Cognitive Style and Political Belief Systems in the British House of Commons

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This study used the integrative complexity coding system to analyze confidential interviews with 89 members of the British House of Commons. The primary goal was to explore the interrelation between cognitive style and political ideology in this elite political sample. The results indicated that moderate socialists interpreted policy issues in more integratively complex or multidimensional terms than did moderate conservatives who, in turn, interpreted issues in more complex terms than extreme conservatives and extreme socialists. The latter two groups did not differ significantly from each other. These relations between integrative complexity and political ideology remained significant after controlling for a variety of belief and attitudinal variables. The results are interpreted in terms of a value pluralism model that draws on Rokeach's two-value analysis of political ideology and basic principles of cognitive consistency theory.

Individuals obviously vary widely in the political views that they endorse. Less obviously, people also differ in their styles of thinking about political issues. For instance, some people rely on a few broad principles or generalizations in interpreting events, reject inconsistent evidence, and have little tolerance for alternative viewpoints. Others interpret events in more flexible, multidimensional ways and attempt to develop perspectives that integrate a wide range of information and values specific to the problem at hand (cf. Lasswell, 1948; Putnam, 1971; Rokeach, 1960; Sidanius, 1978; Suedfeld & Rank, 1976; Taylor, 1960; Tetlock, 1981a, 1981b).

Researchers have shown substantial interest in the interrelations between content and stylistic dimensions of political thought. The key question has been: Do persons who differ in cognitive style (i.e., their characteristic ways of organizing and processing information) also differ in the political views they typically endorse? Two hypotheses have dominated psychological speculation on this topic: the "rigidity-of-the-right" and ideologue hypotheses.

The rigidity-of-the-right hypothesis is derived largely from the well-known studies of the authoritarian personality (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Sanford, 1973). According to authoritarian personality theory, people often develop extremely conservative political-economic opinions as means of coping with deep-rooted psychodynamic conflicts that can be traced to early childhood. Conservative attitudes in this view frequently serve ego-defensive functions. Individuals who identify with the sociopolitical right are therefore more likely than persons who identify with the sociopolitical center and left to feel threatened by ambiguous or belief-challenging events. One result is that extreme conservatives, in their attempts to maintain psychological equilibrium, are especially prone to view issues in rigid, dichotomous (good vs. bad) terms. Other investigators, working from different theoretical assumptions, have reached

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similar conclusions (e.g., McClosky, 1967; Wilson, 1973).

Advocates of the ideologue hypothesis were quick to note, however, the insensitivity of this analysis to "authoritarianism of the left" (Rokeach, 1956; Shils, 1956; Taylor, 1960). According to the ideologue hypothesis, adherents of movements of the left and right are much more similar to each other in cognitive style than they are to individuals near the center of the political spectrum. Differences in the content of left-wing and right-wing belief systems should not be allowed to obscure fundamental similarities in how ideologues organize and process political information. "True believers" (regardless of their cause) are more likely to view issues in rigid, dichotomous terms than are individuals who take less extreme or polarized political positions.

Most empirical work on this topic has involved the mass administration of personality and attitude scales to survey respondents or college students. Stone (1980) has concluded in a recent review of this literature that the preponderance of the evidence is consistent with the rigidity-of-the-right hypothesis and inconsistent with the ideologue hypothesis. He noted that across a variety of measurement instruments and subject populations, right-wing respondents usually appear to be more dogmatic, intolerant of ambiguity, and cognitively simple than their left-wing or moderate counterparts (e.g., Barker, 1963; McClosky, 1967; Neuman, 1981; Sidanius, 1978; Wilson, 1973). These findings do not, of course, indicate that there is no authoritarianism of the left (Eysenck, 1981). They indicate only that in 20th-century Western democracies (e.g., Britain, United States, Sweden) certain cognitive stylistic traits occur more frequently among members of the public conventionally classified as being on the sociopolitical right.

In the last few years, investigators have also begun to explore the relation between cognitive style and ideology in samples of political elites or leaders. One approach to this issue has been to develop research methods such as content analysis that permit the assessment of political leaders "at a distance" (Hermann, 1977; Suedfeld & Rank, 1976; Tetlock, 1981a, 1983b; Winter & Stewart, 1977). For instance, Tetlock (1983a) used the integrative complexity coding system to explore the relation between cognitive style and ideology in the United States Senate. This coding system, originally developed for scoring open-ended responses to a semiprojective test designed to measure individual differences in integrative complexity (Schroder, Driver, & Streufert, 1967), has proven to be a flexible methodological tool that can be adapted to analyze a wide range of archival documents, including the letters, diaries, and speeches of political elites (e.g., Levi & Tetlock, 1980; Suedfeld & Rank, 1976; Suedfeld & Tetlock, 1977; Tetlock, 1979, 1981a, 1981b).

The actual coding rules define integrative complexity in terms of two cognitive structural variables: differentiation and integration (see Schroder et al., 1967; Streufert & Streufert, 1978; Tetlock, 1979, 1981a, 1981b). Individuals at the simple end of the complexity continuum tend to rely on fixed, one-dimensional evaluative rules in interpreting events and to make decisions on the basis of only a few salient items of information. Individuals at the complex end tend to interpret events in multidimensional terms and to integrate a variety of evidence in making decisions. (See the Method section for more detail.)

Tetlock (1983a) attempted to test the rigidity-of-the-right and ideologue hypotheses by assessing the integrative complexity of speeches given by United States senators with extremely liberal, moderate, or extremely conservative voting records. He found that senators with extremely conservative voting records in the 94th Congress made less integratively complex policy statements than their moderate or liberal colleagues. This finding remained significant after controlling for the influence of a number of potential confounding variables, including political party affiliation, education, age, years of service in the Senate, and types of issues discussed.

Although these results converge impressively with previous work on non-elite samples that supports the rigidity-of-the-right hypothesis, two problems complicate interpretation of the findings. The first problem stems from relying on public statements for inferring the cognitive styles of senators. Public policy statements may shed more light on how senators seek to influence other political actors (colleagues, the executive branch of government, the press, special interest groups) than on how senators

actually think about policy issues. In short, conservatives may differ from liberals and moderates in rhetorical style, not cognitive style.

The second problem stems from the limited ideological range of positions represented in the United States Senate. A defender of the ideologue hypothesis could argue that there were not enough representatives of the ideological left to provide a fair test of the hypothesis (i.e., there is no influential socialist or communist party in the United States). This line of argument, however, gains force only to the extent its advocates can offer an explicit and defensible (as opposed to ad hoc) rationale for why the ideologue hypothesis applies only to the far left. How far must one go to the sociopolitical left and why?

Tetlock (1983a) offered a theoretical model of the relation between cognitive style and ideology that addresses this key issue. The model draws on Rokeach's (1973, 1979) two-value analysis of political ideology as well as Abelson's (1959) work on modes of resolving cognitive inconsistency. Following Rokeach (1973), the model assumes that the major ideological movements of the 20th century—communism, democratic socialism, laissez-faire or conservative capitalism, and fascism—vary in the importance they attach to the basic and often conflicting values of individual freedom and social equality. Briefly, laissez-faire capitalists and democratic socialists value freedom highly, whereas communists and fascists do not. In contrast, communists and democratic socialists value equality highly, but capitalists and fascists do not.

Following Abelson (1959), the model also assumes that people prefer simple or least-effort modes of resolving cognitive inconsistency whenever feasible. Simple modes of resolving inconsistency are feasible when competing values such as freedom and equality are of unequal strength. It is then easy to deny the importance of one of the competing values or to bolster the importance of the other value. In contrast, when competing values are of approximately equal strength, denial and bolstering are much less plausible modes of inconsistency reduction. People must turn to more complex and effort-demanding strategies such as differentiation (e.g., distinguishing the impact of policies on the two competing values) and integration or transcendence (e.g., developing rules for coping with conflicts between values). Because there is often a tension or trade-off between equality and freedom (especially economic freedom) in policy debates,[1] advocates of ideologies (liberals, social democrats) that attach relatively high importance to both values should feel much greater pressure to rely on integratively complex modes of inconsistency reduction than advocates of ideologies (communists, laissez-faire capitalists, fascists) that attach high importance to only one or neither of these values. In short, the value pluralism of an ideology may determine both the frequency with which people experience cognitive inconsistency and the complexity of the strategies they typically use to cope with inconsistency.

This value pluralism model of the relation between cognitive style and ideology has two noteworthy advantages. First, it explains why several studies have found that advocates of moderate left-wing causes interpret issues in more flexible, multidimensional ways than advocates of conservative or right-wing causes. The traditional ideologue hypothesis, which emphasizes deviation from a vaguely defined political center, is hard pressed to explain these findings. Second, the value pluralism model specifies how far to the sociopolitical left one must go for integrative complexity to fall off: to the point at which concern for equality consistently dominates concern for individual rights and liberties (radical socialists, communists).

The current study provides a stronger test of the relation between cognitive style and ide-

[1] Thurow (1975) succinctly described the trade-off that many economists and political philosophers believe exists between (economic) freedom and equality. He noted that "to be really egalitarian, social rules would have to state that individuals must choose those economic activities that have the largest trickle-down effect [i.e., are most effective in increasing the incomes of the poorest segments of society]. But this would infringe on the liberty of everyone except the poorest man. Should we force one man to work to raise the income of another? Rawls does not want to do this, but maximizing the minimum prize (income) clearly calls for such an infringement. If we do not force men to work, what universal rule do we postulate to justify this exception to maximin? Liberty? Once we have two clashing universal rules, we are in trouble. How do we delineate the domain of the two rules? Once again, there is no satisfactory answer" (p. 30).

ology in an elite sample than the earlier Tetlock study of senators. The data consist of verbatim transcripts of confidential interviews that the political scientist Putnam (1971) conducted with members of the British House of Commons. There is good reason to believe that political impression management motives exerted much less influence on what the politicians said in this setting than in more public settings such as press conferences or the House of Commons (see Putnam, 1971, for evidence on this point). The politicians interviewed were willing on several occasions to criticize their own party and even themselves in the course of the discussions. In addition, the politicians examined in this study represented a wider variety of ideological positions than exists in the United States Senate. The parliamentarians included "extreme socialists" (who favored the nationalization of all major businesses and industries), "moderate socialists" (who favored limited expansion of public control of the economy), "moderate conservatives" (who favored limited denationalization of industry), and "extreme conservatives" (who opposed any government intervention in the economy).

The primary goal of this study was to test alternative (although not mutually exclusive) hypotheses on the relation between cognitive style and ideology by assessing the integrative complexity of the parliamentarians in the Putnam sample. For instance, the rigidity-of-the-right hypothesis leads us to expect that extremely conservative members of Parliament will be less integratively complex than their moderate conservative and socialist colleagues. The ideologue hypothesis leads us to expect that extreme conservatives and extreme socialists will be less integratively complex than their moderate conservative and moderate socialist colleagues. Finally, the value pluralism model leads us to expect that moderate socialists (who, according to Rokeach (1973), place approximately equal importance on freedom and equality) will be more integratively complex than members of all three other ideological groups (who either value freedom over equality, like conservatives, or value equality over freedom, like extreme socialists). In addition, the value pluralism model predicts that moderate conservatives will be more integratively complex than extreme conservatives (because moderate conservatives attach closer to equal importance to freedom and equality than do extreme conservatives).

The study reported here also had other theoretical objectives. These included (a) assessing the stability or consistency of parliamentarians' integrative complexity scores derived from the interviews (How reliable is our measure of individual differences in integrative complexity?), and (b) exploring the relations among ideology, integrative complexity, and a variety of measures of political beliefs and attitudes that Putnam developed.

Method

Background to the Study

The study is based on analyses of transcripts of interviews that Putnam (1971) conducted with members of the British House of Commons in 1967. Of an initial randomly drawn sample of 110 parliamentarians, 93 (85%) were interviewed. Putnam reported that the individuals interviewed faithfully reflected the composition of the entire Parliament (635 members) over a wide range of characteristics (e.g., party affiliation, age, education, social class, parliamentary seniority, and political importance).

Putnam and two assistants performed the interviews. Before each session, the interviewers informed respondents of the purpose of the study (a cross-cultural investigation of elite political culture) and assured them of the absolute confidentiality of their responses. The interviewers relied primarily on open-ended questions (in part, because the parliamentarians balked at the forced-choice format typically used in survey research). Although the interviewers tried (generally successfully) to keep questioning as constant as possible across sessions, they permitted some flexibility to "maintain the tone of a genuine conversation" (Putnam, 1971, p. 19). The interviews always began with questions concerning the personal background of the respondent—his or her career path, likes and dislikes of political life, and general view of problems facing Great Britain. Respondents then discussed two current policy issues and the policymaking process. At this point, the interview turned to a variety of additional topics, including the "essential characteristics" of democracy, the differences between the two major political parties, the nature of social and political conflict, and the type of society the respondent desired for the future. The average interview lasted for 75 min. Interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim.

Integrative complexity coding. We randomly sampled 10 paragraph-sized statements for integrative complexity scoring from the interview protocols of each of 89 parliamentarians. Four parliamentarians were excluded from analysis: 2 members of the small Liberal Party (who were difficult to classify into our ideological categorization scheme), 1 individual who refused to be audiotaped (thus preventing verbatim transcription of the interview), and 1 individual whose interview responses were missing from our data set. The estimated average length of the paragraphs sampled was 80 words. There were no significant differences in the length of material sampled from the different ideological groups of parliamentarians. Finally, there was a

low positive correlation between length of paragraph unit and integrative complexity (r = .16).

All material was coded for integrative complexity on a 7-point scale (Schroder et al., 1967, Appendix I). The scale defines integrative complexity in terms of two variables: differentiation and integration. Differentiation refers to the number of characteristics or dimensions of a problem that are taken into account in decision making. For instance, a decision maker might analyze policy issues in an undifferentiated way by placing options into one of two value-laden categories: the "good socialist policies," which promote redistribution of wealth, and the "bad capitalist policies," which preserve or exacerbate inequality. A highly differentiated approach would recognize that different policies can have multiple, sometimes contradictory, effects that cannot be readily classified on a single evaluative dimension of judgment—for example, effects on the size of the government deficit, interest rates, inflation, unemployment, the balance of trade, and a host of other economic and political variables. Integration refers to the development of complex connections among differentiated characteristics. (Differentiation is thus a prerequisite for integration.) The complexity of integration depends on whether the decision maker perceives the differentiated characteristics as operating in isolation (low integration), in first-order or simple interactions (the effects of A on B depend on levels of C, moderate integration), or in multiple, contingent patterns (high integration).

Scores of 1 reflect low differentiation and low integration. For instance:

> The key problem is that we [the British] have been living way beyond our means for far too long. We have to tighten our belts. Nobody likes to face this unpleasant truth, but that's the way it is. Our standard of living will inevitably fall. It is as straightforward as that. I don't think anyone in touch with current economic reality can deny that.

Scores of 3 reflect moderate or high differentiation and low integration. For instance:

> In politics, of course, it is not only a question of doing what is right or best for the country. It's also a question of what you can carry. An incomes policy [limits on wage increases] is needed to get our economic house in order. But it would be political suicide to go whole hog and impose a straight-jacket policy.

Scores of 5 reflect moderate or high differentiation and moderate integration. For instance:

> The Opposition responded in two seemingly contradictory ways to the steel bill [to nationalize the industry]. They had to go through some ritual posturing to show the colonels in their constituencies they were doing a good job. But they also had some serious suggestions for improving the bill which they knew full well was going to pass. So they behaved constructively in committee working on technical details, but were strident opponents when more in the public eye.

Scores of 7 reflect high differentiation and high integration. For instance:

> We always have to deal with competing priorities in making up the budget. Most basically, we face the tension between the need to fund social welfare programs to which we are committed and the need to stimulate private sector expansion. But there is no simple rule to resolve that tension. A lot depends on factors that are to some extent beyond our control: the state of the pound, our trade balance, unemployment, and those sorts of things. Usually no one is very satisfied: we end up with different priorities in different years and wind up looking rather inconsistent.

Scores of 2, 4, and 6 represent transition points between adjacent levels.

It should be emphasized that the complexity coding system focuses on the cognitive structure, not the content, of expressed beliefs and is therefore not biased for or against any particular philosophy. One can be simple or complex in the advocacy of a wide range of political positions. For instance, Karl Marx and Adam Smith developed highly integratively complex arguments to support polar opposite positions on fundamental issues of economic policy (communism vs. capitalism). A corollary of the above point is that there is no necessary relation between integrative complexity and the correctness of the positions taken by individuals (Tetlock, 1983a).

Statements were coded for integrative complexity by three trained scorers who were unaware of the hypotheses to be tested and the sources of the material. Substantial agreement existed among coders (mean interrater r = .84). Disagreements were resolved by discussion among coders and, when necessary, between the coders and the author.

Assessing political orientation. Two types of information were used to classify political orientation: (a) party membership (Labour vs. Conservative) and (b) ratings of parliamentarians' responses to a question concerning their views on the proper role of government in regulating the economy and providing social welfare (traditionally divisive issues in British politics). Coders in the Putnam research team rated politicians on a 5-point continuum in which 1 represented an extreme socialist position (support for state control of all major means of production), 2 a moderate socialist position (limited expansion of state control of the economy), 3 a centrist position (for the status quo), 4 a moderate conservative position (reduced state control of the economy), and 5 an extreme conservative position (minimal state control of the economy or classic market capitalism). Putnam (1971) reported fairly high intercoder reliability (τ_b^2 = .76), with only 3% of all respondents placed more than one point apart and 63% of all respondents coded identically. We classified parliamentarians as extreme socialists if they were members of the Labour Party and favored state control of all major means of production, as moderate socialists if they were members of the Labour Party and favored limited expansion of state control of the economy or the status quo, as moderate conservatives if they were members of the Conservative Party and favored limited reduction of state control of the economy or the status quo and as extreme conservatives if they were members of the Conservative Party and favored virtually total dismantling of state control of the economy. According to these criteria, 12 parliamentarians were classified as extreme socialists, 41 as moderate socialists, 24 as moderate conservatives, and 12 as extreme conservatives.

Additional relevant variables examined in the Putnam research. The Putnam research team coded the interviews with the parliamentarians for a number of variables that

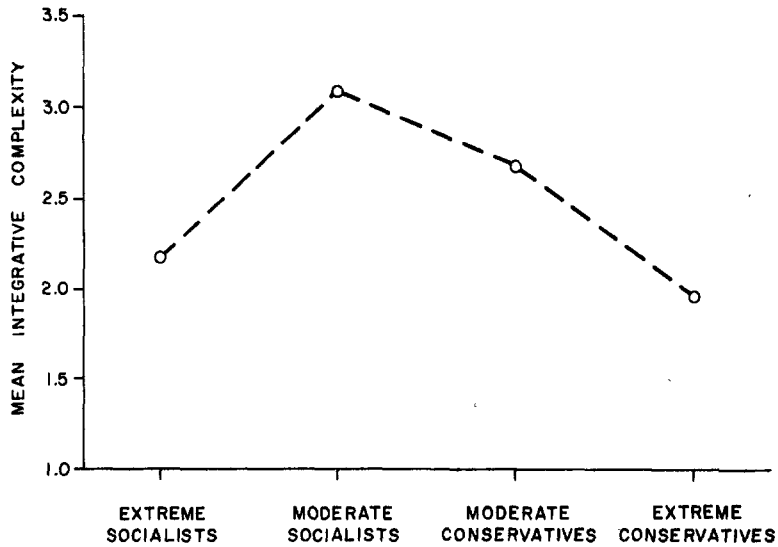

Figure 1. Mean integrative complexity of members of the British House of Commons.

it was reasonable to suspect might be related to integrative complexity. We explored the following possible correlates of integrative complexity:[2]

1. *The ideological style index.* This index (derived from factor analysis) consists of four interrelated variables: (a) *generalizer–particularizer,* the tendency to discuss issues in terms of abstract principles or in terms of specific details of the problem; (b) *deductive–inductive thinking,* the tendency to deduce positions on issues from abstract theory or to reason inductively from available evidence; (c) *reference to a named ideology,* the tendency to refer to a specific ideology or doctrine such as free enterprise or socialism; and (d) *reference to a future utopia* as a standard for judging policy. The Putnam research team rated each interview for the presence of each variable on 3-point scales. In computing the ideological style index, we standardized scores on each of the four variables and then gave equal weight to each variable. An individual received a high score on the ideological style index to the extent he or she was a generalizer, exhibited deductive thinking, and referred to a named ideology and a future utopia in evaluating policy alternatives.

2. *Use of historical context in discussing issues.* Putnam assessed the importance of historical context to a respondent's thinking on a 3-point scale (1 indicating that historical context was a central element in the discussion, 2 indicating that historical context was referred to in passing or vaguely, and 3 indicating that historical context was not important).

3. *Moralizing.* Putnam assessed the tendency to assign blame for current problems on a 3-point scale (1 indicating that the assignment of blame was a central element in the discussion, 2 indicating that the assignment of blame was referred to in passing, and 3 indicating that blame was not assigned).

4. *Extent of party differences.* To measure this variable, Putnam coded responses to the question, "All in all, do you think there is a great deal of difference between the parties, some difference, or not much difference?" He used an 8-point scale (1 indicating "very great differences," 4 indicating important differences except for a "limited group which is closer," and 8 indicating not much difference).

5. *Tolerance of opposing opinions.* Putnam assessed this variable on a 3-point scale (1 indicating the respondent was very intolerant or very unwilling to entertain ideas different from his or her own, 2 indicating the respondent was "somewhat intolerant," and 3 indicating the respondent was tolerant or not at all reluctant to consider opposing ideas).

Results

Figure 1 presents the mean integrative complexity of the interview protocols of parliamentarians classified as extreme and moderate conservatives and socialists. We performed a single-factor (ideological classification) analysis of variance on the mean integrative complexity scores of the parliamentarians. This analysis revealed highly significant differences in the integrative complexity of the four ideological groups, $F(3, 85) = 26.95$, $p < .001$. As the value pluralism model of the relation between cognitive style

[2] Putnam (1971) reported detailed data on the reliability of each of the indices discussed here. In general, there were moderate degrees of interrater reliability: r_b^2's between coders ranged between .4 and .7, with typically under 10% of the protocols rated more than 1 point apart.

and ideology predicted, moderate socialists discussed issues in more integratively complex ways than did extreme socialists (Ms = 3.07 and 2.17), $q(4, 85) = 8.96$, $p < .01$, moderate conservatives (Ms = 3.07 and 2.65), $q(4, 85) = 5.03$, $p < .01$, and extreme conservatives (Ms = 3.07 and 1.97), $q(4, 85) = 11.81$, $p < .001$ (all comparisons based on the Tukey honestly significant difference test, Winer, 1971). Two other pairwise comparisons were also significant: moderate conservatives were more integratively complex than extreme conservatives (Ms = 2.65 and 1.97), $q(4, 85) = 6.28$, $p < .01$, and extreme socialists (Ms = 2.65 and 2.17), $q(4, 85) = 4.43$, $p < .05$. There was no difference in the complexity of extreme conservatives and extreme socialists (Ms = 2.17 and 1.97), $q(4, 85) = 1.60$, *ns*.

An interesting portrait of the integratively complex politician emerges from the correlations between integrative complexity and several belief and attitudinal variables assessed in the Putnam research. The integratively complex politician tended (a) to be politically left of center, $r(87) = -.30$, $p < .01$ (although, as we have seen, the relation between the left–right continuum and complexity is curvilinear); (b) to de-emphasize the differences between the major political parties, $r(87) = .29$, $p < .01$; (c) to be tolerant of opposing viewpoints, $r(87) = .52$, $p < .001$; (d) to think about issues in nonideological terms, $r(87) = .20$, $p = .05$; and (e) to be unconcerned with assigning blame for societal problems, $r(82) = .18$, $p = .05$.[3] In short, integrative complexity is associated with a pragmatic, open-minded, and nonpartisan world view.

We used analysis of covariance to assess whether the relation between integrative complexity and ideology remained significant after controlling for these belief and attitudinal variables. Three variables emerged as significant covariates: the ideological style index, $F(1, 83) = 3.87$, $p = .05$; tolerance for opposing viewpoints, $F(1, 84) = 54.13$, $p < .001$; and perceptions of the magnitude of the differences between the major political parties, $F(1, 84) = 13.47$, $p < .01$. Interestingly though, none of these analyses substantially altered the conclusions of the earlier analysis of variance. The relation between ideology and integrative complexity continued to be highly significant, and the pattern of mean ideological differences across groups remained essentially unchanged.[4]

Finally, we explored the stability of individual differences among parliamentarians in integrative complexity. One way of viewing the integrative complexity scores assigned to the paragraphs sampled from each of the interview protocols is as items in a test designed to assess the "trait" of integrative complexity. From this perspective, it is appropriate to assess the reliability or internal consistency of the complexity scores. The coefficient alpha of .67 indicates that, although room for improvement certainly exists, the integrative complexity index derived from the protocols has a degree of internal consistency comparable to many self-report measures of traits and attitudes.

Discussion

The results indicated that moderate socialists viewed issues in more integratively complex ways than extreme socialists and moderate and extreme conservatives. Moderate conservatives were, in turn, more integratively complex than extreme conservatives and extreme socialists who were not significantly different from each other. This basic pattern of results held up, moreover, after controlling for a variety of belief and attitudinal variables that Putnam (1971) assessed.

The rigidity-of-the-right hypothesis is hard pressed to explain these findings. It can explain why complexity of thought fell as one moved from moderate socialists to moderate conservatives to extreme conservatives (a progression toward increasingly "authoritarian" positions) but not why complexity fell as one moved from moderate to extreme socialists, or why extreme conservatives and extreme socialists interpreted issues in equally integratively simple ways. These latter findings are very difficult to explain in terms of a theoretical position that posits a special affinity between support for right-wing causes and rigid, dichotomous thought.

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[3] The degrees of freedom for the correlations vary somewhat due to missing data on certain variables coded by the Putnam research group.

[4] We also used analysis of covariance to control for the potential confounding influences of age and education. Neither variable was a significant covariate, Fs < 1.

The ideologue hypothesis is obviously in a better position to explain why extreme socialists and conservatives were less complex than their moderate socialist and conservative colleagues. Supporters of this position have long maintained that fundamental cognitive stylistic similarities exist between persons on the far left and the far right. However, the ideologue hypothesis is unable to explain another aspect of the results: the tendency for moderate socialists to be more integratively complex than moderate conservatives. As in earlier studies of United States senators (Tetlock, 1983a) and of non-elite samples (Neuman, 1981; Stone, 1980), why was the point of maximum complexity displaced to the left of center?

The value pluralism model is in the best position to explain these findings. Advocates of ideologies that value both freedom and equality highly are under greater pressure to think about policy issues in integratively complex terms than advocates of ideologies that place much greater weight on one value than the other. Since advocates of moderate socialist causes are most likely to value both freedom and equality highly (Rokeach, 1973), these individuals were more integratively complex than extreme socialists (who valued equality more than freedom) or moderate or extreme conservatives (who valued freedom more than equality). Using similar logic, one can also explain why moderate conservatives were more complex than extreme conservatives and extreme socialists. A good case can be made that moderate conservatives (by our operational definition, individuals who favored a mixed capitalist economy) attached closer to equal importance to the values of equality and freedom than did extreme conservatives (who supported pure or classic market capitalism) and extreme socialists (who supported virtually total state control of the economy).[5]

Although the value pluralism model fits the data well, we should not overlook possible alternative explanations. One interesting alternative is Eysenck's (1954) two-dimensional model of social attitudes. According to Eysenck, social attitudes are structured around two orthogonal dimensions: radicalism–conservatism and tough-mindedness–tender-mindedness. Radicalism–conservatism is similar to the familiar left–right continuum. The tough-minded–tender-minded dimension is based on William James's analysis of these concepts. The tough-minded person is intolerant of opposition, suspicious, hardheaded, and egotistical; the tender-minded person is tolerant, idealistic, and altruistic. There are reasons for suspecting that variation on this personality trait may partly explain the differences in integrative complexity among ideological groups. For instance, Eysenck and Coulter (1972) found that extremists of the left and right were more tough-minded than moderates. In addition, some studies have found that tough-mindedness is positively correlated with rigidity, dogmatism, and intolerance of ambiguity (Eysenck & Wilson, 1978). This pattern of evidence suggests that the lower integrative complexity of extremists in the current sample is a reflection of their greater tough-mindedness. We cannot completely rule out this possibility; however, two findings cast doubt on the proposition that the tough-minded–tender-minded distinction is sufficient to account for all the data on the relation between ideology and integrative complexity. First, Putnam's measure of tolerance for opposing viewpoints appears to tap a central component of the tough-minded–tender-minded distinction. Analysis of covariance indicated that though this variable did explain a substantial amount of the variance in the relation between integrative complexity and ideology, highly significant differences continued to exist in the integrative

[5] Although the value pluralism model did predict that extreme conservatives would be less complex than moderate conservatives, it made no clear-cut prediction concerning the relative complexity of extreme socialists versus moderate conservatives. Applying the value pluralism model to the former comparison is more straightforward than applying it to the latter comparison. In the former case, both groups—moderate and extreme conservatives—value freedom over equality, and freedom dominates equality to a greater extent among extreme conservatives. In the latter case, one group (extreme socialists) values equality over freedom and the other group (moderate conservatives) the reverse. It is difficult to say whether extreme socialists value equality over freedom to a greater extent than moderate conservatives value freedom over equality. Further attempts to test the value pluralism model need to address the problem of quantifying the priorities that individuals and groups assign to competing values.

complexity of moderates and extremists. Second, the tough-minded–tender-minded distinction is theoretically orthogonal to radicalism–conservatism (Eysenck & Wilson, 1978). It is therefore difficult to explain why moderate socialists were more integratively complex than moderate conservatives—two groups that, according to Eysenck, should be equally tender-minded.

Another explanation that merits consideration emphasizes the impact of political role on complexity of thought. Previous work on United States presidents and senators suggests that politicians in opposition roles make more simplistic public statements than politicians in policymaking roles (Tetlock, 1981a; Tetlock, Hannum, & Micheletti, in press). It has been argued that the opposition role grants politicians the rhetorical license to present issues in sharp, black–white ("us against them") terms: the major goal is to rally support for the cause of "throwing the rascals out." In contrast, the policymaking role imposes more reality constraints on rhetoric: politicians must explain and justify unpopular trade-off decisions that inevitably arise in managing complex economic and social systems (cf. Katz & Kahn, 1978). Since the Labour Party was in power during the interviews (1967), an advocate of the political role hypothesis could argue that moderate socialists appeared most complex because they happened to control the government at the time. Again, we cannot completely rule out this possibility; however, there are two reasons to doubt the adequacy of the political role hypothesis. First, the interviews with the parliamentarians were confidential and off the record. Although one can never be sure that respondents were being completely candid and not trying to project a desired social or political image (Putnam, 1971), impression management goals almost certainly exerted less influence on these private interview responses than on the public statements analyzed in earlier studies.[6] Second, the political role hypothesis leaves too many questions unanswered. For instance, why did significant differences in complexity exist between moderate and extreme members of the opposition Conservative Party and moderate and extreme members of the governing Labour Party? Perhaps even more difficult to explain in terms of political role, why were moderate conservatives (in an opposition role) more integratively complex than extreme socialists (at least nominally in a policymaking role)?

Given that the value pluralism model provides the most viable explanation for the current findings, it is appropriate to consider directions that future research might take to refine the model or subject it to further test. One interesting implication of the model is that a reciprocal causal relation exists between cognitive style and political ideology. On the one hand, the value pluralism of a person's ideology may shape how he or she typically thinks about policy issues. Ideologies with one value of overriding importance (monistic ideologies) may encourage adherents to view issues in simple, black–white terms, whereas multivalue ideologies may sensitize adherents to the need to balance competing objectives, often in different ways in different situations. On the other hand, one's cognitive style may shape the value content of one's ideology. Individuals who dislike ambiguity and cognitive inconsistency may be more attracted to monistic than pluralistic ideologies. Such individuals are likely to grow quickly impatient with the difficult trade-offs that pluralistic ideologies require. Detailed longitudinal data are obviously needed to test these hypotheses on the reciprocal effects of cognitive style and ideology on each other.

The value pluralism model also suggests that we should not confidently assume that certain ideological groups will always be more integratively complex than other groups, regardless of the issue being discussed. Ideology-by-issue interactions probably occur in integrative complexity. Interpreted at the most abstract level, the model asserts that people are likely to think about policy issues in complex ways to the degree that two or more approximately equally important values imply contradictory courses of action. For a conservative, this might occur when concern for individual freedom clashes with concern for national security (e.g.,

[6] The most common method of experimentally assessing the impact of impression management goals on behavior is to manipulate subjects' beliefs about whether their behavior is anonymous or open to public scrutiny (Baumeister, 1982).

domestic C.I.A. operations, compulsory military service). For a liberal or social democrat, this might occur when concern for economic efficiency and growth clashes with concern for equality (e.g., redistributive income policies). A promising avenue for future work is to explore ideology-by-issue variations in complexity of this type.

In conclusion, we raise an issue that all researchers in this area inevitably confront: the issue of whether our own political beliefs and ideals contaminate our research. The authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* have been accused of bias against the sociopolitical right; advocates of the ideologue hypothesis have been accused of a centrist bias (against extremism of the left and right). We are potentially vulnerable to the same type of criticism. If one assumes that being integratively complex is always better than being integratively simple (a dubious assumption), we presumably appear biased against monistic and in favor of pluralistic ideologies. For this reason, we shall close with a disclaimer. The research reported here offers no empirical justification for positing a positive or negative relation between integrative complexity of thought and the soundness of the policies advocated. We do not yet understand how integrative complexity is related to the "effectiveness" of high-level policymaking, and, given the difficulty of defining what exactly is sound or effective policymaking, there is little reason to expect the issue to be easily or quickly resolved.

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