A Sketch of Political Psychology
Howard Lavine

Philosophers and poets have long reflected on the relationship between human nature and social arrangements. In fact, for as long as people have pondered the nature of *homo politicus*, they have turned to explanations rooted in individual and collective psychology. As democracy emerged in ancient Athens (leading to consideration of the nature of citizenship and the demands of self-government), Plato and Aristotle developed political theories that took account of citizens' passions and intellectual capabilities. Developments in early modern political philosophy were similarly informed by assumptions about the essential nature of human beings. In *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes wrote that man in a "state of nature" has no idea of goodness, and must be naturally wicked and self-interested. Hobbes believed that life without government would descend into a "war of all against all," which could be avoided only by ceding one's individual rights for the sake of protection. Contrary to Hobbes' pessimism, the Enlightenment philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau held that human beings possessed a natural disposition toward compassion and pity, but that living in a society ridden by economic inequality transformed this basic goodness into a negative psychological complex of pride, vanity, jealousy and fear. More recent European thinkers such as Marx, Pareto, Le Bon and Freud and later those associated with the Frankfurt School (e.g., Horkheimer, Fromm, Marcuse) crafted diverse theories of the interaction between society and the mind, producing a rich body of work out of which modern *political psychology* took shape in the middle of the 20th century.

The most significant proximal development in the field's evolution toward maturity is generally credited to the work of the American political scientist Harold Lasswell. In the seminal works *Psychopathology and Politics* (1930), *World Politics and Personal Insecurity* (1935) and *Power and Personality* (1948), Lasswell applied psychoanalytic theory to a broad range of political questions, including the organization of belief systems, the role of political symbols in

mass persuasion, personality and democratic character and styles of political leadership. His most important idea was that political worldviews are rooted in psychological compensations, specifically in the displacement of private motives and emotions onto public objects which are then rationalized in terms of the public interest.[1] As Ascher and Hirschfelder-Ascher (2005, p. 22) describe it, "certain thoughts or emotions are so painful, threatening, or overwhelming that the individual will repress them and redirect them onto more remote or otherwise less potent [e.g., political] objects." Political behavior is thus seen as "aimed at self-gratification or aggrandizement but is disguised and rationalized as public-spirited" (Sullivan, Rahn and Rudolph 2002, p. 28).

Lasswell's displacement hypothesis helped to establish a distinctive psychological view on the nature and origins of political behavior and it anticipated several highly influential studies of political leaders and followers, including Fromm's (1941) *Escape from Freedom*, Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson and Sanford's (1950) *The Authoritarian Personality*, George and George's (1956) *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House* and Lane's (1962) *Political Ideology*. Each of these works is broadly rooted in a neo-Freudian tradition in which the political preferences of ordinary citizens and the actions of political elites are seen as manifestations of deep-seated (and often unconscious) psychological conflict. For example, in their monumental study of the intrapsychic roots of anti-Semitism, ethnocentrism and fascism, Adorno et al. (1950) hypothesized that future authoritarians are subjected to rigid and punitive child-rearing practices, resulting in feelings of intense hostility toward parental authority. To protect the dependent child's ego from overwhelming anxiety, these feelings are thought to be repressed and manifested unconsciously in over-glorification of and submission to parental values, along with displaced aggression toward political, ethnic and moral out-groups.

Although most early work taking a psychological perspective on politics flowed in one direction – from individual psychological processes to political behavior – contemporary political psychology is defined by a *bidirectional* influence: just as the psyche influences political orientation, the polity leaves its mark on who we are (Ward 2002; see also McDermott 2004). As an example of the latter, evidence from archival studies indicates that people exhibit heightened authoritarian tendencies – including a concern for power, aggression, submission, cynicism and superstition – during periods marked by threat in the environment (Doty, Peterson and Winter 1991). Hermann (1986, p. 2) nicely expresses this bidirectional tenet of political psychology:

> [T]he perceptions, beliefs, motives, opinions, values, interests, styles, defenses and experiences of individuals – be they citizens, leaders, group members, bureaucrats, terrorists, or revolutionaries – are seen as influencing what they do politically; and, in turn, the political culture, political system, mechanisms of political socialization, political movements and parties and the international system are perceived as having an impact on what people are like.

As the quote also indicates, this two-way street provides for a wide range of mechanisms by which psychology and politics can become intertwined. Accordingly, political psychology draws on a broad range of disciplinary sources, including cultural anthropology, history, economics, neuroscience, behavioral genetics, sociology and organizational behavior. This eclecticism reflects the diversity and multi-level foundations of political thought and behavior. Research on the bases of political attitudes, for example, points to a wide range of causal factors that cut across traditional disciplinary lines, including genes, physiology, personality, socialization, historical period, economic conditions and group membership. Political psychology thus strongly eschews the "disciplinary egocentrism" that has come to characterize academic norms (Iyengar 1993).

The field has recently undergone significant growth, including the publication of a new *Handbook of Political Psychology* (Sears, Huddy and Jervis 2003), an *Advances in Political Psychology* annual series (edited by Margaret Hermann) and a near doubling of the article space in its flagship journal, *Political Psychology*. Moreover, work has moved well beyond its traditional base in the United States to be truly international in focus. Sadly, however, the field remains deeply fractured along disciplinary lines. Works of renown in political science are routinely ignored by psychologists and the same is true – if perhaps to a lesser extent – of highly visible work in psychology (for a recent analysis of this problem in the subfield of voting and public opinion, see Druckman, Kuklinski and Sigelman 2009). The study of ideology is a glaring example of parallel but largely non-intersecting research agendas, as psychologists have concentrated their attention on its motivational (i.e., existential and epistemic) antecedents, while political scientists have emphasized its cognitive/rational aspects. There are several areas, however, in which the cross-fertilization process has been effective. For example, political scientists have incorporated several key innovations developed within cognitive psychology, including the concepts of accessibility, on-line information processing, heuristics and implicit cognition. Some of the leading applications include Jervis's (1976) *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Iyengar and Kinder's (1987) *News that Matters*, Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock's (1991) *Reasoning and Choice*, Zaller's (1992) *Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion a*nd Lodge and Taber's (2010) *The Rationalizing Voter*. These examples are still more the exception than the rule, however and scholars in both disciplines would profit from deepening their appreciation of the work across the intellectual divide.

The psychological approach to politics is often contrasted to rational choice theory, which assumes that people form preferences by maximizing "expected utility," that is, by weighting the utilities (or values) of different decision outcomes by their probabilities and choosing the option with the highest weighted sum (Luce and Raiffa 1957). Despite the generality and wide applicability of the theory within economics and political science

(as well as the sophistication of its formal modeling techniques), rational choice is silent with respect to what constitutes a benefit or a cost and simply treats "preferences" as the starting point of the analysis. As Wildavsky (1987) notes, "preferences are referred to as 'tastes,' for which, as the saying goes, there is no accounting, thus rendering them not merely non-economic but non-analyzable" (p.5). By contrast, Crenshaw (2002) observes that the psychological approach views "the establishment of a preference . . . as the outcome of a process . . ., & thus explains what rational choice or econometric theory assumes" (p. 142).[2] From the field's inception, this has fostered an intellectual concern not only with behavioral outcomes (matters of *what* and *when*) but with the origins and intervening cognitive and motivational processes that produce them (matters of *how* and *why*). Herbert Simon's (1985) classic article included in Volume I of this anthology provides a thoughtful integration of the two perspectives via the concept of *bounded rationality*. Simon notes that all reasoning and decision-making are constrained by time, knowledge, information costs and computational power and that we should thus expect political judgment to reflect a compromise – what Simon (1957) called "satisficing" – between the desire to get it right and the necessity of relying on fallible judgment strategies.

Today, what distinguishes a psychological approach from traditional studies of political behavior is the more formal way in which these unobservable mental events are conceptualized and operationalized in research. Traditional research in political science often infers the existence of psychological processes on the basis of overt behavioral data. An example of an observable outcome in the field of public opinion is that exposure to different issue frames (e.g., characterizing affirmative action as "leveling the playing field" vs. "unearned advantage") can alter the bases of an expressed opinion (Kinder and Sanders 1996). This might occur because different ideas are made cognitive accessible or as the result of changes in the importance accorded to different values (hypothetical mediating processes). By using outcome data to explore questions of process, traditional research has, in effect, employed stimulus-response (S-R) methodologies to test stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) models of political behavior. In contrast, the thrust of political psychology is to pry open the black box of the mind and focus more squarely on the underlying processes themselves.

The main purpose of this anthology is to bring together a large and diverse body of work in political psychology and to organize and present it in a single reference source. The collection provides a broad sampling of classic and contemporary articles representing the widest range of theoretical, methodological and epistemological approaches, as well as extensive coverage of the myriad areas of mass and elite political behavior. It nevertheless reflects my own perspective on the field, as well as my own location among "the panoply of research agendas included under the rubric of political psychology" (Sullivan et al. 2002, p. 24). The articles

here draw on the work of leading scholars from around the world in political science and psychology, in roughly equal measure and are reproduced in full, unabridged form. My hope is that this collection will foster intellectual communication across traditional disciplinary lines, including specifically (a) an awareness among psychologists of the creative application of psychological theory within the domain of politics; (b) the usefulness of politics as a vehicle for developing and refining psychological theory; and (c) a deeper appreciation among political scientists of the psychological roots of political behavior.

The collection is presented in four volumes, each with an overarching theme. Borrowing from Sears et al.'s (2003) structuring of the *Handbook of Political Psychology*, Volumes II–IV are organized around three major content areas: Public Opinion and Mass Political Behavior (Volume II); International Relations and the Psychological Study of Political Elites (Volume III); and Intergroup Relations and Political Violence (Volume IV). Volume I is devoted to articles centered on the various *theoretical* schools that scholars have used to make sense of politics. These include classic frameworks such as psychodynamic theory, childhood socialization and culture, less well-known perspectives such as implicit cognition and newer approaches emphasizing emotion and biological processes, including neuroscience, behavioral genetics and evolutionary psychology. Articles in Volume I were chosen as exemplars of basic theoretical frameworks; articles in the remaining volumes serve as illustrations of how those theories have been used to shed light on specific aspects of politics.

Volume I: Theoretical Foundations of Political Psychology

In his instructive book on the unity of knowledge, E. O. Wilson (1998) writes in *Consilience* that "nothing in science – nothing in life, for that matter – makes sense without theory. It is our nature to put all knowledge into context in order to tell a story and to re-create the world by this means" (p. 56). As I noted above, traditional analyses of politics are often light on theory and focus instead on questions of a descriptive nature. The psychological approach to politics, by contrast, emphasizes theory as a way of organizing and explaining political outcomes. By constructing frameworks of the complex interactions between the social environment and the workings of the mind, political psychologists aim to understand not just *what* people think, feel or do, but also *why*? The article by Hermann, Tetlock and Visser (1999) included in this volume provides an excellent example of this "trait-situational" tradition in social psychology within the context of mass judgments about going to war.

There is a consensus that political psychology has progressed through three distinct eras in which different strands of psychological theory have

provided the primary intellectual impetus for understanding the political world. According to William McGuire (1993), a social psychologist and a prominent innovator in the field, the first interdisciplinary flourishing occurred during the 1940s and 1950s and relied largely on *psychoanalysis* as the preferred explanatory system. This reflects both a debt to Freud himself, whose work touched on many politically-oriented topics (e.g., war, leadership, culture, the nature of groups, the origins of society) and whose theories were influential at the time and to Lasswell's early attempts to directly apply Freud's ideas to the realm of politics. According to the classical psychoanalytic account, political attitudes and behavior are determined by the channeling of erotic (and aggressive) drives into the public sphere through the use of various defense mechanisms and through childhood traumas and experiences which organize and tilt the balance between the forces of the id, ego and superego (primitives of personality representing impulse, reason and conscience, respectively).

Adorno et al's (1950) work on authoritarianism is perhaps the best-known application of an orthodox Freudian analysis of the origins of political belief. Expressed in the terminology of psychoanalysis, they theorize that harsh parental reaction to the child's expression of sexual impulses leads to anxiety and insecurity, the repression of hostility and through the defense mechanisms of displacement and projection, an idealization of authority and a vindictiveness toward socially sanctioned outgroups. The authors triangulate on the pre-fascist personality through a variety of research methods, including surveys, projective tests and clinical interviews. Lasswell's article included in this collection, from *Psychopathology and Politics* (1930), is a prototypical example of the early Freudian case study approach to tracing the psychological origins of political preference, usually to the Oedipal conflicts of early childhood. In the manner of Freud's own famous case studies, Lasswell uses the techniques of psychoanalytic interpretation – free association, dream analysis, slips of the tongue – to piece together the psychosexual history and the symbolic substitutions that reveal "the private meaning of public acts" (p. 172).

While intriguing as an intellectual exercise, these studies in the orthodox mold have been criticized as unnecessarily reductionistic (being too narrowly focused on libidinal/Oedipal conflicts) and politically naïve (Sullivan et al. 2002). The *ego*-oriented psychologists that came after Freud, including Heinz Hartmann, Erik Erikson and Erich Fromm broadened the scope of psychoanalytic theory by de-emphasizing the primacy of *id*-related conflict and focusing more on the wider social environment. Much of the literature on psychobiography, including the Georges' (1956) inspired analysis of Woodrow Wilson's failure to win approval in the United States Senate for the League of Nations following the First World War, is cast in this more flexible psychodynamic mold.

A prominent psycho-historical example of ego psychology is Erich Fromm's (1941) *Escape from Freedom*. The article included here, "The Emergence of the Individual and the Ambiguity of Freedom," concerns the ways in which

modern capitalistic societies shape the character structure of the people who live in them. Fromm discusses the phylogenetic and ontogenetic processes by which human freedom emerges from the restraints of authority and the dialectical struggle between the security of enforced social bonds in traditional (pre-capitalist) societies and the yearning for individuality. He writes:

> These primary ties [of traditional society] block his full human development; they stand in the way of the development of his reason and his critical capacities; they let him recognize himself and others only through the medium of his, or their, participation in a clan, a social or religious community and not as human beings; in other words, they block his development as a free, self-determining, productive individual. But . . . [t]his identity with nature, clan, religion, gives the individual security. He belongs to, he is rooted in, a structuralized whole in which he has an unquestionable place. He may suffer from hunger or suppression, but he does not suffer from the worst of all pains – complete aloneness and doubt. (p. 35).

Thus, according to Fromm, modern society leaves man alone and free, yet powerless and afraid. At the heart of *Escape from Freedom* is an analysis of the intersection of history, economics and personality, with a focus on the rise of capitalism and industrialization in the 19th century and its consequences for human freedom. He argues that the anomie, powerlessness and anxiety arising from the vicissitudes of modern society leave people with a fundamental choice: they can form bonds of solidarity with humanity through love and work while retaining their individuality, or they can escape from freedom by submerging their individuality and retreating into the safety of group conformity. This theme of autonomy versus conformity in personality has been extended into contemporary theories of authoritarianism by Duckitt (1989), Feldman (2003a) and Stenner (2005).

The first era of research in political psychology focused not only on psychoanalysis, but also, on personality theory more broadly and on the influence of childhood socialization and the broader culture on adult political preferences. A great deal of research during this period, (e.g., Adorno et al. 1950; Almond 1954; Eysenck 1954; George and George 1956; Greenstein 1969; Lasswell 1948; McClosky 1958; Rokeach 1960; Wilson 1973) fleshed out the general hypothesis that diverse aspects of personality – including anxiety, aggressiveness, ego-strength, self-esteem, dogmatism and social dominance – can play a critical role in determining individual political attitudes and organizing political belief systems. As Sniderman and Citrin (1981) later explained, "attitudes about many different subjects . . . may operate in the service of a common psychological motive; consequently, what appear to be differences or inconsistencies at one level [i.e., ideologically] disappear at another level" (p. 415). Their article included in this volume explores whether an orientation toward isolationism in foreign policy flows from low self-esteem. Reflecting the thrust of functional theory, they argue that isolationism provides some

individuals with "an opportunity to express their fears, suspicions, hostility and self-dislike," and "offers relief from feelings of helplessness and unworthiness." Sniderman and Citrin's analysis also highlights the *organizing* function of personality: they find that attitudes in different political domains are affected by one's level of self-esteem and that this organization would not be evident from a traditional left-right perspective.

As interest in psychodynamic psychology waned after the 1950s, researchers turned to other conceptual frameworks to explain political behavior, including cognitive consistency theory (Festinger 1957), reference group theory (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes 1960) and rational choice theory (Downs 1957). The substantive and methodological foci shifted as well, the former from personality to political attitudes and voting behavior and the latter from macro humanistic and individual case studies to survey research. *The American Voter* (Campbell et al., 1960), a large-scale survey of the dynamics of electoral behavior, is often seen as the pivotal work of this era. The authors' social psychological approach featured the concept of party identification, which they defined as a deeply rooted group attachment originating in childhood and adolescent socialization. The article in this volume by Jennings (1987) provides a strong empirical account of the adolescent origins and development of partisan attitudes and its stability into adulthood. The authors of *The American Voter* also relied on cognitive consistency theory in holding that partisanship serves as a filter of political information, that it "raises a perceptual screen through which the individual tends to see what is favorable to his partisan orientation" (p. 133). This insight provided the basis of a great deal of subsequent research on the influence of partisanship in shaping political perception and evaluation (Anderson and Evans 2006; Bartels 2000, 2002; Duch et al. 2000; Goren, 2002, 2009; Sweeney and Gruber 1984).

Important developments and debates during the second flourishing of political psychology, referred to by McGuire (1993) as the "attitudes and voting behavior era," are covered extensively by Kinder and Sears (1985) in the third edition of the *Handbook of Social Psychology*. One key question concerned whether citizens derive their political attitudes from general ideological principles such as liberalism and conservatism. The understanding and use of such abstractions was traditionally considered a prerequisite of democratic competence, as it constrains the capacity of ordinary citizens to comprehend and respond normatively to elite political debate. Converse (1964) provided a seminal empirical demonstration that the mass public was largely "innocent of ideology." In one analysis, survey respondents in 1956 were probed about what they liked and disliked about the political parties and presidential candidates. According to Converse's coding, only about 12% of the public made even partial use of ideological terms (and only a quarter of this 12% fully understood their meaning). Converse demonstrated that this was not a matter of citizens' inability to verbally articulate the ideological basis of their

attitudes. When he computed correlations between attitudes toward different policy issues, there was very little ideological structure or "constraint," indicating that most citizens did not hold consistently liberal, moderate or conservative preferences. On the basis of these results, Converse concluded that there was an unbridgeable gulf between the mass public and political elites, raising troubling questions about the former's ability to exert control over the direction of public policy.

Converse interpreted the absence of ideological reasoning in terms of cognitive ability. He reasoned that barring an increase in formal education (and consequently in political sophistication), ideological innocence would be a permanent feature of mass politics. Other scholars, however, argued that Converse's findings were influenced by the politically pallid nature of the Eisenhower era. According to Nie, Verba and Petrocik (1976) in *The Changing American Voter*, the charged environment of the 1960s provided citizens with clearer ideological cues, thereby promoting tighter attitudinal organization. Nie et al.'s empirical *pièce de résistance* was a demonstration that correlations between policy attitudes increased substantially in the period between 1964 and 1972 – when civil rights and Vietnam created strong ideological divisions – but weakened again in 1976 when such tensions subsided (though see Sullivan, Piereson and Marcus's 1978 compelling alternative explanation). *The Changing American Voter* reflects a strong tradition in political psychology of locating the origins of political behavior in the social environment (e.g., Gilens 1999; Milgram 1974; McCann 1997, included in this volume).

If ideological abstractions fail to provide a foundation for mass opinion, how do ordinary citizens manage to decide what they stand for politically? Political psychologists devoted a great deal of attention to this general question during the 1960s–1970s. One possibility is simple self-interest: "people support policies that promote their own material interests and oppose policies that threaten them" (Kinder and Sears 1985, p. 671). Despite its popularity throughout the social sciences, the empirical evidence indicates that self-interest plays only a minor role in shaping evaluations of issues and candidates and has pronounced effects only when the stakes are large, clear and certain (Sears and Funk 1991). In their review, Kinder and Sears (1985) note that "neither losing a job, nor deteriorating family financial conditions, nor pessimism about the family's economic future has much to do with support for policies designed to alleviate personal economic distress" (p. 671). For example, the political relevance of "pocketbook" voting – asking what the government has done for *me* lately – pales in comparison to "sociotropic" voting (asking what the government has done for the *country as a whole*; e.g., Kinder and Kiewiet 1981).

Sears and his colleagues (e.g., Kinder and Sears 1981; Sears and Henry 2005; Sears, Hensler and Speer 1979) have often contrasted the weak effects of self-interest to the more powerful influence of political symbols (Edelman 1964). The theory of *symbolic politics* (Sears 1993) holds that during

childhood and adolescence, people acquire affective responses toward a variety of symbols through a process of classical conditioning. For example, many white Americans likely encountered the pairing of the symbol "blacks" with a negative evaluation. The strongest of these learned symbolic responses become stable predispositions, which are thought to guide the attitude formation process. In particular, the theory holds that attitude objects are composed of one or more symbolic elements and that "attitudes toward the object as a whole reflect some combination of the affects previously conditioned to the specific symbols included in it" (Sears 1993, p.120). The theory has been explored most prominently in the domain of race, where Sears and his associates have shown that racial prejudice exerts a powerful influence on racial policy attitudes. The article by Sears (1993) in Volume IV of this anthology provides an expansive theoretical account of symbolic politics theory and contrasts it to other theories of attitude formation and intergroup relations.

By the 1980s, a focus on the ingredients of policy attitudes and vote choice gave way to the *cognitive revolution* – ushering in the third flourishing of political psychology – as scholars turned their attention to the way in which information is acquired, represented and organized in memory and retrieved in making political judgments. As I will describe in greater detail in discussing the articles in Volume II, this endeavor led to several fundamental insights about the nature and quality of public opinion and electoral behavior. Among the important developments in this third wave is the distinction between *memory-based* and *on-line* models of political evaluation (for a review, see Lavine 2002). Proponents of the two schools make different assumptions about the manner in which political information is represented in the cognitive system and about the processes that underlie the construction of opinions. All memory-based models make the assumption that citizens' conscious *recollections* of information mediate political judgments. In this way, judgment is hypothesized to be constrained by *memory* – by citizens' capacity to recall what they like and dislike about political issues and candidates as they enter the voting booth or when they are asked to express an opinion in a survey (Zaller 1992). In contrast, proponents of on-line models argue that citizens extract the evaluative implications of political information at the moment of exposure, integrate them into an ongoing running tally and then proceed to forget the non-gist descriptive details. From this perspective, judgments are not constrained by the pros and cons citizens can subsequently recall; to express an opinion, they need only to retrieve the current value of the updated on-line tally (Lodge, McGraw and Stroh 1989). This process-focused model of political evaluation forcefully challenged the longstanding assumption that rational choice flows from information-holding and ideological awareness.

Another popular solution to the paradox between citizens' informational deficits and their propensity to make good decisions is the concept of

heuristics, or cognitive shortcuts that allow inferences to be made about more detailed political information. This perspective, which has been termed "low information rationality" (Popkin 1994), "is predicated on the view of humans as 'limited information processors' or 'cognitive misers' who have become quite adept at applying a variety of information 'shortcuts' to make reasonable decisions with minimal cognitive effort in all aspects of their lives" (Lau and Redlawsk 2001; p. 952). Researchers have identified a long list of such cost-saving devices, including parties, interest groups, polls, endorsements, politicians, horse-race information, physical appearance, consensus among political elites, presidential approval and feelings toward salient social groups. For example, rather than taking the trouble to learn the details of a complex policy debate, citizens can save time and effort by delegating their judgments to trusted experts (e.g. friends, party leaders, the Sierra Club, the Christian Coalition) who are perceived to hold the same values (Lupia and McCubbins 1998).

Despite the occasional skepticism regarding the *normative* utility of heuristics (e.g., Kuklinski and Quirk 2001; Lau and Redlawsk 2001), the conventional wisdom is that they "elevate the ordinary citizen from a hopeless incompetent to a reasonably capable participant in democratic politics" (Kuklinski and Quirk 2001, p. 295). By providing a plausible account of how a chronically inattentive electorate can manage to make political judgments in line with its values and interests, cognitive shortcuts have undeniable appeal. However, there appears to be a dearth of direct empirical evidence on whether citizens typically use heuristic cues *appropriately*; that is, whether they actually improve the quality of political decisions. In writing that "we *hope* that the shortcuts citizens take will get them to the same place that they would have arrived at if they had taken the 'long way around,'" Kam (2005, p. 177) expresses the thin evidential base on which the utility of heuristics rests. Volume II includes two widely-cited articles on political heuristics – one by Lupia (1994) and the other by Lau and Redlawsk (2001) – that provide mixed evidence and come to somewhat different conclusions on this matter.

Third generation research on decision-making has also focused on the role of emotion. Contrary to the long-held belief that passions are a negative force in human behavior, recent insights from neuroscience suggest quite the opposite – that the experience of emotion is crucial to making *good* decisions (e.g., Damasio 1994; LeDoux 1996). Contemporary research in social psychology indicates that emotions: (a) regulate the quantity and quality of information processing; (b) elicit specific cognitive appraisals; (c) affect perceptions of risk; and (d) increase the explanatory power of models of decision-making (for a review, see Loewenstein and Lerner 2002). Political psychologists have recently begun to explore the role of emotion in politics. The article included here by Lerner, Gonzalez, Small and Fischhoff (2003) examines whether emotion can exert a causal impact on risk perceptions

related to terrorism. In the weeks after the World Trade Center attacks, Lerner et al. manipulated whether participants experienced anger or fear in relation to 9/11. Those assigned to the fear condition rated subsequent attacks as more likely and supported more cautionary policy measures than those assigned to the anger condition (see also Huddy, Feldman, Taber and Lahav 2005).

Perhaps the best-known conceptual framework linking emotion to political judgment is Marcus and colleagues' (1993, 2000) theory of affective intelligence. They apply findings from neuroscience in which positive and negative emotions are regulated by independent biobehavioral systems in the brain. In particular, the "disposition system," which mediates the emotion of enthusiasm, is a reward-seeking system that responds to positive incentives by directly initiating behavior. In providing ongoing feedback about goal attainment and reward acquisition, it manages reliance on habits and previously learned decision strategies. A second structure, called the "surveillance system", mediates the experience of negative affect. Its focus is to maximize attention on the physical and social environment for the presence of threat and danger. Applied to the political realm, anxiety is expected to lead voters to reduce their reliance on existing predispositions (such as party identification) and to pay greater attention to relevant information in the environment. In the article included in this volume, Marcus et al. (2000) demonstrate that when voters are anxious, they (a) pay greater attention to the political environment and acquire more information about candidates' policy stands; (b) rely less on partisanship and more on policy and assessments of candidate character in forming candidate evaluations; and (c) defect at higher rates from the party's candidate. Brader (2006) provided more powerful evidence of the role of anxiety (and for the theory of affective intelligence) by manipulating it experimentally in the context of political ads. He found that compared to an emotionally pallid advertisement, a fear advertisement led to greater attentiveness and more persuasion. Taken together, this work suggests that anxiety leads to voting decisions that are more *rationally* informed by contemporary information and less by prior predispositions.

In the waning years of McGuire's life (he died at 82 in 2007), a fourth flourishing of research in political psychology emerged. Abetted by the spread of biological approaches throughout the social sciences (Pinker 2002), political psychologists have begun to look to behavioral genetics, neuroscience and evolutionary psychology to explain the distal roots of political preference and behavior. For example, several studies have now demonstrated a strong genetic influence on (a) political attitudes (Alford, Funk and Hibbing 2005; Tesser 1993); (b) voter turnout (Fowler, Baker and Dawes 2008); (c) voting behavior (Hatemi et al. 2007); and (d) the tendency to form and hold strong partisan attachments (Settle, Dawes and Fowler 2009). Tesser (1993), for example, found that attitudes marked by high levels of heritability are more

cognitively accessible (i.e., retrieved more easily), more resistant to change and more likely to influence other attitudes than less heritable attitudes. This fascinating result suggests that an attitude's power and functionality – long a topic of great interest to social psychologists, (e.g., Petty and Krosnick 1995) – depends on the extent to which it is genetically determined. Using a twin design, the widely-read article included here by Alford, Funk and Hibbing (2005) finds that political ideology is influenced much more heavily by genetic inheritance than by parental socialization.

Several recent studies have also linked the intensity of physiological responses to political beliefs. For example, Oxley et al. (2008) found that compared to liberals, conservatives manifest stronger sympathetic nervous system activity (measured by skin conductance) in response to threatening images and a harder eye blink response (an involuntary reaction indicative of heightened fear) in response to startling auditory stimuli. Westen and colleagues (2006) examined the neurobiological basis of "motivated reasoning," or the desire make judgments that validate rather than challenge one's political beliefs (Kunda 1990; Lodge and Taber 2000). They found that responses to threatening political information were mediated by areas of the brain specifically known to regulate emotion (e.g., the ventromedial prefrontal cortex) and were unrelated to brain regions known to control "cold" reasoning tasks (i.e., the dorsolateral pre-frontal cortex). Finally, Amodio et al. (2007) identified a neurological basis to the behavioral finding that liberals are more responsive than conservatives to informational complexity, ambiguity and novelty.

Volume II: Public Opinion and Mass Political Behavior

For many scholars, the issues raised and methods used in this volume are at the heart of the contemporary psychological study of politics. I selected 21 articles for this volume, encompassing studies on political communication and the mass media, the origins, structure and functions of political attitudes, conformity and obedience, models of candidate appraisal, the psychological foundations of political ideology and basic research on political cognition. Taken together, they provide a rich and varied portrait of the cognitive capabilities and motivational proclivities of ordinary citizens as they acquire political information and make decisions about candidates, issues and events. Volume II begins with several articles dealing with political communication. As Kinder (2003) has noted, new forms of mass media have transformed the landscape of American politics. The rise of 24-hour cable news, satellite TV, talk radio, email and the internet have vastly increased the amount of information available to ordinary citizens about the "great booming buzzing confusion of the outer world" (Lippmann 1922; p. 31).

Political Communication and the Mass Media

While early reviews largely dismissed the mass media as a powerful source in shaping public opinion (for a review, see Kinder 2003), more recent work indicates a far different conclusion. By shaping how citizens (a) make sense of politics (*framing*), (b) decide which issues are the most important (*agenda setting*) and (c) select the considerations on which their opinions and judgments are based (*priming*), the media are a powerful agent in shaping public opinion. As Nelson, Clawson and Oxley (1997) explain in their article included in this volume, "by framing social and political issues in specific ways, news organizations declare the underlying causes and likely consequences of a problem and establish criteria for evaluating potential remedies for the problem" (p. 568). Beyond elegantly illustrating the basic framing effect, Nelson et al. demonstrate that it is mediated by temporal changes in the importance accorded to different values (and not, as had been widely supposed, by cognitive accessibility; see Iyengar and Kinder 1987). The study also demonstrated that frames are an important means of political persuasion: they altered not only how participants interpreted the target issue, but also led them to take different positions on the issue. In the second framing article included here, Chong and Druckman (2007a) highlight its competitive (i.e., two-sided) nature, as well as the automatic and deliberative components of cognition that influence the perceived persuasiveness of competing frames (for a theoretical review, see Chong and Druckman 2007b; for additional experimental work on framing, see Berinsky and Kinder 2006; Druckman and McDermott 2008; Jacoby 2000; Nelson and Kinder 1996).

Political psychologists have also studied two additional forms of mass media influence: agenda setting and priming. The former occurs when news media attention to a given issue increases its perceived importance; the latter refers to the media's influence in altering the standards by which citizens evaluate political issues and actors (Miller and Krosnick 2000). Over the past two decades, political psychologists have gathered a good deal of evidence in support of these forms of mass mediated persuasion (for a review, see Kinder 2003). To illustrate agenda setting, I include in this volume an article from Iyengar and Kinder's (1987) book *News that Matters*. They present a series of laboratory experiments in which the degree of news coverage devoted to a given issue is varied in a nightly news broadcast. They find strong evidence that perceptions of issue importance are enhanced by news coverage of the issue. To illustrate priming, I include in this volume an article from Mendelberg's (2001) book *The Race Card.* In laying out a theory of *implicit* racial priming in elections, she argues that the rise of egalitarian norms in American society requires that campaigns seeking to mobilize resentful white voters use subtle forms of racial communication. She provides an incisive analysis of the racial impact of the advertisements used in the 1988 American presidential campaign (see also Valentino, Hutchins

and White 2002). Krosnick and colleagues provided important naturalistic evidence for priming by capitalizing on exogenous shocks to the political environment (Krosnick and Brannon 1993; Krosnick and Kinder 1990). They showed that the breaking of the Iran-Contra scandal in 1986 and the first Iraq war in 1991 led to substantial swings in the content of news coverage, which in turn altered the ingredients by which Presidents Reagan and Bush were evaluated.

Political Attitudes: Origins, Structure, Function and Change

The next section of Volume II is concerned with how and why people form attitudes toward political issues, actors and events, the manner in which these attitudes are structured and the factors that promote attitude change. The theoretically eclectic "functional" approach holds that attitudes are formed and maintained because they provide people with various forms of psychological benefit, including defending the self from intrapsychic conflict, expressing important attributes of one's identity, obtaining social rewards and avoiding social sanctions, facilitating one's material self-interest and gaining accurate knowledge about the social world (Katz 1960; Smith, Bruner and White 1956). For example, in a recent study documenting the ego-defensive function of attitudes, Adams, Wright and Lohr (1996) found homophobia to be associated with homosexual arousal. Within an attitude change context, a functional analysis proposes that persuasive messages should be successful to the extent that they directly address the psychological motivation(s) underlying the targeted attitude (i.e., *the functional matching effect*; Lavine and Synder 1996). For example, attitudes based on utilitarian considerations are most likely to be changed by appeals to self-interest, whereas attitudes based on social identity are more easily changed through symbolic appeals. This volume reprints Katz's (1960) seminal article, which a half century on, provides valuable insights into the motivational origins of political attitudes.

Several researchers have argued that political attitudes are rooted in orientations toward more general values. Studies have shown that support for egalitarianism, economic individualism, free enterprise, moral traditionalism and humanitarianism can account for substantial variation in more specific political evaluations and thus provide "some degree of consistency and meaningfulness to public opinion" (Feldman 1988, p. 416; see also Rokeach 1973; Schwartz 1992; for a review, see Feldman 2003b). In an article included in this volume, Feldman (1988) argues that ordinary citizens need not be politically sophisticated to understand how political policies and actions facilitate or block the attainment of deeply held values (for empirical confirmation, see Goren 2004). Rather, all citizens are thought to absorb the major elements of the political culture through socialization, reinforcement of social

norms and political institutions (see also McClosky and Zaller 1984). Work demonstrating strong links between core values and policy preferences has led to a tempering of Converse's (1964) pessimistic conclusion that all but the most sophisticated of citizens lack the cognitive wherewithal to organize their political opinions in a coherent way.

One of the most important developments in political psychology in the late 1980s and 1990s was a rethinking of the nature and meaning of public opinion (Tourangeau and Rasinski 1988; Zaller and Feldman 1992). Traditionally, political attitudes have been conceptualized as evaluations that exist in memory in "precomputed" or summary form (e.g., "capital punishment is bad," "affirmative action is good"). That is, once citizens initially form an opinion, "good" or "bad" summary labels or "affective tags" become attached to it and these affective tags are directly retrieved from long-term memory when survey responses are requested (for a review, see Lavine 2002). However, the direct retrieval model has been challenged by two robust empirical findings: (a) attitudes can be highly unstable over time; and, (b) variation in question form, order or content can exert large effects on survey responses. To accommodate these effects, Zaller and Feldman (1992) proposed, in a classic article reprinted here, that political opinions are typically constructed episodically on the basis of whatever considerations are momentarily accessible. This view implies that citizens are unlikely to possess any one "true" attitude toward a given object; instead, they may be thought to possess a distribution of possible attitudes based on a distribution of considerations with fluctuating activation levels. The latter are thought to vary as a function of the content of elite discourse and media coverage (a micro form of agenda setting), as well as according to their long-term motivational relevance to the individual.

In his groundbreaking book *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*, Zaller (1992) extended the Zaller-Feldman model into a dynamic theory of mass mediated persuasion. Consistent with Zaller and Feldman, attitude change is conceptualized not as the substitution of one crystallized attitude for another, but as a change in the balance of positive and negative "considerations" (Zaller 1992, p. 118). Zaller's model of political persuasion involves two individual-level variables, political awareness and political predispositions (e.g., partisanship, ideology) and one contextual variable, the relative balance and overall level of media attention to competing political positions. The strength of the model is that it captures the variable effects of two-sided information flows in different segments of the population. In one test of the model, Zaller provides an extensive analysis of opinion change toward the Vietnam War from 1964 to 1970. He showed that in 1964, opinion toward the war among liberals was a positive linear function of political awareness, as support for the war was the mainstream position among elites across the ideological spectrum. By 1966, however, the anti-war message increased enough in volume to be "heard" by highly aware liberals, so that support for the war peaked among the moderately sophisticated.

In the last decade, political psychologists have begun to probe the implications of the distinction between implicit and explicit attitudes (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler 2000). "Implicit" attitudes are evaluative judgments that are typically held without conscious awareness. They reflect associations made in childhood and adolescence and are activated automatically and uncontrollably in relevant social situations. They are also conceptually distinct from "explicit" attitudes, which require motivation and ability to apply and are often tainted by social desirability. The implicit-explicit distinction is especially important in assessing attitudes toward socially sensitive topics (e.g., intergroup attitudes), as in a climate governed by tolerant norms, survey respondents are likely to dissemble in reporting their attitudes. Several articles – including the one in this anthology by Fazio, Jackson, Dunton and Williams (1995) – rely on implicit attitude methods (in this case, affective priming) to overcome the effects of social desirability in the measurement of public opinion about race.

Contents and Processes of Candidate Appraisal

In addition to studying the origins and nature of public opinion on policy issues, political psychologists have conducted a great deal of research on how citizens form impressions of political candidates. This work has focused largely on four broad classes of factors: groups, issues, parties and candidate personalities (Campbell et al. 1960; Lau 1989; for a review see Kinder 1998). Some of this research has sought to determine the dispositional and situational factors that moderate the degree to which these (and other) factors influence overall candidate evaluations (e.g., Basinger and Lavine 2005; Lau 1989; Marcus et al. 2000). The standard scholarly understanding is that variation in how people make up their minds turns on one's store of information about politics (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Lau and Redlawsk 2006; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock 1991). Whether referred to as "level of conceptualization," "sophistication," "awareness" or "knowledge," or measured simply as years of education, the traditional view is that a small number of "able" citizens are more likely than the ill-informed masses to form their political judgments using complex decision rules that focus on the most diagnostic information. Less sophisticated voters are seen as falling back on comparatively low-effort cues in distinguishing between candidates, such as perceptions of candidate character. For example, Miller, Wattenberg and Malanchuk (1986) found that references to the personal attributes of the candidates far outnumber references to issues and parties in voters' open-ended comments. By relying on assessments of candidate character, non-ideological voters can manage to form electoral judgements via familiar and well-rehearsed routines of impression formation that they employ in everyday life and that require little in the way of cognitive effort or the capacity for ideological thinking.

The article included here by Lodge, Steenbergen and Brau (1995) provides an experimental test of the on-line model of candidate evaluation. As I noted earlier, the on-line model holds that citizens extract the evaluative gist of the campaign information that they encounter and build an ongoing summary counter that moves up or down (in real time) as new information is received. The most important and enduring insight of their work is that rationality in voting behavior does not depend on voters' memory for campaign events. Voters may be simultaneously responsive to campaigns (i.e., adjusting their overall evaluations in response to campaign messages and events) but forget the descriptive details on which their on-line tallies were built. Researchers have proposed hybrid models that integrate both memory-based and on-line processing components (Lavine 2002; Rahn 1995). According to these models, individuals anchor their evaluations on updated summary evaluations and adjust them up or down on the basis of temporarily accessible considerations.

Psychological Foundations of Political Ideology

There is a vast literature in political psychology exploring the psychological origins of ideology (for a recent review, see Jost, Federico and Napier 2009). Beginning with Reich's (1933) *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* and Horkheimer's (1936) *Studies in Authority and the Family* and including Adorno et al.'s (1950) *The Authoritarian Personality*, Eysenck's (1954) *The Psychology of Politics*, Rokeach's (1960) *The Open and Closed Mind*, Wilson's (1973) *The Psychology of Conservatism*, Altemeyer's (1988) *Enemies of Freedom*, Sidanius and Pratto's (1999) *Social Dominance*, Stenner's (2005) *The Authoritarian Dynamic* (a selection of which appears in this volume) and most recently, Jost, Kay and Thorisdottir's (2009) *Social and Psychological Bases of Ideology and System Justification* and Hetherington and Weiler's (2009) *Authoritarianism and Polarization in American Politics*, psychologists and (occasionally) political scientists have sought to understand why some people gravitate toward conservatism and others toward moderate or liberal ideologies. In a comprehensive theoretical integration of this literature (reproduced in this volume) Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski and Sulloway (2003) argue that people embrace political conservatism because it serves a variety of motivational needs, including the reduction of "fear, anxiety and uncertainty; [the avoidance of] change, disruption and ambiguity; and to explain, order and justify inequality among groups and individuals" (p. 340). From this point of view, political conservatism is simply a special case of *motivated social cognition.* Jost et al. marshal a large amount of evidence that a variety of epistemic and existential needs – including those pertaining to aggression, intolerance of ambiguity, uncertainty avoidance, self-esteem, cognitive

closure, regulatory focus and anxiety arising from mortality salience – are associated with political conservatism.

Two broad types of sociopolitical attitudes in particular – right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) and social dominance orientation (SDO) – have emerged as central explanatory constructs in political psychology (Duckitt 2001). RWA is defined by a constellation of three social attitudes: conventionalism, submission to authority and aggression against outgroups, which covary to form a highly unitary dimension. SDO is embedded in a theory of intergroup relations in which societies are thought to minimize conflict by creating ideologies that legitimize the hegemony of dominant groups and the oppression of outgroups. Individuals scoring high in SDO prefer group relations to be hierarchical, whereas low scorers prefer equality between groups (Sidanius and Pratto 1999). RWA and SDO parallel a longstanding empirical distinction between different dimensions of ideology. Beginning with Eysenck's (1954) two-factor model of radicalism versus conservatism and tough versus tender mindedness, analysts of the structure of political attitudes have repeatedly identified a first factor – corresponding roughly to RWA – that entails conformity, social order and religiousness at one pole and freedom, relativism and permissiveness at the other – and a second factor – corresponding roughly to SDO – that entails power and inequality at one pole and egalitarianism and concern for the disadvantaged at the other (for a review, see Duckitt, 2001). Moreover, RWA and SDO – and the broad value dimensions associated with them – provide a good mapping to two distinct but related dimensions of contemporary issue conflict. RWA is more relevant to attitudes rooted in the "culture war," while SDO is more relevant to attitudes about the distribution of economic resources and power.[3]

Several studies have examined the hypothesis that the political consequences of authoritarianism depend on the presence of threat. For example, in an article included in Volume II, Stenner (2005) finds that the presence of threats to the "normative order" (i.e., shared values and the uniformity of belief) selectively activates the predispositions of high authoritarians, strengthening relations between authoritarianism and a variety of political attitudes (see also Feldman 2003a; Feldman and Stenner 1997). In line with this reasoning, Lavine et al. (2002) found that authoritarianism is linked to threat sensitivity. They found that high authoritarians responded more quickly to threatening but not non-threatening words on an automatic word recognition task than low authoritarians. They also found that authoritarians responded more quickly than low authoritarians to target words that are semantically related to threatening connotations of a homograph (dual meaning) prime (e.g., the target word "weapons," when following the prime word "arms") but *not* to target words that are semantically related to non-threatening connotations of the prime (e.g., the target word "legs" when following the prime word "arms"). Moreover, in a study in which "mortality

salience" was heightened experimentally, Lavine, Lodge and Freitas (2005) found that high but not low authoritarians became biased in their preference for exposure to attitudinally-congruent (vs. incongruent) information, presumably as a strategy for decreasing threat and anxiety.

Political Cognition

The cognitive revolution made inroads into political science as early as the mid 1970s, particularly in the domain of international relations (e.g., Jervis 1976). It arrived in full force in the 1980s with Iyengar and Kinder's (1987) cognitive theory of media priming, Lodge and colleagues' (Lodge et al., 1989; Lodge and Hamill 1986) work on schemas and on-line processing, Larson's (1985) research on Soviet containment, Lau's (1985, 1989) work on construct accessibility and valence asymmetry in political evaluation, Conover and Feldman's (1984, 1989) work on belief systems and inference processes and Tetlock's (1986, 1992, both included in this volume) work on foreign policy decision-making and the relationship between cognitive style and political ideology.

McGraw's (2000) article on the development of the cognitive perspective in political psychology provides a concise review of this area (see also Taber 2003). She explains that the premise of the cognitive approach is that information about the world is organized as knowledge structures (or "schemas") in memory and that these structures play an important role in how people interpret and respond to new information. Contemporary research in political cognition examines a wide variety of substantive questions, including those related to international relations, mass political behavior and intergroup relations. The unifying factor in this work is the concept of "information processing," which McGraw and Lodge (1995) define as "the processes by which people acquire, store, retrieve, transform and use information to perform some intelligent goal-based activity" (p. 1). As they note, a broad distinction can be made between research focusing on the representation of information in memory and that focused on the cognitive processes that lead to a political response. Research on the former was popular in the 1980s, as political psychologists fleshed out how citizens internally organized information about political objects and ideas (e.g., Conover and Feldman 1984) and how differences in organization influenced subsequent memory (Lodge and Hamill 1986), inferences about new information (e.g., Conover and Feldman 1989; Larson 1985; Rahn 1993) and the basis of citizens' vote decisions (Lau 1989).

Research on cognitive processes examines *how* – by what mental operations – judgments are made. As discussed earlier, memory-based and on-line models assume different mechanisms by which individuals construct their political opinions. I include in this volume two articles that focus on different aspects of cognitive processing. The first, by Huckfeldt, Levine, Morgan and Sprague

(1999), focuses on the concept of cognitive accessibility. Given the bounded nature of information processing (Simon 1985), citizens do not take into account all the information they have in making a political judgment; instead, they rely on considerations that are accessible, or those that come easily to mind. Huckfeldt and colleagues demonstrate that respondents with highly accessible partisan and ideological orientations – measured by the speed with which they were reported – are more likely to use these concepts in making political judgments and in resisting persuasion attempts. In the second article, Taber and Lodge (2006) test a theory of motivated reasoning. They argue that all human reasoning can be characterized as a tension between strivings for two conflicting motivations: accuracy and belief perseverance. If the desire for accuracy leads to reasoning from "the bottom up" in an attempt to draw conclusions that respect the available evidence, the belief perseverance principle holds that reasoning can also occur from "the top down" in an attempt to draw conclusions designed to uphold standing political commitments. While from a normative perspective, the interpretation and evaluation of new information should be kept independent of one's "priors," Taber and Lodge demonstrate that people often do otherwise. They show that we tend to selectively seek out information that upholds the validity of our attitudes while actively avoiding information that challenges them and that we critically scrutinize and counterargue incongruent information while accepting congenial information at face value.

Volume III: International Relations and the Psychological Study of Political Elites

According to the theory of *neorealism* (Waltz 1979), sovereign states are the principal actors in the international system. Their actions are thought to be rationally motivated by the single-minded pursuit of self-interest, which is to say, by national security and survival. From this perspective, foreign policy decision-making is constrained by the global distribution of military and economic power, leaving little room for psychological explanations or individual agency. As Tetlock (1998) notes, "national leaders either respond in a timely manner to shifting balances of power or they are rapidly replaced by more realistic leaders" (p. 869). By focusing solely on structural and external constraints, however, political psychologists argue that work in the neorealist tradition fails to address how decision makers' cognitive representations (e.g., operational codes), motivational goals (e.g., dissonance reduction) and emotional states influence their perceptions and actions (for reviews, see Levy 2003; Tetlock 1998). The distinctive premise of the psychological approach is that "variation in the beliefs, psychological processes and personalities of individual decision-makers" can exert a decisive influence on foreign policy behavior (Levy 2003, p. 255).

The articles in this volume examine how psychological concepts have been applied to a variety of problems in international relations, including conflict resolution and political reconciliation, foreign policy decision-making, problem representation, leadership styles and psychobiography. Political scientists have explored these questions from a variety of psychological perspectives, including attribution theory, prospect theory, information processing theories, psychodynamic theory and the psychology of group dynamics. For example, the article included here by Vertzberger (1990) on perception provides a general cognitive model of how decisions are grounded in leaders' representations or frames of foreign policy problems. An article in this volume by Levy (1992) provides a discussion of how prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky 1979), a widely-applied alternative to classical expected utility theory, can explain a number of robust decision-making phenomena that cannot be accounted for by traditional rational actor models.

The first two articles in Volume III offer different perspectives and methodological approaches to studying international conflict. The first article is a selection from Holsti's (1972) book *Crisis Escalation War*, which examines the influence of stress on foreign policy decision-making. Focusing on two case studies with different outcomes – First World War and the Cuban missile crisis – Holsti explores a variety of cognitive mechanisms by which crisis-induced stress leads to suboptimal performance. Researchers have also begun to explore the psychological processes underlying the maintenance and resolution of *intractable* conflicts, those in which violence persists for decades. In the second article included in this volume, Bar-Tal (2000) argues that such conflicts require a psychological infrastructure of shared societal beliefs among citizens, including a narrative about the justice of the in-group's goals, continuous affirmation of its victimization, the delegitimization of one's opponents and a sense of social unity. Bar-Tal also focuses on the cognitive shifts to this "conflictive ethos" that produce a psychological readiness for reconciliation.

The next several articles address a variety of psychological factors affecting foreign policy decision-making among political leaders. The first is a selection from Jervis's (1976) classic book *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, which marks the beginning of the systematic study of the foreign policy from a cognitive perspective. In the article "Deterrence, the Spiral Model and Intentions of the Adversary," Jervis lays out the psychological dynamics by which states come to misperceive the intentions of one another's actions, leading to a spiraling of aggression, even when neither side has expansionist aims but simply desires security. Anticipating a great deal of subsequent work on theory- versus date-driven information processing by psychologists, Jervis argues that "once a person develops an image of the other – especially a hostile image of the other – ambiguous and even discrepant information will be assimilated to that image" (p. 68).

Typically, however, decisions are not made by leaders in isolation; they are worked out collectively within the leader's inner circle of advisors. Elite decision-making can thus be analyzed from the perspective of group dynamics. Janis's (1982) popular "groupthink" model, developed on the basis of several high profile foreign policy fiascos – e.g., the appeasement of Nazi Germany by Neville Chamberlain (1938), Truman's decision to pursue the Korean army beyond the 38th parallel (1950), Kennedy's launching of the Bay of Pigs invasion (1961) and Johnson's escalation of the war in Vietnam (1965) – specifies a set of antecedent conditions, intervening processes or groupthink "symptoms" and a set of consequences that lead to defective decisions. In the article selected for inclusion here, "The Groupthink Syndrome," Janis (1982) argues that group cohesion, its insularity (from qualified outsiders) and the leader's overt preference for a given policy option are hypothesized to produce pressures for uniformity and loyalty, a belief in the group's invulnerability and the morality of its position and stereotyped views of the enemy. These intervening processes are then thought to lead to suboptimal decision-making, including an incomplete survey of objectives and alternatives, failure to examine the risks of the preferred option and biases in the selection and interpretation of evidence bearing on the alternatives. Janis's groupthink model has been subject to empirical testing using experimental techniques, content coding of archival material and a meticulous study included here by Tetlock et al. (1992), in which expert raters completed a Q-sort to capture the group dynamics of several well-known foreign policy decision-making episodes. These studies reveal broad support for the groupthink model, but fail to find that group cohesiveness in particular plays a causal role in generating the hypothesized intervening groupthink symptoms.

Contrary to the neorealist assumption that environmental constraints minimize the influence of individual differences, political psychologists argue that the idiosyncratic experiences, motives, beliefs and abilities of individual leaders can be of great consequence in the decisions they make. According to Greenstein (1969), tracing the influence of psychological processes on leaders' personalities and decisions requires making clinical inferences on the basis of known biographical facts. For example, in their monumental psychological study of Woodrow Wilson, George and George (1956) trace the origins of Wilson's behavior as president to low self-esteem and repressed anger deriving from a cold relationship with a perfectionistic father. They argue that this produced an extreme sensitivity to threats to Wilson's autonomy as an adult and to an uncompromising and self-defeating pattern of behavior. In later work, George (1968) elaborated on the psychodynamics of Wilson's character using Lasswell's (1948) hypothesis that power-seeking among political leaders can be seen as a compensation for damaged self-esteem.

In addition to psychodynamic biographical studies, researchers have developed more objective methods for studying the personality characteristics of

leaders "at a distance," through systematic content analysis of peeches, interviews and other spontaneous verbal material (Hermann 1980). For example, Winter, Hermann, Weintraub and Walker (1991) analyzed the personalities George Bush Sr., & Mikhail Gorbachev using transcripts from speeches and press conferences. They coded for motive profiles (i.e., needs for achievement, affiliation and power), as well as personality traits, general beliefs about the world, cognitive and interpersonal styles and operational codes (i.e., general beliefs about politics and the world). Based on the derived personality profiles, Winter et al. made a series of suggestions about how the two leaders might engage in successful negotiation.

An interesting question about leadership and performance from a social-psychological perspective is the relative contribution of dispositional and situational factors. As Simonton (1988) writes, "is leadership a matter of being the right person, or is it due more to being at the right place at the right time" (p. 928)? A more nuanced form of the question might be: under what circumstances are particular personality qualities in leaders likely to result in successful outcomes? Relying on Erikson's (1964) insight that leaders are chosen by mass publics "possessed of analogous [psychological] conflicts and corresponding needs," Winter (1987) tested a "matching" hypothesis by independently scoring the motive profiles of U.S. presidents and the public on the basis of their needs for power, affiliation and achievement. In line with the trait-situation interaction hypothesis, Winter found that congruence positively predicted the president's electoral appeal, measured by margin of victory and probability of being re-elected. Contrary to the interaction hypothesis, however, he finds that presidential greatness (measured by ratings of historians) is a positive first order (i.e., "main effect") function of the present's level of power motivation.

Volume IV: Intergroup Relations and Political Violence

In his review of the literature on prejudice and intergroup hostility, Duckitt (2003) notes that the tendency to "perceive others as group or category members rather than as individuals occurs pervasively, rapidly and in apparently automatic fashion in many situations" (p. 560). Much in line with this conclusion, political psychologists have found groups to be an integral part of the political landscape. Sympathies and resentments toward a variety of "visible social groupings" – blacks, whites, liberals, conservatives, gays, poor people, businessmen and evangelical Christians – fundamentally shape a broad range of political views, including partisan and ideological identification (Brady and Sniderman 1985; Campbell et al. 1960; Conover and Feldman 1981). For example, in reflecting on whether they are Democrats or Republicans, Green, Palmquist and Schickler (2002) contend that people ask themselves the following: "What kinds of social groups come to mind

as I think about Democrats, Republicans and Independents? Which assemblage of groups (if any) best describes me" (p. 8)? The group-centric nature of public opinion is most clearly evident in Conover and Feldman's (1981) analysis of the origins and meaning of ideological labels, in which evaluations of liberals and conservatives were more strongly rooted in group likes and dislikes than in issue preferences, leading to the conclusion that mass ideology is largely symbolic in nature.

Evidence for the central role of groups can be found in the earliest empirical studies of political behavior (e.g., Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee 1954; Campbell et al. 1960). For example, the sociologically-oriented work of Lazarsfeld and colleagues emphasized economic class, level of urbanization and religion as the primary determinants of vote preference. More recent work in this tradition has shown that race, religion and gender often produce substantial policy and electoral cleavages (e.g., Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Mendelberg 2001). The articles in this final volume illustrate the wide range of political consequences that have been ascribed to group membership, identification and affect. The first set of articles, by Devine (1989), Sears (1993), Sidanius (1993) and Huddy (2001) present broad theoretical frameworks for understanding the cognitive and motivational processes by which group loyalty and political cohesion are developed. The remaining articles examine how these theories have been applied in different domains of group life such as race, gender and ethnicity and provide examples of some important political consequences that flow from group loyalty and cohesion (e.g., patriotism and nationalism, intolerance, terrorism, genocide, social justice and collective political action).

Recent reviews of intergroup relations (Brewer and Brown 1998; Duckitt 2003; Huddy 2003) suggest several classes of explanations for the centrality of groups in political life. At the heart of the *cognitive* approach is the concept of social categorization, which refers to the tendency to partition the variability among people into a more manageable number of groupings. As Hamilton and Trolier (1986) point out, attempting to perceive each person as an individual would quickly overload our cognitive processing and storage capacities. Thus, to simplify our social worlds, we seek perforce the commonalities among people and use those commonalities as a basis for generating social categories. A natural consequence of social categorization is *stereotyping*, whereby members of a group are treated as functionally equivalent. A great deal of evidence in social psychology indicates that stereotypes influence the perception and evaluation of individual group members (for a review, see Fiske 1998). More generally, they can bias the selection and interpretation of information and provide a basis for filling in missing details, thus allowing perceivers to "go beyond the information given."

According to Brewer (1988) and Fiske and Neuberg's (1990) dual-process models of social perception, we seek efficiency as perceivers and thus attempt to fit people we encounter into ready-made social categories such

as "liberal," "Midwesterner" or "old person,", to help us infer what they are like (e.g., "Midwesterners are reserved;" "old people are infirm"). It is only when this process of categorization fails, for example, when a target person does not fit the stereotype, that "piecemeal" processing occurs. In this case, the perceiver is forced to consider the person as an individual (rather than as a member of a social category) and to form an impression on an "attribute-by-attribute" basis – a process requiring considerably more cognitive effort. Huddy and Terkildsen's (1993) experimental work on gender stereotypes – in which they investigate the origins of voters' expectations that female candidates are more competent in handling "compassion" issues (e.g., poverty, the aged) and that male candidates are more competent in handling defense issues – illustrates these "schematic" effects in the realm of candidate judgment. Voters also hold stereotypes about the political parties and use them to infer a candidate's policy positions (Rahn 1993).

Perhaps the most significant theoretical development over the past two decades is the propensity for stereotypes and prejudice to be activated automatically, that is, without intention or conscious effort and applied in ways that are often unsupervised by more deliberative processes (Bargh 1999). Devine's (1989) article included in Volume IV provided early support for the idea that the activation and application of negative racial stereotypes occurs outside of conscious awareness and, most chillingly, that it occurs equally strongly among low- and high-prejudiced individuals. Bargh's (1999) article presents a careful examination of the evidence on the controllability of stereotypes; he concludes pessimistically that automaticity is an uncontainable cognitive monster. Political scientists have only recently begun to explore the political consequences of automatically activated intergroup attitudes (see Mendelberg 2001; Valentino et al. 2002).

A second approach to intergroup relations focuses on the *symbolic* aspects of group membership and identification. According to social identity theory (Tajfel 1981), individuals derive a portion of their self-concept (and esteem) through identification with social groups. At the heart of the theory is the idea that group identification occurs within an intergroup context and is motivated by a desire for "positive distinctiveness," that is, a desire to view the "in-group" as distinct from and more positive than other relevant groups ("out-groups"). Self-categorization as an in-group member thus leads to exaggerated comparisons between in-group and out-group that are designed to favor the former, especially under conditions of intergroup competition. Huddy's (2001) article included in this volume presents a number of critical challenges in applying social identity theory in the realm of politics. In particular, she argues that there needs to be more systematic examination of the subjective meaning of identity, the choice of whether to identify and gradations in identity strength. Huddy and Khatib (2007) probe these issues in research on the nature and consequences of national identity. In other work in political science, Ross (2001) provides a compelling argument that

identities rather than interests are at the core of ethnic conflict, suggesting alternative prescriptions for addressing them (see also Volkan 1997).

The Sears (1993) and Sidanius (1993) articles provide a contrast between symbolic and instrumental approaches to intergroup relations, respectively. As discussed earlier, Sears and colleagues' theory of symbolic politics holds that learned affective responses to political symbols evoke evaluations toward a variety of attitude objects through the "transfer of affect." For example, attitudes toward policies such as affirmative action and Head Start can be formed through reflexive affective responses to the symbol "blacks." Sidanius and Pratto (1999) developed social dominance theory, which views societies as group-based hierarchies with at least one hegemonic group at the top and at least one negative reference group at the bottom. According to the model, most common forms of intergroup conflict and oppression are manifestations of the desire for group-based social hierarchy among dominant groups. The theory is grounded in evolutionary reasoning, such that social groups with hierarchical organization will have an advantage over egalitarian groups in competing for scarce resources. Among the most interesting aspects of the theory is the concept of "legitimizing myths," which are attitudes, beliefs, values and ideologies that "provide the moral and intellectual support to and justification for the group-based hierarchical social structure and the unequal distribution of value in social systems" (Sidanius 1993; p. 207). Some examples include racism, sexism, classism and the Protestant Ethic. Empirical work by Sidanius and colleagues in the domains of race and gender has consistently shown that "social dominance orientation," an individual difference measure capturing the preference for hierarchical versus egalitarian group-based relations, strongly influences attitudes and political judgments (for a review see Sidanius and Pratto 1999).

These general theories have been used to explicate a wide variety of intergroup phenomena. One of the most important is patriotism, defined as a deeply felt attachment to the nation. While virtually all empirical work has treated patriotism as a unidimensional construct (for exceptions, see Huddy and Khatib 2007; Kelman and Hamilton 1989; Schatz, Staub and Lavine 1999; Sullivan, Fried and Dietz 1992), numerous theoretical distinctions have been proposed, including a "military" versus a "civic" form of patriotism, one of imitation and obedience versus innovation and disobedience, ignorance and irrationality versus reason and dissent and "pseudo" versus "genuine" patriotism (for a review see Schatz et al. 1999). The article by Schatz and colleagues (1999) included in this collection encompasses these distinctions by proposing two qualitatively different forms of national attachment: "blind" and "constructive" patriotism. They describe the former as a rigid and inflexible attachment to country, characterized by unquestioning positive evaluation, staunch allegiance and intolerance of criticism. By contrast, constructive patriotism refers to an attachment to country characterized by "critical loyalty," and questioning and criticism of current group practices motivated by

a desire for positive change. Schatz et al. demonstrated that the two forms of patriotism are empirically independent. Moreover, they showed that they are associated with different cognitive and behavioral consequences, with blind patriotism uniquely linked to nationalism, a preference for national symbols over instrumental national action and a tendency toward cognitive bias (i.e., selective exposure) and constructive patriotism uniquely linked to political interest, knowledge, active information-gathering and political activism.

Huddy and Khatib's (2007) critique of Schatz et al. clarified a number of important issues related to conceptualization and measurement, including the degree to which patriotism (qua national identity) is ideologically divisive (they find that it isn't) and whether – once the items are purged of dependent variable content – it promotes political involvement (it does). In exploring the implications of social dominance theory, Sidanius and colleagues (1997) consider the relationship between ethnic and national identity. The "melting pot" perspective, in which new immigrants are absorbed into the larger society as equal citizens, holds that ethnic and national identity should be independent. According to social dominance theory, however, the answer depends on race: the relationship between ethnic and national attachment should be positive among dominant group members (whites) but negative among subordinate group members (blacks). They find strong evidence for the latter perspective (for a concurring demonstration in which the salience of racial identity is manipulated experimentally, see Schatz, 2009).

Another key area of intergroup relations is political tolerance. As globalization and multiculturalism have brought different groups into greater proximity with one another, hostility and violence have often been the result. Tolerance, according to Gibson (2006), "is one of the few viable solutions to the tensions and conflict brought about by political heterogeneity; [it] is an essential endorphin of the democratic body politic" (p. 21). To what extent, then, are people willing to defend the rights of others to express ideas and activities that they find objectionable and what are the dispositional and contextual bases of political tolerance? In an influential program of research, Sullivan, Marcus and their colleagues (1981, 1982, 1995) have explored these questions in depth. Their 1981 article, reprinted here, finds that levels of intolerance are a function of four general factors: psychological insecurity (e.g., low self-esteem, high authoritarianism), political conservatism, low support for democratic institutions and norms and perceiving the disliked group as highly threatening. Gibson (2006) notes several enigmas in this literature, including uncertainty about the origin(s) of perceived threat. While it is logical to suppose that threat perceptions are endogenous to psychological insecurity, apparently this is not the case. Why some people feel more threatened by disliked groups than others remains largely unexplained. It does appear, however, that the effect of threat on intolerance is magnified among high authoritarians (Feldman and Stenner 1997) and those experiencing anxiety (Marcus et al. 1995).

At times, prejudice and intolerance spill over into more virulent forms of violence. As has often been recounted, the 20th century was marked by multiple genocides, ethnic cleansing and the killing of an unprecedented number of civilians through war and acts of political repression. What is at the root of such behavior? Are the origins of intergroup violence different than those that underlie intolerance? Can intractable conflicts be resolved? What, if anything, can political psychologists contribute to ameliorate these problems? Over the past two decades, Ervin Staub (1989, 1999) has examined these questions within a number of political contexts, including the Holocaust, the genocides in Rwanda and of the Armenians in Turkey, the mass killings of Native Americans in the United States and the disappearances in Argentina. In his article included here, Staub (1999) argues that the evolution of evil begins with difficult life conditions such as material deprivation or political chaos, which profoundly frustrate people's basic needs (e.g., security, a positive identity, some control over one's life). Rather than uniting together to solve their problems, social and psychological processes lead subgroups to turn against one another. As Staub (1999) explains:

> Individuals, feelings helpless on their own, turn to their group for identity and connection. They scapegoat some other groups. They adopt or create destructive ideologies – hopeful visions of social arrangement but visions that also identify enemies who supposedly stand in the way of the fulfillment of these visions. (p. 182).

Thus, Staub argues, the individual's basic psychological needs can be met by wielding power over other people and by the use of force. Scholars of intergroup violence also consider the role of structural factors, such as longstanding territorial disputes (e.g., the Palestinian–Israeli conflict) and entrenched differences in power, wealth and opportunity (for a review, see Staub and Bar-Tal 2003).

A final example of the destructive consequences of intergroup conflict is terrorism. Political psychologists have devoted a great deal of effort in understanding the terrorist mind. Analyses of and interviews with terrorists dispel two widely-held beliefs about who they are: (1) terrorists come from lower-class backgrounds; and (2) terrorists have psychopathological personalities. Neither appears to be true. Rather, the motives, personalities and sociopolitical circumstances that foster terrorism are highly heterogeneous. For example, researchers have identified a plethora of motives, including the quest for emotional and social support, trauma and personal loss, humiliation, social status, lack of alternative prospects, the need to belong, the desire to enter heaven, money and support of one's family and more (for a review, see Victoroff 2005). Kruglanski et al. (2009) argue that these personal and ideological motives can be tied together through the overarching concept of the "quest for personal significance," or the desire to transcend

death (e.g., as a suicide bomber) by living on in the grateful memory of the group. Post (2004) proposed a psychoanalytic theory of terrorism centered on the concept of "projection," in which unwanted internal feelings are assigned to others via an unconscious process of distinguishing the good self (which is retained) from the bad self (which is projected onto out-groups; for a different psychoanalytic account, see Lifton 2000). In a critique of individual-level motivations, Crenshaw (1986) argues that any attempt to come to grips with the underpinnings of terrorist behavior must consider two issues: (a) how psychological predispositions interact with aspects of the social environment; (b) how group dynamics provide psychological satisfaction to the identity needs of initiates. One of the key questions in the study of suicide terrorism is whether such acts can be viewed as rational. Pape (2003) argues in the affirmative in holding that it follows a strategic logic, one aimed at coercing liberal democracies to make territorial concessions. Crenshaw (2000), in an article included here, notes that the ostensible goals of terrorists seem unlikely to be achieved through their actions, thus casting doubt on any rationalist explanation.

Coda

I hope that this introductory article whets the reader's appetite to discover the rich landscape of political psychology contained in these four volumes. For psychologists, I hope that these articles will heighten awareness of the creative application of psychological theory within a variety of political settings, including mass political opinion and behavior, international relations and foreign policy decision-making and intergroup behavior and political violence. I hope too that the articles will lead psychologists to view the political world as a useful vehicle for the development, testing and refinement of psychological theory. For political scientists, especially those from a traditional (economic) background, I hope that these articles will persuasively demonstrate the relevance of psychological theory in explaining the nature and origins of political behavior. As the articles make plain, politics is not only, or perhaps even principally, about "who gets what, when and how" in the material sense, but also about how psychological predispositions, attachments, needs and bounded information-processing capacities fundamentally shape and constrain how individuals interact with their government and society at large.

Acknowledgement

Notes

1. For an expansive discussion of Lasswell's numerous contributions to political psychology, see Ascher and Hirschfelder-Ascher (2005).
2. For integrations of psychological and rational choice perspectives, see Chong (2000), Lupia and McCubbins (1998), & McDermott (2004).
3. This paragraph was taken from Weber and Federico (2007). I was originally a co-author on the article, but removed my name when it was decided to submit the article to *Political Psychology*, where I was co-editor.

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