

**Citizen Expectations and Democratic Performance:
The Sources and Consequences of Democratic Deficits from the Bottom Up**

By

Neil Nevitte
Stephen White

University of Toronto

Paper prepared for the conference "Comparing the Democratic Deficit in Canada and the U.S.: Defining, Measuring, and Fixing", held at the Weatherhead Centre for International Affairs, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, May 8-10, 2008. Please do not cite without the authors' permission.

Introduction

Notions of a democratic deficit can be explored from a variety of vantage points. This paper is driven by three starting assumptions. First, the goal is to explore the presence or absence of any deficit from "the bottom up," that is, from the vantage point of citizens. This approach may not entirely square with accounts that tackle the issue from institutional, elite, or other perspectives. But at some point any account of how far the practice of democracy in Canada and the United States falls short of democratic ideals needs to consider citizens' evaluations. Taking a bottom-up approach also means asking a different set of questions. Instead of exploring how well legislative and executive institutions meet the democratic tests of participation, transparency, accountability, representation, for example, the more pertinent questions from this bottom-up perspective are: To what extent are citizens satisfied with the quality of democracy in their respective countries? And whether, or how, do public evaluations of democracy draw citizens closer to meeting the democratic ideal of a politically engaged citizenry.

The second starting assumption is that a more balanced view of American-Canadian similarities and differences emerges by placing those two country comparisons in broader perspective. Questions about the democratic deficit were initially informed by the notion that some of the difficulties facing democratic governance are somehow common to most advanced industrial states (Habermas 1973; Brittan 1975; King 1975; Crozier et al. 1975). Focusing entirely on two country comparisons, however, tends to draw attention to differences rather than similarities. And in the case of Canadian-American comparisons in particular there is the strong temptation to infer that any differences reflect American exceptionalism (Lipset 1950; 1963; 1990). That may well be the case, but such a conclusion has a stronger foundation when Canadian and American variations can be placed in the context of comparable evidence from publics in other advanced industrial states.

The third driving assumption is that if "democracy" can mean different things to different people (Thomassen 1995; Simon 1996; Miller et al. 1997), then it is also possible that the nature, characteristics, and consequences of a "democratic deficit" are different. Because we are interested in citizens' perspectives, the analysis relies on a rich body of individual level data that come from the World Values Surveys (WVS). These surveys have a number of advantages: They use the same sampling and data collection methodologies, and they have asked national random samples of publics many of the same core questions; the questions are worded in the same way and the data are collected at roughly the same time. These data have been gathered in the United States, Canada, Europe, and many other countries at regular intervals between 1981 and 2006. The focus in this paper is primarily, though not exclusively, on cross-national WVS data from the most recent round of the surveys for a straightforward reason that is particularly relevant to the theme of this conference. The 2005-2006 round of the WVS asked respondents a new, and richer, set of questions about the salience and meanings of democracy. These particular data therefore provide a novel opportunity to explore more precisely whether, and how, citizens' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with democracy is related to variations in their conceptions of democracy.

The investigation is organized in five sections. It begins with the broad aggregate picture by outlining prevailing perspectives on the central problem: confidence in government is waning, and formal political participation appears to be declining across many established democracies. The second section considers citizens' levels of commitment to democracy and their conceptions of democracy in the United States, Canada, and other established democracies. It then turns to explore citizen evaluations of how democratically their country is governed. The evidence

suggests that there is a considerable gap -- a citizen-level "democratic deficit" -- between citizens' expectations and their evaluations of democracy in most countries considered. The third section explores comparatively the sources of that gap: the evidence indicates the foundations of the citizen-level democratic deficit are not the same cross-nationally. And so the final analytic section of the paper considers some of the consequences of citizen dissatisfaction with democratic performance. The conclusion ponders some of the implications of the central findings.

Discontent in Advanced Industrial Democracies

Many advanced industrial democracies have shown signs of democratic distress for several decades. Two commonly identified markers of this distress are trends in formal political participation and attitudes towards government. Both Canada and the United States have experienced a significant decline in voter turnout over the last two decades. Voter turnout in Canada in particular fell substantially between the 1988 election, when turnout was 75 percent, and the 2004 contest, when turnout slumped to only 61 percent. Citizens are turning out to vote in dwindling numbers in other political systems as well, but the size and timing of these declines varies considerably. Franklin's (2002) analysis of turnout levels for lower house elections in 23 countries, including Canada and the United States, between 1945 and 1999, found that turnout had declined by only 4.4 percent on average over that period. The declines in Canada and the United States are steeper than the average. The trend in Canada over the period from 1945 to 2000 is a 0.14 percent annual decline in federal election turnout, or 7.5 percent over 55 years (Elections Canada, 2008). In United States Congressional elections the pattern is strikingly similar, namely, an annual decline of .13 percent between 1945 and 2000 (Federal Election Commission, 2008).

Second, observers note that citizen confidence in their political institutions has declined over much of the same period. Figure 1 summarizes the proportion of citizens expressing "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in legislatures between 1981 and 2006. The general trend is a decline in confidence over that 25 year period, but the data suggest a distinction between two groups of advanced industrial publics: among some publics confidence in legislatures declined modestly, while in others it has declined sharply. Canada ranks among the first grouping, while the United States is in the second. The percentage of Canadians expressing "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in parliament has fluctuated around 40 percent during period between 1981 and 2006, with a slight trend downward over those 25 years. In the United States, by contrast, the proportion of respondents expressing "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence dropped from 53 percent in 1981 to only 21 percent in 2006. But the United States is by no means exceptional in this regard. In France, for example, the percentage of people expressing confidence in parliament has also declined steadily from 56 percent in 1981 to 35 percent in 2006. And in the Netherlands and Germany, the erosion in confidence has been more uneven, but substantial nonetheless.

Diminished confidence in political institutions and waning political participation are troublesome in their own right: the former threatens to undermine the legitimacy of political institutions, and the latter threatens to undermine the quality of democracy, particularly if certain segments of politics are systematically underrepresented in politics. For some analysts of democratic politics, these two trends suggest a growing democratic deficit, a widening gap between how these democracies should ideally function and how they function in practice. But these aggregate trends also raise a slightly different set of questions: Are there significant levels of disaffection among different publics with the democratic performance of their respective

countries? And, are these trends of declining political confidence and participation symptomatic of a democratic deficit that is systematically related to people's evaluations of democratic performance? Citizens' own perceptions of democratic performance are certainly critically important to the democratic health of any country in the long run. Eroding confidence in political institutions and declining political participation might indicate diminishing support for particular political actors and specific institutions of democratic regimes, but negative perceptions of democratic performance of regimes is arguably more serious; it has the potential to undercut support for democracy itself (Easton 1965, 1975).

Democratic Beliefs

Before exploring directly the roots of dissatisfaction with democracy, there are two preliminary questions about people's basic orientations to democracy to consider: To what extent do citizens think that a democratic system is a good or bad way of governing? And what core characteristics do people associate with the idea of democracy (Thomassen 1995)? If democracy means different things to different people, then it is useful to ascertain the extent to which there is a consensus, or disagreement, when it comes to people's conceptions of democracy.

The WVS have asked people what they believe to be "essential characteristics" of a democracy. Respondents were presented with 10 statements capturing different regime characteristics and they were then asked to assign a score (between 1 and 10) to each characteristic, indicating whether it was "not at all an essential characteristic of democracy" (=1) or "an essential characteristic of democracy" (=10), or somewhere in between. The first empirical finding shows that people's beliefs about democracy are organized along three different dimensions.

Table 1 shows the results of a principal components factor analysis of results from publics in a number of established democracies, including Canada and the United States. The first and most powerful dimension forms around what might be called the procedural characteristics of democracy: these include support for free elections, equal rights, and civil liberties, and the rejection of military or the idea that the state should be controlled by military or religious authorities. These attributes correspond to conceptions of democracy discussed elsewhere (see Beetham 1994; Simon 1996). The second dimension is organized around evaluations of the economic and legal order, namely, that "the economy is prospering" and "criminals are severely punished." The third cluster groups views that emphasize governments' roles in economic redistribution, the idea that in a democracy "Governments tax the rich and subsidize the poor," and "People receive government assistance for unemployment."¹

How each of these visions of democracy applies to citizens in Canada, the United States, and other countries is summarized in Figure 2. The top panel reports the mean scores of citizens on additive indexes reflecting where publics stand on each of the three dimensions of beliefs.² Clearly, most respondents in Canada, the United States, and the other established democracies believe that procedural elements are "essential characteristics" of democracy. But they are somewhat less inclined to think that redistribution and legal and economic order are necessarily essential elements of democracy. On these dimensions Canadian responses resemble those of their

¹ The same basic factors emerge when Canadian and American samples are analyzed separately.

² These indexes range from 0 to 1, where 0 indicates that all of the characteristics of democracy comprising the cluster are considered not at all essential, and 1 indicates that all of the characteristics are considered essential.

European counterparts. Respondents in the United States in particular are the least inclined to think that redistributive elements are essential characteristics of democracy.

The data in the bottom panel of Figure 2 illustrate the diversity of opinion across each of these visions of democracy; they indicate how much public consensus, or division, there is on these visions (measured in standard deviations). Notice that there is a relatively strong consensus about the importance of the procedural characteristics as core elements of democracy. But there is far less agreement when it comes to the other two clusters of beliefs.

Regardless of whether they share, or do not share, the same conceptions of democracy, the fundamental point is that Americans, Canadians, and citizens in other established democracies do express a strong commitment to democracy. The data in Figure 3 shows the proportion of respondents in Canada, the United States, and nine other advanced industrial democracies who believe that "Having a democratic political system" is a "very good" or "fairly good" way of governing their country, as opposed to "fairly bad" or "very bad." In each of these 11 countries there is practically a consensus that democracy is desirable: more than 80 percent of respondents in all of these countries indicated that having a democratic system is a "very good" or "fairly good" way of governing their country. Neither the United States nor Canada stands out as "exceptional." 91 percent of Canadians, and 86 percent of Americans, think that democracy is a good thing.³

Taken altogether, the evidence concerning conceptions of democracy and commitment to democracy suggest that when placed in the context of other established democracies, there are few outstanding differences between publics in the United States and Canada. Certainly, there are cross-national differences, but it is the similarities that are more striking. Americans do stand out from citizens in other established democracies when it comes to beliefs about whether economic redistribution is a core element of democracy. But when thinking about the core characteristics of democracy, people across these countries discriminate between different clusters of elements, most accept procedural elements as an "essential" characteristic of democracy. And, regardless of country, citizens generally express a strong commitment to democracy.

If public conceptions of, and commitment to, democracy are broadly similar, the next question to ask is: Are citizens' evaluations of the democratic performance of their respective countries also similar? One approach to answering that question is to consider citizens' evaluations of democratic performance in relation to what they expect from democracy. Does democracy live up to citizens' personal expectations? Or is there what might be called a citizen-level democratic deficit? Answering that question requires asking first about salience: is living in a democratic country important to citizens in the first place. The subsequent question is: do people think their country is being governed democratically? The personal salience of democracy, we suggest, is consequential when assessing people's satisfaction with democracy. The intuition behind this proxy for an individual level measure of the democratic deficit is straightforward: Citizens who personally think democracy is very important are more likely than those who think democracy is not all that important to express disappointment with their country's democratic performance when it falls short of being governed completely democratically in their view.

The top panel in Figure 4 reports the mean responses of citizens in 11 established democracies to the question about the personal salience of democracy: "How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically?" (1 = "not at all important" and 10 = "very important"). Most respondents in all countries indicated that living in a democratically governed country was personally important to them. Roughly 1 point on the 1 to 10 scale separates the country with the

³ If this point seems to obvious to belabour, note that the proportion of publics in Guatemala and Nicaragua believing that democracy is a "good thing" is 57 and 48 percent, respectively (see Nevitte et al. 2008).

lowest mean score, France (8.52), from the country with the highest mean score, Sweden (9.56). And, once again, the American (8.57) and Canadian (8.95) publics are unexceptional when compared to other established democracies.

But one finding to emerge from these data is truly intriguing. There is a striking difference between how much importance people personally attach to democracy and their evaluations of how democratically they think their own country is being governed, shown in the bottom panel of Figure 4. Respondents were asked "how democratically is this country being governed today?" (1 = "not at all democratic" and 10 = "completely democratic"). Respondents were more inclined to locate themselves at the "completely democratic" end of the scale. But their evaluations of the democratic performance of their own countries were considerably less enthusiastic than their estimations of how personally important it was to live in a democratic country. Swedes and Finns express the most positive evaluations of the democratic performance of their respective countries (7.53 and 7.42, respectively). Respondents in the United States turn out to be among the least enthusiastic about the quality of democracy in their country (6.34), ranking ahead only of the Italian public (5.79). The Canadian public (7.08), by cross-national standards, occupies the middle ground.

Significantly, there are also substantial differences when it comes to how much agreement, or disagreement, there is among publics in their evaluations of democratic performance. In this case, the top panel of Figure 5 illustrates the extent to which the samples in each country are spread across the scale measuring evaluations of democratic performance. As an interpretive benchmark for comparison, the bottom panel shows the spread of opinion about the personal importance of democracy in the same set of countries. In every country but one (Finland), evaluations of democratic performance are more divergent than are expressions about the personal importance of democracy. The most intriguing finding here is that, of all the countries considered, it is American respondents who are clearly the most divided when it comes to citizens' views about how democratically the country is being governed.

It turns out, then, there are significant subsections of publics in all 11 established democracies who do not think their country is being governed all that democratically. More often than not, their evaluations of how democratically their country is being governed fall short of, rather than exceed, their estimations of how personally important it is to live in a democracy. As before, it is the cross-national similarities, rather than differences, that are most striking. Just because there are cross-national similarities in attitudes toward democracy, it does not follow that the sources and consequences of the individual-level democratic deficit, the gap between expectations and evaluations of democratic performance, will be necessarily the same across different political settings. To what extent, then, are similarities, or differences, in the sources or consequences of these democratic deficits?

Sources of Dissatisfaction with Democratic Performance: Hypotheses

Citizens might be dissatisfied with the democratic performance of their country for a variety of reasons. One possibility is that a citizen-level democratic deficit is a consequence of systematic political under-representation of specific groups within society. Where people sit in the social structure may influence their evaluations of how democratically their country is being governed. Thus, historically marginalized people -- women, minorities, youth, and people with low levels of

income and education -- may well be more likely to express greater dissatisfaction with democracy than those who sit in the mainstream (Nie et al. 1996; Verba et al. 1995).

A second possibility is that people's evaluations of democracy are shaped by perceptions of whether the political system matches their personal conceptions of democracy. Although it is plausible to suppose that people's mental images of democracy itself influence their assessments of how democratic their respective political systems are, the precise expectation in this case is not entirely clear. On the one hand, it is possible that a clear understanding of the rules of the game might induce *greater* satisfaction with democratic performance, simply because those who understand the rules of democracy are more likely to accept political outcomes. As Fuchs (1999, 142) puts it:

"A liberal democracy lives from permanent disputation about the goals that are to be attained through political processes. Its life-blood is therefore disagreement, dissensus, not consensus. However, regulation of this dissensus requires rules of procedure. These rules must be accepted by those involved if they are to fulfill their regulatory function."

If recognition and acceptance of democratic rules of procedure are crucial preconditions for accepting political outcomes in a democratic system, then the expectation is that citizens with a strong belief that procedural elements are the core characteristics of democracy are less likely to be dissatisfied with the democratic performance of their respective political systems. On the other hand, it is also possible that idealists, people with clear mental models of what democracy *should* resemble, may be more inclined to be disappointed by perceived discrepancies between the democratic ideal and democratic practice. This expectation might be particularly relevant when it comes to citizens who see economic redistribution, or legal and economic order, as "essential elements of democracy." Recall the earlier findings indicating that citizens are more divided about whether these dimensions qualify as "essential" characteristics of democratic systems.

Yet another possibility to consider is informed by earlier theories concerning the "crisis" of politics in advanced industrial democracies; it focuses on citizen's political beliefs and preferences. There was no consensus among these observers about what exactly was in crisis. For some, the "crisis" of advanced industrialism concerned governability (King 1975; Rose & Peters 1978; Birch 1984). Others emphasized the legitimacy of the state (Habermas 1975; Offe 1984). And yet others suggested it was the democratic system itself that was in crisis (Brittan 1975; Crozier et al. 1975; Huntington 1976). Furthermore, each perspective held different claims as to the root causes of crisis. What many of these different strains shared in common was the view that modern governments were unable to cope with the proliferation of citizen-driven demands on government. Modern democracies were finding it increasingly difficult to juggle competing interests (Fuchs & Klingemann 1995). As Kaase and Newton saw it, the growth of public demands on the state "makes it difficult to pick a safe political pathway through different interests and problems, and exceedingly difficult to define the national interest" (p. 24). Governments cannot be all things to all people, thus the growing fragmentation of political preferences, not just among publics as a whole but even within individuals (Dalton 2000), makes it more difficult for governments to respond to satisfying the demands of any people. The worse case scenario is that, consequently, the legitimacy of the state is weakened.

Collectively, these perspectives generate a variety of expectations about how citizens' values and preferences might shape levels of dissatisfaction with democracy. First, there is the prospect that citizens who hold some political beliefs will express greater dissatisfaction with the democratic performance of their political system than do citizens who hold opposing beliefs. "Values" in this particular context refer to fundamental social and political orientations rather than

opinions related to shorter-term political matters. It may well be that preferences on social and political issues of the day influence people's attitudes towards specific political actors, the incumbent government, and political institutions. But if demands are to produce dissatisfaction with the core principles of democratic regimes, they are more likely to be related to something deeper than opinions on short-term issues. We consider the impact of three orientations: outlooks on morality, views about welfare and economic competition, and ideological self-identifications. There is no reason a priori to speculate about which particular values induce greater dissatisfaction. Rather, the expectation is that the *direction* of people's values -- whether people are more permissive or more restrictive when it comes to individual morality, whether they are more or less supportive of free enterprise, and whether they identify themselves as being on "the left" or "the right" politically -- will systematically affect their levels of dissatisfaction with the democratic performance of their political system.

Quite aside from the direction of values, there is also the possibility that *intensity* of values matters. More specifically, it is plausible to suppose that citizens who hold more extreme social and political values, for example, might express greater dissatisfaction with the workings of democracy than citizens who hold more ambivalent positions. The argument here is that the claims on the state made by those with more extreme values are less likely to find voice in modern democratic systems that face a welter conflicting demands. That possibility seems especially pertinent to publics the United States and, to a lesser extent, Canada, where there is evidence indicating a growing divide in social and political values between those on "the left" and "the right" (Abramowitz & Stone 2006; Annenberg Research Project 2007; Brady & Nivolu 2006; Cochrane et al. 2007).

The final expectation concerns the possibility that being on the losing side in elections matters. Apart from the social backgrounds, conceptions of democracy, and core social and political values of citizens, it is entirely possible that citizens' satisfaction with democracy is shaped by incumbency effects. People tend to be more satisfied with the way things are working when their own political party holds office. The "outs," similarly, are always more disgruntled (Anderson & Guillory 1997).

These expectations are graphically summarized in Figure 6.

To evaluate the citizen-level democratic deficit, we take into account whether the perceived "democraticness" of a system meets, surpasses, or falls short of citizens' expectations by subtracting respondents' scores on the item gauging how democratically they think their own country is being governed from their scores on the item measuring the personal salience of living in a democratic country,

$$\text{Citizen-level deficit} = \text{Salience of Democracy} - \text{Evaluations of Performance}$$

This measure of citizens' own "democratic deficit" is re-scaled to an intuitive -1 to 1 metric, where -1 signifies respondents who indicate that living in a democratic country is not at all important and that the political system is completely democratic, and 1 signifies those who indicated that living in a democratic country is very important and that the political system is not at all democratic. Respondents who chose the same score on both separate measures score 0.

Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) multiple regression is employed in order to isolate the independent impact of each theoretically relevant factor on the citizen-level democratic deficit in Canada, the United States, and four other established democracies for which we have data for every variable: Australia, Finland, Japan, and Sweden. We use a multi-stage explanatory model to analyze predictors of the individual-level democratic deficit in Canada and the United States: the assumption is that some of the sources are more proximate to dissatisfaction than others. Furthermore, these factors may have direct effects on citizen dissatisfaction and indirect effects by

influencing other more proximate sources of dissatisfaction. All independent variables are standardized to a 0-1 scale; the exception is age, which is measured in years.

Sources of Dissatisfaction with Democratic Performance: Findings

A. The United States

The data presented in Table 2 show the impact of each set of factors on American citizens' levels of dissatisfaction with the democratic performance of the United States. In the first stage of the model, incomes (low), education levels (high), and age (older) emerge as significant predictors of dissatisfaction. The effects of income conform to expectations: those with the highest incomes score .16 lower on the democratic deficit scale than do those with the lowest incomes. Age and education, however, have unanticipated effects. It turns out that older and more educated Americans express greater dissatisfaction with that country's democratic performance than their younger, less well educated counterparts.

The second stage introduces conceptions of democracy into the setup model. Recall that there were two conflicting possibilities with respect to conceptions of democracy: first that a clear understanding of the rules of the game might induce *greater* satisfaction with democratic performance, but second, that idealism might encourage dissatisfaction with democratic performance. The evidence is consistent with the latter expectation. The more citizens are inclined to think that procedural elements are essential characteristics of democracy, the more dissatisfied they are with the democratic performance of the American political system. Americans whose conception of democracy includes redistributive elements as essential characteristics are also more dissatisfied than others. That effect, however, is modest when compared to the impact of procedural notions of democracy. In effect, conceptions of democracy also help to explain why higher levels of education generate greater dissatisfaction with democratic performance. Higher levels of education are associated with clearer notions of democracy, and these in turn produce dissatisfaction.

Stage three of the model includes direction and intensity of values and both of these factors turn out to have a significant impact on levels of dissatisfaction. Citizens who hold opposing social and political beliefs express different levels of dissatisfaction with the democratic performance of the United States: Americans who support free enterprise are considerably more satisfied than are people who are less enthusiastic about free enterprise and who are more supportive of government intervention in the economy; Those who think of themselves as being on "the right" politically are also more satisfied than are those who think of themselves as being on "the left"; And citizens who are more permissive in their moral outlooks are more likely to express dissatisfaction than are people with more restrictive views concerning morality. Significantly, and quite aside from the specific direction of their values, however, Americans who hold more intense social and political views are more inclined to express greater dissatisfaction with the country's democratic performance. Individuals holding more intense beliefs about free enterprise (regardless of whether they support or oppose it) and individuals who place themselves further to either "the left" or "the right" are less satisfied with the workings of democracy than those with more moderate beliefs.

The full specification of the model takes into account the effects of incumbent support. It turns out that those who support the Republicans (incumbents) are considerably less dissatisfied than

others: On average, Republican Party supporters score .122 lower on the -1 to 1 dissatisfaction scale. There is also evidence that social and political beliefs affect levels of dissatisfaction indirectly, through support for the Republicans. The effects of both ideological self-placement and moral outlooks diminish when incumbent support is taken into account. These findings suggest that individuals who consider themselves to be "on the left" and who share more permissive moral outlooks are dissatisfied with the democratic performance of the American political system in part because they are "outs"; they do not support the Republican Party.

B. Canada versus the United States

To what extent are Canadians' evaluations of democratic performance structured in ways that are similar to, or different from, those in the United States? The data presented in Table 3 show the impact of each set of factors on Canadian citizens' levels of dissatisfaction with the democratic performance of their political system. The Canadian evidence resembles the American results in some ways. Procedural conceptions of democracy matter most for both publics; those with more procedural visions of democracy are most likely to exhibit a democratic deficit. Distributive and Legal/Economic visions have no discernable impact for either public. Perhaps the most striking difference between American and Canadian findings concerns the relatively modest effects of social background factors, social and political beliefs, and partisan preferences on dissatisfaction in Canada. Once again, citizens who think procedural elements are essential characteristics of democracy are considerably more dissatisfied with the democratic performance of the political system than are others. And although the relationship is modest when compared to opinion in the United States, older Canadians are also more dissatisfied with their country's democratic performance than are younger Canadians. Notice, however, that unlike their American counterparts, Canadians' social and political orientations have little effect on their levels of dissatisfaction. The only belief dimension with any discernable impact is ideological self-placement. The intensity of social and political values has weak and statistically insignificant effects. Finally, there are also Canadian-American differences when it comes to incumbency effects. Unlike their American counterparts, Canadians who supported the incumbent federal government were neither more nor less likely to express dissatisfaction with democratic performance.

C. Canada and the United States versus other countries

Are Americans exceptional, or is it Canadians who stand out? The evidence from publics in Australia, Finland, Japan, and Sweden, presented in Table 4, suggests that both North American publics stand out in some respects. The only social background variable with a significant effect is age, and once again older citizens express greater dissatisfaction than do youth. The most powerful determinant of dissatisfaction, however, in these cases is linked to people's conceptions of democracy. Citizens who think procedural elements are essential characteristics of democracy are more dissatisfied with the democratic performance of the political system than are others. And the average effect across publics in these four established democracies is essentially the same as in Canada and the United States.

But that is where the commonalities between citizens in these four countries and both North American publics end. Australians, Finns, Japanese, and Swedes combined are more similar to Americans than Canadians when it comes to the impact of the direction of social and political values. Generally, those who support free enterprise are much less dissatisfied than are people who oppose free enterprise; they are more supportive of government intervention in the economy. Canadians are the only exception in this regard. By contrast, the United States public stands out because of the greater impact of the intensity of social and political beliefs, and partisan preferences, on levels of dissatisfaction.

Consequences of Dissatisfaction with Democratic Performance

What are the consequences of people's dissatisfaction with the democratic performance of their political systems? Are the consequences the same everywhere? To explore these questions, we return to the question with which we began, namely, the relationship between dissatisfaction with democratic performance and the two conventional markers of the democratic deficit – political engagement and institutional confidence. The pessimistic expectation is that citizens who are dissatisfied with democracy are not only politically "turned off" but also "tuned out": they express less support for their country's political institutions, and are psychologically and behaviorally disengaged from politics. The more optimistic possibility is that people who are dissatisfied with the democratic performance of their political systems are inclined to be "critical citizens"; they express disapproval about how their political institutions function at present, but they are nonetheless actively engaged in politics (Norris, 1999).

As it happens, the evidence supports the "critical citizens" perspective. The data in Table 5 show the relationship between dissatisfaction with democratic performance and five dependent variables: confidence in government institutions, psychological engagement with politics, attention to politics, willingness to participate in "system-correcting" political acts (petitioning, boycotting, and demonstrating), and voting. In Canada, the United States, and other established democracies, the evidence is that the citizen-level democratic deficit is associated with less confidence in government institutions. But, the results also show, in most cases, that dissatisfaction with democratic performance, the individual level democratic deficit, is *positively* associated with political engagement: dissatisfied citizens are typically more politically active. The effects of dissatisfaction are more pronounced in the United States than anywhere else. The greater the deficit among Americans, the deeper are the levels of psychological engagement with politics, the greater the willingness to engage in system-correcting political acts, and the higher the likelihood of turning out to vote (the probability of voting is about 25 percent higher among the most dissatisfied than among the most satisfied).⁴ The evidence from other established democracies tells a similar story. Citizens' dissatisfaction with their respective countries' democratic performance is associated with both deeper psychological engagement with politics and a greater willingness to engage in system-correcting political acts. Significantly, and unlike the case in the United States public, however, dissatisfied citizens in other established democracies are *not* more likely than others to vote. The case of Canada introduces yet another twist: Canadians who are

⁴ The results suggest dissatisfied Americans are neither more nor less politically attentive than others, but it is worth noting that our measure of political attentiveness may not provide the most effective means for tapping citizens' attentiveness to politics specifically, as it asks about people's use of "different sources to learn what is going on in their country and the world."

dissatisfied with how democratically their country is being governed express a greater willingness than others to engage in system-correcting political acts, but not in other forms of political engagement. Although discontent prompts different sorts of political engagement in other democracies, particularly the United States, its impact on Canadian political engagement seems more limited.

Concluding Discussion

There are good reasons to be concerned about the apparent rising discontent with political actors and institutions and the parallel decline in formal political participation among publics across advanced industrial democracies during the last several decades. American and Canadian publics have experienced the same parallel trends. This paper has examined whether these trends are indicative of a deeper malaise with democratic systems. More particularly the goal has been to explore the sources and consequences of citizens' dissatisfaction with their countries' democratic performance -- the citizen-level democratic deficit -- are similar or different in the United States and Canada.

The core findings are:

- Citizens across advanced industrial states, including Canada and the United States, have clear ideas about what democracy is; they also express an abiding commitment to democracy.
- A portion of these publics are not satisfied that their respective countries are being governed completely democratically.
- The roots of this discontent seem to vary cross-nationally. In the United States in particular, part of people's discontent over how democratically the country is being governed appears to stem from disagreements rooted in social and political values. The same cannot be said, at least not to the same degree, of discontent in Canada or elsewhere.
- The evidence presented here suggests that citizens in Canada, the United States, and other democracies who are dissatisfied are in fact just as likely as, or even more likely than, others to be politically engaged. The U.S. data are particularly striking: Americans who are dissatisfied express significantly higher levels of psychological engagement with politics, and exhibit a greater willingness to vote and to participate in system-correcting actions.

What, then, can we conclude about the democratic health of Canada and the United States? On the one hand, these findings provide reasons for optimism. Despite the erosion in political confidence and formal participation over the last several decades, Canadians and Americans express a strong commitment to democracy. Then there are the consequences of democratic discontent. As Klingemann and Fuchs (1995, 10) note, "a challenge to the institutional structure of a given democracy is conceivable only if its citizens are dissatisfied and behave accordingly. This is also true if the final cause of such change lies with the state and its actors." According to the World Values Survey evidence presented here, dissatisfied citizens in Canada, the United States, and other democracies turn out to be just as likely as, or even more likely than others to be politically engaged. If Klingemann and Fuchs are right this is good news, and signals the potential for considerable political change, especially in the United States.

On the other hand, there are reasons to temper that optimism with some caution. Ideally, support for democratic regimes should be capable of withstanding political disagreements. And thus far it does. But the evidence also suggests that the polarization of citizen on some key social and political values may have the potential to generate substantial democratic discontent among the American public. In that respect the American public appear, up to now, to be rather exceptional.

The cross-national evidence from the World Values Surveys also prompts reflection about the significance of declining voter turnout and waning confidence in political institutions, and the relationship between the two. Although growing unhappiness with political institutions is clearly associated with a deeper discontentment with democratic performance across all countries, the decline in formal political participation may not be a symptom of something more profound; low participation, according to our analysis, is not a consequence of the individual-level democratic deficit.

Tables

Table 1. Factor Analysis, Essential Characteristics of Democracy, 2005-2006 (Advanced Industrial Democracies)^a

Characteristic	Procedural	Legal & Economic Order	Redistribution	Uniqueness
Religious authorities interpret the laws.	-0.508	0.120	0.092	0.693
People choose their leaders in free elections.	0.673	0.070	0.160	0.514
The army takes over when government is incompetent.	-0.402	0.200	0.020	0.762
Civil rights protect people's liberty against oppression.	0.608	0.080	0.207	0.575
People can change the laws in referendums.	0.489	0.157	0.057	0.718
Women have the same rights as men.	0.621	0.194	0.090	0.564
The economy is prospering.	0.138	0.557	0.189	0.627
Criminals are severely punished.	0.071	0.582	0.082	0.646
Governments tax the rich and subsidize the poor.	0.130	0.140	0.500	0.713
People receive government assistance for unemployment.	0.214	0.177	0.519	0.653
Eigenvalue	2.24	0.868	0.324	
Proportion of variance explained	0.862	0.334	0.125	

^a Varimax rotated factor solution; all countries weighted equally

Source: World Values Surveys, 2005-2006

Table 2. Predictors of the Citizen-level Democratic Deficit, United States (OLS regression, N=1,039)

	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3		Stage 4	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Marginalization:								
Income (higher)	-0.160**	0.053	-0.154**	0.053	-0.162**	0.053	-0.151**	0.053
Education (higher)	0.194***	0.055	0.096	0.060	0.066	0.059	0.091	0.058
Female	0.029	0.021	0.029	0.020	0.029	0.020	0.029	0.019
Visible Minority	0.018	0.027	0.034	0.027	0.028	0.027	0.007	0.026
Age (older)	0.003***	0.001	0.002***	0.001	0.003***	0.001	0.002***	0.001
Conceptions of Democracy:								
Procedural			0.301***	0.064	0.232**	0.068	0.217***	0.069
Redistribution			0.133**	0.040	0.100*	0.043	0.079	0.042
Legal and Economic Order			-0.012	0.047	0.034	0.048	0.054	0.047
Values:								
Support Free Enterprise					-0.285**	0.109	-0.240*	0.110
Right-Wing Self-Placement					-0.163**	0.055	-0.083	0.060
Permissive Moral Outlooks					0.100*	0.047	0.072	0.049
Intensity Free Enterprise					0.179*	0.072	0.191**	0.073
Intensity Self-Placement					0.100*	0.041	0.126**	0.041
Intensity Moral Outlooks					-0.043	0.039	-0.047	0.039
Incumbency effect								
Constant	0.062	0.052	-0.148*	0.067	0.092	0.086	0.068	0.087
R ²	0.06		0.10		0.15		0.17	

*** P ≤ .001

** P ≤ .01

* P ≤ .05

See Appendix for question wording and variable construction

Source: World Values Surveys, 2005-2006

Table 3. Predictors of the Citizen-level Democratic Deficit, Canada (OLS regression, N=1,089)

	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3		Stage 4	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Marginalization:								
Income (higher)	-0.015	0.025	-0.025	0.025	-0.019	0.025	-0.018	0.025
Education (higher)	0.041	0.028	-0.003	0.029	-0.009	0.029	-0.010	0.029
Female	-0.012	0.014	-0.004	0.014	-0.002	0.014	-0.003	0.014
Visible Minority	-0.047	0.026	-0.028	0.026	-0.025	0.025	-0.027	0.025
Age (older)	0.001*	0.000	0.001*	0.000	0.001*	0.000	0.001*	0.000
Conceptions of Democracy:								
Procedural			0.303***	0.055	0.240***	0.054	0.244***	0.055
Redistribution			-0.048	0.041	-0.051	0.042	-0.054	0.041
Legal and Economic Order			0.035	0.032	0.050	0.033	0.051	0.033
Values:								
Support Free Enterprise					-0.008	0.058	-0.004	0.058
Right-Wing Self-Placement					-0.110**	0.038	-0.106**	0.038
Permissive Moral Outlooks					0.033	0.037	0.030	0.037
Intensity Free Enterprise					0.103	0.055	0.103	0.055
Intensity Self-Placement					0.025	0.036	0.024	0.036
Intensity Moral Outlooks					0.057	0.031	0.057	0.031
Incumbency effect							-0.011	0.017
Constant	0.154	0.034	-0.042	0.052	0.006	0.061	0.003	0.061
R ²	0.02		0.05		0.07		0.08	

*** P ≤ .001

** P ≤ .01

* P ≤ .05

See Appendix for question wording and variable construction

Source: World Values Surveys, 2005-2006

Table 4. Predictors of the Citizen-level Democratic Deficit, Other Established Democracies (OLS regression, N=3,154)

	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3		Stage 4	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Marginalization:								
Income (higher)	-0.015	0.013	-0.018	0.013	-0.001	0.013	0.002	0.013
Education (higher)	0.008	0.015	-0.016	0.016	-0.010	0.015	-0.011	0.015
Female	0.016*	0.008	0.016*	0.008	0.012	0.007	0.013	0.007
Visible Minority	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Age (older)	0.001***	0.000	0.001***	0.000	0.001***	0.000	0.001***	0.000
Conceptions of Democracy:								
Procedural			0.251***	0.029	0.234***	0.029	0.234***	0.029
Redistribution			0.040	0.018	-0.007	0.018	-0.010	0.018
Legal and Economic Order			-0.005	0.017	0.026	0.017	0.028	0.017
Values:								
Support Free Enterprise					-0.229***	0.039	-0.219***	0.039
Right-Wing Self-Placement					-0.062***	0.021	-0.048	0.021
Permissive Moral Outlooks					0.019	0.019	0.017	0.019
Intensity Free Enterprise					0.097***	0.032	0.101***	0.031
Intensity Self-Placement					0.035	0.018	0.032	0.018
Intensity Moral Outlooks					0.001	0.016	0.000	0.015
Incumbency effect							-0.027***	0.009
Country Dummies:								
Finland	-0.057***	0.011	-0.063***	0.011	-0.053***	0.010	-0.053***	0.010
Japan	-0.023	0.012	-0.015	0.012	-0.017	0.012	-0.030*	0.013
Sweden	0.015	0.011	-0.011	0.012	-0.002	0.012	-0.004	0.012
Constant	0.140***	0.021	-0.052	0.028	0.084*	0.034	0.084*	0.034
R ²	0.03		0.06		0.09		0.10	

*** P ≤ .001

** P ≤ .01

* P ≤ .05

See Appendix for question wording and variable construction

Source: World Values Surveys, 2005-2006

Table 5. The Effects the Citizen-level Democratic Deficit on Political Engagement and Institutional Confidence (unstandardized OLS regression and binary logit results with sociodemographic controls)^a

Dependent Variable	Canada		United States		Other Established Democracies	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Psychological Engagement	0.002	0.037	0.118**	0.037	0.126***	0.015
Political Attentiveness	0.022	0.029	0.026	0.038	0.032**	0.011
System Correcting Action	0.136***	0.033	0.170***	0.033	0.156***	0.015
Vote ^b	0.433	0.320	0.747*	0.366	-0.095 ^c	0.184
Confidence in Government Institutions	-0.267***	0.026	-0.165***	0.027	-0.202***	0.011

^a control variables: income level, education level, gender, race, and country dummies (in models for other established democracies)

^b logit coefficients

^c Australian cases excluded from the analysis

*** P ≤ .001

** P ≤ .01

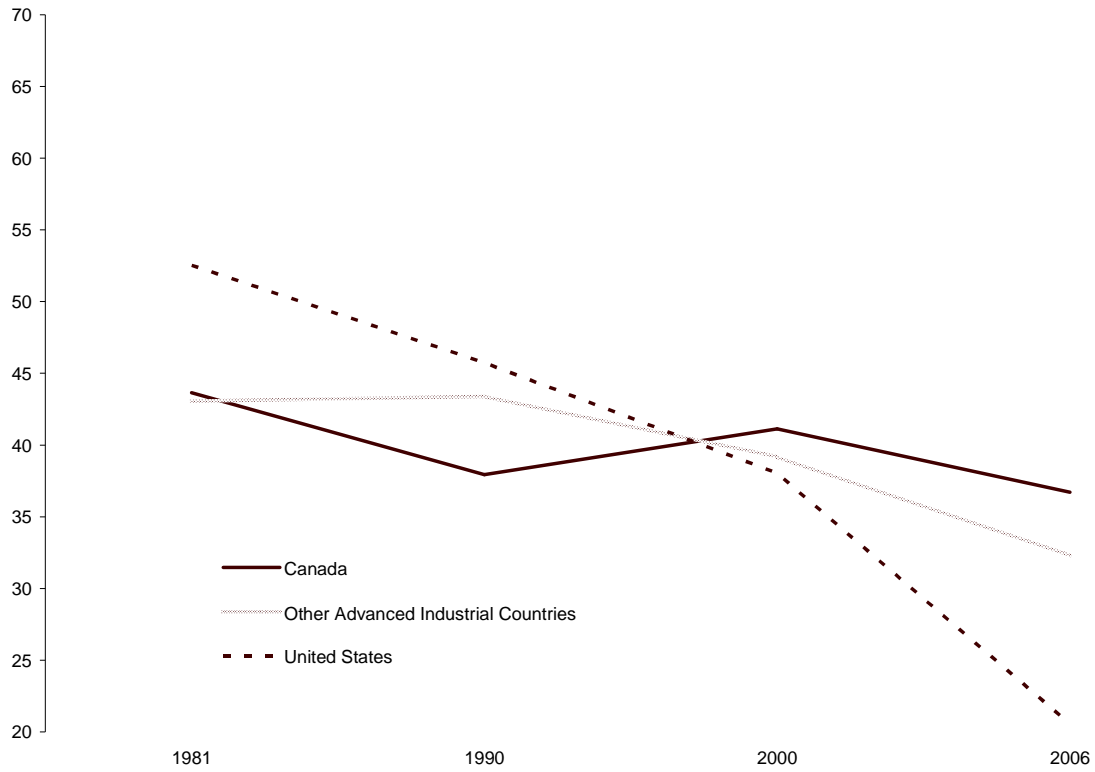
* P ≤ .05

See Appendix for question wording and variable construction

Source: World Values Surveys, 2005-2006

Figures

Figure 1. Confidence in Legislatures, 1981-2006 (% "A great deal" or "Quite a lot")



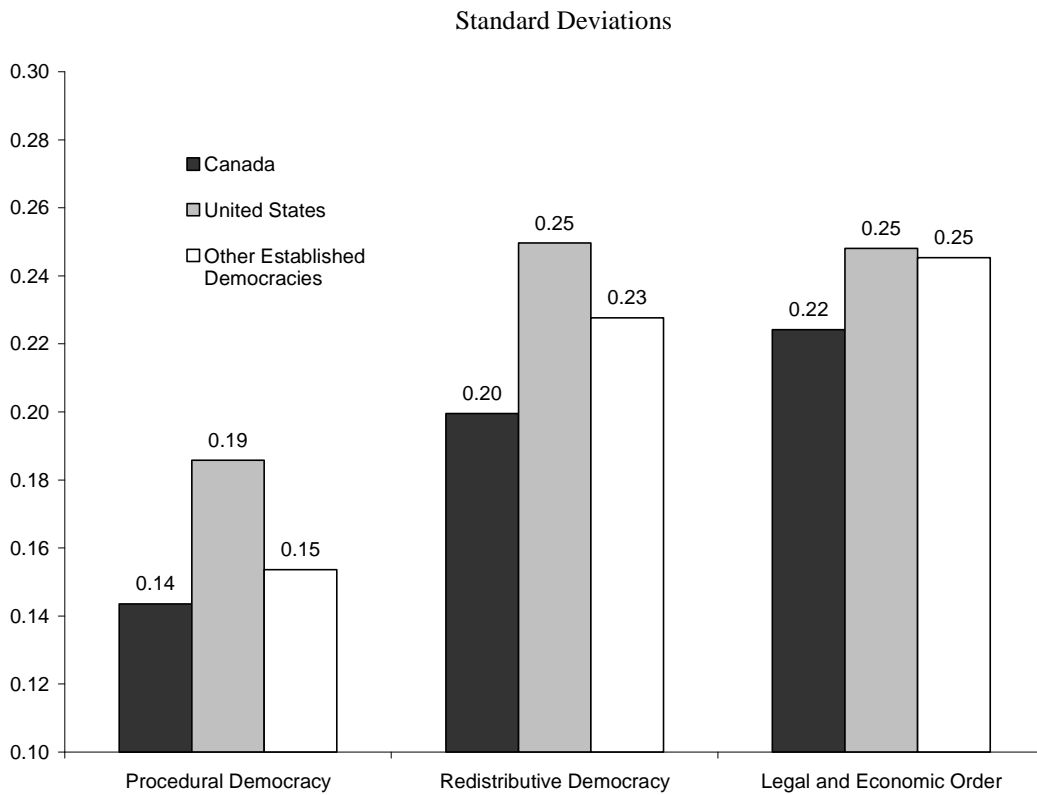
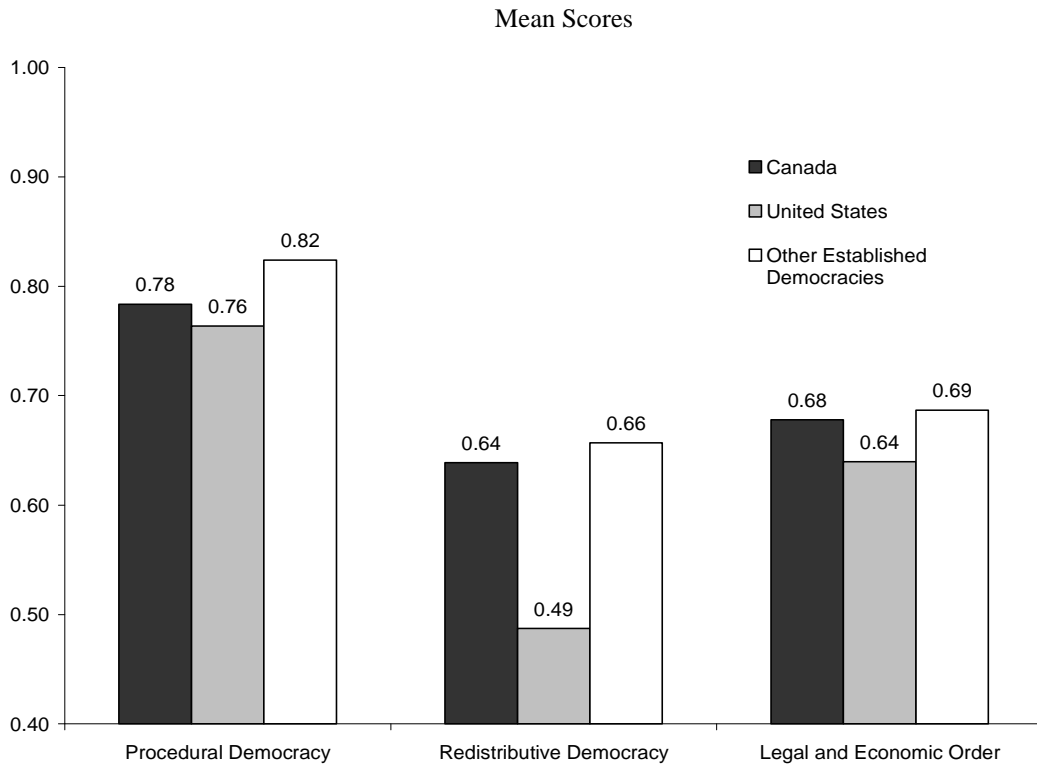
Question Wording:

I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

-Parliament

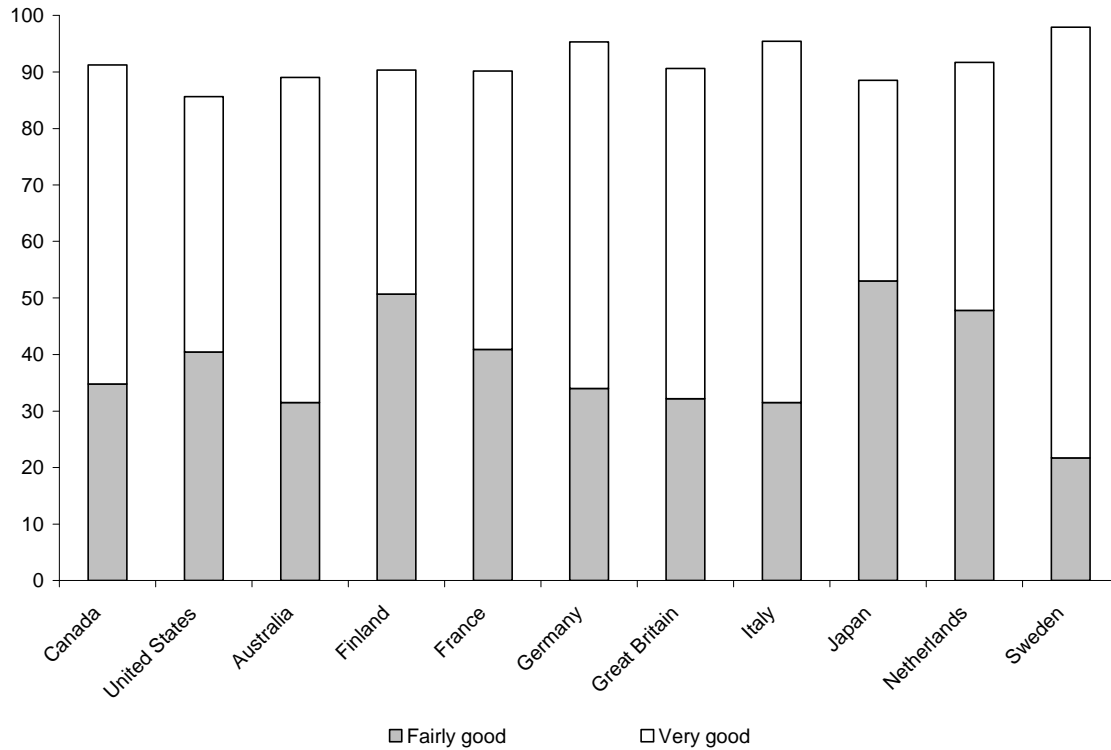
Source: World Values Surveys, 1981 to 2005-2006

Figure 2. Conceptions of Democracy



Source: World Values Surveys, 2005-2006

Figure 3. Commitment to Democracy, 2005-2006



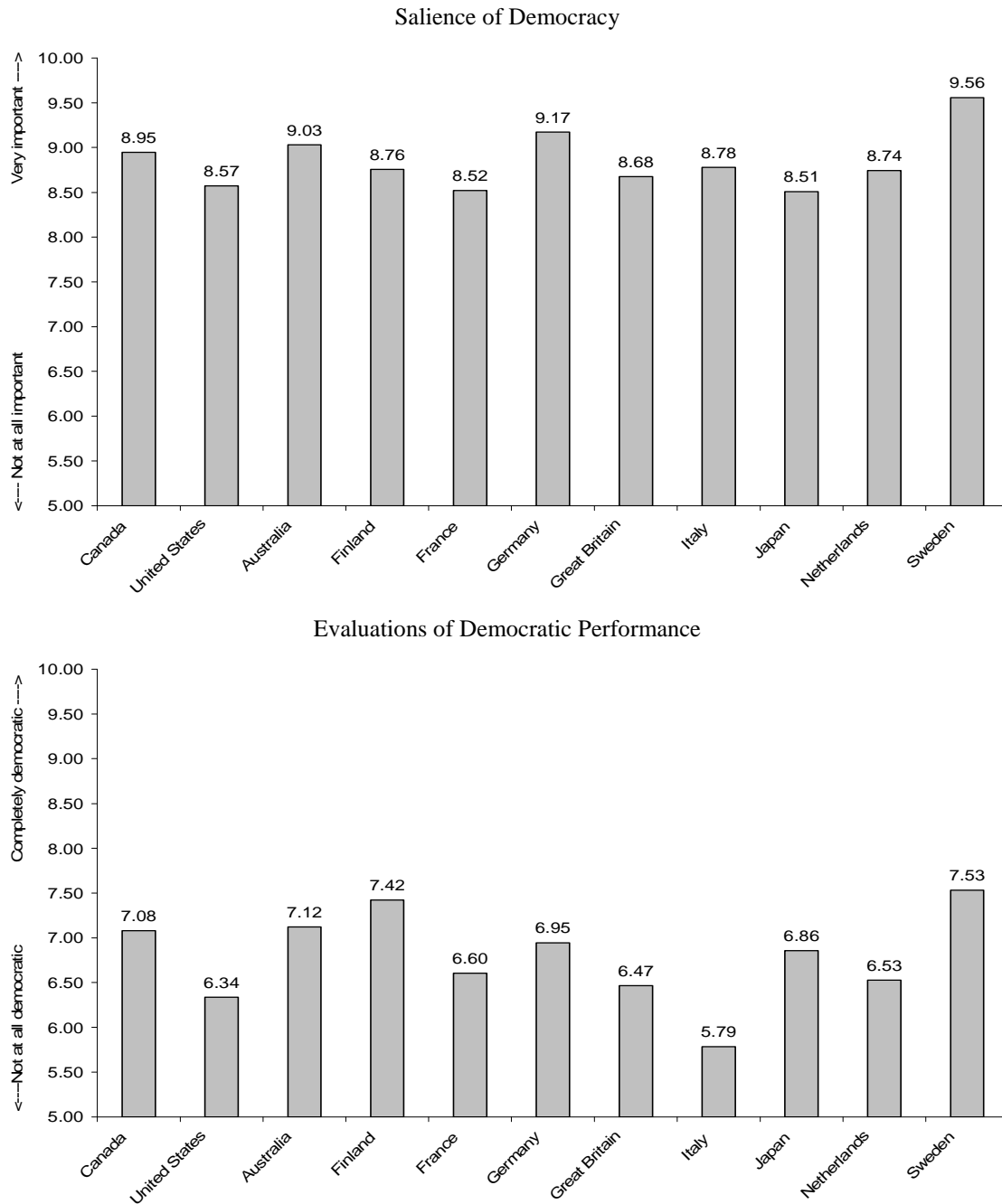
Question:

I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? *(Read out and code one answer for each):*

-Having a democratic political system

Source: World Values Surveys, 2005-2006

Figure 4. The Salience of Democracy and Evaluations of Democratic Performance, Mean scores



Question Wording:

How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? On this scale where 1 means it is “not at all important” and 10 means “absolutely important” what position would you choose?

And how democratically is this country being governed today? Again using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that it is “not at all democratic” and 10 means that it is “completely democratic”?

Source: World Values Surveys, 2005-2006

Figure 5. The Salience of Democracy and Evaluations of Democratic Performance, Standard deviations

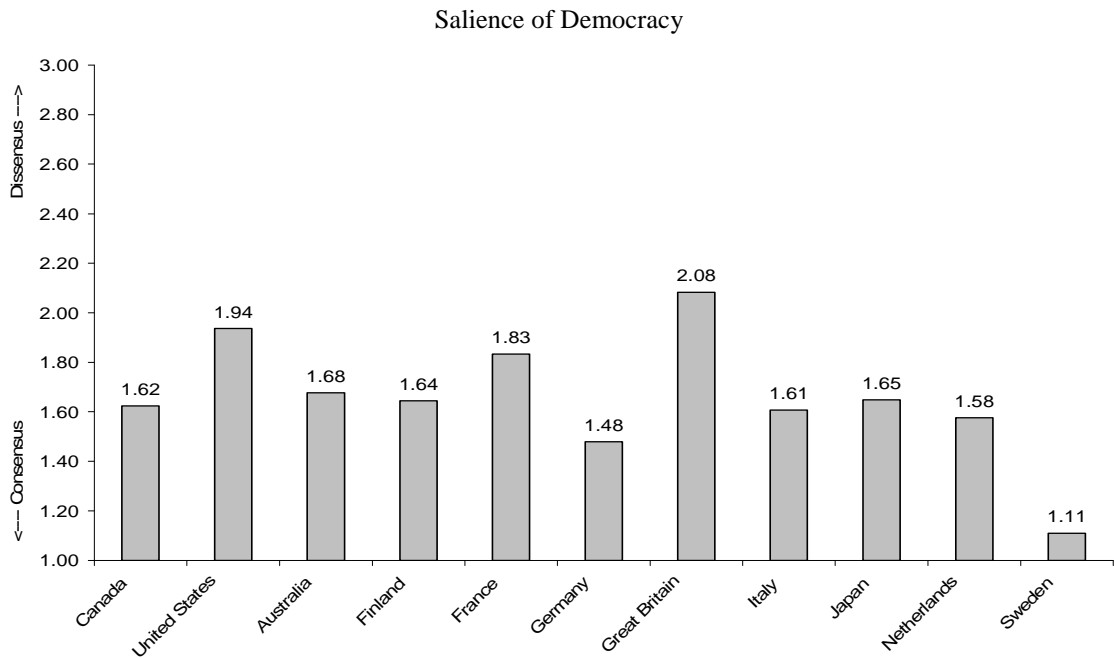
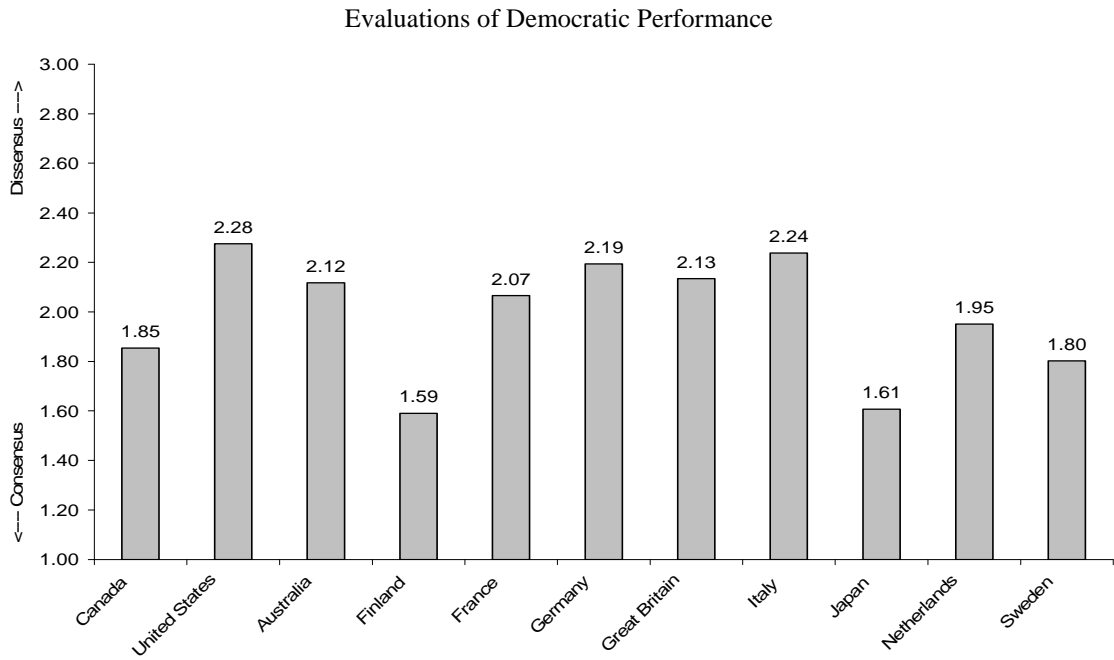
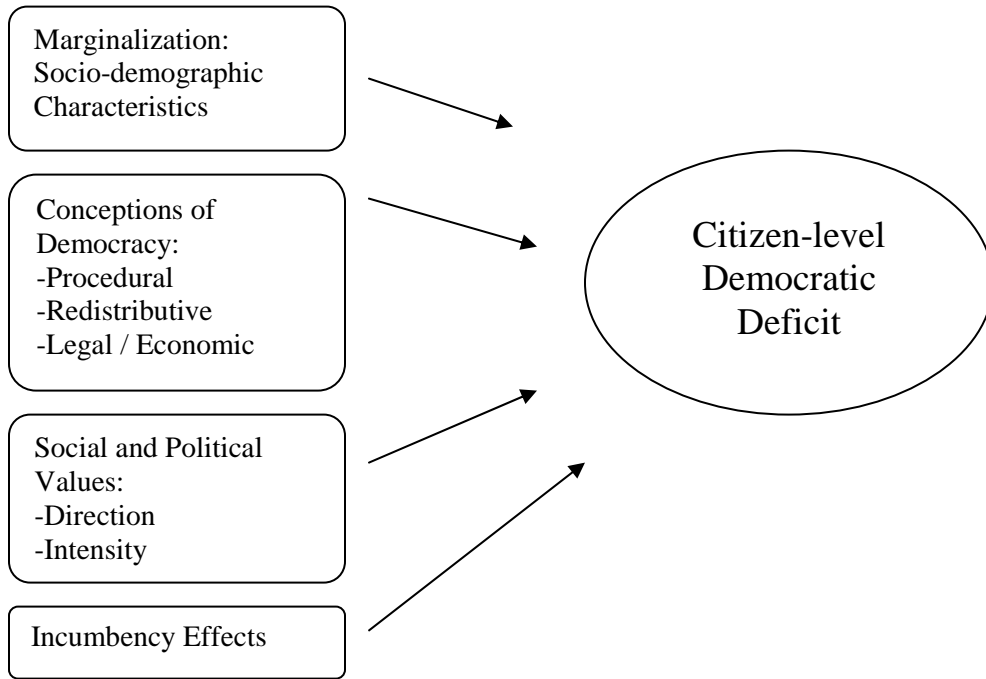


Figure 6. Predictors of the Citizen-level Democratic Deficit



References

- Abramowitz, A.I., & W.J. Stone. 2006. The Bush Effect: Polarization, Turnout, and Activism in the 2004 Presidential Election. *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36: 141-154.
- Anderson, C.J., & C.A. Guillory. 1997. Political Institutions and Satisfaction with Democracy: A Cross-National Analysis of Consensus and Majoritarian Systems. *American Political Science Review* 91: 66-81.
- Annenberg Democracy Project. 2007. *A Republic Divided*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Beetham, D. 1994. *Defining and Measuring Democracy*. London: Sage.
- Birch, A. 1984. Overload, Ungovernability and Delegitimation: The Theories and the British Case. *British Journal of Political Science* 14: 135-60.
- Brady, D.W., & P.S. Nivola, eds. 2006. *Red and Blue Nation? Volume 1: Characteristics and Causes of America's Polarized Politics*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press and Hoover Institution.
- Brittan, S. 1975. The Economic Contradictions of Democracy. *British Journal of Political Science* 5: 129-159.
- Cochrane, C., N. Nevitte, & S. White. 2008. "Value Change in Europe and North America: Convergence or Something Else?," in J. Kopstein & S. Steinmo (eds.), *Growing Apart? Europe and North America*, pp. 53-79. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Crozier, M., S.P. Huntington, & J. Watanuki. 1975. *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*. New York: New York University Press.
- Easton, D. 1965. *A Framework for Political Analysis*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Easton, D. 1975. A Reassessment of the Concept of Political Support. *British Journal of Political Science* 5: 435-57.
- Franklin, M.N. 2002. The Dynamics of Electoral Participation. In *Comparing Democracies 2: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*. Eds. L. LeDuc, R.G. Niemi, & P. Norris. 148-168. London: Sage Publications.
- Fuchs, D., & H-D. Klingemann. 1995. Citizens and the State: A Changing Relationship? In *Citizens and the State*, ed. H-D. Klingemann & D. Fuchs, 1-24. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Fuchs, D. 1999. The Democratic Culture of Unified Germany. In *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance*, ed. P. Norris, 123-45. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Habermas, J. 1975. *Legitimation Crisis*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Huntington, S.P. 1976. The Democratic Distemper. In *The American Commonwealth*, ed. N. Glazer & I. Kristol. New York: Basic Books.
- Kaase, M., & K. Newton. 1995. *Beliefs in Government*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- King, A. 1975. Overload: Problems of Governing in the 1970s. *Political Studies* 23: 284-96.
- Lipset, S.M. 1950. *Agrarian Socialism: the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lipset, S.M. 1963. *Political Man*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Lipset, S.M. 1990. *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*. Ottawa: C.D. Howe Institute.
- Miller, A.H., V.L. Hesli, & W.M. Reisinger. 1997. Conceptions of Democracy among Mass and Elite in Post-Soviet Societies. *British Journal of Political Science* 27: 157-90.
- Nevitte, N., J. Cruz, & M. Estok. 2008. *Barriers to Electoral Participation in Guatemala: Diagnostic of 4 Municipalities*. Guatemala: FLACSO.
- Nie, N.H., J. Junn, & K. Stehlik-Barry. 1996. *Education and Democratic Citizenship in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Norris, P. 1999. Introduction: The Growth of Critical Citizens? In *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance*, ed. P. Norris, 1-27. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Offe, C. 1984. *Contradictions of the Welfare State*, ed. J. Keane. London: Hutchinson.
- Rose, R., & G. Peters. 1978. *Can Government Go Bankrupt?* New York: Basic Books.
- Thomassen, J. 1995. Support for Democratic Values. In *Citizens and the State*, ed. H-D. Klingemann & D. Fuchs, 383-416. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Verba, S., K. Lehman Schlozman, & H.E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Appendix: Variable Construction

Dependent Variables

The Citizen-level Democratic Deficit

A. Question Wording

V162. How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? On this scale where 1 means it is “not at all important” and 10 means “absolutely important” what position would you choose? (*Code one number*):

Not at all important											Absolutely important
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

(*Show Card V*)

V163. And how democratically is this country being governed today? Again using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that it is “not at all democratic” and 10 means that it is “completely democratic,” what position would you choose? (*Code one number*):

Not at all democratic											Completely democratic
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

B. Variable Coding and Metric

The variable takes the difference between the two, rescaled (-1 to 1):

$$\text{DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT} = (v162 - v163) / 9$$

Confidence in Political Institutions

A. Question Wording

I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all? (*Read out and code one answer for each*):

		A great deal	Quite a lot	Not very much	None at all
V143.	The courts	1	2	3	4
V144.	The government in Ottawa	1	2	3	4
V145.	Political parties	1	2	3	4
V146.	Parliament	1	2	3	4
V147.	The Civil service	1	2	3	4

B. Variable Coding and Metric

The variable is an index (alpha = .84), where 0 indicates those expressing no confidence at all in each of the five institutions, and 1 indicates those expressing a great deal of confidence in each of the five institutions:

$$\text{CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT}=(v137 + v138 + v139 + v140 + v141-20)/-15$$

Psychological Engagement

A. Question Wording

For each of the following, indicate how important it is in your life. Would you say it is (*read out and code one answer for each*):

	Very important	Rather important	Not very important	Not at all important
V7. Politics	1	2	3	4

V95. How interested would you say you are in politics? Are you (*read out and code one answer*):

1	Very interested
2	Somewhat interested
3	Not very interested
4	Not at all interested

B. Variable Coding and Metric

The variable is an index ($\alpha = .78$) combining the two items, where 0 indicates disengagement from politics, and 1 indicates high engagement with politics:

$$\text{ENGAGEMENT}=(v7+v95-8)/-6$$

Political Attentiveness

A. Question Wording

People use different sources to learn what is going on in their country and the world. For each of the following sources, please indicate whether you used it last week or did not use it last week to obtain information (*read out and code one answer for each*):

	Used it last week	Did not use it last week
V223. Daily newspaper	1	0
V224. News broadcasts on radio/TV	1	0
V225. Printed magazines	1	0
V226. In depth reports on radio/TV	1	0
V227. Books	1	0
V228. Internet, Email	1	0
V229. Talk with friends or colleagues	1	0

B. Variable Coding and Metric

The variable is an index ($\alpha = .56$) combining the two items, where 0 indicates inattentiveness from politics, and 1 indicates high attentiveness with politics:

$$\text{ATTENTIVENESS}=(v223+v224+v225+v226+v227+v228+v229)/7$$

Willingness to take System Correcting Political Action

A. Question Wording

Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have done any of these things, whether you might do it or would never under any circumstances do it (*read out and code one answer for each action*):

		Have done	Might do	Would never do
V96.	Signing a petition	1	2	3
V97.	Joining in boycotts	1	2	3
V98.	Attending peaceful demonstrations	1	2	3

B. Variable Coding and Metric

The variable is an index ($\alpha = .70$) combining the two items, where 0 indicates unwillingness to take action, and 1 indicates the respondent has taken part in all three types of activities:

$$\text{SYSTEM CORRECTION ACTION} = (v96 + v97 + v98 - 9) / -6$$

Independent Variables

Income

A. Question Wording

V253. Here is a scale of incomes. We would like to know in what group your household is, counting all wages, pensions and other incomes that come in. Just give the letter of the group your household falls into, before taxes and other deductions.

1	Up to 12 500
2	12 501 to 20 000
3	20 001 to 27 500
4	27 501 to 35 000
5	35 001 to 42 500
6	50 001 to 62 500
7	62 501 to 75 000
8	75 501 to 100 000
9	100 001 to 150 000
10	150 001 or more

The income categories above are in Canadian dollars. Income scales vary cross-nationally depending on the national unit of currency and distribution of incomes, but each scale ranges from 1-10, where 1 is the lowest income category and 10 is the highest.

B. Variable Coding and Metric

The Income variable is coded:

$$\text{INCOME} = (V253 - 1) / 9$$

It ranges from 0 (lowest income category) to 1 (highest income category)

Education

A. Question Wording

V239. What is the highest educational level that you have attained? [NOTE: if respondent indicates to be a student, code highest level s/he expects to complete]:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | No formal education |
| 2 | Incomplete primary school |
| 3 | Complete primary school |
| 4 | Incomplete secondary school |
| 5 | Incomplete College/CEGEP |
| 6 | Complete College/CEGEP |
| 7 | Some university-level education, without degree |
| 8 | University-level education, with degree |

The education categories above are Canadian. Education scales vary cross-nationally, but each scale ranges from 1-10, where 1 is the lowest educational category and 10 is the highest.

B. Variable Coding and Metric

The Education variable is coded:

ED LEVEL=(V238-1)/7

It ranges from 0 (lowest education category) to 1 (highest education category)

Visible Minority Status

A. Question Wording

V256 (Code ethnic group of Respondent by observation):

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1 | Caucasian |
| 2 | Black |
| 3 | South Asian |
| 4 | East Asian |
| 5 | Arabic, Central Asian |
| 6 | Other (write in): _____ |

B. Variable Coding and Metric

Caucasian respondents are coded 0, all others are coded 1

Conceptions of Democracy

A. Question Wording

Many things may be desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. Please tell me for each of the following things how essential you think it is as a characteristic of democracy. Use this scale where 1 means “not at all an essential characteristic of democracy” and 10 means it definitely is “an essential characteristic of democracy” (read out and code one answer for each):

- V152. Governments tax the rich and subsidize the poor.
- V153. Religious authorities interpret the laws.
- V154. People choose their leaders in free elections.
- V155. People receive government assistance for unemployment.
- V156. The army takes over when government is incompetent.
- V157. Civil rights protect people's liberty against oppression.
- V158. The economy is prospering.
- V159. Criminals are severely punished.
- V160. People can change the laws in referendums.
- V161. Women have the same rights as men.

B. Variable Coding and Metric

First, the coding for variables v153 and v156 was reversed. Then three indexes ranging from 0 to 1 were constructed based on the results of the factor analyses presented in Table 1:

$$\text{PROCEDURAL}=(v153+v154+v156+v157+v160+v161-6)/54$$

$$\text{REDISTRIBUTIVE}=(v152+v1550-2)/18$$

$$\text{LEGAL/ECONOMIC ORDER}=(v158+v159-2)/18$$

Support for Free Enterprise

A. Question Wording

Now I'd like you to tell me your views on various issues. How would you place your views on this scale? 1 means you agree completely with the statement on the left; 10 means you agree completely with the statement on the right; and if your views fall somewhere in between, you can choose any number in between. (*Code one number for each issue*):

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
v116. Incomes should be made more equal					We need larger income differences as incentives for individual effort				
v117. Government ownership of business and industry should be increased					Private ownership of business and industry should be increased				
v118. The government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for					People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves				
v119. Competition is harmful. It brings out the worst in people					Competition is good. It stimulates people to work hard and develop new ideas				

B. Variable Coding and Metric

An index ranging from 0 to 1 was constructed:

$$\text{FREE ENTERPRISE}=(v116+v117+v118+v119-4)/36$$

Despite its low reliability ($\alpha = .49$), the index performs better in models than its constituent items.

Right-wing Self-Placement

A. Question Wording

(Show Card P)

V114. In political matters, people talk of "the left" and "the right." How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking? (*Code one number*):

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Left									Right

B. Variable Coding and Metric

A scale ranging from 0 to 1 was constructed:

$$\text{LFTRGT}=(v114-1)/9$$

Permissive Moral Outlooks

A. Question Wording

(Show Card AA)

Please tell me for each of the following statements whether you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between, using this card. (*Read out and code one answer for each statement*):

	Never									Always
V202. Homosexuality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
V204. Abortion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
V205. Divorce	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
V206. Euthanasia—ending of the life of the incurable sick	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
V207. Suicide	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

B. Variable Coding and Metric

An index ($\alpha = .81$) ranging from 0 to 1 was constructed:

$$\text{PERMISSIVENESS}=(v202+v204+v205+v206+v207-5)/45$$

Intensity of Values: Support for Free Enterprise, Right-wing Self-Placement, Permissive Moral Outlooks

B. Variable Coding and Metric

Each intensity variable was constructed in three steps:

1. calculate the absolute value of the distance from the midpoint on the Support for Free Enterprise, Right-wing Self-Placement, and Permissive Moral Outlooks items
2. re-scale the absolute value so that it ranges from 0 to 1
3. square that absolute value, to take into account that the effects of intensity should increase as responses move further away from the midpoint

Each intensity variable ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 represents values at the midpoint, and 1 represents values at either extreme of opinion.