Karen Stenner



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#### THE AUTHORITARIAN DYNAMIC

What are the root causes of intolerance? This book addresses that question by developing a universal theory of what determines intolerance of difference in general, which includes racism, political intolerance (e.g., restriction of free speech), moral intolerance (e.g., homophobia, supporting censorship and school prayer), and punitiveness. It demonstrates that all of these seemingly disparate attitudes are principally caused by just two factors: individuals' innate psychological predispositions to intolerance ("authoritarianism") interacting with changing conditions of societal threat. The threatening conditions – particularly resonant in the present political climate – that activate authoritarian attitudes include, most critically, great dissension in public opinion and general loss of confidence in political leaders. Using purposebuilt experimental manipulations, cross-national survey data, and in-depth personal interviews with extreme authoritarians and libertarians, the book shows that this simple model provides the most complete account of political conflict across the ostensibly distinct domains of race and immigration, civil liberties, morality, crime and punishment, and of when and why those battles will be most heated

Karen Stenner is Assistant Professor of Politics at Princeton University, where she has been teaching since 1998. She was previously on the faculty at Duke University. Professor Stenner is the coauthor of *Electoral Behaviour: Introduction to Theories, Methods, and Data* (1992) and has coauthored articles in *Political Behavior, Political Psychology*, and the *Australian Journal of Political Science*, among others.

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# THE AUTHORITARIAN DYNAMIC

#### KAREN STENNER

Princeton University



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To Whimsy and Boo, my tiny little comets, who tore a hole in the sky and let all the magic of the universe pour through.

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# Introduction: The Authoritarian Dynamic

Some people will never live comfortably in a modern liberal democracy. How they got to be that way, what consequences it has for the rest of us, and the conditions under which we will feel those effects are the subjects of this book. This work focuses on a particular type of person: one who cannot treat with natural ease or generosity those who are not his own kindred or kind, who is inclined to believe only "right-thinking" people should be free to air their opinions, and who tends to see others' moral choices as everybody's business – indeed, the business of the state. It is about the kind of people who – by virtue of deep-seated predispositions neither they nor we have much capacity to alter – will always be imperfect democratic citizens, and only discouraged from infringing others' rights and liberties by responsible leadership, the force of law, fortuitous societal conditions, and near-constant reassurance.

This is not a person peculiar to any particular society or era; readers everywhere will recognize this character among their ranks (Greenstein 1987). The only variation is in the designation of "us" and "them" (Taifel and Turner 1979; 1986; Tajfel 1981; Moscovici 1984; Turner 1987), and of what counts as right and wrong. What remains constant is this familiar triad of racial, political, and moral intolerance: the tendency to glorify some "in-group" and to denigrate "out-groups" (Turner and Brown 1978; Tajfel and Turner 1979; 1986; Tajfel 1981; Turner 1987), to venerate and privilege a set of ideas and practices, and to reward or punish others according to their conformity to this "normative order" (Stenner 1997). Across time and place, we find that those inclined to discriminate against members of other racial and ethnic groups also rush to protect the "common good" by "stamping out" offensive ideas and "cracking down" on misbehavior, and show unusual interest in making public policy about what other people might be up to in private. At the other end of this spectrum are those who interact eagerly and respectfully with all manner of people, who think the common good mostly a chimera best

served by letting "a thousand flowers bloom," and who cannot imagine being bothered about, let alone bothering lawmakers about, what others do behind closed doors. The rest of us fall somewhere in between: not openly averse to other peoples but usually favoring our own, uneasy about restricting what individuals may say but less so how and when and where they say it, generally wanting to keep private moral choices out of the public realm but at some point "drawing the line."

The common content and the familiarity of this triad – the regularity with which these things "go together" in individuals – suggest the first and basic argument of this book. Individuals possess fairly stable predispositions to intolerance of difference, that is, varying levels of willingness to "put up with" differing people, ideas, and behaviors. Our attitudes toward minorities, immigrants, and foreigners could not be predicted from our views on dissidents, deviants, and criminals (and vice versa) if not for some relatively enduring predisposition to be intolerant of all manner of difference (Adorno et al. 1950; Allport 1954; Marcus et al. 1995).

#### THE CONCEPT OF AUTHORITARIANISM

The concept of a predisposition to intolerance is certainly not my invention. Across a half-century of scholarly research set in motion by the landmark *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al. 1950),<sup>1</sup> and invigorated recently by the careful contributions of Altemeyer (1981; 1988; 1996), such a predisposition to intolerance – widely labeled "authoritarianism" – has been acknowledged and delineated. In its original formulation, authoritarianism was understood as a personality syndrome of nine covarying traits, the surface expressions of an enduring psychodynamic conflict within the individual originating in rigid and punitive childrearing and involving the repression of hostility toward parental authority and its displacement onto societal out-groups: racial and ethnic minorities, political dissidents, and moral deviants.

This original formulation of the concept of authoritarianism has been subject to some serious theoretical and methodological critiques in the intervening years. On the theoretical front, the concerns include, most notably, the implausibility and nonfalsifiability of the Freudian account of its childhood origins (Altemeyer 1988); the inconsistent relationship between authoritarianism and childhood experiences (Christie and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> I would actually argue that the notion has roots that reach back prior to the publication of *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al. 1950), at least as far as the seminal *Escape from Freedom* (Fromm 1941).

#### Introduction

Jahoda 1954; Altemeyer 1981; 1988); and the failure of this purported personality dimension to show consistent association either with general measures of personality and psychological adjustment such as neuroticism, anxiety, and self-esteem, or with interpersonal behavior (Titus and Hollander 1957; Ray 1976, 1981; Altemeyer 1981).<sup>2</sup> On the methodological front, the concerns include the dubious merits of some of the original research strategies (Hyman and Sheatsley 1954); the tautology between the F-scale measure of authoritarianism and the attitudes and behaviors it was meant to predict (Christie and Jahoda 1954); and the infamous "acquiescence response set" that may have produced spurious consistency within, and relationships between, unbalanced scales (Altemeyer 1981; Ray 1983).

These critiques are so well known that they do not bear repeating here (for fine early reviews of the major themes, see Christie and Jahoda 1954: Brown 1965: Kirscht and Dillehav 1967; for more recent reviews, see M. B. Smith 1997; Martin 2001). And yet there are few concepts in social science that have aroused more interest or generated a more voluminous literature. The idea that there is a readily recognizable disposition that somehow brings together certain traits - obedience to authority, moral absolutism and conformity, intolerance and punitiveness toward dissidents and deviants, animosity and aggression against racial and ethnic out-groups – remains widespread. This is true whether the disposition is conceived in the original Freudian formulation as a particular personality type originating in rigid and punitive childrearing (Adorno et al. 1950), or as a syndrome of attitudes produced by simple social learning (Altemeyer 1981; 1988; 1996). Since both personality and belief systems are typically measured by willingness to agree with certain attitude statements – understood as the surface manifestations of the underlying "disposition" or "syndrome" – scholars with widely varying notions of what authoritarianism is often agree on the broad contours of what it looks like and what it does (Adorno et al. 1950; Stouffer 1955; Rokeach 1960; Katz 1960; Lipset and Raab 1970; Greenstein 1987; Altemeyer 1988; Ray 1988; Duckitt 1989; Staub 1989).

Yet this theoretical permissiveness has been costly. When agreement with certain statements can signify anything from possession of an "authoritarian personality" to learned prejudice toward specific attitude objects, the waters are sufficiently murky that there are few falsifying outcomes to adjudicate between competing perspectives. And certainly we can think of many ways in which it does matter whether

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Here authoritarianism did show some association with measures of anxiety, but this result has not been consistently replicated.

authoritarianism is a universal personality type or a pattern of cultural learning that could be "unlearned," as when deciding whether exposure to difference might aggravate or educate, might intensify or diminish intolerance. Likewise, as it stands there is little incentive or capacity for scholars to distinguish between the sources of authoritarianism, the fundamental predisposition itself, and its attitudinal and behavioral "products." And this matters, quite simply, because the different components behave differently, and are differently related under different conditions. When we are unclear what authoritarianism actually is, and whether the things we are measuring and associating are the predisposition itself, its causes, or its consequences, theoretical confusion and seemingly contradictory findings abound. Like blind men declaring different parts of the elephant to be the whole animal, scholars regularly fail to recognize that they have seized upon only one piece of the puzzle, and that their proclamations regarding the entire beast might be limited to that piece currently within their grasp.

Thus scholars might find that some variation in intolerance is accounted for by psychological factors and proclaim the existence of an authoritarian personality (Adorno et al. 1950; see also Martin and Westie 1959; Martin 1964). Confusion then reigns when this "personality syndrome" appears to ebb and flow with the changing environment, as when behavioral manifestations of authoritarianism respond in the aggregate to shifting levels of societal threat (Sales 1972; 1973; Doty, Peterson and Winter 1991). As Sales and Friend (1973: 163-164) dryly note, the "notion that central personality traits . . . might change in response to changes in the contemporaneous environment is hardly a commonplace in current personality theorizing." In much the same vein, readers already dubious that "individual differences" explain much of social interaction become confirmed in their skepticism when such differences fail to predict behavior consistently across different situations, since sometimes authoritarians behave like authoritarians but at other times are indistinguishable from the pack (Titus and Hollander 1957; Titus 1968; Ray 1976; Altemeyer 1981). Moreover, if personality is the whole thing, rather than a partial determinant of the thing, we are drawn to the unpalatable conclusion that differences across cultures (and subcultures) are a function simply of variations in "national character" and discount the reasonable alternative of differential social learning (see McFarland, Agevey, and Abalakina 1993).

But neither can simple social learning (Altemeyer 1981; 1988; 1996) tell the whole story. Although cultures vary in their levels of subscription to certain ideas, there is an eerie cross-cultural sameness to the elements that end up being "marketed" together (Forbes 1985; Duckitt 1989;

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Staub 1989; Altemeyer 1996), while individuals within a culture vary in their attraction to those ideas (Adorno et al. 1950; Martin and Westie 1959; Martin 1964; Duckitt 1983; Forbes 1985; Altemeyer 1996). Again, without careful distinction among the causes, essential elements, and consequences of authoritarianism, we risk mistaking one component for another or for the whole, and deceiving or confusing ourselves regarding its nature and dynamics. So when a scholar finds associations between racial prejudice and political and moral intolerance, but lacks any functional notion of a common engine driving attitudes across these domains, little wonder he declares the covarying responses nothing more than a "syndrome" produced by social learning (Alterneyer 1981; 1988; 1996). But this leaves us with an authoritarian "attitude package" no more coherent or necessary than any other combination the agents of socialization might have reinforced, and varying among individuals not by virtue of the needs it might be serving for them, but simply in accordance with their exposure to the (sub)cultural message.

In sum, then, the surface consensus on what authoritarianism looks like sits atop unreconciled arguments and seemingly contradictory evidence regarding exactly what it is and where it comes from, what it does and when it does it, and, of course, how best to measure the thing. The latter issue has consumed an inordinate amount of scholarly attention. It is largely responsible for the archetypal instance of "throwing out the baby with the bathwater" in which the study of a predisposition that is acknowledged to be a grave threat to liberal democracy was all but abandoned due to concerns about the reliability and validity of the scale devised to measure it. Then, in a classic case of overcompensation, Altemeyer's (1981; 1988; 1996) determined but empirically driven response to these concerns virtually made a fetish of scale reliability at the expense of providing a satisfactory account of the nature, origins, and mechanics of the predisposition itself. These, then, and especially the latter – figuring out the "dynamic" of authoritarianism, that is, the circumstances in which it is activated and deactivated and the varying "returns" of intolerance we reap in these different conditions - are the tasks to which I dedicate myself in this book.

Before continuing on to the second chapter and the development of my own argument, let me explain, first, the philosophy that inspired and animates this endeavor, and the nature of the data, methods, models, and literature the reader will confront in consequence. This understanding will be critical to the reader's ability to follow the logic of the forthcoming empirical investigations and to evaluate their intellectual contributions. I will then close this introduction with an account of the organization of the book, outlining the major purpose and content of each of its chapters.

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BOOK

As I have made clear, I am certainly not the first to suggest that individuals possess varying predispositions to put up with differing people, ideas, and behaviors. Still, it may not appear much of a contribution even to generate (let alone to resuscitate) the notion that intolerance of difference is driven by a predisposition to intolerance of difference. So let me address this issue directly at the outset. It seems to me that even this first, apparently obvious notion merits a thoroughgoing revival and reexamination. Social scientists face endless tension between formulating general laws describing regularities in the behavior of a whole class and understanding in all its complexity the behavior of a particular case. We struggle always, both as individual scholars and within subfields and disciplines, to find the appropriate balance between theoretical generality and specificity. Of course, both have their place. But in research on intolerance, as in many other fields,3 it may be this pendulum has swung too much in favor of increasing specificity, such that we are missing valuable opportunities to illuminate regularities in human behavior across domains (racial, political, and moral), across cultures, and across time.

Thus, we may achieve a highly textured understanding of exactly why holocaust survivors in Skokie, Illinois, resisted attempts by Nazi sympathizers to march through their town in June of 1978 (Barnum 1982; Gibson and Bingham 1985). But we might miss the import of the facts that the residents varied widely in their resistance; that, in general, aversion to free speech is associated with sympathy for precisely the kind of views they were trying to suppress; and that the more vociferous opponents of the march may actually have had the most to gain from allowing it to proceed.

Likewise, we might develop a rich, highly specified account of white Americans' animosity toward those of African descent, one that references slavery's rise and demise in the United States (Frederickson 1971; Franklin and Moss 1988; M. M. Smith 1997) and the history of the civil rights movement (Woodward 1966; McAdam 1988; Chong 1991); how this animosity may be fueled by or expressed in terms of violation of core American values (Sniderman and Hagen 1985; Kinder 1986; McConahay 1986; Sears 1988; Sniderman and Piazza 1993; Wellman 1993; Kinder and Sanders 1996; Sears, Sidanius and Bobo 2000); and how attitudes toward blacks – again, seemingly for reasons peculiar to the U.S. experience – have become inextricably linked with attitudes toward

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See Bowser (1995) regarding the importance of cross-national studies in comparative research on racism.

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welfare and crime (Glaser 1996; Peffley, Hurwitz, and Sniderman 1997; Gilens 1999; Mendelberg 2001). But in so finely tuning in to one nation's story of one manifestation of intolerance, we may miss the eerie echoes of what the Turks purported to dislike about the Armenians, what the Argentineans feared about the leftist dissidents, and how our Western European contemporaries talk about "guest workers" (see Lederer 1982; Staub 1989; Mendelberg 2001). Moreover, we know that white Americans incensed about blacks' purported welfare dependency and criminality generally can be relied upon also for complaints about Jews, homosexuals, and the ACLU (Sniderman and Piazza 1993; Kinder and Sanders 1996). Again, this suggests that Americans' tangled perceptions of race, crime, and welfare might have as much to do with the kinds of fears about disorder, "moral decay," and "the enemy within" that had the Nazis itching to "cleanse" the Weimar Republic of Jews, deviants, and dissidents as with anything peculiar to the American experience.

So we do not need theories packed with proper nouns to understand general patterns of behavior that have been observed since a variety of increasingly complex societies started worrying about whether and how their members would get along. I certainly do not intend to demean the value of highly specified accounts, which clearly have a vital place in our scholarly enterprise. I mean to suggest only that the ledger has become rather unbalanced, that such attention to names, dates, and places risks obscuring important regularities in human behavior that help all of us better understand our particular cases, and that there is much to be gained at this point by stepping out from among the trees and taking in a more expansive view of the forest.

# DATA, METHODS, MODELS, AND LITERATURE: WHAT TO EXPECT

This, then, is the philosophy animating the current investigation, and it has a number of important consequences for my use of data, methods, models, and literature. First, many of the analyses presented consist of repeated tests – against data generated by different designs and instruments – of one simple but apparently powerful model. This model, which I have labeled the "authoritarian dynamic," essentially consists of just two explanatory variables and their interaction, that is, two major factors thought *in union* to produce manifest expressions of intolerance: authoritarian predisposition and conditions of threat (either naturally experienced, subjectively perceived, or experimentally manipulated).

As for the critical endogenous variables ultimately accounted for by these factors, they are simply overall measures of intolerance in various domains – racial, political, and moral intolerance and its corollary,

punitiveness - and summary measures of general intolerance across the different domains. Thus the racial intolerance indices typically contain diverse items variously reflecting negative sentiments regarding blacks and, occasionally, affection for white supremacist movements or seemingly excessive in-group glorification. Likewise, the political intolerance scales might sum items tapping support for general principles of political tolerance, as well as for various "left-" and "right-wing" targets exercising specific political freedoms such as making speeches and holding rallies, teaching in public schools, and having literature in public libraries. The moral intolerance indices typically gauge a wide array of opinions regarding public regulation of private moral choices in matters such as school prayer, abortion, censorship, and prostitution, and perhaps feelings regarding homosexuals and/or opinions about their rights and protection. Summary measures of punitiveness might include attitudes toward the death penalty, opinions on whether courts deal harshly enough with criminals, and, occasionally, views on the appropriate balance between the rights of criminals and victims. And finally, overall indices of general intolerance are formed simply by averaging these four components of intolerance.

The point being made throughout is that a simple dynamic – a general mechanism consisting of just an enduring individual predisposition responding to changing conditions of threat – can account for a good deal of the variation within, and a great deal of the variation across, these different dimensions of intolerance. Thus to deem the analyses presented here "underspecified" – though surely true by the conventions of contemporary political psychology – would amount to holding the model to an inappropriate standard. The task of maximizing the "variance explained" within a certain domain is a vitally important part of our scholarly enterprise. But as noted, many others have dedicated themselves, and continue to dedicate themselves, to filling out the specifications with comprehensive accounts of all the ideas, interests, emotions, and conditions influencing particular expressions of intolerance.

Likewise, regarding the endogenous variables, one might lament my lack of distinction, say, between "traditional racism," "racial resentment," and "racial policy preferences" (McConahay 1986; Sniderman and Piazza 1993; Kinder and Sanders 1996); between supporting political freedom in the abstract and in specific applications (McClosky and Zaller 1984; Chong 1993; Sniderman and Carmines 1997) to targets of varying ideology and character, exercising different kinds of liberties (Marcus

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Alternately, "old-fashioned racism."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Alternately labeled "modern" or "symbolic" racism (see McConahay 1986; Kinder 1986; Sears 1988; Kinder and Mendelberg 2000; Sears et al. 2000).

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et al. 1995); between sheer homophobia and policy preferences regarding public morality (Sniderman et al. 1989; Golebiowska 1996), and even there between opinions, say, on legalizing "discretionary" and "nondiscretionary" abortions (Alvarez and Brehm 1995). But again, this would be asking that I plough fields already well tended by others at the sure expense of illuminating intolerance in general. Ultimately, I trust that the gains in our understanding of intolerance of difference across domains, cultures, and time will be considered well worth the acknowledged sacrifices of comprehensiveness and specificity.

In the same spirit of universality, note that while I often rely on U.S. data to test my ideas and normally resort to U.S. examples to illustrate points, the theory is entirely general and the phenomenon persists crossculturally, with little modification other than in the designation of "us" and "them" and (to a lesser extent) of what counts as right and wrong. Within cultures, too, though there will be peculiar varieties and manifestations of authoritarianism among subgroups of the population, the structure and character of the "system" remain the same. To isolate just a couple of examples from the contemporary U.S. experience, we can recognize Nation of Islam authoritarianism among African American men adhering to a particular strain of the Muslim faith transfused with ardent black nationalism, and "super-patriot" authoritarianism among whites believing our federal government to be the pawn in some "Zionist" plot to institute "One World Government." Again, while there is variation in "us" and "them," and some fungibility in regard to the content of right and wrong, authoritarianism exists in the fact that there is stark designation of friend and foe, and demand for absolute obedience to the rules and rulers of some normative order.

Finally, note that the same philosophy of generalization governs my treatment of the relevant literature, where I cite specific arguments and evidence regarding intolerance only if they highlight some substantial commonality of determinants or important regularity in behavior across domains, cultures, or time. Ultimately, this means that I mostly confine my references to literature explicitly dealing with the concept of authoritarianism. Even here, I will generally offer broad characterizations of the literature that highlight common themes, central arguments, reliable findings, persistent empirical puzzles, widely shared conclusions, and major disagreements. It has been said that authoritarianism is one of the most heavily cited concepts in all of social science (Van Ijzendoorn 1989;<sup>6</sup> Altemeyer 1996). It would be impossible to deal fairly with the many participants in this long-running debate, to do justice to the finer

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> As of 1989, there were more than 1,200 studies on the subject (Van Ijzendoorn 1989).

points of their arguments, and to consider all the details of the evidence while still leaving time, space, and energy to achieve the larger goals I have described. Fortunately, there are already some fine, comprehensive reviews of the authoritarianism literature to which the reader can refer for more detail (Christie and Jahoda 1954; Altemeyer 1981; 1988; 1996).

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

Let me close this introduction now with an account of the organization of the book, outlining the major purpose and content of each of its chapters. I intended with this first chapter simply to introduce the general notion of a predisposition to intolerance of difference, to acquaint readers with the concept of authoritarianism and its major theoretical disputes and empirical puzzles, and to explain the philosophy of my own endeavors so as to suggest what the reader can expect to encounter and how these efforts might be evaluated. In Chapter 2, I develop my own argument regarding what I have termed the "authoritarian dynamic." I distinguish between the fundamental predisposition, its manifold sources, and its attitudinal and behavioral "products," while specifying the conditions of "normative threat" (Stenner 1997) under which the predisposition will yield these manifest expressions of intolerance. I then expand these ideas into a more general notion of normative threat increasing "constraint" (Converse 1964) across the entire intolerance domain

Chapter 3 attends to the necessary business of describing and explaining the virtues of the three original data collections - one survey and two experiments – that provide the bulk of the evidence for the empirical investigations reported throughout. Chapter 4 then launches the first of those investigations: a kind of "snapshot" of the entire argument. Here I employ both survey and experimental data to show how the concept of the authoritarian dynamic – in which the activation of the predisposition and its impact on intolerance depend upon conditions of normative threat - manages both to reconcile the extant theories and to expose as only seemingly contradictory the empirical "puzzles" described in Chapters 1 and 2. Following these initial demonstrations of the behavior of the authoritarian dynamic, I return to the theoretical discussion, endeavoring to anticipate and address likely misconceptions of the theory. I then demonstrate the over-time stability of authoritarianism relative to political conservatism and party identification, and show how that stability increases (just as does the *impact* of authoritarianism) in conditions of normative threat. This last investigation broaches the notion (then

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developed in Chapters 5 and 6) that authoritarianism is of similar status to, but of very different character from, other major predispositions of interest to political psychologists, while also filling out the general claim (introduced at the close of Chapter 2) that normative threat increases constraint across the domain of intolerance.

Chapters 5 and 6 address themselves directly to the long-standing and very muddled debate regarding the distinctions between authoritarianism and conservatism. Together, these chapters effectively dispose of the notion that the phenomena are indistinguishable and the concepts redundant – Chapter 5 by comparing their impact upon intolerance across widely varying cultures, and Chapter 6 by demonstrating their differing nature and origins, the shifting relationship between the two, and their varying (and changing) influence on intolerance in the contemporary United States. Along the way, we learn a great deal about the roles played by personality, cognition, and social learning in the development of authoritarianism and conservatism; the different emphases these characters place upon achieving unity (for authoritarians) and stability (for conservatives); and how this generates widely divergent reactions to some situations of great political import.

Chapters 7 and 8 utilize in-depth interviews with extremely authoritarian and extremely libertarian subjects to put a face on the theory and to flesh out the portrait developed in the preceding chapters. In Chapter 7, I exploit by various means the rare opportunity these interviews provide to observe the actual behavior of subjects of varying authoritarianism toward (randomly assigned) interviewers of different race entering their homes. In Chapter 8, I then systematically analyze the attitudes that discriminate the authoritarian from the libertarian interview subjects, illustrating these differences with their own words. Through Chapters 7 and 8, I hope to provide a richer understanding of, a "feel" for, the characters involved that makes more vivid and compelling the experimental findings that follow.

The arguments and evidence of the preceding chapters were designed to build toward the principal empirical investigation presented in Chapter 9. Here we finally examine the ultimate dependent variables of racial, political, and moral intolerance, and punitiveness. In two separate experimental investigations – one embedded in a large national telephone survey, the other a laboratory study with students – I subject participants of varying authoritarianism to manipulations of normative threat and reassurance, then observe the impact upon racist, intolerant, and punitive responses. I find incontrovertible evidence that a wide array of stances considered detrimental to liberal democracy – racial animosity, political repression, moral absolutism, extreme punitiveness – are substantially determined

by the interaction of this fundamental predisposition with conditions of normative threat – in particular, with political leaders proving unworthy of our trust, and loss of societal consensus. Chapter 10 then closes the investigation by reviewing the major empirical findings and considering the broader theoretical and political implications of our exploration of authoritarianism and intolerance.

# Kindred Spirits, Common Spark: The Theory of the Authoritarian Dynamic

If we hope to make real progress in understanding predispositions to intolerance of difference, then it is no longer sufficient simply to admire the empirical regularities – the variance "accounted for" – and to persist in our lazy conviction that whatever authoritarianism is, whatever its origins and essential nature, it is *somehow* fundamentally implicated in this cluster of intolerant attitudes and behaviors. I develop in this chapter my own argument regarding what I have labeled the authoritarian dynamic (Stenner 1997). This posits a dynamic process in which an enduring individual predisposition interacts with changing environmental conditions – specifically, conditions of "normative threat" – to produce manifest expressions of intolerance. I will show that this hypothesized dynamic can resolve the persistent empirical puzzles that I have described, and reconcile theoretical perspectives alternately emphasizing the individual psychology or environmental conditions conducive to intolerance.

The first step forward is to distinguish among the sources of authoritarianism, the predisposition itself, and the attitudinal and behavioral consequences of authoritarianism: racial, political, and moral intolerance. Once we unpack these pieces of the puzzle, we can strip authoritarianism down to an elemental predisposition that is not tautological with the dependent variables it purports to "explain"; allow for manifold sources, including both psychological factors and social learning; and admit that the relationship between the predisposition and its manifest products depends upon the environment, that is, that societal conditions affect the extent to which those predispositions are expressed in racist and intolerant attitudes and behaviors.

This disaggregation allows us to formulate a more satisfying conception of authoritarianism; to explain many things with many fewer, more primary things; and to address those persistent empirical puzzles to which I have alluded, most notably: that authoritarianism does not consistently predict behavior across different situations, and (this related to the

former) that authoritarian attitudes and behaviors rise and fall in response to changing social conditions. We can formulate a more satisfying conception of authoritarianism by exposing functional relations among the elements of the disposition (Duckitt 1989) whereby these attributes cohere – as a defensive stance – because they are jointly serving certain needs for the individual. And we make sense of authoritarians' varying behavior across different situations, quite simply, by recognizing that a predisposition serving certain needs for the individual is called into service when needed.

#### UNRESOLVED ISSUES

Now, in a scholarly debate long plagued by unreconciled arguments and seemingly contradictory evidence, it is unusually important to be absolutely clear in the claims that one is making. Favoring clarity over elegance, I will address myself directly to the unresolved issues regarding authoritarianism that in the introductory chapter were stated simply as: what it is, where it comes from, what it does, when it does it, and how best to measure the thing.

#### What It Is

Regarding the first and primary issue of exactly what authoritarianism is, I argue simply that authoritarianism is an individual predisposition concerned with the appropriate balance between group authority and uniformity, on the one hand, and individual autonomy and diversity, on the other. This basic position resembles that taken by, and is informed by the undervalued insights of, the social psychologist J. H. Duckitt (1989). The cross-cultural covariation among particular ideas and attributes, which eludes explanation within a simple social learning framework, is understandable once authoritarianism is conceived as a system of *functionally related* stances addressing one of those "basic human dilemmas...common to all mankind" (Duckitt 1989: 72): that of the appropriate balance between group authority and uniformity and individual autonomy and diversity.

A predisposition is any preexisting and relatively stable tendency to respond in a particular way to certain objects or events (Rosenberg and Hovland 1960; Smith 1968; Greenstein 1987). Sometimes the existence of a predisposition is suggested by an individual propensity to react in the same way to a particular target at different points in time. And certainly, attitudes and behaviors that are predictable from one point in time to the next are often what we have in mind when speaking of predispositions. But mostly, we recognize a predisposition by observing at a single time point individuals' tendencies to respond in like manner to seemingly distinct

objects and events, whose common content then suggests the nature of the predisposition (Converse 1964). Thus the rather impressive coherence within individuals of attitudes and behaviors variously reflecting rejection of diversity and insistence upon sameness suggests the existence of an authoritarian predisposition.

The predisposition is labeled "authoritarianism" because suppression of difference and achievement of uniformity necessitate autocratic social arrangements in which individual autonomy yields to group authority. Thus, individual desire for particular outcomes is associated with preference for certain social arrangements or processes. These relatively stable desires and preferences locate individuals at varying points along a dimension ranging from extreme authoritarianism to extreme "libertarianism," marked at one end by preference for uniformity and insistence upon group authority, and at the other end by preference for difference and insistence upon individual autonomy.

#### Where It Comes From

In regard to the origins of this predisposition, let me note first that I remain agnostic regarding the extent to which these desires for particular ends lead to insistence upon certain social processes, as opposed to preferences for particular social arrangements necessitating acceptance of certain outcomes. Thus, for example, some might insist upon autocratic social arrangements in order to assure themselves of living among kindred folk, all sharing beliefs and behaving in like manner. But others might deem submission to group authority a prudent organizing principle for society and simply accept the social uniformity that tends to accompany it. Likewise, we might insist upon individual autonomy because we appreciate the diversity in beliefs, behaviors, and companions it tends to bring us. Or we might simply be accepting of difference due to the high value we place upon the freedom that produces it.

I imagine that many different paths are possible, and it matters little for our purposes here exactly how one arrived at a certain position on the authoritarian dimension. The important point is that the possibilities are numerous, and so a variety of factors may influence the development of authoritarian predisposition. Thus one may be inclined by personality to find difference exciting, or frightening; may be cognitively able to deal with complexity, or unable to understand that different is not necessarily

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> I leave as intriguing questions for future research the possibilities that how one came to be authoritarian/libertarian does indeed matter for the attitudes and behaviors yielded by one's predisposition, the particular forms that they take, the conditions under which they are manifested, and/or their resistance to change.

worse; may be socialized to believe that the individual is sovereign, or that individuals must submit to group authority. All of these possibilities are considered at length in Chapter 6.

Second, note that my choice of the generic term "authoritarian predisposition" (Lasswell 1930; Smith, Bruner, and White 1956; Rosenberg and Hovland 1960; Greenstein 1987) is very deliberate. To actually label these inclinations the "authoritarian personality" (Adorno et al. 1950), "closed-mindedness" (Rokeach 1960), or, most recently, the "authoritarian attitude syndrome" (Altemeyer 1981; 1988; 1996) is essentially to resolve by fiat a question that should be interrogated for all its possibilities and implications, and then settled by empirical investigation. As noted, personality, cognition, and simple social learning of a "package" of attitudes are *all* among the likely sources of this (or any) predisposition. Probably each is involved in inclining one to a particular resolution between authority and uniformity versus autonomy and difference, and thereby to predictable patterns of response to objects and events that implicate this dimension.

#### What It Does

So what are these predictable patterns of response? What does authoritarianism actually do? It is critical here that we distinguish between the predisposition to intolerance and intolerant attitudes and behaviors, that is, between authoritarianism and its characteristic "manifestations" of racial, political, and moral intolerance. I noted earlier that we infer the existence of a predisposition (here, concerned with rejection of difference and insistence upon sameness) from individuals' tendencies to respond in like manner to seemingly distinct objects (such as racial and ethnic out-groups, political dissidents, and moral "deviants"). Now, these patterns of response suggest the existence of the predisposition, but they are not themselves the predisposition; rather, they are its products. Failure to make this simple distinction between authoritarian predisposition and authoritarian attitudes and behaviors is responsible, as I have noted, for a good deal of the theoretical confusion and seemingly contradictory findings that have plagued research on authoritarianism since its inception.

So, what authoritarianism actually *does* is inclines one toward attitudes and behaviors variously concerned with structuring society and social interactions in ways that enhance sameness and minimize diversity of people, beliefs, and behaviors. It tends to produce a characteristic array of stances, all of which have the effect of glorifying, encouraging, and rewarding uniformity and of disparaging, suppressing, and punishing difference. Since enhancing uniformity and minimizing diversity implicate others and require some control over their behavior, ultimately these

stances involve actual coercion of others (as in driving a black family from the neighborhood) and, more frequently, demands for the use of group authority (i.e., coercion by the state).

In the end, then, authoritarianism is far more than a personal distaste for difference (and libertarianism more than a mere preference for diversity). It becomes a normative "worldview" about the social value of obedience and conformity (or freedom and difference), the prudent and just balance between group authority and individual autonomy (Duckitt 1989), and the appropriate uses of (or limits on) that authority. This worldview induces both personal coercion of and bias against different others (racial and ethnic out-groups, political dissidents, moral deviants), as well as political demands for authoritative constraints on their behavior. The latter will typically include legal discrimination against minorities and restrictions on immigration; limits on free speech, assembly, and association; and the regulation of moral behavior, for example, via policies regarding school prayer, abortion, censorship and homosexuality, and punitive enforcement.

#### When It Does It

When will these characteristic attitudes and behaviors be manifested? The preceding discussion of what authoritarianism does suggests a deceptively simple answer to the question of when it does it, and that is: when it seems necessary. I have argued that the "classic" stances of authoritarianism are concerned with maximizing uniformity and encouraging the obedience and conformity that it requires, with minimizing difference and constraining the freedom and autonomy that produce it. That being so, the experience or perception of disobedience to group authorities or authorities unworthy of respect, nonconformity to group norms or norms proving questionable, lack of consensus in group values and beliefs, and, in general, diversity and freedom "run amok" should activate the predisposition and increase the manifestation of these characteristic attitudes and behaviors.

I refer to these critical catalysts as "normative threats" or "threats to the normative order" (Stenner 1997). By the "normative order" I simply mean some system of oneness and sameness that makes "us" an "us": some demarcation of people, authorities, institutions, values, and norms that for some folks at some point defines who "we" are, and what "we" believe in. "Normative threats" are then threats to this oneness and sameness. In diverse and complex modern societies, the things that make us *one and the same* are common authority and shared values. The conditions most threatening to oneness and sameness, then, are questioned or questionable authorities and values: that is, disrespect for leaders or leaders unworthy

of respect, and lack of conformity to or consensus in group values, norms, and beliefs.

Now, it may seem wrong, or at least messy and unwise, to let ideas about (even subjective) group membership creep into a once elegant conception of authoritarianism that began simply with preferences regarding uniformity and difference. But, as noted, minimizing difference requires *others*' obedience and conformity, which necessitates someone to obey, something to conform to, and some idea of who must do all this obeying and conforming – that is, some system of collective authority and constraint, and some conception of who "we" are to which the system applies. "Obedience" to one's own conscience and "conformity" to an idiosyncratic value system – actually a reasonable depiction of the libertarian stance at the other extreme of the authoritarian dimension (Duckitt 1989) – truly strain our normal understanding of the meaning of these terms.

Ultimately, then, authoritarianism is fairly characterized as "groupiness." But it is a groupiness that generally comes from wanting to be part of *some* collective, not from identification with a particular group; that originates in wanting self and others to conform to *some* system, not in commitment to a specific normative order (cf. Duckitt 1989). The primacy of the first over the second – that is, of desires for oneness and sameness over particular group identifications and normative commitments – is evidenced by the fact that the latter will be sacrificed or abandoned when they do not serve the former. Conditions that bring the two into conflict, then, should separate authoritarians from conservatives. This is a critical claim that I exploit in Chapter 6 in order to distinguish these characters and, hopefully, to help resolve at last a longstanding and very muddled debate.

This is not to say, of course, that the "normative order" of authoritarianism is completely interchangeable, that its content is entirely fungible, that oneness and sameness could be instituted and defended by collective commitment (voluntary or otherwise) to *any* set of values, norms, and beliefs. Oneness and sameness are attributes of the collective rather than of the individual, and they are end states, not processes. They cannot be achieved without some kind of coercive control over *other* people's behavior. Thus, for example, a small group could conceivably achieve perfect consensus on and universal conformity with group norms respecting (say) individual autonomy. But all would need to be knowing, voluntary, and committed members of the group, attentive and amenable to the informal normative pressures that regulate small group behavior. And even perfect respect for *processes* of individual autonomy could never guarantee any

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This terminology was suggested to me by Tali Mendelberg, who bears no other responsibility for the ideas expressed here.

end state. If individuals are free, collective outcomes will vary, and oneness and sameness cannot be assured. Not even diversity can be assured by freedom, although diversity as a desired end state is, of course, excluded by definition. Thus, while the content of authoritarianism's "normative order" is somewhat flexible in regard to the specification of right and wrong (and perfectly malleable in regard to the identification of "us" and "them"), it is by no means value neutral. The normative order whose institution and defense might render "us" one and the same can never value individual autonomy and diversity, and will always tend toward some kind of system of collective authority and constraint.

Ultimately, authoritarians will reject for themselves, and seek to undermine for others, any system that fails to promote oneness and sameness, irrespective of their established group identifications and normative commitments (cf. conservatives; see Chapter 6). In the extreme, authorities deemed illegitimate and norms deemed questionable can ultimately cause highly authoritarian individuals to "withdraw" their consent from that normative order and to "reinvest" their inclinations elsewhere (e.g., the "True America"), as when super-patriot militia types decide that "these are not my people" and "this is not my government." But they will abandon that normative order only if there is a prospect of instituting some alternative system of authority and constraint (and/or some alternative demarcation of "us" and "them") that might promise greater unity and consensus. Right up until that point, authoritarians will be "manning the barricades" in defense of the established system of authority and constraint, showing and demanding obedience to group leaders and conformity with group norms. Most importantly, they will actually augment their commitment to and defense of this normative order as threats to that order (including unworthy leaders and questioned or questionable values) mount.

This idea that normative threats are the critical catalyst for the activation of authoritarian predispositions and their expression in intolerant attitudes and behaviors is ultimately my central argument and main intellectual contribution (see also Stenner 1997; Feldman and Stenner 1997). So again, I will have much more to say and show on this point as we proceed. But it is worth noting here that the idea of behavior being a function of a dynamic interaction between person and situation nicely accords with recent shifts in personality psychology. This new perspective (see especially the work of Walter Mischel and Yuichi Shoda) arose in response to the troubling observation (i.e., troubling for traditional notions of stable individual differences) that personality seems to manifest itself "inconsistently" in different situations. The mechanism I have labeled the "authoritarian dynamic" would be one example of what Mischel and colleagues call "situation—behavior profiles," where personality types exhibit

stable individual differences in behavior considered overall (i.e., averaged across different situations) but also "distinctive and stable patterns of situation–behavior relations (e.g., she does X when A but Y when B)" (Mischel, Shoda, and Mendoza-Denton 2002).

Thus, I am arguing that averaged across different situations (some threatening to that which they value, some reassuring), authoritarians are generally more intolerant of difference than libertarians. But this distinction between them will be more or less apparent in these varying conditions, on account of a dynamic interaction between their predispositions and the situations in which they find themselves (Mischel and colleagues' "situation-behavior relations"). Specifically, authoritarians will clamor for authoritative constraints on racial diversity, political dissent, and moral deviance under conditions of normative threat (belief diversity, leadership failure), but they will considerably relax this multifarious defense of oneness and sameness given normative reassurance (unified public opinion, confidence in leaders). By contrast, libertarians – located at the other extreme of the authoritarian dimension, and by nature disinclined to "groupiness" - remain inattentive to the collective until it imperils the individual. Thus the libertarian "if...then...profile" (Mischel at al. 2002) is to rise up in defense of diversity, dissent, and deviance when "culture wars" and the collapse of leadership make individual autonomy and difference look precarious, but otherwise to remain essentially "asleep at the wheel."

Notice, then, that the same personality is behaving entirely differently in different situations, and conversely, that in those situations where authoritarians "relax their defenses" and libertarians are "asleep at the wheel," these very different personalities are virtually the same in their manifest behavior. As I hope to make clear from our first empirical demonstrations of the authoritarian dynamic (Figures 4.1.1 to 4.2.2) through to the last (Figures 9.2 to 9.12.2), these interactions of personality, situation, and behavior represent contingent relationships of enormous theoretical and political significance, not weak and "inconsistent" associations impugning the very concept of a stable individual predisposition to intolerance of difference.

#### How Best to Measure It

Finally, we come to the issue that has consumed an inordinate amount of scholarly attention since the original publication of *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al. 1950): how best to measure authoritarianism. Readers having even a passing acquaintance with political and social psychology will have heard of the infamous "acquiescence response set" that plagued the original F-scale measure of authoritarianism. The fact that

the items making up the F-scale, as well as the indices that served as the dependent variables (e.g., ethnocentrism, anti-Semitism) were all worded such that agreement with the proffered statement indicated higher levels of the attribute in question produced spurious consistency within and relationships between these "unbalanced" scales (Christie and Jahoda 1954; Altemeyer 1981). So it was never clear whether the F-scale was measuring authoritarianism or mere acquiescence, whether authoritarianism or acquiescence (or associated attributes such as lower education and socioeconomic status) was explaining the dependent variables (ethnocentrism, anti-Semitism), or even whether acquiescence was merely "explaining" acquiescence.

Altemeyer's (1981; 1988; 1996) valiant efforts to address these and other problems resulted in his creation of a new scale purportedly measuring "Right-Wing Authoritarianism" (RWA), a highly reliable index of thirty-four items worded in different directions. In selecting items for the new scale, Altemeyer's overriding concerns appear to have been evading the acquiescence response set and improving scale reliability. He also passed over the more marginal themes of the original conception of authoritarianism – the Freudian psychodynamic etiology having fallen from favor – to isolate what he considered to be the disposition's core components: conventionalism, authoritarian submission, and authoritarian aggression. Unfortunately, all of this was mostly determined empirically rather than by reference to any theory.

One can certainly question the utility of an account asserting, in essence, that authoritarianism is the items that "hang together." And I have already taken issue with the plausibility of offering that they hang together simply because they are taught and learned as a "package," that is, because for some reason in a variety of diverse cultures and settings agents of socialization teach, model, and reinforce this particular combination of attitudes. But even taken on its own terms, I contend that the RWA scale does not constitute a satisfactory measure of authoritarian predisposition. While Altemeyer's balanced RWA scale avoids the acquiescence response set, it does not escape the other major criticisms that were leveled at the original F-scale (Christie and Jahoda 1954): that it confounds authoritarianism with conservatism, and that it is tautological with the dependent variables it is designed to explain.

First, as noted, one of the three major components of Altemeyer's Right-Wing Authoritarianism is conventionalism, and the scale contains a number of items tapping conservative inclinations to preserve traditions, customs, and the status quo. Granted, both Altemeyer's conception of authoritarianism and my own include the tendency to insist upon obedience to authority and conformity to conventions. But the RWA scale is unfortunately riddled with references to *specific* authorities and

conventions. Now, I have argued that a critical distinction between authoritarians and conservatives is that under certain conditions the former will sacrifice the status quo, will abandon group authorities and norms when they no longer serve the primary goal of enhancing uniformity and minimizing difference. Preserving the status quo does often serve to promote unity and limit diversity, so in many societies in many conditions authoritarians are indeed "conservative" in the sense of resisting change. But when it comes right down to it, their desires for oneness and sameness take precedence over defending the *established* authorities and a *particular* normative order. The authoritarian raison d'être is minimizing difference rather than avoiding change, and stability will ultimately be sacrificed to the pursuit of unity and consensus. Many items in the RWA scale confound authoritarianism with conservatism by failing to distinguish these different motives and goals.

Of course, the more general statement of the problem is simply that the RWA items are specifying particular norms and authorities that might be defended, rather than directly tapping into these fundamental motives and orientations. The first major criticism of the RWA scale (and the F-scale) thus merges into the second: that the specific content and "high-level" references of the RWA items make the scale hopelessly tautological with the dependent variables it purports to explain. Before moving on to consider this second criticism, though, let me quickly point out that we are in no better shape if by "right-wing" we mean being opposed to government intervention in the economy and to schemes of equalization and redistribution. I imagine that Altemeyer must have been quite chagrined to find his Right-Wing Authoritarianism scale predicting pro-communist attitudes and resistance to market reforms in the former Soviet Union (McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina-Paap 1992; McFarland et al. 1993; Altemeyer 1996). Likewise in the divergent setting of the contemporary United States: at least in preliminary analyses of support for affirmative action programs. I have found that authoritarians are not necessarily averse to schemes of equalization that enhance social uniformity (see Tables A1.4 and B.4, and Figures A1.4 and B.3). I will defer further consideration of most of these issues until Chapters 5 and 6, where the critical distinctions between authoritarianism and both "status quo conservatism" and "laissez faire conservatism" will be examined at much greater length. Suffice it to say that a measure incapable of clearly distinguishing authoritarianism from inclinations to preserve the status quo or from aversion to government intervention in the economy is, at best, of limited utility and, at worst, inviting spurious conclusions.

The second major criticism, as noted, is that the RWA scale is tautological with the dependent variables of our investigations. The scale is tainted throughout by specific references to what ought to be done with

minorities, dissidents, and deviants; it essentially sums the very attitudes we are endeavoring to explain. This point harks back to my earlier assertions regarding the importance of distinguishing (in both our theories and our measures) between the sources of authoritarianism, the predisposition itself, and its attitudinal and behavioral "products." It hardly "explains" specific instances of moral and political intolerance to demonstrate their association with a summary "predisposition" indicated by such items as "It would be best for everyone if the proper authorities censored magazines and movies to keep trashy material away from the youth" and "It is important to protect fully the rights of radicals and deviants" (Altemeyer 1988: 22-23). In the end then, I think of (and sometimes employ) the RWA scale as a highly reliable, empirically validated measure of authoritarian attitudes – but specifically, of authoritarian attitudes as normally expressed by majority members of contemporary liberal democracies – and not of authoritarian predisposition. In Chapter 4, I will show that this measure of expressed authoritarian attitudes responds exactly as we expect intolerant attitudes to respond to the interaction of a more fundamental measure of authoritarian predisposition with variables reflecting normative threat.

So what would adequately constitute this "more fundamental" measure of authoritarian predisposition? We require an unobtrusive, "lowlevel" measure of authoritarianism that directly reflects individuals' fundamental understanding of the appropriate balance between authority and uniformity versus autonomy and diversity. It must meet the measurement standards of both reliability and validity, with overriding emphasis on the latter. That is to say, apart from ascertaining that the measure is consistently reflecting *something*, we need to be assured that it is actually measuring authoritarianism and not some other attribute such as acquiescence or conservatism. In regard to the latter, the measure must be capable of distinguishing authoritarianism from both aversion to change and aversion to government intervention in the economy. And it must not reference particular targets, objects, events, or social arrangements that may be time-bound, culturally specific, and/or the actual subjects of our investigations. In short, it must tap directly into fundamental orientations to authority and uniformity versus autonomy and difference, in a way that enables us to distinguish authoritarian predisposition from authoritarian "products": the attitudinal and behavioral expressions of the predisposition, which are sometimes manifested but sometimes not, and whose specific content may vary across time and space.

A satisfactory measure of authoritarianism that meets these requirements can be formed from responses to batteries of childrearing values (Stenner 1997; Feldman and Stenner 1997). Here respondents simply indicate the qualities they consider most important to encourage in a child,

normally by choosing between pairs of desirable attributes, such as "that he follows the rules" or "that he follows his own conscience," "that he has respect for his elders" or "that he thinks for himself" (see Kohn 1977 for discussion of the development of measures of childrearing values). Summing their choices (alternately, their rankings) across the series, with authoritarian values scored high, produces a face-valid measure of authoritarian predisposition that meets all our requirements, while avoiding the pitfalls described in the foregoing. As Martin (1964: 86-87) points out: "How to 'bring up' or socialize children is a matter of profound consequences, involving basic human values and objectives." Childrearing values, then, can effectively and unobtrusively reflect one's fundamental orientations toward authority/uniformity versus autonomy/difference. And they can do so without implicating specific social and political arrangements, by simply querying in the context of the social microcosm of the family the trade-off deemed appropriate between the two: between parental authority and children's autonomy, between conforming to the rules and thinking for oneself.

Now, I hasten to stress at this point that such measures need have little to do with how respondents themselves were raised, with whether or not they have offspring, or with the manner in which they, as adults, treat children. It does seem to turn out that childrearing values are moderately related to the first (see Figure 6.3; see also Frenkel-Brunswick 1954), hardly related to the second (see Tables B.2 and E.2), and inconsistently related to the third (see Holden and Edwards 1989). But none is necessary for responses to, nor implied by reliance upon, such measures. These measures reflect childrearing (hence fundamental) values, not necessarily, nor substantially, childrearing practices to which respondents were subjected, or upon which they now rely. (Evidence on this point will be offered in both Chapters 5 and 6). Thus, for example, authoritarian responses to such batteries need not mean that one was subjected to the kind of rigid and punitive childrearing considered causal in the original conception of the authoritarian personality (Adorno et al. 1950). Likewise, a scholar's reliance upon such measures to indicate authoritarian predisposition need not signal that he or she subscribes to this original Freudian formulation.

In sum, then, these childrearing batteries are simply unobtrusive and effective means to *reflect fundamental values* (authoritarian or otherwise). And that is the spirit and manner in which they are employed in all the empirical investigations to come. The only "wrinkle" in the scheme is that it is patently unwise to rely upon such measures to reflect authoritarianism in samples of students who are barely removed, if at all, from being the children potentially subjected to such restrictions. Thus the reader will find the only time I deviate from reliance upon childrearing values to

reflect authoritarianism is when working with a student sample, where I simply ask the students to choose, between pairs of words, the one that "appeals to you more," that "sounds better to you." This strategy is clearly analogous to the logic of the childrearing batteries but obviously more appropriate to the subjects.

This brings us then to the conclusion of my own account of authoritarianism. While the merits of the theory will ultimately be determined by its consistency with the data, I trust I have elaborated at least a plausible account of the origins, nature, and dynamics of authoritarianism: one that responds satisfactorily to the major unresolved issues, reconciles the extant theoretical perspectives, and can encompass the known empirical regularities (including explaining how those persistent puzzles are really not so puzzling). Since the concept of normative threat is clearly the linchpin of this account – the critical catalyst for the activation of authoritarianism and its expression in intolerant attitudes and behaviors – I will review its links to existing arguments and evidence and then reconcile the latter with the former before concluding the theoretical discussion.

#### SOCIETAL THREAT AND AUTHORITARIANISM

The perspective on authoritarianism developed here explains the crosscultural covariation of racial, political, and moral intolerance not simply by implicating some universal personality type, or some system of social learning that mysteriously replicates across diverse societies, but rather by exposing them as functionally related elements of a kind of defensive stance, concerned with minimizing difference and promoting uniformity, with instituting and preserving some collective normative order. As such, it recalls an unjustly neglected literature concerned with the functional basis of attitudes (Smith, Bruner, and White 1956; Katz 1960; Sarnoff 1960; 1968; Greenstein 1987; Eagly and Chaiken 1993; Feldman 2003). Katz (1960), in particular, argues that we can understand attitudes by reference to the needs they serve and the functions they perform for the individual psychologically, which may include "adjustment," "ego defense," "value expression," and "knowledge." According to Katz, this motivation for holding the attitude then determines how it is aroused and how it is changed. "Ego-defensive" attitudes - such as the "classic" defensive stances of authoritarianism - are said to be galvanized by "threats" and "emotionally-laden suggestions" and modified by "removal of threat" and "catharsis." Clearly, it is not difficult to map this functional account onto the essential elements and processes of the authoritarian dynamic as I have described them.

An important advantage of this perspective, then, is that it, alone among the major theoretical alternatives, allows for the *expression* of

authoritarianism to depend upon the environment. If the elements of this functional system cohere because they are jointly serving certain needs for the individual, then the predisposition should be activated, should regulate behavior, and should produce its characteristic outcomes only when needed, that is, under conditions of normative threat; disobedience to leaders or unworthy leaders; nonconformity to norms or questionable norms; lack of consensus in group values and beliefs; diversity and freedom "run amok." Thus the elemental predisposition itself should remain reasonably constant. (There may appear short-term surges in *measures* of authoritarianism to the extent that they too tap manifest expressions of a latent predisposition; more on this later.) But authoritarian attitudes and behaviors can be expected to respond markedly to changing social conditions. So intolerant attitudes and behaviors are not simply a function of the individual's psyche, nor are they wholly determined by the social environment. This hypothesized dynamic – where manifestations of authoritarianism (racial, political, and moral intolerance) depend upon the interaction of individual predispositions with threatening societal conditions allows us to reconcile diverse theoretical perspectives alternately emphasizing the individual psychology or environmental conditions conducive to intolerance

#### Relevant Arguments

The notion that authoritarianism (in some form) is aggravated (somehow) by conditions of (some kind of) threat actually has a long and venerable history, whose significance for my current endeavors should not be discounted by my highly qualified description of its contours. I qualify the characterization for two simple reasons. First, I have posited a very specific kind of threat – normative threat – as critical for the activation of authoritarian predispositions. Other scholars may simply be less precise in stipulating the type of threat involved, or may consider any sort of societal disarray or decline equally consequential, perhaps even any form of aggravation whatsoever (as in simple "frustration-aggression" theories; see Davies 1962; Gurr 1970; Feierabend et al. 1972; Berkowitz 1998; see also Smelser 1962). Second, in elaborating the authoritarian dynamic I have specified a very precise way in which normative threat and authoritarianism are related. It is not that normative threat increases authoritarian predisposition, nor that (in normal conditions) the predisposition fosters the perception or experience of normative threat. And it is not that normative threat directly induces authoritarian attitudes and behaviors (expressions of intolerance) irrespective of one's predispositions, nor that authoritarian predisposition yields the same degree of expressed intolerance regardless of normative threat. Rather, it is that the interaction

of authoritarian predisposition with conditions of normative threat increases the impact of authoritarianism on intolerant attitudes and behaviors. Other scholars may have other causal processes in mind even if their observations, anecdotes, and data are not (as we shall see) inconsistent with the one I have described.

In any case, the general idea that societal threat is in some way implicated in the generation of authoritarian attitudes and behaviors accords with some long-standing arguments as well as with some rudimentary evidence suggesting that these attitudes and behaviors respond powerfully to conditions such as social disorder, "moral decay," national decline, and political dissent and instability. An early expression of this idea was offered by Fromm (1941), who proposed that the appeal to German workers of fascism was the "escape from freedom" it offered, that is, the release it promised from the uncertainty, insecurity, and lack of direction of modern capitalist society. Likewise, Reich (1970) argued that feelings of national humiliation and loss of security and identity prevalent in the pre-Nazi Weimar Republic laid the groundwork for public support of Hitler's fascist regime.

The theme has reappeared in the literature many times since, with the most notable recent contribution provided by Staub (1989), who pondered the origins of genocide and group violence in light of historical case studies of Nazi Germany, Turkey, Cambodia, and Argentina. He argued that "difficult life conditions" – political instability, economic decline, social disorder and change – can lower group esteem, frighten or frustrate individuals, and threaten their values, worldview, or way of life. This is said to create a powerful drive to restore psychological security and a positive self-concept. The restoration is apparently accomplished by cleaving to the in-group, positively differentiating the in-group, and devaluing out-groups. Staub argued that given the right cultural–societal characteristics – an authoritarian culture, a history of devaluation of out-groups, authoritative support for their mistreatment – individuals could move from derogating out-groups in the interests of restoring in-group esteem along a "continuum of destruction" toward mass violence and genocide.

While it does not explicitly address the concept of authoritarianism, we should also note here the correspondence of these ideas with social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979; 1986; Tajfel 1981), one of the most influential and widely supported general theories of prejudice. Social identity theory posits that attitudinal and behavioral discrimination toward out-groups serve the function of allowing individuals to form and maintain positive social identities based upon their in-group membership. An individual whose social identity is threatened seeks to restore that identity by means of positive differentiation of the in-group, and devaluation of and discrimination against out-groups.

#### Relevant Evidence

Until recently, the strongest empirical evidence of a connection between collective threat and authoritarianism was provided by crude analyses of U.S. aggregate data (Sales 1972; 1973; Doty, Peterson, and Winter 1991) showing that periods of presumed societal threat were associated with increases in various indicators of "societal authoritarianism" (which I would alternately describe as aggregate manifestation of authoritarian attitudes and behaviors). These aggregate indicators include conversion to fundamentalist church denominations (Sales 1972), larger police budgets, harsher prison sentences for sex offenders (Sales 1973), power themes in comic books and television programs (Sales 1973; Doty, Peterson, and Winter 1991), censorship attempts, support for conservative political candidates, reports of KKK activity, and enhanced willingness to express prejudice in surveys (Doty, Peterson, and Winter 1991).

More direct, individual-level evidence – drawing on survey and/or experimental data – has been provided by Rydgren (2002; 2003), Altemeyer (1988; 1996), and Marcus and colleagues (1995). Rydgren (2002) analyzes the rise in Europe of what he terms "radical right populist" parties combining "ethno-nationalism" with "sociocultural" authoritarianism and political "populism" (Rydgren 2002: 27) – a conjunction analogous to our own "classic" triad of racial, moral, and political intolerance. Most notably, among the conditions he isolates as conducive to the rise of such parties (Rydgren 2002: 32) are two elements strongly reminiscent of our two critical components of normative threat: belief diversity (in his terms, "fragmentation of the culture") and disaffection with leaders and institutions (his "widespread political discontent and disenchantment").

As for experimental evidence, in a number of different investigations Altemeyer has shown associations between his RWA measure of authoritarianism (from my point of view, a measure of authoritarian attitudes), what he calls "perceptions of a dangerous world," and specific intolerant attitudes, or reactions to experimental scenarios. Altemever's measure of perceptions of a dangerous world is formed from responses to such items as "If our society keeps degenerating the way it has been lately, it's likely to collapse like a rotten log and everything will be chaos," and reflects something like a persistent fear of societal chaos and anarchy. But note that one of the things Altemever has puzzled over through the years is the inconsistency of those associations, the erratic nature of the linkages recalling the already noted failure of the F-scale to show consistent effects upon individual behavior across different situations (Titus and Hollander 1957; Titus 1968; Ray 1976; 1981). Happily, I will be able to clarify this mystery when we turn to the first of the empirical investigations in Chapter 4.

Finally, there are many echoes of the same kinds of processes and sentiments in Marcus and colleagues' (1995) experimental investigations of the "standing decisions" (predispositions) and "contemporary information" (changing environmental conditions) tangled up in specific political tolerance judgments regarding whether various groups – given experimentally manipulated characteristics and conditions – should be allowed to make public speeches and hold rallies. Also of relevance to our endeavors is their finding that global perceptions of society being filled with groups that pose a threat to the country markedly increase intolerance of specified "noxious" groups (Marcus et al. 1995: 108–109).<sup>3</sup>

# Reconciling Existing Arguments and Evidence with the Authoritarian Dynamic

In order to reconcile these arguments and evidence with the hypothesized authoritarian dynamic, we need to recognize the following. First, and most obviously, it is clear that many of the threats described by these scholars could be interpreted by us and/or perceived by the subjects as normative threat. Others could be partly a function of conditions of normative threat, as proves to be the case for perceptions of a dangerous world (see Figures 4.3.1 and 4.3.2). Second, while I have marked out a special role for the normative threats that directly endanger unity and consensus, the hypothesized dynamic would allow more generally that any threats to the collective (however "we" are defined) should induce from authoritarians the same kind (but not extent) of intolerant behavior. That is to say, if, as I have argued, desires for oneness and sameness lead inevitably but secondarily (cf. Duckitt 1989) to a kind of "groupiness," then threats to the integrity (e.g., residential integration, immigration) and status (e.g., economic downturn, military defeat, declining group status) of the collective should set the same dynamic in motion as do direct threats to unity and

Marcus and his colleagues also report experimental evidence indicating that political tolerance is strongly influenced by threatening contemporary information alleging "normative violations" by the targets of the tolerance judgments: specifically, that individuals are less inclined to extend civil liberties to a group that is said to be violent and disorderly. When experimental subjects confront a group that "violates the norms of proper, orderly behavior, the increased perception of threat leads them to respond with intolerance" (Marcus et al. 1995: 79). This idea that individuals will be less tolerant of a specific group that they perceive to be threatening in a particular instance is a common, and commonsensical, one, with cross-national empirical support (see, for example, Gibson 1996). As interesting and important as these effects are, they are very different from that which I am proposing regarding the role generally played by normative threat in activating authoritarian predispositions and increasing their "returns" of intolerant attitudes and behaviors, broadly conceived.

consensus, although (I would expect) less certainly and with more modest results.

Third, it is of course possible that threat, or certain kinds of threat, might directly induce intolerant attitudes and behaviors in ways that are not conditional upon the subjects' possessing authoritarian (or other) predispositions. And most of the studies reviewed in the foregoing do assume that conditions of societal threat translate in a straightforward manner to increased manifestation of what I (if not they) would call authoritarian attitudes and behaviors, without reference to anyone's predispositions. But if one is limited to observing the connections between changing levels of societal threat and authoritarian behaviors in the aggregate – as is mostly the case here – it is not possible to discern the extent to which any apparent association between the two depends upon (is conditioned by) individual predispositions. The association between the two in the aggregate essentially reflects the behavior of average citizens, and can mask widely divergent reactions by authoritarians and libertarians to the same environmental conditions. Thus, conditional and unconditional individual-level processes can be observationally equivalent at the aggregate level. And, of course, with this kind of aggregate data nothing at all can be said about the impact of threat on the predispositions themselves. So when scholars assert some association between threat and "authoritarianism," we must normally attribute the slip to the previously lamented failure to distinguish between authoritarian predisposition and authoritarian attitudes and behavior. They can truly be observing only an association between threat and the manifestation of authoritarian behaviors, and, as already noted, such an association observed in the aggregate can be equally compatible with a process that depends upon variation in individual predispositions and one that does not.

Fourth, no greater clarity is achieved by individual-level analyses of intolerant attitudes that can, but do not explicitly, allow for the interaction of individual predispositions with conditions of threat. Consider, for example, the apparent effects upon political tolerance judgments of threat perceptions, or of threatening experimental manipulations of group characteristics or contexts. These are individual-level analogues of the aggregate association between societal threat and authoritarian behaviors. Either way, the failure (at the individual level) or inability (in the aggregate case) to allow for the interaction of those threats with authoritarian predispositions means that the relationship we observe between threat and intolerant attitudes and behaviors is essentially that prevailing for the average subject or citizen, which may obscure widely varying reactions of authoritarians and libertarians to the same environmental "stimuli."

Fifth, and finally, to the extent that we can even legitimately distinguish between the RWA scale or F-scale and specific intolerant attitudes, the former (in the absence of some more fundamental measure of authoritarianism) will serve as a proxy for authoritarian predispositions, whose relationship then to the latter (specific intolerant attitudes) will depend critically upon the experience or perception of some kind of collective threat. As noted earlier, this explains the inconsistent ability of "authoritarianism" to predict attitudes and behavior across different situations, a nagging finding that has generated skepticism regarding an enduring predisposition to intolerance, but which is perfectly consonant with, and in fact is predicted by, the theory of the authoritarian dynamic.

# Direct Evidence on the Authoritarian Dynamic

I have suggested in the foregoing various ways in which existing arguments and evidence regarding the role played by threat in generating intolerant attitudes and behaviors are compatible with the theory of the authoritarian dynamic. But I can also report a good deal of evidence directly bearing on that interactive process (see also Stenner 1997; n.d.; Feldman and Stenner 1997). First, via pooled cross-sectional analyses of the Cumulative General Social Survey (GSS) – merging twenty independent cross-sections taken semiannually between 1972 and 1994 – I have previously shown that a wide array of intolerant attitudes are substantially determined by authoritarian predispositions (measured at the individual level by childrearing values) interacting with various aggregate indicators of the societal threats prevailing at the time of the respondent's interview (Stenner 1997; n.d.). Conditions of societal threat, and especially normative threat, dramatically magnify the impact of authoritarianism on intolerant attitudes. Most notably, great variance in public opinion at the time, high levels of protest demonstrations, and recent turnover of the presidency from one party to the other all vastly increase the propensity of authoritarian respondents to express racist, intolerant, and punitive attitudes on the GSS. For example, respondents with the same level of authoritarianism, but interviewed during periods that differ in terms of opinion diversity, political unrest, instability or volatility differ dramatically in their expression of racial animosity, aversion to free speech, and support for such things as compulsory school prayer and capital punishment: the classic authoritarian triad of racial, political, and moral intolerance.

Second, Feldman and Stenner (1997) likewise provide direct individuallevel evidence that the interaction of authoritarian predispositions with

perceptions of societal threat produces markedly increased exhibition of intolerant attitudes. This time using data from the National Election Study 1992 (NES92), we show that the influence of authoritarian predispositions (again measured by childrearing values) in promoting characteristic authoritarian attitudes is substantially magnified given perceptions of societal threat. Specifically, the greater the threat perceived by respondents, the greater the influence of authoritarian predispositions on intolerance; militarism; support for the death penalty; favoring order over freedom; derogating, stereotyping, and discriminating against out-groups; and cleaving to the in-group. The analysis employed a number of different subjective measures of political, economic, and social threat, including perceptions of ideological diversity in the polity, negative evaluations of the presidential candidates and major political parties, various perceptions of national economic decline, and fear of nuclear war. But by far the largest and most consistent effects were registered for perceptions of ideological diversity, and negative reactions to political leaders and parties. Across a wide array of typical dependent variables, these normative threats greatly exacerbated the impact of authoritarian predispositions on racist and intolerant attitudes.

Finally, note that both the GSS and NES<sub>92</sub> analyses reveal a striking and theoretically important contrast between the aggravating effects of collective threats and the effects of personal threats. In the GSS analyses, I found that family financial distress, criminal victimization, and personal trauma (such as divorce, serious illness, loss of loved ones) actually dampen the effects of authoritarian predispositions, inducing more tolerant and inclusive attitudes. From the GSS analyses, I concluded that personal threats actually distract authoritarians from their problematic (for others) concern with the fate of the collective, thereby "improving" their behavior (Stenner 1997; n.d.). In the NES92 analyses, perceptions of personal threat (such as family financial insecurity) prove relatively inconsequential for the activation of authoritarian predispositions and, again, more often than not dampen rather than exacerbate the influence of authoritarianism. These strikingly different effects of collective and personal threats in activating or deactivating authoritarian predispositions, and magnifying or diminishing their influence upon intolerant attitudes, are clearly consistent with my description of the origins, nature, and consequences of authoritarianism. In both investigations, authoritarians prove to be relentlessly sociotropic boundary maintainers, norm enforcers, and cheerleaders for authority whose classic defensive stances are activated by the experience or perception of threat to those boundaries, norms, and authorities. Overall, it is evident that authoritarians are oriented to collective rather than individual conditions, concerned more with the fate of the normative order than with their personal fortunes, and greatly aggravated

by perceptions both of value conflict and of failed political leadership: broken rules and unfit rulers.

#### THREAT AND CONSTRAINT IN THE INTOLERANCE DOMAIN

Neither Adorno and colleagues' (1950) psychodynamic conception of authoritarianism, nor Altemeyer's (1981; 1988; 1996) social learning account can comfortably accommodate this manifest responsiveness of authoritarian attitudes and behaviors to threatening conditions. But the authoritarian dynamic is clearly capable of encompassing this array of arguments and evidence. The kinds of threats that appear to aggravate authoritarians and increase the expression of their characteristic attitudes and behaviors – collective threats, and especially normative threats – are entirely consistent with our earlier discussion. Authoritarian fears are alleviated by defense of the collective normative order: positive differentiation of the in-group, devaluation of and discrimination against outgroups, obedience to authorities, conformity to rules and norms, and intolerance and punishment of those who fail to obey and conform. All of these behaviors can be expected to increase in the face of threats to the collective "anxiety-buffer" (Greenberg et al. 1990: 309) – political dissent and diversity, "moral decay," social disorder, national decline as authoritarians' antennae are alerted to the threat, their predispositions are activated, and their characteristic defensive stances swing into action. In sum, then, authoritarianism may be thought of as a reasonably stable individual predisposition that expresses itself to varying degrees under different environmental conditions. It is activated under conditions of collective threat, especially normative threat, and yields greater "returns" of racism and intolerance in response to those threats to the collective. This account allows for both an enduring individual predisposition and attitudes and behaviors that surge and subside under different environmental conditions.

One way of neatly summarizing and generalizing these observations is to posit that normative threat (and, to a lesser extent, collective threat in general) increases "constraint" (Converse 1964) across the entire domain of intolerance. Let me clarify this generalization by referring the reader to Figure 2.1, which depicts my understanding of the main components of the process leading to the "production" of intolerant attitudes and behaviors.

Putting aside the background exogenous variables (cognitive capacity and "openness to experience"),<sup>4</sup> what I am arguing in general is that *all* of the associations among the constituent elements of these components,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The origins of authoritarian predisposition are discussed at length in Chapter 6.

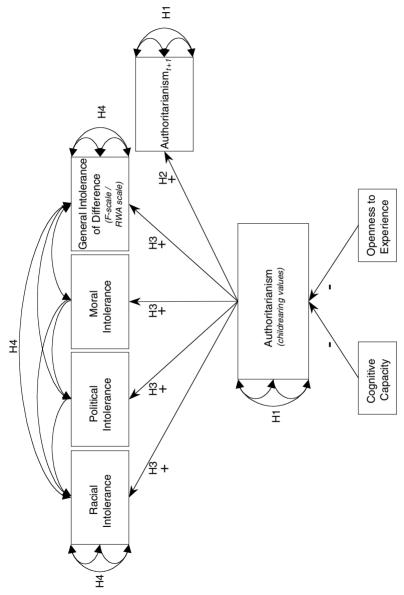


Figure 2.1. Constraint in the domain of intolerance.

and between the components themselves, will increase given the experience or perception of such threats. Stated somewhat more formally:

Normative threat in particular (and collective threat in general):

H1: increases the activation of authoritarian predisposition

 as evidenced by increased reliability of measures of authoritarian predisposition;<sup>5</sup>

H2: increases the stability of authoritarianism

as evidenced by increased association between measures of authoritarian predisposition taken at different time points;<sup>6</sup>

H3: increases the influence of authoritarian predisposition on manifest expressions of racism and intolerance

 as evidenced by increased effects of measures of authoritarianism upon indices (and items) reflecting racial, political, moral, or general intolerance (including the F-scale and RWA scale);<sup>7</sup>

H4: increases the consistency of the various manifestations of intolerance of difference

as evidenced by increased reliability of indices reflecting racial, political, or moral intolerance;<sup>8</sup> and likewise by increased association between measures of racial, political, and moral intolerance, and increased reliability of indices reflecting general intolerance of difference.<sup>9</sup>

- <sup>5</sup> That is, increased association between the items indicating childrearing values (or, alternately, choices of "appealing" words), which would be specified (for example): chooses 'obedience'=b<sub>o</sub>+b<sub>1</sub>(chooses 'rules')+b<sub>2</sub>(normative threat)+b<sub>3</sub>(chooses 'rules'\*-normative threat)+e, expecting significant positive coefficients for b<sub>1</sub> and b<sub>3</sub>.
- Which would be specified: authoritarian predisposition<sub>t+1</sub>= $b_0+b_1$  (authoritarian predisposition<sub>t</sub>)+ $b_2$  (normative threat)+ $b_3$  (authoritarian predisposition<sub>t</sub>\*normative threat)+ $e_3$ , expecting significant positive coefficients for  $b_1$  and  $b_3$ .
- <sup>7</sup> Which would be specified: *intolerance of difference*= $b_0+b_1$ (*authoritarian predisposition*)+ $b_2$ (*normative threat*)+ $b_3$ (*authoritarian predisposition\*normative threat*)+e, expecting significant positive coefficients for  $b_1$  and  $b_3$ .
- <sup>8</sup> That is, increased association between (for example) measures of moral intolerance alternately indicating opposition to abortion and support for school prayer, which would be specified:  $anti-abortion=b_0+b_1(pro-prayer)+b_2(normative\ threat)+b_3(pro-prayer*normative\ threat)+e$ , expecting significant positive coefficients for  $b_1$  and  $b_3$ . Or (to take another example) increased association between measures of racial intolerance alternately indicating "racial resentment" (Kinder and Sander 1996) and "traditional racism," which would be specified:  $racial\ resentment=b_0+b_1(traditional\ racism)+b_2(normative\ threat)+b_3(traditional\ racism*normative\ threat)+e$ , again expecting significant positive coefficients for  $b_1$  and  $b_3$ .
- <sup>9</sup> That is, increased association between summary indices (or individual items) alternately indicating (for example) moral intolerance and racial intolerance, which would be specified:  $moral\ intolerance = b_o + b_{\perp}(racial\ intolerance) + b_{2}(normative\ threat) + b_{3}$

In Figure 2.1, these various associations are indicated by the arrows relating the components and linking the elements within components. So the general notion is that all of these causal paths and internal linkages are augmented (relationships magnified, associations tightened) by the experience or perception of normative (and, less certainly, collective) threats. Chapter 4 will get the empirical investigations under way with some initial exploration of hypotheses  $H_3$  and  $H_2$  (in that order), in part to enhance comprehension of the central ideas, familiarity with the data, and comfort with the methodologies and presentational styles employed throughout the remainder of this work. But all of these hypotheses – each an expression of the same general notion that normative threat increases constraint in the domain of intolerance<sup>10</sup> – will be tested at different points and in various ways in the empirical investigations to come.

(racial intolerance\*normative threat)+e, expecting significant positive coefficients for  $b_1$  and  $b_3$ .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> The common structure of these hypotheses should be evident across the equations specified in the preceding footnotes.

# Manipulating Threat and Reassurance: Data and Methods

Most of the empirical investigations to follow draw upon three different data collections - the Durham Community Survey 1997 (DCS97), the Multi-Investigator Study 1999 (MIS99), and the Cultural Revolution Experiment 1995 (CRE95) – for which I was fortunate to be among the original investigators. Thus in each case I had the opportunity to include a tremendous array of variables (including many original instruments as well as variables infrequently measured on standard social science surveys) and to embed a number of experimental manipulations, all specifically designed to test my hypotheses (see Sniderman et al. 1991 for a discussion of the advantages of this approach). Each dataset employed in this work has its own corresponding appendix, providing full details and exact descriptions of data collection, variable measurement, and scale construction, as well as univariate statistics and the complete results of analyses. These appendices (lettered A<sub>1</sub>, A<sub>2</sub>, A<sub>3</sub>, B, C, D, and E) do not appear here in the hard copy due to space limitations, but may be found online on the worldwide web at \(\sqrt{www.KarenStenner.com}\). Tables and figures that are numbered appear in the corresponding chapters in the text (e.g., Table 5.1 appears in Chapter 5), while tables and figures that are lettered can be found on the website in their respective appendices (e.g., Figure B.3 can be found in Appendix B).

Generally, I will endeavor in the text to keep our attention focused on the argument itself and the import of the evidence, leaving the details of the data to these appendices. But given that most of the investigations to follow draw upon data from more than one of these studies and, moreover, that their special features are critical to many of the claims I will be making, I will provide in this chapter a fairly extensive overview of the nature, logic, and contents of each before moving on to the first of those investigations in Chapter 4.

#### THE DURHAM COMMUNITY SURVEY 1997

Toward the close of the preceding chapter, I reviewed evidence from my prior investigations of the authoritarian dynamic. Each investigation consisted of secondary analyses of existing survey data that had fortuitously included some form of the childrearing values battery (with some items among the battery indicative of the resolution between authority/ conformity and autonomy/difference), from which it was possible to construct satisfactory measures of authoritarianism. These rudimentary scales reflecting fundamental predispositions to authoritarianism had then been interacted with whatever measures of perceived threat could be constructed from the available items (e.g., from NES92 measures of ideological placement and leader trait evaluations), or with objective measures I had devised and merged with the (GSS) survey data, of potentially threatening societal conditions prevailing at the respondent's time of interview. The dependent variables in each case were then simply whatever expressions of intolerance could be found among items collected by other researchers for other purposes. And in neither case did I have access to anything like the kind of measures of personality and childhood socialization required to test hypotheses regarding the origins of authoritarian predisposition, let alone to distinguish these sources of authoritarianism from factors alternately disposing one to conservatism.

It was in response to these various limitations that I devised and conducted the DCS97 (see Appendix A1), a mail-out mail-back survey of a random sample<sup>1</sup> of adult residents of the Durham, North Carolina, community. Over March and April of 1997<sup>2</sup> I received back completed questionnaires from 425 members of a sample of 1,200 (a response rate of 35.42 percent), and of these, 361 non-Hispanic whites – representing a fair cross-section of that community – were retained for the current analyses. My reliance here upon a rather lengthy self-administered questionnaire – completed by respondents in their own homes at their own pace – gave me the opportunity to measure, in addition to more standard fare (sociodemographic attributes, political knowledge, ideology, partisanship, and candidate evaluations), a wide variety of theoretically important variables not typically found in political science surveys. These

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> One "twist" in the randomness of the sample was that, given the nature of the topics under investigation, and the limited resources available, nonwhites were purposefully undersampled by excluding census districts with black majorities from the sampling frame (considerably aided by the fact that Durham has a high degree of residential segregation). Technically, then, the *DCS97* is a random sample survey of citizens of Durham residing in other than majority-black census districts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> While almost all returns were received by the close of April, a smattering of late returns came in over the following few months.

# Manipulating Threat and Reassurance

included a battery of childrearing values, with varying instruments requiring respondents both to choose between pairs of desirable qualities for children and to exhaustively rank order the whole set of qualities. Also included were some widely accepted measures of two personality dimensions thought to be implicated in intolerance (Costa and McCrae 1985; 1992; McCrae 1996; Van Hiel, Kossowska, and Mervielde 2000; Butler 2000) – specifically, "openness to experience" and "conscientiousness" – as well as an unusual set of variables measuring early socialization and childhood experiences (including punitive childrearing). These were important to my ability to distinguish the origins of authoritarianism from the determinants of conservatism in the empirical investigations of Chapter 6. Finally, the survey measured various perceptions of normative, economic, and personal threat and, of course, an extensive array of dependent variables reflecting racial, political, and moral intolerance.

In the four years that followed, I attempted by various means to reinterview these original first-wave respondents on up to four more occasions, sometimes with a collaborator and/or for different purposes (see Stenner n.d.: Fischle 2000); only the first, second, and fifth waves of the panel are relevant for my purposes here. In the second wave of the study (DCS-InDepth97; see Appendix A2), from among the 361 non-Hispanic white respondents to the DCS97 I selected the 30 most and 30 least authoritarian individuals (as identified by the measures of authoritarian predisposition on the original survey) to be interviewed in depth in their homes by randomly assigned pairs of white and black interviewers. In the end, twenty-two extremely authoritarian and eighteen extremely libertarian subjects agreed to participate and were interviewed in November and December of 1997; these data are analyzed and discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. Finally, in the fifth wave of the panel, conducted during the presidential election of 2000 (DCS-Lewinsky Panel 97-00; see Appendix A3), we completed fifteen-minute telephone interviews with 133 of the original DCS97 respondents, 121 of whom were non-Hispanic whites.<sup>3</sup> This final wave of the panel is mostly relevant to investigations reported elsewhere concerning the impact of authoritarianism on political and electoral behavior (Stenner n.d.), but it also provides some valuable data analyzed at the close of Chapter 4 in regard to the over-time stability of authoritarianism relative to other major political predispositions.

As noted, one of the many advantages of the lengthy first-wave questionnaire was the opportunity it provided to measure a wide array of perceptions of normative, economic, and personal threat. I was particularly

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> We attempted to interview all original *DCS97* respondents for whom we had any kind of lead on a telephone number (268 of the original 425), ultimately managing to reach 157 of these original respondents nearly four years later.

intent on indexing the former more directly than had been possible with secondary data, and clearly distinguishing its effects on intolerance from those of the latter (perhaps more obvious and commonsensical) threats. Now, in regard to this critical concept of normative threat, recall that I have stressed throughout the vital importance of two main challenges to oneness and sameness: threats to obedience, and threats to conformity. So if I am correct regarding the origins, nature, and consequences of authoritarianism, then there are two major catalysts for the activation of authoritarian predispositions. First, we have perceptions of disobedience to authority, or leaders appearing unworthy of respect and obedience. And second, we have perceptions of widespread nonconformity and lack of consensus in group norms, values, beliefs and practices, or (very occasionally, since authoritarians will endeavor to resist such a conclusion) the suspicion that the normative order in which one has "invested" one's inclinations might be of questionable value and unworthy of the commitment.

The NES92 analyses had improvised indicators of these two main components of the concept of normative threat. Feelings of wholesale disappointment in (and presumably betrayal by) political leaders were reflected fairly directly by the negativity of responses to both the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates (Clinton and Bush), including both emotional reactions to the candidates and evaluations of their possession of desirable traits, such as "provides strong leadership" and "really cares about people like you." But perception of belief diversity had to be inferred from the (average of the absolute) distances between respondents' placements of themselves and each of the major political parties and leaders on the standard liberal–conservative ideology scale.

On the DCS97, I retained essentially the same<sup>4</sup> two measures of normative threat, but supplemented these with two additional indicators that

<sup>4</sup> My *DCS97* measure of "ideological distance" from major political actors averaged the absolute distances respondents (implicitly) perceived to exist between themselves and just the two major political parties. As noted, the *NES92* measure of the same concept (the data having been collected during the 1992 presidential election) had also averaged in the ideological distances respondents perceived between themselves and each of the major party presidential candidates. But the Durham data were collected in 1997, and in the U.S. political system (cf. a parliamentary system) it is not at all clear between presidential elections which political actor constitutes the "opposition" or "minority" leader, let alone what his or her ideological stances might be absent the cues provided by an election campaign. Second, and for similar reasons, in constructing the *DCS97* measure of "negative leader evaluations" I just relied upon trait evaluations of both President Clinton and former Senator Bob Dole. The latter, as the 1996 Republican presidential candidate, seemed at that time to be the best single choice to represent for respondents the national leadership of the

# Manipulating Threat and Reassurance

might reflect more directly perceptions of widespread belief diversity and collective nonconformity. First, I simply added a measure of the ideological distance respondents apparently perceived to exist between themselves and their fellow citizens, once again as implied by the absolute distance between where they located themselves on the standard measure of liberal/ conservative ideology and their placement of "typical Americans." And second, I measured their direct perceptions of belief divergence from both political elites and the masses by averaging the extent to which they felt "the beliefs and values" that "typical Americans" and then "members of Congress" tended to have "about society and the world in general" were "similar to or different from" their own (with response options ranging across six points from "exactly the same" to "completely different"). The purportedly distinctive capacity of these various threats to the "normative order" to arouse authoritarians' fears and increase the manifest expression of their characteristic defensive stances could then be contrasted directly with that accomplished by perceptions of national economic decline (still collective, but not normative threat), recent criminal victimization, family financial distress, and experience of personal trauma. The latter three are the kinds of personal threats that allegedly serve to "improve" the behavior of authoritarians by diverting their attention from the fate of the collective. The simple bivariate correlations in the DCS97 between each of these threat measures and a variety of important individual attributes are reported in Table 3.1.

There are two main points I wish to establish with Table 3.1. First, authoritarians are not especially inclined to perceive or experience threats of any kind in the environment. (Alternately, one might say that perceptions of threat and/or threatening experiences do not induce higher levels of authoritarianism per se). Indeed, if anything, authoritarianism tends to discourage the perception of threat, albeit very modestly. Authoritarians are somewhat less inclined than those of libertarian predisposition to sense divergence between their own beliefs and values and those of "typical Americans" and members of Congress (r = -.27). That is to say, they have a tendency to perceive that both their representatives and their fellow citizens share their worldview, a well-established psychological phenomenon known as the "false consensus effect" (Ross, Greene, and House 1977). That authoritarians seem especially prone to this perceptual bias perhaps suggests a kind of wishful thinking on the part of those with

Republican Party. But I was not sufficiently confident of his continuing salience to the American public to incorporate additionally in the *DCS97* measure of "negative leader evaluations" the kind of emotional reactions to the leaders (angry, hopeful, afraid, proud) that had been included in the *NES92* measure of same.

Table 3.1. Correlates of perceptions of threat
Table 3.1.1. Correlates of perceptions of normative threat

	Negativity of Evaluation of Major Party Leaders	Ideological Distance from Major Political Parties	Ideological Distance from "Typical Americans"	Belief Divergence from Congress & "Typical Americans"
A 41 i4 i i i				
Authoritarianism	20	08	13	27
Political conservatism	.02	07	24	28
Party identification	.10	.02	12	23
Male	.03	07	10	01
Age (years)	13	11	12	18
Raised in the South	04	12	15	15
Education level	.20	.15	.17	.20
Political knowledge	.04	.12	.03	.07
Subjective social class	.03	.08	.09	.01

Table 3.1.2. Correlates of perceptions of economic and personal threat

	Negativity of Perceptions of the National Economy	Negativity of Perceptions of Family Finances	Was Mugged/ Burglarized in the Past Year	Extent of Personal/Family Trauma in Past Year
Authoritarianism	.15	.08	01	.06
Political conservatism	.24	.09	.02	.04
Party identification	.16	.03	.07	04
Male	15	.09	03	12
Age (years)	05	.13	11	10
Raised in the South	.13	02	.05	.02
Education level	20	19	02	13
Political knowledge	30	14	09	13
Subjective social class	22	25	12	20

*Note*: Cell entries are bivariate correlation coefficients. See Table A1.1 for univariate statistics. *Source*: DCS97, whites only, N = 361.

an unusual interest in oneness and sameness. Likewise, authoritarians – again, as one might expect of those purported to have an unusual reverence for authority – are a little less disposed than those of more libertarian inclinations to negative evaluations of leaders' traits (r = -.20). But still, these connections are slight. All of this is perfectly consistent with findings reported elsewhere regarding the negligible, or very modest, and usually negative association between authoritarian predisposition and the perception or experience of threat (Stenner 1997; n.d.; Feldman and

# Manipulating Threat and Reassurance

Stenner 1997). And bear in mind that the theory of the authoritarian dynamic does not assume that authoritarianism is itself generated by the experience or perception of threat, nor that authoritarian predisposition makes one especially likely to experience or perceive threat, but *only* that authoritarians react with exceptional intolerance to threat, and to very particular kinds of threat at that.

Second, the weak correlations throughout Table 3.1.1 would suggest that should we find – as we have and will – that perceptions of normative threat increase the impact of authoritarian predispositions on intolerance, that does *not* mean merely that authoritarians who are also (say) politically conservative, or less knowledgeable, or of lower status, or male, or older, or raised in the South are especially inclined to express their authoritarianism in intolerant attitudes and behaviors (which of course would support an entirely different account of what is going on than that offered by the theory of the authoritarian dynamic). That is to say, it does not seem to be the case that perception of normative threat is simply standing in as a proxy for some other attribute that is the true catalyst for the activation of authoritarian predispositions, i.e., the real driving force behind their manifest expression in intolerant attitudes and behaviors.

Ultimately, of course, the only way to establish with certainty that one explanatory variable or another is the "real driving force" is to design an experimental treatment that precisely applies that force (and nothing other than that force), and then to assign experimental subjects in a controlled situation to receive or not to receive that treatment by a completely random process (Campbell and Stanley 1963; Cook and Campbell 1979; Kinder and Palfrey 1993). Random assignment to the experimental treatment (e.g., to information about widespread belief diversity, or pervasive failures of political leadership) ensures that the experience of that factor (in this example, normative threat) is absolutely unrelated to (and therefore not confounded with) any attribute of the individual or environment. So if we subsequently discern, for example, that individuals of authoritarian predisposition who were randomly exposed to normative threat display significantly more intolerant behavior than their peers who were not so exposed, then this can only be due to the experience of normative threat, since, by virtue of random assignment to treatment and control conditions, everything else is equal, on average, between the two groups.

So of course there is a great deal to be learned about how the political and social world actually works by dealing with naturally occurring experiences and perceptions: feeling dismayed or disgusted by real political leaders; exasperated by "inside the beltway" politics and a Congress that seems out of touch with people's concerns; sensing that public opinion has turned against things that one holds sacred; feeling estranged from

fellow citizens and unable to understand where they are "coming from." In investigations reported elsewhere concerning how the "politics of fear" actually operate in the contemporary United States (Stenner n.d.), I rely primarily on these kinds of naturally occurring data, while being mindful of their limitations. And I do resort in the current investigation to the *DCS97* data when I need to confirm the veracity of processes and outcomes I have induced with experimental manipulations. But in the end, the case I want to build here regarding the power and precision of the authoritarian dynamic ultimately rests upon the kind of unequivocal evidence that can only be gleaned from randomized experiments.

#### THE MULTI-INVESTIGATOR STUDY 1999

So I turn our attention now to the experiments embedded in the MIS99 and the CRE95, each explicitly designed to isolate and precisely distinguish the effects of different kinds of threats upon the behavior of subjects of varying predisposition to authoritarianism. The MIS99 (see Appendix B) was a national random-digit telephone survey of English-speaking adults residing in households with telephones in the mainland United States. It was carried out by the Survey Research Center of the University of California, Berkeley, under the direction of Paul Sniderman and Henry Brady (see Sniderman et al. 1999), with data collected over a ten-month period between June 1998 and March 1999. I was one of thirteen separate investigators (or teams of investigators) on the MIS99, each allowed a few minutes of interview time to gather data relevant to their own research interests by custom designing and implementing one or more randomized experiments.<sup>5</sup> Investigators also shared a sizeable core of common items measuring political, social, and economic attributes of general interest to all. From the 1,067 completed interviews (an overall response rate of 55.8 percent), my own analyses retain just the 844 non-Hispanic whites.

The MIS99 provided a rare opportunity to implement on a large national sample the kind of complex experiment needed to address the two critical theoretical issues emphasized throughout. First, it enabled me to distinguish the effects of many different types of threats and reassurances on racist and intolerant attitudes among subjects of varying pre-disposition to authoritarianism (again, measured on the MIS99 by childrearing items). This included distinguishing the impact of normative threat from that of more commonly cited sources of intolerance, such

My own module included four main dependent variables (each respondent was randomly assigned two) and seven distinct experimental manipulations (only some of which are relevant to my purposes here).

# Manipulating Threat and Reassurance

as economic distress and real intergroup conflict over material goods (Hovland and Sears 1940; Olzak 1992; Green, Glaser, and Rich 1998). And second, it allowed me to expose subjects to conditions that ought to induce widely divergent (hence theoretically discriminatory) behavior by authoritarians and conservatives, but that do not occur sufficiently often nor patently enough in "nature" for us to pin down the important distinctions between the two characters, that is, the critical differences in their motives and behavior. A full account of the experimental stimuli designed to create these conditions is provided in Table 3.2.

Subjects were randomly assigned to one of eleven conditions: ten treatments and one control condition in which no information was provided. In the treatment conditions, subjects were told that "We're also interested in what people can recall about major news stories; I'm going to read you a summary of a major news story and then I'll ask you how you feel about it." The interviewer then read an (unbeknownst to subjects) fictitious news story, selected at random, and designed to provide either (a) threatening or (b) reassuring (for authoritarians) information in one of five dimensions: (1) belief diversity versus consensus, (2) stability versus change, (3) bad versus good political leadership, (4) economic decline versus growth and (5) blacks gaining relative to whites or vice versa.

Notice, first, that treatments 2a and 2b each make orthogonal the conditions with which authoritarians and conservatives (if I am correct regarding the important distinctions between them) ought to be concerned—stability versus change for conservatives, and consensus versus diversity (sameness versus difference) for authoritarians—and so should induce widely varying behavior from the two characters. Thus the "stable diversity" story (2a) should be threatening to authoritarians but reassuring to conservatives, while the "changing together" story (2b) should be threatening to conservatives but reassuring to authoritarians. These two conditions, then, implement a critical test of the distinctions between authoritarianism and conservatism that is analyzed and discussed at length in Chapter 6.

More generally, though, it should be clear that from the theoretical perspective I have developed, conditions 1a, 2a, and 3a all constitute the classic normative threats by which authoritarians should be alarmed and activated, inducing greater manifestation of racism and intolerance. Likewise, conditions 1b, 2b, and 3b represent the kinds of normative reassurance that ought to calm these fears, deactivate authoritarian predispositions, and decrease the manifest expression of those characteristic attitudes and behaviors. Moreover, these normative threats should prove to be substantially more distressing and aggravating to authoritarians, and the normative reassurances more soothing and disengaging, than

#### Table 3.2. Threatening/reassuring experimental stimuli - MIS99

- Ta: Belief diversity The story was that American public opinion on a wide range of issues from how children should be raised to how the political system should be run is becoming increasingly divided. The American people are starting to disagree about more things, and disagree much more strongly. It seems that public consensus is deteriorating. And worst of all, this disunity in American society looks certain to worsen in the future, with more and more disagreement about what is right and wrong.
- Ib: Belief consensus The story was that American public opinion on a wide range of issues from how children should be raised to how the political system should be run is becoming increasingly united. The American people are starting to agree about more things, and agree much more strongly. It seems that public consensus is growing. And best of all, this consensus in American society looks certain to improve in the future, with more and more agreement about what is right and wrong.
- 2a: Stable diversity (stability but not consensus) The story was that America is going through a period of steady social stability. Advances in science and technology have slowed down dramatically, and we now see stabilization in our political system, our jobs, and our families. The article was not suggesting that American society is pulling together. Rather, it was suggesting that while we might have different goals and values, we have a stable society that will endure as a constant as we ease into the next century.
- **2b:** Changing together (change but not diversity) The story was that America is going through a period of rapid social change. Advances in science and technology have brought about enormous changes in our political system, our jobs, and our families. The article was not suggesting that American society is falling apart. Rather, it was suggesting that we're moving forward at a very fast pace, finding new ways to meet our common goals and values as we speed into the next century.
- 3a: Bad leadership The story was that American presidents have generally not lived up to our expectations. With just a few exceptions, both our Republican and Democratic presidents have been remarkably lacking in strength, vision, and principle. Our presidents, from both political parties, have generally been unworthy of the trust we placed in them, and have not been leaders in any real sense of the word. And worse still, with no electoral reforms, we're bound to confront even poorer-quality candidates in the future.
- **3b:** *Good leadership* The story was that American presidents have generally lived up to our expectations. With just a few exceptions, both our Republican and Democratic presidents have shown great strength, vision, and principle. Our presidents, from both political parties, have generally been worthy of the trust we placed in them, and have been leaders in every sense of the word. And better yet, electoral reforms mean we can look forward to even better-quality candidates in the future.
- 4a: Economic decline The story was that the American economy might worsen dramatically over the next year. The article suggested that America may suffer a period of rapid economic decline. According to some of the indicators, the national economy might show considerable deterioration over the next year or so, with a sharp rise in inflation and unemployment. The conclusion was that America may be facing a severe economic recession in the year to come.

# Manipulating Threat and Reassurance

- **4b:** *Economic growth* The story was that the American economy might improve dramatically over the next year. The article suggested that America may enjoy a period of rapid economic growth. According to some of the indicators, the national economy might show considerable gains over the next year or so, with a big drop in inflation and unemployment. The conclusion was that America may look forward to strong economic growth in the year to come.
- 5a: Blacks gain The story was that, compared to whites, the socioeconomic status of blacks in America has improved dramatically in the last few years. In terms of income, standard of living, getting a good job, and attending a good college, things are getting much better for black Americans. In contrast, white Americans seem to be stuck at much the same level they have always been. Compared with the gains being enjoyed by blacks in society today, whites are simply standing still.
- 5b: Whites gain The story was that, compared to blacks, the socioeconomic status of whites in America has improved dramatically in the last few years. In terms of income, standard of living, getting a good job, and attending a good college, things are getting much better for white Americans. In contrast, black Americans seem to be stuck at much the same level they have always been. Compared with the gains being enjoyed by whites in society today, blacks are simply standing still.

either news of national economic decline or growth (4a and 4b), or stories about relative group gains or losses (5a and 5b).

Fortunately, I was able to test these critical hypotheses repeatedly on both my own "archetypical" dependent variables (wanting to keep blacks out of the neighborhood, to suppress free speech, and to require school prayer), collected just after the threat manipulation, as well as against a wide array of other expressions of intolerance. The latter were included on the *MIS99* either for general purposes in the common pool of items, or for their own purposes in the modules of my fellow investigators. And rather impressively, they were often measured at very considerable distance from the threat manipulation, sometime in the thirty minutes or so remaining in the interview following my own experiment.

6 Note that four dependent variables were actually collected in the module, only three of which were employed in these analyses. A failure to order their presentation randomly meant that one of those dependent variables, measuring racial intolerance, was always presented first. Unfortunately, this meant that subjects in the control condition (no exposure to a news story) were always answering this first racial intolerance item having more recently (than treatment subjects) been subjected to other manipulations with racial content in the prior module. Analyses of this first dependent variable indicate that these control subjects are markedly more aggravated than the treatment subjects, even though I exposed them to no news at all. The differing experience of the control subjects relative to the treatment subjects clearly interferes with my ability to discern the impact of my own manipulation of threat and reassurance on that dependent variable, and it is excluded from all analyses for this reason.

Ultimately, the main advantages of the *MIS99* study were that its large sample size allowed for the implementation of a very complex experiment, and that it provided all the advantages of generalizability deriving from a nationally representative sample (Sniderman et al. 1991). On the other hand, it did not allow for the kind of command over, and close observation of the strength of stimuli, and subjects' experience of same that can only truly be achieved in the controlled conditions of a laboratory experiment, such as the *CRE95*. So let me take some time to explain now the logic and special virtues of that experiment.

#### THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION EXPERIMENT 1995

In late 1995, I designed and conducted the CRE95 (see Appendix C) for varying purposes in collaboration with Stanley Feldman (who is not responsible for any of the analyses or interpretations presented here). Subjects for the experiment were 165 undergraduate political science majors at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, who completed the experiment in partial fulfillment of course requirements. Again, given the nature of my dependent variables, my own analyses retain just the 103 non-Hispanic whites among the participants. These subjects came as scheduled to an experimental laboratory in the Department of Political Science and completed in isolation, in one session lasting about forty-five minutes, a paper-and-pencil questionnaire measuring sociodemographics, characteristics of the family of origin and childhood socialization, and a wide array of intolerant attitudes. As with my module on the MIS99, these variables were collected subsequent to an experimental manipulation of threat and reassurance, this time implemented via the subjects' reading of two "important news reports" - randomly assigned to each from among five threatening and five reassuring stimulus stories – said to have appeared during the preceding week in Time or Newsweek. Thus each subject read one "article" designed to be threatening and one intended to be reassuring, with the selection of each and the order in which they were presented (threatening story first or second) all determined by random assignment.

Note that the five reassuring stories were simply as close to inverse reflections of the five threatening articles as I could manage to construct within the bounds of coherence and plausibility. So there was naturally the one constraint in the random assignment scheme that a subject could not be assigned as his or her two articles both the threatening and the reassuring version of the same story (e.g., both the "bad leadership" and "good leadership" stories). These threatening and reassuring stimulus stories are depicted in Appendix C, much as they were presented to the subjects (though in the experiment itself, they had more of the appearance of articles torn from a news magazine).

# Manipulating Threat and Reassurance

As for the "guise," subjects were told simply that we were "interested in investigating how the news reports that people read in newspapers or news magazines make them feel." When subjects were probed in the postexperiment debriefing, they evidenced very little, if any, suspicion regarding the purposes of the experiment, and they indicated almost universal acceptance of the credibility of the (unbeknownst to them, fictitious) "news magazine articles." Indeed, the most frequent reaction was embarrassment at having been deceived by these fabricated stories. And note that the subjects had been compelled to read and "process" the stories very carefully, since after each article they were explicitly required to write out

as carefully, precisely, completely, and in as much detail as you can, what feelings you experienced as you were reading through the report, and how you feel now. We want you to try to explain to us as well as you possibly can how this news report really made you feel.

In short, we can have a good deal of confidence that the manipulation was implemented effectively.

This, then, is one of the virtues of the *CRE95* relative to the *MIS99*. Again, as a telephone interview of a national random sample of adults, the *MIS99* clearly has the advantages of representativeness and external validity. Likewise, the size of the sample allowed for a complex experiment drawing fine distinctions among many different kinds of threats and reassurances, all compared against a control condition. By contrast, the *CRE95* suffers all the limits on generalizability of any experiment conducted on student "samples of convenience," extracted from their natural environs and subjected to manipulations in the laboratory (see Kinder and Palfrey 1993). Moreover, the small sample necessitated the "doubling up" of the stimuli assigned (each subject here was exposed to both threatening and reassuring materials) and the omission of a true control condition (where no treatment whatsoever is applied).

As always, though, along with the distinctive vices come special virtues. For one, in the *CRE95* we had the time and control necessary to effect a much stronger manipulation. The student subjects read at their own pace apparently real and complete news magazine articles averaging around 500 words, rather than simply hearing a distant voice at the other end of a telephone line convey – with about 80 words in four quick sentences – a summary of a purported news story. Moreover, the explicit demand for written commentary in response to each article, made and monitored in the close confines of the laboratory setting, allowed for much greater control over the attention subjects paid to the stimulus materials.

Second, the fact that each subject in the CRE95 read both a threatening and a reassuring story (and in random order) actually more closely

approximates the mix of positive and negative information one normally confronts with media exposure. For reasons including limited degrees of freedom and the partly contingent assignment of the threats and reassurances, in most analyses of the *CRE95* I investigate just the varying influence upon intolerance of the threat to which one was exposed. But the effects discerned are all the more compelling for the knowledge that the threatening materials were always accompanied by some reassuring information.

Third, in regard to the necessary omission of a true control condition, let me point out that having the "alien life forms" treatment serve here as the "control" condition against which the effects of the remaining threats are compared actually makes the results obtained especially compelling. As with the MIS99, the main goal in the CRE95 was to compare the impact upon subjects of varying authoritarianism (measured for these students by "which word appeals to you more") of normative threats and reassurances relative to other kinds of fears and comforts. But the special role played by normative threats in activating predispositions to intolerance is really underscored in the CRE95 by their impact relative to stories that are obviously far more frightening from any other perspective, including that of simple common sense.

The most telling contrast in this respect might be comparing the aggravation produced by the two normative threats ("belief diversity" and "bad leadership") to the effects of official NASA announcements about imminent contact with alien life forms. But stiff competition – meaning stringent testing of the claim that normative threats are especially consequential – is also provided by the "unjust world" and "no afterlife" treatments. The story of an unjust world was inspired by the fact that many people apparently find distressing the idea that rewards and punishments in life might be meted out in an arbitrary fashion, bearing little relation to just desserts (Lerner 1980; see also Ross and Miller 2002). The "no afterlife" story also seems an obvious choice just on its face, given primitive, pervasive fears about the inevitability and finality of death. But its inclusion was really ordained by intriguing evidence from "terror management" theory (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, and Solomon 1986; Rosenblatt et al. 1989; Greenberg et al. 1990; Solomon, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski 1991) suggesting that our institutions, norms, identities, and commitments may simply be the vast, meaning-giving structure we fabricate in order to protect ourselves from this fundamental and all-consuming fear of dying.

Thus, if scientific proof that there is no life after death, Ivy League confirmation that fate is entirely cruel and arbitrary, and NASA reports of imminent alien contact cannot incite intolerance to the same degree as "simple" stories about "fractured" public opinion and "unworthy"

### Manipulating Threat and Reassurance

political leaders, then we have very compelling evidence supporting the authoritarian dynamic and the special status of normative threats in activating predispositions to intolerance.

I trust by this point I have provided an overview of the three unique data sources I rely upon sufficient to illuminate their special virtues and to clarify the purposes they will be serving in the empirical investigations to follow. So we turn now to Chapter 4, where I launch the first of those investigations, which is designed to underscore the central ideas from the earlier theoretical discussions, and to provide a kind of "snapshot" of the entire argument, while increasing comfort with the methods and presentational styles employed throughout the remainder of this work.

# The Authoritarian Dynamic and the Politics of Fear: Putting the Pieces of the Puzzle Together

I have repeatedly asserted in the preceding discussions that the theory of the authoritarian dynamic resolves (actually, dissolves) some persistent empirical puzzles in the literature. These include, first, the troubling fact that authoritarianism does not consistently predict behavior across different situations. Sometimes the behavior of authoritarians is clearly distinguishable from that of libertarians, but other times it is not. Second. we have the fact that authoritarian behaviors in the aggregate appear to surge and subside with changing environmental conditions (although still rather inconsistently so). It turns out that these two empirical puzzles are actually one and the same. They simply represent two alternative perspectives, or "angles," on the authoritarian dynamic, each generated by the fact that the relationship between authoritarianism and intolerance changes with varying conditions of normative threat. Since this notion of a dynamic relationship between authoritarian predisposition and expressions of intolerance is the central idea of this work, it seems appropriate and illuminating to get the investigations under way with some empirical demonstrations of the behavior of that dynamic, viewed under varying conditions and from different angles.

#### THE AUTHORITARIAN DYNAMIC: AN INITIAL DEMONSTRATION

Recall from the earlier critique of Altemeyer's Right-Wing Authoritarianism scale my argument that the RWA index actually measures not fundamental predisposition to authoritarianism, but rather expressed authoritarian attitudes (i.e., manifest expressions of intolerance of difference). And of course, the central claim of my theory of the authoritarian dynamic is precisely that normative threat increases the expression of authoritarian predisposition in authoritarian attitudes (as in hypothesis  $H_3$  from Chapter 2). So it follows that the most direct way to demonstrate the authoritarian dynamic is simply to observe the changing impact, under

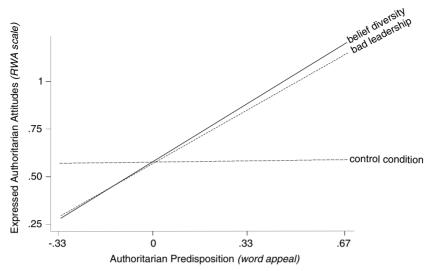


Figure 4.1.1. Experimentally manipulated normative threat increases the expression of authoritarian predisposition in authoritarian attitudes (*CRE95*). *Source*: Table C.4, column 2.

different experimental conditions of threat, of some fundamental measure of authoritarian predisposition (like those formed from childrearing values, or choices of "appealing" words) on some general measure of authoritarian attitudes such as the RWA scale. The results of implementing just such a test with the *CRE95* data are presented graphically in Figure 4.1.1.

In regard, first, to the explanatory variable, recall that for the student sample of the CRE95 I considered it most appropriate to measure authoritarian predisposition not by childrearing values, but by subjects' choices of the word that "appeals to you more," that "sounds better to you" - between "obey or question," "rules or progress," and "obedience or curiosity." (Note that subjects' choices were actually made across a series of seventeen pairs of words, only some of which are relevant to authoritarianism). Thus, subjects' fundamental predispositions to authoritarianism were indicated here simply by their varying inclinations to prefer the words "obey," "rules," and "obedience" over "question," "progress," and "curiosity." Moreover, given the possibility of correlated errors between authoritarian predisposition and authoritarian attitudes, I relied upon two-stage least squares regression (2SLS) to estimate the impact of the former on the latter (as also for all analyses throughout this chapter). So this direct measure of authoritarian predisposition, constructed simply from subjects' choices of appealing words, was

actually represented in the analysis by a proxy formed from exogenous variables.<sup>1</sup>

As for the dependent variable to be explained by this fundamental predisposition, my measure of "expressed authoritarian attitudes" (as distinct from authoritarian predisposition) was formed by averaging the extent of subjects' agreement/disagreement with twenty statements drawn from Altemeyer's (1988) RWA scale. In accordance with my earlier critique of the RWA measure, note that these statements included such specific – and directly political – expressions of intolerance as "The way things are going in this country, it's going to take a lot of 'strong medicine' to straighten out the troublemakers, criminals, and perverts"; "Some of the worst people in our country nowadays are those who do not respect our flag, our leaders, and the normal way things are supposed to be done"; and "It is best to treat dissenters with leniency and an open mind, since new ideas are the lifeblood of progressive change" (reversed). Other RWA items gauged what subjects thought ought to be done with "rabble-rousers," "protestors," the "radical," and the "godless."

I trust that the contrast here between my own and Altemeyer's measure of authoritarianism is sufficiently stark to drive home the face validity of the former as a measure of authoritarian predisposition, the hopeless tautology between the latter and the intolerant attitudes its proponents intend it to *explain*, and thus also the suitability of the RWA as a handy measure of intolerance of difference, that is, of the expressed authoritarian attitudes that are to *be explained* in the current exercise. That is to say, to the extent that, and for the same reasons that, the RWA scale is a poor measure of authoritarian *predisposition*, it is a serviceable measure of intolerance of difference, of authoritarian *attitudes*, at least as they are typically expressed in the social and political struggles of contemporary liberal democracies.

# Experimental Manipulation of the Authoritarian Dynamic

The varying regression slopes depicted in Figure 4.1.1 represent the changing impact of authoritarianism on intolerance in the different experimental conditions. (Note that here and throughout this work, all regression slopes and causal paths depicted in figures, results reported in tables, and relationships described in the text are statistically significant at least at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> I will henceforth forego providing in the text itself details of estimation methods and the like. But note that throughout, complete descriptions of variable scoring, scale construction, and estimation methods, as well as the full results of analyses graphically depicted in the text, are always available in the appendices.

p < .10 unless otherwise indicated). These results provide strong support for hypothesis  $H_3$ , with Figure 4.1.1 representing a compelling demonstration of the distinctive capacity of normative threats to activate authoritarian predispositions and increase their manifest expression in intolerant attitudes.<sup>2</sup> We see that in the "control" condition (exposure to a NASA report on alien life forms),<sup>3</sup> authoritarian predisposition has essentially no impact whatsoever on responses to the RWA scale – which is to say, highly authoritarian and highly libertarian subjects are virtually indistinguishable in their manifest behavior, expressing about the same level of authoritarian attitudes irrespective of their widely varying predispositions to authoritarianism.<sup>4</sup>

However, given experimentally induced exposure to either of the classic normative threats – pervasive belief diversity or failed political leadership – moving across the (one-unit) range of authoritarian predisposition dramatically increases expressed desire to crack down on "troublemakers, criminals and perverts," by at least three-quarters of the (o-I) range of the RWA scale. Among subjects led to believe that "the American people disagree about a much wider range of issues, and disagree much more strongly" than at any time in the last thirty years ("belief diversity"), or that the modern U.S. presidents have been "remarkably lacking in strength, vision, substance, intelligence and principle" ("bad leadership"), fundamental predispositions to authoritarianism vastly increase the propensity to express intolerant attitudes. Thus, characters whose behavior was indistinguishable in the control condition suddenly display widely divergent reactions to those who would disrespect "our flag, our leaders, and the normal way things are supposed to be done."

Again, bear in mind that this is not a matter of "explaining" specific attitudes toward minorities, dissidents, deviants, or criminals with a scale

- <sup>2</sup> Here and throughout, the source of the estimates that generate the graphics is always indicated directly beneath the figure in question. So in this case, the full details and results of the analysis from which the conditional slopes in Figure 4.1.1 are derived are reported in Appendix C, Table C.4, column 2.
- <sup>3</sup> As explained in Chapter 3, this is not a true control condition in which no treatment whatsoever is applied. Rather, it administers a treatment that illuminates the conditions under which authoritarians alter their conceptions of "us" and "them," and that distinguishes authoritarianism from conservatism (these aspects of the experiment are explored at length in Chapter 9). Thus, the estimate of the effect of authoritarianism obtained for subjects in this condition cannot be considered the normal impact of authoritarianism.
- <sup>4</sup> Again, here and throughout, details on variable scoring can always be found in the respective appendices. But generally, all variables without a natural metric are of one-unit range, with dependent variables typically scored to range from o to 1, while explanatory variables are normally centered on a sample mean of o.

formed by summing lots of specific attitudes toward minorities, dissidents, deviants, and criminals. All we have on the X axis is a simple measure of fundamental predisposition to authoritarianism, originally formed from just three indications of the words that "sound better" to the subjects. Those scoring at the scale maximum of authoritarian predisposition had merely indicated that "obey," "rules," and "obedience" sound better to them than "question," "progress," and "curiosity"; those at the scale minimum had indicated the reverse; and somewhat mixed choices landed subjects at one of two points in between. Moreover, with the 2SLS estimation procedure, the fact that an instrument formed from purely exogenous variables is standing in for the direct measure of authoritarian predisposition rules out the possibility that these effects are spurious and due instead to reverse causation (from authoritarian attitudes to authoritarian word choices) and/or correlated errors.

Finally, in regard to the purportedly *distinctive* ability of normative threats to activate authoritarian predispositions, note that the two remaining experimental treatments – intended to induce fears about the reality of an unjust world, or the finality of death – do indeed show much less capacity to arouse authoritarians to the manifest expression of intolerant attitudes (see Appendix C, Table C.4, column 2). Authoritarian predispositions appear to have about half the impact in the "unjust world" condition and around a third of the impact in the "no afterlife" condition that they exercise in the "belief diversity" condition; and moreover, these effects cannot be confidently distinguished from the negligible influence exerted by authoritarianism in the control condition.

### Replication on Survey Data: A Real-World Phenomenon

The natural occurrence of this dynamic process is supported by similar results obtained with the *DCS97* survey data, as depicted in Figure 4.1.2. It does appear that the same dynamic is set in motion by naturally occurring perceptions of normative threat as was induced by experimental manipulation in the *CRE95*. This *DCS97* measure of overall normative threat was formed from the four (equally weighted) components described in Chapter 3: leader trait evaluations, perceptions of ideological distance from the major political parties, perceptions of ideological distance from "typical Americans," and perceptions of belief divergence from "typical Americans" and "members of Congress." The three regression slopes in Figure 4.1.2 represent the varying impact of authoritarian predisposition on expressed authoritarian attitudes, given different perceptions of normative threat. These conditional slopes were generated from the 2SLS results (see Appendix A1, Table A1.5, column 2) by setting overall perceptions of normative threat, in turn, at the average value for perceived

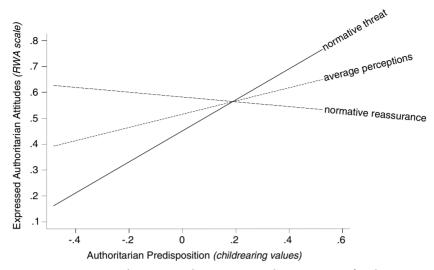


Figure 4.1.2. Perceived normative threat increases the expression of authoritarian predisposition in authoritarian attitudes (*DCS97*). *Source*: Table A1.5, column 2.

normative threat, and then at two standard deviations above and below that sample mean.

The measure of authoritarian predisposition in this case was formed from responses to a battery of childrearing values, where respondents first chose, between five pairs of desirable qualities, "which one of the two you think is more important for a child to have" and then went on to rank order all ten attributes. Authoritarian predisposition was then indicated by the tendency to favor such qualities as obeying one's parents, respecting elders, following the rules, and being well-mannered, neat, and clean over things like thinking for oneself, following one's conscience, exercising good judgment, being responsible for one's own actions, and being "interested in how and why things happen." As for the dependent variable, expressed authoritarian attitudes were here again indicated by extent of agreement/disagreement with (this time, twelve) statements drawn from Altemeyer's RWA scale. Once more, note that these included intolerant sentiments both highly specific and directly relevant to politics, such as "Once our government leaders give us the 'go ahead', it will be the duty of every patriotic citizen to help stomp out the rot that is poisoning our country from within"; "What our country really needs, instead of more 'civil rights', is a good stiff dose of law and order"; and "Our country needs free thinkers who will have the courage to defy traditional ways, even if this upsets many people" (reversed). Other RWA items gauged subjects'

reactions to "protestors," "radicals," "trouble-makers," "deviants," the "immoral," and the "godless."

We see in Figure 4.1.2 that among those perceiving high levels of normative threat, expressed willingness to "help stomp out the rot" with "a good stiff dose of law and order" is steeply augmented by increasing predisposition to authoritarianism. As we move across the (one-unit) range of authoritarian predisposition from insisting that children be autonomous to demanding their obedience, respondents judging Clinton and Dole to be weak, dishonest, and uninspiring, and sensing that political elites and fellow citizens hold very different beliefs from their own, increase in propensity to express intolerant attitudes by about 60 percentage points on the RWA scale. By contrast, authoritarian predisposition pushes those with average perceptions of normative threat just a quarter of the way up the RWA scale, and may even slightly dampen eagerness to express intolerance among those firmly reassured that political leaders are worthy and that societal consensus prevails.

Finally, while space limitations preclude the graphic depiction of all results, the reader should note (Table A1.5, column 2) that nothing other than normative threat seems capable here of activating authoritarian predispositions and magnifying their impact on expressions of intolerance: not negative perceptions of the national economy or family finances, not criminal victimization, and certainly not the experience of personal trauma. In fact, all else being normal (including perceptions of normative threat), the impact of (a one-unit increase in) authoritarian predisposition on expressions of intolerance in the absence of any personal trauma is .32 (across the o-1 scale of the dependent variable), but reduces to just .18 among those reporting a very bad year on the personal front (such as divorce, major illness, and the loss of loved ones).<sup>5</sup> This accords with other predictions and findings (Stenner 1997; n.d.; Feldman and Stenner 1997), and with my depiction of the sociotropic nature of authoritarianism. Personal trauma seems to disengage these predispositions and marginally "improve" the behavior of authoritarians, presumably by distracting them from their problematic concern with the fate of the collective. Conversely, the experience of personal trauma, perhaps by some simple "frustration-aggression" mechanism (see Davies 1962; Gurr 1970; Feierabend et al. 1972; Berkowitz 1998), considerably diminishes the tolerance displayed by libertarians toward those who require and normally receive their forbearance and protection. The overall effect of these divergent movements of authoritarians and (especially) libertarians in the face of personal trauma is to "flatten" the slope for the impact

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Conditional effect calculated holding extent of personal trauma at two standard deviations above the sample mean.

of authoritarianism on intolerant attitudes, with authoritarian predisposition doing less of the "work" of explaining intolerance under these conditions.

#### Solving the Puzzle

Returning now to the larger theoretical issues, we can see that the results presented in Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 easily solve the first puzzle regarding the inconsistent association between authoritarianism and intolerant attitudes and behaviors. The inability of authoritarianism to consistently predict manifest behavior should no longer perplex us. The authoritarian dynamic graphically illustrated in these two figures explains the widely varying behavior of the same character in different situations, and the similar behavior under certain conditions of individuals with widely varying predispositions. For example, we can plainly see that a highly authoritarian individual will behave entirely differently in conditions of normative threat and reassurance, and likewise, that the behavior of even extremely libertarian and authoritarian individuals might be virtually indistinguishable in the absence of normative threat.

The mystery is solved, as most mysteries are, by a fact that seems entirely obvious in hindsight: that a predisposition serving certain needs for the individual will be called into service when needed. In the terminology of the functional approach to understanding attitudes (Katz 1960), the "ego-defensive" attitudes of authoritarianism have as their "motivational basis" the maintenance of some collective oneness and sameness that serves the "psychological function" of providing the individual with identity, security, meaning, and/or comfort. Accordingly, those "defensive" stances – racial, political, and moral intolerance – are "aroused" by "emotionally laden suggestions" and "threats" to that oneness and sameness, and "modified" by some "catharsis" or "removal of threat" that relieves the emotional tension and purges those fears.

### Viewed from the Other Angle: It Depends on the Individual

There is still more to be learned by viewing this same dynamic from another angle, which serves both to clarify the second empirical puzzle and to provide some important theoretical insights. Any two-way interaction, such as that specified here between authoritarianism and normative threat, can always be considered from either of two perspectives. In Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, we were observing the changing impact of authoritarian pre-disposition on intolerant attitudes under varying conditions of normative threat. But that same dynamic can be viewed from another angle, as in

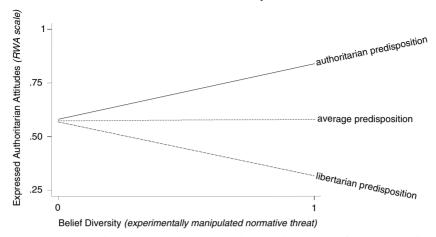


Figure 4.2.1. Authoritarian predisposition changes the impact of experimentally manipulated normative threat on expressed authoritarian attitudes (*CRE95*). *Source:* Table C.4, column 2.

Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, which (using the same data and estimates as before) alternately depict the differing effects of normative threat on intolerant attitudes given varying predisposition to authoritarianism.<sup>6</sup> Although these same effects could have been discerned by simply scanning the preceding figures vertically, from the perspective offered by Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 it is easy to see that normative threat has entirely different effects upon the propensity to express intolerance depending upon the predispositions of the individual.

This is a matter of great theoretical and political importance, but one that has been relatively neglected in the literature, which for the most part assumes that threat has uniform effects upon manifest intolerance irrespective of the individuals involved (Sales 1972; 1973; Doty, Peterson, and Winter 1991). To the extent that individual predispositions are considered at all, we tend to imagine that authoritarians will be induced by threatening conditions to display greater intolerance, with others simply remaining impassive. But as Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 make apparent, this is really only half the story, and there are equal but widely divergent moves

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> While Figure 4.2.1 must, of necessity, display the effects of just one experimental treatment from the *CRE95*, the graph depicting the impact upon expressed intolerance of exposure to the "bad leadership" story is essentially identical to this one. Likewise, the same basic pattern, though not nearly so dramatic, is generated by the interactions with the "unjust world" and "no afterlife" conditions. No experimentally manipulated threat had any discernable effect upon expressed intolerance among those of average predisposition to authoritarianism (see Table C.4, column 2).

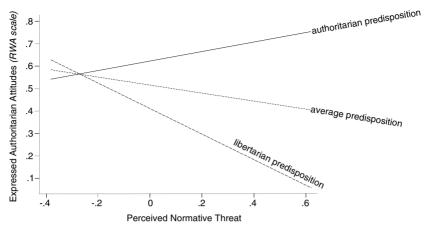


Figure 4.2.2. Authoritarian predisposition changes the impact of perceived normative threat on expressed authoritarian attitudes (*DCS97*). *Source*: Table A1.5, column 2.

being made by individuals at opposite ends of the authoritarian dimension. That is to say, the steepening of the slope representing the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance observed under conditions of normative threat (Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2) is generated *both* by authoritarians expressing greater intolerance *and* by libertarians augmenting their commitment to tolerance under those conditions.

One obvious reason why scholars have tended to overlook the existence and importance of these varying individual reactions is that much of the empirical work on authoritarianism and threat, as discussed in Chapter 2, has consisted simply of correlating aggregate indicators of "societal authoritarianism" with threatening environmental conditions (Sales 1972; 1973; Doty, Peterson, and Winter 1991). Recall that it was this kind of work that had some scholars (committed to the notion that authoritarian stances are simply a function of the individual's psyche) confounded by the fact that "authoritarianism" appeared to respond to shifting environmental conditions. Of course, it was actually not authoritarianism but rather the attitudinal and behavioral products of authoritarianism that were surging and subsiding with changing societal conditions.

But neither should we remain puzzled by the rather unreliable nature of this association between "societal authoritarianism" and aggregate threats, nor, for that matter, by the erratic relationship between intolerance and threat across individual-level analyses that fail to allow for the interaction of those threats with predispositions. We need only glance

at the dynamic on display in Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 to recognize that how this all plays out *overall* will depend upon precisely what the dependent variable is, exactly what kind of threat we are looking to associate with same, and most critically, the impact of that threat on the behavior in question *for individuals of average predisposition*. That is essentially what we will be observing when correlating these variables in the aggregate, and in individual-level analyses that do not allow the effects of threat to be conditional upon predispositions. In either case, depending critically upon the reactions of those of average predisposition, we *may* observe that the threat in question increases the manifestation of some intolerant behavior. But we might just as likely find that the threat has no impact whatsoever (as in the middle slope of Figure 4.2.1), or even that it seems to discourage the expression of intolerance (as in the middle slope of Figure 4.2.2).

#### One Dimension, Two Characters, Same Battle

Apart from the practical matter of clearing up some of the confusion surrounding the relationship between threat and manifest intolerance, there is a larger theoretical point to be made. And that is simply that we have tended to overlook these varying individual reactions to threat because we tend to overlook the character located at the other end of the authoritarian dimension: the libertarian. We are inclined to talk about authoritarians rather than authoritarian-ism, paying insufficient attention to delineating the motives and behaviors of libertarians and exactly when we might expect these to be manifested (which would of course lessen the surprises of Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2). There is a tendency just to describe these individuals as "nonauthoritarians" or "low authoritarians" (Altemeyer 1988; 1996; Lavine et al. 1999), that is, to characterize them by what they are not.

But libertarianism is much more than merely the absence of authoritarianism. Libertarians have things they value positively and wish to protect, apparently to the same degree, and under the same conditions, that authoritarians value and defend *their* preferred social arrangements

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> The full results presented in Table A1.5, column 2, suggest that the experience or perception of national economic decline may induce intolerant behavior irrespective of predispositions. So it is certainly possible that (aggregate, as well as additive individual-level) analyses of the responsiveness of intolerant behaviors to economic downturn are observing in that specific regard an unconditional process not dependent upon authoritarian predispositions. But this has no bearing on the point being made here.

and outcomes. Following Duckitt, one of the few scholars to address themselves directly to this issue, I have described the libertarian as one who favors individual autonomy and diversity over group authority and conformity – who believes that group needs should be "subordinated as completely as possible to the autonomy and self-regulation of the individual member" (Duckitt 1989: 71). Their antithetical resolutions of this fundamental dilemma locate authoritarians and libertarians at opposite extremes of the same dimension. But the characters at the libertarian end of the dimension should be as committed to their particular resolution of this dilemma as authoritarians are to theirs, and should be "activated" in defense of their resolution under the same conditions.

I have been calling these conditions of normative threat, since to this point we have concentrated on how these conditions are understood and experienced by authoritarians. But normative "challenges" might be the more appropriate general terminology (in part because it is unlikely that libertarians actually experience these conditions as frightening; more on this to follow). These are conditions that challenge both authoritarians' and libertarians' antithetical resolutions of the appropriate balance between authority and conformity versus autonomy and diversity. They are the same conditions for each character, but bearing different subjective meanings. For authoritarians, these conditions – essentially, questioned or questionable authorities or norms - constitute threats to oneness and sameness, and to the system of collective authority and constraint intended to promote those ends. For libertarians, the collective is of little interest, and its comings and goings are of no concern until they imperil the individual, which is to say libertarians will have little concern for the uses of collective authority until other people's ambitions for its usage suggest that they ought to take an interest in its limits. The challenge presented to libertarians by these same conditions, then, is to celebrate and defend individual autonomy and diversity at precisely those moments when these favored social arrangements and outcomes might seem to be in jeopardy – deemed by those with less stomach for public discord and partisan strife to be too risky for the collective. Thus, as starkly demonstrated in Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, libertarians bolster their commitment to individual freedom and tolerance of difference just as authoritarians rise up in defense of obedience to group authorities and conformity to the collective normative order. And those of average predisposition to authoritarianism remain relatively impassive in the face of conditions propelling their fellow citizens on either side to the barricades. They have not taken much of a position one way or the other, so it is simply not their battle.

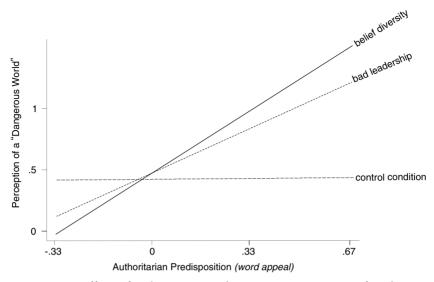


Figure 4.3.1. Effects of authoritarian predisposition on perception of a "dangerous world" given experimental manipulation of normative threat (*CRE95*). *Source:* Table C.4, column 3.

### What Makes the World Feel Dangerous?

We gain some idea of how these conditions are being experienced by different subjects from the analyses depicted in Figures 4.3.1 and 4.3.2. The model specifications, and methodology, remain as for Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, except that the dependent variable now reflects so-called "perceptions of a dangerous world" (Altemeyer 1981; 1988): in essence, the persistent tendency to find the world a fearful place perpetually on the verge of "chaos and anarchy." The CRE95 results presented in Figure 4.3.1 indicate that the tendency of authoritarianism to encourage perception of a dangerous world, negligible in the control condition, 8 is vastly increased by experimentally induced exposure to either of the classic normative threats. In the control condition, even extremely authoritarian and libertarian subjects are indistinguishable in their perceptions of danger, neither being especially likely to agree or disagree that "With everything in such a state of disorder, it's hard for people to know where they stand from one day to the next." But they are separated by the entire range of the dependent variable when induced to believe that "public opinion has become fractured and conflicted" ("belief diversity"), or that Americans have suffered fifty years of presidents "unworthy of the great trust that has been

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> See footnote 3.

vested in them" ("bad leadership"). That is to say, in these experimental conditions of normative threat, authoritarians could not be more convinced that society is "degenerating" into "chaos," whereas libertarians could not be more sanguine about the prospects, insisting that "Although every era has its problems, a person's chances of living a safe, untroubled life are better today than ever before."

Although the remaining experimental conditions are not depicted in Figure 4.3.1, the full results (Table C.4, column 3) indicate that being led to believe that "The world is an unjust place where people do not get what they deserve" ("unjust world") likewise causes authoritarians and libertarians to diverge in their apprehension of a society "full of devious and untrustworthy people" who "prey" on "decent" folk, although less dramatically so – by about three-quarters of the range of the dependent variable. But the impact of authoritarianism given scientific "proof" that "life ends completely... with the death of the physical body" ("no afterlife") cannot be distinguished statistically from the negligible influence it exercises among "control" subjects exposed to NASA confirmation of alien life forms. So whereas there are but modest fears, and imperceptible differences in fear, among authoritarians and libertarians pondering the finality of death or imminent alien contact, simple normative "challenges" like belief diversity and flawed leaders mark out their common battleground and distinguish these two characters like night and day. Rising to the challenge presented by these conditions, authoritarians manage to convince themselves that society is about to "collapse like a rotten log" just as libertarians grow more insistent that "people who think...the end of the world is coming soon are being foolish." And none of these threatening conditions has any impact whatever on those of average predisposition to authoritarianism, who clearly have no stake in the battle.

### Replication on Survey Data: Naturally Occurring Perceptions

Much the same story is told for naturally occurring perceptions of normative threat on the *DCS97* (Figure 4.3.2). These survey results suggest that in natural conditions, authoritarianism does systematically incline one to perceive a dangerous world where "Any day now, chaos and anarchy could erupt around us" (see also Altemeyer 1981; 1988). This effect holds even among those feeling confident in political leaders and reassured that others share their core beliefs and values, but it more than doubles (from .24 to .52)<sup>9</sup> as fears about societal discord and the quality of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Conditional effects of (a one-unit increase in) authoritarianism on perceptions of a dangerous world calculated by setting perceptions of normative threat, in turn, at two standard deviations below and above the sample mean.

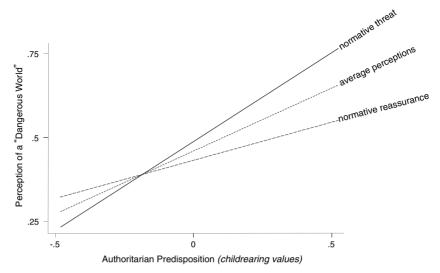


Figure 4.3.2. Effects of authoritarian predisposition on perception of a "dangerous world" given varying perceptions of normative threat (*DCS97*). *Source:* Table A1.5, column 3.

leadership escalate. This means that the most authoritarian and libertarian respondents diverge in their perceptions of a dangerous world by a quarter of the (O-I) range of the dependent variable when feeling solidly reassured about societal norms and authorities, but by more than half the range given perceptions of normative threat. This steepening of the slope is accomplished here again by the divergent movements of authoritarians and libertarians in the face of these normative challenges.

Finally, note that the full DCS97 results (Table A1.5, column 3) once more drive home the *special* capacity of normative threat to mobilize authoritarian predispositions. We find that more commonsensical threats such as national economic decline simply make *everyone's* world seem a good deal more insecure, while family financial distress and even personal experience with crime have little impact on *anyone's* perceptions of danger. And while things like major illness and loss of loved ones make the universe seem rather more precarious to libertarians, personal trauma appears to have no bearing on how dangerous the world feels to authoritarians.

Overall, it is clear, across both the survey and experimental analyses, that for authoritarians a dangerous world is one in which loss of confidence in leaders and widespread disagreement threaten the unity and consensus – the oneness and sameness – of the collective. But these

are not the things that make the world seem ominous to libertarians. Rather, it appears they may actually serve to confirm and strengthen convictions about the appropriate resolution between autonomy and difference versus authority and conformity. While the specter of disunity and dissension seems to fill authoritarians with mounting dread regarding the fate of the collective, these realities of liberal democracy appear to gratify libertarians. That leaders are fallible and consensus elusive seems only to bolster their conviction that individual autonomy and tolerance of difference should, can, and will prevail, that "No matter how much things seem to change, the world just goes smoothly on as if nothing had happened."

#### The Special Status of Normative Threat

The foregoing analyses provide compelling support for the critical contention that it is normative threat, in particular, that activates authoritarian predispositions and magnifies their impact upon expressions of intolerance. Intolerant responses proved to be heavily determined by the interaction of authoritarianism with threats to the "normative order": either experimentally manipulated conditions (CRE95), or subjective perceptions (DCS97) of normative threat. We saw that no other "news" to which the CRE95 subjects were exposed showed nearly the same capacity to propel authoritarians and libertarians to their widely divergent perceptions of, and reactions to, the perils facing the collective: not evidence that the world is grossly unjust, not scientific proof there is no life after death, and certainly not news of imminent contact with alien life forms. So the special status of normative threat was established there by authoritarians' unusually fearful and intolerant reactions to relatively innocuous "news stories" about Americans disagreeing with one another, or being let down by their leaders. These reactions were unusual compared to their muted responses to news that can surely be considered more frightening and mobilizing by normal standards. And they were unusual relative to the complete indifference of regular folk, not to mention the almost buoyant reactions of libertarians to the democratic realities of belief diversity and fallible leaders.

Notice that, by the logic of experimentation, it cannot be countered that these effects may be spurious and truly due not to normative threat, but to individual attributes that may dispose one to *perceive* normative threat (e.g., dogmatism, cynicism, anxiety, media use), or to environmental characteristics that might make one more likely to *be exposed* to such threat (e.g., living with social heterogeneity, strong partisan cleavages, electoral competition, government corruption). These experimental

conditions of normative threat were certainly not something respondents fabricated with their subjective perceptions, or brought upon themselves by inhabiting a certain environment, or exposed themselves to by their preferences, occupations, or activities. Absent random assignment of the different kinds of threatening information, one could plausibly maintain that it was not normative threat that was inducing intolerant responses, but rather some individual and/or environmental characteristic associated with perception of, or exposure to, normative threat. But since a completely random process determined whether subjects read one or another of the threatening news articles, the effects discerned can only be due to normative threat per se, since everything else (about the individuals and their environments) was equal, on average, among those exposed to the different stories.

Still, the case is always more compelling when the processes induced via experimental manipulation are shown to occur naturally, and with the same essential consequences. This is, of course, the logic of endeavoring wherever possible (here and throughout) to pair the internal validity of experimental evidence with the external validity of observational studies (see Sniderman et al. 1991; Kinder and Palfrey 1993). In the DCS97 survey results, then, we saw intolerance respond to the interaction of authoritarian predisposition with *subjective perceptions* of normative threat. The greater one's disaffection for major political leaders, and apparent disagreement with leaders and compatriots, the more precipitously authoritarianism inclined one to intolerant stances. And the special responsiveness of authoritarianism to normative threat was evident here again. Perceptions of national economic decline did not particularly arouse authoritarians, while family financial insecurity and personal experience of crime were of no consequence whatever. And recent family losses and other personal difficulties, while inducing from libertarians some uncharacteristic hostility, left authoritarians entirely unruffled, greatly diminishing the impact of authoritarianism as personal trauma accumulated

#### ADDRESSING LIKELY MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE THEORY

I want to take some time now to anticipate and address likely misconceptions of the theory of the authoritarian dynamic, and then to state the theory in more precise and formal terms. It is unfortunately true that when scholars are relying upon a shared terminology (threat, authoritarianism, intolerance) to offer what are sometimes vaguely specified accounts of phenomena in the same general family, there is a tendency to assume we are talking about the same things, and connecting them in approximately

the same way. But it is this kind of murkiness and imprecision that is responsible, as I have noted, for much of the theoretical confusion and (seemingly) contradictory findings that have plagued research on authoritarianism from its earliest inception. So, at the risk of pedantry, let me be very precise on these points.

#### Contemporaneous Perceptions versus Persistent Beliefs

First, it seems prudent at this juncture to clarify the critical distinctions between perceptions of normative threat and "perceptions" of a dangerous world. The theory maintains, and all the evidence indicates, that perceptions of normative threat are *contemporaneous perceptions* of changeable societal conditions, mostly reflecting the actual behavior of political leaders and real shifts in public opinion, or credible reports of same. By contrast, "perceptions" of a dangerous world, *for otherwise regular folk*, seem neither to respond to, nor to influence, the perception or experience of normative threat. Rather, "perceptions" of a dangerous world appear to reflect an enduring anxiety to which individuals are differentially inclined: specifically, a *persistent fear* of societal "disorder," "chaos" and "anarchy." <sup>10</sup>

Unsurprisingly, authoritarians are persistently inclined to such fears regarding societal chaos, just as they are inclined toward intolerant stances designed to avert this impending anarchy. They become still more convinced that the world is a chaotic and disorderly place in conditions of normative threat (Figures 4.3.1 and 4.3.2) – that is, when exposed to belief diversity and bad leadership – just as they grow increasingly intolerant when confronting those same normative threats (Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2). But they are inclined toward this peculiar fear of a dangerous world under *any* conditions, just as they are perpetually prone to intolerant attitudes and behaviors intended to constrain that chaos and disorder.

Authoritarians are *not*, in sharp contrast, inclined to perceive normative threat. In fact, as I have noted throughout, they are, if anything, somewhat *less* inclined than libertarians to think political leaders unworthy and consensus elusive (Table 3.1), suggesting perhaps a sort of wishful thinking among those with a special interest in obedience and conformity. They *are* especially inclined to perceive normative threat *if exposed to normative threat*, which is the kind of *hypersensitivity* we should expect of individuals fixated on monitoring and defending against threats to obedience and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> As perusal of the contents of the scale will attest. See Appendices A1 and C for a full account of the items from which the "dangerous world" measures in the *DCS97* and *CRE95* were constructed.

conformity. But unlike their persistent and generalized dread of societal chaos and disorder – in my view, better described as belief in, rather than perception of, a dangerous world – authoritarians are not disposed to perceive normative threat in the absence of apparent indications of same, that is, to fabricate the specter of bad leaders and divided opinion from their own imaginings.

#### Normative Threat, Collective Threat, and Personal Threat

I trust by now it is clear that I am stipulating a particular kind of threat – normative threat – as the key to galvanizing authoritarian predispositions. As noted in Chapter 2, the idea that authoritarianism (in some form) is aggravated (somehow) by conditions of (some kind of) threat actually has a long history (Sales 1972; 1973) and attracts continuing interest (Doty, Peterson, and Winter 1991; Marcus et al. 1995; Lavine et al. 1999). I suggested in that earlier discussion various ways in which prior arguments and evidence might be consistent with the authoritarian dynamic. But ultimately, I have isolated threats to oneness and sameness – specifically, questioned or questionable leaders or norms – as the critical catalysts for the activation of authoritarianism and its increased expression in intolerant attitudes and behaviors. As noted earlier, other scholars may be less precise in stipulating the type of threat involved, or might consider any sort of societal disarray or decline equally consequential, even any aggravation whatsoever.

I have acknowledged that other threats to the integrity or status of the collective (e.g., national economic decline) might set the same dynamic in motion as do normative threats, although less certainly and with more modest results, since authoritarians' primary yearning for oneness and sameness leads secondarily to a persistent "groupiness" in aspirations and orientations. But personal trials and tribulations, which distract authoritarians from their problematic concern for the collective, should actually disengage and diminish the impact of those predispositions, buying some temporary "breathing space" for minorities, dissidents, and deviants as authoritarians' attentions are diverted to their personal traumas. So the relentlessly sociotropic character of authoritarianism decrees that it is not "any aggravation whatsoever" that rouses those predispositions and has authoritarians flailing about with the aggression born simply of personal frustration. And within the class of threats to the collective, the primacy of authoritarians' desires for oneness and sameness mandates that bad leadership and divided opinion provide more potent provocation to authoritarian predispositions than more commonsensical stressors such as economic downturn.

### Not Merely Partisanship, Not Just Persistent Fearfulness

Note that one cannot insert into the mechanism simple partisan sentiments in place of generalized perceptions of bad leadership and divided opinion, expecting the dynamic to behave just as it does when activated by perceptions of normative threat. The critical catalysts are more pervasive loss of confidence in authorities in general (e.g., in the leaders of *all* major parties), and/or a general sense that more things divide than unite us (which depends on the *variance* rather than the thrust of public opinion), not merely feeling estranged from the leaders, ideals, or people on one side or another of some partisan divide or social cleavage. (And keep in mind that we have already seen in Table 3.1 that the latter bear no real relationship to the former).

Likewise, one cannot substitute belief in a dangerous world for perceptions of normative threat, assuming that the authoritarian dynamic will be set in motion by persistent belief in the potential for societal chaos, just as it is activated by contemporaneous perceptions of failed leadership and loss of consensus. As I have already noted, for otherwise regular folk, the latter perceptions are entirely unrelated to the former beliefs. II As discussed in the preceding section, belief in a dangerous world seems more like an enduring anxiety to which individuals are differentially inclined, itself substantially influenced by authoritarian tendencies toward persistent fears regarding societal chaos.<sup>12</sup> In short, it is more an enduring dread of anarchy than a contemporaneous assessment of changing exogenous conditions. This leaves belief in a dangerous world looking like little more than a natural concomitant to the adoption of intolerant stances designed to avert that impending chaos. It is something that accompanies, more than "explains" intolerant positions. In other words, it adds almost no new information – no exogenous inputs – to the "system."

But the authoritarian dynamic is a mechanism of *political* psychology. Authoritarianism provides the psychology: the endogenous *pre*-disposition to be hyper-reactive to all that might threaten oneness and sameness. Normative threat provides the politics: the exogenous inputs that activate those persistent but latent predispositions, increasing their defensive outputs of racial, political, and moral intolerance. These critical external inputs to the system are not figments of perpetually fearful

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> In the *DCS97*, for example, they have no variance whatsoever in common; their bivariate correlation stands at just -.05.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> In the DCS97, authoritarianism explains 14 percent of the variance in belief in a dangerous world, but offers almost no account of perceptions of normative threat.

imaginations but rather the unfolding daily dramas, the very stuff of politics: intractable moral conflicts and bitter divisions in public opinion; fallible leaders, openly criticized and regularly overturned; seemingly endless partisan bickering; the stench of political scandal. The confusion likely to be engendered by failure to grasp the entirely different character (and hence role and impact) of perceptions of normative threat and belief in a dangerous world constitutes just one more example of the pressing need for theoretical clarity and precision.

#### Authoritarian Predisposition versus Authoritarian Attitudes

Clarity and precision are likewise essential in regard to the critical explanatory variable of "authoritarianism," or more exactly, "authoritarian predisposition." By either of these terms, it must be clear that I mean a low-level generalized tendency, a persistent latent predisposition to favor oneness and sameness over freedom and difference. I specifically do not mean political and social attitudes concerning whether and how society should arrange institutions, processes, and policies so as to encourage and reward obedience and conformity (or suppress and punish autonomy and diversity). That is to say, I do not mean anything akin to the RWA scale (or F-scale), which indicates instead one's explicit understanding of the appropriate relationship between, and duties of, "the proper authorities in government" and "patriotic citizens." And it does so by means of highly specific queries regarding the fitting societal response to "free thinkers," "dissenters," "protestors," "radicals," "rabble-rousers," "troublemakers," "deviants," "perverts" and "criminals." I trust by now the reader is persuaded that it makes little sense to tally up respondents' attitudes regarding civil rights; free speech and public disorder; pornography, censorship, and moral regulation; crime, sentencing, and imprisonment; and then call the sum total the "explanatory" variable. Quite apart from anything else, it is difficult to conceive of anything more proximate to politics we would have it explain. So there is a hopeless tautology between the RWA scale (or F-scale) and our typical dependent variables. Quite simply, to show that the sum of lots of intolerant attitudes is related to other combinations of intolerant attitudes, or to specific intolerant stances, is neither methodologically appropriate nor theoretically illuminating.

Note that these phenomena to be explained – the dependent variables of the model – can be summary indices reflecting racial, political, or moral intolerance or overall intolerance of difference (including, of course, serviceable measures of general intolerance such as the RWA scale, or a balanced F-scale). They can be hostile feelings or behavior toward racial minorities, political dissidents, or moral deviants, or sympathetic feelings

or behavior toward white supremacists, super-patriots, or "gay bashers." And they can be attitudes or behavior regarding such specific issues as racial integration and programs to assist minorities; freedom of expression and association; school prayer, gay rights, abortion, and censorship; the death penalty, punishment versus rehabilitation, and the rights of the accused. Notice that I am confident that the reach of the authoritarian dynamic covers the myriad ways in which desires for oneness and sameness take political and social form, but make no warrant here regarding what to expect of dependent variables reflecting other than intolerance of difference.

### A Very Specific Process

Next, in regard to specifying the functional form of the model, it must be understood that I have stipulated a very precise way in which normative threat and authoritarianism are related. It is not that normative threat increases authoritarian predisposition, <sup>13</sup> nor that (in normal conditions) the predisposition fosters the perception or experience of normative threat. <sup>14</sup> And it is not that normative threat directly induces authoritarian attitudes and behaviors (i.e., expressions of intolerance) irrespective of one's predispositions, <sup>15</sup> nor that authoritarian predisposition yields the same degree of intolerance regardless of normative threat. <sup>16</sup> Rather, it is that the interaction of authoritarian predisposition with normative threat increases the expression of authoritarian attitudes and behaviors. In other words, normative threat increases the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance of difference (as in Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2), and likewise, authoritarianism increases the impact of normative threat on expressions of intolerance (as in the alternate angle of Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.1). Stated formally, then,

- <sup>13</sup> This model would alternately be specified *authoritarianism*= $b_o+b_1$  (normative threat)+e, with  $b_1$  here reflecting the (unconditional) effect of perceived/experienced normative threat on authoritarian predisposition. In my experience,  $b_1$  here is typically negative and rarely significant.
- <sup>14</sup> Specified as *normative threat*= $b_{\circ}+b_{\scriptscriptstyle \rm I}$ (*authoritarianism*)+e, with  $b_{\scriptscriptstyle \rm I}$  reflecting the (unconditional) effect of authoritarian predisposition on the perception/experience of normative threat. In my experience,  $b_{\scriptscriptstyle \rm I}$  here is typically negative and rarely significant.
- <sup>15</sup> Specified as *intolerance of difference*= $b_0+b_1$ (*normative threat*)+e, with  $b_1$  reflecting the (unconditional) effect of perceived/experienced normative threat on intolerant attitudes and behaviors. In my experience,  $b_1$  here has inconsistent direction (although a negative coefficient may be slightly more common) and is usually insignificant.
- <sup>16</sup> Specified as *intolerance of difference*= $b_0+b_1$  (*authoritarianism*)+e, with  $b_1$  reflecting the (unconditional) effect of authoritarian predisposition on intolerant attitudes and behaviors. In my experience,  $b_1$  here is almost always positive and significant.

this is "the authoritarian dynamic," expecting significant, positive coefficients for both  $b_{\rm I}$  and  $b_{\rm 3}$ :

intolerance of difference= $b_0+b_1$  (authoritarianism)+ $b_2$  (normative threat)+ $b_3$  (authoritarianism\* normative threat)+e

Taking the derivative of intolerance of difference with respect to each of the two explanatory variables, we obtain from the foregoing equation the expected effects of authoritarianism and normative threat, thus:

effect of authoritarianism on intolerance of difference=  $b_1+b_3$ (normative threat)

effect of normative threat on intolerance of difference= $b_2+b_3$ (authoritarianism)

where "effect" means the change in intolerance of difference expected for a one-unit increase in the explanatory variable in question (authoritarianism or normative threat). Note that since it is my practice to score all variables having no natural metric to be of one-unit range, in my analyses the "effect" typically means the *percentage point* change in the dependent variable expected for an increase across the *entire range* of the explanatory variable.

Now, one can plainly see that the conditional coefficient representing the effect of authoritarianism on intolerance – that is, all of  $(b_1+b_3(normative\ threat))$  – includes the *variable* normative threat. Likewise, we can see that the conditional coefficient representing the effect of normative threat on intolerance –  $(b_2+b_3(authoritarianism))$  – includes the *variable* authoritarianism. In other words, the effect of authoritarianism on intolerance of difference is conditional upon (it varies depending upon) the level of normative threat prevailing (as in Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2). Likewise (from the other angle), the effect of normative threat on intolerance of difference depends upon one's predisposition to authoritarianism<sup>18</sup> (as in Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2).

<sup>18</sup> For more technical assistance on the specification of nonadditive (interaction) models, derivation of conditional coefficients, and calculation of conditional effects, see Friedrich (1982).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> If we include other kinds of threats among the explanatory variables, then the model specification expands to: *intolerance of difference*= $b_{\circ}+b_{1}$ (*authoritarianism*)  $+b_{2}$ (*normative threat*)+ $b_{3}$ (*authoritarianism\*normative threat*)+ $b_{4}$ (*other collective threat*)+ $b_{5}$ (*authoritarianism\*collective threat*)+ $b_{6}$ (*personal threat*)+ $b_{7}$ (*authoritarianism\*personal threat*)+e. In this case (in addition to the expectations described for the parameters of the basic model),  $b_{5}$  is expected to be positive but of lesser relative magnitude than  $b_{3}$ , while  $b_{7}$  is expected to be negative.

Note that I routinely mean-center all explanatory variables possessing at least ordinal scale on a sample mean of o, and otherwise score dichotomous "dummy" variables such that o indicates the absence (and I the presence) of the attribute in question – for example, indicates that the subject has not experienced some experimental treatment. Consequently, in my analyses the estimated effect of authoritarianism on intolerance of difference  $(b_1+b_3 (normative threat))$  reduces to  $b_1$  when threat is at normal levels, that is, when the experimental subject has not been exposed to conditions of normative threat (as in the "control condition" of Figure 4.1.1), or when perceived normative threat is at the sample mean of o (as in the "average perceptions" of Figure 4.1.2). The remaining component ( $b_2*normative threat$ ) then represents the increment (or decrement) by which the effect of authoritarianism on intolerance is augmented (or diminished) when levels of normative threat are other than normal, that is, the extent to which those remaining slopes in Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 are steepened (or flattened) when normative threat is at high (or low) levels.

Likewise, in my analyses the estimated effect of normative threat on intolerance of difference  $(b_2+b_3(authoritarianism))$  reduces to  $b_2$  when authoritarianism is at normal levels, that is, when authoritarianism is at the sample mean of 0, (as in the "average predisposition" of Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2).<sup>19</sup> The remaining component  $(b_3*authoritarianism)$  then represents the increment (or decrement) by which the effect of normative threat on intolerance is augmented (or diminished) when levels of authoritarianism are other than normal, that is, the extent to which those remaining slopes in Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 are steepened (or inverted) when authoritarianism is at high (or low) levels.

Finally, I am at pains to stress that these are *moderated* effects – where one explanatory variable changes (i.e., moderates, conditions, qualifies) the *effect* of another explanatory variable on the dependent variable in question. They are *not mediated* effects – where one explanatory variable

Thus, I have no expectations for the significance, magnitude, or direction of  $b_2$ . That is to say, the theory of the authoritarian dynamic gives us no particular reason to expect that normative threat should increase or decrease intolerance of difference for those of average predisposition to authoritarianism (i.e., when the authoritarianism variable scores o). The same holds if we are estimating the parameters of the expanded model: intolerance of  $difference=b_0+b_1(authoritarianism)+b_2(normative threat)+b_3(authoritarianism*normative threat)+b_4(other collective threat)+b_5(authoritarianism*personal threat)+e. The theory gives us no particular expectations for the significance, magnitude, or direction of either <math>b_4$  or  $b_6$  – i.e., it gives us no reason to expect that either collective or personal threat should increase or decrease intolerance for those of average authoritarianism.

changes the *level* of another ("mediating" or "intervening") variable, which in turn then changes the *level* of the dependent variable.<sup>20</sup> That is to say, I am arguing that normative threat increases the *effect* of authoritarianism on intolerance of difference. I am explicitly *not* suggesting that normative threat increases the *level* of authoritarianism, which then goes on to increase the *level* of intolerance.<sup>21</sup> This would be an entirely different process than that posited by the theory of the authoritarian dynamic, and one that is in fact at odds with the available data.

#### STABILITY AND CONSTRAINT

I trust the foregoing has clarified the authoritarian dynamic and anticipated and addressed likely misconceptions of the theory, including misunderstanding of the variables of the model and the manner in which they are related. However, the most likely misconception, and the most likely to "muddy the waters," is of longest standing, and least particular to my own theory: confusing the phenomena and confounding the concepts of authoritarianism and conservatism (variously understood). Throughout the preceding chapters. I have sought to make the case that authoritarianism is a fundamental and enduring predisposition with important implications for political behavior. Moreover, I have insisted – so far, without empirical support – that authoritarianism is distinct from the dimensions normally thought to regulate mass behavior and to structure party systems in modern liberal democracies: conceptually, it is redundant with neither "status quo conservatism" (stability versus change, traditional versus reformist), nor with "laissez-faire conservatism" (laissez-faire versus redistribution, free market versus government intervention). I have indicated that these differences will be explored at length in the following two chapters. But as a prelude to those discussions, I want to close out this first empirical chapter by examining the over-time stability of authoritarianism relative to two variables that are included in most analyses of (at least U.S.) political behavior, and that roughly reflect (in amalgam) those

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Readers seeking more guidance on the distinction between moderated and mediated effects should consult Baron and Kenny (1986) and Hoyle and Robinson (2003).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Such a *mediated* process would alternately be specified by the two equations: *authoritarianism*=*b*<sub>o</sub>+*b*<sub>1</sub>(*normative threat*)+*e*, and *intolerance of difference*=*b*<sub>o</sub>+*b*<sub>1</sub> (*authoritarianism*)+*e*. Likewise, I am not suggesting that authoritarianism increases the *level* of normative threat, which then goes on to increase the *level* of intolerance. This alternative *mediated* process would be specified by the two equations: *normative threat*=*b*<sub>o</sub>+*b*<sub>1</sub>(*authoritarianism*)+*e*, and *intolerance of difference*=*b*<sub>o</sub>+*b*<sub>1</sub>(*normative threat*)+*e*. As I have tried to emphasize throughout, neither of these two mediated processes is posited by the authoritarian dynamic, nor is either consistent with the available data.

alternate dimensions: specifically, "political conservatism" and "right-wing" party identification.

I am loathe to encourage confusion of theoretical constructs with empirical indicators, so the reader is assured that the following two chapters - devoted entirely to the task of distinguishing authoritarianism from conservatism - will give due consideration to the concepts of "status quo" and "laissez-faire conservatism." But however we understand the constructs these variables are intended to reflect, and whatever our opinion of how adequately those constructs are reflected by these measures, the fact remains that these two variables – "political conservatism" and "party identification" - are routinely included among the standard "predispositions" arrayed as explanatory factors for a wide range of (at least U.S.) political attitudes and behaviors. The investigation to follow will serve the dual purpose of broaching the notion (then developed in Chapters 5 and 6) that authoritarianism is similar in status to, but very different in character from, these other predispositions with which it is regularly confounded, while also filling out the general claim (introduced in Chapter 2, and pursued throughout the current chapter) that normative threat increases constraint across the entire domain of intolerance.

### Relative Stability of Major Predispositions

The data for this final investigation are drawn from the previously described panel in the Durham Community Survey, consisting of five waves of interviews between March 1997 and November 2000. The three predispositions of interest to us were all measured on the first and final waves of the panel, allowing us to compare the relative stability of authoritarianism, political conservatism, and party identification over a rather lengthy interval: three years and eight months, on average. Further, these data allow a direct empirical test of one of the claims made at the close of Chapter 2 regarding the various ways in which normative threat increases constraint across the intolerance domain. This claim was previously designated H<sub>2</sub>: normative threat increases the stability of authoritarianism, as evidenced by increased association between measures of authoritarian predisposition taken at different time points. Data bearing on both these issues – the over-time stability of authoritarianism relative to other major predispositions, and the extent to which that constraint is increased by normative threat – are presented in Table 4.1.

These data suggest, first, that authoritarianism is as fundamental and stable a predisposition as those upon which we normally rely to explain the attitudes and behavior of the mass public and that are included in most analyses of political behavior. In each case, under normal conditions,

Table 4.1. Over-time stability of major predispositions given varying perceptions of normative threat

	The Effect of Predisposition <sub>1997</sub> on Predisposition <sub>2000</sub>		
	Given Average Perceptions <sub>1997</sub>	Given Normative Reassurance <sub>1997</sub>	Given Normative Threat <sub>1997</sub>
Authoritarianis $m_{1997} \rightarrow$ authoritarianis $m_{2000}$	.64**	.49**	.80**
"Political conservatism" <sub>1997</sub> → political conservatism <sub>2000</sub>	.67**	.76	.57
"Right-wing" party identification <sub>1997</sub> → right-wing party identification <sub>2000</sub>	.68**	.86	.50

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS multiple regression results in Table A3.2. In column 2,\*\* indicates that the coefficient is significantly different from zero (at p < .05, one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). In columns 3 and 4,\*\* indicates that the conditional coefficient is significantly different from that reported in column 2 for respondents with average perceptions of normative threat. "Normative reassurance" and "normative threat" indicate, respectively, perceptions of normative threat two standard deviations below and above the sample mean. Note that the authoritarianism<sub>1997</sub> variable used here is an abridged three-item version of the complete fifteen-item measure preferred in all other analyses of these data. The abridged version of authoritarianism<sub>1997</sub> was employed here in order to provide a fair comparison of consistency over time (only these three childrearing items were available for constructing the authoritarianism<sub>2000</sub> scale). See Table A3.1 for univariate statistics.

Source: DCS-Lewinsky Panel 97-00, whites only, N = 121 (first wave 1997 respondents reinterviewed in fifth wave 2000).

moving across the (one-unit) range of the predisposition as measured in March 1997 increases scores on the predisposition during election 2000 by around two-thirds of its range. Second, it is clear that the interaction of authoritarian predisposition with normative threat increases the over-time consistency of responses to the authoritarianism measure, as asserted in H<sub>2</sub>. (And again, in order to appreciate these results, the lessons of Table 3.1 must be kept clearly in mind: that perceptions of normative threat are not merely standing in for some other attribute that might enhance constraint, such as education, political knowledge, socioeconomic status, age, or sex). The over-time constraint between the 1997 and 2000 measures of authoritarianism increases dramatically from .49 to .64 to .80 for respondents perceiving low, average, and high levels of normative threat in 1997, respectively. That is to say, there is a far greater relationship between authoritarianism scores in 1997 and authoritarianism scores nearly four years later for respondents who reported on the first wave of the panel great dismay with political leaders, and considerable divergence between their own beliefs and those of both their representatives

and their fellow citizens. And that over-time consistency diminishes very substantially – that is, the relationship flattens to a considerable degree – for respondents solidly reassured in 1997 that their worldviews were widely shared, that societal consensus prevailed, and that the major party leaders were truly worthy of their respect.

#### Latent Predispositions and Their Manifest Expressions

Perhaps the best way to understand this enhanced constraint is to recognize that scores on these childrearing values measures are simply observed indicators - manifest expressions - of latent predispositions to authoritarianism. Thus, we can expect these manifest expressions to respond to the interaction of those predispositions with normative threat in the same way that we expect specific intolerant attitudes, or general measures of intolerance such as the RWA scale, to respond to that interaction. We need only return to Figure 4.1.2 to refresh our memory of this dynamic, and to apprehend the implications of same for the over-time consistency of measures (observed indicators, manifest expressions) of authoritarianism. Simply substitute the *latent* unmeasured predisposition to authoritarianism for the X axis, and scores on the childrearing values measure for the Y axis. It is easy then to see that the reactions of "latent" authoritarians and libertarians to the questions about childrearing values might be barely distinguishable given normative reassurance. But authoritarians will "sound" far more authoritarian, and libertarians more libertarian, in their responses to those childrearing values, given perceptions of normative threat. So even if those threatening perceptions were peculiar to conditions prevailing in 1997, the fact that the 1997 childrearing values measure does a far superior job, given perceptions of normative threat, of discriminating latent authoritarians and libertarians (spreading their scores across the range) means that those 1997 authoritarianism scores will be more steeply related to the scores in 2000.

Notice that the results for the stability of political conservatism and party identification under the same conditions stand in contrast to those for authoritarianism (Table 4.1). Although the moderation of over-time consistency by normative threat is not statistically significant for either of these two predispositions, we can still discern that normative threat appears to diminish the over-time stability of both political conservatism and party identification.

### A Fundamental Predisposition Exercising Unusual Constraint

At the very least, these results provide some initial indication that, as a predisposition governing political attitudes and behavior, authoritarianism

is similar in status to, but rather different in character from, political conservatism and party identification. Moreover, while this is not the place to launch an extended discussion of these issues, these results certainly caution against making a fetish of scale reliability, against exalting measures based upon their internal coherence or over-time consistency (or abandoning valid measures on account of "unreliability" or "instability"), and against confusing empirical indicators with the latent constructs they are intended to reflect. Most importantly, they suggest that attitudinal constraint (Converse 1964) does not necessarily depend upon political expertise – not for all people, and certainly not for all kinds of attitudes (Achen 1975; Chong, McClosky, and Zaller 1983; see also Kinder 1998). Likewise, emotional arousal need not diminish, and a "sober second thought" need not enhance (Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen 2000), the consistency of responses with each other or with underlying convictions (Zaller and Feldman 1992). While the consistency of political conservatism and party identification may depend upon a calm demeanor and a clear head (Sharp and Lodge 1985), perhaps for particular domains, for certain kinds of predispositions, and/or for attitudes underwritten by affect more than cognition (Kuklinski et al. 1991; Kinder 1994; Marcus et al. 2000; Marcus 2003), emotional arousal and cognitive deterioration can actually enhance constraint across components<sup>22</sup> and over time.

#### WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

By the convergence of experimental and survey findings, this first empirical chapter was meant to establish a number of important theoretical points. First, I trust I have made the case that the authoritarian dynamic is a plausible mechanism generating expressions of intolerance, and one that is uniquely consistent with the empirical regularities and "irregularities" observed across fifty years of research in the field. Through graphic demonstrations of the behavior of the mechanism, viewed from different angles, we have seen that the authoritarian dynamic manages both to reconcile the extant theories and to expose as only seemingly contradictory the empirical "puzzles" described in Chapters 1 and 2. Thus, intolerance is not merely a product of the individual psyche, nor is it wholly determined by the social environment. Rather, the expression of intolerance

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Apart from these findings in Table 4.1, results reported in Table 9.1 will show that the reliability of the authoritarianism scales in both the *MIS99* and the *CRE95* is much higher (i.e., the measures are far more internally coherent) among subjects exposed to experimental conditions of normative threat than among those exposed to normative reassurance.

depends upon the activation of individual predispositions to authoritarianism by environmental conditions of normative threat. Intolerance seems to have an inconsistent relationship with both individual predispositions and environmental conditions only because the impact of each of these explanatory factors depends critically upon the other. Seemingly erratic, weak, and dubious associations look more like contingent relationships of great theoretical and political importance once the model is correctly specified to incorporate the interaction of these two variables.

Second, I hope to have established that authoritarianism incorporates two poles, that libertarianism is far more than merely the absence of authoritarianism, and that libertarians have things they value and wish to protect, to the same degree and under the same conditions as authoritarians. We have seen that the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance is comprised of two components: the equal but widely divergent movements of authoritarians and libertarians to defend their worldviews in the face of normative "challenges" to same. And this is no small matter. The authoritarian dynamic remains mysterious, and the tremendous societal implications of these divergent movements go unappreciated, if all that one can conceive at the other pole are "nonauthoritarians" or "low authoritarians" (Altemeyer 1988; Lavine et al. 1999), that is, individuals distinguished only by their *lack* of interest in oneness and sameness, rather than by their *positive* appreciation of freedom and difference.

Third, I expect that the special status of normative threat in the authoritarian dynamic is now apparent. We have seen that the extraordinary capacity of normative threat to magnify the impact of authoritarian predisposition stands out among a roll call of just about every imaginable challenge – either experimentally manipulated or subjectively perceived – to the health, happiness, security, and welfare of both the collective and the individual. Moreover, it is clearly not the case that normative threat is simply "standing in" as a proxy for some other factor – the real driving force – with which it happens to be associated. This was established definitively by experimental subjects' predictable reactions to precisely designed stimuli that came to their attention purely by chance, since random assignment ensures that their experience of one threat or another is entirely unrelated to any other attribute, including their predispositions. But bear in mind that it was also shown (Table 3.1) that naturally occurring perceptions of normative threat are likewise unrelated both to authoritarian predisposition and to plausible rival explanatory variables. Authoritarians are not especially inclined to perceive normative (indeed, any) threat, they are just especially intolerant once they do, which is of course a different matter altogether, and the central prediction of the authoritarian dynamic. And in fact, as already noted in the discussion surrounding Table 3.1, none of the DCS97 threat perceptions is substantially associated with any

important individual characteristic.<sup>23</sup> So while the experimental evidence can certainly stand on its own, the case is nicely sealed by authoritarians' unusual reactivity to perceptions of normative threat to which they are not particularly inclined (neither by their predispositions nor by any trait associated with authoritarianism),<sup>24</sup> and which bear no relation to rival explanatory variables.

Fourth, I hope the reader is persuaded that something akin to the child-rearing values measure best reflects fundamental *predisposition* to authoritarianism, and that the RWA scale – the popular alternative – is better understood as a measure of authoritarian *attitudes*: the manifest and manifestly political expressions of this underlying predisposition to intolerance of difference. Quite simply, if the RWA scale is authoritarianism, it is authoritarianism already (at least partly) "expressed," <sup>25</sup> that is, already activated and manifesting its characteristic defensive stances.

- <sup>23</sup> Or, for that matter, with any other of the threat perceptions. There is, of course, some modest interrelationship among the four different perceptions (see Appendix A1) making up the overall index of normative threat, but still less than one might imagine. Only one of the six correlations between these four components of threat exceeded .30: perceived ideological distance from the major parties, and perceived distance from "typical Americans" were correlated at .64.
- <sup>24</sup> In fact, the characteristics substantially associated with authoritarianism tend to leave one (as does authoritarianism itself) somewhat disinclined to perceive normative threat, although still very modestly so. In addition to the evidence provided in Table 3.1, I can report that attributes measured on the DCS97 that subsequently (see Chapter 6, especially Figure 6.3) prove to be important determinants of authoritarianism (cognitive incapacity, limited verbal ability, and lack of "openness to experience") are correlated with overall perceptions of normative threat as follows: errors per word of commentary, -.13; number of characters per word of commentary, .14; and openness to experience, .25.
- <sup>25</sup> For this reason, if we were to ignore this tautology and nonetheless specify the RWA scale (or its ilk) as the explanatory variable, we should probably not expect it to show the same reactivity to normative threat as displayed by a more fundamental measure of latent predisposition to authoritarianism such as childrearing values (or choices of "appealing" words). Recall that I have explicitly hypothesized (see H<sub>4</sub> of Chapter 2) that normative threat increases the consistency of the various manifestations of intolerance of difference, and this can be evidenced in increased association of measures reflecting overall intolerance of difference, with variables indicating racial, political, or moral intolerance. So conditions of normative threat should still magnify the relationship between overall measures of intolerance of difference such as the RWA scale, and other intolerant attitudes. This should see the RWA scale (when serving as the "explanatory" variable) being "activated" and responding to normative threat with increased expression of intolerance, in much the same manner as does authoritarian predisposition, although probably not to the same degree since, as I have noted, the authoritarianism of the "higher level" RWA scale is already (at least partly) "expressed."

These stances are not the *explanatory* variables; rather, they are among the phenomena that might *be explained* by our fundamental predisposition. And again, this is no small matter. Quite apart from theoretical issues regarding the validity of measures and model specification, one can certainly conclude from the results presented here that should we employ the RWA scale as our "explanatory" variable, we will be peering into the dynamic process generating manifest expressions of intolerance near its conclusion, and missing most of what is of interest to us as social scientists.

Finally, I trust these results at least suggest authoritarianism might be as fundamental, enduring, and powerful a predisposition as those we routinely rely upon to account for political behavior, but one that is potentially different in character from, and capable of explaining much that remains unexplained by, the standard "liberal"/"conservative" and "left"/"right" dimensions of our investigations. By the close of Chapter 6. I expect that this will be more than a suggestion. As indicated, the following two chapters are devoted entirely to distinguishing authoritarianism – theoretically and empirically - both from aversion to change and desire to preserve the status quo, and from preference for a free market over intervention and redistribution. Chapters 7 and 8 will go on to paint a vivid portrait of authoritarianism – of exactly what it is and what it does – by examining the "natural" interactions of authoritarians and libertarians with interviewers of varying race, and then systematically analyzing the content of their conversations. And finally, Chapter 9 will make explicit exactly what responses authoritarians and libertarians demand of the polity as they are impelled to the "barricades" to mount their characteristic defenses.

By the time these last investigations are concluded, I expect authoritarianism will give every appearance of being an ideology for the "common folk": an untutored assemblage of fundamental stances toward (more than ideas about) freedom and difference in all their manifestations. We will see that this "package" is held together not so much by logic and reason as by one central fear, by a consistent set of defensive responses to that fear, and by the countervailing reactions of those intent on protecting freedom and difference precisely when they might seem too risky for the collective. These responses rather effortlessly achieve coherence, then, not by elaborate cognitive undergirding but naturally and necessarily, by virtue of their common function: to establish and defend oneness and sameness (or freedom and difference) across the collective, in conditions where those valued ends appear to be in jeopardy. We will learn that, for all its homeliness and lack of sophistication, authoritarianism is no less powerful as the primary determinant of behavior toward all manner of difference, instead gaining considerable force and

explanatory range from its humble origins, artlessness, and unself-conscious expression.

What authoritarianism is *not* is a desire to preserve the status quo whatever that may be. It does *not* preclude support for social change, so long as we are changing together in pursuit of common goals. And it is *not* preference for laissez-faire economics. It does *not* necessitate opposition to government interventions that might serve to enhance oneness and sameness. Apart from confusing theory and confounding evidence for half a century, these common misconceptions have created needless skepticism and resistance among those (quite reasonably) reluctant to accept that distaste for change implies distaste for other races, or that commitment to economic freedom somehow suggests an interest in moral regulation and political repression. Before we can truly grasp what authoritarianism is and what it does, then, we must first establish what it isn't and what it doesn't.

### Authoritarianism and Conservatism across Cultures

Few debates in the social sciences are as muddled as that concerning the distinctions between authoritarianism and conservatism. To the theoretical confusion and empirical puzzles generated by the highly contingent relationship between authoritarian predisposition and authoritarian attitudes, one can add failure to distinguish authoritarianism from conservatism as another leading source of skepticism regarding the explanatory value of the concept. The idea that intolerance is driven primarily by "conservatism" - however understood - doggedly persists in both scholarly and popular commentary. If the notion of authoritarianism is considered at all, critics tend to assume that the concept is redundant and that authoritarianism is just conservatism in another guise; that authoritarianism is little more than a product of conservatism, at most merely mediating the effect of conservatism on intolerance; or else that authoritarianism – even if distinct in character, differing in origin, and of independent influence – is inconsequential compared to conservatism. In any case, the suspicion is that the concept adds little to our understanding of intolerance.

Clearly, appreciation of the importance of authoritarianism, and of the relative insignificance of conservatism, in fueling general intolerance of difference waits upon evidence of their distinctive characters, causes, and effects. Yet with both authoritarianism and conservatism conceived in different ways by different scholars, with great discrepancies in measurement even among those with shared conceptualizations, and with endless variation in model specification and methodology, fifty years of argument and evidence have brought us no closer to any meaningful consensus regarding the nature and extent of those distinctions.

# AUTHORITARIANISM, STATUS QUO CONSERVATISM, AND LAISSEZ-FAIRE CONSERVATISM

The first issue that must be addressed is exactly what we mean by conservatism. In broad terms, when speaking of conservatism, theorists, scholars, and commentators (either expressly or implicitly) typically have in mind one (or, problematically, more) of the following: first, something akin to that which I have alternately described as authoritarianism as per Wilson's "social conservatism" (Wilson and Patterson 1968: Wilson 1973); second, an enduring inclination to favor stability and preservation of the status quo over social change; or third, a persistent preference for a free market and limited government intervention in the economy. These distinctions are not usually made so stark or explicit. But the entangling - in normative theory, social science, and popular rhetoric - of what turn out to be three different and very weakly related dispositions has been a substantial contributor to misunderstanding of the relative roles played by authoritarianism and conservatism in fueling general intolerance of difference. So for clarity, and with apologies for the awkward terminology, I will designate the latter dimensions "status quo conservatism" and "laissez-faire conservatism," respectively.

### Political Psychology versus Political Ideology

Now, throughout the investigations presented in this and the following chapter, it must be kept clearly in mind that I am thinking and speaking of authoritarianism and conservatism as fundamental psychological predispositions, something akin to universal personality dimensions – not as political philosophies, and certainly not as contemporary political ideologies. Granted, to the extent that persistent ideas in political philosophy address universal dilemmas regarding the manner in which human affairs ought to be arranged and conducted, they also speak to universals in human needs, desires, and motivations. Yet while the dilemmas they address may be universal, the particular resolutions they offer represent reasoned doctrines: some systematic analysis and reconciliation of values, which may not coincide, across time and space, with the manner in which different needs and desires are tangled up within individuals. Thus, for example, the fact that Burke's (1790) "organic conservatism" commingles opposition to cultural change with a rejection of social difference does not indicate that, across varying cultural contexts, those who are actually averse to change also tend generally to be uncomfortable with difference.

Likewise, contemporary political ideologies gain currency and electoral force by speaking to fundamental values, and by combining, prioritizing, and trading off those values in one way or another. But again, suppose we find that "conservative" elites in contemporary U.S. politics have effectively utilized blacks' purported violation of the free market ethos to mobilize the racially intolerant behind opposition to social welfare programs (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997; Peffley, Hurwitz, and Sniderman 1997; Gilens 1999). This does not indicate that intolerance of difference and preference for laissez-faire economics stand in general relationship as dimensions of human psychology. And, of course, the way political elites might package and sell issues in the *current* political context, in order to maximize their electoral appeal to multiple constituencies, must not be confused with the manner in which different value commitments tend to "go together" within individuals, universally and perpetually. It must be clear that the latter – an empirical question, and a question of psychology – is our only concern in this and the following chapter.

#### "Right-Wing Extremism": Extremely What? Extreme How?

Note that everything I have said and will say regarding "conservatism" is equally applicable to the still less helpful nomenclature of "right-" versus "left-wing." Whereas the term "conservatism" at least has the minimal virtue of retaining in ordinary language one of those meanings – a tendency to oppose change - that are typically ascribed to it, the right/left terminology originates in nothing more meaningful or enduring than the seating arrangements of monarchists and antimonarchists in legislative assemblies during the French Revolution. Worse still, the right/left terminology clearly assumes a dimension underlaid by one fundamental question, with the "right-" and "left-wing" labels then to be applied to those leaning one way or the other on this sole matter of contention. Yet "rightwing," just like "conservative," has come to mean anything – or, more usually, everything - from intolerant of difference, to averse to change, to opposed to government intervention and redistribution: three distinct inclinations that will prove in subsequent analyses to be trivially or negatively related once measured separately and observed across time and space.

Note that the term "right-wing extremism" – common parlance in analyses of contemporary Western European politics, and usually referring to the classic triad of racial, political, and moral intolerance – is especially misleading in this regard, implying as it does that authoritarianism, rather than being a distinct attitudinal dimension, is just a more extreme form

of something else: a very intense aversion to change, for example (see Lipset and Raab 1970); or alternately, a "regular-strength" aversion (say, to redistribution) combined with a willingness to use "extreme" methods to achieve the desired ends (see Bobbio 1997).

Now again, political philosophers might reason their way to a defense of any alignment and accommodation of those values that their analysis finds prudent or just. Likewise, political elites might calculate their way to a defense of any alignment and accommodation of those values that their strategists find prudent or their ideologues just. And any of these postures might be labeled "right-wing" or "conservative" at one time or another, or in this place or that. But these alignments are not natural or necessary. Whether they are universal and enduring in individual psychology is an empirical question for social science.

## Measures with Confused and Shifting Content

Yet in order to discern whether these inclinations normally "go together" in individuals, we must be capable of discerning when they are apart. Thus, it is critical to have measures that cleanly distinguish between them: each reflecting one thing, the whole thing, and nothing but the thing. The widespread confusion of these three discrete predispositions – authoritarianism, status quo conservatism, and laissez-faire conservatism – aggravates, and is aggravated by, analysts' reliance upon empirical measures that hopelessly confound those distinct inclinations.

This criticism applies to popular measures such as Altemeyer's (1981; 1988; 1996) "Right-Wing Authoritarianism" scale and Wilson's "social conservatism" (Wilson and Patterson 1968; Wilson 1973). Yet, as discussed at greater length in the following chapter, by far the most problematic in this regard are the so-called "self-placement" measures. These measures require respondents to place their "views" or themselves (what "you think of yourself as" or "consider yourself to be") on an ordinal scale ranging (usually with no further explanation) from "left" to "right," or from "liberal" to "conservative." Since this self-placement is based on the respondent's own understanding of what those terms mean, it inevitably reflects the manner in which political elites define those terms in that culture at that point in time. One need only momentarily contemplate the divergent political realms of, say, the Soviet Union in the 1950s, Sweden in the sixties, Argentina in the seventies, and the United States in the eighties to recognize that this could reflect virtually any mix of postures regarding change, difference, and redistribution. It need bear no relation to the manner in which those dimensions are aligned, or the way in which the terms are used, at some other time or place. Certainly, we cannot tell how those

dimensions are aligned *across* time and place if our own measures cannot tell them apart.

## The Plan of Attack

My plan in this and the following chapter, then, is first to argue for the distinctions between authoritarianism and conservatism, and then to move systematically through a series of empirical demonstrations of their widely differing natures, origins, and impact. Most of my consideration of laissezfaire conservatism will be reserved for the following chapter, where I rely largely upon U.S. data and examples to clarify a conceptual confusion that seems to be particularly entrenched in analyses of that culture. The bulk of the current chapter will be consumed with distinguishing authoritarianism from status quo conservatism by means of comparative analysis, since confusion of the two is both ubiquitous cross-culturally, and most effectively clarified by resort to cross-cultural data. Here I will rely upon the World Values Survey (see Inglehart, Basanez, and Moreno 1998): a crossnational and cross-temporal dataset possessing "clean," unambiguous measures of authoritarianism, status quo conservatism, and laissez-faire conservatism as well as universally applicable measures of intolerance – which is to say, possessing the capacity to provide some definitive answers regarding the distinctions between those predispositions, and the extent to which each is implicated in generating intolerance of difference across time and place.

By the close of Chapter 6, it should be apparent that authoritarianism, status quo conservatism, and laissez-faire conservatism are very different beasts; that when people talk of the impact of "conservatism" on prejudice and intolerance, what they mostly have in mind is authoritarianism; that neither aversion to social change nor rejection of intervention and redistribution implies, necessitates, or tends to produce generalized intolerance of different races, beliefs, and behaviors; and that authoritarianism is the primary, and conservatism a relatively minor, determinant of general intolerance of difference.

### AUTHORITARIANISM $\neq$ CONSERVATISM

In many liberal democracies, it is common parlance to describe as conservative certain persistent sociopolitical stances that tend to be manifested in concert. Expressed in very general terms, these include support for racial

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See also Sniderman and Piazza (1993) for a discussion of the connection, or lack thereof, between conservatism and racial prejudice.

inequality and segregation and for supremacist notions and causes; demanding various limits on free speech, association, and assembly; denying equal status under the law to "radicals" and moral "deviants"; requiring compulsory observance of the rules and rites of a particular faith or creed; prescribing government regulation of freely chosen private behaviors of little public consequence; and insisting upon "law and order" at the expense of individual rights and freedoms.

Yet if the arguments of the preceding chapters are accepted, this "package" is more appropriately deemed authoritarian. What marks out these stances as authoritarian rather than conservative is the immovable fact that they tend to occur together across very diverse cultural contexts, when there is no shared theme to explain why that should be so other than general intolerance of difference. With great regularity, individuals wanting to discriminate (and especially, wanting the state to discriminate) against other racial and ethnic groups also tend to demand restrictions on the communications and association of all but "right-thinking" people. Likewise, they are inclined to think that the state has both the right and the responsibility to closely monitor and regulate individual moral choices: to strictly enforce compliance with laws via aggressive investigation, prosecution, and punishment; and to "encourage" conformity with norms by doling out penalties and rewards. Such coercion might range from favorable treatment for those conforming with conventions (e.g., regarding marriage, sex, childrearing, religious faith), to the criminalization of behavior more the purview of individual conscience than public welfare (e.g., homosexuality, pornography, reproductive choice), to the ultimate authoritative sanction on nonconformity: capital punishment. And from a cross-cultural perspective, there is no unifying motif that consistently pulls these elements together so well as a general aversion to difference. These stances, which I have previously marked out as the classic elements of the authoritarian defensive arsenal – racial, political and moral intolerance, and punitiveness - cannot be attributed consistently to avoidance of social change (status quo conservatism), let alone to distaste for government intervention in the economy (laissez-faire conservatism).

## A Comparative Investigation: In Search of Generalities

Our comparative investigation is specifically designed to test this assertion that when we consider these stances as a set, and without fixing on the forms they happen to take in a particular period or place, it is intolerance of difference more than avoidance of change that provides the common thread. I will show that both logically and empirically, authoritarianism does, but status quo conservatism does not, strongly and *consistently* yield

intolerance of difference, across cultures, across domains, and across time. I will elaborate each of these claims in turn, while reserving consideration of cross-temporal variations, and the lessons they reveal, for the following chapter.

My case will be made, first, by comparing the influence of authoritarianism and status quo conservatism on different domains of intolerance across ten diverse cultures of Western Europe (Table 5.1); second, by comparing their influence across an equivalent set of well-established Eastern European countries (Table 5.2); and finally, by comparing their ability to explain the intolerance expressed by all respondents in what is arguably the most representative dataset one can assemble of the world population (Table 5.4).

## "Bare Bones" Measures of Authoritarianism and Status Quo Conservatism

The data for this investigation are drawn from the second and third waves of the World Values Survey (WVS90-95), which pools eighty independent samples taken in fifty-nine diverse nations between 1990 and 1998 (see Inglehart, Basanez, and Moreno 1998). As usual, my measure of authoritarianism was constructed from childrearing values, a strategy whose advantages over such measures as the Right-Wing Authoritarianism scale are palpable in any comparative investigation across nations widely varying in what counts as "right" and "left" (or "conservative" and "liberal"); in the targets and modes of intolerant expression; in the gods that the "godless" would be without and the norms that the "deviants" would be deviating from; in how "the proper authorities" were installed and how they might be removed; and in just what the "rebellious" would be rebelling against and proposing in its stead. Here authoritarianism is simply indicated by respondents' choosing (from a proffered list of eleven) those "especially important" qualities "that children can be encouraged to learn at home," counting "obedience" and "good manners" as reflecting authoritarian tendencies and "tolerance and respect for other people," "independence," and "imagination" as indicative of libertarian inclinations (the second component reversed and equally weighted in the final measure).

My measurement of status quo conservatism was guided by the same philosophy, seeking to reflect fundamental aversion to/preference for change *without* referencing actors, objects, or arrangements that may be time-bound, culturally specific, or the actual subjects of our investigation. The measure was formed from two items gauging (on ten-point scales, anchored each end) the extent to which respondents agreed that "One should be cautious about making major changes" (versus "You will never

achieve much in life unless you act boldly") and that "Ideas that have stood the test of time are generally best" (versus "New ideas are generally better than old ones").

This construction generated two highly discriminatory ordinal variables, with the authoritarianism measure ordering respondents across an eleven point scale, and the status quo conservatism measure across twenty-one points. (Each scale was rescored to be of one-unit range, then centered on a sample mean of o). Each of these variables proved to be nicely normally distributed, and the two dimensions are evidently substantially independent. We find that their simple correlation across the Western European nations in Table 5.1 is just .18: they have only three percent of their variance in common. Likewise, their correlation across samples drawn from our Eastern European nations (in Table 5.2) is just .16. Once we enlarge the arena still further to the pooled WVS90–95, the correlation between authoritarianism and status quo conservatism shrinks to a meager .09.

If we reduce these two scales for the moment to crude categorical variables, we find that authoritarians (i.e., those making more authoritarian than libertarian choices from among the childrearing values) constitute 59 percent of the pooled WVS90-95 dataset, while 39 percent of the respondents prove to be libertarians (making more libertarian than authoritarian choices). The proportion categorized as conservative (on balance, averse to change) is 49 percent, while 39 percent are deemed liberal (open to change). A simple cross-tabulation of these categorical variables again shows very modest association between the two dimensions (see Appendix E, Table E.5). Thus, while 62 percent of conservatives (those whose responses indicate more aversion than openness to change) prove to be authoritarian, so do 53 percent of liberals (those showing more openness than aversion to change). While much more evidence will be offered on this particular point in the following chapter, these preliminary findings certainly tend to suggest that authoritarianism and status quo conservatism are neither one and the same, nor substantially redundant. The question for now is: to what extent is each of these apparently distinct dimensions implicated in generating intolerance of difference across cultures and domains?

## Universal Measures of Intolerance

The dependent variables to be explained by these two predispositions in our comparative analysis will be summary measures of racial intolerance/ethnocentrism, political and moral intolerance, and punitiveness (complete details on item wording and variable construction are provided in Appendix E). Now, one can always gain greater insight into

the levels and determinants of intolerance in a particular society by utilizing national cross-sectional surveys (as I do in the following chapter, and throughout most of the larger investigation). Their instruments will be purposely designed to tap the peculiar ways in which intolerance is expressed in that society at that point in time by that majority, toward those particular minorities, dissidents, and deviants. But again, my objectives here (like those of the WVS principal investigators) were more general, requiring resort to cross-national surveys and to items selected for their ability to reflect the same phenomena consistently across diverse cultures, without reference to nation-specific actors, objects, and arrangements.

Sometimes this made for difficult trade-offs and debatable choices, as when including in my overall measure of "racial intolerance/ ethnocentrism" an item simply asking respondents how proud they are to be [their nationality], the measure's equivocal label acknowledging its somewhat ambiguous content. Yet the item in question was frequently included and has a pleasing universality of meaning, and a wealth of comparative evidence attests to the regularity with which out-group denigration accompanies in-group glorification (Taifel and Turner 1979; 1986; Tajfel 1981; but see also Brewer 1999), including such seemingly innocuous expressions of patriotism (Revkowski 1997; Schatz, Staub, and Lavine 1999). The remaining items are less controversial, including respondents' opinions on whether employers should give priority to [their nationality] over immigrants when jobs are scarce, and indications of whether they chose (from a list of ten groups) "people of a different race" and "immigrants/foreign workers" as people they "would not like to have as neighbors."

My measures of political intolerance and punitiveness relied upon batteries designed to measure fundamental values (see Inglehart 1977), which again had the advantages of universal applicability and regular inclusion across different countries and waves of the WVS. These batteries included two separate sets of four alternatives, from which respondents would indicate their first and second choices regarding "what the aims of this country should be for the next ten years." Political intolerance<sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Note that this set of four value items (with the addition of "fighting rising prices") was actually designed to measure "postmaterialist" values (Inglehart 1977), but clearly reflects important aspects of political tolerance as I have described it. The WVS does include the classic battery for measuring political intolerance – the "least liked" methodology (Sullivan et al. 1982) – in which the respondent first indicates from a list of objectionable groups the one he or she likes least, and then goes on to answer a series of questions about the civil liberties that ought to be accorded that group. Unfortunately (and inexplicably!), the WVS list for this battery includes

was reflected by the priority respondents gave to "maintaining order in the nation" relative to "protecting freedom of speech" and "giving people more say in important government decisions." And the punitiveness measure indicated the importance they assigned (in a subsequent set of choices) to "the fight against crime" over "progress toward a less impersonal and more humane society." This contrast seemed appropriate insofar as responses to the issue of crime typically reflect either a "justice" orientation focused on punishment, incarceration and deterrence of criminals, or a "preventative/rehabilitative" orientation concerned with alleviating societal causes of crime such as poverty, neglect, and abuse, and with (re-)integrating (would-be) criminals into the community.

My measure of moral intolerance was formed from responses to three questions asking whether homosexuality, abortion, and divorce can be "justified," indicated on ten-point scales ranging from "never justifiable" to "always justifiable." These items have the advantage of referring to moral behaviors routinely subjected to legislation in diverse societies the world over. But they are far from ideal in that they fail to distinguish between mere disapproval, and demand for public regulation of the behavior, that is, between moral traditionalism and authoritarianism, the latter involving the crucial addition of coercion by the state to discourage and penalize the disapproved behavior. They nevertheless remain the best indicators of moral intolerance regularly collected in different countries and waves of the survey. Finally, an overall measure of general intolerance of difference was formed by summing these four equally weighted components. (Note that all variables in the analysis were ultimately rescored to range from 0 to 1).

"criminals," along with more typical targets such as "communists," "neo-nazis," and "homosexuals." The majority of respondents naturally choose criminals as the group they like least, whose civil liberties they are then questioned about. While the general methodology is widely accepted, one can hardly maintain that political intolerance is adequately reflected by respondents' reluctance to allow criminals to "teach in our schools" or to "hold public office"! Likewise, in regard to the "neighbors" battery (mentioned earlier in my description of the racial intolerance measure), there are arguably sound reasons not to want "political extremists," "drug addicts," and "people with a criminal record" as neighbors. So again, these items can hardly stand as valid indicators of political intolerance, moral intolerance, and punitiveness, respectively. More generally, in selecting dependent variables for the analysis, I was always constrained by having to choose items asked in most countries, and on both waves of the WVS under investigation here (1990 and 1995), which ultimately ruled out a number of plausible indicators of one kind of intolerance or another.

## AUTHORITARIANISM VERSUS STATUS QUO CONSERVATISM IN WESTERN EUROPE

For our troubles, then, exactly what is accomplished by this comparative analysis? The logic is very simple. A general predisposition to intolerance of difference should substantially determine intolerance of difference in every place and every domain: intolerance of racial diversity, of political dissent, of moral deviance, and of criminality. But the extent to which a general aversion to change yields intolerance of difference should depend upon what constitutes the status quo in that domain, in that culture, at that time, since it is change per se to which one is primarily objecting. more than whatever it is that society is changing away from or toward. Thus, status quo conservatism should be a trivial influence on intolerance of difference in times, domains, or cultures where tolerance is a wellestablished norm, and a more important determinant in periods, realms, or places where intolerant ideas and practices are entrenched and institutionally supported. In theory, one can even imagine regimes so persistently and pervasively tolerant that aversion to change among citizens socialized in said culture might actually bolster tolerance of difference. Still, this is not to say that status quo conservatism is entirely a process preference, devoid of substantive content, since generally the extent and rate of social change can be limited by the kinds of constraints on individual freedom so appealing to authoritarians for their tendency to minimize difference. But it does mean the intolerant "returns" to status quo conservatism should be far less substantial than those we reap from authoritarianism, and that they should vary in ways consistent with variations in traditions.

#### Britain

And that is the general pattern we observe first in Table 5.1, which analyzes data drawn from some of the most established and dominant nations of Western Europe, all surveyed at the same time in 1990 during the second wave of the WVS. Britain, for example, has relatively tolerant cultural traditions, such that a general aversion to change and consequent attachment to established customs yields less intolerance of difference among the British than it does among most of their Western European contemporaries (see Table 5.1). The fundamentals of our modern understanding of human rights have been assumed and protected in Britain for hundreds of years, both by common law and by deeply rooted traditions and norms, central elements of which ultimately shaped the written constitutions of many other nations. The British culture contributed many of the core

Table 5.1. Influence of authoritarianism and status quo conservatism on intolerance of difference across cultures and domains: Western Europe

		General Intolerance of Difference	Racial Intolerance/	Political Intolerance	Moral Intolerance	Punitiveness
		Difference	Ethnocentrism			
Sweden	au	.33(.44)	.26(.28)	.41(.34)	.35(.32)	.28(.26)
(N = 1,047)	sq	.11(.11)	.05(.04)	.11(.07)	.19(.13)	.06(.04)
Denmark	au	.33(.47)	.28(.30)	.39(.36)	.30(.34)	.32(.33)
(N = 1,030)	sq	.09(.10)	.02(.01)	.05(.03)	.24(.20)	00(00)
West Germany	au	.36(.48)	.35(.37)	.43(.36)	.36(.36)	.27(.27)
(N = 2,101)	sq	.19(.23)	.17(.16)	.24(.18)	.26(.24)	.05(.05)
Britain	au	.21(.30)	.15(.15)	.19(.16)	.24(.24)	.25(.22)
(N = 1,484)	sq	.05(.07)	.06(.05)	.07(.05)	.08(.07)	02(01)
Netherlands	au	.39(.50)	.30(.33)	.39(.34)	.44(.41)	.36(.35)
(N = 1,017)	sq	.16(.13)	.07(.05)	.16(.09)	.30(.17)	.04(.03)
Belgium	au	.25(.37)	.23(.26)	.25(.23)	.25(.25)	.23(.22)
(N = 2,792)	sq	.10(.13)	.05(.05)	.12(.10)	.18(.17)	.00(.00)
France	au	.26(.33)	.25(.25)	.28(.22)	.23(.21)	.26(.22)
(N = 1,002)	sq	.19(.21)	.14(.12)	.23(.16)	.28(.23)	.06(.05)
Spain	au	.24(.35)	.14(.18)	.29(.25)	.31(.27)	.23(.22)
(N = 4,147)	sq	.17(.21)	.10(.11)	.20(.15)	.27(.20)	.07(.06)
Portugal	au	.18(.31)	.06(.09)	.22(.19)	.21(.22)	.22(.21)
(N = 1,185)	sq	.13(.22)	.03(.05)	.18(.15)	.17(.18)	.14(.13)
Italy	au	.31(.44)	.28(.33)	.35(.28)	.31(.28)	.27(.25)
(N = 2,018)	sq	.10(.13)	.04(.04)	.09(.07)	.22(.18)	.01(.01)
OVERALL	au	.29(.41)	.24(.28)	.29(.25)	.32(.31)	.26(.25)
(N = 17,823)	sq	.15(.18)	.11(.11)	.15(.11)	.24(.20)	.03(.03)

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized OLS multiple regression coefficients (with their associated standardized coefficients in parentheses) indicating the independent influence of authoritarianism and status quo conservatism on intolerance of difference. All coefficients are significant at p < .10 (two-tailed tests applied throughout) except those italicized. See Table E.1 for univariate statistics. *Source:* WVS90.

concepts of due process, including judicial warrants for search, arrest, and detention; prohibitions on inhuman treatment and coerced confessions; fair public trial by jury; presumption of innocence; the right to counsel and indigent defense; limits on the admissibility of evidence; and grounds for and multiple avenues of appeal. And of course this birthplace and architect of parliamentary democracy has a very long and unbroken history of stable, orderly representative government, with popular suffrage and regular, highly competitive elections.

Similarly, the civil liberties at the very core of modern liberal democracy are both firmly entrenched customs and long protected by law in Britain, including the rights of privacy, freedom of speech, assembly, and association. There is a certainly a strong tradition of lively, independent

media, particularly print media, and great cultural pride taken in the vigilance and vitriol of press and Opposition criticism of the government. Although empowered to do so on grounds of likelihood of violence or destruction, authorities restrict public assemblies less frequently than is the norm across much of Western Europe, and likewise, in contrast to many of these peers, have not gone the way of banning fascist parties and organizations. Freedom of religion has long been assured, and religion generally remains a more private matter in Britain than in many Western European countries having greater religious homogeneity, higher levels of formal church membership, and more regular attendance at religious services. Employment discrimination on the grounds of belief, including religious belief, has been illegal since 1976. Government provides substantial funding for schools run by a variety of religious denominations; attitudes regarding religion and schooling have generally been less emotionally charged than is typical of many of Britain's Western European peers.

Tolerant traditions likewise prevail in regard to matters of race, ethnicity, and nationality. The UK was one of the first signatories to the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1951, and since that time has been a leader in promoting the plight of political refugees and accepting asylees. A good proportion of those formally denied asylum nevertheless are granted leave to remain in the country, and deportation is less common than in many peer nations. Britain appears to take its international human rights commitments unusually seriously, and seems to make a special effort to ensure that its domestic laws are made consistent with those obligations. International monitors<sup>3</sup> have remarked upon Britain's long-standing and unusually comprehensive legislation prohibiting racial and ethnic discrimination, as well as its especially proactive approach to the promotion of racial equality and racial harmony. Since the Race Relations Act of 1965, it has been a civil wrong to discriminate in access to premises and a criminal offense to incite racial hatred. Britain's Race Relations Act of 1968 (expanded again in 1976) further prohibited discrimination (and instruction or inducement to discriminate) in employment, housing, and the provision of goods, facilities, and services, going well beyond the measures taken by most of its contemporaries, and still beyond the provisions made by many of its peers since.4 Britain's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See, for example, the report of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) in 2002.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For example, the British legislation is unusual in prohibiting discrimination on grounds of nationality, discrimination in provision of facilities and access to housing, and discrimination by associations regarding admission and treatment of members. It requires many public authorities to plan for and actively promote racial equality. And it imposes specific duties and enforces compliance with those duties (see EUMC 2002).

unusual commitment to racial tolerance is evidenced also by the fact that these legislative initiatives invariably incorporate the establishment of independent statutory bodies (e.g., the Commission for Racial Equality) given full authority to enforce their provisions (including the authority to conduct formal investigations and to compel compliance) and charged proactively to promote good race relations and racial equality: by means of community intervention, education, and research and by the provision of assistance and advice to industry, labor, and the government itself. "Positive" or "affirmative action" measures are also permitted and are widely employed to redress the legacies of past discrimination, including underrepresentation of particular racial groups in education and in certain occupations.

It is important to recognize that my point is not that the British are unusually tolerant, but rather that Britain has unusually tolerant traditions. In fact, at the time these data were collected, the British sample was displaying higher levels of moral intolerance and punitiveness than the other countries shown in Table 5.1 on average. My point is only that, logically and empirically, their intolerance is not substantially fueled by status quo conservatism. Compare the British coefficients for the effects of conservatism on intolerance with the coefficients estimating the impact of authoritarianism, and also with those gauging the influence of conservative inclinations among their Western European contemporaries. Since the British tradition is generally one of tolerance, devotion to tradition lends slender support to intolerance in that culture, compared both with the boost the British (and all of us) get from authoritarianism, and also with the impetus to intolerance this same aversion to change provides their peers socialized in rather less tolerant cultures, and thus attached by their conservative inclinations to rather less tolerant traditions.

#### Denmark

Note that the same general pattern holds also in the Scandinavian samples (Table 5.1), the Danes and Swedes likewise being heirs to cultural traditions sufficiently tolerant that a general aversion to change and consequent devotion to established custom yields comparatively modest returns of intolerance. The Danes, for example, have long observed due process; the rights of the accused are held inviolate; and privacy and freedom of assembly and association receive strong constitutional protection. The Danish constitution has had prohibitions in place against deprivation of "full enjoyment of civic and political rights" on the basis of "creed" since 1849, and on the grounds of "descent" since 1953. In 1971, the Danes went so far as to criminalize "differential treatment" on account of race, ethnicity,

nationality, or religion in all public services, establishments, and events. Denmark was the first European nation to ban slave trading, back in 1792. It has long been a haven for refugees, with liberal standards for granting asylum and comparatively low rates of deportation. And it is one of the most ardent defenders of human rights worldwide, often taking the lead internationally in mobilizing support for human rights conventions. The exemplary response of the Danes to Hitler's persecution of the Jews was no isolated demonstration of a long-standing tradition of tolerance. So again, we see that aversion to change and attachment to custom provide little fuel for intolerance among individuals imbued with such traditions (see Table 5.1). That conservatism does lend some impetus to *moral* intolerance among the Danish people probably reflects their exceptional (by any standards) religious homogeneity, in the form of extraordinarily high levels of membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The official state religion since the 1500s (and decreed such by the constitution), the church has an honored position in Danish society, is heavily subsidized by the state, and has long enjoyed the privilege of providing religious instruction throughout the public school system. Thus, even the exceptions lend support to the rule that the effects of status quo conservatism will depend upon variations in tradition.

#### Italy

The same point is made by considering the pattern of results for Italy (Table 5.1) in light of that country's idiosyncratic conjunction of traditions (see also Sniderman et al. 2000). Again, while conservatism generates some moral intolerance in a manner unsurprising for a devoutly Catholic nation, for the Italians it does not fuel intolerance of difference more generally, and its yield is especially meager in such domains as racial intolerance, where peculiar local traditions might well lead us to expect scant returns. Since World War II, Italy has had an institutionalized regime of tolerance for ethnic diversity unsurpassed among similarly situated nations. The Italian constitution of 1948 guarantees the "inviolable rights" of the individual regardless of nationality, and the equality of all citizens under the law "without distinction of sex, race, language, religion, political opinions, and social and personal conditions." Italy was among the first to pass legislation (in 1975) prohibiting the commission or incitement of discriminatory acts and racial or religious violence. The Catholic Church itself has often been a leader in fighting against racial and ethnic discrimination and in working to improve the welfare of disadvantaged minorities.

But Italy is most remarkable of all in the autonomy it has ceded to regions with significant minority populations, autonomy conferred under

a constitutional article requiring the republic to "safeguard linguistic minorities by means of special provisions." In particular, special statutes adopted under constitutional law for the regions of Trentino–Alto Adige and the Valle d'Aosta, and for some municipalities of Friuli–Venetia Giulia, guarantee for their German-, French- and Slovene-speaking populations, respectively, the use of their native languages in government offices and public schools. In the context of such an institutionalized regime of tolerance for ethnic diversity, then, we can expect no more than a weak relationship between preference for the status quo and racial intolerance. So, while Italian respondents to the WVS90 did in fact express relatively high levels of racial animosity, this animus cannot be located, logically or empirically, in general aversion to change (see Table 5.1). Rather, we see that it is driven primarily – for the Italians, and for everyone else – by authoritarian inclinations to be intolerant of all manner of difference.

#### France

This is to say, not that status quo conservatism is never an important determinant of intolerance, but only that its influence depends critically on the content of the status quo. Attachment to tradition can provide considerable fuel for intolerance of difference when one's cultural tradition incorporates substantial elements of intolerance, as the patterns for West Germany and France will attest (Table 5.1). And it need not be that the cultural tradition in question is inarguably rooted in intolerance, and consistently intolerant in *all* its implications; it is necessary only that important institutions, values, or customs can be intolerant of difference in effect. One could argue, for example, that to accede to supremacist notions (like those promoted recently by Le Pen's National Front) is to abandon the universalism, solidarism, and egalitarianism of France's republican and socialist traditions (Lamont 1995). And the French who are merely attached to tradition but not otherwise especially inclined to intolerance (and the correlation there between status quo conservatism and authoritarianism is just .16) should surely be reluctant to desert the principles that have been at the core of the civic culture since the French Revolution. So entrenched and resonant are those traditions that mainstream leaders across the spectrum of French politics did feel compelled to join forces in publicly condemning Le Pen's statements regarding racial inferiority.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> And it is notable that the greater animus being expressed in Italy these days toward recent waves of immigrants – primarily from Africa, South Asia, Turkey, the Balkans, and the Middle East – seems to be focused especially on Muslims and to be tangled up with fears about diluting the traditional "Catholic identity" of the nation.

Yet there is no question that National Front arguments about the impossibility of assimilating North African immigrants into the French culture also access and gain fuel from some of those same core values (see Schain 1999; Rydgren 2002; 2003). Similarly, French conservatives can and do complain that "identity politics" and "affirmative action" proposals addressing disadvantages suffered by ethnic minorities violate founding principles of the French Republic, which insist on the equal standing of citizens before the state, and underwrite long-established institutions and processes of racial "incorporation" (Hollifield 1994; Lamont 1995). Any "group rights," any inequality of treatment – whether this creates disadvantage or advantage for the citizen - is said to be deeply incompatible with the republican model. These fundamental principles were cited by France's Constitutional Council as obstacles to their ratifying the European Charter on Regional or Minority Languages in 1999. And they underwrite their unusual insistence upon the seamless integration of immigrants and the maintenance of cultural homogeneity – for example, their long-running refusal to allow Muslim girls to wear headscarves in public schools. With such important cultural threads - universalism, solidarism, egalitarianism – that can so easily be woven into a defense of sameness and oneness, it is no surprise that attachment to established tradition can and does incline French conservatives toward intolerance of different races and beliefs (see Table 5.1).

#### West Germany

The nexus between aversion to change and intolerance of difference is more patent still in Germany, which of course has a very unfortunate tradition of aggressive defense of racial and cultural homogeneity. (Note that the WVS90 drew independent samples for West and East Germany here on the eve of German reunification; the East German results are presented subsequently in Table 5.2). In regard first to moral intolerance, high levels of religiosity and the overwhelming numerical and cultural dominance of the Lutheran and Catholic Churches in Germany have enabled incursions by the state into the realm of private morality and persistent official discrimination against minority religions. Despite constitutional provision for freedom of religion and official separation of church and state, the Lutheran and Catholic Churches in Germany have long enjoyed the special status of "corporation under public law," 6 whose

Other creeds in the Judeo-Christian tradition have since been accorded public law corporation status. But the state only recently granted this status to some Islamic groups, and repeatedly rejected the applications of the Church of Scientology and Jehovah's Witnesses on the grounds of their purportedly dubious loyalty to the state and the democratic order.

advantages may include government administrative assistance and state subsidies for church schools and hospitals. And public schools have long permitted (and still tend to make extra allowance for) these denominations to oversee religious instruction as part of the regular curricula, with alternatives for students choosing not to participate tending to isolate and stigmatize.

Government discrimination against minority religions is acute and broadly supported. The treatment of Scientologists, in particular, could reasonably be labeled persecution, although Jehovah's Witnesses and Muslims also experience a good deal of official discrimination. Governments have refused Scientology missions the tax-exempt status afforded most religious organizations as nonprofit associations. Official publications defame the Church of Scientology's ideas and practices, and those with even remote Scientology connections have been denied government contracts, business licenses, and state civil service positions. Similarly, despite the fact that Islam is now Germany's third largest denomination, local authorities have persistently hindered the construction and operation of mosques in their communities, while controversy continues over the extent to which Islamic religious and cultural practices can be consistent with German law and incorporated into public life.

In cultural conditions such as these, private faith creeps into public affairs to a degree uncommon in countries with lower levels of religiosity and/or greater religious heterogeneity. The seeming impossibility of reconciling the allegedly superior morality of West Germany with the "godless" norms of East Germany almost derailed reunification; abortion policy was a particular sticking point. West Germany for a long time strictly regulated access to abortion, in striking contrast to the practices of many of its peers. Around the time these WVS data were collected, abortion was permitted only on grounds of medical necessity or extreme hardship; women would seek abortions in the Netherlands rather than submit to the "justification" procedures; a gynecologist had just been imprisoned for two and a half years (and his patients fined) for performing abortions with insufficient justification; and the Christian Democrats were asking the Constitutional Court to rule (which it did, in 1993) that abortion violated the right to life. In total, the long history and cultural penetration of the Lutheran and Catholic Churches in Germany, together with a high degree of religiosity, underwrite a tradition in which it came to seem natural that the private faith of the majority should be public policy for all. Germans attached to tradition will be attached to that tradition, in which case we should be unsurprised to find status quo conservatism inciting moral intolerance (see Table 5.1) to a degree that is not replicated in cultures such as Britain, where religion and morality generally remain matters of private conscience.

The same logic explains the stronger connection between conservatism and racial intolerance in Germany than that observed for any other country in Table 5.1. One need not even reference the Holocaust to discern a long history in law and society of favoring "German blood" and privileging all that is "authentically German" (Staub 1989). Strict laws regarding residency and citizenship, unsurpassed across western Europe, only recently became more amenable to other than "ethnic Germans," in terms of the length of residence needed to qualify for naturalization and the granting of citizenship to children born of legal foreign residents. And residents who are not citizens (which includes many in the large and long-resident Turkish population) have suffered considerable disadvantages, being excluded from most civil service jobs (including positions in education and law enforcement) and restricted in their property rights and access to university places. Similarly, the Romani/Sinti minority in Germany, although ever-present, were long denied official status, cultural protection, and representational guarantees.

Germans inclined to cling to tradition should resonate to all the contemporary residue of persistent cultural notions about racial purity and racial superiority. They would probably sympathize with their country's somewhat less-than-wholehearted implementation of UN conventions on refugees and asylum – for example, the policy of ruling ineligible for asylum, with little regard to circumstances, those said to be entering Germany via a "safe third country"; and the practice of deporting, deprived of their belongings, Bosnian and Kosovar refugees who fail to accept "voluntary" repatriation schemes. And we could certainly expect them to resist claimants and immigrants whose assimilation into German society might appear hardest to accomplish – specifically, Muslims and those of African origin – whose acceptance might thus seem to pose the greatest risk of societal destabilization.

Yet it is likely that Germans averse to change and instability would be dismayed and alarmed at repeated reports of brutality,<sup>7</sup> even human rights abuses by law enforcement officials, directed particularly against Muslims and foreigners (including border police mistreating asylum seekers attempting to enter or being deported). Following the turmoil and shame of the Nazi experience, Germany entrenched one of Europe's most stringent constitutional and legal frameworks guaranteeing individual rights and liberties (but see notable exceptions regarding political intolerance, as discussed in the following section). There are many different types and levels of courts, with multiple avenues of appeal, as well as a Constitutional Court that rules on infringement of individuals' constitutional

<sup>7</sup> See reports published by Amnesty International and the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

rights. The German constitution (known as the Basic Law) includes absolute prohibitions on arbitrary arrest or detention, forced exile, torture, and other inhuman treatment. It requires judicial warrant for arrest (of all but those in the act of committing, or about to commit, a crime) and judicial review of all detention. Detainees all have access to lawyers; most are released without bail; if convicted they have their sentences reduced by time spent in custody; and if acquitted they can actually receive government compensation.

The point is that Germany has now enjoyed a half-century of the peace and equilibrium made possible, in part, by firm commitment to the rule of law and protection of individual rights against abuses by the state. Germans' historical experience would assure them that violating or undercutting those protections threatens greater instability than does the admission of asylees, refugees, and immigrants and their even imperfect assimilation. So an aversion to change should, and does, incline Germans to favor public regulation of private moral choices, as well as policies that might slow the "dilution" of the German people and culture by the "encroaching hordes" of Africa, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans. But it should not, and does not, generate an eagerness to sacrifice due process in the interest of cracking down on criminals and deterring fraudulent claimants (see Table 5.1, final column). Any aversion to change would have to be accompanied by authoritarian inclinations (and even here in West Germany, the two predispositions correlate at just .28) in order to spark enthusiasm for dismantling due process and exposing the individual to the unfettered force of the state. In this regard, it is instructive to note that Portugal is the one nation in Table 5.1 where status quo conservatism does rather incline one to punitiveness: to a willingness to sacrifice individual rights and liberties in favor of "cracking down on crime." Portugal has limited reliance upon trial by jury, a long history and extraordinarily high levels of mistreatment and deaths in police custody,8 routine reliance upon and very prolonged periods of pretrial "preventive" detention, and persistently substandard prison conditions falling well below Western European norms.

Finally, it is enlightening to dissect a central element of German political culture that is simultaneously conservative, antiracist, and politically repressive. This element is shared with some other European

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> This is according to reports of international monitors such as Amnesty International and the European Committee on the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. For example, the latter group reported after investigations in 1992 that "ill-treatment of persons in police custody was a relatively common phenomenon," and reiterated that impression in 1995 after following up progress on the government's response to their earlier charges.

nations experienced in the destruction wrought by Nazi ideals, but nowhere is it manifested so vehemently as in the society whence those ideals originated. I refer to the absolute conviction that certain ideas essentially, racism and fascism – are forever ruled "out of order" in a liberal democracy. In the aftermath of World War II, Germany established severe limits on freedom of speech, association, and assembly, which were clearly intended to secure the new order and purchase social stability. It is illegal in Germany to endorse Nazism in any fashion, to deny the Holocaust, or to post or access any such prohibited material, including on the internet. There are federal and state Offices for the Protection of the Constitution (OPC) that monitor potential threats to the democratic system and the constitutional order. The OPC collect intelligence, conduct interviews, and even infiltrate organizations with undercover agents. The Basic Law allows government to ban and confiscate the assets of organizations endorsing illegal ideas or otherwise considered a threat to the liberal democratic order. Some "right-wing" and "skinhead" organizations have been banned on this authority; hundreds of other organizations remain under observation. Beyond these sweeping powers accorded to all federal and state governments, the federal Constitutional Court can (and does)9 permanently outlaw any political party judged a threat to liberal democracy. Outlawed organizations are prohibited from holding public assemblies, rallies, and marches. The police can actually take into custody for up to two weeks (varying by state, and given timely judicial concurrence) anyone they think *intends* to take part in an unauthorized assembly.

These widely accepted restrictions on speech, association, and assembly represent the foundation of the postwar constitutional order: a dense web of legal constraints on "unthinkable" ideas that itself would be unthinkable in the United States, for example, where it is both a constitutional principle and a cultural canon to protect even treacherous groups espousing hateful and incendiary notions (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982; McClosky and Zaller 1984; Chong 1993). In the U.S. context, then, defending free speech by the likes of super-patriots or the Ku Klux Klan just as one protects the speech rights of any other group is at once politically tolerant and (even recklessly) indifferent to racial hatred, but nevertheless, through it all, consistently faithful to the status quo. Restrictions on speech, association, and assembly are heresy in the "freedom fundamentalism" of U.S. political culture (however imperfectly that faith has been practiced; see Stouffer 1955; McClosky and Zaller 1984; Sniderman et al. 1989). Such constraints are truly antithetical to the national "religion" of unfettered civil liberty to which Americans devoted to tradition ought to be committed. Yet they are the very core

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Since the 1950s, the court has outlawed Nazi and communist parties.

of Germany's post-Nazi settlement: the "never again" social truce that Germans averse to change and instability should, and evidently do, defend (Table 5.1).

## AUTHORITARIANISM VERSUS STATUS QUO CONSERVATISM IN EASTERN EUROPE

In making my case regarding the distinctions between authoritarianism and status quo conservatism, I have focused to this point on a set of Western European nations that share important commonalities as established liberal democracies but that also have important variations in cultural traditions. I have also deliberately confined my analyses to nations that the WVS had surveyed in 1990: the critical historical moment at which Eastern Europe emerged from decades of communist control, and isolation from the liberal democratic traditions of Western Europe. We can now broaden our frame of reference by replicating the previous analysis on some of the most established and stable countries of Eastern Europe<sup>10</sup> (see Table 5.2). These countries were all surveyed at that same historical moment, and they have important cultural elements in common as members of the former Eastern bloc. But they too vary in cultural traditions – both from each other, and from the Western European representatives in Table 5.1 – in ways that should again illuminate the differences between authoritarianism and status quo conservatism. For further enlightenment, I rounded out this Eastern European set with samples from the major combatants Croatia and Serbia, drawn in 1995 and 1996, respectively, in the midst of the genocidal conflicts attending the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia.

Broadening the frame of reference in this way reinforces the conclusion that the intolerant returns to status quo conservatism are far less dependable than those generated by authoritarianism, and that they vary in ways consistent with variations in cultural traditions. In general, conservatives in these Eastern European countries – mostly fledgling democracies trying to take root in autocratic cultures – should be, and are, inclined to political intolerance (see Table 5.2), to resist the rapid expansion of political freedom and the unpredictable outcomes of democracy: shifting factions, party change, leader turnover, fickle public mood, and the unfamiliar cacophony of dissent. But again, since it is change more than difference that they abhor (that is, the unfamiliarity more than the

Poland would certainly qualify on these criteria for inclusion in the analysis, and WVS90 data were available for Poland. Unfortunately, however, the Polish survey measured the critical variable, authoritarianism, differently than the others, recording only the respondent's first choice from among the childrearing values.

Table 5.2. Influence of authoritarianism and status quo conservatism on intolerance of difference across cultures and domains: Eastern Europe

		General	Racial	Political	Moral	Punitiveness
		Intolerance of	Intolerance/	Intolerance	Intolerance	
		Difference	Ethnocentrism			
East Germany	аи	.29(.45)	.31(.33)	.23(.21)	.34(.36)	.18(.21)
(N = 1,336)	sq	.08(.12)	02(02)	.19(.16)	.19(.19)	03(03)
Czech Republic	au	.21(.29)	.19(.19)	.16(.12)	.21(.18)	.25(.22)
(N = 930)	sq	.05(.07)	01(02)	.09(.07)	.09(.08)	.02(.02)
Slovakia	au	.16(.25)	.12(.13)	.26(.21)	.10(.09)	.22(.22)
(N = 466)	sq	00(00)	.04(.06)	.04(.04)	01(01)	08(09)
Hungary	au	.08(.12)	.06(.07)	.01(.01)	.10(.09)	.10(.11)
(N = 999)	sq	.10(.16)	.06(.07)	.12(.10)	.13(.11)	.10(.10)
Bulgaria	au	.21(.28)	.17(.16)	.23(.18)	.23(.20)	.18(.18)
(N = 1,034)	sq	.05(.09)	.05(.07)	.13(.14)	.04(.05)	.00(.00)
Belarus	au	.16(.23)	.10(.09)	.17(.13)	.18(.16)	.20(.19)
(N = 1,015)	sq	.03(.04)	.01(.01)	.06(.05)	.02(.02)	.03(.03)
Russia	au	.11(.17)	.08(.09)	.14(.11)	.06(.08)	.17(.17)
(N = 1,961)	sq	.07(.12)	.08(.08)	.13(.11)	.04(.06)	.05(.06)
Romania	au	.10(.12)	.08(.07)	.17(.12)	.09(.07)	.08(.07)
(N = 1,103)	sq	.10(.16)	.06(.07)	.15(.14)	.16(.17)	.00(.00)
Serbia	au	.23(.41)	.21(.28)	.25(.25)	.22(.27)	.23(.27)
(N = 1,280)	sq	.05(.09)	.01(.02)	.10(.10)	.07(.09)	.03(.04)
Croatia	au	.28(.39)	.20(.26)	.33(.27)	.34(.28)	.23(.26)
(N = 1,196)	sq	.04(.06)	02(03)	.08(.06)	.13(.10)	01(01)
OVERALL	аи	.20(.30)	.20(.21)	.22(.19)	.17(.16)	.21(.22)
(N = 11,320)	sq	.08(.12)	.02(.03)	.15(.13)	.11(.11)	.04(.05)

*Note*: Cell entries are unstandardized OLS multiple regression coefficients (with their associated standardized coefficients in parentheses) indicating the independent influence of authoritarianism and status quo conservatism on intolerance of difference. All coefficients are significant at p < .10 (two-tailed tests applied throughout) except those italicized. See Table E.1 for univariate statistics.

Source: WVS90, except for Serbian and Croatian samples, which are drawn from WVS95.

dissent), they are not so inclined as their Western European peers to favor attempts to regulate sexual behavior, to restrict reproductive choice, or to privilege domestic arrangements such as marriage, with high religiosity and state incursions into the realm of private morality being less common in the Eastern European tradition. And neither does aversion to change so incline Eastern European conservatives to expressions of racial animosity, as they have been socialized mostly under monolithic regimes determined to suppress ethnic conflict and to discourage any kind of particularistic identity. Note that I am not saying Eastern Europeans are less disposed than their Western counterparts to racial and moral intolerance, but only that they are less disposed by their conservatism to

such intolerance<sup>11</sup> (compare the effects of status quo conservatism between Tables 5.1 and 5.2), since the traditions to which their aversion to change attaches them less often include the unconstrained expression of ethnic identity, pride, and animosity, and public regulation of private moral choices

#### Romania

Beyond these broad variations in tradition between East and West, there are important cultural differences among the Eastern European countries themselves, which likewise should and do accord with the varying influence of status quo conservatism across these countries. For example, aversion to change probably has an elevated influence on moral intolerance in Romania (Table 5.2) because the culture has long displayed a religiosity and a predilection for moral regulation unusual for Eastern Europe. Close to 90 percent of Romanians belong to the Romanian Orthodox Church, and their levels of attendance at religious services, and the influence of the church in government, are unparalleled. There has long been official and quasi-official discrimination against other religions, in terms of their ability to gain tax-exempt status, receive state funding, build places of worship and use public facilities, operate their own schools and teach in public schools, and broadcast programs in the media.

International monitors of human rights and religious freedom regularly report that Orthodox clergy and local authorities incite their communities to violence against other religions, while police decline to intervene. Such widespread discrimination, long directed at Jews and members of the Greek Catholic (Uniate) and Hungarian Roman Catholic Churches, has only expanded over time to include newer entrants – labeled "sects" – such as Baptists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and Adventists. Likewise, religious values pervade public affairs to a degree exceptional for Eastern Europe. Police and societal persecution of gays is pervasive and long-standing, and homosexual acts between consenting adults are punishable by imprisonment. And both abortion and prostitution have been subjected to an unusual degree of regulation. At the time these WVS data were collected, the newly installed post-Ceauşescu regime had only just repealed draconian abortion laws, in place for a quarter of a century, that

This is the same point as made previously in regard to the British – i.e., not that the British are less intolerant than their Western European counterparts, but that they are less inclined by their conservatism to intolerance than those peers. These kinds of claims pertain to the determinants, not to the levels of intolerance.

had made abortion legal only if the woman already had five children, and otherwise punishable by up to five years' imprisonment.

#### East Germany

Note also that the East Germans seemed "godless" only to the West Germans; by Eastern European standards, they were relatively pious. And the state exercised an unusual degree of moral oversight, just as it strictly regulated all other aspects of political and cultural life. In regard to religion, throughout most of the communist period the government maintained a self-interested kind of rapprochement with the Lutheran Church (the vast majority of those annexed into the GDR after World War II were devout Lutherans), which stood in sharp contrast to the brutal repression of organized religion practiced by many of its peers. The church had an independent administration, owned property, ran agricultural enterprises. operated hospitals and homes and day care centers, and for the most part was allowed a kind of peaceful coexistence with the state, its own institutions working with those of the state in the provision of social services in many parts of the country. And while East Germany's abortion policies were certainly permissive relative to those of West Germany, it was actually not until 1972 that they legalized abortion in the first trimester, whereas other comparably situated Eastern bloc countries (e.g., Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Bulgaria) had allowed relatively unrestricted access to abortion since the mid-1950s.

Thus the exceptional impact of status quo conservatism on moral intolerance in East Germany (Table 5.2) can likewise be considered consistent with peculiar local tradition. While some scholars have argued that East European abortion restrictions were driven more by fears about declining birth rates than by moral concerns (Harsch 1997), bear in mind that status quo conservatism should exercise unusual influence on intolerance wherever local traditions are intolerant of difference in effect, irrespective of their origins or intent.

#### Czechoslovakia

By contrast, in countries such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, which nurtured – either "underground" or above – relatively tolerant traditions, we see that aversion to change yields very little in the way of intolerance across the different domains (see Table 5.2 in regard to the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Serbia, and Croatia). Czechoslovakia's famous "Prague Spring" – the extraordinary "opening up" that ensued in 1968 under the new party leader Dubcek – pushed reform further than any communist

state had ever allowed, toward cultural "liberalization" and allowance for some genuinely democratic participation in decision making (including freely granting autonomy to the republic of Slovakia).

Of course, this movement toward reform, in direct defiance of the USSR, was swiftly put down that summer by the Soviet invasion and consequent institution of an even more repressive regime, strongly "supported" by the USSR. Nevertheless, this unusual impetus to democratic reform and quest for greater individual freedom clearly had deep roots in the local culture. The 1960s in general had been a period of unusual personal freedom and lively artistic expression: in Dubcek's words, "socialism with a human face." Abortion had been permitted since 1957 for a wide variety of health and social reasons, and consensual homosexual behavior between adults was formally decriminalized in 1961. The push toward liberalization had actually been under way as far back as the late 1950s. bearing some early fruits with the enactment of a new constitution in 1960, and a considerable easing in 1963 of controls on the press, education, and cultural life in general, as well as some devolution of power to local authorities. It was then kept alive, at great risk to the reformers, by a vigorous and broad-based underground resistance sustained through the entire period of renewed repression.

This movement came "above ground" with the publication in January 1977 of Charter 77, a forceful declaration of human rights signed by 700 intellectuals, human rights activists, and former party leaders, which called on the government to live up to the state's own constitution and international covenants on political, economic, and cultural rights. While the regime's official response was the imposition of even stricter controls, this stunning declaration – widely disseminated and popularly supported – clearly resonated with a persistent cultural bent that would survive two decades of occupation and Soviet-backed repression to culminate in the "Velvet Revolution" of 1989: the extraordinary grassroots groundswell that brought about the swift and peaceful dismantling of the Czechslovak communist regime.

## Yugoslavia

Likewise in regard to the former Yugoslavia, although here the tradition was more "top down" than grassroots in nature: a formal regime of respect for difference actually instituted and consistently supported by the authorities. Either way, we see yet again that a tendency to cling to the status quo generates little intolerance given a cultural heritage such as this (see Table 5.2). The Serbs and Croats, despite the violence attending the dissolution of their union, were jointly heirs to an unusually tolerant tradition; they had been socialized under an institutional regime

remarkable for Eastern Europe in its respect for ethnic and political differences. The 1946 constitution explicitly proclaimed the Yugoslav republic to be a "community of equal nations, which, on the basis of their right of self-determination, including the right of secession, expressed their will to live together in a federative state" (Zagar 2000: 79). Following the 1948 schism with Stalin, Yugoslavia became a highly independent, nonaligned communist country, and across three decades of Tito's determined leadership it remained a nation exceptional by Eastern European standards for its relatively democratic decision making and political freedom, its formal recognition of minority group rights, and its highly autonomous republics and provinces. It was remarkable for the relative harmony that existed among this multiethnic population and among the constituent republics – Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Bosnia – and later, the autonomous provinces of Vojvodina (mostly Hungarian) and Kosovo (mostly Albanian).

While some contend that this "coexistence sprouted from below" through intermarriage, friendship, and workplace cooperation (Bugajski 1996: 121), the interethnic harmony is generally attributed to Tito's strong and charismatic leadership (Zagar 2000), his pervasive philosophy of "brotherhood and unity" that consistently shunned ethnic nationalism, and the substantial autonomy he ceded to these "constituent nations" within an institutional framework heavily favoring consensus and cooperation. The constituent nations (in theory) always had the ability to secede, and (after further significant decentralization in 1974) all eight nations and provinces had veto power over decisions other than emergency measures. As further impetus to power sharing and to ethnic cooperation and consensus, Tito had instituted an eight-man presidency, with the lead position rotating annually among the republics; and he was vigilant over the years in purging from the government any nationalists or nationalistic rhetoric that might threaten his vision.

These decades of peaceful coexistence and power sharing started to unravel only after Tito's death in 1980, which seemed to have two critical consequences for the troubles subsequently plaguing this formerly tranquil nation. It enabled the reemergence of nationalistic forces – notably instigated by Milosevic, then president of Serbia's League of Communists – and separatist ambitions (Lendvai 1991; Zagar 2000; Licht 2000). And it allowed the increasingly self-regarding constituent republics (soon with their own flags, anthems, and constitutions) to pursue varying goals, which apparently included varying tastes for democracy and capitalism (Cohen 1993). As the republics started to democratize at differing rates, their governments became difficult to harmonize, and interethnic and interrepublic cooperation – perhaps always too heavily dependent on Tito's "personal charisma" (Zagar 2000: 86; see also Licht 2000) – began to

decline. Croatia, the wealthiest and most western republic, had a political culture and public notably more sympathetic to democratization and the free market. Their 1990 push for a multiparty system and democratic and economic reforms has been credited with setting in motion the secessionist drive that ultimately culminated in the dissolution of Yugoslavia (Cohen 1993; Zagar 2000), amid some of the most vicious ethnic violence witnessed since the Second World War.

The data from Serbia and Croatia presented in Table 5.2 suggest that none of this had much to do with anyone's aversion to change. Clearing our minds of the genocidal images dominating our recent impressions of Yugoslavia, and taking a clear view of the tolerant traditions that had prevailed for forty years prior, we can see there was little in the culture that sustained this kind of hatred, and much that nurtured peaceful coexistence and respect for ethnic and political differences. Attachment to tradition provides very little fuel for intolerance among those imbued with such tolerant traditions. The meager influence of status quo conservatism on racial and political intolerance in both Croatia and Serbia is certainly consistent with these expectations (see Table 5.2), as is the similarity of its influence between these two heirs to the same cultural tradition. 12 While this conclusion might at first seem jarring and counterintuitive, I would point out that analysts have posited "deep-seated ethnic hatred simmering below the surface" to explain events precisely because the bloody dissolution was so unexpectedly incongruent with impressions of Yugoslavia widely held prior to the horrifying events of the 1990s.

I was especially interested in including these Yugoslav combatants among the comparative set for this analysis, then, not only to make the point regarding how badly we are misled when we fail to distinguish status quo conservatism from authoritarianism, but also to emphasize the special explanatory "edge" of the theory of the authoritarian dynamic. In distinguishing authoritarianism from conservatism in this chapter, I have concentrated only on the authoritarian predisposition itself, and not on the second critical component of the authoritarian dynamic: conditions of normative threat. That is to say, for the limited purposes of this chapter, I have confined my attention to just one component of the two-way interaction that ultimately generates the bulk of manifest expressions of intolerance. But I did want to signal here that the Yugoslav puzzle is really not so puzzling once we understand manifest intolerance as the product of the interaction of relatively stable predispositions with *changing* 

Likewise, the somewhat greater impact of status quo conservatism on moral intolerance in Croatia than in Serbia probably reflects the Croatians' Catholicism and unusual religiosity (including persistently high levels of attendance at religious services).

environmental conditions of normative threat. It is not that Tito's demise "took the lid off" preexisting ethnic hatred that had merely been suppressed by his regime, but rather that Tito's demise took the lid off the expression of different values and pursuit of divergent ends within and among the republics. That is to say, it created those conditions of normative threat – of diversity in public opinion and loss of confidence in leaders – that prove critical to the activation of latent predispositions to authoritarianism, and their expression in manifest intolerance of all manner of difference.

In brief, I have found that while analysts are correct to deem Serbia especially "responsible" for the events that transpired, the Serbs' problem (which became everyone's problem) was not actually high levels of authoritarianism or intolerance, but rather high variance in public opinion and its long-term correlate: high variance in authoritarianism. Comparing across eighty WVS90-95 samples drawn from fifty-nine different nations. none of the six Yugoslav republics displayed especially high levels of authoritarianism on average, ranging from five percentage points above the world norm for Serbia, to eight points below that norm for Croatia (which actually placed Croatia among the ten least authoritarian nations). But Serbia is unparalleled across the eighty samples in terms of variance in authoritarianism. No other country comes anywhere close to matching the deviation in authoritarianism apparent among the Serbs. Note that Montenegro, too, displays very high variance in authoritarianism – the third highest across the eighty samples - but still does not even approach the variance apparent within Serbia. In short, the Serbs disagree with one another, tremendously, in their fundamental understanding of the appropriate resolution between freedom and difference and oneness and sameness.

One of the unfortunate corollaries of such enormous variance in authoritarianism is a national tendency toward high variance in public opinion more generally. In this regard, we observe that the level of public dissension evident in the Serbian sample places them among the five most conflicted publics in the entire WVS90-95 survey. (Note that Croatia's variance in public opinion is also sufficient to place them among the top ten most fractious publics). This measure of within-nation variance in public opinion was formed using two equally weighted components – the variance (across the WVS national sample in question) in general intolerance of difference, and the variance in status quo conservatism (each

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Variance in authoritarianism and variance in public opinion are correlated .41 across the twenty nations represented in Tables 5.1 and 5.2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ideally, I would like this second component of the measure to have indicated not variance in status quo conservatism (the predisposition) but rather variance in

as earlier described) – since aversion to difference and aversion to change are the two dimensions purportedly implicated in generating intolerance. The variance in opinions expressed by fellow respondents to the WVS survey of one's national community<sup>15</sup> serves to reflect the diversity of beliefs that a citizen of that nation must confront in the course of his or her daily interactions and consumption of popular media. I consider this measure the real-world analogue to those experimental manipulations of "news" reports of belief diversity: the key component of normative threat.

It becomes evident that while countries with high levels of authoritarianism are forever problematic for minorities within, and for neighbors without, countries with high variance in authoritarianism are endemically and endlessly a problem for themselves. One can easily picture the predicament by reviewing Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, vertically scanning the far right sections of those figures. Here we can clearly discern the eviscerating internal conflict a country will experience when populated in equal measure and with equal intensity by both authoritarians and libertarians, once they find themselves in an environment of fractured public opinion, of great belief diversity, of widespread disagreement, of high normative threat. These are countries that essentially go to war with themselves, that destroy themselves from within. This "genocidal formula" - which may explain not only the Yugoslav troubles, but also those that have plagued Germany and Argentina – is not at all obvious until one clearly grasps that there are two critical components implicated in the dynamic process fueling intolerance of difference. While these issues are tangential to the current investigation and cannot be pursued further here, readers with particular interest in the Yugoslav case should note that I develop it at much greater length in the companion to this work (Stenner n.d.). There

political and social attitudes reflective of an aversion to change, just as the first component indicated not variance in authoritarianism but rather variance in specific attitudes reflective of an aversion to difference. Unfortunately, there were no suitable measures of specific political and social attitudes reflective of status quo conservatism collected sufficiently widely and consistently across the eighty national samples of the WVS90-95.

National variance in public opinion was indicated by averaging two equally weighted components: the variance (across the national sample in question) in general intolerance of difference, and the variance in status quo conservatism (see also the preceding note). Each of these two components was first rescored to range from o to 1, with the actual range of scores across the eighty samples of the WVS90-95 defining the range for each of the two components. The two components were then averaged, and the result was rescored to range from o to 1, then centered on a mean of zero (based on the full WVS90-95 sample). See Appendix E for complete details and Table E.1 for univariate statistics.

I provide a wide variety of real-world demonstrations of the explanatory power of the authoritarian dynamic, from the genocide in Yugoslavia, to the rise of "right-wing extremist" parties across Europe, to political disengagement and political violence, hate crimes, and death penalty sentencing by juries in the contemporary United States.

Returning now to the current investigation and the lessons of Table 5.2, we find that for Serbians and Croatians, heirs to the same tolerant tradition, attachment to tradition provides virtually no account of intolerance. But authoritarianism explains a great deal of the variance across these different domains of intolerance in both countries. (And again, in the investigations of this chapter we are not even allowing for the extent to which these intolerant returns to authoritarianism are magnified by normative threat). In a simple bivariate model, authoritarianism accounts for 18 percent of all intolerance of difference in Serbia, 16 percent in Croatia, and 21 percent in the two samples combined. By contrast, status quo conservatism explains just three percent of intolerance in Serbia, two percent in Croatia, less than five percent combined, and never more than one percent once we control for authoritarianism. Moreover, no sociodemographic variable can match the explanatory power of this simple measure of authoritarian predisposition. Neither age nor years of education adds more than seven percent to the explanation provided by authoritarianism; the addition of either religiosity or rural residence adds less than four percent to the account. In sum, then, authoritarianism provides a substantial and parsimonious account of all intolerance of difference manifested by the major participants in what many consider the worst genocide since the Holocaust.

#### A COMMON SOURCE AND A UNIVERSAL PROCESS

The more general point I wish to make, of course, is that ultimately we need not resort to particularistic accounts referencing the history of the Balkans (or the Velvet Revolution, or the Reformation), the peculiar propensities or traditions of different peoples and cultures, or simmering ethnic tensions kept in check by charismatic leaders. The Serbs are intolerant of the Croats for the same reasons (i.e., from the same sources) that the Croats are intolerant of the Serbs, which are the same reasons the Germans are intolerant of those seeking refuge from this genocidal conflict, that the Czechs are intolerant of the Roma and the French of North African immigrants, and that all are intolerant of dissidents, deviants, and criminals. In a simple bivariate model, authoritarianism alone accounts for 20 percent of the variance in all intolerance of difference across the Western European set, and 10 percent of the variance across the East

European representatives. With no competition from authoritarianism, status quo conservatism explains just six and three percent of intolerance in Western and Eastern Europe, respectively, and adds only three and one percent to the explanation provided by authoritarianism.

And the intolerance generated by status quo conservatism is certainly less consistent across domains and cultures. Even in the domain of moral intolerance, where aversion to change did give us some purchase in analyses of Western Europe, I suspect that conservatism would not have yielded quite the same returns had I been able to distinguish mere disapproval of certain behaviors from a willingness to use the authority of the state to discourage and penalize those behaviors. As the results for the domain of punitiveness make apparent, controlling others' behavior by the application of force is a distinctively authoritarian predilection, whether that be the use of actual physical force, or state coercion via public policy and the manipulation of rewards and penalties for desired and undesired behaviors. Exceptional interest in using collective authority to coerce individual compliance with group norms could almost be considered diagnostic of authoritarianism.

Overall, then, it should be evident that the extent to which status quo conservatism yields intolerance of difference depends on the established institutional and cultural context, on the peculiar conjunction of local traditions, on precisely what one would be changing away from and toward, in that domain, in that culture, at that time. But as a broad survey of Tables 5.1 and 5.2 makes apparent, authoritarianism rather consistently produces a predictable cluster of sociopolitical stances varying in target and form, but never in function: the animating spirit throughout is to limit difference in people, beliefs, and behaviors. Authoritarianism persists in packaging together the taste for racial discrimination, moral regulation, and all-out political repression, indifferent as to its object, and mostly indifferent to cultural context.

# MEASUREMENT ERROR AND THE APPARENTLY VARYING INFLUENCE OF AUTHORITARIANISM

I say "mostly" indifferent to cultural context because at least on the face, authoritarianism seems better able to account for intolerance among the Western than among the Eastern European nations. There are a number of possible explanations for this discrepancy, some mere artifacts, others having great substantive import. First, it may be simply that the WVS data – or certain of the variables therein – collected by the less experienced and largely uncoordinated Eastern European survey organizations contain more random measurement error, that they are less reliable than

those collected in the West. Perusal of the scale reliabilities<sup>16</sup> indicates that status quo conservatism, political intolerance, and punitiveness are actually measured with equal or higher precision in Eastern than in Western Europe, and that moral intolerance, though measured with somewhat greater error in the East than the West, is actually pleasingly reliable in both regions by WVS standards. 17 The racial intolerance measure, however, is extremely unreliable indeed, and even less reliable in Eastern  $(\alpha = .23)$  than in Western Europe  $(\alpha = .33)$ , which then seems mostly responsible for the lower reliability in the East ( $\alpha = .58$ ) than in the West  $(\alpha = .69)$  of the composite measure of general intolerance of difference. But by far the biggest problem in the data is the substantially lower reliability in Eastern ( $\alpha = .23$ ) than in Western Europe ( $\alpha = .39$ ) of the key independent variable, authoritarianism – a precipitous decline from a base that was none too impressive to begin with – not to mention extreme variation in the reliability of this measure across the twenty countries. even within regions. Since random measurement error has entirely different consequences depending on whether the measure serves as a dependent or an independent variable, I will deal with each of these two issues separately.

#### Unreliability of the Authoritarianism Measure

First, greater random error in the measurement of authoritarianism in Eastern Europe will severely attenuate the *unstandardized* coefficients for authoritarianism in the Eastern region across all domains (racial, political, moral, and punitive). And this is indeed what we observe moving from Table 5.1 to 5.2. While the authoritarianism measure exhibits great unreliability in the Western European set also, in Eastern Europe the measure is riddled with a truly daunting degree of random error, sufficient to flatten – even down to (apparently) zero effect – all but the steepest (true) relationships.

Unreliability in tolerance-related indices is sometimes of substantive import, as I previously argued in Chapter 2 (see the discussions around Figure 2.1 and hypotheses  $H_I$  and  $H_4$ ), and as I will subsequently

The average  $\alpha$  reliabilities for the measures of status quo conservatism, political intolerance, moral intolerance, and punitiveness are .43, .51, .74, and .61, respectively, across the ten Western European nations in the comparative set, and .46, .53, .67, and .60 across the ten Eastern European nations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Though all of these scale reliabilities are still very far from satisfactory, substantial unreliability in one's measures seems to be an unavoidable cost of working with pooled cross-cultural data covering both developed and underdeveloped nations, and collected by organizations with widely varying experience in survey research.

demonstrate in Chapter 9 (see Tables 9.1 and 9.5). This is just one of a few good reasons why we ought not to make a fetish of scale reliability. why we should not discard valid measures for no reason other than seemingly poor internal coherence. Sometimes apparent unreliability reflects something real and important, as when normative reassurance deactivates latent authoritarianism, producing disconnection among scale items indicating predispositions to intolerance (as in H<sub>I</sub> and Table 9.1) or manifestations of intolerance (as in H<sub>4</sub> and Table 9.5), in just the same way that it deflates the relationships between those predispositions and those manifestations (as in H<sub>3</sub>, and Figures 4.1.2, 9.9, 9.11.1, and 9.11.2). In short, normative reassurance (most critically, little variance in public opinion, the major ingredient of normative threat) can make tolerance-related indices come "unhinged," but that would not render them "unreliable" in the sense that we should not rely upon them in our analyses, that we could not extract meaning from their lack of relation to other variables.

In the current case, however, if we create a simple aggregate dataset (N = 20) including each country's scale reliabilities, region alone (Western versus Eastern Europe) accounts for over a third of the variance in the reliability of the authoritarianism measure across those countries, while within-nation diversity of public opinion has no significant influence on reliability beyond that. And in any case, the reliability of the authoritarianism measure in the West, while higher, is still very unimpressive. <sup>18</sup> Ultimately, then, the conclusion to be drawn is simply that we have a very "noisy" measure, which is noisier still in the East. The problem would seem to be the ambiguous format of the authoritarianism items, in concert with the autonomy and latitude allowed the local survey organizations administering the WVS, and their imperfect documentation of any variations in administration. <sup>19</sup> This potential applies to all the countries, but would produce less error in the West on account of their more experienced and coordinated survey organizations.

 $<sup>^{18}</sup>$  The α reliability of the measure of status quo conservatism, while barely more satisfactory (averaging .43 across the Western European set and .46 in Eastern Europe) is at least equivalent between the two regions, and also far less variant across the twenty nations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> While the WVS codebook documents a number of variations in the way different countries administered or scored different items, the WVS was clearly heavily dependent on the diligence of the local organizations and the consistency with which those organizations reported any variations back to the center. My experience working with hundreds of different variables from all countries and waves of the WVS indicates that, understandably but unfortunately, there are many undocumented variations in the administration and/or scoring of different items, which would introduce a considerable degree of random error into the pooled dataset.

As I explained earlier, my measure of authoritarianism relied on respondents choosing from a proffered list of eleven "qualities that children can be encouraged to learn at home" those they considered "especially important." Two of those eleven alternatives I counted as reflective of authoritarian values, and three as reflective of its inverse, libertarianism, with the final measure equally weighting these two components. The childrearing values measures I normally rely upon have respondents choosing between paired authoritarian and libertarian qualities, or else at least partially ranking a set of desirable qualities (e.g., indicating the three most and three least important). Each of these formats would seem to leave far less room for variation in administration and in respondents' comprehension than formats where respondents are instructed (perhaps with varying consistency, clarity, and prodding) to "choose up to five" qualities from a list of eleven.

It is important to keep in mind that nothing I have said here casts doubt upon the validity of the authoritarianism measure. The validity of a measure (the extent to which it reflects what we mean for it to reflect, rather than some other attribute) is distinct from its reliability (the consistency or precision with which it reflects the attribute in question). There is no suggestion here that the authoritarianism scale is invalid (that it is systematically measuring something other than authoritarianism), only that it is unreliable (that scores are reflecting much random variation, in addition to systematic variation in true levels of authoritarianism). Invalidity of the measure would leave us in danger of drawing inappropriate conclusions about the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance, perhaps spuriously attributing to authoritarianism effects that are truly due to some other attribute our measure is unwittingly reflecting. The manifest unreliability of the authoritarianism measure, by contrast, should only enhance our confidence in the size and "truth" of the relationships we are nevertheless able to discern despite the high ratio of random to systematic variation in the scores.

Of course, one must always consider the particular context when deciding what use can be made of an unreliable measure. For example, if one were arguing that some factor had no effect on the dependent variable, then obviously one would be stacking the odds in favor of supporting that hypothesis by retaining an unreliable measure of the independent variable. But in the current case, unreliability in the authoritarianism measure works against the research hypotheses, making only for a stricter test of those claims and greater confidence in the results. Given that attenuation in the unstandardized coefficients will be proportional to the amount of unreliability in the independent variable, the fact that the coefficients estimating the impact of authoritarianism manage to distinguish themselves from zero in spite of this overwhelming noise testifies to the magnitude of

the true effects of authoritarianism on intolerance. Note that in the end, this applies to the Western as well as to the Eastern European results, since a scale reliability of just .39 is also applying some serious downward pressure (just not as much downshift as in the East) on the slopes for authoritarianism across all the different domains of intolerance.

#### Varying Impact of Authoritarianism More Apparent than Real

We can assume, then, that the true slopes for authoritarianism are actually steeper than estimated – and, in particular, far steeper than estimated in Table 5.2. Further, we can also assume that variation in the steepness of those slopes across the different nations is at least in part a function of the enormous variation in authoritarianism scale reliability across countries, even within regions. There are actually a number of different ways in which we could formally test these assumptions, but one easy and straightforward method is to make the steepness of those slopes themselves the phenomenon to be explained in a subsequent analysis. Specifically, we can form a simple aggregate dataset with observations on each of these twenty countries, and specify the unstandardized coefficients for authoritarianism from Tables 5.1 and 5.2 as the dependent variables, with the steepness of these slopes (i.e., the apparent impact of authoritarianism on intolerance) depending upon those nation-level factors that we hypothesized might be important, such as the reliability of the authoritarianism scale, region (Western versus Eastern Europe), and also diversity of public opinion within the nation (i.e., the critical normative threat at the heart of the authoritarian dynamic, which should of course increase the actual impact of authoritarianism on intolerance).20

The results of such an analysis, presented in Table 5.3, tell a story consistent with our conjectures. First, the bulk of the cross-national variation in the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance is indeed more apparent than real: a simple artifact of tremendous variation among these different countries in the reliability of that problematic authoritarianism scale. In simple bivariate analyses, variations in scale reliability alone can account for around half the variance in the apparent impact of authoritarianism on intolerance of difference in every domain. The unstandardized coefficients<sup>21</sup> in Table 5.3 indicate that, due to nothing other than the varying

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> As per  $H_3$  in Chapter 2, Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, and Figures 9.2 to 9.11.2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> By which I mean the coefficients estimating the impact of the independent variables (such as authoritarianism scale reliability) in Table 5.3, and not the coefficients from Tables 5.1 and 5.2 that became the dependent variables in the current analysis.

Table 5.3. How the apparent impact of authoritarianism on intolerance of difference depends upon scale reliability, region, and normative threat

		Dep	Jependent variables		
;	Unstd Effect b		Unstd Effect b	Unstd Effect b	-
Explanatory Variables	Auth→Gen Intol	Auth→Rac Intol	Auth→Pol Intol	Auth→Mrl Intol	$Auth \rightarrow Punit$
Authoritarianism $lpha$ reliability	.36(.09).57**	.34(.10).52**	.33(.10).43**	.42(.13).57**	.25(.08).53**
Western versus Eastern Europe	.03(.03).19	.01(.03).03	.05(.04).27	.03(.04).15	.04(.02).35**
Variance in public opinion	.18(.05).39**	.24(.07).51**	.23(.07).42**	.21(.06).39**	.00(.05).01
Constant	$.09(.02)^{**}$	.06(.02)**	$.10(.03)^{**}$	.08(.03)**	$.13(.03)^{**}$
$\mathbb{R}^2$	.77	.67	69.	.72	.63

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized OLS multiple regression coefficients (with standard errors in parentheses) and their associated standardized coefficients, in that order. \*\* p < .05, \* p < .00 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). Note that since this is not a random sample of any population, these "significance" values do not carry their normal meaning; they are provided only as a general indication of the magnitude of

Source: WVS90-95, values aggregated for each nation in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, N = 20 throughout.

reliability of their authoritarianism measures, we can expect the effects of authoritarianism on racial intolerance, for example, to *appear* around .06 greater<sup>22</sup> (on a o to 1 scale) in the Netherlands<sup>23</sup> ( $\alpha$  = .49) than in Britain ( $\alpha$  = .32), and around .15 greater in the Netherlands and East Germany<sup>24</sup> ( $\alpha$  = .41) than in Romania ( $\alpha$  = .01). (The modification is about the same in the domain of political intolerance, somewhat greater in the moral intolerance domain, and less for punitiveness).

Note that while Romania's scale reliability clearly renders it virtually incoherent, with drastic impact upon the effects obtained for authoritarianism in that country in every domain (see Table 5.2), the reliability of the authoritarianism scale is not much improved in other Eastern European countries that likewise register seemingly modest effects of authoritarianism on intolerance, such as Russia ( $\alpha = .13$ ), Hungary ( $\alpha = .19$ ), and Belarus ( $\alpha = .19$ ). More generally, the reduction in the reliability of the authoritarianism measure from Western to Eastern Europe on its own would flatten the regression slopes for authoritarianism in Table 5.2 by around .05 or .06 across the different domains of intolerance. As I noted earlier, over a third of the variance in the reliability of the authoritarianism scale is itself explained by the region (Western versus Eastern Europe) in which the data were collected. Thus, once we control here (in Table 5.3) for the effects of that varying reliability, region no longer exerts much independent influence in modifying the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance.

By contrast, in parallel analyses substituting status quo conservatism in place of authoritarianism,<sup>25</sup> whereas the reliability of the conservatism scale (actually somewhat higher in Eastern than in Western Europe, and varying only modestly across the twenty nations) had no influence whatsoever on the impact it exerted in any domain of intolerance, region did modify its impact, just as described in the earlier impressionistic account.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> For example, since a one-unit increase in the  $\alpha$  reliability of the authoritarianism scale is predicted to yield a .34 (*b*) increase in the (apparent) impact of authoritarianism on racial intolerance, then a .17 increase in reliability (i.e., the difference between the British  $\alpha$  of .32 and the Dutch  $\alpha$  of .49) is expected to produce a .06 increase in the (apparent) impact of authoritarianism on racial intolerance, as per: (.49 - .32)\*.34 = .0578.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Other nations with better (although still very far from satisfactory) authoritarianism scale reliabilities include Denmark ( $\alpha = .47$ ), West Germany ( $\alpha = .46$ ), and Sweden ( $\alpha = .43$ ).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> It is notable that the East German data, displaying much higher authoritarianism scale reliability than is the norm for Eastern Europe, were collected by the same highly experienced survey organization that was responsible for the West German data.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Not shown due to space limitations, but available from the author on request.

Specifically, it is evident that status quo conservatism exerts significantly greater influence on racial and, especially, moral intolerance in Western than in Eastern Europe, in keeping with the different traditions to which Western and Eastern conservatives will find themselves attached. But Table 5.3 provides very little indication that such variations in cultural traditions alter the impact of authoritarianism.

# Varying Impact of Authoritarianism Partly Real

The way in which cultural context matters for the impact of authoritarianism is indirect, and via a very different mechanism than that underwriting the aforementioned attachment of conservatives to traditions with varying intolerant content. We do know that Western European nations generally manifest greater variance in authoritarianism than Eastern, which in turn seems to generate greater variance in public opinion, 26 the critical component of normative threat. And such a climate of dissensus does indeed increase the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance of difference (see Table 5.3), as per the central prediction of the authoritarian dynamic. In a simple bivariate analysis, national differences in diversity of public opinion can account for around 30 percent of the variance across these countries in the impact of authoritarianism on general intolerance of difference (and even more within domains, although explanatory power is strangely lacking in the domain of punitiveness). Note that the measure of within-nation variance in opinion was rescored to be of one-unit range, then centered on a mean of o for the pooled WVS90-95, which saw the final measure ranging from -.51 to .49 across those eighty independent samples.27

Ultimately, no public displayed greater variance in opinion than did the West German sample drawn in 1990, scoring the maximum of .49. Based only on that extraordinary level of public disagreement, the unstandardized coefficients in Table 5.3 predict that the impact of authoritarianism on, say, racial intolerance in West Germany will *actually* be .17 greater<sup>28</sup> (on a o to 1 scale) than it exercises in Hungary (which displays opinion variance well below the world norm, at -.20); .15 greater than in Portugal (with a below-average opinion variance score of -.12); and .14 greater than in Britain (with opinion variance at -.09). Just within Eastern Europe (and again, on top of the vacillation already pinned on varying scale

Note that being a member of the Western versus Eastern European set, per se, has no further impact upon variance in public opinion once we control for variance in authoritarianism. See also note 13 and associated text.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> See note 15 and Appendix E for further details.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Calculated:  $(.49 + .20)^*.24 = .1656$ .

reliability), the impact of authoritarianism on racial intolerance should be around .10 greater in a nation as fractious as East Germany (scoring .20 in opinion variance) than it exerts amid the equanimity of the Hungarian opinion milieu, and .08 greater than in Russia (also enjoying relatively consensual opinion at -.13). The modification due to more or less consensual environments is about the same in the domains of political and moral intolerance as in these examples based on the results for racial intolerance. More generally, the lower (within-nation) variance in public opinion in Eastern than in Western Europe<sup>29</sup> would flatten the slopes for authoritarianism in each of those intolerance domains by around .02.

Taken together with the previously estimated effects of differences in scale reliability, these results make sensible the variations in the impact of authoritarianism that we observe across the countries represented in Tables 5.1 and 5.2. Thus, the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance is magnified in West German politics and society due to the normative threat generated by their extraordinary opinion diversity. But additionally, we are better equipped to discern that real-world phenomenon on account of the superior (although still very far from satisfactory) reliability of their authoritarianism scores. Conversely, in Hungary and Russia, authoritarianism is evidently deactivated and its intolerant returns greatly diminished thanks to the normative reassurance issuing from their unusual consensus in public opinion. Yet also, our impression of the magnitude of its impact is grossly obscured by the virtual incoherence of their authoritarianism measures.

In total, the results presented in Table 5.3 indicate that the fluctuating impact of authoritarianism that we observed is mostly an artifact of varying scale reliability, of no real consequence except insofar as it obscures the magnitude and consistency of authoritarianism's influence upon intolerance across cultures. But the remaining fluctuation is a real phenomenon of great practical importance and theoretical interest, at the very heart of the authoritarian dynamic. Thus, due in no small measure to tremendous differences between these countries in diversity of national opinion at the time our "snapshot" was taken, authoritarianism was exerting greater impact upon (and explaining more of the variance in) intolerance of difference in West Germany and Serbia than in Portugal and Hungary. But these are contemporaneous political conditions that can and do shift, rather than inertial cultural traditions evolving at a glacial pace. This is what makes intolerance of difference a dynamic *political* process: one that is highly contingent upon contemporary levels of threat,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> The average within-nation opinion variance scores are .14 averaged across the ten Western European nations and .06 averaged across the Eastern European samples.

and capable of erupting (seemingly) "out of nowhere" in cultures with tolerant and intolerant traditions alike.

#### Unreliability of the Racial Intolerance Measure

Random measurement error in an *independent* variable (per the foregoing) affects only the *unstandardized* coefficients for that variable alone, <sup>30</sup> across all dependent variables. But as I noted earlier, two of the dependent variables in this investigation likewise display much lower reliability in Eastern than in Western Europe, as well as pronounced variation in reliability across the twenty countries. So the potential consequences of this random error must also be taken into consideration in deciding what conclusions may be drawn from Tables 5.1 and 5.2. Unreliability in a dependent variable (in this case, racial intolerance, and general intolerance of difference) increases its unexplained (and inexplicable) variance (because random variation cannot be systematically associated with any factor), potentially diminishing the standardized coefficients<sup>31</sup> for all independent variables (here, authoritarianism and conservatism) in that analysis, and the R<sup>2</sup> value for (the "variance explained by") the model overall.<sup>32</sup> This could certainly account for at least some of the seeming decline from Table 5.1 to 5.2 (and the apparent variation across countries even within regions) in the explanatory power of authoritarianism, but only in those two affected domains (racial intolerance, and general intolerance of difference).

Note first that this would not explain away, as a mere artifact, the lesser influence of status quo conservatism on racial intolerance in Eastern than in Western Europe – on the basis of which I drew certain distinctions

- <sup>30</sup> The bias is confined and predictable in this way so long as the independent variable in question is not substantially correlated with other independent variables in that analysis. In this regard, note that authoritarianism and conservatism correlate at just .18 across these twenty countries, and at .09 in the pooled *WVS90*–95.
- More generally, the reliance of standardized coefficients on the variance of the dependent variable is the reason we really ought to compare standardized coefficients only between independent variables in the same analysis, and not across different cultures/samples or different domains (different dependent variables).
- <sup>32</sup> Essentially, unstandardized coefficients, or "regression slopes" (the focus of the preceding section), indicate the magnitude of impact of the independent on the dependent variable, i.e., the size of the relationship: the extent of change we can expect in the dependent variable for a one-unit increase in the independent variable (all in their original metrics). On the other hand, standardized coefficients (and everything in that same "family," including correlation coefficients and overall measures such as R²) indicate the strength of association between the independent and dependent variables, i.e., how strongly, "tightly," or consistently they "hang together": how much of the variance in the latter is "explained by" (goes along with) the former.

between conservatism and authoritarianism in the early discussions of this chapter - since it can account only for attenuation of the standardized coefficient in that domain. The unstandardized coefficient estimating the impact of conservatism on racial intolerance is likewise reduced as we move from Western to Eastern Europe, but these coefficients are attenuated only by unreliability in the independent variable itself, and status quo conservatism is actually measured with greater precision in the East than in the West. More generally, this would also seem the appropriate place to note that none of the cross-national variation in the influence of conservatism – which informs and supports those distinctions drawn in the early discussions - is an artifact of differences between those countries in the reliability of either status quo conservatism or the dependent variable in question. The reliability of the conservatism measure exhibits only modest variation across the national samples. Racial intolerance is the only individual domain troubled by notable cross-sample differences in the reliability of the dependent variable, and all the countries employed to contrast racially intolerant and tolerant cultural traditions (e.g., West Germany versus Denmark) enjoyed above-average reliability in their racial intolerance measures.

# Varying Power of Authoritarianism Partly an Artifact

As for authoritarianism, the decline in its explanatory power from Table 5.1 to Table 5.2 is too consistent across all the different domains of intolerance to be fully accounted for by unreliability in just some of the dependent variables, though that surely plays a partial role. Exactly how great a role - how much of the apparent variation in explanatory power is actually a measurement artifact – can be approximately portioned out by replicating the logic of the prior analysis, this time with the standardized coefficients from Tables 5.1 and 5.2 as the phenomenon to be explained, and the reliability of the relevant dependent variables serving as explanatory factors (again, along with region, and variance in public opinion). The results of such an analysis<sup>33</sup> confirm that unreliability in the dependent variables does not notably modify the effects of status quo conservatism, whose influence is again almost entirely dependent upon region, with superior capacity to explain racial and moral intolerance in Western than in Eastern Europe, as per the early discussions. But unreliability in the racial and general intolerance measures apparently does account for much of the diminished explanatory power of authoritarianism

<sup>33</sup> Again, space limitations preclude full presentation of these results, but they can be obtained from the author upon request.

from West to East, and for variations in its power across countries, in those two domains.

For example, the evidence suggests that the standardized coefficient estimating the strength of authoritarianism's influence on general intolerance is reduced by about .11 from Western to Eastern Europe,<sup>34</sup> simply due to increased random error in that overall measure of intolerance of difference. As for the conspicuous fluctuation observed across countries even within regions, we can apparently expect – again, based on nothing more than differences in the reliability of their dependent variable – a reduction of around .22 in the influence of authoritarianism on general intolerance from, say, the Dutch to the Portuguese sample, or from the Croatian to the Hungarian.<sup>35</sup> And while attenuation of effects seems less severe in the racial intolerance domain, unreliability in that dependent variable apparently still accounts for some healthy discounts in the influence of authoritarianism, of around .13 from East Germany to Russia or Portugal, for example, and around .04 from Western to Eastern Europe.<sup>36</sup>

# Varying Power of Authoritarianism Partly Real

Even when we allow for this attenuation due to unreliability in some of the dependent variables,<sup>37</sup> however, we are left with a persistent difference between Western and Eastern Europe in the ability of authoritarianism to explain intolerance of difference, in every domain. Note that I am referring still to varying *explanatory power* (i.e., to reduction in the standardized coefficients and R<sup>2</sup> values). This is distinct from variation in the apparent *impact* of authoritarianism on intolerance (i.e., in how much additional

- <sup>34</sup> Calculated by subtracting the average reliability of the general intolerance measure among the ten nations constituting the Eastern European set ( $\alpha=.58$ ) from the average reliability of that measure among the ten Western European countries ( $\alpha=.69$ ), and multiplying that difference by 1.02, which is the estimated effect (b) of that varying reliability upon the size of the standardized coefficient reflecting the apparent influence of authoritarianism on general intolerance of difference, thus: (.69-.58)\*1.02 = .1122. Full results of these analyses are available from the author upon request.
- <sup>35</sup> Again, the regression slope obtained (*b*) is 1.02, while the  $\alpha$  reliabilities for the general intolerance measure in the samples from the Netherlands, Portugal, Croatia, and Hungary are .77, .55, .72, and .49, respectively.
- <sup>36</sup> The relevant regression slope (b) is estimated at .38, while the  $\alpha$  reliabilities for the racial intolerance measure in the samples from East Germany, Russia, and Portugal are .46, .14, and .08, respectively. The average  $\alpha$  reliability of the racial intolerance measure is .33 across the Western European set, and .23 across the Eastern European representatives.
- <sup>37</sup> And also allow for some variation in the influence of authoritarianism owing to cross-national differences in diversity of public opinion.

intolerance we can expect as authoritarianism increases), which we previously determined (Table 5.3) was largely an artifact of random error in the authoritarianism measure, and partly a real consequence of the varying "yields" of intolerance induced from authoritarianism by different levels of normative threat. The real and the artifact together accounted for most of the apparent variation in the regression slopes for authoritarianism, which suggests that even given very different cultural traditions, we can expect about the same rise in intolerant behavior for a certain increase in levels of authoritarianism, given equivalent contemporaneous conditions. But in regard to explanatory power (i.e., regarding the strength, rather than the size, of the relationships), even after taking account of attenuation due to unreliability in the dependent variables, there remains a real difference between Western and Eastern Europe in the ability of authoritarianism to explain intolerance of difference.

One substantive and theoretically important possibility to consider is that intolerance outside the West is differently determined, that it is rooted more in, say, sociodemographic factors than in psychological predispositions. But supplementary analyses<sup>38</sup> provide assurance that the determinants of intolerance are essentially the same across the different regions. No variable surpasses the explanatory power of authoritarianism in either region, and in both regions only two factors – age and education<sup>39</sup> – are capable of adding more than three percent to the variance in intolerance explained by authoritarianism (which is 20 percent in Western Europe and 10 percent in the East). This applies to the whole host of sociodemographic variables collected by the WVS, including all the "usual suspects" such as income, class, and occupation; religiosity; rural residence; employment, marital, and family status. In short, authoritarianism does a worse job of explaining intolerance in the East than in the West, but no other factor does a better job. Intolerance is not differently explained in Western than in Eastern Europe, but it is better explained by authoritarianism in the West than in the East.

# A PARSIMONIOUS ACCOUNT OF GENERAL INTOLERANCE OF DIFFERENCE

This brings us around finally to one of the larger questions driving the overarching investigation: is it generally true that intolerance of difference

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Available from the author upon request.

<sup>39</sup> Years of education adds 5 or 6 percent to the explanation of general intolerance of difference in either region (having a college education adds only 1 or 2 percent), and age (expressed as Z-scores relative to the national average, in order to allow for widely varying longevity across these countries) adds 7 or 8 percent either way.

is better explained by authoritarianism than by any other factor? To this point, the analysis has been confined to just one region and to a very limited subset of those countries sampled in the two waves of the WVS90-95. The logic of the comparative investigation that constituted the focus of this chapter required a set of relatively well-established nations sharing important commonalities, yet varying in ways that should illuminate the differences between authoritarianism and status quo conservatism. But of course, the larger goal of The Authoritarian Dynamic has been to provide a parsimonious account of general intolerance, one that is capable of explaining intolerance of all manner of difference – of racial diversity, political dissent, and moral deviance - with just one or two fundamental variables, no proper nouns, and no qualifications specific to a particular time or place. As I have noted, the dependent variables were formed specifically for this purpose from items with universal meaning and application, just as capable of gauging intolerance of majorities by minorities as reflecting intolerance of minorities by majorities. Likewise, the key explanatory variables were designed to be "bare bones" measures tapping fundamental predispositions, without referencing actors, objects, or arrangements that may be time-bound, culturally specific, or the actual subjects of our investigation.

# A Dataset Representative of the World Population

If we now take up the entire pooled dataset, we have over 110,000 respondents from 80 independent samples drawn in 59 different nations<sup>40</sup> between 1990 and 1998. This covers most major regions of the world, developed and underdeveloped nations alike, and cultures varying widely along all the major dimensions of interest, from Switzerland to China to Nigeria to Azerbaijan. The consequences we suffered due to unreliability in the data collected from just our limited group of European nations should be sufficient to impress upon us how great a challenge is presented by the degree of random error inevitably lurking in such a dataset. Consider also that samples were retained so long as they measured all three

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> I excluded only pilot studies (Ghana 1995); subnational samples drawn of Northern Ireland, Puerto Rico, and different regions of Russia and Spain; and surveys that failed to measure (or failed to measure exactly as they had been measured by the others) any of the three key predispositions, those being authoritarianism, status quo conservatism, and laissez-faire conservatism (Britain 1998, Colombia 1997, Poland 1990, Switzerland 1990), or else failed to measure many of the individual items constituting any of the different intolerance scales (Bangladesh 1996, Japan 1995, Pakistan 1996, South Africa 1990, South Korea 1996, Turkey 1996). (Note that the first wave of the *WVS*, collected in 1981, had to be excluded entirely for failing to meet those last two criteria.)

predispositions constituting our critical explanatory variables, as well as most of the individual items constituting the different intolerance scales. And within samples, respondents were retained as long as they had scores for most of those items constituting the dependent variables. Elaborate routines were employed to impute missing values from exogenous variables, using estimates from that sample or from a comparable sample (e.g., from the same nation sampled in a different wave, or from Austria for Switzerland), in order that all available respondents could be retained. In short, to my knowledge this is the most complete and representative dataset assembled of the world population, and we can be confident that the results reported reasonably reflect general regularities in the behavior of mass publics. Considering all of the foregoing in total, what we see reported in Table 5.4 can certainly be regarded as a clean test, and a very hard test, of the explanatory power of authoritarianism.

## The List of Competitors: Rival Explanatory Variables

The numbers reported in column 2 of Table 5.4 are the R² values obtained regressing our measure of general intolerance of difference against each of the explanatory variables arrayed in column 1, in turn. These figures thus represent how much of the variance in general intolerance of difference, worldwide, is explained by each of those factors alone, arranged in order of their evident explanatory power. As I have noted, the WVS measures a comprehensive array of sociodemographic variables.<sup>41</sup> The reader can assume that all of the "usual suspects" were tested, and that any that do not appear in this table (e.g., gender) were found to explain less variance in intolerance than those listed here.

In addition to these sociodemographic attributes, the list of competitors includes the three predispositions of greatest interest to us: authoritarianism, status quo conservatism, and laissez-faire conservatism. This last measure was constructed from four items gauging positions on whether incomes should be made more equal (or allowed to vary as individual incentive); on private versus collective ownership and management of business and industry; and on whether government "should take more

<sup>41</sup> Although the variations in administration and coding across these samples (and incomplete documentation of those variations), as well as the extent of missing data, are truly daunting (and, of course, inevitably the source of much random error). Discovering and taking account of all these variations as I constructed the many variables included in the analyses, and devising and implementing elaborate routines for imputing the missing values so that as many samples and respondents as possible could be retained, amounted to easily two months of work, and readers wishing to replicate these analyses are strongly advised to contact the author to obtain the relevant command files.

Table 5.4. A parsimonious account of general intolerance of difference: cross-cultural

Explaining General		Adding a Second	
Intolerance with One Explanatory Variable:	Variance Explained	Explanatory Variable:	Variance Explained
Authoritarianism	.12	Authoritarianism + lives in a liberal democracy	.16
Number of other languages spoken in nation	.07	Authoritarianism + number of other languages in nation	.16
Years of education	.06	Authoritarianism + age (z-score within nation)	.16
Age (z-score within nation)	.05	Authoritarianism + years of education	.15
Lives in a liberal democracy	.05	Authoritarianism + number of children	.15
Number of children	.04	Authoritarianism + status quo conservatism	.14
Any college education	.03	Authoritarianism + R's racial/ethnic dominance	.14
R's racial/ethnic dominance in nation	.03	Authoritarianism + any college education	.14
Status quo conservatism	.03	Authoritarianism + subjective social class	.13
Any college degree	.03	Authoritarianism + any college degree	.13
Subjective social class	.03	Authoritarianism + family income (decile)	.13
Raised religious	.03	Authoritarianism + population share of largest minority	.13
Family income (decile within nation)	.02	Authoritarianism + raised religious	.13
Population share of largest racial minority	.02	Authoritarianism + laissez-faire conservatism	.13
Laissez-faire conservatism	.02	Authoritarianism + currently in the workforce	.12

*Note:* Cell entries are R<sup>2</sup> values from OLS regression models of general intolerance of difference consisting of either one (left panel) or two (right panel) explanatory variables. See Table E.1 for univariate statistics.

Source: WVS90-95, all national samples, N = 110,298 throughout.

responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for" (see Appendix E for more detail). This yielded a highly gradated (and normally distributed) ordinal variable spreading respondents across a scale of 115 points (which was rescored to be of one-unit range, then centered on a sample mean

of o). On balance, about two-thirds of the WVS90–95 respondents lean toward capitalist values; around one-third tend toward socialism. With respect to my earlier contentions regarding the distinctiveness and relative independence of authoritarianism, status quo conservatism, and laissez-faire conservatism, note that across the pooled WVS90–95 dataset, laissez-faire conservatism shows a trivial and negative association with each of the other two dimensions, correlating –.07 and –.11 with authoritarianism and status quo conservatism, respectively. A simple cross-tabulation of categorical variables (see Table E.6) reinforces the folly of confusing "right-wing" with authoritarian tendencies, bearing in mind that "rightwing" libertarians (70 percent of libertarians turn out to be capitalists) contradict the equivalence of authoritarianism and laissez-faire conservatism just as surely as do "left-wing" authoritarians (more than a third of authoritarians tend toward socialism).

In addition to these individual attributes, the list of potential explanatory factors also includes three variables reflecting aspects of the national environment that may reasonably affect the requirement and/or possibilities for tolerance. These aggregate variables include indications of whether the respondent lives in a liberal democracy;<sup>42</sup> the number of languages spoken in that nation apart from the language of the majority; and the size (proportion of the population) of the largest racial or ethnic minority. The first nation-level factor is meant to take account of the idea that living in a liberal democracy generally elevates the individual's tolerance of difference – presumably by a process of socialization, including the positive experience of its rewards – although the reverse causality of course remains possible: that a preponderance of individuals with a taste for tolerance makes the institution and maintenance of liberal democracy more likely. The other two aggregate variables address the straightforward notion that tolerance of difference is easier, thus more likely, when there is actually less difference to tolerate in one's environment. Finally, there is one last variable that combines information about both the individual and the aggregate, here labeled the respondent's racial/ethnic "dominance" within the nation.<sup>43</sup> This variable indicates the population share of the

Which, by generous criteria, I took to include all the countries of Scandinavia and Western and southern Europe (including Turkey); the United States, Canada, and Australia; Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay; India, Japan, and South Africa.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Each of these last three variables is an imperfect but nevertheless serviceable indicator of its concept, being inferred from the national survey data themselves rather than being established via exhaustive independent verification for each country. These national surveys were certainly not always random samples of their populations, and additionally, the relevant questions on race, ethnicity, and language were not always asked in every survey (although their not being asked generally coincided with their not being particularly relevant in that context, so one could still make

respondent's racial or language group (whichever is the lesser) and is roughly meant to reflect how psychologically secure the respondent would be in his or her own national context, with greater security generally expected to allow for more tolerance of difference within one's environment.

# Authoritarianism the Primary Determinant of Intolerance Worldwide

The overall story told by Table 5.4 is clear: authoritarianism is the primary determinant of general intolerance of difference worldwide. No other variable comes close to matching its explanatory power, which remains impressive, certainly in view of those obstacles stacked against its revelation. Authoritarianism – reflected simply by the expression of desirable qualities for children – on its own explains 12 percent of the variance in intolerance of all manner of difference. And this is everyone "in the mix" together, responding to the same general queries: the Yoruba in Nigeria picturing Hausa, Fulani, or Christians; the British their South Asian minorities; Australians the "yellow peril" descending from East Asia; Russians the people of the Caucasus; and vice versa; and all of them thinking about their own country's peculiar array of dissidents, deviants, and criminals.

Only a handful of other variables can explain, on their own, more than three percent of the variance in intolerance: years of education and age, the number of children one is raising, living amid language (i.e., ethnic) diversity, and living in a liberal democracy (the latter two variables more attributes of the nation than the respondent). While the experience of living in a liberal democracy generally seems to diminish intolerance, I show elsewhere that this omnibus effect actually conceals widely varying reactions among those differently disposed to the experience (Stenner n.d.): whereas it brings out the best in libertarians, it drives authoritarians to even greater expressions of intolerance. In the end, the nearest rival to authoritarianism is simply the commonsense reality that the more difference one is actually required to tolerate, the harder it is to tolerate difference; but even those objective conditions cannot come close to matching the explanation provided by our predispositions. As for the individual-level attributes, years of education and age, alone, explain only five or six percent of the variance in intolerance, and add just three or four percent

reasonable inferences about the aggregate reality from that fact). So, for example, the number of other languages, apart from the majority language, reported (not consistently) as being spoken by the respondents in that (not always random) sample will clearly not perfectly align with the aggregate reality. All the same problems and reservations apply to the variables imperfectly reflecting the population share of the largest racial or ethnic minority, and the respondent's racial/ethnic dominance.

to the account provided by authoritarianism (as do those nation-level attributes).

## Disentangling the "Essence" of Education

Note here that one of the many advantages of these cross-national data is their ability to distinguish more clearly the effects of authoritarianism and education on intolerance (and likewise to isolate which aspects of or associated with education are influencing authoritarianism, as investigated in Chapter 6). In surveys of modern liberal democracies, education can sometimes "steal" explanatory power on account of the fact that level of education in such societies covaries with exposure to the libertarian norms of Western academe and "sophisticated" social circles, as well as the personality and cognitive attributes that incline one both to develop libertarian tendencies (see Chapter 6) and (in free societies) to seek and succeed at higher education.

But there are many other societies where education does not promote, and educated social circles are not pervaded by, libertarian norms, and/or where entering into or completing an education is not primarily determined by individual talent and desire. Thus, sampling across societies with wide variation in the control, accessibility, purpose, and content of education helps us to distinguish more clearly the impetus to tolerance independently furnished by these otherwise confounded factors. It means that when we isolate the ameliorative effect of education on intolerance, it is the effect of education on intolerance (as near as we can tell from the inevitably flawed data available to us), which essentially means the effect of the superior knowledge and cognitive skills developed by education upon the ease and comfort with which one deals with complexity and difference. (This hypothesized mechanism is explored at greater length in Chapter 6.) Once tested across these different cultural contexts – disentangled from exposure to libertarian norms, from the demands of political correctness. and even (to a lesser degree) from innate talent and desire – this "essence of education" manages to explain just three percent of the variance in worldwide intolerance of difference beyond that already accounted for by authoritarianism.

# Status Quo and Laissez-Faire Conservatism Not Generally Influential

Note, too, that once we aggregate across domains, cultures, and time, neither status quo nor laissez-faire conservatism provides much purchase on general intolerance of difference; the latter actually tends to diminish intolerance. Within particular domains, in particular cultures, at particular points in time, we may find that peculiar cultural traditions,

contemporaneous conditions, or electoral maneuvering and preference aggregation by political elites conspire to align citizens' aversion to change. or their attachment to the free market, with support for intolerant stances of one kind or another. But the impetus provided to intolerance by such alignments is inevitably weak and erratic in the greater scheme of things. The impetus can dissipate, evaporate, even invert itself, since these alignments - largely "man-made" inventions, neither natural nor necessary - are forever subject to revision with changing social conditions and/or political calculations. This is especially true in the case of laissez-faire conservatism, which, for precisely those kinds of reasons, gets tangled up at various times - in the contemporary United States, for example - with what look like racially intolerant stances (more on this issue in the following chapter). But it is actually aligned with tolerance in parts of the world where attraction to a free market is part of a more general commitment to individual freedom. In Eastern Europe, for example, laissez-faire "conservatism" is sufficiently strongly associated with tolerance ("explaining" eight percent of the variance among our Eastern European set, whether or not we believe that association is actually causal) that it could actually serve as a rough proxy for libertarian inclinations in this region when measures of childrearing values are unavailable.

#### EXPLAINING THE EXPLANATORY GAP

Finally, I note that the same kind of "explanatory gap" that appeared between our Western and Eastern European sets is evident likewise when one undertakes to separate out these eighty samples (by any number of different criteria) into more and less "modern," or democratic, or libertarian cultures. The comparative investigation, then, cannot be complete until we at least briefly consider the most plausible explanation of this explanatory gap, and the implications of same for our understanding of the origins and future of general intolerance of difference.

While the discussion must remain speculative in the absence of direct data, this variation in explanatory power is certainly consistent with scattered arguments and evidence hinting that authoritarianism becomes a more important determinant of intolerance the more aberrant such attitudes and behavior are for the context. Note that I am referring specifically to the normality of those behaviors at any point in time, as distinct from the extent to which such behavior is consistent with tradition. For example, while we saw that there are wide variations in cultural traditions across countries even within regions, the Eastern European set manifests much higher levels of intolerance in every domain, 44 which is

<sup>44</sup> The Eastern European scores are 16 percent higher on average.

to say, intolerance is far more *normal* in Eastern than in Western Europe. When intolerant notions are widely shared and intolerant behavior is commonplace (so the theory goes), variations in psychological predispositions cannot explain so much of that behavior.

The idea, essentially, is that individual psychological deviations should regulate intolerance to a greater degree the more abnormal intolerance is for one's environment. Thus, to be virulently anti-Semitic in Berkeley in the aftermath of World War II was to be extremely psychologically aberrant, which may explain why the originators of the concept of the authoritarian personality (Adorno et al. 1950) – having conducted some of their seminal research in that era and subculture – were so much more certain than many who followed that peculiarities in the individual's psyche were at the root of intolerance of difference. Likewise, from this perspective it does not seem at all surprising that psychological factors should explain less of racial intolerance among Afrikaner than among English South Africans (Mynhardt 1980). Unfortunately, a fuller exploration of such variations in explanatory power is beyond the scope of this chapter, whose main objectives were simply to distinguish authoritarianism from status quo conservatism, and to establish the former as the primary determinant of general intolerance of difference. But there will be a little more evidence offered on this issue in the following chapter, in the course of comparing the ability of authoritarianism and conservatism to explain intolerance in the United States, across different domains, eras, and regional subcultures

#### THE FUTURE OF INTOLERANCE

This brings us then to one last idea I wanted to raise before moving on from these cross-cultural comparisons, concerning some of the very real dangers of confusing authoritarianism and status quo conservatism, of believing that intolerance is mostly a sociocultural phenomenon, a simple product of social learning. In discussing earlier the catalytic role played by a fractious opinion climate, I have already made the point that this dynamic process – in which contemporaneous threats activate latent predispositions - explains the kind of intolerance that seems to "come out of nowhere," that can spring up in tolerant and intolerant cultures alike, producing sudden changes in behavior that cannot be accounted for by slowly changing cultural traditions. Thus, scholars persuaded that intolerance has more of a sociocultural basis may look forward to a future in which the world's cultures slowly evolve toward greater respect for individual freedom and difference, and in which citizens attached to those cultures, and attentive to cultural norms, evolve right along with them, presumably into more perfect liberal democratic citizens. But the theory

of the authoritarian dynamic anticipates a future in which the increasing license allowed by those evolving cultures generates the very conditions guaranteed to goad latent authoritarians to sudden and intense, perhaps violent, and almost certainly unexpected, expressions of intolerance.

Likewise, then, if intolerance is more a product of individual psychology than of cultural norms, *and* even more a product of psychology the less it is supported by norms, we get a different vision of the future, and a different understanding of whose problem this is and will be, than if intolerance is an almost accidental by-product of simple attachment to tradition. The kind of intolerance that springs from aberrant individual psychology, rather than the disinterested absorption of pervasive cultural norms, is bound to be more passionate and irrational, less predictable, less amenable to persuasion, and more aggravated than educated by the cultural promotion of tolerance (see also Fiske 2002). Either way, we begin to see that authoritarianism is a problem of and for libertarian, more than authoritarian, cultures. And intolerance is not a thing of the past, it is very much a thing of the future.

# Authoritarianism and Conservatism: How They Differ and When It Matters

In the preceding chapter, I sought to distinguish authoritarianism from status quo conservatism by exploiting cross-national data to reveal their varying influence on intolerance, viewed in the context of variations in cultural traditions. This chapter will continue to pursue the overarching objective of distinguishing authoritarianism from conservatism, but this time devoting just a little more attention to discerning the differences between authoritarianism and laissez-faire conservatism. and to assessing their relative influence on intolerance in contemporary American politics. While the notion received no general support from the cross-national data investigated in Chapter 5, the idea that aversion to government intervention in the economy is somehow implicated in intolerance is especially entrenched in U.S. politics and political science. It ought to be explored using U.S. data, the conceptualizations and measures favored by U.S. political science, and the targets and forms of intolerant expression characteristic of U.S. politics.

Inevitably, this will be done at some cost to conceptual clarity, since the way in which the notion of "conservatism" is typically employed in American politics, and conceived and measured in American political science, hopelessly entangles those three dimensions we have so far striven to distinguish: authoritarianism, status quo conservatism and laissez-faire conservatism. Still, we have other data available to us with measures that cleanly distinguish the three predispositions, and sufficient crossnational variation in the alignment of those dimensions to separate out their influence. In contemporary U.S. politics, "conservative" does tend to mean, *all at once*, intolerant of difference, attached to the status quo, and opposed to government intervention in the economy. That does roughly approximate the way in which preferences on the three dimensions are currently "packaged" in the American party system, which is different, note, from the way in which those preferences are packaged *in Americans*,

not to mention different from how they might be packaged by the system in the future.

There are critical theoretical insights to be gleaned by exploring those subtle distinctions, and that exploration will consume the bulk of this chapter. We will investigate how *and when* authoritarianism, as I conceive and measure it, is related to "political conservatism" as it is typically conceived and measured in U.S. political science, and how and when it differs from that amalgam in its responses to the targets and issues of intolerance predominant in U.S. politics. This will be accomplished in part by observing the reactions of authoritarians and conservatives to some highly "diagnostic" situations, which, if I am correct regarding the important distinctions between them, ought to induce widely divergent responses from those different characters.

Before moving on to the U.S. investigation, we will first revisit the WVS data in order to ascertain the relationships between, and determinants of, authoritarianism, status quo conservatism, and laissez-faire conservatism, about which I have so far only speculated. The investigations of Chapter 5 established authoritarianism as the primary, and status quo conservatism as a relatively minor, determinant of intolerance of difference worldwide, with laissez-faire conservatism actually associated with greater tolerance. But the notion that the concept of authoritarianism is redundant – that conservatism is really "behind it all" – cannot be ruled out until it is firmly established that authoritarianism is not itself just a product of conservatism, that it is not merely mediating the influence of those other variables. This calls for measures that cleanly distinguish the predispositions, and estimation methods that allow for potentially reciprocal relationships between them, either or both of which have been lacking in prior research.

Further, once we control for their influence upon one another, we can then clearly discern the extent to which each is rooted in various socio-demographic, personality, and cognitive factors. We have a particular interest in learning whether the predispositions have notably different origins. Different origins would suggest the predispositions have fundamentally different natures, and may compel different conclusions regarding matters of great theoretical and practical interest, including the changeability of those dispositions and the persuadability of those so disposed; our capacity to alter those dispositions by means of socialization and education; the volatility or irrationality or ferocity of their "products"; and whether those inclinations would respond to various changes in objective conditions. For example, if one is socialized into something, presumably one can also be socialized out of it. Patterns of cultural learning can be "unlearned." But if a disposition is rooted in relatively immutable personality or cognitive attributes that forever constrain one's capacity to deal

with complexity and difference, then well-meaning programs celebrating multiculturalism, for example, might aggravate more than educate, might intensify rather than diminish, intolerance.

Once we have established the determinants of our three predispositions, we can then move on to our investigation of the U.S. data with a somewhat surer understanding of just what is tangled up in the (so-called) "political conservatism" measure so routinely favored in analyses of U.S. political behavior. This is a simple self-placement item virtually devoid of substantive content, which indicates nothing other than respondents' willingness to call themselves "conservative" or "liberal." It should be possible, by comparing the determinants of our three predispositions in the WVS to those influencing "political conservatism" in the U.S. data, to gain a reasonable sense of the extent to which the latter is reflecting intolerance of difference, aversion to change, and/or aversion to government intervention in the economy, which is of course preferable to inferring its content from its ostensible effects.

# PRIOR RESEARCH ON THE ORIGINS OF AUTHORITARIANISM AND STATUS QUO CONSERVATISM

We will first consider what prior theory and research have to say about the origins of our predispositions. Unfortunately, the implications of much of this work are ultimately indistinct, given the confusion of authoritarianism and conservatism prevalent in most prior research. Almost all of the arguments and evidence I review bear upon conceptions and measures of authoritarianism, such as the F-scale and RWA scale, that entangle authoritarianism with aspects of status quo conservatism, or else rely upon conceptions and measures of conservatism, such as Wilson's "social conservatism" (Wilson and Patterson 1968; Wilson 1973), that likewise merge aversion to difference and aversion to change. In the end, it proved impossible, given what was available, to separate out the literature and to develop distinct expectations for the determinants of authoritarianism and status quo conservatism, although some distinction was accomplished for laissez-faire conservatism. Adequate differentiation waits upon "clean" measures within a properly specified empirical analysis. Nevertheless, it is possible at least to identify the universe of potential determinants for our analysis, and to develop some reasonable expectations regarding the variables included among the explanatory factors.

# Group Identification versus General "Groupiness"

The question of greatest theoretical interest for my purposes is, of course: by what process do individuals end up distributing themselves along the

authoritarian dimension? How is it that some people come to believe that the requirements of collective authority and conformity, of oneness and sameness, should prevail over individual autonomy and difference, while others hold that individuals are sovereign - free to regulate their own behavior and to pursue their own ends, irrespective of the consequences for the collective? Duckitt's (1989) position appears to be that authoritarians arrive at this stance via intense identification with a particular group, hence their commitment to group cohesion, and all that that entails and requires. To my mind, this position runs the risk of failing to distinguish adequately (as previously lamented) between the origins of authoritarianism, the predisposition per se, and its products. Depending on one's perspective, it either verges on identifying one potential source of authoritarianism with the predisposition itself, or comes so close to confounding the predisposition with some of its attitudinal and behavioral consequences – patriotism, nationalism, in-group glorification – as to render the explanation of those outcomes tautological.

Thus while Duckitt's functionalist perspective can accommodate many of the empirical regularities, I would demur that this process probably begins for most people with some general desire, whatever its sources may be (more on this to follow), to transfer sovereignty to, and commit self and others to conformity with *some* collective order, rather than intense identification with a *particular* group. The latter – in-group identification and glorification – is most appropriately considered a consequence of the former, to be grouped together with racism and political and moral intolerance as attitudinal and behavioral outcomes that may attend this "escape from freedom" (Fromm 1941).

# Subcultural Expressions of Authoritarianism

Of course, individuals seeking to commit themselves *and* others to obedience to, and conformity with, some collective order may "invest" in and dedicate themselves to the people, authorities, institutions, values, and norms of any important collective in their social milieu, perhaps centered on race, class, gender, religion, or other shared beliefs. But it is thought that if one is predisposed to "invest" in some collective order, the natural first choice for most would be that of the "superordinate social group within which social and political authority is vested and exercised, and . . . the basic social identification group for most of its members" (Duckitt 1989: 80).

The obvious exceptions come when one rejects the kinship of this dominant group and/or the legitimacy of its authorities, institutions, and values, as may be the case, for example, within the subcultures of minority populations, and with super-patriot/militia members and the like – that is,

"these are not my people" and/or "those are not my leaders." In the United States, for example, African Americans strongly inclined toward authoritarianism may be the ardent black nationalists populating the ranks of organizations like the Nation of Islam: glorifying the black race, dressing in uniform, speaking in code, demanding purity of thought and deed, and attributing all oppression to the Jewish conspiracy purportedly controlling the depiction of blacks in the media. Likewise, white authoritarians convinced that the federal government is controlled by Jews, blacks, intellectuals, and the UN may be the super-patriots constituting the civilian militia movement: again, glorifying the white race, dressing in uniform, speaking in code, demanding purity of thought and deed, and attributing all oppression to the ATF, the IRS, and One World Government. Note that their determination to bear arms is actually a potent symbol of their rejecting the authority of the state, which normally has the sole right to the legitimate use of force.

#### Same Form and Function: A System of Collective Constraint

In any case, the in-group glorification, out-group derogation, and demands for attitudinal and behavioral conformity differ only in targets and content, not in general form or function. There will still be "one true people" and "one right way." But the very same inclinations are being *expressed* differently, most obviously in regard to the identity of "us" and "them" (those who are to be differentiated and disparaged), and so (to make a pragmatic point) cannot normally be investigated by observing the same expressions of intolerance (i.e., by analyzing the same dependent variables).<sup>1</sup>

In sum, the targets and content, though not the general form and function, of its expression can vary depending upon who "we" are and what "we" stand for. This is not to say, of course, that this "normative order" is entirely content-neutral. From the authoritarian point of view, whatever it is that we stand for, we must *all* stand for it. Accordingly, that which we stand for can *never* include individual freedom and diversity. While the identity of "us" (the one true people) is infinitely malleable, then, the content of the normative order (the one right way) will always tend toward *some* system of collective constraint on individual beliefs and behavior. As noted earlier, oneness and sameness are attributes of the collective, and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Thus the effort invested (and costs incurred) in the previous chapter to find dependent variables having universal applicability across cultures and subcultures, and having minimal reference to culture-specific targets of intolerance.

(outside of small groups "regulated" by informal normative pressures) cannot be achieved without coercive control over *other* people's behavior.

In any case, the overriding objective of authoritarianism, and thus the *function* of all its manifestations, is always to enhance oneness and sameness; to minimize the diversity of people, beliefs, and behaviors with which one is confronted; and to institute and defend some collective order that makes all of this possible. Ultimately, my own work and Duckitt's are most strongly in agreement on this central idea that it is their shared function that causes the various components and manifestations of authoritarianism to cling so consistently together (rather than simple social learning of a package of attitudes that mysteriously replicates across diverse cultures, for example; cf. Altemeyer 1988).

#### Fear, Insecurity, Isolation, Meaninglessness

In contrast to Duckitt's emphasis on group identification as the primary source of authoritarianism, however, I would argue that there are a multitude of routes by which individuals might come to demand obedience and conformity over autonomy and difference (see also Feldman and Stenner 1997). Punitive childrearing, cultural or subcultural socialization, narrow life experiences, personality factors such as rigidity and lack of openness – perhaps including both innate character and the increasing aversion to the unfamiliar associated with aging (Storandt, Siegler, and Elias 1978; Shock et al. 1984) – lack of education or knowledge, and/or limited cognitive capacity are all potential sources of these inclinations.

Fromm (1941) argued long ago that insecurity arising from the rootlessness of the modern world is the major factor in the development of authoritarianism. Faced with an uncertain world and a lack of direction, people seek to "escape from freedom." Similarly, other perspectives variously touch upon how individual freedom, and the complexity of choices and diversity of lifestyles and beliefs with which it confronts us, may be frightening, overwhelming, or isolating for many individuals (Rokeach 1960; Forbes 1985), who may wish to divest themselves of the fear, stress, or loneliness of their own freedom, and/or to avoid the diverse and unpredictable consequences of the freedom of others. Wilson (1973) likewise argues that "social conservatism" (barely distinguishable in this rendition from our own conception of authoritarianism) is rooted in dislike of complexity and fear of uncertainty. Though not directly addressing the issue of authoritarianism, "terror management" theory (Greenberg et al. 1986; 1990; Rosenblatt et al. 1989; Solomon et al. 1991) somewhat similarly contends that social institutions, norms, and customs constitute the vast apparatus – the "societal anxiety buffer" – that we humans construct

to protect ourselves from recognizing the meaninglessness and impermanence of our existence and the reality of our own mortality. Insistence upon conformity to collective norms and authority thus serves to reassure and to relieve anxiety.

Personality Factors: "Openness to Experience" and "Conscientiousness"

Most of these authors are silent or vague regarding just what it is that renders certain individuals more inclined to find freedom frightening, burdensome, or lonely; less equipped to deal with complexity; more distressed by the unpredictable or the unfamiliar. But it is generally implied that personality and/or cognitive factors are the culprits (as per Rokeach's ideas about intolerance of ambiguity, dogmatism, and closed-mindedness). Although not always addressing itself to the issue of authoritarianism, there is nevertheless a good deal of direct and indirect evidence relevant to assessing the role that personality and cognitive factors might play in the development of authoritarianism. In regard first to personality factors, there are strong indications that "openness to experience" (McCrae and Costa 1992; McCrae 1996), and perhaps also "conscientiousness" (Costa, McCrae, and Dye 1991), produce traits consistent with our characterization of authoritarianism/libertarianism. These are two of five personality dimensions from the "Big Five" model of personality (Digman 1990; Goldberg 1993; McCrae and Costa 1995): a widely accepted and empirically validated typology of personality dimensions consistently revealed in data collected across different cultures.<sup>2</sup> Openness to experience, in particular, seems to dispose one to a range of libertarian-like attitudes and behaviors, including a preference for novelty, variety, and complexity; sensation seeking; unconventionality; and the pursuit and appreciation of different experiences. The traits manifested by those with low levels of openness to experience likewise align with our impressions of the authoritarian character, with the "closed" preferring familiarity and simplicity and showing less tolerance of ambiguity (McCrae 1996). We should note, in particular, that openness to experience is strongly characterized by a delight in the experience of intellectual stimulation and engagement (Johnson 1994).

More directly, researchers have reported significant negative association of openness to experience with authoritarianism (Trapnell 1994; McCrae 1996; Butler 2000) – mostly indicated by the RWA measure (Altemeyer

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The five dimensions revealed in psychometric investigations are Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, and Agreeableness. The first three types, in particular, are consistently evident and widely accepted.

1988) – as well as with Wilson and Patterson's (1968) Conservatism scale (Trappell 1994). Note that the latter, like the RWA scale, appears to reflect a mix of intolerance of difference and aversion to change. Once again, we confront the difficulties of finding evidence clearly distinguishing between the determinants of authoritarianism and conservatism. Truskosky and Vaux (1997) found that openness, along with conscientiousness (the second personality dimension mentioned at the outset), actually predicted 25 percent of the variance in Right-Wing Authoritarianism. Conscientiousness is associated with personal rigidity and a compulsion about having things in order and knowing what is coming next. It seems especially likely to be implicated in aversion to change and uncertainty, although it clearly also plays a role in intolerance of difference and complexity. Given the involvement of authoritarianism in intolerance of different beliefs, it is especially worth noting that, of the six different components of openness (openness to fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, and values), authoritarianism seems most strongly (negatively) associated with openness to values (Butler 2000).

### Innate and Stable Disposition? The Heritability of Authoritarianism

This line of research naturally suggests a more fundamental question: if personality is an important determinant of authoritarianism, then what determines personality? Although these issues are certainly not settled in contemporary psychology, many believe that personality, though subsequently conditioned by our environments,<sup>3</sup> is largely innate, and that it is only modestly modified by ongoing socialization (see McCrae and Costa 1990; Eysenck 1990; Loehlin 1992; Costa and McCrae 1993: Rowe 1994). Openness to experience appears to be substantially heritable, perhaps more so than any other of the "Big Five" personality dimensions (Loehlin 1992; Bergeman et al. 1993; Waller 1999), and relatively stable throughout adulthood (Costa and McCrae 1988). McCrae (1996: 332), arguably the leading scholar in the field, goes so far as to conclude that openness is "genetically determined to a substantial degree." More direct evidence is provided by a study of Right Wing Authoritarianism (Altemeyer 1981, 1988, 1996) among identical and fraternal twins reared together and apart (McCourt et al. 1999), which finds that about half the variance in RWA is accounted for by genetic factors. While clearly not identical with authoritarian predisposition, RWA is nevertheless substantially associated with both authoritarian predisposition and lack of openness to experience.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Which may, for example, influence whether certain innate tendencies are activated, are developed, or remain latent.

In sum, then, authoritarianism is largely innate and relatively stable; thus it will more or less permanently dispose one to respond in certain predictable ways to certain kinds of situations. Likewise, (lack of) openness to experience is both substantially related to authoritarianism, however it is measured, and characterized by a variety of traits that can reasonably be supposed to figure prominently in inclining one to intolerance of difference. Moreover, note that modern understandings of personality – that it regulates behavior only at those times, and in those domains, to which it is relevant – are certainly consistent with the notion of latent authoritarianism being activated, and manifesting its characteristic traits, in conditions that seem to threaten oneness and sameness (see also Mischel, Shoda, and Mendoza-Denton 2002).

Note that to argue that authoritarianism is largely innate – that it is both heavily determined by heritable personality factors, and itself substantially heritable – is not to suggest that these inclinations to intolerance come strictly from within, that the environment is inconsequential to the development of authoritarianism (McCourt et al. 1999). Almost certainly, there is an interaction between nature and nurture, in the sense that the environment can influence the extent to which a potential predisposition develops or remains dormant. It does mean, however, that should nature and nurture conspire to realize that potential, such a developed predisposition to intolerance of difference will be deep-seated and relatively immutable, which is to say, not very amenable to revision in response to democratic resocialization and well-meaning programs of "multicultural education."

# Cognitive Factors: Deficiencies in Capacity, Knowledge, Reasoning

Next, it is also possible that relatively enduring cognitive factors may be implicated in the development of authoritarianism, since cognitive incapacity may likewise limit one's ability to deal easily and comfortably with complexity and difference. Presumably this could involve innate cognitive limitations, and/or deficiencies in development of knowledge and reasoning more due to lack of education. As noted earlier, evaluation of the latter claim is vastly complicated by the fact that there are myriad reasons why lower levels of education might be associated with more authoritarian and intolerant stances, most of which ultimately do not involve cognitive incapacity. These ideas will be considered subsequently.

In regard, first, to the more straightforward notion of cognitive inability to deal with difference, there is a good deal of evidence, both direct and indirect, that what Altemeyer (1996) calls "impaired cognitive thinking" has some role to play in authoritarianism and intolerance, whether or not the scholars in question regard these limitations as directly disposing one to

authoritarianism. Note in this regard that Altemever appears to conceive of this impairment as a consequence rather than a cause of authoritarianism, which he considers a product of simple social learning (more on this to follow). In his conception, authoritarians are simply "under-practised in thinking for themselves" (Altemeyer 1996: 93) by virtue of having been so long discouraged from exercising their own judgment, and from questioning rather than merely accepting what they are told. Notwithstanding our divergent notions of the direction of causality, he provides evidence (Altemeyer 1996: 93–105) that his Right-Wing Authoritarians have more trouble making correct inferences, display compartmentalized thinking that results in contradictory statements, engage in biased reading of evidence, and are more susceptible to the "fundamental attribution error" (Jones and Harris 1967; Ross 1977). Rokeach (1960) went a great deal further in arguing that authoritarianism is a cognitive style: a generally closed-minded way of thinking about the world. Rokeach developed the concept and measure of "dogmatism," which he thought of as reflecting "general authoritarianism" purged of the ideological content of the F-scale (Adorno et al. 1950). He found sizeable correlations between the two, but only weak association between those scales and various measures of "left-right" opinion, laissez-faire conservatism, and status quo conservatism (not his terms).

More indirect evidence of some kind of relationship between dispositions at least reminiscent of authoritarianism and variables reflective of or associated with cognitive limitations (e.g., lesser education, poor academic performance, low IQ) has littered the social science literature since the earliest days of empirical research (see, among others, Christie 1954; McClosky 1958; Sidanius 1985). Certainly, there is no more ubiquitous argument in the literature than the assertion that education plays a crucial role in mitigating against intolerance in general, although this purported ameliorative effect of education is more commonly attributed to aspects such as exposure to libertarian norms and increased breadth of perspective than to enhanced knowledge and capacity to think and reason for oneself.

# The Ambiguous Effects of Education

Social and political effects attributed to education are always contentious, since it is rarely self-evident just what aspect of education, *or* what factor *associated* with being better educated, is actually producing the observed effect, and in what proportion. One can reasonably argue, for example, that the ameliorative effect observed for education is compatible with a number of very different accounts of the determinants of authoritarianism and intolerance. These include explanations attributing the effect of education to the superior knowledge and cognitive skills that should improve

one's ability to deal easily and comfortably with complexity and difference. Contention then remains over the extent to which we think that this capacity is actually developed by the process of education itself, or (as I would argue) largely innate and simply the root source of one's propensity to seek and succeed in education. Alternately, there are explanations more focused on simple social learning, which argue that higher education matters mostly for the fact that it reflects increased exposure to the libertarian values and norms that pervade academe (especially universities in liberal democracies) and educated social circles (Altemeyer 1981).

Similarly, others argue that education is mostly just reflecting consequential aspects of social class or socioeconomic status. It may be the more rigid upbringing, the less "sophisticated" or "cultured" or "urbane" social norms, or the narrower range of life experiences (including exposure to different environments and people) generally associated with lower status that actually produce most of the negative effects otherwise attributed to lack of education (Lipset and Raab 1970; Gabennesch 1972; Kohn 1977). Even more simply, difficult life conditions may dispose those less privileged individuals to authoritarian and intolerant stances via some basic "frustration aggression" mechanism (Berkowitz 1998), or as a rational response to competition for scarce resources with "outsiders" of one kind or another. Finally, there are those who argue that the apparent tendency of education (and social status more generally) to increase tolerant responses is largely artifice (Jackman 1978; Jackman and Muha 1984), with education serving mostly to alert the individual to that which is politically and socially "incorrect," that is, to what kinds of opinions may not be expressed in "polite," or "civilized," or "sophisticated" society. Fortunately, as I noted earlier, the cross-cultural nature of the WVS data - which greatly reduces the covariance among these otherwise entangled explanatory factors – will give us some much-needed purchase in distinguishing these alternate claims.

# Childhood Socialization: Rigid Upbringing and Parental Punitiveness

The concept of "working-class authoritarianism" (Lipset 1959) includes assertions about rigid and constrictive styles of childrearing thought to be more common among lower-class families. Working-class parenting and socialization more generally are said to involve – as necessitated, some have argued, by the reality of harsher conditions and a less privileged social position – a greater emphasis on teaching respect for authority and social conformity. Childhood punitiveness, in particular, especially physical punishment, has often been singled out as consequential for the development of intolerant and/or conservative inclinations, whether or

not this punishment orientation is attributed to lower social status. Of course, childhood punitiveness was the very genesis of authoritarianism in the original Freudian conception of the authoritarian personality (Adorno et al. 1950; see also Milburn et al. 1995). Here, authoritarianism was understood as the surface expression of an enduring psychodynamic conflict within the individual, originating in rigid and punitive childrearing practices and involving the repression of hostility toward parental authority and its displacement onto societal out-groups: racial and ethnic minorities, political dissenters, social and moral deviants. The implausibility and nonfalsifiability of the Freudian account of its genesis was one of the major reasons why this original formulation fell from favor (see Christie and Jahoda 1954; Hyman and Sheatsley 1954; Brown 1965; Altemeyer 1988: 53-54). But one need not take on board the Freudian psychodynamics to suppose that children who learn that the application of physical force and coercion by authority are appropriate means to "influence" another's behavior might subsequently be inclined to authoritarianism.

# Altemeyer and "Social Learning"

The foregoing (apart from the psychodynamic account) are all examples of a "social learning" perspective (Bandura 1977) on authoritarianism, which constitutes the major theoretical competitor to accounts alternately emphasizing the importance of innate attributes of the individual, such as personality and cognitive capacity. The strongest proponent of the social learning perspective in general is Altemeyer (1981; 1988; 1996), who conceives of authoritarianism simply as a learned "attitude package," which is acquired in response to the rewards and punishments administered by various agents of socialization, especially in childhood, but continuing throughout the life span. This lifetime of social learning can include all the elements previously touched upon: parental emphasis on unquestioning conformity and respect for authority; physical punishment, which may teach a child that force is an appropriate means to "influence" another's behavior; learning to fear people and things that are different; more restricted contacts with "outsiders" and narrower life experiences; lack of exposure to the libertarian norms of higher education, and so on.

Altemeyer thus substituted social constraint for the psychological constraint once provided by Freudian psychodynamics. But the obvious question remains: why should *these* attitudes cohere, across so many cultures, in so many settings? Why would agents of socialization in a variety of diverse cultures and settings teach, model, and reinforce *this particular constellation* of attitudes? Analyses employing the RWA scale in Russia, for example, obtain results similar to those reported in the West, with

Russian authoritarians (strong communists!) responding to the tone of the RWA items despite the incongruence of their content with many aspects of their situation (McFarland et al. 1992; 1993; Altemeyer 1996). When Altemeyer found that administrations of his RWA scale in Canada, the United States, West Germany, South Africa, and Australia obtained scale reliabilities consistently hovering around .90, he confessed that he had "no idea or hypothesis...that they would covary anywhere else than in North America" (Altemeyer 1988: 14), a surprise that is understandable, given his theoretical stance.

Overall, then, it is no doubt true that the agents of socialization in particular cultures or subcultures (e.g., rural or religious) may emphasize conformity, deference, and obedience over individual autonomy and diversity, so that individuals may acquire an authoritarian worldview by a simple process of social learning. But a social learning explanation, on its own, simply cannot provide a satisfactory account of the consistent cross-cultural covariation among *this* particular collection of attitudes. Neither can it explain within-culture variations: the tremendous differences in level of authoritarianism among individuals equally exposed to the cultural "message." Ultimately, these must instead be governed by the kinds of variations in personality and cognitive capacity that affect individuals' needs for oneness and sameness, and the ease, comfort, and pleasure with which they handle freedom, complexity, and difference.

#### A Subtle but Critical Distinction

I cautioned at the outset that it would prove impossible in the foregoing review to distinguish between the determinants of authoritarianism and status quo conservatism, due to the almost universal merging in prior research – in both conceptions and measures – of aversion to difference and aversion to change. Let me concede, however, that conceptual and measurement confusion are not entirely to blame for the difficulties of distinguishing between the two predispositions. As the reader may have observed in my characterization of the arguments and evidence, the lines between aversion to difference and aversion to change can sometimes be difficult to discern; certainly they are often difficult to describe. For my part, I have found it useful to conceive of authoritarianism as primarily an aversion to difference across space (i.e., diversity of people and beliefs), and to think of status quo conservatism as primarily an aversion to difference over time (i.e., change). Thus the two characters share a general distaste for difference. Other things being equal, then, authoritarians should also prefer not to confront new experiences or to face an uncertain future. And conservatives should also

prefer not to share their environment with unfamiliar people or to deal with different beliefs and behaviors. But the two characters still diverge in whether they find difference across space or difference over time *more* objectionable.

Thus in the preceding chapter, we saw that an overriding aversion to change severely constrains the extent to which status quo conservatism will yield intolerance of difference in traditionally tolerant cultures. For status quo conservatives, a stable, institutionalized, and authoritatively supported respect for diversity should always be preferable to dismantling those well-established protections and moving toward an uncertain future holding out the prospect of greater uniformity of people and beliefs, yet at the cost of intolerable social change and uncertainty. But across countries, we saw that authoritarians relentlessly pushed for severe restrictions on all manner of difference, even in pervasively tolerant cultures – in fact, especially in pervasively tolerant cultures – where the institution of such restrictions would have constituted vast social change amounting to a reversal of generations of political struggle that made democracies from monarchies and citizens of subjects.

It cannot be overstated how theoretically and politically important are these distinctions between authoritarianism and status quo conservatism. They could be discerned more clearly and consistently if societal conditions pitting the preservation of stable diversity against the prospect of wholesale change toward greater oneness and sameness occurred more clearly and frequently in "nature." But they do not, and in any case, survey data are rarely collected in the midst of the infrequent "authoritarian revolution." Thus, while some differentiation between authoritarianism and status quo conservatism will be achieved as soon as we can investigate their determinants with measures and models more cleanly distinguishing the two, the important distinctions will really be revealed in their divergent reactions to some experimental engineering of conditions infrequently observed in nature.

# PRIOR RESEARCH ON THE ORIGINS OF

First, though, let me briefly survey what we know about the determinants of laissez-faire conservatism. The question does not warrant extended consideration, insofar as we have already seen strong indications that aversion to government intervention in the economy is unlikely to be an important determinant of general intolerance of difference. Moreover, as we shall see, this apparent independence of attitudes in the authoritarianism domain from those reflecting preferences regarding redistribution and equalization is certainly no isolated finding.

# The Primacy and Independence of Freedom and Equality

The idea that there are two distinct dimensions of individual psychology centered on the values attached to freedom and equality (although variously labeled), which universally structure social and political attitudes, is one of the more persistent notions in social science (see Rokeach 1973; 1979; Braithwaite 1982; 1994; 1998; see also Schwartz 1992; 1994), not to mention in political philosophy (see Hume 1752; Russell 1936; Bobbio 1997; see also Norman 1987). The best-known authority and proponent is of course Rokeach (1973: 169), who went so far as to conclude that all ideological differences are in the end "fundamentally reducible, when stripped to their barest essence, to opposing value orientations concerning the political desirability or undesirability of freedom and equality in all their ramifications."

The available empirical evidence points to the primacy of freedom and equality and to the relative independence of preferences regarding these two values. It is clear that the laissez-faire/socialism dimension, although representing the major ideological divide in party systems and party support in modern liberal democracies (Bishop, Barclay, and Rokeach 1972; Cochrane, Billig, and Hogg 1979: Thannhauser and Caird 1990), cannot alone account for the structure of political attitudes (Luttbeg and Gant 1985; Heath 1986; Fleishman 1988), and that attitudes toward freedom/ difference versus obedience/conformity reflect an independent value dimension cutting across this so-called left-right divide.4 Numerous studies reveal that these two distinct dimensions (variously labeled) structure social and political thought for mass publics, between them accounting for most of the variance in those attitudes (see especially Robertson 1984; Himmelweit, Humphreys, and Jaeger 1985; Heath 1986; Heath and Evans 1988; Fleishman 1988; Heath et al. 1991; Heath, Evans, and Martin 1994; Evans and Heath 1995; Evans, Heath, and Lalljee 1996).

#### Terminal versus Instrumental Values

One might reasonably think of freedom and equality as the core "terminal" values (Rokeach 1973; 1979) universally structuring political ideology, with preferences regarding each attaining political expression in authoritarianism and laissez-faire conservatism, respectively. Those distinct inclinations should then regulate political and social attitudes in their different domains. As for status quo conservatism, it is important to recognize that social change can leave us either closer to, or further

<sup>4</sup> Note that this bidimensionality likewise underwrites the organization of McClosky and Zaller's (1984) well-known investigation of "capitalist" and "democratic" values in the United States.

from, individual freedom, and likewise closer to, or further from, economic equality. Thus, stability versus change is more an "instrumental" value bearing on the means by which we might attain or preserve those desired ends. Depending on the circumstances, it may align (if not entirely equally) with *either* freedom or constraint, *either* equality or inequality. As I noted in the preceding chapter, however, this is not to say that status quo conservatism is *entirely* a process preference, devoid of substantive content, since generally the extent and rate of social change can be limited by constraints on individual freedom. Minimizing difference across space can limit difference over time. So there is some common resonance to the concerns and objectives of authoritarians and status quo conservatives. And we have certainly seen evidence that status quo conservatism can fuel intolerance of difference, given a context of intolerant cultural traditions.

In sum, while there are reasonable conceptual bases and empirical grounds to justify the retention of status quo conservatism in an investigation of intolerance of difference, there is truly slender support for continued consideration of laissez-faire conservatism. The value attached to government intervention and economic equality, as against limited government and market determination of rewards, should of course assume a central role in accounts of party support in modern liberal democracies, and of attitudes toward redistribution and public ownership the world over. But consideration of laissez-faire conservatism and inclusion of relevant measures in the current investigation are justified only by the need to address the persistent belief in U.S. political science that free market values are somehow implicated in intolerance of difference. Ultimately, the question will be settled empirically, and as a pragmatic issue, establishing the major determinants of laissez-faire conservatism is necessary for our assessment of just what might be tangled up in the rather ambiguous measure of "political conservatism" available for our subsequent analyses of the U.S. data.

# Distinctive Determinants of Laissez-Faire Conservatism versus Authoritarianism

Happily, the evidence on this issue is plentiful and consistent, and likewise accords with some simple analyses of the WVS data (see Table E.7). Evans and Heath and their colleagues provide the most useful evidence for our purposes, paying special attention to the measurement of concepts, and providing side-by-side comparison of the determinants of laissezfaire conservatism and authoritarianism (Heath et al. 1994; Evans and Heath 1995; Evans et al. 1996). Both these concepts were measured using scales they developed and validated themselves on nationally representative British survey data. And their constituent items for the most

part cleanly tap into these two fundamental dimensions as we have defined them, with little involvement of notions more reflective of aversion to change (although still more reference to current political issues than desirable).

Note first, in further support of the claim that authoritarianism and laissez-faire conservatism are distinct value dimensions, that these scholars report only modest correlation (around .25) between the two predispositions in the British data (Heath et al. 1994: 120; Evans and Heath 1995: 198). Recall that my own analyses of the WVS90-95 reveal a trivial and negative association (r = -.07) between the two, once we test that relationship across widely varying cultures. Unsurprisingly, then, the two dispositions also prove to have very different sources. In accordance with our understanding of laissez-faire conservatism as primarily concerned with economic equality/inequality and the (re)distribution of wealth, by far the most important and consistent determinant of free market values is socioeconomic status (Heath et al. 1994: 126-127; Evans and Heath 1995: 199). The more privileged one's socioeconomic position – the more one is favored by market distribution of economic rewards – the greater the objection to government intervention in the economy. This applies to a number of variables variously reflecting aspects of SES such as subjective class, being an employer as opposed to an employee, being a homeowner rather than a renter, being better educated, and, of course, income.

It is especially worth noting that both income and education increase laissez-faire conservatism but substantially decrease authoritarianism. Ultimately, there is no more important determinant of authoritarianism than (lack of) education, consistent with expectations generated by our earlier review of the literature. But again, bear in mind that it cannot be clarified by these data - drawn from just one liberal democratic public exactly what aspects of education, or what attributes associated with being poorly educated or well educated, are actually yielding the observed effect upon authoritarianism, and in what proportions. Authoritarianism also appears to rise with increasing age in both investigations, presumably by virtue of the increasing rigidity and aversion to the unfamiliar that is associated with aging (Storandt et al. 1978; Shock et al. 1984). Religiosity (whether indicated by religious belief or by attendance at religious services) also appears to give a modest boost to authoritarianism. Given the contemporaneous nature of the predictor, however, the association between religiosity and authoritarianism has ambiguous causal direction. It could reflect the impact upon authoritarian inclinations of the social learning we might imagine is taking place in religious circles: learning that perhaps reinforces norms of conformity and respect for authority. But alternately, it may reflect the influence of authoritarianism itself on attraction to systems of collective membership, belief, and ritual. In any

case, these connections with religiosity and age are far less substantial than the relationship between authoritarianism and lack of education.

#### SIMPLE MODELS OF AUTHORITARIANISM AND CONSERVATISM

Ultimately, far greater clarity can be achieved on these issues by investigation of the WVS data. I will shortly present a more fully specified analysis, and one that allows for reciprocal influence between authoritarianism and status quo conservatism. But it is worth reporting first on some very "cut down" analyses of the determinants of our three predispositions (see Table E.7). My goal in these initial analyses was to identify those few factors that accounted for most of the explained variance in each disposition. All of the exogenous variables available in the WVS90-95 were tested, and the reduced model for each predisposition retained just those three variables displaying the greatest explanatory power in each case. Each model additionally controlled for whether or not the respondent lives in a liberal democracy. The exercise was also repeated separately for liberal democracies and otherwise, to ascertain whether the major determinants of each predisposition varied across these different contexts. The results of these analyses generally support the contention that these are three distinct predispositions of differing origin, with varying determinants that are largely congruent with expectations generated by theory and prior research, and mostly invariant across the different cultural contexts.

# Major Sources of Authoritarianism

Four factors accounted for nine percent of the variance in authoritarianism worldwide, with years of education alone explaining five percent of the variation in levels of authoritarianism (Table E.7.1). Level of ethnic diversity within a nation (indexed by the number of minority languages) explained another three percent of the variance. Recall that in the preceding chapter, the latter variable was also found to exert a direct impact upon intolerance of difference, ultimately explaining more of that intolerance than any other factor apart from authoritarianism itself. Clearly, then, intolerance of difference responds in arguably rational ways to the amount of difference one is required to tolerate. Apart from directly influencing contemporaneous expressions of intolerance, the level of ethnic diversity within a nation evidently gets built into a more enduring effect, by augmenting levels of authoritarianism per se. As far as I am aware, this is the first "hard" demonstration that variations in such objective conditions across nations make important contributions both to predispositions and to contemporaneous expressions of intolerance. Authoritarianism, then, is not entirely sourced in peculiarities of the individual psyche. In part,

it reflects an arguably rational demand upon the state for greater regulation of and constraints upon difference, when the level of diversity being experienced by the individual might actually seem more than is reasonably tolerable.

In the end, lack of education and objective conditions of ethnic diversity together account for most of what we are able to explain in authoritarianism. Religious upbringing does add a very small additional increment (less than one percent) to the account. And in this case, we can be somewhat more certain (than with earlier results reported for current religiosity) that the causal direction runs from immersion in the norms of a religious subculture to the development of authoritarian inclinations (although the possibility of course remains that this report of a religious upbringing might still be a projection from current religiosity, and/or from authoritarianism itself). Finally, the experience of living in a liberal democracy (added to all three analyses as a control, irrespective of explanatory power) made a very modest contribution to the reduction of authoritarianism. Note that estimating this rudimentary model separately for liberal democracies and otherwise indicates that we can explain far more of the variance in authoritarianism (12 percent versus 7 percent) in the former than in the latter, but this gap is no doubt partly attributable to the differing reliability<sup>5</sup> of their authoritarianism measures. The more important point is that the major determinants of authoritarianism remain the same in each subset.

# Major Sources of Laissez-Faire Conservatism

Laissez-faire conservatism evidently has entirely different sources (see Table E.7.3). A rudimentary model can explain around 9 or 10 percent of the variance in free market values worldwide, and subjective social class *alone* contributes a weighty 6 percent to that account. There is no other individual-level variable of *any* consequence in determining laissez-faire conservatism, once we control for class. As for aggregate-level factors, living in a liberal democracy can explain nearly three percent of the variance in attraction to free market values, which I imagine is accomplished by a simple process of social learning; laissez-faire conservatism is apparently very much a Western commitment. But beyond these broad cultural differences, attitude toward government intervention in the economy was almost entirely a product of whether one would be more the beneficiary or the benefactor of that intervention. Note also that neither the explanatory power of the model nor its important determinants varied between liberal democracies and otherwise.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The authoritarianism measure has an  $\alpha$  reliability of .45 across the liberal democracies and .31 otherwise.

Combining these findings with those reported in prior investigations, and also bearing in mind the consistent independence of the freedom and equality dimensions in values research, one is compelled to the conclusion that authoritarianism and laissez-faire conservatism truly are distinct predispositions. Variables reflecting education and socioeconomic status consistently diminish authoritarianism, while those same variables prove most consequential for promoting laissez-faire conservatism, invariably providing a healthy boost to those inclinations. Moreover, laissez-faire conservatism is either trivially or negatively correlated with authoritarianism everywhere we look. And in data collected across diverse cultures, it actually appears to promote greater tolerance of difference, although still contributing very little to its explanation. There proves to be little justification for retaining this construct in an investigation of general intolerance of difference.

## Major Sources of Status Quo Conservatism

As for status quo conservatism, it certainly appears harder to explain than both authoritarianism and laissez-faire conservatism: the two predispositions purportedly expressing one's commitments to the fundamental "end state" values of freedom and equality (see Table E.7.2). Bringing its main determinants together in a rudimentary model explains only four percent of the variance in status quo conservatism worldwide – less than half that achieved by the accounts of authoritarianism and laissez-faire conservatism. And most of this explanation of aversion to change is provided simply by increasing age. Note that age is expressed as a Z-score – indicating standard deviations above or below the norm for one's own population – in order to take account of the fact that being sixty years old makes one a lot older, for all practical purposes, in Armenia than in Austria. Age in absolute years performs more poorly as an explanatory factor than does "relative age."

While income qualifies as one of the most substantial determinants of, and significantly diminishes, status quo conservatism (in contrast to its consistently positive effects on laissez-faire conservatism), it nevertheless ultimately makes a trivial contribution to its explanation. As for aggregate-level factors, living in a liberal democracy contributes less than one percent to the explained variance, with a democratic environment slightly easing aversion to change. (And the model has essentially the same explanatory power across democracies and otherwise.) In sum, no factor other than age is of any real consequence in explaining status quo conservatism. The importance of age is consistent with the purported overriding concerns of this predisposition, given that aging is generally associated with increasing rigidity, intolerance of uncertainty,

and discomfort with new experiences (Storandt et al. 1978; Shock et al. 1984). This stands in subtle but significant contrast to the primary dependence of authoritarianism upon lack of education, which should indeed be more detrimental to one's capacity to deal with complexity than with uncertainty.

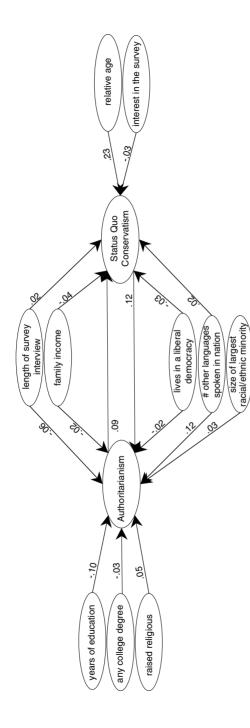
# A FULLY SPECIFIED MODEL OF AUTHORITARIANISM AND STATUS QUO CONSERVATISM

These rudimentary models are helpful in isolating the few exogenous factors on which the different predispositions are primarily dependent. But a properly specified model must fill out these accounts, while allowing for the possibility that authoritarianism and status quo conservatism might influence one another. The results of such an analysis of the WVS are graphically illustrated in Figure 6.1. While only the core determinants can be depicted here, the complete 2SLS results from which Figure 6.1 derives can be found in Tables E.2 and E.3.

### Modest Reciprocity and Differing Determinants

There proves to be some degree of reciprocal influence between authoritarianism and status quo conservatism, as might be expected given the moderate overlap in their concerns. Generally, the more averse to difference, the more averse to change, and vice versa, although this reciprocity remains modest. Controlling for that mutual influence, each predisposition remains largely determined by those distinctive factors identified in the preceding analyses, with minor additional effects being contributed by other exogenous variables. Overall, one of the more notable findings is again our superior ability to explain authoritarian predisposition as against a general aversion to change. The fully specified model can account for 12 percent of the variance in authoritarianism worldwide, but only 5 percent of the variance in status quo conservatism.

As for estimates of impact, the coefficients reported in Figure 6.1 depict the maximum possible effects upon each predisposition of each explanatory variable. (We should bear in mind throughout that all of the estimated effects are likely to be seriously attenuated by the high degree of unreliability in the WVS data). These "maximum effects" are calculated by multiplying the range of the explanatory variable by its unstandardized coefficient. Note that this rather exaggerates the impact of "relative age" (as a Z-score with enormous range); the effect upon status quo conservatism of a four standard deviation unit increase in the age variable is about half that depicted, at .12 (on the 0 to 1 scale of the dependent variable). Nevertheless, it is evident that age is far and away the most



Note: Path entries are maximum effects of the explanatory variables, calculated from unstandardized 2SLS regression coefficients in Tables E.2 and E.3, column 3, in conjunction with univariate statistics in Table E.1. All paths significant at p < 1.10 (one-tailed Figure 6.1. Core determinants of authoritarianism and status quo conservatism (WVS90-95). tests applied as appropriate).

important variable inclining individuals toward status quo conservatism, although of course we do not have available to us in this analysis some of the personality factors thought to be implicated in aversion to change (more on this to follow).

As for authoritarianism, we find that respondents living in the most ethnically diverse nations (with seven or more minority languages being spoken) are generally around twelve percentage points (.12 on a o to I scale) more authoritarian than those confronted by little ethnic diversity (i.e., having no minority languages to deal with). Regarding individual-level explanatory factors, the best-educated respondents (with sixteen or more years of education) are expected to be ten percentage points less authoritarian than the least educated (with seven or fewer years of education). In a similar vein, note also that, generally, the longer the interview continued (which in other investigations I have found to reflect, in part, the respondent's intellectual engagement with the issues being discussed), the less authoritarian the respondent.

#### Clarifying the Effects of Education

As noted in our earlier discussion, it proves difficult to resolve the dispute over the true meaning of any effect discerned for education when the data are drawn only from modern liberal democracies. In such societies, it is largely the case that academic, educated, and higher-status environments tend to promote libertarian values more than lower-status and less well-educated circles. And there are indeed strong norms regulating public discourse, with expressions of intolerance certainly falling into the category of "politically incorrect," and with the better-educated more likely to have learned those norms (Jackman and Muha 1984). But clarification is possible when the effect of education persists, as here, in data drawn from a wide variety of cultures, since one would be hard-pressed to maintain, for example, that higher-status environments are pervaded by libertarian norms in Azerbaijan, or that education in China tends to promote libertarian values, or that strong norms of political correctness inhibit the expression of intolerance in Nigeria.

Authoritarianism conceivably might still be increased by the lack of exposure to different people, environments, and experiences, or by the frustration created by difficult life conditions, or by the competition for scarce resources likely to characterize less-privileged circumstances in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Bear in mind that these alternative explanations are more tenuous in any case when the dependent variable in question taps not outright expressions of intolerance, but simply opinions on whether obedience or imagination are more important qualities for children.

every country. But since we have adequate controls in this dataset for those conditions – variables directly reflecting social class, family income, occupational prestige, and employment, none of which proved very consequential – we can be assured we are not misattributing their influence on authoritarianism to education. In any case, while education strongly covaries with socioeconomic status in countries such as the United States – where university education is a private good and an expensive market commodity – education is less likely to usurp the effects of SES in data drawn across nations with anything from tightly controlled (with diverse entry criteria) to universal access to higher education, with widely varying levels of public funding.

That leaves us, then, with the most plausible interpretation of our education effect being the beneficial effects of knowledge and cognitive skills on one's ability to deal easily and comfortably with complexity and difference. These capacities may be developed by the process of education itself; they may be largely innate and mostly just the root cause of one's seeking and succeeding in education; or they may be some combination thereof. As foreshadowed by our earlier discussion, however, the effect we have been able to capture here would reflect more of the former than the latter, since in a cross-cultural context such as this, accessing and completing an education will be determined by many factors other than innate talent and desire. We will shortly gain just a little more insight into this issue when we analyze two data collections that, in addition to the standard education variables, provide some direct measures of cognitive capacity.

#### Validity of the Authoritarianism Measure: Childrearing Values ≠ Childrearing Practices

Note, finally, that these results tend to rule out the earlier concern (see Chapter 2) that the authoritarianism measure might reflect childrearing practices more than childrearing (hence fundamental) values. The measure proves barely responsive to factors that would surely influence childrearing practices, including individual attributes such as sex, occupation, SES, and social class, as well as environmental variables such as rural residence, and living in a liberal democracy (see Figure 6.1 and associated discussion, and Tables E.2 and E.7.1). The fact that the authoritarianism measure does respond markedly, and otherwise inexplicably, to such national factors as the extent of ethnic diversity and the size of the largest minority, again tends to reassure us that these childrearing values do not reflect childrearing practices so much as fundamental orientations toward oneness and sameness.

#### NATURE OR NURTURE? IDENTICAL GERMANIES REARED APART

Before leaving these cross-national data behind, I want to exploit one last opportunity they provide to shed a little more light on the extent to which authoritarianism might be fundamentally innate, or socially learned. As I noted in my earlier review of the literature, such issues are best settled by studies of identical and fraternal twins reared together and apart, which enable researchers to separate out with some confidence the independent impact of genetics and environment on the attribute in question. While I did review some evidence regarding the heritability of Right-Wing Authoritarianism – which indirectly addresses our issue to the extent that RWA and authoritarian predisposition are related – we are fortunate to have also some indirect evidence on the issue, with the WVS data providing something of a cross-national analogue (albeit a very crude one) to the twins studies.

Table 6.1 reports a simple analysis of the authoritarianism expressed in 1990 by individuals residing in West and East Germany and by their immediate neighbors in Western and Eastern Europe. The left panel of the table compares apparent predisposition to authoritarianism among West Germans to the levels of authoritarianism evidenced by both their western neighbors (in Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Switzerland, and Austria) and by East Germans. Similarly, the right panel compares apparent predisposition to authoritarianism among East Germans to the levels of authoritarianism evidenced by both their eastern neighbors (in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Belarus, Lithuania, and Russia)<sup>7</sup> and by West Germans. The logic I obviously have in mind is that of considering the West and East Germans as being something roughly analogous to identical twins reared apart.

We find that the East Germans were generally only 3 percentage points more authoritarian in predisposition than the West Germans, which places them 11 and 14 percentage points *below* the world norm, 8 respectively. And they were far more akin to each other in this regard than they

Oata were also available for Poland in 1990, but they were excluded from these (and all other) investigations on account of the fact that the Polish data, in contrast to the norm, report only the respondent's first choice among the childrearing values.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> To my mind, this represents just one more piece of evidence in favor of the theory that intolerance is a function of the interaction of authoritarian predisposition with conditions of normative threat (especially diversity of public opinion). While of course I cannot determine with any certainty whatsoever the extent to which either authoritarianism or a tendency toward fractious public opinion is enduring, it is interesting to note that both West and East Germany manifest low levels of authoritarian predisposition by world norms, but that no sample among the eighty drawn from fifty-nine different nations displays anywhere near their variance in public opinion.

Table 6.1. Nature or nurture? "Twin" nations reared apart

West German versus		East German versus	
East German	.03(.01)**	West German	03(.01)**
Western neighbors	.09(.01)**	Eastern neighbors	.09(.01)**
Constant	14(.00)**	Constant	11(.01)**
$R^2$	.02	$R^2$	.05
	N = 12,138		N = 9,808

*Note:* The dependent variable throughout is authoritarian predisposition, indicated by childrearing values. See Appendix E for variable construction. Cell entries are unstandardized OLS multiple regression coefficients (standard errors in parentheses). \*\* p < .05 (two-tailed tests applied). See Table E.1 for univariate statistics.

Source: WVS90.

resembled either their western or eastern neighbors, from the cradle of liberal democracy on one side and from behind the Iron Curtain on the other. The East Germans tended to be six percentage points less authoritarian than Germany's western neighbors, on average, and nine percentage points less authoritarian than their neighbors in Eastern Europe. I would certainly not want to make too much of this evidence. It is only aggregated survey data, after all, and "single shot" at that; the analogy to the twins studies is obviously very crude. And I am keenly aware of the discomfort engendered by the idea that predispositions to intolerance might be deeply innate.9 But it must be acknowledged that to find the West and East Germans – on the eve of reunification, after forty years of separate development and vastly different cultural socialization - manifesting almost indistinguishable levels of authoritarianism, and looking far more like each other than either resembles their "cultural neighbors," is very difficult to reconcile with a "social learning" account of the origins of authoritarianism

# AUTHORITARIANISM AND "POLITICAL CONSERVATISM" AS DISTINCT PREDISPOSITIONS

Having established the major determinants of our predispositions on cross-cultural data, we are now in a position to make the necessary assessment of just what is being reflected by the "political conservatism" measure routinely employed in analyses of U.S. political behavior. The dataset most suitable for such a determination is the *Cumulative General Social* 

<sup>9</sup> Naturally enough, this may engender particular discomfort among scholars who have dedicated themselves to investigating the sources of prejudice regarding the purportedly innate inferiority and superiority of different peoples.

Survey 1972–2000. The GSS72–00 has the virtue of being collected regularly, in twenty-three independent cross-sections, spanning almost thirty years of U.S. history. This temporal variation should guard against the possibility of drawing inappropriate conclusions about relations between variables, relations that might be evidenced only by virtue of some peculiar historical conditions or political maneuvering occurring at one point in time.

Subsequent analyses exploring the determinants of intolerance will benefit from the ready availability in the *GSS* of items tapping intolerance in all four of our classic domains, which, although not routinely collected every survey, were tapped sufficiently regularly to allow the construction of multi-item scales reflecting racial, political and moral intolerance, and punitiveness. <sup>10</sup> Note that since we will be investigating those expressions of intolerance most appropriate to the U.S. context, which include items probing negative sentiments regarding specific racial minorities, only white respondents were retained for all *GSS* analyses throughout. But much as we found that the determinants of our three predispositions in the *WVS* were relatively constant across liberal democracies and non-democracies, the determinants of authoritarianism and political conservatism do not vary markedly across different racial groups in the United States.

#### Measures of Authoritarianism and Political Conservatism

In regard to those predispositions, the GSS fortunately collects a fairly standard measure of "political conservatism." In analyses of U.S. political behavior, "conservatism" is almost always measured by means of a scale ranging across either five or seven points from "extremely (or sometimes 'strong') liberal" to "extremely conservative." A respondent's placement is typically determined from responses to two questions running something like: "Generally speaking, would you consider yourself to be a liberal, a conservative, a moderate, or haven't you thought much about this?," followed by "Do you think of yourself as a strong liberal/conservative or a not very strong liberal/conservative?" Alternately, respondents might place themselves directly on the scale based on their

Whenever a question was not answered by a respondent, or was not asked of respondents in that year or on that form of the survey, missing values were imputed for that individual item (i.e., prior to the construction of the composite scales) from a predictive model consisting of twenty-two exogenous sociodemographic variables (see Appendix D for the list), with model parameters estimated using all respondents in the cumulative GSS<sub>72</sub>-00 having scores on that item.

own understanding of "the political views that people might hold," as here with the GSS version. The GSS measure of political conservatism produces a normally distributed variable spreading respondents across a seven-point scale, subsequently rescored to be of one-unit range and centered on a sample mean of o (see Appendix D for further details). Though the variable was collected across nearly three decades, it is reassuring that the mean hardly wavers from year to year; the association with time is negligible (r = .02).

As for the predisposition of primary interest, the GSS data allow us to construct a better-than-usual measure of authoritarianism using respondents' partial rank ordering of thirteen desirable qualities for children (six of those qualities are deemed relevant to authoritarianism), with respondents indicating the three "most desirable" qualities, the "most desirable of all," the three "least important," and the "least important of all." The values considered reflective of authoritarianism were obedience, neatness, and good manners, while the libertarian values alternately reflected a preference for children being curious, exercising their own judgment, and being responsible for themselves (see Appendix D for more detail). These choices were used to construct a highly discriminatory measure of authoritarianism, which ultimately arrayed respondents across a twentynine-point scale (rescored to be of one-unit range, then centered on a sample mean of o). The resulting variable was normally distributed and, again, shows no real movement over time (r = -.04). This fact should, once more, reassure us that such items reflect fundamental orientations toward obedience and conformity (oneness and sameness) more than childrearing practices, since the latter are surely growing more "permissive" over time. As for the distribution, if we break the scale down into crude categories for the moment, we find that 56 percent of respondents can be classified as libertarians (i.e., making more libertarian than authoritarian choices), 31 percent tend toward authoritarian values, and 13 percent are balanced or "neutral" in their choices.

Unfortunately, these childrearing items were asked on only eight of the twenty-three surveys constituting the cumulative GSS72-00. Nevertheless, those surveys span a decent interval of the GSS series, from 1973 to 1986; there is a vast array of exogenous variables available for the task of imputing the missing values; and the connections between those exogenous determinants and authoritarianism are evidently reasonably stable over time. Thus, we can have a good deal of confidence in the imputations, and the error introduced will generally work against the research hypotheses. (See Appendix D for more details; and see Franklin 1989 for further guidance on the imputation of missing values from instrumental variables).

#### But What Is Political Conservatism?

The relationship between authoritarianism and political conservatism. and the extent to which each predisposition depends upon different sociodemographic factors, will be the initial subjects of our investigation. As indicated, subsequent analyses will go on to explore the relative roles played by each of these predispositions in fueling intolerance of difference in the contemporary United States. But it is necessary first to establish exactly what this political conservatism is. From the standard self-placement measure, simple willingness to claim the label "conservative" or "liberal" is taken to reflect anything or (more usually) everything from moral traditionalism/libertarianism, to being "tough" or "soft" on crime, to being resistant to or supportive of government provision of social welfare benefits, to general inclinations to defend or overturn the way things have always been, including the established racial hierarchy. Now this is generally an accurate rendition of the mix of stances politicians and commentators seem to have in mind when they use the labels "conservative" and "liberal," in this particular culture, at this point in time. And it is roughly consistent with the preference aggregation, alliance formation, and constituent mobilization underwriting the behavior of the two major political parties – the Republican and Democratic Parties – as they operate in this particular culture, at this point in time. But it is problematic as social science, to say the least. Since the measure has no actual content or substance – we are not actually asking respondents what they think or feel or believe about anything – it ends up reflecting whatever it means to the respondent to claim one of those labels (which likely echoes whatever current political elites are saying it means), in this particular culture, at this point in time.

In our own analyses, we derive some protection against this shifting content of political conservatism by having data ranging across a thirty-year period of U.S. political history, which enables us to gain some sense of what is relatively enduring in the measure. With respect, first, to my basic claim regarding the distinctiveness of authoritarianism and conservatism, we see that even if this problematic "political conservatism" measure reflects some muddled and shifting mix of aversion to change and big government and difference, it nevertheless proves to be only very modestly related to authoritarianism. Across the GSS72-00, the correlation between the two predispositions is just .09. A simple cross-tabulation of categorical variables likewise indicates only slight association (see Appendix D, Table D.6), most of which is attributable to the fact that authoritarians in the contemporary United States appear reluctant to label themselves "liberal." But authoritarians are still no more willing than libertarians to call themselves "conservative" (Table D.6). Substituting

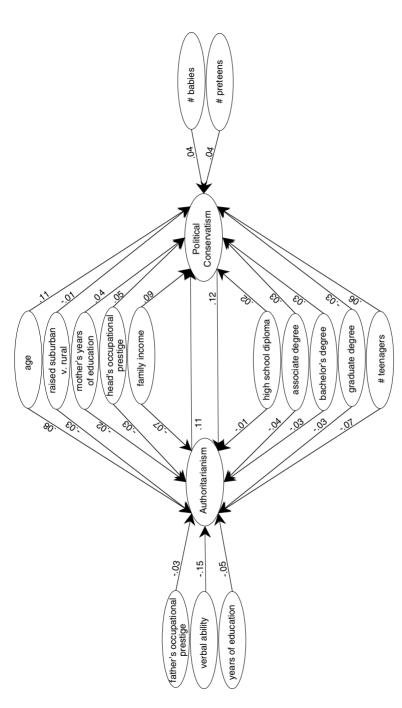
in a standard measure of party identification (see Appendix D) provides even less evidence that authoritarianism is substantially associated with (what American political science takes to reflect) conservatism. Authoritarianism and "right-wing" party identification show a trivial and *negative* relationship (r = -.04). And while a simple cross-categorization turns up no significant association, still a greater proportion of Democrats than Republicans prove to be authoritarian, and authoritarians are more likely to call themselves Democrats than Republicans, that is, they are more likely to align themselves with the party promoting redistribution and social change than with the party favoring free markets and preservation of the status quo (see Table D.7).

#### A Fully Specified Model of Authoritarianism and Political Conservatism

While these rudimentary analyses are suggestive, a more fully specified model provides the definitive answers regarding the degree to which authoritarianism and political conservatism are mutually dependent, as well as the extent to which each is influenced by different exogenous variables. The latter, among other things, will furnish the most helpful clues regarding just what it is that this "political conservatism" measure is measuring. Figure 6.2 depicts the main results of such an analysis, showing the reciprocal relationship between authoritarianism and political conservatism across this slice of U.S. history, and the core determinants of each predisposition. The full specifications and 2SLS results from which Figure 6.2 derives are reported in Appendix D (Tables D.2 and D.3). So too are some more basic models for each predisposition (Table D.8), which (just as for the earlier WVS investigation; see Table E.7) provide a simpler picture of the few variables that are doing most of the explaining.

In concert, the full and the simple models tell a story very reminiscent of the patterns we observed for authoritarianism and status quo conservatism in the WVS data. We find a modest degree of mutual reinforcement between authoritarianism and political conservatism (Figure 6.2). And we can explain far more of the variance in authoritarianism than in political conservatism (17 percent versus 7 percent). This again leaves the former looking like more of a *pre*-disposition than the latter, whose dependence upon the various exogenous variables is probably fluctuating over time in response to current political maneuvering, given the

This difference cannot be attributed to the fact that the political conservatism model (owing simply to the availability of the relevant measures) is estimated across a larger slice of time than the model for authoritarianism. The explanatory power of the former model is not notably improved by restricting its estimation to the same period as the one available for authoritarianism.



Note: Path entries are maximum effects of the explanatory variables, calculated from unstandardized 2SLS regression coefficients in Tables D.2 and D.3, column 3, in conjunction with univariate statistics in Table D.1. All paths significant at p < 100 (one-tailed Source:  $GSS_72-00$ , whites only; N=6,930 (authoritarianism), N=22,974 (political conservatism). Figure 6.2. Core determinants of authoritarianism and "political conservatism" (GSS72-00). tests applied as appropriate).

minimal content and shifting meaning of its measure. What little we can account for of political conservatism would seem mostly attributable to the rigidity associated with aging, with higher family income also increasing conservatism by a modest increment. The most elderly respondents are expected to be around 11 percentage points (i.e., .11 on the o to 1 scale of the dependent variable) more conservative than the youngest (and note: around eight percentage points more authoritarian), and the wealthiest around nine percentage points more conservative than the most impoverished.

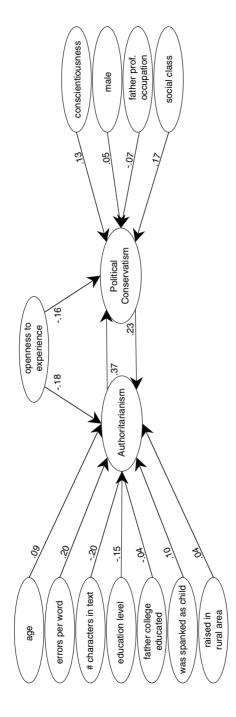
As for authoritarianism, either years of education or verbal ability, entered alone, can account for most of its explained variance (10 percent and 8 percent, respectively). When their independent effects are separated out in a fully specified model (see Figure 6.2 and Table D.2), we find that verbal ability in particular - which may reflect innate more than developed cognitive capacity, or at least more effectively than do years of education - has a very substantial ameliorative effect in diminishing authoritarian tendencies. Respondents scoring highest on the GSS test of verbal ability are predicted to be 15 percentage points lower in authoritarianism than those with the poorest performance. Once we control in this (admittedly crude) manner for variations in "natural talent," the most highly educated respondents are expected to come in just five percentage points lower in authoritarianism than those with no formal education whatsoever (holding all else constant). Beyond this, the additional reduction in authoritarianism (on the order of three percentage points) apparently associated simply with obtaining a college degree of one kind or another may then reflect some independent impact of exposure to the libertarian norms of academe. In concert with prior findings, these results should certainly incline us to the conclusion that cognitive incapacity to deal with complexity and difference plays a major role, if not the primary role, in the development of authoritarian predisposition.

More generally, it is apparent that authoritarianism and political conservatism stand in very different relation to all of the variables in any way reflecting education or social class. Authoritarianism is reduced by cognitive capacity, years of education, attaining a college degree, family income, the household head's and the father's occupational prestige, and the mother's education. Political conservatism, by contrast, is *increased* by family income, the household head's occupational prestige, the mother's education (perhaps reflecting the social class of the family of origin), and attaining a college degree. (The only exception to the rule is that possession of a graduate degree modestly diminishes conservatism, which again probably reflects high exposure to academic norms).

# Clarifying the Roles of Personality, Cognition, and Childhood Socialization

While the GSS data provide the most reliable picture of the general relationships of interest, it is worth briefly surveying the estimates (see Figure 6.3 and Tables A1.2 and A1.3) from a dataset (DCS97) in which I was able to include some critical measures of personality and cognitive capacity, which are not normally available to us in the major nationally representative surveys. While these data were collected from only one region of the United States (Durham, North Carolina) - a region, moreover, notorious for its history of racial conflict and moral conservatism – this need not reduce our confidence in the results. There is good evidence that being raised or currently residing in the South increases neither authoritarianism nor political conservatism by more than a few percentage points (see Tables D.2 and D.3) (which again, tends to weigh in against the "social learning" account) and, far more importantly, that the major determinants of each predisposition remain the same across the South and the non-South alike (see Table D.8). The fact that the data are a single "snapshot" in time is of somewhat greater concern, but the cognitive and personality variables of particular interest to us here should generally remain in stable relations with the two predispositions.

Overall, we again find that authoritarianism and political conservatism reinforce one another to a reasonable degree, that cognitive capacity and education play critical roles in diminishing authoritarianism, and that higher social status goes along with increased political conservatism. The detrimental effect of sheer cognitive limitations on one's ability to deal with complexity and difference is more conclusively demonstrated here via two unique variables (see Appendix A1 for full details). These measures are simple counts of the number of characters, and the number of spelling and grammatical errors per word, found in an open-ended answer respondents were asked to write relating "whatever you can remember" about three infamous "super-patriot"/militia incidents (thus. incidents about which even the least cognizant authoritarians ought to have had some knowledge and opinions). We find that those writing the longest responses containing more complex words were generally 20 percentage points lower in authoritarianism than the least verbose. Similarly, respondents making a spelling or grammatical error every two or three words tended to score around 20 percentage points higher in authoritarianism than those whose responses were error-free. And once again, note that these very substantial effects of cognitive incapacity per se hold up despite stiff competition from level of education, with the most highly educated respondents expected to score around 15 percentage points lower in authoritarianism than those leaving school short of the eighth grade.



Note: Path entries are maximum effects of the explanatory variables, calculated from unstandardized 2SLS regression coefficients in Tables A1.2 and A1.3, column 3, in conjunction with univariate statistics in Table A1.1. All paths significant at p < 1.10Figure 6.3. Core determinants of authoritarianism and "political conservatism" (DCS97). (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). Source: DCS97, whites only; N = 361.

Most significantly, we find strong evidence that the two major personality dimensions – openness to experience, and conscientiousness – often thought to regulate one's comfort in dealing with complexity and uncertainty do indeed exert the expected effects on authoritarianism and conservatism, respectively (see Appendix A1 for the scale items). Increasing openness to experience, which is marked by a preference for variety, complexity, novel experiences, and intellectual stimulation, substantially reduces both authoritarianism and political conservatism, by about 17 percentage points apiece. Conscientiousness, which is primarily associated with rigidity, orderliness, and a compulsion about being in control of one's environment, unsurprisingly promotes conservatism to a considerable degree. Moving across the range of this personality dimension is expected to increase political conservatism by around 13 percentage points.

Finally, these data also provide some suggestion that physical punitiveness in childhood may be associated with increased authoritarianism in adulthood, with the mechanism perhaps as simple as a child's learning that physical force and coercion by authority are appropriate means to "influence" another's behavior. One need not take on board the Freudian psychodynamic account of the genesis of authoritarianism, then, to admit that childhood punitiveness might be consequential; other things being equal, the simplest (and falsifiable) explanation is to be preferred. In any case, there remains an alternative possibility that these correlational data cannot exclude: that authoritarianism itself induces respondents to report (presumably, approvingly) that their childhood discipline was particularly strict.

### Childrearing Values ≠ Childrearing Practices, Revisited

Bear in mind, however, that none of these alternatives implies that the childrearing items with which we measure authoritarian tendencies reflect anything other than fundamental orientations toward oneness and sameness. Thus, while the value orientations that respondents reveal in answering these questions regarding desirable qualities for children may be partly *influenced* by childrearing practices experienced in the family of origin, if these items actually *measured* childrearing practices (to which respondents were subjected, *or* upon which they now rely), then responses would be growing more "permissive" over time. Likewise, they would depend far more notably than is evident here (see Figure 6.2 and Tables D.2 and D.8.1) upon subcultural variations (e.g., ethnic origin, rural versus urban or Southern versus non-Southern upbringing and residence) and sociodemographic attributes (e.g., sex, occupation, SES, social class) that surely impact childrearing practices. These assurances – also offered

earlier for the WVS – go to the validity of the authoritarianism measure, and thus to the authenticity of the relationships we did and will discern.

#### General Overview of Findings

Generalizing broadly across the foregoing results, we may conclude that:

- authoritarianism and political conservatism are distinct inclinations;
- the former appears rather more a *pre*-disposition than the latter, with a character something akin to a personality dimension;
- they are mutually reinforcing to some degree, presumably by virtue of sharing some aversion to novelty, unfamiliarity, and uncertainty;
- similarly, each seems to be augmented by the rigidity of increasing age, although this effect is far more substantial and certain for conservatism;
- authoritarianism alone is heavily determined by cognitive incapacity to deal with complexity and difference;
- the larger portion of this effect persists even controlling for education, confirming the independent impact of innate capacities, beyond the skills and knowledge actually acquired by education;
- only a very modest portion of the oft-noted education effect seems to be attributable to mere exposure to libertarian norms;
- variables reflecting socioeconomic status (including education) invariably diminish authoritarianism, but augment political conservatism;
- social learning makes only modest contributions to either disposition; and finally,
- personality traits considered largely innate, which limit one's ability to deal comfortably with complexity and uncertainty, play a very substantial role in the development of authoritarianism and conservatism, respectively.

#### What's in the Mix? The Content of Political Conservatism

Putting these results from the U.S. data together with the earlier WVS findings regarding the determinants of our three distinct predispositions, it seems that political conservatism – as the concept is typically measured and employed in the United States – probably reflects, in approximately equal measure, aversion to change and aversion to government intervention in the economy. While authoritarianism and political conservatism both resonate with some distaste for novelty and complexity, authoritarianism ultimately proves far too heavily and consistently determined by cognitive incapacity and lack of education for us to conclude

that it has much in common with political conservatism. The latter is actually considerably increased by any factor touching on education, or on social status in general, all of which consistently diminish authoritarianism. On the other hand, aversion to government intervention was similarly augmented (in both the WVS and prior research) by any such factor connected with social class or socioeconomic status. And in the WVS, aversion to change was almost entirely determined by age (although one suspects that had they been available, personality variables would also have proved consequential). The strong positive association of political conservatism with both age and anything reflecting socioeconomic status, including education, ultimately compels the conclusion that political conservatism is mostly an amalgam of status quo and laissez-faire conservatism. It certainly seems sensible that aversion to change and aversion to government intervention should align in a society whose exceptional commitment to the free market and small government is longstanding, broadly shared, and deeply entrenched in the culture (McClosky and Zaller 1984; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991).

## THE CONTINGENT RELATIONSHIP OF AUTHORITARIANISM AND POLITICAL CONSERVATISM

Authoritarianism and political conservatism appear to be largely distinct predispositions, consistent with the finding that the latter reflects a peculiar American intermingling of aversion to change and aversion to government intervention, each of which proved in our cross-national investigation to be trivially related to authoritarianism. What is politically significant about this fact is that the relationship between authoritarianism and political conservatism is bound to be highly contingent: swinging from a positive, to an insignificant, even to a negative association, depending upon changing environmental conditions. These can include both major shifts in the socioeconomic environment and more fleeting and "man-made" changes in the manner in which rival political actors are packaging and selling positions on contemporary issues. Any of these may serve to align, realign, or disassociate those individual orientations toward change, difference, and redistribution; cause interests and concerns to converge or diverge; and fundamentally alter the relationship between authoritarianism and political conservatism. This is one of many reasons why it is important to determine whether those discrete individual inclinations are eternally wed, or can be divorced and lined up with different partners. If the latter, then politics can provide the critical outside meddling that drives one character into the arms of another. For example, with those critical external inputs – the right exogenous conditions – distaste for difference could be mobilized behind schemes of equalization

and redistribution, and aversion to change might be rallied in defense of institutionalized diversity and established protections for individual freedom. Fortunately, while those changing exogenous conditions are difficult to anticipate and systematically investigate in "nature," they are relatively easy to engineer and analyze in an experiment. What follows, then, are two experimental investigations that expose the highly contingent relationship between authoritarianism and political conservatism: first, by disaligning authoritarian concern for unity from conservative interest in stability; and second, by altering confidence in the leaders who might be governing and intervening, and the extent of public consensus on the goals of their interventions.

#### Authoritarianism versus Conservatism: Difference across Space versus Difference over Time

We have observed that authoritarianism and political conservatism are modestly related, most likely by virtue of some shared distaste for the novel and the unfamiliar. I have suggested in earlier discussion that it may be helpful to conceive of authoritarianism as primarily an aversion to difference across space (i.e., diversity of people and beliefs), and to think of status quo conservatism as primarily an aversion to difference over time (i.e., change). Thus authoritarians and conservatives share some distaste for difference, but diverge in whether they find difference across space or difference over time – variety or novelty, complexity or uncertainty – *more* objectionable.

While this may seem a subtle distinction to draw, it has important political implications. As I have noted, the extent and rate of social change can generally be limited by the kinds of constraints on individual freedom so appealing to authoritarians for their tendency to minimize difference. Likewise, social diversity can often be constrained by limiting the pace of social change. Thus in many conditions, the concerns and interests of authoritarians and status quo conservatives tend to converge, and it may be difficult to distinguish the two characters. This modest alignment of authoritarianism and status quo conservatism under normal conditions is depicted in the upper panel of Figure 6.4: obedience and conformity (i.e., restricting individual freedom and difference) tend to enhance social stability; brakes on social change tend to limit diversity; and so we may often find the two characters in modest agreement.

Nevertheless, the *primary* concerns of authoritarianism and status quo conservatism vary, which may cause them under certain conditions to diverge in ways that can be critical for the maintenance of liberal democracy. For status quo conservatives, the primary concern is to promote stability and certainty over change and uncertainty. For authoritarians,

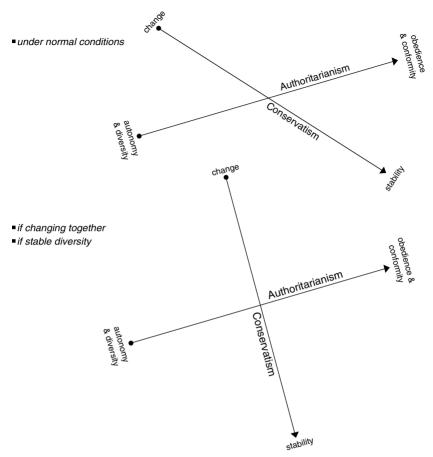


Figure 6.4. Hypothesized divergence between authoritarianism and political conservatism under varying conditions.

the overriding objective is to promote oneness and sameness (a.k.a. unity and consensus; obedience and conformity) over individual freedom and difference (autonomy and diversity). Certain conditions make orthogonal these issues with which each character is *primarily* concerned; this hypothetical situation is depicted in the lower panel of Figure 6.4.

The critical conditions for divergence between the two characters are those that set "at odds" their primary concerns, thus unhinging the modest alignment of the two dimensions (Figure 6.4). For brevity, I will label these conditions "stable diversity" and "changing together." Social conditions of "stable diversity" should please status quo conservatives (for the stability) but disturb authoritarians (for the diversity). Conditions in

which we are "changing together" in pursuit of common goals ought to please authoritarians (for the unity) but distress status quo conservatives (for the change). Either of these social conditions can be expected to disalign authoritarians and status quo conservatives, rendering the two dimensions – authoritarianism and conservatism – largely independent or even negatively related. Note, then, that historical moments presenting a direct choice between "stable diversity" and "changing together" should be particularly critical for unmasking the two characters: revealing that which is ultimately at stake for each, how their concerns diverge, and why that matters for the rest of us.

# Engineering a Realignment: "Changing Together" versus "Stable Diversity"

In order to test these hypotheses, I designed an experiment for inclusion in the Multi-Investigator Study 1999 (see Appendix B) that would manipulate precisely these conditions, albeit with rather less drama than is normally present in those historical moments. Subjects of varying authoritarianism and conservatism (from a nationally representative sample survey) were randomly assigned to one of eleven different treatments: either to a control condition, or to one of ten different treatments in which the interviewer would read them a short summary of what was purported to be a recent "major news story." The MIS99 experiment is described at length in Chapter 3, and the stimuli for the ten treatment conditions are presented there in Table 3.2. The supposed news stories telling tales about "stable diversity" and "changing together" in contemporary U.S. society are conditions 2a and 2b, respectively (Table 3.2). The "stable diversity" story reports that we are in a period of "steady social stability," and assures us of a "stable society that will endure as a constant," but also makes reference to Americans' "different goals and values," noting that American society is not necessarily "pulling together." The "changing together" story says that we are in a period of "rapid" and "enormous" social change, in which we are "moving forward at a very fast pace," yet also notes that American society is not necessarily "falling apart," but "finding new ways to meet our common goals and values."

While these experimental manipulations may seem subtle, it should be clear that an amplified version of the choice between "stable diversity" and "changing together" is, in essence, the choice between modern liberal democracy and authoritarian revolution. It is no secret that liberal democracy is most secure when individual freedom and diversity are pursued in a relatively orderly fashion, in a well-established institutional framework, under responsible leadership, within the bounds set by entrenched and consensually accepted "rules of the game." Such "stable diversity" should

be acceptable to conservatives but abhorrent to authoritarians (perhaps a diversity that is entrenched and unchallenged is actually the worst kind of all). On the other hand, the prospect of some wholesale overthrow of the system in pursuit of greater unity should be appealing, even exciting, to authoritarians, but appalling to conservatives. Liberal democracy would seem least secure when conservatives cannot be persuaded that freedom and diversity are authoritatively supported and institutionally constrained, and when authoritarians can be persuaded that greater sameness and oneness – the "one right way" for the "one true people" – lie just the other end of the "shining path." As I have noted, some of these moments occur relatively infrequently in "nature," and survey data are rarely collected in their midst. But we can certainly experimentally engineer approximations of some of these conditions (albeit on a much lower level), and observe whether authoritarianism and conservatism do indeed diverge as and when expected.

#### Authoritarianism versus Conservatism: Intervention by Whom and to What Ends?

The foregoing addresses the important distinctions between authoritarianism and status quo conservatism. But what about laissez-faire conservatism, which is also tangled up in that political conservatism amalgam? We have seen good evidence that authoritarianism and laissez-faire conservatism are either trivially or negatively associated. By reason also, it would seem that under normal conditions we should expect a modest negative relationship between the two, given the pressing interest of authoritarians in the exercise of collective authority over the individual, and inversely, the aversion of libertarians to any constraints on individual freedom, which ought to extend right across the social, political, and economic spheres. In short, authoritarians by rights ought to be attracted to the idea of big government and should support collective control of economic and social outcomes; certainly it would be hard to minimize any kind of diversity without authority. Likewise, libertarians ought to lean toward small government and a free market, just as they would favor minimal interference in all affairs of the individual, economic and otherwise.

Yet the relationship between authoritarianism and laissez-faire conservatism, just as with status quo conservatism, is likely to be contingent on social conditions. And I would argue that those conditions of normative threat to which authoritarians are so clearly attentive in other matters are likely to feature prominently here again. We have seen that confidence in political leadership and (at least perceptions of) consensus in public opinion are critical reassurances for authoritarians. Nothing aggravates

authoritarians more than feeling that leaders are unworthy of their trust, and/or that beliefs are not shared across the community (see Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 for examples). And nothing lets down their defenses more than confidence in political leaders and widespread public consensus. Apart from communities bounded naturally by race or ethnicity, what make "us" an "us," after all – what make us *one and the same* – are common authority and shared values. So those are the critical conditions to which authoritarians are eternally attentive (hence the aggravation induced by normative threat).

Thus, whether or not authoritarians will get behind government intervention should depend critically on who will be doing the governing and intervening, and to what ends. That is to say, the relationship between authoritarianism and laissez-faire conservatism should be highly contingent: positive under what I have been calling conditions of normative threat. and negative (i.e., pro-intervention) given normative reassurance. Fortunately, since the idea that normative threat plays a critical role in magnifying the impact of authoritarianism is the core thesis of this book, normative threat has been manipulated or measured in all of the datasets employed throughout. So it is a simple matter to add to our current investigation some tests of whether such conditions of normative threat and reassurance might also modify the relationship between authoritarianism and political conservatism. The most telling evidence will be provided by manipulations of normative threat and reassurance in both the MIS99 (see Table 3.2 for the remaining stimulus stories) and the Cultural Revolution Experiment 1995 (see Chapter 3 and Appendix C), although I will also make brief reference to replications of those findings on the various survey datasets.

#### Setting Authoritarians and Conservatives at Odds

Figure 6.5.1 depicts the impact of political conservatism on authoritarianism given manipulated exposure to the various stimulus stories in the MIS99 (full results reported in Appendix B, Table B.2, column 4). In accordance with expectations developed in the earlier discussion, we find that conditions that set at odds the issues with which authoritarians and conservatives are primarily concerned do fundamentally alter the relationship between the two predispositions. (Note that each predisposition was scored to be of one-unit range, then centered on a mean of o). Under normal conditions, conservatism seems to boost authoritarianism by around 35 percentage points. But conservative inclinations actually diminish authoritarianism in the face of either assurances about a "stable society that will endure as a constant" despite Americans' "different goals and values," or reports of "rapid" and "enormous" social change in

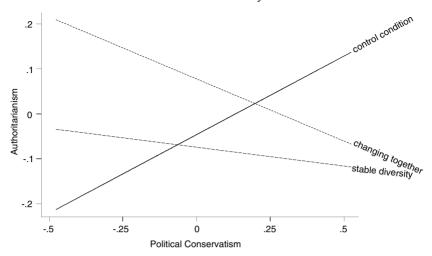


Figure 6.5.1. Conservatives reject authoritarianism when belief diversity is the status quo and greater unity requires change (MIS99). Source: Table B.2, column 4.

pursuit of our "common goals and values." The disjuncture between the two predispositions is especially stark in the face of the latter, evidently very alarming, prospect: conservatism appears to reduce authoritarianism by around 28 percentage points under these conditions. In short, conservatives reject authoritarianism when belief diversity is the status quo, institutions are stable, and greater unity requires wholesale social change.

The shifting relationship between the two predispositions is likewise evident from the alternate angle depicted in Figure 6.5.2 (full results reported in Table B.3, column 4). By these estimates, authoritarianism increases conservatism by a hefty 65 percentage points under normal conditions (that is, in the control condition not depicted here). But that inclination toward conservatism is reduced to 36 percentage points upon pondering the apparently rather appealing prospect of Americans "moving forward at a very fast pace" in pursuit of "new ways to meet our common goals and values." This would make strong libertarians into self-professed ideological "moderates," and the highly authoritarian into "not very strong" conservatives. But this same relationship is considerably steepened upon hearing reports that the American presidents have not been "leaders in any real sense of the word" - have been "unworthy of the trust we placed in them" - or else that "public consensus is deteriorating" and that the future holds only the prospect of "more and more disagreement about what is right and wrong." When no one agrees on the ends to pursue, or when

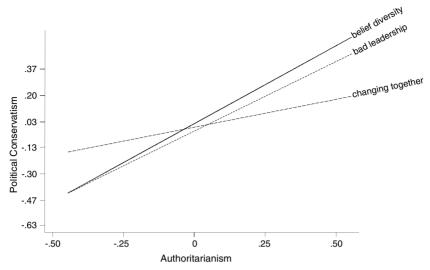


Figure 6.5.2. Authoritarians are less conservative if we are changing together in pursuit of common goals (MIS99).

Source: Table B.3, column 4.

there are no leaders who can be trusted to pursue them, authoritarians determinedly grasp the label of "strong conservative," and clearly have no interest in big government under these conditions – indeed, no interest in government doing anything at all.

These striking contingencies in the relationship between authoritarianism and conservatism are demonstrated even more starkly in the *Cultural Revolution Experiment 1995*, in which subjects this time read for themselves a rather lengthy (unbeknownst to them, fictitious) newspaper article conveying some kind of threatening news, with two of those (randomly assigned) articles again intended to effect the critical normative threats of belief diversity and bad leadership. (Appendix C presents the different newspaper articles that were employed as stimuli, and their intent is fully described in Chapter 3). Figure 6.6 depicts the varying impact of authoritarianism on conservatism given this experimental manipulation of normative threat in the *CRE95*. We find that whereas authoritarianism yields only modest returns of conservatism among "control" subjects<sup>12</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> I must point out that these modest effects cannot be considered the usual impact of authoritarianism on conservatism, since this was not a true control condition (as explained in Chapter 3). Rather, the story about imminent contact with aliens, to which "control" subjects were exposed, was expected to deflate the association between authoritarianism and conservatism. This aspect of the experiment is

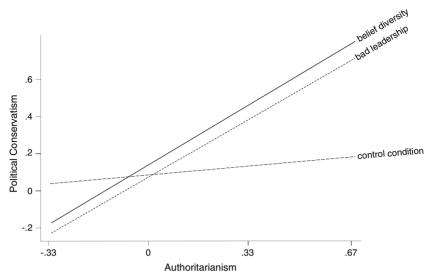


Figure 6.6. Effects of authoritarianism on political conservatism given experimental manipulation of normative threat (*CRE95*). *Source:* Table C.3, column 4.

(who are told by a "normally highly secretive NASA division" to expect "significant contact with intelligent life forms from other parts of the galaxy"), the impact of authoritarianism on conservatism is greatly magnified given manipulated exposure to normative threat. Authoritarians tend to become as conservative as can be, and the two dimensions are virtually in a one-to-one relationship among subjects informed that "more and more people... hold beliefs that are very different from (their) own," or that the postwar American presidents were not "men who had the nation's best interests at heart, men doing their best to serve the American people." So once again we see that authoritarians – who in reassuring political conditions can be attracted to the idea of big government – entirely reject government intervention when there is no "societal consensus about what is right or wrong," or when those who would be governing are "not true leaders in any sense of the word."

explored in Chapter 9. Thus, the estimated effects of authoritarianism obtained for subjects in this condition cannot be considered the normal impact of authoritarianism, which is no doubt better indicated in the true control condition of the *MIS99* experiment.

"Left-Wing" Authoritarians and "Right-Wing" Libertarians

Figures 6.7 and 6.8 present the results from these two experiments in a form that should enable us to grasp overall the highly conditional nature of the relationship between authoritarianism and conservatism. While space limitations preclude their presentation in the text, these effects of experimentally manipulated normative threat were replicated in three different survey datasets. For example, as real-world analogues to the experimentally manipulated news of belief diversity, I employed naturally occurring perceptions of belief diversity (see Figures A1.1 and A1.2, from the DCS<sub>97</sub>), <sup>13</sup> actual variance in the opinions being expressed among all those interviewed within a few days of the respondent (see Figures D.1 and D.2, from the GSS72-00), 14 and similarly, the variance in public opinion within different nations (see Figures E.1 and E.2, from the WVS90-95). 15 To replicate the effects of experimentally manipulated reports of leadership failure, I employed survey measures of negative evaluations of the major party leaders (Figures A1.1 and A1.2) and loss of confidence in a variety of political institutions (Figures D.1, D.2, and E.1, E.2). In short, there is no question that these effects replicate outside the experimental laboratory, in naturally occurring settings, cross-temporally, and crossnationally.

These striking and politically consequential contingencies in the relationship between authoritarianism and conservatism are sensible only if we recognize the important distinctions between their primary concerns. Authoritarians, almost by definition, favor the subordination of the individual to the demands of the collective. And it is clear they can be comfortable with an activist government when they are confident in the ends that will be pursued and the leaders who will pursue them. but otherwise they shift sharply to a limited-government, "hands off" conservative stance. For their part, conservatives grow more attracted to authoritarianism when there is great variance in public opinion and little confidence in social and political institutions. But they are notably disinclined to adopt authoritarian stances when conflict seems to be at manageable levels and when they have high confidence in the institutions that would manage it. And they most definitely will not be "on board" for the authoritarian revolution unless the uncertainty and instability that that promises seem no worse than that which they currently confront. Among other things, failure to recognize these important distinctions leads us to

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix A1 for details.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> See Appendix D for details.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> As also described and employed in the preceding chapter: see footnotes 14 and 15 to Chapter 5 and associated discussion there in the text. See Appendix E for full details on variable construction, and univariate statistics.

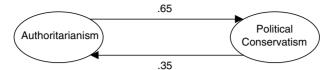


Figure 6.7.1. Under normal conditions.

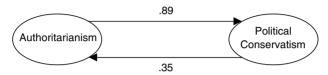


Figure 6.7.2. If bad leadership.

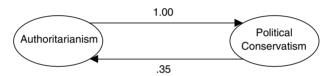


Figure 6.7.3. If belief diversity.



Figure 6.7.4. If stable diversity.



Figure 6.7.5. If changing together.

Figure 6.7. Relationship between authoritarianism and political conservatism under varying conditions (MIS99).

*Note:* Path entries are conditional coefficients calculated from unstandardized 2SLS regression coefficients in Tables B.2 and B.3, column 4. All paths significant at p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate).

Source: MIS99, whites only; N = 844.



Figure 6.8.1. Under normal conditions.



Figure 6.8.2. If bad leadership.



Figure 6.8.3. If belief diversity.

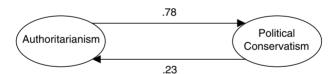


Figure 6.8.4. If unjust world.

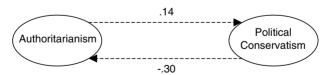


Figure 6.8.5. If aliens / no afterlife.

Figure 6.8. Relationship between authoritarianism and political conservatism under varying conditions (*CRE*95).

*Note:* Path entries are conditional coefficients calculated from unstandardized 2SLS regression coefficients in Tables C.2 and C.3, column 4. All unbroken paths significant at p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied).

Source: CRE95, whites only; N = 103.

underestimate the potential for authoritarians, under the right conditions, to get behind programs such as affirmative action for minorities, which hold out the prospect of minimizing some of the difference they so abhor. Likewise, it leads us to underestimate (and thus to underemploy) the potential for conservatives to serve as guardians of liberal democracy, and bulwarks against fascist social movements (see also Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991; Sniderman and Piazza 1993). While these issues go well beyond the scope of this investigation, they are explored at length in subsequent work (Stenner n.d.).

## AUTHORITARIANISM AND POLITICAL CONSERVATISM AS SOURCES OF INTOLERANCE

This brings us then to the final component of the investigation: that of discerning the relative roles played by authoritarianism and conservatism in fueling intolerance of difference in the contemporary United States. To this point, we have established that the predispositions have some mutual resonance but largely different origins and natures; that the relationship between them is entirely dependent upon political and social conditions; and that political conservatism mostly reflects some (probably shifting) amalgam of aversion to change and aversion to government intervention. We also established in the preceding chapter that there can be varying "returns" to conservatism, depending on the extent of intolerant content in the traditions that conservatives find themselves committed to conserving.

The issue we need to address now is the extra layer added to this mystery of what kinds of attitudes we can expect from "conservatives," by virtue of the minimal content of the standard measure of political conservatism, and the process by which that content (i.e., the meaning of the labels) gets filled in. Many people's conception of what it means to call oneself a "conservative" or a "liberal" is rather idiosyncratic, not generally shared by their fellow citizens (Converse 1964). But much more problematically, many others' understanding is highly endogenous. Put simply, individuals may call themselves "conservative" because they have behaved in some way that current political rhetoric tells them is "conservative." According to self-perception theory (Bem 1972), people "come to know their own attitudes, emotions and internal states by inferring them from observations of their own behavior and circumstances in which they occur." Thus, individuals may infer that they are "conservative" or "liberal" by comparing their vote choices and issue positions to those that contemporary political elites and campaigns are calling "conservative" and "liberal." And we then treat this "ideological self-placement" as an "explanatory" variable when analyzing the determinants of those vote choices and issue positions. To put it mildly, it is difficult to say to what

extent we, let alone conservatism, have actually "explained" anything when we find that scores on such a self-placement measure are associated with variation in those attitudes or behaviors.

#### Mobilizing and Employing versus Generating Intolerance

As noted in the preceding chapter, those connections will always depend on the current maneuvers of parties and political elites, and on the ideological positioning, preference aggregation, and constituency mobilization that seem to them most feasible and electorally advantageous at that particular point in time. It is certainly a serious mistake to assume that the way in which political elites are currently packaging issues in order to maximize their appeal to *multiple* constituencies is the way in which those issues are "packaged" *within* the individual taxonomies of their current supporters, let alone future supporters mobilized by some different campaign "mix." Similarly, it would be a mistake to assume that the "buttons" political actors will sometimes push, the symbols they might manipulate, the rhetoric they employ to mobilize intolerant sentiments in their favor, reflect that which *generates* those sentiments.

"Conservative" political actors in the contemporary United States have certainly made effective use of pervasive beliefs that racial minorities abuse social welfare and violate cherished norms of hard work and individual self-reliance (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997; Peffley, Hurwitz, and Sniderman 1997; Gilens 1999), that they are disproportionately implicated in crime and drug abuse (Hurwitz and Peffley 1997; Mendelberg 2001), and that they are morally lax more generally (Sniderman and Piazza 1993). These ubiquitous notions are mostly conveved, not by outright assertion, but below the level of conscious awareness, via the constant juxtaposition of references to, and images of, race, poverty, and crime in media coverage and political campaign messages (Jamieson 1992; Gilens 1999; Mendelberg 2001). Conservative and Republican political elites have apparently learned that "coded" messages about crime are effective ways to mobilize the racially intolerant to their cause, without openly violating contemporary norms regarding acceptable discourse, or running foul of citizens' self-monitoring (Mendelberg 2001; see also Terkildsen 1993). The cultural force of the work ethic and devotion to capitalist values of individual self-reliance (Chong, McClosky, and Zaller 1983; McClosky and Zaller 1984; Feldman 1988), combined with the ready "availability" in the culture of those notions about welfare abuse, can provide "cover" for racial animosity to be expressed in more acceptable terms - as in "racial resentment" (Kinder and Sanders 1996) or "laissez-faire racism" (Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997) - via seemingly reasonable objections, not to other races, but to those who

allegedly take advantage of the system and will not help themselves. And without question, on many occasions conservative and Republican elites have (at least) employed (if not openly encouraged) those ideas to rally the racially intolerant to their side "under cover" (Carmines and Stimson 1989).

Yet, as clearly recognized in the most careful work in the field, all of this says more about the behavior of political elites than the attitudes of citizens, and certainly more about the *motivating* force of those values in American culture than the *explanatory* power of those values in American intolerance. These cultural and political realities have tempted some less careful scholars to conclude that conservatism (or Republican partisanship) is involved in the *generation* of intolerance. And this is very different from conservative political elites being implicated in the mobilization of intolerance, conservative positions being employed in the expression of intolerance, and conservative candidates benefiting from that mobilization and expression of intolerance.

But these important distinctions are easily blurred given the virtual absence of content in the self-placement measure so routinely employed to "explain" these attitudes and behaviors, and the hopeless endogeneity in the act of applying those labels to oneself. Essentially, *absence* of content makes for *shifting* content in response to current political packaging; "conservative" comes to mean whatever political maneuvering says it means right now; and one calls oneself "conservative" (today) because one did or said or believes something that political elites are calling conservative. Unsurprisingly, that self-labeling then aligns with what one did or said or believes, which may well be intolerant in some aspect or domain. But that need not mean that political conservatism *influenced* one's intolerance. And it certainly does not indicate that aversion to change, or aversion to government intervention, *generated* that intolerance.

#### Data and Measures

To what extent, then, are authoritarianism and political conservatism actually implicated in generating intolerance of difference in the contemporary United States? The GSS72-00 again provides the best available data for the test. Its collection over nearly three decades of U.S. political history provides considerable protection against our drawing spurious conclusions about relationships between variables that may be fleeting and generated only by the peculiar conditions of the time. This is of particular concern here, of course, given the shifting meaning of those "conservative" and "liberal" labels in response to contemporary political maneuvering and packaging. The collection of data across time will also allow some further demonstration of the extent to which both the

intolerant "yield" of conservatism, and the explanatory power of authoritarianism, shift with changing cultural traditions and norms. In addition to authoritarianism and conservatism, all of the analyses will also control for party identification (with attachment to the "laissez-faire" Republicans scoring high), in order to guard against the possibility that we are missing some of the influence of conservative or free market values by relying only on the flawed conservatism measure.

In contrast to the unavoidable constraints imposed by working with the WVS cross-national data, here we have the luxury of retaining only the white majority respondents, and then including among our dependent variables items specifically reflecting the ways in which racial intolerance is predominantly expressed in this culture at this time. In this domain, as in all others, the selection of items for the various intolerance scales was constrained by the need to choose those appearing on a large number of surveys across a considerable span of the overall series. But there can be no doubt in this case that the racial intolerance items are actually reflecting racial animosity, indicated by respondents' opinions on whether "White people have a right to keep blacks out of their neighborhoods if they want to" and on whether interracial marriage should be banned, as well as their expressed willingness to vote for a well-qualified black man nominated by their party for president.

Political intolerance was also well reflected by the classic series of items asking respondents whether each of five targets – atheists, communists, homosexuals, racists, and militarists – should be allowed to make a speech in their community, to teach in a college or university, and whether they would favor removing a book that this person wrote from their public library. Moral intolerance was indicated by attitudes toward compulsory prayer in public schools, the banning of pornography, and homosexuality. Finally, punitiveness was reflected by support for the death penalty, opinions on whether the courts deal sufficiently harshly with criminals, approval of wiretapping, and gun ownership. As always, all scales are of one-unit range, and the four domains were equally weighted in the overall measure of general intolerance of difference. (Full details on variables and scale construction can be found in Appendix D.)

# Authoritarianism the Primary Determinant of U.S. Intolerance, and Growing

The results of these analyses are presented in Table 6.2. To allow for investigation of the extent to which the returns to conservatism, and the explanatory power of authoritarianism, might be varying over time, the analyses were run separately on data drawn across (roughly) the first decade (Table 6.2.1) and the last decade (Table 6.2.2) of the nearly

Table 6.2. Influence of authoritarianism, "political conservatism" and "right-wing" party identification on intolerance of difference across domains and time: United States

	General Intolerance of Difference	Racial Intolerance	Political Intolerance	Moral Intolerance	Punitiveness
		Table 6.2.1: 1972–1982	32		
Authoritarianism	.50(.01).48**	.55(.01).37**	.64(.01).45**	.48(.01).38**	.10(.01).10**
"Political conservatism"	.21(.01).24**	.18(.01).14**	.18(.01).15**	.25(.01).24**	.14(.01).15**
"Right-wing" party identification	.00(.00).01	02(.01)03**	02(.01)02**	.00(.01).01	.05(.01).09**
Constant	.49(.00)**	**(00)**	.49(.00)**	$.62(.00)^{**}$	$.41(.00)^{**}$
$\mathbb{R}^2$ (full model)	.31	.17	.24	.23	.05
$\mathbb{R}^2$ (authoritarianism alone)	.25	.15	.22	.17	.01
$+R^2$ (pol con adds to auth)	90.	.02	.02	90.	.03
$+R^2$ (pty id adds to auth)	.01	00.	00.	00.	.02
		Table 6.2.2: 1990–2000	00		
Authoritarianism	.72(.01).65**	.77(.01).59**	.84(.01).53**	.75(.01).48**	.21(.01).17**
"Political conservatism"	.14(.01).20**	.06(.01).07**	.11(.01).11**	.22(.01).22**	.11(.01).14**
"Right-wing" party identification	.02(.00).03**	01(.00)02**	02(.01)03**	.04(.01).06**	.05(.01).10**
Constant	.44(.00)**	$.34(.00)^{**}$	.42(.00)**	.56(.00)**	.47(.00)**
$\mathbb{R}^2$ (full model)	.49	.36	.31	.32	80.
$\mathbb{R}^2$ (authoritarianism alone)	.45	.36	.30	.26	.04
$+R^2$ (pol con adds to auth)	.04	00.	.01	90.	.03
$+R^2$ (pty id adds to auth)	.01	00.	00.	.02	.02

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized OLS multiple regression coefficients (with standard errors in parentheses) and their associated standardized coefficients, in that order. \*\* p < .05, \* p < .00 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). See Table D.1 for univariate statistics. Source: GSS72-00, whites only; N = 25,426 overall, N = 8,591 in Table 6.2.1, N = 9,787 in Table 6.2.2.

thirty-year period in which the GSS was in the field. This division of time periods is historically rather arbitrary, but it has the virtue of leaving us with approximately the same number of years, surveys, and respondents in each of the two subsets.

Overall, the results are sufficiently predictable and consistent as to be easily summarized. Authoritarianism is the primary determinant of general intolerance of difference in the contemporary United States, and it becomes increasingly powerful over time. The latter accords with the observation (introduced in the preceding chapter) that authoritarianism generally explains more of intolerant behavior the more aberrant that behavior is for the cultural context. Authoritarianism alone can explain a quarter of the variance in all intolerance of difference in the earlier period. and very nearly half the variance in the later period. This increased explanatory power is evident in every domain. But the rise in power is most precipitous (from 15 percent to 36 percent) in the domain of racial intolerance, consistent with the "sea change" in norms regarding racial equality that took place over the period. And the rise is very modest indeed, as is explanatory power generally, in the domain of punitiveness, which likewise accords with those expectations. The United States is one of the most extraordinarily punitive nations, by every indicator, and by any comparison, not limited to liberal democracies or "advanced" economies. This exceptional punitiveness includes, among other things, the proportion of the population imprisoned or otherwise in the "care" of the criminal justice system; the severity of sentencing for minor crimes; and support for, imposition and execution of the death penalty (Forer 1994; Vincent and Hofer 1994; Windlesham 1998). Since there is nothing the least bit abnormal about extreme punitiveness in the United States, then or now, we cannot expect authoritarianism to exercise much influence in regulating intolerant responses in that domain, then or now.

As for the actual impact of authoritarianism – the change we can expect to observe in expressions of intolerance as authoritarianism increases – it is substantial in every domain, and especially steep in the later period. Moving from the most libertarian to the most authoritarian respondent is predicted to increase racial, political, and moral intolerance by 77, 84, and 75 percentage points, respectively, and punitiveness by 21 percentage points.

Both the explanatory power and impact of conservatism are far more modest, and they generally diminish from the earlier to the later period, as the traditions conservatives are dedicated to conserving grow increasingly tolerant. Yet even in the earlier period, the intolerant returns to conservatism are comparatively slight, consistent with generally tolerant cultural traditions. In an unusually religious culture with strong Puritan roots (Hunter 1983; Liebman and Wuthnow 1983; Ammerman 1987; Wald

1987), conservatives are predictably inclined to object to the growth of "gay rights" and to the supposed proliferation of pornography. But even here, moving across the full range of the conservatism scale from "extremely liberal" to "extremely conservative" increases moral intolerance by just 25 and 22 percentage points in the earlier and later periods, respectively, compared to a 48 and a 75 point boost from authoritarianism in those periods. Authoritarianism alone can explain 17 and 26 percent of the variance in moral intolerance in the earlier and later periods. In either period, conservatism can explain only eight or nine percent of moral intolerance on its own, and it adds just six percent to the account provided by authoritarianism.<sup>16</sup>

#### Changing Racial Norms Alter the Intolerant "Yield" of Conservatism

The decline in the impact of conservatism on racial intolerance from the earlier to the later period is particularly theoretically illuminating, and worthy of closer investigation. Table 6.3 presents analyses of racial intolerance estimated separately for four different subsets, defined by respondents' year of interview and by whether or not they were raised in the South, where racial traditions and norms were notoriously less tolerant. The years 1972 and 1996 were chosen for the fact that they are the first and last years in which all three items making up the racial intolerance scale were measured. Given the explicit comparison of effects over time, limited to just one domain, it was important to ensure that the dependent variable was exactly comparable across those years. Note that in addition to the regular explanatory variables, these analyses also control for years of education. This guards against the possibility that the apparent effects of conservatism might be diminished over time simply by its association with attentiveness to the norms of "political correctness" regarding racial attitudes (Jackman and Muha 1984), norms that altered dramatically over

the WVS90–95 (retaining white and nonwhite respondents alike, and employing the universal measures of intolerance constructed as appropriate for the earlier cross-national comparisons) similarly indicate that authoritarianism is the primary determinant of intolerance. Authoritarianism in these data explains nine percent of the variance in general intolerance of difference, with laissez-faire and status quo conservatism contributing little beyond that. Note that I am reluctant to make too much of these U.S. data from the WVS only on account of their extremely (and inexplicably) poor reliability. Every one of the measures constructed for the dependent and independent variables alike exhibited scale reliability below those already meager values reported for the Eastern European subset in the preceding chapter. This pervasive unreliability would certainly greatly attenuate both the apparent explanatory power and the impact of the independent variables.

Table 6.3. Influence of authoritarianism, "political conservatism," and "right-wing" party identification on racial intolerance across subcultures and time: United States

	Raised South, Interviewed 1972	Raised non-South, Interviewed 1972	Raised non-South, Raised South, Raised non-South Interviewed 1972 Interviewed 1996 Interviewed 1996	Raised non-South, Interviewed 1996
Authoritarianism	1.16(.29).46**	.66(.13).31**	.60(.18).39**	.66(.07).50**
"Political conservatism"	.64(.28).17**	.34(.11).11**	.08(.07).09	.10(.04).11**
"Right-wing" party identification	04(.07)04	.01(.03).01	07(.05)10	08(.03)13**
Years of education	.019(.011).19*	009(.006)10*	005(.008)08	006(.004)08*
Constant	.19(.14)	.48(.07)**	$.46(.11)^{**}$	.43(.06)**
$\mathbb{R}^2$ (full model)	.18	.18	.21	.34
$\mathbb{R}^2$ (authoritarianism alone)	.13	.17	.20	.32
$+R^2$ (pol con adds to auth)	.03	.01	00.	00.
$+R^2$ (pty id adds to auth)	00.	00.	.01	.01
$+R^2$ (educ adds to auth)	.02	00.	00.	.01
	N = 192	N = 804	N = 140	N = 445

dardized OLS multiple regression coefficients (with standard errors in parentheses) and their associated standardized coefficients, Note: Dependent variable throughout is racial intolerance (see Appendix D for variable construction). Cell entries are unstanin that order. \*\* p < .05, \* p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). See Table D.1 for univariate statistics.

this period (Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo 1985). This is particularly critical given the purportedly "old-fashioned racism" reflected by the dependent variable and the common perception that, given the "sea change" in norms and the force of political correctness, such blatant expressions have lost their utility as indicators of racial intolerance.

The import of the results in Table 6.3 is clear. The influence of conservatism on racial intolerance depends critically on the extent of intolerant content in the traditions that conservatives find themselves committed to conserving. Note that this is perfectly consistent with the pattern already established in the preceding chapter by the varying impact of status quo conservatism in different cultural contexts. Thus, we find here that the impact of conservatism diminishes dramatically from 1972 to 1996 with changing racial norms; and likewise, in just the earlier period, that it was markedly greater among those socialized in the then-intolerant traditions of the South. And this is no false attenuation attributable to political correctness. Such effects would be captured by the education variable, and even there, higher levels of education barely diminish (and note: actually augment in the early South) willingness to engage in those allegedly "old-fashioned" expressions of racial intolerance.

It seems clear that the intolerant "returns" to conservatism have altered in line with a fundamental, and apparently now lasting, shift in racial norms. Equal treatment under the law is a durable canon of American culture in general. It is these deeply resonant cultural values (Myrdal 1944) that were "accessed" and employed in the civil rights revolution of the 1960s (McClosky and Zaller 1984; Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo 1985; Kinder and Sanders 1996), which formally secured equal status under the law for Americans of all races, including equal treatment in employment, public accommodations, and federally funded programs (via the Civil Rights Act of 1964), as well as equal access to electoral registration and voting (via the Voting Rights Act of 1965). While imperfectly and selectively practiced over the years (as the history of segregation will attest), and apparently sufficiently malleable as to lend support to both opponents and proponents of affirmative action, the doctrine of equal treatment truly has claim to the status of cultural orthodoxy (Myrdal 1944). Its firm entrenchment now in the sphere of racial equality appears to have fundamentally altered the "yield" of racial intolerance we can expect from conservatism<sup>17</sup> (see also Sniderman et al. 1989). The

Among other things, this highlights the danger of inferring the unsuitability of certain dependent variables for reflecting racial intolerance from the inability of some independent variable to explain them, the plausible (and theoretically important) alternative being that one's explanatory variable has simply lost its explanatory power.

## Authoritarianism and Conservatism Compared

explanatory power of authoritarianism, on the other hand, appears to increase with those changing norms, explaining 13 percent of the variance in racial intolerance in the early South, and 32 percent in the contemporary non-South. That is to say, its explanatory power increases with the increasing "ab-norm-ality" of the intolerant behavior in question, a phenomenon we have now observed in a number of different contexts.

#### THE FINAL ACCOUNT

It seems appropriate to close this investigation by taking overall account of the variance in general intolerance of difference explained by authoritarianism, relative both to other predispositions and to a comprehensive array of sociodemographic variables often implicated in generating intolerance (Table 6.4.1). The exercise is repeated for the MIS99 (Table 6.4.2), mostly to underscore the point that the shifting meaning and content of political conservatism, and its responsiveness to contemporary political maneuvers, can from time to time generate seemingly strong relationships between conservatism and intolerance. I have endeavored to persuade in this chapter that these "relationships" are fleeting and these days mostly a product of the endogeneity in the act of claiming the "conservative" or "liberal" label for oneself. Thus the over-time data of the GSS72–00 (Table 6.4.1) provide the most accurate accounting, by virtue of their immunity to the peculiarities of any particular period.

We find that authoritarianism can provide the most complete account of intolerance, explaining around 32 percent of the variance in intolerance of difference expressed across these three decades of U.S. history. That is to say, fundamental orientations toward oneness and sameness, reflected by nothing more than preferences on whether children should be obedient, neat, and well-mannered, account for almost a third of the variance in contemporary opinion on such issues as interracial marriage and residential segregation; civil rights, censorship, and freedom of speech and assembly; pornography, homosexuality, and compulsory school prayer; gun ownership, aggressive policing, and capital punishment.

Unsurprisingly, given their association with authoritarianism, a number of variables related in some way to education or cognitive capacity also seem to possess considerable explanatory power, in the absence of controls for competing influences (Table 6.4.1, left panel). Note that this apparent power of education and knowledge is likewise variously manifested in the MIS99 (Table 6.4.2, left panel), suggesting that variables reflecting cognitive incapacity stand in consistent relation to intolerance. But it is critical to notice that not one of these variables can add more than five or six percent to the account of intolerance that is provided by authoritarianism alone (Tables 6.4.1 and 6.4.2, right panel). In each

Table 6.4. A parsimonious account of general intolerance of difference: United States

	Tab	Table 6.4.1: GSS72-00	
Explaining General Intolerance with One Explained	Variance Explained	Adding a Second Explanatory Variable:	Variance Explained
Authoritarianism	.32	Authoritarianism + age (years)	.41
Years of education	.28	Authoritarianism + years of education	.37
Age (years)	.25	Authoritarianism + father's years of education	.37
Father's years of education	.22	Authoritarianism + mother's years of education	.37
Mother's years of education	.20	Authoritarianism + political conservatism	.36
Verbal ability (word recognition)	.17	Authoritarianism + any college degree	.34
Any college degree	.17	Authoritarianism + family of origin Protestant	.34
Political conservatism	80.	Authoritarianism + raised in rural area	.34
Raised in rural area	80.	Authoritarianism + verbal ability (word recogn.)	.33
White-collar occupation	80.	Authoritarianism + raised in the South	.33
Father's occupational prestige	.07	Authoritarianism + full-time in the workforce	.33
Head's occupational prestige	.07	Authoritarianism + resides in the South	.33
Family income (real \$1000s)	.05	Authoritarianism + father's occupational prestige	.33
Full-time in the workforce	.05	Authoritarianism + resides in rural area	.33

Explaining General Intolerance with One Explanatory Variable: Variance Explained	Variance Explained	Adding a Second Explanatory Variable:	Variance Explained
Authoritarianism	.22	Authoritarianism + education level	.28
Political conservatism	.16	Authoritarianism + political conservatism	.28
Education level	.15	Authoritarianism + political knowledge	.27
Any college degree	.11	Authoritarianism + any college degree	.26
Political knowledge	.10	Authoritarianism + age (years)	.26
Age (years)	60.	Authoritarianism + male	.25
Full-time in the workforce	.07	Authoritarianism + full-time in the workforce	.25
Family income (\$1000s)	.05	Authoritarianism + family income (\$1000s)	.24
Resides in rural area	.03	Authoritarianism + resides in rural area	.23
Male	.02	Authoritarianism + resides in the South	.23

Note: Cell entries are R<sup>2</sup> values from OLS regression models of general intolerance of difference consisting of either one (left panel) or two (right panel) explanatory variables. See Tables D.1 and B.1 for variable descriptions and univariate statistics. Source: GS72-00, whites only, N = 25,426 throughout (upper panel); MIS99, whites only, N = 844 throughout (lower panel).

case – as was also true in the WVS analyses (Table 5.4, right panel) – most of the ostensible influence of education-related variables evaporates once we control for authoritarian tendencies. This strongly suggests that much of the ameliorative effect upon intolerance often attributed to education – particularly, to exposure to the tolerant norms of academe and "sophisticated" society – is spurious, and due more to libertarian *learnings* than to libertarian *learning*. The misattribution derives from the tendency of reasoning abilities (leading to, or developed by, an education) to diminish attraction to authoritarianism, and likewise from the propensity of personality and cognitive variables linked to authoritarianism to discourage education-seeking and academic success.

The increasing rigidity associated with aging apparently has the most *independent* explanatory power, adding nine percent to the variance explained across the *GSS72–00*, beyond the contribution of authoritarianism. Political conservatism can explain only eight percent of the variance in intolerance on its own (versus 16 percent in the *MIS99* "snapshot"), and adds just four percent (similarly, six percent in the *MIS99*) to the account provided by authoritarianism.

This final accounting concludes our consideration of the concept and phenomenon of conservatism. In these two chapters, we have systematically examined the distinctions between authoritarianism and conservatism, with a view to dispelling the misconceptions that they are either one and the same or else substantially redundant, and that conservatism plays a major role in fueling intolerance of difference. We have learned that the factors inclining us to favor authority and conformity over autonomy and diversity differ from those disposing us to prefer stability over change. We have seen that authoritarians and conservatives respond differently to a number of diagnostic situations of great political import, causing the relationship between the two to be highly contingent on political and social conditions. And most importantly, we have found that authoritarianism is the primary, and conservatism a relatively minor, determinant of general intolerance of difference, both in the contemporary United States and across cultures and time.

Whereas in this and the preceding chapter I have sought to distinguish authoritarianism from conservatism, the next two chapters are devoted to distinguishing between authoritarians and libertarians, that is, to isolating the major differences between the characters at either extreme of the authoritarian dimension. The remainder of this work will then be devoted to more intensive investigation of the motivations underlying authoritarianism, and to examining the conditions and forms in which those fears, desires, and impulses come to be expressed as demands upon the polity.

## One True People: Putting a Face on the Theory

I have argued that individuals possess relatively stable predispositions to intolerance, that these predispositions are adequately reflected by the qualities they deem most desirable to encourage in children, and that those inclinations heavily influence their reactions to people, beliefs, and behaviors that differ from their own. In the preceding chapters, I have provided an array of evidence indicating that authoritarian predispositions importantly determine intolerant attitudes. But it remains to be seen to what extent these purportedly fundamental predispositions, conceived and measured in this simple fashion, will predict, as they should, and some considerable time subsequent to their measurement, attitudes expressed in natural conversation and actual behavior toward strangers and different others. This would certainly increase our confidence that we have isolated a fundamental and relatively stable predisposition to be intolerant of all manner of difference.

That is the logic of the investigations reported in this and the following chapter, which rely upon data generated via in-depth interviews (see Chapter 3 and Appendix A2) with forty of the very most and least authoritarian respondents to the original DCS97 (Appendix A1), conducted in their own homes by randomly assigned interviewers of varying race. As explained in Chapter 3, the potential subjects for the in-person interviews were the 30 most and 30 least authoritarian individuals from among the 361 white respondents to the first wave of the DCS97. These individuals had marked themselves out by attaining the most extreme scores on the childrearing values measure of authoritarian predisposition from the original questionnaire they completed around March of 1997. About eight months later, in November of that year, six interviewers I had selected and trained for this purpose - five undergraduates and one graduate student from Duke University - attempted to contact these sixty individuals by telephone and to persuade them to allow us to conduct in-depth interviews in their own homes. Importantly, neither the interviewers nor their

potential subjects at any point in the process knew the subjects' authoritarianism scores, let alone that the subjects had distinguished themselves eight months earlier as the most extremely authoritarian and libertarian respondents to the original *DCS97*.<sup>1</sup>

Ultimately, the interviewers managed to make some kind of telephone contact with twenty-seven of the thirty most authoritarian and nineteen of the thirty least authoritarian respondents to the DCS97. Clearly, the libertarians proved to be much harder to track down, apparently in large part because they had less regular lives and greater residential mobility, as we might have expected. We were somewhat less likely to have telephone numbers for libertarians at the time of the original DCS97; even if we did, they were less likely than authoritarians to still be at or connected to that number; and either way, they tended to be harder to locate eight months later. They also seemed to have more active lives and less conventional occupations, again making them more difficult to get in touch with by telephone. Among those forty-six respondents we did reach, however, libertarians were more likely than authoritarians to agree to take part: just twenty-two of the twenty-seven authoritarians versus eighteen of the nineteen libertarians that we managed to contact agreed to be interviewed. The interviews were then scheduled for the earliest opportunity suitable to all parties, to be conducted for the most part in the subjects' own homes.2

## THE ROLES OF THE PRIMARY INTERVIEWER AND THE INTERVIEW PARTNER

## The Primary Interviewer

The interviews were conducted in each case by a pair of interviewers: the 'primary interviewer' and the 'interview partner'. It was the primary

- <sup>1</sup> The interviewers clearly could not be informed of the extreme predispositions of their subjects for fear of biasing their interactions and observations. But all were explicitly advised prior to commencement of the interviews that the odds were they would encounter individuals who made them feel uncomfortable, and be subjected to some hostility and unpleasant experiences. They were then advised that they could withdraw without penalty from participation in the study, at that point or at any time thereafter. All expressed their desire to continue their (entirely voluntary) participation. The interviewers were explicitly directed to depart immediately from any situation that made either one feel endangered or distressed. Finally, the older, more experienced graduate student among the six interviewers was asked to keep me fully apprised of any difficulties or potential dangers the interviewers were encountering.
- <sup>2</sup> A few subjects were interviewed at alternate locations, at their request: at Duke University, at their own workplaces, or in a public place.

interviewers who were responsible for contacting by telephone the potential subjects to whom they had been assigned, trying to convince them to take part using simple persuasion and increasing financial incentives (anywhere from \$10 to \$30, as negotiated between the parties), and making all arrangements for the meetings with those who agreed to participate. Immediately upon the conclusion of their telephone contact(s) with each of the potential subjects, the primary interviewers had to assess five different aspects of their interactions to that point, recording (on seven-point rating scales) their impressions of each subject's reluctance, suspicion, hostility, deceptiveness, and apparent interest in the payment they would receive. They were also required to note in a post-contact log – being "as detailed and precise as possible" and providing "as much information as vou can, even if you can't imagine how or why it would be relevant" – all that took place during the telephone conversation(s), as well as "anything unusual, noteworthy or problematic that occurred in between the time of organizing the interview on the phone, and turning up for the interview session."

The primary interviewer was then responsible for conducting the interview itself, asking a number of very broad questions dealing with matters of home, family, and lifestyle, fear and pride, race and tolerance. I desired a wide-ranging, loosely structured interview that, while suggesting general topics for discussion, allowed the subject to make apparent the ideas and themes that occupied his or her thoughts, with only minimal direction provided by the interviewer. The interviewers were explicitly instructed, insofar as was possible, not to suggest ideas to the subject or to direct the conversation beyond broaching these broad themes. Examination of the interview transcripts indicates that the interviewers did indeed comply with this direction. The thirteen questions they were instructed to raise, and the order in which they raised them, are listed in Table 7.1.

#### The Interview Partner

The 'interview partner' who accompanied the primary interviewer to the meeting was meant to provide some security and support for the primary interviewer. Beyond this, the interview partner was responsible for operating the tape-recording equipment (all interviews were recorded, with the permission of the subject), but otherwise was asked to sit quietly to the side unless the interview subject purposely drew the partner into any part of the conversation. Mostly, they just sat by listening and observing; quite often they got started during the interview itself making notes in their post-interview logs. Both the primary interviewer and the interview partner were provided with these blank logs for each interview

Table 7.1. Schedule of questions for the in-depth interviews

- 1. Can you please tell me a bit about yourself.
- 2. What's your life like these days?
- 3. Different people are afraid of different things. How about you? What are you most afraid of?
- 4. Different people are proud of different things. How about you? What are you most proud of?
- 5. Let's talk about the country as a whole. How do you feel about the U.S.?
- 6. How do you feel about being an American?
- 7. When you think about the future of this country, and how things are going, what are you most afraid of?
- 8. When you think about the future of this country, and how things are going, what do you find most hopeful or reassuring?
- 9. From time to time, the American people find themselves disagreeing about various issues: about how society should be organized; about how people should behave, etc. Do you think people should always be allowed to freely express their views in public?
- 10. In general, how do you feel about moral values in this country?
- 11. In general, how do you feel about race relations in this country?
- 12. Overall, how do you feel about politics and politicians in this country?
- 13. You may be aware that there are many groups in American society for example, super-patriot and militia groups who are very dissatisfied with the government, and with how the American political system is run. How do you feel about these groups?

and were required independently, without conferring, to write down any notable aspect of the environment, the subject, the interview, or the interactions either during or immediately subsequent to completing the interview, and departing from the subject's home. Again, these logs contained nothing but the printed instruction that they should "note anything unusual, noteworthy or problematic that occurred during the interview session," being "as detailed and precise as possible" and providing "as much information as you can even if you can't imagine how or why it would be relevant." In addition to these unstructured log sheets, both the primary interviewer and the interview partner were required to rate on seven-point scales (again independently, and immediately subsequent to the interview) seventeen different aspects of the subject and their interactions (see Tables 7.3 and 7.4 for a listing). This completed all of their responsibilities for the interview. The various ways in which these different kinds of data (including the complete transcripts of the interview discussions) are employed in the investigation will be explained as we proceed.

#### RACE OF INTERVIEWERS

The primary interviewer and the interview partner were each randomly assigned to the subject from among four white and two black interviewers. This means that the interviewers ultimately assigned to a potential subject were determined by a completely random process unrelated to any aspect of the subject, the interviewers, their environment, or their interactions. Since each role was randomly assigned, both the pairings and the responsibilities assumed by each changed across interviews. That is, different combinations of the six interviewers would pair off from one interview to the next; and likewise, an interviewer could be the 'primary' in one interview and the 'partner' in another. The pool of six interviewers from which the random assignments were made consisted of one white male, three white females, one black male, and one black female. All were young (ranging in age from early to mid-twenties) and perfectly innocuous, unexceptional in both appearance and character, articulate and well-mannered. Importantly, the two black interviewers were both unusually petite, of gentle demeanor, soft-spoken, and very courteous. That is to say, they could not be considered dangerous or offensive by any rational calculation (as was likewise true of the white interviewers).

While the actual content of the interview discussions will be analyzed extensively in the following chapter, the first objective of the interviews, and the main focus of the current chapter, was to create a rare opportunity to observe actual behavior by subjects of varying authoritarianism as they interacted with white and black strangers seeking to enter their homes. I wanted to know whether authoritarian predisposition, as measured eight months earlier via the simple expression of preferences regarding desirable qualities for children, could predict actual behavior toward different others. It is of course important and illuminating to discern the impact of such predispositions on racist and intolerant attitudes as expressed in survey questionnaires. This is particularly true to the extent that we believe those survey expressions are reflective of, or related to, real phenomena of interest, such as policy preferences and electoral behavior. But we really have very few opportunities in social science (or we have exploited very few opportunities) to observe the impact of our (hopefully) explanatory variables on actual behaviors as manifested in natural situations (for notable exceptions, see Gosnell 1927; Gerber and Green 2000). And by 'natural' I mean either naturally occurring situations that we simply observe, or else situations that we engineer but leave as natural as we can make them while still retaining the ability (ideally unobtrusively) to observe and record the behaviors of interest to us.

In the current case, by having interviewers visit (or seek to visit) the homes of subjects of widely varying authoritarianism, and engage them in discussion of issues of race and tolerance, we can ascertain the impact of those predispositions on the actual behavior of subjects toward strangers entering (or seeking to enter) their homes, as well as on the attitudes and behaviors they manifest more generally during the interview. And the addition of a randomized experiment to this engineered encounter significantly augments what we are able to learn from the interaction and, most importantly, vastly strengthens claims about causality. With or without the experiment, we garner rare and valuable data regarding differences in the attitudes expressed and the behaviors manifested by subjects at the extremes of authoritarian predisposition. But if those differences between the authoritarian and libertarian subjects in attitudes and behaviors are magnified (or diminished) when interacting with blacks, this can be due only to the race of the interviewers, since, by virtue of random assignment, everything else (about the environment, the subjects, the interviewers, and their interactions) is equal, on average, between those encountering white and black interviewers. But the focus of interest is always the influence of authoritarianism and not the impact of race. What follows, then, should not be considered an investigation of "race of interviewer effects." Although the evidence gleaned does shed light on that topic, it does so only tangentially; the issue warrants, and has received, extensive exploration in its own right (see Campbell 1981; Cotter, Cohen, and Coulter 1982; Anderson, Silver, and Abramson 1988a; 1988b; Davis 1997a; 1997b).

Rather, this is an investigation of the impact of authoritarianism on behavior toward strangers and those of different race. The following chapter will pay somewhat less attention to these interactions between subjects and interviewers, and somewhat more to the content of their discussions regarding the 'one right way'. There we will investigate the effects of authoritarianism on racial prejudice, ethnocentrism, and patriotism, on distaste for politics and politicians, and on beliefs about morality and discipline, crime and punishment. But we are interested initially in the actual behavior of the 'one true people' toward strangers and different others, and we begin our journey here with the very first encounter: the primary interviewer's initial telephone contact with the potential interview subject.

#### ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN THE INTERVIEW

As earlier explained, it was the primary interviewers who were responsible for telephoning the potential subjects to whom they had been randomly assigned, trying to convince them to take part, settling on the amounts

they would be paid for participating, and arranging the meetings with those who agreed to be interviewed. In order to limit the possibility of spurious associations, perhaps generated by different interviewers dealing with different characters in different ways, the interactions proceeded according to a standard script. These printed instructions told interviewers exactly how they should approach the potential subjects and detailed the answers they were to provide in response to anticipated questions and concerns. Immediately upon the close of these communications with the forty-sixty potential subjects, interviewers evaluated various aspects of their interactions with those individuals ( $a_{1}$ – $a_{5}$ , Table 7.2), recording these assessments on seven-point rating scales (rescored to range from 0 to 1).

Table 7.2. Effects of subjects' authoritarianism on outcomes of primary interviewers' attempts to obtain the interview

	The Effects of Authoritarianism <sup>a</sup>				
Dependent Variables $^b$	across All Subjects	if Primary Interviewer Was White	if Primary Interviewer Was Black		
<i>a</i> 1. Reluctance to be interviewed	.24**	.07	.63**		
a2. Suspicion about taking part	.13	.04	.34*		
<i>a3</i> . Hostility as tried to organize meeting	.06	06	.37**		
<i>a4</i> . Deception as tried to organize meeting	.05	.10*	-		
a5. Interest in money to be paid	.22**	.19*	.44		
a6. Payment (\$) demanded by S $(N = 40)$	4.72**	4.20**	8.37		

a measured in March 1997.

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS results in Table A2.2. The conditional coefficients indicate effects of subjects' authoritarianism on various behaviors as the primary interviewer attempted to gain agreement to interview. Successive columns report conditional effects upon dependent variables (arrayed in column 1) of subjects' authoritarianism, irrespective of primary interviewer's race (column 2), if white primary interviewer (column 3), and if black primary interviewer (column 4). \*\*p < .05, \*p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). This significance test indicates the effect of authoritarianism on the dependent variable is significantly different (columns 2 and 3) from zero, or (column 4) with black primary interviewer than with white. Dash indicates term dropped for lack of effect. See Table A2.1 for univariate statistics.

Source: DCS-In-Depth97, N=46 (all subjects initially contacted), except a6, where N=40 (all subjects interviewed).

b measured in November 1997.

#### Self-Interest, Suspicion, and Hostility toward Strangers

It is apparent that authoritarians displayed significantly<sup>3</sup> greater reluctance to be interviewed than libertarians (a1), but we find that this difference was almost entirely contingent upon the race of the interviewer who called them. If contacted by a white interviewer, authoritarians were virtually indistinguishable from libertarians in their apparent willingness to be interviewed, but they proved to be around 63 percentage points more reluctant than libertarians when a black interviewer tried to persuade them to participate. Of course, in order to take this result seriously as evidence of aversion to interacting with those of another race, one has to accept (contra Johnny Cochran) that whites and blacks in the contemporary United States tend to have characteristic speech patterns that most of us (at whatever level of consciousness) can distinguish by audio alone at some rate substantially better than chance. And there is, in fact, some persuasive evidence to that effect (see Cotter, Cohen, and Coulter 1982). Moreover, the result reported for at is very large and strongly significant. Among those telephoned by a black interviewer, no libertarian was recorded as having expressed any kind of reluctance whatsoever, whereas all but one of the authoritarians showed some degree of hesitation. Likewise, among those negotiating with a black interviewer, authoritarians were a good deal more suspicious about the interview (a2), and proved to be about 37 percentage points more hostile (a3) than libertarians as the interviewer went about trying to organize the meeting – for example, being impatient and difficult, querying the need for certain information, disputing the arrangements made, and so on. And again, no such differences were apparent between the two characters when dealing with a white interviewer.

There is also a hint in the data that authoritarians were more deceptive than libertarians as the interviewers attempted to arrange the visit to their homes (*a4*), irrespective of the interviewer's race.<sup>4</sup> I would not want to make too much of this result, but there were certainly some strange tales reported back about subjects providing misleading information, giving false directions, and pretending to be home when they were not or vice versa. The exemplar in this regard was a bizarre series of telephone communications with one authoritarian subject who repeatedly, and for no

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Since this is clearly not a random sample of any population, the "significance" tests reported here and in Appendix A2 obviously do not carry their normal meanings. I retain the notion and the notation simply to convey some rough idea (by indicating the size of the coefficient relative to its "standard error") of how substantial is the relationship in question.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> And the full results (Table A2.2) suggest that everyone was a little more unreliable and evasive in arranging to meet with a black interviewer.

apparent reason, gave false directions to his home before finally, the next day, providing the correct instructions. As the primary interviewer noted dryly in her log: "[The interview partner] and I couldn't make sense of it. We were quite upset about the whole thing (after  $I\frac{1}{2}$  hours of driving around); we felt he may have been pulling our leg, or otherwise, mental in some way."

Finally, it is clear that authoritarians were consistently more interested than libertarians in the payment they would receive for participating ( $a_5$ ), and this difference was basically doubled among those negotiating with a black interviewer. And they certainly demanded a higher price for allowing a black interviewer into their homes (a6). Consistent with their expressing greater interest in the money to be paid, authoritarians were inclined to demand about four or five more dollars than libertarians. But again, that difference essentially doubled among those striking a deal with a black interviewer, in which case authoritarians tended to extract around eight or nine more dollars than libertarians as the price of their participation.

Of course, there are alternatives to concluding that authoritarians tend to be less cooperative and more self-interested than libertarians, and especially in their interactions with blacks. These alternative accounts include the position that authoritarians are simply less financially secure on average than libertarians. And we have already seen that socioeconomic status does tend to be inversely related to authoritarianism (see also Adorno et al. 1950; Lipset 1960; Kohn 1977; Altemeyer 1981; 1988). But one would still need to explain why their greater 'neediness' was especially apparent when negotiating with a black interviewer. Alternatively, one might propose that, for whatever reason, the black interviewers tended to be more careless with money, more generous in nature, or perhaps less persuasive than the white interviewers, thus relying more heavily upon financial incentives. But again, why would their carelessness, or generosity, or lesser persuasiveness be more apparent when negotiating with authoritarians than with libertarians, if not for the lesser willingness of authoritarians to deal with blacks? The black interviewers did not differ at all from the white interviewers in the payments they settled upon with libertarian subjects. And again, bear in mind throughout that neither the interviewers nor the potential subjects knew the subjects' authoritarianism scores, let alone that the subjects were the very most and least authoritarian respondents from the DCS97. Ultimately, then, there is simply no alternative explanation that fits the data so well, particularly when these findings with respect to interest in the money are viewed in conjunction with the preceding results.

Overall, it seems reasonably clear from these data that authoritarians are less cooperative and reliable than libertarians in interacting with strangers; that their behavior is more self-interested, especially in their

dealings with blacks; and that they are substantially more suspicious and hostile toward, and more reluctant to interact with, blacks than are libertarians. And of course, since interviewers of different race were randomly assigned to potential subjects, and moreover, since their interactions were regulated by a standard protocol, one cannot attribute these effects to the different kinds of people with whom authoritarians and libertarians tend to come into contact, to the different ways in which those characters are inclined to interact with authoritarians and libertarians, nor to the different contexts in which those contacts and interactions tend to take place (Lipset 1959; Kohn 1977). It is this irresistible logic of experimentation that gives tremendous power to the analyses.

#### IMPRESSIONS FROM THE INTERVIEW

Further illumination of the character, manner, and motives of authoritarians relative to libertarians is provided by the post-interview evaluations recorded independently by both the primary interviewer (Table 7.3, b1-b17) and the interview partner (Table 7.4, c1-c17), again on sevenpoint rating scales (rescored to range from 0 to 1). These impressions were recorded by the two interviewers without conferring, immediately subsequent to the completion of each in-person interview. While it might seem more sensible to have combined the two sets of evaluations for purposes of analysis, bear in mind that the primary interviewer and the interview partner had different roles in, and perspectives on, the interview, and therefore (at least potentially) different experiences. As noted earlier, the primary interviewer took the lead in all interactions with the subject and was responsible for actually conducting the interview. The interview partner's role was to sit by and operate the recording equipment, and to observe whatever seemed notable about the subject, the interactions, and the environment, while providing security and support for the primary interviewer.

While these were my only intentions, I should alert the reader at this point to the fact that the presence of the interview partner when the interview partner was black was perceived by authoritarians in a very different way, the partner sitting quietly to the side seemingly being viewed as an ominous, even deliberately threatening, presence rather than merely a silent assistant. This proved to be extremely unsettling and distressing to authoritarians, as will be repeatedly apparent as we move through the various analyses in this and the following chapter. (And note that the subjects had been forewarned they would be meeting with two interviewers, and had been given the opportunity to call my office at Duke University to verify both my own and the interviewers' credentials). In any case, the more limited point I wanted to make here is simply that the primary

Table 7.3. Effects of subjects' authoritarianism on primary interviewers' impressions from the interview

	T	he Effects of Au	thoritarianism	a
Dependent Variables $^b$	across All Interviews	if Both Interviewers White	if Primary Interviewer Black	if Interview Partner Black
b0. S claims not paid for prior survey	.25**	.54**	-	.01**
<i>b</i> 1. Interest in money to be paid	.24**	-	-	-
<i>b</i> 2. Reluctance once interviewers arrived	.22**	.16	.39*	-
b3. Suspicion about taking part	.17**	_	_	_
<i>b4</i> . Hostility to primary interviewer	.11*	.03	.24*	.15
<i>b5</i> . Hostility to interview partner	.09	08	.00	.21**
<i>b6</i> . Dishonesty in responses	.19**	_	_	_
<i>b</i> 7. Interest in topics discussed	15**	27**	_	08
b8. Apparent intelligence	26**	_	_	_
<i>b</i> 9. Self-confidence	19**	_	_	_
b10. Anxiety during interview	.35**	_	_	-
b11. Happiness in demeanor	15**	_	_	-
b12. Satisfaction with life	07	.02	25	-
b13. Satisfaction with world	08**	07*	17	-
b14. Openness to experience	43**	_	_	-
b15. How appealing as a	37**	28**	52*	_
person				
b16. Apparent SES	09	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
<i>b17</i> . Overall success of interview	21**	_	-	-

a measured in March 1997.

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS results in Table A2.3. The conditional coefficients indicate effects of subjects' authoritarianism on attributes and behaviors observed by the primary interviewer during the interview. Successive columns report conditional effects upon dependent variables (arrayed in column 1) of subjects' authoritarianism, irrespective of either interviewer's race (column 2), if both interviewers white (column 3), if primary interviewer black (column 4), and if interview partner black (column 5). \*\*p < .05, \*p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). This significance test indicates the effect of authoritarianism on the dependent variable is significantly different (columns 2 and 3) from zero, or (column 4) with black primary interviewer than when both interviewers (primary plus partner) white, or (column 5) with black interview partner than when both interviewers white. Dash indicates term dropped for lack of effect; n.a. indicates not applicable. See Table A2.1 for univariate statistics.

Source: DCS-In-Depth 97, N = 40 (all subjects interviewed).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>b</sup> measured in November 1997.

Table 7.4. Effects of subjects' authoritarianism on interview partners' impressions from the interview

	The Effects of Authoritarianism <sup>a</sup>				
Dependent Variables $^b$	across All Interviews	if Both Interviewers White	if Primary Interviewer Black	if Interview Partner Black	
c1. Interest in money to be paid c2. Reluctance once interviewers arrived	.21** .17**	<u>-</u> -	_ _	- -	
c3. Suspicion about taking part c4. Hostility to primary interviewer	.10 .08	.01 04	- .11	.28* .24**	
c5. Hostility to interview partner	.14**	04	.06	.23**	
<i>c6</i> . Dishonesty in responses <i>c7</i> . Interest in topics discussed	.16** 15**	03 -	.23*	.11 -	
c8. Apparent intelligence c9. Self-confidence	35** 08 .21**	- .04 04	- - .01	- 22* .52**	
<i>c10</i> . Anxiety during interview <i>c11</i> . Happiness in demeanor <i>c12</i> . Satisfaction with life	28** 20**	04 21*	36	23	
c13. Satisfaction with world c14. Openness to experience	19** 47**	- -	_ _		
c15. How appealing as a person	33**	13	-	42**	
<i>c</i> 16. Apparent SES <i>c</i> 17. Overall success of interview	12** 17**	<i>n.a.</i> 00	<i>n.a.</i> 04	n.a. 33**	

a measured in March 1997.

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS results in Table A2.4. The conditional coefficients indicate effects of subjects' authoritarianism on attributes and behaviors observed by the interview partner during the interview. Successive columns report conditional effects upon dependent variables (arrayed in column 1) of subjects' authoritarianism, irrespective of either interviewer's race (column 2), if both interviewers white (column 3), if primary interviewer black (column 4), and if interview partner black (column 5). \*\*p < .05, \*p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). This significance test indicates the effect of authoritarianism on the dependent variable is significantly different (columns 2 and 3) from zero, or (column 4) with black primary interviewer than when both interviewers (primary plus partner) white, or (column 5) with black interview partner than when both interviewers white. Dash indicates term dropped for lack of effect; n.a. indicates not applicable. See Table A2.1 for univariate statistics.

Source: DCS-In-Depth 97, N = 40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>b</sup> measured in November 1997.

interviewer and the interview partner had rather different perspectives on, and experiences in, the interview. Therefore, it makes sense to analyze their post-interview evaluations separately, with convergence between the two enhancing our confidence in results and divergence perhaps highlighting the different experience of the interview partner.

#### It's about Responsibility

Note that Table 7.3 contains an extra dependent variable not present in Table 7.4, denoted bo. This item alone is not derived from a preconceived rating scale completed routinely by the interviewers; rather, it is a dichotomous (1/0) variable simply indicating that either or both of the interviewers noted in their logs that the subject claimed not to have been paid for completing the original DCS97 questionnaire eight months prior. Throughout November and December, as each in-depth interview was completed and the interviewers turned in their materials, I grew increasingly bewildered to see this same note turning up again and again in the logs of both the primary interviewers and the interview partners. (I have verified beyond any doubt that all respondents to the original survey were promptly paid the precise amounts they were promised for completing the questionnaire). And for their part, the interviewers grew increasingly irritated that my seeming failure to follow through with payments for the first wave was subjecting them to such censure. Obviously, in order to avoid biasing their own observations and recordings, it was necessary to keep the interviewers in ignorance of the erroneous nature of these claims until all of the in-depth interviews had been completed.

Bear in mind that these notations in the interviewers' logs were not induced by any specific instruction of mine but rather were generated naturally. As noted earlier, in order to limit the possibility of our drawing spurious conclusions from any of the interview data, I had designed standard protocols to regulate all of the interviewers' tasks and interactions, and had provided these to each in the form of printed instructions. This was meant to ensure that interviewers' behavior toward and observation of the subjects and interactions were as uniform as possible across interviewers and subjects, that is, that they were not systematically varying according to some attribute other than those explicitly under investigation. So all that the interviewers were responding to in this instance was my provision of blank log sheets, with the printed instruction that each was to note (without conferring with the other) "anything unusual, noteworthy or problematic that occurred."

And problematic it was. Five of the forty subjects complained that they had not been paid for completing the previous survey. And *all* of them were

authoritarian. But note that the charges were mostly leveled before an all-white interview team (bo). Authoritarians seemed unwilling to air this grievance to a white primary interviewer when a black interview partner was standing by. This seems reminiscent of the oft-noted reluctance of family members to 'air their dirty laundry in public', in front of strangers, perhaps suggesting that blacks are indeed 'them' rather than 'us' to white authoritarians. It is difficult to know for certain what to make of any of this. But I doubt that it was a deliberate ruse among individuals who knew full well that they had indeed been paid. It also seems unlikely that authoritarians were simply inclined to forget having received the payment. Quite apart from anything else, it is not clear why such trickery, or forgetfulness, would depend, as it apparently does, upon the race of the interviewers.

But more importantly, the great bitterness of the complaints and the terms in which they were typically expressed suggest that they were more likely generated by some systematic tendency to mistrust others, and pervasive feelings of being duped or taken for granted. The following note from an interviewer's log is typical:

He also reiterated for the twentieth time how upset he was with Duke for not sending him the money for the initial questionnaire. It wasn't so much the money (which he obviously didn't need) as it was "following through" with what you say you'll do. "It's about responsibility."

Note, however, in the results for bi and ci that both the primary interviewers and the interview partners rated the authoritarian subjects, yet again, as significantly more interested than the libertarians in the money they would be paid for participating. In the end, then, I am unwilling to entirely rule out the possibility that these complaints were a 'scam' at some level, especially in view of this unusual and persistent interest among authoritarians in the payment they would receive for granting the in-depth interview.

## Closed-Minded and Unintelligent, Unnerved and Unappealing

In order to guard against the possibility of drawing spurious conclusions from chance associations, as we proceed through each component of the investigation I will elaborate only the most substantial and significant findings, and characterize more broadly whatever consistent patterns may be discerned in the remainder. This is fairly easily accomplished with the largely convergent findings of Tables 7.3 and 7.4. Here we find that authoritarians were generally more reluctant than libertarians to proceed with the previously arranged meeting once the interviewers arrived for the appointment  $(b_2, c_2)$  – and especially, it seems,

when finding a black primary interviewer standing on their doorstep. They also tended to be more suspicious about the whole procedure (b3, c3), but particularly (maybe only) upon realizing that a black interview partner would be listening in on the discussions. Likewise, as the discussions got under way authoritarians appeared to be somewhat less honest than libertarians in their responses (b6, c6). And again, it seems this tendency to be guarded and evasive may have been exacerbated (perhaps only manifested) in the presence of blacks, particularly a black primary interviewer.

Authoritarians also seemed to 'take it out on' the primary interviewer  $(b_4, c_4)$  when either the primary interviewer or the interview partner was black, displaying more hostility than libertarians toward the primary interviewer in these conditions. Likewise, authoritarians were more inclined than libertarians to behave in a hostile manner toward the interview partner  $(b_5, c_5)$ , but only when the partner was black. In much the same vein, authoritarians displayed a great deal more anxiety than libertarians during the interview (b10, c10). But their fearfulness and nervousness was far more (perhaps only) apparent when trying to get through the whole ordeal with a black interview partner listening in on their every word. This effect may be due to the differing behavior of subjects when a black interview partner was sitting by, and/or to the fact that black partners were better able than others to detect these differences between authoritarians and libertarians. So this striking result could be the product of the black interview partners' peculiar impact upon the subjects, their superior vantage point on the proceedings, and/or their special sensitivity to these signs of distress. Either way (but likely in combination), authoritarians and libertarians differed in manifest anxiety by over half the range of the dependent variable when observed by a black interview partner.

Authoritarians were consistently judged a good deal less intelligent than libertarians (b8, c8) by both the primary interviewer and the interview partner. Authoritarians and libertarians diverged in apparent intelligence by around a third of that dependent variable, which ranged across seven points (rescored o to 1) from "well below average" up to "well above average" intelligence. Authoritarians tended to be labeled "average," while libertarians were generally considered "quite a bit above average" in intelligence (see Appendix A2, Tables A2.3 and A2.4). Authoritarians also seemed less interested in the discussion than libertarians (b7, c7). But there is some hint that this difference may have dissipated in the presence of a black interview partner, with authoritarians perhaps trying to feign a little more interest in the topics with a black partner listening in. This could be consistent with their lacking self-confidence compared to libertarians (b9, c9), and with that confidence further (maybe only)

eroding when their responses were being audited by a black interview partner.

Authoritarians also seemed to be somewhat less happy than libertarians,  $(b_{II}, c_{II})$ , as well as less satisfied with their own lives  $(b_{I2}, c_{I2})$ and with the world around them (b13, c13). But all of these grievances seemed to be exacerbated (perhaps only manifested) when forced into conversation with a black primary interviewer. And in one of the largest and most consistent findings of the set, authoritarians appeared far less open to experience than libertarians (b14, c14), the two characters separated by nearly half the range of that dependent variable. As discussed in the preceding chapter, this is a well-established, major dimension of personality, whose central elements were explained to interviewers prior to commencement of the interviews. As noted earlier, openness to experience is marked by preference for diversity, complexity, and novelty and is negatively associated with intolerance, conformity, and rigidity. (Recall that it proved to be a very important determinant of authoritarianism in the investigations reported in Chapter 6). And this difference in openness between authoritarians and libertarians held regardless of the race of either interviewer, as we might expect for a fundamental personality dimension.

Authoritarians were ultimately judged less "appealing as a person" than libertarians (b15, c15). Moreover, there was a very noticeable and telling contingency in this result: authoritarians seemed far less appealing than libertarians to black primary interviewers and interview partners. In this case, the assessed appeal of the two characters diverged by around half the range of this dependent variable. As before, this effect could be due to authoritarians being less appealing in the presence of blacks, and/or to their seeming less appealing to blacks. Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, given this long list of deficits, the interviews with authoritarians were ultimately judged less successful overall than those conducted with the libertarians (b17, c17). This was especially true in the presence or opinion of black interview partners, in which case ratings of the success of the interviews with authoritarian and libertarian subjects diverged by a third of the range of this dependent variable. Again, the foregoing results are all the more compelling when we remind ourselves that neither the interviewers nor their subjects knew the subjects' levels of authoritarianism.

#### OVERALL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISCUSSION

We turn now from the behavior of interview subjects to the overall quality and content of their discussions during the interview. Table 7.5 presents

Table 7.5. Differences in overall characteristics of the discussion

	The	Effects of Autl	noritarianism <sup>a</sup>	
	across All Interviews	if Both Interviewers	if Primary Interviewer	if Interview Partner
Dependent Variables <sup>b</sup>		White	Black	Black
Overall quality of the discussion d1. Total number of words d2. Number of different words d3. Characters per word d4. Grade level of discussion	-1388** -602** 12** -2.68**	- - - -1.23*	- - - -5.21**	- - -
d5. Reading ease of discussion	10.91**	7.77**	16.51**	_
Thematic emphases of the discuss e1. Diversity, difference, nonconformity	ion -1.37**	-	-	-
<i>e</i> 2. Freedom, autonomy, choice <i>e</i> 3. Consensus, similarity, affinity	12 23	05 33*	49* .00	42 -
e4. Exclusion, isolation, disconnection	15	70**	.72**	-
e5. Criticism, denigration, complaint	44	-1.58**	47**	.35**
e6. Aggression, domination, force	.13	05	-	.38**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> measured in March 1997.

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS results in Table A2.5. The conditional coefficients indicate effects of subjects' authoritarianism on the quality and thematic emphases of subjects' discussion of topics during the interview. Successive columns report conditional effects upon dependent variables (arrayed in column 1) of subjects' authoritarianism, irrespective of either interviewer's race (column 2), if both interviewers white (column 3), if primary interviewer black (column 4), and if interview partner black (column 5). \*\*p < .05, \*p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). This significance test indicates the effect of authoritarianism on the dependent variable is significantly different (columns 2 and 3) from zero, or (column 4) with black primary interviewer than when both interviewers (primary plus partner) white, or (column 5) with black interview partner than when both interviewers white. Dash indicates term dropped for lack of effect. See Table A2.1 for univariate statistics. Source: DCS-In-Depth97, N = 40.

results bearing on the cognitive complexity of authoritarians relative to libertarians (di–d5), as well as on their characteristic concerns (ei–e6) as evidenced by the pervasive themes of their discussions. All of the measures in this table were generated by objective, automated counting or coding of elements of the interview transcripts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>b</sup> measured in November 1997.

#### Cognitive Complexity of the Discussion

The first three items  $(d\tau-d3)$  are easily dispensed with, being simple counts of words and characters in the interview discussion (of course, subjects' words only, here and throughout). And the results are quite straightforward: in general, authoritarians in their discussions tended to say about 1,400 fewer words and around 600 fewer different words, with fewer characters per word than libertarians. These differences are very large, strongly significant, and entirely consistent with those findings from Chapter 6 regarding the extent to which ability and willingness to deal with difference depend upon simple intellectual capacity and cognitive complexity. And of course, these results also converge with those reported earlier regarding the lesser apparent intelligence of authoritarians relative to libertarians, as assessed by interviewers blind to their varying predispositions.

The fact that these findings hold regardless of the race of those conducting or observing the interview suggests (as likewise asserted earlier for openness to experience) that these capacities are innate and reasonably stable attributes of the interview subject. The same cannot be said regarding the 'grade level' and 'reading ease' of the discussions ( $d_4$ ,  $d_5$ ). which, while clearly diverging widely for authoritarians and libertarians under any conditions, proved to be tremendously responsive to the race of the interviewer with whom the subject was conversing. These two dependent variables are objective measures of the "readability" of a document as computed routinely by the Word word-processing program. Thus they possess the obvious advantages of being generated by the automatic application of formulas to text, rather than according to the subjective judgments of the researcher or the interviewers. The exact formulas for computing the two measures and a fuller description of each may be found in Appendix A<sub>2</sub>. In brief, the reading-ease measure indicates on a 100-point scale how easy it is to understand the text in question, with the score depending upon both the average sentence length and the average number of syllables per word. The grade-level measure (constructed from the same two components but in different form) ranges from one to twelve and is meant to indicate the grade level (in the U.S. school system) one would need to have attained in order to understand the document in question.

The results for these two dependent variables are unambiguous. In general, the expressed thoughts of authoritarians rated almost three grade levels lower than those of libertarians  $(d_4)$ , and about 11 percentage points higher in ease of reading  $(d_5)$ , indicating the far greater simplicity of their discussions relative to those conducted by libertarians. Moreover, these differences between the two characters were vastly exaggerated when

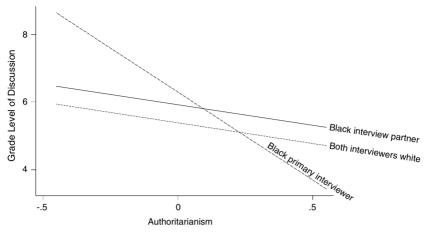


Figure 7.1. Grade level of authoritarians' discussion declines. *Source*: Table A2.5, row *d4*.

subjects were engaged in conversation with a black primary interviewer, in which case authoritarians' discussions generally plummeted to five grade levels lower than those conducted by libertarians and soared 16 or 17 points higher in reading ease.

The striking contingencies in the grade level of the discussion are graphically illustrated in Figure 7.1. The sophistication of authoritarians' and libertarians' discussions tended to diverge by just over one grade level when both interviewers were white, the former talking at almost a fifthgrade level of complexity and the latter around the sixth-grade level under these conditions. But when forced to engage in conversation with a black primary interviewer, the two characters were as distinct as third and ninth graders in the complexity of their discussions (see Table A2.5). I am inclined to believe that this dramatic effect is attributable to libertarians' cognitive enhancement and authoritarians' cognitive deterioration when confronted by diversity. I have argued throughout that a critical, indeed the critical, distinction between libertarians and authoritarians is that the former are excited and engaged and the latter frightened and unhinged by difference. And we know that excitement tends to enhance, and fear to diminish, performance on a wide array of cognitive tasks, leading to decreased complexity, simplistic and categorical thinking, increased rigidity, faulty evaluation of evidence and arguments, the narrowing of alternatives, and premature closure, among many others (see Olson and Zanna 1993; Kruglanski 1996; Kruglanski and Webster 1996).

An alternative explanation is that authoritarians may have deliberately simplified their discussions when talking with a black primary interviewer,

in accordance with their predictably uncomplimentary assessment of the intellectual capacities of the listener. Another account posits that authoritarians felt unable to express their true opinions in these conditions, and that the need to constrain their conversation within socially acceptable boundaries, and to offer unpracticed opinions they did not truly hold or regularly express, led inevitably to simplistic discussions. Certainly neither of these alternative explanations is any more flattering to authoritarians than the threat-deterioration account, as each depends upon authoritarians possessing very negative attitudes toward blacks. But more importantly, neither of the alternatives offers any real explanation of the *increased* complexity of libertarians under these same conditions, certainly none as plausible or well supported as the idea that excitement enhances cognitive processing.

#### Distinctive Themes of the Discussion

The lower panel of Table 7.5 addresses the issue of whether the discussions of authoritarians and libertarians seemed to manifest distinctive themes and characteristic concerns (e1-e6). The dependent variables in this case are standardized normative scores reflecting thematic emphases of the discussion (again, subjects' words only), as produced automatically by the Diction 5.0 content analysis program for any selected text (Hart 2000). The scores are derived by comparing the content of the text to reference values provided by (in this case) a collection of 2,357 campaign speeches delivered by Democratic, Republican, and third-party presidential candidates between 1948 and 1996. Thus the program essentially delivers Z-scores indicating how many standard deviations above or below the norm is a given text in its reliance upon terms from a variety of different dimensions, each represented by a 'dictionary' of words all reflecting a certain theme.

From among the thirty-five distinct dimensions in the Diction program, I first sought to isolate those four themes that seemed most reflective in theory of that which I have described as the central interests of libertarians (diversity and freedom) and authoritarians (conformity and unity, a.k.a. sameness and oneness). The purported concerns of libertarians were very directly represented in the 'diversity' and 'liberation' dictionaries of the program. The 'diversity' dictionary consists of "words describing individuals or groups of individuals differing from the norm" (Hart 2000), such as nonconformist, unique, individualistic, factionalism, deviancy, variety, distinctive, and disobedient. The 'liberation' dictionary contains "terms describing the maximizing of individual choice and the rejection of social conventions" (Hart 2000), such as autonomous,

open-minded, radical, eccentric, liberty, freedom, emancipation, and uninhibited.

The purported concerns of authoritarians had rather less straightforward representation in the program. The 'rapport' dictionary seemed most reflective of conformity and sameness, describing "attitudinal similarities among groups of people" (Hart 2000) with terms such as congenial, camaraderie, approve, permission, equivalent, resemble, and consensus. But the concern for unity and oneness had no obvious and entirely satisfactory representative, and ultimately it seemed that *lower* scores on the 'exclusion' dimension (that is, lesser willingness to use those terms) would best reflect these emphases. The 'exclusion' dictionary essentially represents the antithesis of unity and oneness, with terms "describing the sources and effects of social isolation" (Hart 2000), such as sequestered, self-contained, repudiated, secede, ostracize, loneliness, pariah, and spurn.

In regard, first, to the characteristic concerns of libertarians, we find that libertarians were indeed far more likely than authoritarians to rely in their discussions on terms reflecting diversity, difference, and nonconformity (e1). Libertarians' use of such words in the interview was generally 1.37 standard deviations higher than that of authoritarians. And keep in mind that these standard deviation units refer to the normed values, that is, they reflect the extent of variation across the 2,357 reference documents and not merely across the 40 interview transcripts. So in terms of the extent to which reliance upon these kinds of words varies across the thousands of campaign speeches providing the reference values for the Diction program, authoritarians were roughly one and a third of those standard deviation units below libertarians in their use of words indicating difference. Specifically, libertarians tended to be over one standard deviation above the population norm, and authoritarians almost a third of a standard deviation below that norm, in reliance upon terms reflecting diversity (see Table A2.5).

This is a very substantial difference indeed and holds irrespective of the race of either interviewer, suggesting a persistent tendency on the part of libertarians, and a notable disinclination among authoritarians, to talk about diversity, difference, and nonconformity. The findings for relative reliance upon terms variously reflecting freedom (e2) are much smaller, less certain, and more conditional. They suggest that authoritarians were only noticeably less likely than libertarians to use words reflecting freedom, autonomy, and choice in the presence of a black interviewer. I would not want to make too much of these differing results, especially since Americans are notorious for their fervent subscription to freedom in principle but not in practice (Sullivan et al. 1982; McClosky and Zaller 1984). And one can do a lot of talking about people 'taking

liberties' in the course of complaining about freedom 'run amok', and in arguing for constraints on excessive freedom in specific applications. Such cautions apply more generally across these four dependent variables, but they seem particularly relevant here, given the national 'religion' of freedom.

The findings in regard to the authoritarian theme of consensus (e3) are no more clear-cut, and probably for much the same reason. I will show in the following chapter (see Table 8.3) that authoritarian subjects were generally less likely to maintain that Americans have strong shared values (l3), and more inclined than libertarians to fret about 'moral decay' and the need to address the nation's moral decline (l1, l2). But in a manner reminiscent of their previously noted reluctance to criticize 'us' in front of 'them', authoritarians became almost indistinguishable from libertarians (l2), or even more sanguine regarding the prospects for consensus (l3), in the presence of black interviewers. Similarly, then, we find here that, in discussions with one of their 'own kind', authoritarians seemed somewhat less likely than libertarians to talk of consensus, similarity, and affinity (e3), but that the two characters became indistinguishable in their emphasis on that theme when conversing with a black primary interviewer

The results for the (antithetical to authoritarian) theme of social exclusion (*e4*) turn out to display the most striking and revealing contingencies of all (see Figure 7.2 and Table A2.5). We find that when talking with

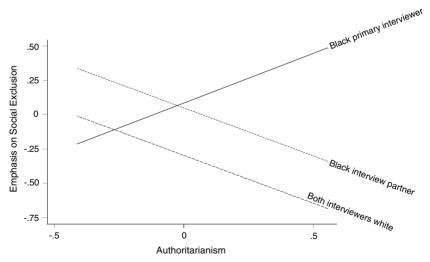


Figure 7.2. Authoritarians' discussion emphasizes social exclusion. *Source*: Table A2.5, row *e4*.

a white primary interviewer, authoritarians were far less likely than libertarians to speak of social exclusion, isolation, and disconnection. But they were far *more* inclined than libertarians to emphasize those themes when confronting a black interviewer. Quite simply, the language of authoritarians was especially inclusive when it was just 'us' talking among ourselves, but they were clearly thinking exclusion when confronting one of 'them'. In sharp contrast, notice that the language and emphases of libertarian subjects were largely unaltered, hovering around the population norm for usage of exclusionary terms irrespective of the race of the interviewer. It was clearly neither a psychological trigger nor a relevant consideration for libertarians, who remained relatively indifferent to the race of the person with whom they were conversing.

#### Implicit Aggression in the Discussion

Finally, apart from distinguishing the characteristic themes of authoritarians and libertarians, I also sought to detect variation in the aggressiveness of their discussions, imagining that any hostility they might have felt with respect to their interrogators or interrogation would manifest itself in their use of language. The 'blame' and 'aggression' dimensions of the Diction program seemed best suited to this task. The former dictionary incorporates critical and derogatory adjectives such as mean, stupid, repugnant, malicious, painful, detrimental, cruel, and offensive. The latter dictionary includes words variously reflecting competition, force, and domination, such as crash, explode, collide, conquest, attacking, commanded, demolish, and overturn.

The results are easily summarized across these two dependent variables. As long as they did not find themselves trying to carry on a conversation about race and tolerance with a black interview partner auditing their every word, authoritarians were indistinguishable from libertarians in the aggressiveness of their language (e6). And they were actually far less inclined (by over one and a half standard deviations, given all-white interviewers) to sound critical and complaining (e5), as we might expect of characters purported to be acquiescent, obedient, and conformist. But the language of authoritarians became significantly more aggressive and critical than that of libertarians with a black interview partner sitting silently by. These final results strongly suggest that our earlier findings regarding the greater hostility, suspicion, and anxiety of authoritarians in the presence of a black interview partner are probably due more to authoritarians actually being different around, rather than merely seeming different to those Black partners.

# SPONTANEOUS REVELATION OF DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THE CHARACTERS

All of the analyses to this point have relied upon either specific assessments of subjects and interactions recorded by interviewers on preconceived rating scales, or objective counting of various aspects of the interview content, but again along a priori dimensions. And these data have converged in some important respects, as in the foregoing, where we increased our confidence regarding the peculiar behavior of authoritarians around black interview partners by supplementing the subjective impressions of the interviewers with purely automated coding of the interview transcripts. But clearly there is a great deal to be learned from data generated more naturally, via unobtrusive observation and direct coding of the presence or absence of various attributes. So we turn our attention now to the simple observation and categorization of some of the attributes, attitudes, and behaviors manifested during these interactions.

All of the remaining analyses in this and the following chapter rely upon systematic coding of each subject's interview transcript in conjunction with the logs of both the primary interviewer and the interview partner assigned to the subject. The transcription of the interviews, and then the coding of the forty transcripts and their associated log sheets, were performed three years subsequent to the Durham interviews by an adult resident of Princeton (NJ) specifically trained for the purpose. The coder was unknown to me, had never been a student of mine nor been exposed to the tolerance literature, and was entirely blind to my objectives and hypotheses. This included being unaware that predispositions to intolerance were under investigation, let alone that the interview subjects had extreme predispositions. The only information the coder had was that which presented itself directly in the transcripts, their associated logs, and, of course, the coding scheme itself.

The scheme I created for the task assigned numeric codes to an array of attributes that one might observe about the subject, the interviewers, their interactions, the environment, the outcomes, and the ideas expressed in the interviews themselves. There were also codes covering the manner in which and conditions under which those attributes were manifested and those ideas were expressed. The coder was instructed to take that coding scheme and assign the appropriate numeric codes to those attributes wherever they were evidenced, that is, as manifested in subjects' interview transcripts, or as noted in the associated logs of their primary interviewer or interview partner. I then created a series of 1/0 dichotomous variables indicating that the code in question was/was not assigned by the coder to the subjects' interview transcript (due to some remark made by the subject), or to one of their interviewers' logs (due to some comment

regarding the subject, the circumstances, or the interactions, noted in the log of the primary interviewer or interview partner). These dichotomies constitute the dependent variables for all the remaining analyses, where I once again seek to distinguish between authoritarians and libertarians, this time by ascertaining the impact of subjects' authoritarianism on the probability that a certain code was assigned to the subject (that is, to the subjects' interview transcript, or to one or both of their interviewers' logs).

Finally, wherever I can, I try to flesh out our portrait of authoritarians and libertarians by illustrating these manifest differences between the two characters with their own words, or the comments of their interviewers. For example, if the quantitative analysis indicates that authoritarians were inclined to express particular ideas or to display certain behaviors in the presence of a black interview partner. I will illustrate that finding with remarks made by an authoritarian subject being audited by a black partner, and/or with the log notes of one of his or her interviewers. But I will do so only where those remarks and notations were actually assigned the code in question by the coder blind to my hypotheses, prior to my analysis. And the reader can assume that if multiple examples are provided in illustration of a point, they are drawn from different interview subjects unless otherwise indicated. Subjects' quotes and interviewers' log notes appear either set apart or in double quotation marks, exactly as they were expressed or written in the original source (with any deleted text indicated thus: ...). Audible emphases in the subject's expression of ideas were italicized by the coder as she transcribed the interviews, and her indications of other audible features of the conversation were inserted in the text in parentheses, thus: [long pause].

#### INTERVIEW CONDUCT AND INTERACTIONS

## You'd Have to Pay Me to Do That

The first results deal with the conduct displayed by subjects during the interview, and the character of their interactions with their interviewers. The findings reported in Table 7.6 turn out to provide compelling confirmation of many of the peculiar patterns observed in the prior analyses of the preconceived dependent variables. First, among those confronting a black primary interviewer, some comment indicating that "the \$ may have been somewhat influential in changing his mind" about participating (ft) was vastly (about .96) more likely to be noted for authoritarians than for libertarians. Libertarians again proved to be relatively indifferent to the race of the individuals with whom they were interacting (see Figure 7.3 and Table A2.6). Irrespective of race, there was around a one in ten

Table 7.6. Differences in interview conduct and interactions

	The	Effects of Au	thoritarianisı	n <sup>a</sup>
Dependent Variables $^b$	across All Interviews	if Both Interviewers White	if Primary Interviewer Black	if Interview Partner Black
General				
f1. Payment critical to gaining S's participation	.37**	.23	.96**	_
<i>f</i> 2. S troubled re tape recording interview	.06	13	_	.39**
f3. S physically anxious, uncomfortable	.43**	.26	_	.87*
f4. S audibly relaxed, comfortable	71**	69**	_	-1.02
f5. S anxious, uncomfortable re partner	.01	39*	.15*	.12**
<i>f</i> 6. S avoids interaction/eye contact with primary	01	17	_	.21**
f7. S avoids interaction/eye contact with partner	.13	25	_	.57**
f8. S's behavior very odd	.30**	.10	_	.65**
f9. S guarded, insincere, dishonest, evasive	.25**	.09	-	.48*
f10. Others in household interfere with interview	17	19	79*	.60**
Regarding race				
g1. S troubled re black primary	n.a.	n.a.	.32**	_
<i>g</i> 2. Primary says S very uncomfortable talking about race	.28**	05	.11	.47**
g3. Partner says S very uncomfortable talking about race	.20**	07	.17	.31**
g4. S very comfortable talking about race	- <b>.</b> 45**	_	_	_
g5. S very calm, thoughtful talking about race		_	-	_

a measured in March 1997.

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS results in Table A2.6. The conditional coefficients indicate the effects of subjects' authoritarianism on the probability of the code in question being assigned by a blind coder to subjects' interview. Successive columns report conditional effects upon these dependent variables (arrayed in column 1) of subjects' authoritarianism, irrespective of either interviewer's race (column 2), if both interviewers white (column 3), if primary interviewer black (column 4), and if interview partner black (column 5). \*\*p < .05, \*p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). This significance test indicates the effect of authoritarianism on the dependent variable is significantly different (columns 2 and 3) from zero, or (column 4) with black primary interviewer than when both interviewers (primary plus partner) white, or (column 5) with black interview partner than when both interviewers white. Dash indicates term dropped for lack of effect; *n.a.* indicates not applicable (where the analysis naturally included only those subjects interviewed by a black primary interviewer; N = 14). See Table A2.1 for univariate statistics.

Source: DCS-In-Depth 97, N = 40.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>b</sup> measured in November 1997.

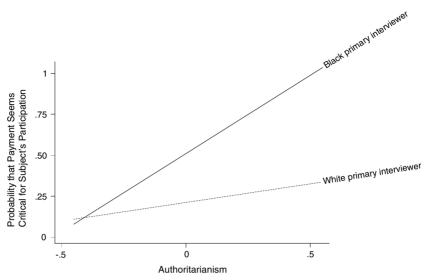


Figure 7.3. Payment seems critical for authoritarians' participation. *Source:* Table A2.6, row  $f_I$ .

chance that such a note would appear in one of their interviewers' logs. But there was about a one in three chance of finding such a log note for authoritarian subjects assigned a white primary interviewer, which soared to a virtual certainty when they confronted a black primary interviewer instead.

## Anxiety and Avoidance

We were also more likely for authoritarian than for libertarian subjects to see some explicit acknowledgement that the subject seemed troubled about encountering a black primary (gI). In one such case, the primary noted the "face of disappointment" when s/he turned out not to be white, while the partner likewise remarked: "AM seemed very surprised that BI was actually Black; he wasn't hostile towards us, however, he was very distant and cold." Similarly authoritarians, who actually seemed less anxious than libertarians about the presence of the interview partner when both interviewers were white, were more likely than libertarians to be described as anxious and uncomfortable when either was black (f5).

Most of the remaining results in Table 7.6 repeatedly attest to the very peculiar behavior of authoritarians in the presence of a black partner. With a black partner silently auditing their discussions, authoritarians were far more likely than libertarians to actually display physical signs of anxiety  $(f_3)$ . The logs of their interviewers were littered with comments

like "extremely nervous... biting his glasses and tapping his foot," "very insecure + jittery," "very avoidant of eye contact, constant fidgeting," "started to bite his nails and fold his arms around his chest," "arms rubbed up & down the chair" and "would put his hands on his head as if he were wiping off sweat." Unsurprisingly, then, when there was a black partner the probability of someone remarking that the subject's behavior was very odd in some way was .65 greater for authoritarians than for libertarians (f8). And in one completely unanticipated result, we find that when authoritarians faced a black primary 'head on' their family members seemed to clear out of the room, but when a black partner hovered ominously to their side, there was a .60 greater chance for authoritarians than for libertarians that one of their family members would try to 'run interference' for the apparently distressed subject (f10).

The likelihood that someone would actually make a note of the fact that the subject avoided interacting or making eve contact with a black partner was .57 greater for authoritarians – who apparently "always looked at W<sub>I</sub> and rarely glanced at B<sub>2</sub>" – than for libertarians ( $f_7$ ). As one primary noted, "I don't remember her giving B2 any eye contact when she actually talked about what she thought about race," speculating that "it's as if she were making some sort of implicit dialogue directed toward B2 about her resentment of 'so called racial inequality'." In another such case, the partner observed that the only time the subject looked at him/her was "to reassure me that he has Black friends and does not hate Black people." Note that libertarians appeared to make no particular effort to attend to a white interview partner but seemed to go out of their way to include a black partner (see Figure 7.4 and Table A2.6). By contrast, authoritarians seemed perfectly comfortable interacting with a white partner, but there was a .59 probability one of their interviewers would accuse them of deliberately ignoring the interview partner when the partner was black. And note that for authoritarians more than for libertarians, the presence of a black partner appeared to disturb their interactions with the primary interviewer as well (f6), as likewise reported in the earlier analyses (Table 7.4, c4).

## You Don't Want to Know What I Really Think

Authoritarians seemed more guarded, dishonest, and evasive than libertarians around a black partner (f9). One partner reported that when the subject was asked about racial issues, "his answers were brief and to the point . . . you can tell he was holding back," and the primary independently concurred: "not that honest when we talked about race & disconnected eye contact." In another case, the primary noted that the subject was very "guarded throughout the interview, but at the race question, he became

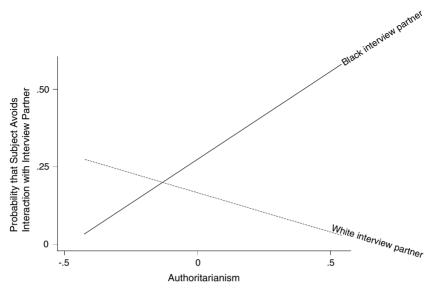


Figure 7.4. Authoritarians avoid interaction with black interview partner. *Source:* Table A2.6, row *f7*.

even more guarded." The primary then went on to report that this same subject, who during the interview itself "didn't really have any opinion on the matter of race relations," subsequently launched into a long diatribe and "seemed very opinionated on the matter" as soon as the tape recorder was turned off. Not surprisingly, then, authoritarians were observed to be more troubled than libertarians about a black partner sitting there tape-recording the interview ( $f_2$ ). One was described as being "quite suspicious" about the tape recorder, which "he kept on looking at the entire interview," seemingly "fearful of giving the wrong answer (incriminating himself)."

Similarly, both primary interviewers and partners were inclined to note that authoritarians more than libertarians seemed uncomfortable talking about race and were "holding back" in some way in the presence of a black partner (g2, g3). One primary reported that the subject "definitely has issues that he wasn't telling us about, I assume he was repressing something negative he felt about race that he didn't want to be recorded." And the partner likewise noted independently that "when answering race questions he sort of avoided the topic, he placed his hand on his temple and began to rock a little faster in his chair; I think he felt a little uncomfortable speaking about race relations." Log notes about subjects getting "tense + reserved when the race questions came" were common for authoritarians

with black partners listening in, as again were explicit descriptions of their physical discomfort, such as "when we would ask questions about race relations, his feet would tap a little faster and his teeth would clinch down a little harder on the glasses."

#### A Level of Comfort

In sharp contrast, libertarians were far more likely than authoritarians to sound relaxed and comfortable in their discussions: about .70 more likely under any conditions, but even more so around a black partner  $(f_4)$ . There was a lot of "shared laughter" and "expressions of interest" in the topics and in seeing the final results of the study. Irrespective of the race of either interviewer, libertarians certainly seemed more comfortable than authoritarians talking about race (g4). This was evident in the log notes of their interviewers (e.g., "very comfortable w/me and B2 asking him race questions"), and still more apparent in the words of the subjects themselves. One libertarian noted sadly that "we've taken a big step backwards...in the last twenty years" and attributed this to our avoiding "an honest open dialogue about racism." Another similarly found it "very dangerous" that "many people seem to be tired of it and don't want to deal with and address these issues anymore." He was adamant that we should "continue to address them and find out why it is that this is an issue that's still so problematic in our society." And yet another expounded a subtle theory of the ways in which "the socioeconomic component" overlaps with "the race component" and exacerbates mutual misunderstanding, where "we lose the ability to communicate with each other" because "everybody's had different life experiences, everybody has a different background" and "that makes things very difficult sometimes."

One libertarian who had purposely moved to the racially diverse community of Durham so that her family "could have a more sort of integrated kind of life experience" was dismayed to find that "for the most part it doesn't really exist," and in fact that race relations in Durham were "absolutely diabolical and appalling if I can be so bold as to say it like that." The same subject talked of being truly "shocked" upon moving to Durham to encounter "(I hope this isn't, you know, bad, I don't know if I'm even using bad language or what, but) a lot of what I would call old-fashioned Southern Blacks" who still "perceive of *themselves* as second-class citizens." The subject then described an incident with a group of black men who had done some work for her family, where:

no matter *what* I did I could never get them to call me by my name. I only got yes ma'am, Mrs. This, Mrs. That. I said it's all right, you can just, you know, we're just regular old people. And they didn't feel comfortable to do that, which leads

me to believe that their life experiences have made them feel uncomfortable doing that. I'm not like *blaming* them, don't get me wrong. But I find it really disturbing that so much of that still exists here. It's painful *to me actually* that that still exists here.

It is difficult to imagine an authoritarian even noticing such an incident and considering it problematic, let alone feeling comfortable describing an encounter with "old-fashioned Southern Blacks."

Regardless of either interviewer's race, libertarians appeared calmer and more thoughtful than authoritarians in their actual discussions of racial issues (g5). One libertarian conceded that "we're definitely a racist country... we don't treat people who are different very well," while another asserted bluntly that most white Americans "want to accept" Blacks but find that "they hate them badly." (On this phenomenon of 'aversive racism', see Gaertner and Dovidio 1986.) The latter subject also argued that race relations were in part "an economic issue," in the sense that "when peoples' livelihoods are threatened, they lash out at the source of that threat, and perceived inequities based on race then become a target for that." Another thought that the real problem was not race but the "growing gap" between different social classes, that the issue was "turning more from race relations to *class* relations of some sort." And one libertarian pondered at length the "paradoxical" fact that "enthusiasm for identity politics" and "having a sense of your identity as a member of a race" - while admittedly important for "the provision of pride and sense of self-worth" - also "works against integration, works against being color-blind" to some degree, undermining the possibilities for "a community in which people...can live as citizens and not based on the color of their skin."

#### PERSONALITY AND DEMEANOR

## Happy, Active, and Gregarious

Table 7.7 addresses itself generally to the task of detecting any manifest differences in the personalities and demeanors of authoritarian and libertarian subjects. We find that the probability that libertarians would appear to have many friends and a rich, full life was about .49 greater than that for authoritarian subjects (h4), as evidenced either in the notes of their interviewers or, more frequently, in their own excited descriptions of their "hectic, chaotic, full, busy, busy, full and full and busy" lives. Libertarians were very noticeably more inclined than authoritarians to talk passionately about how happy they were with everything around them. They would reel off long lists of all the things that they "loved"

Table 7.7. Differences in personality and demeanor

	The	Effects of Auth	noritarianism <sup>a</sup>	
Dependent Variables $^b$	across All Interviews	if Both Interviewers White	if Primary Interviewer Black	if Interview Partner Black
h1. Primary/partner says S is	.26**	_	-	_
scary, creepy  h2. Primary/partner describes S in very glowing terms	35**	-	-	-
<i>h</i> 3. S psychologically/ emotionally disturbed	.12	21	13	.30**
<i>b4</i> . S has many friends, full life	49**	_	_	_
<i>h5</i> . S very bitter, angry	.15	17	.30*	*
<i>h6</i> . S very happy, upbeat, cheerful	25**	.00	38	-
<i>h7</i> . S very stiff, distant, cold, unfriendly	.27*	07	.19	.57**
h8. S very warm, open, friendly	31**	18	84*	34
<i>h</i> 9. S very disrespectful, provocative	.18*	00	.24*	*
h10. S very courteous, respectful	28*	-	-	_
h11. S very masculine (men only, $N = 27$ )	.42**	-	-	_

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> measured in March 1997.

*Note:* Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS results in Table A2.7. See notes to Table 7.6 for further explanation. \*\*p < .05, \*p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). Dash indicates term dropped for lack of effect.

Source: DCS-In-Depth 97, N = 40.

and that were "great" about their lives, most often including their friends and neighbors, their social lives, their work, and their seemingly endless pastimes, particularly reading, writing, and watching movies. Libertarians were also far more likely than authoritarians to be described in very glowing terms in the interviewers' logs ( $h_2$ ), ranging from simple but enthusiastic notations like "great interview!!" to comments like "one of the most genuine people I've interviewed...humble, real, and a very nice person to talk to." In this regard, interviewers were especially likely to remark upon libertarians' open-mindedness. One libertarian was said to be "one of the most 'open to experience' people I've met (and this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>b</sup> measured in November 1997.

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doesn't limit it to the interviews)," while another interviewer noted of her subject: "Honestly, this woman could not have been more open-minded, relaxed and laid-back; nothing fazed her, she was fun." Libertarians were also more inclined than authoritarians to appear courteous and respectful of others (*h10*).

### An Intimidating Character

In sharp contrast, authoritarians had the dubious distinction of being a good deal more likely than libertarians to make their interviewers feel "uncomfortable in respondent's presence," to actually be described by their interviewers as "creepy and scary" (h I). As another partner noted in the post-interview log:

He was physically scary. Just something about him that made me very uncomfortable. I didn't make much observation of the house, due to fear of him asking why I was looking. A very troubled and lonely man.

In another instance, the subject suddenly 'turned the tables', and started aggressively interrogating and browbeating the interviewers, the primary interviewer in that case noting that "I found myself intimidated, like I was on trial." And one black partner found him/herself the recipient of what s/he perceived to be a deliberately menacing remark during the discussion of racial issues, subsequently noting: "he looked right in my eyes (very scary) when he said that as a single White male, he doesn't qualify for quotas." Authoritarian men were also much more likely than libertarian men to appear very masculine, "a man's man," or exceptionally "male-oriented" (h11). They might have repeatedly stressed the social problems supposedly induced by "the large number of single parents that we have...where there's no male role in the family." Or their "maleoriented" outlook might have earned a special mention in one of their interviewers' logs, such as "Fathers taking the lead in the family to set the family morals," or in another case, "family esp. male-oriented w/ father + sons."

# Warm and Friendly, Open and Excitable

All of the foregoing distinctions between authoritarians and libertarians held up irrespective of the race of either interviewer, suggesting that these attributes may be akin to reasonably stable personality traits. But the manifestation of other differences in authoritarians' and libertarians' demeanor seemed to depend heavily upon having blacks in their midst. Most notably, when any blacks were present, but especially given a black

primary interviewer, libertarians were vastly more likely than authoritarians to display great warmth toward their visitors (h8). In these conditions. there were countless notes about libertarian subjects being "friendly," "open," "nice," offering refreshments, and the like. Their interactions with the interviewers often had more the character of a mutually enjoyable conversation in which one is getting to know new friends, rather than suggesting someone submitting grudgingly to a one-sided and uncomfortable interrogation. One libertarian (an artist) laughed about how the interviewers would now have to look at some of her work, since she had got to experience theirs, joking: "I've managed to figure out a way to do what I liked to do best in kindergarten and make a living out of it...it's cut-and-paste, I'll show you before you leave, you get to see some of my work, it's only fair!" Libertarians were significantly more likely than authoritarians to seem very happy, upbeat, and cheerful under any conditions (h6), but especially around a black primary interviewer. And evidencing a "very excited personality" seemed to be a big part of that. Here one libertarian described "playing hooky" from work the day before and driving up to Washington, D.C., just to do as she pleased:

I went shopping, I went to museums, [very excited now] I had a blast at the Air and Space Museum! I had so much fun! You know, just being both responsible and irresponsible enough to let myself do that: it's good [laughing]. So I love my life, I have very few complaints about my life.

# Bitter and Unfriendly

The contrast with the behavior of authoritarians is striking. When either of their visitors was black, authoritarians seemed significantly more angry than libertarians  $(h_5)$ : "bitter" was the word their interviewers mostly settled on. This bitterness appeared often to have a comparative component, to do with having had things hard, or with being unappreciated or overlooked relative to others. One authoritarian described gleefully how he "took a lot of delight in rubbing it in, [tone rises] I told you so! I told you so!" when finally proved right in a long-running argument. Another was said to have listed a series of unfortunate life experiences that "definitely embittered her" and was described as "almost defiant" about having "done so well...in spite of all she had gone through." And when either interviewer was black, authoritarians also seemed more provocative and disrespectful than libertarians (h9), as when unaccountably answering a female interviewer's standard query "What's your life like these days?" with "I don't have a woman sucking all my money out of me."

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But again, the most dramatic contrasts were manifested exclusively in the (clearly troubling) presence of a black interview partner. In those conditions, the probability of the subject seeming stiff, distant, cold, and unfriendly was about .57 greater for authoritarians than for libertarians (*h*7). They would make their interviewers feel "very uncomfortable...he was so stiff and unfriendly," and tended to be described as "very official, reserved, guarded, throughout the interview." One interviewer found an authoritarian subject's apparently cold and unfeeling demeanor remarkable enough to take specific note in the log that "when she mentioned [a recent very tragic event befalling a close acquaintance] no facial expressions of sadness."

And finally, in one of the more striking results, we find that in the presence of a black partner authoritarians were far more likely than libertarians to be described as psychologically or emotionally disturbed (*h*<sub>3</sub>). For example, one was said to be "very paranoid," while another gave her interviewer "the impression that she was unloading a lot of emotional baggage onto us." In another case, the subject seemed to have been "deeply affected by childhood experiences, he kept on relating everything to Cold War trauma/fear of nuclear annihilation... very troubled." And once again, it is notable that libertarians' behavior remained essentially unaltered by the race of the interview partner. Libertarians had about a one in seven chance of seeming psychologically/emotionally disturbed regardless of the partner's race (see Figure 7.5 and Table A2.7). But authoritarians, who really never seemed troubled or maladjusted around a white partner, had around a .43 probability of being labeled

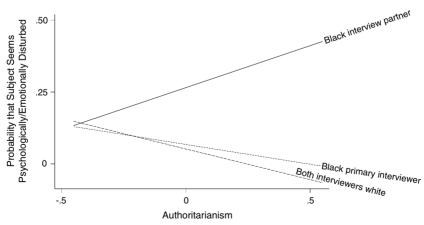


Figure 7.5. Authoritarians seem psychologically/emotionally disturbed. *Source*: Table A2.7, row  $h_3$ .

Table 7.8. Differences in cognitive capacity

	The	The Effects of Authoritarianism <sup>a</sup>			
Dependent Variables $^b$	across All Interviews	if Both Interviewers White	if Primary Interviewer Black	if Interview Partner Black	
i1. S cognitively complex, elaborate responses	33**	_	_	_	
<i>i</i> 2. S answers easily, coherently, eloquently	19**	29**	_	-	
<i>i</i> 3. S cognitively simple, brief responses	.18	.49**	_	39**	
<i>i4</i> . S apologetic/ embarrassed re lack of knowledge	.22*	-	-	-	

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> measured in March 1997.

*Note:* Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS results in Table A2.8. See notes to Table 7.6 for further explanation. \*\*p < .05, \*p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). Dash indicates term dropped for lack of effect.

Source: DCS-In-Depth 97, N = 40.

psychologically or emotionally disturbed when observed and audited by blacks.

#### COGNITIVE CAPACITY

# Complex, Thoughtful, and Eloquent

Finally, in regard to apparent cognitive differences between our authoritarian and libertarian subjects, we find that in these 'natural' conversations, the libertarians proved to be a good deal more cognitively complex than the authoritarians under any conditions (Table 7.8,  $i\tau$ ). Again, this accords both with interview findings presented earlier in the chapter (Table 7.5,  $d\tau-d5$ ), and with the survey results reported in Chapter 6. Libertarians' responses to questions generally proved to be more elaborate than those of authoritarians, as evidenced by an interviewer actually noting that the subject "puts a lot of thought/analysis into answers," or else by the interview content itself (as assessed by a coder blind to my hypotheses). For example, one libertarian subject drew elaborate distinctions between older northeastern cities "whose problems have to do with sustaining infrastructures already been built" and which "seem never to change, really, because they are so mature as communities," and a younger city like

b measured in November 1997.

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Durham "that's sort of half formed and doesn't have a deep and readily recognizable culture that you can point to."

Another libertarian who did not herself "adhere to any organized religion," and who stressed that "personally, it's not something that I would find beneficial," nevertheless appreciated that for many people religion "plays a very important role in their lives, in determining their sense of morality." But she took pains to distinguish between that role played by religion – which she viewed as generally healthy and beneficial for the individual – and instances where "organized religion, in my opinion, crosses the line into politics and into attempting to legislate what we believe." This same subject, in disputing the notion that the United States was in a state of 'moral decay', later went on to make a subtle point about relative morality across the ages:

I don't think that people are any more or less moral by today's standards than people a hundred years ago were by *their* standards. I just think our standards have changed.

It hardly seems surprising, then, that we were more likely to discover in the logs of their interviewers some comment about the libertarian subjects being "very articulate + intelligent," or to find their responses generally more coherent and eloquent than those of authoritarians (*i*2). We saw a good deal of evidence regarding libertarians' apparently superior cognitive capacities when this issue was examined in Chapter 6, and the findings presented here should enhance confidence in that claim. Moreover, the fact that these manifestations of cognitive capacity seem generally unresponsive to the race of the interviewers suggests that they reflect 'traits' more than 'states', that is, innate capacities of the individuals involved more than attributes induced by the conditions in which they found themselves.

# Simplistic, Unsophisticated, and Inarticulate

The foregoing stands in contrast to the findings regarding apparent displays of cognitive simplicity. While we have seen that authoritarians, under *any* conditions, simply lacked the cognitive capacity to provide complex and eloquent responses to the interview questions, they did apparently endeavor to offer less simplistic answers when those responses were being audited by a black interview partner (i3). This finding seems somewhat reminiscent of one reported earlier in this chapter (Table 7.3, b7) – that authoritarians, who otherwise seemed significantly less interested than libertarians in the topics being discussed, apparently feigned more interest when a black partner was listening in. But here again, without that seeming impetus to the authoritarians' pride, they came across as

substantially more cognitively simple than libertarians. They occasionally "answered all of the questions with one syllable answers," or, more generally, gave brief and rather unsophisticated responses. For example, one authoritarian subject, when asked how he felt about being an American, said simply "I think it is wonderful to be an American, uh, [pause] 'cause you have a lot of things here that you wouldn't get anywhere else." Another authoritarian, when questioned about what it meant to him to be an American, responded:

Um, [pause] bein' free, I guess. And having the freedom to do and say things, read things I want to. You know, it's those, a lot of those liberties that we just take for granted, aren't available to everybody. I think that's probably, [pause] freedom, would be the biggest thing. Yeah.

Moreover, authoritarians were somewhat more likely than libertarians to appear apologetic or embarrassed about their lack of knowledge (*i4*). One interviewer noted that the authoritarian subject "seemed embarrassed that he couldn't answer the questions...he said he wasn't that educated... and I could sense him feeling a bit uncomfortable." Another flustered subject "immediately jumped away from the politics question and seemed a bit embarrassed about his lack of knowledge about politics + public affairs." And yet another, in her own words, conceded self-consciously:

Yeah, well I'll tell you what, I, I have a hard time answering that, because I'm just not into politics. I am *sorry*. You know, I vote, but you know I usually ask my kids who to vote for, because, you know I haven't been following it.

#### **UNEASY CONCLUSIONS**

There is always a little unease, even among those who rely heavily upon experimental methodology, associated with treating research subjects with any kind of manipulation or deception. And I am of course keenly aware that it is rather disquieting to see depicted in such bleak terms the motives and behavior of unwitting individuals, accommodating enough to participate in a research study and to allow strangers into their homes. Yet by ensuring that the interviewers had no preconceptions of their subjects, and that all of their interactions were regulated as far as possible by a standard protocol and script, I was careful to limit the possibility of spurious conclusions.

Such caution was necessitated, in part, by the well-documented phenomenon of behavior confirmation (Snyder, Tanke, and Berscheid 1977), where one's stereotypes can have a self-fulfilling influence upon the

# One True People

behavior of members of the stereotyped group in subsequent interactions. For example, if our black interviewers expected the authoritarian subjects to be prejudiced and aggressive, and acted accordingly around (including toward) them, they could, in a more spontaneous and less constrained interaction, actually induce more agitated and unpleasant behavior from those subjects than they would otherwise display. In this case, we would have great difficulty distinguishing the extent to which those documented differences between authoritarians and libertarians in the anxiety and aggression they exhibited around the black interviewers were attributable to their different predispositions, as distinct from real differences in the way those black interviewers behaved around authoritarian as opposed to libertarian subjects.

By automating and standardizing the interviewer–subject interactions to the greatest extent possible, I took pains to ensure uniformity in the manner in which interviewers of different race behaved around subjects of different predisposition. Beyond this, I took care that all of the tasks that could affect the outcome of the analyses were performed by interviewers and coders who were unaware of my hypotheses, of the purposes of the study, and of the subjects' predispositions. In concert with random assignment of interviewers to subjects, these procedures ensure that the subjects' behavior was induced by nothing other than their own predispositions, reacting to nothing other than the mere race of their interviewers.

If the two characters under investigation (and bear in mind that they had been distinguished eight months prior only by their childrearing values) subsequently prove to behave in very different ways around interviewers of *randomly varying* race, then this can be due *only* to the interaction of their predispositions toward intolerance of difference with exposure to different others. And the patterns distinguished by the quantitative analyses were simply illustrated in the words of the subjects themselves and their wholly unwitting interviewers, according to strict rules of selection. So while it is admittedly discomfiting to see these patterns of behavior manifested so starkly, and so obviously contingent upon the race of the interviewers with whom subjects were interacting, as social scientists this is precisely what we want and need to know.

By merely observing, categorizing, and distinguishing between the attributes manifested by authoritarians and libertarians interacting with interviewers of randomly varying race, we have already substantially increased our understanding of their apparently widely varying motives and behavior toward strangers and different others. The same kinds of data will now be employed in the following chapter to distinguish the *content* of their beliefs and attitudes regarding matters of race, politics, and morality.

Such data – shaped and filtered to a minimal degree by the preconceived notions of the investigator – can greatly enhance our confidence that we are depicting real, central, naturally occurring differences in the makeup, attitudes, and behavior of authoritarians and libertarians. And the 'portrait' simply becomes all the more compelling when painted with the characters' own words.

# One Right Way: Fleshing Out the Portrait

By my account, authoritarianism is a fundamental predisposition concerned with minimizing difference, and constraining the individual freedom that tends to surround and confront us with different people, beliefs, and behaviors. It should dispose authoritarians and libertarians to widely varying reactions to racial diversity, political dissent, and moral deviance. That being so, the responses of our authoritarian and libertarian subiects ought to be spontaneously and readily distinguishable along these lines as, with very minimal prompting and guidance from their interviewers, they answer rather broad questions regarding themselves; their lives; their hopes, fears, and pride; and their feelings about race, politics, and morality (see Table 7.1). That is to say, even structured to the least degree possible by my preconceived notions, the content of these (approximately) natural conversations should, if I am correct, reveal stark differences between the authoritarian and libertarian subjects in the manner in which they think and feel about racial diversity, political dissent, and moral deviance.

In this chapter, then, I examine the actual content of the in-depth interview discussions, dealing in turn with each of these three dimensions of racial, political, and moral intolerance. In each domain, I will report upon the size and consistency of any differences manifested between the authoritarian and libertarian subjects in their propensity to subscribe to certain ideas or to express certain beliefs about the world. Again, these differences between the two characters were revealed simply by the varying probability that a particular code would be assigned by the blind coder to the content of their discussions or to their interviewers' log notes. And most of these differences will be illustrated by representative quotes, in their own words or those of their interviewers, selected and presented strictly according to the rules described in the preceding chapter. As usual, as I proceed through the analyses in each of the three dimensions of intolerance, I will mostly confine my remarks to the specific results at

hand, reserving broader reflection upon the findings until the concluding discussions.

#### RACIAL ANIMOSITY, PREJUDICE, AND DISCRIMINATION

In the preceding chapter, we saw a good deal of evidence suggesting that authoritarians were more reluctant to allow the black interviewers into their homes, less comfortable in their presence, and less capable of treating them with ease and generosity. Given these rather consistent differences in their interpersonal interactions – presumably the products of authoritarians harboring more negative feelings than libertarians about blacks in general – it should come as no surprise to discover that authoritarians manifested substantially greater racial animosity, prejudice, and discrimination than libertarians in the content of their discussions. And this was evident throughout their conversations, whether they were discussing racial issues directly, their fears about crime in their neighborhoods, disadvantages they had allegedly suffered at work, perceived problems with their children's schools and schoolmates, or their hopes and fears for their own future and that of the nation, especially in regard to the nation's purported moral decline and explosion of crime and lawlessness.

The manifest differences between authoritarians and libertarians in beliefs, ideas, and feelings about race are reported in Table 8.1. In my discussion of these results, I will group the major differences in content around (what turned out to be) the three major themes: negative stereotypes about blacks, aversion to and rejection of interracial contact, and attributions of responsibility (blaming blacks, or blaming the system) for inequality between the races. But before moving on to examine those persistent themes, we will ponder first what I consider the most important lesson of Table 8.1, which turns out to be not so much what authoritarians actually *think* in regard to matters of race, but what they evidently *know not to say* about race.

#### Liberal Democratic Norms and Political Correctness

As noted at various points in the discussions of Chapters 5 and 6, for years a rather muddled debate has raged regarding exactly what we should make of the negative relationship fairly consistently discerned between expressions of intolerance, including racial animosity, and variables reflecting (years or level of) education, as well as the factors with which education is associated: social class, socioeconomic status, occupational prestige, income, and the like (Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry 1996). On the one hand are scholars, including myself, who propose that much of the positive impact education may appear to have in diminishing intolerance

Table 8.1. *Differences in interview content – racial animosity, prejudice, and discrimination* 

	The Effects of Authoritarianism <sup>a</sup>			
Dependent Variables <sup>b</sup>	across All Interviews	if Both Interviewers White	if Primary Interviewer Black	if Interview Partner Black
<i>j</i> 1. S seems to be racist	.34**	.50**	14**	_
<i>j</i> 2. S uses "us" and "them" when discussing race	.27**	.54**	.01*	.41
<i>j</i> 3. S defensive, "some of my best friends black"	.20*	.40**	04**	06
<i>j4</i> . S disapproves of interracial contact	.19**	.33*	.09*	.04
<i>j5.</i> S welcomes interracial contact	32**	_	_	_
<i>j6.</i> S concerned race relations getting worse	18	67**	.08**	
<i>j7</i> . S dismayed about racial tension	10	35**	.05**	
<i>j</i> 8. S says blacks have good deal, selves to blame	.45**	.76**	.00**	.51
<i>j</i> 9. S concedes discrimination, system to blame	30*	92**	05**	47
<i>j10</i> . S claims disadvantaged for being white	.11	.43**	17**	.01
<i>j</i> 11. S has negative stereotypes of blacks: violent, lazy	.23**	.10*	.77**	_

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> measured in March 1997.

*Note:* Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS results in Table A2.9. See notes to Table 7.6 for further explanation.\*\*p < .05, \*p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). Dash indicates term dropped for lack of effect.

Source: DCS-In-Depth 97; N = 40.

is spurious, and largely attributable to the fact that education is (imperfectly, hence inconsistently across time, cultures, and contexts) reflecting (standing in for) the real explanatory variables. Scholars then differ regarding what are the true explanatory variables for which education is serving as an imperfect proxy. But to my mind, the real 'movers' are the cognitive and personality factors that heavily determine individuals' ability and willingness to tolerate difference (see Chapter 6), and that also happen to dispose them to seek and succeed at higher education. In the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>b</sup> measured in November 1997.

other camp are those scholars who imagine that the positive influence of education on tolerance is mostly real, and (partly, largely, or entirely) due to exposure to, and presumably acceptance of, liberal democratic ideals regarding tolerance and respect for difference, particularly via a university education and consequent immersion in the pervasive liberal democratic culture of academe (Altemeyer 1981; Sullivan et al. 1982; McClosky and Zaller 1984).

As I have noted, an offshoot of this latter camp believes, alternately, that highly educated people are probably not actually, or at least not necessarily, more tolerant than the less well-educated. They have (merely, mostly, or partly) just *learned the norms* of tolerance: of what constitute acceptable and unacceptable attitudes to express in polite, sophisticated society (see Jackman 1978; Jackman and Muha 1984). In this account, those who have not been immersed in the culture of higher education, and/or who do not move in social circles dominated by those who have, are said to be neither innately less capable of tolerating difference, nor necessarily less tolerant, than the better educated. Rather, by being deprived of exposure to liberal democratic norms, they have simply had less opportunity to learn what kinds of things should and should not be expressed in public, according to the norms of 'sophisticated' society in liberal democratic cultures.

#### Authoritarians Know the Norms

To my mind, the results presented in Table 8.1 provide compelling evidence that authoritarians have learned as well as anybody else the norms regulating social interaction and conversation in contemporary liberal democratic societies. When discussing racial issues with a black primary interviewer, authoritarians were essentially indistinguishable from libertarians in their willingness to express racially intolerant attitudes and beliefs (i1-i4, i6-i10). In some instances they even seemed to be 'bending over backwards' not to make statements that could be construed as racially intolerant (j1, j10). In those cases, authoritarians gave the appearance of being *more* tolerant than libertarians who were likewise interacting with a black primary interviewer, but who were clearly not so fearful of revealing what they actually believed about race as to invert their real attitudes in their efforts not to reveal it. It is clear, then, that being forced to discuss racial issues face to face with a black primary interviewer constrained authoritarians' expressions of intolerance to the point that they could hardly be distinguished from their libertarian counterparts. But often, merely having a black interview partner 'lurking' to the side was sufficient to render authoritarians and libertarians equivalent in their manifest intolerance (13-14, 16-17, 110). In other cases, the presence of a black interview

partner clearly constrained to some degree authoritarians' willingness to 'sound off' about race, but not to the extent of completely erasing differences in the intolerance displayed by authoritarians and libertarians (j2, j8-j9).

Overall, then, these findings suggest that while our authoritarian subjects were indeed more racially intolerant than the libertarians, they knew full well that their attitudes were 'politically incorrect' according to the racially egalitarian norms of 'sophisticated' society, and made conscious efforts not to express those attitudes in front of blacks. While the distinctions will inevitably remain debatable, I would insist that this is not simply a matter of authoritarians' respect for interpersonal norms of polite interaction. If the attitudes in question referred not to whites and blacks but to men and women, if they analyzed the causes of gender inequality as opposed to racial inequality, if they bore on the appropriate roles and relationships of women and men rather than blacks and whites. we would hardly consider it interpersonally inappropriate or impolite (let alone dangerous) to express such opinions to a female interviewer. The attitudes in question are more politically than interpersonally incorrect, and the fact that authoritarians avoid expressing these opinions in the presence of blacks reveals their awareness of the controlling social norms, if not their exact motivations for yielding to them.

In regard to those likely motivations, bear in mind that authoritarians appeared to constrain their expression of 'incorrect' attitudes only in the presence of blacks. Moreover, they seemed to exercise greater constraint if actually being questioned by a black primary interviewer, rather than merely being observed by a black 'assistant' as they conversed with one of 'us'. Accordingly, their motivations seem less likely to entail a desire to appear sophisticated and 'knowing' (if not actually unprejudiced) than a desire to avoid coming to harm at the hands of those they evidently fear. After all, while within a given culture the 'political incorrectness' of proclaiming a certain attitude does not depend upon the characteristics (including the race) of the listener, authoritarians might assume that the consequences do. Likewise, while their 'incorrect' attitudes were as likely to offend a black 'assistant' to a white primary interviewer as a black primary, authoritarians might well have assessed that the latter scenario put them at greater risk than the former. In any case, regardless of when and why they were willing to constrain their responses, the fact that they were able – under any conditions, for any reason – to keep their responses within 'acceptable' bounds confirms their awareness of those bounds. The importance of this finding, of course, is that it tends to undermine the objection that we are dealing here not with individuals harboring deep-seated 'hot' prejudices toward all manner of difference, but just with simple folk who lack exposure to the norms of 'sophisticated' society, who

might merely have 'coolly' (dispassionately) absorbed the less progressive values prevalent in their narrower, less urbane, and less educated social circles.

### The Best That They Could Manage

The two remaining results not so far discussed (j5, j11) are just as revealing, but make somewhat different points. The first is rather straightforward. The fact that the interviewers' race could not moderate the negative impact of authoritarianism on the welcome extended to the prospect of interracial contact (j5) tends to confirm that having black interviewers merely constrained the expression of negative racial attitudes. It was unable to generate even the semblance of positive attitudes in their stead. Thus, whereas in the company of blacks authoritarians managed to forego expressing their disapproval of interracial contact (j4), they apparently could not bring themselves, under *any* conditions, to sound like they might actually embrace and appreciate the value of contact between the races (j5).

Second, the reader will note that the very last result presented in Table 8.1 stands in stark contrast to all of the effects discussed in the foregoing, which were moderated throughout by the *conscious* efforts apparently exerted by authoritarians in the presence of blacks to repress the expression of what they knew to be 'incorrect' attitudes. But here we find that whereas authoritarians were more likely than libertarians under any conditions to display negative racial stereotypes, this difference between the two characters was vastly *magnified* when talking to a black primary interviewer (111). Authoritarians were actually far *more* likely to talk of blacks being violent, lazy, and the like when facing a black rather than a white primary interviewer. So whereas in the company of blacks, authoritarians were able consciously to control the processes involved in the expression of all the foregoing attitudes, facing a black primary interviewer apparently subconsciously activated negative racial stereotypes, whose expression the subject was thus unable to 'interrupt'. This is consistent with what we know about the involvement of conscious and unconscious processes in the activation and expression of different kinds of attitudes, the extent to which stereotypes operate below the level of conscious awareness, and consequently their stronger resistance to contextual factors and lesser regulation by norms (see especially Devine 1989; Mendelberg 2001).

All of this is likewise perfectly consistent with the kinds of remarks that tended to be captured by this code  $(j \tau)$ , which would rarely involve subjects stating outright that blacks were violent and lazy. Rather, they would typically entail subjects slipping seamlessly and apparently unawares from discussing matters of race to talking about crime and/or welfare, seemingly

oblivious to the connections they were drawing between the two, as in this remark offered by one authoritarian subject, immediately subsequent to discussing local efforts to redress racial inequality:

Everybody's been disadvantaged at one time or another. You are what you want to be, and if these people want to be scum, then they need to be off. *That*, as much as anything, concerns me about the Durham community. And as I said, I don't know whether the paper's playin' it up, but it seems to me, I read it a lot more – stickups in parking lots everyday – than when I came here twenty years ago.

And the magnitude of this effect is truly sobering. When talking to a black primary interviewer, authoritarians were around .77 more likely than libertarians to display these stereotypic conceptions of blacks. I consider this very compelling evidence regarding the extent to which authoritarians harbor negative images of blacks, not to mention how very easily and unconsciously these can be activated simply by gazing upon a black face (see also Terkildsen 1993; Gilens 1999; Mendelberg 2001). We will see some more striking patterns of this nature when we examine the perceived links between race and crime in our later discussion of beliefs about morality and discipline (see Table 8.3,  $l_9-l_{10}$ ).

#### Talking among Ourselves

So what do whites really think about blacks when talking among their 'own kind', and obviously feeling at much greater liberty to express attitudes that would more surely be deemed 'incorrect' in mixed company? First, overall, we find that authoritarians were about .50 more likely than libertarians to seem racist, an admittedly highly subjective judgment, indicated either by their interviewers' log notes or by the coder's assessment of the content of their discussions (*j1*).

As Figure 8.1 makes apparent, the libertarian subjects did not seize the opportunity of talking with a white primary interviewer to express otherwise unmentionable opinions about blacks; they simply had no probability of appearing racist in these conditions (see also Table A2.9). Indeed, as usual, they seemed relatively indifferent to the race of the person with whom they were interacting. But authoritarians, who truly had zero probability of being described as racist after talking to a black primary, had about a one in two chance of being designated thus on the basis of their discussions with a white primary interviewer. One black partner to a white primary observed that the subject was "very agitated" when describing a negative childhood experience with blacks, making "no eye contact with me during (above)," and was likewise "very excited when talking about race relations & government support programs/race." Another black partner assisting a white primary noted that the subject

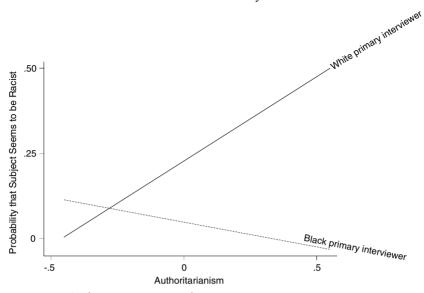


Figure 8.1. Authoritarians seem to be racist. *Source*: Table A2.9, row *j*1.

"seemed, from the answers he gave to certain questions, a little racist, although he would be sure to look at me and say he had nothing against Black people, or he would be sure to mention his one Black best friend."

The latter was actually a fairly common maneuver: authoritarians were far more likely than libertarians to disavow any personal prejudice by making some statement of the order of 'some of my best friends are black' (13) (see Bonilla-Silva and Forman 2000). One subject protested that "I have lots of Black friends, Hispanic friends, Indian friends... we don't interact socially a lot but, you know, we do occasionally," adding defensively: "I don't interact much with the Caucasian people either." But the psychological boundaries that they truly perceived between the races were evidenced in the fact that authoritarians were about .54 more likely than libertarians to talk of 'us' and 'them' when discussing matters of race (j2). One interviewer explicitly noted in the log that when talking about race relations, the subject "defined it as 'them' and 'us' and claimed that there were 'no problems, if there was a problem it was with them'." But mostly it was a case of the coder noticing after the fact a subject's propensity to use this kind of language, by perusing the subject's comments themselves, as in:

I'd just like them not to feel like they're excluded... I mean if *any little thing* happens they say it's because of race, you know? And, I mean, they just, they feel persecuted all the time, and I think, I'd like to see them become more friendly, you know?

#### Interracial Contact

In regard to interracial contact, authoritarians were more likely than libertarians to confess that they actually disapproved of social interaction between blacks and whites  $(j_4)$ . As one subject noted:

I warn't into none o' that... as far as Blacks and Whites mixin', goin' to parties together, intermarriage and all this stuff, I don't, I mean, I'll just tell you like this... I'm just not the type to [pause] say, somebody I work with, I bring home. I work with 'em and get along, but I go home. He goes home. That's about as simple as I can put it.

This is an extreme and 'old-fashioned' kind of racism, the likes of which presumably fueled the attacks upon interracial couples, and upon black families moving into 'white' neighborhoods and schools, that once marred race relations throughout much of the United States and especially the South (see Myrdal 1944; Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo 1985; Stenner 1997). And it was notable that subjects seemed to find particularly repugnant the idea of interracial couples, as in this blunt remark:

I think things will be bad on the young'uns. I don't think too much of it. I think, you know, Blacks should go with Blacks, Whites with Whites. Most of 'em, biggest majority is White lady and Black man, you know, having young'uns. And you can't have it, you know?

In sharp contrast, libertarians were more inclined than authoritarians (and, as noted earlier, under any conditions) to express a great desire for, and indeed to argue the necessity of, more extensive contact between blacks and whites (*j5*). One interviewer took special note of the fact that a subject "liked that his kids have a mix of friends." Another subject urged that all Americans ought to be "going and introducing yourself to people who live around the block" who "happen to be of a different, whatever, than you are," and "trying to get to understand them and trying to know how to trust and respect them." This same subject went on to argue that "all the politically correct stuff that we talk about in this country" was simply "a kind of avoidance just from really getting in and doing the work."

Libertarians were about .67 more likely than authoritarians to express concern that race relations were actually "getting worse" (*j6*). One subject who thought that racial harmony had certainly "declined" expressed the "hope" that it was "just a matter of a general trend of, say, ten steps forward and one step back, and we're in the one step back stage right now." Another understood that tension was nearly inevitable, since "whites in America have been very used to having power," and "when another race says 'we'd like to have some of that too'," then "the people in power say 'well, wait a minute, you know, why do I want to voluntarily give up

some of what I have?'." But while understanding its origins, libertarians were more likely than authoritarians to express great dismay at the levels of racial tension that prevailed ( $j_7$ ): the "continuing division" and "lack of real understanding between the races in America."

#### Who Is to Blame?

Assessments of the extent to which blacks themselves, rather than systematic discrimination, are to blame for their unequal standing in American society have consistently proved critical to white Americans' sympathy for their plight, and to whites' willingness to support and underwrite governmental efforts to redress those inequities (Kluegel and Smith 1986; Kluegel and Bobo 1993: Kinder and Sanders 1996). And the belief that blacks violate core American values regarding individual self-sufficiency, hard work, and self-reliance is said to be the primary means by which racial animosity, or "racial resentment," is expressed in the modern era, since "oldfashioned" or "traditional" racism – aversion to interracial contact, and beliefs about the innate inferiority of blacks - can no longer be comfortably expressed in 'polite' society (McConahay 1986; Sears 1988; Kinder and Sanders 1996; Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997). So it is certainly notable that authoritarians were about .76 more likely than libertarians to claim that blacks had a 'good deal', and largely had themselves to blame for their unequal position relative to whites (*i8*).

Again, we find that libertarians were relatively indifferent to the race of the interviewers with whom they were interacting, having about a one in four chance of allocating some of the blame to blacks themselves, across the board (see Figure 8.2 and Table A2.9). This would seem to many of us still a distressingly high level of subscription to a belief so clearly detrimental to efforts to counter racial discrimination and address pervasive inequities. But it nevertheless pales in comparison with the sentiments persistently expressed by authoritarians when among their 'own kind'. When talking to a black primary interviewer, authoritarians could not be distinguished from their libertarian counterparts in denial of systemic discrimination. But they had about a .75 probability of blaming blacks themselves when constrained only by the 'lurking' presence of a black partner. And in the relative safety and comfort of all-white company, authoritarians were almost certain to suggest that blacks had a very good deal, that "they're getting a lot of benefits," even if sometimes hastening then to soften such remarks with the likes of: "just like a lot of Whites are getting benefits that maybe they don't deserve; some of 'em do deserve the benefits, some of 'em don't."

Authoritarians' claims regarding the 'good deal' supposedly enjoyed by blacks in the contemporary United States sometimes took a more specific

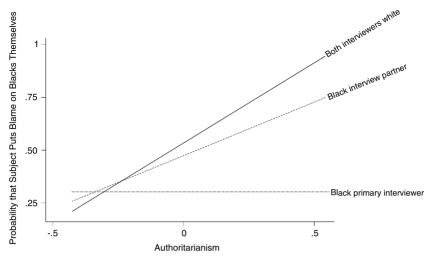


Figure 8.2. Authoritarians put blame on blacks themselves. *Source*: Table A2.9, row *j*8.

form, nevertheless animated by much the same spirit. Authoritarians were far more likely than libertarians to claim that they themselves had been discriminated against or disadvantaged for being white (*j10*), as in:

They do get more things easier than Whites. I mean, we have something like that at [his workplace]....I come along, I work [a number of] years before I got everything they did. Then, they ruin everything I created. My salary went up slow. But now, if you Black it don't take long. I heard one big shock the other day about this guy, ain't been working with us about [a number of] months, he's about to raise his salary. And he don't know the trade, but they raise his salary. What can you say?

Ultimately, nothing distinguished the racial attitudes of authoritarians and libertarians more than these very dramatic differences in their attributions of responsibility for racial inequality. We see that in stark contrast to the foregoing, libertarians were about .92 more likely than authoritarians to recognize the persistence of racial discrimination, to believe that racial inequalities were "inextricably linked with American history," and to hold the system, rather than blacks themselves, largely responsible for their unequal standing (j9). In the end, then, libertarians would almost always, but authoritarians could almost never, bring themselves to concede the reality of racial discrimination, to summon the kind of understanding and sympathy demonstrated by this libertarian subject:

It takes a long time. I mean, gosh...these poor folks are slapped down in our country and shunned for...years before they actually even, you know, got any

kind of attention to a proper education or learning. And as time moves on they are becoming respected members of the community. But what I'm saying is just we had a head start. We had a big head start, you know, from these folks.

#### ETHNOCENTRISM, PATRIOTISM, AND POLITICS

The second domain in which we expect to discern important differences between authoritarians and libertarians concerns their comfort and engagement with the democratic process and attitudes toward politics and politicians. From their initial designation as "pre-Fascist" personalities (Adorno et al. 1950) through to the present, authoritarians have been understood as individuals who possess a rather tenuous commitment to democratic processes, and who are extremely uncomfortable with, even uncomprehending of, the core components of a democratic system. If authoritarianism is concerned with sacrificing individual freedom and diversity to group authority and conformity, and if authoritarians have the motives and capacities I have ascribed to them, it is easy to see that the central elements of democracy are not just anathema, but actually insensible to authoritarians. Disagreement, dissent, and disobedience; determination of the 'common good' by debate and negotiation between partisans of competing worldviews: none of this is comprehensible, let alone palatable, from the authoritarian perspective. Not surprisingly, then, the results presented in Table 8.2 indicate that the authoritarian and libertarian subjects did indeed differ substantially: in their understanding of what it meant to be a patriotic American; in their engagement with and affect for democratic politics and politicians; and in their sympathy for the super-patriot notion that there is a transcendent 'true America' suffering at the hands of the federal government, and a self-evident 'common good' being eroded by 'petty partisan politics'. Again, I will group the results accordingly and consider each of these three major themes in turn.

#### Patriotism or Ethnocentrism?

In terms of what they thought it meant to be a patriotic American, libertarians, predictably, turned out to be far more comfortable than authoritarians with the idea that one could be critical of America and Americans while still being a loyal citizen. Libertarians were about .50 more likely than authoritarians to think of the United States as a "mixed bag" (k1). They tended to recognize flaws and "failings" of the nation, and to admit that they did not "always agree with everything the country does" and were not "always proud of the decisions we make or what our policies are." For example, one subject thought that the nation fell short in terms of "making opportunity available widely to *all kinds* of people" and

Table 8.2. Differences in interview content - ethnocentrism, patriotism, and politics

	The Effects of Authoritarianism <sup>a</sup>			
Dependent Variables $^b$	across All Interviews	if Both Interviewers White	if Primary Interviewer Black	if Interview Partner Black
<i>k</i> 1. S recognizes flaws of United States/Americans	50**	_	=	_
<i>k</i> 2. S not ethnocentric, admires other countries	41**	_	_	_
<i>k</i> 3. S says "love it or leave it" re United States	.12**	_	_	_
k4. S very emotional re American flag	.17**	00	.23**	
k5. S does not follow politics	.25*	_	_	_
k6. S follows politics	09	29*	_	.31**
<i>k</i> 7. S thinks politicians all about money/power	.04	.53**	.02	.16
<i>k</i> 8. S thinks politicians mean well, unappreciated	21*	40**	.00**	_
<i>k</i> 9. S sympathetic to super-patriot/militia movement	.14	.65**	07**	
k10. S no sympathy for patriot/militia issues	25*	65**	0	6*

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> measured in March 1997.

*Note:* Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS results in Table A2.10. See notes to Table 7.6 for further explanation. \*\*p < .05, \*p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). Dash indicates term dropped for lack of effect.

Source: DCS-In-Depth 97; N = 40.

"recognizing the diverse talents that its people have, and the diverse problems these people have also." Another complained that "the materialism drives me insane," concluding with evident regret that "there's much more caring about things than about people." In sharp contrast to the 'brook no criticism' stance typically assumed by the authoritarians, it was clear that libertarians saw no contradiction between recognizing deficiencies and being a patriotic American, a good and loyal citizen of the United States. It is certainly difficult to imagine an authoritarian subject complaining that:

We're incredibly stupid and badly informed and badly educated, and we don't save money, we're just like, things like we have a terrible health care system. And

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>b</sup> measured in November 1997.

there are the things to be ashamed of about being American, within our country and in the world as a whole, like not being members of UNESCO, and not paying our dues to the United Nations.

Libertarians did seem to think of themselves more as citizens of the world. They appeared far less ethnocentric than authoritarians, being much more likely to describe things they admired about other countries (k2), especially as compared to the United States, something of which authoritarians hardly seemed capable. One subject thought that what distinguished the United States from other countries was "the very inward-looking nature of our society" that had "so little idea of what's going on outside compared to other people." He noted that "exposure to languages, other cultures . . . are so limited here" that you could "drive for days, and just all you'll see are things like McDonald's and malls . . . the same TV shows." Another subject observed sardonically that:

Throughout the country's history we set ourselves up to be an example to the world of freedom and democracy and [mocking tone] 'equality for all people' and all that, and I think we toot our own horn an awful lot, and when it comes right down to it, I wouldn't say on a lot of issues we're the frontrunner there.

Apart from showing themselves much more reluctant than libertarians to criticize the United States, authoritarians were also inclined, in regard to those who did have complaints, to insist that "if you're gonna live here, love it or leave it"  $(k_3)$ . As one subject described it:

If they're not happy with this country, then try to go to some of these other countries and live like they want to do here. And they'll find out what they've got...if they're not happy...then *get out*, you know, and go somewhere else. If they're not happy with this country, go to China, go to Russia, go to Cuba.

Authoritarians were also more likely than their libertarian counterparts to become very emotional when talking about the American flag (k4), but *only* in the presence of blacks. In all-white company, authoritarians were no more likely than libertarians to wax lyrical about the 'stars and stripes'. But when either of their interviewers was black, authoritarians would describe how they "still get choked up when I see that flag, and then pledge the flag, and somebody does a stirring rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner." This seems reminiscent of the tendency of those who are unusually 'invested' in some group to increase their identification with that collective – including allegiance to its members and fondness for its symbols – when the boundaries between 'us' and 'them' are challenged or made salient, as presumably they were in this instance by the presence in their homes of those whom authoritarians evidently consider to be outsiders (Taifel and Turner 1979; 1986; Taifel 1981).

### Political Disengagement and Anti-Democratic Sentiment

In regard to their affect for and engagement with the democratic process, we find, first, that authoritarians were somewhat more likely than libertarians to seem as if they "don't really get into politics a lot"  $(k_5)$ . As another subject described it:

Honestly, I can't say that I know that much about politics, but I can't say that they're not doin' nothin', 'cause I don't know what the world would be like if they weren't doin' nothin'. I can't really see much difference, to be honest with you.

Others went so far as to declare they were "personally turned off" by politics "to be quite blunt," and "not too keen on politics or politicians at all." Libertarians were more likely than authoritarians to give the impression that they followed politics and public affairs (k6). Their interviewers would note that the subject "seemed to know politics and current events" or was "very confident when he talked about politics." But just as we observed in the preceding chapter authoritarians' apparent efforts to feign greater interest in public affairs when being audited by a black partner (Table 7.3, b7), here again we find that this seeming prick to their pride caused authoritarians in these conditions to actually appear more engaged by politics than libertarians.

The findings regarding beliefs about politicians' motivations (k7, k8) also seem reminiscent of some patterns detected earlier. Recall from the preceding chapter that authoritarians appeared very reluctant before a black partner to level the charge that we had neglected to pay them for completing the original DCS97 questionnaire (bo). Likewise, they seemed more inclined to wax on about consensus and community when being interviewed by a black primary (e3). And we will also see in the following section that in the presence of black interviewers, authoritarians were less likely to fret about 'moral decay' (l1, l2) and more inclined to assert that Americans had strong, shared values (l3). All of this I consider indicative that authoritarians think of blacks as outsiders – that psychologically, they are not included among their own 'people' – with these persistent patterns reflecting authoritarians' apparent reluctance to criticize 'us' in front of 'them'.

Here again, then, we find that in the presence of blacks, authoritarians were less likely to assert that politicians were all about money and power (k7), and more inclined to insist that the nation's leaders meant well and were doing their best to serve the American people (k8). But absent these apparent constraints on 'airing the dirty laundry' in front of outsiders, authoritarians were very noticeably more critical than libertarians of the motives and behavior of the nation's political leaders. Among their 'own kind', authoritarians were about .53 more likely than libertarians to

charge that politicians were motivated by concern for money and power (k7). As one subject observed:

I think that a problem is that they have a price at which they can be bought or paid or influenced by money contributed to them. And that's a concern that I have, where the underdog or person without money doesn't have access to the Lincoln Room at the White House, and so forth. I don't have a couple hundred thousand dollars to contribute to the White House. I don't, you know, have that access, and that's a concern that I have.

This contrasted sharply with libertarians' generally benign impressions of politicians' motivations, and their apparent comfort with a democratic process that often involved politicians catering to influential constituencies, and shifting their positions with an eye to electoral gains. Certainly, libertarians were much more likely than authoritarians (as long as they were not speaking to a black primary) to maintain that politicians usually had pure motives for holding office and that their efforts were underappreciated by those they sought to serve (k8). As one subject generously described it:

I think most of our politicians are very well-meaning in general, genuinely want to do what is best for the country... And people that do get involved in public life, most of them it is because they are interested in it, and generally want to make their country or their city or their state or their country a better place.

# Super-Patriotism

We turn last to the important question of our subjects' sympathy for the super-patriot/militia movement, a sentiment that we might reasonably conceive as the logical end product of authoritarians' peculiar understanding of patriotism (including what constitutes America, and Americans), and their fundamental distaste for democratic processes. The findings regarding expressions of support for the super-patriot/militia movement (k9, k10) indicate that authoritarians were around .65 more likely than libertarians to be sympathetic to the movement and its concerns. However, they proved wholly unwilling to express that affinity and approval in the presence of black interviewers.

I can imagine at least two different mechanisms that could be responsible for these findings, and probably each is implicated to some degree in producing the patterns observed here. The first is that which has already been described regarding the persistent tendency of authoritarians to be less critical of 'our' people, leaders, and norms in front of 'them'. Since one of the two main themes pervading super-patriot ideology is criticism and distrust of the federal government (Chaloupka 1996; Freilich, Pichardo Almanzar, and Rivera 1999), it would make sense, according

to the logic described earlier, that authoritarians would be less willing to express sympathy for the militia movement, and by implication its bitter critique of "our" government, in front of black interviewers.

But it is also true that the second main component of super-patriot ideology consists of white supremacist ideas about the inferiority of other races, and the threat posed to the 'True America' and cultural identity by the encroachment and growing power of racial and ethnic minorities (Green, Abelson, and Garnett 1999). So the patterns observed in these findings may additionally, or alternatively, be due to a mechanism similar to that which purportedly drove authoritarians' apparent reluctance to express racial animosity in front of black interviewers. If so, this would suggest that authoritarian subjects were keenly aware of the militia movement's links to white supremacist organizations and ideologies, and that they understood that they ought not to be displaying those sympathies around blacks.

Either way, but probably in some combination, when in the company of blacks authoritarians proved to be pretty much indistinguishable from libertarians in expressions of support for the super-patriot/militia movement (kg). Authoritarians constrained by the presence of a black interviewer, and libertarians under any conditions, had about a .42 probability of displaying some kind of sympathy (broadly defined) for the positions taken by the movement (see Figure 8.3 and Table A2.10). But authoritarians

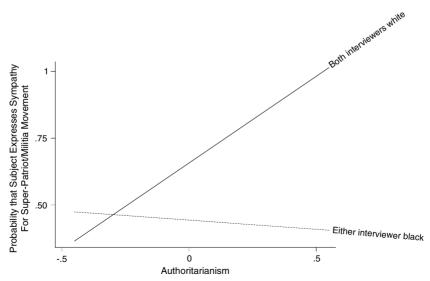


Figure 8.3. Authoritarians express sympathy for super-patriot/militia movement. *Source:* Table A2.10, row *k9*.

were *virtually certain* to express affinity for the movement or approval of its stances when no Blacks were present. As one subject tentatively conveyed his sympathies:

I agree with some of 'em...Now you talkin', say a militia, uh, I don't, I don't disagree with 'em. But a militia's just like IBM or Duke University or somethin'. You got bad ones in all of 'em. Now these militias, course the government's called militias bad, I understand why they are, 'cause some of 'em, they're crazy to start with! But if, if they're doin' right, I think they're okay really. I say, I just, I have to, I have to side with them people. I don't believe they did nothin' that bad for the army and the FBI to come up there. I just, they weren't done right, to my opinion.

Finally, we see that the contrast with the sentiments expressed by libertarians is again striking. Libertarians were .65 more likely than authoritarians (given all-white company) to insist that they had no sympathy whatsoever for the super-patriot movement or its positions (kio), that they were "absolutely, adamantly opposed to everything they stand for." One subject puzzled over their being "such an unfamiliar commodity," confessing that "I just so fundamentally don't understand how they think." But another was confident she knew exactly what kinds of people populated their ranks: "nuts and fanatics and really unbalanced people with very... twisted views." The important distinctions between libertarians and authoritarians in this respect were neatly summarized by one libertarian pondering the seeming incongruity of the 'super-patriot' banner, who observed: "Im for the country... I want the country to stay together... Im a patriot, but they say they're patriots too... I don't see us as being the same thing."

#### MORALITY AND DISCIPLINE, CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Finally, we come to the issue domain that appeared to exercise authoritarians more than any other, and to which they seemed to return persistently irrespective of the question actually posed to them. It is no exaggeration to report that fears regarding immorality and crime, claims about the critical need to reestablish some normative order, and elaboration of plans for accomplishing this reversal occupied the bulk of authoritarians' 'psychic space', consuming a vastly disproportionate share of their time and energy in these discussions. The distinctions between authoritarians and libertarians in attitudes toward morality and discipline, crime and punishment, are reported in Table 8.3. But again, before moving on to examine what turned out to be the persistent themes – the impending crisis of morality, the role to be played by government and public education in reversing the moral decline, and the blame attributed to the failure of families – we will first consider what can be learned from two general patterns of response

Table 8.3. Differences in interview content – morality and discipline, crime and punishment

	The Effects of Authoritarianism <sup>a</sup>			
Dependent Variables <sup>b</sup>	across All Interviews	if Both Interviewers White	if Primary Interviewer Black	if Interview Partner Black
l1. S worries about nation's loss of morals, moral decay	.52**	.80**	.71	.08*
<i>l</i> 2. S ridicules idea of nation's moral decay	- <b>.4</b> 7**	99**	11**	
13. S says Americans have strong shared values	01	35**	.18**	
<i>14.</i> S says govt. to reverse nation's moral decline	.39**	_	-	_
<i>l5</i> . S wants schools to reverse moral decline	.20*	.57**	.04**	
<i>l</i> 6. S says family breakdown source of society's ills	.29**	_	_	_
<i>l7</i> . S says kids don't respect authority, no discipline	.28**	.51**	_	.08**
l8. S says TV corrupts kids, bad influence	.17**	_	-	_
19. S very concerned with crime and safety	.38**	.20	.80*	.29
<i>l10</i> . S turns everything into crime issue	.26**	01	.72**	.04

a measured in March 1997.

*Note:* Cell entries are unstandardized conditional regression coefficients calculated from OLS results in Table A2.11. See notes to Table 7.6 for further explanation. \*\*p < .05, \*p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). Dash indicates term dropped for lack of effect.

Source: DCS-In-Depth97; N = 40.

pervading the results in Table 8.3. These patterns should be fairly easily apprehended, given that we have already observed and commented upon each at various points in this and the preceding chapter.

# What Moral Decay? Airing the Dirty Laundry in Public

The first general pattern of response to which I wish to draw the reader's attention is that which I have repeatedly characterized as reluctance to 'air the dirty laundry' in front of outsiders (see also bo, e3, k7, k8, and

b measured in November 1997.

perhaps k9, k10). Once again, we find that in the company of black interviewers, and especially with a black partner auditing one's declarations, authoritarians became more insistent that the American people had strong, shared values, less preoccupied with elaborate plans to stem the tide of immorality, and less inclined to accuse the nation's children of being undisciplined and disrespectful (l1-l3, l5, l7). It would seem that the authoritarian subjects, who in all-white company gave every appearance of being in a state of great alarm regarding the nation's supposed 'moral decay', were more reluctant to question the virtue of the American people and their offspring in front of those they evidently viewed as outsiders to that collective. And these contingencies were truly dramatic. Authoritarians could be separated from libertarians by almost the entire range of the dependent variable when feeling at liberty among their own 'people' to voice their fears regarding the nation's moral turpitude. But they were often almost indistinguishable from their libertarian counterparts in the concerns they were willing to express in front of 'them'.

The only alternative account that seems plausible rests upon authoritarians' concerns about the nation's 'moral decay' actually referring (however consciously) to the purported immorality of blacks, the moral decline of white Americans induced by living among blacks, and/or the degradation of the culture under the influence of blacks. If this was indeed the case, then authoritarians may well have been more reluctant to recount their moral critique of blacks to blacks, in much the same way they were disinclined to express criticism of blacks to blacks in their direct discussion of racial issues (Table 8.1). In the absence of dispositive evidence, I am unwilling to rule out this alternative explanation, but it does not appear as compelling as the first account. The moderation here in Table 8.3 seems most dependent upon the lurking presence of a black interview partner, as has mostly been the case for those prior incidents I characterized as unwillingness to criticize 'us' in front of 'them'. And the alternative mechanism allegedly responsible for moderating racial animosity (Table 8.1) seemed instead much more heavily dependent upon facing a Black primary interviewer head on, and consciously endeavoring to constrain the expression of beliefs both explicitly derogatory to blacks and recognized as politically incorrect. And none of this appears to be applicable in the current instance. In a nutshell, then, these patterns look more like authoritarians suppressing criticism of 'us' in front of 'them', than suppressing criticism of 'them' in front of 'them'.

#### Crime Has a Black Face: Race and Crime in the Subconscious

The second pattern worth noting in the current results does actually recall the findings of Table 8.1, but in regard to subjects' apparent *inability* to

control the activation and expression of negative racial stereotypes operating below the level of conscious awareness. Recall that when face to face with a black primary interviewer, authoritarians, who had consciously and successfully constrained the expression of all other derogatory beliefs, could not help but talk endlessly about blacks being violent and lazy (111). In that lone case, facing a black primary apparently subconsciously activated negative racial stereotypes, whose expression the subject was powerless to control. And here again, in Table 8.3, the sole exceptions to the general pattern stand out starkly against a backdrop of moderated criticism in the company of 'them', and are distinguished from the other dependent variables by their specific reference to crime. We find that authoritarians were vastly more likely than libertarians to fret about crime when talking directly to blacks (19, 110), whose allegedly disproportionate involvement in criminal activity we know forms a central component of white Americans' racial stereotypes (Sniderman and Piazza 1993; Hurwitz, and Peffley 1997; Peffley, Hurwitz, and Sniderman 1997; Mendelberg 2001).

Quite clearly – and not surprisingly, of course, given the array of evidence testifying to much the same phenomenon (see especially Mendelberg 2001) – there is something very particular about gazing upon a black face that fills many white Americans with visions of crime and violence that are beneath their awareness and beyond their conscious control. Authoritarians were somewhere between .20 and .29 more likely than libertarians to express great concern about crime and safety, even without the stimulus of looking directly at a black face (*l*9). But when speaking to a black primary interviewer, they were fully .80 more likely than libertarians to sound frantic about the "mollycoddling of people that need to be incarcerated for the rest of their lives . . . rather than incarcerated for a night's stay."

And as with the previous result (jii), the comments captured by the code in question (l9) did give the appearance of being generated below the level of conscious awareness, with race and crime continually juxtaposed in a manner difficult to explain without reference to subconscious linkages. For example, one subject wanted "the racial problem in Durham" to "get a lot better, so you don't have to worry about people fighting, going to the supermarket, crime." And another observed:

When we went to school, we didn't have policemen in schools, we didn't have guns in schools. They talk about violence on TV? We had violence on TV, we watched Westerns, everything. We didn't go out to shoot somebody just for the heck of shooting somebody. We had no, um, [mutters inaudibly to herself], we had no discrimination as far as I was concerned or as far as the people that I went to school with were concerned. You were fine, I was fine; it didn't make any difference.

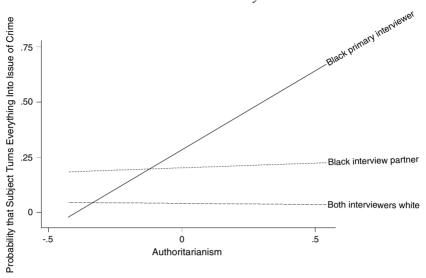


Figure 8.4. Authoritarians turn everything into issue of crime. *Source:* Table A2.11, row *l10*.

There was, in fact, a code explicitly assigned to a subject's inclination to turn everything into an issue of crime (lio), and this dependent variable displayed much the same pattern, with authoritarians being around .72 more likely than libertarians to slip from whatever topic had been raised by a black primary interviewer to fretting about crime. We see that in allwhite company, there was no real likelihood that either authoritarians or libertarians would display such a tendency, and each character had about a one in five chance of obsessing about crime with just a black partner sitting to the side (see Figure 8.4 and Table A2.11). But then authoritarians had around a .68 probability (and libertarians none whatsoever) of returning endlessly to the issue of crime when looking directly at a black primary interviewer. Clearly, then, as others have demonstrated before me, for many white Americans crime has a black face. But the unique story is in the details, and the contingencies here are critical. Only the authoritarians appeared shot through with tangled visions of race and crime. Only those already predisposed to intolerance of difference slipped seamlessly from looking diversity in the face to bemoaning the "mollycoddling" of criminals, to plotting wholesale overhaul of our "very benevolent judicial system."

Note that while these issues are certainly not settled, the prevailing view among many scholars of racial stereotyping, at least in the contemporary United States, is that more and less prejudiced individuals, alike, harbor

negative racial stereotypes, and that none can resist the automatic activation of those stereotypes that takes place below the level of conscious awareness (see especially Devine 1989). However, the current results (j11, l9, l10) would seem to indicate that simply gazing upon the face of a black interviewer, in an otherwise innocuous interaction, is insufficient to activate those stereotypes for extreme libertarians. Either that, or these very unprejudiced individuals really do harbor little in the way of negative stereotypes of blacks – and perhaps even possess positive preconceptions – even in a deeply and pervasively racist culture. Note that while any elaboration must remain conjecture in the absence of direct evidence, such dominance of strong predispositions over social learning might also suggest, inversely, that extreme authoritarians would harbor negative racial stereotypes even if socialized in a perfectly enlightened environment of tolerance.

### The Impending Crisis of Morality

So what did these characters have to say about the moral values of 'Americans' (however they understood that collective) when not diverted subconsciously to stereotypic images of black criminals, and when feeling at liberty in the company of whites to criticize their own people? We find that in these conditions, authoritarians generally appeared to be consumed with fears about an impending moral crisis, while libertarians remained fairly sanguine about the virtues of the citizenry. Authoritarians were about .80 more likely than libertarians to be "afraid" that morals were "on the decline" and to express great concern about Americans' purported loss of virtue (*l1*). One subject thought that there were "a lot of misguided people out there" who were now "coming of age . . . as adults" that "just didn't have the solid, family home." He predicted this was "certainly something we're going to have to deal with a lot in the future," worrying that "our society will probably suffer for that."

Another subject who repeatedly designated as his "number one" or "primary concern" the fact that morals had "really gone downhill since I was a child" listed a number of things he found intolerable that, by his account, were now publicly accepted: "it's acceptable to be a single parent, it's acceptable in many situations to smoke marijuana, much more hard drugs." The subject apparently believed the problem was not so much that the American public was failing to conform to accepted moral standards, but that standards of public morality had actually evaporated, to the point that "it's very open...I think just about anything goes today." And he clearly held public institutions responsible for this purported erosion of standards, from the media allowing swearing ("I think the first thing was 'my darling, I don't give a damn' in 'Gone with the Wind'")

to the Supreme Court disallowing school prayer; the latter was deemed especially culpable insofar as "with Supreme Court decisions, you can't use religion in schools; before, I think that had to impact, it helped to hold up our moral values."

In very stark contrast, libertarians were around .99 more likely than authoritarians (absent black visitors) to actually heap scorn upon the idea of the nation's moral decay (*l*<sub>2</sub>). As one subject insisted:

No, that's all bogus, I don't buy any of that... I understand that there are some people that say [mocking tone]: "We really ought to go back to the way things were done in the early 1950s and we were all better off then, and the 60s came along and ruined everything." And I *certainly* don't subscribe to that.

Essentially, then, in all-white company authoritarians almost never, but libertarians almost always, ridiculed the idea that the moral virtue of the American people was in steep decline. One subject neatly summarized in a simple joke her disdain for the notion of moral decay, the perceived hypocrisy of those she held responsible for the notion's currency, and her estimation of their importance, laughing: "Moral values? I think that the moral majority isn't."

A good number of libertarians subscribed explicitly or implicitly to some kind of moral relativism, as one subject described it: "I don't think that there's any one moral code that Americans agree with, or that all Americans should share the same morality." They tended to find the idea of absolute moral standards, applicable to all people and all times, anything from unrealistic to insupportable to preposterous. That is to say, they were disinclined to "reify" moral codes (Gabennesch 1972); rather, they understood those codes (like all norms of behavior) as human products that would naturally evolve to meet the demands of the contemporary environment, and the needs of people in a particular time and place. As one subject argued:

I believe that morals are pretty much a steady state. It may seem as if we're going down or going up. I mean, if you study the ancient world, you understand that...they were, you know, kind of up and down. So I don't agree that our sense of moral right and wrong needs to be restored because it's...come down from some mythical high.

Another subject laughed about how "we can't always live up to some bizarre Victorian ideal," and likewise observed that even though we sometimes disagree on moral standards, overall:

I think that eventually, the direction of the nation just reflects what is right and what is good; I think it is slow but it eventually gets there... So, I think there's a real difference today but I wouldn't consider it a decline.

Not surprisingly then, in all-white company libertarians proved to be a good deal more confident than authoritarians that the American people had strong, shared values (*l*<sub>3</sub>). Yet as noted earlier, when apparently induced by the presence of blacks to defend American virtue in front of the 'outsiders', authoritarians gave the appearance of actually being more "reassured" than libertarians that Americans "band together and stand up for what they believe in and . . . rise up in opposition against the bad." Another authoritarian likewise being audited by a black partner similarly expounded a conviction that what held Americans together was "our belief in the Almighty," finding it "reassuring, that regardless of who's up in the White House, the God Almighty that I believe in is still in control."

#### Moral Discipline: Governmental Regulation and Public Education

Authoritarians proved much more likely than libertarians to have actually formulated elaborate plans for stemming or reversing the purported tide of immorality and instilling greater moral discipline in the American people and their offspring. These proposals mostly involved more intense and pervasive public regulation of private moral choices by government decree, as well as programs of moral education and stronger discipline in schools and the home. Authoritarians were certainly much more likely than libertarians to talk of the government's responsibility for reversing the nation's supposed moral decline (14). One subject who hastened to note that he "definitely can't do a totalitarian state" nevertheless concluded that "if we the people can't maintain civility ourselves then somebody has to institute it." Others outlined rather specific plans for the government's efforts to shore up public morality, one subject going so far as to suggest that the government should "put out guidelines that would be good to go by as far as morally right and wrong," which would "you know, say we should do it this way or that way, and have some guidelines...that we could go by." And another had the president instituting a series of sweeping changes through the public schools:

Havin' a president put more emphasis on, uh, on religion, I believe, could start puttin' the Bible, not necessarily the Bible but puttin' prayer time back in chur, uh, back in public schools. And, um, start, start off, number one, every mornin' sayin', sayin' the pledge allegiance to the flag. I think that would definitely, that's uh, definitely help out. I think, I honestly believe there would be a lower crime rate.

Authoritarians were in fact around .57 more likely than libertarians to argue that the nation's schools had an important role to play in stemming the tide of immorality  $(l_5)$ . One subject proposed that "there has to be some type of required course that's going to teach us...to have higher

moral values than we have." But more typically, the 'education' authoritarians appeared to have in mind involved children simply learning by the application of force the constraints on their behavior. And quite often subjects would seem to be drawing connections (at some level of consciousness) between the alleged social benefits of corporal punishment of schoolchildren and capital punishment of criminals – as in the following, perhaps revealing, choice of words:

Well, I used to get spanked quite often in school. And, so you had a little fear of your teachers then... And today, teachers can't, aren't allowed to touch children. They can't discipline them, other than send them probably to detention or whatever... and that's why I think they get away with murder, you know?

Whether or not we believe this subject was actually imagining violent criminals by the time he concluded this train of thought, it does seem clear from their various comments that the authoritarians, far more than the libertarian subjects, believed that fear of retribution, external constraints, and physical force were appropriate means, indeed the ideal means, for regulating social behavior. They were certainly a great deal more likely than libertarians (so long as there was no black partner listening in) to charge that today's children had no respect for authority ( $l_7$ ) and that "the moral values that are gone" have been lost in large part due to "the oppression of the teachers" and the limits placed upon their use of force.

# The Failure of Families

So authoritarians were evidently more inclined than libertarians to hold formal institutions such as government and the education system responsible both for allowing, and now for redressing, the nation's alleged moral decline. But of course the family was also said to play an important role in each. For one, authoritarians were more likely than libertarians to think that family breakdown was a major source of society's ills (*l*6). One subject spoke of the detrimental effects of having "a lot of single parent households," which were surely "creating some of the problems we have." Another likewise urged the need to "just get back to the two parent home," which purportedly "gets 'em together well when the children are young," whereas "once they grow up, really, [whistles] whew!" The notion that the breakdown of the traditional family unit has led inexorably to moral decay and societal disarray was certainly a common theme, as in this bleak prospectus:

The nuclear family is disintegrating completely. Marriages are completely shattered, in disarray. No marriage, it seems like. Strong family, cohesive unit seems to have dissolved rapidly, morals plummeting. Drug problem, of course, the drug problem has got to be paramount. And the frequency of firearms.

Finally, note that even traditional families were found lacking, in the sense of paying too much attention to the children's material needs while taking insufficient care with their moral education. One subject chastised those parents who "may say, well, I buy their clothes, I feed 'em and I send 'em to school" and then "they think that's the end of it," except apparently "that is not the end of it by any means." There was a notable propensity among authoritarians to consider the traditional, patriarchal family unit both the ideal instrument of moral training and the appropriate model for social organization more generally: a central element other scholars have likewise detected in both authoritarian and conservative ideology (Wilson 1973; Kohn 1974). The following rather wistful sentiment captures the authoritarian vision of moral order perfectly, with societal regeneration said to begin

in the home, with parents having strong standards, biblical standards. Starting right in the home, and for the fathers to take the lead in the family and to move ahead, with the roles of the wife and the father and the children all understood and carried out. And then just goin' on as it grows in the community, for that seed to come forth and bring that whole attitude into the whole community.

#### CONCLUSION: TWO DISTINGUISHED CHARACTERS

In total, the analyses presented in this and the preceding chapter should increase confidence that we have isolated a fundamental predisposition with considerable explanatory power across the intolerance domain; that we have accurately described the motives and attributes distinguishing authoritarians and libertarians; and that that which has been depicted as the basic dilemma underwriting authoritarianism – and thereby the central issues at stake in the 'battle' between these two characters – is fully supported by data shaped and structured to a minimal degree by my own preconceived notions. Of course, I also hoped, with these more qualitative data, to provide a richer understanding of, a 'feel' for the characters involved that would make more vivid and compelling the experimental analyses to follow.

In order to appreciate the full import of these in-depth interview data, it is necessary to remind ourselves that the authoritarian and libertarian interview subjects had been distinguished, initially, simply by the qualities they deemed most important to encourage in children, according to their responses on the original DCS97 questionnaire. The authoritarian subjects had merely indicated that they thought it was more important that a child obeys his parents, has good manners, is neat and clean, has respect for his elders and follows the rules. And the libertarians had simply suggested that a child should be responsible for his own actions, have good sense and sound judgment, be interested in how and

why things happen, think for himself, and follow his own conscience. Discriminated in this exceedingly simple fashion, the authoritarian and libertarian subjects went on to display, eight months later, very distinctive demeanors and capabilities, and widely varying reactions to differing people, ideas, and behaviors, in accordance with theoretical expectations.

From the beginning, the libertarians showed themselves to be much more trusting, cooperative, and amenable to strangers entering their homes. And they were far more relaxed and comfortable with the unusual experience of having to become quickly acquainted with those strangers. and discussing with them at length a number of sensitive issues. Authoritarians required stronger financial incentives to participate, particularly if it would entail interacting with blacks. And, evidently riddled with subconscious visions of blacks being prone to violence – indeed, perpetually on the verge of committing some crime – the experience of facing a black primary interviewer induced a truly astonishing deterioration in the complexity of their discussions. And it also yielded a very notable (although again, seemingly unconscious) increase in their reliance upon language emphasizing social exclusion and separation. (Similarly, having a black interview partner silently auditing their discussions yielded a wide array of extremely odd behaviors among authoritarians: the products, it would seem, of the anxiety induced by this apparently ominous presence). Whereas authoritarians facing a black interviewer seemed to become mentally unhinged and withdrawn, libertarians, by contrast, appeared excited and engaged in these conditions, manifesting a sharp rise in the complexity of their discussions, and decreased reliance upon the language of social exclusion and separation. But even without the stimulus of facing a black interviewer, libertarians showed themselves to be far more articulate, verbose, and cognitively complex in their discussions than authoritarians.

As for the actual content of those discussions, authoritarians and libertarians proved to be as distinct as the theory predicted, and in the precise ways that it predicted, in their beliefs about race, politics, and morality. In regard to race, they were distinguished most starkly by libertarians' almost universal recognition of racial discrimination and prejudice, contrasted with authoritarians' pervasive tendency to think that blacks had a good deal in contemporary U.S. society, and that they had only themselves to blame for their unequal position. And as noted earlier, these varying attributions of responsibility for the problem are certainly no small matter, consistently proving critical to white Americans' ability to summon up sympathy for the plight of blacks, and willingness to support interventions designed to redress discrimination and inequality.

#### One Right Way

As for attitudes regarding patriotism, politics, and politicians, it proves to be not much of a stretch to characterize authoritarians – in the terminology of The Authoritarian Personality (Adorno et al. 1950) – as "pre-Fascist" personalities. There was certainly evidence attesting to their discomfort with disagreement, and distaste for the practice of democracy. In terms of the overall content of their discussions and the language in which they expressed their ideas, libertarians generally proved far more comfortable than authoritarians voicing criticism and complaints, and talked blithely and often about diversity, difference, and nonconformity, as about all the things that separate and divide us. For their part, authoritarians clearly found it difficult to reconcile political disagreement and debate with being a patriotic American. They seemed to understand democratic politics and politicians as obscuring and undermining, rather than revealing and promoting, the needs of America and Americans. In a very real sense, then, authoritarians can reasonably be labeled 'super-patriots', irrespective of whether they actually consider themselves part of the movement bearing that name. Authoritarians' markedly greater support for the superpatriot/militia movement can be understood simply as the ultimate end product of this tendency to apprehend a 'True America' transcending the national government, and a self-evident 'common good' beyond the reach of 'petty partisan politics' and democratic negotiation.

Finally, this characteristic authoritarian notion that what 'we' believe in is absolute and transcendent likewise seems to pervade beliefs about morality. Nothing distinguished our two characters more than authoritarians' great dismay and alarm regarding the purported crisis of morality, as against the almost universal scorn that libertarians heaped upon this whole notion of 'moral decay'. It is evident that authoritarians are inclined to "reification" of social norms and processes, that they tend to think of social reality as "encompassing a superordinate normative dimension, an external locus where events are determined, where moral authority resides, and to which men must adapt themselves" (Gabennesch 1972: 862-63). Thus institutions, rules, customs, and norms are treated not as human products – fashioned by us and adapted by us, to meet the needs of a particular time and place - but rather as if installed by some external force, "superordinate and infused with transcendental authority" (Gabennesch 1972: 864). Unsurprisingly, then, authoritarians proved to be greatly alarmed by departures from moral and cultural absolutism, by any deviation from unquestioning conformity to external authority. And most characteristic of all, they invariably looked first to leaders and institutions to reinstate and reinforce the normative order, seeking to marshal the authority of the state to "institute" the maintenance of "civility" and "hold up our moral values," via everything from reciting prayers in public

schools and pledging allegiance to the flag, to the government "putting out guidelines" or having "some type of required course that's going to teach us to have higher moral values."

Viewed in their entirety, the data presented in this and the preceding chapter certainly compel the conclusion that we are dealing here with two very distinct characters, whose widely varying values, motives, and capabilities shape everything from interpersonal behavior toward strangers and different others, to understandings of what constitute and cause pressing social problems, and the designation of *appropriate political responses* to same. In the following chapter, we will finally return to the heart of the fundamental dynamic with which we began, experimentally manipulating those visions of moral decay and corrupted leaders that so evidently dominate authoritarians' darkest fears, and discovering exactly what responses authoritarians and libertarians demand of the polity as they rush to the 'barricades' to mount their characteristic defenses.

# Manning the Barricades: Racism and Intolerance under Conditions of Normative Threat

The overarching goals of this work were to develop and test a general theory of intolerance of difference that could explain the most intolerance with the merest model, while accounting for both persistent inclinations to intolerance, and varying expression of that intolerance under differing conditions. In the early chapters, I elaborated and defended a dynamic mechanism purporting to explain the manifold expressions of intolerance of difference with just an enduring psychological predisposition responding to changing conditions of normative threat. Chapter 4 provided some initial tests of the theory, in the course of demonstrating the ability of the authoritarian dynamic to reconcile extant theories alternately emphasizing the psychology or the politics of intolerance, and to dissolve those persistent empirical puzzles long hindering acceptance of the value of the concept. But in the intervening chapters, the authoritarian dynamic has essentially been idling in the wings, its return to center stage awaiting persuasive demonstration that authoritarianism is a deep-seated predisposition, whose primary motives yield a functionally related array of stances concerned with minimizing difference in all its manifestations; that it is distinct from conservatism in its character, origins, and effects; and that it is the primary determinant of intolerance of difference across domains, cultures, and time.

With that much established, we return now to the fundamental dynamic with which we began. I have argued that racial, political, and moral intolerance and punitiveness are "kindred spirits": that they are functionally related stances, driven by the same engine, fueled by the same impulses, and manifested under the same conditions. That is to say, intolerance of racial diversity, political dissent, and moral deviance are all primarily driven by authoritarianism, fueled by the impulse to enhance unity and conformity, and manifested under conditions of normative threat, that is, conditions that threaten that oneness and sameness. Such conditions of normative threat activate authoritarian predispositions and increase

the manifestation of their characteristic defensive stances, while provoking countervailing reactions from libertarians most intent on protecting freedom and difference precisely when they might seem too risky for the collective.

In these conditions, authoritarians and libertarians "man the barricades" in defense of their alternate resolutions of the appropriate balance between group authority and uniformity, as against individual autonomy and diversity (Duckitt 1989) - their defensive stances essentially amounting to demands for the use of (or limits on) collective authority. Thus while authoritarianism, as we have just seen, induces personal coercion of, and bias against, different others (racial and ethnic out-groups, political dissidents, moral deviants), it is more commonly manifested as political demands for authoritative constraints on their behavior, that is, as demands upon the polity. The latter will typically include legal discrimination against minorities and restrictions on immigration; limits on free speech, assembly, and association; and the regulation of moral behavior, for example, via policies regarding school prayer, abortion, censorship and homosexuality, and punitive enforcement. The authoritarian dynamic, then, provides a plausible and parsimonious account of political conflict across the seemingly diverse domains of race and immigration, civil liberties, morality, crime and punishment, and of when and why those battles will be most heated.

#### THE COSTS OF A NARROW PERSPECTIVE

I want to emphasize again that this is not an exercise in theoretical imperialism. Attitudes and behaviors in each of these domains – how they are generated, how they are expressed, and how they are addressed and employed – are all influenced by ideas, interests, and emotions specific to each domain, and by the peculiarities of local history, culture, and politics. I am suggesting only that there is a common mechanism explaining much of the variance within and across these different domains, whose existence and import are obscured by an exclusively narrow perspective, at considerable cost to our understanding of both those specific attitudes and behaviors, and intolerance of difference in general. These costs may include that we fail to *fully* understand, that we fundamentally *mis* understand, or that we understand *only for now*.

### Missing Important Commonalities

Lack of education, for example, is consistently implicated in racial, political, and moral intolerance alike, but in the absence of any unifying perspective, the explanations provided for that association tend to vary

by domain. Education is said to diminish racial intolerance primarily by exposing individuals to the libertarian norms of academe and "sophisticated" society; to decrease political intolerance largely by developing the knowledge and cognitive skills necessary to apply abstract principles of tolerance to specific situations; and to reduce moral intolerance by its association with secularization, diverse life experiences, and increased breadth of perspective. And surely each of these accounts is true in part. But lack of education, as we have seen, is also strongly associated with authoritarianism, whose fundamental distaste for difference and complexity efficiently accounts for all these varieties of intolerance.

Moreover, education only imperfectly reflects – hence inconsistently reflects across cultures and time - variations in knowledge and cognitive skills, and exposure to "sophisticated" society and libertarian norms. Thus, as we saw in Chapter 5, education appears less consequential to tolerance once we sample across cultures varying in the accessibility, intent, and content of education. Similarly, while in many liberal democracies, political and moral intolerance have diminished as mass publics grow better educated, education then becomes a far less important determinant of tolerance, in part because broader access to education renders it a poorer indicator of superior knowledge and cognitive skills. At the same time, the increasing ab-norm-ality of intolerance appears to decrease the importance of social learning and sociocultural factors, and to enhance the explanatory power of authoritarianism, that is, to increase the ability of aberrant psychology to explain this increasingly aberrant behavior. An exclusively narrow perspective, then, leaves us at risk of missing important commonalities, misattributing effects, and building theories around explanatory variables with erratic or fleeting explanatory power.

### Misattributing Effects

Similar issues arise in regard to the conviction that religiosity is the primary determinant of moral intolerance. Since all major religions concern themselves with inculcating rules of moral (especially sexual) behavior, and since many encourage proselytism, it is difficult to resist the assumption that religiosity is the major source of demands for regulation of morality. But the evidence is rather compelling on this point. Authoritarianism proves to be the primary determinant of moral intolerance in the WVS90–95 pooled dataset (a religious upbringing explains less than half the variance explained by authoritarianism), and its dominance as an explanatory factor is especially apparent in our U.S. data (as across the liberal democracies sampled by the WVS). In the GSS72–00, whereas authoritarianism alone accounts for 20 percent of the variance in moral intolerance, and fully 26 percent by the last decade, a fundamentalist

upbringing on its own can explain only four percent of the variance, and adds just one percent to the account provided by authoritarianism. Other means of indexing the religiosity of one's upbringing (e.g., being raised Baptist, or atheist) contribute even less to the account.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to *current* religiosity, we know that both religious fundamentalism and authoritarianism are substantially rooted in heritable personality factors with some mutual resonance (see McCourt et al. 1999; Waller et al. 1990; Loehlin 1992; Bergeman et al. 1993; McCrae 1996; Waller 1999). Moreover, it is to be expected that authoritarianism attracts individuals to monolithic systems of collective membership, belief, and ritual. So one will find stronger association between moral intolerance and measures of *current* religious belief and practice, especially those steeped in fundamentalism and evangelism. But that association is attenuated with adequate controls for authoritarianism, so long as the dependent variables are able to distinguish between mere disapproval of and demand for regulation of certain behaviors. Ultimately, there is no necessary relation between belief in and personal commitment to a religious code, and demand for state coercion of others' adherence to same. The latter rests *primarily* on something beyond personal faith and individual codes of conduct, having to do with a compulsion to control the diversity and complexity of one's environment, that is, a need to regulate other people's behavior. These compulsions find expression and weigh upon the polity in religious and irreligious societies alike; they persist in the latter – and grow increasingly consequential – even as public demand for moral regulation wanes with increasing secularization<sup>2</sup>; and most importantly, they extend their claws into every domain of social behavior, seeking restrictions on all manner of difference.

### Neither Target nor Domain Specific

The latter is ultimately the most critical point. Our understanding of behavior within each domain of intolerance is at best seriously limited, and at worst steered awry, by an exclusive focus on domain-specific factors, to the neglect of the common impulses that have individuals calling on the government to limit pornography, and crime, and public demonstrations, and immigration, and other races moving in next door. For

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This modest impact of religious upbringing upon moral intolerance is consistent with our earlier findings across the WVS that a religious upbringing can account for just 1 percent of the variance in authoritarianism, and 3 percent of the variance in general intolerance of difference.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The apparent impact of authoritarianism on moral intolerance in the Netherlands (Table 5.1) is an obvious case in point.

example, as noted in the very first pages of this work, we know that white Americans incensed about blacks' purported welfare dependency and criminality generally can be relied upon also for complaints about Jews, homosexuals, and the ACLU (Sniderman and Piazza 1993; Kinder and Sanders 1996). At the risk of belaboring the point, I would simply plead that the notion that some general and enduring tendency to intolerance of difference fuels intolerance in each specific domain is surely more plausible than the alternatives: that perceptions of blacks being lazy and welfare-dependent somehow generate complaints about immigrants willing to work too hard for too little money, and about Jews being rather too "sharp" and successful; that anti-Semites are likewise incensed, and driven to intolerant and punitive stances, by immorality, violence, and family breakdown in the Jewish community; that racial animosity somehow fuels pleas not just for "crackdowns" on drugs, gangs, and prostitution, but also for censorship of popular media, and discrimination against gays; and most curious of all, that negative affect for blacks and Jews mysteriously morphs into a desire to restrict the speech rights of Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan.

The latter phenomenon is particularly illuminating. Authoritarians' distaste for diversity and complexity – especially for public disagreement – consistently produces demands for restrictions on the civil liberties of *both* black separatists and white supremacists, atheists and religious zealots, communists and super-patriots.<sup>3</sup> One of the telling empirical regularities in the political intolerance domain, then, is that authoritarians, while generally more tolerant of free speech for racists than they are *for* others, nevertheless remain more intolerant of free speech for racists *than* others – that is, they consistently prove more intolerant of the free expression

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> It is clearly not unusual to be intolerant of the exercise of civil liberties by groups for which one has great affection. This has direct implications for the long-running debate over how best to measure political intolerance, in regard to the validity of the so-called "least-liked" methodology, which gauges one's willingness to restrict the civil rights of the group that one likes least. The problem is that while tolerance of one's "least-liked" group might reflect general political tolerance, one could be intolerant of a disliked group because one is generally intolerant, or simply because one dislikes that group. The problem would remain the same if one alternately adopted the strategy of asking about the civil liberties that ought to be accorded the respondent's "most-liked" group. In that case, while intolerance of one's "mostliked" group might reflect general political intolerance, again, one could be tolerant of a liked group because one is generally tolerant, or simply because one likes that group. It seems clear, then, that the most valid measurement strategy is to gauge general political intolerance by the respondent's willingness to restrict the rights of a variety of target groups, both disliked and liked (see also Gibson 1992), or at the very least, to inquire about the rights of both one's least-liked and most-liked groups.

of different opinions, including racist opinions, than libertarians (see Table D.9 for a U.S. illustration drawing on the *GSS*72-00 data). Clamping down on fringe groups agitating – at odds with widely shared norms – on behalf of contentious ideas about racial inferiority does, at that moment, pit authoritarians' great distaste for disagreement and nonconformity against their attraction to the prospect of racial homogeneity. But this empirical regularity persists – across domains, cultures, and time – on account of the generality and primacy of aversion to difference.

#### The Expression versus the Generation of Intolerance

So for the most part, neither intolerance of different beliefs and behaviors, nor intolerance of different races, is target specific; much of it is not even domain specific. Again, I am at pains to emphasize that there are critical domain-specific questions whose adequate investigation requires resort to domain-specific variables, especially in regard to the manner in which certain attitudes are expressed, addressed, and employed in the politics of a particular society. The vast literature exploring racial prejudice in the contemporary United States - touched upon in the Chapter 6 discussion of the purported entanglement of laissez-faire values in the expression of racial animosity – is a good case in point (see Sears, Sidanius, and Bobo 2000 for a survey and synthesis of this literature). As earlier noted, prominent in that literature are theories regarding "racial resentment" (also "modern" or "symbolic" racism), which argue that oldfashioned "Iim Crow racism" is a thing of the past, that "racial prejudice today is not what it once was; its public expression and private language are different now from what they were in the days of slavery" (Kinder and Sanders 1996: 94).4 While the kind of traditional prejudices that accompanied segregation and "biological racism" have declined, they are said

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Scholars have actually suggested the existence of a variety of "new" racisms. "Aversive racism" theorists argue that old-fashioned racism is dying out, but that the residue of lingering negative feelings causes anxiety and discomfort, thus motivating whites to avoid interacting with blacks (Gaertner and Dovidio 1986). "Ambivalent racism" theorists believe that whites are torn between positive feelings for blacks that emerge from their genuine support for egalitarian values, and the negative feelings toward blacks that stem from the lingering perception that blacks violate the more individualistic values associated with the Protestant work ethic (Katz, Wackenhut, and Hass 1986; Katz and Hass 1988). Theorists of "covert racism" argue that racial prejudices persist, but that their overt expression is muted by new, post–civil rights era norms of equality (Sigall and Page 1971; Kinder and Sanders 1996; Mendelberg 2001). Finally, "subtle racism" theory is an attempt to extend symbolic racism theory beyond the United States (Pettigrew and Meertens 1995; Meertens and Pettigrew 1997).

to have left behind a residue of negative affect toward blacks as well as a variety of negative stereotypes, most critically, the lingering suspicion that blacks regularly violate certain time-honored American values having to do with individual self-reliance (see also Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997 regarding "laissez-faire racism"). This "new" racism is considered not a response to direct threats to self-interest, but rather "a form of resistance to change in the racial status quo based on moral feelings that blacks violate such traditional American values as individualism and self-reliance, the work ethic, obedience, and discipline" (Kinder and Sears 1981: 416).

Whether this new racism is actually new, and actually racism, are subjects of a long-running debate<sup>5</sup> tangential to the concerns of the current investigation, although I will note that "racial resentment" responds to the authoritarian dynamic just as do measures of "old-fashioned racism," suggesting that whatever else (e.g., laissez-faire values, individualism, inegalitarianism) it might also be reflecting (appropriately or inappropriately. depending on one's perspective), it is reflecting good old-fashioned racial animosity in considerable measure. The main point I want to make here is that this vast body of research illustrates both the advantages and disadvantages of a domain-specific focus in the study of intolerance. The best of this work has taught us a great deal about racial politics and policy in the contemporary United States: about the subtle but politically consequential ways in which racial animosity may be expressed, addressed, and employed, in an era of racial egalitarianism and changing norms of acceptable public discourse, within a cultural context lending force and legitimacy to (both real and apparent) commitments to economic freedom and individual self-reliance. We have learned how central elements of the "American Creed" have been "used: how they were employed and for what ends...how they were invented, stolen for other ends, remade, abandoned" (Rodgers 1987: 3). But less careful work - through the myopia induced by exclusive focus on intolerance in one domain and one culture - has seemed determined to identify manifold and, supposedly, uniquely American varieties of racism, confusing the manner in which these sentiments manifest and are utilized with the forces supposedly generating the sentiments.

It is to be expected that racial animosity will typically be expressed in acceptable terms, which usually means in terms of the core values of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See Kinder and Sears (1981); Bobo (1983; 1988); McConahay (1986); Sniderman, and Tetlock (1986); Sears (1988); Sears and Funk (1991); Sniderman et al. (1991; 1996); Sidanius et al. (1992); Sniderman and Piazza (1993); Wood (1994); Kinder and Sanders (1996); Sears et al. (1997); Alvarez and Brehm (1997); Gilens, Sniderman, and Kuklinski (1998); Gilens (1999); Kinder and Mendelberg (2000); Sears, Henry, and Kosterman (2000); Sniderman, Crosby, and Howell (2000).

the culture. Just as American racists talk about how African Americans lack the work ethic, how they abuse welfare and are unwilling to "work their way up," French racists speak of North African immigrants lacking responsibility and self-sufficiency, and about the unfairness of their expecting and receiving special privileges and unequal treatment from the state (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991; Silverman 1992; Lamont 1995; 2000). But in the end, the complaints of the American racists are no more *generated* by laissez-faire values than the complaints of the French are generated by their socialist and republican principles.

### DIFFERENCE-ISM: THE GENERALITY AND PRIMACY OF AVERSION TO DIFFERENCE

I have argued that a good deal of what we call racial intolerance is not even primarily about race, let alone blacks, let alone African Americans and their purported shortcomings. Ultimately, my contention is that much of what we think of as racism, likewise political and moral intolerance. is more helpfully understood as "difference-ism." This is a strong and no doubt controversial claim, in need of some strong and incontrovertible evidence: the kind that can only be provided by precisely designed and randomly applied experimental treatments. Evidence directly bearing on this issue will be furnished by experimental conditions in the Cultural Revolution Experiment 1995, which alter the boundaries of "us" and "them" by conveying "news reports" of the existence or absence of alien life forms. The objectives of the CRE95 experiment (a laboratory experiment with U.S. college students as subjects) were previously described in Chapter 3, and both the threatening and the reassuring versions of the five (unbeknownst to subjects) fictitious news magazine stories used as stimulus materials are provided in Appendix C.

In all other investigations of these data reported in the current work,<sup>6</sup> I have analyzed only the relative impact of each of the *threatening* news reports, with a view to distinguishing the influence of normative threat on expressions of intolerance from the effects of other kinds of threat that can surely be considered more frightening and arousing from any other perspective, including simple common sense. And most of the analyses reported later in this chapter continue with that design and specification. Recall that these five threatening reports conveyed news about increasing diversity in public opinion; political leaders consistently proving unworthy of our trust (i.e., the two critical normative threats); a pervasively unjust world in which bad things happen to good people; scientific proof

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Responses to both the threatening *and* the reassuring stimuli are investigated for other purposes in the companion to this work (Stenner n.d.).

that there is no life after death; and official NASA reports of imminent contact with alien life forms. However, as explained in Chapter 3, each subject was also assigned to read one of five *reassuring* news reports, which were simply as close to inverse reflections of the five threatening articles as I could manage to construct within the bounds of coherence and plausibility. The threatening and the reassuring article to be read by the subject were each randomly assigned, but with one obvious contingency: a subject could not be assigned to read both the threatening and the reassuring (inverse) version of the same story – for example, a subject would not read "news" of both increasing discord and increasing consensus in public opinion.

For my purposes here, we make use of just those two experimental conditions in which subjects read news of an official report finally released by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, said to be based on "an analysis of the billions of radio signals received from outer space over the last 20 years." This report decisively concluded either that there were alien life forms "eager to communicate with us," which, while they "clearly mean us no harm," would "make actual contact with us here on earth within the next few years" (threatening version), or else that "human life on earth is without a doubt the only intelligent life form in the galaxy" (reassuring version). The impact of each of these conditions upon the propensity of subjects of varying authoritarianism to express intolerance of different races, beliefs, and behaviors constitutes, then, a precise test of the claim that much of what we call racial, political, or moral intolerance is better understood as "difference-ism." The "aliens" story was expressly designed to be the critical contrast condition for all analyses of the CRE95, representing as it does the scenario that ought to be the most threatening - and certainly more threatening than mere public discord and flawed political leaders - from any perspective other than that at the heart of the authoritarian dynamic. At the same time, this scenario conveys information that should induce authoritarians if they are indeed primarily concerned with establishing and defending oneness and sameness - to reconfigure their mental boundaries of "us" and "them."

#### Changing Conceptions of "Us" and "Them"

I have argued that much intolerance of different races, beliefs, and behaviors is driven *primarily* not by domain-specific factors, and not by animosity toward any specific target (e.g., blacks, communists, homosexuals, criminals), but rather by a fundamental and overwhelming desire to establish and defend *some* collective order of oneness and sameness. In short, the entire defensive arsenal is fueled by the need to identify, glorify,

privilege, and reward "us," and whatever beliefs and behaviors make us "us," and to differentiate, denigrate, disadvantage, and punish "them," and whatever beliefs and behaviors make them "them." That being so, should a new and *even more different* "them" make those who were formerly "them" look more like "us," then the formerly "them" should no longer be denigrated and punished, but instead come to share in the glory and rewards of being "us."

These hypotheses were put to direct test by contrasting the intolerance expressed by experimental subjects – with varying predispositions to authoritarianism, and to conservatism – exposed to either the "aliens" or the "no aliens" scenario in the CRE95. As previously described (and elaborated in Appendix C), authoritarianism was measured for this student sample by the words they found "more appealing" between "obey or question," "rules or progress," "obedience or curiosity." And political conservatism was indicated by the standard self-placement measure. As in all preceding investigations of this experiment, I retained only non-Hispanic whites (103 subjects from the original sample of 165) and employed dependent variables most effectively reflecting the manner in which intolerance is typically expressed by that majority. In order to illustrate the generality of difference-ism, and the common impulse fueling intolerant responses across seemingly diverse domains, the analysis included two dependent variables, reflecting extreme expressions of intolerance of different races, and intolerance of different beliefs and behaviors, respectively. The first dependent variable indicated racial intolerance by means of three equally weighted components: negativity of feelings about African Americans; how much more positively subjects felt about the Ku Klux Klan than about some mainstream political actors (a baseline composite averaging affect for Bill Clinton, Bob Dole, conservatives, and liberals); and how much more favorably they evaluated "members of the American Nazi Party, who believe that Blacks and Jews are genetically inferior" than they did communists, in terms of their being violent, dishonest, threatening, untrustworthy, dangerous, unpredictable, and extremist.

Second, extreme intolerance of different beliefs and behaviors was reflected by eagerness to remove from the community altogether – by imprisonment or execution – those who fail to conform. This punitiveness measure was constructed from two equally weighted components, indicating subjects' approval of the death penalty, and whether they thought the purpose of prison should be to punish criminals or to rehabilitate them back into the community. (Complete details on measurement and scale construction are provided in Appendix C). Racial intolerance and punitiveness were analyzed as a function of authoritarianism, political conservatism, and the interaction of each of those predispositions with exposure to our "news reports" on the existence or absence of alien life forms.

(Note that all variables were scored to be of one-unit range, with the predispositions each centered on a mean of o). The results of these analyses are fully reported in Table C.5, and graphically depicted in Figures 9.1.1 and 9.1.2 (see also Figures C.2.1 and C.2.2).

# A New and Even More Different "Them": The Malleable Boundaries of "Us"

The findings are consistent with expectations. Among those subjects absolutely assured that the "life forms that exist right here on earth are the only beings with which we will ever have to make our peace" – that is, that the difference they currently confront is the most difference they will ever confront – moving across the (one-unit) range of the authoritarianism measure increases racial intolerance by 29 percentage points (Figure 9.1.1). But among those learning that NASA has verified the existence of alien life forms – "other beings who are very different from us in ways that we are not yet even able to imagine" – authoritarianism decreases racial intolerance by very nearly half the range of the dependent variable. Clearly, to those relentlessly monitoring sameness and difference, black people seem more like "us" than "them" once there are green people afoot, and as such, are then lavished with all the glory and rewards

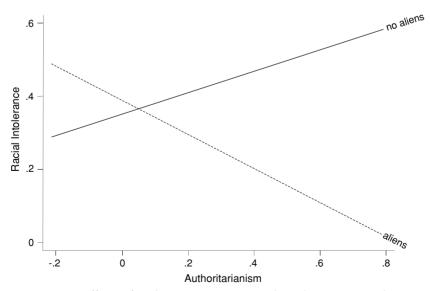


Figure 9.1.1. Effects of authoritarianism on racial intolerance given changing conceptions of "us" and "them" (*CRE95*). *Source*: Table C.5, column 2.

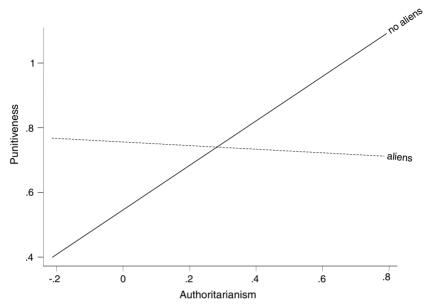


Figure 9.1.2. Effects of authoritarianism on punitiveness given changing conceptions of "us" and "them." *Source*: Table C.5, column 3.

authoritarians reserve for "us." Thus in the "aliens" condition, authoritarians actually express great affection for African Americans, and distaste for Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan, and far more than do libertarians, who seem to grow more intolerant (and punitive) when confronting the prospect of alien encounters. These findings simply cannot be sensible unless much of what we call racial intolerance is primarily about difference more than race.

#### Defending Some Oneness, Not Some One

Moreover, we see much the same pattern in regard to punitiveness (Figure 9.1.2), once again suggesting the common motive and mechanism underwriting intolerance of different races, and intolerance of different beliefs and behaviors. Among subjects guaranteed that there are no alien life forms "with understandings of the world and ways of behaving very different from our own" – in effect, that humanity as currently constituted represents about as much diversity and complexity as they will ever need to contend with – authoritarianism increases enthusiasm for punitiveness by over two-thirds of the range of the dependent variable. But again, authoritarianism actually reduces punitiveness among those now expecting

to confront "unknown and very different forms of life," and to have to "come to terms with new ways of looking at things and entirely different understandings of the world." Under these conditions, authoritarians become far more willing to rehabilitate the out-cast back into the community, since all the criminals and deviants still seem far more familiar and akin than whatever strange beings might be tripping about the universe.

We should also note, given our secondary interest in distinguishing authoritarianism from conservatism (Chapters 5 and 6), that these manipulations have entirely the opposite effect upon conservatives (see Figures C.2.1 and C.2.2), that is, upon those purported to be reassured and comforted *more* by stability and certainty (e.g., established hierarchies and mandatory sentences) than by sameness and oneness. Thus, in direct contrast to the reactions of authoritarians, this kind of cosmic uncertainty actually induces from conservatives more racist and (especially) punitive behavior than they will normally display when their universe is not shifting so dramatically.

Overall, these findings are perfectly consistent with recent research into what has been labeled the "common ingroup identity model" (Gaertner et al. 1993). This perspective suggests that redefining the boundaries of "us" and "them" by creating a common in-group identity at a superordinate level is a fruitful approach to dealing with those who are intolerant of difference, reducing bias and minimizing intergroup conflict.

In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that the reversal of the influence of authoritarianism depicted in Figures 9.1.1 and 9.1.2 was accomplished by nothing other than leading subjects to expect imminent contact with a new and even more different "them." No new information was conveyed about African Americans, Klansmen, Nazis, or criminals. It is not that the behavior of "us" and "them" changed. It is not even that behavior toward "us" and "them" changed. It is just that the boundaries of "us" and "them" changed. Whoever "we" were, "we" were still glorified and rewarded. The fundamental motives underwriting intolerance and their characteristic products are thus clearly exposed. Shifting authoritarians' conceptions of "us" and "them" dramatically altered the outcomes yielded by their predispositions because those predispositions are concerned, and those outcomes are intended, to privilege and defend some oneness, not some one.

### EXPERIMENTAL MANIPULATION OF THE AUTHORITARIAN DYNAMIC

This brings us back finally to the heart of the fundamental dynamic with which we began: to those functionally related stances, driven by the same engine, fueled by the same impulses, and manifested under the same

conditions. For the remainder of this chapter we will trace the workings of the authoritarian dynamic, from its initiation with the activation of the predisposition, to its conclusion in explicit demands upon the polity. This final investigation will rely heavily on converging evidence generated by the experimental manipulation of threat and reassurance in two different studies: the *CRE95* described in the preceding section, and an experiment embedded in the *Multi-Investigator Study 1999*. Before launching into the investigation, then, we should first refresh our memory of the main features and virtues of each study.

As explained more fully in Chapter 3, the CRE95 has all the advantages afforded by a laboratory experiment. It allowed me to implement a forceful manipulation of threat and reassurance, tightly controlled and precisely applied, with each subject reading at his or her own pace through two purported news magazine articles, averaging 500 words apiece. (Again, one article was intended to be threatening and the other reassuring, with the selection of each story – from among five threatening and five reassuring scenarios – and their order of presentation all randomly assigned). This mix of positive and negative news approximates the manner in which such information is typically conveyed under natural conditions, while explicit demand for extensive written reactions to each article ensured that subjects paid maximum attention to this information. However, while strong in internal validity, the CRE95 suffers the inevitable limits on generalizability attaching to experiments conducted with student "samples of convenience," extracted from their natural environs and subjected to inevitably artificial experiences in the laboratory (see Kinder and Palfrey 1993).

On the other hand, the MIS99 experiment, while not allowing for such a forceful manipulation, has great external validity, embedded as it was within a large-sample, random-digit telephone survey covering the mainland United States (see Sniderman et al. 1999). (My own analyses retain 844 non-Hispanic white respondents from among 1,067 completed interviews). This allowed for a complex experiment capable of clearly distinguishing the effects of different kinds of threats and reassurances; moreover, it permits us to generalize with considerable confidence from those sample findings to the relevant population. But this format placed inevitable limits on the strength of the experimental manipulations. As explained more fully in Chapter 3, subjects were randomly assigned to one of eleven conditions: a control condition in which no information was provided, and ten treatment conditions in which subjects were told that we were "interested in what people can recall about major news stories; I'm going to read you a summary of a major news story and then I'll ask you how you feel about it." The interviewer then read an (unbeknownst to the subjects) fictitious news story, designed to provide either

(a) threatening *or* (b) reassuring (for authoritarians) information in one of five dimensions: (1) belief diversity versus consensus; (2) stable diversity versus changing together; (3) bad versus good political leadership; (4) economic decline versus growth; and (5) blacks gaining relative to whites or vice versa. (See Table 3.2 for the complete stories). The first six conditions (1a–3b) obviously represent the classic normative threats and reassurances, while the last four (4a–5b) were intended to distinguish the impact of normative threat from that of more commonly cited sources of intolerance, such as economic distress, and real intergroup conflict over material goods (Hovland and Sears 1940; Olzak 1992; Green, Glaser, and Rich 1998).

As explained in Chapter 3, and tested in Chapter 6, treatments 2a and 2b (among other things) expose the critical distinctions between authoritarians and conservatives by making orthogonal the conditions with which each is said to be primarily concerned: stability versus change for conservatives, and consensus versus diversity (sameness versus difference) for authoritarians. For our purposes here, these extremely subtle treatments also represent highly diagnostic tests of the special capacity of normative threats and reassurances to magnify and diminish the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance of difference. Recall that in prior arguments and evidence, I have isolated two critical components of normative threat: failed political leadership and, especially, great variance in public opinion. In the MIS99 experiment, threats and reassurances regarding conditions of public discord and consensus are explicitly effected via treatments 1a ("belief diversity") and 1b ("belief consensus"), and implicitly conveyed via conditions 2a ("stable diversity") and 2b ("changing together").

Clearly, stories 1a and 1b are expressly and wholly concerned with supposed increases or decreases in public dissensus. Condition 2a ("stable diversity"), on the other hand, masquerades as a reassuring story about increasing social stability, while subtly conveying threatening information (i.e., threatening to authoritarians) about belief diversity. Thus, "the article was not suggesting that American society is pulling together. Rather, it was suggesting that while we might have different goals and values, we have a stable society that will endure as a constant as we ease into the next century." Likewise, condition 2b ("changing together") gives the appearance of being a threatening story about rapid social change, meanwhile implicitly conveying reassuring (to authoritarians) information about belief consensus. Thus, "the article was not suggesting that American society is falling apart. Rather, it was suggesting that we're moving forward at a very fast pace, finding new ways to meet our common goals and values as we speed into the next century."

More generally, we should notice that all of the threats and reassurances in the MIS99 – each a purported "summary of a major news story,"

conveyed over the telephone in just four quick sentences – are rather mild and subtle manipulations, especially relative to the (apparent) news magazine articles that the *CRE95* subjects were compelled to read for themselves, and then to comment upon at length. In this sense, then, the *MIS99* experiment might generally be considered the "acid test" for the authoritarian dynamic. But evidence from conditions 2a and 2b will be especially dispositive. And convergence between the *MIS99* results and those obtained from the *CRE95* could constitute compelling confirmation of the unique and catalytic role played by normative threats and reassurances in the authoritarian dynamic.

# ACTIVATION OF THE PREDISPOSITION UNDER NORMATIVE THREAT

I have argued that the authoritarian dynamic is set in motion (or set at rest) when those disposed to monitor the environment for threats to oneness and sameness detect conditions of normative threat (or reassurance). The entire process is said to begin with the "activation" of authoritarian predisposition by the experience or perception of normative threat, and to be averted or ameliorated with the "deactivation" of authoritarianism by normative reassurance. In the theoretical discussions at the close of Chapter 2, I specified this first hypothesis as Hi: normative threat increases the activation of authoritarian predisposition, as evidenced by increased reliability of measures of authoritarian predisposition, that is, increased association between the items indicating childrearing values (or alternately, choices of "appealing" words).

Conceivably, one might detect such activation by a number of different means. But observing changes in the reliability of the authoritarianism measure in response to normative threat and reassurance has the advantage of consistency with our standard specification of the changing impact of authoritarianism on intolerance under those same conditions. The  $\alpha$  reliability coefficient essentially represents the (standardized) slope coefficient that one would obtain if one could regress the observed responses to those childrearing measures against the true unobserved *latent* predisposition to authoritarianism. It is analogous (one step down) to the coefficient obtained regressing manifest expressions of intolerance of difference – "expressed authoritarian attitudes" – against our measures of authoritarian predisposition.

This common structure is easily discerned by returning to the templates provided by our first demonstrations of the authoritarian dynamic in Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, but this time substituting the latent unobserved tendency to authoritarianism for "authoritarian predisposition," and substituting the observed responses to the childrearing items (or choices of

appealing words) for "expressed authoritarian attitudes." These observed responses from which we form our measures of authoritarian predisposition are obviously just manifest expressions of the unobserved latent predisposition to authoritarianism. As such, their relation to the underlying predisposition (i.e., how reliably they reflect the true latent variable) should vary with conditions of normative threat and reassurance, just as manifest expressions of racial, political, and moral intolerance are more or less heavily influenced by authoritarianism, depending upon levels of normative threat. Thus, considering the template provided by Figures 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, we can see that latent authoritarians and libertarians, despite their differing underlying tendencies to authoritarianism, should offer barely distinguishable responses to the childrearing measures in conditions of normative reassurance, but widely divergent responses, more reliably indicative of their true inclinations, under conditions of normative threat. Note that this same phenomenon of enhanced reliability of authoritarianism measures in the presence of normative threat can likewise be envisioned from the alternate angle provided by Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2.

# Varying Reliability: Calling Up or Calming Down a Latent Predisposition

Table 9.1 presents stark evidence of the varying reliability of our authoritarianism measures in response to the MIS99 and CRE95 experimental manipulations. Random assignment to experimental conditions guarantees that this activation and deactivation of the latent predisposition is incontrovertibly due to nothing other than varying exposure to normative

Table 9.1. Internal coherence of authoritarianism given experimental manipulation of normative threat and reassurance

	l	b	1	r	α	
Experimental Conditions	MIS99	CRE95	MIS99	CRE95	MIS99	CRE95
If normative threat <sup>a</sup>	.40	.31	.40	.31	.67	.57
If normative reassurance <sup>a</sup>	.30	.08	.30	.08	.56	.19
% increase in constraint	+33%	+288%	+33%	+288%	+20%	+200%

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> For the MIS99, includes only that random half of respondents whose authoritarianism was measured subsequent to the threat/reassurance manipulation.

Source: MIS99, whites only, N = 844 overall, N = 125 measured after normative threat, N = 109 measured after normative reassurance; CRE95, whites only, N = 103 overall, N = 32 under normative threat, N = 31 under normative reassurance.

*Note:* Cell entries are (*b*) average unstandardized OLS regression coefficients, (*r*) average correlation coefficients, and ( $\alpha$ ) Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients among the three items making up the authoritarianism scale in each dataset.

threat and reassurance in those experiments. The resulting variation in the  $\alpha$  reliability of our authoritarianism scales is impressive even with the subtle manipulations of the *MIS99*. The reliability of the childrearing values measure is .56 among subjects hearing the reassuring news that "the American people are starting to agree about more things, and agree much more strongly" ("belief consensus"), that we have "common goals and values" ("changing together"), or that the presidents generally "have been leaders in every sense of the word" ("good leadership"). That scale reliability then rises to .67 among those subjected to normative threat, who learn that "American public opinion on a wide range of issues . . . is becoming increasingly divided" ("belief diversity"), that Americans are not necessarily "pulling together" ("stable diversity"), or that the American presidents "have generally been unworthy of the trust we placed in them" ("bad leadership").

The internal coherence of authoritarianism varies still more dramatically in response to the far stronger manipulations of the CRE95. Here the authoritarianism measure (formed for this student sample from choices of appealing words) achieves an  $\alpha$  reliability of .57 among subjects exposed to normative threat,7 who learn that "today the American people disagree about a much wider range of issues, and disagree much more strongly, than ever before" ("belief diversity"), or that a "highly respected" Harvard professor "who has studied political leadership for over three decades" has deemed the postwar American presidents "remarkably lacking in strength, vision, substance, intelligence and principle" ("bad leadership"). But this scale reliability then plummets to just .19 among those reassured that "the opinions of the American people on a whole range of matters, extending from how children should be raised, to how the political system should be run, are much more similar now than they were even ten years ago" ("belief consensus"), or that our Harvard expert has concluded that the presidents have generally been "true leaders in every sense of the word...men you could look up to, that you could put your faith in, leaders the people could follow" ("good leadership"). In short, latent predispositions to authoritarianism are deactivated as the classic fears are calmed, and our measure of authoritarianism

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> While the reliability of the childrearing values measure given normative reassurance in the MIS99 is equivalent to the reliability achieved by the "word appeal" measure under normative threat in the CRE95, the only valid comparison for our purposes here is within sample. Not only are their measures of authoritarianism entirely different, their samples are of very different character. Among other things, the variance of our measures is inevitably diminished in small student "samples of convenience" compared to large representative samples of the general population, and such lesser variance constrains scale reliability.

essentially comes "unhinged." The observed responses to the scale items now erratically reflect those underlying predispositions and are scarcely able to distinguish latent authoritarians from latent libertarians by their manifest behavior

#### Clueless or Fearless? What to Make of "Unreliability"

As I previously argued in the discussions surrounding Table 4.1, and again in Chapter 5, such results caution against abandoning valid measures on account of "unreliability," "instability," or "inconsistency"; against assuming that apparent incoherence reflects nothing but measurement failure; and against thinking that no substantive meaning can be extracted from unreliability (poor inter-item association) and/or inconsistent impact (lack of association with other variables). Clearly, the unreliability of authoritarianism scales under conditions of normative reassurance reflects a real phenomenon of great theoretical and political import, not errors of measurement, not errors on the part of the citizen. Attitudinal "incoherence" need not indicate some failure of unsophisticated citizens to "package" and connect their attitudes appropriately, and attitudinal constraint (Converse 1964) need not depend upon political expertise. This notion (though much neglected in the interim) was actually entertained by Converse himself, whose original discussion identified "psychological sources" as potential bases of attitudinal constraint. Thus, the  $\alpha$  reliability of the authoritarianism measure declines from .67 to .56 among MIS99 subjects exposed to normative threat or reassurance, while varving from .70 to .49 for those scoring above or below the sample mean in political knowledge. Authoritarianism scale reliability in the CRE95, with its more forceful experimental manipulations, plunges from .57 to .19 among subjects exposed to normative threat or reassurance, while it dips from .54 to .42 for those with above- or below-average political knowledge,9 respectively.

Thus, for tolerance-related attitudes, a certain kind of fear can produce greater coherence than does political expertise, and a particular reassurance can produce far greater "inconsistency" than does political ignorance. Attitudes in this domain may be nicely constrained because one was knowledgeable enough to respond in a consistent fashion to a series of inquiries, *or* because one was frightened enough to adopt an array of defensive stances whose coherence derives simply from their *common function* of addressing and alleviating those fears. Likewise, responses might be incoherent due to lack of the expertise purportedly required to recognize

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> See Appendix B for details of this measure.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See Appendix C for details of this measure.

"what goes with what" (Zaller 1992), or because one was soothed and reassured enough to let down one's defenses.

## ENHANCED EFFECTS OF AUTHORITARIANISM UNDER NORMATIVE THREAT

Letting down one's defenses includes "unpacking" the defensive arsenal, those demands authoritarians place upon the polity in response to threats to oneness and sameness: demands for legal discrimination against minorities and limits on immigration, restriction of free speech and association, regulation of moral behavior, and their punitive enforcement. Just as normative threat enhances and reassurance diminishes the consistent expression of latent predispositions to authoritarianism, these critical conditions should enhance and diminish the expression of authoritarianism in manifest intolerance of difference. This hypothesis was previously specified in Chapter 2 as  $H_3$ : normative threat increases the influence of authoritarian predisposition on manifest expressions of racism and intolerance, as evidenced by increased effects of measures of authoritarianism upon indices (and items) reflecting racial, political, moral, or general intolerance.

This hypothesis will be repeatedly tested in the investigation to follow, utilizing the experimental manipulations of both the MIS99 and CRE95 and an array of dependent variables reflecting intolerance of difference in each of the domains. In each domain, the hardest test will be the ability of the authoritarian dynamic – the interaction of authoritarian predisposition with conditions of normative threat – to explain one "archetypical" expression of intolerance as collected in the MIS99. As explained in Chapter 3, the MIS99 investigators each had a few minutes of interview time to conduct their own experiments and to collect the dependent variables of particular interest to them. I chose to include three dependent variables 10 (explained as we proceed) that, in my view, represent the most extreme expressions of racial, political, and moral intolerance that one can safely voice in the contemporary United States, without straying too far beyond the bounds of acceptable discourse, broadly conceived. These tests are made still harder by the fact that only half the subjects (randomly assigned each time) responded to each of my dependent variables, which prevented construction of a more reliable multi-item index of intolerance, and also left certain of the experimental conditions in some of the analyses containing fewer subjects than desirable (particular areas of difficulty will be noted as we proceed).

Note that four dependent variables were actually collected in the module, only three of which were employed in these analyses. See note 6 to Chapter 3 for further explanation.

While these archetypical dependent variables thus provide the strictest tests of the authoritarian dynamic, the analyses are then repeated employing the full sample, and multi-item indices more reliably and broadly indicative of racial, political, and moral intolerance. This expansion is made possible by the serendipitous fact that my own module appeared early in the MIS99, with fellow investigators subsequently measuring a number of other variables reflecting intolerance of difference in the thirty minutes or so remaining of the interview. That many of these dependent variables were collected at considerable distance from my manipulation of normative threat and reassurance, and following the intercession of numerous experiments independent of my own, should serve to enhance confidence in the results. Finally, the CRE95 experiment will allow for independent replication of the findings in each domain, employing distinct operationalizations of both the dependent and the independent variables. and effecting the experience of normative threat by entirely different, and more forceful, means. In the end, then, no component of the investigation stands on its own. The case for the power, precision, and generality of the authoritarian dynamic ultimately rests on the converging evidence of all these elements.

#### RACIAL INTOLERANCE

The results of the investigation will first be presented and discussed by domain, followed by a synthesis of the common patterns, and a broader consideration of intolerance of difference in general. Table 9.2 presents the MIS99 findings regarding the determinants of our "archetypical" expressions of racial, political, and moral intolerance. The dependent variables are all constructed as simple dichotomies with the intolerant response scored 1, and the estimates are logit coefficients. In each case, here and throughout the investigation, intolerance is specified to be a function of authoritarianism, the experimental conditions of threat and reassurance, and the interaction of authoritarianism with those manipulated conditions. The MIS99 analyses also control for subjects' affective arousal: how afraid, worried, angry, hopeful, excited, or proud the "news" story they heard reportedly made them feel about the country. (See Appendix B for full details of all measures). Controlling in this way for emotional arousal allows us to distinguish the impact upon intolerance of our specific threats and reassurances from that exerted simply by some undifferentiated "frustration aggression" reaction (Berkowitz 1998). Finally, note that each of the MIS99 analyses also controls for the influence of unrelated experimental manipulations within my own module and those that preceded it.

Table 9.2. Determinants of archetypical expressions of racial, political, and moral intolerance – MIS99

Explanatory Variables	Right to Keep Blacks Out of Neighborhood	Government Should Ban Speech	Prayer in Public Schools
Authoritarianism	.81(.61)*	.94(.36)**	2.23(.54)**
Negative/positive arousal	20(.39)	.23(.35)	58(.38)
$Authoritarian is m*negative/positive\ arousal$	1.39(1.11)*	1.30(.99)*	_
Experimental threat/reassurance			
Belief diversity	see note <sup>a</sup>	_	_
Belief consensus	_	_	_
Stable diversity	$33(.36)^{a}$	.15(.36)	.58(.39)
Changing together	90(.48)	_	.08(.38)
Bad leadership	_	.24(.48)	27(.44)
Good leadership	05(.40)	_	_
Economic decline	_	58(.45)	_
Economic growth	43(.40)	_	_
Blacks gaining	_	.45(.40)	16(.50)
Whites gaining	-	_	_
Authoritarianism*threat/reassurance			
Authoritarianism*belief diversity	see note <sup>a</sup>	_	_
Authoritarianism*belief consensus	_	_	_
Authoritarianism*stable diversity	$1.80(1.23)^{*a}$	2.07(1.11)**	1.49(1.15)*
Authoritarianism*changing together	_	_	$-1.62(1.28)^*$
Authoritarianism*bad leadership	_	3.19(1.40)**	1.98(1.36)*
Authoritarianism*good leadership	$-1.45(1.15)^*$	_	_
Authoritarianism*economic decline	-	2.85(1.52)**	_
Authoritarianism*economic growth	-1.47(1.19)	_	_
Authoritarianism*blacks gaining	_	.94(1.15)	1.97(1.48)*
Authoritarianism*whites gaining	_	_	_
Other experimental manipulations <sup>b</sup>			
Target for banning: militia vs. communist		.63(.21)**	
School prayer Q: "require" vs. "approve"		,	91(.23)**
Constant	71(.21)**	25(.20)	71(.24)**
Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup>	.08	.10	.14
Log likelihood	-233.58	-262.85	-232.52
% correctly predicted	72%	65%	70%
Improvement in prediction cf. naïve model	0%	+16%	+11%
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	N = 427	N = 427	N = 413

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Coefficient here is for the combined experimental conditions "belief diversity" and "stable diversity."

*Note:* Cell entries are logit coefficients (standard errors in parentheses) from multivariate analyses. \*\* p < .05, \* p < .10 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). Dash indicates variable dropped for lack of effect. See Table B.1 for univariate statistics.

Source: MIS99, whites only; N = 844 overall.

b All three analyses also tested and, where necessary, controlled for (i) any effects of having first responded to whatever other dependent variable may have preceded the dependent variable in question, (ii) the effects of other (unrelated) experimental manipulations within both the dependent variable in question and whatever dependent variable may have preceded it, and (iii) the effects of having the measurement of authoritarianism intervene between the threat/reassurance manipulation and the collection of the dependent variables.

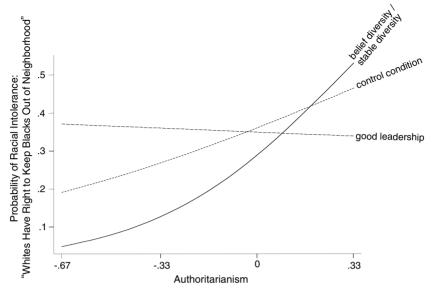


Figure 9.2. Effects of authoritarianism on archetypical racial intolerance given experimental manipulation of threat and reassurance (MIS99). *Source*: Table 9.2, column 2.

The results for the first domain of racial intolerance are graphically depicted in Figure 9.2. The dependent measure is a dummy variable scoring I (otherwise o) if subjects failed to disagree strongly that "White people have a right to keep blacks out of their neighborhoods if they want to, and blacks should respect that right." Here and more generally, my strategy is always to continue wherever possible to work with variables that cleanly and unambiguously reflect the concept of interest – in this case, "old-fashioned" racism - and then to construct the measure actually used in a particular analysis in whatever way seems most effectively to indicate the concept, given contemporary norms and the resulting distribution of responses. In the current case, then, agreeing, or only "somewhat" disagreeing, that whites have a right to keep blacks out of their neighborhoods is considered reflective of racial intolerance. Ultimately, 28 percent of subjects – white Americans mostly socialized in an era of racial egalitarianism, and interviewed in a climate of "political correctness" – failed to firmly disagree that whites could keep blacks out if they wanted to.

These responses prove to be regulated by the interaction of authoritarian predisposition with normative threat, as asserted in hypothesis  $H_3$ . (While these results are fully reported in Table 9.2, they are more

easily understood through their graphic depiction in Figure 9.2, since logit models are inherently nonlinear and nonadditive, and individual logit coefficients cannot be interpreted as readily as least squares regression coefficients). We find that among control subjects exposed to no "news" whatsoever, moving across the (one-unit) range of the authoritarianism measure, from the most libertarian to the most authoritarian disposition, increases the probability of a racially intolerant response from .19 to .47. That already substantial impact of authoritarianism is then considerably steepened for subjects exposed to either explicit or implicit<sup>12</sup> threats of belief diversity, with authoritarianism increasing the likelihood of an intolerant reaction from .05 to .53 among those led to believe that American public opinion is deeply divided.

Notice that this magnified effect of authoritarianism is comprised of the divergent movements of both authoritarians and libertarians: a phenomenon of great theoretical and political consequence previously considered in the discussions around Figures 4.1.1 to 4.2.2. Thus, here and throughout the investigation, we see that authoritarians and libertarians each move to defend their antithetical resolutions regarding the appropriate balance between oneness and sameness versus freedom and difference under conditions that appear to bring those resolutions into issue, that is, conditions of normative threat. This, of course, is the functional logic at the very heart of the authoritarian dynamic. And it is discerned just as clearly in the deactivation of these two characters and the "neutralization" of their positions under conditions of normative reassurance. Thus, we find that authoritarians and libertarians become virtually indistinguishable in their racial intolerance when persuaded that the presidents have "shown great strength, vision, and principle" and "have generally been worthy of the trust we placed in them." They each let down their defenses in the wake of such reassurance, rendering authoritarians calmed and libertarians complacent, the latter fairly characterized as "asleep at the wheel" under these conditions.

Much the same pattern is revealed, and with greater statistical certainty, upon repeating the analysis using the larger sample and a broader multi-item index of racial intolerance/ethnocentrism (see Table 9.3, column 2). Here the dependent variable averages responses to three

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> See Aldrich and Nelson (1984) for further guidance.

Simply owing to the luck of the draw, random assignment left the "belief diversity" condition seriously short of cases for this dependent variable, with (counting whites only) just twenty-eight subjects (compared to an average of thirty-nine) ultimately assigned both to this particular condition and to this particular dependent variable. It was thus combined with the "stable diversity" condition for analyses of this dependent variable only.

Table 9.3. Determinants of overall measures of racial, political, and moral intolerance - MIS99

Explanatory Variables	Nacial Illustration	Political	Moral Intolerance Punitiveness	Punitiveness	General Intolerance of
	Ethnocentrism	Intolerance			Difference
Authoritarianism	.34(.04)**	.19(.03)**	.35(.03)**	$.16(.03)^{**}$	.27(.02)**
Negative/positive arousal	1	1	07(.03)**	.05(.03)	I
Auth* neg/pos arousal	ı	ı	ı	$.19(.09)^{**}$	I
Threat/reassurance <sup>a</sup>					
Belief diversity	01(.03)	ı	1	ı	ı
Belief consensus	ı	ı	ı	04(.03)	I
Stable diversity	.04(.03)	ı	$.07(.03)^{**}$	04(.03)	.02(.02)
Changing together	07(.03)**	ı	.02(.04)	ı	02(.02)
Bad leadership	ı	.01(.04)	ı	02(.03)	00(.02)
Good leadership	1	ı	.04(.04)	ı	ı
Economic decline	.00(.04)	02(.04)	ı	ı	I
Economic growth	1	ı	1	ı	ı
Blacks gaining	.01(.04)	ı	.00(.04)	.01(.03)	ı
Whites gaining	ı	ı	ı	$07(.04)^*$	ı
$Auth^*Threat/Reassurance$					
Auth* belief diversity	$.21(.08)^{**}$	I	ı	I	I
Auth* belief consensus	1	ı	1	ı	ı
Auth*stable diversity	.24(.09)**	ı	ı	$.20(.08)^{**}$	.14(.06)**
Auth*changing together	$14(.10)^*$	ı	47(.14)**	ı	14(.07)**
Auth*bad leadership	1	$.19(.08)^{**}$	1	$.16(.09)^{**}$	$.12(.06)^{**}$
Auth*good leadership	ı	ı	$19(.11)^{**}$	ı	I
Auth*economic decline	$.14(.09)^{**}$	$.18(.08)^{**}$	ı	ı	I
Auth*economic growth	1	ı	1	1	I
Auth* blacks gaining	$.15(.10)^*$	ı	.13(.10)	.11(.09)	I
Auth* whites gaining	ı	I	1	ı	I
Constant $R^2$	$.31(.02)^{**}$ .18	$.24(.02)^{**}$ .25	$.62(.02)^{**}$ $.19$	.64(.02)** .09	$.47(.01)^{**}$

Analyses in columns 2-5 also tested and, where necessary, controlled for (i) any effects of having first responded to whatever other variables may have preceded the dependent variables in question, (ii) the effects of other (unrelated) experimental manipulations within both the dependent variables in question and whatever variables may have preceded them, and (iii) the effects of having the measurement of authoritarianism intervene between the threat/reassurance manipulation and the collection of the dependent variables.

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized OLS multiple regression coefficients (standard errors in parentheses). \*\* p < .05, \* p < .06 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). Dash indicates variable dropped for lack of effect. See Table B.1 for univariate statistics. Source: MIS99, whites only; N = 844.

items, 13 indicating subjects' at least partial admission of a "right" to exclude blacks from one's neighborhood (as already described); their affection for Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan relative to communists or "gay rights activists"; and whether or not "being an American" is the very "most important thing" in their lives (see Appendix B for full details). Thus the index nicely covers sentiments unambiguously reflecting both in-group glorification<sup>14</sup> and out-group denigration and discrimination. Measured in this fashion, racial intolerance again proves highly responsive to the authoritarian dynamic. Authoritarianism<sup>15</sup> escalates the expression of racial intolerance by a third of its range even in the control condition, but drives subjects exposed (either explicitly or implicitly) to "news" about public discord across half the range of the dependent variable. Conversely, normative reassurance - this time, talk of Americans "moving forward" together "to meet our common goals and values" - again serves to muffle the impact of authoritarianism. The most authoritarian and libertarian subjects diverge in their manifest expression of racial intolerance by just 20 percentage points<sup>16</sup> with this calming and "dis-arming" news, compared to more than 50 percentage points upon learning of our "different goals and values."

Note that news of national economic decline, and of blacks making material gains relative to whites, likewise serve to magnify the impact of authoritarianism, albeit somewhat less dramatically and certainly. At the same time, it is important to recognize that these effects are still administered by the authoritarian dynamic, and serve to aggravate racial intolerance (and very modestly so) only among those predisposed to authoritarianism. Neither economic downturn nor declining group status

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> In each domain, the multi-item index of intolerance was formed by averaging responses to whichever of the (equally weighted) items I describe in the text were available for each respondent. At various points throughout the MIS99 interview, respondents were randomly assigned to one or another question (or version of a question), and thus some items used in constructing these indices were collected only for some subset of respondents. Since this was always randomly determined, and the different items are congeneric, there is no reason to believe that any problems are introduced into the analysis by simply choosing for each domain the items that seem best to reflect the construct of interest, and then making use of whatever data are available on those items for each respondent.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> As noted likewise in Chapter 5, a wealth of comparative evidence attests to the regularity with which out-group denigration accompanies ingroup glorification (Tajfel and Turner 1979; 1986; Tajfel 1981; but see also Brewer 1999), including such seemingly innocuous expressions of patriotism (Reykowski 1997; Schatz, Staub, and Lavine 1999).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> That is, moving across the (one-unit) range of the authoritarianism measure.

That is, by .20 on the 0 to 1 scale of the dependent variable.

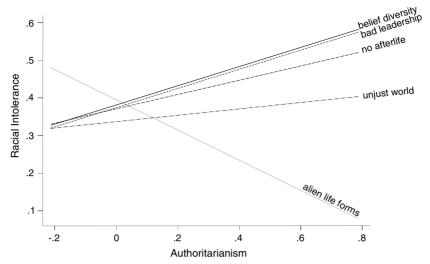


Figure 9.3. Effects of authoritarianism on racial intolerance given experimental manipulation of threat (*CRE*95).

Source: Table 9.4, column 2.

has any impact whatever upon subjects of average predisposition, and they actually impel those of libertarian inclination toward greater racial tolerance. In short, these effects are entirely contingent upon authoritarianism. They provide little evidence that real or imagined conflicts, of individual or group interests, play a substantial role in fueling racial intolerance.

The core findings of the MIS99 analysis are replicated on the CRE95 data, with an independent sample, distinct operationalizations of both the dependent<sup>17</sup> and independent<sup>18</sup> variables, and different means of effecting the experience of normative threat (see Table 9.4, column 2, and Figure 9.3). Note that when considering the results reported for each domain throughout Table 9.4, it is important to keep in mind that the "aliens" treatment, which serves as the excluded category for comparing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The racial intolerance index is constructed as previously described in the "aliens" versus "no aliens" investigation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Recall that authoritarianism is measured for this student sample not by childrearing values but by choices of "appealing" words: a measurement strategy that is clearly analogous to the logic of the childrearing batteries, but obviously more appropriate for these student subjects.

Table 9.4. Determinants of racial, political, and moral intolerance - CRE95

Explanatory Variables	Racial Intolerance	Racial Intolerance Political Intolerance Moral Intolerance Punitiveness	Moral Intolerance	Punitiveness	General Intolerance of Difference
Caramina ( Camina Awa					
Authoritarianism	$40(.12)^{**}$	18(.16)	18(.16)	.07(.30)	21(.11)
Experimental threat					
Belief diversity	01(.07)	$.19(.06)^{**}$	.03(.08)	08(.12)	.04(.06)
Bad leadership	02(.06)	.08(.07)	09(.08)	08(.12)	04(.06)
Unjust world	06(.06)	01(06)	ı	$22(.11)^*$	08(.05)
No afterlife	02(.06)	.08(.07)	04(.07)	.00(.12)	01(.05)
Authoritarianism*Threat					
Auth*belief diversity	$.65(.29)^{**}$	.88(.24)**	$.91(.32)^{**}$	.74(.52)*	$.92(.23)^{**}$
Auth*bad leadership	$.65(.15)^{**}$	$.52(.21)^{**}$	.48(.22)**	.15(.38)	$.53(.15)^{**}$
Auth*unjust world	$.48(.17)^{**}$	.26(.23)	I	.39(.40)	$.26(.20)^*$
Auth*no afterlife	$.59(.18)^{**}$	$.43(.24)^{**}$	.44(.23)**	.30(.40)	$.50(.17)^{**}$
Constant	$.39(.04)^{**}$	$.42(.05)^{**}$	$.62(.04)^{**}$	.76(.08)**	.59(.04)**
$\mathbb{R}^2$	.16	.22	.11	.14	.23

Note: Cell entries are unstandardized OLS multiple regression coefficients (standard errors in parentheses). \*\* p < .05, \* p < .05 (one-tailed tests applied as appropriate). Dash indicates variable dropped for lack of effect. See Table C.1 for univariate statistics. Source: CRE95, whites only; N = 103.

the effects of the different threatening stories, <sup>19</sup> reverses the normal impact of authoritarianism, that is, induces a negative relationship between authoritarianism and intolerance of difference within, by creating the appearance of even greater difference without (as per Figures 9.1.1 and 9.1.2). Thus, the so-called <sup>20</sup> main effect of authoritarianism reported across the top row of Table 9.4 (and depicted as the slope obtained in the "alien life forms" condition in Figures 9.3, 9.5, 9.7, 9.8, and 9.10) obviously cannot be considered the normal impact of authoritarianism on intolerance. The normal impact is most accurately reflected by the slope obtained for authoritarianism in the true control condition of the *MIS99*, as reported across the top row of Table 9.3.

Thus, as observed in the preceding investigation, authoritarianism actually diminishes racial intolerance among those learning that NASA has confirmed the existence of alien life forms expected to make contact with us in the near future (Figure 9.3). As noted earlier, this constitutes rather compelling evidence that much of what we call racial intolerance is *primar*ily about difference more than race, particularly once we observe (across the top row of Table 9.4) the same reversal of influence in regard to intolerance of different beliefs and behaviors. In sharp contrast, moving across the authoritarianism measure increases racial intolerance by a quarter of its range among those merely reminded of the inevitable democratic realities of divided public opinion or leaders who fail to command our respect. Subjects all highly disposed to authoritarianism can be separated by half the range of the dependent variable (scoring either .57 or .07 on the racial intolerance scale) depending on whether they are responding in their characteristic fashion to the inevitable consequences of freedom and diversity here on earth, or to the prospect of alien beings "who are very different from us in ways that we are not yet even able to imagine."

Notice also that scientific proof that there is no life after death similarly magnifies the impact of authoritarianism on racial intolerance. As explained in Chapter 3, this stimulus story was inspired by the "terror management" claim that our institutions, norms, identities, and commitments

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> As explained in Chapter 3, the effects upon intolerance of the reassuring stories cannot be analyzed simultaneously with the effects of the threatening stories, due to the small sample size and the partly contingent assignment of the threats and reassurances. Nevertheless, essentially the same story is told upon repeating the analyses reported in Table 9.4, this time using the five reassuring stories rather than the threatening stories.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> So-called, but misnamed, since the effect of authoritarianism is *always* interactive, i.e., always conditional upon levels of normative threat.

are the meaning-giving structure that we fabricate in order to protect ourselves from a primitive fear of dying, and thus defend most vigorously when our mortality is made salient (Greenberg et al. 1986; 1990; Rosenblatt et al. 1989; Solomon et al. 1991). The notion of a fundamental fear that produces stances designed to address and relieve that fear when exogenous conditions conspire to make the fear salient is obviously very resonant with the theory of the authoritarian dynamic. But again, it cannot escape our attention that the impact of this fear appears to be entirely conditional upon authoritarian predisposition (see Table 9.4). Only authoritarians are propelled by the news that "with the death of our physical bodies we simply cease to exist" toward greater expression of racial intolerance.

Note that the terror management researchers themselves discovered that the tendency of their "mortality salience" manipulation to induce negative reactions toward a different other depended entirely upon subjects' levels of authoritarianism, just as we find here (Greenberg et al. 1990). And we will see this same pattern repeated in every domain of intolerance, throughout our investigation of the *CRE95*. Being confronted with the impermanence and meaninglessness of one's existence appears to be *one* means (and evidently not the most effective means) by which authoritarians can be induced to escalate their defense of the various elements of the societal "anxiety-buffer" (Greenberg et al. 1990). Thus, the authoritarian dynamic can comfortably accommodate terror management theory, and it goes well beyond the latter in specifying precisely the critical aggravating conditions, and the manner in which their impact is contingent upon variation in individual predispositions.

#### POLITICAL INTOLERANCE

Confidence in the power and scope of the authoritarian dynamic is increased as we observe the same essential process at work in every domain of intolerance. In regard to political intolerance, our archetypical dependent variable in the *MIS99* indicates subjects' sympathy for the proposition that a "super-patriot militia type" or a "communist" (target randomly assigned) who wants to espouse these views in their community should "be banned by the government from making a speech." By my construction, agreement with the proposal, or halfhearted objection, reflects sympathy (scored 1); only disagreeing "very strongly" with such a ban constitutes a politically tolerant stance (scored 0). As usual, my method was to formulate an item that seemed unambiguously to represent the concept of interest, and then simply to "cut" the responses in whatever way seemed most effectively to reflect the attribute in question, given prevailing norms and the resulting distribution of the variable.

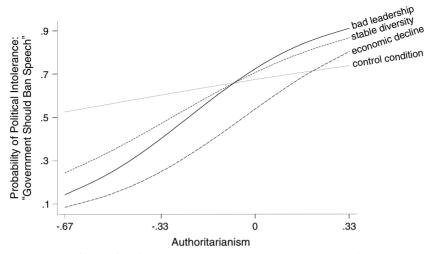


Figure 9.4. Effects of authoritarianism on archetypical political intolerance given experimental manipulation of threat and reassurance (*MIS99*). *Source*: Table 9.2, column 3.

Notice, then, that while standard political intolerance items almost always inquire whether some group or another "should be allowed" to speak, I am asking instead whether the target should actually be "banned by the government from making a speech." Demanding that the authority of the state be employed to prohibit the expression of contentious views is unambiguously a more direct reflection of political intolerance, given that it is never clear in the standard inquiry exactly who would be, and what would constitute, allowing or not allowing the speech. Ultimately, 50 percent of subjects contemplating a communist, and fully 63 percent of those considering a "militia type," were actively sympathetic, or lukewarm in their objection, to a government-enforced ban. And in a political culture that has elevated (at least the abstract idea of) unfettered free speech to something like a national religion (Sullivan et al. 1982; McClosky and Zaller 1984; Chong 1993), it certainly seems reasonable to insist that only firm rejection of such a ban may constitute a tolerant response.

The results of this first analysis of political intolerance are reported in Table 9.2 and graphically depicted in Figure 9.4. Note that this depiction assumes that the subject was considering the speech rights of a "superpatriot militia type" rather than a "communist." Again, as emphasized in the earlier discussions, it is highly diagnostic of their primary motives that authoritarians remain more intolerant than libertarians of the public

airing of contentious points of view even when those views are ones with which they have considerable sympathy. We find that even in normal conditions, there is only a one in four probability that highly authoritarian subjects will staunchly resist the government stepping in to silence "militia types," whereas strong libertarians have about an even chance of standing firm against a government ban, despite their likely antipathy for the views being espoused and repugnance at those that espouse them.

This divergence between the two characters becomes starker still – that is, the relationship between authoritarianism and intolerance steepens – with exposure to news of public discord or poor leadership, their positions on free speech sharply polarizing as they mount their characteristic defenses. Under these conditions, libertarians have around an 80 percent chance, but authoritarians just a 10 percent chance, of staunchly defending free speech against government incursions. That leaders are failing to inspire confidence, that beliefs and values are not widely shared, feeds authoritarians' hunger for anything that might shore up unity and consensus, at the same time it bolsters libertarians' commitment to individual sovereignty and respect for difference. Notice that news of national economic downturn also serves to magnify the impact of authoritarianism, although in this case the steepening of the slope is almost entirely accomplished by pulling all but the highly authoritarian toward more tolerant stances, rather than by driving the latter to greater intolerance (see Figure 9.4). The overall pattern of findings is much the same if we substitute a broader multi-item index combining this archetypical expression of political intolerance with two more conventional items, tapping subjects' views on whether a certain target<sup>21</sup> should be "allowed to make a speech" and "allowed to hold public rallies" in their community "to protest against the government" (see Table 9.3, column 3).

The CRE95 analysis likewise attests to the catalytic role of normative threat in inciting authoritarians to political intolerance (see Table 9.4 and Figure 9.5). Here the dependent variable is broader still. The measure includes responses to a range of standard queries regarding whether communists and Nazis (in turn) should be "allowed" to make speeches, teach in public schools, have books in public libraries, and run for president, and whether they should be subjected to government wiretaps. But it also comprises some more abstract expressions of willingness to sacrifice free speech when the ideas are "threatening," "disruptive," "offensive," "unpopular," and the like (see Appendix C for details). This time we find that nothing comes close to provoking from authoritarians the same zeal for political repression as does belief diversity: the news

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> By random assignment, either "people like you," "people," or the subject's least-liked group.

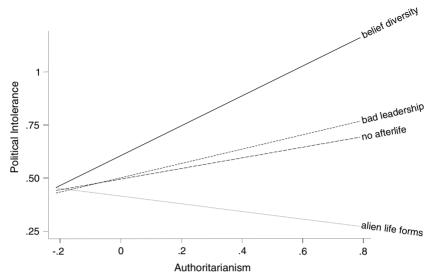


Figure 9.5. Effects of authoritarianism on political intolerance given experimental manipulation of threat (CRE95).

Source: Table 9.4, column 3.

that "today the American people disagree about a much wider range of issues, and disagree much more strongly, than ever before" (see Table 9.4 and Figure 9.5). Moreover, in contrast to the MIS99 data, here almost all of the changing impact of authoritarianism (i.e., the steepening and flattening of the regression slope in response to different kinds of threat) is attributable to wild shifts in the reactions of authoritarians, with libertarians continuing to express moderate opinions irrespective of the news to which they were exposed.

Thus, authoritarians behave like absolute despots upon learning that "public opinion has become fractured and conflicted," the model predictions locating them at the scale maximum under these conditions. But they actually *embrace* civil liberties when confronted with something suddenly seeming far more alien than earthlings' most unconventional opinions and aberrant behavior: those "unknown and very different forms of life" with "understandings of the world and ways of behaving very different from our own." Note that reports of pervasive leadership failure and scientific dismissal of the afterlife also provide for some escalation of effects, with authoritarianism in these conditions generally boosting political intolerance by a third and a quarter of its range, respectively. But clearly, nothing inflames authoritarians' fervor for political repression quite like the news that "on no important issue facing the American people today is there

anything even remotely approaching a majority opinion, or a societal consensus."

#### MORAL INTOLERANCE

In the domain of moral intolerance, recall that I have emphasized the importance of distinguishing between personal (dis)approval of certain behaviors and demand for state regulation of same, the latter to be accomplished by the authoritative assignment of rewards and penalties for desired and undesired behaviors. Compulsory observance of the rules and rites of a particular faith or creed is a ubiquitous element of authoritarian demands upon the polity, and whether children in public schools should recite a common prayer remains a central issue in political struggles over public morality in the contemporary United States (see Hunter 1983; Liebman and Wuthnow 1983; Wald 1987). The most ardent advocates of school prayer seek that critical element of coerced compliance: the creation of a legal requirement and provision of authoritative sanctions. But any proposal for prayer in the public schools runs afoul of constitutional provision for separation of church and state; thus much of the political battle has been waged in the nation's Supreme Court (although there is evidence that local school authorities find ways to quietly subvert Court rulings).

Typical survey measures at the disposal of interested scholars gauge whether respondents "approve" of school prayer, or else "approve" of Supreme Court rulings prohibiting school prayer, neither of which cleanly and directly reflects demand for state coercion of religious observance. Thus, my measure of archetypical moral intolerance in the MIS99 was formed from responses to an item asking "How do you feel about [local government requiring] prayer in public schools?," with strong approval of the proposition scoring 1, otherwise o. Notice, then, that I generated (and randomly assigned) two different versions of the question – one gauging mere approval of school prayer, the other assessing support for government-mandated prayer – since it is one thing to wish for school prayer, and quite another to insist that government require it. Ultimately, 45 percent of subjects in the former condition expressed strong approval of school prayer, and (a still astonishing) 28 percent in the latter condition strongly approved of compulsory prayer.

The full results of this first analysis of moral intolerance are reported in Table 9.2, with the core findings graphically depicted in Figure 9.6 (assuming subjects were responding to the question of compulsory school prayer). Again, we find that most of the changing impact of authoritarianism is due to the widely varying reactions of authoritarians to different kinds of news, and that nothing augments the intolerant "returns"

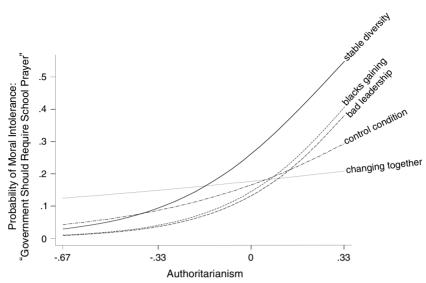


Figure 9.6. Effects of authoritarianism on archetypical moral intolerance given experimental manipulation of threat and reassurance (MIS99). *Source*: Table 9.2, column 4.

to authoritarianism quite like reports of belief diversity. Authoritarianism generally shifts subjects in the "stable diversity" condition from being not at all likely (specifically, a predicted probability of .03) to being more likely than not (a probability of .55) to strongly approve of required school prayer. Thus, nothing more than the subtle suggestion that Americans have "different goals and values" and are not necessarily "pulling together" doubles the normal impact<sup>22</sup> (from .25 to .52) that authoritarianism otherwise exerts among control subjects left undisturbed by any incoming news. Leadership failure – that second critical component of normative threat – likewise substantially escalates effects, with authoritarianism increasing the probability of strongly endorsing compulsory prayer by around .37 among those learning that our presidents "have not been leaders in any real sense of the word."

Notice, too, that news of blacks making material gains relative to whites also appears to boost substantially the intolerant returns to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Specifically, moving across the (one-unit) range of the authoritarianism measure is predicted to increase the probability of strongly approving compulsory school prayer by around .25 (increasing the probability from .04 to .29) in the control condition, but by around .52 (increasing the probability from .03 to .55) in the "stable diversity" condition.

authoritarianism. Yet it must be clearly understood that this effect is entirely contingent upon authoritarianism, as earlier noted for similar effects discerned in the *MIS99* investigation of overall racial intolerance (see Table 9.3, column 2, and associated discussion). Here again, only authoritarians react to changes in relative group status with greater expression of intolerance, while others actually shift toward more tolerant positions under those same conditions.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the fact that in this case we have racial diversity exacerbating authoritarians' intolerance of moral diversity once again underscores the common engine driving intolerance of difference in general.<sup>24</sup>

The catalytic role of normative threat in the authoritarian dynamic is evident not only in the heightened impact of authoritarianism on intolerance under conditions of normative threat, but also in the dampening of its influence given normative reassurance. Thus, just as reports of "stable diversity" exacerbate the impact of authoritarianism on pleas for school prayer, the reassuring news that we are "changing together" in pursuit of shared values appears to dissipate this yearning for rites of oneness and sameness. By these estimates, the most authoritarian subjects are around .52 more likely than the least authoritarian to strongly endorse compulsory prayer when Americans are not "pulling together," but only .09 more likely when reassured that we are "moving forward" as one to meet our "common goals."

Note that this convergence in the stances of authoritarians and libertarians once we are "changing together" is the only instance where the altered impact of authoritarianism on moral intolerance is due to the reactions of both these characters to the incoming news. The resulting increase in the likelihood of libertarians endorsing compulsory prayer (from a .04 probability in the control condition up to .12) does not compare to the sharp shifts in authoritarians' reactions across the different conditions, and still leaves them less supportive than authoritarians under any conditions. Nevertheless, it seems evident that just as authoritarians are reassured, libertarians are a little intrigued by all this "speeding into the next century" to "meet our common goals and values." The consequent

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Although not in this case attaining statistical significance, this news about "blacks gaining" seems to have much the same effect (again, conditional upon individual predispositions) in the analyses of overall moral intolerance reported in Table 9.3, column 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> This entangling of different kinds of difference is also somewhat reminiscent of the earlier finding (see Table 5.4, based on the *WVS90*–95 cross-national data) that, after authoritarianism, the most powerful determinant of general intolerance of difference (in terms of variance explained) is the extent of ethnic diversity in the nation (as indexed by the number of languages spoken there apart from the language of the majority).

relaxation of each character's defenses yields some softening of, and thus convergence in, their normally sharply polarized positions, with authoritarians easing their demand for unifying rituals just as libertarians come to view those rituals in their least oppressive light.

Normative reassurance effects the same kind of convergence in the analysis of overall moral intolerance (see Table 9.3). Here the dependent variable combines those responses on school prayer with two other components, indicating subjects' opposition to government and business providing health insurance to employees' unmarried partners, and the perceived importance of "encouraging belief in God" over "a modern scientific outlook" (see Appendix B). As usual, these selections for the overall index were opportunistic, and in this case clearly move us away from our unambiguous focus on moral coercion rather than moral disapproval. Nevertheless, the broader index again allows us to replicate the initial investigation on the full MIS99 sample, a not inconsiderable benefit in this instance, since the luck of the draw left the control condition in the school prayer analysis decidedly short of subjects, <sup>25</sup> and substantial interactions between authoritarianism and the experimental treatments straining to attain statistical significance. The results confirm the capacity of normative reassurance to slash, even to reverse, the impact of authoritarianism on moral intolerance (Table 9.3). In this case, reassurance can be furnished by our glorious "changing together," or else by confidence in the quality of political leadership, each of which serves to relax the characteristic defenses of authoritarians and libertarians, creating at least the momentary appearance of some "fellow feeling" between characters formerly staking out sharply polarized positions.

Finally, the *CRE95* analysis allows for independent confirmation of the special role played by normative threat in inducing from authoritarians greater demand for moral coercion of fellow citizens (see Table 9.4 and Figure 9.7). Moreover, the extraordinarily close correspondence between the pattern of results obtained for moral intolerance and that evidenced in the earlier analysis of political intolerance<sup>26</sup> provides a particularly stark demonstration of the generality of the authoritarian dynamic (compare Figures 9.5 and 9.7). The moral intolerance index on the *CRE95* was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Simply by the accident of random assignment, the control condition in the school prayer analysis (counting whites only) ended up with just twenty-seven subjects. An equal distribution would have placed around thirty-eight subjects in each of the eleven experimental conditions.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Thus, all of the general conclusions (though not the predicted scores on the dependent variable) drawn from the *CRE95* political intolerance analysis regarding the varying impact of authoritarianism under different conditions, and the implications of those patterns, apply equally well to the results for moral intolerance presented in Figure 9.7.

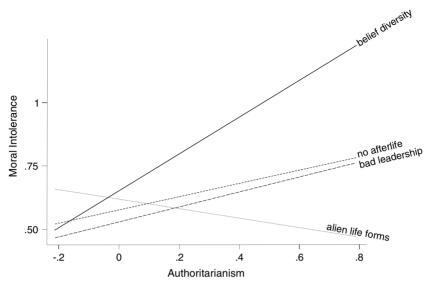


Figure 9.7. Effects of authoritarianism on moral intolerance given experimental manipulation of threat (CRE95).

Source: Table 9.4, column 4.

formed from subjects' affect for homosexuals, along with their opinions on film censorship and the prohibition of pornography and prostitution (see Appendix C). That these thoughts and feelings regarding moral regulation respond to the interaction of authoritarianism with normative threat just as do seemingly disparate judgments regarding the civil liberties that ought to be accorded Nazis and communists nicely underscores the common mechanism generating intolerance of difference in every domain.

## **PUNITIVENESS**

The final domain of punitiveness takes moral intolerance to its extreme, where one is eager to use physical force – and to authorize the state to use physical force – to coerce conformity with norms and enforce compliance with rules. Of course, all complex societies must ultimately be willing to employ force to these ends. Punitiveness refers to individuals' special interest in, their primary reliance upon, their enthusiasm for regulating others' behavior by such means. As noted at the very outset of this work, oneness and sameness are attributes of the collective, not the individual. Maximizing oneness and sameness thus requires some control over the behavior of others. Collectives may *influence* the behavior of their

members by rewarding desired behavior, but *controlling* others' behavior ultimately requires physical force and punishment: the infliction of pain, loss, or suffering for undesired behavior.

As noted in Chapter 6, for a variety of reasons beyond the scope of the current investigation – perhaps even beyond the scope of our current understanding - the United States, by every indicator and by any comparison, is one of the most extraordinarily punitive nations (see, among many others, Forer 1994; Vincent and Hofer 1994; Windlesham 1998). While I indicated in Chapter 5 that punitiveness can generally be considered highly characteristic of the authoritarian defensive "arsenal," I have also argued that intolerant attitudes and behaviors will not be heavily determined by authoritarianism when they are strongly supported by cultural norms, that is to say, psychological aberrations best explain culturally aberrant behavior. Whether we gauge punitiveness by rates of imprisonment, severity of sentencing for minor crimes, the imposition and execution of the death penalty, or public support for capital punishment (e.g., only a quarter of white respondents to the GSS2000 opposed the death penalty for murder), the United States truly has very few peers, among "advanced" nations or otherwise. Thus, we cannot expect authoritarianism to exercise much influence over punitiveness in the United States, because there is nothing the least bit ab-normal about punitiveness in this culture. Nevertheless, we should still see much the same dynamic at work, albeit with reduced explanatory power.

Since extreme punitiveness is so ordinary in the contemporary United States, it seemed wasteful of *MIS99* interview time to gauge some archetypical expression of punitiveness (e.g. support for the death penalty), as was collected for each of the preceding domains of racial, political, and moral intolerance. Nevertheless, I was able to form a reasonable index of punitiveness to serve as our dependent variable from items collected by fellow investigators for their own purposes or included in the common core. These items gauged opinions on the importance of police "doing what it takes" to stop crime relative to "protecting the rights of the accused," and of "guaranteeing law and order in society" relative to "guaranteeing individual freedom" (see Appendix B).

The results of this analysis (see Table 9.3) confirm the continuing involvement of the authoritarian dynamic in every domain of intolerance, despite the lesser abnormality of punitiveness and the consequent reduction in the explanatory power of the model. We find that authoritarianism increases punitiveness by around 16 percentage points<sup>27</sup> among control

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> That is to say, moving across the one-unit range of the authoritarianism measure is predicted to increase punitiveness by .16 on the o to 1 scale of the dependent variable.

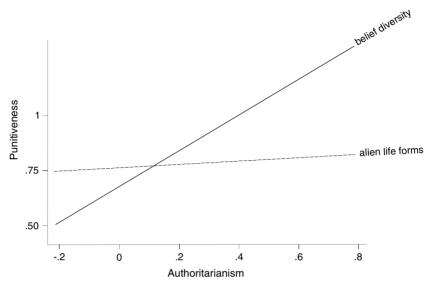


Figure 9.8. Effects of authoritarianism on punitiveness given experimental manipulation of threat (*CRE95*). *Source:* Table 9.4, column 5.

subjects left undisturbed by news of any kind. But that impact is at least doubled – with authoritarianism then boosting punitiveness by a third of its range – among subjects exposed to those consistently provocative normative threats, "stable diversity" and "bad leadership." This magnified influence is constituted from authoritarians and libertarians each moving outward to their respective defensive positions. But in this case, the steepening of the slope is far more a function of the reactions of libertarians, who rally determinedly behind individual freedom and the rights of the accused once others start fretting about Americans not "pulling together," and political leaders "remarkably lacking in strength, vision, and principle." Finally, note that the escalation set in motion by belief diversity, in particular, is independently confirmed in the corresponding analysis of the CRE95 experiment (see Table 9.4 and Figure 9.8). In this case, both authoritarians and libertarians are roused to arms by the news that "there is no societal consensus on what is right or wrong," mobilizing behind their antithetical positions on the death penalty and punishment versus rehabilitation.<sup>28</sup> And these are characters who were virtually indistinguishable in their willingness to allow "out-laws" back in, once imminent alien

<sup>28</sup> This dependent variable is constructed as previously described in the "aliens" versus "no aliens" investigation.

encounters had authoritarians reconceiving criminals as more "us" than "them," and libertarians feeling rather less indifferent about difference.

#### OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Viewed in their entirety, these results lend powerful support to the theory of the authoritarian dynamic. One might conceivably furnish variant accounts of individual findings in one analysis or another. But it is difficult to imagine a plausible and parsimonious alternative that accommodates so well the overall pattern of results across these seemingly disparate domains. Likewise, one could always wish for greater consistency and certainty of effects. Yet these are complex experiments, with small cell sizes, and realistic manipulations analogous to the manner in which such threats and reassurances might typically be conveyed. The findings remain well beyond what could be expected by chance, particularly given repeated testing of one central hypothesis, precise manipulation of the purportedly critical conditions, and clear specification of the anticipated direction of effects.

The convergence of evidence from different samples, manipulations, domains, and measures is compelling. Normative threat truly proves catalytic for the activation of latent predispositions to authoritarianism, and their increased expression in intolerance of all manner of difference. At every turn, one or both of its critical elements – belief diversity and failed political leadership - led the way in grabbing the attention of authoritarians and libertarians, and driving those characters to more sharply polarized positions on racial diversity, political dissent, and moral deviance. Summarizing broadly, the most authoritarian and libertarian subjects might diverge in their expression of intolerance by around a quarter of the range of the dependent variable under normal conditions, by about a third of its range with reports of leadership failure, and by around half its range given news of public discord. Conversely, talk of our "common goals and values" and trustworthy leaders could dramatically diminish. even reverse, the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance, although it did prove much easier to threaten than to reassure, that is, to activate than to deactivate those fundamental predispositions. This seems consistent with evidence from social and cognitive psychology regarding the greater salience, memorability, and motivating force of negative than positive information under many conditions (see Lau 1985).

One mystery that remains (but about which I can only speculate in the absence of direct evidence) is why the implicit reports of discord and consensus in public opinion ("stable diversity" and "changing together") proved to be far more powerful threats and reassurances than their explicit counterparts ("belief diversity" and "belief consensus") in

the MIS99 experiment (see Table 3.2). It does seem plausible that authoritative recognition that "American public opinion...is becoming increasingly divided," with explicit acknowledgment that such a state of affairs is problematic ("belief diversity"), might actually be less threatening than hearing experts blithely accepting – as an innocuous aside in a supposedly positive report about increasing social stability – that Americans might "have different goals and values" and are not necessarily "pulling together" ("stable diversity"). The implication of the latter report is that this belief diversity is accepted and considered unproblematic by others, and will now "endure as a constant" as one component of this lauded "stabilization in our political system." As I previously noted in Chapter 6, from the authoritarian perspective a diversity that is entrenched and unchallenged might actually be the worst kind of all. Likewise, the explicit assertion that "public consensus is growing" ("belief consensus") may not prove as reassuring as intended if it contradicts subjects' own perceptions and induces a mental review of counterexamples (see Kunda 1990), whereas the report that we are "moving forward at a very fast pace, finding new ways to meet our common goals and values" ("changing together") implies that renewed consensus is right around the corner

These normative threats and reassurances proved powerful not just in absolute terms, but also relative to the aggravation and comfort provided by other kinds of threats and reassurances. And this included most of the "usual suspects" considered provocative of racist and intolerant behavior, most notably: economic decline, changing group status and conflict of interests, even the simple pursuit of justice. For example, belief diversity proves to be a greater instigator of whites' racial intolerance than either their diminished standing relative to blacks or economic downturn (Table 9.3). Moreover, it is only authoritarians who respond to changing group status and economic decline with modest increases in racial animosity. These conditions have no significant impact upon regular folk, and actually diminish racial intolerance among libertarians. Once again, this suggests that much of what we call racism has more to do with general intolerance of difference than with animosity toward other races and/or conflict of material interests. And if this is still insufficient to persuade. we should note that whites' diminished standing relative to blacks also induces from authoritarians (and authoritarians alone) greater demand for moral regulation (Table 9.2).

Likewise, belief diversity proves to be a more powerful irritant to punitiveness than news of an unjust society where "crime often does pay" and "people do not get what they deserve, nor deserve what they get" (Table 9.4). Reports of a grossly unjust world have a trivial impact on punitiveness among authoritarians, and among those of average or

libertarian inclinations they substantially decrease support for the death penalty and for punishment over rehabilitation. This is actually one of a mere handful of instances in which the experimental manipulations had any significant impact on regular folk, that is, had any tendency to promote tolerance or intolerance among those of average predisposition to authoritarianism (per the general dearth of significant effects across the upper panels of Tables 9.2 to 9.4).

These few exceptions seem to reflect relationships that are predictable from simple common sense, for example, that a world where "rewards and punishments are not distributed in accordance with individual merit" might lessen average citizens' enthusiasm for the death penalty and the like; similarly, that tremendous variance in values and beliefs might boost their willingness to restrict moral choices and free expression. In the vast majority of cases, however, our manipulated threats and reassurances (normative and otherwise) can exercise real influence only in interaction with authoritarianism, polarizing or "neutralizing" the positions of authoritarians and libertarians, while leaving regular folk generally unmoved by the whole experience. Recall that this same point was emphasized earlier when discussing the ability of the authoritarian dynamic to encompass "terror management" theory (Greenberg et al. 1986; 1990; Rosenblatt et al. 1989; Solomon et al. 1991), with manipulations of "mortality salience" (as in our "no afterlife" condition) increasing intolerance only among those predisposed to authoritarianism (Table 9.4).

Finally, and similarly, note that there is only one case in the entire *MIS99* investigation where sheer emotional arousal in response to the incoming news has any significant impact (one way or the other) on average subjects' attraction to intolerant positions, with negative arousal tending modestly to *diminish* overall moral intolerance (Table 9.3). Otherwise, negative arousal provokes only authoritarians to greater intolerance, while reducing intolerance among libertarians (Tables 9.2 and 9.3), steepening the impact of authoritarianism much as did the originating reports themselves. That negative arousal is consequential only in interaction with authoritarianism, and actually encourages libertarians to adopt more tolerant stances, lends slender support to the notion that racism and intolerance might be a function of some simple, undifferentiated "frustration aggression" reaction (Berkowitz 1998).

Of course, an alternative means of gaining an overall sense of that which drives intolerance of difference in general is simply to analyze summary indices constituted by averaging across these seemingly disparate expressions of racial, political, and moral intolerance. Effects that are peculiar to one domain or another, or mere products of chance, will be cancelled out, leaving only that which consistently underwrites intolerance of difference in general. The results of conducting such analyses on both the

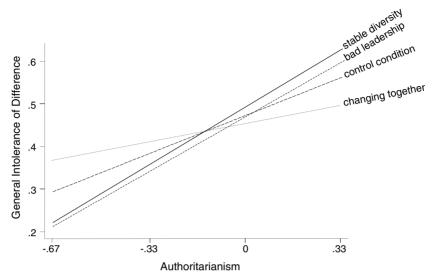


Figure 9.9. Effects of authoritarianism on general intolerance of difference given experimental manipulation of threat and reassurance (*MIS99*). *Source:* Table 9.3, column 6.

MIS99 and CRE95 data are presented in the final columns of Tables 9.3 and 9.4 and graphically depicted in Figures 9.9 and 9.10. These results confirm the general conclusions drawn in the preceding overview, this time with dependent variables<sup>29</sup> reflecting, all at once, the full gamut of intolerance of difference: from animosity toward blacks and affection for the Ku Klux Klan; to abstract as well as specific opposition to free speech, association, and assembly; to homophobia, demand for school prayer, and prohibitions on pornography and prostitution; to support for the death penalty, punishment over rehabilitation, and sacrificing the rights of the accused.

In each experiment, almost a quarter of the variance in these manifold expressions of intolerance of difference is explained by nothing more than this fundamental measure of authoritarian predisposition (formed simply from choices of desirable qualities for children or of "appealing" words), responding to randomly assigned (i.e., exogenous) conditions of threat or reassurance. Bear in mind, too, that my opportunistic deployment of tolerance-related variables collected by fellow investigators meant that my overall index of general intolerance on the MIS99 was largely comprised of items sometimes asked as much as thirty minutes subsequent

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> See Appendices B and C for full details on the construction of these overall indices.

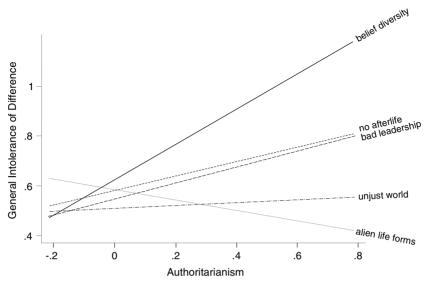


Figure 9.10. Effects of authoritarianism on general intolerance of difference given experimental manipulation of threat (*CRE95*). *Source*: Table 9.4, column 6.

to my manipulations of threat and reassurance. This is especially impressive when we consider the mild nature of those manipulations, and the fact that tolerance judgments are known to be highly responsive to question-ordering effects and other aspects of survey design (Marcus et al. 1995).

# REPLICATION ON SURVEY DATA: VARYING PUBLIC DISCORD ACROSS CULTURES AND TIME

To this point, I have relied entirely upon this experimental evidence, taking advantage of the internal validity assured by precisely designed and randomly assigned treatments to make strong claims about the causal impact of the authoritarian dynamic. Yet this mechanism we observe at work in every domain of intolerance is no mere fabrication of laboratory manipulation; we can discern the same dynamic operating in the real world. Employing both the *GSS72-00* and *WVS90-95* surveys, and substituting actual variance in public opinion for our experimentally manipulated reports of belief diversity, we can see that the impact of authoritarianism on survey expressions of intolerance is likewise contingent upon the level of public discord prevailing in the respondent's environment (see Tables D.5 and E.4 and Figures 9.11.1 and 9.11.2).

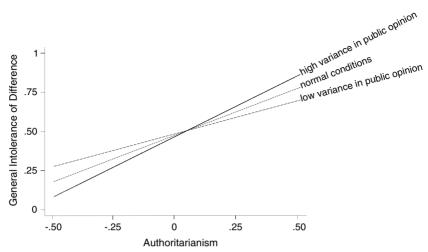


Figure 9.11.1. Effects of authoritarianism on general intolerance of difference given varying experience of normative threat (GSS72-00). Source: Table D.5, column 2.

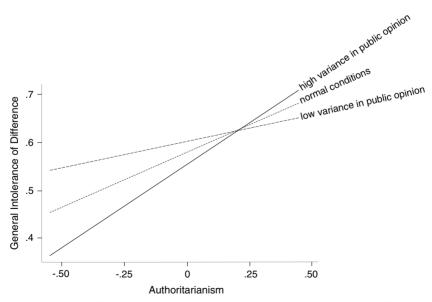


Figure 9.11.2. Effects of authoritarianism on general intolerance of difference given varying experience of normative threat (WVS90-95). Source: Table E.4, column 2.

In the *GSS* analysis, the public discord actually being experienced by each respondent is indicated by the variance in opinions expressed by all those interviewed around the same time as the respondent, specifically, on the same day, or within a few days beforehand. In the *WVS* investigation, the level of public dissension with which a respondent is presumably being confronted is reflected by the variance in opinions expressed by all others from the same national sample in the same wave of the survey. In each case, the measure of public discord equally weights the variance in intolerance of difference and the variance in conservatism, the two dimensions allegedly underwriting the attitudes under investigation.<sup>30</sup>

These survey measures of public discord in the respondent's environment are the real-world analogues of our experimental manipulations of news reports of belief diversity: the critical component of normative threat. In the real world, levels of public discord change over time, and diverge across cultures, presumably dependent upon differing political, social, and economic environments. These environmental variations might entail variations in history and cultural traditions, institutions, customs, and norms. They may involve the intercession of external events and domestic responses to same. And they could include variations in the sociodemographic characteristics of the population, attributes of the macro economy, electoral systems and conditions, partisan organization and political maneuvering, or media coverage and framing of issues and events.

Regardless of the root causes of these differing levels of public discord, the opinion variance scores calculated for the different WVS national samples, and GSS time periods, effectively reflect the diversity of beliefs that the respondent must confront in the course of his or her daily interactions and consumption of popular media. Such public discord ought to activate authoritarian predispositions and magnify their influence upon racism and intolerance, irrespective of the respondent's conscious awareness of that opinion variance, and irrespective of its sources. In our analyses, we are fortunate to have public discord varying widely not only across time (with respondents interviewed on different days over three decades of the GSS72-00), but also across cultures (with respondents drawn from eighty different national samples in the WVS90-95). All of this makes for strong external validity and a particularly compelling test of the generality and universality of the authoritarian dynamic, against the most representative samples that one can assemble of both white Americans, and the world population.

In both the GSS and WVS analyses, authoritarianism is again indicated by nothing other than childrearing values. And the measures of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Full details on variable construction are provided in Appendices D and E. See also notes 14 and 15 to Chapter 5 and associated discussion in the text.

general intolerance of difference (as previously described in Chapters 5 and 6)<sup>31</sup> are comprised of a broad range of expressions of racial, political, and moral intolerance, as appropriate to their respective populations. These include attitudes regarding residential segregation, interracial marriage, immigration, and patriotism; civil liberties in principle and practice; school prayer, pornography, homosexuality, and abortion; the death penalty, stricter sentencing, and prioritizing the fight against crime over compassion, individual freedom, and the rights of the accused.

In each case, we find that the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance is substantially magnified in a fractious opinion climate and considerably diminished given a relatively consensual opinion milieu. Authoritarianism<sup>32</sup> generally increases the intolerance expressed by our GSS respondents by about 42 percentage points<sup>33</sup> given low variance in public opinion, by around 60 points under normal conditions, and by about 79 points in the face of high variance in opinion<sup>34</sup> (Figure 9.11.1). Thus, authoritarians and libertarians interviewed as data collection wound up in late April 1982 – a period of unusual public discord, judging by great variance in the opinions expressed by respondents at that time – would generally adopt far more distinctive stances toward minorities, dissidents, and deviants than similarly predisposed respondents interviewed amid the relative equanimity apparently prevailing as interviews got under way in late February of the following year. This simple interaction between authoritarian predispositions and varying levels of public discord explains nearly a third of the variance in intolerance of all manner of difference expressed across these three decades of U.S. history.

The same story is told when we shift our investigation to the world arena, testing the power of this simple dynamic to explain the intolerance expressed by respondents of every race, color, and creed, across eighty independent samples drawn in fifty-nine vastly different nations between 1990 and 1998. Again, it appears that the tendency of authoritarian pre-disposition to yield intolerance of difference is greatly inflated in a cultural context of divided public opinion (Figure 9.11.2). We find that authoritarianism<sup>35</sup> tends to increase the manifest expression of intolerance by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> And more fully detailed in Appendices D and E.

<sup>32</sup> That is, moving across the one-unit range of the authoritarianism measure.

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 33}$  That is, by around .42 on the 0 to 1 scale of the dependent variable.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> That is, calculating the conditional effects of (a one-unit increase in) authoritarianism upon general intolerance of difference, while variance in public opinion is held, in turn, at two standard deviations below the sample mean, at the sample mean, and at two standard deviations above that mean. See Table D.5 for the regression estimates, and Table D.1 for univariate statistics.

<sup>35</sup> That is, moving across the one-unit range of the authoritarianism measure.

around 11 percentage points<sup>36</sup> given low variance in public opinion (say, the degree of consensus evident in Taiwan in 1995), by about 23 points in a typical opinion climate, and by around 35 points in the presence of great public discord<sup>37</sup> (e.g., at about the level prevailing in Turkey in 1990). Thus, Turkish authoritarians and libertarians would be staking out far more polarized positions in regard to intolerance of all manner of difference than their Taiwanese counterparts harboring the very same inclinations, by virtue of the activation of those latent predispositions and the escalation set in motion by their fractious opinion climate. This interaction of endogenous individual predispositions with exogenous societal conditions explains over 13 percent of the variance in all intolerance of difference worldwide, including majorities' intolerance of racial and ethnic minorities, minorities' animosity toward majorities, and everyone's intolerance of the home country's peculiar array of dissidents, deviants, and criminals.

In evaluating these WVS results, we should keep in mind that the steepness of each of the estimated slopes depicted in Figure 9.11.2 will have been greatly attenuated by the extreme unreliability of their authoritarianism measure (an issue earlier discussed around Table 5.3). Likewise, the unreliability of the WVS measure of general intolerance of difference will diminish the apparent explanatory power of the model. In each case, this unreliability works against the research hypotheses, making only for a stricter test of the power and precision of the authoritarian dynamic.

Of course, all interactions can always be viewed from the alternate angle, which in our case helps to solidify insights and to illuminate their implications (as previously illustrated in Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2). Thus, we can discern the manner in which normative threat modifies the impact of authoritarianism on intolerance, as in Figures 9.11.1 and 9.11.2. Or from the alternate perspective offered by Figures 9.12.1 and 9.12.2, we can observe how authoritarianism modifies the impact of normative threat on intolerance. The same insights could always have been gleaned by vertically scanning the former figures, but they are more easily grasped from the alternate angle depicted in the latter figures.

From this perspective it is readily apparent, as emphasized throughout the theoretical discussions, that the changing impact of authoritarian-ism

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> That is, by around .11 on the o to 1 scale of the dependent variable.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> That is, calculating the conditional effects of (a one-unit increase in) authoritarianism upon general intolerance of difference, while variance in public opinion is held, in turn, at two standard deviations below the sample mean, at the sample mean, and at two standard deviations above that mean. See Table E.4 for the regression estimates, and Table E.1 for univariate statistics.

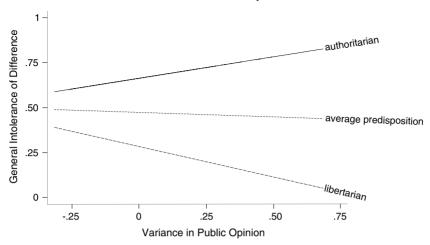


Figure 9.12.1. Effects of experience of normative threat on general intolerance of difference given varying authoritarianism (*GSS*72–00). *Source*: Table D.5, column 2.

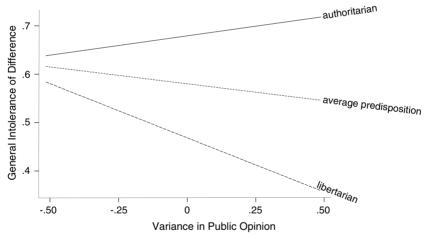


Figure 9.12.2. Effects of experience of normative threat on general intolerance of difference given varying authoritarianism (*WVS90–95*). *Source:* Table E.4, column 2.

is a function of the changing behavior of both authoritarians *and* libertarians under conditions of normative threat. Thus, we can see that regular folk – who have no strong leanings one way or the other – are relatively unmoved, even induced to greater tolerance, by increasing public discord

(see the middle slopes of Figures 9.12.1 and 9.12.2). This easily explains why aggregate analyses that cannot, and individual analyses that do not, allow for the critical interaction with individual predispositions may often find that various measures of collective threat either fail to influence, or appear to diminish manifest expressions of intolerance. But authoritarians and libertarians, for whom this battle matters, are activated and polarized by conditions of normative threat, rushing to "man the barricades" in defense of oneness and sameness or freedom and difference.

Thus, our predictions from the GSS72-00 analysis place highly libertarian and authoritarian respondents at .39 and .59, respectively, on the (o-1) measure of general intolerance given extremely consensual public opinion, but then at .04 and .83 in a climate of great dissensus (Figure 9.12.1). To put this in perspective, the latter scores would place our libertarians and authoritarians at the first and ninety-ninth percentiles in the overall distribution of intolerance of difference. Similarly, the WVS90-95 estimates have the most libertarian and authoritarian characters barely distinguishable in manifest intolerance given a climate of near equanimity (e.g., the likes of Japan in 1990), with predicted scores on the (0-1) general intolerance measure of .58 and .64, respectively (Figure 9.12.2). But respondents with exactly the same latent predispositions are expected to score .36 and .72 in overall intolerance should they find themselves in an extremely fractious environment (e.g., West Germany in 1990), placing them at the tenth and eightieth percentiles in the worldwide distribution of intolerance of difference.

In the end, then, the logic of the authoritarian dynamic is not at all mysterious. These are two antithetical characters engaged in one fundamental battle: each equally concerned with the appropriate balance between oneness and sameness versus freedom and difference; equally aroused by societal conditions challenging their competing resolutions of that dilemma; and equally moved to defend these resolutions under those same conditions of normative threat.

## NORMATIVE THREAT AND ATTITUDINAL CONSTRAINT

This brings us full circle back to the one overarching generalization that serves to integrate many of the findings presented throughout the larger project: normative threat increases constraint across the entire domain of intolerance. This generalization was offered at the close of the theoretical discussions of Chapter 2, and it has been tested at different points and in various ways throughout this work. We have already seen that normative threat increases the reliability (hypothesis  $H_I$ ) and over-time stability ( $H_2$ ) of measures of authoritarianism, as well as the influence of authoritarianism on racism and intolerance ( $H_3$ ). The evidence now presented

Table 9.5. Constraint among intolerant attitudes given experimental manipulation of normative threat and reassurance

	b		r		α	
Experimental Conditions	MIS99	CRE95	MIS99	CRE95	MIS99	CRE95
If normative threat	.26	.23	.25	.21	.80	.71
If normative reassurance % increase in constraint	.18 +44%	08 + 188%	.17 +47%	.08 +163%	.71 +13%	.47 +51%

Note: Cell entries are (b) average unstandardized OLS regression coefficients, (r) average correlation coefficients, and ( $\alpha$ ) Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients among the twelve individual measures making up the overall intolerance of difference scale in each dataset.

Source: MIS99, whites only, N = 844 overall, N = 233 under normative threat, N = 230 under normative reassurance; CRE95, whites only, N = 103 overall, N = 32 under normative threat, N = 31 under normative reassurance.

in Table 9.5 addresses the final hypothesis in that series, previously designated *H*<sub>4</sub>: normative threat increases the consistency of the various manifestations of intolerance of difference, as evidenced by increased reliability of indices reflecting racial, political, *or* moral intolerance; and likewise by increased association *between* measures of racial, political, and moral intolerance, and increased reliability of indices reflecting general intolerance of difference.

We find that just as conditions of normative threat and reassurance increase and decrease the reliability of authoritarianism measures (Table 9.1), they likewise enhance and diminish the reliability of our indices of general intolerance of difference (Table 9.5). The twelve-item general intolerance index from the MIS99 attains an  $\alpha$  reliability of .80 among subjects exposed to any kind of normative threat ("belief diversity," "stable diversity," or "bad leadership"), but just .71 among those receiving normative reassurance ("belief consensus," "changing together," or "good leadership"). Of course, by virtue of random assignment to experimental conditions, this attenuation of scale reliability cannot be attributed to anything other than the varying "news" to which subjects were exposed. And again, it is all the more impressive given that the index was largely comprised of items asked some considerable time after those rather mild manipulations of threat and reassurance. By way of comparison, note that this intolerance index achieves a reliability of .77 among those with above-average political knowledge scores,<sup>38</sup> and .64 among the less sophisticated.

The more forceful manipulations of the CRE95 experiment managed to tighten and loosen the CRE's overall index to an even greater degree,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> See Appendix B for details of the political knowledge measure.

with subjects responding more or less "consistently" to the twelve items reflecting their racial, political, and moral intolerance depending simply on the "news reports" which they had been assigned. Here the measure of general intolerance of difference attained an  $\alpha$  reliability of .71 among subjects who read about "the fracturing of public opinion" or "uninspiring political leadership," which plummeted to just .47 among those reading reassuring news of "broad societal consensus" or leaders "that you could put your faith in." <sup>39</sup> By comparison, the scale reliability is .74 and .55 among subjects with above- and below-average political knowledge, <sup>40</sup> respectively.

## THE POLITICS OF IDEAS VERSUS THE POLITICS OF FEAR

This varying coherence of tolerance-related indices under conditions of normative threat and reassurance is no mere measurement "artifact" or methodological footnote. As I previously noted in the discussions around Table 9.1, it has been an enduring concern in public opinion research that ordinary citizens do not appear to have very "consistent" or "coherent" attitudes about politics (Converse 1964; Achen 1975; Zaller 1992). The suspicion that many citizens do not possess anything resembling meaningful opinions generally rests on persistent evidence of inconsistency and instability in survey responses. As earlier noted, this is typically described as a lack of constraint, where constraint is defined as "the success we would have in predicting, given initial knowledge that an individual holds a specified attitude, that he holds certain further ideas and attitudes" (Converse 1964: 207). Most importantly, a lack of constraint is generally seen as a weakness or failure of political reasoning, prevalent among those with insufficient political expertise to recognize the "proper" connections between their general principles (such as they are) and specific issues, that is, to consistently express their general beliefs in specific political attitudes, and likewise to express logically consistent positions on related issues.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Note that we can observe the same phenomenon of enhanced internal coherence when normative threat improves the reliability of the RWA scale. (Bear in mind that, from my point of view, the RWA scale is a measure of general intolerance of difference, equivalent to the overall indices of intolerance constructed and analyzed in Table 9.5). Thus, the reliability of the *CRE95* twenty-item RWA scale ranges from .79 to .90 for subjects under experimental conditions of normative reassurance and threat, respectively. Likewise, the reliability of the *DCS97* twelve-item RWA scale ranges from .71 to .93 for respondents with perceptions of normative threat at most one standard deviation below, and at least one standard deviation above, the sample mean, respectively.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> See Appendix C for details of the political knowledge measure.

This understanding of inconsistency as cognitive failure makes sense if ideology is the only kind of political thinking, and politics is nothing but the expression of ideas. But it is a dangerously incomplete picture if there are political predispositions other than reasoned ideologies, and things that citizens want to express in politics other than ideas. And certainly it is my hope that the evidence presented throughout this work has persuaded us of at least that much (see also Chong, McClosky, and Zaller 1983; Sniderman et al. 1989; Kuklinski et al. 1991; Kinder 1994; 1998; Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen 2000; Marcus 2003). Thus, an apparent lack of constraint - those regrettably "incoherent" and "unstable" responses may well indicate a failure of reasoning on the part of the citizen. But in the tolerance domain, at least, it is just as likely to reflect not a lack of expertise but a lack of fear, that is, not a failure of political reasoning resulting in inexpert packaging of one's attitudes, but rather a reasonable (if not reasoned) response to reassuring contemporaneous information. In short, the unhinging of tolerance-related indices given normative reassurance reflects a completely appropriate "dis-arming" of the defensive arsenal when conditions no longer warrant its mobilization. As authoritarians and libertarians step back from the barricades and soften or abandon their characteristic defensive stances, they are naturally harder to recognize in their "pacified" states. The attitudes they express at this point (and thus the characters themselves) may be almost indistinguishable (hence, "incoherence"); likewise, they may bear little relation to those expressed subsequently under conditions of normative threat (hence, "instability").

So general ideology *should* stand in consistent relation to specific political attitudes; for example, a reasoned commitment to laissez-faire principles should *always* yield objections to government ownership of industry, irrespective of changing conditions. But a functional predisposition like authoritarianism should regulate specific attitudes in the relevant domain as needed. Since the latter is determined by changing exogenous conditions, authoritarian predisposition will not be consistently related to (i.e., will not consistently produce the same degree of) manifest intolerance. Likewise, when less heavily regulated by authoritarianism, those manifest expressions of racial, political, and moral intolerance will themselves less consistently align. These are defensive stances that almost effortlessly achieve "coherence" not by elaborate cognitive undergirding but naturally and necessarily, simply by virtue of their common function. They "come together" to serve a function; they are "un-packed" when no longer needed. But this is all as it should be. Only an overly "idea-lized" perspective on politics will view this as regrettable error.

What is regrettable are the errors we commit if we fail to recognize that there are politics other than the politics of ideas, and that a great deal of political "reasoning" might be rather less reasoned than we like

to imagine. In the idea-lized perspective, politics is in the end mostly about political elites "helping" citizens understand how their general beliefs connect to current political issues and actors, and doing a better or worse job of signaling and "selling" those connections. One might effect a fundamental and politically consequential shift in the salience of an issue, in the manner in which it is framed, in perceptions of how it might best be managed, or by whom. But none of this anticipates wild or rapid shifts in public *demand* – for example, the demand for some moderate intervention in the economy should remain reasonably constant, even as political maneuvering alters who gets to service that demand and to benefit from that intervention.

But the authoritarian dynamic is a different creature altogether. Authoritarians and libertarians are mobilized in defense of that which they value only when those valued ends appear to be in jeopardy. For each side, this will be when they are induced to fear that those ends, and the social arrangements that serve them, might be at risk, or starting to seem too risky for the collective. Exogenous<sup>41</sup> conditions of normative threat – most critically, belief diversity and fallible leaders – remind both authoritarians and libertarians of that which they value, of why it is valued, and that it may not be valued (now, or for too much longer) by others. The experience or perception of normative threat may certainly, even often, be a product of elite manipulation. But the predisposition to be hyperresponsive to those conditions is endogenous: a product of the masses. Thus, as we saw starkly depicted in Figures 9.12.1 and 9.12.2, with rising levels of normative threat – something as simple as increasing discord in public opinion - characters with vastly different *latent* predispositions, whose positions on tolerance might have been virtually indistinguishable in a climate of relative equanimity, will suddenly sharply diverge in the stances they adopt toward any issue touching upon diversity, dissent, and deviance.

Given those estimated slopes for citizens of average predisposition, mean levels of intolerance may remain constant or even decline. But it will be a very different world indeed. The aggregate result of activating this dynamic will be deeply intensified value conflict across the tolerance domain, sharply polarized politics, and enormously increased demands upon the polity: for greater *and* lesser discrimination against minorities and restrictions on immigration; for more *and* fewer limits on free speech, assembly, and association; for stricter *and* softer policies on common rites, abortion, censorship, and homosexuality; for harsher *and* more lenient

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Keeping in mind the consistent finding (for instance, see Table 3.1) that authoritarians are not especially inclined to experience or perceive normative threat (if anything, somewhat the reverse), they are simply hyper-responsive once they do.

punishment. Moreover, once set in motion, the process clearly has the potential to "feed" itself, with great public discord provoking increased polarization of positions, which in turn can further fuel the dynamic.

Ultimately, then, what we see depicted here is, for stable societies bounded and underwritten by substantial commonality, and for robust polities with responsible leadership and strong institutional safeguards, the anatomy of a debilitating "culture war," at least (Hunter 1991; 1994; DiMaggio, Evans, and Bryson 1996; Evans 1996). For less secure systems, at the extreme, it may be the recipe for civil dissolution, even genocide. Either way, we are no longer dealing with that inertial, elite-driven politics, competing to "educate" citizen-consumers and then to service their reasonably constant and predictable demands. This is a volatile movement of the masses, placing vastly increased – and essentially irreconcilable – demands upon the polity. It is not a "top down" diffusion of cues and considerations, but a "bottom up" expression of primitive passions; not the politics of ideas, but the politics of fear. The persistent dilemmas that this lurking dynamic creates for modern liberal democracies, in particular, will now become one of the primary concerns of our concluding discussion

# TO

# The Authoritarian Dynamic: Implications

This work began with the conviction that racial, political, and moral intolerance, normally studied in isolation, are really kindred spirits: primarily driven by the same fundamental predisposition, fueled by the same motives, exacerbated by the same fears. While not discounting the value of providing a comprehensive account of all the ideas, interests, and emotions influencing intolerance in a specific domain, it seemed that insufficient attention had been paid to developing a parsimonious model illuminating general regularities in intolerant behavior: one that could help all of us better understand the particular expressions of intolerance of interest to us.

To this end, I set about resuscitating the concept of authoritarianism: of a general predisposition to intolerance of difference. I managed to isolate and measure that predisposition in such a way as to avoid confounds with the attitudes and behaviors that we want to explain: a previously inescapable tautology that has plagued prior theory and research, reducing confidence in the value of the concept and the validity of empirical findings. I then developed and tested a general model – the authoritarian dynamic – that can explain a great deal of the variance across different varieties of intolerance with the interaction of just two variables. Via precisely designed and randomly assigned experimental manipulations, I have shown that a wide array of behaviors considered detrimental to liberal democracy are substantially influenced by fundamental predisposition to authoritarianism, interacting with changing environmental conditions of normative threat.

## THE POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY OF INTOLERANCE

The authoritarian dynamic thus manages to reconcile extant theories alternately emphasizing the individual psychology or environmental conditions conducive to intolerance. And in so doing, it "dis-solves" some

nagging empirical puzzles that have derailed prior attempts to give credence to the notion of authoritarianism, specifically: the parallel mysteries of a purported pre-disposition that expresses itself to varying degrees in different situations, and of attitudes and behaviors, supposedly regulated by individual psychology, that precipitously surge and decline with changing levels of societal threat.

Importantly, authoritarian predisposition seems to be a relatively innate and enduring individual trait, while these catalytic conditions turn out to be the central stuff of politics: high levels of dissent and divided public opinion: leaders proving fallible and unworthy of our trust. Thus, politics provide the critical exogenous inputs that fundamentally alter the behavior of citizens of varying disposition. Authoritarians prove to be especially important political actors on account of their relentlessly sociotropic outlook, constant monitoring of collective fates and fortunes, and extreme reactivity to those changing exogenous conditions. In all of our experimental manipulations, it proved alarmingly easy to shift these characters from positions of indifference, even of modest tolerance, to aggressive defense of oneness and sameness employing the full force of state authority. We can only wonder at the fearful politics and irrational policy shifts surely set in motion by our steady diet of negative campaigning, media obsession with political scandals, and the constant ringing of alarm bells regarding society's "moral decay."

Authoritarianism, then, is not merely a static property of the individual psyche – of interest only to scholars concerned with the life of the mind – but a living, breathing social phenomenon: a dynamic *political* process. The concept of authoritarianism had managed to retain a tenuous foothold in political science on account of the lingering suspicion that it had *consequences* we care about: racism and intolerance. But the evidence presented here testifies to the critical responsiveness of authoritarian attitudes and behaviors to such central political variables as public opinion, media coverage, and confidence in political leadership. There can no longer be any doubt that authoritarian attitudes and behaviors are highly susceptible to political influences: they have important political *causes*, as well as important political *consequences*.

# AUTHORITARIANISM VERSUS STATUS QUO CONSERVATISM: CONSERVATIVES AS DEFENDERS OF FREEDOM

A secondary but not inconsiderable contribution of this work is that, in making its case for the authoritarian dynamic, it clearly distinguishes authoritarianism from both status quo and laissez-faire conservatism, exposing their widely varying natures, origins, and effects. This has been a thoroughly confused issue, whose clarification was vital to gaining a

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proper appreciation of the primary role played by authoritarianism in fueling intolerance of difference across domains, cultures, and time. Thus, while demonstrating that authoritarianism is indeed the principal determinant of intolerance of difference worldwide, I also provide definitive evidence regarding what it is *not*. It is not a desire to preserve the status quo whatever that may be. It does not preclude support for social change, so long as we are changing together in pursuit of common goals. And it is not preference for laissez-faire economics. It does not necessitate opposition to government interventions that might serve to enhance oneness and sameness. As I noted at the close of Chapter 4, apart from confusing theory and confounding evidence for half a century, these common misconceptions create needless skepticism and resistance among those (quite reasonably) reluctant to accept that distaste for change implies distaste for other races, or that commitment to economic freedom somehow suggests an interest in moral regulation and political repression.

This confusion – among both scholars and political elites – has significant political and social implications. It can drive those who are merely averse to change into unnatural and unnecessary political alliances with the hateful and intolerant, when they could be rallied behind tolerance and respect for difference under the right conditions. These conditions would include authoritative reminders of how privileged are those ideals in one's national tradition; reassurances regarding established brakes on the pace of change, and the settled rules of the game to which all will adhere; and confidence in the leaders and institutions managing social conflict, and regulating the extent and rate of social change. I find compelling indications that status quo conservatives, if properly understood and marshaled, can be a liberal democracy's strongest bulwark against the dangers posed by intolerant social movements. Those by nature averse to change should find the "shining path" to the "glorious future" far more frightening than exciting, and can be expected to defend faithfully any established order – including one of institutionalized respect for difference and protection of individual freedom – against "authoritarian revolution."

# AUTHORITARIANISM VERSUS LAISSEZ-FAIRE CONSERVATISM: AUTHORITARIANS AS SOCIAL REFORMERS

Likewise, notwithstanding the manner in which political elites – in certain cultures, at particular points in time, for whatever reason – might choose to package issues, there is no natural or necessary alliance between commitment to laissez-faire economics and aversion to individual autonomy and difference. In fact, these two dimensions are logically antithetical and, more often than not, empirically inverted in diverse populations the world over. Since these planes are distinct, their positioning relative

to one another can and does shift, potentially generating phenomena of great import – internal factions, "odd bedfellows," crosscutting cleavages, partisan realignments – that can be exploited by scholars for theoretical insights, and by elites for political gains.

For example, regarding opposition to affirmative action programs designed to promote racial equality, at least in preliminary analyses I find evidence that this is motivated more by genuine aversion to government intervention on anyone's behalf than by aversion to difference (see also Sniderman and Piazza 1993; Sniderman et al. 1996; Sniderman and Carmines 1997; Kuklinski et al. 1997; Stoker 1998), and that authoritarians - who are generally hateful toward and driven to denigrate those of different race – can actually be attracted to such schemes promoting greater social uniformity (see Tables A1.4 and B.4 and Figures A1.4 and B.3). Although it may seem counterintuitive, this preliminary evidence suggests that those least tolerant of racial diversity might actually be brought around to supporting programs redressing racial inequality when the proposed policies (e.g., quotas in university admissions) seem likely to reduce some of the (real or imagined) differences they so abhor. This not obvious insight – which itself depends upon recognizing that much of what we tend to call racism is more appropriately understood as difference-ism – provides some potentially critical leverage on an important political and social issue. Authoritarianism appears to soften conservatives' opposition to specific interventions such as affirmative action schemes and, more generally, to pull them away from identification with political parties espousing laissez-faire principles (see Figures A1.3, B.2, and D.3 and Tables A1.4, B.4, and D.4). While all of these issues remain secondary for my purposes and could not be pursued here, the preliminary evidence clearly indicates that they merit further investigation. For now, suffice it to note simply that failure to grasp the fundamentally different natures of authoritarianism and conservatism means that scholars miss critical insights and political elites miss valuable opportunities.

### ACCEPTING AND WORKING WITH DIFFERENCE-ISM

Recognizing the power and primacy of difference-ism can make for a more optimistic assessment of certain persistent problems confronting diverse modern liberal democracies. For example, suppose we accept that much expression of racial intolerance is driven primarily not by racial animosity but by some more fundamental, generalized intolerance of difference. To put it bluntly, those of different race can more easily change their seeming difference than their race, and more easily than the inherently intolerant can change their predispositions. It would appear that if different races and ethnicities within a particular society could *seem* less

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different – whether by real or apparent increase in commonality of values, culture, or language – then those who are innately intolerant of difference would generally be more "tolerant" in effect (although in reality, of course, they remain persons who are no less intolerant but simply perceive that they are confronting less difference). This will seem a preposterous response to a persistent dilemma for liberal democracy (and moreover, a deeply offensive one that appears to shift blame for the problem, or at least responsibility for its solution, onto the victims) only if we reject out of hand the whole notion of a fundamental and relatively immutable predisposition to intolerance of difference. While I am well aware how discomfiting, even objectionable, many will find these propositions, they are supported by some very compelling evidence from behavioral genetics, precise experimental manipulations, and universal regularities.

Vain hopes aside, if our ultimate objective is for those of different race, belief, and disposition to live in peace with one another, we ought to take a clear-eyed view of how that might best be accomplished, within the constraints set by the normal distribution of human capacities and imperfections. And I have tried to emphasize that this is not only a more realistic stance for our increasingly diverse polities, but also a more hopeful one. The stunning "about face" in authoritarians' behavior induced by the "aliens" versus "no aliens" manipulation (Figures 9.1.1 and 9.1.2) constitutes a powerful demonstration of the potential for, and the potential benefits of, effectively altering the boundaries of "us." This promising phenomenon, as earlier noted, has likewise received empirical support in psychological research on the "common ingroup identity model" (Gaertner et al. 1993). The long and short of it is that anything a polity can do to generate the appearance of greater difference without will ultimately benefit minorities, dissidents, and deviants within. While this process will of course always demonize some designated "them," no actual out-groups need be harmed; the mere conjuring of some kind of greater difference without is all that seems required to shift the line of demarcation.

This process has been recognized (with varying degrees of consciousness) by those observing or exploiting the "rally around the flag" phenomenon said to attend the existence or creation of a common external enemy (see Mueller 1973; Janis 1982). But its breadth and potential utility for augmenting (in effect) tolerance of all manner of difference has not been widely appreciated. (Note that a good deal of anecdotal evidence suggests that U.S. "domestic" minorities might have benefited from just such a process in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks). Of course, by resort to such strategies we will not actually have produced any *real* change in citizens' tolerance of difference. But we are (or ought to be) about the science, not the religion, of democracy. With or without any genuine change of heart, the fate of the formerly "them" will be

substantially improved once they are included among the beneficiaries of all the privilege, concern, and affection that authoritarians seem determined to lavish upon "us."

### THE SCIENCE VERSUS THE RELIGION OF DEMOCRACY

Unfortunately, our resistance to such proposals – emphasizing sameness within, and difference without – appears to run very deep, ultimately having much to do with cherished (and largely unexamined) beliefs that we share regarding the supposed civilizing force of democracy, that is, the purported educative function of experiencing and participating in a diverse liberal democracy. We tend to imagine, despite a preponderance of evidence, that everyone can be socialized away from intolerance toward greater respect for difference, if only we have the will, the resources, and the opportunity to provide the right experiences. This thinking is, of course, consistent with the notion that intolerant attitudes are primarily learned; hence, they can be "unlearned." According to this wishful understanding of reality, the different can remain as different as they like, and the intolerant will eventually have their intolerance educated out of them. But all the available evidence indicates that exposure to difference, talking about difference, and applauding difference – the hallmarks of liberal democracy – are the surest ways to aggravate those who are innately intolerant, and to guarantee the increased expression of their predispositions in manifestly intolerant attitudes and behaviors.

Paradoxically, then, it would seem that we can best limit intolerance of difference by parading, talking about, and applauding our sameness. Note that this proposal is consistent with Katz's (1960) contention that in order to modify an attitude, we must address the function that that attitude serves; the motivation for holding the attitude determines both how it is aroused and how it might be changed. And this strategy is not nearly as daunting as it might sound, again bearing in mind that it is the appearance of sameness that matters, and that apparent variance in beliefs, values, and culture seem to be more provocative of intolerant dispositions than racial and ethnic diversity. What is daunting is the fierce resistance such proposals encounter from those very actors with the greatest stake in promoting tolerance and respect for difference. But blind faith aside, the science of democracy yields some inescapable, if heretical, conclusions. Ultimately, nothing inspires greater tolerance from the intolerant than an abundance of common and unifying beliefs, practices, rituals, institutions, and processes. And regrettably, nothing is more certain to provoke increased expression of their latent predispositions than the likes of "multicultural education," bilingual policies, and nonassimilation. In the end, our showy celebration of, and absolute insistence upon,

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individual autonomy and unconstrained diversity pushes those by nature least equipped to live comfortably in a liberal democracy *not* to the limits of their tolerance, but to their intolerant extremes.

Note that this dynamic can easily account for the unexpected failure of democratic transitions in societies that, in the comforting climates of unity and consensus furnished by former autocratic regimes, had given every appearance of being ready for the "installation" of democracy and "conversion" to democratic citizenship. A populace that had seemed to coexist and function in relative tranquility in a climate of normative reassurance – given absolute authority, strong constraints on individual autonomy, and mechanisms for suppressing all manner of difference - may hardly be recognizable once the release of those constraints exposes citizens with widely varying (latent) predispositions to conditions of normative threat: with (likely their first experience of) the unrestrained display of diverse opinions and verboten behaviors; rampant criticism of formerly revered authorities and institutions; and exposure and ousting of fallible leaders (see also Seligson 2003). Contrary to popular analyses, then, the seemingly sudden and unexpectedly venomous civil dissolution that may attend this "inauguration" of the authoritarian dynamic must be considered a consequence, not a cause, of the dis-integration of the populace.

## COMMUNITY REQUIRES COMMUNITY

One of the more general conclusions we must draw from the evidence presented here is that the distribution (especially the variance) of individual attributes within a society matters a great deal (which, among other things, constitutes a very strong argument for a more genuinely political political psychology). It matters for political behavior, for political outcomes, even for determining what kind of political system is feasible and operable, in ways that will never be captured by simply observing the average tendencies of a population. For example, the "genocidal formula" may well be not high *levels* of authoritarianism in a populace so much as great variance in authoritarianism, or (relatedly) in public opinion. And communities with a certain distribution of attributes may ultimately be illsuited to democratic processes. Both issues are pursued at greater length in the companion to this work (Stenner n.d.). Again, I would urge that we must substitute for blind faith in democracy a good deal more hard data and clear-eyed empirical investigation of the environmental conditions, and aggregate distributions that are, and are not, in fact conducive to sustaining a healthy liberal democracy.

This proposition will no doubt perplex those democratic "fundamentalists" who seem to think of democracy as a faith that can be spread to any troubled community: in essence, that once those lost souls have

tasted freedom and heard the good word, they will receive the new spirit. convert from their wicked ways, and be born again as democratic citizens. But then no less misguided are the democratic "technocrats," who appear to consider democracy something like a technology we can graciously bestow upon the primitives, dependent only upon our will and resources. Commentators of this persuasion talk about "installing" democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq as if we were installing central air conditioning: an apparatus for cooling internecine tensions and regulating conflict. Most critically, both "schools" seem to assume that difference requires democracy and that democracy solves the problem of difference. But I would argue, instead, the evidence clearly indicates that democracy requires substantial commonality, and functions poorly in the presence of substantial difference (meaning different values, not different peoples). The lack of actual community in many of the world's communities - the legacies of imperialism, the spoils of war, and artificial boundaries – proves to be a great impediment to "installing" democracy and "converting" to democratic citizenship. One cannot create a *self-governing* community where no community truly exists, and democracy cannot be sustained in the presence of excessive difference. In the final analysis, then, democracy does not produce community, it requires community.

## THE PARADOX OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

The evidence presented here likewise highlights the peculiar weaknesses and paradoxical constraints of the American political system, in terms of its ability to nurture tolerance and respect for difference. I am certainly not the first to puzzle over the incongruence between the country's professed dedication to freedom and diversity and its citizens' often erratic commitment to, and practice of, those ideals. The United States is a nation with a very heterogeneous population that apparently harbors sizeable wellsprings of racial animosity. It is a religious outlier (among "developed" nations) that regularly thrusts private moral choices into the realm of public regulation. It is a nation that imprisons and executes a larger share of its population than just about any other. And perhaps most significantly, it is a polity trying to accommodate the demands of very diverse claimants, but one that has deliberately divided its government, and insists upon submitting a vast array of disputes to democratic resolution.

It is well known that the American political system was purposely designed as a system of checks and balances, which multiplied the arms of government, assigned them distinct functions, and set them forever at odds with one another. It is also a system designed to shift power downward, with multiple levels of government, frequent elections at every level, and as many decisions as possible, as often as possible, left in the hands of the

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electorate. The benefits of these arrangements are the stuff of American folklore. But the costs of such a system are the amplification of conflict, the propagation of adversaries, and the constant airing of disagreement: conditions we now know are guaranteed to activate the authoritarian dynamic, starkly polarize the electorate, and increase the manifest expression of intolerance. Little wonder, then, that the "home of the brave" seems perpetually prone to fear-driven politics and irrational public policy, and that the "land of the free" appears simultaneously determined to be "one nation, under God, indivisible": a credo, we should note, that is at heart a pithy endorsement of racial, moral, and political intolerance.

## "STEALTH DEMOCRACY": LESS IS MORE

Contrast this with Britain's prototypical parliamentary system, where we essentially have one representative government engaged in rather orderly and regularized competition with one alternate "team," which is apparently so equally worthy, so integral to the government, and so assuredly dedicated to the "common interest" as to merit the official appellation: "Her Maiesty's Loval Opposition," Ultimately, I would argue – I am sure controversially, but not without good evidence (see also Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002) – that American democracy, like many others, might profit from (at least the appearance of) rather *less* democracy; it could certainly use more common and unifying rituals, institutions, and processes. It turns out that many citizens support democratically elected leaders only when confident they are committed to "people like me," and endorse democratic decision making only when assured that everyone shares their views, which is no kind of democratic commitment at all. It seems that many people "suffering" under vibrant liberal democracies – apparently including many ordinary Americans (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002) – are disturbed by the pursuit of anything other than the (apparently selfevident) "common interest," distressed by endless debate and constant airing of disagreement, and very uncomfortable with the degree of democracy to which they are exposed and expected to contribute.

While the preferences and comfort of its authoritarian citizens should concern a democratic polity as much as any others', the larger issue is, of course, the negative consequences we all suffer on account of their neglect and discomfort. Thus, reversion to some kind of "stealth democracy" (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002) – which could include greater appearance of unity and consensus, less display of diversity and airing of differences – seems likely all at once to improve system affect, enhance meaningful political engagement, increase the rationality of public policy, and diminish the manifest expression of intolerance.

#### DEMOCRACY IS BAD FOR THE ANTI-DEMOCRAT

Of course, all of this directly contradicts the received wisdom on how one goes about securing and enhancing liberal democracy. The standard response to the reality that "stealth democracy is what the people want" (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002: 10) is not to give the people what they want, but to make the people want something more. Typically, this is to be accomplished by means of "education designed to increase people's appreciation of democracy" (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002: 10), including their awareness of the diversity of beliefs and "the challenges of coming to agreement in the face of divided opinion" (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002: 225). Unfortunately, since this amounts to increasing awareness of normative threat, most likely what the reluctant democrats will be wanting in the wake of their democratic "education" is not to embrace freedom and difference, but to shore up oneness and sameness.

Likewise for the experience of living in a democracy itself. This can be inferred from authoritarians' increased demand for limits on diversity. dissent, and deviance given the perception (Figure 4.2.2), manipulation (Figure 4.2.1), or experience (Figures 9.12.1 and 9.12.2) of variance in public opinion. It can be seen more directly still in a cross-national investigation presented in the companion to this work (Stenner n.d.). There, analvses pooling survey data across fifty-nine different nations show that living in a liberal democracy vastly increases the likelihood that authoritarian predispositions will be expressed in intolerant attitudes and behaviors. Quite simply, authoritarians are never more tolerant than when reassured and pacified by an autocratic culture, and never more intolerant than when forced to endure a vibrant democracy. This serves as a potent reminder that people are not empty vessels waiting to be filled with appreciation and enthusiasm for democratic processes. Democratic experiences and messages can encourage democratic or anti-democratic behavior, depending on the predispositions of the "receiver." We have long known that the "anti-democratic personality" (Adorno et al. 1950) is bad for democracy. The harder lesson to learn is that democracy is bad for the anti-democrat.

### DEMOCRACY IS ITS OWN UNDOING

I have endeavored in the foregoing to draw out the broader conclusions that are either directly consistent with, or implied by the totality of empirical evidence presented herein, much of it generated via experimental manipulation of the authoritarian dynamic. But I do not leave the case to rest on experimentation alone. The phenomena observed here are no mere fabrication of laboratory manipulation; they are likewise evident in subsequent investigations of real-world behaviors pursued in the companion

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to this work (Stenner n.d.). This complementary volume exploits both U.S. and cross-national data to illuminate attraction to "right-wing extremist" parties and movements; the surge and decline over time of hate crimes, political violence, and death penalty sentencing; the etiology of political distrust, inefficacy, and disengagement; and ultimately, the anatomy of civil dissolution and genocide. Along the way we discover, among other things:

- that Bill Clinton via the loss of confidence in leaders and institutions engendered by the Lewinsky scandal may have done more damage to the tolerance, trust, and political engagement of the American public than any leader since Nixon;
- that the U.S. has consistently "turned on itself," has persecuted difference and deviance within during times of political turmoil;
- that capital punishment is so evidently driven by the same fearful forces as itself to be deemed a hate crime more than rational public policy;
- that the surprising popularity of the "right-wing extremist" movements proliferating in the world's most avowedly tolerant nations may be due not to high levels of authoritarianism, but to tremendous variance in public opinion; and
- that the Serbs should never have been expected to live in peace with the other Yugoslav republics under anything less constrained than Tito's "benevolent dictatorship."

Ultimately, my hope is that these two complementary volumes will revive the broad concept of an anti-democratic personality (Adorno et al. 1950). I trust that the convergence of experimental precision with compelling real-world applications paints a persuasive picture of the negative returns we reap by exposing these characters to more difference than they are predisposed to tolerate, and more democracy than they are innately equipped to handle. If there are inherent predispositions to intolerance of difference, if citizens so predisposed pop up in all societies, and if those predispositions are actually activated by the experience of living in a vibrant democracy, then freedom feeds fear that undermines freedom, and democracy is its own undoing. The overall lesson is clear: when it comes to democracy, less is often more, or at least more secure. We can do all the moralizing we like about how we want our ideal democratic citizens to be. But democracy is most secure, and tolerance is maximized, when we design systems to accommodate how people actually are. Because some people will never live comfortably in a modern liberal democracy.

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