model of gradual cognitive development, a process
which permitted children and adolescents to employ their emerging
critical faculties to judge the political system in which they were
beginning to operate. As the individual came to perceive and to inter-
act with the world of politics more directly, much of the sugar coat-
ing began to melt away from his or her original images of that world.
And as young adults came to understand and to experience the occasional
deprivations which they must endure at the hands of political decision-
makers and institutions, there developed an affective relationship be-
tween self and polity which operated at two levels. At a lower level
of salience, this relationship was rather volatile--moving with and
directed at the actions of particular sets of political authorities--
and at any given moment might be perceived by the individual in unfav-
orable or negative terms. More significant was the undercurrent of
support directed at more permanent political arrangements--especially
the regime and the political community. The greater stability of these
attitude objects was matched by a greater stability of individual ori-
entation and, because of the character of early learning in our polit-
ical system, these orientations tended to be clearly positive.

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Thus, we return to the fundamental differences between specific
and diffuse support--a distinction central to the study of political
discontent, yet one which has more often been assumed than it has
been empirically validated. A variety of concepts have been employed,
the most common of which is one or another variant of political trust/
cynicism. To these we might add such concepts as alienation, legiti-
macy, estrangement, disaffection, dissatisfaction, allegiance,
powerlessness, efficacy, and futility. Some of these are more gen-
eral, referring to multiple clusters or dimensions of orientation;
others are relatively more specific, although one often encounters var-
ious conceptual definitions and operational measures from one study to
the next. As I have already argued, there seems to be little advan-
tage in preparing an inventory of conceptual and operational indica-
tors of political discontent. The focus here will be on political
trust and political efficacy, although each will require more pre-
cise specification than is typical of the literature with which we
will be concerned in this chapter. For the moment, however, let us re-
view the forces which have been thought to shape feelings of political
discontent among adults.

The Origins of Political Trust

As we have seen, political trust has been conceptualized as a
component or manifestation of diffuse support. Gamson, for example, de-
fined trust as referring to "the general expectations people have about
the quality of the product that the political system produces."[1] Gamson
is concerned, however, that the conceptual distinction between political

trust and political efficacy be a sharp one; thus, he clarifies his definition such that political trust refers to "the probability of obtaining preferred outcomes from the political system even when this system is left untended."[2] For Easton as well, political trust--validly measured--represents a dimension of diffuse support, insofar as it is directed at political objects more fundamental than the level of incumbent authorities.[3] Gamson's definition is more or less representative of studies that employ the concept of political trust (and its opposite, political cynicism).[4]

However it has been measured (or conceptualized in terms of diffuse support), political trust typically has been understood primarily as a function of general sociological and psychological factors peculiar to the individual citizen. In the latter case, for example, feelings of political trust have been interpreted as a specific manifestation "of a more generalized sense of trust in one's fellow man."[5] The hypothesis is advanced succinctly by Robert Lane.

> The more people believe that others are trustworthy, cooperative, and care about each other ("faith in people"), the more likely they are to believe that government officials have these qualities. . . .[6]

The logic here is rather straightforward: "If one cannot trust other people generally, one can certainly not trust those under the temptations of and with the powers which come with public office."[7]

The empirical support for this hypothesized relationship varies from one investigation to the next, although the size of the correlation coefficient is rarely large. Agger and his associates, in a study conducted in 1959, found personal and political cynicism to be

associated, apart from their common relationship with education.[8]

Similar findings have been reported by Aberbach[9] and by Finifter,[10] both using nationwide probability samples (1964 and 1960, respectively); a modest relationship for both blacks and whites is reported by Aberbach and Walker from their sample of Detroit in 1967.[11] A path model tested by Cole, using national samples collected by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center (1964, 1968, and 1970), suggests that there has been a gradual reduction of the personal trust-political trust path over this period.[12] Abravanel and Busch report a modest relationship in a sample of university students,[13] as do Rodgers[14] and Jennings and Niemi[15] in their adolescent samples. One factor that may attenuate (or accentuate) the relationship between personal and political trust is the "political milieu" in which a particular study is conducted.[16] The bulk of the empirical evidence seems to limit the extent to which we may attribute feelings of political trust among Americans to their more general psychological characteristics, at least as these are represented by measures of personal trust.[17] As I shall contend below, however, the most persuasive evidence in denial of a dominant causal relationship between personal and political trust is similar to that which we encountered in our review of political socialization research: widespread change in feelings of political trust, observed at both aggregate and individual levels of analysis.

Political trust also has been explained with reference to citizens' social backgrounds or social group memberships. One possible influence on feelings of trust is race; we have seen that black children and adolescents tend, in recent years at least, to manifest lower levels

of support for a variety of political objects than do whites.[18] Al-

though the association again is one which varies across time and space,

empirical studies have often found that black adults are less likely

to feel trustful toward their government and its leaders than are

white adults.[19]

We must turn, however, to the various dimensions of social class

in order to indentify those social forces which have typically dominated

research into the origins of political trust and support among adults.

In general language, Aberbach and Walker hypothesize that

> the socially advantaged are more trusting than the dis-
> advantaged because they possess the status and the skills
> which bring them societal rewards and honors, while the
> disadvantaged achieve relatively little, and as a result,
> have little faith either in their fellow men or their
> government.[20]

Just as we found it difficult to summarize the findings of the politi-

cal socialization literature, we are constrained in this instance by

differences in research settings, time frames, and measures. A number

of studies have reported significant relationships between indicators

of social class or status and feelings of political trust or support,

with the "disadvantaged" more likely to be cynical about political

actors and/or institutions.[21] Yet other studies, including the po-

litical socialization literature reviewed above,[22] have provided

numerous exceptions and qualifications to this generalization.

It occasionally may be wise to stage a momentary retreat in order

to enhance subsequent progress. Such a strategy seems particularly

appropriate at this point because, as we will see, the barriers to

generalization which we have repeatedly encountered are becoming an

ever greater obstacle to a clear understanding of political support and

discontent. Even if we set aside the question of measurement equiva-

lence (which we cannot do indefinitely), it becomes absolutely essen-

tial to make distinctions among the variety of attitudinal orientations

whose origins this literature is attempting to locate. Once again, I

will decline the challenge of synthesizing the entire conceptual bat-

tlefield. It is not possible, however, to deal adequately with this

body of research without returning to a fundamental distinction which

we have encountered previously--that between political efficacy and

political trust/cynicism. As I have already indicated, I will not be

treating political efficacy as a direct manifestation of political sup-

port, but rather as an important source of positive or negative support.

Whether or not this approach proves to be useful theoretically, we can-

not come to grips with the available evidence without attending to the

fact that efficacy and trust are not the same thing, nor do they

spring from precisely the same sources. Too often, scholars obscure

these differences by proceeding as if both orientations were more or

less equal parts of some larger attitudinal construct. Such an ap-

proach serves our (and often their) purposes badly.[23]

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Political Efficacy: Some Preliminary Observations

When we shift our attention to political efficacy, we encounter a

term whose conceptual meaning appears to be more or less settled among

students of individual political behavior. Sense of political efficacy

was originally defined as "the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, i.e., that it is worth while to perform one's civic duties. It is the feeling that political and social change is possible, and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about this change."[24] Initially introduced as a partial explanation for individual political participation in the United States, sense of efficacy has become an important theoretical component in studies of individual attitude sets and belief systems, political behavior, and the consequences that these attitudes and/or behaviors can have upon the political system.

A quick reading of the Survey Research Center's definition of political efficacy should alert us to the possibility that it contains at least two attitude objects: the self and the political system (or process). The rather belated effort to disentangle these multiple meanings has resulted in something of a mini-literature of its own, indispensable for those who would employ the concept yet uncertain in its resolution of the dilemma—with the result that clarity is often sacrificed for research continuity. This problem will have to be confronted in due time, but for the moment it is most important to recognize the distinction between political trust and political efficacy which is most characteristic of this research tradition. As previously noted, Gamson defines political trust as "the probability of obtaining preferred outcomes from the political system even when this system is left untended." A comparison of this definition with the traditional sense of efficacy concept indicates that, while the two variables share the political system as an attitude object, political

efficacy stands alone in linking the individual to that system. A citizen's sense of efficacy is, in large measure, an evaluation of his or her own skills, status, and power with respect to the system and its authorities.

While these concepts will ultimately require further refinement, it is their relative emphasis on the self as an attitude object which has traditionally distinguished trust from efficacy. Understandably, then, many attempts to determine the origins of political efficacy have emphasized the personal nature of these beliefs. One such view comes from Lane.

> Men who have feelings of mastery and are endowed with
> ego strength tend to generalize these sentiments and to
> feel that their votes are important, politicians re-
> spect them, and elections are, therefore, meaningful
> processes.[25]

The SRC similarly posits (and demonstrates) that political efficacy is associated with a more general sense of "personal effectiveness," a sense of control or mastery over the environment. The implication is that such variables

> may be conceived as lying at a relatively "deep" level
> in any hierarchy of dispositions. That is, they repre-
> sent highly generalized orientations toward the world
> of politics and could be expected to remain rather stable
> over a period of time. In this sense, they are ap-
> proaching "personality" status.[26]

As one might expect to be true for orientations of this sort, political efficacy has been interpreted as having its origins in childhood. Easton and Dennis document the early development of efficacy in two senses: (a) older children become gradually more likely to express an opinion, and (b) this opinion is "distinctly in the direction of a development

of a higher sense of political efficacy in these years."[27] Once again,

the typical interpretation is summarized by Lane.

> It appears that the standard of influence, then, is es-
> tablished relatively early--and is not the product of
> occupational experience so much as of the family and
> strata where one is reared, plus the personality sup-
> port which such an attitude implies.[28]

This passage reminds us that attitudes of political efficacy,

like those of political trust, are often found to be associated with

various social background factors. We have already learned of the

relative consistency with which socialization studies have found black

children to be less efficacious than white children, even when social

class is controlled.[29] Racial differences in efficacy (and related

constructs) have also been observed among adults.[30] But any attempt

to generalize the race-efficacy relationship across space and time is

certain to be confounded by some of the same patterns we have pre-

viously encountered--particularly the surprising instability of the

political attitude.[31]

We must return, however, to social class in order to isolate the

most frequently cited background correlates of political efficacy.

And, for a change, we may be pleasantly surprised to learn that the

cacophony of evidence is somewhat more manageable in this instance.

The empirical association between social class variables and political

efficacy has long appeared to be one of the least ambiguous relation-

ships in this literature,[32] with indicators of social disadvantage

being associated with relative inefficacy. Class differences have also

been noted among children, with attitudes becoming somewhat more

polarized by class as the children begin to mature.[33] And there is

some evidence that racial differences in class background may account

for some--though perhaps not all--of the racial differences in politi-

cal efficacy.[34]

Why should an individual's sense of efficacy reflect his or her

social and economic situation? If we may safely assume that intergen-

erational social mobility is at least somewhat limited, then we might

understand how the processes of political socialization operate to

perpetuate class differences in efficacy. For example, the child from

a higher-status family is more likely to receive cues from his parents

which instill in the child a belief that citizens are effective and

political leaders are responsive. Moreover, "(h)is position and that

of his family in the social structure expose him more frequently to

events and interests congruent with this sense."[35] Something very dif-

ferent presumably is being communicated within less advantaged fami-

lies. The learning process may not be quite as direct as this account

suggests, however. Jennings and Niemi report that parental status is

a slightly more accurate predictor of an offspring's sense of efficacy

than are the parents' own feelings of political competence.[36]

For Wright, the social distribution of efficacy provides evidence

of a positive relationship between real and perceived powerlessness in

the United States. While the high sense of efficacy among the better-

off is surely a product of "the social, political, and economic bene-

fits which the system has provided for them," it is also a reflection

of their "training and experiences throughout life."

> From birth, they are located in a politically active
> and aware milieu; the positive "lessons" of prior gen-
> erations are passed on to them. . . . Once they reach
> high school, the civics courses they encounter are
> more informative and provide a more accurate descrip-
> tion of the realities of political life. After high
> school, of course, they are far more likely to enter
> college, and, thus, to acquire any political benefits
> imparted therein. Once in college, too, they are more
> actively involved in student politics, . . . and, thus,
> more likely to develop usable political skills. Once
> out of college, they are the most likely to enter poli-
> tics and, presumably, most likely to develop contacts
> with political figures at all levels. . . . These ex-
> periences, in turn, provide the context for the politi-
> cal socialization of their own children, the active par-
> ticipants of succeeding generations.[37]

In support of this interpretation, Wright notes that the political

efficacy of college graduates declines very little from 1964 to 1970--

a period during which the same trend in the general population was

toward significantly stronger feelings of powerlessness.[38]

Abramson, in his attempt to account for racial differences in ef-

ficacy and trust, considers the possibility that "social deprivation"

(hypothetically more prevalent among black children) may contribute to

feelings of low self-confidence and personal ineffectiveness among in-

dividuals; and that the latter, in turn, may generalize to feelings

of political inefficacy (and perhaps cynicism as well). Reviewing the

evidence, however, Abramson concludes that it is unable to demonstrate

convincingly that the intervening psychological variable is a neces-

sary component of the deprivation-efficacy relationship.[39]

In sum, we might conclude that attitudes of political efficacy

are of a more fundamental and deep-rooted sort than are attitudes of

political trust. The relative consistency of empirical research

seems fairly persuasive: Whatever other forces might operate to alter
an individual's sense of efficacy over a lifetime, we might best under-
stand this attitude as one which is shaped within the context of his
or her social background,[40] and which reflects, in some measure, his
or her general orientation toward the social environment. If such a
conclusion seems reasonable, it is also inappropriate. As we have
seen, this traditional view of efficacy suggests that the attitude
should be formed early in life--and remain relatively stable there-
after. This is, of course, an hypothesized manifestation of what we
have called the "primacy principle" in political socialization: "that
what is learned earliest in life is learned best, and is least likely
to be displaced by subsequent experiences."[41]

We have already seen evidence, derived from the socialization lit-
erature, which seriously questions the durability of early-learned
feelings of political support--if, in fact, that early learning was
positive in the first place. We are confronted with a similar dilemma
if we wish to attribute attitudes of political trust and political ef-
ficacy among adults to citizens' personality characteristics and so-
cial circumstances. It is clearly plausible to expect that the latter
forces will not be entirely irrelevant for an understanding of one's
political orientations in some circumstances; but to assume that po-
litical orientations are merely--or even largely--an extension of funda-
mentally non-political phenomena is to ignore a large and growing body
of evidence to the contrary. In addition, this assumption places one
in the uncomfortable position of having to explain a great deal of

temporal instability in attitudes of trust and efficacy. In order to cling to traditional interpretations, it becomes necessary to explain these changes in terms of rather substantial transformations of the "personality profile" of Americans and/or a dramatic growth in the incidence of (primarily downward) social mobility--all taking place within a period of a very few years.[42] It is in their patterns of change that we find our best clues as to the nature and the origin of political trust and political efficacy. Let us continue our search for these origins by examining some of the evidence of change.

Trust and Efficacy: Patterns of Change

Investigations into the temporal stability of political trust and political efficacy have taken a number of forms. Changes in aggregate response distributions have been isolated by examining presumably equivalent (usually national) samples, and by comparing the percentages of individuals in each sample who exhibit a characteristic response pattern. Since this approach is unable to detect the full amount of response instability (whether due to real attitude change or to measurement error), it is more useful to compare the responses of the same individuals, measured at different points in time. This approach is able to describe change which occurs in both directions, and which may be invisible when we examine aggregate response distributions. In addition, one may attempt to measure instability through age cohort comparisons. This particular strategy will interest us later, as we begin to search for generational differences in the nature and origins of political discontent, but it suffers the same limitation as aggregate

analyses: an inability to detect individual patterns of change and, as a result, an insensitivity to change which may be occurring in opposite directions.

Whichever of these methodologies are employed, it is absolutely beyond dispute that Americans have, in substantial numbers, lost confidence in their political leaders and institutions over the past fifteen years.[43] While he was not the first to note this trend, Arthur Miller was able to illustrate its dimensions and to draw our attention to its implications for our understanding of the concept of political trust. Concentrating on the period from 1964 to 1970, Miller documents a steady increase in the proportion of cynical white Americans; blacks, on the other hand, were somewhat less cynical until after 1966, when the proportion of trustful among them took a precipitous decline.[44] The same conclusion is reached by Wright, who adds that the trends are roughly uniform across social classes and regional groupings.[45]

The downward trend in political trust did not bottom out in 1970. Jennings and Niemi, who questioned the same parents and children in 1973 as they had in 1965, discovered "exceptionally strong Zeitgeist effects . . . in the growth of cynicism among both parents and young adults."[46] As adolescents, the offspring in their sample had responded as we have come to expect adolescents to respond: they had been reasonably supportive of the institutions of American politics and, in particular, they had exhibited higher levels of support than had their parents. In the intervening eight years, their apparent introduction to some of the "harsh realities" of political life involved even

greater disillusionments than (we believe) is typical of adolescents
in other historical periods. Thus, while both parents and their
children are far more likely to be cynical in 1973, the increase is
even more pronounced among the latter; on some items, the young adults
have become even more cynical than their parents.[47]

Cohort analyses, while occasionally differing in their particular
emphases, reach the same general conclusion as Jennings and Niemi:
that declining trust (or some similar orientation) is evident among
all age categories, and that the evidence supports the existence of
powerful Zeitgeist effects during the post-1964 period in American
politics.[48] And, as we saw in the previous chapter, lower levels of
support are evident among children and adolescents, many of whom are
only beginning to form their impressions of the character of our
political system and its leaders.[49]

The evidence of change in political efficacy is equally persua-
sive, although that concept again presents a problem because of its
dual attitude objects--the self and the system. Philip Converse dem-
onstrated that over-time changes in aggregate responses to the various
efficacy items were not at all identical. He noted that the standard
efficacy scale might best be divided into two separate components:
"personal feelings of political competence" (referring to "the indi-
vidual's sense of his own fundamental capacities and experience in op-
erating in a political domain") and "trust in system responsiveness"
(referring to perceptions of the "properties of the political system
as it stands at a point in time").[50] Converse compares these two ideas
with Gamson's distinction between political efficacy and political

trust, although, as I shall argue below, beliefs about system respon-
siveness are not synonymous with feelings of trust in the capacity or
willingness of political leaders and institutions to generate favor-
able outputs (decisions and behaviors).

What is most interesting about Converse's thesis is that the pat-
terns of change associated with each of the attitudinal components of
the efficacy scale reflect an increasingly plausible view of our nation's
recent political experience. The political competence component is
erratic, but one item shows a clear gain over the period from 1952 to
1968--a gain which is consistent with the overall educational advances
in the American population during these years. The system responsive-
ness component, on the other hand, parallels the rise in political
cynicism cited in so many studies; the proportion of efficacious res-
ponses declines steadily after 1960, following modest gains which had
occurred between 1952 and 1960.[51] Converse speculates that the drop
in perceptions of system responsiveness can be understood as a general
public reaction to the political turmoil of the 1960s, including the
pressures toward racial desegregation, the escalation of conflict in
Vietnam, and the civil disorder which was associated with each of these
areas of concern.[52] He concludes,

> . . . it seems reasonable to imagine that "driven" by ·
> education, the personal competence component of politi-
> cal efficacy has been steadily advancing in this period
> within the ranks of the better-educated, however glacial
> the pace, and underlies the increases in attentiveness
> and participation in this period as well. But, in the
> middle 1960's sequences of events occurred which sharply
> jarred the component of efficacy that bears on confi-
> dence in system responsiveness or integrity. For the
> less well-educated, this perceived souring of the system

> tended to draw a response of acquiescence and resigna-
> tion which is probably age-old, and which surfaces
> partly in the increased belief that politics is simply
> beyond the grasp of "people like me." While the well-
> educated were not completely immune to such reactions,
> there is also a tendency among them toward a less pas-
> sive response. . . .[53]

While other studies have documented a decline in feelings of political

efficacy among Americans, we rarely find the concept's dual components

given the separate attention that each requires.[54]

The Origins of Political Discontent: A Tentative Assessment

We have thus far encountered numerous grounds on which to dismiss,

or at least qualify, our traditional notions about the origins of po-

litical support. Among children, the inevitability of early positive

learning appears to be problematic; and if early learning is_ positive,

there is considerable evidence to suggest that changes in the politi-

cal environment can generate changes in the political attitudes of pre-

adults—although the process by which such events are perceived and

evaluated is not adequately understood. Our brief review of the lit-

erature concerning political trust and political efficacy has raised

equally serious questions about the nature of supportive sentiments

among adults. In particular, the temporal instability of these atti-

tudes, evident at both aggregate and individual levels of analysis,

suggests that adult citizens may also be responding to changes in the

political environment. Moreover, the inexorable downward movement of

numerous indicators of political support, occurring over the past fif-

teen years or so, implies that much of the American population has res-

ponded to the same political events—and in much the same way.

While we are not yet at a point where we can precisely identify the political forces which give shape and substance to such attitudes as trust and efficacy, it seems useful to make a few preliminary observations before going on. At a minimum, we can readily agree that neither of these political orientations, at least as we have been measuring them, conform to the Eastonian notion of diffuse support. This conclusion is a troubling one for the many scholars who have thought otherwise, including Gamson and the many others who have adapted their concepts and their theories to Gamson's discussion of political trust.

At the risk of oversimplification, we might consider the following dictum: "If it varies over short periods of time, it cannot be diffuse support." More to the point, there are at least three reasons why we cannot regard attitudes of political trust (as well as beliefs about system responsiveness) as measures of diffuse support for the political system: (1) they are not inherited or otherwise learned during childhood--at least not in ways suspected by early socialization theorists (the "primacy principle"); (2) they are not forever fixed; rather, they are variable among many citizens, particularly in response to (3) changes in the political environment (cf. the "structuring principle"). The evidence in support of this final proposition is itself rather eclectic, and we will need to identify with some precision the environmental forces to which citizen feelings of support and discontent are responsive. We might also note at this point that, if our interpretation of trust and efficacy is a _political_ one, we

will be less troubled by variations over time in the personal and social

correlates of discontent--for example, as blacks become more, then less,

favorable in their feelings of trust; or, as we notice a tendency for

even the most self-confident individuals to view the political system

as unresponsive to citizen demands and interests. The nonpolitical

correlates of these attitudes will fluctuate as they come to be more or

less associated with the political causes of discontent--and the lat-

ter association will depend very much on the particular actions and de-

cisions of political leaders, and how these are perceived by citizens.

All of this is not to say that there is no such phenomenon as

diffuse support. Whether due to the inadequacy of the concept itself

or to our failure to develop valid and reliable measures of it,[55]

about all that we can presently say is that political trust and politi-

cal efficacy are not manifestations of diffuse support. Unfortunately,

most scholarly attempts to assess the significance of declining levels

of trust and efficacy have tended to act as if they are. We are told,

for example, that rising discontent can eventually limit the flexibil-

ity of decision-makers as they attempt to deal with social problems

and citizen demands; or, that in the long run, such a state of affairs

may generate more fundamental challenges to the very nature of the po-

litical regime.[56] Indeed, this may be true--but not because these atti-

tudes necessarily conform to the Eastonian theory of diffuse support.

From what we have already seen, we might reasonably characterize trust

and efficacy (and their many companion concepts) as manifestations of

specific support, moving to and fro over time as citizens respond with

favor or with disgust to the decisions and behaviors of their political leaders. The most important question which we must ask, however, has little to do with the origins or the stability of these beliefs. Rather, we must determine whether they carry with them behavioral implications that have (or might have) ultimate significance for the operation and performance of political systems.

The attempt to clarify both the causes and the behavioral consequences of political trust is the central task of this study. If recent trends toward widespread mistrust and cynicism portend potential danger for the political order, we might be forgiven for dismissing the diffuse-specific distinction as inadequate for our efforts to understand that danger. There are many questions that we will need to answer before we can explicitly detail the character and the importance of the attitudinal trends we have just reviewed. But the entire effort must depend largely on how we conceptualize that which we are attempting to explain.

Conceptualization

It is essential to recognize the distinction between concept and theory. The ideas of specific and diffuse support are more than simply psychological constructs; they represent elements of a theory with which Easton has attempted to explain the persistence and continued effectiveness of governments, even during periods when government outputs failed to satisfy large segments of the population. There is nothing inherently wrong in this, but there is a danger when

we fail to take account of the fact in our research. Particularly con-
fusing are the efforts of those who appear to take their cue from
Gamson's equation of political trust and diffuse support.[57] Thus, the
most problematic elements of the Easton model--the hypothesized rela-
tionship between support and system persistence--seem to have survived
an era during which our indicators of political trust were behaving
precisely as we would expect specific support (i.e., that form which
holds little immediate consequence for the regime) to behave. And
with political trust and political efficacy being so clearly associ-
ated with one another in the minds of citizens, can it be unreasonable
to conceive of efficacy as yet another important aspect of diffuse
support?

The goal of this study is to understand the origins and conse-
quences of political trust. It is unnecessary to specify in advance
whether we are talking about specific or diffuse support. The model
which I shall propose suggests that it is certainly not the latter,
but the data will answer this question for us. The first task must be
to specify precisely what we mean by political trust and--since both
tradition and my own theory demand it--political efficacy, and to do so
in a way that does not compel us to any particular conclusions about
the causes and effects of those beliefs.

Let us begin with political efficacy. We long have been at least
vaguely aware that this concept contains two fundamentally different
attitude objects.

> It (political efficacy) has, of course, two components
> --the image of the self and the image of democratic gov-
> ernment--and contains the tacit implication that an
> image of the self as effective is intimately related to
> the image of democratic government as responsive to
> the people.[58]

These complementary constructs of personal effectiveness and system

responsiveness are encountered increasingly in other studies as well.

For example, Coleman and Davis contend that

> A low sense of political efficacy could be a function
> of . . . personal inability to elicit a response from a
> system which responds to some people, or shared in-
> ability to elicit a response from an unresponsive sys-
> tem. In the former case, we are dealing with the self
> as an attitude object; in the latter case it is the
> system which is the attitude object.[59]

This distinction becomes a bit more complicated when we introduce

the concept of political trust (or cynicism) because, once again, we

find that the attitude object is the political system. For Miller,

political cynicism "is a statement of the belief that the government

is not functioning and producing outputs in accord with individual

expectations."[60] And we should recall Gamson's distinction between

political trust and political efficacy, described above. Sharing the

same attitude object, and thus perhaps subject to many of the same

causal influences, we might anticipate that political trust and the

responsiveness component of political efficacy will share some amount

of common variance. Indeed, we may find the two concepts to be empir-

ically equivalent.

While much of the literature involving efficacy and trust is rel-

atively insensitive to questions of dimensionality, recent studies

sometimes have been more attentive to this issue. For example, I have

already noted Converse's recognition that the SRC efficacy scale seems
to contain both personal and institutional components. Balch demon-
strated that this scale breaks down into two pairs of items, each
relatively uncorrelated with the other. These are internal efficacy,[61]
i.e., the individual's belief that means of influence are available to
him, his evaluation of his own political abilities; and external
efficacy,[62] i.e., the belief that the authorities or regime are respon-
sive to influence attempts.[63] Each pair appears to relate differently
to various dimensions of political participation (interest, knowledge,
and propensity to participate); further, the two pairs have rather
sharply distinct relationships with political trust and propensity
toward political protest. Coleman and Davis apply this distinction in
an authoritarian setting (Mexico) and, while their results are clearly
supportive, the authors fail to account adequately for the relationship
between external efficacy and political trust.[64]

The result of these and other deliberations, including the evi-
dence of different patterns of change over time among the three atti-
tudes,[65] has been a proliferation of attitudinal constructs, each in-
tended to tap one or another element of the broader concepts of politi-
cal efficacy and political trust. Even limiting ourselves to the
general themes just reviewed, we can identify at least four separate
ideas in the literature:

(1) personal effectiveness--a belief that one is generally
    the master of his environment and able to bring about
    preferred outcomes in his daily life;
(2) political effectiveness--a belief that one is personally
    effective in the political sphere;

(3) **institutional responsiveness**--a belief that authori-
ties will be responsive to the influence attempts
of citizens generally (whether in addition to or in
place of one's individual efforts); and

(4) **institutional benevolence**--a belief that authorities
will be responsive to the **needs** of citizens (apart
from any consideration of citizen demands).

Taking our cue from Gamson, we might note that "(e)fficacy re-
fers to the <u>ability</u> to influence; trust refers to the <u>necessity</u> for in-
fluence."[66] The belief in one's ability to influence, however, can
occur in either (or both) of two senses. An individual's sense of ef-
ficacy can refer either to a confidence in his ability to utilize what-
ever influence or communications channels a polity provides for its
citizens (internal efficacy); or to the (potential) perceived respon-
siveness of authorities should he choose to act through these channels
in order to influence government output (external efficacy). Political
trust will be defined in terms of "institutional benevolence," and it
will refer to the anticipated quality of government outputs. Unlike
the attitude of external efficacy, the potential effectiveness of
personal action is not a component of political trust; the latter refers
to government action perceived as being in the public <u>interest</u>, whether
or not it is seen as a product of popular <u>demand</u>.[67]

We would expect that internal efficacy will be empirically linked
to both personal effectiveness (by sharing the notion of self-compe-
tence) and external efficacy (by implicitly sharing the notion of
responsiveness). This latter point would seem to obscure the internal-
external distinction, but the link is less the product of logic than
of democratic culture and expectations. In a culture such as our own,
which places emphasis upon individual initiative and both the norm and

reality of popular government, we would expect that political effective-
ness will be judged partly on perceptions about the likely outcomes of
personal involvement in politics. A similar link may be expected be-
tween the external efficacy and trust dimensions, again as the product
of democratic culture. It is probable that among the anticipated out-
puts upon which a democratic government is generally evaluated (politi-
cal trust) is the degree to which it responds to citizen demands
(external efficacy). In sum, we would expect to find positive corre-
lations, at least in the United States, between internal and external
efficacy, and between external efficacy and political trust. No
necessary relationship should exist between internal efficacy and po-
litical trust.[68] We will assess the validity of this scheme as our
analysis develops.

We have reached the point at which we can begin to move beyond the
traditional explanations of political discontent, and to address the
large and growing body of evidence which attempts to link citizens'
attitudes with the political reality which those citizens confront in
their daily lives. We have not yet passed the stage at which we can
place behind us our frustrations with the variety of concepts and
measures with which political discontent has been described in .the
literature. But we have finally isolated a theoretically important var-
iable whose origins we wish to explore (political trust), and one of the
central explanatory factors which should assist us in that task (politi-
cal efficacy). We can now begin to develop a political explanation of
these political beliefs.

CHAPTER V

TOWARDS A POLITICAL EXPLANATION OF POLITICAL DISCONTENT

The idea that political discontent might somehow be rooted in
"political reality" has become increasingly plausible in recent years,
particularly as the United States has experienced a troubling (and at
least moderately enduring) decline in the confidence with which citi-
zens view their political leaders and institutions. We perhaps should
recall the conclusion suggested by our review of the socialization
literature: that changes in feelings of political support or discon-
tent may occur not simply because the lessons of childhood are inade-
quately learned or forgotten, but because they are associated with
changes in the political environment. "'Socialization' is no more a
static process, unchanging in content, form, and effect, and 'aliena-
tion' is no more a static state of being, constant in its roots and
implications, than is history itself."[1] Such a perspective, however,
inevitably must lead us to consider precisely what changes in the po-
litical environment may be responsible for the contemporary dissatis-
faction of Americans with the state of their polity.

The Political Origins of Cynicism

Investigations into the origins of political trust and cynicism
have come increasingly to focus upon the outputs of the political system.

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In a study which essentially has come to serve as a point of departure
for similar "political" explanations of discontent, Arthur Miller at-
tempted to assess the impact of citizen reactions to political issues
and public policy upon the formation of political cynicism. Miller's
analysis located generally higher levels of cynicism among individuals
whose preferences across a variety of social issues were toward the
attitudinal extremes and away from the center of the political spec-
trum. This relationship might be explained by the fact that cynicism
was highest among individuals who were dissatisfied with the policy al-
ternatives offered by both of the major political parties in the
United States.[2] Presumably, then, we may attribute the over-time
decline in political trust among Americans either to changing attitudes
on salient contemporary issues, or to changing evaluations of the po-
litical choices by which these issues and problems might be confronted.[3]

Similar efforts to locate the origins of political discontent in
the policy preferences of Americans have usually affirmed the spirit,
if not always the details, of this account. We shall review the evi-
dence as we proceed, but it should be instructive to pause for a
moment to consider how Miller's interpretation of political trust dif-
fers from that which we have already encountered. In fact, while his
analysis suggests a rather different pattern of relationships than
that hypothesized by Easton and Gamson, it is also true that Miller
attempts to place his research squarely within that same tradition.
Consider, for example, the various ways in which he conceptualizes
his dependent variable.

Political trust can be thought of as a basic evaluative
or affective orientation toward the government. . . .
Cynicism thus refers to the degree of negative affect
toward the government and is a statement of the belief
that the government is not functioning and producing
outputs in accord with individual expectations.[4]

Political trust is the belief that the government
is operating according to one's normative expectations
of how government should function. The concept is
closely related to the notion of legitimacy, a statement
that government institutions and authorities are morally
and legally valid and widely accepted. . . . At an ab-
stract, conceptual level, trust in government--through
the notion of legitimacy--thus becomes associated with
questions of identification with, or estrangement from,
political institutions, symbols and values. . . .[5]

. . . political trust in a representative democracy implies
the fulfillment of citizen expectations that the govern-
ment functions in an equitable, responsible and responsive
manner. Lack of trust suggests that a discrepancy ex-
ists between normative standards used to judge the be-
havior of political elites and the visible actions of
the elites. The standards may reflect universally shared
norms of behavior--the honesty, competence and fairness
of authorities--or more specific goals, such as collec-
tive and self-interest.[6]

Political trust may in part both reflect and affect the
general social and economic quality of life directly ex-
perienced by the citizen.[7]

It is difficult not to be struck by the complexity of what, at

its base, seems to be a relatively straightforward attitudinal concept.

The reader will recall from the previous chapter that political trust

has been defined here simply as "the anticipated quality of govern-

ment output." This is not to say that the origins of this attitude are

anything but complex--a view with which I am in complete agreement.

But, once again, it seems impossible to grasp the nature of the con-

cept independently of its determinants, both personal and contextual.

The value of Miller's various interpretations lies, as we shall see,

In the clues they provide about the likely origins of political trust
--although we must understand these as hypotheses rather than as defi-
nitional givens.

As befits his concern with the dynamic character of the attitude
itself, Miller apparently is prepared to explain the recent changes in
its levels and distribution among the American public in terms that
are quite compatible with the Eastonian notion of diffuse support.
As I have already noted, Easton speculates that diffuse support may
be partly a function of political outputs and the performance of the
authorities, as citizen evaluations of these phenomena may evolve
over a long period of time. Thus, negative outputs and the dissatis-
factions which they generate may <u>accumulate</u> in the political conscious-
ness of the individual and <u>generalize</u> to the point at which negative
feelings are directed at political objects more fundamental than the
incumbent authorities.[8] This is essentially what Miller hypothesizes
to have occurred since the early 1960s, reflecting widespread and en-
during popular dissatisfaction stemming from such events as the civil
rights movement, Watergate, Vietnam, and steadily deteriorating econ-
omic conditions. Specifically, Miller hypothesizes a model in which
two basic evaluations are thought to condition an individual's feelings
of political trust. These evaluations, depicted in Figure 3, are
directed at political leaders themselves and at the policies which they
produce.[9] While the relationship between these variables and politi-
cal trust should be positive at any moment in time, it is the accumu-
lation of grievances over time which is thought to represent the

FIGURE 3

A SUMMARY DIAGRAM OF THE POLITICAL SOURCES OF POLITICAL TRUST

Leadership
Evaluation

Political
Trust
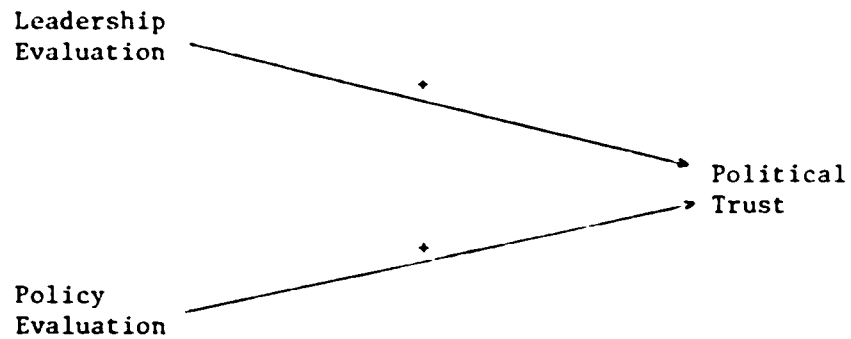
Policy
Evaluation

Source: Arthur H. Miller, "Change in Political Trust: Discontent with
         Authorities and Economic Policies, 1972-1973" (paper presented
      · at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science
         Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974), p. 4.

greatest threat to governmental performance and to hold the greatest potential for social change.[10] The data analyzed by Miller are generally supportive and, reviewing additional evidence of growing political dissatisfactions among Americans, he concludes "that political distrust (has) become generalized from incumbents to institutions as well as across the various levels and branches of government."[11]

Unfortunately, conclusive evidence in support of the cumulation/generalization hypothesis is not easily acquired. What _is_ becoming increasingly available, however, is evidence of at least a static relationship between feelings of political trust or cynicism and perceptions or evaluations of the political environment—"political reality" if you will, at least as it exists for any particular individual (or, perhaps, group). While the conclusions we draw from such findings must be inferential, we have seen in previous chapters that patterns of change in the supportive sentiments of Americans are largely unidirectional and clearly pervasive, with attitudes of discontent increasingly coming to characterize citizens of all ages and varied social backgrounds and group memberships. From such findings we might conclude that there have been powerful Zeitgeist effects during the post-1964 period in American politics, and that the origin of these changes may be found in the turbulent era of political and social conflict which captured both headlines and the attention of citizens in those years.

The validity of this interpretation has been enhanced by a number of studies which examine individual-level relationships. For purposes of organizing these findings, it might be useful to retrieve the three

categories of political experience which were identified in Figure 1 above. It was suggested there that the origins of Easton's specific support, and those of diffuse support when understood in terms of accumulation and generalization processes, might be located in citizens' perceptions of (1) system outputs, (2) authority performance, and (3) personal experience. The first two of these correspond roughly with Miller's notions of policy and leadership evaluations.

As we have seen, Miller's analysis suggested that higher levels of political cynicism can be found among Americans whose policy preferences are either liberal or conservative--an apparent response to the generally centrist policies pursued by our government and the moderate (and similar) alternatives offerred by our political parties during a period of attitude crystallization and polarization within the electorate. This last point is important. The 1960s have been seen as a period during which dramatic events and domestic and international turmoil managed to penetrate the relative political indifference of many Americans, creating a mood of urgency and growing demands for solutions to our many pressing problems.

Alongside these changes in our political environment, the character of the electorate has also been altered by a substantial rise in the educational level of our citizenry, as increasing numbers have responded to greater opportunities and to the demand of a technological society for the skills of a college education. Together, these changes are thought to have provided more citizens with both the motivation and the ability to attend to the issues of contemporary political debate, with the result that opinions have become more firmly held, more

consistent, and more consistently liberal or conservative than was true during the "quiescent" 1950s.[12]

If it is true that the outputs of our political system have tended toward the center of the ideological spectrum, then it is reasonable to suppose that an aroused and increasingly un-moderate electorate will respond to these outputs—especially if they fail to alleviate the problems at which they are directed—with gradually less kindly dis-positions toward the leaders and the institutions from which the out-puts flow. For example, Miller and Levitin argue that

> the most important source of distrust has been the issue polarization within the electorate. . . . Trust in gov-ernment . . . is primarily based on satisfaction with how well the government is performing. The (SRC) items do not tap feelings of loyalty or patriotism, abstract philosophical theories about government, or existential states of alienation or helplessness as directly as they indicate satisfaction with the performance of the party in power. As voters have become more concerned with issues, and as their demands for policy alternatives have become increasingly polarized, cynicism or lack of trust in government to meet those demands has increased correspondingly. When the demands on government are translated into contrasting policy demands, a centrist government—that is, a government based on two party competition for support from the central mass of voters —cannot satisfy those who take extreme positions, right or left, without jeopardizing its support from the center. . . .[13]

It remains unclear, however, whether this particular pattern of res-ponse is typical—or even whether it has endured throughout the 1970s.[14]

As one might expect, the particular relationship between "politi-cal reality" and political trust depends heavily upon how the indepen-dent variable is conceptualized and operationalized in any study. In general, however, the relationship is one which finds some degree of support across populations, time frames, and even methodological

techniques. For example, Citrin and his associates report an association between disapproval of governmental performance on broad policy fronts (e.g., reducing unemployment, controlling the cost of living, taxing people fairly) and political alienation.[15] Miller found a relationship between economic policy evaluations and political trust in 1972, although this relationship was diminished except among Republican identifiers in 1973.[16] This study is particularly interesting for its attempt to understand declining levels of trust during this period in terms of changes in political evaluations. Similarly, Entman and his associates used a panel design to locate the sources of changing levels of trust among college students in 1973 and 1974. In both years, political trust was rather closely associated with both evaluations of Nixon and policy dissatisfaction (domestic and foreign). The determinants of change in political trust were a bit less straightforward, but the overall pattern was consistent with the proposition that feelings of trust respond to changes in the political environment.[17] The conclusion that feelings of trust and cynicism are, in large measure, a function of citizen perceptions of system outputs seems to be supported by a substantial body of evidence.[18]

There is also some evidence suggesting that political discontent may result from negative evaluations of incumbent authorities themselves, and the quality of leadership which they are felt to exhibit in the execution of their duties. Such standards as those described by Miller—honesty, competence, fairness—might be expected to play an important role in the formation of attitudes or feelings toward the

government. Miller's data show that such leadership evaluations do make a contribution to feelings of trust, independently of the effect on trust of policy evaluations.[19] The same conclusion may be drawn from the Entman study noted above.[20] In addition, we will momentarily consider the extent to which political cynicism may be encouraged by the belief that political authorities are not usually responsive to the demands of citizens. While responsiveness is one important output of democratic political systems, it also provides a standard by which particular authorities might be judged.

An individual's personal experiences with agents of the government may also influence his or her feelings of confidence and trust. I have already argued that children and adolescents often have experiential bases for learning directly about politics, and for testing the information which they may have received from other sources.[21] Aberbach and Walker contend that the same is true for adults, and that an individual's (or group's) cumulative political experiences do help to shape his or her political evaluations.[22] Of particular interest is the tendency, reported by Abravanel and Busch, for college students who had worked for a party or candidate to feel higher levels of mistrust than did nonparticipants.[23]

In general, then, we are on rather firm ground in concluding that attitudes of trust or cynicism toward political leaders and institutions derive in part from citizens' perceptions of the political environment. Whether this is a relationship which gradually evolves over time, as the "theory" of diffuse support suggests, is a question

that cannot adequately be answered. Perhaps even more important for
our immediate purposes, our understanding of the conditions under
which perceptions of political events and personal experiences are
translated into affective judgments about politics remains rudimentary
at best. Before I suggest what some of these conditions might be,
let us examine the extent to which we may attribute feelings of politi-
cal efficacy to environmental and experiential sources.

The Political Origins of Efficacy

Let us recall that sense of efficacy involves two distinct compo-
nents: (1) internal efficacy--the degree to which an individual has
confidence in his ability to utilize whatever influence or communica-
tions channels a polity provides for its citizens; and (2) external
efficacy--the perceived likelihood that political authorities will be
responsive should the individual attempt to influence government out-
put.

Internal efficacy differs from both external efficacy and politi-
cal trust ("the anticipated quality of government outputs") in its
emphasis on the self as an attitude object. It also appears to exhibit
different aggregate patterns of change over time, although the continued
use of the SRC scale and similar measures makes this proposition diffi-
cult to demonstrate authoritatively. These differences suggest that
internal efficacy will derive from different sources than will external
efficacy or political trust

To anticipate the argument that I will make below, it seems reason-
able to expect that both external efficacy and political trust will

"reflect variations in regime performance"[24]--or citizen evaluations

of regime performance. An individual's sense of external efficacy

should reflect his evaluation of the processes and institutions of the

regime, in particular the extent to which he sees these as facilitating

or inhibiting the expression of his procedural political values. Po-

litical trust, on the other hand, is a more inclusive construct, and

it should reflect an individual's belief that the system and its rep-

resentatives are generating outputs which are consistent with his

substantive (or symbolic) political values--whether or not he has at-

tempted to shape these outputs through direct influence attempts. In

contrast, it is internal efficacy which should be more responsive to

variations in such motivating and facilitating personal characteristics

as socioeconomic status, political knowledge, political interest and

attentiveness.[25]

What evidence can we find to support the contention that external

efficacy is responsive to changes in the political environment? The

fact that external efficacy is a less stable attitude than once was

supposed is clear,[26] but the failure of analysts to move beyond a

tentative recognition of the internal-external distinction has hampered

our ability to understand the nature of these changes. As we saw in

the previous chapter, however, there does seem to be a certain logic

in the patterns of change for the different efficacy items, and it

seems fair to conclude that these patterns indicate that external effi-

cac', in particular, is situationally variable in the sense that it

responds to citizen perceptions of political "events."[27] According to

Hess,

> . . . a sense of efficacy is one expression by the indi-
> vidual of his relation to his environment. The relation-
> ship is reciprocal in the sense that it depends on both
> the individual and the system; it is more fluid than the
> traditional image of efficacy as a set of inherent prop-
> erties or attitudes that a citizen carries around with
> him makes it appear. This line of argument suggests that
> a person's sense of efficacy varies from one social or po-
> litical context to another. . . . The individual's per-
> ceptions of the particular environment in which he is
> operating (especially his reception of its responsiveness
> or susceptibility to influence) are crucial.[28]

This latter point underscores the possibility that efficacy, like

trust, may be a function of an individual's personal experiences with

political authorities or institutions. Hess hypothesizes that, while

sense of efficacy may be understood as a global attitude which oper-

ates across a range of personal and political attitude objects, it "is

almost certainly modified quickly and sharply in individual encounters

with various representatives of institutions and of government."[29]

For example, it is well established that a sense of efficacy enhances

the probability that citizens will engage in political influence at-

tempts.

> But if a sense of effectiveness tends to increase po-
> litical participation, might it not be true also that po-
> litical participation tends to increase a sense of politi-
> cal effectiveness. . . . Like role-playing, voting and
> talking politics may alter a person's attitudes toward
> the activities he engages in. On the other hand, would
> it be true that political activity might spoil the illu-
> sion of efficacy, on the grounds that "familiarity breeds
> contempt"?[30]

While the causal direction of this relationship is difficult to es-

tablish, a number of studies have concluded that personal experiences

are a significant source of political evaluations such as efficacy.[31]

Is external efficacy, like political trust, also shaped by the

perceived _outputs_ of the political system? Wright examined changes in

efficacy and trust from 1964 to 1970, and attempted to link them with

the rise in "disappointments with political outputs" during this

period. Focusing on attitudes about the economy and Vietnam, Wright

offers an interesting conclusion:

> Powerlessness . . . appears to reflect the correlation
> between public policy and political preference: Where
> the correlation is high, powerlessness is low, and vice
> versa. Trust, on the other hand, may reflect the openness
> and competence whereby that correlation is attained.
> Groups whose policy preferences are being honored may
> still decline in political trust _if_ the decision-
> making process is itself deceptive or corrupt. In
> short, even the winners of an unfair contest may object
> to the rules of the game.[32]

We must again acknowledge that the conditions under which perceptions

of political outputs or processes are translated into feelings of

external efficacy remain obscure. It does appear, however, that such

feelings somehow _are_ responsive to changes in the political environ-

ment.[33]

Coleman and Davis have been perhaps the most attentive to the

need for understanding differences in the respective origins of internal

and external efficacy. Their hypothesized model for "pluralist" re-

gimes is illustrated in Figure 4.[34] Their assumption is that if either

dimension is to be seen as a cause of the other, it is external effi-

cacy that will shape internal efficacy.

> In pluralist regimes external efficacy might be seen as
> a facilitating but not a sufficient condition for the
> existence of internal efficacy. . . . (I)ndividuals who
> believe the system is responsive to people like them-
> selves will be more likely to believe that they person-
> ally have the skills to induce government officials to
> act. However . . . the belief in system responsiveness

FIGURE 4

A REVISION AND SYNTHESIS OF PREVIOUS THEORIES OF POLITICAL EFFICACY

Actual   Evaluations
Regime   ────────▶ of Regime   ────────▶ External ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ▶ Internal
Performance   Performance   Efficacy   Efficacy

                                          Political Attentiveness/
                                          Political Involvement

                                                    ▲
                                                    │
                                                    │

                                              SES and
                                          SES-Determined Variables

Strong Causal Effect   ──────────▶

Weak Causal Effect   ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─▶
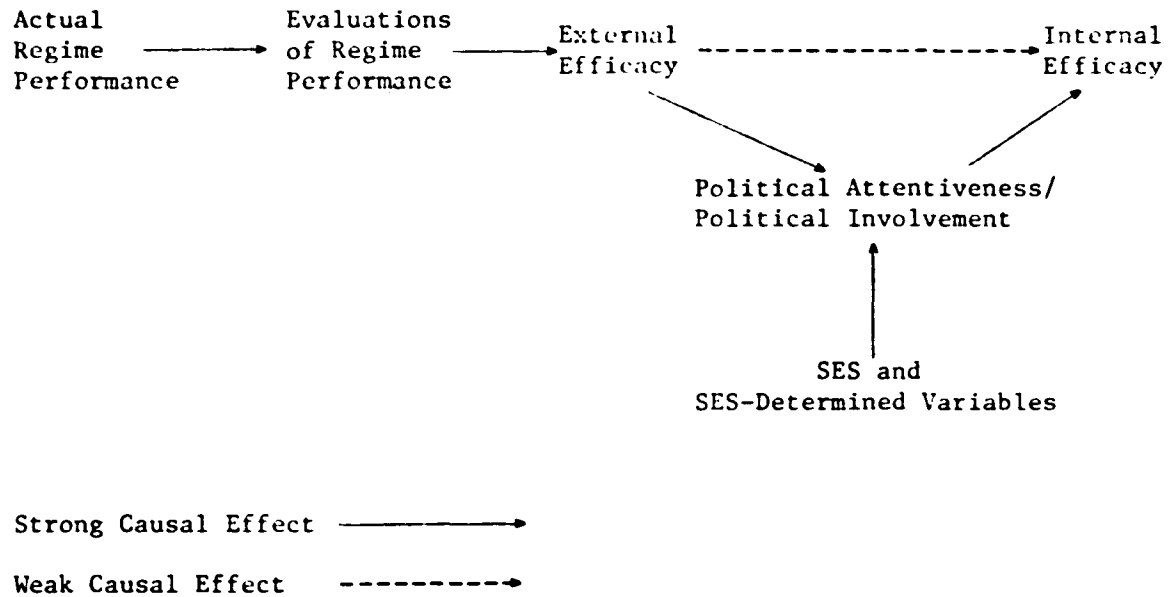
Source: Kenneth M. Coleman and Charles L. Davis, "The Structural Context of
         Politics and Dimensions of Regime Performance: Their Importance for
         the Comparative Study of Political Efficacy," Comparative Political
         Studies, 9 (July, 1976), p. 192.

> does not guarantee the belief in personal efficacy; there
> seems to be at least one intervening step, the development
> of political attentiveness. . . . (This is) the primary
> determinant of internal efficacy.[35]

Since there are additional determinants of variation in the intervening

variable, we should not be surprised to find that even in regimes

where authorities are believed to be responsive to citizen demands,

there will be many individuals who are internally inefficacious.

> Some individuals may have neither the self-confidence,
> nor the political knowledge, nor the expressive skills
> to believe themselves capable of inducing government
> action favorable to their petitions. Those lacking such
> attributes . . . will tend, in all systems, to be from
> the lower social classes.[36]

The Coleman-Davis model, therefore, emphasizes that in pluralist re-

gimes (a) external, but not internal, efficacy should be associated

with evaluations of regime performance;[37] (b) internal, but not ex-

ternal, efficacy should be associated with social class or status,

through the intervening variable of political attentiveness;[38] and

(c) external efficacy should facilitate, and thus be moderately asso-

ciated with internal efficacy, also through the intervening variable

of political attentiveness.[39]

The model which I will propose owes much to this formulation, al-

though it differs from Figure 4 in some important respects. My most

serious reservation about the Coleman-Davis model, as I explained in

the previous chapter, concerns the failure of these authors to dis-

tinguish adequately between external efficacy and political trust.

Their very plausible argument is that we cannot expect to find high

levels of external efficacy in regimes whose political institutions and

processes actually discourage citizen attempts to influence policy outputs, thereby also discouraging the development of external efficacy itself. This should not, however, tempt us to redefine our concepts as we move from one context to another. External efficacy in Mexico sounds very much like what many other scholars are calling political trust; indeed, their analysis showed it to be associated with measures of political trust. It would appear to be counter-productive to define external efficacy--in any context--such that it does not explicitly contain reference to perceived responsiveness to citizen demands. Should this concept fail to capture the essence of the relationship between citizens and their government in authoritarian systems, perhaps we may successfully differentiate groups according to their feelings of political trust--a concept which does explicitly exclude the idea of citizen influence in all contexts. This should not, of course, suggest that external efficacy and political trust will be unrelated in "pluralist" regimes. To the contrary, I would argue that external efficacy is an important source of political trust in such settings.

Efficacy and Trust in Democratic Politics

I indicated in the previous chapter that we should expect to find an empirical relationship between internal and external efficacy, since both share the self as an attitude object.[40] In addition, at least in democratic cultures, it is unlikely that one's skills as a political actor will be evaluated entirely without reference to the likely outcomes

of personal involvement in politics. Thus, even though internal effi-
cacy is not defined in these terms, we should expect that some trace
of "responsiveness" will be implicit in such evaluations. It is per-
haps in this sense that external efficacy may be a determinant of
internal efficacy: if the regime is perceived as unresponsive to
citizen demands, one's own self-evaluation as a political actor may
be impaired.[41] But it is also likely that a strong sense of self-
confidence, as manifested by high internal efficacy, can be general-
ized in some instances to the political sphere. The citizen who feels
that he possesses the skills to manipulate the environment may be un-
deterred by evidence that the regime is sometimes unresponsive to the
demands of other individuals or groups. Therefore, we might expect
internal efficacy to exert some small causal influence upon external
efficacy.[42] As we have already seen, internal and external efficacy
have been found to be associated, at least within a democratic con-
text.[43]

I have also hypothesized that external efficacy and political trust
will covary in democratic regimes. In the first place, each has the
political system as an attitude object. Moreover, it is probable that
among the anticipated (and actual) outputs upon which a democratic gov-
ernment is generally evaluated is the degree to which it responds to
citizen demands. Specifically, we might expect that external efficacy
will be a determinant of political trust. In the absence of a variety
of studies which recognize the internal-external distinction, this
proposition is difficult to verify. The existence of a relationship

between trust and the more global concept of efficacy has been demonstrated often in the literature, however.

An early study by Agger found political cynicism to be related to "political impotency" at all levels of educational attainment.[44] Aberbach and Walker found political competence to be associated with political trust among blacks and whites in Detroit.[45] Aberbach found a similar relationship in a 1964 national sample, but concluded that it was sufficiently weak to warrant our treating inefficacy and mistrust as separate dimensions of political alienation.[46] Perhaps more interesting is the evidence which demonstrates a growing relationship between these variables over time. For example, a causal model of political trust developed by Cole shows that, at least among whites, the direct path between political efficacy and political trust was significantly greater in 1970 than in either 1964 or 1968.[47] Miller, noting that the decline in political efficacy during the 1960s paralleled the decline in political trust, indicates that the relationship between the two variables has grown from .17 in 1964 to .35 in 1972.[48]

To what extent may we attribute this relationship to the covariance between external efficacy and political trust? Balch reports that, among his sample of college students, the SRC "external" pair was consistently associated with measures of political trust; the "internal" pair was correlated with trust at levels near zero (with small negative correlations not uncommon for certain items).[49] A similar study by this author found internal efficacy related to external efficacy, and external efficacy related to political trust--but internal efficacy was unrelated to political trust.[50] With somewhat different measures,

Abravanel and Busch found political trust to be positively correlated
with the "government responsiveness" dimension, but negatively corre-
lated with the "self-competence" dimension--i.e., the mistrustful were
more likely to have a higher sense of political self-competence than
were the trustful. This was true despite the fact that the efficacy
dimensions were themselves correlated at .35.[51] Citrin and Elkins
report a correlation (r) of -.52 between political cynicism and per-
ceptions of "system responsiveness" among British university students.[52]

I indicated in the previous chapter that there is no reason to
expect that internal efficacy will be associated with political trust.
If it is true that political self-evaluation in democratic cultures
is unlikely to be completely free of some implicit notion of "respon-
siveness," however, it should also be true that we could discover a
weak relationship between internal efficacy and trust. Even if it is
weak, whatever relationship we find in certain contexts should be a
positive one. It is interesting, then, to note that some of the
studies just cited actually discover these two political orientations
to be inversely related. This may be an artifact of the particular
measures used, or it may reflect something more meaningful. The latter
possibility will concern us below, but for the moment it is important
to consider the relationship between external efficacy and political
trust in greater depth.

System Responsiveness as a Democratic Norm

In 1967, Easton and Dennis published an article titled "The Child's

Acquisition of Regime Norms: Political Efficacy."[53] They contended

that the concept of political efficacy could be understood "as a norm,

as a psychologocal disposition or feeling, and as a form of behavior."[54]

It is the first of these which will concern us here.

> As a norm it refers to the timeless theme of demo-
> cratic theory that members of a democratic regime
> ought to regard those who occupy positions of politi-
> cal authority as responsive agents and that the mem-
> bers themselves ought to be disposed to participate
> in the honors and offices of the system. The norm
> of political efficacy therefore embodies the expecta-
> tion in democracies that members will feel able to
> act effectively in politics.[55]

While the thrust of this argument seems to place the responsibility

for guaranteeing regime responsiveness (and thus a sense of efficacy)

upon the shoulders of individual citizens, the last sentence at least

reminds us that the political system also has a role to play in es-

tablishing itself as consistent with democratic ideals. It may be

possible, in authoritarian settings, for citizens to accept the fact

that their political leaders will not respond to popular pressures,

if such pressures are allowed to be played out in the first place.

This does not mean that external inefficacy will not encourage resent-

ment in an authoritarian context, but that its effect on political

trust may be depressed. This is certainly not what we expect in the

United States.

Even within this country, we might expect that there will be vari-

ations in the determinants of political trust across different contexts.

For example, Litt has emphasized the importance of the "political milieu"

in which cynicism "may be acquired as a community norm, a part of the

political acculturation process in the city's daily routine."[56] A

similar phenomenon was uncovered in socialization studies which found

widespread cynicism and inefficacy among "deprived" black and white

children.[57] This state of affairs can affect the relationship be-

tween efficacy and trust, as it did in Litt's study of Boston, where

the mistrustful were not especially likely to feel that local politi-

cians would be inattentive to constituent demands.[58]

On balance, however, we should not be surprised to find that the

American political system is evaluated in part according to the degree

to which citizens perceive it to be responsive to citizen input. In

fact, a certain level of responsiveness is possibly one of the most

important outputs upon which citizen evaluations of the system are

based. The idea is developed by Stokes:

> When the individual's sense of political efficacy is
> compared with his positive or negative attitude toward
> government, it is apparent that a sense of ineffective-
> ness is coupled with feelings of hostility. This re-
> lation is more than a tautology. In other cultures or
> other historical eras a sense of ineffectiveness might
> well be associated with a positive feeling. In the con-
> text of democratic values, feelings of powerlessness
> toward public authority tend to create feelings of
> hostility toward that authority.[59]

Similarly, Aberbach and Walker speculate that, "in a system infused

with the democratic ethos, perceived influence is as important as the

quality and justice of the outputs themselves in determining political

trust."[60] If the assumption that citizen influence is a powerful dem-

ocratic value or norm is correct, then the frequently reported associ-

ation between external efficacy and political trust is not at all

surprising.

Still, we must be cautious in attributing this value to the bulk
of the American population; it is an empirical question. Schwartz, in
considering the relationship between political inefficacy and political
alienation (estrangement), makes two points which are relevant here.
First, "(a)n individual may feel utterly inefficacious and yet feel
no estrangement because he does not believe himself to be entitled to
more power."[61] Moreover, "a person's inefficacy may not be salient
to him. If a person is satisfied with things as they are, he may just
not care very much about his inefficacy. . . . If the political system
already comports with his fundamental politicized values, inefficacy
is unlikely to produce estrangement."[62] Schwartz moves from this lat-
ter point to argue that political alienation depends upon both the per-
ception of fundamental conflict between personal and systemic values
and the belief that the system itself is inefficacious, i.e., that it
cannot be moved to attain the individual's values, either through
personal attempts at influence or by the efforts of other agents with
whom the individual is sympathetic.[63] The idea that "threatened value
conflict" is a determinant of political alienation generally corres-
ponds to the argument of Miller and others, that system outputs which
contradict an individual's values (or, more simply, his perceived in-
terests) are likely to generate dissatisfaction with the system and its
leaders.[64]

To what extent, then, may we assume that perceptions of regime
unresponsiveness to "people like me" also represent, in democratic sys-
tems, a "threatened value conflict"—a gap between democratic aspirations

and perceived political realities? To what extent may we say that the
norm of external efficacy is a salient one to Americans, not only for
its potential in removing substantive value conflicts between policy
outputs and citizen preferences (an instrumental value), but also for
its positive symbolic value in our political culture? In large measure,
we may take the existence of an efficacy norm as a matter of faith,
although it does not seem likely that our faith is misplaced in this
instance. After all, external efficacy is associated with political
trust in study after study--apparently more so in recent years than
previously. The association between the two variables is less than
perfect, which tells us that external efficacy is not a salient value
for some (if, indeed, their responses to survey items represent deeply
held beliefs in the first place[65]), and that our explanation of politi-
cal trust cannot begin and end with sense of efficacy. But it is un-
likely that the efficacy-trust relationship is a spurious one, resulting
from the common influence of some third variable(s).[66]

Earlier in this chapter, I briefly described some apparent changes
in the character of the American electorate which have captured the
attention (and the imagination) of political analysts in recent years.
In particular, it has been argued that the events of the 1960s and early
1970s had a "politicizing" effect upon many Americans, whose response
included a greater attentiveness to political issues and controversies,
and a crystallization of opinions about these issues. These changes
have been accompanied, and perhaps partly shaped,[67] by rising levels of
educational achievement in the electorate. While these themes will re-
quire our attention later, they are especially relevant for understanding

the importance of citizen influence in contemporary American politics. At the same time that trust in government has been declining at an impressive rate, other changes have been taking place that seem almost contradictory. Converse, for example, notes "the juxtaposition of declining efficacy with aggregate levels of political interest that have at the very least been maintained, and probably have risen."[68] Reviewing measures of "unusual political activity" over the period from 1952 to 1968, Converse reports that most showed slightly higher levels of involvement in the 1960s than during the 1950s.[69] He concludes that education, and with it feelings of internal efficacy, have moved slowly in the opposite direction from the trends for political trust and external efficacy. And with the rise in education and internal efficacy, the kind of political involvement and attentiveness that traditionally has characterized the well-educated and the "efficacious" has advanced as well.[70]

Others have noted this counter-trend in political involvement.[71] In fact, the failure to distinguish between internal and external efficacy sometimes leads to the conclusion that feelings of political efficacy have remained more or less stable at the same time that "other" indicators of political discontent (i.e., cynicism) have risen to alarmingly high levels.[72] Yet the changes in education and political involvement may have significant consequences which actually make the diffusion of political discontent among Americans more likely. We might speculate that the apparently greater strength of the efficacy-trust relationship in recent years refers to the external dimension, and that

it is the consequence of the "politicization" of the electorate. Not only are the better-educated more likely to _feel_ efficacious (internally), it seems likely that they are more likely to _demand_ that they feel efficacious, i.e., to insist that the political regime be responsive to citizen inputs. They should be more likely to share the democratic "norm" of political (external) efficacy.

In addition, we will recall from our review of the socialization literature that children from lower-status families, except where political cynicism appears to be a community or cultural norm, have often exhibited higher levels of confidence in and support for political institutions and authorities. Status differences among children have been explained in terms of different rates of political maturation or "politicization," although these processes appear to be tied to changes in the immediate or external environment to a greater degree than was originally expected. A similar phenomenon may explain the trends of politicization-plus-discontent among adults since the 1950s. As people become more attentive to their political environment, we may find that, _ceterus paribus_, they will be less than enchanted by what they perceive. This need not always be the case: citizens may perceive a benevolent regime which is acting in the best interests of all the people, while also being responsive to the demands of a majority. It is, however, probably not in the nature of either persons or government that this happy set of circumstances often will prevail. In fact, given that the natural tendency--at least among Americans--may be a state of general political indifference, it is unlikely that the events and

controversies which interrupted this passive state will be of a re-
assuring sort.[73] It may be, then, that whatever forces operate to
encourage higher aggregate levels of political involvement or atten-
tiveness, thereby also operate to encourage higher aggregate levels
of discontent. Both political events and the dispersion of educational
opportunities[74] may have helped to produce, in a more or less direct
way, the growing levels of political discontent in contemporary
America.[75]

Nie has characterized the trends of rising politicization and
rising cynicism in terms of a change from a politics of "positive
salience" to a politics of "negative salience." He argues that, by
1972, measures of campaign interest were no longer adequate as indica-
tors of individual involvement in politics. Many citizens who express
disinterest in conventional politics are no longer indicating that
politics is not perceived as being important in their lives; instead,
they are simply expressing their frustration with the policies or the
unresponsiveness of political leaders and institutions.[76] Similarly,
it has been demonstrated that mistrustful, or "alienated," citizens are
not likely to respond to their discontent by withdrawing into a state
of inactivity and quiescence. Many among the discontented retain a
concern about politics, and many are likely to be characterized by
some sort of active involvement in conventional political activity.[77]
Nor should we be surprised by this finding. Sense of political effi-
cacy is traditionally associated with higher levels of political at-
tentiveness and participation. As the discontented have come to in-
clude increasing proportions of the better-educated--and of the internally

efficacious--they should also include among their ranks more citizens who are prepared to test their personal skills in an effort to influence the shape of public policy. The possibility that these same citizens might be prepared to resort to unconventional tactics is a question that will be addressed below.[78]

While the "politicization" which is associated with changes in the political environment may prove to be rather ephemeral, changes in the educational composition of the electorate will persist. The implications of this are unclear, but it does appear that it is (and will continue to be) accompanied by higher levels of internal efficacy and, perhaps more importantly, by increasing demands for citizen input into the political decision-making process.[79] Inglehart has characterized the changes brought about by educational advances in Western democracies in terms of a cognitive mobilization, a phenomenon which includes growth in both subjective (motivation) and objective (skill) indicators of political competence. This has occurred primarily among the young in these nations, and it appears to enhance both the value of and the demand for meaningful political participation.[80] We are in the midst of an historical era in which the norm of participation is being politicized and diffused throughout Western populations and, even if this does not suggest that such demands have become universal, the behavioral implications of observed changes cannot be ignored. Before pursuing these themes, however, let us see how we might apply further the notion of "politicization" to our model of political discontent.

Expectations, Grievances, and Political Discontent

It is important to understand that, even as we have arrived at a greater appreciation of the political roots of political discontent, we have not yet fully grasped the nature of the psychological processes by which individual experience is generalized to the political realm. Miller sounds an appropriate warning:

> Political disaffection is a complex phenomenon that almost certainly depends on the convergence of different explanations rather than on one single cause. Thus, while policy dissatisfaction has been isolated as a strong correlate of political cynicism, no one would claim that it is the only explanation of political distrust. . . .[81]

In fact, even a simple and direct association between policy dissatisfaction and cynicism seems unlikely. Let us recall two among the several component definitions which Miller presents for the concept of political trust: "Political trust is the belief that the government is operating according to one's normative expectations of how government should function."[82] "Lack of trust suggests that a discrepancy exists between normative standards used to judge the behavior of political elites and the visible actions of the elites."[83]

The idea which is incorporated into these statements corresponds directly to the arguments developed above: In order for (external) political inefficacy to stimulate political discontent, it is probably necessary that persons feel deprived—and at the hands of the political system itself—because of their perceived lack of influence. Similarly, in order for policy dissatisfaction to result in discontent, it is likely that the system outputs that produce dissatisfaction must be perceived as salient—as imposing a meaningful hardship upon the individual,

his family or friends, or other groups with which he identifies.[84]

Schwartz' concept of "threatened value conflict" was intended to serve

as a "summative measure" of "gaps" between citizens' "aspirations and

expectations."[85] Again, we find the idea summarized by Miller:

> The evaluations of authorities and policies con-
> ceptually represent the result of a comparison between
> expectations and perceived reality. When the behavior
> of authorities or the government's policy performance
> do not conform to the citizen's expectations, negative
> evaluations result and these spill over into political
> distrust. . . .[86]

Easton writes of specific support in a way that should also apply

to political trust, given what we have learned about that orientation.

The applicability of the concept of specific support, according to

Easton,

> depends on the validity of the assumption that people
> can be aware, however vaguely, of a relationship between
> their needs, wants and demands on the one hand and the
> behavior of the political authorities on the other. The
> relationship needs to be such that the members perceive,
> whether correctly in some objective sense or not, that
> the fulfillment of their needs and demands can be associ-
> ated with the authorities in some way.[87]

Nor is it enough that members perceive this connection.

> They must interpret it in such a way that they are likely
> to attribute causative force to the behavior of the author-
> ities. The relationship between felt wants and articulate
> demands must by such that the members can lay the blame
> or praise at the door of the authorities. . . . Without
> this causal tie being made, the performance of the author-
> ities would have little probability of influencing the
> level of support directed towards them.[88]

Easton goes on to suggest that evaluations of the authorities may

arise from citizens' matching perceived system outputs to their artic-

ulated demands,[89] or simply as a result of the perceived general

performance of authorities rather than decision-makers' explicit actions. The question of whether citizens are equipped with either the motivation or the skills to match outputs with expectations, and thereby to arrive at a "rational" calculation of whether they should offer or withhold their support, is a matter of some controversy. Easton contends that citizens are probably capable of some sort of "reality testing" whereby they may judge the relevance of policy decisions to their own needs and wants. However,

> Even if members are unable to see their present conditions as a product of identifiable actions (or lack of actions) by the authorities, they may nonetheless be predisposed to hold the government responsible for their plight. They may be satisfied or dissatisfied with the kind of people the authorities are, their style of behavior, the kinds of social conditions they are thought to have permitted to come into existence, and so on. . . .[90]

There are valid reasons to doubt that many citizens develop affective orientations towards political objects as a direct result of frustrated demands. For example, many citizens are not sufficiently aware of politics and political issues to make the link between their wants or demands and political institutions or policies. The American electorate has been characterized as lacking any widespread ideological foundation or stable attitude sets which might be used to guide them in formulating their political evaluations. If these observations are correct, it makes little sense to speak of political support or discontent as being the result of the frustrated demands or expectations of large segments of the population.[91] Wahlke suggests that support for the political regime is probably the product of symbolic satisfaction with the process of government, rather than of instrumental

satisfaction with the policy outputs of those processes. In fact, he goes on, it may be more reasonable to interpret support for the political authorities as itself the product of this more general (diffuse) support for the regime.[92] Similarly, Muller argues that it is best to conceive of Easton's specific support less as a function of demand satisfaction than of citizen evaluations of the performance of political authorities (including the symbolic outputs of these authorities).[93]

Easton is not persuaded by this criticism. He contends that neither Americans nor other electorates are entirely ignorant of government policies, nor do they appear to be unable to evaluate these policies in terms of their own preferences. For example, he cites electoral research which suggests that when citizens perceive political issues as being directly related to their personal interests (i.e., salient), then these issues tend to be associated with candidate preference and vote choice.[94]

We might recall here the argument of Entman and his associates, who criticize the traditional explanations of political alienation for implicitly assuming that there exists a "steady-state match between citizens' policy demands and government outputs."[95] As I suggested at the beginning of this chapter, we should look for changes in the political environment if our goal is to explain observed changes in political trust. Specifically, we should attempt to identify shifts in the "match" between citizen demands and policy outputs, as well as the forces with which these shifts might have originated. Changes such as these may occur as a result of (1) objective changes in the performance of the

regime, assuming that these are perceived by substantial numbers of citizens and evaluated either more positively or more negatively than previous dimensions of regime performance; or (2) subjective changes among citizens themselves, in the sense either that the scope of popular demands is expanded (or contracted) or that the evaluative criteria by which regime performance is judged become more or less exacting.

It is entirely plausible that contemporary discontent is a function of the inability of recent administrations to provide solutions—any solutions—for the divisive problems of the period. The war in Vietnam was essentially lost, we have witnessed a presidential resignation in disgrace, our influence in the international community seems to be impaired, cold winters repeatedly highlight our dependence on foreign sources of energy, concerns about our military preparedness and national security will not vanish, and our economy is plagued simultaneously by a frightening rate of inflation and persistent unemployment. Whether our government has become more inept, or whether it is simply at the mercy of global and domestic forces which it cannot control, one might argue that problems remain unsolved and tensions and fears remain unrelieved. This essentially is the view presented by Wright, who contends that

> . . . attitudes of efficacy (and, to a lesser extent, trust)
> are quite rationally adjusted to reflect on-going events
> in the larger society. As the federal government moves
> through cycles of responsiveness and nonresponsiveness, the
> level of powerlessness ebbs and flows accordingly. As
> governmental incompetence and lack of candor increase, so
> too does the level of political distrust. . . . The one
> common feature of all these trends is their obvious sen-
> sitivity to changing realities. . . .[96]

We reasonably might conclude that the "match" between citizen demands and policy outputs has been diminished by the actions of government in recent years. Even if citizen expectations and demands have not changed, the content and the style of political decision-making may have created a growing "discrepancy . . . between normative standards used to judge the behavior of political elites and the visible actions of the elites" --i.e., a deepening sense of mistrust in the electorate.

But we may also speculate that changing levels of discontent are a function of changes among citizens as well. At least two sorts of changes might be involved here, each of them parallel to the dynamics of "politicization" discussed in the previous section. In the simpler case, political events and controversies may have done no more than "sensitize" citizens to the actions--and perhaps the inadequacies-- of their political leaders and institutions. In other words, while the outputs of the regime may be no less adequate as a response to pressing problems than was true in earlier years, these same outputs may be greeted differently by an alert and attentive electorate than by a detached and unconcerned electorate. The "gap" between demands and outputs may not have widened, but it may be more clearly perceived by a larger proportion of Americans--and its relevance for the personal lives of these citizens may be understood with a clarity that previously was not present. The key to a transformation of this kind is the higher level of attentiveness with which individuals may be responding to their political environment. A very similar process may occur, though more gradually, as educational levels in the electorate increase.

There is, however, a second type of individual change which might result in even more fundamental alterations of the relationship between citizens and their government. I argued above that changes in the political environment ("politicization") and changes in the educational composition of the electorate ("cognitive mobilization") have apparently operated to increase the salience of political participation and citizen influence among Americans. As more citizens have come to share the democratic "norm" of external efficacy, and as our governmental leaders and institutions have been perceived as failing to respond to that standard, the deteriorating "match" between citizen demands and system outputs has contributed to a stronger sense of political discontent.

Precisely the same dynamics may be operating to produce a stronger relationship between policy dissatisfaction and political discontent in contemporary America. For example, Ladd contends that the economic prosperity of postwar years in this country has altered the basis upon which our government is evaluated.

> Affluence in one way increases dissatisfactions, and thus conflict, by contributing to a mentality of demand, an inordinately expanded set of expectations concerning what is one's due, a diminished tolerance of conditions less than ideal. Precisely because an affluent society can deliver so much, because its expanding resources create the impression that all good things are possible if. only men honestly pursue them, . . . the standards by which acts, conditions, and problems are judged to be "intolerable" have been dramatically enlarged or softened.[97]

It is difficult to anticipate the exact form which a "mentality of demand" might take. It may be that citizen expectations have been raised, and with them "discrepancies" between standards and official actions.

Alternatively, the perceived "discrepancies" may remain unchanged, but their salience may be enhanced to the point where discontent becomes more likely. Finally, it may be that increasing numbers of citizens have expanded the scope of their political demands or, in more operational terms, they may have come to evaluate their government—and to offer or to withhold their support—according to a broader range of policy dimensions or criteria.

It is this third possibility which will guide our investigation of the substantive bases of political discontent. Stated in its simplest form, the thesis is a rather straightforward one. Along with Miller, it is hypothesized that discontent (i.e., political cynicism) will increase in proportion to the discrepancy between individual demands or expectations and the degree to which government leaders and institutions are perceived to meet these standards. This relationship obviously will not occur on all possible dimensions of regime performance, but only on those which are salient to the individual citizen. The argument does not end here, however, for what we are postulating is a dynamic relationship which is in constant flux as a function of changes in the political and social environment. While a satisfactory assessment of this argument depends upon evidence which is, to the best of my knowledge, unavailable, the argument gains some measure of credibility in the light of changes that have been observed in the American electorate since the early 1960s. In addition, I will attempt to provide a longitudinal perspective to the available evidence by considering whether there are generational differences in the substantive bases of political discontent.

The differential impact of change-producing forces upon different age groups is a potentially important qualification to the generalizations we will be able to make about the origins of discontent. For example, if an increased scope of citizen demands is partly the product of the changing educational composition of the electorate, we should expect to locate the greatest amount of attitudinal change among the better-educated younger cohorts. But the entire electorate has been exposed to the dramatic events and divisive controversies of American political life in recent times. And the economic prosperity of the past thirty years has been experienced among all age groups, although we might expect that its visible effects will be greater among the younger segments. In short, if there has been an identifiable change in the "mentality of demand" among Americans, it should be evident in some measure throughout the population.

Since our own analysis of changing demands will necessarily be indirect, it is important to pause for a moment to consider whether or not the premise can be supported with available evidence (although the latter tends to be equally indirect). Wright, whose main target is the assumption that political discontent is likely to result in regime-challenging acts of opposition, sees little to recommend the idea of citizen demand-making in the first place. He regards as "implausible" the assumption that

> citizens, in some empirically real sense, do make demands
> upon their government, expect these demands to be satisfied,
> and are, in turn, disappointed and then driven to "correc-
> tive" measures when they are not satisfied. . . . Aside

> from occasionally casting a vote, the immense majority
> engages in no other activity that even remotely resembles
> "issuing a demand." In other words, we could say that
> few lose because virtually nobody even plays. . . .
> Theories that try to account for the allegiance of the
> "losers", then, suffer from the fallacy of explaining
> that which does not exist.[98]

Wright does, however, belong to that group of scholars who recognize

the link between citizen attitudes and political events, and his concern

is specifically directed at the likelihood of behavioral manifestations

of discontent. Yet his general theme is one which must continually be

confronted by the student of public opinion, i.e., the apparent detach-

ment with which many citizens appear to regard the issues, institutions,

and personalities of politics in this country.

How "demanding" is the American electorate? Miller's analysis of

economic attitudes and political trust provides a possible clue. Ac-

cording to Miller,

> American citizens expect the government to assist them
> in solving their problems--particularly economic problems.
> Indeed, Herbert Gans has described the American people
> as having gradually moved from the traditional pursuit
> of aspiring to improve their standard of living to ex-
> pecting that improvement and to increasingly demanding
> it. . . . When the predominant means of coping with
> economic dissatisfaction is self reliance and individual
> initiative, no link between economic discontent and
> system attitudes would logically result. When the sat-
> isfaction of economic demands is thought to be dependent
> on the actions of government or others, however, negative
> evaluations and system blame may result if these expecta-
> tions go unsatisfied. . . .[99]

Verba and Schlozman apply similar reasoning to the Depression years,

when unemployment was a humiliating experience apparently accompanied

by a general withdrawal from community life--including politics. Their

study, using national survey data from 1939, attempted to assess the

extent to which the political "quiescence" of the unemployed reflected continued support for the system, or whether it indicated a rejection of the system--but also a failure to act upon that rejection. The authors find limited evidence of "radical" political attitudes even among the unemployed, and they conclude that the reason for this may be found in the relative absence of "class consciousness" among Americans. Instead, even among the working class and the unemployed, the overall commitment seemed to be to the ethic of "rugged individualism" and to an optimism about the future.[100]

The special importance of economic demands, and their relationship to political support and discontent, is stressed by Ladd.

> The demands which a citizenry make in a egalitarian society are many, but some of the most important and persistent are economic: that the system provide a volume of goods and services and a distribution of these sufficient to meet perceived needs. . . .[101]

And thus it has been natural that social scientists have so often looked for--and occasionally have found--an "economic" distribution of political trust in the electorate. If economic demands are the most salient of all categories of demand among citizens, then we can expect that "discrepancies" between expectations and policy will be most acutely felt on this critical dimension of government performance.

Still, we are confronted with two sets of findings that compel us to qualify any hypothesized relationship between economic demands and political discontent. One of these is the modest or negligible relationship which so often appears in empirical studies of individual attitudes. Citrin and his associates explain that the strength of the relationship between discontent and any aspect of an individual's "life

circumstances" depends upon such factors as

> (1) the salience of the issues about which one feels dis-
> satisfied; (2) whether one holds the national political
> regime responsible for promoting citizens' satisfaction
> in this domain of life; and (3) how one evaluates the ef-
> fectiveness of relevant public policies.[102]

Social scientists search for empirical relationships between personal
attributes and political discontent "on the assumption that a person's
social characteristics summarize the cumulative impact of a number of
experiences that have shaped his beliefs, values and identifications."[103]
Yet these relationships are invariably far less than perfect, suggesting
that our assumption must be qualified.

Such a qualification should, as these authors suggest, include
differences in salience (of an issue or of an attribute which is imputed
to represent a common concern among "group" members), expectations, and
(dis)satisfactions—all of which may vary across time or across individ-
uals at a particular point in time. During some historical periods,
such as the 1930s in American politics, one particular set of issues or
demands or personal attributes may provide the focal point for political
controversy. But as changes take place in the social and/or political
environment, we should also expect that changes will occur in the social
and substantive locations of conflict. As I have already argued, if
our interpretation of discontent is a political one, we will not be sur-
prised to observe changes over time in the origins of these attitudes
—changes which might be attributable to variations in any or all of
the qualifying factors described by Citrin. And the nonpolitical cor-
relates of discontent will fluctuate as they come to be more or less

associated with the political causes of this orientation, a relation-

ship which will be influenced by aspects of government performance as

these are perceived by citizens. This same point is appropriate for

investigation into the origins of political discontent, voting behavior,

or any other aspect of political choice or evaluation.[104]

There is a second set of findings which leads us to reject a simple

explanation of political discontent in terms of economic demands and dis-

satisfactions. While negative attitudes toward government have some-

times been disproportionately located among the disadvantaged segment

of the American population, the decline in political trust which has

characterized the post-1964 period has resulted in the diffusion of dis-

content across economic groupings. Schwartz refers to the recent "deep-

ening and broadening" of political alienation, and his data show little

direct association between alienation and social status.[105] The con-

clusion he derives from this finding parallels the argument I have just

made.

> The reason that the lower-status individual may have been
> alienated . . . is that this status situation was per-
> ceived as a deprivation which was both negatively valued
> by the individual and which was deemed illegitimate and
> weakening to the political position he believed himself
> to be entitled to. . . .[106]

This association between the social and the political may be broken be-

cause a citizen accepts his lower status as legitimate, because depri-

vation "does not intrude into the individual's evaluations of the polity"

--or "because all statuses come to carry with them negative evaluations

of the polity."[107] It is this final possibility that has so intrigued

many observers of contemporary political discontent in America.

Once again, it is Citrin who alerts us to the complexity of the linkages between perceived life satisfaction and political cynicism.

> . . . discontent about other features of one's life situation, such as the quality of one's children's education, the availability of good housing, the level of crime in one's neighborhood, the quality of the physical environment where one lives or works or the way in which people of one's race or religion are treated, may also foster feelings of political alienation.[108]

The diffusion of discontent throughout the population may, of course, reflect the higher economic aspirations and lower tolerance of perceived government inadequacies among the economically advantaged. It seems more likely, however, that a period of unparalleled economic prosperity --with a communications media that makes the conditions of affluence so visible to all--has sensitized the less advantaged to the discrepancy between the ideal and their own personal status. The more affluent, on the other hand, are more free to turn their attention to non-economic concerns, aspiring to greater achievements in these areas and critical of policies and official actions which appear to be contrary to their preferred goals for society (and for themselves). This argument is generally consistent with that of Inglehart, who suspects that non-economic concerns may be especially characteristic of younger generations in relatively affluent Western societies.[109]

The extent to which there is a growing "mentality of demand" in American social and political life does remain, however, a question without an authoritative answer. Even the presence of serious deprivation does not appear to guarantee that citizens will place the blame for that condition at the doorstep of their government. And, as Wright warns us, even if that deprivation is felt acutely by the disadvantaged, it is by

no means certain that they will actively press their demands for redress
upon the political authorities. Our own national experience during
periods of widespread and serious hardship must lead us to reject any
simple relationship between feelings of personal disadvantage and politi-
cal discontent.

Sniderman and Brody specifically reject the spirit of the argument
that rising levels of discontent are a function of a dominant "mental-
ity of demand" among Americans. In 1972, most Americans did not ex-
pect to receive government help with their most pressing personal prob-
lems, although citizens who did expect help tended to be less than
fully satisfied--a feeling that was associated with political cynicism
even when evaluation of governmental performance on national problems
was controlled. The authors emphasize that, as we have seen, cynicism
is unlikely to result from dissatisfaction unless citizens believe that
they ought to be receiving a greater amount of governmental assistance
for their most salient personal problems. But Sniderman and Brody
question whether such demands are typically made by most Americans.
Instead, they speak of an "ethic of self-reliance" which appears to
moderate the political demands--the expectations--of citizens in our po-
litical culture.[110] Perhaps things have not changed so very much since
the 1930s after all.

Still, we are faced with widespread levels of political discontent
that have developed over a relatively short period of time, and which
have come to characterize citizens of widely varying personal status
and political commitment. It does not seem unlikely that this change
can be attributed partly to the objective performance of government

during this era, but neither is it consistent with the evidence to dismiss the possibility of changes in individual expectations. Even Sniderman and Brody, speculating in the absence of adequate longitudinal data, suggest that there may have been some changes in the _types_ of personal problems which many Americans have come to experience, including concerns about the quality of life in society. Even economic concerns may have come to be of a sort which emphasizes joint (including governmental) action more than individual responsibility.[111] Or, rather than contending that personal problems have become more "political" in recent years, one might expect a more subtle transformation: it may be simply that political issues have become more personal in their impact, or at least that such a change has been perceived by many citizens. Such a change would be the essence of an electorate "politicized" by political events.

The notion of a "mentality of demand" may place too great an emphasis upon changes that may have occurred at the individual level, without a recognition that objective changes may have taken place in governmental performance. Still, the evidence of a dynamic relationship between citizens and their political system is persuasive, and it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that a partial explanation for contemporary discontent can be found in the changing expectations of Americans--particularly, but not exclusively, among the young. Do most Americans have the motivation and/or cognitive abilities and skills necessary for them to perceive a connection between their personal needs or wants and the behavior of political authorities? For many citizens, and perhaps for most of them in some historical periods, we must answer

this question in the negative. I have argued, however, that the character of the electorate is shaped in large measure by the social and the political environment. It would be surprising if we were to discover that the current political malaise is not in some way a product of changes in that environment. Specifically, we have good reason to believe that many Americans have become "politicized" by the events of the 1960s and 1970s, that they have acquired a greater motivation to be attentive to their political world--including the links that may exist between the behavior of decision-makers and the quality of their own lives. Further, more extensive opportunities for acquiring an education have probably enhanced the motivation to be attentive, as well as providing more citizens with the skills by which they might evaluate what they see. And what they have seen is clearly not very comforting.

CHAPTER VI

POLITICAL TRUST AND POLITICAL REALITY: A DYNAMIC MODEL

In general, based upon much of the evidence we have reviewed thus far, it seems plausible to hypothesize that citizens' affective orientations toward their government are somehow rooted in "political reality" (or, more appropriately, in citizens' perceptions of political reality). In a most preliminary sense, we might state the static and dynamic cases in the following way:

(1) political cynicism, at any particular moment in time, can be seen as a function of the discrepancy (or congruence) between individual demands or expectations and the degree to which government leaders and institutions are perceived to meet these standards; this relationship should be evident only on those dimensions of regime performance that are salient to the individual citizen; and

(2) changes in the level of cynicism among citizens will be a function of changes in the perceived "match" (discrepancy or congruence) between individual expectations and system outputs; such a change might involve (a) objective changes in regime performance, which are perceived by citizens and which are evaluated differently by them; (b) increased or decreased citizen attentiveness to their system's policy behavior and to its relevance for citizens' personal lives; or (c) subjective changes among citizens which result in higher or lower expectations and/or an alteration in the scope of citizen demands.

As I have already indicated, our approach to the dynamic character of political discontent necessarily will be indirect, focusing particularly upon the apparent effects of changes in the political environment and the educational composition of the electorate. For the moment,

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however, I shall attempt to formalize somewhat the expected relation-
ship between system performance and citizen evaluations—a relation-
ship which should be more or less stable at any particular moment in
time. By way of introduction, let us review the hypothesized origins
of political efficacy and political trust which were cited earlier. As
I suggested, internal efficacy should be most responsive to variations
in such motivating and facilitating personal characteristics as socio-
economic status, political knowledge, political interest and atten-
tiveness. External efficacy and political trust, on the other hand,
each should primarily reflect citizen evaluations of regime performance.

> (1) An individual's sense of external efficacy should
> reflect his belief that the processes and the insti-
> tutions of the regime are either facilitating or
> inhibiting the expression of his procedural politi-
> cal values.
> (2) An individual's feelings of political trust should
> reflect his belief that the system and its repre-
> sentatives are generating outputs which are or are
> not consistent with his substantive (or symbolic)
> political values—whether or not he has attempted
> to shape these outputs through direct influence
> attempts.

This view of political trust is simply a more precise formulation of
what I have already stated: political trust should reflect the degree
of "match" between citizen expectations and system outputs on dimen-
sions of performance which are salient to the individual.

While the language used here is somewhat different, the ideas are
roughly comparable to those suggested by theories which posit that
relative deprivation lies at the heart of political discontent. For
example, Gurr hypothesizes that "(t)he potential for collective vio-
lence varies strongly with the intensity and scope of relative

deprivation among members of a collectivity."[1] Relative deprivation
refers to perceived discrepancies between an individual's "value ex-
pectations" and his "value capabilities" with respect to a particular
set of preferred conditions .or objects.[2] Note that the emphasis is
on individual perceptions of "deprivation" or "discrepancies," which
is consistent with our own usage. Those "values" whose perceived
(and unjustifiable) absence can provoke feelings of relative depriva-
tion include, according to Gurr, power values (participation and se-
curity), welfare values (economic and self-actualization), and
interpersonal values (status, community, ideational coherence).[3]

We can see that relative deprivation is very much parallel to
Schwartz's "threatened value conflict," Miller's "discrepancies" be-
tween normative standards and elite behavior, Entman's "match" between
citizen demands and government outputs, and similar constructs--in-
cluding political efficacy and political trust--which at least imply
that citizen evaluations of political objects and conditions are the
result of some sort of comparison between what is preferred and what
is perceived to be real. We may place the concept of relative depri-
vation within the context of our own discussion by recalling that cit-
izen evaluations (including trust) are not expected to be based upon
all possible dimensions of regime performance. Rather, in order for
system outputs to produce negative evaluations, it is likely that those
outputs must be perceived as salient--as imposing a meaningful hard-
ship upon the individual, his family or friends, or other groups with
which he identifies. That is, the individual must perceive and feel

<u>deprived by</u> what his government has done--and he must be willing and able to place the blame (or, in the opposite case, credit) for his deprivation upon the actors and institutions of his government.[4] In short, deprivation must be <u>politicized</u> before it will result in negative system evaluations.[5]

We already have encountered numerous arguments, each making a similar point about the relationship between personal attributes or policy preferences and political discontent. We must recognize that even the individual who is the victim of what many of us would "objectively" characterize as deprivation will not necessarily experience his condition in this way, and even if he does it does not always follow that he will blame the political system and/or its leaders for his status.[6] The question of whether or not Americans have come to experience a wider range of conditions and statuses as deprivation, and whether they are more likely to blame the political system for this situation, carries us back once again to the concept of a "mentality of demand" and, thus, to the dynamic aspects of political discontent and its origins. We can expect that, if political discontent has its origins in some aspect(s) of regime performance, discontent will remain stable only in the absence of visible and persuasive dissonant stimuli.

It is extremely difficult to separate the static from the dynamic in developing a political theory of political discontent, largely because the dimensions of regime performance upon which citizen evaluations are based may prove to be quite volatile--all the more so during

periods of rapid and often disruptive social and political change.

Thus, any model which purports to "explain" political trust in these

terms may be rendered archaic in rather short order, a reflection of

shifting demands and expectations in the electorate. The theoretical

task in this instance is to identify the political origins of discon-

tent in terms which are reasonably precise, but which also are flex-

ible enough to incorporate changes such as those which may have re-

cently occurred in the United States. The operational task, on the

other hand, is to provide substance to the general language of the

model, identifying in any specific case and at any particular moment

in time precisely which dimensions of regime performance are provid-

ing the basis for citizen evaluations of political objects. In other

words, in order to explain political trust in the United States, we

must identify those values which have been politicized for substantial

segments of the population, and which are experienced as deprivations

by them. And, as I shall argue, changing political evaluations must

be understood with reference either to changes in these salient values,

or to perceived government performance with respect to them.[7]

How may we identify the politicized demands of the American pop-

ulation? Presumably, if we can demonstrate some significant degree of

empirical covariation between citizen dissatisfactions or perceived

deprivation and feelings of political discontent, we will be drawn to

the conclusion that the former somehow is causally related to the lat-

ter. It will not, of course, be quite this simple. In particular, we

are faced with the difficult task of identifying the political bases of

political discontent in the absence of explicit measures which provide us with a clear listing of politicized concerns in the electorate. The problem is illustrated by recalling the hypothesized origins of external efficacy: an individual's sense of external efficacy should reflect his belief that the processes and the institutions of the regime are either facilitating or inhibiting the expression of his procedural political values.

In a sense, this statement is virtually true by definition since external efficacy--properly conceptualized and validly measured--_is_ an attitudinal expression of participatory potential in any particular political system. The statement, however, assumes a good deal more than that. Above all, it presumes that meaningful citizen participation in policymaking is among the politicized procedural values shared by large numbers of citizens, and that this fact will cause the regime to be judged according to its performance on this dimension. As we have seen, however, this assumption is probably not valid in some contexts, and even if it is we should not assume that a violation of widely held procedural values will necessarily produce higher levels of popular discontent or opposition. Thus, we must qualify our expectations to indicate that our model may be valid only in the democratic (or "pluralist") context.

More importantly, we are faced with the possibility that many citizens, even in democratic settings, may not place a particularly high value upon the participatory opportunities they see as being open to themselves and their contemporaries. If this is true, (a) individual

expressions of external efficacy may well reflect factors other than
regime performance in this area (e.g., political socialization), and
(b) external efficacy may be weakly related to political trust--i.e.,
participatory values may not be politicized, in which case citizens
will not believe themselves to be "deprived" if these "values" are not
realized. While there is too much evidence, much of it reviewed above,
to suggest that these conditions accurately characterize contemporary
American politics, it is also true that we are not in a position to
prove the salience of participatory values among Americans. We are
forced, in a very real sense, to infer the salience of these values
--including their variable salience over time--from the evidence
available to us.[8] Thus, while it is not entirely accurate that our
assumptions about the origins of external efficacy are true by defini-
tion, we must be aware of the tentative empirical support for the as-
sumptions upon which they are based.

We are faced with a similar dilemma in attempting to provide an
explanation for political trust, in that we must somehow anticipate or
infer those deprivations (or satisfactions) upon which cynicism and
trust might be based at any particular moment. Survey data regarding
the "most important problem" facing the government or confronted by
respondents in their personal lives (e.g., Sniderman and Brody)·are
simply not adequate for capturing the full range of political concerns
in the electorate. At the same time, however, we must be cautious in
attributing salience to any other expressions of citizen concern or
dissatisfaction which we might expect to be linked to political discontent.
While we will take the empirical covariation of any expressed grievance

with political cynicism to be _prima_ _facie_ evidence of the salience of

that grievance, it is also important to search for independent con-

firmation that a particular dimension of regime performance has been

politicized. This is precisely what I have attempted to do with the

value of popular participation in policymaking, and it is what I shall

attempt to do later in considering citizen demands across various

domains of public policy.

Political Trust and the Search for "Expression"

Let us begin the task of developing an explanatory model of po-

litical trust by returning to the proposition which will provide the

foundation for our analysis.

> Proposition 1. Political trust (or cynicism) should vary
> according to an individual's belief that the political
> system and its representatives are generating outputs
> which are or are not consistent with his politicized values.

Stated in this way, the hypothesis incorporates the ideas of salience

and system responsibility (blame or credit) which I have emphasized re-

peatedly. What has thus far been left largely unspecified is the

range of outputs which are likely to meet these criteria. We have,

however, encountered one plausible possibility.

> Hypothesis 1a. In democratic political systems, one di-
> mension of regime performance upon which political eval-
> uations may be based is the extent to which the system is
> perceived as being responsive to the articulated demands
> of citizens. Therefore, political trust should be pos-
> itively related to feelings of external efficacy.

Even in democratic settings, this relationship will be stronger

in some periods than in others, as changes occur either in the salience

of the participatory norm or in the perceived level of government res-

ponsiveness. Further, external efficacy will not be the only, nor even

necessarily the strongest, predictor of political trust. This should be

true partly because the value of participation means different things

to different people. For some, government responsiveness will repre-

sent a symbolic demand and satisfaction (or grievance); democratic

leaders will be judged on these grounds by many citizens who are not

themselves active participants, simply because responsiveness is be-

lieved to be the correct and proper way of running a government. For

others, the value of participation and citizen influence will have a

more personal meaning; it will be regarded as an instrumental value

which facilitates or inhibits citizens' abilities to influence the

policymaking process.

Regardless of the strength and pervasiveness of the link between

external efficacy and political trust, we must look to other dimensions

of performance upon which citizens will base their evaluations of po-

litical actors and institutions. I have discussed these dimensions in

terms of three sets of citizen perceptions, each of which may or may

not be related to the others: system outputs, authority performance

(including responsiveness), and personal experience. To the extent

that individuals hold certain expectations with respect to these kinds

of factors--to the extent that they are salient and embody some measure

of "demand"--then the perceived failure of government to meet these

expectations may generate discontent. This rather straightforward rela-

tionship is depicted in Figure 5, which differs from Miller's preliminary

FIGURE 5

A SUMMARY DIAGRAM OF POLITICAL EVALUATIONS

Citizen ─────────────────────────► Attitudes toward the
Demands   Political System
                                    (Actors and Institutions)

            Leadership
            Response
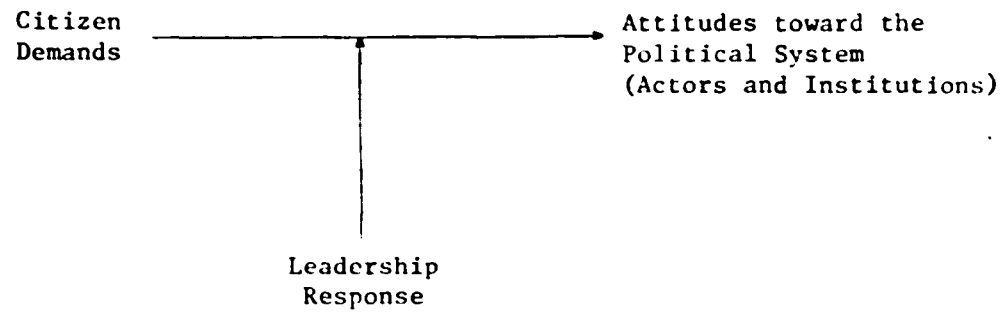
model (Figure 3) by making explicit (a) the element of politicization ("demands"), and (b) the intervening role played by political leaders.

It is considerably more difficult to provide specific referents and content to the general category of "citizen demands." As a first step, we must specify the types of demands which citizens make upon their political leaders, particularly in the area of substantive policy issues. This returns us, of course, to the disputes reviewed earlier regarding the ability of most citizens to perceive some link between their personal lives and the behavior of political authorities.[9] We might look to any of several categories of citizen "demands" or "expectations," but the themes employed in the literature seem to fall within the two general areas cited by Miller and Easton: (a) the perceived congruence between system outputs and articulated demands ("policy evaluation"), and (b) the perceived general performance, rather than the explicit actions, of political authorities. This latter category may include responses to the personal or political qualities of leaders; symbolic (as opposed to instrumental) performance satisfactions;[10] the perceived "openness and competence" of decision-making, regardless of the congruence between personal preferences and policy outputs;[11] or the presence of consensus that "things ought to be better," and that the government is to be blamed because they are not.[12]

The emergence of a "mentality of demand" in affluent America would lead us to pay greater attention to the explicit policy preferences of citizens. The same would be true if we are correct in assuming that political events and social change have produced an electorate better

prepared to judge its government in terms of specific policy outputs.
If the size of the "attentive public" has grown, then we should ex-
pect stronger relationships between policy dissatisfactions and po-
litical discontent.[13] Demands, at least in a democratic system, "re-
quire" a response on the part of political leaders. A politicized
electorate--or that segment of the electorate which at any moment is
sufficiently politicized that we may regard them as "demanding"--will
presumably search for opportunities to channel their demands into the
political decision-making process. This might involve direct and in-
tensive individual efforts at influence, attentiveness to and partici-
pation in electoral activity intended to convey the relevant messages,
or more vicariously through citizen identification with the demands of
more active individuals and groups.

It seems reasonable to consider the observations of Easton,
Gamson, and others who have noted the independence of "diffuse support"
from specific system outputs. We are told that a strong sense of dif-
fuse support enables citizens to accept the occasional disappointments
and dissatisfactions that they must endure at the hands of their gov-
ernment--as long as disappointment does not become the norm in such a
way that specific grievances are generalized to the institutions and
processes of decision-making themselves. A more general point is sug-
gested by this thesis which should moderate our expectations about the
relationship between citizen demands and political discontent. It
seems unlikely that any single grievance, or even a series of specific
grievances, will generate a strong and behaviorally relevant sense of

betrayal at the hands of one's political system. Ours is, after all,
a system which is usually characterized as being more or less respon-
sive to the needs and demands of a variety of political interests.
And the question of responsiveness aside, it is undeniably true that
a tremendous number of conflicting demands are channelled into the
system by a wide range of participants, organized and unorganized. If
Americans responded to every action which they perceived as contrary
to their own expectations by rejecting the system or some fundamental
aspect of it, we would surely have experienced a great deal more po-
litical opposition and upheaval than we have seen in our recent history.

Let us assume, then, that an attentive mass public will not ex-
pect that its political demands and expectations will be met in every
instance, nor will it withdraw its support when any particular set of
government actions is perceived as failing to live up to these stand-
ards. Consider the possibility I have just suggested: a politicized
electorate (or politicized segments of an electorate) will search for
opportunities to channel their demands into the political decision-
making process. In other words, when citizens have values which have
been politicized, they will demand that the system provide opportuni-
ties for the open expression of these values. This is not the same as
saying that citizens will expect their values to be reflected per-
fectly in the processes and outputs of the regime, but rather that
citizens will expect to be fairly represented when political decisions
are being made. It does not follow, as Muller and others seem to sug-
gest, that demands for expression or representation will usually be

satisfied by the manipulation of symbolic or expressive outputs. While
this may be true for many (or most) of the people much of the time, it
is an explanation which seems ill-equipped to account for the complexity
of citizen-elite interactions in recent years.

In what sense do citizens demand that their politicized values
be adequately expressed or represented in politics? In answering this
question, perhaps we can begin to provide specific referents to the
"citizen demands" depicted in Figure 5. I would suggest that, given
the existence of political or social stimuli which "politicize" some
segment of the population, we should expect that this phenomenon will
"activate" these citizens' search for political expression: demands
will be created and expectations will be altered, and the political
system will be judged according to its response to these popular in-
puts. Specifically, we might consider the search for expression to en-
compass any or all of the following dimensions of regime performance:

(1) procedural expression: the democratic norm of citi-
    zen involvement and government responsiveness;
(2) partisan expression: the representation of issue pri-
    orities and preferences in the "electoral marketplace,"
    particularly by our major political parties but also
    by their candidates and by the emergence of occasional
    minor-party challenges; and
(3) policy expression: the representation of issue pri-
    orities and preferences in the policy outputs of gov-
    ernmental institutions and decision-makers.

These dimensions can be operationalized in different ways, and we have
certainly not resolved or dismissed the question of whether Americans
are more likely to base their political evaluations upon specific pol-
icy considerations or some more general aspects of government perform-
ance. The implication of the dynamic argument developed above is that,

within the time frame encompassed by this study, we should expect political discontent to have its roots in more specific grievances. This remains, however, an unsettled question and one which we will need to address in the analysis which follows.

The three hypothesized dimensions of regime performance should remind us that, while our attention has largely been restricted to political trust and cynicism, the phenomenon of discontent can be understood as having a number of contemporary manifestations and, therefore, a variety of causes. One theme which is encountered frequently concerns the apparent instability and ill health of the political party system in the United States. Our party system is often characterized as being increasingly less capable of performing its classic electoral functions, including the recruitment of political leaders, the organization of elections and electoral alternatives, and the aggregation of popular interests in politics and in government. In part, this can be seen as an inevitable product of traditional American suspicion of parties, and particularly of recent efforts to "reform" our parties so as to make them more efficient instruments of "the people."[14] In addition, the decline of parties may be tied in with the same forces of politicization and cognitive mobilization which we have already reviewed, with increasing numbers of people coming to demand more·precision in policy articulation than our two-party system seems capable of delivering, and with better educated and more ideological citizens operating independently of the formal party structures.[15]

We will encounter some of these themes again as we progress, but

the point to keep in mind is that the apparent decline of parties in
American politics may be closely related to the phenomenon of political
discontent. Just as citizens are more likely to feel cynical toward
their political leaders and institutions, they are also more likely
to eschew a strong sense of identification with either of our major
parties, to express negative attitudes toward the parties and party
system, and to ignore partisan cues in making their electoral choices--
relying instead upon such factors as issue beliefs, candidate orienta-
tions, or incumbency.[16] A full consideration of the partisan atti-
tudes and behavior of the American electorate is beyond the scope of
this study. We might, however, take note of the apparent relationship
between partisan change and the rise in political cynicism.

> Hypothesis 1b. In democratic political systems, polit-
> ical evaluations will be based partly upon the extent to
> which the institutions of parties and elections are
> perceived to provide a forum for the expression of pop-
> ular demands. Dissatisfaction with the choices provided
> by these institutions should be associated with stronger
> feelings of political cynicism.

> Hypothesis 1b(1). Dissatisfaction with the choices pro-
> vided by the institutions of parties and elections should
> also be associated with stronger feelings of partisan
> independence.

The latter hypothesis, while secondary to our focus on political trust,
is intended once again to emphasize that the scope of contemporary po-
litical discontent is not limited to the phenomenon of political cyni-
cism. More importantly, however, we are hypothesizing that even po-
litical cynicism will be enhanced when citizens believe that parties
and elections are failing to facilitate the expression of their po-
liticized policy or performance values.

Finally, we turn to the hypothesized relationship between "policy expression" and political trust. It is here that we most directly confront the question of whether or not Americans are characterized by a "mentality of demand." Is our political system being negatively evaluated, as Miller contends, because government policies are not congruent with the policy preferences of large numbers of citizens? Or is the current malaise better understood as a product of general frustration in the face of social conditions which the government appears unable or unwilling to alleviate? The controversy in the literature on this question occurs within a more or less common framework: that political trust and cynicism are a function of individual perceptions of and responses to the political environment--"political reality." But within this general consensus, the precise nature of the policy origins of discontent remain unclear.

> Hypothesis 1c. In democratic political systems, politi-
> cal evaluations will be based partly upon the extent to
> which the policy outputs of government are perceived to
> be congruent with the preferences of citizens on salient
> dimensions of public policy. Disagreement with govern-
> ment outputs should be associated with stronger feelings
> of political cynicism.

We will, as I have already noted, need to exercise caution in selecting operational measures of policy dissatisfaction, since some citizens may be responding less to the actual policies of government than to the societal conditions which respondents may blame government for permitting to exist. The distinction may be a subtle one, but it can have important implications for the likely success of policies aimed at restoring popular confidence in political leaders and institutions.

In sum, I have suggested that popular evaluations of political objects will be based upon at least three dimensions of regime performance, each of them referring to expectations which citizens in democratic settings will have regarding the performance of government. The concept of "expression"--procedural, partisan, and policy--is intended to reflect the belief that several conditions must prevail in order for political discontent to result from popular dissatisfactions: values (and citizens) must be politicized, demands must be made (directly or indirectly), and expectations must be violated. As noted above, the individual must perceive and feel deprived by what his political system and leaders have done, and he must be able and willing to place the responsibility for this state of affairs upon the system.

A Model of Political Discontent

The model depicted in Figure 6 represents an attempt to summarize the many forces--static and dynamic--which appear to play a significant role in the formation of political discontent. The model is not complete, in that it omits some factors which may help to shape citizens' evaluations, e.g., personality variables. Instead, it emphasizes the extent to which the origins of political discontent may be located in individual perceptions of what we have called "political reality." In addition, the model attempts to account for the variability which should characterize the antecedents of discontent: as the social and political environment changes, and as both citizens and their government change in response, the relationships among the various elements

FIGURE 6

A DYNAMIC MODEL OF THE
POLITICAL ORIGINS OF POLITICAL DISCONTENT

POLITICAL EVENTS

SOCIAL CHANGE (e.g., affluence, education)

POLITICIZATION   [referring to the motivation
                                  and the ability to attend
COGNITIVE MOBILIZATION   to politics]

REGIME   EVALUATIONS OF REGIME ⟶ POLITICAL SUPPORT/
PERFORMANCE   PERFORMANCE   DISCONTENT
                    -procedural expression
                    -partisan expression
                    -policy expression
                                               DIFFUSE SUPPORT/
                                               SYSTEM AFFECT

Partisanship   POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION
Political Ideology
Social Background
Personal Experience

---

of the model may prove to be rather volatile. The content, cleavages, and intensity of political controversy will invariably differ somewhat from one historical moment to the next, and we can understand the nature of political discontent at a particular moment in time only by providing specific referents to the rather general terms of the model. This is, as I have noted, the operational task to which we will momentarily give our attention. There are, however, several important questions which should be considered before we move forward in that task.

For example, should we expect that any single dimension of regime performance will be more salient than the others in the genesis of political discontent? Let us recall once again the "generalization" thesis of Easton and Gamson. I have already argued that, whatever the validity or empirical utility of the concept of diffuse support, it is unlikely that many citizens will be encouraged to withdraw positive support for their political system every time they are confronted with a policy or condition which fails to meet their expectations. Instead, we should expect that citizens will demand that the system provide opportunities for the open "expression" of their politicized values.

There does not appear to be any logical relationship among the three hypothesized dimensions of regime performance. One may feel thoroughly antagonistic toward (and deprived by) the policy directions of government, while also recognizing that these policies are more or less responsive to a popular majority, and that they are openly arrived at through honorable and democratic processes. Or, as Wright suggests, even the "winners" of policy battles may be offended by the manner in

which their choices have triumphed. Alternatively, one may seek re-
dress for unfavorable policy decisions by attempting to persuade others
of one's point of view--perhaps through participation in a viable and
respected electoral system which permits conflicting views to be rep-
resented by the major political parties. In other words, one may per-
ceive "expression" as being available in one forum even when it is ab-
sent in another. When this occurs, positive and negative perceptions
may offset one another to produce an overall feeling of ambivalence
toward the political system. Or it may be that positive perceptions
regarding one dimension of regime performance will be sufficient to
sustain positive evaluations of the regime. This seems especially like-
ly to be true when citizens, socialized into a political culture which
often emphasizes process (e.g., majority rule, free and open political
competition, the open consideration of conflicting points of view)
over substance, retain faith in the ability of these processes to even-
tually produce a "correct" policy response.

When the generalization thesis is applied to our model of politi-
cal discontent, it may be read to say that there is an additive effect
among the dimensions of popular evaluation--that as negative percep-
tions come to be held with regard to several aspects of regime perform-
ance, a threshold may be reached where support is withdrawn and opposi-
tion becomes likely. Alternatively, it may be that negative evalua-
tions on any single dimension are necessary but insufficient for any
significant withdrawal of support, and that only when the system is
judged as deficient on all three grounds will behaviorally relevant

discontent emerge.[17] We could find that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts" where perceptions on all three dimensions are reinforcing--positively or negatively. Taking the latter case, we may find something resembling a generalization phenomenon when citizens come to believe that value expression is unavailable to them in all three senses described above. The effect of such impressions may be multiplicative or interactive rather than additive, and the result may be a more acute sense of discontent and estrangement from the polity than an additive model would suggest.

There would seem to be several alternative forms which the relationship between perceived value expression and political discontent might take, and I know of no compelling reason to select among the various alternatives. It does not seem likely that any sort of generalization will _quickly_ produce an intensification of discontent, partly because of the existence of other forces which may help to insulate the polity from the specific grievances of citizens. We might, however, speculate on the relative significance of each dimension of perceived value expression for the emergence of political discontent.

> Hypothesis 2. In democratic political systems, particularly those in which citizens are socialized (as children and as adults) to believe that the ultimate power of government rests upon popular consent, there should be a relatively constant and widespread relationship between perceived procedural expression and political trust. Thus, we should find a positive relationship between external efficacy and political trust across time, and within different social, demographic, and political subgroups in the population.

The norm of popular participation should be a salient one in democratic cultures, even during periods of relative popular quiescence when

specific issues and controversies are muted. Even the salience of ex-

ternal efficacy, however, is subject to variation as times and people

change.

> Hypothesis 3. In democratic political systems, the re-
> lationship between perceived procedural expression and
> political trust should be strengthened (a) when greater
> numbers of citizens are "politicized" by their environ-
> ment to a state of relative political attentiveness and
> concern regarding the salient issues of the day; or (b)
> when greater numbers of citizens are equipped with the
> cognitive abilities they believe to qualify them for
> active democratic citizenship.

In other words, when citizens acquire the motivation and/or abilities

to fulfill the citizenship role, they will be quicker to demand that

they be permitted to play that role--and quicker to judge the govern-

ment harshly if such a role is perceived as being placed beyond their

reach. While the argument is a dynamic one, we may approach it with

cross-sectional data by speculating that the relationship between ex-

ternal efficacy and political trust will be strongest among those seg-

ments of the population which are politicized and/or cognitively mo-

bilized.

As I have suggested, however, when an electorate becomes more at-

tentive or better educated, they are likely to demand more from their

government than a modicum of responsiveness to the popular will. We

might add to the third hypothesis an expectation that politicization

and cognitive mobilization will enhance the empirical association be-

tween all dimensions of value expression and political discontent--

although external efficacy may still remain the most universally salient

norm of all, at least in democratic settings. At first glance, this

statement may appear to be an acceptance of the argument that most cit-
izens are not very demanding most of the time, that many or most are
unable to make the link between their own expectations and the actions
of government, and that feelings of political discontent are most resp-
onsive to the "nature of the times" or to symbolic reassurances that
decision-makers are acting with the popular interest at heart. As it
is stated, however, my own argument is far better able to accommodate
the possibility of change. And even when the pitch of political con-
troversy is muted, we may still find that many citizens are more
discerning in their political judgments than some would have us believe.

The "generalization" thesis is specifically addressed to the hy-
pothesized distinction between specific and diffuse support, with many
scholars contending that only the latter is likely to impose signifi-
cant constraints upon the operation or persistence of polities. Po-
litical trust, while it has often been used as an indicator of diffuse
support for political objects more fundamental than political authori-
ties (consistent with Gamson's usage), has been challenged in its com-
mon operational form as more accurately an indicator of specific support
--for incumbent authorities. While there is persuasive documentation
that Americans have lost confidence in their political leaders and in-
stitutions over the past fifteen years, there is still considerable un-
certainty about the meaning of this trend. Exactly what is it that
Americans have lost confidence in? While survey respondents are in-
creasingly likely to express negative feelings about a variety of

political objects (including, as noted above, the political party sys-
tem), is it fair to say that generalization has taken place in such a
way as to threaten the stability of the political order in the United
States?

A review of the literature suggests that it would be inaccurate
to equate the growth of political cynicism in this country with a wide-
spread withdrawal of support for the regime or the political community.
For example, using West German survey data, Muller and Jukam tested
several operational measures of "affect for the incumbent administra-
tion" and "affect for the political system"--roughly parallel to the
specific-diffuse distinction. They conclude that, while the two dimen-
sions of support are related to one another, they are correlated at
different levels with such theoretically relevant variables as politi-
cal ideology and aggressive political behavior. Most importantly for
our purposes, they conclude that a 4-item political trust scale is bet-
ter understood as an indicator of incumbent affect--partly a function
of policy evaluations and ideological orientations, and less behavior-
ally relevant (in a regime-challenging sense) than attitudes of sys-
tem affect.[18]

Other studies have attempted to distinguish similar manifestations
of political support according to the object of these attitudes. An
earlier study by Muller concluded that individuals were capable of dis-
tinguishing among different political actors and institutions in eval-
uating the extent to which each was "representative."[19] Citrin and
Elkins found that British university students were able to maintain a

generally positive identification with the British political community at the same time that they were rather critical of government policies and incumbent authorities.[20] Sniderman and his associates conclude that evaluative attitudes toward the American national government were largely unaffected by the early Watergate revelations, in part because of the "centrality" (and thus resistance to change) of such attitudes.[21] A number of recent political socialization studies have been attentive to the attitude objects of supportive beliefs, particularly as these objects may have shifted in response to Watergate. The general conclusion seems to be that, if generalization has occurred, it has been modest and its long-term impact upon the polity is uncertain.[22]

How shall we regard political trust, and its dramatic decline among Americans? While Miller emphasizes that a generalization of discontent has already occurred to some extent, others insist that the decline represents primarily a withdrawal of support for the incumbent authorities.[23] Whether or not specific grievances have accumulated and passed the threshold beyond which diffuse support is affected, it seems clear that political discontent in the United States goes beyond a simple dissatisfaction with one set of political authorities. Presidents from Johnson to Carter have been the targets of popular dissatisfactions; Congress and other social and political institutions have come to be regarded more with suspicion than with respect; our major political parties have suffered both psychological and behavioral defections and are apparently unable to attract many new adherents among younger voters; citizens are less likely to feel that they can play a meaningful role in

democratic politics. The ability to capitalize upon these sentiments surely played an important part in the surprising success of Jimmy Carter in 1976.

My solution to this dilemma will be a rather practical one. Instead of attempting to specify precisely which political objects are being evaluated when respondents express a sense of political cynicism or inefficacy, I will attempt to assess the behavioral significance of such negative evaluations. This is, after all, the ultimate purpose of so much of the research we have reviewed thus far, from political socialization research to studies of contemporary discontent and alienation. This approach does not permit us simply to sidestep the diffuse-specific question, for the distinction is largely rooted in the belief that each type of political support has different behavioral consequences. Muller and Jukam state the hypothesis in general form:

> If system affect is negative among powerful or sizable segments of a polity, the threat to the stability of the prevailing regime will be great, even if affect for a particular incumbent administration is positive; conversely, if system affect is positive among powerful or sizable segments of a polity, the threat to the stability of the prevailing regime will be small, even if affect for a particular incumbent administration is negative.[24]

Such an argument underlies Easton's observation that governments often are able to persist and to operate effectively during periods of widespread popular dissatisfaction with policy outputs; it is also reflected in the statements of concern, from Miller and others, that the current mood of discontent may portend significant social and political change if it continues to persist and to deepen. Since discontent has become so broadly diffused since the early 1960s, and because it seems to have

such a variety of manifestations, many observers suspect that gener-

alization has occurred or is occurring--and that fundamental change

in our social and political order may be imminent.[25]

American politics, however, seems to possess a stability which

belies the prophets of doom. It is in recognition of this fact, and

of the scattered evidence which seems to reveal an underlying attach-

ment to our political system even in troubled times, that our model of

political discontent accepts a fundamental distinction between discon-

tent and "diffuse support" or "system affect." The relationship be-

tween these variables probably reflects a two-way causal flow, with

underlying attachments helping to soften the specific disappointments

which citizens must endure--yet also vulnerable to decay if these dis-

appointments should become the norm.[26] While the data with which we

might test this proposition are largely unavailable for this study,[27]

the significance of system affect for political discontent should be

acknowledged. Thus, we expect that political discontent will be con-

ditioned by, and over time will itself condition, feelings of basic

attachment or loyalty to the political regime and the political community

--the latter largely a product of political socialization processes in

all cultures. That is, there should be a positive relationship between

political trust and feelings of "diffuse" support, with the strength

of this relationship varying over time as a result of a mutual causal

interaction between these two variables. The more relevant question

for our own research is whether political discontent, conditioned but

not precisely determined by system affect, can provide the motivation

for political behavior which has systemic relevance. It is the answer
to this question which may ultimately provide the meaning of current
trends in public opinion.

Having minimized the extent to which we will permit the diffuse-
specific distinction to distract us, we must recognize a second sense
in which the attitudinal residues of political socialization--and per-
haps of other shaping forces--are likely to affect the level of politi-
cal trust or cynicism an individual feels for the government and its
leaders. In concluding our review of the socialization literature, I
asked whether it might not be true that preadult expressions of support
are actually manifestations of partisan sentiment. The same question
must be asked about the affective orientations of adults, whose parti-
san identities are presumably more firmly held and more likely to serve
as cues which help the individual to evaluate the events, issues, and
personalities of politics. To the extent that our measures of discon-
tent are tapping such partisan reactions, we may be measuring nothing
more than discontent with specific political authorities--and perhaps
a reflexive or content-free discontent at that. The implication of
this would be that changing the political authorities would probably
cause a dramatic shift in the social location of discontent, as the
"outs" became the "ins," and vice versa.

There is some evidence that political discontent is associated
with the partisan identities of the discontented,[28] but such an explana-
tion clearly cannot explain the diffusion of negative evaluations among

all partisan groups since the early 1960s. Miller, for example, wonders

how an "out-party disgruntlement" hypothesis can explain the mistrust

articulated by Republican identifiers in the early 1970s.[29] The per-

sistence of widespread cynicism across Democratic and Republican admin-

istrations suggests that some degree of generalization, at least across

partisan objects, has already occurred.

This is not to say that partisan cues will be irrelevant to the

formation of political cynicism. It seems more likely, however, that

partisan loyalties will be only one among several forces which help

to shape such an orientation.

> Hypothesis 4. Citizen evaluations of regime performance
> will be conditioned, in part, by their partisan loyalties.
> In particular, we should find higher levels of policy
> dissatisfaction and lower levels of political trust—as
> well as a stronger relationship between the two—among
> identifiers of the "out" party.

> Hypothesis 5. The relationship between party identifi-
> cation and political discontent (mediated by evaluations
> of regime performance) will be stronger during historical
> periods of relatively less political controversy when
> fewer citizens may be characterized as "politicized."

The latter hypothesis suggests that, in any period, the political eval-

uations of politicized and attentive citizens will be unlikely to rest

primarily upon their partisan identities.[30] The more important we find

party to be in explaining political evaluations, the more likely it is

that our measure of discontent is tapping attitudes less deeply rooted

and less behaviorally relevant than we have hypothesized.[31] This line

of reasoning applies only to the direction of partisan affiliation;

partisan strength, as I argued above, may be regarded as a manifesta-

tion of discontent and, as such, should be related to both political

trust and its antecedents. (See Hypothesis 1b(1).)

The model depicted in Figure 6 suggests that we may locate the

origins of citizens' performance evaluations in their partisan identi-

ties, ideological beliefs, social background, and personal experiences.[32]

The impact of ideology upon political discontent has been noted in

several studies,[33] although we should expect that this relationship

will be captured in our analysis by measures of "policy expression."

The influence of other potentially significant conditioning forces will

be examined as we proceed.

Trust, Efficacy, and Politicization: Trends and Nontrends

While the growth of political cynicism in the United States has

been documented and described in numerous studies, it should be useful

to take a quick glance at this trend and, in the process, become

acquainted with some of the indicators of our major dependent variable.

As reported in the University of Michigan's biennial election surveys,

the trend is clear.[34]   When asked, "How much of the time do you think

you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right," Americans

have never—at least within the time span of these surveys—been likely

to express unqualified confidence. Yet as recently as 1964, only about

22 percent of those with an opinion on this question responded "only

some of the time" or "never"; by 1974, the proportion had grown to 63

percent. In 1964, 69 percent believed that the government was being

"run for the benefit of all the people"; in 1974, nearly 73 percent

believed instead that government was run "by a few big interests looking

out for themselves."

The gradual, yet apparently massive, decline in political trust
is equally evident in the responses to the other items in the tradition-
al SRC trust scale. By 1974, 76 percent responded that the government
wastes "a lot of the money we pay in taxes"; and 47 percent were willing
to believe that "quite a few of the people running the government are
a little crooked." Perhaps the most ambiguous item in this battery asks
whether the "people running the government are smart people who usu-
ally know what they are doing." One can imagine that some hardened
cynics are also willing to acknowledge that our leaders are at least
quite "shrewd" or "clever" at their trickery. Still, where 72 percent
were willing to attribute some sort of competence to our leaders in
1964, the figure had shrunk to 52 percent ten years later. Perhaps
some citizens came to the conclusion, particularly during Watergate,
that our leadership ranks had been swelled by men who were unable to
avoid "getting caught."

Similar, though less dramatic, negative trends are also evident
when we examine responses to items which measure external efficacy. In
1956, only 27 percent believed that "public officials (don't) care much
what people like me think"; by 1974, the comparable figure was 52 per-
cent. A majority (59 percent) of respondents rejected in 1974 the
statement that "people like me don't have any say about what the gov-
ernment does"; yet even this represents a drop from the nearly 72 per-
cent who disagreed in 1956. Similarly, respondents have become more
likely to believe that "those we elect to Congress in Washington lose

touch with the people pretty quickly" (71 percent in 1974, 55 percent in 1968); and that "parties are only interested in people's votes but not in their opinions" (61 percent and 48 percent, respectively). The less dramatic diminution of external efficacy in the electorate during this period may reflect the existence of moderating forces which permit citizens to believe in their own capacity to influence even an unresponsive system. In particular, it may be that countertrends in such factors as educational attainment, internal efficacy, and personal competence have helped to moderate the decline in this hypothesized antecedent of political discontent.[35] In addition, such events as the American withdrawal from Vietnam and the resignation of Richard Nixon may have bolstered the faith which some citizens placed in the system's eventual--though perhaps grudging--responsiveness.

Unfortunately, countertrends in attitudinal measures of "politicization" are difficult to document--at least with the evidence provided by the SRC election surveys. There is, for example, no unambiguous indicator of internal efficacy. One item asks whether politics and government are sometimes "so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on." While this item manifestly addresses the individual's view of his own ability to understand-- and, at least potentially, to affect--the government, it remains a statement with which most of us could probably identify.[36] This trend over time parallels that for external efficacy,[37] with which it is moderately correlated, but the decline is not as pronounced.[38] Per- haps the relative stability of this item has been enhanced by growing

levels of education and personal confidence, but this is difficult to demonstrate conclusively.[39] More supportive of our argument is the decline in inefficacious ("agree") responses to the following item: "Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how the government runs things." This item is, however, the most ambiguous of all the original efficacy measures, since efficacy can be implied either by agreement (a belief that citizens are able to use elections to shape public policy) or by disagreement (a belief that citizens may make themselves heard through other participatory channels).[40] Most respondents agree with the statement throughout this period, but if one accepts the SRC formulation, the American population appears to have become somewhat _more_ efficacious since 1956.[41]

While these two indicators do not behave in quite the same way over time as do the less ambiguous measures of political trust and external efficacy, it remains difficult to use these patterns as proof of "countertrends" in the American electorate. As I have indicated, each of these variables is positively associated with indicators of external efficacy, although the correlation coefficients are significantly smaller than those within the 4-item external efficacy battery.[42] In addition, each is positively--though not at all strongly--related to political trust. In view of these relationships, it may be that the increase in internal efficacy which we would expect to follow educational advances (and perhaps politicization as well) has been muted to a degree by the same forces which have produced higher levels of cynicism and external inefficacy. We will consider this possibility below,

but for the moment we must conclude that trends in internal efficacy, to the extent that they are accurately portrayed by these standard items, are unclear--although obviously not consistent with the sharp decline in feelings of political trust and external efficacy.

If it is difficult to document an increase in politicization by examining trends in internal efficacy, it is even more difficult to establish that the political events, issues, and controversies of recent years have had a profound effect upon the political consciousness of the American public. Again, however, we are at the mercy of available indicators, and we must again conclude that these measures are only partially satisfactory. For example, measures of campaign interest will largely be shaped by the qualities of particular contests and candidates, as well as by the salience of the issues and values which might be a focus of campaign rhetoric and policy debate. The 1960 presidential election, which precedes the sharpest rise in political discontent, has been characterized as one which captured the attention and imagination of many previously uninvolved voters.[43] Keeping this in mind, we must note that respondents appear to be no more involved in, attentive to, or concerned with presidential politics in the 1970s than was true during the 1950s.[44] A more general question asks respondents if they "follow what's going on in government and public affairs . . . whether there's an election going on or not." Such a measure seems better suited to measure politicization independently of the short-term forces which can make a particular campaign "exciting" or "dull," and responses seem to provide modest support for our thesis that the salience of politics has been enhanced for many citizens.[45]

The image of an unusually aroused and attentive electorate is

hardly sustained by these patterns, but there are other grounds upon

which to base the "politicization" argument. As we have already seen,

Converse was not troubled (at least through the 1960s) by diminishing

levels of voting turnout; instead, he argued that participation in

modes of "unusual political activity" increased during the sixties, as

a greater variety of participatory forms came to be used by those who

wished to channel their demands into the political decision-making

process.[46] Others have noted a modest increase in certain forms of

campaign participation during this same period.[47] More impressionisti-

cally, we might recall that numerous presidential candidacies have

achieved relative success since the early 1960s by drawing upon the

energies of new and enthusiastic (and often young) campaign volunteers,

who were attracted to electoral politics by the candidates and the

policy choices which they represented. And the activation of the col-

lege campus over such issues as civil rights and Vietnam, even if the

phenomenon was temporary, suggests something rather different from a

politics of quiescence.

Perhaps the best indicators of increased politicization are more

subtle and less easily measured than are professed levels of political

interest and overt political involvement. There was no more persuasive

evidence of the "quiescent electorate" of the 1950s than that provided

by Converse's classic essay on belief systems in the mass public.[48]

Converse demonstrated that very few citizens were able to evaluate po-

litical parties and candidates in "ideological" or even issue-oriented

terms; that citizens' opinions about important contemporary issues
tended not to be consistent in a liberal-conservative sense; and that
citizens would often express an opinion at one moment in time which
was inconsistent with his or her opinion at a previous time--suggesting
that. many of the issue beliefs elicited by survey instruments were
actually more or less random responses to questions which were not very
salient (or "central") to respondents' daily concerns.

While this view of the electorate briefly enjoyed the status of
"conventional wisdom," it was not long before other studies began to
note what appeared to be important changes in these standard indica-
tors of mass political sophistication and involvement. A number of
studies found a much higher level of issue consistency beginning in
1964, i.e., citizens were more likely to be consistently liberal or
consistently conservative across a range of specific issue controver-
sies.[49] It follows that increased consistency would be accompanied by
higher levels of issue polarization in the electorate, with true "lib-
erals" and "conservatives" coming to outnumber the traditionally domi-
nant group in American politics--the moderates or "accommodationists,"
to whom politics was (if anything) more a matter of winning elections
than of ideological advocacy. And, along with apparently higher levels
of attitudinal consistency, some studies noted a growing polarization
among Americans.[50] Others cited a change in the ability of citizens
to employ ideological abstractions and issue criteria when evaluating
the political parties and their presidential candidates.[51] More than
that, citizens appeared to be more likely than before to base their

voting decisions upon these issue criteria, often abandoning long-term
commitments to one of the major political parties in the process.[52]

These apparent changes have together fostered a rather different
view of the electorate of the 1960s and 1970s, when compared to its
counterpart of twenty years ago. Pomper has characterized the distinc-
tion as being between a "dependent voter" and a "responsive voter."
The latter view

> places more emphasis on change, on the responsiveness of
> the electorate to new stimuli in the environment, and on
> the electorate's ability to grasp coherent, internally
> consistent belief systems and to effectuate policy pre-
> ferences in its vote.[53]

While Pomper sees these changes as reflecting a more or less permanent
alteration in the character of the American electorate, others have
been more likely to emphasize the volatility of political issues and
events and their impact upon citizens.

> If public attitudes . . . are responsive to political
> events, then a pattern of political attitudes and be-
> havior discovered at one point in time may differ sub-
> stantially from that found at another point in time.[54]

It is this sort of volatility which seems to have created conditions
conducive to the growth of political discontent—a phenomenon which
surely is not unrelated to the other changes observed in the mass pub-
lic since 1964.[55]

Unfortunately, this "revisionist" portrait of the American elec-
torate has generated its own critics. Some have acknowledged the in-
creased issue consistency among citizens, but interpret it less as the
product of a changing political environment than as the result of rising
educational levels[56] or—much more troubling—of changes in our

measuring instruments.[57] The higher levels of ideological sophistica-
tion evidenced by citizens' political evaluations have also been seen
as a function of higher educational levels. Converse, for example,
argues that a weak information base (or "contextual knowledge") in-
hibits widespread attitude crystallization, and that this situation
is likely to characterize those issue areas (i.e., most issue areas)
which are of limited relevance to citizens' daily concerns. He notes
the apparent changes in attitudinal consistency and ideological sophis-
tication[58] which began to occur in 1964, and he contends that these
are in large part the product of alterations in citizen motivation to
be attentive. That is, for many citizens most of the time, the rela-
tive costs (in spite of the media) and potential benefits of informa-
tion acquisition are such that inattentiveness to politics may be a
rational choice.[59] In particular, the motivation to be attentive may
be dampened for many who fail to see the importance of certain kinds
of issues (e.g., foreign relations, relations between government and
business) for their own lives.

Has this changed in recent years? Converse contends that politics
has become more salient for many citizens, whose response to political
events has been stimulated particularly by heightened party differen-
tiation and group antagonisms that developed in the sixties--i.e., the
public's motivation to attend to politics is expanded. Still, Converse
emphasizes that education may ultimately (if also gradually) alter the
cost-benefit calculations regarding political information acquisition,
and produce changes in the character of public opinion which will

endure even as the salience of contemporary issues and antagonisms declines.[60]

The point of this review has been to emphasize the difficulty in conclusively demonstrating that the period since 1964 has been one of widespread "politicization" in American politics. This difficulty pertains as well to our own analysis, as we attempt to select indicators of politicization with which we will (indirectly) test our propositions concerning the environmental origins of political discontent. It is considerably more difficult to measure the "salience of politics" or "motivational states" than it is to measure, say, educational attainment. Yet the distinction between these two sources is important, since each implies something rather different about the probable persistence of recent trends.

There are those who would argue, as I noted above, that the "politicization" of the electorate never really occurred—at least on the scale that so many scholars have hypothesized. These are not disputes which can easily be resolved, nor will we attempt to provide a definitive resolution in this study. What we must do, however, is attempt to recognize the potential impact upon political discontent of both events and education, for both represent important aspects of an individual's personal world. To the extent that we can understand the contribution of such forces to the mood of political malaise in America, we will be in a better position to understand the roots and the meaning of that malaise.

CHAPTER VII

POLITICAL DISCONTENT IN AMERICA: AN EMPIRICAL TEST

As I explained in the previous chapter, we will be using the SRC
national election study from 1972 to test our theory of political dis-
content. The advantage of this is that we will be able to examine a
representative national sample of respondents, and thereby to place
a reasonably high degree of confidence in the generality of the rela-
tionships we observe. One major disadvantage to this strategy is in-
herent in any secondary analysis such as this one: we are limited by
the variety and the content of available indicators, a problem we have
already encountered in our attempt to measure internal efficacy.

There are two additional problems, one of them unique to the 1972
study, which will have a bearing on our analysis. In the first place,
studies which are conducted during presidential election years typi-
cally employ two separate waves, and thus they represent a sort of
panel study. The first wave is conducted prior to the election, the
second wave after the election. Unfortunately, some of the respondents
who are initially interviewed are unavailable for reinterview in the
second wave of the study. Since many of the questions we would like to
examine were asked only during the post-election wave, we will find
ourselves occasionally facing a missing data problem of some magnitude.
Thus, whenever possible, we will attempt to minimize the problem of

attrition by concentrating on items used prior to the election.

The second difficulty presented by the 1972 study involves the questionnaire format. Actually, this study employs not one, but two separate national samples. That is, two separate questionnaire forms were utilized and each was administered to approximately half of the total sample. Most items were included on both form 1 and form 2, but a number were unique to one form or the other. This will affect our analysis by requiring us to focus upon the most inclusive set of questions available. For our preliminary analysis of political trust and efficacy, we will look primarily to form 2 (N=1333) because it meets this standard. Form 2, however, is much less satisfactory for examining the relationships among issue beliefs, policy expression, and political discontent. Thus, because the range of issue dimensions is considerably broader on form 1 (N=1372), we will turn to this sample at that stage of our analysis. In order to ensure that our results are comparable, we occasionally will compare results from each of the two forms as a reliability check, although the timing of a question (i.e., pre- or post-election wave) and the resulting problem of missing data will sometimes make these comparisons problematic.[1]

Trust and Efficacy: Measures and Preliminary Analysis

Our measure of political trust is a scale built from responses to the standard 5-item SRC trust battery. Our external efficacy scale includes responses to two of the four original efficacy items, plus two additional items which have been added in recent years. These items,

plus those which were used to construct other attitudinal scales, are described in Appendix 1. Essentially, each of these measures was derived from an analysis of the face validity of the component items, with an effort being made to retain standard SRC measures whenever possible. Having completed this initial scan of available indicators, item analysis was employed in building the appropriate scales. Basically, this approach centered upon the internal consistency of hypothesized scale items, patterns of covariation with other scales and individual items, and relationships involving other external variables when these were available.

Since our theory of political discontent rests so heavily upon the origins of and interaction between political trust and external efficacy, let us spend some time considering these constructs. The internal consistency of each of these scales is good, though less than overwhelming.[2] This may reflect the fact that any or all of the component items of each scale are measuring something other than that which they have been hypothesized to measure, i.e., item validity may be-- in fact, it certainly is--less than perfect. One of the things which these items may be measuring is what has come to be known as "nonattitudes" or measurement "noise."[3] That is, some respondents may be responding to the measurement stimulus in ways that have little or nothing to do with their feelings of political trust or efficacy--if, indeed, they even have such feelings at all. Much of what we measure using survey research can be characterized as "noise," a situation which should prompt us both to exercise caution when interpreting opinion

distributions and statistical relationships, and to work to improve

our measuring instruments so as to maximize the amount of "true" atti-

tudinal variance which we record. We will note in a moment one ex-

ample of how apparent measurement error can complicate our analysis.

The evidence contained in Table 1 tells us a number of things about

political trust and political efficacy. In the first place, we see an

initial benefit from our distinction between internal and external effi-

cacy. As expected, it is external efficacy--that orientation which

takes the political system as a primary attitude object, and which pre-

sumably is more susceptible to change as a result of perceived regime

performance--which is much more strongly related to political trust

(r=.48).[4] Internal efficacy, while associated at moderately high levels

with external efficacy, is only weakly related to political trust--a

finding which parallels the results of earlier studies.[5] In further

support of our conceptual scheme, it is political trust and external

efficacy which are most closely associated with measures of system sup-

port and what the SRC calls "Government Attention to the People/

Responsiveness."[6]

One might be surprised at the magnitude of the relationship be-

tween personal efficacy and political trust (r=.24), but the relative

independence of trust from personality factors is indicated by a mod-

est association between personal and political trust (r=.15). Further,

these relationships are due largely to the impact of external efficacy

--apparently more responsive to personality--upon political trust.[7]

Alternatively, we might consider the rather unorthodox possibility that

TABLE 1

INTERCORRELATIONS (r) BETWEEN TRUST, EFFICACY, AND RELATED VARIABLES

	Political Trust	External Efficacy	Respon-siveness	System Support	Personal Efficacy	Education	Political Interest
POLITICAL TRUST[a]	--	.48	.36	.31	.24	.12	.08
EXTERNAL EFFICACY[b]	--	--	.45	.30	.39	.33	.32
Voting only way[c]	.13	.36	.15	.11	.22	.27	.21
Politics complex	.14	.32	.20	.15	.28	.30	.27

N varies between 1061 and 1333

[a]Sample mean = 17.4 (with a range of 5 to 25, low scores representing high trust); N=1333

[b]Sample mean = 11.3 (with a range of 4 to 20, low scores representing low efficacy); N=1333

[c]The correlation between "voting only way" and "politics complex" is .24

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 2 respondents only.

political frustrations have begun to spill over into the personal

sphere, i.e., that feelings of personal trust and effectiveness are

partly shaped by negative evaluations of regime performance. When we

consider the extent to which our personal lives are dependent upon the

actions of government--and the possibility that citizens are increas-

ingly aware of this fact--such an hypothesis seems plausible.

Our conceptualization of internal and external efficacy, however,

presents a puzzle when we notice that each of these dimensions is re-

lated at similar levels to factors which we have hypothesized to be

more strongly associated with the internal dimension. To an extent,

the figures depicted in Table 1 are misleading: a valid scale should

correlate more strongly with related attitudes or attributes than do

the component items of that scale. Breaking down external efficacy, we

find that it is, on balance, no more strongly related to personal ef-

fectiveness, education, and political interest[8] than are the "internal"

efficacy items. A further analysis confirms our expectations that in-

ternal efficacy is slightly more closely associated with indicators

of traditional political participation.[9]

While the relationships between personal factors and external ef-

ficacy do not disappear when internal efficacy is controlled, we can

see from Table 1 that these same personal attributes are much more

modestly related to political trust--a construct with which external ef-

ficacy shares considerable covariation. In the absence of an adequate

measure of internal efficacy, we might speculate that political efficacy

--both internal and external dimensions--refer to somewhat distinct,

but also complementary, aspects of the relationship between citizens

and their government; and that perceptions of system responsiveness

are not unaffected by an individual's own personal qualities and his

perception of their political potency. We also might note one other

set of relationships which will concern us below, but which help to

distinguish between internal and external efficacy. It is the latter

dimension (along with political trust) which is more strongly related

to both party identification and intended 1972 presidential vote, with

Republicans and Nixon supporters being more trustful and externally

efficacious. These differences suggest that the environmental ori-

gins of internal efficacy are, as we would expect, less prominent than

in the case of external efficacy or trust.

Before addressing the propositions which were developed above,

we might learn something about the nature of these attitudes by prob-

ing the relationship between efficacy and trust a bit more deeply. The

coefficients presented in Table 1 refer to that portion of the sample

which responded to form 2 of the SRC questionnaire. I was somewhat

startled to find that the relationship between external efficacy and

political trust was much weaker, though still substantial, for the

form 1 sample (r=.26). Additional comparisons revealed that several--

though not all--of the coefficients in Table 1 were similarly reduced

for form 1 respondents. It was unclear what to make of all this, al-

though it seemed probable that the problem was tied to the fact that,

for the form 1 sample, political trust was measured in the post-election

survey (including a mail follow-up). Perhaps the respondents who had

been lost in the post-election wave had somehow destabilized these

relationships--although this group seemed likely to include those (less educated, less interested in politics, etc.) whose absence would enhance the strength of the relationships. Further, the sample means for trust and external efficacy--the latter substantially related to education and to political interest--were not significantly different for form 1 and form 2 respondents.

Among the possible explanations for this phenomenon, one seemed to recommend itself as most plausible. We have seen that neither political trust nor external efficacy is a terribly stable orientation. In fact, Asher found considerable instability in political efficacy even from pre- to post-election measurements in the same election year.[10] I noted that the lower coefficients involving political trust resulted when we used the post-election measure of that variable--and correlated it with variables which had been measured prior to the election. A closer examination required setting aside the form 1 respondents[11] and focusing upon the form 2 sample, whose feelings of trust and efficacy were measured during both waves of the survey. The results are presented in Table 2.

We may make several initial observations from these data. First, political trust and external efficacy are moderately to strongly correlated, regardless of the point of measurement or the educational level of the respondent. Second, the over-time stability of each measure is substantial. But third, there is clearly a weakening of the association between trust and efficacy when they are measured at different points in time.[12] Oddly, the pattern of correlations depicted in Table 2 does not suggest that the better educated are more stable; in fact,

TABLE 2

THE STABILITY OF TRUST AND EFFICACY, BY EDUCATION[a]

	External (T_2)	Trust (T_1)	Trust (T_2)
External (T_1)	.58/.67/.62	.45/.49/.45	.43/.46/.39
External (T_2)	-----	.23/.43/.29	.46/.49/.46
Trust (T_1)		-----	.49/.60/.59
Trust (T_2)			-----

N varies between 1072 and 1333

[a]The coefficients (r) are grouped in sequence from low to high educational attainment.

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 2 respondents only.

it is the middle group which is most stable. A similar breakdown by political interest reveals no consistent pattern.

What can we make of all this? It might be simply that external efficacy and political trust are showing us the same volatility we have hypothesized--although whatever events worked to change the level of these orientations between measurements should not have altered the relationship between them to any great degree. Further, we have noted little change in the aggregate levels of trust and efficacy between pre- and post-election waves.[13] Undoubtedly, we have picked up some of what we noted above: measurement "noise." We have tapped considerable change at the individual level in combination with impressive stability at the aggregate level--a pattern unlikely to result from the kinds of "real" attitude change we are most concerned with.

These are problems which must concern any analyst who employs survey research: there are many citizens who simply have no firm opinion on some of the attitudes which we want to tap--but who answer our questions anyway. Having noted the problem, we can take some comfort from the fact that most relationships which we find to be significant will remain significant over time. In particular, we have confirmed one of our primary expectations: there is a reasonably strong and apparently persistent association between political trust and external efficacy. But we have also reaffirmed another major theme of this study: some citizens do not have strongly held beliefs on every facet of American political life. That is, we also have illustrated the importance of attempting to discern the salience of various dimensions of

popular demand and regime performance for the explanation of political discontent.

Political Trust and Procedural Expression

Among which groups of citizens can we locate the political cynicism which has become a source of concern to scholars and politicians alike? Actually, we do not have to look very far because it is difficult to locate any significant segment of the population which has not come to regard our government with some degree of skepticism. Still, some groups remain more favorably disposed than others. As the figures in Table 1 indicated, the externally inefficacious are more likely to be characterized by lower levels of education; the same is true, though much less dramatically, for the mistrustful.[14] We also find lower levels of trust and external efficacy among blacks more than whites, and among those who identify with the working class more than those who think of themselves as belonging to the middle class. Men and women differ little, if at all, on these measures. The old are more cynical than the young, although the pattern is not one of monotonic change across age categories; we will have more to say about this in the following chapter.

Our purpose here, however, is not to search for the social location of political discontent--except as it clarifies the relationship between perceptions of "political reality" and negative evaluations of government. It is this latter relationship which represents our primary focus. Before continuing, however, we should take note of the

consistently positive (though not always strong) bivariate association between favorable orientations toward the government and higher levels of politicization or cognitive mobilization. We already have noted the positive relationship between education and political trust and external efficacy. Similarly, there is a modest tendency for the "politicized" (i.e., those who "care" which party wins the presidential election, those who profess interest in the campaign, and those who generally follow "government and public affairs") to feel less cynical toward the government; the correlations between these variables and external efficacy are even more robust.[15]

These figures do not support the hypothesis that politicization necessarily entails (at least in contemporary America) a clearer perception of governmental malfeasance and, thereby, less favorable evaluations of political actors and institutions. What these figures do not address, however, is the possibility that the educated and the politicized (though perhaps fewer in number) were even more supportive of their government during the less turbulent period prior to 1964.[16] Nie, for example, attempts to describe how cynicism has driven some citizens to profess campaign disinterest even while recognizing the impact of politics on their personal lives (i.e., they are nonetheless politicized); and he shows that cynicism has increased, since 1964, even among those interested in campaign politics.[17] The latter trend, if dominant, would operate to produce the quite small correlations we have observed for 1972, and indicate a very different pattern from that which would have held in earlier years. As I argued in the previous

chapter, the validity of our indicators of politicization is uncertain; it may be that citizen reports of disinterest actually have become a widespread manifestation of political discontent itself.

We also should consider one other set of bivariate relationships, although these too will become more significant as we proceed. As I reported above, both political trust and external efficacy are associated with respondents' party identification and intended 1972 presidential vote. Republican identifiers and Nixon supporters were more trustful than Democrats or McGovern supporters. The relationships were not terribly strong (and, again, they tended to vary a bit for each half-sample), but neither were they insignificant.[18] This does not mean simply that negative orientations are a ritualistic response of those citizens who identify with the "out" party or who favor the underdog candidate. Such partisan differences may reflect a more substantive basis for political discontent, depending upon the policy differences between partisan groups. This is the sense in which we will be most concerned with the impact of party upon political discontent.[19]

Standing clearly among the ranks of the political cynics are many citizens who also believe that their political system is less open to popular input than it might be—the externally inefficacious. The evidence supports hypothesis 1a, presented above: that there will be a positive relationship between external efficacy (perceived procedural expression) and political trust. As we have seen, this relationship is fairly strong and consistent (across both groups and time). In the language developed above, this suggests that many Americans do value the

democratic norm of popular participation in decision-making, and many of them believe that this norm has been violated by the actions of governmental leaders and institutions. Sensing the existence of a basic conflict between their politicized expectations and perceived political reality, these citizens have responded by regarding the actors and the institutions of the regime with a presumably unhealthy suspicion--they have withdrawn much of their support for the government and its leaders.

Can we be confident that we have accurately described the causal relationship that exists between trust and external efficacy? Without longitudinal data, we cannot be certain. To the extent that external efficacy, more than political trust, is a product of such personal attributes as educational attainment, level of political attentiveness, and sense of internal efficacy, then we would expect it to be both causally prior to trust and relatively more stable than trust over time. While these qualities do appear to characterize external efficacy, it is also true that both it and political trust are rooted in political events and regime performance. In fact, our own model of political discontent posits external efficacy as itself an evaluation of regime performance. Is it not possible that both trust and that component of external efficacy which is responsive to such forces will move in tandem as the political landscape changes? Indeed, while the view presented here suggests that declining levels of political trust may represent a "generalization" of dissatisfaction with the opportunities for popular participation in decision-making, might the opposite not be true instead?

Even if the dynamic aspect of this relationship cannot be ascertained precisely, we might turn to the concepts of politicization and cognitive mobilization to provide us with insight. Actually, I have hypothesized that, given our cultural emphasis on the processes of democratic government, we should expect to find the demand for procedural expression—and a relationship between external efficacy and political trust—evident across both individuals and time (hypothesis 2). Although the strength of the relationship appears to vary, numerous studies over a period of years have reported a positive association between trust and efficacy. Our own data suggest that one does not have to be either politicized or well educated to demand that our government be responsive to popular input. The relationship between trust and external efficacy is strong and steady across all educational categories and levels of political interest.[20]

Can we say, then, that anything has changed? Our third hypothesis suggested that variations in politicization and cognitive mobilization would produce a stronger relationship (over time and across individuals) between external efficacy and political trust. That is, both politicization and education should result in increased demands for procedural expression, and in a stronger sense of cynicism if these demands are perceived to be unmet. There is one measure in the 1972 study which permits us to measure the salience of the participatory norm more precisely than do our other measures of politicization. The measure is intended to tap what Inglehart has called "post-materialist" values, which he contends have become more widespread in affluent Western nations, particularly among the young. Among the changes which are said

to have occurred in the postwar West is a gradual, yet fundamental, re-
duction of the salience of citizen demands for sustenance and physical
safety needs. With these needs--said to be the most salient in all
cultures, as long as they are in short supply[21]--having been met for
large proportions of the populations of these nations, citizen demands
are seen as having embraced a variety of "social and self-actualiza-
tion values." Among these is the demand for self-expression and par-
ticipation in decisions that affect one's life.

> The politics of classical industrial society were
> based on mass parties and associated movements such as
> trade unions and church-related organizations that were
> generally bureaucratic and oligarchical in structure.
> Emerging cultural values emphasize spontaneity and indi-
> vidual self-expression. Furthermore, the expansion of
> education means that increasing numbers of people are
> available with political skills that enable them to
> play roles previously limited to a small political elite.
> For both objective and subjective reasons the old par-
> ties are being challenged by new forces that seem less
> and less amenable to an elite-directed type of organi-
> zation.
>   Insofar as these demands of newly articulate groups
> cannot be accommodated within existing structures, sup-
> port for governmental institutions may erode. . . .[22]

Inglehart characterizes the United States as being less prone to
these changes than most of the nations of Western Europe, due to our
relative prosperity throughout the twentieth century, as well as to
the physical security which our geographical isolation has given us
through several wars. Still, in the United States and elsewhere, the
new set of demands which are said to characterize "post-industrial" so-
ciety are located more often among the younger age cohorts--those
whose formative experiences have occurred in the prosperous and rela-
tively peaceful postwar years.[23]

Inglehart proposes to measure value orientations by asking res-
pondents to select the first and second most important priorities for
the nation from among four possibilities: fighting rising prices,
maintaining order, giving people more say in important government de-
cisions, and protecting freedom of speech.[24] The first two goals are
intended to reflect "materialist" value priorities, while the latter
two should reflect "post-materialist" values--and they should be found
most commonly among younger age cohorts. Overall, Inglehart found
that respondents' rankings tended to be consistent: people were more
likely to select either the "materialist" pair or the "post-materialist"
pair than they were to select any of the four "mixed" combinations.
This tendency was also evident, although a bit less so, in the United
States; 45 percent of the respondents were located in one of the two
polar categories (35.2 percent "materialist" and 9.5 percent "post-
materialist"), while 55 percent selected some combination of value pri-
orities.[25]

Whatever may be the validity of Inglehart's thesis, we would expect
that his "post-materialist" value types would be most likely to demand
a government which responds to popular input, and to feel deprived at
the hands of their government should such responsiveness appear not to
be forthcoming. To the extent that such a tendency is reflected by a
stronger association between external efficacy and political trust, our
expectations are confirmed. While differences are not large enough to
revise our conclusion that the salience of the participatory norm is
widespread in our own political culture, it is nonetheless true that the

discontent of "post-materialists" is relatively more likely to be founded upon perceptions of system unresponsiveness.[26]

Most Americans, however, are neither "materialist" nor "post-materialist." Since a majority of respondents selected at least one "post-materialist" priority for the nation, we also considered those who specifically stated a preference for giving people more say in policymaking. Actually, the strongest association between external efficacy and political trust is found among that small group (N=100) which believed that our most important national goal should be the protection of free speech. But overall, it appears that a "post-materialist" outlook does lead one to place relatively greater procedural demands upon government.[27]

To the extent, then, that recent years have witnessed a growing demand for meaningful avenues of citizen participation in policymaking, we may say that the rise of political discontent stems partly from the perceived unavailability of procedural expression. Our confidence in this conclusion remains clouded by the problem of the chicken and the egg: Is perceived procedural expression a cause, or merely a separate manifestation, of political discontent--stemming from identical social and policy sources?[28]

We are further limited by the absence of conclusive evidence that the demand for governmental responsiveness has changed and that, if it has, it is a result of rising levels of politicization and cognitive mobilization (as specified by hypothesis 3). It appears to be true,

however, that procedural demands are most likely to be located among

the better educated (and among the young), suggesting that at least a

gradual change in the salience of government performance on this di-

mension is taking place. Overall, then, hypothesis 3 is supported

only in part: cognitive mobilization (measured indirectly by post-

materialist values) appears to be enhancing the strength of the rela-

tionship between external efficacy and political trust. The effects

of politicization remain unclear, although more sensitive measures of

this variable--especially measures which are uncontaminated by feel-

ings of political discontent itself--might lend greater support for

our hypothesis. Whatever changes may have occurred in the procedural

demands of Americans, however, the importance of governmental respon-

siveness in a democratic political culture remains clear.[29]

Political Trust and the Party System

Political trust, however closely it may be tied to perceptions of

regime responsiveness, can be understood fully only by considering

other shaping forces as well. Two dimensions of regime performance

which we have hypothesized to be among the bases of political discon-

tent involve the political party system and the public policymaking

apparatus of government. In fact, these two aspects of value expression

are difficult to separate--both conceptually and empirically--since

each will depend upon voters' policy expectations. For example, is a

polarized and competitive party system sufficient to generate political

support even if neither party is perceived as adequately representative

of a citizen's policy values?[30] Alternatively, will citizens whose

policy preferences are reflected by one of the political parties, or

by governmental decision-makers themselves, nonetheless by cynical in

the absence of a vigorous competition at the other end of the ideolog-

ical spectrum?

In other words, it surely is unreasonable to regard "partisan ex-

pression" and "policy expression" as two distinctly different phenomena.

The idea that electoral competition may be positively valued in isola-

tion from the choices represented by that competition seems implausible.

Thus, it is more than simply the perceived presence or absence of

choice itself which should bring the citizen to a position of politi-

cal support or opposition.   Still, it is intriguing to ask whether the

American electorate places a positive value upon vigorous competition

itself.   The traditional view has it that this definitely is not the

case.

Our political party system (including parties as caretakers of gov-

ernment) has long been characterized as "accommodationist" rather than

"ideological." That is, except for periodic (and relatively brief)

periods of "crisis" during which the electorate becomes polarized and

is more likely to demand the same of their representative institutions,

"Americans have traditionally depended on the political party system

to play a major role in the reconciliation of conflict in society--

usually by building wide coalitions to contest elections."[31]

> Since the various social groups in the U.S. do not
> see themselves as too far apart, they can be appealed to
> by a single party. . . . There is thus strong incentive
> for a party seeking national power to make the broadly

> inclusive appeal, because if it does not, its opponent
> will generally seize the opportunity. Accommodationist
> politics means two big parties making inclusive appeals.
> Parties trying to be inclusive can hardly concern them-
> selves with doctrinal purity, and to the extent that
> they succeed in being inclusive they become umbrella
> parties containing the spectrum of contending positions
> (although not with the same distribution of contending
> position). . . .[32]

Such a politics is possible--even necessary[33]--for a number of rea-

sons, including the absence of intense class (or any other social)

cleavages which might threaten to turn American politics into a zero-

sum game, and the apparent tendency of voters to be content, except in

extraordinary circumstances, with a more or less "issueless" brand of

electoral competition. To be sure, there are those citizens whose po-

litical demands are unable to be met by accommodationist politics,[34]

but these citizens have been seen as a small minority of the elector-

ate which has been unable to deter the party system from its typical

centrist course--the only course which seems to promote the ultimate

goal of American parties: victory. The depth of conviction with which

this view has been held is exemplified by Lyndon Johnson, perhaps the

single most significant party figure of the postwar era.

> The biggest danger to American stability is the politics
> of principle, which brings out the masses in irrational
> fights for unlimited goals, for once the masses begin to
> move, then the whole thing begins to explode.[35]

> The party that can produce a record of service to the peo-
> ple . . . the party that is the least partisan and the
> most patriotic . . . that party will win. A party that
> is overly partisan, overly quarrelsome and obsessed
> solely with politics will lose.[36]

Johnson is described as advocating parties more concerned with "results"

than with the "forthright advocacy of virtuous ideals"--and so it

should be since the former more faithfully reflects the electorate's

own ideological inconsistency and their "ambiguities of conviction

and purpose."[37]

And so it is that the qualities of people and the ambitions of

their political leaders interact to produce a politics of moderation.

Not everyone has seen these traits as virtues, however, despite the

recognition that such a system often operates to mute social and politi-

cal conflicts which are at least latent in any society. Conflicting

needs, interests, and values will be present, and these must be per-

mitted to see the light of day in a democratic system. Thus, some have

argued the need for a more "responsible" party system, with parties

which

> (1) make policy commitments to the electorate, (2) are
> willing and able to carry them out when in office, (3)
> develop alternatives to government policies when out of
> office, and (4) differ sufficiently to "provide the
> electorate with a proper range of choice between alter-
> natives of action."[38]

There obviously are constraints to the development of responsible

party government in the United States, including the relative homogen-

eity of its political culture, the absence of a sharply defined class

or caste system, and the fact that ours has long been among the

wealthiest of nations--the latter inhibiting the emergence of wide-

spread economic demands which could not adequately be represented with-

in an accommodationist framework.[39] In addition, the institutional

setting within which the parties operate--including the federal system,

the constitutional separation of executive and legislative branches,

statutory constraints upon the evolution of minor parties, and the like--

has served to produce the kind of political party system we have known in this country.[40]

But most of all, our party system appears to be a reflection of the people whom it is intended to represent. If ours is not a responsible party system, it is perhaps because most Americans are not prepared to support ideological and internally disciplined parties. While most adults, even today, continue to express a loyalty to one party or the other, "we cannot (thereby) conclude . . . that (they approve) of parties in general as desirable institutions."[41] To the contrary, from the time of Madison, Americans have been quick to embrace the spirit of party reform, and their feelings toward party institutions have been strangely ambivalent. Sometimes criticizing parties for creating unnecessary conflict, other times blaming them for not taking distinct and contrary policy positions, Americans seem not to know exactly what they want of these important representative institutions.[42]

While Americans have usually been willing to "reform" the parties in order to reduce the injury that otherwise might be inflicted upon "popular" government, recent reform efforts are directed more explicitly at making these bodies more "representative" of the mass public.[43] This, of course, presumes that the parties have been intolerably unrepresentative—perhaps even that the electorate has become disenchanted with the centrist tendencies of the major parties. Notwithstanding the rejection of such presidential hopefuls as Goldwater, Wallace, and McGovern, it has become fashionable to accept the "not a dime's worth of difference" dictum—to characterize our parties and their leaders as

unable or unwilling to reflect what has become a dominant polarization
in the electorate, or to represent previously excluded groups whose
preferences may not be easily moderated in the process of electoral
aggregation.

· The presumed polarization of the American electorate is an inte-
gral part of the processes of sociopolitical change with which we have
been concerned throughout this study. In the past, the content and the
social bases of political conflict have undergone periodic adjustments,
as both people and parties have reacted to new issues and intense
cleavages in such a way that the character of American politics has
been fundamentally altered. The characteristic result of such periods
has been a "realignment" of the bases of support for the major parties
around new ideological and social divisions.[44] This is a topic which
we will consider in greater depth in the following chapter, but it is
important to note that the period since 1964 seemingly has witnessed
many of the phenomena that normally accompany realigning eras--the
emergence of new issues which divide the electorate differently than
the issues which dominated the period from about 1928 to 1964; a
greater attentiveness to these issues, and to politics generally, by
citizens who believe that they have a personal stake in the resolution
of new national problems; and the emergence of a new set of political
leaders--often operating outside the mainstream of their parties--who
articulate these new concerns and provide a vehicle by which they
might be placed on the national agenda.

Many of the apparent changes that have taken place in the electorate

in recent years seem to suggest that people may be ready for the emergence of a more ideological party system. If the electorate has become politicized, if mass attitudes on political issues have become more consistent (and thus more polarized), and if a "mentality of demand" has produced a wider range of national problems for which government is expected to provide solutions, then it would scarcely be surprising that a politics of accommodation would no longer be judged as tolerable. This is the essence of Miller's argument, reviewed above, that a polarization of the mass public has made centrist politics a source of intense political discontent in the United States. This unpleasant situation presumably is aggravated by the dispersion of educational opportunities through the electorate, a process which results in a heightened salience for participatory norms: as more people come to possess the political skills and psychic resources for "effective" political involvement, fewer and fewer will be satisfied with the participatory opportunities available through "umbrella" political parties.[45]

In sum, the current dissatisfaction with our party system is seen as a product of changes in the character and the demands of large numbers of citizens. These changes are, in turn, stimulated by the emergence of new issues which both politicize the citizenry and immobilize a party system whose basic rationale for existence has faded with the passage of time—and which is unable to provide expression for the demands which are coming to be placed upon it.

The arguments which we have just reviewed embrace an entire literature which is only in the process of understanding the nature of sociopolitical change in contemporary American life. Any attempt to resolve all of the controversies posed by empirical research would carry us far beyond the scope of this study. There is a desperate need for some unifying framework which could subsume, and hopefully provide a basis for the resolution of, these controversies and the concepts contained therein. As it is, we are not entirely certain what changes have taken place in recent years, much less what their origins might be.

What we can do is examine the ways in which our respondents regard American parties, and see whether this has any apparent relationship to feelings of political discontent. Somewhat paradoxically, Gerald Pomper has concluded that the events and issues of the 1960s produced a sharper differentiation between our two major parties—and that this differentiation was rather clearly perceived by a significant proportion of the electorate. More than that, Pomper discovered a growing correspondence between individuals' issue preferences and their partisan affiliations—perhaps reflecting the emergence of a politics quite different from that of the so-called "issueless" 1950s.[46] As a result of changes at both the elite and mass levels, the period from 1964 to 1972 appeared to produce a movement away from voting based primarily on partisan factors, with issues coming to play a seemingly greater role in the voter's decisional calculus.[47]

Are these conclusions compatible? And can the greater party

differentiation documented by Pomper be understood as part of the same

era which has produced higher levels of partisan independence, more

frequent defection from established party loyalties, and an epidemic

of split-ticket voting? Pomper himself notes the apparent contra-

diction.

> For their part, voters have shown themselves ready
> to respond, to realign their loyalties, to comprehend
> abstract belief systems, and to fit their votes to their
> ideology. Their response depends on the stimuli they
> receive from the political environment. . . . Confused
> voters reflect confused parties; clarity among the
> voters follows from clearheaded parties.[48]

Once again, it appears that the parties are the culprit of this piece.

Yet the political leadership is not irrelevant to the popular response

of the 1960s.

What we have seen, however, is a growing tendency for both candi-

dates and their supporters to dissociate themselves from the party

organizations and, in many cases, to base their candidacies on ideo-

logical appeals. The success of such candidates has been enhanced by

the continuing reforms aimed at making the parties more "open," the

increasing financial independence of candidates from their party organi-

zations, and the growing influence of better-educated issue-oriented

activists who have little interest in winning elections at the expense

of their deeply felt ideological convictions.[49] While Americans have

yet to elect a Goldwater, a Wallace, a McCarthy, a McGovern, or a

Reagan to the presidency, the impact of their candidacies--and of others,

including at the sub-presidential level--has introduced a new set of

issues into our politics which the parties themselves seem incapable

of making their own.[50]

Thus, in our attempt to guage the importance of perceived parti-
san and policy expression for political discontent, we must be care-
ful to separate perceptions of the parties from perceptions of the
candidates; and we must attempt to identify those sets of issues which
have been least effectively assimilated into the traditional two-party
framework in this country. This latter effort will once again carry
us into a rather contentious body of research--that concerning the
belief structures of the mass public. For the moment, however, let
us examine the degree to which citizens perceive party differences to
exist in the first place. Do citizens believe that the alternatives
represented by our parties present voters with a significant choice
at election time?

In order to answer this question, we must have indicators which
reflect perceptions of choice independently of citizens' feelings about
the adequacy of that choice. There are a number of questions which
tap these perceptions in the 1972 election study. Most directly, res-
pondents were asked whether they believed there were "any important
differences in what the Republicans and Democrats stand for." Only
about 51 percent believed that there were important differences--but
their mean level of cynicism differed scarcely at all (and actually
was a tiny bit higher) than for the group which perceived no differ-
ences.[51] Much the same pattern was evident among respondents who be-
lieved that one party or the other would make a difference in whether
"your family would get along better financially in the next four years."[52]

Finally, respondents were asked what was the "single most important problem" facing the country--and whether one party or the other was more likely to be "helpful" on this problem. Only about 54 percent of those who were able to name a problem believed that either the Democrats or the Republicans were better able to deal with it; this group was only slightly more trusting than those who named neither party.[53]

Though the evidence is less than overwhelming, one gathers that the presence of partisan choice is hardly sufficient to encourage positive support for the government. This is not in itself very surprising, since "choice" is not the same as "expression"--the latter concept implying the ability of the political system to accommodate the individual's particular values or preferences. But before asking whether (and for whom) policy expression was available in 1972, let us pursue the idea of partisan differentiation a bit further--this time considering the specific choices which were open to the electorate in that election.

For example, respondents were asked to place both major parties and their candidates on a "feeling thermometer" which was scored from zero to 100 "degrees." The higher a respondent placed a party or candidate, the more "warmly" he or she felt toward that attitude object.[54] A comparison of feelings toward the two candidates, and feelings toward the two parties, provides us with measures of candidate and partisan differentiation, or perceived choice.[55] The distribution of responses for these comparisons are depicted in Table 3. If there is any one conclusion which compels itself from these data, it is that Americans

TABLE 3

PERCEIVED PARTY AND CANDIDATE DIFFERENTIATION IN 1972[a]

Party Differentiation Score:		Candidate Differentiation Score:	
0	38%	0	11%
1-4	32	1-4	24
5-9	20	5-9	30
10-19	10	10-19	35
	100%		100%

$\bar{X}$=3.6

N=1009

r with political
trust=.13

$\bar{X}$=7.8

N=1269

r with political
trust, n.s.

Feeling thermometer, Democrats   : $\bar{X}$=13.4 (N=1019)

Feeling thermometer, Republicans: $\bar{X}$=12.6 (N=1015)

Feeling thermometer, McGovern   : $\bar{X}$=10.1 (N=1271)

Feeling thermometer, Nixon   : $\bar{X}$=13.3 (N=1304)

[a]Scores based on responses to feeling thermometer items for "Democrats," "Republicans," "George McGovern," and "Richard Nixon."

NOTE: These figures describe form 2 respondents only.

saw little to recommend one political party--either party--over the
other in 1972. To the extent that these measures tap perceived party
differentiation, we may conclude that most citizens would be unlikely
to disagree with the "tweedledum-tweedledee" characterization of
American parties.[56] It could be, of course, that many citizens are
oblivious to any need for party conflict or differentiation, and that
they regard both parties warmly. The figures in Table 3 indicate that
this is true up to a point: both parties are scored, on the average,
above the midpoint of the continuum represented by the thermometer.
But neither do the figures suggest a consensus that both parties are
deserving of our praise.[57]

A rather different picture emerges when we turn our attention to
perceived differentiation between the two presidential candidates in
1972. Most respondents are considerably more likely to rate one
candidate more highly than the other--though even in 1972, nearly 35
percent saw little or no difference between the candidates.[58] It is
nonetheless true that candidate differentiation was evident in this
election, and its presence may have contributed to a belief among citi-
zens that partisan expression was available to them.

What effects do these perceptions have upon political trust? Not
much, and the direction of the relationship is a bit of a surprise:
those who differentiate the least in their evaluations of the parties
are more likely to feel trustful toward the government (r=.13), more
externally efficacious (r=.12),[59] and more likely to have higher levels
of system support (r=.22). Perceptions of candidate differentiation

seem to matter little or not at all for these sentiments. To the extent, then, that one's feelings toward the political parties are polarized (and few respondents fit that description), the probable result is a stronger sense of political discontent.

. But this statement is misleading because it does not go quite far enough. A closer look informs us that it is Democratic identifiers who are most likely to perceive party differences on this measure.[60] We might suspect that opposition to both Nixon and his policies would be concentrated among this group--and a negative thermometer rating of Nixon is much more closely associated with both political cynicism (r=.31) and the other affect variables. The pattern is even sharper when we look at intended McGovern voters: they are considerably more likely to score higher on the party differentiation measure ($\bar{X}$=5.2, compared to 3.9 for intended Nixon voters); they are quite likely to feel less than warmly toward Nixon (r between intended vote and Nixon rating=.65); and, as we have seen, negative feelings toward Nixon are associated with political discontent.[61]

Finally, we might note that it is the very conservative and the very liberal (as respondents choose to label themselves) who are most likely to differentiate between the parties--and to feel cynical. The perception of party differences is not equally distributed throughout all opinion categories.[62]

These data suggest that Americans may be less than fully prepared to support a responsible party system in the strictest sense. But, while the presence of partisan differentiation does not in itself provide

a motivation for citizens to support their political system, we have
seen some clues which suggest that the policy values embodied by a
party system may provide a stronger basis for political support or dis-
content. We cannot be certain that the relationships discussed above
represent such substantive concerns; they may be the result of a re-
flexive partisan reaction among supporters of the "out" party and its
candidates. Our next task, therefore, is to attempt to identify the
relevance of policy expression for political discontent. Hypothesis
1b in the previous chapter stated that dissatisfaction with the "choices"
provided by American parties would be associated with feelings of po-
litical cynicism. But the evidence considered so far suggests that
partisan expression--considered independently of the particular choices
embodied by parties and their nominees--is not a significant source
of support and discontent.

Before going further, we should consider the relationship between
perceived partisan expression and citizen attitudes about and behavior
with respect to the political party system. It seems reasonable to
suspect that the recent trends toward nonpartisan attitudes and be-
havior represent one manifestation of the political discontent which
has become so widespread since the early 1960s. As one presumed source
of political cynicism, it was expected that a belief that our party
system is an inadequate vehicle for the expression of citizen values
would encourage citizens to reject the party system in various ways.
We may still find that partisan expression, viewed with an eye toward

the policy values which citizens expect the parties to represent, is

an important source of political discontent. But the perceived absence

of partisan choice or differentiation does not itself produce feelings

of negative support.

. Does the absence of choice help to explain the growth of parti-

san independence in recent years? While such figures do not resolve

the cause-and-effect relationship between these sets of beliefs, it is

quite clear that independents do not see much of a difference between

our major political parties. A full 70 percent of the independents in

our sample do not believe that either party is more likely to solve

the nation's "most important problem"; 72 percent did not think their

family would benefit financially by the presidential victory of either

party; and 65 percent did not believe there were any important differ-

ences in what the parties stood for.[63] There were a great many Demo-

crats and Republicans who shared these beliefs, but the independents

stand apart in the degree to which they see our major parties as

being cut from the same cloth.

Like other groups in the electorate, the independents in 1972 were

able to make a sharper differentiation between the competing candidates

than between the political parties. But the level of differentiation

--between both parties and candidates--was significantly smaller than

the levels reflected among either group of identifiers. If such be-

liefs do not actually produce higher levels of discontent among indep-

endents,[64] they are quite clearly a reflection (if not a cause) of

that independence itself. Thus, hypothesis 1b(1)--which states that

dissatisfaction with partisan alternatives should be associated with weaker partisan loyalties--is supported by the data. But while the choice to dissociate from the parties may result from a belief that the parties are not sufficiently distinct, the adoption of a cynical posture among independents is much more closely tied to the specific policy values which independents believe that the parties--particularly the "in" (Republican) party--are failing to articulate. Measures of issue "distance" or "proximity" will be developed below in order to assess the relationship between perceived policy expression and political discontent. For the moment, let us simply note that there is a stronger association between perceived distance from the Republican candidate and cynicism among independents than is true for either Democrats or Republicans.[65] This is true despite the fact that independents as a group placed themselves closer to the president's position--and farther from that of the Democratic candidate--than did Democratic identifiers. In other words, they were not the group most likely to believe that the presidential party deprived them of an opportunity to express their policy values in the electoral arena; yet they were the group most likely to respond with cynicism when such opportunities were believed to be absent.

How, then, may we assess the relationship between these two suspected manifestations of political discontent? It would probably be inaccurate to say that cynicism and nonpartisanship share the same origins. In the first place, strength of partisanship is not linearly related to political trust. The salience of party (and candidate)

differentiation is apparently greater for the decision to become or to remain independent than it is for the development of political cynicism.[66] As we expect to be true for partisans as well, political discontent is much more clearly a function of the particular policy values which independents expect to be represented in the electoral and policymaking arenas. But the evidence also suggests that those forces which contribute to an independent stance, also enhance the likelihood that cynicism will result when policy values are not believed to be adequately represented.

If we wish to talk about contemporary trends, we might speculate that parties have indeed been unable to accommodate the new issues and new concerns of voters which developed during the 1960s and early 1970s. As these failures mounted, at least in the eyes of much of the electorate, some voters abandoned their long-standing partisan commitments, while many more younger voters saw no reason to make such a commitment in the first place. As specific policy dissatisfactions grew more intense and more widespread, many voters came to regard their government, its leaders, and its institutions in unfavorable terms. Most of all, this may be true of independents--who are not necessarily more cynical or more likely to believe themselves deprived of policy expression, but who are most likely to withdraw their support from the government when such feelings of deprivation develop. Without feelings of attachment to partisan institutions, one potentially important constraint on the development of political discontent is removed. Add to this a more highly educated (and perhaps more demanding) electorate

which feels itself to be less in need of the services of "action inter-mediaries"--particularly unresponsive or unrepresentative ones--and we find what seems to be a declining potential for demand satisfaction and positive political support.

. The accuracy of this scenario is uncertain, though it is supported at least in part by some of the literature cited throughout this study. Our own evidence suggests that partisan independence is significant for the development of--but not necessarily directly related to--political discontent. What, then, is the importance of policy expression for discontent in the electorate as a whole?

Political Trust and Policy Expression

One of the most vigorous controversies in public opinion research centers around the question of whether political issues are salient--and whether they may have become more salient--to the broad mass of American voters. We already have seen that early studies found most Americans to hold inconsistent and unstable opinions across a variety of issues.[67] In those few instances where higher levels of consistency (or constraint) were observed, the issues involved seemed to be those which were the least removed from citizens' daily concerns.

> A repeated finding from social-psychological research on
> attitude change and attitude structure is that inconsis-
> tent or dissonant beliefs are frequently held in areas
> of people's lives distant from their daily concerns. . . .
> (W)hen the salience or centrality of the psychological
> object is heightened, pressures are brought on individuals
> to force their inconsistent beliefs into harmony. . . .[68]

And we also have seen that more recent research has come to some

rather different conclusions about the structure of mass beliefs and,

consequently, about the salience of contemporary issues and events to

the average voter. Specifically, a number of forces have been said to

have contributed to the manifestly higher levels of consistency wit-

nessed since 1964: a succession of dramatic events (civil rights,

urban riots, war, campus disorder, political assassination, economic

recession, energy shortages, governmental corruption) which impressed

themselves upon the public consciousness; the widespread power of the

mass media to bring these images into the homes of virtually all citi-

zens; the more obviously personal impact which many issues (e.g.,

busing, inflation and unemployment) have upon citizens' lives; higher

levels of education and, with this, the ability to consume and to

order information about important events and issues; and the greater

clarity with which our political leadership--individual candidates

and spokesmen more than the political parties themselves--has responded

to events.

In other words, there are many factors which are believed to be

important in determining the character of mass opinion in any given

era. But foremost among the explanations for recent change has been

the apparently greater salience which citizens have come to attach to

politics and political issues.[69] To this we might add that, with a

broader level of societal affluence, many citizens are believed to have

turned their attention away from immediate concerns of subsistence and

toward a broader range of problems to which government is now expected

to be responsive. This is, of course, the hypothesized "mentality of

demand" which we have discussed previously.

Whether or not these patterns are accepted as an accurate portrayal of contemporary American politics, it generally is clear that the 1960s saw the emergence of a new set of political issues--issues which were qualitatively different from the economic conflicts that dominated the period since 1929. Opinions on these new issues seemed to cleave the electorate in ways rather different from the traditional patterns of the New Deal era, thereby encouraging some voters to abandon long-standing partisan loyalties in order to support the opposite party's candidates on matters of principle or self-interest. The inability of the parties to differentiate themselves adequately on these new issues was often seen to be at the root of declining levels of partisanship and the increased frequency of split-ticket voting.

Still, there are almost as many different interpretations about the structure of public opinion today as there are empirical studies on the subject. For example, some argue that citizens generally have managed to assimilate the new issues into a belief structure that resembles a liberal-conservative ordering dimension.

> Not only has constraint increased among traditional attitudes, but also as new issues have merged in the 1960s, they have been incorporated by the mass public into what now appears to be a broad liberal/conservative ideology. Liberals on traditional issues tend to be more liberal on new issues; conservatives are more conservative on these issues.[70]

Similarly, Miller and his associates, using the 1972 SRC study, use factor analysis to isolate "four general issue dimensions defined by policies conerning the war, and economic, social, and cultural issues."[71]

But they go on to add that

> the voter's self-location on the liberal-conservative
> scale was clearly relevant to all four factors. This
> suggests a degree of consistency in issue attitudes that
> has traditionally been associated with an ideological
> interpretation of politics.[72]

From such findings, one might conclude that the American electorate

has been primed to align (or realign) itself in response to party

divisions which reflect this dominant left-right attitudinal dimension.

Other studies, however, have painted a rather different picture

of mass opinion. On the one hand, there are those who continue to

argue that public opinion is largely fragmented, composed of numerous

"issue publics" whose opinions on issues salient to their daily lives

may be deeply rooted and consistent--but that most issues are not

salient to most people.[73] Others consider recent changes to be pri-

marily "socially induced," i.e., the result of more meaningful politi-

cal rhetoric and more lucid "belief-packaging" on the part of elites

whose belief systems are being transmitted to most of the rest of us.

Such belief systems, largely unsupported by adequate levels of infor-

mation and "contextual knowledge," result in higher observed levels of

consistency--but not in any widespread "ideological thinking" such as

that described by Nie and Miller.[74] Finally, there are those who ac-

cept the idea that new (and perhaps old) issues have become salient to

many citizens, but who emphasize that opinions on these issues cut

across traditional opinion groupings and traditional partisan divisions

in such a way that a two-party system could not effectively aggregate

interests even if it wanted to do so.[75] This situation presumably has

been aggravated by the absence of a <u>crisis</u> issue which would render

other controversies secondary, and which would force our parties to

respond to a single dominant cleavage such as those which characterized

realigning eras in our political history.

.

Once again, we must try to extract ourselves from this controversy

before it renders us helpless to pursue our understanding of political

discontent.[76] But neither is the controversy meaningless for our pur-

poses, especially since we are interested in determining just which

issue dimensions are most salient, and to whom. While it is important

to retain a measure of skepticism about the more dramatic conclusions

reached in recent belief systems research, we will use one of its

assumptions for our own purposes. That is, to the extent that citizens

manifest relatively higher levels of attitudinal consistency across a

range of political issues, we will assume that these issues are <u>salient</u>

to the individual--that they occupy at least a moderately high degree

of <u>centrality</u> in his or her belief structure. The absence of consis-

tency has been taken, by Converse and others, to signify the irrele-

vance of political issues for much of the population. When we find

consistency to be present, we will assume that the opposite conclusion

is warranted.[77]

Our measure of attitudinal constraint will use individual-level

data in order to generalize about societal phenomena. In the absence

of materials which could be used to understand respondents' justifica-

tions for their belief patternings, we will be forced to recognize that

our estimates may understate the extent to which such justifications--

idiosyncratic though they may be--are present in the electorate. Our

assumption about the relationship between constraint and centrality

presumes that the primary sources of belief structures are psychologi-

cal. Many, again including Converse, would contest this assumption,

arguing instead that attitudinal constraint may have predominantly

social origins. This includes the idea that recent changes are the

result of more effective "belief-packaging" by elites, and more wide-

spread communication of these packages by the media.[78] Someone must,

however, be on the receiving end of these communications, and if ob-

served patterns are the result of forces external to the individual,

this fact is not necessarily damaging to our thesis. It is true that

if the logical connection between beliefs is not perceived by the indi-

vidual, perhaps due to a faulty information base, then our use of

attitudinal consistency as a measure of salience or politicization would

be unjustified.[79] Still, one wonders whether the inattentive or the un-

informed citizen would be likely to receive leadership cues even when

they are available. It is the interface between leadership and citizen

behavior which lies at the heart of the revisionist literature, and it

is at this interface that we expect to find a partial explanation for

political discontent.

Our strategy will be to approach the identification of salient

issue dimensions without presuming that they will be part of a single

ideological dimension. Having taken many of the same steps as did

Miller and his associates, I have reached many of the same conclusions.

The first step was to enter a number of issue-belief measures from the 1972 study into a factor analysis,[80] the results of which produced four factors approximating those described by Miller. Following the identification of four basic issue dimensions, each of them was examined individually for internal consistency and face validity. The four dimensions which will be utilized in this analysis are the following:

> (1) SOCIAL: busing, rights of accused persons, government aid to minorities, civil rights, and desegregation;
> (2) WAR: Vietnam, amnesty for draft evaders, military spending;
> (3) LIFESTYLE: legalization of marijuana, women's rights, abortion;
> (4) ECONOMICS: government guarantee of jobs and a good standard of living, government health insurance.

The analysis upon which these scales were derived is described in Appendix 3.[81]

The figures presented in the appendix, and those in Table 4, indicate that many Americans possess reasonably consistent sets of beliefs about the major issues of American politics. Is this the same as saying that consistency is "high"? The likelihood of reaching such a conclusion depends very much upon one's standards or expectations. Obviously, there are many people whose beliefs do not conform to the pattern manifested for the population as a whole. In addition, scale values for each dimension were computed only for those respondents who gave a substantive response to each item in the particular cluster; most of the questions contained a "filter" which permitted respondents to indicate that they had not given much thought to an issue. Thus, the

TABLE 4

INTERCORRELATIONS (r) BETWEEN ISSUE BELIEFS AND OTHER POLITICAL ATTITUDES

	WAR	LIFESTYLE	ECONOMICS	Liberal-Conservative	Intended 1972 Vote	Party ID	Nixon Rating	McGovern Rating
SOCIAL	.48	.41	.41	.46	.41	.16	.39	-.40
WAR	--	.33	.35	.47	.52	.27	.43	-.44
LIFESTYLE		--	.15	.32	.16	n.s.	.22	-.17
ECONOMICS			--	.37	.39	.24	.31	-.38

N varies between 656 and 1148

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 1 respondents only.

figures in Table 4, as well as others involving our issue measures, exclude those respondents to whom an issue is manifestly not salient. Were these respondents not given an opportunity to select out of the questioning, as has been the case in some of the earlier voting studies, our.estimates of consistency would surely be lower.[82]

What is more important for our purposes, however, is not an estimate of issue constraint, but rather an assessment of the importance of issue beliefs for political discontent. Our strategy gives us at least some confidence that the issues included are of some importance to most of the respondents whose scores we are using. The apparent relevance of these beliefs is underscored by the figures in Table 4. In the first place, attitudes on each of the four issue dimensions are positively associated--an economic liberal tends to be a social liberal, a Vietnam "hawk" is more likely to oppose the legalization of marijuana and the extension of rights to women, and so forth. As Miller et al. reported, attitudes on each issue dimension are also associated with self-placement on a liberal-conservative continuum, and with intended presidential vote choice in 1972.[83] We also can see that three of the dimensions (excluding LIFESTYLE) are associated with party identification, Democrats tending to be more liberal than Republicans. The magnitude of these coefficients tend, however, to be smaller than the other relationships depicted in Table 4--a finding which may have considerable significance for our party system. Finally, each issue dimension is correlated with evaluations of the two presidential candidates--liberals tending to feel more favorably toward McGovern than do conservatives,

and conservatives more positive about Nixon than are liberals.

The basic conclusion that we can draw from these data is that there is a substantial subset of the American population for whom matters of public policy tend to be relatively salient. Some issues are undoubtedly more salient to some citizens than are others, and it is in this variety that we might expect to find some of the different routes by which individuals arrive at the conclusion that their government is not to be trusted. We must, however, note the covariation among issue dimensions and ask whether one or two sets of issues really form the crux of the American public's policy orientation. When scores on the three other dimensions are simultaneously controlled (Table 5), each issue usually retains a significant--though reduced--association with such variables as liberalism-conservatism, party identification, intended presidential vote, and candidate evaluation. The LIFESTYLE factor is weakest of all, but this could be so for any of several reasons external to the individuals for whom such issues are salient.[84]

Still, we must be cautious in inferring that these issues are salient, even to the respondents for whom we have complete data. The coefficients depicted in Tables 4 and 5 could reflect an artificial consistency, resulting less from the importance of the issues than from the importance of partisanship. It may be, for example, that many respondents are merely adopting the policy preferences of their favored candidate or party ("persuasion"). Later, when we consider the "distance" which respondents perceive to separate their own beliefs from those of the candidates or parties, we might have either this problem,

TABLE 5

PARTIAL CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ISSUE BELIEFS AND OTHER POLITICAL ATTITUDES[a]

	Liberal- Conservative	Intended 1972 Vote	Party ID	Nixon Rating	McGovern Rating
SOCIAL	.20	.16	n.s.	.17	-.17
WAR	.27	.38	.21	.27	-.28
LIFESTYLE	.13	-.07	-.12	n.s.	n.s.
ECONOMICS	.18	.21	.15	.13	-.21
	N=651	N=691	N=691	N=691	N=691

[a]Coefficients represent third-order partials with all other issue
dimensions controlled.

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 1 respondents only.

or its opposite: a person may wrongfully attribute his or her own
preferences onto political objects which are favored for other reasons
("projection").

These are problems for which we can offer no definitive solutions.
We must, however, attempt to establish that issue preferences are more
than an artifact of party loyalties. We might begin by noting that
the relationship between issue position and party identification is
far from overwhelming. As we can see from Table 5, for example, only
three policy dimensions have significant independent effects on parti-
sanship--with one coefficient actually being of the opposite sign from
the others. In addition, the evidence presented in Table 6 shows that,
with very few exceptions, issue beliefs seem to be associated with the
behavior and political evaluations of all partisan groups.[85] While
the magnitude of these correlations will certainly decline when other
issue dimensions are controlled, the consistency of the relationships
supports the belief that we have tapped meaningful and salient policy
grounds upon which many citizens may choose to evaluate their govern-
ment.[86]

One might note from Table 6 that, although issue beliefs generally
are significant among Republicans, the correlations for this group tend
to be weaker than those for Democrats. One possible explanation for
this is that Republicans are relatively less sensitive to the issue
controversies that marked the 1972 campaign. Another possibility is
that the lower correlations reflect a greater amount of attitudinal
consensus on these issues among Republicans than among Democrats. We
have seen that some studies report a high degree of polarization in the

TABLE 6

INTERCORRELATIONS (r) BETWEEN ISSUE BELIEFS AND
OTHER POLITICAL ATTITUDES, BY PARTY

	Liberal- Conservative	Intended 1972 Vote	Nixon Rating	McGovern Rating
DEMOCRATS				
SOCIAL	.53	.46	.43	-.45
WAR	.46	.50	.45	-.40
LIFESTYLE	.38	.26	.30	-.25
ECONOMICS	.31	.38	.32	-.38
N varies between 319 and 584				
INDEPENDENTS				
SOCIAL	.45	.27	.36	-.28
WAR	.50	.53	.24	-.41
LIFESTYLE	.60	n.s.	.20	n.s.
ECONOMICS	.34	.33	.29	-.25
N varies between 52 and 136				
REPUBLICANS				
SOCIAL	.23	.18	.15	-.23
WAR	.25	.33	.24	-.31
LIFESTYLE	.18	n.s.	.18	-.10
ECONOMICS	.23	.17	n.s.	-.20
N varies between 265 and 410				

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 1 respondents only.

electorate, especially among Democratic identifiers. Miller and others have attributed much of the rise in political discontent to this polarization--and to the parties' and government's inability to reflect it. Let us see if these conclusions are warranted.

.

Was the American electorate polarized in 1972? Do moose have lips? The answer depends partly upon the definition of the term, and I am not aware of any commonly accepted standard by which it might be assessed. Beyond this, our estimates of issue polarization will depend upon the "issue space" which is tapped by the survey questions we use (e.g., if opposition to school busing denotes social conservatism, most Americans are very conservative). And, as always, we are dependent on how the respondents themselves interpret our measuring devices; a response of "5" on a 7-point continuum may mean entirely different things to different people.

With such limitations in mind, we at least can examine and compare response distributions for various groups in 1972, hoping that in the process we might find differences that could help us to explain political discontent. Table 7 shows the sample means, as well as the mean scores for certain partisan groups, for each of our four issue scales. At first glance, the figures do not appear to reflect a polarized electorate--at least not one which is polarized along partisan lines. Republicans tend to be more conservative than are Democrats (except on LIFESTYLE), but not by a terribly wide margin. Nor do independents · appear to be an extremist lot crying out for someone to represent them.[87]

TABLE 7

ISSUE POLARIZATION IN 1972[a]

		Total Sample	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	McGovern Democrats	Nixon Democrats	Nixon Republicans
SOCIAL		23.1	22.1	22.9	24.4	18.4	25.6	24.3
(range:	5-35)	N=843	N=422	N=81	N=331	N=172	N=143	N=278
WAR		13.7	12.2	14.0	15.5	9.1	15.5	15.8
(range:	3-21)	N=918	N=460	N=110	N=338	N=189	N=157	N=280
LIFESTYLE		12.6	12.6	12.9	12.5	11.5	14.2	12.4
(range:	3-21)	N=1163	N=598	N=138	N=412	N=246	N=187	N=334
ECONOMICS		8.1	7.4	8.1	9.3	6.2	9.2	9.5
(range:	2-14)	N=1024	N=528	N=120	N=367	N=226	N=165	N=297

[a]The figures presented are mean scores for the indicated group. Lower scores reflect "liberal" responses; higher scores reflect "conservative" responses.

NOTE: These scores describe form 1 respondents only.

When we separate Democrats favoring Nixon from those favoring

McGovern, however, we get a sense of the polarization described by

others.[88] On every issue dimension, but particularly on WAR and SOCIAL,

there is a considerable gulf between these two groups, with Nixon Dem-

ocrats tending to be much more conservative. In fact, on the SOCIAL

and LIFESTYLE scales, they are, on balance, more conservative than

Nixon Republicans. Differences between McGovern Republicans and Nixon

Republicans differ every bit as sharply as do the two Democratic fac-

tions, but the former group is so tiny that we may regard its members

as anomalies.[89]

We should recall the argument that it is issue polarization, not

inherently but as a product of the centrist tendencies of American pol-

itics, which has been seen as a major cause of recent trends in politi-

cal cynicism. Are our liberals and conservatives more cynical than the

moderates? The evidence is mixed, as we can see from Table 8. For

SOCIAL and, to a lesser extent, for LIFESTYLE, Miller's model of "cynics

of the left" and "cynics of the right" seems somewhat appropriate.[90]

For WAR and ECONOMICS, however, there is a monotonic increase in cyni-

cism as one moves "ideologically" from right to left.[91] And in no

instance may we characterize "extremists" as a great deal more cynical

than are the moderates.

For comparison, the distributions of external efficacy and approval

of unconventional political tactics are also shown in Table 8. As we

can see, relatively higher levels of external efficacy are character-

istic of WAR and ECONOMIC conservatives, and LIFESTYLE and SOCIAL

TABLE 8

ISSUE POLARIZATION AND POLITICAL DISCONTENT[a]

ISSUE DIMENSION (range of scores)	Political Trust	External Efficacy	Extra-System Orientation
SOCIAL	(r=n.s.)	(r=.17,N=843)	(r=.48,N=843)
Liberal (5-14)	19.4 (N=97)	13.1 (N=97)	7.2 (N=97)
Moderate (15-25)	16.8 (N=402)	12.7 (N=402)	10.6 (N=402)
Conservative (26-35)	18.2 (N=344)	10.7 (N=344)	12.0 (N=344)
WAR	(r=.18,N=918)	(r=.06,N=918)	(r=.41,N=918)
Liberal (3-8)	19.2 (N=161)	11.9 (N=161)	8.3 (N=161)
Moderate (9-15)	18.0 (N=328)	11.5 (N=328)	10.9 (N=328)
Conservative (16-21)	17.0 (N=429)	12.4 (N=429)	12.0 (N=429)
LIFESTYLE	(r=n.s.)	(r=.17,N=1163)	(r=.44,N=1163)
Liberal (3-8)	18.4 (N=215)	12.7 (N=244)	8.6 (N=244)
Moderate (9-15)	17.3 (N=487)	11.9 (N=558)	11.2 (N=558)
Conservative (16-21)	17.7 (N=312)	10.4 (N=361)	12.4 (N=361)

TABLE 8 - Continued

ISSUE DIMENSION (range of scores)	Political Trust	External Efficacy	Extra-System Orientation
ECONOMICS	(r=.13,N=885)	(r=.11,N=1024)	(r=.29,N=1024)
Liberal (2-5)	18.8 (N=226)	10.4 (N=270)	9.5 (N=270)
Moderate (6-10)	17.5 (N=382)	12.0 (N=438)	11.1 (N=438)
Conservative (11-14)	17.1 (N=277)	12.3 (N=316)	11.9 (N=316)

[a]These figures are mean scores for the scales indicated. Low scores indicate high trust, low efficacy, and approval of unconventional political behavior.

NOTE: These scores describe form 1 respondents only.

liberals--the latter being the two dimensions where liberalism is most strongly associated with higher education. For extra-system orientation, the trend is unambiguous: liberals are more supportive of unconventional tactics than are conservatives. We will look more closely at these patterns in the following chapter.

On balance, then, we must reject the "cynics of the left/right" thesis as an oversimplification, although it does appear to have some validity for some sets of issues. Was the American electorate polarized during the 1972 presidential campaign? Again, there is only modest support for such a contention, although when one centers upon the Democratic party it is hard to ignore the evidence of a substantial schism along liberal-conservative lines--particularly for issues concerning war, national defense, race, and social equality. If we moderate our language somewhat, we might describe 1972 as a year in which there was a lack of consensus in the mass public. With the exception of SOCIAL, where most citizens were to the right of center on our issue scale, there were substantial segments of the electorate who fell at virtually every point along the path from left to right on the issues of the day. This may conjure up images of the "inattentive" electorate of the 1950s, but we have found considerable evidence of consistency among specific issue beliefs and between issue beliefs and other measures of political opinion and behavior. If there is no consistent relationship--linear or curvilinear--between issue preference and political discontent, where might we look for common grievances among all ideological groups which could help us to understand their mutual

dissatisfaction with government?

The concept of "expression," as I have stated repeatedly, is intended to reflect the likelihood that demands must be made and left unmet in order for political discontent to develop. Having identified a set of apparently salient policy demands or expectations among a substantial segment of the population, we must determine the extent to which citizens perceive these demands as being responded to by political leaders and institutions. It is this "gap" between expectations and perceptions of political reality that should clarify the relationship between policy preferences and political discontent. As stated by hypothesis 1c in the previous chapter, dissatisfaction with government outputs should be associated with stronger feelings of political cynicism.

I have developed three different sets of "policy expression" measures to correspond with each of our four issue dimensions. As described in Appendix 1, respondents are asked to place themselves, both parties, and both presidential nominees along a 7-point continuum for several specific issues. Since not all of the issue questions making up our four scales permit us to compute "proximity" measures, our indicators of policy expression will be based upon a smaller set of items than we examined above. Nonetheless, there is at least one issue from each policy dimension which can be used to compute proximity measures, so all dimensions will be retained in the following analysis.[92] Thus, for each of the four dimensions, three sets of relational measures

were computed:

(1) <u>party and candidate differentiation</u>: perceived distance between Democrats and Republicans, and between McGovern and Nixon;

(2) <u>partisan policy expression</u>: perceived proximity between the respondent and Democrats, and between the respondent and Republicans; and

(3) <u>candidate policy expression</u>: perceived proximity between the respondent and McGovern, and between the respondent and Nixon.

The first of these measures corresponds to the party and candidate differentiation scores which were developed from the feeling thermometer questions. The purpose here was identical: to determine whether discontent was higher among citizens who saw little difference between the parties or the candidates. In this instance, we are able to provide some substance to citizens' perceptions since we can derive differentiation scores for four dimensions of public policy.[93] The conclusions are, however, quite similar to those we reached above. There is only a weak relationship between both party and candidate differentiation (on all dimensions) and political trust. And in all instances, the tendency is for those who perceive less differentiation to feel more trustful. But the correlations are persistently weak, and we again must question whether the presence of "choice" is itself a positive value for Americans.[94]

Perhaps, then, the concept of policy expression should refer to something more specific, i.e., to the belief that one's own preferences are afforded representation by <u>at</u> <u>least</u> <u>one</u> of the parties and/or their candidates. To what extent did our sample believe that such opportunities for expression were available to them in 1972? Again, the answer

is ambiguous since we have no clear standards with which to judge whether
expression is "high" or "low." An impressionistic interpretation of the
figures in Table 9 might be that most citizens were at least able to
identify one party and/or candidate which they preferred, but that they
did not always feel that their preferences were well represented by
this choice. On balance, the "attentive public" (if this is in fact the
segment of the population whose attitudes we are considering) seems
willing to place its opinions at least within hailing distance of both
parties and the Republican candidate on all dimensions. The Democratic
candidate fares less well, tending to be perceived as more distant from
the "average voter" than is his party. Once again, then, we find evi-
dence of a stronger candidate differentiation than party differentiation
--strongest of all for Vietnam and the SOCIAL dimension.[95]

Scores based upon the entire population are, however, misleading.
Table 9 provides some rather sharp distinctions between different par-
tisan and voting blocs. Once again, we see a rather dramatic distinc-
tion between Democrats who favored McGovern and those who intended to
vote for Nixon. The loyal Democrats are far more likely to believe
that their policy values are best represented by their party and its
nominee. Democratic defectors, on the other hand, are more likely to
place themselves closer, not only to Nixon, but also to the Republican
party on all four policy dimensions--a finding which is hard to reconcile
with the argument that citizens tend to project their own preferences
onto political objects which they favor for other reasons. This group
does, however, make a clear distinction between the Democratic party and

TABLE 9

PERCEIVED POLICY EXPRESSION IN 1972[a]

	Total Sample	McGovern Democrats	Nixon Democrats	Nixon Republicans
PARTISAN POLICY EXPRESSION				
SOCIAL (3 items, range: 0-18)				
Republican	5.2 (N=518)	7.9 (N=127)	4.5 (N=84)	3.7 (N=184)
Democratic	5.9 (N=481)	4.3 (N=125)	6.3 (N=76)	7.2 (N=164)
WAR (1 item, range: 0-6)				
Republican	1.7 (N=847)	3.1 (N=179)	1.2 (N=135)	0.9 (N=278)
Democratic	1.9 (N=817)	1.4 (N=181)	1.8 (N=130)	2.4 (N=260)
LIFESTYLE (2 items, range: 0-12)				
Republican	3.5 (N=669)	5.1 (N=166)	2.9 (N=109)	2.4 (N=211)
Democratic	3.5 (N=645)	3.2 (N=162)	3.4 (N=110)	3.7 (N=192)
ECONOMICS (2 items, range: 0-12)				
Republican	4.3 (N=635)	6.4 (N=168)	3.4 (N=98)	2.5 (N=201)
Democratic	4.2 (N=626)	2.7 (N=174)	4.3 (N=92)	5.5 (N=190)

TABLE 9 - Continued

	Total Sample	McGovern Democrats	Nixon Democrats	Nixon Republicans
CANDIDATE POLICY EXPRESSION				
SOCIAL (0-18)				
Nixon	5.3 (N=639)	8.6 (N=135)	4.2 (N=107)	3.4 (N=228)
McGovern	7.0 (N=532)	4.2 (N=135)	9.2 (N=82)	8.3 (N=169)
WAR (0-6)				
Nixon	1.7 (N=990)	3.1 (N=202)	1.3 (N=168)	0.9 (N=311)
McGovern	2.4 (N=939)	1.4 (N=203)	2.7 (N=158)	3.2 (N=291)
LIFESTYLE (0-12)				
Nixon	3.4 (N=766)	5.1 (N=172)	2.7 (N=129)	2.2 (N=244)
McGovern	3.8 (N=639)	2.8 (N=167)	4.8 (N=97)	4.3 (N=188)
ECONOMICS (0-12)				
Nixon	4.3 (N=655)	6.7 (N=164)	3.2 (N=102)	2.7 (N=209)
McGovern	4.9 (N=620)	2.6 (N=171)	6.0 (N=86)	6.5 (N=187)

[a]These figures are mean scores for the indicated group. Lower scores reflect closer perceived proximity to the party or candidate.

NOTE: These scores describe form 1 respondents only.

George McGovern; their policy views are seen as much more distant from the candidate than from his party.[96] Loyal Republicans parallel their Democratic counterparts by placing themselves closer--in fact, closer than do the Democrats--to their party and candidate.

·These estimates of policy expression are computed using respondents' perceptions of the policy positions of the parties and the candidates. How accurate are these estimates? Is there a tendency for citizens to "project" issue positions closer to their own onto political objects which they favor for non-policy reasons, while placing political objects toward which they are antagonistic farther away from themselves? A glance at the sample means for party and candidate placement items suggests a rather accurate collective perception by the electorate. The Democratic party is perceived as being more liberal than the Republican party on every issue for which we have data; Democrats fall somewhat to the left of center, Republicans somewhat to the right of center. Nixon tends to be perceived as falling very close to his party's position, while McGovern is seen as being to the left of his party. These patterns are a fairly accurate reflection of a Republican party dominated in 1972 by a single visible leader, contrasted against a rather contentious collection of would-be Democratic spokesmen.

Still, while our figures imply a high degree of aggregate consensus about the policy positions of the parties and their nominees, these statistics mask a good deal of individual-level variability. For example, McGovern Democrats see their party and candidate as being a little less liberal than do the Nixon Democrats or Nixon Republicans.[97] The

latter two groups, on the other hand, tend to place Nixon and the Republican party a bit closer to the center, with loyal Democrats seeing them as more conservative. And even within these groups there is variability in perceived party and candidate positions. Is this evidence of projection?

There can be no doubt that misperception occurs for many respondents, but there are several reasons why this may be true. For one, we again must recognize that the 7-point issue space will not be interpreted in the same way by all respondents. In addition, the typical citizen—particularly when he or she is attentive to politics—is likely to receive a variety of "cues" about the issue beliefs of different party leaders. This is also likely to be true of presidential candidates (often intentionally), although the choice in 1972 was probably less ambiguous than most. The result of this will be many different "definitions of the situation," and voter uncertainty is inevitable—particularly on new issues which cut across traditional partisan divisions, and which the parties may have been unable to make their own. It is hard to deny that, on many issues, "the public does not encounter a well-articulated set of choices that can be ranked along the left-right continuum."[98]

Does this mean that our measures of policy expression are hopelessly contaminated by misperception? In view of the fairly accurate aggregate perceptions we have noted, this seems to be an overstatement. In fact, there is a sense in which misperception is irrelevant to our thesis: if citizens perceive a discrepancy to exist between their own

values and political reality, it may make little difference whether the
discrepancy is real or imagined—we expect it to generate feelings of
political discontent. And yet if perceived discrepancies are more
imagined than real (or if they are simply rationalized on other grounds
or on the basis of misinformation), we must contend with the argument
cited earlier from Citrin:

> . . . "valence" issues such as inflation, economic pros-
> perity, the energy crisis, and honesty in government are
> uppermost in the public mind. On these issues, everyone
> agrees about the goals of public policy. . . . (R)esults,
> such as an improving economy, will do more to rebuild
> trust in government than the adoption of some particu-
> lar program or ideological orientation.[99]

In other words, "results" would remove the discrepancies perceived by
many citizens, even if these results were achieved through policy
actions that might not always conform to individual preferences.

Perhaps we should concentrate on some ambiguous measure of policy
satisfaction, rather than attempting to provide concrete referents such
as those embodied in our proximity measures. It seems to me, however,
that "results" often can be as variable in their meaning as our 7-point
scales. If everyone is agreed that we should have honesty in govern-
ment, there remain differences as to what kinds of behaviors are "dis-
honest." If an improving economy is a consensual goal, the trade-off
between inflation and unemployment may create disputes about when the
economy is "healthy" and when it is not. As long as energy problems
require uneven sacrifices from different groups (e.g., oil producers,
conservationists, the poor), the crisis probably cannot be resolved to
everyone's satisfaction.

The list could go on. But if the concept of "results" means different things to different people, we still must assess the damage which misperception does to our estimates of policy expression. That misperception occurs in some instances is undeniable. We might ask, however, why it occurs in some instances but not in others. There is a good deal of variability in the mean placement of parties and candidates--and in perceived proximity--as one moves from one issue to another. If misperception or projection is the dominant response pattern, we should expect it to be more uniform in its manifestations than it appears to be. More importantly, we might remember the opinions of the various partisan groups described in Table 9. Particularly for the Nixon Democrats, something has managed to cut through their partisan screen to produce a group quite different from the loyal Democrats. That "something" may include some of the issue controversies embodied by our measures of policy expression. We have found policy values to be associated with too many varieties of behavior and opinion to dismiss their relevance in American politics.[100] Are they also a source of political discontent?

I asked earlier whether perceived policy expression was "high" or "low" in 1972. We know that political cynicism was widespread, and if we establish that the one is associated with the other (as anticipated in hypothesis 1c), we might be able to infer that expression was at least not high "enough" for much of the population. A glance at Table 10 informs us that policy expression was indeed related to political

TABLE 10

INTERCORRELATIONS (r) BETWEEN POLICY EXPRESSION AND OTHER POLITICAL ATTITUDES[a]

PARTISAN POLICY EXPRESSION (Republican Party)	POLITICAL TRUST		LIBERAL-CONSERVATIVE		INTENDED VOTE		EXTRA-SYSTEM ORIENTATION	
	r	Partial[b]	r	Partial[b]	r	Partial[b]	r	Partial[b]
SOCIAL	.28	.07(n.s.)	-.38	n.s.	-.48	n.s.	-.28	n.s.
WAR	.32	.14	-.39	-.19	-.55	-.41	-.30	-.16
LIFESTYLE	.25	.08(n.s.)	-.31	-.12	-.42	-.11	-.33	-.15
ECONOMICS	.22	.07(n.s.)	-.41	-.16	-.52	-.22	-.33	-.19

N for zero-order correlations varies between 443 and 847
N for third-order partials = 271

TABLE 10 - Continued

CANDIDATE POLICY EXPRESSION	POLITICAL TRUST		LIBERAL-CONSERVATIVE		INTENDED VOTE		EXTRA-SYSTEM ORIENTATION	
(Richard Nixon)	r	Partial[b]	r	Partial[b]	r	Partial[b]	r	Partial[b]
SOCIAL	.28	.08(n.s.)	-.39	-.10	-.53	-.17	-.31	-.10
WAR	.31	.19	-.37	-.20	-.53	-.39	-.30	-.17
LIFESTYLE	.25	.09(n.s.)	-.34	-.16	-.45	-.19	-.38	-.18
ECONOMICS	.26	n.s.	-.40	-.12	-.55	-.23	-.32	n.s.

N for zero-order correlations varies between 445 and 990
N for third-order partials = 269

[a]Low scores represent closer issue proximity, high trust, liberal identification, support for McGovern, and approval of unconventional political behavior.

[b]Third-order partials, with all other issue dimensions controlled.

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 1 respondents only.

trust in 1972: the larger the discrepancy between one's own policy

values and the perceived positions of the Republican party and its nom-

inee, the more likely one was to be cynical toward government. This

conclusion applies only to perceptions of the incumbent president and

his·party; McGovern and the Democrats were much less relevant for the

formation of political discontent.[101] Citrin notes the same phenomenon:

> Between 1970 and 1972, the tendency of political trust
> to signify support for the incumbent national administra-
> tion grew concomitantly with the increased visibility
> and salience of ideological cleavages between the par-
> ties. . . .[102]

Miller responds that the shift from 1970 to 1972 can be understood pri-

marily as the result of the "leftward" shift of the Democratic party.

> With the leftward shift of Democratic policy alternatives,
> both parties were thus no longer equally centrist and Dem-
> ocratic alternatives therefore became less meaningful than
> Republican alternatives as a reference for policy judgments
> among Republicans and Independents. . . .[103]

I have already reported that political cynicism tends to be higher

among McGovern supporters. Since the latter tend to be more liberal

than other groups, and since cynicism is more likely to be found among

liberals than among conservatives on all four issue dimensions, the

relationship between party and trust does not necessarily translate

into a finding of "out-party disgruntlement." In fact, the relation-

ship between party identification and political trust is significant,

but also modest (r=.17).[104]

Our fifth hypothesis stated that the party-trust relationship will

be stronger during periods of relatively less political controversy when

fewer citizens are "politicized." We cannot test this proposition with

cross-sectional data, although evidence which will be presented below suggests that policy dissatisfaction is more readily translated into discontent among the better educated (but perhaps not among the politicized). Still, the modesty of the correlation between party identification and trust might lead us to suspect that contemporary political conflict has diminished what once could have been a stronger relationship. Further, we might recall the evidence presented in Table 9: Nixon Democrats actually believed that policy expression was most readily available through the opposing party and its nominee. As a result, we should not be surprised to find that they are less cynical than are either McGovern Democrats or independents.[105]

Actually, to the extent that we can test our fifth hypothesis indirectly, we find that it is not supported by the data. There is a somewhat stronger relationship between party identification and political trust (with Democrats tending to be more cynical) among those respondents who are better educated and who have higher levels of political interest. Perhaps we should not be surprised by this finding after all, since the educated and the politically attentive may have a stronger information base (as well as the cognitive ability) with which to align their partisan, policy, and affective orientations. Still, the party-trust relationship is modest among all groups, and an appropriate test of this hypothesis would require both longitudinal data and more discriminating indicators of politicization.

But partisanship, if it does not always operate directly upon one's feelings of political discontent, does appear to have quite a lot to do

with what kinds of forces do operate to produce cynicism. This is evi-
dent from Table 11, where we can see that it is only among independents
and McGovern Democrats that policy expression is consistently associ-
ated with political discontent. Issue distance is not irrelevant to
Republicans and to Democratic defectors, but its impact is clearly
limited. We should treat the figures in Table 11 with caution, since
we are generally dealing with a subset of the population. But the
likely unrepresentativeness of this group would normally lead us to ex-
pect many of these correlations to be even higher. Thus, even for
citizens to whom these issues are salient, there are groups for whom
policy expression has only a modest impact upon political trust.

We can return to Table 10 for a clue as to how we will interpret
these findings. We can see there that citizens who attribute the most
discrepant opinions to Nixon and the Republican party are also more
likely to be McGovern supporters and self-identified liberals--among
the least trustful groups in the electorate. It is this cluster of
attributes which appears to have characterized the most discontented
citizens in 1972; there is an understandable consistency in the observed
patterns. But we are describing these patterns with correlation
coefficients--relational measures which should not bring us to conclude
that Republicans (or Nixon Democrats) were a contented lot. They were
more trustful of the government in 1972, but their ranks included a
number of cynics or skeptics.

Perhaps our inability to account for much of the variation in af-
fect among these groups results from their relative agreement on the

TABLE 11

INTERCORRELATIONS (r) BETWEEN POLICY EXPRESSION AND
POLITICAL TRUST, BY PARTY AND VOTE[a]

	McGovern Democrats	Nixon Democrats	Independents	Republicans
PARTISAN POLICY EXPRESSION (Republican Party)				
SOCIAL	.22	n.s.	.48	.18
WAR	.36	n.s.	.31	.19
LIFESTYLE	.19	n.s.	.35	.20
ECONOMICS	n.s.	n.s.	.40	n.s.
	N=127 to 179	N=84 to 135	N=42 to 90	N=209 to 335
CANDIDATE POLICY EXPRESSION (Richard Nixon)				
SOCIAL	.27	.23	.35	.13
WAR	.36	.13	.39	.18
LIFESTYLE	.22	n.s.	.38	.16
ECONOMICS	.21	n.s.	.49	n.s.
	N=135 to 202	N=89 to 168	N=47 to 106	N=222 to 374

[a]Low scores refer to high trust and closer issue proximity.

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 1 respondents only.

issues of the day (including their perception of the opportunities for

expressing their policy values). One cannot expect to account for much

variation in one variable with another set of variables whose variance

is limited. A glance at the standard deviations for the 8 measures of

policy expression described in Tables 10 and 11 confirm these suspi-

cions. For both partisan and candidate policy expression (referring

to Nixon and the Republicans), the greatest amount of variance is

found among the independents and the McGovern Democrats. Nixon Demo-

crats are less heterogeneous, with Nixon Republicans least hetero-

geneous of all.[106]

We also must consider the possibility that many Republicans simply

will not adjust their political evaluations very easily as long as one

of their own sits in the White House. However, this ignores two cru-

cial facts: (1) Nixon Democrats do not have a partisan screen which

insulates them from the effects of policy disappointments; and (2)

since many Republicans are anything but trusting, we must conclude

that something accounts for their cyncism, despite their status as mem-

bers of the "in" party.

What about George McGovern and the Democratic party? It seems

safe to conclude that the policy expression permitted by McGovern's

candidacy has very little to do with the political trust of any parti-

san bloc. There are a few exceptions to this for individual issue dimen-

sions, but we can find nothing resembling the patterns we find with

Nixon as the referent. Much the same thing can be said about perceived

policy expression through the Democratic party--it is largely irrelevant

for political trust.[107] In contrast, Miller contends that "dissatis-
faction with Democratic policy alternatives (is) a source of political
discontent for certain subpopulations"--and he gives black Democrats
as an example.[108] Our own analysis, with a few exceptions does not
support this view.

What, then, may we say about the relevance of policy expression for
political discontent? It clearly is an important factor for part of
the population, but not for everyone. Of the four issue dimensions we
have described, Vietnam appears to have been the most important in
1972; the third-order partials in Table 10 demonstrate its association
with a variety of attitudes.[109] But when we concentrate on the popu-
lation as a whole, we lose some important information, for it is among
independents and loyal Democrats that policy expression (as measured
here) is most salient. Whether we are witnessing an "out" party ver-
sus an "in" party phenomenon is unclear, and will remain so at least
until we ask the same questions during the tenure of a Democratic pres-
ident. But the patterns among many Democrats (i.e., Nixon supporters)
and the cynicism that characterizes even many Republicans, suggest that
these people may translate perceived discrepancies between value ex-
pression and "political reality" into political discontent in ways that
our measures of policy expression have not been able to capture. It
is among these groups that Citrin's criterion of "good times" or "bad
times" may be a more potent predictor--not because of the dominance of
"valence" issues, but because of a cognitive screen which prevents some
citizens from attaching immediate relevance to their disappointment

with favored political leaders. Still, something has managed to penetrate this screen, and we will consider some additional possibilities momentarily.

On balance, then, our data support the hypothesized relationship between policy expression and political trust. We should, however, recall the partisan differences that were anticipated by hypothesis 4 above: that policy dissatisfaction and political cynicism--as well as a stronger relationship between the two--should be evident among identifiers of the "out" party. This hypothesis is supported for loyal Democrats, but for a substantial minority of Democratic identifiers the pattern more closely resembles that among the "in" party identifiers. Thus, the "screening" effects of partisanship actually appear to extend to a large group for whom the hypothesized "screen" does not even exist. In other words, our fourth hypothesis appears to oversimplify the effects of partisan loyalties for political discontent.

Have contemporary processes of politicization and cognitive mobilization operated to enhance the salience of policy expression among the mass public? We find there to be no significant differences in the association between policy expression and political trust across different levels of political interest. In a sense, this corresponds to the apparent tendency of even the disinterested to exhibit higher levels of attitudinal constraint during the 1960s--suggesting that even the nominally "disinterested" have not been unaffected by the events of this period.[110]

Our strategy of analysis, however, renders this finding ambiguous since those respondents whose opinions we have examined are likely to be the most politicized segment of the population. Again, the more relevant question may be whether the size of this group has grown over time. Educational differences are, however, more supportive of our thesis. Table 12 suggests that a better educated electorate will probably place broader and more intense policy demands upon governmental decision-makers. If this is true, recent changes in the educational composition of the electorate may be tied to the decline in political trust in some of the ways we have suggested here.

Political Reality and Political Discontent:
An Overall Assessment

Let us take a moment to review the status of the propositions developed in the previous chapter. In somewhat abbreviated form, our hypotheses are the following:

> Proposition 1: Political trust should vary according to an individual's belief that the political system and its representatives are generating outputs which are or are not consistent with his politicized values.
> Hypothesis 1a: In democratic political systems, political trust should be positively related to feelings of external efficacy. (Confirmed.)
> Hypothesis 1b: In democratic political systems, dissatisfaction with the opportunities for choice provided by political parties and elections should be associated with stronger feelings of political cynicism. (Disconfirmed when "partisan expression" is operationalized as "partisan choice.")
> Hypothesis 1b(1): Dissatisfaction with the choices provided by parties and elections should also be associated with stronger feelings of partisan independence. (Confirmed.)
> Hypothesis 1c: In democratic political systems, dissatisfaction with government outputs should be associated with

TABLE 12

INTERCORRELATIONS (r) BETWEEN PARTISAN POLICY
EXPRESSION AND POLITICAL TRUST, BY EDUCATION

| | EDUCATION | | |
	High	Medium	Low
PARTISAN POLICY EXPRESSION (Republican Party)			
SOCIAL	.31	.21	.44
WAR	.36	.33	.26
LIFESTYLE	.30	.27	n.s.
ECONOMICS	.30	.18	n.s.
	N=212 to 303	N=245 to 417	N=58 to 127
CANDIDATE POLICY EXPRESSION (Richard Nixon)			
SOCIAL	.38	.22	.18
WAR	.30	.36	.21
LIFESTYLE	.36	.26	n.s.
ECONOMICS	.28	.24	.27
	N=232 to 337	N=245 to 497	N=89 to 155

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 1 respondents only.

stronger feelings of political cynicism. (Confirmed, with qualifications.)

Hypothesis 2: In democratic political systems, the positive relationship between external efficacy and political trust should be evident across time, and within different social, demographic, and political subgroups in the population. (Confirmed in the static case.)

Hypothesis 3: In democratic political systems, a stronger positive relationship between external efficacy and political trust will be observed during historical periods of (a) citizen politicization to a state of political attentiveness, or (b) widespread diffusion of political skills and abilities. (Not directly tested; qualified support with cross-sectional data.)

Hypothesis 4: Higher levels of policy dissatisfaction and lower levels of political trust—as well as a stronger relationship between the two—should be located among identifiers of the "out" party. (Confirmed, with qualifications.)

Hypothesis 5: The relationship between party identification and political discontent will be stronger during historical periods of relatively less political controversy and limited mass politicization. (Not directly tested; disconfirmed with cross-sectional data.)

The most central element of our model of political discontent involves the hypothesized relationships between three dimensions of value expression—i.e., the politicized demands of citizens, and their beliefs about whether the behavior of governmental leaders and institutions is consistent with these values or expectations—and political discontent.

(1) Procedural expression, operationalized as external efficacy, was found to be rather closely associated with political trust. The relationship was strongest among those groups which explicitly placed a higher value upon the norm of popular participation in policymaking. Participatory demands are not, however, limited to the most politicized or the most educated segments of the

population.[111] Also in line with our hypotheses, the apparent

demand for procedural expression is the strongest and most perva-

sive of the three dimensions of value expression considered here.

A note of caution is necessary, since our analysis has not demon-

.strated that external efficacy "causes" trust.

(2) Partisan expression is difficult to separate from policy expression,

since one's feelings of political discontent will probably result

from beliefs about the opportunities for expressing one's own

policy values through partisan and electoral institutions. When

partisan expression is operationalized as perceived differentia-

tion between political parties or between their candidates--do

they permit the voter to choose between two distinct sets of pol-

icy (or perhaps personal) alternatives?--we find little support for

the idea that partisan differentiation or polarization is a posi-

tive value among Americans.

We do find a strong relationship between perceived differenti-

ation and the strength of partisan identification, with indepen-

dents (along with a substantial proportion of partisans) seeing

little difference between the parties or the candidates in 1972.

Nonpartisanship is not, however, directly associated with politi-

cal cynicism. Instead, it appears to condition the kinds of

forces which are able to shape feelings of trust and cynicism

among citizens. This point was reaffirmed by our analysis of

policy expression.

(3) Policy expression is associated with political trust, although much

more strongly for Democrats and independents than for Republicans.

This statement applies primarily to beliefs about the policy ex-

pression (or "proximity") represented by the incumbent administra-

tion, which is not surprising since it is the foremost manifesta-

.tion of "the government" and its policies. While there is a

notable tendency for respondents who had opinions on our four

dimensions of public policy to also have consistent opinions on

these issues, it would be a mistake to assume that this reflects

the emergence of a single, overarching dimension of ideological

conflict in American politics. I shall have more to say about

this as we conclude our analysis.

Policy expression can be made available to voters through

either partisan or candidate channels. While perceived proximity

to the Republican party was positively related to political trust,

there are two patterns which argue for the greater salience of

candidate policy expression. In the first place, fewer citizens

were able to place the policies of the two parties on our 7-point

issue scales, apparently affirming the continued ambiguity of party

policies into the 1970s. Secondly, those respondents who did offer

an estimate of party positions tended to see less of a difference

than that which existed between the presidential nominees. This

finding was paralleled by the results of the party and candidate

"differentiation" (feeling thermometer) measures. Overall, we may

conclude that perceived policy expression is an important compo-

nent of popular evaluations of government, but the generalization

is one which requires elaboration.

An important element of our model of political discontent suggests that its relationship with perceived value expression is dynamic --that the relationship will be stronger among citizens who have been politicized by political events, and among the better-educated segments of the population who are (a) more likely to place a variety of demands upon government decision-makers, and (b) better able to understand the linkage between official actions and political outcomes. This relationship could only be examined with cross-sectional data, and thus far the evidence has provided limited support for our hypotheses. Nonetheless, the validity of the dynamic model cannot be tested adequately without repeated measurements of political attitudes over time. Our own analysis was further hampered by the absence of an unambiguous measure of politicization (including internal efficacy); and our strategy of analysis has tended to exclude those respondents who should be among the least politicized. By concentrating on respondents who gave a full set of answers to our questions, we may have obscured any distinctions that could otherwise have been made according to level of politicization. It remains to be determined whether this group has grown in size as a result of the political events of the 1960s and 1970s. On the other hand, we know that educational levels have risen, and our data suggest that this trend may also have entailed a broader range of demands which government is expected to address ("mentality of demand"), as well as the linkage between perceived value expression and political trust.

One possibility which we have not explicitly considered concerns

the inhibiting effects which a sense of system (or diffuse) support

might have upon the development and the generalization of political

discontent. If Americans are socialized to feel supportive of their

political regime--and the literature provides us with ample evidence

that this is the case--then we might find that specific grievances

toward political authorities and institutions are largely irrelevant

for regime stability or effectiveness. As Easton has suggested, we

find among our respondents a relatively high degree of system support

existing along with a high level of political cynicism. Nor do we

need to consult our history books to recognize that our political sys-

tem has remained largely intact through the turmoil of recent years.

Still, we must acknowledge our uncertainty about how deep-seated

system support is best measured in a survey context. For example,

Miller contends that the items we have taken to be indicators of sys-

tem support "can be viewed as measuring the same underlying attitudi-

nal dimension that is tapped by the trust in government scale."[112]

A more practical limitation on our own analysis has been the unavail-

ability of this measure for respondents whose issue beliefs we have

examined in depth. We will, however, consider in the following chapter

whether high scores on system support affect the relationship between

political trust and political behavior.

Our final two propositions concerned the impact of partisan

loyalties upon feelings of political discontent. We did find that

Democrats were the least trustful partisan group, and that Republicans

were the most trustful. Rather than regarding this as an inevitable

result of the screening of dissonant stimuli by partisan attitudes, we
have seen that there is an underlying policy basis for this pattern.
While there is a deep split in policy values among Democrats and inde-
pendents, there are many among the ranks of each group whose values
differ from those of the incumbent administration. These are the citi-
zens whose cynicism is greatest, and whose policy dissatisfaction is
most likely to generate those feelings of cynicism. Partisanship is
certainly not irrelevant to the processes by which political discontent
develops, but neither does it function entirely to eliminate the rela-
tionship between value expression and discontent. If it is true that
the party-trust relationship will be stronger in periods when politi-
cal controversy is muted and fewer citizens are politicized, the pat-
terns we have found for 1972 suggest that it was indeed a period of
relatively intense political conflict[113]--although partisan differences
in trust were admittedly somewhat greater among the educated and the
politically attentive. Whether or not the partisan location of politi-
cal discontent would be reversed during a Democratic administration is
uncertain--but the cynicism of many Republicans (and the defection of
many Democrats) in 1972 tells us that policy dissatisfaction is not
tied as closely to partisan divisions as the "responsible party gov-
ernment" model would have it.

How can we assess the overall impact of our hypothesized sources
of discontent? A stepwise regression analysis was performed using po-
litical trust as the dependent variable. The independent variables,

and the standardized regression coefficients for each, are described
in Table 13. We should be unusually cautious in interpreting these
results, since our missing data problem compounds itself to produce
some extremely small N's. The figures presented here represent only
those respondents for whom there are no missing values for any variable
included in the regression equation. Since this has the potential for
rendering our analysis thoroughly unrepresentative, a similar pro-
cedure was performed using pairwise deletion for missing data, i.e.,
respondents were included if they gave substantive responses for both
political trust and the particular independent variable being considered.
Comparisons will be made between the two procedures as we proceed. But
apart from the methodological issues posed by this analysis, we should
take the missing data problem as a reminder that not every potential
criterion by which citizens may evaluate their government will be
salient to every group in the population. We recognize this by iso-
lating various partisan and voting blocs, and we will explore the mat-
ter further in the following chapter by considering generational dif-
ferences.

The independent variables which are included in the regression equa-
tions are the four (Republican) candidate policy expression measures,
external efficacy, feelings toward each of the two major presidential
nominees (feeling thermometer), and party identification. On the assump-
tion that many citizens define their ideological identification accord-
ing to issues which are not represented by our four policy dimensions,
we have included liberalism-conservatism as a potentially important

TABLE 13

REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR POLITICAL TRUST

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	Total Sample	McGovern Democrats	Nixon Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Nixon thermometer rating	.27	.21	.17	.14	.18
External efficacy	.25	.24	.53	.40	.20
Policy expression (Nixon)					
Vietnam	.19	.29	-.07	.19	.16
SOCIAL	.05	n.s.	.15	.08	n.s.
ECONOMICS	n.s.	.12	-.03	.26	-.15
LIFESTYLE	.08	.07	-.06	.34	.05
McGovern thermometer rating	.09	.09	-.03	.22	n.s.
Party identification	.06	--	--	--	--
Liberalism-conservatism	.04	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	.13
	$R^2=.23$	$R^2=.34$	$R^2=.39$	$R^2=.47$	$R^2=.11$
	N=300	N=73	N=48	N=25	N=125

NOTE: These coefficients (beta) describe form 1 respondents only.

source of political trust.[114] What we learn from Table 13 is that,

for our limited sample, external efficacy and feelings toward President

Nixon have fairly strong relationships with trust. Of our four policy

dimensions, Vietnam was clearly the most relevant in 1972, as it also

was·for vote choice. The fact that policy expression is overshadowed

by candidate evaluation as a predictor of discontent, does not suggest

that citizens are basing their affective judgments on personal or non-

policy factors. Not only may candidate evaluations be influenced by

issues that our measures leave untapped,[115] but citizens' assessment of

a political leader's "honesty," "integrity," or "competence" are per-

fectly sound bases for evaluation.

We must, however, turn to the different partisan blocs in order

to understand the various factors that are contributing to contempor-

ary political discontent. We can note quickly that both external effi-

cacy and positive evaluations of Nixon are significantly related to

trust among all groups. The contribution of efficacy (procedural ex-

pression), independently from the policy bases of discontent, is in

line with our earlier conclusions about the importance of governmental

responsiveness in a democratic culture. External inefficacy is most

strongly associated with cynicism among Nixon Democrats and independents.

The former group might well be reacting in part to their party's failure

to represent their interests, while independents may be reflecting their

disappointment with the party/electoral system as a whole.

For Democrats who remained loyal to their party's nominee, Vietnam

was by far the most important policy basis for their feelings of trust

or cynicism, although economic issues (a traditional Democratic strength) were also salient for this group. It is interesting to note that negative evaluations of McGovern contribute to the cynicism of loyal Democrats (and of independents), while the evaluations of Nixon Democrats and.of Republicans are little influenced by the candidate of the opposition.

For Nixon Democrats, policy expression had relatively little impact upon political trust in 1972. In fact, closer proximity to Nixon on Vietnam and ECONOMICS was associated with higher cynicism for this group; the relationships are weak, however, and we should not infer too much from these statistics.[116] The SOCIAL dimension, on the other hand, was somewhat relevant for Nixon Democrats, perhaps reflecting some of the reasons why they were less than satisfied with their own party in the 1970s. Policy expression was of similarly limited importance for Republican identifiers, although both Vietnam and ECONOMIC issues had modest influence upon their feelings of trust.[117] Republicans are, as we can see from Table 13, the one group for whom our explanation of political discontent is least adequate.

Independents are the group for whom policy expression is most salient. Particularly surprising is the extent to which ECONOMIC issues play a key role in defining their discontent. In addition, LIFESTYLE issues and Vietnam make substantial independent contributions, with SOCIAL issues much less salient. It is also among this group that evaluations of Richard Nixon are least important.[118]

As I have said, we must be very cautious in interpreting these

results. When the alternative strategy of pairwise deletion of missing data is employed, we raise our sample size, but at the expense of examining many respondents who do not have a clearly defined set of beliefs across the entire range of attitudes we are measuring. Not surprisingly, the percent of variance explained is lower for the larger sample, although the overall pattern resembles that depicted in Table 13.[119] Overall, we may say that if a variable has a substantial impact upon trust for the smaller sample, it retains some impact regardless of our disposition of missing data. Thus, external efficacy is salient for all groups, as is evaluation of Nixon (except independents); policy expression is salient to all groups, but in varying degrees and with differences across issue dimensions (e.g., Vietnam for the McGovern Democrats and Republicans, SOCIAL for Nixon Democrats, Vietnam and ECONOMICS--and perhaps LIFESTYLE--for independents). Once again, we are reminded of the variety of problems for which our political leaders and institutions are expected to find solutions.

How well have we "explained" political trust? Our results compare favorably with those of a similar analysis performed by Miller.[120] He, too, found policy expression to be an important source of political discontent, along with evaluations of Nixon. There are, however, two important differences in our respective analyses. We have the advantage of including procedural expression as a value which appears to be salient to every group in the population.[121] Miller, on the other hand, finds the strongest single predictor of political trust to be citizen perceptions of governmental performance in handling the economy--a variable

which was restricted in the 1972 study, and which was unavailable for use here.

The apparent significance of economic performance evaluations brings us back to the idea that most citizens judge their government according to the "results" which it is able to achieve. There can be no doubt that this is true, and if we had a fuller range of indicators of performance evaluation, our understanding of political trust would surely be enhanced. But, as I argued above, "results" are not unambiguous. We may regard them in much the same way that we have conceptualized value expression, i.e., in terms of expectations, demands, and perceptions of reality. In fact, governmental performance is a factor which is clearly subsumed under hypothesis 1c (regarding policy expression) presented above. What we should recognize is that the same policy outcomes will not conform to the values and preferences of all citizens --and when this occurs, "results" will not inevitably produce political trust. Nor will "results" in one area of public policy necessarily satisfy those citizens who give priority to other policy domains.

Our proposed explanation of political trust appears to have some validity, although a broader range of indicators certainly is necessary to capture the character of citizen demand-making in American politics. What our evidence has <u>not</u> told us is <u>how</u> this process develops.[122] We have seen, for example, some fairly stark partisan differences in the antecedents of political discontent. Miller's analysis of changes in trust between 1972 and 1973 found partisan differences to be equally important. He found, for example, that both economic policy evaluations

and attitudes toward Nixon were independently related to political

trust in 1972. Over the next year, both of these attitudes became less

favorable toward the incumbent administration, with trust declining

even further during this period as well. Most significantly, Miller

found the deteriorating economy to have the greatest impact upon

Republicans and conservative Democrats, with each group becoming more

cynical in the intervening months.[123] While partisan loyalty apparent-

ly prevented many Republicans from translating their disapproval of

Watergate into stronger feelings of cynicism, the political events of

the period did appear to break through the partisan screen of the sup-

porters of the "in" party.[124]

Miller concludes that these patterns

> clearly illustrate that more attention needs to be given
> to how various social and historical conditions deter-
> mine what may be considered direct correlates of politi-
> cal trust so that theoretical statements about sources
> of trust can be made with greater specificity. . . .[125]

Our own dynamic model of political discontent has stressed this varia-

bility, and the need for understanding the character of sociopolitical

change in order to explain longitudinal trends. The specific variables

which will provide us with the fullest explanation of trust and cyni-

cism can be expected to vary with the demands and expectations of citi-

zens--and with the ability of government to meet those demands.

Discussion

Many of the findings presented in this chapter help to illustrate

a dilemma which is facing political parties and governmental decision-

makers. The structure of public opinion, as we have seen, has been characterized in many ways. Our own analysis has identified four separate issue dimensions which seem to have attained a degree of centrality or salience in the minds of much of the mass public. Opinions on these issues tend to be relatively consistent, and opinions across issue domains also tend to be more consistent than early studies have led us to believe. But any attempt to describe contemporary public opinion as falling within a single "liberal-conservative" dimension of conflict will serve only to oversimplify a very complex phenomenon.

Table 14 provides us with a rough estimate of the proportions of the electorate who hold consistent opinions across issue domains. Each of our four scales has been divided into three categories (liberal, moderate, conservative),[126] and the responses to each scale were cross-tablulated against every other scale. For the various issue pairs, somewhere between 40 and 50 percent of the observed population fall along the main diagonal of the table, i.e., they hold more or less "consistent" opinions. Assuming that our use of multiple indicators has weeded out many (though not all) respondents for whom these issues are not salient, we are left with an impressive amount of inconsistency. The "extreme inconsistents" are those who are liberal in one issue area and conservative in the other. Since these are people who had to give repeated consistent answers to our issue measures, we might assume that relatively few among them are creating measurement "noise."

The point, however, is not simply to attach a number to the issue constraint of the mass public, but rather to point out the difficulty

TABLE 14

OPINION CONSISTENCY AMONG THE MASS PUBLIC

ISSUE PAIR	Consistents	Extreme Inconsistents
WAR - SOCIAL (N=731)	51.4%	4.5%
WAR - LIFESTYLE (N=833)	42.7	8.4
WAR - ECONOMICS (N=753)	45.3	8.9
SOCIAL - LIFESTYLE (N=770)	49.3	6.5
SOCIAL - ECONOMICS (N=696)	51.4	6.6
ECONOMICS - LIFESTYLE (N=929)	41.3	11.5

NOTE: These figures describe form 1 respondents only.

a two-party system may have in providing a satisfactory level of policy

expression for the American electorate as a whole. And it seems very

clear that our party system has not succeeded in this task. We have

seen at several stages of our analysis that the Democratic party is

anything but homogeneous in its opinions. The same thing can be said

of independents, who are not a like-minded group of people waiting to

award their loyalties to the party which provides the "right" policy

response. Even the Republicans, certainly a more homogeneous group

than the others, are divided on some issues--most notably on the

LIFESTYLE cluster, where liberalism is associated with the higher levels

of education that have long characterized Republican identifiers. None

of our four issue dimensions is very strongly related to partisanship,

while SOCIAL and LIFESTYLE attitudes are related to party weakly or not

at all.

More than that, we can be sure that particular issues are much

more salient to some groups than to others. While Vietnam may have

been the most universally important issue of 1972, we might expect that

it had a special meaning for younger voters. Similarly, it is reason-

able to suspect that inflation was a particular concern of the elderly;

that middle-class parents viewed the threat of school busing with some

alarm; that affirmative action and government assistance to minority

groups were very salient issues to those same minorities; that college-

educated women were anxious to remove barriers to their career oppor-

tunities; and so on. If all of the conflicts generated by these and

a multitude of other issues could be subsumed by some coherent liberal-

conservative ideology, then the question of policy expression might not
be so acute. But one does not have to accept the idea that the whole
of public opinion is made up of many tiny parts—many issue publics
whose concern with politics is limited to a very few issues which touch
one's life directly—in order to argue that no such single dimension of
conflict is evident.

The 1960s and early 1970s have been described as a period of po-
liticization, during which the size of issue publics was swelled by
citizens who often had no clear personal stake in the resolution of
particular issues—but who came to have opinions and expectations about
these issues nonetheless. Such periods historically have involved a
single set of issues that polarized the electorate and, eventually, pro-
duced a partisan realignment around them. The "crisis issue" of the
1970s may be the absence of a crisis. Various scenarios have been
developed which anticipate a realignment around such issues as race,
the "social issue," something resembling Inglehart's "post-material-
ism," and so on. And yet 1978 sees such economic concerns as infla-
tion and demands for tax relief dominating many of the headlines.[127]

Obviously, the economic dimension that dominated American politics
for so very long has given way to a bewildering array of problems and
conflicts, opinions about which simply do not fall easily along any
single ideological continuum that either citizens or parties could
accept. According to Burnham,

> to the extent that issues achieve salience and shape
> voting behavior in the United States of today, the
> resultant cleavages become both too intense and too

> numerous to be contained any longer within the tradi-
> tional two-party electoral matrix. One may speculate
> that, if electoral law and political tradition in the
> United States allowed, we would have seen the emergence
> some time ago of an explicit multi-party system. As
> it is, we find party decomposition instead. . . .[128]

Typically, the failure to provide expression for the growing de-

mands of American citizens is attributed to the parties themselves, and

to their leaders. Trilling has used open-ended materials to measure

respondents' "party images," and he is among the many who have noted a

decline in the salience of class issues and cleavages over the past

two decades. But the problem goes deeper than that.

> Parties mean less to Americans because many traditional
> themes are less important than they once were while those
> issues that might have redefined American parties quickly
> became irrelevant to American political parties. We have
> argued . . . that on issues such as race the parties have
> failed to take the polarizing stands that could have re-
> defined parties in accordance with the strong sentiments
> Americans felt. . . .[129]

Burnham indicts political leadership for their unresponsiveness in even

stronger language.

> . . . (E)stablished "old politics" leadership in any given
> (pre-alignment) period responds to growing political crisis
> by a rigidity and a rejection of emergent demand which con-
> tributes in no small way to the magnitude of the subsequent
> explosion, and the completeness of their own repudiation.
> . . . What is different about the contemporary period in
> this respect is that leadership has failed the public for
> so long a time, and that the failed . . . leadership has
> included in turn the top elites of both major political
> parties.[130]

We should note that these views center largely upon the failure

of our parties to provide policy expression for the emergent issues and

demands. The candidates of the parties are something else again, since

voters do not always seem to find it particularly difficult to "define"

candidates in terms of the major issues of the day. Many studies have

concluded that over-time trends away from party-based voting have led

to a much greater role for the "candidate factor." But even as indi-

vidual candidates are able to provide expression for many citizen de-

mands, the role of the parties is described as becoming increasingly

limited. Combined with the institutional constraints on American par-

ties--and candidates' awareness that their success may be achieved in-

dependently of the party organization[131]--we seem to be left with a

fragmented situation which scarcely resembles the "responsible party

government" model.

If interpretations such as these are correct, we may be able to

account for such contemporary phenomena as the growth of nonpartisanship,

the declining influence of party on vote choice, split-ticket voting,

the active rejection of political parties as "action intermediaries,"

and the like. Our own analysis has provided ample evidence that many

voters experience great difficulty in trying to differentiate between

the parties along important policy dimensions.[132] Our goal, however,

is to account for levels of political trust and cynicism in the mass

public. And, as we have seen, there is no direct link between an ac-

tive rejection of partisanship and political cynicism: independents

were actually less cynical than were (McGovern) Democrats in 1972.

While many independents remain unconcerned about and inattentive to po-

litical issues, their ranks have been swelled in recent years by cit-

izens who are politicized. These are the people who probably have been

able to provide answers to our battery of survey questions--and who

show a healthy relationship between perceived policy expression and political discontent. In 1972, they tended to fall in between the Democrats and the Republicans on these measures.

It does not follow from all of this that there is no relationship between nonpartisanship and political discontent. Given the complex opinion structure of the mass public (and remembering that independents are heterogeneous in their policy preferences), we may speculate that the relationship is a dynamic one. Burnham notes the polarization among Democrats and argues that it has "contributed to a situation in which, election after election, significant minorities of the electorate --it may be added, different minorities each time--have been left without an adequate perceived choice at a time when they very much want to make one."[133] As these disappointments mount over time, among all partisan groups, the trend toward both independence and cynicism cannot help but be accelerated. If the 1972 election provided a context in which many nonpartisans could feel supportive of their government, the same situation may be very different in future elections. With no "crisis issue" and no single dimension of political conflict around which the parties might polarize, the path remains open for individual candidates to appeal to particular opinion groupings. If, over time, different "significant minorities" find their policy values to be un-represented by political leadership, then we can expect further evi-dence of both party decomposition and political discontent--even if the relationship between these phenomena remains uneven at any given mo-ment.

But there is more to the dilemma faced by political decision-makers. We have seen that the Republican party and its nominee were the focal points for the link between policy expression and political discontent in 1972. Since the Republicans were the "in" party at the time, this comes as no great surprise. Richard Nixon was more than the spokesman for one major party; he was the foremost symbol of "the government," and evaluations of the government's success and probity centered quite naturally around him. In addition, the Nixon administration had a record of both policy directions and "results" which were easier for citizens to perceive and to evaluate than were the ideas and the promises of the Democratic challenger. Today, that situation is reversed, and we would expect to see that fact reflected during the 1980 campaign.

As the parties take their turns serving as "the government," they face the expectations and demands of the same electorate to whom they will appeal--as parties--at election time. Assuming that mass opinion remains both polarized and fragmented between presidential elections, "the government" is likely to have a very hard time producing the kinds of results which Citrin believes could eventually reduce political discontent. Dawson refers to this as "the problem of political response."[134]

> . . . newly developing patterns of opinion distributions
> do not relate systematically to the traditional instru-
> ments of political expression and representation (e.g.,
> political parties, representative bodies, and elections).
> This lack of tie-in makes it difficult for government to
> respond rapidly and effectively to new political demands.
> Likewise, it renders it difficult for the citizenry to
> express concerns through normal channels.[135]

Dawson, Trilling, Burnham, and others refer to the emergence of new issues which not only cut across traditional partisan divisions,[136] but which are also more or less orthogonal to the most visible social groupings in the electorate. I have argued that the social location of political discontent will vary according to which social groups perceive the greatest degree of violation between their value expectations and political reality. Our data inform us not only that we may expect to find substantial cynicism in virtually every segment of the population, but also that opinions on our four policy dimensions often are associated weakly or not at all with traditional social divisions. Blacks tend to be liberal on most issues, except LIFESTYLE where education is the more important influence. Education also is associated with SOCIAL liberalism, but it is only a weak differentiator on ECONOMIC issues. Working class identification is associated with greater ECONOMIC liberalism, but also with greater SOCIAL and LIFESTYLE conservatism. Toward which social groups, on which dimensions of public policy, and with which specific proposals should our parties and "the government" direct their favors?

The politicization of the electorate without a consensus about which issues deserve priority seems to have produced a climate of disapproval which our political leaders and institutions will be able to eliminate only with the greatest difficulty. Perhaps our period of "drift" will end abruptly with the emergence of a crisis which clearly establishes a set of priorities around which we might divide; "clarity" may replace "complexity" in public opinion in a way which we cannot yet

foresee. As things stand today, however, such a process does not appear to be imminent.

Many writers have argued that a major source of contemporary mass opinion can be found in the processes of generational change. As new voters reach political maturity under conditions that differ from those faced by preceding generations, they presumably will bring with them a different set of priorities—a different set of problems which they believe need to be placed at the top of our political agenda. Perhaps this change will be accelerated by the flow of events (as in a "realignment" sequence), or perhaps it will be the more gradual value change described by Inglehart. The emergence of new issues in recent years often has been tied to the influx of new voters during the 1960s —people for whom the conflicts of the New Deal era bore little resemblance to their own perceptions of society's needs. Perhaps we can locate the origins of opinion change—in addition to clarifying the relationship between value expression and political discontent—in the demands and priorities of younger voters.

CHAPTER VIII

POLITICAL DISCONTENT AND

THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN POLITICS

The diffusion and intensification of political discontent in con-
temporary America is a phenomenon reported by numerous empirical
studies, including this one. In addition, our study has provided a
measure of support for those who see these trends as a result of a
growing discrepancy between citizen expectations and governmental per-
formance. Our purpose in this chapter will be to consider the impli-
cations of these findings. In particular, we will attempt to enhance
our understanding of the dynamic relationship which exists between
citizens and their government by searching for generational differences
--not only in political discontent, but in the demands which may give
rise to discontent. We will also examine the relationship between po-
litical cynicism and political behavior, for it is here that we must
eventually locate the systemic significance of contemporary trends.
These two themes are not unrelated, for generational differences in the
style of political behavior have been noted in several studies, es-
pecially as a reflection of age differences in educational attainment.
Our efforts may provide us with a feeling for the role which political
discontent could play in the future of American politics.

GENERATIONAL CHANGE AND DEMANDS FOR VALUE EXPRESSION

The Concept of Generation

While the idea of "generations" has existed for centuries, its central reference point for most contemporary discussions in sociology and politics is Karl Mannheim.[1] Mannheim writes of the ever-changing character of society, with new participants constantly entering the cultural process to replace older participants who have dominated that process for decades. These new participants are characterized by a "fresh contact" with society, and as a result they bring with them the potential for change and innovation. Most importantly, this potential evolves from the common experiences which may be shared by members of the same generation.

> Generational location is based on the existence of bio-logical rhythm in human existence--the factors of life and death, a limited span of life, and ageing. Individuals who belong to the same generation, who share the same year of birth, are endowed, to that extent, with a common location in the historical dimension of the social process.[2]

Membership in the same generation will endow individuals with

> a common location in the social and historical process, and thereby (limits them) to a specific range of potential experience, predisposing them for a certain characteristic mode of thought and experience, and a characteristic type of historically relevant action. . . .[3]

Mannheim, however, recognizes that the common location of generation members does not require the emergence of "new collective impulses and formative principles original to itself and adequate to its particular situation."[4] The realization of a generation's potential depends, in large measure, on the "tempo of social change."

> When as a result of an acceleration in the tempo of
> social and cultural transformation basic attitudes must
> change so quickly that the latent, continuous adaptation
> and modification of traditional patterns of experience,
> thought, and expression is no longer possible, then the
> various new phases of experience are consolidated some-
> where, forming a clearly distinguishable new impulse,
> and a new centre of configuration. We speak in such
> cases of the formation of a new generation style. . . .[5]

In this sense, then, Mannheim parallels our own dynamic view of the
relationship between citizens and their polity: it is in reaction and
adaptation to social and political events that the potential for sig-
nificant change may be realized.[6] If we may grant that the period
since the 1950s has been one in which the "tempo of social change" has
been greatly accelerated, it would seem that the potential for gener-
ational change is enormous.

One might ask whether dramatic social and political events, es-
pecially when they are experienced directly or vicariously by all or
most individuals in a society, do not have a similar impact upon people
of different ages. In some instances this may be true--indeed, we
will review evidence that suggests it is true for the decline in po-
litical trust; political learning may occur at any stage of a person's
life span, with attitudinal change a possible outcome of that learning.
But the concept of "generation" presumes that there is something unusu-
ally significant about the learning which occurs during an individual's
youth.

> . . . (I)n estimating the biographical significance of
> a particular experience, it is important to know whether
> it is undergone by an individual as a decisive childhood
> experience, or later in life, superimposed upon other
> basic and early impressions. Early impressions tend to

> coalesce into a <u>natural</u> <u>view</u> of the world. All later
> experiences then tend to receive their meaning from
> this original set, whether they appear as that set's
> verification and fulfillment or as its negation and
> antithesis. . . .[7]

Thus, it is important to know not only that an individual has experi-

enced an important set of historical circumstances, but also that he

or she has experienced these circumstances <u>at a particular stage of</u>

<u>the life-cycle</u>. The generational approach is one which assumes that

youth are particularly susceptible to the shaping forces of the en-

vironment, and that the learning which results is likely to <u>persist</u>

and to <u>structure</u> later experiences and later learning.[8]

In attempting to understand the evolution of any particular gen-

eration, it is therefore necessary to focus upon that formative period

during which one's "natural view of the world" is most likely to de-

velop, and to identify the historical forces which are likely to pro-

vide a common backdrop of experiences upon which a unique generational

outlook might be founded. It is difficult, however, to specify pre-

cisely which stage of the life-cycle represents the "period of maximum

suggestibility."[9] Mannheim suggests that this occurs at about age 17;

others feel that the learning which occurs even earlier—in pre-

adolescence—is apt to be more durable.[10] Most recent analyses of gen-

erational differences in party identification and other political at-

titudes have taken entry into the potentially active electorate—age 21

until 1972, age 18 thereafter—as the point at which political genera-

tions begin to take their shape. In the absence of persuasive evi-

dence to the contrary, the analysis presented below takes age 17 as the

beginning of an individual's "period of maximum suggestibility."[11]

The empirical study of political generations has gathered considerable momentum in recent years, in large part because of the discipline's fascination with the potential for partisan realignment during the 1960s—a process in which, as we shall see, younger voters are understood to play a crucial role. There are many methodological (as well as conceptual) problems associated with generational analysis.[12] Since our own purposes are rather limited, and because our methodology will not involve rigorous "cohort analysis," most of these will be set aside. Two problems which we must address, however, involve the specification of generational differences using static, cross-sectional data.

The most intractable problem in the study of generations concerns the difficulty in separating generational from life-cycle effects. With longitudinal data we may be able to determine whether the differences between age strata that we observed at one point in time have persisted.[13] When our data are from a single point in time, we must be particularly sensitive to the fact that members of the various age strata differ in both their chronological age—and the different social roles that accompany the various stages of the life-cycle—and also the "common experiences" that separate members of different generations. For example, the "generation gap" which seemed to be so large in the 1960s was often interpreted as a temporary phenomenon which would fade as younger people began to assume the social roles and responsibilities of adulthood; such a transition, it was believed, would bring the

attitudes of youth into greater congruence with the attitudes of their

elders. The youthful years have commonly been seen as a period of

"rebellion" from established (including parental) authority, followed

by a relaxation of these tensions with the passage of time.[14] As a

result of our use of cross-sectional data in this study, we must be

careful not to be dogmatic in our conclusions about the significance

of observed age-related differences.

A second problem in generational analysis, and one which has par-

ticular bearing on our own thesis, is the danger of what Riley has

called the "compositional fallacy."[15] Briefly, it is possible that

our comparison of different age groups will be confused by the dif-

ferential distribution among them of certain characteristics. Age

groups may vary according to migration, race, mortality, and so on.

When these differences are associated with the characteristics we are

comparing, we must be careful not to interpret wrongly compositional

differences as generational differences.[16] In our case, we must be

alert to the educational differences which characterize the age strata:

the opportunity for an extended education has expanded greatly in re-

cent years, primarily to the benefit of the younger segments of the

population.[17] To the extent that we are able to indentify what appear

to be generational differences, we will want to know whether these

are attributable to the diffusion of higher education.[18]

Generations and Partisan Realignment

As we have seen, political learning during the childhood years

remains less than fully understood by socialization scholars. We know a great deal about the attitudes of children, but often we are unable to identify precisely the origins of those attitudes. One major exception seems to be party identification, an orientation which appears to be largely a parental legacy--learned quite early in life and retained through adulthood, with often profound effects upon one's characteristic patterns of political thought and behavior.

At first glance, this interpretation of the learning of such an important orientation seems at odds with the argument that the pre-adult years are the period of "maximum suggestibility" at the hands of the political environment. Yet even the learning of partisanship has been described in age-related terms--and in a way which seems to help us account for the presence of a "generational rhythm" in American politics. Age is a variable which is strongly associated with the strength of partisanship, and with the likelihood that an individual's vote choice will be consistent with his or her party loyalties. This relationship expresses a life-cycle, rather than a generational, phenomenon. This point is underscored when we discover that it is the length of time that one has identified with the party--not age itself--which is the strongest correlate of partisan strength; it is the young who are most likely to have a newly adopted party affiliation, or else no affiliation at all. In fact, when length of party membership is controlled, the association between age and partisan strength actually becomes negative, since faster rates of learning tend to be located among the young.[19] This corresponds, of course, to the idea that the

period of maximum suggestibility occurs during youth.

The hardening of partisan attachments over time appears to re-
sult in the "immunization" of the older citizen from the effects of
external forces and events, some of which might otherwise draw him
toward modes of thought and behavior which are at odds with his parti-
san feelings. Thus, it is younger voters, whose electoral experience
is least and whose resistance to the pull of events is weakest, who
are likely to provide disproportionate support for whatever electoral
tides are dominant. This does not suggest that older voters are en-
tirely immune from such forces,[20] but rather that susceptibility to
events does appear to vary with age. Since partisan loyalties often
have the effect of "screening" dissonant stimuli which are inconsis-
tent with those loyalties—a pattern which was illustrated by our
analysis in the preceding chapter—the process is one which holds
great significance for the stability of partisan divisions and coali-
tions in the electorate.

Stability has been the rule in American electoral history, but
there have been periodic disruptions of the status quo which intro-
duced new patterns of voting behavior and partisan cleavage. As out-
lined in the previous chapter, such periods of "realignment" usually
involve the emergence of a new set of issues which cleave the elec-
torate in ways different from the issues upon which the dominant
alignment is based. As these new issues become more important to cit-
izens, and as the traditional party system is unable to accommodate
these issues, each party is likely to be internally divided. Eventually,

electoral coalitions shift, the new issues completely supercede the old in their salience for various groups, and a readjustment of party loyalties signals the beginnings of a new period of electoral stability.[21]

Realignment sequences in American politics are marked by the defection of many partisans, whose loyalties cannot immunize them entirely from the impact of the issues and events which precipitated the realignment. But for older citizens, these defections often do not signal any long-term change in party affiliation; instead, they represent exceptions to traditional voting patterns which have been stimulated by events too strong to ignore. It is among the younger segments that scholars have found the response which gives a realigning period its durability.[22] At a period of the life-cycle during which they are most receptive to the dramatic events which precipitated the realignment, the political (including partisan) identities of these cohorts apparently are shaped by these events; over time, and consistent with the concept of "immunization," these identities harden and the social and partisan cleavages which have survived the earlier turmoil become the foundation for a new era of party politics.

There is, of course, more to the dynamics of party realignment than the mere availability of young and impressionable cohorts whose political identities have yet to be fixed. If no more than this were needed, we could expect to witness such upheavals with much greater regularity than has been the case. Realignment sequences originate in the policy concerns of voters, and they become inevitable when the

dominant alignment is unable to provide adequate "expression" for these concerns. It is important to realize that young voters are characterized not only by their relative susceptibility to political events, but also by a <u>lack</u> of identification with the issues that shaped the previous alignment. While the political identities of their parents or grandparents have been formed by these earlier events, their own identification with the dominant issues and cleavages is often remote.

One might portray the conditions under which realignment is most often to occur in terms similar to those depicted in Figure 7.[23] With the passage of time, the intensity and salience of the issues which have shaped the present alignment begin to fade. These issues may remain central to the political identities of older voters (although, even among this group, such feelings will be less intense than they once were); but these groups eventually begin to be replaced by younger cohorts to whom the issues of the past seem far less relevant. Still, this "ripeness for realignment"[24] requires something more—it demands that new issues capture the attention of the electorate, especially among the young who are likely to have far less resistance to the impact of these events. And, if a different pattern of social and partisan cleavage is to emerge, preferences on new issues will have to be orthogonal to the divisions established decades earlier. Finally, in order for realignment to occur, the parties themselves must finally respond to the new and salient issues in such a way that permits the new agenda to override past traditions and concerns.

Much of this reasoning is being applied to contemporary American

FIGURE 7

CONDITIONS OF PARTISAN REALIGNMENT
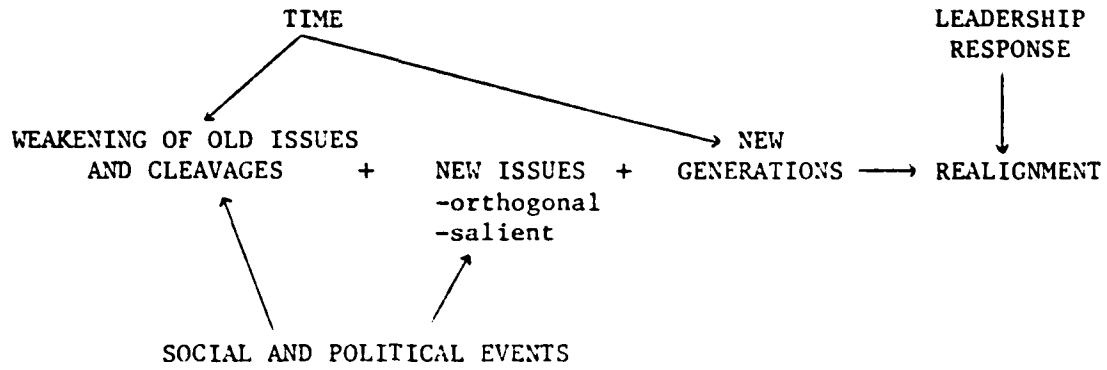
politics. With the economic prosperity of the postwar years, the dominant issues of the New Deal era apparently have become less salient to many voters, and particularly to the young. This transition has many manifestations, including the tendency of voters to abandon their party loyalties in order to vote for candidates of the opposing party, and the growing levels of partisan independence (again, particularly among the young) which characterized the 1960s and early 1970s.[25] Along with the fading relevance of class issues, there have been many new issues--civil rights, social order, alternative lifestyles, war, etc.--which have assumed their place on the national agenda, and which often have divided the electorate in ways that split the New Deal coalitions.

All of this corresponds rather closely to the evidence which we considered in the previous chapter. While we should not assume that older citizens have been unaffected by the events of recent years, we might gain a better understanding of the future by focusing our attention briefly on the younger cohorts who presumably have been most susceptible to the emergence of new issues and conflicts. Our model of political discontent is based upon the assumption that shifting demands in the electorate, if left unmet, can generate higher levels of cynicism. If we can locate among the young a set of demands which is qualitatively different from the demands of older voters, we will have a further illustration of the dilemma which is confronted by political leadership. We should be careful, however, not to expect that we will find overwhelming differences between age groups. As I argued in the

previous chapter, the "crisis" of the 1970s may be in the fact that no well-defined crisis exists. It is the absence of such a set of issues[26] --a critical feature of realignment sequences in the past--that may help us to understand both the absence of partisan realignment and the depth of contemporary discontent.

Political Discontent and the Significance of Age

Just as political cynicism has spread across various social categories, it also has become a common orientation among young and old alike. All age groups have experienced the "alienating events" of recent years, and all have come to regard the government with a substantial amount of suspicion. The general conclusion recommended by the literature is that the growth of political discontent is a pronounced period effect, which cannot be traced to any identifiable age, region, sex, education, or economic group.[27] A number of studies continue to observe a slightly higher level of trust among younger respondents--probably as a residue of their socialization to a generally supportive frame of mind; these differences tend, however, to be small.[28]

Jennings and Niemi were able to examine changes in trust among both parental and filial generations at two points in time, 1965 and 1973. The timing of their study is fortuitous, since it corresponds to the period when aggregate levels of cynicism were growing rapidly. In their initial observation, when the offspring were high-school seniors, parents were found to be significantly less trusting than their children. Such differences were expected, in light of early

socialization research, to diminish as adolescents became adults and were more exposed to the harsh "realities" of political life. These purely life-cycle effects were indeed observed in 1973, along with the aforementioned period effect: cynicism had increased among both groups, but at a much faster rate among the young. Such rapid changes in young adulthood may, however, portend future generational effects. That is, since a high level of cynicism has been reached at such an early age, it may have become part of that group's "world view" and, as such, it may be very resistant to change regardless of the government's success in alleviating its initial causes.[29] Addressing himself specifically to the failure of our party system to effectively speak to the changing demands of the mass public, Burnham notes the entry of large numbers of young voters into the electorate. "This very large segment of the voting population," he continues, "has lived its entire adult life in this cumulative crisis of leadership. . . ."[30] When we recall from our review of the socialization literature that even younger children have begun to reflect the discontent of their elders, we must wonder whether this generally common attitude has permanently colored the outlooks of entire generations.[31]

Our own data support the conclusion that age differences in system affect are minimal. As we can see from Table 15, the differences in political trust which are evident across our five age categories[32] suggest that a life-cycle effect may be present, i.e., the older cohorts (age 50-plus) are more cynical than the rest of the electorate. But differences are very small, and there is no clear linear or

TABLE 15

SYSTEM ATTITUDES ACROSS AGE STRATA[a]

AGE IN 1972	Political Trust	External Efficacy	System Support	Extra-System Orientation
18-24	17.1(N=206)	11.3(N=206)	3.1(N=171)	9.4(N=206)
25-34	16.7(N=299)	11.6(N=299)	2.8(N=236)	10.2(N=299)
35-49	17.0(N=328)	12.1(N=328)	2.7(N=265)	11.0(N=328)
50-60	18.3(N=220)	10.8(N=220)	2.9(N=172)	11.5(N=220)
60-plus	18.0(N=276)	10.4(N=276)	2.9(N=224)	12.3(N=276)

[a]These figures are the mean scores on the variables indicated; low scores reflect higher trust, higher system support, lower external efficacy, and approval of unconventional political tactics.

NOTE: These figures describe form 2 respondents only.

curvilinear pattern. Much the same conclusion is warranted for external

efficacy and, despite the higher educational levels of younger cohorts,

internal efficacy and personal effectiveness.[33] The system support mea-

sure does show the youngest group most likely to endorse the idea that

changes in our form of government are necessary and/or that they feel

little pride in our system of government. The significance of this may

depend on whether system support is simply a manifestation of political

trust, or whether it represents more deep-seated (and behaviorally rele-

vant) beliefs. Age differences are most clearly evident for extra-system

orientation, with approval of unconventional political tactics decreasing

monotonically across the age strata. Perhaps the significance of these

data is not in an unusually high level of discontent among the young,

but in the fact that such feelings have come to be held at such an early

age. Especially if there are life-cycle processes which will tend to

increase the cynicism of younger voters as they age, we must again won-

der whether the government can ever hope to regain their full allegiance.

And, finally, if partisan loyalties can help to screen out (or at least

moderate) the disaffecting impact of negative stimuli, the greater levels

of partisan independence among younger voters may help to make cynicism

a persistent feature of our political life.

Answers to questions such as these cannot be determined without the

perspective of time. Our own purposes are more limited, and tied in

with the themes we have been considering throughout this study. If the

1960s and early 1970s have seen the emergence of new issues and new de-

mands to which government is expected to be responsive, then the genera-

tional thesis would bring us to locate these demands most clearly among younger citizens, for this is the group which should be most strongly affected by the events and the issues of the day.

Value Expression and Political Discontent

With varying degrees of emphasis, there are numerous studies which emphasize the changing priorities and expectations of the young. We have already noted Inglehart's thesis about the gradual development of "post-materialist" values in Western societies.[34] Similarly, Miller and Levitin have written of the rise of a New Politics during the early 1970s, centering around such issues as the counterculture and divergent lifestyles, the growth of political protest, law and order (and race), and the tension between social control and individual freedom. Attitudes regarding these issues are said to have crystallized and polarized, reflecting a new set of demands on the part of a growing number of citizens. While the two-party system was unable to parlay this trend into a realignment, it was nonetheless the actions of political leadership--individual spokesmen who addressed the electorate's emergent concerns--which permitted these conflicts to be explicitly channelled onto the agenda of politics. Miller and Levitin find liberal support on New Politics issues to be most evident among the young.[35]

Other studies, most of them reaching far less dramatic conclusions about generational change, have attempted to compare the belief structures of different age groups. For example, a factor analysis presented by Pomper suggests that the attitudes of younger voters are more clearly

crystallized around such issues as lifestyle, social equality, and war; older voters, on the other hand, seem to place a greater emphasis on matters of race and economic opportunity.[36] However, Nie and his associates have concluded that recent increases in consistency on their dominant liberal-conservative dimension were not the result of sharper increases among the young.[37]

We discovered in the previous chapter that both procedural expression (external efficacy) and policy expression are important sources of political discontent. We also found that these relationships are not uniform across all social groups, perhaps indicating that demands are not evenly distributed throughout the population, and that some issues are more salient to some groups than to others. Can we enhance our understanding of this phenomenon by concentrating on evidence of generational change? In other words, even if political discontent does not appear to be (for the moment) a result of generational differences, is it possible that the various age groups possess divergent demands and, as a result, that they arrive at their feelings of discontent through different sets of value discrepancies? We might hypothesize that

> emergent demands regarding procedural and policy expression (the latter referring to issue dimensions other than traditional New Deal economic and social welfare controversies) will be disproportionately located among young Americans; and that perceived governmental failure to meet these demands will account for a correspondingly higher proportion of the political cynicism observed among this group.

We can quickly dismiss the possibility that external efficacy is a value which is of greater importance to younger cohorts. The relationship between external efficacy and political trust is a reasonably strong and

positive one for all five of our cohorts.[38] The relationship is weakest

for the over-60 group, perhaps reflecting their disengagement from polit-

ical (and social) activity, but differences are generally modest. This

might come as some surprise since "post-materialists" are most numerous

in the 18-to-24 cohort, but their numbers are apparently insufficient to

alter the general pattern. We should keep in mind, however, that demands

for active participatory opportunities might indeed be more intense among

the young, and especially among the well-educated young. Our measure of

external efficacy taps that demand either indirectly or not at all, so we

should limit our conclusions to the more general notion of "system re-

sponsiveness"--a value which clearly is salient for many citizens of all

ages.

Are there generational differences in the relative centrality of

our four dimensions of public policy? While an effort was made to deter-

mine whether attitudes on these issues were structured differently ac-

cording to age, the differences that existed seemed to be generally

unsystematic. As a result, the same scales that were described in the

previous chapter were also used here.[39] One conclusion can be reached

quickly: on three of the four policy dimensions, there is a clear asso-

ciation between age and direction of preference, with younger citizens

more likely to hold "liberal" attitudes--even with their level of educa-

tion held constant. The exception is for ECONOMIC issues, where the

Depression and pre-Depression cohorts are more liberal than the distri-

butions for other dimensions would lead us to expect.[40] This could re-

flect either generational (the events of 1929-1939) or life-cycle

(reduction of earning power with age) influences. Even on ECONOMIC

issues, however, the youngest cohort is as liberal, or even a tiny bit

more so, than the oldest.[41] These patterns are described in Table 16.

It is difficult to reach any summary judgments about the relative

salience of each policy dimension to the five cohorts. The figures in

Table 17[42] tell us that all four dimensions are reasonably well inte-

grated into the ideological self-identification of the generations--

with the rather conspicuous exception of the Depression group, for whom

we would expect ECONOMIC issues to be more salient.[43] These data remind

us of the problems which face our parties as they attempt to represent

public opinion across the spectrum of problems considered here. Issue

preference and partisanship are simply not related at levels that we may

take to symbolize a healthy two-party system. This is most clearly true

for the SOCIAL and LIFESTYLE issues. Liberalism on these dimensions is

at least positively (though modestly) related to Democratic identifica-

tion for our two youngest cohorts; this suggests that younger voters who

do select a party affiliation--though many have remained independent--

are doing so in a way which accommodates a wider range of contemporary

issues. Older voters are less successful in this regard.[44]

A similar point can be made about the relationship between policy

preferences and political trust. In this instance, it is only among the

youngest cohort that we see a fairly consistent zero-order relationship

between liberalism on all four policy dimensions and higher levels of

political cynicism. In fact, while the coefficients are generally not

significant at the .05 level, the youngest cohort is the only one in

which SOCIAL conservatism is not associated with greater cynicism. This

TABLE 16

AGE AND DIRECTION OF POLITICAL PREFERENCE[a]

	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	N
A. WAR (r=.19, gamma=.22)				
18-24	29%	43%	28%	147
25-34	22	35	43	192
35-49	18	30	52	256
50-60	8	34	58	158
60-plus	10	41	49	160
				913
B. SOCIAL (r=.26, gamma=.34)				
18-24	18%	61%	22%	125
25-34	13	56	32	182
35-49	14	50	36	250
50-60	6	38	56	141
60-plus	5	34	61	139
				837
C. LIFESTYLE (r=.22, gamma=.26)				
18-24	38%	43%	18%	180
25-34	24	48	28	239
35-49	22	48	31	329
50-60	11	55	34	192
60-plus	11	47	42	215
				1155
D. ECONOMICS (r=n.s., gamma=-.01)				
18-24	32%	45%	24%	139
25-34	21	47	32	224
35-49	22	46	32	289
50-60	26	42	33	166
60-plus	35	34	31	201
				1019

[a]These row percentages indicate the proportion of each age group holding the indicated preferences. The range of values associated with each issue position is described in Table 8 in the preceding chapter.

NOTE: These figures describe form 1 respondents only.

TABLE 17

INTERCORRELATIONS (r) BETWEEN ISSUE BELIEFS AND OTHER POLITICAL
ATTITUDES, BY AGE COHORT (WHITES ONLY)[a]

	Political Trust	Liberal-Conservative	Intended 1972 Vote	Party ID
A. AGE 18-24				
SOCIAL	-.13(n.s.)	.52	.52	.20
WAR	-.27	.59	.65	.33
LIFESTYLE	-.19	.45	.28	.10(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	-.22	.35	.41	.33
(N varies between 86 and 154)				
B. AGE 25-34				
SOCIAL	.12(n.s.)	.37	.22	.14
WAR	-.10(n.s.)	.36	.44	.24
LIFESTYLE	-.03(n.s.)	.31	.30	.14
ECONOMICS	-.15	.39	.23	.19
(N varies between 132 and 216)				
C. AGE 35-49				
SOCIAL	.11	.40	.29	.02(n.s.)
WAR	-.23	.50	.49	.15
LIFESTYLE	-.02(n.s.)	.42	.18	-.13
ECONOMICS	-.12	.39	.34	.16
(N varies between 172 and 285)				

TABLE 17 - Continued

	Political Trust	Liberal-Conservative	Intended 1972 Vote	Party ID
D. AGE 50-60				
SOCIAL	.03(n.s.)	.20	.19	-.07(n.s.)
WAR	-.13(n.s.)	.29	.31	.15
LIFESTYLE	.00(n.s.)	.02(n.s.)	.14	-.05(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	-.04(n.s.)	.07(n.s.)	.34	.18
(N varies between 92 and 172)				
E. AGE 60-PLUS				
SOCIAL	.06(n.s.)	.36	.19	-.03(n.s.)
WAR	-.18	.24	.51	.29
LIFESTYLE	-.13	.23	.00(n.s.)	-.11(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	-.05(n.s.)	.29	.35	.27
(N varies between 96 and 197)				

[a]Low scores represent liberal preferences, high trust, liberal self-identification, McGovern support, and Democratic partisanship.

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 1 (white) respondents only.

finding is made even more curious by some figures which are not pre-
sented in Table 17: for every cohort, but most strongly for the four
oldest, higher levels of external efficacy are found among SOCIAL liber-
als. The same is true, though at much smaller magnitudes, for LIFESTYLE
issues. These patterns may result from the fact that higher educational
attainment is associated with both external efficacy and liberalism on
SOCIAL and LIFESTYLE. And since external efficacy is positively related
to political trust (accounting for most of the modest relationship be-
tween education and trust), we may have a partial explanation for what
seems to be an anomaly in our data: although liberals tend generally to
more cynical than all except extreme conservatives, the significantly
greater liberalism of the young is not accompanied by similarly higher
levels of political discontent. What we may be witnessing is the joint
influence of educational opportunities and political events (and perhaps
life-cycle effects as well), operating in such a way that cynicism among
the young has been somewhat checked.

We have not, however, resolved the question of whether generational
differences in policy priorities exist, and whether this represents a
broadening of the political demands to which government is expected to
respond. The figures in Table 18, which describes the partial correla-
tions between policy preferences and the same attitudes we have been
considering, may guide us toward an answer. There is no simple way for
us to summarize these patterns (a problem compounded by the fact that,
once again, we are dealing with a smaller N than we would prefer). Some
general observations are possible, however. For example, WAR issues were
the most powerful independent influence on vote choice in 1972-- and

TABLE 18

PARTIAL CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ISSUE BELIEFS AND OTHER POLITICAL
ATTITUDES, BY AGE COHORT (WHITES ONLY)[a]

	Political Trust	Liberal- Conservative	Intended 1972 Vote	Party ID
A. AGE 18-24				
SOCIAL	-.05(n.s.)	.23	.20(n.s.)	.04(n.s.)
WAR	-.08(n.s.)	.44	.61	.26
LIFESTYLE	-.05(n.s.)	.23	.05(n.s.)	-.10(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	-.23	.00(n.s.)	-.03(n.s.)	.27
	N=71	N=63	N=55	N=71
B. AGE 25-34				
SOCIAL	.15(n.s.)	.17	.05(n.s.)	.06(n.s.)
WAR	-.14(n.s.)	.19	.28	.19
LIFESTYLE	-.02(n.s.)	.13(n.s.)	.17	.02(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	-.10(n.s.)	.21	.11(n.s.)	.22
	N=117	N=100	N=98	N=116
C. AGE 35-49				
SOCIAL	.26	.06(n.s.)	-.03(n.s.)	-.02(n.s.)
WAR	-.31	.28	.43	.19
LIFESTYLE	-.04(n.s.)	.24	.08(n.s.)	-.19
ECONOMICS	-.18	.16	.18	.12(n.s.)
	N=157	N=128	N=137	N=156

TABLE 18 - Continued

	Political Trust	Liberal-Conservative	Intended 1972 Vote	Party ID
D. AGE 50-60				
SOCIAL	.18	.06(n.s.)	-.04(n.s.)	-.19
WAR	-.25	.22	.27	.27
LIFESTYLE	.02(n.s.)	-.10(n.s.)	.11(n.s.)	-.07(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	-.05(n.s.)	-.08(n.s.)	.38	.19
	N=81	N=62	N=69	N=81
E. AGE 60-PLUS				
SOCIAL	.05(n.s.)	.27	.02(n.s.)	-.08(n.s.)
WAR	-.16(n.s.)	.02(n.s.)	.34	.20
LIFESTYLE	-.06(n.s.)	.02(n.s.)	.03(n.s.)	-.07(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	-.09(n.s.)	.16(n.s.)	.42	.28
	N=76	N=59	N=64	N=76

[a]These are third-order partial correlations between each dimension of policy preference and the indicated attitude, with each of the other policy dimensions controlled. Low scores represent liberal preferences, high trust, liberal self-identification, McGovern support, and Democratic partisanship.

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 1 (white) respondents only.

their centrality is most evident among the young. Also as expected, the salience of ECONOMIC issues increases with age. Attitudes about WAR and ECONOMICS have been most successfully integrated into the partisan attitudes of each cohort. And, once again, it is the two youngest groups which have been able to bring the broadest array of issues into line with their ideological identification.

But these data are too complex to support any simple generalizations. We might note, for example, that ECONOMIC preferences are most evident in the vote intentions of older citizens--yet they are most strongly related to the political trust of the youngest cohort. Precisely the opposite pattern is evident with WAR issues. Also, the tension between SOCIAL and LIFESTYLE preferences and partisanship is again evident from these data, but there is no clear generational pattern. The same tension is found in the tendency (differing substantially in strength across cohorts) for cynicism to be located among SOCIAL conservatives and WAR and ECONOMIC liberals.

The situation is hardly clarified when we examine the impact upon political trust of candidate (Nixon) policy expression. The zero-order coefficients tell the familiar story of perceived distance from the Republican nominee being associated with stronger feelings of cynicism. A look at the independent influence of each dimension of policy expression (Table 19) tells us something else again. Remembering that our sample size is very small for these comparisons, we see that it is now for SOCIAL issues that policy expression is most strongly related to trust for the youngest cohort. But there is once again no systematic pattern of differential salience across age strata. In fact, we find several instances

TABLE 19

POLICY EXPRESSION AND POLITICAL TRUST,
BY AGE COHORT (WHITES ONLY)[a]

CANDIDATE POLICY EXPRESSION (Nixon)	POLITICAL TRUST	
	Zero-Order	Third-Order Partial
A. AGE 18-24		
SOCIAL	.32	.20(n.s.)
Vietnam	.35	.10(n.s.)
LIFESTYLE	.28	.10(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	.31	.08(n.s.)
	N=70 to 139	N=44
B. AGE 25-34		
SOCIAL	.26	.06(n.s.)
Vietnam	.29	.05(n.s.)
LIFESTYLE	.17	-.07(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	.25	.17(n.s.)
	N=104 to 187	N=58
C. AGE 35-49		
SOCIAL	.38	.30
Vietnam	.42	.25
LIFESTYLE	.34	.15(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	.25	-.14(n.s.)
	N=147 to 250	N=96

TABLE 19 - Continued

CANDIDATE POLICY EXPRESSION (Nixon)	POLITICAL TRUST	
	Zero-Order	Third-Order Partial
D. AGE 50-60		
SOCIAL	.22	-.02(n.s.)
Vietnam	.22	-.23(n.s.)
LIFESTYLE	.32	.26
ECONOMICS	.15	.22(n.s.)
	N=86 to 153	N=41
E. AGE 60-PLUS		
SOCIAL	.17(n.s.)	.04(n.s.)
Vietnam	.30	.26(n.s.)
LIFESTYLE	.21	-.10(n.s.)
ECONOMICS	.22	.04(n.s.)
	N=85 to 163	N=36

[a]Low scores represent closer proximity to Nixon and higher trust. The partial correlations reflect the relationship between candidate policy expression and political trust with each of the other dimensions of policy expression controlled.

NOTE: These coefficients describe form 1 (white) respondents only.

(though statistically insignificant) where closer perceived proximity to Nixon is found among the more cynical (e.g., Vietnam for the Depression cohort).

Conclusion

On balance, then, our data cannot support any general conclusion that there are profound differences among the age strata, not only in the direction of policy preference, but also in the relative priority of their policy demands. There are some indications that younger voters are pressing a wider variety of demands on their government (something we found to be true of the better educated in the previous chapter); and they appear to be doing so in a more ideologically consistent manner than we find among older citizens. But the events and personalities of contemporary American politics have made an impression on every segment of the population. A methodology which identified with greater precision the policy demands and expectations of respondents might help us to unravel some of the mysteries left unsolved by our analysis. Similarly, it may be that we have defined our generations too broadly—particularly in a period of rapid social change—and that a focus on more narrowly defined age groupings would yield more interpretable results. However, studies which have used this strategy have thus far been unable to provide convincing evidence of changing citizen demands along generational lines. And our own analysis has defined the youngest cohort (age 18-24 in 1972) in fairly precise historical terms—and discovered among this group a variety of issues with which they link themselves to their government.

There can be little doubt that the demands and expectations of the American electorate have changed in recent years. There is at least some tentative support for the idea that the contemporary period is marked by a "mentality of demand"--particularly among the better-educated, and perhaps among the young. The more expectations which citizens hold of their government, the greater is the opportunity for government to fail. But expectations have changed among young and old alike, and not in any simple or straightforward way. Pomper, whose reasoning parallels Inglehart's description of contemporary youth in the affluent West, sees the younger generation as defining its collective ideological self-identification in terms of the "newer" issues, such as lifestyle and individual freedom.[45] Our data simply do not sustain such an unambiguous conclusion.

Nor should the apparently greater liberalism of the young--except on ECONOMIC issues--be interpreted to mean that new voters are like-minded in their political preferences. The attitudes of contemporary youth are as diverse as those of their elders, a fact to which many generational theorists give insufficient attention. In particular, there are sharp ideological cleavages between college and noncollege youth,[46] and these are evident even on the "newer" issues which have been identified as a part of the growing consciousness of emergent generations. If there is to be a partisan realignment, with youth providing the foundation for long-term change, there will be enough opinion diversity to sustain at least two political parties.

And what of our political parties, and their standing in the eyes of youth? If there is one characteristic that seems perpetually to distinguish the politics of youth, it is that they are only imperfectly

socialized into the political party system. This apparent life-cycle phenomenon, and the gradual "immunization" of the citizen from the impact of events which might disturb his basic party loyalties, was described above. What seems to make the independence of contemporary youth unusual is that the process of immunization does not appear to be working very well. Our data from 1972 show that 17 percent of the youngest cohort describe themselves as "pure" independents. This figure declines across the age strata, with only 8 percent of the oldest cohort falling into the independent category. What is most unusual is that independence is equally high (17 percent) among those between the ages of 25 and 34. Jennings and Niemi, examining changes in partisanship at the individual level between 1965 and 1973, reach much the same conclusion: the traditional independence of youth is not disappearing--and it may itself be hardening over time in much the same way as party loyalties normally do. Such an outcome suggests a rather volatile future for American electoral politics.[47]

In fact, there is evidence that weakening partisanship--and other manifestations of "dealignment" or "disaggregation," such as split-ticket voting--has spread among all age groups.[48] This apparent "period effect" (constrained by life-cycle processes) may be closely connected with the political discontent that has been our focus. Still, in the previous chapter we learned that there is no clear and direct relationship between partisan strength and discontent, and we must reaffirm that conclusion here. Just as the greater liberalism of youth has not made them disproportionately cynical towards government, neither has the weakness of their collective party loyalties resulted in higher cynicism. But

nonpartisanship, like youthfulness, appears to cause many individuals to be more responsive to other influences coming from the political environment--including the issues and events of the day, which may generate discontent more directly without having to overcome partisan predispositions.

.To all of this, we must again note the influences of higher education, the distribution of which is marked by sharp generational discontinuities. The diffusion of higher education may mean many things for the future of American politics, including a more liberal attitude on some important issues as the processes of generational replacement go forward. Our interest in political discontent, however, leads us to emphasize increasing educational levels as indicative of "cognitive mobilization." This refers to the growth of skills relevant to meaningful citizen participation in policymaking, and the subsequent demand that opportunities for participation be made available. As young Americans are increasingly likely to possess these skills and values, they are less likely to be satisfied with the traditional forms of party politics. To the extent that this orientation fosters a reluctance among citizens to accept partisan commitments, the potential for political discontent would seem to be enhanced. Such an outcome is not logically necessary. But when education interacts with societal affluence, a tendency to hold higher and broader expectations concerning governmental performance, an historical cultural suspicion of political parties, a telecommunications network that performs functions (especially the distribution of political information) once delegated to the parties, and a two-party system which simply cannot adequately represent an infinite amount of opinion diversity, then the opportunities for widespread and enduring discontent would seem to

grow accordingly.

Contemporary youth (including many of the not-so-young) does appear
to be "ripe" for realignment. One characteristic of realigning periods
is that the processes of political socialization—especially the trans-
mission of partisanship from parent to child—are disrupted. But this
ripeness, in order to realize its potential, must be shaped by events
and leaders who provide a new focus and a new definition of political
conflict. The past 15 years have not been marked by an absence of such
forces, but rather by a bewildering array of them, none of which have
established predominance over all of the others. Our own data provide
ample evidence of change, both among and between generations, but the
direction of change is difficult to discern. Different sets of demands
help us to account for different attitudes and behaviors as we look across
partisan, social, and age groups in the electorate. If "political genera-
tions" are defined as people, of similar age, who have undergone a common
set of experiences during their formative years, we must not overlook the
influence of political and social events upon Americans of all ages. The
future may yet provide us with a "crisis" issue with which we can reorient
our politics and redefine our political identities—around which citizen
demands and expectations can be focused. For the moment, however, the
changes which are in store for us cannot be foreseen.

THE BEHAVIORAL SIGNIFICANCE OF POLITICAL DISCONTENT

Compliance versus Challenge

In the course of this study, we have often encountered the idea that
the diffusion of political discontent may represent a genuine threat to

the stability of our political institutions. We might recall some of
these arguments, including the belief of Aberbach and Walker that mis-
trust may produce "the kind of creative tensions needed to prompt social
change"--or it "may lead to violent disruption or indiscriminate and cruel
repression," depending upon how the government and society responds to the
demands of mistrustful groups.[49] Even more dramatically, Miller warns us
that political discontent, if it persists over long periods of time,
carries with it "the potential for revolutionary alteration of the politi-
cal and social system."[50]

It is in its potential for producing systemic change that many theo-
rists locate the ultimate significance of contemporary discontent. We
must recall, of course, that the political objects toward which this at-
titude is directed will have much to say about its systemic relevance.
Such distinctions are at the heart of Easton's concept of "diffuse"
support, the absence of which may prove to be disabling for political
decision-makers. It should be useful to repeat the general hypothesis
as formulated by Muller and Jukam:

> If system affect is negative among powerful or sizable
> segments of a polity, the threat to the stability of the
> prevailing regime will be great, even if affect for a
> particular incumbent administration is positive; con-
> versely, if system affect is positive among powerful or
> sizable segments of a polity, the threat to the stabil-
> ity of the prevailing regime will be small, even if
> affect for a particular incumbent administration is
> negative.[51]

While this proposition would probably be endorsed as plausible by
most scholars, both they and we are limited by the quality of our data as
we attempt to assess the validity of the hypothesis. As I have explained,
we will be less concerned with formulating a theory of system stability

than with determining the behavioral significance of political cynicism. For even if it is accurate to speak of widespread discontent in the United States, and even if we may say that discontent has "generalized" in such a way that it now describes the modal popular attitude toward a variety of political institutions, we must acknowledge one indisputable fact: despite the turmoil of recent years, our political system has persisted and continued to make authoritative decisions for society. While we can produce considerable evidence of widespread dissatisfaction and disaffection in the U.S., our data from 1972 have illustrated paradoxically high levels of "system support" and disapproval of nontraditional forms of political protest. It is this sort of paradox which makes the distinction between diffuse and specific support plausible.

While we will consider the relationship between political discontent and regime-challenging behavior momentarily, we should recognize that it does not take a revolution for the stability of the political order to be impaired. For example, Gamson emphasizes that high levels of societal trust permit greater flexibility in decision-making: leaders are able to commit society's resources toward solving important problems, and citizens are willing to accept momentary hardships in pursuit of future benefits. On the other hand, when trust is low, the government may be required to divert its resources toward efforts to control the discontented groups.[52] This is most obvious when the discontented are mobilized, thus presenting a direct challenge to the decisions issued by the government.

> . . . (U)nless the decisions and actions of those members
> who bear the responsibility for taking care of the day-
> to-day problems of the system--the political authorities--
> are normally accepted as binding or authoritative, a
> society will quickly be reduced to a state of chaos.[53]

While this feeling need not be universal, and while compliance may be encouraged through threats of coercion and material incentives,[54] it still seems likely that widespread noncompliance will prove to be seriously disruptive to the government's effective operation.

These ideas are of concern to us because an "obligation to obey" is usually conceptualized as a manifestation of political support. Thus, with political discontent having become widespread, we might expect that citizens will also have become less likely to comply with governmental directives, thereby constituting a behavioral threat to the regime. The evidence which links supportive beliefs to compliant behavior is, however, less than overwhelming. Studies of preadults have discovered a relationship between beliefs in the legitimacy of political authorities and attitudes toward compliance with the law,[55] but the relationship tends to vary across different social groups and different indicators.[56] In particular, we might suspect that compliance, like political behavior in general, will be strongly influenced by situational factors. Sears and his associates, in an interesting study of reactions to the energy shortage of 1974, concluded that support for the Nixon administration's "official line" was associated with partisan attitudes more than with political trust or diffuse support; and they found that "behavioral compliance" (regarding the consumption of gasoline and electricity) was primarily a function of situational factors (i.e., a belief that the energy shortage had a direct personal impact).[57]

There are many varieties of political behavior for which political discontent might be a motivating factor. Political alienation, conceptualized and measured in a seemingly endless number of ways, has been

found to predict to such behaviors as voting negativism, protest voting, and apathy or withdrawal from politics.[58] Political cynicism is an orientation which has only occasionally been found to exert an influence on vote choice in national elections, but such a relationship has been found for both 1964 and 1972, when the "out-party" candidate apparently provided an outlet for the expression of political discontent.[59] These findings remind us of the importance of situational factors for political behavior: if there is no "alienated response option" available, through which the discontented may express their grievances, the quality or the direction of their participation is likely to be determined by other forces (especially, in the case of elections, by partisan affiliation). On the other hand, when the situation permits discontent to be expressed through one form or another of political action, the link between attitude and behavior should be more evident. In particular, we should not expect to find widespread manifestations of aggressive anti-regime behavior in the absence of visible alternatives to the existing regime. The absence of such an alternative may help us to understand the relative stability of American political institutions, both now and in earlier periods of widespread disaffection and hardship.[60]

It is the apparent relationship between political discontent and unconventional political behavior which has led many observers to express alarm about the growth of cynicism in the United States. Numerous studies have reported that political cynicism, or a parallel measure, is associated with participation in or (more often) approval of political protest or disruptive behavior.[61] Political cynicism, in this view, is understood to be a motivation to act, with the particular mode of

behavioral expression depending on a number of factors, including the structure of the situation and the individual's personality or behavioral orientation.[62] All things being equal, politicized discontent seems to be an attitude which carries the potential for actions intended to challenge the authorities and institutions that are blamed for the conditions which generated the discontent.

The relationship between trust and protest does not, however, prove to be quite this simple or straightforward. A number of additional attitudes and attributes--e.g., ideology, race, age, education--have been found to qualify the relationship in particular samples. The most frequently cited of these qualifying variables is sense of political efficacy (usually conceptualized as internal efficacy, though often operationalized with no attention to the internal-external distinction). Gamson has hypothesized that "a combination of high sense of political efficacy and low political trust is the optimum combination for mobilization--a belief that influence is both possible and necessary."[63] This elegantly simple proposition captured the imagination of a great many social scientists, although empirical support tended to be either weak or nonexistent.[64] Both Gamson (from Paige) and Finifter developed speculative typologies to describe the likely behavioral manifestations associated with the simultaneous presence of different levels of trust and efficacy. Finifter, for example, expects that a reform orientation (including "reform-oriented protest group activities" aimed at "correcting specific societal conditions that impede the integration of certain subgroups into the system as a whole") will be located among those who are cynical, yet also efficacious (believing that "the system is at least

potentially responsive to their efforts").[65]

Perhaps the most common view is that political efficacy orients one toward or away from political involvement, while political trust works to determine the means or style of involvement selected by the participant. This is in line with one of the first "laws" of behavioral political science: that the politically efficacious are substantially more likely to participate in politics (by whatever means) than are the inefficacious. Thus, for example, Miller and Miller report that, while McGovern support in 1972 was disproportionately high among the "inefficacious cynics," the candidate's advantage among this group was minimized by their higher levels of apathy and abstention.[66] Converse suggests that the diffusion of cynicism in the 1960s had different effects on different groups, tending to produce acquiescence and resignation among the less well-educated (i.e., inefficacious), while also tending to motivate the better-educated (i.e., efficacious) toward a more active response.[67] Abravanel and Busch found that efficacious college students are more likely to express a willingness to engage in political influence attempts, while the cynical among them are more likely to employ mass demonstrations and protest tactics to accomplish their goal.[68] The general idea seems to be that a sense of efficacy is a necessary condition for most political action, while cynicism is necessary--but not sufficient--for nontraditional forms of protest.[69]

The logic of the presumed efficacy-participation relationship is relatively straightforward: political involvement requires the expenditure of resources--personal, psychological, and social--and the absence of such resources tends to place the costs of involvement beyond the

reach of many citizens. Political efficacy (again, primarily referring to the internal dimension[70]) not only seems to be an important psychological resource, but it also tends to be associated with other resources (e.g., better education, political knowledge and skills, social advantage) upon which the potential participant might draw. Thus, Wright argues that the growth of political discontent does not signal the beginnings of an active challenge to the regime, in large measure because the most cynical segments of the population are also the most inefficacious—and rightly so, for he contends that there is a strong relationship between real and perceived powerlessness. That is, political alienation (especially inefficacy) is highest among those groups in which the resources, ability, and inclination to mount an effective political challenge are weakest.[71] Similarly, scholars who hypothesize a relationship between system (diffuse) support and regime stability—e.g., the Muller-Jukam citation above—are usually inclined to note that the greatest threat is posed when "powerful or sizable" segments are characterized by low levels of support.[72]

Our own model of political discontent suggests that changes in the distribution of resources may be taking place in American society. The processes of politicization and, especially, cognitive mobilization should have resulted in a broader distribution of the personal and psychological resources that facilitate political involvement; and the spread of societal affluence may have added to the momentum of these trends, especially by providing access to higher education (a milieu which historically has been a focal point for protest) and by increasing the leisure time available to citizens who are inclined to participate

in politics.

Our problem has been that the documentation of these trends is extremely difficult with the survey measures available to us. We have seen that "internal" efficacy, as measured with SRC indicators, has not changed much in recent years, although Wright notes an overall increase in political efficacy among the college-educated from 1964 to 1970.[73] I have argued that the absence of an upward trend in such indicators may well be a function of discontent itself, and that respondents' answers to questions about their political interest and feelings of personal or political effectiveness will probably be contaminated by negative perceptions of the political environment. In fact, the absence of a downward trend in these measures may itself be taken to reflect expanding levels of political skills and psychological resources in the electorate. More supportive of our argument is the evidence of change in such apparent indicators as attitudinal constraint (politicization) and levels of conceptualization (cognitive mobilization).[74] Let us examine the extent to which political discontent, under various qualifying conditions, can help us to understand the behavioral tendencies of Americans in 1972.

Political Discontent and Political Behavior

As I have indicated, our intent is not to explain political behavior, but rather to examine the behavioral significance of political discontent. Still, while we will need no elaborate typologies of behavior to accomplish this task, an important distinction needs to be made between two separate motivations to political action. Citizens may participate in politics for a variety of reasons. Verba, for example, distinguishes

between influential and supportive participation, contending that political participation increases the democratic character of a nation only to the extent that it involves some degree of influence by the participant over governmental decisions.[75] Since participation in such traditional modes as voting and partisan activity can fall into either category, we are faced with the difficult challenge of distinguishing between identical manifestations of behavior according to the intent of the participant. A similar distinction is made by Inglehart, who describes two qualitatively different modes of political involvement.

> Elite-directed political participation is largely a
> matter of elites mobilizing mass support through
> established organizations such as political parties,
> labor unions, religious institutions, and so on.
> The new "elite-challenging" style of politics gives
> the public an increasingly important role in making
> specific decisions, not just a choice between two
> or more sets of decision-makers. . . .[76]

Cognitive mobilization and value change have presumably contributed to the distribution of political skills and the demands for influential involvement in the affluent West.

While Inglehart's conceptualization leaves us pondering the different motivations that may lie behind identical actions (e.g., is involvement in electoral politics stimulated by the desire to exert influence or by partisan attachments that may exist apart from ideological commitments?), it does permit us to identify certain activities as likely to fall in the "elite-challenging" category. Political protest is the most obvious example, although protest need not be regime-challenging. The same may be said of other activities which tend to involve citizens in politics independently of the guiding hand of political (and social) leadership,

e.g., such nonpartisan forms of electoral involvement as ticket-splitting and defection from traditional party loyalties. This is not to say that other forms of participation are necessarily "elite-directed," but rather that such actions as protest and nonpartisan voting are more likely to be motivated by the desire to influence public policy. Thus, our hypothesis is that political cynicism will be positively associated with participation in elite-challenging modes of political behavior.

There are a number of additional factors which we expect to be related to participation in the "newer" forms of political behavior, and it will not always be possible to estimate the independent effects of each. For example, there is the process of cognitive mobilization, which represents the distribution of both political skills and the positive value attached to those skills; with increasing educational levels, citizens may be less willing to submit to political involvement which is organizationally directed.[77] But education, which is the primary indicator of cognitive mobilization, also represents a particular kind of socialization experience--exposure to a milieu which might affect one's attitudes about different modes of political action.[78] This was especially true during the 1960s, when a generation of young people learned from or participated in the unconventional forms employed by the civil-rights and antiwar movements--and in the process perhaps developing a distinctive generational political "style."[79] Age itself, representing a stage of the life-cycle at which resistance to traditional authority is at its peak, may explain why the youth of any historical period are more inclined to endorse elite-challenging modes of participation. Young people, and some older ones as well, have apparently become somewhat more liberal

on some issues in recent years, and <u>liberalism</u> as an ideological orientation involves a critical posture toward the status quo which seems to include a greater proclivity toward unconventional behaviors.[80] And, finally, there is political cynicism itself--independently or in some sort of interaction with feelings of political efficacy and personal effectiveness.

As I noted, not all of these forces can be empirically distinguished from one another, at least with the data at hand. For example, the effort to separate generational effects from life-cycle effects is a difficult one; generational differences are also evident with respect to educational attainment; education and political efficacy are related, as are education and social and cultural liberalism; and so forth. Most importantly, we must recognize that the distribution of some of these attributes has been changing. Thus, we might have witnessed a growing tolerance of and demand for elite-challenging opportunities even if there had been no over-time growth of political cynicism.

In both the previous chapter and this one, we have encountered some of the correlates of what I have called extra-system orientation (EXTRA), an attitudinal rather than a behavioral measure which taps respondents' feelings about various forms of political protest.[81] For example, we saw (Table 8) that liberal preferences on each of our four policy dimensions was associated with higher extra-system orientation; perceived party and candidate policy expression was negatively associated with EXTRA (Table 10). In this chapter (Table 15), we learned that there is a monotonic decrease in protest potential as we move from the youngest to the oldest age cohort.

Another attitude which is related to EXTRA--but only modestly--is

political trust (r=-.12). When scores for both variables are trichot-

omized, we find that high EXTRA scores are about as frequent among the

trustful as among the cynical. The one distinguishing characteristic

of the most cynical group is that they are more likely to express quali-

fied support (i.e., medium EXTRA scores) for protest tactics. But the

relationship is not a strong one and, as Citrin contends, we are probably

better off looking at citizens' feelings of policy dissatisfaction--

especially if they are liberals--than at their feelings of political

trust.[82] Miller is somewhat more precise, noting that "ideology can be

expected to condition the predisposition to participate in protest be-

haviors."[83]

> For individuals with a social change ideology (i.e.,
> liberals), the interaction of the ideological orienta-
> tion and distrust of the government was sufficient to
> result in positive predispositions toward protest be-
> havior. For those with a social control ideology
> (i.e., conservatives), however, a moderate degree of
> policy dissatisfaction was also needed before distrust
> of the government was translated into a more positive
> attitude toward protest actions. . . .[84]

Our data confirm the conditional impact of political discontent on

EXTRA. We find, for example, that only among Inglehart's "post-mate-

ialists" and Democratic identifiers--both groups being more likely to

hold "liberal" preferences--is cynicism related to protest, and even then

the magnitude of the correlations is not overwhelming. The possibility

that liberal preferences encourage protest potential (perhaps by acti-

vating one's sense of cynicism) independently of age is also supported

by our data: the trust-EXTRA relationship does not vary substantially

across the generations. Thus, both age and ideology appear to be

significant factors in the development of an extra-system orientation.
Another likely candidate is education, and we find cynicism somewhat
more strongly related to EXTRA among the better-educated.[85] When we
examine the independent effects of age and education, we see that each
remains associated with EXTRA—although the stronger effect is that of
age, suggesting that we have finally located a source of true genera-
tional change.[86] We might also note here that blacks are considerably
more likely to endorse protest than are whites (although a plurality of
blacks—47 percent—fall only into the "qualified" endorsement category).

Another variable which might be expected to condition the rela-
tionship between trust and EXTRA is political efficacy. At the zero-
order level, we learn that our measure of external efficacy is virtually
unrelated to protest. A modest relationship does exist between EXTRA
and the two questionable indicators of internal efficacy, with protest
approval moderately higher among those who disagree with the "voting
only way" and "politics complex" questions. Our primary interest,
however, is whether trust and efficacy operate jointly to affect pro-
test. The Gamson-Paige hypothesis suggests that, among the efficacious
(those who are likely participants), political cynicism will provide a
motivation for "mobilization." For both the externally and the internally
efficacious, the cynical were more likely to endorse protest, but the
tendency was a modest one; this pattern was stronger among the internally
efficacious.[87]

Pomper notes that the low trust-high efficacy combination, and with
it the potential for political innovation and system change (though not
necessarily revolution or rebellion), is most likely to be found among

today's better-educated youth.[88] Our data provide some support for this view, but some qualifications are necessary. In the first place, the low trust-high efficacy (internal and external) group was considerably outnumbered in 1972 by those who were both cynical and inefficacious. It is true that this latter group was older, less educated, less liberal (internal efficacy only), and less likely to endorse protest than were those respondents who possessed Gamson's "optimum combination for mobilization." But if withdrawal and acquiescence is typical of the cynical-inefficacious, their numbers would seem to proscribe mass mobilization in the immediate future. We should also note that those who score high on both trust and efficacy were both a little younger and a little better educated, on the average, than were the cynical-efficacious. It would seem that, if we wish to account for variations in protest orientation, we should direct our attention to the influences of such factors as age and education. Political trust does seem to be a motivating force under some circumstances, but these circumstances are sometimes rather limiting.

One possibility for the modesty of our empirical relationships is that, despite the growth of political cynicism among the mass public, political negativism has not yet passed the threshold beyond which regime-challenging orientations and behaviors are engaged. We have seen that widespread discontent does not (or did not in 1972) always entail a correspondingly high level of demand for fundamental change in our regime structures and processes. Our measure of "system support," especially to the extent that it taps what Easton calls "diffuse support," might be the most significant limiting condition on the trust-behavior relationship. Our data are supportive, but again the tendency is modest. Among those

with high system support scores, political trust has very little to do with EXTRA. Among those lower in system support, however, cynicism is more strongly associated with protest potential.[89] Still, we must acknowledge either that our measure of system support is a very imperfect indicator of diffuse support, or that even diffuse support has only moderate effects upon the readiness to engage in regime-challenging behaviors. Neither conclusion seems to be implausible.

We should be wary of reading too much into these data, for even though EXTRA is an attitudinal variable that overestimates the true incidence of protest activity in the population, one may engage in change-oriented behavior without endorsing disruptive tactics. Or, as a matter of fact, one may do both. While the relationships are generally weak, there is a tendency for those who have participated in traditional campaign activities (e.g., attending political meetings, contributing to a political party, etc.) to also have higher EXTRA scores than do non-participants. It is reasonable to suspect, though we cannot prove, that those who engage in traditional activities in the hope of influencing public policy (i.e., instrumental participation) would be even more likely to endorse at least limited forms of protest.[90] However, while trust is modestly related to EXTRA, it is even more weakly associated with traditional modes of campaign involvement.

Since we cannot identify those campaign participants who are motivated by instrumental (policy) considerations, we must be satisfied to examine some indirect indicators of elite-challenging campaign involvement. Respondents were asked whether they had always voted for the same political party in presidential elections, and whether they voted a

straight party ticket in state and local elections in 1972. Unfortu-
nately, political trust is related weakly or not at all to partisan
loyalty (presumably including most of those who are voting in an "elite-
directed" fashion) on these measures. A much better predictor is strength
of party loyalty, with weaker partisanship strongly associated with
ticket-splitting and vote-switching.[91] To the extent, then that these
are indicators of elite-challenging behavior, we must conclude that the
factors which combine to produce partisan independence--e.g., age,
education, a belief that party differences are small, etc.--are more
significant than are the forces which generate political discontent.[92]

Conclusion

In a sense, our analysis has not supported the grand conclusion
that the recent diffusion of political discontent in American neces-
sarily signals the emergence of popular demands for system change.
Political cynicism does appear to provide a motivation for protest be-
havior under some circumstances, but those circumstances--e.g., liberal
ideology, post-materialist values, low system support, strong feelings
of personal competence--are not sufficiently widespread to support an
alarmist view that our government is on the verge of being actively re-
pudiated by its citizens. Nor does political cynicism appear to have
much to do with the most conventional modes of elite-challenging be-
haviors, such as party-independent voting habits. Thus, we must con-
cede that our hypothesized relationship between political cynicism and
elite-challenging participation is supported in a very modest way by
the available evidence.

Still, it does not seem plausible that the growth of political discontent would be without significant consequences for individual behavior (and, through such behavior, system change of some sort). To accept this argument is to accept the possibility that Americans have little collective interest in ameliorating the conditions which produced their discontent, or that they could not do so if they wished—or both. There may be more than a trace of justification for reaching such a conclusion, and our reluctance to reach it is surely conditioned by normative beliefs about the role of the citizen in democratic government. But even if we may be burdened with the norms of our political culture, it does not appear to be myopic to take note of the conditional relationship between political discontent and political behavior.

In addition to the qualifying conditions we have just reviewed, many others can be cited. The intensity with which cynicism may be felt, as well as its duration, may affect its behavioral outplay. These variables have not been measured. Nor have we examined a very wide range of elite-challenging behaviors in which the discontented might be more willing to engage—including noncompliance with various public policies. Perhaps most of all, we should recognize the situational and personal factors which help to determine the extent to which any individual will become involved in politics (in any mode). This does not require that we attribute to the "average" citizen a dominant sense of political disinterest, nor that we assert that the costs of involvement will usually exceed the perceived potential benefits of that involvement. The 1960s should have taught us that mobilization will be conditioned by

these and similar considerations, but also by the political environment
—especially by the presence of events which affect citizens' lives,
leadership which can articulate this linkage, and opportunities for
active involvement which clearly permit citizens to make their grievances
known. The punishment must fit the crime, so to speak.[93] Faced with
electoral choices that may bear little relationship to felt needs, the
mass public will not necessarily turn to political protest and violence
as their only recourse. There are a wealth of activities in between,
and we should examine them, their relevance for specific grievances,
and their availability as visible means of popular influence before we
conclude that political discontent has no bearing on the future of
American politics.

In fact, the past fifteen years have seen the emergence of new forms
of political action. Among these is political protest, and with the
diffusion of higher education, the maturation of a generation which sees
protest as a constructive method for soliciting political change, and a
population which is gradually becoming more liberal in at least some
important issue areas, we might expect that the "parameters of license"
for protest will broaden with the passage of time.[94] If political dis-
content persists or even deepens, then the conditional relationships un-
covered here and elsewhere may come to have a very different meaning.
And if new opportunities for elite-challenging political action continue
to emerge, it may not take a revolution for our political system to feel
the effects of an unhappy public.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

The past two decades have been a period of change, sometimes dramatic but often more gradual and subtle, in American politics and social life. We have seen what I have referred to as the "politicization" of the American electorate, a development which includes such phenomena as increased ideological and issue-oriented thinking and behavior; apparently higher levels of citizen attentiveness to and involvement in politics; issue polarization, particularly among Democrats and independents; the rise of ideological candidacies and the development of cadres of activists loyal only to the candidates or to the issue beliefs they represent; and increased citizen involvement in "elite-challenging" forms of political behavior. Many of these changes affect or interact with the alterations that have taken place in our party-oriented style of electoral politics; greater numbers of citizens have come to identify with neither major party, and among those whose loyalties remain unchanged there is an increased willingness to vote for the candidates of the other party.

Such changes at the individual level, in conjunction with other developments which include continued efforts at party reform, have resulted in candidates and officeholders who essentially are free from party constraints; incumbents (except, perhaps, for presidents)

are more likely than ever before to be reelected regardless of their party affiliation; there is a stronger probability of presidential landslides, not always to the benefit of the incumbent party, and often inconsistent with voting patterns for other offices; the executive and legislative branches of the government are more likely to be controlled by different parties; the media have come to exert a stronger influence in the dynamics of leadership selection, in addition to their continuing role as critic and watchdog of the government; and a diminished accountability of political leadership to the mass public seems to be the ultimate outcome of these trends.

Changes in the social composition of the electorate have also taken place: the ranks of both the very young and the very old have swelled, although changing lifestyles and fertility rates will continue to alter the meaning of these developments as time passes; affluence has provided us with the chance to make higher education available to an unprecedented proportion of the population. And the social cleavages that once provided structure to American political life have apparently begun to give way to a patchwork array of alliances which may determine a particular election, but which are not durable enough to give a clear and long-term meaning to the results.

And, finally, there is a changing relationship between the American citizen and his government. Citizens are more likely than not to express a mistrust of government and to doubt the integrity and the capabilities of its leaders. There is a widespread belief that the affairs of government--and sometimes even of one's own

personal life--are beyond the scope of individual influence and con-
trol. There is greater dissatisfaction with the specific policies
advocated by political leadership, as well as a more general dissat-
isfaction with the effects of those policies on the problems that con-
front the nation. Even among many citizens who are genuinely con-
cerned about these problems, and who are attentive to the efforts to
solve them, there is a feeling which we have called "negative salience,"
and which is manifested by such phenomena as campaign disinterest and
lower rates of voter turnout. Citizens appear to be more than cap-
able of being politicized and discontented at the same time.[1]

When one adds to these patterns the political events and the
emergence of new political issues which would have challenged the in-
genuity of decision-makers even in the absence of complicating factors,
we are reminded again of the "problem of political response."[2] Not
only will complex problems frustrate those who attempt to solve them,
but they may also generate growing (and often conflicting) demands from
citizens who, in turn, will feel frustrated by their perceived inabil-
ity to make their preferences heard through traditional channels of
popular expression.

So many of the phenomena which have characterized our recent po-
litical experience conform to our expectations about partisan realign-
ment, and we have responded to the evidence of change by attempting
to fit it into our traditional understandings about the processes of
realignment. Ladd and Hadley contend that

> we have been mesmerized by the New Deal experience, to
> the point of taking it to be a model. . . . The New Deal
> model is so tantalizing, so compelling in its neatness
> and simplicity. The electorate was subjected to an
> overriding new issue. Under the impact of this new
> issue, the old structure of partisan alliances crumbled.
> A new majority party marched forth boldly, rallying a
> majority of the populace to the urgent business of the
> nation. . . .[3]

In contrast, the contemporary period--a time when realignment seems

to be "overdue" in light of their past periodicity and their apparent

dependence upon the inexorable dynamics of generational replacement[4]

--does not fall quite so neatly within our model. Among the obstacles

to such a theoretically satisfying denouement, we might especially

note the weakening of the institution of political parties in a vari-

ety of ways (including the decline of partisanship, the emergence of

issue activism, the diffusion of higher education, the "democratiza-

tion" of party participation, and the growing influence of the mass

media).

The simplistic solution to the volatility and drift of contemp-

orary American politics would seem to be a matter of responsiveness:

if only our political leadership would respond to the dominant issues

with a clarity and conviction that is uncharacteristic of the politics

of accommodation, then our political differences could be adequately

expressed through conventional channels and democratic processes, and

resolved by a government whose strength is rooted in the popular con-

sensus. It is not an altogether remote possibility that a "crisis"

issue might yet produce a response, by parties and citizens alike, which

would approximate the New Deal experience. But the "problem of political

response" alerts us to the possibility that our reach may exceed our grasp as our political institutions attempt to confront the complexity of the problems which face us--and of the demands which are being made by the electorate.

· Our own evidence has provided considerable support for the argument that we are in the midst of a period of opinion "disarray." Different groups place different demands on the political system; priorities vary in such a way that we cannot identify any single cluster of issues which can be said to structure our political discourse; and opinions on the various issues are polarized to the point that any single policy response risks alienating a substantial proportion of the attentive public. In particular, the emergence of new issues for which demands are orthogonal to traditional social cleavages--without actually replacing those cleavages in any permanent sense--has enormously complicated the task of political leadership. We saw that Vietnam was probably the most significant issue in the 1972 election, but there were other issues which were salient for one group or another. The same pattern would seem to characterize the politics of 1978, when inflation, taxes, and other economic concerns dominate the political agenda[5]--but without necessarily muting the demands which are being made in other areas of public policy.

To the extent that the political discontent of different groups is rooted in a simple dissatisfaction with governmental performance, we might expect that an improvement in that performance would ameliorate the problem of discontent. This, of course, is Citrin's solution:

"results, such as an improving economy, will do more to rebuild trust
in government than the adoption of some particular program or ideo-
logical orientation."[6] As I have argued, however, "results" are not
themselves unambiguous. Just as any single program or ideology would
probably further alienate many citizens, so too would "results" which
are achieved by methods contrary to one's own political values, and
which surely will be interpreted differently depending upon those
values. More than that, we must ask whether decision-makers are cap-
able of producing "results" in an increasingly interdependent world
where their actions often have consequences that cut across various
policy domains. And can "results" be achieved in anything resembling
a democratic fashion?

The emergence of issue activism and the politicization of much of
the American electorate has generally been viewed with relief by
scholars whose cultural values seemed to be vindicated by the events
of the 1960s and early 1970s. But the virtues of these changes do
not stand alone, for there are dangers as well. One of the most serious
concerns the ways in which citizens might hold their leaders accountable
for their actions in a period of intense and multidimensional cleavage.
Converse explains that "elections are a social device for forwarding
messages concerning governance from the masses to their governors."
In the best of times, "elections are also rather blunt instruments of
control" which "convey no more than an ambiguous policy mandate."

> As a communication mechanism the election channel is
> simply not built to carry much detailed information,
> and the messages flowing through it emerge vague and

> noisy, leaving the winners with corresponding lati-
> tude for discretionary maneuver.[7]

When voters are characterized by weak attitudinal constraint across

policy domains, or when an empirical consistency masks broad differ-

ences in the salience of different issues to different voting blocs,

the "mandate" conveyed by the election outcome becomes even more

ambiguous.

> Certainly it is only after a common structuring of
> political opinion is shared by some critical mass of
> voters that vote choices based on policy preferences
> become interpretable in _political_ rather than _personal_
> terms.[8]

Given the fact that American political parties generally have

little in common with the "responsible party government" model, and

thus are not well equipped to receive and unscramble their "mandates"

with any degree of clarity, we must conclude that Americans in the

1970s face a considerable challenge as they attempt to find expression

for their political values through conventional channels. More active

forms of political involvement, which provide greater opportunities

for citizens to influence public policy, continue to attract larger

numbers of participants. But there is heterogeneity even among the

political values of these groups, and to the degree that they are more

"extreme" in their preferences than is the rest of the electorate, in-

creased involvement poses its own threat to the effective redress of

popular grievances.

We might describe the 1970s as a period in which there is a "men-

tality of demand" evident among the mass public. This need not reflect

unreasonably high expectations on the part of most citizens, as much

as a significant <u>broadening</u> of the policy domains for which decision-
makers are now being held accountable. The prosperity of the postwar
years has surely expanded the scope of citizen concerns, while the
expansion of governmental activity has probably contributed to heightened
expectations which often cannot be met. In terms of political discon-
tent, there is something of a vicious circle involved here: with the
intensification of citizen demands, government becomes less likely to
respond in a consensually satisfactory manner, which permits the dis-
content to fester and grow.[9] It seems especially ironic that citizens
might hold high expectations of a government which many of them per-
ceive as being ineffectual.

Perhaps even more ironic, at least in retrospect, is the strategy
recommended by Gamson for reducing the likelihood that discontent will
be "generalized" across political objects.

> . . . larger issues must be broken up into a series of
> smaller ones whenever this is possible. . . . By de-
> emphasizing the precedent setting aspects of decisions
> and by emphasizing their <u>ad hoc</u> nature, by deciding
> issues in bits and pieces rather than taking them in
> omnibus form, authorities can reduce the tendency for
> their decisions to lead to attitudes of confidence or
> alienation toward increasingly more general political
> objects. . . .[10]

When government's response to these "smaller" issues is unable to pro-
duce satisfactory "results," however, the potential policy bases of
political discontent may multiply and perhaps even take on a symbolic
life of their own, at least for some segments of the population.
Whether or not the generalization of discontent has reached the point
at which our political regime is threatened—and it apparently has not—

the ultimate impact of repeated governmental failures cannot be assumed away.

Since the future will certainly be shaped in large measure by political events and by changes in the social and political environment, we should be wary of anticipating the worst. Still, the processes of cognitive mobilization make it seem unlikely that citizen demands will quickly abate; and the failure of government to fulfill the expectations of an educated public would appear, according to the evidence presented above, to make the generalization of policy dissatisfactions more, rather than less, probable. While the politicization of the electorate may be an ephemeral phenomenon (although a reversion to widespread acquiescence is equally unlikely), cognitive mobilization should have more lasting consequences for American political life.

Politicization and education together have helped to produce one particular type of demand which may be the most significant of all--the demand for procedural expression, including the opportunity for citizens to participate actively in the decisions which affect their lives. Yet another irony of the past fifteen years may be found in the fact that such opportunities have expanded in ways we could not have anticipated in the 1950s. Despite the emergence of new modes of political expression, however, citizens are more apt to feel politically powerless than they were previously. The "excess of democracy" that seems so admirable on its face, may have contributed to the dilemmas which confront us today.[11] Perhaps as much as any other recent phenomenon, the demand for procedural expression--accompanied as it

usually is by substantive policy demands--may be the prime cause of the "demand overload" which seems to have developed.

It is difficult to establish the causal relationships that may exist among the many changes that have taken place in American politics. As we have seen in this study, there is no clear tendency for partisan disaggregation and political discontent to covary, although the former appears to facilitate the translation of policy dissatisfaction into political cynicism. Nor can we establish that rising discontent will continue to produce greater citizen involvement in elite-challenging participatory modes, although the presence of cynicism does appear to be a motivation to political action when other attitudes or attributes are present. Most of all, we cannot demonstrate that recent trends pose a genuine threat to the stability of the American government, despite their potential significance for more moderate forms of political change. What we can say is that the trends of the 1964-1972 period have not been halted, much less reversed. Data from 1976 and 1977 document even higher levels of cynicism and external inefficacy than those described here.[12] The difficulties facing the Carter administration-- including the president's modest popularity ratings--would appear to indicate that the obstacles to responsive decision-making have not yet been removed. Despite some evidence that the decline in partisan strength may finally have levelled off since the early 1970s,[13] the American electorate is quite obviously not in a happy frame of mind with respect to its political leaders and institutions. Even if we cannot precisely specify the causes, correlates, and consequences of political

discontent, its manifestations must continue to impress us.

This study has been directed primarily to the task of developing
a political explanation of political discontent. Empirical studies
have gradually come to the conclusion that citizens' feelings for their
political system are more firmly grounded in their perceptions of
political reality than we once believed to be true. Even when we dis-
cover that discontent is associated with membership in particular so-
cial groupings, we might expect that this will be a function of the
political experiences of these groups, and of the norms and "realities"
that are communicated among its members.

The fundamental proposition which has been investigated by this
study is that political discontent will increase in proportion to the
discrepancy between individuals' politicized demands or expectations
and the degree to which the leaders and institutions of government are
perceived to meet these standards. Our evidence generally has supported
this proposition, but the modesty of the observed correlations suggests
that we are only beginning to understand this complex relationship be-
tween citizens and their polity. This conclusion is generally consis-
tent with the findings presented in other recent studies which have
encouraged us to abandon a basically sociological and deterministic ex-
planation of political discontent.

Most importantly, we have developed a model of discontent which
emphasizes its dynamic quality--the extent to which it is a function of
changes in the social and political environment. The need for such a

perspective has been noted by others.

> Thousands of analyses have been generated with party or
> candidate image, sense of political efficacy or trust
> in government, or attitudes on issues as the "indepen-
> dent variables" when the real independent variables are
> the actors and events of the world of politics, external
> to the experimental subjects whose responses constitute
> the entire basis for data collection.[14]

The impact of events, social transformations, and political leadership

upon the social and political life of our country can scarcely be

doubted. Manifestations of change are all around us, and yet we have

thus far been unable to capture the essence of change in our models

of political behavior. Instead, we focus upon changes in observed re-

lationships across studies and across time, and we infer from these

patterns some intuitively plausible conclusions about the impact of

the environment on political life.

Such a strategy is useful, but only up to a point. We now have

sufficient evidence that American politics in the 1970s differs in a

number of ways from American politics in the 1950s. Perhaps it is time

to acknowledge not only that changes have occurred (although methodo-

logical witchcraft has sometimes immobilized our efforts to reach even

simple descriptive agreements), but also to explicitly incorporate the

sociopolitical environment into our models of political behavior.

Miller and Miller view the development of voting theories in a way that

is more broadly applicable to the study of politics.

> Broad conceptions of voting are not discovered; they
> are invented. . . . We think the purpose of scientific
> inquiry is (most) adequately served by an approach that
> seeks to understand the conditions that depress some re-
> lationships while accentuating others. . . . It is far
> more significant for the general study of voting behavior

> to know the cause of a shift in the relative weights (of
> explanatory variables) across a series of elections than
> it is to know which factor was more important in a par-
> ticular election.[15]

The significance of the results presented here is less in their

moderate support for the proposition that political discontent is

rooted in perceptions of political reality, than in their support for

the idea that this is a dynamic relationship. Our data warrant no

neat conclusions; the evidence is cross-sectional, and our attempt to

examine change through generational replacement yielded no clear pat-

terns. Yet we have not only seen evidence that change has occurred,

we have also uncovered relationships which take on a whole new mean-

ing when viewed from the perspective provided by recent and continuing

trends. When we are able and willing to be explicit about the impact

of environmental forces (and of time itself) upon political behavior,

we will remove a major impediment to the development of social theory.

NOTES

Chapter I

[1]V. O. Key, Jr., Public Opinion and American Democracy (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), p. 4.

[2]These figures were compiled by Louis Harris and Associates, and are reported in Public Opinion, May/June 1978, p. 23.

[3]The logic of our argument also allows for cynicism to grow when government is perceived to meet a constant set of citizen demands less adequately than in the past.

[4]Arthur H. Miller and Warren E. Miller, "Partisanship and Performance: 'Rational' Choice in the 1976 Presidential Election" (paper presented at the 1977 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D. C., Sept. 1-4, 1977), p. 5.

Chapter II

[1]At least as a matter of emphasis, many would argue that this admittedly imprecise generalization is most appropriate in reference to the inputs of "elite" actors, or some subset of "influential" system members. My own view is that some sort of qualification to the generalization is warranted but, as I shall argue, it is also apparent that the subset of "relevant" actors whom we must take into account may be quite variable over time.

[2]Joel D. Aberbach and Jack L. Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," American Political Science Review, 64 (December, 1970), p. 1199. "Democracy's guiding ideal is the substitution of mutual understanding and agreement for coerciveness and arbitrary authority in all phases of social and political life. The existence of distrustful citizens who are convinced that the government serves the interests of a few rather than the interests of all is a barrier to the realization of the democratic ideal."

[3]David Easton and Jack Dennis, Children in the Political System (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), p. 57.

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[4] Ibid., p. 58.

[5] Ibid., p. 59.

[6] Ibid., p. 60.

[7] Ibid., p. 61.

[8] William A. Gamson, "Political Trust and Its Ramifications," in Social Psychology and Political Behavior: Problems and Prospects, ed. by Gilbert Abcarian and John W. Soule (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1971), p. 41.

[9] An example sometimes cited to illustrate this interaction is that of President Johnson's policy options with respect to American military involvement in Vietnam. Elected in 1964 by an overwhelming margin, held in high esteem by much of the public, and presented with a generally cooperative Democratic Congress, Johnson probably had a rather wide range of foreign policy options open to him in 1965. In the view of some observers, he would have had broad support for any clear and definitive course he might have chosen to follow--including either total withdrawal of American forces or a formal declaration of war and subsequent commitment to military victory. Johnson's decision to commit his energy (and leadership) to domestic matters, and independently to pursue an ill-defined policy of escalation in Vietnam, had the effect of igniting and inflaming opposition to his foreign policy--and of restricting his policy maneuverability in the domestic as well as the foreign realm. For different views, see Gamson, "Political Trust and Its Ramifications," p. 44; David S. Broder, The Party's Over (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp. 43-44. This scenario is contested by James D. Wright, The Dissent of the Governed (New York: Academic Press, 1976), pp. 127-130.

[10] Gamson, "Political Trust and Its Ramifications," pp. 42-46. Gamson suggests some interesting hypotheses intended to probe the relationship between political trust and the decision-latitude of political leaders.

[11] David Easton, A Systems Analysis of Political Life (New York: Wiley, 1965), p. 273.

[12] Gamson, "Political Trust and Its Ramifications," p. 45.

[13] Ibid., pp. 46-48.

[14] Or it may be simply "a sign of the irrelevance of politics and government for many people much of the time." Ibid., p. 46.

[15] Ibid.

[16]The idea that apathy and inactivity (the product of whatever kinds of forces) are functional for democratic political systems is an honored one. The general indifference to politics which characterized most Americans seemed to provide our system with a level of stability and flexibility which was not only tolerable, but virtuous. For example, see Bernard R. Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William N. McPhee, Voting (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), Ch. 14; Samuel P. Huntington, "The Democratic Distemper," in The American Commonwealth, 1976, ed. by Nathan Glazer and Irving Kristol (New York: Basic Books, 1976); Norman H. Nie, Sidney Verba, and John R. Petrocik, The Changing American Voter (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 36-42.

Such an interpretation is hardly archaic, as witnessed by much of the recent response to proposals to ease voter registration requirements.

[17]Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," p. 1199.

[18]Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government: 1964-1970," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974).

[19]In contrast to several of the concepts which are subsumed by, or related to, the concept of "political discontent," I shall use this particular term in a more inclusive or generic sense. Operationally, we will consider discontent as it is manifested by feelings of political cynicism (mistrust). These terms are discussed in the preceding chapter.

[20]David Easton, "An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems," World Politics 9 (April, 1957), p. 391.

[21]These problems are highlighted in David Marsh, "Political Socialization: The Implicit Assumptions Questioned," British Journal of Political Science 1 (October, 1971). While Marsh is explicitly concerned with the assumptions of political socialization research, the questions he raises are significant with respect to a much broader range of political research.

[22]Ted Robert Gurr and Muriel McClelland, Political Performance: A Twelve-Nation Study, Sage Professional Paper, Comparative Politics Series, Series No. 01-018 (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1971), p. 32. The attempt of these authors to study the relationship between "legitimacy" and other dimensions of polity performance involves the inference of legitimacy sentiments from behavioral indicators of what they call "illegitimacy manifestations." We might also take note of the speculative attempts of other studies to deal with the relationship between affective orientations among individuals and system-level phenomena. For example, see Ada W. Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation," American Political Science Review 64 (June, 1970); Jeffery M. Paige, "Political Orientation and Riot Participation,"

American Sociological Review 36 (October, 1971).

[23]We might call this "behavioral support." Edward N. Muller, "Correlates and Consequences of Beliefs in the Legitimacy of Regime Structures," Midwest Journal of Political Science 14 (August, 1970).

[24]Easton, "An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems," p. 391. Apart from the obvious qualifications which must accompany such a conclusion, we must take note of a more practical limitation on this sort of micro-analysis. In countries where active dissent is not widespread, the number of dissenters uncovered in any sample is likely to be small. The typical solution—a strategy which I will employ here—is to measure dissent as an attitudinal variable or "predisposition to action." This, of course, makes the inferential leap from individual citizen to political system even more tenuous.

[25]As I have argued, this confusion is perhaps best illustrated by the literature on social and political alienation, which will in some instances be able to inform our understanding of political discontent. The concept occasionally has been defined in terms which are compatible with the central concepts of this study, but its many other usages persuade me to avoid the term whenever possible. For insight into the concept of alienation, see David C. Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior (Chicago: Aldine, 1973); Melvin Seeman, "Alienation and Estrangement," in The Human Meaning of Social Change, ed. by Angus Campbell and Philip E. Converse (New York: Russell Sage, 1972); Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation."

[26]David Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," British Journal of Political Science 5 (October, 1975), p. 444.

[27]Ibid., p. 437.

[28]Ibid., p. 436.

[29]Ibid., p. 437.

[30]Ibid.

[31]It is important to keep such behavior, and the motivations behind it, distinct from more conventional efforts intended to influence the decision-making process or the substantive policy decisions it generates.

[32]Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," pp. 437-438. Others have suggested marginally different sets of referents for the attitude of support. For example, see William A. Gamson, Power and Discontent (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1968), pp. 50-51; Gurr and McClelland, Political Performance, p. 31.

[33]Easton, A Systems Analysis, p. 273. Obviously, this reservoir also may involve unfavorable attitudes or a "reservoir of ill-will." Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," p. 445.

[34]Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," p. 445.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, pp. 106-107.

[37]Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," p. 445.

[38]Ibid., p. 445. In addition, "there may be instances . . . in which the sudden frustration of expectations can so jolt the deeper loyalties of the members of a system that their diffuse support falls into a precipitous decline."

[39]Ibid., p. 449.

[40]At the risk of belaboring the point, I might suggest one other sense in which generalization may occur. A number of studies have suggested that concepts such as political alienation, legitimacy, support, and disaffection should be viewed as multidimensional, each composed of different expressions of an individual's perceived affective relationship to various political objects. For example, see Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation"; Muller, "Correlates and Consequences"; Joel D. Aberbach, "Alienation and Political Behavior," American Political Science Review 63 (March, 1969).
While the attitudinal dimensions suggested by these studies are not always patterned after the diffuse-specific distinction, the empirical covariation which often is found to exist among dimensions suggests that generalization across them might occur. For example, feelings of political powerlessness might, over time, tend to erode the trust which citizens are willing to place in the political authorities and the institutional roles they occupy. This particular relationship is central to the analysis which will follow, but the principle may be applicable with respect to other dimensions of affect as well.

[41]Gamson, Power and Discontent, p. 51. Also see Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology"; Arthur H. Miller, "Change in Political Trust: Discontent with Authorities and Economic Policies, 1972-1973," (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974).

[42]Martin D. Abravanel and Ronald J. Busch, "Political Competence, Political Trust, and the Action Orientations of University Students," Journal of Politics 37 (February, 1975), p. 80. Sniderman and his associates found that their respondents, in evaluating the events of

Watergate, were often able to draw an explicit distinction between incumbent officeholders and the political system as a whole, placing blame only upon the former. Others were willing to emphasize the personal responsibility of the president, or of his advisors, for Watergate. See Sniderman et al., "Stability of Support for the Political System: The Initial Impact of Watergate," American Politics Quarterly 3 (October, 1975), pp. 448-452.

[43]To the best of my knowledge, no study has yet dealt adequately with the processes by which specific satisfactions become translated into high or low levels of diffuse support over time. Such a study would, of course, require time-series data.

[44]Gamson, Power and Discontent, p. 51. This is the importance of a high "reservoir" of diffuse support for a political system, and it is not inconsistent with Easton's theoretical scheme. According to this view, diffuse support inhibits the generalization of specific (dis)satisfactions—as well as the playing out of these (dis)satisfactions in behaviors which are directed toward the regime or political community. Dahl notes that such reservoirs are likely to be highest in well-established regimes with a history of having met the felt needs of citizens over a long period of time. Robert A. Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), p. 149. Yet even in new regimes, a successful record of specific satisfactions may eventually generalize in such a way that a foundation of diffuse support is built. Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," p. 445. This is, of course, the same process of accumulation described above, except that it involves the generalization of favorable attitudes.

[45]Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," p. 1202.

[46]Lehnen finds empirical support for a causal chain running from diffuse to specific support. He argues that diffuse support is the more salient attitude, i.e., that (high) specific support can exist only in combination with (high) diffuse support, but diffuse support can and often does exist without specific support—usually among citizens who are less attentive to the daily affairs of government and politics. Robert G. Lehnen, American Institutions, Political Opinion, and Public Policy (Hinsdale, Ill.: The Dryden Press, 1976), Ch. 4.

[47]This is not to say that political systems are themselves directly responsible for socializing members to feelings of support. And if direct efforts at socialization are attempted by the system, they need not necessarily be successful.

[48]Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, pp. 51-52. Political socialization is not the only means by which a political system may attempt to cope with stress. For example, a system might rely heavily on coercion (or threats of coercion) in order to coax citizens

into complying with policy decisions--a compliance which comes more naturally among citizens who have high levels of diffuse support. See Easton and Dennis, Ch. 3.

[49]Easton suggests other sources of stress in addition to that which is posed by insufficient levels of diffuse support. One of these is relevant to this study: the clogging of a system's communications and processing structures by an excess of demands being put into the system in any given period of time. See ibid., pp. 54-57. It is the importance of diffuse support for system persistence and change, however, which has guided much of the research which I will be reviewing.

[50]Jack Dennis, "Major Problems of Political Socialization Research," Midwest Journal of Political Science 12 (February, 1968), p. 89.

[51]Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, pp. 35-36.

Chapter III

[1]Fred I. Greenstein, "A Note on the Ambiguity of 'Political Socialization': Definitions, Criticisms, and Strategies of Inquiry," Journal of Politics 32 (November, 1970).

[2]David Easton and Jack Dennis, Children in the Political System (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), p. 7.

[3]For example, see M. Kent Jennings and Richard G. Niemi, "Continuity and Change in Political Orientations: A Longitudinal Study of Two Generations," American Political Science Review 69 (December, 1975).

[4]M. Kent Jennings and Richard G. Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1974); R. W. Connell, "Political Socialization in the American Family: The Evidence Re-Examined," Public Opinion Quarterly 36 (Fall, 1972).

[5]Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, pp. 11-12. Similar arguments are made by Robert D. Hess, "The Acquisition of Feelings of Political Efficacy in Pre-Adults," in Social Psychology and Political Behavior: Problems and Prospects, ed. by Gilbert Abcarian and John W. Soule (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1971); Robert Weissberg, Political Learning, Political Choice, and Democratic Citizenship (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974); David O. Sears, "Political Socialization," in Handbook of Political Science, Vol. 2, Micropolitical Theory, ed. by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975).

[6]This should not be taken to mean that other orientations and attachments are not significant in the development of diffuse support,

or in the inhibition of the potential for regime-challenging behavior in maturity. As I have indicated already, there may be sources of stress on the political system other than diminished diffuse support directed specifically at the structure of political authority.

[7]Most of the preceding two paragraphs was derived from a useful summary in Richard E. Dawson, Kenneth Prewitt, and Karen S. Dawson, Political Socialization, 2d ed. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977), pp. 50-60. The research from which these patterns of political learning were drawn include, principally, Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System; Fred I. Greenstein, Children and Politics, rev. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969); Robert D. Hess and Judith V. Torney, The Development of Political Attitudes in Children (Chicago: Aldine, 1967); Jennings and Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence.

[8]Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, p. 207. These authors acknowledge that "(c)hildren as well as adults may be loosened from their ties to the system." This presumably could occur through the cumulative impact of specific dissatisfactions as described above.

[9]Greenstein, Children and Politics, p. 155. One reason cited by Greenstein for the importance of early learning for later behavior "is that early learning often has an unintended, inadvertant character. As a result, what one learns early is likely to be taken for granted and accepted unquestioningly." Greenstein, p. 160. Cf. Weissberg, Political Learning.

[10]Donald D. Searing, Joel J. Schwartz, and Alden E. Lind, "The Structuring Principle: Political Socialization and Belief Systems," American Political Science Review 67 (June, 1973), p. 415. The assumption is usually subject to qualification, the most important of which is a recognition that political learning is not limited to childhood. But, "(i)n general, the more important a political orientation is in the behavior of adults, the earlier it will be found to emerge in the learning of the child." Greenstein, Children and Politics, p. 56. Also see James D. Wright, "Political Socialization Research: The 'Primacy' Principle," Social Forces 54 (September, 1975).

[11]Searing et al., "The Structuring Principle," p. 416. This structuring process is seen as operating through such processes as selective perception and cue-giving, with party identification being the best example available in the American context. "The early acquired political loyalties and identities may provide the citizen in later life with guidelines for making decisions with respect to day-to-day political events." Dawson et al., Political Socialization, p. 46.

[12]For a somewhat different perspective on the importance of the timing with which supportive sentiments are acquired, see Sandra Kenyon

Schwartz, "Patterns of Cynicism: Differential Political Socialization among Adolescents," in New Directions in Political Socialization, ed. by David C. Schwartz and Sandra Kenyon Schwartz (New York: The Free Press, 1975).

[13]Donald Searing, Gerald Wright, and George Rabinowitz, "The Primacy Principle: Attitude Change and Political Socialization," British Journal of Political Science 6 (January, 1976), p. 84. For elaborations of these categories, see Weissberg, Political Learning, pp. 23-31; Dawson et al., Political Socialization, pp. 42-47, 73-81.

[14]Weissberg, Political Learning, pp. 58-59.

[15]Some qualifications are in order at this point. We might note, for example, that early political learning does not always involve such positive orientations. In other cultures or, as we will see, in certain subgroups within our own culture, early political learning may involve rather different kinds of attitudes and feelings. Also, as Easton suggests, diffuse support may be directed at any of several political objects. Not all of these will be considered in depth by this study, e.g., support directed at the political community. The objections which I will raise with regard to the utility of the concept of diffuse support are limited by that fact.

[16]Jennings and Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence, Ch. 5, 10.

[17]It is worth noting that such cognitive developmental processes sometimes appear to work in the other direction as well. For example, a sense of political efficacy is often cited as an important component of political support. This particular orientation is one which appears to be enhanced by developmental learning. See David Easton and Jack Dennis, "The Child's Acquisition of Regime Norms: Political Efficacy," American Political Science Review 61 (March, 1967). Cf. Jennings and Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence, Ch. 10.

[18]Pauline Marie Vaillancourt, "Stability of Children's Survey Responses," Public Opinion Quarterly 37 (Fall, 1973). This sample involved children between the ages of nine and fifteen. Consistent with the developmental patterns just noted, Vaillancourt observed greater attitudinal stability among the older children.

[19]This theme is, of course, paralleled in the "belief systems" literature on adult attitudes, which we will review below. Marsh reminds us that few people possess the type of complex belief system which might be expected to support or underpin stable political attitudes. David Marsh, "Political Socialization: The Implicit Assumptions Questioned," British Journal of Political Science 1 (October, 1971). Given the limited significance which politics and government

have for children, this surely would seem to inhibit at least the
conscious maintenance of supportive beliefs over the life cycle.
This view stands in rather sharp contradiction to the hypothesized
durability of inadvertant learning. See note 9.

[20]This includes, for example, developmental patterns in the di-
rection of a higher sense of political efficacy and a more widespread
commitment to the norms of democracy. See Jack Dennis et al.,
"Political Socialization to Democratic Orientations in Four Western
Systems," Comparative Political Studies 1 (April, 1968). The
students in this study are generally between the ages of nine and
sixteen.

[21]Sears, "Political Socialization," p. 103. Sears notes the par-
ticular appeal that President Kennedy had for children.

[22]In addition, Greenstein has noted the shortcomings of the meth-
odology of these early studies, arguing that the pervasiveness of
benevolent imagery may have been overstated even at that point in
time. Fred I. Greenstein, "The Benevolent Leader Revisited: Children's
Images of Political Leaders in Three Democracies," American Political
Science Review 69 (December, 1975).

[23]Dean Jaros, Herbert Hirsch, and Frederick J. Fleron, Jr., "The
Malevolent Leader: Political Socialization in an American Sub-Culture,"
American Political Science Review 62 (June, 1968).

[24]This is true with respect to a variety of indicators of system
support, including attachment to the political community, benevolent
imagery, political trust, and political efficacy. For a review of
this evidence, see Paul R. Abramson, The Political Socialization of
Black Americans (New York: The Free Press, 1977), esp. Ch. 6.
Blacks and whites do not appear to differ in their attitudes toward
compliance with political authority, although the antecedents of
compliant attitudes do vary according to race. Compliance is dis-
cussed in Chapter VIII of this study.

[25]Nor are children from other nations as likely to personalize
government in the form of the chief of state. For a review, see
Sears, "Political Socialization."

[26]The same problem, of course, plagues those who would measure the
opinions of adult samples. The problem is somewhat compounded in
socialization research, where the cooperation of school officials
(rather than individual respondetns) is usually necessary.

[27]Greenstein, Children and Politics, pp. 101-102.

[28]Hess and Torney, The Development of Political Attitudes in
Children, pp. 135-136. Class differences in attachment to political

authorities did not appear to be the result of partisan differences, since the same pattern was evident with respect to feelings about the policeman.

[29]Ibid., pp. 149-150.

[30]Ibid., pp. 129-131.

[31]Weissberg, Political Learning, p. 97. This last sentence should be recognized as a fusion of the primacy and structuring principles.

[32]For example, see Jennings and Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence, p. 144; Schwartz, "Patterns of Cynicism"; Robert Weissberg, "Adolescents' Perceptions of Political Authorities: Another Look at Political Virtue and Power," Midwest Journal of Political Science 16 (February, 1972); Harrell R. Rodgers, Jr., "Toward Explanation of the Political Efficacy and Political Cynicism of Black Adolescents: An Exploratory Study," American Journal of Political Science 18 (May, 1974).

[33]For example, see James D. Wright, The Dissent of the Governed (New York: Academic Press, 1976), Ch. 6. Part of the difficulty in reaching a summary judgment about social group differences results from varying perspectives about exactly what opinions we should interpret as manifestations of political support. As Wright notes, class differences are much more evident with respect to feelings of political efficacy than is the case for political trust and cynicism. Different patterns of relationship are really rather common in studies which examine both efficacy and trust, despite the fact that the two attitudes are themselves usually correlated at a moderately strong level. Some investigators consider both orientations to be indicators of support, and it is the uncertain validity of this assumption which has contributed to the uneven nature of our conclusions about the origins of supportive sentiments. My own view is that political efficacy is not a direct indicator of support, although its relationship both to those attitudes and to political participation (and its correlates) makes it a theoretically and empirically significant concept. This argument is amplified in later chapters.

[34]Greenstein, Children and Politics, Ch. 5.

[35]Hess and Torney, The Development of Political Attitudes in Children, p. 154. Also see Weissberg, Political Learning, pp. 103-104.

[36]Weissberg, Political Learning, p. 131. In addition, status differences exist in children's perceptions of the legal system, with higher-status children being quicker to recognize that laws are not inherently just, and that they can sometimes be changed. Weissberg, p. 97.

[37] Hess and Torney, The Development of Political Attitudes in Children, pp. 126-127.

[38] Greenstein, Children and Politics, p. 91. This apparent difference in the motivation for political development does not seem to be the product of differential learning in the school. For example, there seem to be few or no class differences in objective political knowledge, perhaps because the school is able to perform an equalizing role in this area. Higher-status children do acquire a better understanding of the informal aspects of politics, presumably because this type of information is rarely encountered in the classroom—and because lower-status children are not likely to encounter it at home either. Greenstein, p. 98. It may be that parental support must reinforce classroom learning in order for the child to develop and maintain the motivation for individual political development. See Weissberg, Political Learning, pp. 100-103; cf. Jennings and Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence, p. 191; Hess and Torney, The Development of Political Attitudes in Children, p. 152; Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, pp. 345-347.

[39] Hess and Torney, The Development of Political Attitudes in Children, p. 135. This tendency is hypothesized to be related to the child's feeling of protection within his family, a feeling which is found to vary according to social class. Hess and Torney find lower-status children to express less positive attitudes toward their fathers, and correspondingly higher levels of attachment to the president. Also see Dean Jaros and Kenneth L. Kolson, "The Multifarious Leader: Political Socialization of Amish, 'Yanks', Blacks," in The Politics of Future Citizens, ed. by Richard G. Niemi (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974). Orum and Cohen, on the other hand, found students' sentiments toward their fathers to be unrelated to their feelings toward political authority figures. Anthony M. Orum and Roberta S. Cohen, "The Development of Political Orientations among Black and White Children," American Sociological Review 38 (February, 1973).

[40] Greenstein, Children and Politics, pp. 47-50. By such a process of generalization, the president and other political authority figures may become "the family writ large." See David Easton and Robert D. Hess, "The Child's Political World," Midwest Journal of Political Science 6 (August, 1962).

[41] For a critique which stresses the developmental perspective, see Sheilah R. Koeppen, "Children and Compliance: A Comparative Analysis of Socialization Studies," Law and Society Review 4 (May, 1970). Koeppen has little use for the primacy principle, arguing that cognitive development necessitates affective development as well. The fact that children continue to have generally positive attitudes toward government is said to be the result of reinforcing communications—the lack of contradiction between what children are learning and what they learned earlier—and not of the unaltered persistence of early-learned positive support.

[42]Dawson et al., Political Socialization, pp. 61-62.

[43]For example, see Hess and Torney, The Development of Political Attitudes in Children, Ch. 7.

[44]Jaros et al., "The Malevolent Leader." This study examined students in grades five through twelve. Jaros has expended considerable effort in an attempt to isolate the processes by which early positive (or negative) system attitudes are initially learned by the child, although his results are somewhat eclectic. See Jaros and Kolson, "The Multifarious Leader"; Dean Jaros, "Children's Orientation Toward the President: Some Additional Theoretical Considerations and Data," Journal of Politics 29 (May, 1967).

[45]Jaros et al., "The Malevolent Leader," p. 570.

[46]Jaros suggests that the central agent in this process may be the family, with direct transfer of parental attitudes a more plausible hypothesis than that of generalization from family to political authority figures. See ibid. This hypothesis seems less plausible in light of the evidence demonstrating a weak parent-child correspondence with respect to political trust. Jennings and Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence. For indirect evidence on the same point, see Jaros and Kolson, "The Multifarious Leader."

[47]Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans.

[48]Dawson et al., Political Socialization, p. 61. Also see Weissberg, Political Learning, pp. 106-113. Assuming that black children come disproportionately from lower-status families, these findings suggest a process rather more complicated than the "lower-class idealization" theme we have just encountered.

[49]Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans, pp. 7-8.

[50]See note 33.

[51]Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans, p. 9. Again, Abramson notes that post-1967 studies which found blacks to be no more mistrustful than whites were frequently based upon "atypical" samples. The University of Michigan's national study of high-school seniors found only marginally greater mistrust among blacks, a finding which is said to be consistent with pre-1967 data from other studies. A second study out of Michigan (by Jerald G. Bachman) reached similar conclusions; this is reported in Abramson, pp. 9-10.

[52]This observation also is an accurate description of trends in political trust among black and white adults. See Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government: 1964-1970," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974).

[53]For example, Orum and Cohen, "The Development of Political Orientations"; Edward S. Greenberg, "Children and the Political Community: A Comparison Across Racial Lines," Canadian Journal of Political Science 2 (December, 1969); Edward S. Greenberg, "Children and Government: A Comparison Across Racial Lines," Midwest Journal of Political Science 14 (May, 1970); Edward S. Greenberg, "Orientations of Black and White Children to Political Authority Figures," Social Science Quarterly 51 (December, 1970); Joan E. Laurence, "White Socialization: Black Reality," Psychiatry 33 (May, 1970); Sarah F. Liebschutz and Richard G. Niemi, "Political Attitudes among Black Children," in The Politics of Future Citizens, ed. by Richard G. Niemi (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974); Schley R. Lyons, "The Political Socialization of Ghetto Children: Efficacy and Cynicism," Journal of Politics 32 (May, 1970).

[54]For example, see Liebschutz and Niemi, "Political Attitudes among Black Children."

[55]Laurence, "White Socialization: Black Reality," p. 192.

[56]Ibid., p. 176.

[57]Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans, p. 76. While Abramson's intent is to explain racial differences in efficacy and trust, the same logic may be applied to any other manifestation of political support.

[58]M. Kent Jennings and Richard G. Niemi, "The Transmission of Political Values from Parent to Child," American Political Science Review 62 (March, 1968). Niemi reports the parent-child correspondence to be marginally higher for blacks than for whites with respect to political cynicism. No racial differences were evident for political efficacy. These findings are cited in Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans, p. 79.

[59]See Jennings and Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence, Ch. 5.

[60]Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans, p. 79.

[61]Orum and Cohen, "The Development of Political Orientations," p. 70.

[62]As Abramson puts it, "Where does the mainstream culture end and the subculture begin?" The Political Socialization of Black Americans, p. 91.

[63]Laurence, among others, demonstrates that racial differences in political attitudes may exist even when blacks attend integrated schools. See "White Socialization: Black Reality."

[64]The common political outlooks of Appalachian children "may be due to the homogeneity and isolation of the area. Family, peer groups, schools and other possible agents of socialization indigenous to the region probably manifest substantially the same configuration of values. . . . The remote location of the county probably insulates it from electronic or printed media and other external stimuli. Any value implications at variance with indigenous norms which such sources might transmit are thus prevented from having a widespread effect on maturing children." Jaros et al., "The Malevolent Leader," p. 570.

[65]Cf. Edgar Litt, "Political Cynicism and Political Futility," Journal of Politics 25 (May, 1963).

[66]Rodgers, "Toward Explanation of the Political Efficacy and Political Cynicism of Black Adolescents," p. 265.

[67]Among other things, Jaros and Kolson note that the positive views of Amish children are probably inconsistent with the hypothesis of direct parental transfer of political attitudes. Jaros and Kolson, "The Multifarious Leader," p. 53.

[68]See Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans, pp. 8-10. While I have chosen not to focus on political efficacy (for reasons already noted), the factors cited in this paragraph may be applicable to many of these investigations as well.

[69]Ibid., p. 84.

[70]"Correct" perceptions were indicated when children agreed that blacks and whites are not "treated the same." Greenberg, "Orientations of Black and White Children." Perhaps even more significant for political support in the long run is that the same relationship is evident with respect to support for the political community (as measured by selection of the American flag as the "best" among several). Greenberg, "Children and the Political Community." Abramson, however, notes a possible tautology in Greenberg's analysis, suggesting that black "awareness" may be no more than another measure of black cynicism. See The Political Socialization of Black Americans, p. 84.

[71]Greenberg, "Children and the Political Community."

[72]Orum and Cohen, "The Development of Political Orientations," p. 71.

[73]Rodgers, "Toward Explanation of the Political Efficacy and Political Cynicism of Black Adolescents," p. 278. Controls for social status altered these findings only within the lowest strata.

[74]Koeppen, "Children and Compliance."

[75]IQ and school achievement are two variables which presumably might distinguish children according to their ability to perceive reality. For blacks, this might mean that intelligence would be negatively related to political efficacy, yet there is some evidence which seems to suggest a positive relationship. See Easton and Dennis, "The Child's Acquisition of Regime Norms"; Hess and Torney, The Development of Political Attitudes in Children; Rodgers, "Toward Explanation of the Political Efficacy and Political Cynicism of Black Adolescents"; Lyons, "The Political Socialization of Ghetto Children."
Whatever the intelligence-efficacy relationship might be, Abramson argues that there is little evidence in support of an intelligence-trust relationship. See The Political Socialization of Black Americans, p. 72.

[76]Cf. Richard M. Merelman, "The Development of Policy Thinking in Adolescence," American Political Science Review 65 (December, 1971).

[77]Jaros and Kolson find Amish children to be the least politically "sophisticated" of their three groups, with sophistication negatively related to presidential image. Controlling for sophistication, however, does not entirely eliminate group differences in presidential image. Jaros and Kolson, "The Multifarious Leader."

[78]Abramson, for example, is critical of empirical studies assessing his "political-reality explanation," arguing that they do not address the objective reality posited by the assumptions reviewed earlier. See The Political Socialization of Black Americans, p. 96.

[79]F. Christopher Arterton, "The Impact of Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority," Political Science Quarterly 89 (June, 1974); F. Christopher Arterton, "Watergate and Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority Revisited," Political Science Quarterly 90 (Fall, 1975). Arterton rejects the possibility that de-idealization is a function of social status (and thus, presumably, of politicization or sophistication), primarily because of the magnitude of change between the earlier study and this one.

[80]Greenstein, "The Benevolent Leader Revisited." The evidence of modest change has itself been challenged on methodological grounds. See John L. Sullivan and Daniel Richard Minns, "'The Benevolent Leader Revisited': Substantive Finding or Methodological Artifact?" American Journal of Political Science 20 (November, 1976); Fred I. Greenstein, "Item Wording and Other Interaction Effects on the Measurement of Political Orientations," American Journal of Political Science 20 (November, 1976).

[81]Arterton notes, for example, that these findings are not very

compatible with the "vulnerability" or "father-transference" hypotheses. See "The Impact of Watergate." The same point is made in Harrell R. Rodgers, Jr. and Edward B. Lewis, "Student Attitudes Toward Mr. Nixon: The Consequences of Negative Attitudes Toward a President for Political System Support," American Politics Quarterly 3 (October, 1975).

[82]Roberta S. Sigel and Marilyn Brookes, "Becoming Critical About Politics," in The Politics of Future Citizens, ed. by Richard G. Niemi (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974), pp. 104-105.

[83]Ibid., p. 125.

[84]This study involved a two-wave interview of an urban Michigan community. Students were first interviewed in 1966, when they were in grades four, six, and eight. The same students were interviewed two years later, when they were in grades six, eight, and ten. Ibid., p. 106.

[85]Maturational effects, in the direction of greater negative judgments, were also evident on responsiveness items. Ibid., p. 111.

[86]Ibid., pp. 115-116.

[87]Roberta S. Sigel and Marilyn Brookes Hoskin, "Affect for Government and Its Relation to Policy Output among Adolescents," American Journal of Political Science 21 (February, 1977), p. 125. This does not mean that the dissatisfied are antagonistic toward the system, but rather that their feelings were more guarded than we might expect. The authors speak of negative affect as being qualified by "relative or comparative pride" in the American system. For example, even the dissatisfied students were likely to rate American achievements as being no worse than the achievements of other nations. Most citizens do not appear to have a comparative perspective from which they might evaluate their own system's accomplishments or failures. See Sigel and Hoskin, pp. 129, 132.

[88]Ibid., p. 132. Cf. Dean Jaros and John A. Shoemaker, "The Malevolent Unindicted Co-Conspirator," American Politics Quarterly 4 (October, 1976).

[89]Arterton notes, for example, that factual knowledge about Watergate was not high in his sample (grades 3-5), but that children most often cited the news media as the source of what information they had. See "The Impact of Watergate."

[90]Marjorie Randon Hershey and David B. Hill, "Watergate and Pre-adults' Attitudes Toward the President," American Journal of Political Science 19 (November, 1975), p. 704. Cf. Hess, "The Acquisition of Feelings of Political Efficacy." Hershey and Hill hypothesize that

salient political events are most likely to have a strong effect upon children who have not yet learned much political information and whose attitudes are not yet firmly held; attitude change (or formation?) should be most likely when the information received is new or inconsistent with the child's existing perceptions. Consistent with this view, they find concern over Watergate to be associated with sharper drops in perceptions of presidential responsiveness among younger children—whose partisan identities and general cognitive abilities are probably not strong enough to allow children to "selectively" interpret the meaning of Watergate-related events. The catch in all of this is that younger children are also the least politicized; specifically, they are less concerned about Watergate than are their older schoolmates. Thus, the salient events of the day—however potentially powerful their shaping effects might be—are less likely to impact on the younger child. This may partly explain the peculiar finding that younger children scored higher on perceptions of presidential responsiveness than did their counterparts in the earlier Chicago study (although older students were much less positive in this study).

[91]Bruce A. Campbell, "The Acquisition of Political Trust: Explorations of Socialization Theory" (paper presented at the 1975 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, Calif., Sept. 2-5, 1975).

[92]Weissberg, "Adolescents' Perceptions of Political Authorities."

[93]Martin D. Abravanel and Ronald J. Busch, "Political Competence, Political Trust, and the Action Orientations of University Students," Journal of Politics 37 (February, 1975), p. 78. As the authors note, the causal direction of this relationship is uncertain, for it may have been a feeling of mistrust that led these students to participate in the first place.

[94]Jennings and Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence, p. 144.

[95]See Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans, p. 79.

[96]This is not inconsistent with the interpretation given to changing racial patterns by the authors reviewed above. As blacks have come to be more aware of their racial identities and more sensitive to the reality of their position in the American political structure, feelings of support or discontent have become more pervasive (and more successfully diffused) among blacks.

[97]For example, see Jennings and Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence, Ch. 5; Hershey and Hill, "Watergate and Preadults' Attitudes Toward the President," p. 715; Arterton, "The Impact of Watergate."

Sullivan and Minns present evidence which they contend demonstrates that recent increases in political discontent have been directed primarily at political authorities and the regime—but that support for the political community remains largely intact among American children. (Their data were collected in 1973-1974.) See "'The Benevolent Leader Revisited.'"

[98]Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans.

[99]For example, Abramson notes that feelings of political efficacy have dropped even more among whites than blacks in recent years. Ibid., p. 110.

[100]Wright, The Dissent of the Governed, p. 194, note 30.

[101]Robert M. Entman, James W. Prothro, and Edward F. Sharp, "The Mass Media, Dissonant Events, and Alienation: A Panel Study of the Effect of the Watergate Scandals on Political Attitudes" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974), p. 29.

Chapter IV

[1]William A. Gamson, "Political Trust and Its Ramifications," in Social Psychology and Political Behavior: Problems and Prospects, ed. by Gilbert Abcarian and John W. Soule (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1971), p. 41.

[2]"A preferred outcome is one that is regarded as most favorable to one's interests when they conflict with those of others, or as the most efficient for the system as a whole." Ibid., p. 48.

[3]See David Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," British Journal of Political Science 5 (October, 1975).

[4]See Edward N. Muller and Thomas O. Jukam, "On the Meaning of Political Support," American Political Science Review 71 (December, 1977), p. 1568.

[5]Martin D. Abravanel and Ronald J. Busch, "Political Competence, Political Trust, and the Action Orientations of University Students," Journal of Politics 37 (February, 1975), p. 71.

[6]Robert E. Lane, Political Life (New York: The Free Press, 1959), p. 166.

[7]Ibid., p. 164.

[8]Robert E. Agger, Marshall N. Goldstein, and Stanley A. Pearl, "Political Cynicism: Measurement and Meaning," Journal of Politics 23 (August, 1961).

[9]Joel D. Aberbach, "Alienation and Political Behavior," American Political Science Review 63 (March, 1969), p. 92. The correlation between personal and political trust is .16.

[10]Ada W. Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation," American Political Science Review 64 (June, 1970), pp. 400-405. Finifter finds a measure of "faith in people" to have a strong and independent influence on "perceived political normlessness," a variable which is similar--though not identical--to political trust/cynicism. The standardized regression coefficient in this instance is -.30.

[11]Joel D. Aberbach and Jack L. Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," American Political Science Review 64 (December, 1970), p. 1205. Gamma for whites is .16, for blacks .17.

[12]Richard L. Cole, "Toward a Model of Political Trust: A Causal Analysis," American Journal of Political Science 17 (November, 1973), pp. 814-815. This conclusion, which appears to hold for both whites and blacks, is more problematic than Cole would have us believe. The personal trust measure was not available in the 1970 study, and a measure of "personal effectiveness" was substituted in the path model. The comparability of these two "personality" measures is uncertain. Aberbach, for example, found a relationship between them of .13 in the 1964 study. See "Alienation and Political Behavior."

[13]Abravanel and Busch, "Political Competence." Gamma=.15.

[14]Harrell R. Rodgers, Jr., "Toward Explanation of the Political Efficacy and Political Cynicism of Black Adolescents: An Exploratory Study," American Journal of Political Science 18 (May, 1974), p. 270. The correlation (r) between personal trust and political cynicism is -.18.

[15]M. Kent Jennings and Richard G. Niemi, The Political Character of Adolescence (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 145.

[16]Edgar Litt, "Political Cynicism and Political Futility," Journal of Politics 25 (May, 1963), pp. 317-320. Litt argues that feelings of political mistrust or cynicism "may be acquired as a community norm, a part of the political acculturation process in the city's daily routine." This argument is paralleled in studies, reviewed above, which have discovered widespread cynicism among black (and "deprived" white) children and adolescents.

[17]In addition to the sources just cited, see James D. Wright, The Dissent of the Governed (New York: Academic Press, 1976), pp. 106-109.

[18]See Paul R. Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans (New York: The Free Press, 1977).

[19]For example, see Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology"; Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation"; Wright, The Dissent of the Governed, Ch. 6; Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government: 1964-1970," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974); Robert S. Gilmour and Robert B. Lamb, Political Alienation in Contemporary America (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), Ch. 2.
    For a brief review of the variety of findings on this relationship, see Wright, p. 69.

[20]Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," p. 1205. Their analysis, however, does not support this hypothesis.

[21]See Wright, The Dissent of the Governed, pp. 67-68, and the sources cited therein.

[22]See Chapter III. The reader will recall that evidence suggests the moderation or disappearance of class differences in supportive sentiments by adolescence.

[23]One particularly tempting approach is to combine efficacy and trust in an index of "alienation," thereby entering a world where all sane political scientists should fear to tread. The gravity of the sin, of course, depends upon the care with which distinctions are drawn, and explained once they initially appear (or are made to appear by the analyst). For example, see Wright, The Dissent of the Governed; Gilmour and Lamb, Political Alienation in Contemporary America; cf. Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans.

[24]Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren E. Miller, The Voter Decides (Evanston: Row, Peterson and Co., 1954), p. 187.

[25]Lane, Political Life, p. 149. Lane does not, however, overlook the "system responsiveness" component of political efficacy, nor does he dismiss the possibility that variations in that attitude are partly a reflection of government action. See pp. 149-151.

[26]Angus Campbell et al., The American Voter (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1960), p. 516. While their emphasis is clearly in the direction suggested by this passage, it is also true that the SRC view is not entirely insensitive to fluctuations in political efficacy that might occur in response to changes in the political environment.

[27]David Easton and Jack Dennis, "The Child's Acquisition of Regime Norms: Political Efficacy," American Political Science Review 61 (March, 1967), p. 33.

[28]Lane, _Political Life_, p. 151.

[29]Abramson, _The Political Socialization of Black Americans_, pp. 7-8.

[30]For example, see Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation"; Wright, _The Dissent of the Governed_; Gilmour and Lamb, _Political Alienation in Contemporary America_.

[31]For example, Wright notes a rise in political efficacy among blacks from 1956 to 1960, an apparent response to events of the civil rights movement. While levels of efficacy apparently declined among blacks in subsequent years, Abramson notes that the recent decline is even more pronounced among whites. See Wright, _The Dissent of the Governed_, pp. 176-180; Abramson, _The Political Socialization of Black Americans_, p. 110.

[32]See Lane, _Political Life_, pp. 149-150; Campbell et al., _The American Voter_, p. 479; Wright, _The Dissent of the Governed_, Ch. 7; Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation."

[33]Easton and Dennis, "The Child's Acquisition of Regime Norms," p. 35.

[34]Abramson, _The Political Socialization of Black Americans_, Ch. 4. Wright suggests that higher-status blacks showed sharper gains in efficacious beliefs during the period from 1956-1960 than did blacks as a whole; and their growing inefficacy in recent years was attenuated noticeably by their higher social class. Wright, _The Dissent of the Governed_, pp. 176-181. We might note that the elimination of racial differences when social class is controlled may provide us with a substantively misleading statistic—since blacks are not likely to achieve the same status levels as are whites. Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation," p. 399.

[35]Easton and Dennis, "The Child's Acquisition of Regime Norms," p. 35.

[36]Jennings and Niemi, _The Political Character of Adolescence_, pp. 128-129. The differences are not at all substantial, however, and neither variable is a particularly powerful predictor of political efficacy among these high-school students. As suggested by Easton and Dennis, the correspondence between parental and offspring efficacy is enhanced among higher-status families where political interest is likely to be higher and parental cues should be less ambiguous. See Jennings and Niemi, pp. 130-131.

[37]Wright, _The Dissent of the Governed_, pp. 141-142. This description is, unfortunately, intended to apply to "political alienation," operationalized in terms of both cynicism and inefficacy. Wright does recognize, however, that social class is more closely associated with the latter.

[38]Ibid., p. 195. The college graduates did, however, parallel the general population in their diminishing levels of political trust. In fact, the policy "disappointments" of this group exceeded the overall trend, which suggests to Wright that we may have discovered at least one instance of what Easton calls diffuse support—attitudes of good will that are relatively independent of political events.

[39]Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans, Ch. 4. Abramson notes an apparently sharper post-1965 decline in political efficacy among whites than among blacks. He suggests that this may reflect a growing sense of pride and self-confidence among blacks during this period, and that the "social deprivation" explanation may be more appropriate as an explanation of efficacy than as an explanation of trust. See Abramson, Ch. 7. This possibility is generally consistent with the conceptualization of efficacy and trust which I will develop below.

[40]The greater impact of class variables on efficacy is acknowledged by Wright, Abramson, and others. Despite the nearly universal finding that trust and efficacy are empirically linked, this difference provides a rather good illustration of the dangers inherent in treating both attitudes as somewhat different manifestations of the same underlying phenomenon.

[41]Donald D. Searing, Joel J. Schwartz, and Alden E. Lind, "The Structuring Principle: Political Socialization and Belief Systems," American Political Science Review 67 (June, 1973), p. 415.

[42]The volatility in these attitudes among many black Americans is especially clear evidence in contradiction of a purely deterministic interpretation of trust and efficacy.

[43]Exactly what it is that Americans have lost confidence in remains, however, an important matter of dispute. The question, and the behavioral implications of the answer, will occupy our attention in the following chapters. Aggregate patterns of change are described in Chapter VI.

[44]Among other things, such trends force us to recognize that racial differences in political trust are not carved in stone. A statement to the effect that blacks are more cynical than whites is insufficient without qualifications: when? by what proportion?

[45]Wright, The Dissent of the Governed, pp. 188-189. Also see the analysis of trends in "political alienation" in Gilmour and Lamb, Political Alienation in Contemporary America.

[46]M. Kent Jennings and Richard G. Niemi, "Continuity and Change in Political Orientations: A Longitudinal Study of Two Generations," American Political Science Review 69 (December, 1975), p. 1331.

[47]Ibid., pp. 1331-1332.

[48]Neal E. Cutler and Vern L. Bengtson, "Age and Political Aliena-
tion: Maturation, Generation and Period Effects," The Annals of the
American Academy of Political and Social Science 415 (September, 1974);
Donald Searing, Gerald Wright, and George Rabinowitz, "The Primacy
Principle: Attitude Change and Political Socialization," British
Journal of Political Science 6 (January, 1976); James S. House and
William M. Mason, "Political Alienation in America, 1952-1968,"
American Sociological Review 40 (April, 1975).

[49]See Abramson, The Political Socialization of Black Americans.

[50]Philip E. Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," in
The Human Meaning of Social Change, ed. by Angus Campbell and Philip
E. Converse (New York: Russell Sage, 1972), p. 334.

[51]Ibid., p. 328.

[52]Ibid., p. 330. Converse suggests that the decline in efficacy
is related to the weakening of partisan loyalties in the electorate
during the 1960s. Also see Philip E. Converse, The Dynamics of
Party Support (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1976).

[53]Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," pp. 335-336.

[54]For example, see Wright, The Dissent of the Governed, Ch. 7;
Gilmour and Lamb, Political Alienation in Contemporary America, Ch. 1.
An exception is House and Mason, "Political Alienation in America."
Their description of trends in individual efficacy items parallels
that of Converse. In particular, they note the apparently uniform
downward trend in the system responsiveness component across dif-
ferent social and demographic categories--a trend which they attrib-
ute to increasing popular discontent with specific events and gov-
ernment policies during the 1960s. This analysis does not, however,
make a distinction between perceived system responsiveness and po-
litical trust.

[55]The latter explanation seems the more likely to Easton; see
"A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," pp. 449-450.

[56]The reader might take a moment to review the Miller and the
Aberbach and Walker citations on pp. 14-15 above. These passages, and
a great many more like them, must be understood as hypotheses rather
than as statements of general empirical validity. As I argued in
Chapter II, we must not conceptualize our attitudinal variables in
such a way that we attribute to them, by definition, a behavioral sig-
nificance which they might not have.

[57]Muller and Jukam suggest that the problem may have been less in

the concept itself than in the frequent (mis)use of the SRC's "trust in government" items to measure a concept of considerably greater scope. See Muller and Jukam, "On the Meaning of Political Support," p. 1568.

[58]Lane, Political Life, p. 149.

[59]Kenneth M. Coleman and Charles L. Davis, "The Structural Context of Politics and Dimensions of Regime Performance: Their Importance for the Comparative Study of Political Efficacy," Comparative Political Studies 9 (July, 1976), pp. 189-190. For similar views, see Edward N. Muller, "Cross-National Dimensions of Political Competence," American Political Science Review 64 (September, 1970), pp. 794-795; Meredith W. Watts, "Efficacy, Trust, and Orientation Toward Socio-Political Authority: Students' Support for the University," American Journal of Political Science 17 (May, 1973), p. 292.

[60]Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government," p. 952.

[61]Internal efficacy is indicated by disagreement with the following items: (1) Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how the government runs things. (2) Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.

[62]External efficacy is indicated by disagreement with the following items: (1) I don't think public officials care much what people like me think. (2) People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

[63]George I. Balch, "Multiple Indicators in Survey Research: The Concept 'Sense of Political Efficacy,'" Political Methodology 1 (Spring, 1974).

[64]In particular, Coleman and Davis present a conceptualization of external efficacy which appears to suffer from the same problems of dimensionality that have plagued the initial efficacy formulation. They define external efficacy as "the extent to which respondents believe the regime is attentive to citizen demands and needs." (Emphasis mine.) Coleman and Davis, "The Structural Context of Politics," p. 197. As I shall argue, responsiveness to citizen demands and responsiveness to felt citizen needs are two separate dimensions on which a regime and its governing officers may be judged —although the two evaluative criteria may be empirically related in some contexts.

An earlier report by these same authors did indicate a moderate correlation between external efficacy and measures of political trust, although the latter is not defined with sufficient precision. See Charles L. Davis and Kenneth M. Coleman, "The Regime Legitimating Function of External Political Efficacy in an Authoritarian Regime:

The Case of Mexico" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29- Sept. 2, 1974). While their operationalization of external efficacy does have a high degree of face validity, one must question the cross-contextual utility of an efficacy concept which explicitly excludes the belief that regime responsiveness is the product of citizen input.

[65]The stability of sense of efficacy at the individual level also has been a subject of research attention. See Herbert B. Asher, "The Reliability of the Political Efficacy Items," Political Methodology 1 (Spring, 1974); Susan Welch and Cal Clark, "Change in Political Efficacy: A Test of Two Hypotheses" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sep. 2, 1974); J. Miller McPherson, Susan Welch, and Cal Clark, "The Stability and Reliability of Political Efficacy: Using Path Analysis to Test Alternative Models," American Political Science Review 71 (June, 1977).

In general, we must conclude that this attitude is far more volatile than early speculations would have had us believe, with much of the change that does occur appearing to be more or less random. The latter study, however, suggests that the items identified by Balch as "external efficacy" form a more cohesive pair whose over-time stability is considerably greater than that of the other items (while still being volatile enough to question the view that they are unresponsive to the political environment).

[66]Gamson, "Political Trust and Its Ramifications," p. 41.

[67]This leaves the attitude of personal effectiveness, as well as that of personal trust, unaccounted for. While such variables might be related to their political counterparts (especially feelings of personal effectiveness), it is the view here that we will do better to focus on the personal situational variables which may have relevance for both personal and political evaluations.

[68]The expectations were met quite nicely in two separate student samples analyzed by the author. The internal efficacy variable was conceptualized somewhat differently than indicated above, but both the variables and the relationships among them were generally compatible with this interpretation. Stephen C. Craig, "Efficacy, Trust, and Political Behavior: An Attempt to Resolve a Lingering Conceptual Dilemma" (paper presented at the 1978 Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Political Science Association, Houston, Texas, April 12-15, 1978).

Chapter V

[1]Robert M. Entman, James W. Prothro, and Edward F. Sharp, "The Mass Media, Dissonant Events, and Alienation: A Panel Study of the Effect of the Watergate Scandals on Political Attitudes" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974), p. 29.

[2]Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government: 1964-1970," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974).

[3]This latter possibility might be a function of changes in the alternatives offered by our parties and leaders, or simply a product of changes in the way such alternatives are evaluated by citizens-- or both.

[4]Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government," p. 952.

[5]Arthur H. Miller, "Rejoinder to 'Comment' by Jack Citrin: Political Discontent or Ritualism," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974), p. 989.

[6]Arthur H. Miller, "Change in Political Trust: Discontent with Authorities and Economic Policies, 1972-1973" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974), p. 1.

[7]Ibid., p. 2.

[8]See Chapter II.

[9]Miller explicitly excludes personality factors from his analysis.

[10]The behavioral consequences of political trust are, as I have already indicated, a topic of considerable importance--and also one of considerable dispute, since its empirical validity is questionable. It sometimes is difficult to determine whether Miller views political trust as a determinant of, a component of, or equivalent to diffuse support. In any case, he clearly agrees with Easton and Gamson that its consequences for the regime are potentially significant.

[11]Miller, "Change in Political Trust," p. 39.

[12]This theme will occupy our attention below.

[13]Warren E. Miller and Teresa E. Levitin, Leadership and Change: The New Politics and the American Electorate (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1976), p. 227. The authors conclude that this relationship is most evident with respect to traditional liberal-conservative issues. See pp. 175-177, 227. Miller's analysis suggests, however, that the

curvilinear relationship between cynicism and policy preference can be seen for both traditional and newer issues. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government," pp. 962-963.

[14]Nie and his associates, using a somewhat different methodology, suggest that the pattern which Miller found in 1970 appeared only in that year. Their data show greater cynicism among conservatives—but greater trust among liberals—in 1958, followed by a period during which citizens on the political right became even more cynical. After 1964, however, it is the liberals who experience the greatest increase in cynicism and, by 1972, they are even more mistrustful than conservatives (with moderates more trustful than either extreme). Norman H. Nie, Sidney Verba, and John R. Petrocik, The Changing American Voter (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 284-286.

Citrin has challenged the Miller thesis on several grounds. For example, as citizen perceptions of ideological distance between the two parties became more visible between 1970 and 1972, it was dissatisfaction with the incumbent Republican administration which was the primary policy determinant of cynicism; the perceived policies of the "out" party and its leader (McGovern) were frequently unrelated to cynicism in 1972. Miller, however, argues that the reduced association between dissatisfaction with Democratic policies and cynicism was located primarily among Republican identifiers and independents: as these citizens perceived the Democratic party as moving left from 1970 to 1972, that party became a less viable alternative and their reference for policy judgments shifted to the GOP. Miller adds that the "out-party disgruntlement" hypothesis is unable to explain the mistrust of Republican identifiers in 1970-1972.

Citrin raises a number of additional questions which are pertinent to Miller's analysis: (1) "Given the institutional and cultural pressures toward compromise, bargaining, and coalition-building in American politics," it is not surprising to find that citizens at the ideological extremes will tend to be unhappy with "parties whose primary goal is electoral victory." Despite this, on only two of the policy questions examined by Miller "were there consistently monotonic decreases in the level of political trust as one moved from the center of the policy continuum toward its extremes." (2) The size of the centrist bloc grows significantly when its definition is expanded to include more than just the middle point ("4") on a 7-point continuum. "And when the 1972 study gave respondents the explicit choice of saying they had not thought about an issue," the size of the extremist blocs declined even further. (3) The concrete referents of some numerical responses are ambiguous, e.g., "what is a 'centrist' policy on inflation?" On many of the issues examined by Miller, "the public does not encounter a well-articulated set of choices that can be ranked along the left-right continuum." And "when the referents of perceived policy stands are vague or vacuous, we should be cautious about using issue distance measures as valid measures of policy dissatisfaction." The restoration of public trust in government cannot

be accomplished through the abandonment of "centrist" policies, be-
cause most salient problems today are not "position" issues (on
which public opinion is polarized), but rather "valence" issues (on
which there is general agreement about the goals of public policy,
and on which government will be judged according to its success in
achieving results in such problem areas as easing inflation, achiev-
ing economic prosperity, dealing with energy shortages, and main-
taining a high standard of honesty in government).

   See Jack Citrin, "Comment: The Political Relevance of Trust
in Government," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974);
Miller, "Rejoinder." A very similar conclusion is drawn by Brody
and Page, who argue that presidential popularity is largely a function
of results, as these may be experienced directly or mediated by the
mass media. See Richard A. Brody and Benjamin I. Page, "The Impact
of Events on Presidential Popularity: The Johnson and Nixon Adminis-
trations," in Perspectives on the Presidency, ed. by Aaron Wildavsky
(Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1975).

[15]Jack Citrin et al., "Personal and Political Sources of Po-
litical Alienation," British Journal of Political Science 5 (January,
1975). This, of course, corresponds to Citrin's distinction between
"position" and "valence" issues, and the data support the view that
it is with reference to the perceived results of governmental action
that many citizens form their evaluations of political leaders and
institutions.

[16]Miller, "Change in Political Trust." For most of the popula-
tion in 1973, it was leadership evaluations (i.e., disenchantment
with Nixon) which became the more important source of political cynicism.

[17]Entman et al., "The Mass Media, Dissonant Events, and Alienation."
The best predictor of political trust in 1974 was the individual's
1973 trust level. Negative change was most likely to occur among those
students whose prior attitudes suggested that the Watergate events
would generate some degree of cognitive imbalance and, therefore,
pressure for attitude change in order to remove that imbalance. If
one was cynical to start with, however, Watergate was more likely to
leave one unchanged—or even more trustful, perhaps as a response to
events which encouraged the impression that "the system works."
Finally, at the highest level of imbalance, some reinforcement of
prior feelings of trust was evident.

[18]In addition to these sources, see Nie et al., The Changing
American Voter; Citrin et al., "Personal and Political Sources of
Political Alienation"; George I. Balch, "Political Trust and Styles
of Political Involvement among American College Students" (paper pre-
sented at the 1971 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science
Association, Chicago, Ill., April 29-May 1, 1971).

   Abravanel and Busch show a correlation between liberalism and
political trust. See their "Political Competence, Political Trust, and

the Action Orientations of University Students," Journal of Politics 37 (February, 1975). Similar conclusions may be drawn from research in Britain, e.g., Jack Citrin and David J. Elkins, Political Disaffection Among British University Students (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1975); Alan Marsh, Protest and Political Consciousness (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1977).

[19]Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government"; Miller, "Change in Political Trust."

[20]Also see John Fraser, "Personal and Political Meaning Correlates of Political Cynicism," Midwest Journal of Political Science 15 (May, 1971).

[21]See Chapter III.

[22]Joel D. Aberbach and Jack L. Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," American Political Science Review 64 (December, 1970). As one might infer from their emphasis on cumulative experiences, it is the end product of such experiences which the authors find to be directly associated with political trust. That is, a citizen's beliefs about his political effectiveness and his expectations of favorable treatment in a government office are the aspects of "experience" which are related to trust.

[23]Abravanel and Busch, "Political Competence," p. 78.

[24]See Kenneth M. Coleman and Charles L. Davis, "The St. ictural Context of Politics and Dimensions of Regime Performance: Their Importance for the Comparative Study of Political Efficacy," Comparative Political Studies 9 (July, 1976), pp. 190-191.

[25]Philip E. Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," in The Human Meaning of Social Change, ed. by Angus Campbell and Philip E. Converse (New York: Russell Sage, 1972); George I. Balch, "Multiple Indicators in Survey Research: The Concept 'Sense of Political Efficacy,'" Political Methodology 1 (Spring, 1974); Coleman and Davis, "The Structural Context of Politics."

[26]See Donald Searing, Gerald Wright, and George Rabinowitz, "The Primacy Principle: Attitude Change and Political Socialization," British Journal of Political Science 6 (January, 1976); Herbert B. Asher, "The Reliability of the Political Efficacy Items," Political Methodology 1 (Spring, 1974).

[27]Converse, "Change in the American Electorate"; Susan Welch and Cal Clark, "Change in Political Efficacy: A Test of Two Hypotheses" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974); J. Miller McPherson, Susan Welch, and Cal Clark, "The Stability and Reliability

of Political Efficacy: Using Path Analysis to Test Alternative Models,"
American Political Science Review 71 (June, 1977).

[28]Robert D. Hess, "The Acquisition of Feelings of Political Effi-
cacy in Pre-Adults," in *Social Psychology and Political Behavior:
Problems and Prospects*, ed. by Gilbert Abcarian and John W. Soule
(Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1971), p. 72. While Hess'
conceptualization of political efficacy is even broader than my own,
the joint emphasis on self and system parallels the notion of ex-
ternal efficacy.

[29]*Ibid.*, p. 71.

[30]Robert E. Lane, *Political Life* (New York: The Free Press, 1959),
p. 153. In answering his own questions, Lane concludes that the
effect of political activity on sense of efficacy is "multiple and
varied."

[31]For example, see Joan Huber and William H. Form, *Income and
Ideology* (New York: The Free Press, 1973); Stanley Allen Renshon,
Psychological Needs and Political Behavior (New York: The Free
Press, 1974).

[32]James D. Wright, *The Dissent of the Governed* (New York: Academic
Press, 1976), p. 194. Wright argues that this is particularly evident
with respect to citizen reactions to Vietnam policy. Specifically,
he notes that both hawks and doves were more mistrustful than mod-
erates throughout the period, and that increases in mistrust were
fairly constant across all three groups. Thus, he criticizes Miller
for "confusing factors that account for distributions with factors
that account for trends." Presumably, then, the tendency for all
three groups to become mistrustful reflected their common negative
reaction—a reaction which was independent of their policy preference
—to the *processes* by which Vietnam policy was derived.

[33]See Welch and Clark, "Change in Political Efficacy"; Marjorie
Randon Hershey and David B. Hill, "Watergate and Preadults' Attitudes
Toward the President," *American Journal of Political Science* 19
(November, 1975). Guest concludes that differences in efficacy
cannot be explained by respondents' issue positions, but he also sug-
gests that recent declines may be due to perceptions that the gov-
ernment has been unresponsive to the generally articulated demands
of citizens rather than to the belief that individual interests were
not being met. This seems to parallel Citrin's view that cynicism
may be the result of general dissatisfaction with the inability of
government to produce *results* on issues which are characterized by
widespread agreement on goals. See Avery M. Guest, "Subjective
Powerlessness in the United States: Some Longitudinal Trends," *Social
Science Quarterly* 54 (March, 1974).
House and Mason are able to attribute *levels* of external

efficacy in 1968 to dissatisfaction with political events and government policies; they also demonstrate an association between <u>changes</u> in external efficacy and <u>changes</u> in policy dissatisfaction between 1964 and 1968. While the strength of these relationships tends to be more modest than the authors are willing to acknowledge, the evidence of a link between external efficacy and perceptions of the political environment is persuasive. See James S. House and William M. Mason, "Political Alienation in America, 1952-1968," <u>American Sociological Review</u> 40 (April, 1975).

[34]Their models are derived from Edward N. Muller, "Cross-National Dimensions of Political Competence," <u>American Political Science Review</u> 64 (September, 1970); Norman H. Nie, G. Bingham Powell, Jr., and Kenneth Prewitt, "Social Structure and Political Participation: Developmental Relationships, I and II," <u>American Political Science Review</u> 63 (June and September, 1969).

The SES variables include measures of social status, organizational involvement, and civic duty—variables which Nie et al. found to be associated with political information. I have not included their parallel model for authoritarian regimes, which omits the causal link from external to internal efficacy, and moderates the influence of external efficacy upon political attentiveness and involvement. The effect of external efficacy is said to be limited in such contexts because "where policy decisions are made without interaction between elites and masses, the motivation to be politically attentive will remain low even were citizens to believe that the regime has generally acted with their own interests at heart." This also reduces or eliminates the indirect effect of external efficacy, operating through attentiveness, upon internal efficacy in authoritarian settings. In fact, the two dimensions of efficacy are understood to be <u>unrelated</u> in authoritarian regimes. "Some citizens with a high sense of external efficacy will <u>exist</u> . . . because such regimes do accede to the wishes of selected citizens, although doing so in an essentially arbitrary and unpredictable fashion. . . . Other citizens will exist who believe that they have the skills to elicit a response, were the structural setting different. However, these two groups . . . need not overlap." The latter group will be better educated and more politically attentive in <u>all</u> regimes; the former group need not be. In the case of Mexico, the authors contend that external efficacy is associated with "regime performance," particularly to the extent that Mexicans are satisfied or dissatisfied with <u>symbolic</u> outputs—including among the poor, who are unusually attentive to the symbolic dimension of regime performance. See Coleman and Davis, "The Structural Context of Politics," esp. pp. 193-194.

[35]Ibid., pp. 191-193.

[36]Ibid., p. 193.

[37]In an "open" political system, however, there might be a relationship of some sort between government performance evaluations and citizens' evaluations of their own effectiveness. See ibid., p. 191.

[38]A regime whose outputs consistently favor the higher social classes might exhibit an essentially spurious correlation between class and external efficacy.

[39]Moderate relationships--although unfortunately involving different indicators of the two dimensions--are found by Balch, "Multiple Indicators in Survey Research"; Muller, "Cross-National Dimensions of Political Competence"; Stephen C. Craig, "Efficacy, Trust, and Political Behavior: An Attempt to Solve a Lingering Concpetual Dilemma" (paper presented at the 1978 Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Political Science Association, Houston, Texas, April 12-15, 1978).

[40]This is something of a departure from the concepts employed by Muller and by Davis and Coleman. For these authors, internal efficacy refers to one's own ability to influence the political system, while external efficacy probes beliefs about the system's responsiveness to people in general. Even though external efficacy is typically measured using "people like me" attitude items, it is my contention that this should be interpreted as a statement of the relationship which the individual believes to exist between himself and the system. It is wrong to conceptually exclude beliefs about self-competence from our definition of external efficacy. And this, of course, returns us to the uncertain distinction these same authors provide between external efficacy and political trust.

[41]Converse notes that "the sheer definition of personal skills that are politically effective is to some degree dependent on the shape of the political system itself, and most specifically, the kind of influence attempts to which it is open, if any." Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," p. 334.

[42]Since feelings of self-competence will, as Coleman and Davis note, be higher among the higher social classes, we would expect that SES-related variables will influence external efficacy by operating through the intervening variable of internal efficacy. This relationship should, however, be quite modest as well as indirect.

[43]I agree with Coleman and Davis that this relationship will be depressed, and perhaps nonexistent, in authoritarian regimes. I differ with them on the meaning of this, however. One cannot explain variations in internal efficacy with a measure of external efficacy which does not—or should not, if our model is correct—vary appreciably across individuals.

[44]Robert E. Agger, Marshall N. Goldstein, and Stanley A. Pearl, "Political Cynicism: Measurement and Meaning," Journal of Politics 23 (August, 1961).

[45]Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology."

[46]Joel D. Aberbach, "Alienation and Political Behavior," American Political Science Review 63 (March, 1969).

[47]Richard L. Cole, "Toward a Model of Political Trust: A Causal Analysis," American Journal of Political Science 17 (November, 1973).

[48]Miller, "Rejoinder," p. 990. The statistic is r.

[49]Balch, "Multiple Indicators in Survey Research," pp. 20-22. Most correlations (r) involving the external pair were in the .2 to .4 range. The external items were associated with the political trust scale at .57 and .44.

[50]Craig, "Efficacy, Trust, and Political Behavior." This pattern was evident across two separate samples, one involving college students, the other at the high-school level.

[51]Abravanel and Busch, "Political Competence." Specifically, the mistrustful were more likely to say that they would attempt to influence the legislature by employing mass demonstrations and protest tactics. The statistic in this study is gamma.

[52]Citrin and Elkins, Political Disaffection, p. 40. Although these authors recognize the basic internal-external distinction, their measure of "system responsiveness" comes very close to tapping what I am calling political trust; that is, it measures attitudes toward the political system without consistent reference to the self as a factor in encouraging that system to be responsive. This may explain why their correlation coefficient exceeds the level found in other studies.

[53]American Political Science Review 61 (March, 1967).

[54]Ibid., p. 25.

[55]Ibid., p. 26.

[56]Edgar Litt, "Political Cynicism and Political Futility," Journal of Politics 25 (May, 1963), p. 319.

[57]For example, Harrell R. Rodgers, Jr., "Toward Explanation of the Political Efficacy and Political Cynicism of Black Adolescents: An Exploratory Study," American Journal of Political Science 18 (May, 1974).

[58]Litt, "Political Cynicism."

[59]Cited in Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," p. 1205.

[60]Ibid.

[61]David C. Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior (Chicago: Aldine, 1973), p. 12. Schwartz compares this orientation with what Almond and Verba call a "subject" political mentality. He cites an SRC study using 1966 national data. In that survey, 57.7 percent of those who responded to the question "How much political power do you think people like you have?" thought that they and their counterparts had "little or no power." Yet the question "Do you think that people like you have too little political power or just the right amount?" prompted the response from 61.5 percent that they were satisfied with the power they believed they had.

[62]Ibid., p. 13. On the other hand, "people who are in funda-mental value conflict with the political system need not become alien-ated from that polity if they perceive themselves to be efficacious in changing it so as to reduce the conflict." Ibid.

A similar argument is made by Citrin and Elkins, Political Disaffection, pp. 4-5. The authors contend that we may infer a neg-ative evaluation of political processes from a finding of political powerlessness only by assuming "(a) that people value political effi-cacy, and (b) that their sense of political powerlessness stems from perceptions of politics rather than from self-perceptions." Parallel to Schwartz, then, an inefficacy-cynicism relationship depends upon efficacy being both "valued" and "thwarted." See Schwartz, p. 13.

[63]This idea reflects Schwartz's belief that "Americans seem to orient more toward the system as a whole than toward their personal participation in it"—more as "consumers" than as "participants"; we tend "to take our politics vicariously and to assume that we have entirely fulfilled our civic duty by voting." Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior, pp. 13-14. The model of political alienation which is developed by Schwartz depends, of course, upon the influence of variables other than those discussed here. See especially Chapters 1, 4-7.

[64]Unfortunately, Schwartz's measures of "threatened value conflict" (TVC) are very general and they allow the respondent to provide his or her own policy (or value) referents when assessing the extent to which conflict exists. In practice, this obscures the difference between TVC and the alienation which it is intended to explain. A study done by this author used items derived from Schwartz's study in an attempt to assess the relationship between TVC and political trust. As it turned out, a very satisfactory TVC scale was developed—but it was empirically indistinguishable from the trust scale in its association with (and independent contribution to the explanation of) theoreti-cally relevant attitudes and behavioral dispositions. The relationship (r) between TVC and trust was -.54. Stephen C. Craig, "Towards a Theory of Political Behavior" (unpublished paper, Northwestern Uni-versity, 1974).

[65]Cst. Asher, "The Reliability of the Political Efficacy Items."

[66]When regime unresponsiveness is perceived as a "norm violation," its impact upon the formation of cynical attitudes should be enhanced. The author asked a student sample to indicate the amount of political influence they felt they currently had, and the amount of influence they felt they ought to have. Each of these items had response categories which ranged from 1 ("A lot of influence") to 7 ("No influence"). The simple numerical difference between the two may be viewed as an indication of the extent to which a student believed that American political processes embody the democratic value of citizen involvement in policymaking. As expected, this measure of "norm violation" was associated with both external efficacy ($r = -.29$) and political trust ($r = -.32$)—but not significantly with internal efficacy. It is worth noting in this context that virtually every one of the 200 students questioned believed that he or she had less political power than he or she ought to have. See Craig, "Efficacy, Trust, and Political Behavior." The relationship posited by Schwartz is repeated by Watts:

> It seems clear that trust and efficacy are not re-
> lated in a simple way and there must be an intervening
> step. The intervening "variable" proposed here is a
> normative construct—an evaluative belief that the sys-
> tem should be responsive and that the individual should
> be influential. . . .

See Meredith W. Watts, "Efficacy, Trust, and Orientation Toward Socio-Political Authority: Students' Support for the University," American Journal of Political Science 17 (May, 1973), p. 293.

[67]Philip E. Converse, "Public Opinion and Voting Behavior," in Handbook of Political Science, Vol. 4, Nongovernmental Politics, ed. by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975).

[68]Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," p. 332.

[69]Ibid., p. 333. Converse considers the decline in voting turnout to be less significant as an indicator of mass political interest than are more strenuous activities. He concludes that decisions about whether or not to vote are usually made among the less attentive lower strata, which are less likely to be pushed "over the threshold into further activism" by political events. See Converse, pp. 333-334.

[70]See the passage cited on pp. 77-78 of the text above.

[71]See Converse, "Change in the American Electorate"; Nie et al., The Changing American Voter; Gerald M. Pomper, Voters' Choice (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1975), Ch. 1; Richard W. Boyd, "Electoral Trends in Postwar Politics," in Choosing the President, ed. by James David Barber (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974).

[72]For example, Miller and Levitin, who acknowledge the internal-external distinction and some of the changes in each dimension, choose not to emphasize the extent or the importance of changes in external efficacy. See Leadership and Change, p. 228.

[73]The exception might be the "rally-round-the-flag" phenomenon which seems to occur regularly in times of crisis. This tends, however, to occur during relatively discrete and highly visible crises, and the support which is so quickly given is also rather quickly taken away. If the period since the early 1960s represents a "crisis," it surely is one of a very different nature. See John E. Mueller, War, Presidents and Public Opinion (New York: Wiley, 1973).

[74]The extent to which these phenomena make independent contributions to the observed changes in mass publics is unclear. The straightforward relationship between education and political involvement and attentiveness makes it clear that some degree of politicization probably would have occurred even during a period of relative political tranquility and consensus. But some changes have been observed even among the less well-educated, suggesting that perhaps the political environment also has had an impact. See Converse, "Public Opinion and Voting Behavior"; Norman H. Nie with Kristi Andersen, "Mass Belief Systems Revisited: Political Change and Attitude Structure," Journal of Politics 36 (August, 1974).

[75]This argument is intended to address changes in the aggregate levels of politicization and discontent. The implication is, of course, that these two variables are directly related at the individual level as well, although the validity of this proposition is uncertain. Coleman and Davis hypothesize that external efficacy and political attentiveness will be positively related as the former promotes motivation for the latter. See Coleman and Davis, "The Structural Context of Politics"; Muller, "Cross-National Dimensions of Political Competence."

Still, it may be that a normally positive relationship is weakened as politicization becomes more widespread. See notes 76 and 78.

[76]Nie with Andersen, "Mass Belief Systems Revisited." Their analysis suggests that the disaffected group grew in size in the early 1970s, and that many new entrants into this group were both "disinterested" and "politicized" (the latter measured in terms of attitude consistency across political issues).

[77]For example, see Robert S. Gilmour and Robert B. Lamb, Political Alienation in Contemporary America (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975); Edward N. Muller, "Behavioral Correlates of Political Support," American Political Science Review 71 (June, 1977).

[78]Aberbach and Walker present an interesting statistic which seems to contradict the spirit of the argument I have been trying to develop. Their respondents were asked "How much difference do you think it makes to people like yourself what the government in Washington does?" While their presentation does not make this absolutely clear, it appears that respondents who felt that government actions are salient were _more_ likely to score high on political trust. Among whites only, this relationship is stronger at lower levels of educational attainment (perhaps because perceptions of government impact are not accompanied by greater sophistication among this group), but the relationship is still substantial among the better educated. See Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," pp. 1206-1207. A similar finding is reported in John Fraser, "Validating a Measure of National Political Legitimacy," American Journal of Political Science 18 (February, 1974), p. 131. In contrast, a measure of the "relevance of government" was found to be negatively associated with political trust among college students (r=-.20, i.e., perceived relevance was higher among the mistrustful). Craig, "Efficacy, Trust, and Political Behavior."

[79]The reader will recall from above that Wright discovered that the college-educated, while becoming more cynical about politics during the 1960s, also exhibited strangely higher levels of "efficacy." Insofar as this observation applies to internal efficacy, it is not surprising. And as a higher proportion of the electorate comes to achieve a college education, so will the aggregate level of internal efficacy continue to grow.

[80]Ronald Inglehart, The Silent Revolution (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), Ch. 11.

[81]Miller, "Rejoinder," p. 996.

[82]Ibid., p. 989.

[83]Miller, "Change in Political Trust," p. 1.

[84]This latter point is suggested by the findings of Aberbach and Walker. These authors believe that the mistrust of well-educated blacks in their Detroit sample stems partly from a feeling of identification with the black community and its problems. "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," pp. 1208, 1211. A similar argument is made in Citrin et al., "Personal and Political Sources of Political Alienation," p. 16.

[85]Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior, p. 16.

[86]Miller, "Change in Political Trust," p. 4.

[87]David Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," British Journal of Political Science 5 (October, 1975), p. 438.

[88] Ibid.

[89] These demands may have been channelled into the system by citizens themselves, or by others acting in their behalf. Ibid. Schwartz contends that alienation depends not only upon perceived personal inefficacy, but also upon a belief that there are no "reference groups" who are operating in the polity, and who can achieve the citizen's values for him. Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior, p. 13.

[90] Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," p. 439.

[91] Ibid., pp. 439-441. For example, see Philip E. Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in Ideology and Discontent, ed. by David E. Apter (New York: The Free Press, 1964).

[92] John C. Wahlke, "Policy Demands and System Support: The Role of the Represented," British Journal of Political Science 1 (July, 1971).

[93] Edward N. Muller, "The Representation of Citizens by Political Authorities: Consequences for Regime Support," American Political Science Review 64 (December, 1970).

[94] Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of Political Support," pp. 440-441. Easton also notes that salient personal concerns often are channelled into the political arena in contexts other than the electoral setting (e.g., particularized contacts with public officials), and that these might also contribute to a generalization of positive or negative affect based upon demand satisfaction. He also reminds us that specific support may originate less with instrumental demand satisfaction than with perceptions of the behavior of political authorities.

[95] Entman et al., "The Mass Media, Dissonant Events, and Alienation," p. 29.

[96] Wright, The Dissent of the Governed, p. 200.

[97] Everett Carll Ladd, Jr., American Political Parties (New York: Norton, 1970), p. 255.

[98] Wright, The Dissent of the Governed, p. 198.

[99] Miller, "Change in Political Trust," p. 5. Data from 1972 reported by Miller show a positive relationship between political trust and the respondent's feelings about how helpful the government was in dealing with his or her personal problems. It is interesting that only 41 percent of the sample believed that government should help,

although they tended to be less than fully satisfied with the help they felt was being given. Cf. Paul M. Sniderman and Richard A. Brody, "Coping: The Ethic of Self-Reliance," American Journal of Political Science 21 (August, 1977).

[100] Sidney Verba and Kay Lehman Schlozman, "Unemployment, Class Consciousness, and Radical Politics: What Didn't Happen in the Thirties" (paper presented at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Sept. 2-5, 1976). Dahl interprets the stability of the United States during this period in terms of the effects of something very much like "diffuse support," a large reservoir having been built up through processes of political socialization. See Robert A. Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), pp. 149-150.

[101] Ladd, American Political Parties, p. 39.

[102] Citrin et al., "Personal and Political Sources of Political Alienation," p. 15.

[103] Ibid., p. 14.

[104] When any personal characteristic—demographic, situational, attitudinal—is given political relevance by political events or by changes in the political environment, it may affect attitudinal or behavioral support. What is important to understand is that personal characteristics are infused with such significance through the individual's contact with "political reality." We therefore should expect that the relationship between personal factors and political support is variable over time, rather than deterministic.

The same argument has been applied to the social-background determinants of vote choice. "Social characteristics gain a political significance when political alternatives tend to parallel differentials in social attribute. One attribute may be of political significance at one time and another at another." Thus, social attributes move into and out of the "zone of political relevance." V. O. Key, Jr. and Frank Munger, "Social Determinism and Electoral Decision: The Case of Indiana," in American Voting Behavior, ed. by Eugene Burdick and Arthur J. Brodbeck (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1959), p. 297. Also see Pomper, Voters' Choice, pp. 8-12.

[105] Nor does Schwartz find a consistent relationship between "social" and "political" alienation, suggesting that the latter derives more directly from citizen evaluation of political conditions. Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior, Ch. 2-3. Cf. Gilmour and Lamb, Political Alienation in Contemporary America; Wright, The Dissent of the Governed.

[106] Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior, p. 90.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Citrin et al., "Personal and Political Sources of Political Alienation," p. 15.

[109] Inglehart, The Silent Revolution. Sniderman and Brody also found that the most important "personal" problems mentioned by better-off respondents in the 1972 SRC national election study tended to involve "quality of life" concerns, while others were more likely to cite economic problems. See Sniderman and Brody, "Coping."

[110] This restraint is also seen as acting upon the economically disadvantaged, for whom economic concerns are usually the most salient —yet they are not disproportionately likely to believe that their plight ought to be blamed upon the government. See Sniderman and Brody, "Coping." Easton and Dennis also emphasize the importance of political socialization in moderating the demands which citizens feel justified in channelling into the political system. See their Children in the Political System (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), p. 56.

[111] The difference between the two may be illustrated by Sniderman and Brody's contrast between "making ends meet" and "the cost of living." The latter concern is much more likely to be recognized by citizens as beyond the scope of individual responsibility. Sniderman and Brody, "Coping."

Chapter VI

[1] Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Rebel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 24.

[2] Ibid.

[3] See ibid., pp. 25-27. One might compare our speculations on the importance of political (external) efficacy in a democratic culture with the idea of "relative deprivation" with respect to "power values," i.e., "those that determine the extent to which men can influence the actions of others. . . ." Relative deprivation is most often viewed as an important antecedent of protest behavior or political violence—perhaps even without political discontent or alienation intervening between the two. We will consider the behavioral relevance of political trust and cynicism in Chapter VIII. See Edward N. Muller, "A Test of a Partial Theory of Potential for Political Violence," American Political Science Review 66 (September, 1972). Cf. Jack Citrin, "Comment: The Political Relevance of Trust in Government," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974).

[4] See Chapter V.

[5]It is this condition which could precipitate a decline in political trust even in the absence of either substantial alterations in government performance or "rising" expectations on the part of citizens. Politicization, in this sense, refers to the scope of citizen demands or expectations of performance.

[6]Nor, as we have been told, does the presence of felt deprivation and system blame necessarily require that this combination will produce regime-challenging (or any other) behavior intended by the individual to remedy the situation.

[7]House and Mason make a very similar point about recent changes in external efficacy (which they equate with political trust); in addition, they emphasize the importance of perceived discrepancies between citizen preferences and government policy. Comparing evidence from 1964 and 1968, they conclude that changing preferences may have widened the "gap" between some citizens and their government, contributing to a rise in external inefficacy during this period. See James S. House and William M. Mason, "Political Alienation in America, 1952-1968," American Sociological Review 40 (April, 1975).

[8]Such an inference, as I argued earlier, seems justified by a number of observations, including the significant and apparently growing relationship between external efficacy and political trust, the scattered evidence that external efficacy is responsive to changes in the political environment, and the growing levels of education among Americans. In addition, there is some evidence that external efficacy is more strongly related to political trust when perceptions of system unresponsiveness are regarded as a "deprivation" or "norm violation." See pp. 109-110 of the text.

[9]See pp. 116-118 above.

[10]The language here is from Muller, who sees political support as largely dependent upon perceptions of "representational linkages" (including both instrumental and expressive or symbolic values) between citizens and their leaders. See Edward N. Muller, "The Representation of Citizens by Political Authorities: Consequences for Regime Support," American Political Science Review 64 (December, 1970).

[11]James D. Wright, The Dissent of the Governed (New York: Academic Press, 1976), p. 194.

[12]Citrin, "Comment," p. 987.

[13]The concept of an attentive public as a subset of the entire electorate embraces several ideas which we have encountered previously. It refers to that minority of citizens who, according to Wright, are most likely actually to make demands upon their government—and who are most likely to be disappointed when these demands are not met. It

refers to those citizens who are sufficiently politicized and who have the cognitive abilities to perceive that government actions are relevant for the quality of their daily lives. The attentive public, in a more practical sense, might include those citizens whose social placement and status permit them to be heard, and perhaps to have an effect upon political events and the policy choices of political decision-makers. The idea is summarized by Dahl, who explains that beliefs are most likely to encourage political action which, in turn, is more likely to influence governments when our attention is focused upon elites rather than upon masses. This is because elites are more politicized, their belief systems are more elaborate (due to their better education and higher level of attentiveness), they are more likely to act upon their beliefs, and they are likely to be better placed to influence political events.

See Robert A. Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), p. 131. Dahl does not, however, dismiss the possibility that the masses can be mobilized (and perhaps manipulated) under certain circumstances, implying that the size of the "politically relevant" group may indeed grow in response to events in the social and political environment.

[14]For example, see Austin Ranney, Curing the Mischiefs of Faction: Party Reform in America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); Gerald M. Pomper, "The Decline of Partisan Politics," in The Impact of the Electoral Process, ed. by Louis Maisel and Joseph Cooper (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1977).

[15]See note 49, Chapter VII.

[16]For an essay which links the themes of "voter disaffection" and "party disarray," see Richard W. Boyd, "Electoral Trends in Postwar Politics," in Choosing the President, ed. by James David Barber (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974). Also see Philip E. Converse, The Dynamics of Party Support (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1976); Walter Dean Burnham, "American Politics in the 1970s: Beyond Party?" in The American Party Systems: Stages of Political Development, 2d ed., edited by William Nisbet Chambers and Walter Dean Burnham (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975); Jack Dennis, "Trends in Public Support for the American Party System," British Journal of Political Science 5 (April, 1975).

[17]In other words, positive evaluations on any one dimension of performance may be sufficient to sustain positive support.

[18]Edward N. Muller and Thomas O. Jukam, "On the Meaning of Political Support," American Political Science Review 71 (December, 1977).

[19]Muller, "The Representation of Citizens."

[20]Jack Citrin and David J. Elkins, Political Disaffection Among British University Students (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1975).

[21]Paul M. Sniderman et al., "Stability of Support for the Political System: The Initial Impact of Watergate," American Politics Quarterly 3 (October, 1975). In addition, these authors find that the early Watergate period was subject to differing interpretations, suggesting that the complexity of an event may minimize that event's impact upon popular opinions.

[22]For example, see Marjorie Randon Hershey and David B. Hill, "Watergate and Preadults' Attitudes Toward the President," American Journal of Political Science 19 (November, 1975); Dean Jaros and John A. Shoemaker, "The Malevolent Unindicted Co-Conspirator," American Politics Quarterly 4 (October, 1976); Harrell R. Rodgers, Jr. and Edward B. Lewis, "Student Attitudes Toward Mr. Nixon: The Consequences of Negative Attitudes Toward a President for Political System Support," American Politics Quarterly 4 (October, 1975); Roberta S. Sigel and Marilyn Brookes Hoskin, "Affect for Government and Its Relation to Policy Output among Adolescents," American Journal of Political Science 21 (February, 1977); John L. Sullivan and Daniel Richard Minns, "'The Benevolent Leader Revisited': Substantive Finding or Methodological Artifact?" American Journal of Political Science 20 (November, 1976).

[23]Citrin, "Comment." Also see the passage from Miller and Levitin on p. 94 above.

[24]Muller and Jukam, "On the Meaning of Political Support," p. 1563.

[25]See Chapter II.

[26]Generalization can, of course, occur in a more positive sense as specific satisfactions accumulate and help to build the kind of "reservoir of good will" which Easton, Gamson, and others regard as so significant for the persistence of regimes. Ladd explains that the ability of the American system to meet the (especially economic) demands of many of its citizens has contributed to a moderation of political conflict, a general confidence in the system's capacity for meeting demands, and a "legitimacy born of habituation" for our political institutions—a sort of inertia which operates to insulate the United States against demands for fundamental change as a result of unrealized citizen expectations. The experience of the Depression years suggests how powerful a constraint against system rejection such a favorable political and socioeconomic history may provide. See Everett Carll Ladd, Jr., American Political Parties (New York: Norton, 1970), pp. 39-44. Such positive historical experiences may, however, be less constraining upon younger citizens who, if their formative years are characterized by political disappointments and unmet demands,

may prove to be less tolerant and more disposed to corrective action
than are their elders. Cf. Roberta S. Sigel and Marilyn Brookes,
"Becoming Critical About Politics," in The Politics of Future Citizens,
ed. by Richard G. Niemi (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974).

[27]Much of the controversy in the literature stems from different
views of whether we have adequately operationalized "diffuse support"
—or whether the specific-diffuse distinction is even operationalizable.
For example, see David Easton, "A Re-Assessment of the Concept of
Political Support," British Journal of Political Science 5 (October,
1975); Muller and Jukam, "On the Meaning of Political Support";
Citrin and Elkins, Political Disaffection Among British University
Students; Joel D. Aberbach and Jack L. Walker, "Political Trust and
Racial Ideology," American Political Science Review 64 (December,
1970); Jack Citrin et al., "Personal and Political Sources of Po-
litical Alienation," British Journal of Political Science 5 (January,
1975); David O. Sears, "Political Socialization," in Handbook of
Political Science, Vol. 2, Micropolitical Theory, ed. by Fred 1.
Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley,
1975).

[28]For example, see Joel D. Aberbach, "Alienation and Political
Behavior," American Political Science Review 63 (March, 1969); Citrin
et al., "Personal and Political Sources of Political Alienation";
Arthur H. Miller, "Change in Political Trust: Discontent with
Authorities and Economic Policies, 1972-1973" (paper presented at
the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Associa-
tion, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974); Robert M. Entman, James
W. Prothro, and Edward F. Sharp, "The Mass Media, Dissonant Events,
and Alienation: A Panel Study of the Effect of the Watergate Scandals
on Political Attitudes" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting
of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-
Sept. 2, 1974).

[29]Arthur H. Miller, "Rejoinder to 'Comment' by Jack Citrin:
Political Discontent or Ritualism," American Political Science Review
68 (September, 1974), p. 998.

[30]If citizen policy preferences tend to be congruent with their
party affiliations, the relationship between party and discontent will
be stronger—but it should also be diminished when policy preferences
are controlled.

[31]For a thoughtful discussion of the difference between partisan
sentiments and system support, including citations of empirical studies,
see Sears, "Political Socialization." Sears, like so many other
scholars, is concerned about the success with which we can empirically
separate partisan beliefs about incumbent authorities from more funda-
mental beliefs about the "legitimacy" of the regime and the political
community. Beyond the methodological challenge, however, Sears speculates

that perhaps people simply do not make the distinctions among political objects that political scientists have analytically imposed upon them. To the extent that our various measures of political support are responsive to perceptions of system outputs (substantive and otherwise), this possibility remains plausible if not necessarily likely.

Sears raises many of these same questions in considering whether there is such a thing as diffuse or system support which is learned during the preadult years and which persists thereafter. He concludes that, to the extent that our model of attitude acquisition grows out of a social learning approach—and the studies reported in Chapter III tend to support such an approach—we probably would expect early learning to be tied to rather specific stimulus objects, rather than involving more generalized cognitive structures which can be applied to a range of political objects. Not only does this observation seem to apply to children, but the cognitive structures of adults usually have been perceived by scholars as limited in scope and of scant generalizability across attitude objects. Part of the problem may be in the way citizens attend (or are capable of attending) to politics, but we also must be aware that attitude objects change rather substantially over time. It does seem probable, however, that continuity rather than change will characterize such objects as "America" or "majority rule and minority rights"—which returns us to the question of whether we have adequately measured popular attachments to these more fundamental principles and objects. See Sears, "Political Socialization."

[32]These categories are largely derived from Miller, "Change in Political Trust."

[33]For example, see Muller and Jukam, "On the Meaning of Political Support"; Martin D. Abravanel and Ronald J. Busch, "Political Competence, Political Trust, and the Action Orientations of University Students," Journal of Politics 37 (February, 1975); Alan Marsh, Protest and Political Consciousness (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1977). Whether it is liberals or conservatives (or both, as suggested by Miller) who will feel more discontented depends, of course, upon the perceived congruence between the respondents' ideological preferences and those of the government.

[34]The data which are analyzed in this study were made available by the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research. Each election study, including the study from 1972 which will provide the basis for this analysis, involves a sample of respondents which is representative of a cross section of eligible voters living in private dwelling units within the continental United States. The percentages which are reported in these introductory paragraphs were derived from the codebooks provided for each election survey; each percentage is based on the total (unweighted) number of respondents who gave substantive answers to the question (i.e., missing data were omitted from these calculations).

[35]The traditional 4-item SRC efficacy scale was asked as early as 1952, permitting us to look further back in time as we search for changes in citizen perceptions. The degree to which external efficacy responds to the political environment is evident from studies, described earlier, which demonstrate that the electorate became more efficacious between 1952 and 1964. See Philip E. Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," in The Human Meaning of Social Change, ed. by Angus Campbell and Philip E. Converse (New York: Russell Sage, 1972); Neal E. Cutler and Vern L. Bengtson, "Age and Political Alienation: Maturation, Generation and Period Effects," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 415 (September, 1974); House and Mason, "Political Alienation in America."

[36]For example, House and Mason note that changes in this item over time have been evident in all segments of the electorate, perhaps reflecting a uniform response to the turbulence--and complexity --of recent years. See "Political Alienation in America," p. 136.

[37]See ibid.

[38]About 64 percent agreed with the statement in 1956, compared to 73 percent in 1974. The figures for the intervening years show a rather high degree stability since the 1964 survey.

[39]As the concepts have been formulated, it is internal efficacy which should be most strongly related to such variables as education, political attentiveness and sophistication, and feelings of personal effectiveness. House and Mason suggest that the "politics complex" item may be the only "pure" measure of internal efficacy among the original SRC questions, and they note that the correlates of efficacious responses to this item include most of those we have hypothesized. See "Political Alienation in America," p. 136.

Our own analysis, using the 1972 survey, is more ambiguous. We find both external and internal efficacy (including "voting only way") to be related to such factors as education, personal effectiveness, political interest, and conventional political participation. And these relationships are maintained (though reduced) even when controls are introduced for the alternative dimension of political efficacy. These relationships will be considered in greater detail in the following chapter.

[40]For example, see J. Miller McPherson, Susan Welch, and Cal Clark, "The Stability and Reliability of Political Efficacy: Using Path Analysis to Test Alternative Models," American Political Science Review 71 (June, 1977).

[41]See Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," pp. 328-329.

[42]See Appendix 2.

[43]For example, see Norman H. Nie, Sidney Verba, and John R. Petrocik, The Changing American Voter (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), Ch. 15.

[44]In fact, the 1972 survey found a drop in reported campaign interest from the relatively higher levels of 1964 and 1968. As noted in the previous chapter, Nie has described this trend as one of increasing "negative salience"—greater attentiveness to and concern with politics and political issues, combined with a frustration over the perceived failures of political leaders and institutions to respond to popular demands and to deal adequately with our pressing national problems. The decline in campaign interest did, however, reverse itself somewhat in 1976. See Arthur H. Miller and Warren E. Miller, "Partisanship and Performance: 'Rational' Choice in the 1976 Presidential Election" (paper presented at the 1977 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D. C., Sept. 1-4, 1977), p. 36.

[45]Unfortunately changes in question wording make comparisons prior to 1968 tenuous. For example, in 1964, respondents were asked whether they followed "politics"—a term whose connotation is surely different from that of "government and public affairs." In the latter case, about 64 percent of the 1968 sample responded "most of the time" or "some of the time"; in 1974, the comparable figure was about 75 percent.

[46]Converse, "Change in the American Electorate."

[47]Boyd, "Electoral Trends in Postwar Politics"; Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, Ch. 15. Nie also discusses changes in other indicators of politicization, including attentiveness to the media. Such changes, he argues, are only partly attributable to rising educational levels. See Nie et al., pp. 275-276.

[48]Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics."

[49]Norman H. Nie with Kristi Andersen, "Mass Belief Systems Revisited: Political Change and Attitude Structure," Journal of Politics 36 (August, 1974); Stephen Earl Bennett, "Consistency Among the Public's Social Welfare Policy Attitudes in the 1960's," American Journal of Political Science 17 (August, 1973). These changes seem to have persisted through 1976. See Miller and Miller, "Partisanship and Performance."

[50]For example, Nie et al., The Changing American Voter; Arthur H. Miller et al., "A Majority Party in Disarray: Policy Polarization in the 1972 Election," American Political Science Review 70 (September, 1976).

[51]For example, Nie et al., The Changing American Voter; John C. Pierce, "Party Identification and the Changing Role of Ideology in American Politics," Midwest Journal of Political Science 14 (February, 1970); John O. Field and Ronald Anderson, "Ideology in the Public's Conceptualization of the 1964 Election," Public Opinion Quarterly 33 (Fall, 1969).

[52]See Chapter VII, note 47.

[53]Gerald M. Pomper, Voters' Choice (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1975), p. 12.

[54]Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, p. 7.

[55]See ibid., Ch. 2.

[56]Cf. George F. Bishop, "The Effect of Education on Ideological Consistency," Public Opinion Quarterly 40 (Fall, 1976); James A. Stimson, "Belief Systems: Constraint, Complexity, and the 1972 Election," American Journal of Political Science 19 (August, 1975). Cst. Stephen Earl Bennett and Robert Oldendick, "The Effect of Education on Mass Belief Systems: The Case of Issue Constraint among Domestic Policy Opinions, 1956-1976" (paper presented at the 1978 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., April 20-22, 1978).

[57]George F. Bishop, Robert W. Oldendick, and Alfred J. Tuchfarber, "Effects of Question Wording and Format on Political Attitude Consistency," Public Opinion Quarterly 42 (Spring, 1978); George F. Bishop, Alfred J. Tuchfarber, and Robert W. Oldendick, "Change in the Structure of American Political Attitudes: The Nagging Question of Question Wording," American Journal of Political Science 22 (May, 1978); John L. Sullivan, James E. Piereson, and George E. Marcus, "Ideological Constraint in the Mass Public: A Methodological Critique and Some New Findings," American Journal of Political Science 22 (May, 1978). Also see Hugh L. LeBlanc and Mary Beth Merrin, "Mass Belief Systems Revisited," Journal of Politics 39 (November, 1977); Alfred J. Tuchfarber and George F. Bishop, "Trends in the Structure of American Political Attitudes, 1956-1976: Change or Stability?" (paper presented at the 1978 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., April 20-22, 1978).

[58]Converse notes, however, that the more frequent usage of ideological symbols was largely restricted to the better informed half of the population; whatever stimuli served to create this change seem not to have penetrated throughout the population. See Philip E. Converse, "Public Opinion and Voting Behavior," in Handbook of Political Science, Vol. 4, Nongovernmental Politics, ed. by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975), p. 91. Cf. Pierce, "The Changing Role of Ideology."

[59]At this point, we might recall the argument developed by Coleman and Davis (see Figure 4, p. 101). They suggest that the absence of external efficacy in authoritarian regimes inhibits the motivation to be politically attentive and informed. And as external efficacy has declined in the United States, these feelings of political powerlessness may have effectively countered the greater levels of politicization that would otherwise have resulted from increased education, dramatic and visible events, and sharp partisan differentiation.

[60]Converse, "Public Opinion and Voting Behavior," pp. 77-111. For Converse, attitude crystallization and constraint are more the products of political attentiveness than of education--and thus they are more likely to reflect the conflicts of the day, and to be less durable, than are the changes in "ideology" which are a function of education. Cf. Nie et al., The Changing American Voter; Bennett and Oldendick, "The Effect of Education on Mass Belief Systems."

Chapter VII

[1]For form 1, 253 respondents were unavailable for reinterview; for form 2 the number was 261. Some of these returned shortened mail questionnaires, thus enlarging the size of the post-election sample for certain items.

[2]Three separate analyses involving different combinations of respondents were examined, and the results were similar for each. For example, the figures for form 2 respondents are the following: political trust (Cronbach's alpha=.658, average inter-item correlation=.31, N=1133); external efficacy (alpha=.766, average inter-item correlation=.45, N=1248). These figures are based upon respondents for whom there are no missing data on any item in the hypothesized scale.

Contrary to some other studies, which found that these and similar items did not have the same meaning across racial groups, we found little difference between the reliability coefficients (and patterns of item intercorrelation) for whites and blacks. Analysis of black responses was based on the total black sample in the 1972 study (forms 1 and 2 combined, N=267). See Herbert Jacob, "Problems of Scale Equivalency in Measuring Attitudes in American Subcultures," Social Science Quarterly 52 (June, 1971); cf. James D. Wright, The Dissent of the Governed (New York: Academic Press, 1976), Ch. 4.

[3]See Philip E. Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in Ideology and Discontent, ed. by David E. Apter (New York: The Free Press, 1964); Philip E. Converse, "Attitudes and Non-Attitudes: Continuation of a Dialogue," in The Quantitative Analysis of Social Problems, ed. by Edward R. Tufte (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley,

1970); Christopher H. Achen, "Mass Political Attitudes and the Survey Response," American Political Science Review 69 (December, 1975); John C. Pierce and Douglas D. Rose, "Nonattitudes and American Public Opinion: The Examination of a Thesis," American Political Science Review 68 (June, 1974).

[4]All coefficients in this analysis, unless otherwise stated, are Pearson's r. The presentation of probability levels has been dispensed with when considering relationships involving the entire sample; the N is sufficiently large in this instance that we may safely assume that any coefficients of substantive significance (and many which are not) are also statistically significant. In order to maximize the size of our sample, missing values for any item were replaced with the sample mean for that item prior to scale construction (although the scales were evaluated, according to the criteria described above, for only those respondents who had no missing values for any item in the hypothesized scale). This results in an N for these scales which is equivalent to the N for the total sample. The exception to this strategy is an obvious one: when scales were built using post-election items, all respondents who could not be reinterviewed were assigned missing values for these scales. In addition, no missing values were replaced for individual items employed in this analysis.

[5]For example, see George I. Balch, "Multiple Indicators in Survey Research: The Concept 'Sense of Political Efficacy,'" Political Methodology 1 (Spring, 1974); Stephen C. Craig, "Efficacy, Trust, and Political Behavior: An Attempt to Resolve a Lingering Conceptual Dilemma" (paper presented at the 1978 Annual Meeting of the Southwestern Political Science Association, Houston, Texas, April 12-15, 1978).

[6]These measures are described in Appendix 1. A fifth item in the SRC "Responsiveness" battery asked about the ability of interest groups to make government pay attention to the people. While this item was positively associated with the others—evidence, perhaps, of the kind of "generalization" of discontent that we discussed in the previous chapter—its manifest content seems to set it apart. Empirically, it added little to the scale's reliability.

The reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for the scales used in this analysis, in addition to those reported elsewhere, are the following: responsiveness (.677), extra-system orientation (.622), personal effectiveness (.663), personal trust (.786); the correlation for the two system support items is .38.

[7]The association between trust and personal efficacy, personal trust, and education falls to or near zero with external efficacy controlled.

[8]The "political interest" variable, here and elsewhere in this study, refers to general interest in "government and public affairs."

[9]These include such activities as attempting to influence another person's vote, attending political meetings or rallies, displaying a campaign button or bumper sticker, making contributions to a political party, and writing a letter to a public official. Actually, even the relationship between "internal" efficacy and political participation is less overwhelming than much of the literature would have us believe (r ranging between .09 and .24 for the activities just described).

[10]Herbert B. Asher, "The Reliability of the Political Efficacy Items," Political Methodology 1 (Spring, 1974).

[11]These respondents were not administered the trust battery in the pre-election wave nor the efficacy battery in the post-election wave.

[12]The same correlation noted above, between external (T_1) and trust (T_2) is considerably stronger for form 2 (r=.44) than for form 1 respondents (r=.26). For form 2, the external (T_2) and trust (T_1) association does fall to .37. There is no readily apparent explanation for the disparities in these relationships, particularly in light of the consistent patterns observed across education and political interest groupings. Our analysis will be affected by these differences, since our fullest examination will be of the form 1 sample.

[13]This is also true for form 2 respondents observed alone, as well as for comparisons between the two samples.

[14]Respondents have been classified into three educational groupings: (a)low—an eighth-grade education or less; (b) medium—a high-school diploma or less; and (c) high—at least some college. For both trust and external efficacy, the mean score changes monotonically as we move from one educational category to the next. The same is true for internal efficacy, system support, personal effectiveness, personal trust, and extra-system orientation.

[15]Once again, the split-form questionnaire manages to constrain us from expressing this relationship too strongly. The comments in the text refer to form 2 respondents only. For form 1 respondents, our indicators of politicization remain associated with external efficacy at roughly comparable levels (r ranging from .15 to .25, compared to a range of .19 to .32 for form 2). The already modest relationship between politicization and trust (from .08 to .11), however, disappears entirely for form 1 respondents. We note that two of our politicization measures were asked in the pre-election wave, while political trust was measured after the election for form 1 respondents.

Because it seemed reasonable to expect that those respondents who were unavailable to be reinterviewed in the post-election wave would differ in systematic ways from the rest of the sample, a quick comparison of these two groups was done. While differences generally were modest, the "attrition" group was somewhat less educated, more Democratic

in identification and vote, and more likely to identify subjectively with the working class.

[16]We should emphasize that education and politicization, while substantially related, are not the same thing. Education is associated with concern about the election outcome at .15, with campaign interest at .27, and with general political interest at .35 (form 2 respondents). It is within the middle educational category that we witness the strongest relationships between politicization and both trust and external efficacy. In fact, among the least educated, those who are most likely to follow "government and public affairs" are a bit more likely to be mistrustful ($r=-.11$, $p=.06$); the opposite is true for the moderately educated ($r=.11$, $p < .01$), with no relationship evident among the better educated. Similarly, it is among those who are moderately interested in "government and public affairs" that education is most strongly associated with political trust. It would seem inadvisable to attach too much significance to these modest differences. Overall, the safest conclusion may be that neither education nor politicization have a great deal to do with political trust in the contemporary period —although the same cannot be said, to no surprise, about both dimensions of political efficacy.

[17]Norman H. Nie with Kristi Andersen, "Mass Belief Systems Revisited: Political Change and Attitude Structure," *Journal of Politics* 36 (August, 1974), pp. 576-578. Nie has become perhaps the major spokesman—and certainly the most inviting target—among those "revisionist" scholars who have attempted to persuade us that the American electorate is more flexible and responsive to their social and political environment than we once believed. As I noted above, the evidence of increased attitudinal consistency—which Nie takes to be a product of the politicization of much of the mass electorate— has been challenged on grounds that it is a product of our own increasing methodological sophistication. It has always troubled me most, however, that little attention has been paid to the dynamic character of the empirical evidence which is needed to verify the revisionist scenario. That is, for constraint to be established as a function (and thus an indicator) of politicization, we need to know that observed changes were concentrated among those citizens or groups who became interested in politics, particularly between 1960 and 1964. Since increased consistency was evident even among the less educated—implying, as I have said, that education and politicization are not identical—it seems that the "salience-of-politics" notion must rest upon such dynamic evidence.

[18]For form 2 respondents, trust was associated with party identification at .14, and with intended vote choice at .23; the comparable coefficients for external efficacy were .19 and .18. The party identification variable is derived from the standard SRC format (see Appendix 1), which places respondents along a 7-point continuum from "strong

Democrat" to "strong Republican." Some questions have been raised
about the meaning of the continuum. For example, respondents who
initially identify themselves as "independent" are asked whether they
tend to "lean" toward one party or the other. These leaners have been
found, in some instances, to exhibit traits which are more "partisan"
than those of the "weak Democrats" or "weak Republicans." Indeed, in
1972 (form 2), the Democratic "leaners" were a little bit more cynical
than "weak Democrats"—yet the most trustful group of all were the
"weak Republicans." For external efficacy, the increase in efficacy is
monotonic as we move along the continuum toward the Republican end,
with only one exception: "weak Democrats" are less efficacious than
any Republican group, but more efficacious than other Democrats and
independents. Actually, these differences are not particularly large.
The sharpest distinctions on both variables are between Republican
identifiers (including "leaners") and everybody else.

The partisan tendencies of independent "leaners" are discussed
by John R. Petrocik, "An Analysis of Intransitivities in the Index of
Party Identification," Political Methodology 1 (Summer, 1974).

[19]It is worth noting that, while self-identified "liberals" tend to
be more cynical than "conservatives," the relationship is not particu-
larly strong, nor is it linear.

[20]This refers both to general interest in "government and public
affairs" and to campaign interest. The magnitude of the correlation is
not exactly equal across all these categories, but the differences are
both modest and irregular (i.e., it is strongest among the middle group
on the political interest variable).

[21]See Ronald Inglehart, The Silent Revolution (Princeton, N. J.:
Princeton University Press, 1977), Ch. 2; Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation
and Personality, 2d ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970).

[22]Inglehart, The Silent Revolution, pp. 15-16.

[23]Inglehart notes that the long-term prosperity and physical security
of the U.S. and Britain, in combination with their more recent experiences
with inflation and diminishing economic growth, should make age differences
in "post-materialist" value priorities less sharp than we would expect
for the rest of Western Europe. The evidence seems to support this
view, although generational differences still are evident in the U.S.
and, to a lesser extent, in Britain. See ibid., pp. 34-39.

[24]See Appendix 1. Inglehart recognizes the influence which short-
term forces may have on the frequency with which one or another of these
priorities will be selected. It is, for example, difficult to imagine
that very many Americans have not become quite concerned with the
problems of inflation. If such concern is reflected in larger propor-
tions of citizens giving higher priority to "fighting rising prices,"

we may get a misleading view of the salience of non-materialistic values to Americans (if citizens possess a general value orientation at all). Thus, the absolute frequency of any particular response pattern is likely to be affected by both short-term forces and "nonattitudes"—although comparisons among groups may still give us a more or less accurate picture of the rate of value change in our society. A 12-item battery has been developed to enhance the reliability of the measure described here, but this was unavailable to us in the 1972 election study. See ibid., pp. 39-53.

[25] These are form 2 respondents; percentages are based on that number which selected two priorities (N=1034). As Inglehart notes, it is true that "Western society remains predominately Materialist." Ibid., p. 38. It is also true, however, that younger cohorts are less "materialist" than their elders. Our data show the likelihood of "post-materialist" values to increase monotonically as one moves from the oldest to the youngest age group (although a majority of each age group was placed in the "mixed" category, i.e., they were not polar or "pure" types). Whether these demands will persist throughout the lifetime of the individual, and whether citizens who enter the electorate in the future will continue to swell the ranks of the "post-materialists," are questions that cannot presently be answered. Much would seem to depend on whether short-term economic (and perhaps security) concerns become more pressing in the long term.

[26] The correlation between external efficacy and political trust: (a) materialists (r=.46, N=364, p <.01); (b) mixed (r=.51, N=572, p <.01); (c) post-materialists (r=.61, N=98, p <.01). A further distinguishing characteristic of the "post-materialist" group, and one that will concern us later, is the relative likelihood of political cynicism to be associated with approval of unconventional political tactics; this relationship is weak to nonexistent among "materialist" and "mixed" value types.

[27] Post-materialists are more cynical—but also more externally efficacious—than other value types. Their external efficacy is probably a product of their generally higher educational attainment, a factor which may also explain their relatively higher levels of "internal" efficacy and their greater willingness to sanction nontraditional forms of political action. One must keep in mind that Inglehart's value typology is not independent of political preferences. For example, "post-materialists" are very likely to come from that segment of the population which labels itself as "liberal." Thus, even this measure returns us to the question of whether political discontent is a function of policy—or partisan—expectations.

[28] Of course, a dynamic theory of political discontent could emphasize the mutual interaction among these beliefs—a sort of generalization process whereby cynicism (or trust) feeds back to condition the extent to which citizens are disposed to see their government as

responsive. See Joel D. Aberbach and Jack L. Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," American Political Science Review 64 (December, 1970).

[29]Given that "post-materialist" value priorities are most likely to be found not only among the young, but also among the better educated, why is the relationship between external efficacy and political trust not stronger among these groups? The answer, in large part, seems to be that "post-materialists" are a minority even among the young and the educated. Age and education do not appear to discriminate sufficiently between those to whom participation and responsiveness are values of prime importance, and those to whom such values are salient primarily as a result of their having been socialized into a democratic culture. Further, if the norm of efficacy has become more salient in recent years, this change may well have characterized a broader and more heterogeneous segment of the population than that which we have found to be "politicized" or "cognitively mobilized." Indeed, the idea of a mentality of demand" suggests that, even as economic or materialist values have remained salient for most of the population, a broader range of demands--including the value of responsiveness--may have emerged. Inglehart's value orientation measure only asks the respondent for a relative statement of salience for particular national goals.

One other possible explanation for these limited differences between age and educational groupings recommends itself. We have noted declining agreement with the belief that "voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how the government runs things"--a decline most evident among those who have experienced the college milieu where new forms of political action became most evident during the 1960s. (See Philip E. Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," in The Human Meaning of Social Change, ed. by Angus Campbell and Philip E. Converse (New York: Russell Sage, 1972).) The belief that one may impose one's will upon a reluctant government may help to moderate the extent to which perceptions of governmental unresponsiveness to "traditional" citizen activity will generate feelings of cynicism.

[30]This dilemma is, of course, more likely to be found in a two-party system where the expression of ideological diversity will necessarily be constrained.

[31]Norman H. Nie, Sidney Verba, and John R. Petrocik, The Changing American Voter (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 2.

[32]Everett Carll Ladd, Jr., American Political Parties (New York: Norton, 1970), pp. 42-43.

[33]See Anthony Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy (New York: Harper and Row, 1957).

[34]Here, I refer to the so-called "amateurs" or "purists" whose political opinions tend to be more consistent and more extreme, and whose concern with electoral success is secondary to their ideological or programmatic values. See note 49 below.

[35]Quoted in Doris Kearns, Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), p. 154.

[36]Ibid., p. 155.

[37]Ibid., p. 156. This sounds very much like the argument of Citrin and others, that it is the failure of government to achieve "results" which can best explain contemporary discontent.

[38]Nelson W. Polsby and Aaron Wildavsky, Presidential Elections, 4th ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), p. 208.

[39]See Ladd, American Political Parties, Ch. 2. Indeed, one of the more important factors in defining the relatively nonconflictual nature of American politics has been the absence of an explicit and durable party of the working class.

[40]See ibid.; Joyce Gelb and Marian Lief Palley, Tradition and Change in American Party Politics (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975), Ch. 1; James L Sundquist, Dynamics of the Party System (Washington, D. C.: Brookings, 1973), p. 28.

[41]Austin Ranney, Curing the Mischiefs of Faction: Party Reform in America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 52.

[42]Such findings are reported by Jack Dennis, "Support for the Party System by the Mass Public," American Political Science Review 60 (September, 1966).

[43]See Ranney, Curing the Mischiefs of Faction.

[44]For example, see Sundquist, Dynamics of the Party System; Ladd, American Political Parties; V. O. Key, Jr., "A Theory of Critical Elections," Journal of Politics 17 (February, 1955); Walter Dean Burnham, Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics (New York: Norton, 1970).

[45]Inglehart characterizes such changes in terms of increasing demand for "elite-challenging" as opposed to "elite-directed" modes of participation. For Ladd, the spread of educational attainment (as well as that of information through the mass media) reduces the need which people may have once had for the parties to act as "action intermediaries" in the voting decision. This is an important source, he contends, of increased partisan independence since the 1950s. See

Inglehart, The Silent Revolution, Ch. 11; Everett Carll Ladd, Jr.
with Charles D. Hadley, Transformations of the American Party System
(New York: Norton, 1975), Ch. 6.

[46]Gerald M. Pomper, Voters' Choice (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co.,
1975), Ch. 8; Gerald M. Pomper, "From Confusion to Clarity: Issues
and American Voters, 1956-1968," American Political Science Review
66 (June, 1972). Pomper notes that the political "learning" of this
period has taken place at all levels of education—thus favoring a
"politicization" explanation.

[47]Again, we must note that the conclusion is not shared by all
scholars who have attempted to understand the act of voting. Some,
such as Key, have argued that the pre-1964 period was not "issueless."
Others have challenged the conclusion that issue voting in the cur-
rent era is as widespread as the "revisionists" would have us believe.
Many of the disputes center around methodological techniques and
strategies and, as such, they would make an intriguing case study in
the sociology of knowledge.

Among the more prominent attempts to identify the factors that
shape vote choice, the reader might consult the following: Angus
Campbell et al., The American Voter (New York: John Wiley and Sons,
1960); Nie et al., The Changing American Voter; Philip E. Converse
et al., "Continuity and Change in American Politics: Parties and
Issues in the 1968 Election," American Political Science Review 63
(December, 1969); Arthur H. Miller et al., "A Majority Party in Dis-
array: Policy Polarization in the 1972 Election," American Political
Science Review 70 (September, 1976); Donald E. Stokes, "Some Dynamic
Elements of Contests for the Presidency," American Political Science
60 (March, 1966); Arthur S. Goldberg, "Discerning a Causal Pattern Among
Data on Voting Behavior," American Political Science Review 60 (December,
1966); V. O. Key, Jr., with the assistance of Milton C. Cummings, Jr.,
The Responsible Electorate (New York: Random House, 1966); David E.
RePass, "Issue Salience and Party Choice," American Political Science
Review 65 (June, 1971); David E. RePass, "Comment: Political Method-
ologies in Disarray: Some Alternative Interpretations of the 1972
Election," American Political Science Review 70 (September, 1976);
Samuel Popkin et al., "Comment: What Have You Done for Me Lately?
Toward An Investment Theory of Voting," American Political Science
Review 70 (September, 1976); Richard W. Boyd, "Popular Control of Pub-
lic Policy: A Normal Vote Analysis of the 1968 Election," American
Political Science Review 66 (June, 1972); Benjamin I. Page and Richard
A. Brody, "Policy Voting and the Electoral Process: The Vietnam War
Issue," American Political Science Review 66 (September, 1972); Peter
B. Natchez and Irvin C. Bupp, "Candidates, Issues, and Voters," Public
Policy 17 (1968); Stanley Kelley, Jr. and Thad W. Mirer, "The Simple
Act of Voting," American Political Science Review 68 (June, 1974);
Samuel A. Kirkpatrick, William Lyons, and Michael R. Fitzgerald, "Can-
didates, Parties, and Issues in the American Electorate: Two Decades
of Change," American Politics Quarterly 3 (July, 1975); John E. Jackson,

"Issues, Party Choices, and Presidential Votes," American Journal of Political Science 19 (May, 1975); Mark A. Schulman and Gerald M. Pomper, "Variability in Electoral Behavior: Longitudinal Perspectives from Causal Modeling," American Journal of Political Science 19 (February, 1975); Richard A. Brody and Paul M. Sniderman, "From Life Space to Polling Place: The Relevance of Personal Concerns for Voting Behavior (paper presented at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Sept. 2-5, 1976).

Some more general themes in the study of voting behavior are discussed by Richard A. Brody and Benjamin I. Page, "Comment: The Assessment of Policy Voting," American Political Science Review 66 (June, 1972); John H. Kessel, "Comment: The Issues in Issue Voting," American Political Science Review 66 (June, 1972); Benjamin I. Page, "Elections and Social Choice: The State of the Evidence," American Journal of Political Science 21 (August, 1977).

[48]Pomper, Voters' Choice, p. 184. Margolis criticizes Pomper's analysis for, among other things, basing his conclusions upon only a fraction of the total sample (including those who both have an opinion on a particular issue, and who perceive party differences on that issue). LeBlanc and Merrin, using open-ended materials from SRC surveys, report a recent decline in the proportion of voters who see their own party as best able to handle the "most important problem" facing the government. Most of this decline, they conclude, is due to a growing tendency to see no difference between the parties on these salient problems.

See Michael Margolis, "From Confusion to Confusion: Issues and the American Voter (1956-1972)," American Political Science Review 71 (March, 1977); Hugh L. LeBlanc and Mary Beth Merrin, "Parties, Issues and Candidates: Another Look at Responsible Parties" (paper presented at the 1975 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, Calif., Sept. 2-5, 1975).

[49]Party activists have long been a different breed than the rank-and-file members of the parties, especially among Republicans, but recently among Democrats as well. They tend to be better educated, of higher social status, and, most importantly, they tend to be more "ideological" and more "extreme" in their political opinions than the electorate as a whole.

For example, see Herbert McClosky, Paul J. Hoffmann, and Rosemary O'Hara, "Issue Conflict and Consensus among Party Leaders and Followers," American Political Science Review 54 (June, 1960); Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, Ch. 12; David Nexon, "Asymmetry in the Political System: Occasional Activists in the Republican and Democratic Parties, 1956-1964," American Political Science Review 65 (September, 1971); Ladd with Hadley, Transformations of the American Party System, Ch. 6; Polsby and Wildavsky, Presidential Elections, Ch. 1.

[50]Steeper and Teeter place special emphasis on the role of political leadership in the "polarization" which presumably has come to characterize the electorate. On many contemporary issues, they contend,

polarization has been imposed on voters to whom these issues are not normally salient to their daily lives. Such "leader-induced polarizations" will fade, thereby reducing the tensions and conflicts in society, if only parties will refrain from nominating candidates who incite voters normally disposed to accept the norm of accommodationism. See Frederick T. Steeper and Robert M. Teeter, "Comment on 'A Majority Party in Disarray,'" American Political Science Review 70 (September, 1976).

I wonder if there has ever been a more splendid example of this phenomenon than the Panama Canal dispute highlighted by the Reagan candidacy in 1976.

[51]This is a form 1 question (N=998). The group perceiving party differences did score somewhat higher on the external efficacy and "responsiveness" scales. They were also more internally efficacious.

[52]Fifty-seven percent of the form 1 sample believed it made no such difference which party won the election (N=1288), and their mean level of cynicism showed virtually no difference from that group which believed the election would make a difference.

[53]This is a form 2 question (N=931). For all three of the measures just discussed, "pure" partisan independents are by far the most likely to believe that significant party differences do not exist. Partisans are somewhat--but far from overwhelmingly--likely to perceive such differences, with Republican and Democratic identifiers about equally discriminating.

[54]See Appendix 1. While each attitude object was scored by the precise "temperature" assigned to it by respondents, the discussion of these variables is based upon a simplified coding scheme. Respondents were scored from 1 (0 to 5 "degrees") to 20 (96 to 100 "degrees"), with each value representing successive 5-point groupings of the original scores.

[55]The "difference" scores between parties and between candidates was simply the absolute value of the difference between scores for the relevant item pair. The range of values on this variable was from zero (no perceived difference) to 19 (maximum perceived difference).

[56]The figures presented in Table 3 are from form 2 respondents; no appreciable differences appear with the form 1 sample.

[57]Perhaps the best evidence of a healthy--and perhaps "responsible" —party system would be a situation where most citizens exhibited strong support for one of the parties (presumably as a result of policy values more than mere emotional attachment), felt considerably less favorable toward the other party (for the same reasons), and selected the candidates for whom they would vote on this basis. One of the more curious findings to come from this analysis is that thermometer ratings of the

two parties are essentially independent of one another (r=.05, n.s. for the form 2 sample); the same was not true for feelings toward the two candidates (r=-.39).

It is true that partisans are likely to feel more warmly toward both their party and its nominee than are those who identify with the other party. But these tendencies are modest enough that even strong Republican identifiers have a mean positive rating for "Democrats," whose strong partisans do the same when rating "Republicnas." And it is only among the strong partisans of each party that we see a tendency to feel significantly more favorable about one's own party than about the opposition (party differentiation $\bar{X}$=5.6 for strong Democrats, 4.5 for strong Republicans). Our party system, by these measures, approximates the accommodationist model rather nicely.

[58]LeBlanc and Merrin also comment on the greater candidate, as compared to party, differentiation in 1972--but they also note that perceptions of candidate differences (measured with open-ended materials) are anything but universal. LeBlanc and Merrin, "Parties, Issues and Candidates." Cf. Richard J. Trilling, Party Image and Electoral Behavior (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1976).
The relationship between our party and candidate differentiation scores is a moderate .25.

[59]This relationship reduces to zero for form 1 respondents.

[60]This is in contrast to the candidate differentiation measure where Republicans have much more polarized feelings than do Democrats. In other words, Democrats are much more likely to rate Nixon highly than are Republicans to rate McGovern highly. This suggests that the polarization of Democrats cited by other studies may be a very real phenomenon, a possibility our own analysis will shortly confirm.

[61]The correlation between Nixon rating and party identification is a weaker .45.

[62]Respondents were asked to place themselves along a 7-point continuum from liberal to conservative. The distribution on this item is actually a bit more uneven than the statement above suggests. The overall pattern is one in which liberals tend to be more cynical than conservatives--except for those eleven respondents on form 2 who placed themselves at the conservative extreme: they are the most cynical of all.

[63]These figures describe "pure" independents only. Partisan "leaners" are defined as identifiers of that party toward which they profess to lean.

[64]Independents are less cynical than Democrats, but more cynical than Republicans. Actually, as we will see below, independents are more cynical than are Democrats who supported Nixon.

[65]This is true across four separate dimensions of public policy. See the discussion which follows.

[66]A measure of partisan strength was computed by combining the "strong," "weak," and "leaning" identifiers of each party into three groups, with "pure" independents representing the weakest form of party identification. Our party differentiation measure was associated with this indicator of partisan strength at .32, i.e., there is a linear relationship between perceived party differentiation and strength of partisan identification. The relationship between perceived candidate differentiation and partisan strength is .21. These coefficients are derived from the form 2 sample.

[67]Some protests were registered concerning the general conclusions that should be drawn from this evidence. Brown suggested that the over-time stability of opinions was greater than suspected, and he argued that much of the "liberal-conservative" structure of beliefs among the better educated was a product of their socialization into the "logic of liberal democratic ideology." Axelrod located what he characterized as a "populist" belief structure among the less educated—suggesting that strict liberal-conservative structuring was not dominant for the entire population. Luttbeg found multidimensional —but meaningful—structures of belief among elite and mass alike when he studied opinions about local political issues. See Stephen R. Brown, "Consistency and the Persistence of Ideology: Some Experimental Results," Public Opinion Quarterly 34 (Spring, 1970); Robert Axelrod, "The Structure of Public Opinion on Policy Issues," Public Opinion Quarterly 31 (Spring, 1967); Norman R. Luttbeg, "The Structure of Beliefs Among Leaders and the Public," Public Opinion Quarterly 32 (Fall, 1968). Also see Pierce and Rose, "Nonattitudes and American Public Opinion"; Achen, "Mass Political Attitudes and the Survey Response"; John P. Robinson, "Balance Theory and Vietnam-Related Attitudes," Social Science Quarterly 51 (December, 1970).

Boyd and Hyman argue that sample surveys are ill-equipped to measure political "ideology" (referring to the abstract principles which citizens use to "justify" their particular attitudes). This suggests that many citizens may have more individualistic or idiosyncratic belief systems, rather than conforming to a common liberal-conservative framework. And even the open-ended materials used in surveys may be unable to tap the justifications used by citizens who are often unable to articulate their patterns of reasoning. This, of course, does not explain why Converse found opinions to be quite unstable over time. See Richard W. Boyd and Herbert H. Hyman, "Survey Research," in Handbook of Political Science, Vol. 7, Strategies of Inquiry, ed. by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975); Robert E. Lane, Political Thinking and Consciousness (Chicago: Markham, 1969).

Finally, the opposite point also can be made: the presence of consistency does not imply that respondents are thinking "ideologically" about politics. Consistency can, for example, result when citizens

absorb the "belief-packages" of leaders without really understanding the principles which justify the particular "package." See Philip E. Converse, "Public Opinion and Voting Behavior," in Handbook of Political Science, Vol. 4, Nongovernmental Politics (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975).

[68] Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, p. 153.

[69] As I have already noted, the rise in attitudinal constraint has itself been challenged as an artifact of changes in our measurement techniques.

[70] Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, p. 123.

[71] Miller et al., "A Majority Party in Disarray," p. 766.

[72] Ibid. Using multidimensional scaling in an analysis of "feeling thermometer" ratings of the various contestants for presidential nominations in 1972, these authors conclude that "a one-dimensional solution fits the data nearly as well as a two-dimensional solution." See Miller et al., p. 773. Cf. Herbert F. Weisberg and Jerrold G. Rusk, "Dimensions of Candidate Evaluation," American Political Science Review 64 (December, 1970).

[73] For example, see Donald E. Stokes, "Spatial Models of Party Competition," in Elections and the Political Order, ed. by Angus Campbell et al. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966). Cf. RePass, "Political Methodologies in Disarray"; Ronald Inglehart and Avram Hochstein, "Alignment and Dealignment of the Electorate in France and the United States," Comparative Political Studies 5 (October, 1972).

[74] For example, see Converse, "Public Opinion and Voting Behavior." One of the interesting conclusions of this research is that increased constraint—if it is more than methodological artifact—is tied to factors other than higher educational levels. That is, while other manifestations of ideological thinking may be related to education, issue consistency has risen at all levels of education. See Nie et al., The Changing American Voter; Stephen Earl Bennett, "Consistency Among the Public's Social Welfare Policy Attitudes in the 1960's," American Journal of Political Science 17 (August, 1973); Stephen Earl Bennett and Robert Oldendick, "The Effect of Education on Mass Belief Systems: The Case of Issue Constraint among Domestic Policy Opinions, 1956-1976" (paper presented at the 1978 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., April 20-22, 1978).

The evidence we presented in Table 2 above suggests that education has little to do with the over-time stability of some attitudes, at least over the short term. Cf. Brown, "Consistency and the Persistence of Ideology." On the other hand, some researchers have reported that unidimensional belief structuring is more likely to be found among

the better educated. See James A. Stimson, "Belief Systems: Constraint, Complexity, and the 1972 Election," American Journal of Political Science 19 (August, 1975).

[75]While the conclusions vary from study to study, the theme of multidimensional belief structuring can be seen in Walter Dean Burnham, "American Politics in the 1970s: Beyond Party?" in The American Party Systems: Stages of Political Development, 2d ed., edited by William Nisbet Chambers and Walter Dean Burnham (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975); Weisberg and Rusk, "Dimensions of Candidate Evaluation"; Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg, The Real Majority (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1970); Norval D. Glenn, "Class and Party Support in 1972," Public Opinion Quarterly 39 (Spring, 1975).

An interesting study using the 1948 Elmira sample is Robert J. Williams and Charles R. Wright, "Opinion Organization in a Heterogeneous Adult Population," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology 51 (November, 1955).

[76]A thorough review of the belief systems literature, including the frustrating incompatibility of many commonly used concepts and methodological techniques, is provided by W. Lance Bennett, "The Growth of Knowledge in Mass Belief Studies: An Epistemological Critique," American Journal of Political Science 21 (August, 1977).

[77]See Leon Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957). This is not to say that consistency will be taken as evidence of widespread ideological thinking. There is good reason to suspect that such a conclusion would be premature but, in any event, it is not essential to our argument that we resolve the question. See RePass, "Political Methodologies in Disarray."

[78]Cf. the idea of "leader-induced polarizations" discussed above.

[79]It should be noted that the relationships among issue beliefs and a variety of other attitudinal measures will be examined. It is the sum total of this evidence which I believe will best support any assumptions of issue salience or centrality.

[80]From this point on, unless otherwise specified, our analysis refers solely to form 1 respondents. Among the numerous obstacles which one encounters with the split-form schedule is a seriously restricted set of issue items on form 2. In particular, many of the items available were drawn from the SOCIAL dimension, while other issue dimensions were represented by few unambiguous indicators. Since the results of factor analyses will reflect the type of information which they are asked to process, it was not very surprising to find that the attitude structure of form 2 respondents was very nearly uninterpretable—dominated thoroughly by the "social issue." As a result, the relevance of policy expression for political discontent will be assessed without

reference to these respondents.

[81]Three of the sixteen items originally included in the analysis were eventually dropped because of their ambiguous relationships with the issue dimensions to which they might be attached. These included questions concerning welfare rights, progressive versus proportional taxation, and government action to control inflation.

[82]At the same time, however, our methodology may overlook the existence of well-developed belief structures which do not conform to the dominant pattern. In addition, our standards for including respondents in the analysis are quite rigid, since there are a number of "exit points" at which they may be excluded. The first of these occurs when items from the post-election wave are used, as they are for some of our issue measures and for a number of other variables (including political trust on form 1). Additional respondents will be lost when they indicate that they have not given much thought to any issue in a particular cluster (when this option is available to them). A few of those who are not thereby filtered out will be lost when they are nonetheless unable to place themselves on the 7-point response continuum (Appendix 1), or in any substantive response category for the other variables being analyzed. Finally, we will lose still more respondents when we turn to our measures of policy expression which will be discussed momentarily. These measures ask the respondent to place each major party and each presidential nominee along that same 7-point continuum; missing values for any of these items will cause the respondent to be excluded from at least some of the computations.

The problem of missing data is not a trivial one. Miller's conclusions about higher levels of issue constraint in 1972 have been criticized (by RePass), as have Pomper's descriptions of growing party differentiation among voters (by Margolis), for basing observations upon an unrepresentative subsample of the total population.

Similar objections could be directed at our own analysis, particularly since our strategy surely has enhanced the levels of education and politicization of the groups being analyzed. Still, our claims for what it is that issue constraint actually represents are modest, and we acknowledge that some issue dimensions will be more salient than others to different groups of people. Further, even after using quite stringent criteria for the inclusion of respondents in our issue scales, we are left with a substantial proportion of the electorate. Our research question asks whether, for those people to whom particular sets of issues are salient (an admittedly unrepresentative segment of the population, defined in part by their educational and politicization levels), a perceived absence of policy expression can result in political discontent. While the dynamic argument assumes a growth in issue salience, and thus in issue demands, the evidence with which we might adequately test this proposition is unfortunately ambiguous. While firm conclusions about the dispersion of contemporary discontent must await the resolution of this question, our own analysis hopefully will

establish the existence of a static relationship between policy ex-
pression and discontent. At the same time, our estimates of trends
remain dependent upon a great many questions which the literature has
not yet resolved.

Some of the characteristics of those respondents with missing
issue belief scores were examined (keeping in mind that some of these
respondents have been described when we reviewed the characteristics
of people who could not be re-interviewed). When compared to those
whose answers to these questions were complete, the "missing respon-
dents" on every issue scale were predictably less educated, less in-
terested in politics, more (but not much more) Democratic, and so
forth. With these differences in mind, this group still represented
a rather wide range of scores on demographic and political variables,
while those who were able to answer the issue items completely in-
cluded many whom we would expect to be considerably less attentive to
and informed about politics.

[83]Miller et al., "A Majority Party in Disarray," pp. 766, 776-778.
The SRC analysis has been criticized for failing to note that inability
to place oneself on the liberal-conservative continuum is closely asso-
ciated with lower educational attainment. In this regard, I should
point out that the coefficients involving this variable in Table 4
have rather small N's (from 656 to 711). At least for this group,
however, these issues have some liberal-conservative meaning. More
than that, each issue scale is associated with liberalism-conservatism
(r ranging from .17 for LIFESTYLE to .41 for SOCIAL) for those low-
education respondents for whom a complete set of data is available on
these measures.

[84]Such reasons might include the perceived inability of either
parties or candidates to reflect the kinds of choices which most citi-
zens might prefer, or a distribution of opinion on LIFESTYLE issues
which cuts across traditional partisan and ideological divisions. It
is interesting to note the modest negative partial correlations between
LIFESTYLE and both intended vote and partisanship: other things being
equal, "liberals" on these issues were a bit more likely to be Republi-
cans and to favor Nixon—possibly reflecting the higher education of
these respondents. Cultural liberalism is associated with education
at .35.

[85]One of the more interesting aspects of Table 6 is the extent to
which LIFESTYLE issues are associated with liberal-conservative identi-
fication—yet are quite weakly related to other variables—among
independents. This may be one area where "policy expression" is
simply not perceived as being available through partisan channels.
Alternatively (and keeping in mind that preferences on this dimension
often cut across opinion distributions in other areas), it may be simply
that other issues were more salient to the particular choices avail-
able in 1972.

A set of figures not presented in Table 6 reinforces our general

argument. Among Democrats, each issue scale is related to evaluations
of the Republican party (as measured by the feeling thermometer, r
ranging from .22 to .30). Among Republicans, all except LIFESTYLE
are at least modestly related to evaluations of the Democratic party
(r ranging from -.14 to -.17). Apparently, issues do have a diffi-
cult time breaking through the partisan screen to shape one's general
evaluations of one's own party. But evaluations of the other party
(as well as one's vote) are apparently more susceptible—and this
despite the relative lack of differentiation which respondents exhibit
on these particular variables (see Table 3).

[86]Once again, I must emphasize that this does not prove that
either "ideology" or issue voting is widespread among the mass public,
or even that it is more widespread than it used to be. Instead, we
simply are looking at that group for whom issues appear to be most
salient. Whether this group was larger in 1972 than previously cannot
be ascertained from these data.

[87]Of course, this could be because there are a number of extreme
liberals and conservatives in this group, whose scores tend to cancel
out and present a picture of moderation. There appears to be at least
some truth to this: the standard deviation of each issue scale is
higher among independents than among Republicans, although smaller
than we find among Democrats (except for LIFESTYLE).

[88]For similar comparisons, see Miller et al., "A Majority Party
in Disarray"; Arthur H. Miller and Warren E. Miller, "Issues, Candi-
dates and Partisan Divisions in the 1972 American Presidential
Election," British Journal of Political Science 5 (October, 1975).
   One qualifying note must be added. Some issue items do not
follow the standard 7-point format. These were recoded so as to
make the response categories equivalent for all measures. In the
process, however, we may have overstated the absolute level of polari-
zation in the electorate (especially on dichotomous items).

[89]The number of McGovern Republicans with issue scores is less
than ten for each of the dimensions described in Table 7.

[90]Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government:
1964-1970," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974).

[91]Cf. Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, pp. 284-286.

[92]For proximity, there will be a single issue from the WAR dimen-
sion (Vietnam), 3 from SOCIAL (busing, rights of accused persons, minor-
ity aid), and 2 from LIFESTYLE (marijuana, women's rights); both issues
from the ECONOMICS scale permit the computation of policy expression.
   I should remind the reader that our analysis will be confounded
by problems of missing data. Each proximity score requires data for
both items being compared on all issues in a given dimension. Thus,

respondents may disappear from our analysis, not only because they have
not thought much about a particular issue, but also because they are
unable to place a candidate or a party along the continuum. It is
possible that this latter group will include many citizens for whom
an issue is salient—yet who also believe that party or candidate
positions are so ambiguous as to prevent their being described in
this way. As a result, we may be omitting from our analysis some
citizens who do perceive a lack of policy expression and who trans-
late this into feelings of discontent, but whose grievances are
not adequately tapped by our measuring instruments.

[93]There is a fairly steady positive relationship between party
and candidate differentiation, as measured by the feeling thermometer,
and party and candidate differentiation on each of the four policy
dimensions. The correlations range from .10 to .42.

[94]As we also found with the thermometer ratings, there is a
tendency for those who perceive less distance between the parties and
candidates to also be more likely to vote for Nixon, to be Republican
identifiers, and to be more conservative by self-designation. How-
ever, these coefficients tend to be very small, and often insignifi-
cant, so we should not be drawn to the unalterable conclusion that
liberals and Democrats are most likely to differentiate between
parties and candidates—thereby explaining the slightly higher po-
litical cynicism of this group. The tendency is there, but it is
weak.

[95]An interesting corollary to this point is found in the some-
what larger number of respondents who were unwilling or unable to
place one or both parties along the 7-point continuum. In most in-
stances, the N for our candidate proximity measures exceeds that for
the party proximity measure on the corresponding issue dimension. In
addition, the greater visibility of the president is indicated by
higher N's for "proximity-to-Nixon" measures.

[96]Note that Nixon Republicans make the same distinction, though
less dramatically.

[97]The Nixon Democrats provide some exceptions to this pattern,
but only in their perception of the Democratic party; their mean place-
ment of McGovern is to the left of McGovern Democrats for every issue
except women's rights.

[98]Jack Citrin, "Comment: The Political Relevance of Trust in
Government," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974),
p. 986.

[99]Ibid., p. 987.

[100]The idea that candidate evaluations are themselves a product, at least in part, of policy concerns is supported by several studies. For example, see Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, Ch. 9; Weisberg and Rusk, "Dimensions of Candidate Evaluation"; David E. RePass, "Levels of Rationality Among the American Electorate" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974).

[101]In addition, the relationships that did exist were of the opposite sign: closeness to the Democrats and McGovern was associated with higher cynicism.

[102]Citrin, "Comment," p. 985.

[103]Arthur H. Miller, "Rejoinder to 'Comment' by Jack Citrin: Political Discontent or Ritualism," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974), p. 998. Miller also notes that the partisan focus of policy dissatisfaction can change over time, as it had by 1972 when Vietnam was perceived to be Nixon's war.

[104]See p. 206 above.

[105]The mean scores are as follows, with higher scores reflecting cynicism: McGovern Democrats (19.4, N=245), Nixon Democrats (17.3, N=186), Independents (17.9, N=132), Republicans (16.7, N=425).

[106]The same pattern is evident for our four issue position scales.

[107]An interesting exception occurs among Republicans, where close proximity to both the Democrats and to McGovern is moderately associated with higher trust. Even more interesting is the tendency of Republicans—even more than either Democratic faction—to define their liberalism-conservatism identification with respect to the Democratic party and its nominee (closer proximity corresponding with higher "liberalism").

[108]Miller, "Rejoinder," p. 999. Miller's methodology differed from that described here, particularly in his consideration of changes in both policy dissatisfaction and political trust from 1970 to 1972. In addition, he used individual issue and expression items—including some which were available only on form 2 and are not discussed above—which produced a larger N, and which may account for some of the differences in our results.

[109]One surprise that is provided by these data is the relative insignificance of the SOCIAL dimension for vote choice in 1972. Cst. Miller et al., "A Majority Party in Disarray."

[110]For example, see Nie with Andersen, "Mass Belief Systems Revisited." Nie's measure, however, was one of campaign interest, while ours refers

to more general interest in "government and public affairs."

[111]We might consider the possibility that there are qualitative differences in participatory demands across these groups. The politicized and the educated may expect the system to provide specific channels which these citizens could personally use in attempting to influence public policy, while the rest of the population may have more diffuse perceptions about the kinds of things which "responsiveness" entails.

[112]Miller, "Rejoinder." The reader will recall that the two measures are associated at .31 for form 2 respondents.

[113]There is one major exception to this usual relationship which we expect to find between partisanship and political discontent. During realigning periods, when both parties and citizens are polarized by a dominant set of political issues, cynicism may be overwhelmingly located among supporters of the minority party. Even here, however, the party-trust relationship should be reduced when ideological orientations or policy preferences are controlled.

[114]The same point has been made regarding this measure as a predictor of vote choice. See John D. Holm and John P. Robinson, "Ideological Identification and the American Voter," Public Opinion Quarterly 42 (Summer, 1978).
    Each variable added to the equation will, of course, reduce our N as additional respondents are lost because of missing values. Dropping the liberalism-conservatism variable, as well as the McGovern thermometer rating, does increase our N—but only slightly, while leaving our results largely unaffected. Thus, the discussion of Table 13 includes these measures.

[115]See note 100.

[116]For the analysis using pairwise deletion of missing data, the sign was reversed for Vietnam among Nixon Democrats. But the magnitude of the coefficient was again too small to sustain any significant generalization.

[117]For both regression analyses, proximity to Nixon was associated with higher cynicism among Republicans. The spending decisions of Congress during the Nixon administration (and some misperceptions about how strongly Nixon resisted the impulse to spend) may have contributed to this phenomenon.
    Republicans were the only group for whom liberal-conservative identification had much of an impact on trust—with conservatives being the most cynical! Since our measures of policy expression have probably accounted for the tendency of liberals to be more cynical, what we may have here is the effect of that fairly small group of "cynics of the extreme right" who—like Nixon Democrats—simply don't

regard their party's policy directions as satisfactory. The issues upon which this relationship is based apparently have not been captured by our measures of policy expression.

[118]The independents are the group for which we find the greatest differences, depending on our strategy for dealing with missing data. When pairwise deletion is used, ECONOMICS and Vietnam retain a substantial impact on trust. On the other hand, LIFESTYLE issues have only a modest impact, while the direction of the relationship actually changes for SOCIAL issues. Finally, evaluations of Nixon approach insignificance for the larger sample of independents.

[119]The R^2 ranges from .13 for Republicans to .33 for independents.

[120]Miller, "Rejoinder," p. 999. The analysis presented here differs from Miller's on a number of particulars, including (a) the use of policy dimensions rather than individual issues, which necessitated (b) an exclusive focus on form 1 respondents; (c) the use of perceived proximity to Nixon, rather than to the Republican party; (d) the presence of external efficacy as an explanatory variable; and (e) the absence of an item measuring satisfaction with the government's economic policy performance. The last two points are discussed in the text. Miller does not report the sample size for his analysis.

[121]We might recall that the efficacy-trust relationship is nonetheless moderate for form 1 respondents, apparently owing to the different points in time at which the two variables were measured.

[122]In addition to the variables discussed in this section, our analysis also considered the possibility that social group memberships could enhance our understanding of political trust. But the results reaffirm our earlier contentions that social group differences in trust are minimal. Such variables as education, race, and social class added little variance that had not been accounted for by attitudinal variables.

[123]Such changes were especially prominent among the better educated, suggesting that the weak relationship reported earlier in this chapter may have been eroded even further by political events.

[124]Arthur H. Miller, "Change in Political Trust: Discontent with Authorities and Economic Policies, 1972-1973" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974).

[125]Ibid., p. 30.

[126]See Table 8 for the range of scores that define these categories. Unlike the correlations reported above, these figures give us some

estimate of attitudinal consistency at the <u>individual</u> level. Cf. RePass, "Political Methodologies in Disarray."

[127]As Broder suggests, very few problems have moved off our national agenda in recent years, while a large number of issues have moved onto the agenda. See David S. Broder, <u>The Party's Over</u> (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), Ch. 1. Nie and his associates trace the emergence of new issues, using Gallup data, in <u>The Changing American Voter</u>, Ch. 6. A more recent review, which emphasizes the importance of economic issues in recent years, is provided in <u>Public Opinion</u> (May/June, 1978), pp. 30-32. On the greater salience of economic issues in the 1976 election, see Arthur H. Miller and Warren E. Miller, "Partisanship and Performance: 'Rational' Choice in the 1976 Presidential Election" (paper presented at the 1977 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D. C., Sept. 1-4, 1977).

[128]Burnham, "American Politics in the 1970s," p. 340.

[129]Trilling, <u>Party Image and Electoral Behavior</u>, p. 213.

[130]Burnham, "American Politics in the 1970s," pp. 346-347.

[131]"Thus it is that political elites, in a mutually reinforcing process, adapt to what they see to be the dominant behavioral patterns of electoral politics and, in doing so, reinforce those patterns." <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 322. Burnham is describing Nixon's party-independent strategy of the 1972 campaign—particularly his efforts to avoid antagonizing organized labor or the South.

[132]This is illustrated further when we examine the relationships between Democratic and Republican policy expression measures for each policy dimension. The correlations are those between proximity measures for the two parties on (a) Vietnam (r=n.s.), (b) LIFESTYLE (r=.48), (c) ECONOMICS (r=n.s.), and (d) SOCIAL (r=n.s.). In other words, there is no tendency for respondents who place themselves closer to one party on an issue to also see the other party as more distant; for LIFESTYLE issues, there is actually a tendency for people to perceive each party as either distant or proximal. Once again, citizens are able to make greater distinctions between the candidates (i.e., the correlations are modest and negative in direction, except for LIFESTYLE where the relationship is a weak positive one).

[133]Burnham, "American Politics in the 1970s," p. 316.

[134]Richard E. Dawson, <u>Public Opinion and Contemporary Disarray</u> (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 155.

[135]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 2.

[136]See, for example, Tables 5 and 7.

Chapter VIII

[1]Karl Mannheim, "The Problem of Generations," in *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1952).

[2]*Ibid.*, p. 290.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. 291.

[4]*Ibid.*, p. 309.

[5]*Ibid.* Mannheim contrasts this with peasant communities, within which the tempo of change is so gradual that little generational differentiation occurs. He also notes, however, that when the tempo of change is too great, the realization of a generation's potential may similarly be inhibited. Along these lines, Broder cites an editorial printed in *Time* magazine prior to Nixon's inaugural: "So swift is the pace of modern change that in terms of common experience, America has a new generation every five years." See David S. Broder, *The Party's Over* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 263.

[6]"Natural factors, including the succession of generations, provide the basic range of potentialities for the historical and social process. But precisely because they are constant and therefore present in any situation, the particular features of a given process of modification cannot be explained by reference to them." Mannheim, "The Problem of Generations," p. 312. One might compare this with the failure of sociological interpretations to explain the dynamic features of American political life, e.g., variations in voting patterns across elections, or the diffusion of contemporary political discontent.

[7]*Ibid.*, p. 298.

[8]There is, of course, a parallel between this view and the arguments of early socialization theorists, who saw the childhood learning of support for the political system (and many other political attitudes) as providing the foundation for system stability and persistence. What these theorists overlooked, as I have argued, was the importance of the political environment for early political learning.

[9]The phrase is taken from William R. Klecka, "Applying Political Generations to the Study of Political Behavior: A Cohort Analysis," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 35 (Fall, 1971).

[10]Cf. Russell J. Dalton, "Was There A Revolution? A Note on Generational Versus Life Cycle Explanations of Value Differences," *Comparative Political Studies* 9 (January, 1977).

[11]It is similarly difficult to determine how long a generation "lasts"; Mannheim suggests about thirty years. It seems that, among

other things, we should recognize that the character and pace of events will have much to say about how long any generation will be—and that the answer may vary over time. Klecka has correctly criticized cohort analyses which artificially impose equal time intervals upon their data (usually four years, to conform with the period between presidential elections). Our own analysis will make much broader assumptions, based upon social and political events rather than convenience and symmetry.

See Klecka, "Applying Political Generations"; Bennett M. Berger, "How Long Is A Generation?" British Journal of Sociology 11 (March, 1960); Daniel Elazar, "The Generational Rhythm of American Politics," American Politics Quarterly 6 (January, 1978).

[12]For example, see Matilda White Riley, "Aging and Cohort Succession: Interpretations and Misinterpretations," Public Opinion Quarterly 37 (Spring, 1973); Norman B. Ryder, "The Cohort as a Concept in the Study of Social Change," American Sociological Review 30 (December, 1965); Neal E. Cutler, "Toward a Generational Conception of Political Socialization," in New Directions in Political Socialization, ed. by David C. Schwartz and Sandra Kenyon Schwartz (New York: The Free Press, 1975); Neal E. Cutler, "Political Socialization Research as Generational Analysis: The Cohort Approach Versus the Lineage Approach," in Handbook of Political Socialization, ed. by Stanley Allen Renshon (New York: The Free Press, 1977); M. Kent Jennings, "The Variable Nature of Generational Conflict: Some Examples from West Germany," Comparative Political Studies 9 (July, 1976); Norval D. Glenn, Cohort Analysis (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1977).

[13]Riley notes that even longitudinal data can be ambiguous, since we may forget that all cohorts experience the intermingling of aging processes with social change—and that historical events may be experienced differently by different generations. See Riley, "Aging and Cohort Succession."

[14]See Gerald M. Pomper, Voters' Choice (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1975), p. 95.

[15]Riley, "Aging and Cohort Succession."

[16]Also see Jennings, "The Variable Nature of Generational Conflict"; Cutler, "Toward a Generational Conception"; Neal E. Cutler and Vern L. Bengtson, "Age and Political Alienation: Maturation, Generation and Period Effects," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 415 (September, 1974); M. Kent Jennings and Richard G. Niemi, "Continuity and Change in Political Orientations: A Longitudinal Study of Two Generations," American Political Science Review 69 (December, 1975).

[17]The proportions of the various age strata that are characterized by "high" (some college) education are (a) age 18-24: 40 percent; (b) age 25-34: 39 percent; (c) age 35-49: 37 percent; (d) age 50-60: 18 percent; and (e) age 60-plus: 13 percent. Those respondents over age 34 are distinct from the two youngest cohorts, in that many more of them fall into the "low" (eighth grade or less) education category.

[18]It is possible to view higher education, not simply as a personal characteristic or attainment which might produce compositional differences in our data, but rather as a part of the generational transformation of American political and social life. That is, exposure to higher learning and the college milieu, residential segregation according to age, and delayed entry into the work force are viewed by many as among the most important of the common experiences which separate contemporary youth from their elders. Whichever perspective is the more valid, we will want to know whether observed age differences are the product of educational or other (and unmeasured) differences between the generations.

[19]Philip E. Converse, "Of Time and Partisan Stability," Comparative Political Studies 2 (July, 1969). Also see Angus Campbell et al., The American Voter (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1960), pp. 160-167; David Butler and Donald Stokes, Political Change in Britain, 2d college edition (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), Ch. 3; William N. McPhee and Jack Ferguson, "Political Immunization," in Public Opinion and Congressional Elections, ed. by William N. McPhee and William A. Glaser (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1962); Philip E. Converse, The Dynamics of Party Support (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1976); Gerald B. Finch, "Physical Change and Partisan Change: The Emergence of a New American Electorate, 1952-1972," in The Future of Political Parties, ed. by Louis Maisel and Paul M. Sacks (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975); Norman H. Nie, Sidney Verba, and John R. Petrocik, The Changing American Voter (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), Ch. 4.

[20]For example, Finch suggests that partisan strength will be the most strongly affected over time when citizens experience a high level of politicization and relatively intense electoral involvement. Political immunization may, on the other hand, be inhibited if the citizen's experience is not of sufficient intensity so as to leave a lasting impression upon his partisanship. Butler and Stokes posit that immunization will develop if citizens are able, over time, to accommodate successfully new information within their partisan framework. See Finch, "Physical Change and Partisan Change"; Butler and Stokes, Political Change in Britain, Ch. 3; cf. Paul Allen Beck, "A Socialization Theory of Partisan Realignment," in The Politics of Future Citizens, ed. by Richard G. Niemi (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974).

[21]See James L. Sundquist, Dynamics of the Party System (Washington, D. C.: Brookings, 1973); Everett Carll Ladd, Jr., American Political

Parties (New York: Norton, 1970); Donald E. Stokes, "Spatial Models of Party Competition," in Elections and the Political Order, ed. by Angus Campbell et al. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966); Nie et al., The Changing American Voter; Elazar, "The Generational Rhythm of American Politics"; V. O. Key, Jr., "A Theory of Critical Elections," Journal of Politics 17 (February, 1955); Walter Dean Burnham, Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics (New York: Norton, 1970).

[22]Andersen's analysis of the New Deal realignment reminds us that the youthfulness of these groups represents a tendency rather than an absolute. It is that group of "new voters"—and in the 1920s and 1930s this included many immigrants and their families—which provide a realignment with its momentum. See Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, Ch. 5. Also see Sundquist, Dynamics of the Party System.

[23]The ideas upon which this figure is based are derived principally from Nie et al., The Changing American Voter; Sundquist, Dynamics of the Party System; Beck, "A Socialization Theory of Partisan Realignment"; Ronald Inglehart and Avram Hochstein, "Alignment and Dealignment of the Electorate in France and the United States," Comparative Political Studies 5 (October, 1972).

[24]The term is from Beck, "A Socialization Theory of Partisan Realignment." Beck seems to argue that the "disengagement of young voters" from the established party system tends to be a more or less continuous process, occurring over about three generations. It might be argued that, in the absence of pressures which threaten to disrupt existing coalitions, party loyalties may be passed from parent to child indefinitely, with stability rather than "drift" the likely result. Cf. Converse, "Of Time and Partisan Stability"; Inglehart and Hochstein, "Alignment and Dealignment."

[25]The trends toward nonpartisanship are discussed below. Evidence that the "social class/social welfare" issues and cleavages which long have characterized American political discourse may be dissolving, especially along generational lines, is developed by Paul R. Abramson, "Generational Change in American Electoral Behavior," American Political Science Review 68 (March, 1974); Paul R. Abramson, Generational Change in American Politics (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1975); Ronald Inglehart, The Silent Revolution (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1977); Richard E. Dawson, Public Opinion and Contemporary Disarray (New York: Harper and Row, 1973); Richard J. Trilling, Party Image and Electoral Behavior (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1976); Everett Carll Ladd, Jr. with Charles D. Hadley, Transformations of the American Party System (New York: Norton, 1975); Pomper, Voters' Choice; Norval D. Glenn, "Class and Party Support in the United States: Recent and Emerging Trends," Public Opinion Quarterly 37 (Spring, 1973). Primarily these studies point to a diminishing relationship between

social class variables and both party identification and vote choice.

There is some evidence that class divisions, while declining in importance for most of the country, actually have become more pronounced in the South. See Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, Ch. 13; Finch, "Physical Change and Partisan Change"; Norval D. Glenn, "Class and Party Support in 1972," Public Opinion Quarterly 39 (Spring, 1975). Beck, however, emphasizes that "dealignment" is a national phenomenon, not limited to the North. See Paul Allen Beck, "Partisan Stability and Change in the American South: 1952-1972" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974).

[26]For example, see Beck, "A Socialization Theory of Partisan Realignment"; Inglehart and Hochstein, "Alignment and Dealignment."

[27]See Cutler and Bengtson, "Age and Political Alienation"; James S. House and William M. Mason, "Political Alienation in America, 1952-1968," American Sociological Review 40 (April, 1975). Both of these studies unfortunately examine political efficacy (primarily the external dimension) under the label of "political alienation." While it does appear that the decline in external efficacy represents a period effect, our understanding of the phenomenon is hindered by such terminological atrocities. Also see Donald Searing, Gerald Wright, and George Rabinowitz, "The Primacy Principle: Attitude Change and Political Socialization," British Journal of Political Science 6 (January, 1976).

[28]Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, Ch. 15; Warren E. Miller and Teresa E. Levitin, Leadership and Change (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1976), Ch. 7; Arthur H. Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government: 1964-1970," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974).

[29]See Jennings and Niemi, "Continuity and Change in Political Orientations."

[30]Walter Dean Burnham, "American Politics in the 1970s: Beyond Party?" in The American Party Systems: Stages of Political Development, 2d ed., edited by William Nisbet Chambers and Walter Dean Burnham (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 347.

[31]One recent trend suggests that the relationship between education and political trust, already weak in 1972, may become even weaker —or even reverse its direction—in the future. We have conceptualized political discontent as a function of frustrated expectations and demands. The expectation of intergenrational upward social mobility is a strong one in our society, but it is one that perhaps cannot be sustained indefinitely. As the character of our economy changes, and as large numbers of highly educated citizens increasingly are unable to market their skills and to meet their economic expectations,

a growing disillusionment may develop. And it seems very likely that blame for this situation will be placed on "the government." See Louis M. Seagull, Youth and Change in American Politics (New York: New Viewpoints, 1977), Ch. 3.

[32]These categories are derived, first by identifying age 17 as the approximate point of maximum suggestibility, and then by dividing recent political history into approximate "eras" according to the general tenor of the times. Thus our five age groups are defined by those who reached the age of 17 during the following periods: (a) 1965-1971: the contemporary era; (b) 1955-1964: the "Eisenhower era," which appears to have been marked by relative tranquility and general consensus about political goals; (c) 1940-1954: the "internationalist era," where the most burning issues often were those of war, defense, and national security; (d) 1929-1939: the "Depression era"; and (e) pre-1929. The starting point for the contemporary era was selected for its correspondence with many of the phenomena of interest in this study, including the growth of cynicism and of partisan independence. While the 1964 election seems to have marked the emergence of a more politicized and issue-oriented electorate, many have seen it as a re-affirmation of the goals of the New Deal. Pomper's evidence of greater party clarity in that election centers around traditional issues of this sort. See Gerald M. Pomper, "From Confusion to Clarity: Issues and American Voters, 1956-1968," American Political Science Review 66 (June, 1972); Converse, The Dynamics of Party Support; Broder, The Party's Over.

[33]The youngest age group is the most likely to deny that "voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how the government runs things." This suggests, particularly in light of the age differences evident for extra-system orientation, that the newer forms of political involvement that became prominent during the 1960s made the greatest impression on youth—particularly among the college-educated. Still, differences between the youngest cohort and the rest of the under-50 respondents are not large for this item.

This description of age differences is based upon responses to the form 2 questionnaire, primarily because of the availability of the system support variable for these respondents. The patterns are quite similar for form 1 respondents.

[34]Inglehart, The Silent Revolution. Cf. Daniel Yankelovich, The New Morality: A Profile of American Youth in the 70's (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974).

[35]It is also among the "New Liberals" that we are most likely to find Inglehart's "post-materialists." See Miller and Levitin, Leadership and Change, Ch. 3, 6.

It is very important to recognize that both Inglehart and Miller and Levitin hypothesize more than simply the emergence of a new dimension of political conflict. Both "post-materialism" and "New Politics"

priorities are associated with more liberal attitudes on the issues contained within these dimensions. As a result, the studies are noting a rise in political liberalism—disproportionately, but not exclusively, among the young. It is very difficult to separate these elements, but our own argument makes a very explicit distinction between issue preferences and issue priorities. It is the latter which we expect to correspond to changing demands and expectations regarding "value expression." We do not assume that preferences on new issues must be in a particular direction (although they may be); nor do we assume that any particular set of preferences on these issues will be associated with political discontent (although they may be).

[36]Pomper, Voters' Choice, p. 116. A much more limited study of Columbia University students found the attitudes of students on new issues to be much more crystallized than were their parents' attitudes about these same issues. See Lucy N. Friedman, Alice R. Gold, and Richard Christie, "Dissecting the Generation Gap: Intergenerational and Intrafamilial Similarities and Differences," Public Opinion Quarterly 36 (Fall, 1972). A study at Ohio State, however, found student attitudes to be much more differentiated and hardly indicative of an emergent "ideology." See Philip M. Burgess and C. Richard Hofstetter, "The 'Student Movement': Ideology and Reality," Midwest Journal of Political Science 15 (November, 1971).

[37]Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, p. 151. Nie further notes an apparent decline in the salience of lifestyle issues in the early 1970s; see pp. 134-135. Cf. Arthur H. Miller and Warren E. Miller, "Partisanship and Performance: 'Rational' Choice in the 1976 Presidential Election" (paper presented at the 1977 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D. C., Sept. 1-4, 1977).

Also on generational differences in constraint, see Samuel A. Kirkpatrick, "Aging Effects and Generational Differences in Social Welfare Attitude Constraint in the Mass Public," Western Political Quarterly 29 (March, 1976). Cf. Elizabeth B. Douglass, William P. Cleveland, and George L. Maddox, "Political Attitudes, Age, and Aging: A Cohort Analysis of Archival Data," Journal of Gerontology 29 (November, 1974).

[38]Again, this relationship is weakened considerably when the two attitudes are measured at different points in time, as they were for form 1 respondents.

[39]Kirkpatrick reports that attitudinal constraint for social welfare issues was particularly high among the Depression generation. While our cohorts are defined differently, an examination of the consistency of attitudes across issue dimensions suggests that it is lowest for our two oldest cohorts—including the Depression group. The most obvious tendency is for attitudes on the WAR dimension to be much

more modestly related to other dimensions among older voters. Oddly,
we also find that the correlation between the two items in our
ECONOMICS scale (jobs/standard of living and health insurance) is
lowest for the Depression cohort—and highest for the pre-Depression
cohort.

Kirkpatrick's evidence suggests that citizens who mature during
a period of intense political conflict might remain receptive to cues
from the environment in any era; our data would not support such a
proposition. See Kirkpatrick, "Aging Effects and Generational Dif-
ferences."

[40]The same point is noted by Pomper, Voters' Choice, p. 106.

[41]The figures in Table 16 refer to the entire sample. When only
white respondents are considered, the percentages change somewhat, but
the magnitude of the correlation coefficients (between age and attitude)
and the overall pattern remain unchanged. Nie reports that young
blacks are actually a bit more "conservative" than their elders on a
liberal-conservative dimension (possibly due to greater racial mili-
tancy among the young). See Nie et al., The Changing American Voter,
p. 266. Our methodology would make analysis of racial differences
extremely tenuous, so the focus will be on the total sample, and on
whites in particular.

The greater liberalism of the young is also described by Nie
et al., Ch. 14; Miller and Levitin, Leadership and Change; Pomper,
Voters' Choice, Ch. 5; Abramson, Generational Change in American
Politics, Ch. 5.

[42]At this point, our analysis shifts to an exclusive focus on
white respondents. This approach is recommended by several factors,
including the greater liberalism of blacks regardless of age, the
relative salience which we might expect all black cohorts to afford
to SOCIAL issues, and the rather different racial trends in political
trust since 1964.

[43]Parallel to our own results, Miller and Levitin report that
younger citizens are more likely to integrate a wide variety of issues
into their liberal-conservative identification. See Leadership and
Change, Ch. 7.

[44]Despite the disproportionate nonpartisanship of youth, party
identification is strongly related to vote intention among all age
groups (r ranging between .43 and .60). Even when we hold constant
preferences on all four policy dimensions, partisanship is related to
intended vote in the vicinity of .4 to .5 for all groups. (A note of
caution: both party identification and intended vote are trichotomous
variables, with independent identification and uncertain vote choice.
as the respective middle categories.)

These figures are generally consistent with the idea that, even
though younger voters are less likely to be affiliated with a party,

those who do think of themselves as partisan will tend to vote consistently with that orientation. See Samuel A. Kirkpatrick and William Lyons, "Age-Related Effects and Contending Impacts on the Vote: A Cohort Analysis of U.S. Presidential Elections" (paper presented at the Edinburgh IPSA Congress, International Political Science Association, Aug. 16-21, 1976). Pomper, on the other hand, emphasizes that partisanship was less significant for voting behavior in 1972 among the 18-to-24 cohort. See Voters' Choice, pp. 111-112. Cf. Abramson, Generational Change in American Politics, Ch. 6.

[45]See Pomper, Voters' Choice, pp. 108-110.

[46]For example, see ibid., Ch. 5; Yankelovich, The New Morality; Abramson, Generational Change in American Politics, Ch. 5; Dawson, Public Opinion and Contemporary Disarray, Ch. 5; Inglehart, The Silent Revolution, Ch. 3.

[47]The themes of electoral volatility and "alternating landslides" are emphasized by many scholars; for example, see Ladd with Hadley, Transformations of the American Party System, Ch. 6; Richard W. Boyd, "Electoral Trends in Postwar Politics," in Choosing the President, ed. by James David Barber (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974).

[48]See Paul R. Abramson, "Generational Change and the Decline of Party Identification in America: 1952-1974," American Political Science Review 70 (June, 1976); Converse, The Dynamics of Party Support; Nie et al., The Changing American Voter, Ch. 4.

[49]Joel D. Aberbach and Jack L. Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," American Political Science Review 64 (December, 1970), p. 1199.

[50]Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government," p. 951.

[51]Edward N. Muller and Thomas O. Jukam, "On the Meaning of Political Support," American Political Science Review 71 (December, 1977), p. 1563.

[52]William A. Gamson, "Political Trust and Its Ramifications," in Social Psychology and Political Behavior: Problems and Prospects, ed. by Gilbert Abcarian and John W. Soule (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1971), pp. 41-46. We should recall, however, that high levels of trust can also be a barrier to social change. Gamson clearly sees political cynicism as a source of motivation to political action, not all of which need be contrary to the interests of society. Cf. Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology"; Miller, "Political Issues and Trust in Government."

[53]David Easton and Jack Dennis, Children in the Political System (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), p. 54.

[54]Ibid.

[55]See Richard L. Engstrom, "Race and Compliance: Differential Political Socialization," Polity 3 (Fall, 1970); Harrell R. Rodgers, Jr. and George Taylor, "Pre-Adult Attitudes Toward Legal Compliance: Notes Toward a Theory," Social Science Quarterly 51 (December, 1970); Harrell R. Rodgers, Jr. and Edward B. Lewis, "Political Support and Compliance Attitudes: A Study of Adolescents," American Politics Quarterly 2 (January, 1974).

[56]For example, Engstrom found that benevolent perceptions of the policeman were more likely to motivate whites to comply, while blacks seemed to be more strongly motivated by perceptions of the policeman's power. See "Race and Compliance."

[57]David O. Sears et al., "Political System Support and Public Response to the Energy Crisis," American Journal of Political Science 22 (February, 1978). These authors qualify their conclusions by suggesting that a widespread belief that the energy shortage posed a threat to the stability of the political system might have produced a stronger relationship between support and compliance. In addition, noncompliance in this instance did not involve an active challenge to the regime, but rather a passive decision not to alter one's habits of consumption; in other contexts, where passivity constituted compliance, negative support might be more clearly associated with (active) noncompliance. Finally, we might consider that the absence of an "organized opposition" (by the Democrats or by others) to administration policy may have inhibited citizens from establishing a cognitive link between disaffection and noncompliance. See Sears et al., pp. 76-81.

[58]For a discussion of much of this literature, see Joel D. Aberbach, "Alienation and Political Behavior," American Political Science Review 63 (March, 1969); David C. Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior (Chicago: Aldine, 1973). Cf. James D. Wright, The Dissent of the Governed (New York: Academic Press, 1976), Ch. 9.

[59]See Aberbach, "Alienation and Political Behavior"; Arthur H. Miller and Warren E. Miller, "Issues, Candidates and Partisan Divisions in the 1972 American Presidential Election," British Journal of Political Science 5 (October, 1975). Miller and Miller contend that it was not cynicism itself, but rather the social location, policy dissatisfaction, and partisan loyalties of the cynics which led them to support McGovern in greater proportions.

[60]G. R. Boynton and Gerhard Loewenberg, "Support for Political Institutions: Attitudes and Behavior" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago,

Ill., May 24-26, 1974). Cf. Aberbach, "Alienation and Political Behavior"; Robert S. Gilmour and Robert B. Lamb, Political Alienation in Contemporary America (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), Ch. 6; Alan Marsh, Protest and Political Consciousness (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1977), pp. 17-22; Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior, Ch. 1, 8.

Boynton and Loewenberg specifically note the presence of a Nazi alternative to Weimar Germany in the 1930s, and the absence of such a (plausible) choice in Britain and the United States during the same period. We might consider regional homogeneity and the evolution of the Confederacy as facilitating factors during the Civil War period. Still, one must not assume that disaffected groups will necessarily respond to such alternatives (or that they will respond to them in the same way across groups)—particularly if there does exist a general commitment to prevailing institutions and ideologies such as that suggested by the concept of diffuse support. Cf. Sidney Verba and Kay Lehman Schlozman, "Unemployment, Class Consciousness, and Radical Politics: What Didn't Happen in the Thirties" (paper presented at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Sept. 2-5, 1976).

[61]For example, see Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology"; Jack Citrin et al., "Personal and Political Sources of Political Alienation," British Journal of Political Science 5 (January, 1975); Marsh, Protest and Political Consciousness; Edward N. Muller, "Correlates and Consequences of Beliefs in the Legitimacy of Regime Structures," Midwest Journal of Political Science 14 (August, 1970); Edward N. Muller, "The Representation of Citizens by Political Authorities: Consequences for Regime Support," American Political Science Review 64 (December, 1970); Edward N. Muller, "A Test of a Partial Theory of Potential for Political Violence," American Political Science Review 66 (September, 1972).

[62]Aberbach and Walker explain that the trust-protest relationship will be shaped by situational factors such as those noted above.

> Distrust of the government creates a tension in the polity which can build for some time, but ultimately seeks release. . . . The mode of expression depends on the depth of the discontent, traditions of violence in the society, loyal coercive forces available to the government, and the availability of free electoral processes. . . .

See Aberbach and Walker, "Political Trust and Racial Ideology," p. 1213. To these influences we might add citizen beliefs about the likelihood that aggressive political action will be (or has been in the past) successful. See Edward N. Muller, "Behavioral Correlates of Political Support," American Political Science Review 71 (June, 1977); Marsh, Protest and Political Consciousness.

[63]William A. Gamson, Power and Discontent (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1968), p. 48.

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[64]The hypothesis was supported with regard to riot behavior by Jeffery M. Paige, "Political Orientation and Riot Participation," American Sociological Review 36 (October, 1971). Paige, however, did not employ a true measure of political efficacy in his study on the grounds that it surely would be related to political trust (and thus would tap not only the respondent's proclivity to act or the level of his political skills, but also his beliefs about the likelihood of success).

The Gamson-Paige hypothesis was either rejected or substantially qualified by John Fraser, "The Mistrustful-Efficacious Hypothesis and Political Participation," Journal of Politics 32 (May, 1970); Brett W. Hawkins, Vincent L. Marando, and George A. Taylor, "Efficacy, Mistrust, and Political Participation: Findings From Additional Data and Indicators," Journal of Politics 33 (November, 1971); Meredith W. Watts, "Efficacy, Trust, and Orientation Toward Socio-Political Authority: Students' Support for the University," American Journal of Political Science 17 (May, 1973); Stephen C. Craig with Gordon G. Henderson, "Efficacy, Trust and Political Participation," unpublished manuscript (Texas Tech University, 1973). These studies include "mobilization" measured as both traditional and unconventional forms of political participation.

[65]Ada W. Finifter, "Dimensions of Political Alienation," American Political Science Review 64 (June, 1970); cf. Gamson, "Political Trust and Its Ramifications"; Muller, "Behavioral Correlates of Political Support"; Richard D. Shingles, "Internal and External Control as Two Separate Dimensions of Political Efficacy: A Reformulation and Bi-Racial Comparison" (paper presented at the 1978 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., April 20-23, 1978). The idea that political behavior is not dichotomous—traditional/conformative versus nontraditional/challenging—is further emphasized by Schwartz's model of political alienation. See Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior.

Finifter provides a necessary perspective to our examination of political protest by arguing that "protest can act as a catalyst for needed social change. . . ." This point is noted by Miller and by Aberbach and Walker, among others, whose warnings refer to the protest which is encouraged by persistent and intense discontent. This condition usually is thought to be accompanied by low efficacy, with the behavioral outcomes more likely to involve either complete withdrawal or regime-challenging acts. In the more limited case, however, Finifter suggests that we regard protest as "orthofunctional," rather than "dysfunctional," since it refers to "systemic stresses that, while initially disruptive, generate increasing system integration by the modification of conditions that violate widely-shared norms or otherwise inhibit intra-system cohesion." Finifter, p. 407.

[66]Miller and Miller, "Issues, Candidates and Partisan Divisions." It is a common theme in the literature on political alienation that the alienated are likely to withdraw from political involvement, to be

ill-informed and apathetic. To the extent that such "alienation" in-
cludes feelings of inefficacy, the observation is probably true. But
political cynicism itself does not appear to be very closely related
to political apathy. For example, see Jack Citrin, "Comment: The
Political Relevance of Trust in Government," American Political Science
Review 68 (September, 1974), pp. 982-984; Wright, The Dissent of the
Governed, Ch. 9.

[67]Philip E. Converse, "Change in the American Electorate," in
The Human Meaning of Social Change, ed. by Angus Campbell and Philip
E. Converse (New York: Russell Sage, 1972), pp. 335-336.

[68]Martin D. Abravanel and Ronald J. Busch, "Political Competence,
Political Trust, and the Action Orientations of University Students,"
Journal of Politics 37 (February, 1975), pp. 74-77.

[69]Even political efficacy may not be a necessary condition for
involvement. Shingles cites a number of motivating factors—parti-
sanship, civic duty, political interest, and ideology—which might
operate to encourage participation. His model suggests that the mode
of participation (especially "allegiant" versus "control" orientations)
will vary according to the presence or absence of motivating forces
other than efficacy and trust. Shingles, "Internal and External Control."

Similarly, Muller hypothesizes that some measure of political
efficacy is necessary for any type of political involvement, except
for those individuals who believe that aggressive political behavior
has been helpful to other groups in society. Muller, "Behavioral Cor-
relates of Political Support."

[70]Low external efficacy also may dampen the motivation to par-
ticipate by bringing citizens to believe that, whatever their skills
and abilities, the government simply will not be responsive to influ-
ence attempts. See Kenneth M. Coleman and Charles L. Davis, "The
Structural Context of Politics and Dimensions of Regime Performance:
Their Importance for the Comparative Study of Political Efficacy,"
Comparative Political Studies 9 (July, 1976). On the other hand, ex-
ternal efficacy may parallel political cynicism by providing a moti-
vation to participate in protest activities. See Charles L. Davis and
Kenneth M. Coleman, "The Regime Legitimating Function of External Po-
litical Efficacy in an Authoritarian Regime: The Case of Mexico"
(paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political
Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974).

[71]"Having distributed an unequal share of political power and
material rewards to approximately the same persons, the system thus
guards admirably against potential insurgency among those best able
to carry it out." Wright, The Dissent of the Governed, p. 141.

[72]Also see David Easton, "An Approach to the Analysis of Political
Systems," World Politics 9 (April, 1957), p. 394; Robert A. Dahl,

Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), p. 131; Ted Robert Gurr and Muriel McClelland, Political Performance: A Twelve-Nation Study, Sage Professional Paper, Comparative Politics Series, Series No. 01-018 (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1971), p. 30.

[73]Wright, The Dissent of the Governed, Ch. 7. For Wright, the greater challenge to the regime occurs whenever cynicism grows (as it has) within this group, since its members do have the resources with which to mount an effective challenge. But since they also have the most to lose with any substantial change in current arrangements, they are unlikely to support a serious challenge to the regime. See Wright, Ch. 6.

[74]Marsh reports that higher levels of conceptualization are associated with greater protest potential in Britain. See Protest and Political Consciousness, p. 113.

[75]Sidney Verba, "Political Participation and Strategies of Influence: A Comparative Study," in Readings in Citizen Politics, ed. by James David Barber (Chicago: Markham, 1969), p. 3. Cf. Gamson, Power and Discontent, Ch. 4, 8.

[76]Inglehart, The Silent Revolution, p. 3. Emphasis of the two modes of participation is mine.

[77]See Chapter VII.

[78]The situational influences on the student protest of the 1960s have been noted by Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System.

[79]For example, see Marsh, Protest and Political Consciousness; Converse, "Change in the American Electorate"; Stanley Allen Renshon, "Personality, Political Motivation and Political Violence: Some Generational Dynamics and Attitudinal Correlates" (paper presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., Aug. 29-Sept. 2, 1974). It has been reported that generational differences among blacks are evident in the approval of violence. See David O. Sears and John B. McConahay, The Politics of Violence (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1973).

[80]For example, see Citrin, "Comment"; Citrin et al., "Personal and Political Sources of Political Alienation"; Marsh, Protest and Political Consciousness.

[81]See Appendix 1 for these items. We cannot assume that favorable attitudes toward civil disobedience are isomorphic with either past or future participation in these or similar activities. See Chapter II. Apart from the likelihood that there is a significant (if imperfect) relationship between attitude and behavior in this instance, there is

another sense in which attitudinal support for unconventional tactics might have systemic relevance. Marsh argues that community norms represent a sort of "parameter of license," and that they "play an important role in regulating the behavior of active partisans in the political arena." These parameters "are the boundaries between endorsement and censure that are extended by the general population to protest campaigners . . . that place popular constraints upon the extent of their use of protest methods." Marsh, Protest and Political Consciousness, pp. 18-22.

In 1972, these parameters were not particularly broad in the United States. Only 19 percent of our sample approved of legal protest meetings or marches, with even fewer respondents endorsing civil disobedience (17 percent) or disruptive activities (8 percent). There was considerable change from the 1968 figures, however, in that many more Americans had come to express qualified approval ("it depends on the circumstances") of these tactics. By 1972, between 41 and 60 percent of the electorate had come to express at least tentative approval of these three modes of protest. The figures for 1974 were very similar to those for 1972.

[82]Citrin, "Comment," pp. 978-982. Cf. George I. Balch, "Political Trust and Styles of Political Involvement Among American College Students" (paper presented at the 1971 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, Ill., April 29-May 1, 1971).

[83]Arthur H. Miller, "Rejoinder to 'Comment' by Jack Citrin: Political Discontent or Ritualism," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974), p. 995.

[84]Ibid., pp. 995-996.

[85]The same is true for those with a higher level of political interest. Extra-system orientation is higher for both the educated and the politically interested.

[86]The age-EXTRA relationship is most ambiguous among the least educated group, partly because of the very few respondents under age 35 (N=26) who fall into this category. Thus, small cell size may contribute to the more erratic pattern in this instance. And among our two oldest cohorts, the relationship between education and EXTRA is near zero.

[87]Among respondents who disagreed on "voting only way," 19 percent of the trustful scored high on EXTRA, compared with 29 percent of the cynical. For those who did not think that politics is "too complex," 20 percent of the trustful had high EXTRA scores, compared with 29 percent of the cynical. The moderately trustful group more closely resembled the trustful in each instance.

[88]Pomper, Voters' Choice, p. 102. A similar point is made by

Abravanel and Busch, who look to the college campus to find the
greatest incidence of this attitudinal configuration--and, with it,
some support for the Gamson-Paige hypothesis. Abravanel and Busch,
"Political Competence."

[89]For those low in system support (N=381), 10 percent of the
trustful score high on EXTRA, compared with 20 percent of the cyn-
ical. The zero-order correlation between system support and EXTRA
is also modest (r=-.11).

[90]On the likelihood that protest participants also are active in
more conventional modes, see Muller, "Behavioral Correlates of Politi-
cal Support"; Marsh, Protest and Political Consciousness, Ch. 3.

[91]For presidential vote-switching, r=.34, gamma=.53; for state and
local ticket-splitting, r=.26, gamma=.41. Strong partisans also are
more likely to have a strong sense of "civic duty" regarding their ob-
ligations as citizens to participate in elections. Trust also is re-
lated to civic duty, with cynics tending to feel less of an obligation
to vote. Neither of these relationships is pronounced, however.

[92]And we should recall that there is no direct linear relation-
ship between political trust and strength of partisan affiliation.

[93]Citrin makes a similar point, arguing that "oppositionist" ac-
tivity will usually be directed toward those individuals or institu-
tions who are perceived as being responsible for an unsatisfactory
situation. Citrin, "Comment," pp. 979-980.

[94]A stepwise multiple regression (with listwise deletion for
missing data) was performed with EXTRA as the dependent variable. The
independent variables in order of their inclusion into the equation,
and the respective standardized betas, are the following: liberal-
conservative identification (.26), age cohort (.20), education (.15),
race (.13), post-materialist value priorities (.12), political trust
(-.11), and "politics complex" (.06). The R^2 was .27 (N=732).
This analysis was not intended to be thorough, but rather to
get a general feel for the relative importance of some of the variables
discussed above. In particular, we should recall that some of these
variables--including political trust--probably will have a conditional
or an interactive effect on protest which is not captured by a linear
regression equation of this sort. Cf. Marsh, Protest and Political
Consciousness.

Chapter IX

[1]This discussion is based upon a large number of the essays and
studies which have been cited throughout this report. For a good

overview of many of these changes, see Samuel P. Huntington, "The Democratic Distemper," in The American Commonwealth, 1976, ed. by Nathan Glazer and Irving Kristol (New York: Basic Books, 1976); Richard W. Boyd, "Electoral Trends in Postwar Politics," in Choosing the President, ed. by James David Barber (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974).

[2]Richard E. Dawson, Public Opinion and Contemporary Disarray (New York: Harper and Row, 1973).

[3]Everett Carll Ladd, Jr. with Charles D. Hadley, Transformations of the American Party System (New York: Norton, 1975), p. 333.

[4]See Walter Dean Burnham, Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics (New York: Norton, 1970); Paul Allen Beck, "A Socialization Theory of Partisan Realignment," in The Politics of Future Citizens, ed. by Richard G. Niemi (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974).

[5]Public Opinion (May/June, 1978), pp. 30-32. Also see Arthur H. Miller and Warren E. Miller, "Partisanship and Performance: 'Rational' Choice in the 1976 Presidential Election" (paper presented at the 1977 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D. C., Sept. 1-4, 1977).

[6]Jack Citrin, "Comment: The Political Relevance of Trust in Government," American Political Science Review 68 (September, 1974), p. 987.

[7]Philip E. Converse, "Public Opinion and Voting Behavior," in Handbook of Political Science, Vol. 4, Nongovernmental Politics, ed. by Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975). Also see Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie, Participation in America (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), Ch. 7.

[8]Warren E. Miller and Teresa E. Levitin, Leadership and Change (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1976), p. 47. Cf. Converse, "Public Opinion and Voting Behavior," pp. 87, 128.

[9]I refer here to something rather different than the idea discussed by Gamson and others, that political discontent inhibits the decisional flexibility of elites. In sufficient quantity and intensity, this may occur. But my argument is directed more specifically to the policy origins of discontent—the nature and scope of citizen political demands.

[10]William A. Gamson, Power and Discontent (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1968), p. 52.

[11] The phrase is from Huntington, "The Democratic Distemper." This phenomenon can be seen not only among the better educated, but also among groups whose self-consciousness has been activated (e.g., blacks, women) and who are demanding that they be permitted to play a larger role in the policymaking process.

[12] Public Opinion (May/June, 1978), p. 23; Peter K. Eisinger et al., American Politics: The People and the Polity (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1978), p. 15.

[13] Miller and Miller, "Partisanship and Performance."

[14] Warren E. Miller, "The Challenges of Electoral Research," American Politics Quarterly 3 (July, 1975), pp. 134-135.

[15] Arthur H. Miller and Warren E. Miller, "Ideology in the 1972 Election: Myth or Reality--A Rejoinder," American Political Science Review 70 (September, 1976), p. 832.

APPENDIX 1

MAJOR QUESTIONS AND INDICES

Political Trust/Cynicism

1. Do you think that people in the government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?
2. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?
3. Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?
4. Do you feel that almost all of the people running the government are smart people who usually know what they are doing, or do you think that quite a few of them don't seem to know what they are doing?
5. Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are a little crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked at all?

External Efficacy ("Disagree" responses are coded as "efficacious.")

1. People like me don't have any say about what the government does.
2. I don't think public officials care much what people like me think.
3. Generally speaking, those we elect to Congress in Washington lose touch with the people pretty quickly.
5. Parties are only interested in people's votes but not in their opinions.

"Internal" Efficacy ("Disagree" responses are coded as "efficacious.")

1. Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how the government runs things.
2. Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.

Government Attention to the People/Responsiveness

1. Over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what the people think when it decides what to do—a good deal, some, or not much?

2. How much do you feel that political parties help to make the government pay attention to what the people think--a good deal, some, or not much?
3. And how much do you feel that having elections makes the government pay attention to what the people think--a good deal, some, or not much?
4. How much attention do you think most congressmen pay to the people who elect them when they decide what to do in Congress--a good deal, some, or not much?

System Support

1. Some people believe a change in our whole form of government is needed to solve the problems facing our country, while others feel no real change is necessary. Do you think a big change is needed in our form of government, or should it be kept pretty much as it is?
2. I'm going to read you a pair of statements about our form of government, and I'd like you to tell me which one you agree with more. Would you say "I am proud of many things about our form of government," or "I can't find much in our form of government to be proud of?"

Personal Effectiveness

1. Do you think it's better to plan your life a good way ahead, or would you say life is too much a matter of luck to plan ahead very far?
2. When you do make plans ahead, do you usually get to carry out things the way you expected, or do things usually come up to make you change your plans?
3. Have you usually felt pretty sure your life would work out the way you want it to, or have there been times when you haven't been sure about it?
4. Some people feel they can run their lives pretty much the way they want to; others feel the problems of life are sometimes too big for them. Which one are you most like?

Personal Trust

1. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?
2. Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful, or that they are mostly just looking out for themselves?
3. Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance, or would they try to be fair?

Extra-System Orientation

There are many possible ways for people to show their disapproval or disagreement with governmental policies and actions. I am going to describe three such ways. We would like to know which ones you approve of as ways of showing dissatisfaction with the government, and which ones you disapprove of.

1. How about taking part in protest meetings or marches that are permitted by the local authorities? Would you approve of taking part, disapprove, or would it depend on the circumstances?
2. How about refusing to obey a law which one thinks is unjust, if the person feels so strongly about it that he is willing to go to jail rather than obey the law? Would you approve of a person doing that, disapprove, or would it depend on the circumstances?
3. Suppose all other methods have failed and the person decides to try to stop the government from going about its usual activities with sit-ins, mass meetings, demonstrations, and things like that? Would you approve of that, disapprove, or would it depend on the circumstances?

National Priorities (Inglehart)

For a nation, it is not always possible to obtain everything one might wish. On this card, several different goals are listed. If you had to choose among them which one seems most desirable to you?

1. Maintaining order in the nation
2. Giving the people more say in important political decisions
3. Fighting rising prices
4. Protecting freedom of speech

Which one would be your second choice (as a national goal)?

Issue Beliefs

WAR

*1. With regard to Vietnam, some people think we should do everything necessary to win a complete military victory, no matter what results. Some people think we should withdraw completely from Vietnam right now, no matter what results. And, of course, other people have opinions somewhere between these two extreme positions. Suppose the people who support an immediate withdrawal are at one end of this scale—at point number 1. And suppose the people who support a complete military victory are at the other end of the scale—at point number 7. Where would you place yourself on this scale or haven't you thought much about this?

2. Some people feel that after the Vietnam war is over, the government should declare an amnesty—that is, men who left the country to avoid the draft should be allowed to return without severe punishment. How do you feel—do you think the government should declare an amnesty after the war?

3. Some people believe that our armed forces are already powerful enough and that we should spend less money for defense. Others feel that military spending should at least continue at the present level. How do you feel—should military spending be cut, or should it continue at least at the present level?

ECONOMICS

*1. 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. And, of course, other people have opinions somewhere in between. . . . Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

*2. There is much concern about the rapid rise in medical and hospital costs. Some feel there should be a government insurance plan which would cover all medical and hospital expenses. Others feel that medical expenses should be paid by individuals, and through private insurance like Blue Cross. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

SOCIAL ISSUE

1. Some say that the civil rights people have been trying to push too fast. Others feel they haven't pushed fast enough. How about you: do you think that civil rights leaders are trying to push too fast, are going too slowly, or are they moving about the right speed?

2. Are you in favor of desegregation, strict segregation, or something in between?

*3. There is much discussion about the best way to deal with racial problems. Some people think achieving racial integration of schools is so important that it justifies busing children to schools out of their own neighborhoods. Others think letting children go to their neighborhood schools is so important that they oppose busing. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

*4. Some people are primarily concerned with doing everything possible to protect the legal rights of those accused of committing crimes. Others feel that it is more important to stop criminal activity even at the risk of reducing the rights of the accused. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

*5. Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every possible effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks and other minority groups. Others feel that the government

should not make any special effort to help minorities because they should help themselves. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

LIFESTYLE

*1. Some people think that the use of marijuana should be made legal. Others think that the penalties for using marijuana should be set higher than they are now. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

*2. Recently there has been a lot of talk about women's rights. Some people feel that women should have an equal role with men in running business, industry, and government. Others feel that women's place is in the home. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

3. Still on the subject of women's rights, there has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. Which one of the opinions on this card best agrees with your view? (a) Abortion should never be permitted. (b) Abortion should be permitted only if the life and health of the woman is in danger. (c) Abortion should be permitted if, due to personal reasons, the woman would have difficulty in caring for the child. (d) Abortion should never be forbidden, since one should not require a woman to have a child she doesn't want.

NOTE: Items indicated by an asterisk (*) ask respondents to place themselves on a 7-point continuum between the two alternatives described in the question. Each includes a filter, which permits respondents to indicate that they do not have an opinion on that particular issue. These are the items which were used to compute the "proximity" or "policy expression" measures described in the text. Those respondents who were able to place themselves on a continuum were asked to place a number of other individuals and groups on that same continuum, including "Richard Nixon," "George McGovern," "Democratic party," and "Republican party."

Liberalism-Conservatism

We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I'm going to show you 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 yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

Party Identification

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?

(If party named) Would you call yourself a strong _____ or a not very strong _____?

(If no party named) Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or to the Democratic party?

INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG COMPONENT ITEMS OF POLITICAL
TRUST AND POLITICAL EFFICACY SCALES

Political Trust/Cynicism. See Appendix 1 for full text of items. The following coefficients (r) are based upon responses to variables 89-93 (form 2 only, pre-election wave, N=1333); coefficients are computed using pairwise deletion for missing data.

	trust	benefit	smart	crooked
"waste money"	.31	.32	.18	.25
"trust to do right"	--	.46	.26	.36
"run for benefit of people"	--	--	.20	.41
"public officials smart"	--	--	--	.23
"public officials crooked"	--	--	--	--

NOTE: For "trust to do right," a handful of respondents volunteered the response, "none of the time." To make response categories comparable for all items in the scale, these responses were recoded as "only some of the time." This had no appreciable effect on the correlations reported in this study.

Political Efficacy. See Appendix 1 for full text of items. The following coefficients (r) are based upon responses to variables 269-274 (form 2 only, pre-election wave, N=1333); coefficients were computed using pairwise deletion for missing data. Coefficients involving "internal" efficacy (I) are separated from those involving external efficacy (E) by heavy lines.

	voting	complex	don't care	congress-men	parties
"people have no say" (E)	.32	.24	.49	.30	.40
"voting only way" (I)	--	.24	.25	.22	.30
"politics complex" (I)	--	--	.26	.23	.24
"public officials don't care" (E)	--	--	--	.48	.55
"congressmen lose touch" (E)	--	--	--	--	.49
"parties interested in votes" (E)	--	--	--	--	--

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APPENDIX 3

CONSTRUCTION OF ISSUE DIMENSION SCALES

A. ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX[a]

Issue	SOCIAL	WAR	LIFESTYLE	ECONOMICS
*Busing	.47	.24	.09	.23
*Rights of Accused	.40	.23	.19	.05
*Minority Aid	.61	.19	.08	.26
Civil Rights	.56	.12	.08	.17
Desegregation	.52	.08	.17	.04
Welfare	.32	.09	.17	.05
*Vietnam	.13	.64	.07	.23
Amnesty	.27	.52	.10	.18
Military Spending	.15	.48	.13	.08
*Marijuana	.23	.26	.61	.01
*Women's Rights	.24	.01	.41	.05
Abortion	.06	.08	.57	-.04
*Jobs/Standard of Living	.31	.14	-.06	.57
*Health Insurance	.13	.17	.11	.44
Progressive Taxation	.08	.04	.03	.31
Inflation	.00	.06	-.04	.34

NOTE: Those variables indicated by an asterisk (*) are the 7-point issue items which are also used to compute measures of "policy expression." See Appendix 1.

[a]These figures (form 1 only) are derived from a principal axis factor analysis with iterations, with a varimax orthogonal rotation of the resulting principal factors. Pairwise deletion was used because of the unusually large number of missing values (see text).

B. RELIABILITY ESTIMATES[b]

(1) SOCIAL (5 items)
average inter-item correlation=.34
Cronbach's alpha=.710
N=843

(2) WAR (3 items)
average inter-item correlation=.37
Cronbach's alpha=.614
N=918

(3) LIFESTYLE (3 items)
average inter-item correlation=.32
Cronbach's alpha=.580
N=1163

(4) ECONOMICS (2 items)
r=.33
N=1024

[b]These figures are derived from an analysis of the internal consistency of hypothesized scale items, using listwise deletion for each individual scale. Items were recoded to equalize response categories.

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