

Exploring the Etiology of Ideology:
In Search of the Political Self through the EI Model and BEVI Method
Adam John Edmunds

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Abstract

In the United States at the beginning of the 21st century, political partisanship appears more prevalent than it has been at any time in the last 25 years. Although considerable emphasis has been placed on which partisan stance is held to be true or good (e.g., conservative versus liberal), the etiology of political ideology is far less understood. In other words, considerable emphasis has been directed to *what* the adherents to various parties believe; much less attention has been devoted to understanding *why* such perspectives are endorsed in the first place. After reviewing a range of literatures which explicate such matters (e.g., moral foundations, personality traits, attitudes about threat and uncertainty, neurophysiological, life history, socialization, attachment), we consider the origins of ideology through an informative model and method: Equilintegration or EI Theory as well as the Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory or BEVI. From an EI perspective, political ideology doesn't just "happen" or result from "choice," but is the inevitable consequence of a complex interaction among formative variables (e.g., life history), core needs (e.g., attachment, affiliation), and contingencies (e.g., that which is and is not valued in one's life context).

To explore this proposition, data then were examined from the Forum BEVI Project, a long-term and multi-institution assessment of learning project via SPSS and MPLUS, through ANOVAs, regression analyses, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Overall, results suggest three fundamental conclusions. First, it is relatively easy to differentiate political ideologies on the basis of expected differences (e.g., regarding the role of government; self-endorsement of conservative or liberal labels). Arguably, a more and interesting and illuminating tack examines less obvious aspects of self-

organization (e.g., affective, attributional, developmental) that nonetheless also may be associated with political differences from an ideational standpoint. Second, life history (e.g., the degree of “negative” or “positive” life events that individuals report) appears to be associated with a range of variables (e.g., the capacity to hold complexity), which further are predictive of political ideology. Third and by extension, the structure of the “political self” (e.g., the political affiliations we endorse; our inclination to experience and express affect) doesn’t “just happen,” but results from complex interactions (e.g., affective, attributional, developmental), which become codified in the beliefs and values about self, others, and the larger world that we call our own. Such processes seem operative whether or not we understand them or even agree that they occurred.

What are the implications of such findings? As we struggle to move beyond the political divisiveness of our present age, it may be helpful to contemplate the possibility that our political affiliations are deterministically acquired via a complex set of interactions representing the “best fit” for each human being. Ultimately, it may be more difficult to vilify “the other” if we appreciate the possibility that our political inclinations are nothing more or less than an expression of how we are organized at the level of our core self. That is not to say that change to our political affiliations is neither possible nor desirable, just that it stands to reason why we fight for our preferred political parties, since we really are fighting to protect and preserve the viability and coherence of underlying psychological structures, of which we may or may not be aware.

Introduction

Values and basic beliefs are more polarized along partisan lines than at any point in the past 25 years.

Pew Research Center, 2012

In the United States of America, a focus on political partisanship has impacted actions and practices in government as well as public perceptions writ large. For a variety of reasons, various indices, including voting patterns and survey data, suggest we presently are living through an era of growing political division far more fractious than the decades of “consensus politics” immediately following World War II (Gallup, 2012a). In addition to considerable scholarship, popularized books – such as *What’s the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* (Frank, 2004), and *The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation* (Westen, 2007) – all are attempting to understand the dynamics of how people interpret and respond to political information across the ideological spectrum. While political partisanship on all sides is recognized to impact political discourse and attendant policies (e.g. healthcare law, auto bailout, foreign policy, debt ceiling debate), the etiology of ideology is far less understood, or even discussed. In other words, it’s one thing to describe *what* political beliefs and values differentiate us. Far more telling is *why* such differences occur in the first place. A theoretically and empirically exploration of “why” is at the heart of this chapter.¹ This approach is important because political ideology is one aspect of self that influences how one sees and engages the world and yet, this aspect of self also is affected by how the world shapes it through various processes (e.g. life

¹ Content from this dissertation is included as a chapter in Shealy, C.N. (in press) (Ed.), *Making Sense of Beliefs and Values*, and is published here with the permission of Springer Publishing, New York.

history, genetics, personality). Moreover, how the self manifests different aspects of self, such as political ideology, on a conscious or non-conscious level is of particular interest because such aspects may be influenced by different factors, including introspection, affect, and level of openness.

Ideology has been defined as “the body of doctrine, myth, belief, etc., that guides an individual, social movement, institution, class, or large group” (Ideology, n.d.). Jost (2006) notes that the concept of ideology generally has been used in two ways: (a) as a system of belief or meaning regarding society, politics, or economics, and (b) in a propagandistic manner, in which the term or beliefs it is used to describe are distorted. Political ideology similarly has been defined by Erikson and Tedin (2003) as a set of beliefs that explain how society should behave and look as well as how such an endpoint should be realized. Finally, ideology represents a version of reality that is informed by particular experiences, motivations, affective responses, and cognitive styles (Jost, Federico, & Napier, 2009).

Interest in the psychological foundations of ideology has grown in recent years, with increased recognition that ideological differences have deep motivational roots, which substantively impact social influence and decision-making (Jost, 2006). More recently, the construct of ideology has proved relevant in understanding a range of events and phenomena (e.g., 9/11, wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, gay marriage, abortion debates, partisanship in the United States). Relevant to the study of beliefs and values, Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, and Sulloway (2003) concluded that particular ideologies emerge from and are related to varying constellations of psychological needs, a central contention also of the Equilintegration (EI) theoretical framework, discussed below. From their

meta-analysis, ideology (e.g. conservatism) was understood as a socially motivated cognition based on situational, dispositional, and psychological factors. From this perspective, individuals are attracted to various ideologies because they meet epistemic, existential, and relational needs.

Political ideology often is understood as existing along a continuum between liberalism (or the political left more generally) and conservatism (or the political right more generally) (Jost et al., 2009). From the standpoint of Merriam-Webster, conservatism is defined as “a political philosophy based on tradition and social stability, stressing established institutions, and preferring gradual development to abrupt change” (Conservatism, 2012). In contrast, liberalism is defined as “a political philosophy based on belief in progress, the essential goodness of the human race, and the autonomy of the individual and standing for the protection of political and civil liberties” (Liberalism, 2012). Two core dimensions distinguish conservatism from liberalism: (a) resisting social change versus advocating for it, and (b) accepting inequality versus rejecting it (Jost et al., 2003). These distinctions were displayed by the 2012 presidential candidates, such as when former U.S. Senator, and conservative presidential candidate Rick Santorum said, “There is income inequality in America, there always has been and hopefully, and I do say that, there always will be,” (Detroit Free Press, 2012).² Finally, in terms of broad social identifications, conservatives remain the largest ideological group at 40% whereas liberals and moderates are 21% and 35%, respectively (Gallup, 2012b). Nevertheless, this pattern of social identification does mask some underlying complexity

² Interestingly, the historic distinction of the “left” (liberal) and “right” (conservative) political wings have their origins in seating arrangements for the French Legislature during the French Revolution in the 18th century; advocates for change sat on the left side of the chamber while supporters of the ruling body sat on the right side (Bobbio, 1996).

and inconsistency in underlying attitudes, as many self-identified conservatives actually adopt broadly liberal positions on many issues (Stimson, 2004).

While many understand liberalism and conservatism to represent opposites on a continuum, some scholars regard this bipolar paradigm as simplistic for purposes of explaining ideology, postulating that these are independent or non-dichotomous dimensions, with different underlying mediational processes (Conover & Feldman, 1981; Kerlinger, 1984). For example, Duckitt's dual-process model proposes two distinct continua for social and economic issues because the socially conservative often are distinct from the economically conservative even though both groups tend toward the conservative end of the liberal-conservative continuum (Duckitt & Sibley, 2010; Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, & Birum, 2002). According to Duckitt and others, the ideology of social conservatives and economic conservatives may be attributable to different emphases (e.g. law and order/security for social conservatives and social inequality/dominance for economic conservatives) as well as different motivational foundations. Along these lines, libertarianism provides a salient example of the complexity of plotting political ideology along a simple continuum between liberalism and conservatism, since this political philosophy includes aspects of both conservatism and liberalism. Specifically, libertarianism focuses on liberty, personal responsibility, and freedom to do what one wants without constraint as long as the rights of others are not infringed (Boaz, 1997). Its emphasis on freedom includes social behavior such as adult consensual sexual relationships, drug use, and civil liberties – all positions on the liberal side of the spectrum. However, its emphasis on economic freedom also embraces minimal government regulation of business practices – a conservative position – with the

caveat that individuals should be protected from exploitation or fraud. Libertarians also oppose governmental subsidization (i.e., corporate welfare) of industries and companies (Libertarian Party Platform, 2010). In short, libertarianism is difficult to plot along a liberal – conservative continuum, which suggests the need for a more multi-dimensional paradigm of political ideology.

Political Parties in the United States

In the United States, it is important to note that many individuals who endorse conservative, libertarian, or liberal ideologies do not associate with any party. In fact, among U.S. citizens within the U.S., 30% affiliate with the Democratic Party, 27% with the Republican Party, and 42% describe themselves as Independent (Gallup, 2012c). From the standpoint of party platforms, the Democratic Party endorses liberal characteristics such as equality for all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender, or race/ethnicity; adoption of progressive tax policies; advocacy for labor rights and pro-environmental policies; and strong regulation of businesses (Democratic National Platform, 2012). According to its platform, the Republican Party is mainly socially and economically conservative, advocating for limited social welfare programs; display of religious (particularly Christian) practices in the public sphere (e.g. prayer in school); aggressive foreign policy; limited government regulation and taxation; and fiscal conservatism (i.e. limited government spending) (Republican Party Platform, 2012). Most state and federal government officials belong to either of these parties. While many libertarians may consider themselves to be independent of the Democratic and Republican parties, and vote between the two parties based on a combination of factors, many other libertarians are members of the Libertarian Party, which advocates for

whichever perspective emphasizes libertarianism in political discourse. The Libertarian Party is the third largest political party in the United States, with 250,000 registered voters (Libertarian Party, 2012). Although it tends to have more success at local and state levels, individuals who hold libertarian positions have been elected to the U.S. Congress under the auspices of the Republican Party (e.g. House Representative Ron Paul of Texas and Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky).

Understanding Ideological Distinctions

Political affiliation is but one way to differentiate between liberals, conservatives, and to a lesser extent, libertarians. Research has identified several other ways in which these ideologies differ, especially between liberals and conservatives. These factors include moral foundations, personality traits, attitudes about threat and uncertainty, and biology.

Moral Foundations

Through their analysis of the etiology and development of morality, Haidt and Joseph (2004) developed Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) in an attempt to explain the complexities of morality. Haidt and Graham (2007) further refined this framework positing five different foundations for morality: harm/care, fairness/reciprocity, in-group/loyalty, authority/respect, and purity/sanctity. The first foundation, harm/care, refers to the capacity to feel another's pain and experience compassion for suffering. Secondly, fairness/reciprocity reflects the cooperative nature of society and the negative emotions experienced when communal camaraderie is violated. The third foundational principle, in-group/loyalty, is seen to be derivative of the evolutionary advantages of trusting members of one's own group, while distrusting outsiders. Authority/respect, the

fourth foundation, respects the hierarchical nature of society and devalues insubordination. Lastly, the foundational principle of purity/sanctity is concerned with physical and spiritual contagion and emphasizes the virtues of chastity, wholesomeness, and the control of desires. Cultures and contexts vary in the emphasis they place on each of these foundations; it also should be noted that the associated emotional aspect of these foundations suggests that there may be an underlying evolutionary predisposition for each.

In juxtaposing these moral foundations with liberal and conservative political ideologies, Haidt and Graham (2007) and Graham, Haidt, and Nosek (2009) found that liberals' beliefs and actions are guided by two of the moral foundations (harm/care and fairness/reciprocity) more than the others whereas conservatives base their beliefs and actions on all five of the foundations nearly evenly. In expanding their analysis, Haidt, Graham, and Joseph (2009) further reported that libertarians tended to be low on all five of the principles, and thus were perceived to be more individual-focused overall. Another group was labeled the "religious left," due to its "liberal" focus on fairness and the reduction of harm, combined with a concurrent yet deemphasized endorsement of the other three principles. Members of this group identified as either neutral or liberally oriented with an embrace of religion similar to that of conservatives.

In addition, further research by Iyer, Koleva, Graham, Ditto, and Haidt (2011) found, perhaps not surprisingly, that liberty is the driving moral foundation for libertarians, who also tended to rely upon reason over emotion, and were more individualistic and independent than liberals or conservatives. Iyer et al. found that while libertarians appear to prioritize the Harm/Care and Fairness/Reciprocity moral

foundations over the other three foundations, when compared with liberals and conservatives, they scored lowest on each of the five moral foundations, suggesting that they do not base their beliefs or actions on these foundations to nearly the same degree as liberals and conservatives (Haidt et al, 2009). Thus, Iyer et al.'s findings led to a revision of the moral foundations to include liberty/oppression as the sixth moral foundation, which accounts for “feelings of reactance and resentment people feel toward those who dominate them and restrict their liberty” (Haidt, 2012).

Other investigations have highlighted the existence of multiple classes of self-identified liberals and conservatives using latent-variable techniques, many of which show different patterns of moral-foundation endorsement despite adopting a common identity label (Weber & Federico, 2012). For example, social conservatives tend to place greater emphasis on in-group/loyalty, authority/respect, and purity/sanctity than other types of conservatives (e.g., those who emphasize fiscal matters). Thus, the simple liberal/conservative dichotomy may obscure more complex patterns of moral intuition in politics.

Overall, when examining these principles in terms of political orientation, liberals and conservatives present and engage differently based upon their conceptualization of what constitutes a “good society” (Haidt et al., 2009, p. 110). For example, the issue of gay marriage illustrates the different applications of moral foundations. Using the MFT framework, Haidt et al. (2009) elucidated these differences as follows:

The left side sees legalizing gay marriage as a straightforward way to reduce harm (to innocent victims) without hurting anyone else while increasing fairness (including issues of equality and rights). Using just the Harm and Fairness

foundations, one simply cannot construct convincing arguments against gay marriage [...] Cultural conservatives, however, are more likely to see gay people as members of a different culture (attacking or infiltrating the heterosexual in-group) who subvert gender roles (rejecting the authority of church, law, and tradition) while pursuing a carnal and hedonistic lifestyle (including “impure” sexual acts that trigger feelings of disgust). (p. 112)

When evaluating the morality of sexual behaviors, liberals tend to believe that if individuals are not harming themselves or others, then their sexual behavior is not immoral. Therefore, homosexuality is not wrong because it does not cause harm to anyone. In contrast, conservatives perceive homosexuality as wrong because of their emphasis on the purity/sanctity moral foundation (Haidt & Hersh, 2001) as well as their fidelity to established social conventions (Inbar, Pizarro, & Bloom, 2009). At a complementary level, findings by Triandis and Gelfand (1998) illustrated conservatives' and liberals' preference for order and equality, respectively, with conservatives emphasizing social relationships that were vertical in nature, while liberals stressed horizontal social relationships. Moreover, Liu and Ditto (2012) found evidence that liberals and conservatives interpret facts differently in order to line up with their moral positions. In short, given these differences in foundation emphasis, it should be not be surprising that liberals and conservatives react to each other differently, with attendant confusion and divisiveness.

Personality Traits

In addition to moral foundation differences among liberals, conservatives, and libertarians, research also has found variation in personality styles. In particular, these differences have been identified via the “big five” personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism). Overall, liberals score higher than conservatives on measures of openness to experience, suggesting (among other attributes) that they are drawn toward new experiences and creative endeavors whereas conservatives score higher on measures of conscientiousness, indicating a preference for orderliness and structure. Such characteristics have been identified through self-assessment (e.g., Caprara, Schwartz, Capanna, Vecchione, & Barbaranelli, 2006; Gerber, Huber, Doherty, Dowling, & Ha, 2010; Mondak, 2010) as well as analysis of interpersonal interactions, personal and professional working space, and personal possessions (Carney, Jost, Gosling, & Potter, 2008). Moreover, across the “Big Five,” liberals also have been found to be more neurotic and less conscientious, extraverted, and agreeable than conservatives (Thornhill & Fincher, 2007), although these results are somewhat less consistent (see Mondak, 2010). Finally, Iyer et al. (2011) found that Libertarians scored similarly to liberals on openness to experience, and to conservatives on neuroticism, but differently to both groups on agreeableness, conscientiousness, and extraversion (cf., McCrae & Sutin, 2009).

System Justifications

System justification is “the motivation to defend, bolster, and justify the status quo” (Jost, Federico, & Napier, 2009, p. 309), even “at the expense of personal and group interest” (Jost & Banaji, 1994, p.2). In this vein, research suggests that people tend to

hold positive attitudes toward themselves and others like them, as well as toward existing social systems and the status quo (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). In addition, Jost and others posited that not all people engage in system justification to the same extent. For example, conservatives engage in system-justification arguments more frequently than liberals. As such, liberals experience less happiness than conservatives partly because liberals focus on issues of inequality in the world. More specifically, liberals tend to feel that inequality is the product of a system which can and should be restructured, and thus experience more distress than conservatives, who tend to attribute inequality to individual factors for which they are not responsible to address (Jost et al., 2003; Napier & Jost, 2008).

Uncertainty-Threat Model

The Uncertainty-Threat Model was developed as a theoretical frame to explain the etiology of political conservatism from a “motivated social-cognitive approach” (Jost et al., 2003, p. 340). According to Jost et al., “...ideological differences between right and left have psychological roots: Stability and hierarchy generally provide reassurance and structure, whereas change and equality imply greater chaos and unpredictability” (Jost et al., 2007, p. 990), findings which are highly consistent with the basic precepts of the Equilintegration model, discussed below. As a result, for those inclined to seek it, conservatism fulfills a psychological need to manage threat and reduce uncertainty. Liberalism, on the other hand, appeals to those who are more open to new experiences, tolerant of ambiguity, and likely to become excited by, rather than fearful of, the unknown. Such qualities also seem associated with a capacity for cognitive complexity, in that those who are less fearful of uncertainty may be simultaneously more capable of

tolerating ambiguity and avoiding premature closure regarding that which is “new and different.” Along these lines, Jost et al. (2007) demonstrated that uncertainty avoidance and resistance to change independently contribute to political ideology, adding to a literature that political and other ideologies are derivative of an interaction among psychological needs and core beliefs regarding the relative importance of change and equality (cf., Shealy, Bhuyan, & Sternberger, 2012).

At the same time, external events appear to impact ideology across the spectrum, as evidenced by the fact that the apparent experience of uncertainty and threat led Democrats, Independents, and Republicans to adopt more conservative attitudes after 9/11 than they reported prior to 9/11 (Bonanno & Jost, 2006). Indeed, recent work suggests that the motive to avoid uncertainty may increase conservatism in actual policy attitudes more among those who self-identify as liberals or for whom the liberal side of an issue is more salient (Federico, Deason, and Fisher, in press). Moreover, Janoff-Bulman (2009) proposed that different political orientations are mediated by motivational predilections toward approach or avoidance: conservatism is driven by an avoidance motivation, whereas liberalism is driven by an approach motivation. Conservatism seeks to identify potentially negative outcomes and experiences, as evidenced by the need to avoid threats and danger, whereas liberalism seeks to identify positive outcomes and experiences, as evidenced by the need to approach the enticing unknown and uncertain. Not surprisingly then, according to Janoff-Bulman (2009), conservatives demonstrate their avoidance motivation through inhibition, as is commonly seen by their resistance to change and preference for social order, whereas liberals demonstrate their approach motivation by their embrace of change and preference for social justice. Nonetheless,

and consistent with our above observations regarding the complexity of these constructs, Duckitt et al. (2002) and Duckitt and Sibley (2010) observed that social conservatism and economic conservatism are two different sociopolitical constructs, a distinction that is illustrated further by Authoritarianism and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO).

Authoritarianism

In many respects, the modern psychological study of ideology has its roots in the study of authoritarianism. First examined to explain the rise of fascism in Europe during the World War II era, *The Authoritarian Personality* in 1950 by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford offered early and influential research on authoritarianism, averring that individuals with authoritarian personalities have submissive attitudes toward authority figures and hold prejudiced views toward targeted out-groups while defending the status quo. The empirical cornerstone of their approach was the “F-scale,” a questionnaire measure of authoritarianism. They explained authoritarianism in psychodynamic terms, arguing that it resulted from the repression of hostility toward idealized, conventional authorities (especially parents), and the projection of this hostility onto various outgroups. Importantly, Adorno et al (1950) noted that authoritarianism was associated not only with ethnocentrism but with right-wing political attitudes and identifications as well, making it an early psychological explanation for ideological differences.

Despite inspiring much research, *The Authoritarian Personality* and the F-scale eventually came in for a variety of theoretical and methodological criticisms (Christie, 1954). In particular, Altemeyer (1981) refined research on authoritarianism via the concept of “right-wing authoritarianism” (RWA) and the revised scale measure he

developed to assess it. In Altemeyer's (1998) model, RWA consists of three inter-related tendencies: authoritarian submission to legitimate authorities, authoritarian aggression toward "deviants" and outgroups, and rigid conventionalism. Overall, those scoring high on RWA tend to defer to established authority when making decisions, treat others harshly if instructed by authority, express a preference for highly traditional beliefs, values, and practices, and tend toward a conservative political ideology (Altemeyer, 1996). Individuals who score high on RWA tend to agree with statements such as "Our country desperately needs a mighty leader who will do what has to be done to destroy the radical new ways and sinfulness that are ruining us," and "It is always better to trust the judgment of the proper authorities in government and religion than to listen to the noisy rabble-rousers in our society who are trying to create doubt in people's minds" (Altemeyer, 2004, p. 426). Along with submission to authority, those who score high on RWA also tend to be politically right-wing, exhibit high levels of prejudicial beliefs such as ethnocentrism and homophobia, condone harsh punishment of extremists, and endorse limiting of the social freedom due to security concerns. They also tend to be fundamentalist in their religious beliefs, and adhere to the religion of their parents (see Altemeyer, 1998, for a review). Interestingly, high RWA individuals tend to endorse beliefs about themselves that are socially favorable; therefore, individuals high in RWA seemingly are unaware of how their prejudice may be experienced by others.

Recent developments in the literature on authoritarianism have further refined the construct by conceptualizing it as an "authoritarian predisposition" that is activated under conditions of social threat (Stenner, 2005). Work in this vein has attempted to measure authoritarianism strictly in terms of childrearing values – that is, whether one emphasizes

obedience and conformity versus independence and curiosity in raising children. This approach helps avoid the explicitly political content included in many earlier measures of authoritarianism, such as the F scale and the RWA scale. Even with this tighter measurement strategy, however, authoritarianism is strongly related to ideology, partisanship, and a variety of political attitudes, especially those linked to the maintenance of social order (Barker & Tinnick, 2006; Hetherington & Weiler, 2009; Stenner, 2005).

Social Dominance Orientation (SDO)

Whereas authoritarianism has been associated with social conservatism, Social Dominance Orientation has been linked to economic conservatism. Individuals with a high Social Dominance Orientation maintain that some groups are dominant over others as a consequence of evolution and the natural order of social stratification (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Interestingly, RWA and SDO scales are independent predictors of conservative attitudes, with positive but weak correlations between them. For instance, social conformity is strongly associated with higher RWA scores but not with SDO. Moreover, individuals who are more socially conservative score higher on the RWA, whereas those who strongly accept income inequality will score higher on SDO scales (Duckitt & Sibley, 2010). The distinction between RWA and SDO may be ascertained by analyzing the worldviews associated with each. While RWA consists of having a “dangerous world” perspective, SDO has a “competitive jungle” worldview (Duckitt et al., 2002). In other words, higher SDO is correlated with one’s opinions with respect to hierarchy and status, while higher RWA is related to one’s opinions with respect to order, loyalty, and group affiliation. Despite the

differences between the two scales, conservatives tend to score higher on both of these measures than do liberals (Altemeyer, 2004; Duckitt et al., 2002; Roccato & Ricolfi, 2005). Moreover, individuals who score high on both SDO and RWA tend to be more prejudiced than other individuals (Altemeyer, 2004).

Framing the Etiology of Ideology

From the above overview, it appears that liberals and conservatives, and at times libertarians, have measurable differences that lead them to experience the world differently from one another. However, the etiology of such differences – what causes them – is on the cutting edge of our understanding. Although correlational research offers tantalizing clues, questions of cause and effect are still underemphasized, perhaps in part due to the complex nature of such inquiry vis-à-vis the political self. For example, although various personality traits may be associated with specific sociopolitical ideologies, etiological pathways are not always clear (i.e., does personality cause ideology, does ideology determine personality, or are both manifestations of similar underlying processes). Moreover, although neurophysiological differences may be evident among various sociopolitical ideologies, it is unclear whether biology is a consequence or cause of differing ideological tendencies. We do not claim to resolve such matters, only to point toward the sort of theoretical and empirical perspectives that may be helpful to such a pursuit over the long-term, including those that are described next.

Heredity/Biology

On the one hand, some evidence suggests that political ideology is influenced by genetic and heritable components (Alford, Funk, & Hibbing, 2005; Dawes & Fowler,

2009; Settle, Dawes, & Fowler, 2009). Such research suggests that identical twins are more similar in their political attitudes than are fraternal twins. In an attempt to understand such putative processes, Hatemi et al. (2011) considered how genomes and chromosomal linkages may influence political ideology. Despite such findings, other scholars recognize the potential reductionistic hazards of overstating the biological underpinnings of ideology given the current state of methodological sophistication; in short, “chicken and egg” questions predominate within such scholarly foci. Moreover, there has been some recent debate about how exactly genes, personality, and politics relate to one another, with some arguing that the relationship between genes and political attitudes are mediated by differences in personality (Kandler, Bleidorn, & Riemann, 2012) and others arguing that personality and politics are related not from any mediating effect of personality, but merely because politics and personality are influenced by common genetic variants (Verhulst, Eaves, & Hatemi, 2012).

More recently, research has identified differences in neurocognitive functioning between liberals and conservatives. In other words, different parts of the brain appear to exhibit different levels of activity depending on one’s orientation as liberal or conservative (Amodio, Jost, Master, & Yee, 2007; Zamboni, et al., 2009). For example, Kanai, Feilden, Firth, and Rees (2011) observed that people with diverse ideologies exhibited structural differences within their brain. Specifically, individuals who self-identified as liberal had increased gray matter volume in the anterior cingulate cortex of the brain (an area that affects executive control) as compared to individuals who self-identified as conservatives, whereas conservatives had increased volume of their right amygdala (area that processes emotions, such as fear) as compared to individuals who

self-identified as liberals. As another example of this emerging area of focus, Oxley et al. (2011) found that individuals who endorsed conservative positions displayed higher physiological reactions to threatening stimuli than individuals who supported liberal positions. The question, of course, is what causes what – are underlying genetic processes and/or environmental experiences responsible for these physiological differences? If previous research is any indication, it seems likely that some interaction between nature and nurture will be necessary to understand the etiology of political ideology (e.g., evidence has accrued regarding the formative variables that are associated with such ideological differences, including the role of socialization and attachment).

Socialization and Attachment

Other programs of research are examining the impact of upbringing and early life experiences on political ideology. For example, Lakoff (2002) postulates that conservatism and liberalism are influenced by family metaphors that are grounded in different approaches to parenting. For instance, conservatives appear to be guided by a relatively strict-father model in which rules, order, and discipline are paramount. Liberals, on the other hand, may endorse a more nurturant-parent model, in which care, kindness, and compassion are emphasized. In evaluating this perspective, Barker and Tinnick (2006) found that the more one adopted a particular parenting metaphor (strict or nurturant), the more consistently liberal or conservative one was. In other words, the ways in which an individual described their own upbringing (discipline versus compassion) was further associated with their political orientation. McAdams et al. (2008) also explored Lakoff's hypotheses, and found evidence for a relationship between a conservative sociopolitical ideology and life history. Specifically, the life narratives of

conservatives tended to focus on strict rules, self-discipline, personal responsibility, deference to authority, and group allegiance whereas the life narratives of liberals were characterized by themes of empathy, openness to new experiences, deep regard for fairness, and sympathy for human suffering. Importantly, however, and differing from the conclusion of Barker and Tinnick (2006), McAdams et al. (2008) observed that these expressed narratives may and may not be a reflection of what actually happened since sociopolitical ideology could influence the recollection of life events in ways that correspond to one's current frame. Nonetheless, the associations that emerge from such lines of research suggest important underlying pathways that may fruitfully be explored.

Along with early life experiences, do caregiver attachment processes differ between liberals and conservatives? In examining this question, early arguments suggested that children raised with relatively strict and punitive parents would develop into more socially conformist individuals who saw the world as dangerous and threatening and endorsed socially conservative positions (e.g., Adorno et al., 1950). Moreover, children who reported cold and unaffectionate parents were assumed to become tough and independent individuals who viewed of the world as competitive, thereupon endorsing economically conservative positions (Duckitt, 2001; Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, & Birum, 2002; Ross, 1993). Indeed, focusing upon adult attachment styles rather than early-childhood family dynamics, Weber and Federico (2007) found that individuals with an anxious attachment style saw the world as dangerous and threatening, and tended to endorse social conservatism, as measured by the Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) scale. On the other hand, individuals with an avoidant attachment style perceived the world in competitive terms, endorsing economic conservatism, as measured by the Social

Dominance Orientation (SDO) scale. Such findings led these scholars to theorize that individuals who are securely attached are less likely to see the world as dangerous and competitive, and more likely to hold a liberal ideology.

Demonstrating the complexity of such processes, Thornhill and Fincher (2007) found that liberals scored higher on scales measuring avoidant attachment than did conservatives, whereas conservatives scored higher on secure attachment. Also, according to their measures, liberals experienced more stress in their childhoods than did conservatives (Thornhill & Fincher, 2007). In addition, Koleva and Rip (2009) reviewed research examining the relationship between attachment and political ideology and found liberalism associated with both secure attachment and insecure avoidant attachment, whereas conservatism was associated with insecure avoidant attachment and anxious-ambivalent attachment. They posited that how attachment is conceptualized (i.e., relational need or relational habit) determines whether attachment security or insecurity leads to conservatism or liberalism. Thus, if attachment security is seen as a relational need that is satisfied, then one is more likely to embrace liberal ideology. However, if attachment security is conceptualized as a relational habit that leads to expectancies for future security, then conservatism will be endorsed. Moreover, Gillath and Hart (2010) found that experimental priming of a secure attachment (i.e., identifying and reflecting on one's relationship with someone who provides love, acceptance, and help – a security providing attachment figure) led to a decrease in the endorsement of conservative foreign policy, which suggests that sociopolitical ideology may be influenced by feelings of security. Taken as a whole, such studies suggest that attachment style is related to

sociopolitical ideology, although the nature of such a relationship may be influenced by issues of conceptualization, measurement, and methodology.

In Summary

To summarize, at least from the perspectives discussed above, political ideology appears to be a form of motivated social cognition, which manifests in different forms, including liberalism, conservatism, and libertarianism. Among other predilections, liberalism embraces complexity, openness to experience, and tolerance for ambiguity whereas conservatism is associated with a preference for certainty, order, structure, and closure (Jost et al., 2003). Moreover, libertarianism emphasizes liberty above other considerations, and typically endorses aspects of both social liberalism and economic conservatism (Boaz, 1997). Such processes have prompted an exploration of origins. Among other factors, neurophysiological factors, life history, socialization, and attachment do seem to mediate sociopolitical ideology, although processes of directionality are complex at best. As such, towards the overarching goal of further clarification regarding these complex issues of etiology and outcome, we now turn our focus to theory and data from the Forum BEVI Project, a long-term and multi-institution assessment of learning project that may help illuminate further these very processes and outcomes (www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects). Following an overview of this project model and method, we present various findings which help identify causal pathways among formative variables (e.g., life history), mediators (e.g., scales of sociopolitical beliefs and values), and outcomes (e.g., self-reported stances on selected sociopolitical issues). Such examination offers additional insight into the possible mechanisms that contribute to development of the self, including aspects of political

ideology, and how endorsement of such ideology may be evidenced through endorsed or rejected belief statements about self, others, and the larger world.

EI Theory, the EI Self, and the BEVI

Although a full explication is presented in Shealy (in press), a brief overview of the three main components of the present approach – Equilintegration (EI) Theory, the EI Self, and Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI) – may be helpful at this point. Equilintegration (EI) Theory seeks to explain “the processes by which beliefs, values, and ‘worldviews’ are acquired and maintained, why their alteration is typically resisted, and how and under what circumstances their modification occurs” (Shealy, 2004, p. 1075). Derivative of EI Theory (Shealy, 2004), the Equilintegration or EI Self explains integrative and synergistic processes by which beliefs and values are acquired, maintained, and transformed as well as how and why these are linked to the formative variables, core needs, and adaptive potential of the self. Informed by scholarship in a range of key areas (e.g., “needs-based” research and theory; developmental psychopathology; social cognition; psychotherapy processes and outcomes; affect regulation; theories and models of “self”), the EI Self seeks to illustrate how the interaction between our core needs (e.g., for attachment, affiliation) and formative variables (e.g., caregiver, culture) results in beliefs and values about self, others, and the world at large that we all internalize over the course of development and across the life span (Shealy, Bhuyan, & Sternberger, 2012).

Concomitant with EI Theory and the EI Self, the Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI) is a comprehensive analytic tool in development since the early 1990s that examines how and why we come to see ourselves, others, and the larger world as we

do (e.g., how life experiences, culture, and context affect our beliefs, values, and worldview) as well as the influence of such processes on multiple aspects of human functioning (e.g., learning processes, relationships, personal growth, the pursuit of life goals). For example, the BEVI assesses processes such as: basic openness; the tendency to (or not to) stereotype in particular ways; self- and emotional awareness; preferred strategies for making sense of why “other” people and cultures “do what they do”; global engagement (e.g., receptivity to different cultures, religions, and social practices); and worldview shift (e.g., to what degree do beliefs and values change as a result of specific experiences). BEVI results are translated automatically into reports at the individual, group, and organizational levels and used in a range of contexts for a variety of applied and research purposes (e.g., to track and examine changes in worldviews over time) (cf., Isley, Shealy, Crandall, Sivo, & Reifsteck, 1999; Hayes, Shealy, Sivo, & Weinstein, 1999; Pysarchik, Shealy, Sternberger, 2007; Shealy, 2000a, 2000b, 2004, 2005, 2006, in press; Shealy, Bhuyan, & Sternberger, 2012; for more information about the Forum BEVI Project, including a description of BEVI scales, see www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects and www.thebevi.com).

In the present analysis, we draw upon the EI model and BEVI method to explore the etiology of political ideology. More specifically, we are interested in understanding whether specific formative variables (e.g., key aspects of one’s life history or background) are associated with the endorsement or rejection of specific belief statements as well as core constructs on the BEVI that are especially predictive of one’s political ideology. When viewed through the lens of the EI theoretical framework, the

juxtaposition of item and scale levels of analyses on the BEVI may help illuminate why the “political self” becomes organized as it does.

Exploring the Etiology of Ideology

For present purposes, we are interested in exploring the relationship between three interrelated process: 1) whether specific formative variables (including ethnicity, gender, age, parental education, SES, highest level of education completed, primary location where raised) are 2) predictive of various constructs (i.e., factors or scales) on the BEVI, which 3) further mediate specific measurable outcomes (e.g., political affiliation).³ After providing methodological information, we present two sets of findings: 1) an item level of analysis, which examines patterns of responding by political affiliation to two types of BEVI items; and 2) structural equation models and correlation matrix data, which illustrate the complex interactions between formative variables, mediators, and outcomes vis-à-vis political affiliation as well as the relationship among various aspects of the self (e.g., affective, attributional, developmental).

Analyses were developed on the basis of a convenience sample from a large dataset (N = 2331) collected during 2011 - 2012 from the Forum BEVI Project, a multi-institution, multi-year project coordinated by the Forum on Education Abroad (www.forumea.org) and International Beliefs and Values Institute (www.ibavi.org).

Participants primarily included undergraduate students (96.7%), although a small sample of graduate students (3.3%) also was included. The sample ranged between the ages of 17 – 26, with an average age of 19; 3.9% fell into the age range of 26 – 62, with another

³ We recognized that partisanship or political affiliation is but one way to differentiate one’s political ideology. While party identification and ideology are not conceptually the same thing, due to their relationship in the following analyses, party identification serves as an estimate of one’s ideology (i.e., partisanship is an outcome that is strongly related to political ideology).

.9 % falling into the range of 12 – 17. Although the majority of participants reported as U.S. citizens (93.3%), non-U.S. citizens also were included in the sample (N = 156 or 6.7%). Also, participants were drawn from 38 different countries of origin. Of the sample, 79.9 percent of the reported as Caucasian with 20.1% as non-Caucasian (6.6% Black or African American; .9% American Indian or Alaskan Native; 7.4% Asian or Pacific Islander; Hispanic / Latino 2.9%; Other, 3%). Finally, from the standpoint of gender, 40.8 percent of the sample was female, with 59.2 percent male. All participants were required to provide informed consent as determined by multiple Institutional Review Boards processes, and participation was entirely voluntary (e.g., participants were not required to complete the BEVI, and could elect to discontinue participation at any time). Analyses were conducted via SPSS and MPLUS, and consist of ANOVAs, regression analyses, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). More information (e.g., institutional participants, methodological issues) from the Forum BEVI Project is available at www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects.

Item Level Analyses

In exploring the origins of political ideology at an item level of analysis on the BEVI, perhaps the most basic question is identifying which items to select. Two criteria were selected in that regard. First, we wished to identify items that differentiated statistically between self-identified “Republicans,” “Independents,” and “Democrats.” In other words, political affiliation needed to be predicted well by observing whether belief statements were differentially endorsed or rejected across different political affiliations. Second, we wished to understand whether different “types” of items differentiated across political affiliations. More specifically, we wanted to understand whether items other

than those that were relatively face valid (i.e., would seem to be predictive of party affiliation “on the face of it”) could illuminate underlying affective and attributional processes that help explain the etiology of ideology. Therefore, two sets of items were selected in that regard: expected predictors and explanatory predictors. As the “expected predictors” items of Tables 1 – 5 indicate below, when compared to Democrats, Independents, or those who indicated an “Other” political orientation, Republicans are more likely to *agree* with the following BEVI items:

I am more conservative than liberal on social issues.

Too many people are looking for a free handout.

Likewise, they are more likely to *disagree* with the following BEVI items:

Many government programs do a lot of good.

There is too big a gap between the rich and poor in our country.

Church and state must be separate.

Table 1

Q306. I am more conservative than liberal on social issues.

Source	Sum of Squares	Mean	df	Mean Square Error	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	464.289		3	154.763	253.569	0.00
Intercept	13214.633		1	13214.633	21651.33	0.00
Political Orientation	464.289		3	154.763	253.569	0.00
Democrat		1.955				
Independent		2.316				
Republican		3.034				
Other		2.198				
Error	1385.078		2271	0.61		
Total	15065		2275			
Corrected Total	1850.367		2274			

Note: R²=0.251 (Adjusted R²=0.250)

Table 2

Q223. Church and State must be separate.

Source	Sum of Squares	Mean	df	Mean Square Error	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	65.127		3	21.709	36.517	0.00
Intercept	21465.063		1	21465.063	36106.82	0.00
Political Orientation	65.127		3	21.709	36.517	0.00
Democrat		3.192				
Independent		3.112				
Republican		2.827				
Other		3.296				
Error	1357.81		2284	0.594		
Total	22888		2288			
Corrected Total	1422.937		2287			

Note: $R^2=0.46$ (Adjusted $R^2=0.45$)

Table 3

Q55. Many government programs do a lot of good.

Source	Sum of Squares	Mean	df	Mean Square Error	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	39.970		3	13.323	36.517	0.00
Intercept	17751.259		1	17751.259	40831.94	0.00
Political Orientation	39.97		3	13.323	30.647	0.00
Democrat		2.94				
Independent		2.753				
Republican		2.631				
Other		2.671				
Error	1000.77		2302	0.435		
Total	18792		2306			
Corrected Total	1040.741		2305			

Note: $R^2=0.038$ (Adjusted $R^2=0.037$)

Table 4

Q70. Too many people are looking for a free handout.

Source	Sum of Squares	Mean	df	Mean Square Error	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	102.683		3	34.228	57.541	0.00
Intercept	20766.002		1	20766.002	34910.4	0.00
Political Orientation	102.683		3	34.228	57.541	0.00
Democrat		2.767				
Independent		2.983				
Republican		3.28				
Other		2.976				
Error	1369.315		2302	0.595		
Total	22238		2306			
Corrected Total	1471.998		2305			

Note: $R^2=0.070$ (Adjusted $R^2=0.069$)

Table 5

Q274. There is too big a gap between the rich and the poor in our country.

Source	Sum of Squares	Mean	df	Mean Square Error	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	100.037		3	33.346	59.466	0.000
Intercept	13440.273		1	13440.273	23968.193	0.000
Political Orientation	100.037		3	33.346	59.466	0.000
Democrat		3.179				
Independent		3.021				
Republican		2.678				
Other		2.893				
Error	1276.838		2277	0.561		
Total	21328.000		2281			
Corrected Total	1376.875		2280			

Note: $R^2=0.073$ (Adjusted $R^2=0.071$)

Again, such findings although striking from the standpoint of consistency, are perhaps not surprising. In other words, patterns of rejection or endorsement of such politically-oriented beliefs would be expected to predict political affiliation, and do. But what might we learn about the etiology of ideology by examining belief statements that would not necessarily be expected to predict political affiliation, but also do? Consider

Tables 6-9. Here, Republicans also are *less likely* to agree with the following BEVI items than are Independents or Democrats.

I am comfortable around groups of people who are very different from me.

I have wondered about who I am and where I am going.

I am always trying to understand myself better.

I like to think about why things are the way they are.

Table 6

Q364. I am comfortable around groups of people who are very different from me.

Source	Sum of Squares	Mean	Df	Mean Square Error	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	19.516		3	6.505	12.294	0.000
Intercept	12029.800		1	12029.800	22733.674	0.000
Political Orientation	19.516		3	6.505	12.294	0.000
Democrat		2.908				
Independent		2.797				
Republican		2.682				
Other		2.824				
Error	1194.319		2257	0.529		
Total	18958.000		2261			
Corrected Total	1213.835		2260			

Note: $R^2=0.016$ (Adjusted $R^2=0.015$)

Table 7

Q123. I have wondered about who I am and where I am going.

Source	Sum of Squares	Mean	Df	Mean Square Error	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	6.597		3	2.199	4.571	0.003
Intercept	22846.005		1	22846.005	47494.32	0.000
Political Orientation	6.597		3	2.199	4.571	0.003
Democrat		3.208				
Independent		3.157				
Republican		3.078				
Other		3.166				
Error	1105.398		2298	0.481		
Total	23958		2302			
Corrected Total	1111.995		2301			

Note: $R^2=0.006$ (Adjusted $R^2=0.005$)

Table 8

Q149. I am always trying to understand myself better.

Source	Sum of Squares	Mean	Df	Mean Square Error	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	11.166		3	3.722	8.744	0.00
Intercept	21970.751		1	21970.751	51613.41	0.00
Political Orientation	11.166		3	3.722	8.744	0.00
Democrat		3.174				
Independent		3.092				
Republican		3.004				
Other		3.089				
Error	976.082		2293	0.426		
Total	22958		2297			
Corrected Total	987.249		2296			

Note: $R^2=0.011$ (Adjusted $R^2=0.010$)

Table 9

Q372. I like to think about why things are the way they are.

Source	Sum of Squares	Mean	Df	Mean Square Error	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	3.003		3	1.001	2.626	0.049
Intercept	21793.064		1	21793.064	57173.21	0.00
Political Orientation	3.003		3	1.001	2.626	0.049
Democrat		3.144				
Independent		3.095				
Republican		3.061				
Other		3.145				
Error	859.933		2256	0.381		
Total	22656		2260			
Corrected Total	862.936		2259			

Note: $R^2=0.003$ (Adjusted $R^2=0.002$)

What do such findings suggest? Recall that the Equilintegration or EI model essentially is concerned with both interpretive as well as descriptive levels of analysis (Shealy, in press). That is to say, it seeks to ask and answer questions of *what* (e.g., what do people believe about politics, religion, and so forth) as well as *why* (e.g., how do specific formative variables, such as life events, influence the beliefs and values towards which human beings are inclined). Second, the EI model and BEVI method were derived

out of actual utterances made by real human beings in clinical, training, and educational contexts (Shealy, 2004). Thus, by design, we anticipate that the belief / value statements human beings declare to be true or false, and good or bad, for themselves, others, and the larger world are expected to be deeply intertwined with other core aspects of self, such as one's relative degree of access to affect, capacity for introspective, and inclination toward engagement with others.

By extension then, this model and method regard political ideology as a symptom or sign of how the self writ large is structured, and is therefore no more or less salient than other ideological commitments (e.g., toward religion, the environment, issues of gender), which all are deterministically linked to and intertwined with one another. As such, when combined with sufficient information about one's life history and background, to know something of one's political ideology, it is quite possible to derive empirically and theoretically substantiated predictions about other self structures and processes (e.g., affective capacities; self-awareness; gender relations). Third, the EI framework explicitly recognizes the complex interaction between nurture (e.g., formative variables) and nature (e.g., the genetically-mediated "adaptive potential" of the Core Self) that ultimately culminates in what human beings come to believe about self, others, and the larger world. In short, then, the present approach seeks to build upon the advances in our understanding of both what and why political ideology manifests as it does, by exploring the dynamic, organismic, and interacting processes that occur over the lifespan across different levels of self. Toward such means and ends, the complementarity between this approach and the growing literature on psychology and ideology noted above – including but not limited to lay epistemic theory (Jost et al., 2003), moral

foundations theory (Haidt & Graham, 2007; Haidt, Graham, & Joseph, 2009), and personality theory (Gerber et al., 2010; Mondak, 2010) – may be evident.

In short, from an EI perspective, it stands to reason that “selves” become structured in ways that predispose them to self-identify with particular political positions. For example, as the 2012 political elections in the United States illustrated, the fact that Republicans tend to *disagree* more than Democrats with belief statements such as, *I am comfortable around groups of people who are very different from me* and *I like to think about why things are the way they are* certainly is informative at a descriptive level of analysis. At an explanatory level of analysis, however, more interesting is what such inclinations suggest about both the underlying structure of the self as well as why it is organized as it is. From an EI perspective, it is not that the aggregated Republican “chooses” not to reflect upon such matters, but rather is structured in such a way that such reflection is deterministically less likely to occur. In this regard, such self structure didn’t just “happen,” but resulted from a complex interaction among different levels of self, including the sum total of all encounters with formative variables through development, which essentially codifies into the belief / value structures that we call our own.

SEM and Correlation Matrix Analyses

In the final set of analyses, we examine this proposition regarding the etiology of ideology more closely. Specifically, we want to understand better how complex and interactive developmental process largely determines why we experience self, others, and the larger world as we do irrespective of whether we understand or even agree that such processes occurred to and within us (Shealy, Bhuyan, & Sternberger, 2012). To do so,

we next present a series of structural equation models (SEM) along with related correlation matrix data. Consistent with the underlying EI framework of the BEVI, the SEM theoretical model we sought to evaluate posits that 1) formative variables (e.g., life events; ethnic background) 2) mediate the nature of belief / value constructs that are inculcated and codified, for present purposes, as various BEVI scales, which ultimately lead to 3) “outcomes” in the “real world, including but by no means limited to one’s political affiliation. Thus, we really are testing whether a theoretical model regarding how these processes contribute to one another along pre-specified paths via standard fit indexes that are appropriate for such analyses (e.g., RMSEA, CFI). Here, we focus on SEM’s regarding the relationship between Negative Life Events and Socioemotional Convergence scales on the BEVI vis-à-vis political ideology.^{4,5} What do we conclude from a review of such models?

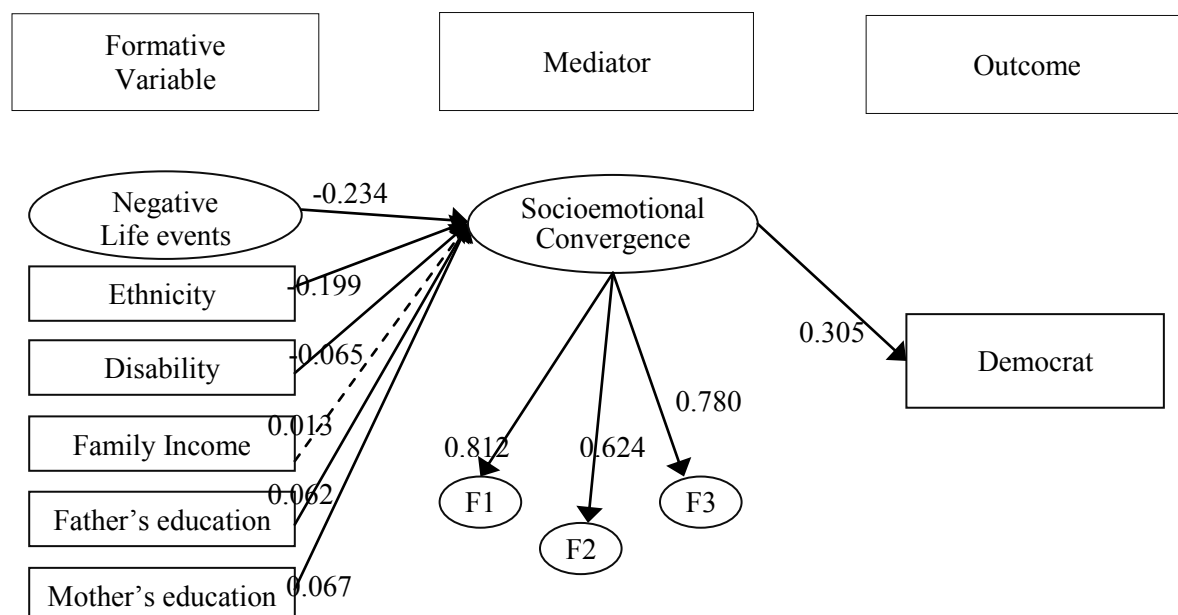
As illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 below, it may be helpful to highlight three key findings. First, note that the degree to which individuals report a relatively high degree of Negative Life Events (NLE) is significantly predictive of a lower degree of Socioemotional Convergence (SEC) for both Democrats and Republicans in these SEMs

⁴ As described in Shealy (in press), Negative Life Events consists of self report statements regarding one’s own upbringing and life history. Among other dimensions, Socioemotional Convergence measures the degree to which individuals demonstrate and overarching capacity to “hold complexity” (i.e., avoid black and white characterizations regarding how the world “is” and “should be”). For more information, see www.thebevi.com

⁵ From an interpretive standpoint, ethnicity is a dummy measured variable; value "0" indicates the respondent is a minority, and "1" means the respondent is a Caucasian. Disability also is a dummy variable; “0” indicates the person is not eligible to services for students with disabilities, and 1 means otherwise. Family income is measured by a series of numbers indicating the respondent's annual family income. It ranges from "1" (Less than \$10,000) to "10" (\$175,000 or more). Both father's education and mother's education are ordinal measured variables. They range from "0" (Some high school or less) to "8" (Doctoral degree). The dependent variable "Democrat" also is a dummy variable; "0" means not a Democrat, and "1" means a Democrat. Finally, we used WLSMV (weighted least squares, robust standard errors, and mean and variance adjusted chi square test statistic) as the estimator for all the structural equation models because the variables have ordinal measures or dummy measures.

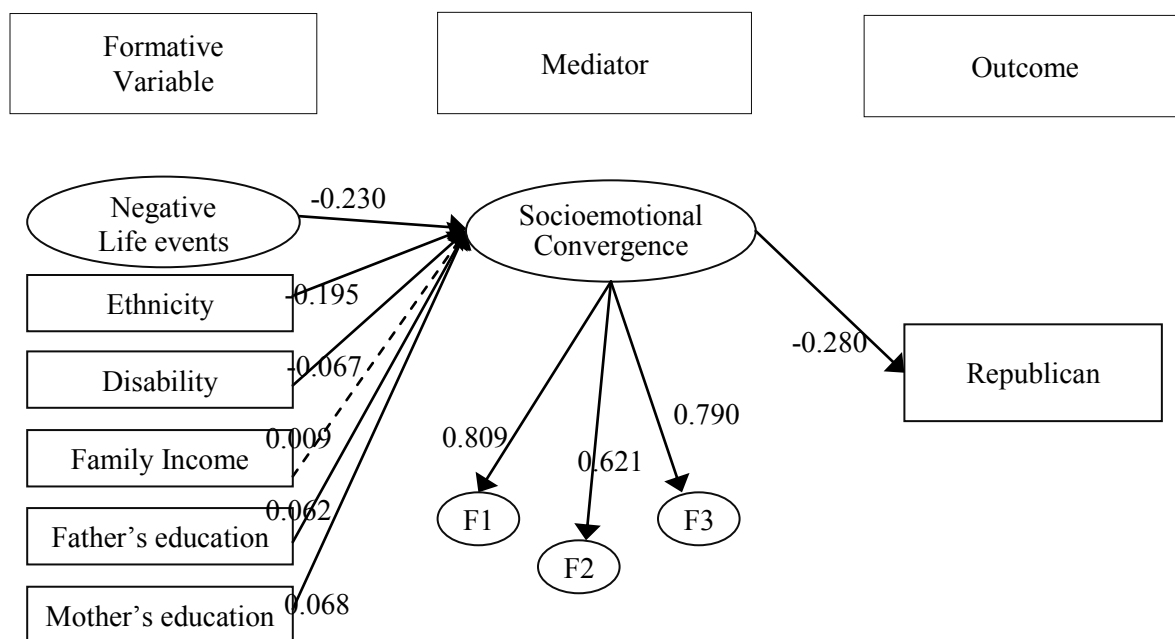
(for purposes of interpretation, solid lines refer to statistically significant findings). In other words, the *greater the degree* that individuals report conflict in the home or origin, unhappy childhood experiences, legal or other life difficulties and so forth, the *lower the degree* of basic openness, self-awareness, and sociocultural interest the individual evidences, from the standpoint of the BEVI. Second, other formative variables (in addition to NLE) also predict SEC. Specifically, those individuals who 1) are non-Caucasian, 2) report that they do not have a disability diagnosis⁶, and 3) who report a higher degree of education by their father and mother all evidence a greater degree of SEC, regardless of whether they are Democrat or Republican. Third, the higher degree of SEC an individual reports, the more likely they are to report that they are a Democrat and the less likely they are to report that they are a Republican. So, taken as a whole, and consistent with that which would be predicted by an EI framework, these findings suggest that the more people report that they experienced particular types of formative variables (e.g., a happy / satisfactory experienced during their upbringing and in life, had parents with a greater degree of education), the more likely they were to evidence a capacity and inclination for openness to or engagement with self, others, and the larger world, which further is associated with the tendency to self-report as Democrat.

Figure 1

SEM of Negative Life by Socioemotional Convergence and Democratic Political Ideology

Note: $X^2=2989.948$, $df=363$, $p=0.0000$, $RMSEA=0.056$, $CFI=0.905$.

Figure 2

SEM of Negative Life by Socioemotional Convergence and Republican Political Ideology

Note: $X^2=3107.749$, $df=363$, $p=0.0000$, $RMSEA=0.057$, $CFI=0.901$.

Finally, to augment and explain further these SEM findings, consider Table 13, which was derived from correlation matrix data, based upon an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) of BEVI data, which preceded the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) used for purposes of SEM⁷.

Table 10

Correlation Matrix data of Socioemotional Convergence and other BEVI Scales

Needs Closure (-.93)
Emotional Attunement (.84)
Sociocultural Openness (.82)
Divergent Determinism (-.81)
Basic Closedness (-.79)
Ecological Resonance (.69)
Identity Diffusion (-.69)
Negative Life Events (-.69)
Hard Structure (-.53)

What do we conclude from such correlation matrix data? First, for interpretative purposes, note that this analysis considers the correlation of Socioemotional Convergence

⁶ It is not clear why “disability status” is negatively associated with Socioemotional Convergence. Although an empirical and theoretical question, it could be that self-identification as “disabled” (e.g., with a psychological condition) may be associated with less “holding of complexity,” at least as measured by this construct on the BEVI.

⁷ More information about the BEVI, including EFA parameters as well as correlation matrix data, is available at <http://www.thebevi.com/aboutbevi.php>.

(SEC) to other BEVI scales which are significantly ($p < .001$) correlated at or above .50 (see http://www.thebevi.com/docs/bevi_scale_pairwise_correlations_and_significance_levels.pdf). Second, consistent with the SEMs and other ANOVAs reported above, note that the *greater* the degree of Socioemotional Convergence an individual reports, the more likely they are to report 1) that their “core needs” *were* met (Needs Closure); 2) the *greater* their capacity and inclination for attending to emotions in self and other (Emotional Attunement); 3) the *greater* their degree of interest or engagement in cultures that are different to that which they are accustomed (Sociocultural Openness); 4) the *lesser* their tendency to adopt a “contrarian” viewpoint for the sake of doing so (Divergent Determinism); 5) the more *likely* they are to acknowledge basic thoughts or feelings or tolerate emotional pain (Basic Closeness); 6) the *greater* their tendency to express care and concern for the environment and natural world (Ecological Resonance); 7) the *lesser* degree of confusion or “stuckness” they evidence regarding who they are and where they are going in life (Identity Diffusion); 8) the *less likely* they are to report unhappy experiences during the upbringing and in life (Negative Life Events); and 9) the *more likely* they are to acknowledge doubts about one’s self or one’s actions in the world (Hard Structure). Although the implications of such findings extend beyond the etiology of political ideology, it may be helpful to bear such relationships in mind as we continue to explore such interacting processes in future research, recognizing that one’s “political self” is inextricably linked to why we experience self, others, and the larger world as we do.

Summary Observations

On the basis of the above findings, we offer three summary observations regarding our exploration of the etiology of ideology.

First, depth matters. As our item level of analysis indicated, it is relatively easy to differentiate political ideologies on the basis of expected differences (e.g., regarding the role of government; self-endorsement of conservative or liberal labels). Arguably, a more and interesting and illuminating tack examines less obvious aspects of self-organization (e.g., affective, attributional, developmental) that nonetheless also may be associated with political differences from an ideational standpoint. In this regard, the finding that Republicans overall are less likely to wonder “about who I am and where I am going” or to like thinking about “why things are the way they are” may suggest that political affiliation simply represents the “best fit” to how the self is structured rather than a rational process of “deciding” what one does and doesn’t believe vis-à-vis various political considerations.

Second, interactions matter. Results do suggest that the greater the degree of Negative Life Events individuals report they experience, the *less likely* they are to evidence show the sort of construct-based patterns suggested by the above correlation matrix data vis-à-vis Socioemotional Convergence. For example, the more “negative experiences” individuals report at the level of formative variables, the less open they generally appear to be, which makes sense from an EI perspective. Also, the more our core needs are met in a “good enough” manner, the more capacity we appear to have not only to tolerate, but actively care for, self, others, and the larger world (e.g., Shealy, 1995; Shealy, Bhuyan, & Sternberger, 2012). Interestingly, a higher degree of

Socioemotional Convergence is in fact associated with a greater tendency to report a Democratic political affiliation. However, such a conclusion should *not* necessarily be construed to mean that Democrats experience less “Negative Life Event” than do Republicans, since there is competing evidence along these lines, as reported above (cf., Koleva & Rip, 2009; Thornhill & Fincher, 2007; Weber & Federico, 2007). Indeed, two sub-findings are especially instructive in this regard. On the one hand, a higher degree of Socioemotional Convergence (e.g., an inclination to experience the world in shades of gray rather than black and white) is associated with a Democratic rather than Republican political affiliation. Moreover, a higher degree of Negative Life Events also is associated with a lower degree of Sociocultural Convergence. However, a syllogism does not necessarily follow that a low degree of Negative Life Events is associated with a greater degree of Democratic affiliation or that a high degree of Negative Life Events is associated with a greater degree of Republican affiliation. Although an empirical question awaiting further study, it may be that political affiliation is similar to religious affiliation in that the specific nature of one’s identity in this regard may vary depending upon the nature of the formative variables through which such identity was inculcated. Just as there is a difference between “fundamentalist” and “orthodox” Christians (with the former tending toward greater certitude than the latter regarding matters of religious faith), it may be that there are similar differences between “fundamentalist” and “orthodox” Republicans or Democrats. If so, the most important formative variables that may mediate such outcomes may have to do with the relative degree of warmth and responsiveness individuals experience by caregivers during development rather than some putative rational process that culminates in one’s political affiliation (see Brearly,

Van den Bos, Tan, in press). In short, to understand the etiology of ideology, we should account for within group variability (e.g., the fact that various subsets of self-identified Republicans may be more open, aware, and engaged than various subsets of self-identified Democrats), by ensuring as researchers that our theoretical models and assessment methods are able to do so.

Third, self-preservation matters. In the final analysis and related to the above points, the structure of the self (e.g., the political affiliations we endorse; our inclination to experience and express affect) doesn't "just happen," but results from complex interactions (e.g., affective, attributional, developmental), which become codified in the beliefs and values about self, others, and the larger world that we call our own. Such processes seem operative whether or not we understand them or even agree that they occurred (Shealy, Bhuyan, & Sternberger, 2012). Thus, as we struggle to move beyond the political divisiveness of our present age, it may be helpful to contemplate the possibility that our political affiliations are deterministically acquired via a complex set of interactions representing the "best fit" for each human being. Ultimately, it may be more difficult to vilify "the other" if we appreciate the possibility that our political inclinations are nothing more or less than an expression of how we are organized at the level of our core self. That is not to say that change to our political affiliations is neither possible nor desirable, just that it stands to reason why we fight for our preferred political parties, since we really are fighting to protect and preserve the viability and coherence of underlying psychological structures, of which we may or may not be aware.

In Conclusion

At the outset of this chapter, we began with the fundamental conclusion of the Pew Research Center (2012) that “values and basic beliefs are more polarized along partisan lines than at any point in the past 25 years.” However, we observed that in considering political ideology, greater focus typically has been devoted to what divides us in terms of our political ideologies (e.g., the content of our differing beliefs and values politically), and less focus has been placed on the etiology of ideology (e.g., why we differ in the first place). Although these are, and should remain, complementary emphases, our contention is that if we were to spend greater attention on *why* rather than *how* we differ politically, the complex phenomenon of political ideology would become more comprehensible and accessible. As Stevens (2012) laments in a recent critique of political science, “many of today’s peer-reviewed studies offer trivial confirmations of the obvious,” and dwell on quantitative minutiae that should not erroneously be equated with knowledge (p. 6). As a point of contrast to this pessimistic appraisal, we argue that the generation of data and development of knowledge need not be mutually exclusive endeavors. As we have attempted to illustrate, quantitative analysis of individual-level political data may in fact play a crucial, if not indispensable, role in the development of knowledge. In other words, there may be no other way to develop some forms of knowledge, such as those presented here, without empirical studies and statistics (i.e., it is not possible, by theory or argument alone, to have a basis for supporting the conclusions we have reached). However, generative and ecologically valid outcomes are that much more likely if we integrate the whole human being into our research, which means considering simultaneously complex – and indeed, “messy” – interactions among a wide range of

variables that too often are not included in mainstream, macro-level research on the foundations of ideology (e.g., affect, attribution, life history, context, culture; see also Jost, 2006; Jost et al., 2009).

In the final analysis, as psychologists who are interested in politics and political science, we respectfully offer the framework presented here – including significance findings from a range of analyses – as one way to deepen our understanding and examination of the political animal. There many reasons for doing so. For example, as the theory and data described here suggest, when human beings report that they have not received “what they need” in their own lives (e.g., during development), their attendant capacity and inclination to see and experience self, others, and the larger world correspondingly appear to be affected. By extension, when many individual human beings share such experiences of self, and come together in groups and societies, it seems likely that political actions, policies, and practices will follow to no small degree, as we regularly witness in our polarized political discourse, not only in the 2012 elections in the United States, but all over the world. Thus, in seeking to comprehend the etiology of ideology, it likely will help if we include an examination of why and how the political self comes be structured as it does. Likewise, if we focus not only on *what* divides us, but *why*, it seems more likely that our conceptual frameworks, predictive models, and policy solutions will be that much more likely to possess ecological validity and real world meaning, for scholars, policy makers, and the public at large.

Appendix A

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY⁸

Adorno, T. W., Frenkel-Brunswik, E., Levinson, D. J., & Sanford, R. N. (1950). *The authoritarian personality*. New York: Harper.

This seminal work is frequently cited by researchers examining political ideology and its psychological underpinnings. Though outdated, it is helpful in understanding how ideology was initially thought of and explained. It served as the inspiration of Altemeyer's work, particularly regarding the Right-Wing Authoritarian scale. It provides the context for how ideology and psychology were examined following World War II to help understand the motivations of the actors involved.

Alford, J., Funk, C., & Hibbing, J. (2005). Are political orientations genetically transmitted? *American Political Science Review*, 99(2), 153-167.

The authors examined the extent to which political attitudes are influenced by genetics by using responses from samples of monozygotic and dizygotic twins. They recognized that political attitudes are not 100% due to environment or genetics, but their research expanded the knowledge base so that genetics are better considered. In fact, the article suggests that political attitudes are influenced more by genetics than by parental socialization because genes affect personalities and people's outlooks which predispose

⁸ In order to facilitate future scholarship in this area, and consider relevant perspectives and approaches in greater detail, an annotated bibliography of selected literature is included in this dissertation.

people toward specific attitudes. Alford and others also suggested that genes lead to political phenotypes, such as “absolutist,” which bears similarity to conservative and “contextualist,” which is similar to liberal. They said that the absolutist and contextualist labels can apply to other areas in human activity, such as religion (fundamentalist/secular humanist), law (procedural/substantive due process), morality (enduring standards/situational ethics), and art (traditional form-based realism/modern free-form impressionism). This article was helpful in providing a more comprehensive examination of the etiology of political ideology.

Altemeyer, R. (2003). What happens when authoritarians inherit the earth? A Simulation. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 3, 15-23.

This article examined what would happen if individuals scoring high on the RWA and SDO scales “ruled the world,” using the Global Change Game experiment (a three-hour experiment in which participants are assigned randomly “to different regions of the earth and challenged to solve the problems of the future,” such as population growth, limited resources, environmental crises). The results of the experiment showed that the world populated with just authoritarian followers (high on RWA scales) fared poorly due to their insular nature even though charity occurred at times. However, while the world populated with authoritarian followers and authoritarian leaders was less insular, it too did

poorly, just not as much as the world populated by only authoritarian followers. When authoritarian leaders were present, more engagement and competition with other groups was demonstrated, with less charity and more warlike behavior (e.g. threats, alliances). This article illustrated what individuals with high scores on the measures may do when presented with global problems.

Altemeyer, R. (2004). Highly dominating, highly authoritarian personalities. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 144*, 421-447.

This article examined members of the population who score highly on both the Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) scale and the Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) scale. Gathered from samples of college students and their parents, Altemeyer found that individuals scoring high on both appear to be among the most prejudiced people in society. This article illustrated the overlap among people who identify as conservatives, while noting the implications of such individuals and the societies in which they inhabit. For instance, Altemeyer noted that such individuals are more likely to lead extremist right-wing movements in the United States.

Amodio, D., Jost, J. Master, S. & Yee, C. (2007). Neurocognitive correlates of liberalism and conservatism. *Nature Neuroscience, 10*, 1246-1247.

Amodio, Jost, Master, and Yee discuss literature that found conservatives to be more structured and persistent in decision-making and attitudes, which differed from liberals, who were found to be more tolerant of ambiguity and open to new experiences and complexity. They felt that such distinctions would be apparent through examination of neurocognitive functioning between liberals and conservatives using stimulus-response patterns based on complex and potentially conflicting information. The study found that liberals demonstrated more sensitivity to cognitive conflict than did conservatives, suggesting that liberals perform better when changes in response style are required, while conservatives may be best when a fixed response style is needed. Given how stimulus-response patterns can reflect self-regulation, the authors' findings provided a connection between political beliefs and self-regulation.

Barker, D.C., & Tinnick, J. D. (2006). Competing visions of parental roles and ideological constraint. *American Political Science Review*, 100(2), 249-263.

Barker and Tinnick applied George Lakoff's theory of parenting metaphors to describe the relationship between citizens and government in their study. According to Lakoff, most people in the United States can be split between the "strict father" narrative and the "nurturant father" narrative. Individuals who describe their family experience with the "strict father" narrative tend to identify

themselves as conservatives, while individuals identified as liberals use the “nurturant father” narrative. Through their study, which included interviews and regression analyses, the authors found that one’s strength in endorsing childrearing according to the metaphors presented by Lakoff indicated the consistency one’s political attitudes.

Bonanno, G. & Jost, J. (2006). Conservative shift among high-exposure survivors of the September 11th terrorist attacks. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 28, 311-323.

Given research that theorizes that the need to manage uncertainty and threats lead to the adoption of conservative attitudes, Bonanno and Jost examined whether there would be a noticeable shift toward conservative attitudes among 9/11 survivors and whether such shift would promote positive mental well-being. They observed such a shift regardless of political party lines, but such shifts did not illustrate improved well-being. Rather, Bonanno and Jost found that conservative shifts had a relationship with poor psychological functioning. This article provided perspectives on how psychological stress or trauma can contribute to the endorsement of conservative ideology.

Carney, D.R., Jost, J.T., Gosling, S.D., & Potter, J. (2008). The secret lives of liberals and conservatives: Personality profiles, interaction styles, and the things they leave behind. *Political Psychology*, 29(6), 807-840.

Carney, Jost, Gosling, and Potter examined personality patterns and behaviors between individuals who identify as liberals and conservatives. This article provided a historic overview of personality differences between ideologues, incorporating personality theories, such as the “Big Five” model, and the results with the various dispositions and traits obtained through research. Carney and the others conducted three studies that used multiple domains and techniques to identify the relationship between political orientation and personality. Besides noting that Openness to Experience and Conscientiousness differ between liberals and conservatives, through the various studies and methods employed, Carney and the others found liberals to be more open-minded, creative, and curious, whereas conservatives are more orderly, conventional, and better organized. They did not observe differences among the other Big Five traits (Extraversion, Agreeableness, or Neuroticism). Moreover, the results obtained in the article acknowledged that personality differences are more strongly tied to social dimensions of ideology instead of economics.

Dawes, C.T., & Fowler, J.H. (2009). Partisanship, voting, and the dopamine D2 receptor gene. *Journal of Politics*, 71(3), 1157-1171.

Dawes and Fowler explored the possibility that not only could political orientation have genetic components, but partisan

affiliation as well. They examined the dopamine D2 receptor gene and found that individuals with the A2 allele of that gene were more likely to identify as a partisan than individuals with the A1 allele. While they recognize that children can be influenced by their parents' party affiliation, possibly due to socialization, their findings add the possibility that genes play a role in the adoption of party identification. This article further illustrates how political ideology may have heritable components that influence it.

Duckitt, J. (2001). A dual-process cognitive-motivational theory of ideology and prejudice. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 33, 41-113. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

This chapter by Duckitt is quite extensive and examined ideology and prejudice. It was frequently cited by other researchers examining political ideology and provided a frame of understanding RWA and SDO in a developmental context that examined socialization, worldview beliefs, personality, ideological attitudes, and ethnocentrism. Duckitt offered a model that described a cognitive-motivational basis of ideological attitudes. Most helpful currently were points regarding ideology and its development.

Duckitt, J. & Sibley, C.G. (2010). Personality, ideology, prejudice, and politics: A dual-process motivational model. *Journal of Personality*, 78(6), 1861-1893.

Duckitt and Sibley challenged the notion that political orientation is on a continuum of liberal-conservative that was expressed by early theorists, such as Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, and Sanford (1950). Rather they accepted the findings that political ideology is comprised of two motivational goals or values, articulated through the constructs of right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) and social dominance orientation (SDO). This article outlined how a dual-process motivational model explains the two constructs, including the differing worldviews between them and how they may manifest themselves through politics and prejudice. Right-wing authoritarianism was developed by Altemeyer (1981) to measure authoritarian attitudes, such as obedience and respect for authority figures and adherence to traditional or moral norms and values. Social dominance orientation looked at intergroup relationships and whether one was equal or dominant-subordinate. Research noted that individuals identified or holding conservative beliefs tended to score high on measures assessing RWA and SDO. Duckitt and Sibley explored how much personality characteristics played a role in one's attitudes along these constructs. Duckitt and Sibley recognized that socialization, environment, and personality influenced worldviews, which affected people's attitudes and thus their political beliefs and level of prejudice. For instance, whether an individual saw the world as dangerous or a competitive jungle

leads to adopting an attitude that strongly relates to either RWA or SDO, depending on the worldview.

Duckitt, J., Wagner, C., du Plessis, I., & Birum, I. (2002). The psychological bases of ideology and prejudice: Testing a dual process model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(1), 75-93.

This article expanded on the ideas presented by Duckitt (2001) and described and tested a casual model linking personality and worldview to ideology and prejudice. The results supported the hypotheses that motivational and cognitive processes influence prejudice and ideology. It further described Duckitt's (2001) theory and suggested potential implications. The article by Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, and Birum illustrated how different ways of looking at the world could influence one's political attitudes, thus emphasizing the role of belief systems roles in the etiology of ideology.

Gerber, A. S., Huber, G. A., Doherty, D., Dowling, C. M., & Ha, S. E. (2010).

Personality and political attitudes: Relationships across issue domains and political contexts. *American Political Science Review*, 104, 111-133.

Authors examined differences among the Big Five traits regarding political attitudes in the social and economic domains. They found Openness and Conscientiousness align with liberalism and conservatism, respectively, as prior research has found, but they also noticed differences among Agreeableness, Extraversion, and

Emotional Stability regarding political attitudes. For instance, Emotional Stability was found to be more strongly associated with economic conservatism than with social conservatism, although it was associated with both. Extraversion was associated with both social and economic conservatism, but more so with economic conservatism. The results also found that Agreeableness was associated with economic liberalism and social conservatism. They concluded that individual differences should not be ignored but recognized for the complexity they bring, particularly when different policy domains and racial differences are considered.

Gillath, O., & Hart, J. (2010). The effects of psychological security and insecurity on political attitudes and leadership preferences. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 40*, 122-134.

Gillath and Hart recognized that much empirical work on political orientation/ideology and security/insecurity focused on effects of situational threats or dispositional *insecurities* on political attitudes and leadership preferences, rather than on the effects of psychological *security*. Applying terror management theory and attachment theory to political attitudes, they posited that psychological insecurity motivated people to adopt attitudes that would increase or restore security and cause them to prefer leaders who can evoke such feelings, whereas psychological security reduced the need for attitudes or leaders who convey or provide

security but rather promote openness and inclusiveness. Gillath and Hart conducted two studies examining the effects attachment priming had on people regarding adoption of political attitudes and leadership preferences. They found that attachment security priming does affect political attitudes and leadership preferences, suggesting that one's attitudes are influenced by one's sense of security. Their studies also suggested that attachment security helps buffer anxiety related to threats to safety, adding to the literature that psychological security affects psychological functioning.

Graham, J., Haidt, J., & Nosek, B. A. (2009). Liberals and conservatives rely on different sets of moral foundations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 96*, 1029–1046.

Moral foundations theory examines how people of different political ideologies make moral judgments using five moral intuitions: Harm/care, Fairness/reciprocity, Ingroup/loyalty, Authority/respect, and Purity/sanctity. This article examines how people of different political ideologies utilize these intuitions across four studies. The four studies assessed the use of the moral foundations by varying how conscious one's reliance on moral beliefs was. In study 1, respondents rated the moral relevance of foundation-specific concerns. In study 2, moral judgments of self-identified liberals and conservatives were examined explicitly and

implicitly. Participants in study 3 were presented with choices that had them make moral tradeoffs, to test the strength of certain foundations for those individuals, and study 4 involved analyzing moral texts, religious sermons for the sake of the study, to see if speakers in different moral communities (e.g., liberal or conservative churches) used foundation-related words in different ways or amounts. The findings from the studies were that liberals utilized the moral foundations of Harm/care and Fairness/reciprocity more than the other three foundations, whereas conservatives used all five equally. The authors strongly stressed future research to include diverse samples, more validation in item selection to ensure that differences between liberals and conservatives are accurately measured, consideration of cultural and national differences, and casual nature between ideology and moral beliefs.

Haidt, J., & Graham, J. (2007). When morality opposes justice: Conservatives have moral intuitions that liberals may not recognize. *Social Justice Research* (20) 98–116.

Haidt and Graham contributed to the literature of moral foundation theory, noting that conservatives utilize moral intuitions that liberals tend not to use. This article acknowledged the development in psychology of morality, citing the contributions by Kohlberg (1969; ethic of justice) and Gilligan (1982; ethic of care).

Haidt and Graham review how morality as initially studies focused on protecting individuals; yet further research suggested that morality extended beyond individuals to focus on a societal level. For example, they comment on Richard Shweder's perception that morality to comprise of three ethics: autonomy, community, and divinity. Given these ideas, the authors discuss how Haidt and Joseph (2004) posited five moral foundations, describing them: Harm/care, Fairness/reciprocity, Ingroup/loyalty, Authority/respect, and Purity/sanctity. The article then examines whether social justice consists of one-half of morality, a frame seen more frequently among liberals in moral foundation research, or one-fifth, as seen more frequently among conservatives. In addition, the authors emphasize how an awareness of the differences between liberals and conservatives can present more opportunities for open dialogue regarding morality or issues that evoke their moral intuitions.

Haidt, J., Graham, J., & Joseph, C. (2009). Above and below left-right: Ideological narratives and moral foundations. *Psychological Inquiry* 20(2), 110-119.

This article applies Dan McAdams's three-level account of personality to better account the ideological narratives people adopt. Level 1 consists of personality traits, level 2 consists of characteristic adaptation, and level 3 consists of life stores. Haidt, Graham, and Joseph noted that Moral Foundation Theory (MFT)

may best account as a level 2 psychological construct that affects the development of level 3 narratives that people have about their political ideologies. They applied MFT to a dataset of survey responses regarding morals and identified four clusters in which the respondents could be classified: secular liberals, libertarians, religious left, and social conservatives. These different clusters had different profiles among the five moral foundations described in MFT. Life experiences among people within the different clusters would lead to the variation among and within the people within these clusters. Based on the differences among the clusters, different ideological narratives were identified that the authors felt people in the different clusters would endorse giving the themes or moral emphasized in those narratives. Thus, the authors felt that while classification through traits and response patterns are important, so is listening to the stories people have.

Haidt, J. & Hersh, M. (2001). Sexual morality: The cultures and reasons of liberals and conservatives. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 31*, 191-221.

This article illustrated the differences between liberals and conservatives' beliefs/attitudes regarding sexual behavior. Haidt and Hersh noted that conservatives struggled to reconcile their beliefs in autonomy with their beliefs in religion and traditional family structures whereas liberals did not have such difficulty. This article emerged before Haidt postulated his Moral

Foundations Theory, suggesting that the findings from it helped pave the groundwork for that eventual theory. According to the article, liberals and conservatives are morally motivated and have strong opinions, but the driving forces come from different moral frames.

Hatemi, P.K., Gillespie, N.A., Eaves, L.J., Maher, B.S., Webb, B.T., Heath, A.C., ... Martin, N.G. (2011). A genome-wide analysis of liberal and conservative political attitudes. *Journal of Politics*, 73(1), 1-15.

This article was helpful because it provided information about the biochemical processes that may be involved in political attitudes, demonstrating that such beliefs may not just be cultural or learned. Through a sample of 13,000 respondents, Hatemi and others observed glutamate and N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptors having a relationship with conservative-liberal attitudes, leading them to recommend further exploration of neurochemical pathways as factors in political attitude development. The fact that these receptors appear associated with cognitive processes, such as information processing, memory, and learning, show their importance in understanding ideology. Hatemi and others' research offers evidence that biological processes, particularly genome-wide analyses, have some role, even if indirectly, on political orientation.

Inbar, Y., Pizarro, D., & Bloom P. (2009). Conservatives are more easily disgusted than liberals, *Cognition & Emotion*, 23, 714-725.

This article examined the relationship between conservatism and disgust sensitivity. Through several studies, the authors identified correlations between the two concepts, especially around issues of purity, such as homosexuality, which to be a clear standard to which conservatives and liberals differ. The findings suggest that those who are prone to disgust are more likely to be conservative than liberal. This article showed another dimension in which liberals and conservatives differ that is worth considering when examining the development of ideology.

Iyer, R., Koleva, S.P., Graham, J., Ditto, P.H., & Haidt, J. (2011). Understanding libertarian morality: The psychological roots of an individualist ideology. (Unpublished manuscript). University of Southern California. Available at www.MoralFoundations.org

This unpublished manuscript may undergo revisions during the publication process but it offers much information regarding how libertarianism is included in Haidt's Moral Foundations Theory. It further identifies similarities libertarians share with liberals and conservatives, which noting its own unique characteristics. Using over 100,000 responses from an on-line self-report measure, the researchers demonstrated that individual liberty seems to be a guiding principle compared to the other moral principles for

individuals who endorse libertarian perspectives. The article also illustrates the complexity that ideology can hold beyond liberalism and conservatism, allow more nuance for understanding people and how they develop and exercise their political beliefs.

Janoff-Bulman, R. (2009). To provide or protect: Motivational bases of political liberalism and conservatism. *Psychological Inquiry*, 20(2-3), 120-128

Janoff-Bulman's frame that conservatism is driven by an avoidance motivation, whereas liberalism is driven by an approach motivation helps explain how these attitudes may be developed and what psychological needs may be met through them. This article adds to the literature and perspectives that are presented from examination of the different types of attachment (secure and insecure). Janoff-Bulman's article also complements the articles that examined threat-uncertainty and its relationship with political attitudes, as well as those focused on RWA and SDO due to its review of inhibition and activation (which can appear as social conformity or system justification).

Jost, J.T., (2009). "Elective affinities": On the psychological bases of left-right ideological differences. *Psychological Inquiry*, 20, 129-141.

Jost defended the use of the left-right bipolar dimension, stating that it is "the single most useful, popular, and parsimonious way of classifying political ideology in the Western World for 200 years and counting" (p.129). This article articulates the psychological

bases of left-right differences, including “top-down” and “bottom-up,” as well as heritability and childhood origins of such differences. Jost noted that “‘elective affinities’ remains useful for describing the forces that unite belief systems with individuals and groups who are prone to receive them” (133). He reiterated political ideology as motivated social cognition, and stressed that political extremists are not equally closed-minded.

Jost, J.T., Banaji, M.R., & Nosek, B.A. (2004). A decade of system justification theory: Accumulated evidence of conscious and unconscious bolstering of the status quo. *Political Psychology, 25*(6), 881-919.

System-justification theory attempts to explain how existing social customs or arrangements are accepted despite their negative impact on an individual or a group. This article reviewed ten years of research regarding system-justification theory, including intergroup relations, prejudice, social identities, dominance-subordination, rationalization of the status quo, particularly from the vantage point of oppressed or disadvantaged groups, such as African-Americans, the poor, and gays and lesbians. Jost, Banaji, and Nosek examined 20 hypotheses related to system-justification through the presented decade of literature review, acknowledging its impact on political ideology, such as conservatism.

Jost, J.T., Federico, C.M., & Napier, J.L. (2009). Political ideology: Its structure, functions, and elective affinities. *Annual Review of Psychology, 60*, 307-337.

This article summarized the research of political ideology, including definition, history, dimensions, and social-psychological underpinnings. It provides a frame to examine ideology, such as the different components that might be included. It notes the challenges between unidimensional and multidimensional models of ideology, as well as between the top-down and bottom-up processes that may be used to explain the development of ideology. In addition, Jost, Federico, and Napier commented on the social and political consequences of ideology, recognizing how candidates, parties, and issues may be framed or presented. Furthermore, they stated that ideology can affect intergroup attitudes and justify actions or situations.

Jost, J.T., Glaser, J., Kruglanski, A.W., & Sulloway, F.J. (2003). Political conservatism as motivated social cognition. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129, 339–375.

This article examined theories of personality, epistemic and existential needs, ideological rationalization using a meta-analysis to describe political conservatism as a motivated social cognition that occurs to meet psychological needs, particularly the management of uncertainty and fear. These feelings are influenced by one's attitudes related to resistance to change and endorsement of inequality. The authors reviewed much research and noted that ideology is affected by many different personal and situational factors. They examined conceptual definitions of conservative

ideology, theories related to the psychology of conservatism, such as personality traits, terror management theory, cognitive style, and uncertainty avoidance. Their analyses integrated decades of research that focused on psychological bases of ideology.

Jost, J.T., Napier, J.L., Thorisdottir, H., Gosling, S.D., Palfai, T.P., & Ostafin, B. (2007).

Are needs to manage uncertainty and threat associated with political conservatism or ideological extremity? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33, 989-1007.

This article reports the findings of three studies that were conducted because the authors realized that the meta-analysis performed in the 2003 article by Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, and Sulloway left unresolved several questions: (1) do uncertainty and threat management independently contribute to political orientation?; (2) do uncertainty and threat management predict conservatism or ideological extremity?; (3) do uncertainty and threat management predict “mainstream” conservatism?; and (4) do individual differences in death anxiety predict political orientation? Through the use of questionnaires and structural equation modeling, Jost and others conducted three studies to assess the uncertainty-threat model of political conservatism. Their analyses supported their hypothesis that uncertainty and threat management each contribute to conservatism independently even after adjusting for ideological extremity.

Kanai, R., Feilden, T., Firth, C., & Rees, G. (2011). Political orientations are correlated with brain structure in young adults. *Current Biology*, 21, 677–680.

This article looked at differences in brain activity among liberals and conservatives. Acknowledging differences between them regarding their cognitive styles, Kanai, Feilden, Firth, and Rees used structural MRI images to illustrate that self-identified liberals had increased gray matter volume in the anterior cingulate cortex of the brain, whereas self-identified conservatives had increased volume in the right amygdala. Although they caution against determining causality, they recognize that political attitudes may be reflected in brain structure.

Koleva, S.P., & Rip, B. (2009). Attachment style and political ideology: A review of contradictory findings. *Social Justice Research*, 22, 241-258.

This article examined the existing research on attachment style and political ideology, noting the different outcomes identified. According to Koleva and Rip, secure attachment is predominantly associated with liberalism and its covariates, whereas insecure anxious-ambivalent attachment is mainly associated with covariates of conservatism. However, in regards to insecure avoidant attachment, the results were mixed with for it had associations with both liberalism and conservatism. Given the discrepant findings regarding attachment and political ideology, Koleva and Rip offered frameworks to better explain the

differences. Their framework said that how attachment security is conceptualized affected its relationship to ideology. For instance, if attachment security is conceptualized as a relational need that can be met, then that may give people the secure base from which they can meet other needs or self-actualize (Maslow, 1943), and hence adopt liberal views. If not, then people may seek experiences and situations that lead to conservatism. If attachment security is conceptualized as a relational habit, it may foster a preference for conservative ideologies that lead to subsequent opportunities or experiences that maintain or preserve such security, whereas attachment insecurity may create openness to new experiences and tolerance for ambiguity, qualities associated with liberalism.

Liu, B.S., & Ditto, P.H. (2012). What dilemma? Moral evaluations shape factual belief.

Social Psychological and Personality Science, 00(0) 1-8. DOI:

10.1177/1948550612456045

Authors looked at the relationship moral beliefs have with interpretation of facts to resolve ethical dilemmas. According to them, “people resolve such dilemmas by bringing cost-benefit beliefs into line with moral evaluations, such that the right course of action morally becomes the right course of action practically as well” (p. 6). This article illustrated how different worldviews or versions of reality affect decision-making by noting that

information may be examined differently based on the worldviews people hold. The article offered information about how biases can contribute to the differences in opinions that make it difficult for compromise to be obtained.

McAdams, D.P., Albaugh, M., Farber, E., Daniels, J., Logan, R.L., & Olson, B. (2008). Family metaphors and moral intuitions: How conservatives and liberals narrate their lives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95(4), 978-990.

Inspired by Lakoff (2002) and Haidt and Joseph (2004), McAdams and others examined the themes present among the narratives given about key life events between conservatives and liberals. They found conservatives depicted authority figures as being strict with focus on discipline and morality, whereas liberals depicted authority figures with empathy and openness. They also noted that liberals' morality and religious faith seemed emphasized harm and fairness, in contrast with conservatives who emphasized in-group loyalty, authority-respect, and purity-sanctity. They stressed that it was difficult to ascertain whether ideology influenced their narratives regarding discipline, strictness, empathy, and openness or whether they actually experienced more episodes reflecting such characteristics. This article further illustrated the relationship between family history and ideology.

Napier, J.L., & Jost, J.T. (2008). Why are conservatives happier than liberals? *Psychological Science*, 19(6), 565-572.

Napier and Jost wanted to understand why conservatives report greater happiness or more positive well-being than do liberals. They conducted three studies that used as variables, demographics, cognition differences, rationalization of inequality, life satisfaction, and macroeconomic data to obtain information explaining the differences between the two political ideologies. They even compared happiness levels and life satisfaction across several different countries in one of their studies. They found that neither demographic differences nor do cognitive styles account for the differences between liberals and conservatives. Rather, the rationalization of inequality contributes to the differences in happiness between the two groups, supporting prior research regarding system-justification. In fact, their third study suggested that conservatism serves as a buffer to unpleasant emotions that could be evoked due to inequality, whether economic or social.

Oxley, D.R., Smith, K.B., Alford, J.R., Hibbing, M.V., Miller, J.L., Scalora, M., ...

Hibbing, J.R. (2011). Political attitudes vary with physiological traits. *Science*, 321, 1667-1670

This article was helpful and cited because it offered information about the physiological differences that may exist between liberals and conservatives. It helped offer another perspective for examining the differences between liberals and conservatives, particularly regarding biology. The article does not identify a

causal relationship between physiological responses to threats and political attitudes, but rather notes that differences between those of different political attitudes may exist.

Pratto, F., Sidanius, J., Stallworth, L., & Malle, B. (1994). Social dominance orientation: A personality variable predicting social and political attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67, 741-763.

This article presents the concept of Social Dominance Orientation (SDO). Pratto and others examined how inequality is endorsed among social groups, such as men and women. Like Altemeyer's research on Right-Wing Authoritarianism (aspect of social conservatism), this article expanded the research in understanding conservatism, particularly regarding economic conservatism. The authors stressed that SDO is an attitudinal orientation rather than a policy doctrine or application. They suggested that SDO drove one's intensity of economic conservatism. Pratto and others defined SDO as the extent one wishes one's in-group dominates and is superior to out-groups.

Roccatto, M., & Ricolfi, L. (2005). On the correlation between right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 27, 187-200.

Roccatto and Ricolfi examined the relationship between Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO). They wanted to formally test Duckitt's (2001) theory that

two variables influence the correlation between RWA and SDO: strength of ideological contrast (stronger the contrast, stronger the correlation) and age of interviewees about their ideological attitudes (older the individuals, the stronger the correlation). Due to the sample sizes, their studies did not provide clear and convincing evidence to support the theory; however they noticed trends suggesting that the degree of contrast does have some impact on the correlation. The results regarding age were less certain, although in countries with strong contrasts, differences in age could be observed. This article was an example of the research examining the relationship between these two constructs, which was helpful in understanding conservative ideology.

Settle, J.E., Dawes, C.T., & Fowler, J.H. (2009). The heritability of partisan attachment. *Political Research Quarterly*, 62(3), 601-613.

The authors examined the heritability of partisan attachment using data from a sample of twins. Their findings indicated that while environment plays a role in socializing people's party identification between parent and child, heritability appears to play a significant role in partisanship, especially regarding the strength of partisan identification. According to the authors, the results expand on previous research that has looked at the development of political attitudes. Settle, Dawes, and Fowler noted that given the

stability of genetic expression, partisanship and political identification is likely to be more stable than initially considered.

Shealy, C. N. (2004). A model and method for “making” a Combined-Integrated psychologist: Equilintegration (EI) theory and the beliefs, events, and values inventory (BEVI). [Special Series]. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 60*(10), 1065-1090. doi: 10.1002/jclp.20035

This article discusses the importance of self-reflection, self-awareness, and self-assessment in the development of professional psychologists from a combined-integrated perspective. It notes how Equilintegration (EI) Theory and the Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI) can be used to facilitate such training. It offers an overview of EI theory and the BEVI, noting how a person’s structure contributes to the processes that are experienced in life and in therapeutic contexts, and such awareness is essential for best practices and ethical care.

Thornhill, R., & Fincher, C.L. (2007). What is the relevance of attachment and life history to political values? *Evolution and Human Behavior, 28*, 215-222.

Thornhill and Fincher believed that conservatives are focused on in-group association while liberals are focused on out-group association due in part to secure attachments and low levels of childhood stress (conservatism) or high childhood stress and avoidant attachment (liberalism). They acknowledged the literature finding the association between insecure attachment and

higher childhood stress. Surveying 123 participants, their findings supported their hypotheses about whether political attitudes are affected by attachment experiences. Their research suggests that individuals who do not experience much childhood stress tend to develop secure attachments and subsequently adopt conservative attitudes, whereas those who experience more stressful childhoods tend to become insecurely attached and adopt liberal attitudes. They speculated that an insecure attachment can lead to openness to experiences and risk-taking, which could be an adaptive function.

Weber, C., & Federico, C.M. (2007). Interpersonal attachment and patterns of ideological belief. *Political Psychology*, 28(4), 389-416.

Weber and Federico examined whether certain attachment styles related to SDO and RWA. With a sample of undergraduate participants, they found that anxious attachment led to RWA, but not SDO, whereas avoidant attachment led to SDO, but not RWA. These were mediated by worldview beliefs that the world is a dangerous place (for RWA) or it is an uncaring competitive jungle (for SDO), supporting their hypotheses. Their analyses also confirmed research suggesting that liberals and conservatives are more primed for sociocultural concerns rather than economic ones. Weber and Federico suggested that working models of anxious and avoidant attachment lead individuals to be overly concerned about

safety and competition, leading to the adoption of conservative ideology, whether it is related to right-wing authoritarianism or social dominance orientation. This article helped provide information about attachment styles and ideology, although the authors are clear about not making casual inferences.

Zamboni, G., Gozzi, M., Krueger, F., Duhamel, J-R., Sirigu, A., & Grafman, J. (2009).

Individualism, conservatism, and radicalism as criteria for processing political beliefs: A parametric fMRI study. *Social Neuroscience*, 4(5), 367-383.

Zamboni and the other authors recognize that neuroscience has recently been utilized in the examination of political beliefs among individuals. They add to the research by their study that assumes that political beliefs require more criteria/dimensions than simply the liberal-to-conservative criterion. They also wanted their study to identify unique brain activation among the political beliefs.

Through the use of multidimensional scaling (MDS) and parametric functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) they identified three dimensions of political beliefs (individualism, conservatism, and radicalism) and observed different neural activation for them: liberalism (medial prefrontal cortex and temporoparietal junction), conservatism (dorsolateral prefrontal cortex), and radicalism (ventral striatum and posterior cingulated).

Furthermore, their research noted how these dimensions impact

self-other processing, social decision-making in ambivalent settings, and reward prediction.

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