
The Authoritarian Specter

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— 1 —

Previous Research on Right-Wing Authoritarianism

By “right-wing authoritarianism” I mean the covariation of three attitudinal clusters in a person:

1. Authoritarian submission—a high degree of submission to the authorities who are perceived to be established and legitimate in the society in which one lives.
2. Authoritarian aggression—a general aggressiveness, directed against various persons, that is perceived to be sanctioned by established authorities.
3. Conventionalism—a high degree of adherence to the social conventions that are perceived to be endorsed by society and its established authorities.¹

Elaborations on the Definition

The more precisely a scientific construct is defined, the easier one can test it, find its errors and limitations, and move on to a better model. Let me explain in some detail, therefore, what I mean by the terms in my definition of right-wing authoritarianism.²

By “attitudinal clusters” I mean orientations to respond in the same general way toward certain classes of stimuli (namely, the perceived established authorities, sanctioned targets, and social conventions). But an orientation to respond does not necessarily lead to a response, and few social psychologists today expect attitude measures to correlate highly with behavior regardless of the situation.

SITUATIONS VERSUS PERSONALITY

Stanley Milgram’s (1974) famous experiments on obedience provide a clear and highly relevant example. Men recruited through newspaper ads were maneuvered into being the Teacher in a supposed experiment on the effects of electric shock upon learning. Although the “Learner” (a Milgram confederate) never received any shocks, the situation was masterfully convincing. The Teachers had every reason to believe they were inflicting terrible pain on the Learner soon after the experiment began. By the end of the session, if the subjects did not stop it, they could easily have believed the next shock would kill the unconscious Learner, if he was not already dead. The point of the experiment was to see when subjects would defy their local authority, the Experimenter, and shock no more.³

Most people are shocked themselves when they learn that in Milgram’s basic experiment, almost all of the Teachers threw switches that would have inflicted great pain on the victim. And *most* of the men threw switches representing stronger and stronger shocks until they ran out of switches at 450 volts. That is, they completely obeyed the Experimenter—unwillingly to be sure, but completely, to be sure.

If you believe with me that Milgram’s subjects were horrified at what was happening, their compliance in itself demonstrates the power of situations over personality. But Milgram produced an even more compelling demonstration. In two conditions of his experiment, the real subject was sandwiched between two confederates at the shocking machine as part of a “Teaching Team.” When the Learner screamed he wanted to be set free from the experiment, one of the confederates quit. So did the second, soon thereafter. The Experimenter then pressured the naive subject to continue administering shocks, but only four of forty (10%) went to 450 volts. However, if the two confederates kept right on going when the Learner started screaming, as though nothing had happened, thirty-seven out of forty (92%) of the subjects who served in that condition went (with their silent partners) all the way to 450 volts.

So who is a hero, and who is jelly? It mattered almost not at all who the individuals were. Behavior in these two conditions almost completely depended on what the confederates on the Teaching Team did.

THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY

Let me catch myself before I go off the deep end. I *do* believe that in many situations it matters a great deal who the people are. Different patterns of genes make a difference. So do different patterns of socialization. After all, Milgram’s subjects were in a strange environment (to put it mildly), interacting with strangers trained to say their lines whatever the subject did. Whereas we usually act in familiar settings with familiar people whose behavior we

can affect. But the great lesson of social psychology has been how easily situations trump individual differences. Milgram's experiment shows us that, and a great deal else very frightening.

Right-wing authoritarianism is an individual difference variable, a personality trait if you like, developed on the premise that some people need little situational pressure to (say) submit to authority and attack others, while others require significantly more. We can find evidence of this individual difference even in Milgram's experiment. In two conditions of the initial study, the Learner sat in a separate room from the Teacher, which made it relatively easy for the Teachers to obey the Experimenter completely, as 64% did. In two other conditions, however, the Learner sat right beside the Teacher, and indeed sometimes the Teacher had to force his victim's hand down on a (supposed) shockplate to administer the punishments. That made it harder to obey the Experimenter, as you can imagine: "only" 35% proved completely obedient.

In one case, then, the situation pushed people toward obedience; but in the other, it promoted defiance. In both cases some people acted differently from the majority. They defied when it was hard to defy, or they obeyed when it was hard to obey. Who were they? Elms and Milgram (1966) found that the twenty defiant ones scored rather low on a pioneering measure of personal authoritarianism, the California Fascism Scale; whereas the twenty obedient ones, whom the Experimenter could get to shock a helpless victim sitting at their side, scored much higher.

ARE THERE REALLY FASCIST PEOPLE IN DEMOCRACIES?

But can there really be fascist people in democracies? I am afraid so. The central apprehension behind my research program, driven by twenty-five years of alarming findings now being confirmed in tragic headlines, is that a potential for the acceptance of right-wing totalitarian rule exists in countries such as Canada and the United States. This acceptance boils down to essentially an attitude, a state of mind, a willingness to see democratic institutions destroyed, which in some people may even be a desire.

Right-wing authoritarianism has thus been defined as an orientation, rather than as the terrible acts it greases the skis for, but it is still dangerous. The mood of a populace can create a climate of public opinion that promotes totalitarian movements. It can intimidate politicians, journalists, and religious leaders who might otherwise oppose repression. It can elect a dictator into office, as it did most notably in Germany in 1933. It can encourage a bold, illegal grab for power, as it did in Italy in 1922, and has violently done in so many other places since. And once the power is grabbed, who will resist? Who will love democracy enough to face the tank in Tiananmen Square, versus those who will cheer for the dictator? That is an individual difference.

AUTHORITARIAN SUBMISSION

By "submission" to the perceived established authorities I mean a general acceptance of their statements and actions and a general willingness to comply with their instructions without further inducement.⁴

Authoritarians believe that proper authorities should be trusted to a great extent and deserve obedience and respect. They believe that these are important virtues which children should be taught and that if children stray from these principles, parents have a duty to get them back in line. Right-wing authoritarians would ordinarily place narrow limits on people's rights to criticize authorities. They tend to assume that officials know what is best and that critics do not know what they are talking about. They view criticism of authority as divisive and destructive, motivated by sinister goals and a desire to cause trouble. Authoritarians believe, to a considerable extent, that established authorities have an inherent right to decide for themselves what they may do, including breaking the laws they make for the rest of us.

By "perceived established authorities" I mean those people in our society who are usually considered to have a general legal or moral authority over the behavior of others. One's parents (at least through childhood), religious officials, civic officers (the police, judges, heads of governments), and superiors in military service usually qualify as established authorities.

But note the modifier "perceived." Some extremists may reject normal authorities who (it seems to them) have betrayed the *real*, fundamental established authority: for example (their perception of) God's will, or the Constitution. They often believe the government has been taken over by Jews, homosexuals, feminists, Communists, and so on. Such extremists are right-wing authoritarian in this context—"superpatriots" who see themselves as upholding traditional values, but whose fear and self-righteousness hammer with such intensity that they rehearse for violence and may cross the line to violence itself. As we shall see, ordinary authoritarians stand closer to that line in the best of times than most people do. They are just not *that* afraid yet.

The ordinary authoritarians—whom this book is about—do not submit absolutely, automatically, or blindly to the usual authorities. Like anyone else, they can be conflicted about orders from above; they will not always accept orders, but they will accept them more often than others will. Similarly, officials do not all command equal degrees of respect and submission: there are "good judges" and "bad governments," "good popes" and "poor presidents." Authoritarians however, will submit to established authorities they like, and to those they do *not* like, more readily than nonauthoritarians will.

RIGHT- AND LEFT-WING AUTHORITARIANISM

When I modify authoritarianism with the phrase "right-wing," I do not necessarily mean anything political (as in liberal versus conservative) or economic

(as in socialist versus capitalist). Rather, I am using "right-wing" in a *psychological* sense of submitting to the perceived authorities in one's life (Altemeyer, 1981, p. 152), usually "the Establishment." The supporters of apartheid in pre-Mandela South Africa would be right-wing authoritarians, and so would those who praised the murderous military police in Brazil. And so would the Chinese who supported the massacre in Tiananmen Square, and the hard-liners in Russia who want to reinstate the Communist Party. Although neither the Chinese nor Russian groups are economic right-wingers, they are psychological right-wingers in their support for those they were raised to believe were the legitimate authorities.

Are there psychological left-wingers too? Yes. I shall talk about them in Chapter 9. The rest of this book concerns right-wing authoritarianism, which I often call simply "authoritarianism," because after twenty-five years, I am tired of typing out "right-wing." (I am even more tired of typing out "authoritarianism" but feel I have to give you *some* chance to know what I am talking about.)

AUTHORITARIAN AGGRESSION

By "aggression" I mean intentionally causing harm to someone. The harm can be physical injury, psychological suffering, financial loss, social isolation, or some other negative state that people usually try to avoid. Aggression is authoritarian when it is accompanied by the belief that proper authority approves it or that it will help preserve such authority.

The predisposition to such aggression does not mean that authoritarians will always act aggressively when opportunities arise. Fear of retaliation may stop them, as may the legal and social prohibitions against aggression in our culture. This is where the perception of authoritative sanction plays its role. It can *disinhibit* the aggressive impulse.⁵

Right-wing authoritarians are predisposed to control the behavior of others through punishment. They advocate physical punishment in childhood and beyond. They deplore leniency in the courts and believe penal reform just encourages criminals to continue being lawless. They advocate capital punishment. All in all, one finds an "Old Testament harshness" in their approach to human conduct.

Anyone could become the target of authoritarian aggression, but unconventional people (including "social deviants") and conventional victims of aggression (such as certain minority groups) are attacked more readily than others. Thus we would expect right-wing authoritarianism to correlate with ethnic and racial prejudice, because such prejudice provides a conventional outlet of aggressive impulses. Authoritarians believe that certain authorities approve of this hostility, and they may believe that certain groups threaten the social order. Hence the aggressiveness in prejudice can be authoritarian.

But by no means is all prejudice thought to be linked to right-wing authoritarianism.

If social deviants and certain minority groups provide ready targets for authoritarian aggression, others can be victims as well. The authoritarian is more likely to attack a conventional person than a nonauthoritarian is, if an established authority sanctions it. This power of authority figures to direct the hostility of authoritarians against almost any target increases the danger of authoritarian aggression to all in a society.

CONVENTIONALISM

By "adherence to social conventions" I mean a strong acceptance of and commitment to the traditional social norms in one's society. Many such norms in my society are based on the common teachings of the Judeo-Christian religions. The right-wing authoritarian generally believes in "God's law" and thinks human conflict occurs because people ignore this law. Within each religion, authoritarians tend to be fundamentalists, wishing to maintain the beliefs, teachings, and services in their traditional form and resisting change. Authoritarians reject the idea that people should develop their own ideas of what is moral and immoral, since authorities have already laid down the laws.

Authoritarians' attitudes toward sex are strongly influenced by their religious principles. Traditionally sex outside marriage is basically sinful. Nudity is sinful. Thinking about sex is sinful. Homosexuality is considered a sin and a perversion. Many sexual acts, even between married partners, are perversions.

These attitudes toward sex have their parallel in conventional attitudes toward proper behavior for men and women. Authoritarians endorse the traditional family structure in which women are subservient to their husbands. They believe women should, by and large, keep to their traditional roles in society. While advocating a "decent, respectable appearance" for both sexes, they especially demand it of women. While condemning sexual transgression for both sexes, they especially condemn it when women "transgress."

Right-wing authoritarians endorse a host of other social norms. The flag and the national anthem should be venerated. They strongly believe that "our customs and national heritage are the things that have made us great" and that everyone should be made to show respect for them. People should strive to be well-behaved, properly dressed, respectable, and in general to stick to the straight and narrow. Finally, they hold these conventions to be moral as well as social imperatives. The authoritarian rejects the proposition that social customs are arbitrary and that one group's customs may be as good as another's. Other ways of doing things are wrong.

I use the term "norms" here in the normative, not the descriptive, sense. The right-wing authoritarian's conventionalism specifies how people ought to act, not how they do. The authoritarian's code is conventional because it is based on long-standing tradition and custom, not because it actually describes how most people behave today. Thus it may be that most adults in our society engage in sexual intercourse before marriage. But the fact that most people are "sinning" shows the authoritarian only that it is a sinful world.

I do not mean to imply that the authoritarian's adherence to traditional social norms has been cast in iron and cannot be changed in a lifetime. We shall see that authoritarian students today are more likely to have sex before marriage than they were in years past. But their adherence to their customs will prove more resistant to change than the nonauthoritarian's, and it is relatively more likely to be influenced by the pronouncements of the established authorities than by the behavior of peers.

Does the Trait Actually Exist?

Right-wing authoritarianism, being a covariation of social attitudes, is measured by a thirty-item Likert-type attitude scale entitled (what else?) the Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) Scale. The latest version of the instrument is given in Exhibit 1.1.

Exhibit 1.1 The 1996 RWA Scale

This survey is part of an investigation of general public opinion concerning a variety of social issues. You will probably find that you *agree* with some of the statements, and *disagree* with others, to varying extents. Please indicate your reaction to each statement by blackening a bubble in SECTION 1 of the IBM sheet, according to the following scale:

Blacken the bubble labeled

- 4 if you *very strongly disagree* with the statement.
- 3 if you *strongly disagree* with the statement.
- 2 if you *moderately disagree* with the statement.
- 1 if you *slightly disagree* with the statement.

Blacken the bubble labeled

- + 1 if you *slightly agree* with the statement.
- + 2 if you *moderately agree* with the statement.
- + 3 if you *strongly agree* with the statement.
- + 4 if you *very strongly agree* with the statement.

If you feel exactly and precisely *neutral* about an item, blacken the "0" bubble.

You may find that you sometimes have different reactions to different parts of a statement. For example, you might very strongly disagree ("-4") with one idea in a statement, but slightly agree ("+1") with another idea in the same item. When this happens, please combine your reactions, and write down how you feel "on balance" (i.e., a "-3" in this example).

1. Life imprisonment is justified for certain crimes.
2. Women should have to promise to obey their husbands when they get married.
3. The established authorities in our country are usually smarter, better informed, and more competent than others are, and the people can rely upon them.
4. It is important to protect the rights of radicals and deviants in all ways.
5. Our country desperately needs a mighty leader who will do what has to be done to destroy the radical new ways and sinfulness that are ruining us.
6. Gays and lesbians are just as healthy and moral as anybody else.*
7. Our country will be great if we honor the ways of our forefathers, do what the authorities tell us to do, and get rid of the "rotten apples" who are ruining everything.
8. Atheists and others who have rebelled against the established religions are no doubt every bit as good and virtuous as those who attend church regularly.*
9. The *real* keys to the "good life" are obedience, discipline, and sticking to the straight and narrow.
10. A lot of our rules regarding modesty and sexual behavior are just customs which are not necessarily any better or holier than those which other people follow.*
11. There are many radical, immoral people in our country today, who are trying to ruin it for their own godless purposes, whom the authorities should put out of action.
12. It is always better to trust the judgment of the proper authorities in government and religion than to listen to the noisy rabble-rousers in our society who are trying to create doubt in people's minds.
13. There is absolutely nothing wrong with nudist camps.*
14. There is no "ONE right way" to live life; everybody has to create their *own* way.*
15. Our country will be destroyed someday if we do not smash the perversions eating away at our moral fiber and traditional beliefs.

16. Homosexuals and feminists should be praised for being brave enough to defy "traditional family values."*
17. The situation in our country is getting so serious, the strongest methods would be justified if they eliminated the troublemakers and got us back to our true path.
18. It may be considered old fashioned by some, but having a normal, proper appearance is still the mark of a gentleman and, especially, a lady.
19. Everyone should have their own lifestyle, religious beliefs, and sexual preferences, even if it makes them different from everyone else.*
20. A "woman's place" should be wherever she wants to be. The days when women are submissive to their husbands and social conventions belong strictly in the past.*
21. What our country really needs is a strong, determined leader who will crush evil, and take us back to our true path.
22. People should pay less attention to the Bible and the other old traditional forms of religious guidance, and instead develop their own personal standards of what is moral and immoral.*
23. The only way our country can get through the crisis ahead is to get back to our traditional values, put some tough leaders in power, and silence the troublemakers spreading bad ideas.
24. Our country *needs* free thinkers who will have the courage to defy traditional ways, even if this upsets many people.*
25. There is nothing wrong with premarital sexual intercourse.*
26. It would be best for everyone if the proper authorities censored magazines so that people could not get their hands on trashy and disgusting material.
27. It is wonderful that young people today have greater freedom to protest against things they don't like, and to make their own "rules" to govern their behavior.*
28. What our country *really* needs, instead of more "civil rights," is a good stiff dose of law and order.
29. Some of the best people in our country are those who are challenging our government, criticizing religion, and ignoring the "normal way" things are supposed to be done.*
30. Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn.
31. Nobody should "stick to the straight and narrow." Instead, people should break loose and try out lots of different ideas and experiences.*

32. Once our government leaders give us the "go ahead," it will be the duty of every patriotic citizen to help stomp out the rot that is poisoning our country from within.
33. We should treat protestors and radicals with open arms and open minds, since new ideas are the lifeblood of progressive change.*
34. The facts on crime, sexual immorality, and the recent public disorders all show we have to crack down harder on deviant groups and troublemakers if we are going to save our moral standards and preserve law and order.

Note: Only items 5–34 are scored. Items are scored on a 1–9 basis. For protrait statements, "–4" is scored as 1, and "+4" is scored as 9. The keying is reversed for contrait items. For both kinds of items, the neutral answer ("0") is scored as 5. The lowest possible score is 30, and the highest is 270.

I have used a –4 to +4 response scale on the RWA Scale since 1980, rather than the usual –3 to +3, because experiments have shown that the former produces (marginally) higher reliability. Either a nine-point or a seven-point response scale appears to be superior to the five-point format Likert (1932) invented. A three-point response scale ("Disagree/?/Agree") seems to damage appreciably a scale's psychometric properties among populations capable of making finer distinctions (Altemeyer, 1988, pp. 39–42).

* Item is worded in the contrait direction; the right-wing authoritarian response is to disagree.

The first four items are "table-setters," intended to give the respondent some experience with the nine-point response scale and also a little familiarity with some of the content that follows. They are not scored. The test proper consists of items 5–34, which include fifteen protrait items (for example, "Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn"—to pick a short one) and fifteen contrait statements (such as "There is absolutely nothing wrong with nudist camps"). All items are intended to measure the extent to which someone believes in authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism. Most statements tap two, or all three, of these orientations.

The covariation of responses to the RWA Scale provides a test that the trait "exists." Since the thirty items cover many different topics, their 435 intercorrelations tend to be small. After all, how much connection can there be between believing in children's obedience and disliking nudist camps? But small as they might be on average, the correlations will gel if the model is right.

This level of interitem correlation, along with the length of the test, determines Cronbach's (1970) alpha coefficient of internal consistency. Basically, the mean interitem correlation ranged around .18, and the resulting alpha

ranged around .85-.88, among the population used to develop the test—introductory psychology students at my university (Altemeyer, 1981, p. 218; Altemeyer, 1988, p. 29; hereafter the 1981 *Right-Wing Authoritarianism* will be cited as *RWA*, and the 1988 outpouring, *Enemies of Freedom*, as *EOF*). This constitutes fairly solid evidence that authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism *do* covary in that population. But do they elsewhere?

MY PREVIOUSLY REPORTED RWA SCALE ALPHAS

During 1973-74, alphas of .84 were obtained at two other Canadian universities (Alberta and Western Ontario) with the original scale. The same figure appeared at the University of North Dakota.⁶ Then studies at the Universities of Alabama, Indiana, Virginia, and Wyoming and at Pennsylvania State University found alphas ranging from .85 to .89 (*RWA*, pp. 208-210, 216-218).

Two nonstudent populations were also sampled in the early days of *RWA* Scale research. Adult males in Winnipeg, Canada (randomly selected from voter lists and the telephone directory), produced an alpha of .85. And parents of my Manitoba students came in at .89 (*RWA*, pp. 210-211, 218).

My first book produced an avalanche of five *RWA* Scale studies by the time my second book appeared, seven years later. Zwillenberg (1983) found a reliability of .86 for the original scale among 503 students drawn from the University of New Haven, Brooklyn College, Columbia University, Montclair State College, the University of Georgia, Central Michigan University, the Universities of Nebraska and Denver, California State University at Fresno, and the University of California at Santa Cruz. Johann Schneider (personal communication, November 19, 1984) obtained an alpha of .94 with a translated version given to German students. Duckitt (1992) found an alpha of .93 among 212 South African students. Heaven (1984) reported an alpha of .81 among Australian students and .90 among heterogeneous adults. Lastly, Ray (1985) obtained an alpha of .89 among a random sample of Australian adults (*EOF*, pp. 13-14).

In my own research through 1987, the *RWA* Scale (which changes a little every year) continued to show alphas of about .88 among Manitoba students and .90 among their parents (*EOF*, p. 29). However, samples of North American lawmakers showed astounding internal consistency when answering the scale. Alphas ranged from .88 to .97 in four Canadian provincial assemblies, and from .94 to .97 in four American state legislatures (*EOF*, chapter 7).

MY OWN SUBSEQUENT STUDIES, 1989-90

In the fall of 1989 I began bothering people at various North American universities, asking if I could dip into their introductory psychology subject pools to collect some cross-validation data. Eventually I found several places that

would not give "No!" for an answer.⁷ At each site a booklet of surveys beginning with the *RWA* Scale was administered, usually by a graduate student. At the State University of New York at Potsdam (SUNY-Potsdam), 183 students produced an alpha of .88. At Harvard 172 students racked up a North American student record alpha of .93. Finally, alpha equaled .87 among 200 University of Pittsburgh students and .92 among 101 undergraduates at the University of Houston.

In the spring of 1989, Andre Kamenshikov administered his own translation of the *RWA* Scale for me to 226 students attending Moscow State University (the one in Russia, not Idaho). The alpha was .81 (Altemeyer and Kamenshikov, 1991).

OTHER RESEARCHERS' SUBSEQUENT FINDINGS

Table 1.1 presents the *RWA* Scale's alpha coefficients obtained lately by other researchers.⁸ You can see that the test has held together well in the many populations sampled. With the exception of the Xhosa-speaking South African group (whose proficiency in English was unreported), authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism have covaried appreciably in all of the populations tested to date.

This still surprises me no end. The scale was developed among Manitoba first-year psychology students. It measures social attitudes, which would seem to be very culture-bound, and could easily be organized differently among different groups *within* a culture. So I was a little surprised to discover the test hung together as well among the parents of university students as it did among their progeny. I was even more surprised that it proved as cohesive among scattered American student samples as it had in my little neck of the woods. Then, when results started coming in from diverse American nonstudent samples, and especially when I learned of the results from overseas, I was just amazed. (I could not sit down for two days after the first Russian findings came in.)

Mind you, we have heard from only a few places. Minorities within North America and vast majorities in virtually all the countries in the world have not been studied. I fully expect the scale to fall apart here and there, and perhaps everywhere else. We have no universal trait here, I am sure. Still, we have something a little grander than I ever expected it to be.

Finally, although you perhaps have had a different experience, I have seldom found that scales have the same sparkling psychometric properties in my research that they had in their inventors' write-ups. So I have been happy to see that most researchers have obtained *RWA* Scale alphas as high as, and often higher than, I have gotten in my own work. Science has to be a public effort by a community of investigators struggling to discover the truth, whatever it may be. Replicability is essential to that struggle. It enables us to work

Table 1.1 Internal consistency of the RWA Scale obtained by other researchers

Investigator	Participants	Alpha
<i>North American students</i>		
Hunsberger (1994, p.c.) ^a	Several thousand Wilfrid Laurier U. (Can.) students	.89
Moghaddam and Vuksanovic (1990)	155 McGill U. (Can.) students	.89
Peters (1990)	239 U. of Waterloo (Can.) students in two studies	.89
Walker and Quinsey (1991)	157 Queens U. (Can.) students (and 41 nonstudents recruited through posters and employment centers)	.93
Trapnell (1992, p.c.)	924 U. of British Columbia students in two studies	.87
Colby et al. (1987)	488 U. of California at Irvine students	.89
Goldberg and Rosolack (1991)	503 Oregon college students	.88
Stone and Schultz (1992)	112 University of Maine students	.90
Stone (1994, p.c.)	108 University of Maine students	.94
Tarr and Lorr (1991)	339 students at two "eastern universities"	.86
Billings et al. (1993)	139 students, perhaps in Milwaukee	.88
Cormier (1993, p.c.)	102 Hofstra U. students	.85
Eigenberger (1994)	242 U. of Wyoming students	.87
Peterson et al. (1993)	448 U. of Michigan students in two studies	.92
Skitka and Tetlock (1993)	166 Berkeley and Southern Illinois U. students	.86
Skitka (1994, p.c.)	1,317 Southern Illinois U. students	.90
Leak and Randall (1995)	157 Creighton U. students	.87
Wasieleski (1994, p.c.)	279 U. of Alabama students	.92
<i>Non-North American students</i>		
Garzon (1992)	109 U. of Valencia and Castellon students (in Spanish)	.85
Edwards and Leger (1993)	215 Rhodes U. (South Africa) students (in English)	.83
	400 Xhosa-speaking Fort Hare U. students (in English)	.43
Rubinstein (1996)	708 Israeli university students (in Hebrew)	.88
	120 Palestinian university students (in Arabic)	.84

Table 1.1 (continued).

Investigator	Participants	Alpha
<i>North American nonstudents</i>		
Holms (1989)	183 friends of Canadian university students who did not go to university	.86
McFarland (1989a)	463 Kentucky adults	.89
Dornfest (1992, p.c.)	1,094 U. of California at Davis alumni	.93
Lykken (1994, p.c.)	3,240 members of Minnesota Twin Study and spouses	.90
Perrott (1991)	160 members of Halifax (Can.) police force	.84
Colby et al. (1992)	169 women over age sixty living in Orange County, Calif.	.92
Stober and Chance (1995, p.c.)	158 Georgia adults awaiting possible jury duty	.95
<i>Non-North American nonstudents</i>		
Feather (1993)	204 Adelaide (Australia) adults	.88
McFarland et al. (1990) ^b	167 Moscow and 179 Estonia citizens (translated)	.92
McFarland et al. (1994)	440 Moscow citizens (translated)	.81

a. Indicates a personal communication.

b. McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina (1990) studied a quota sample of Soviet citizens living in Moscow or Tallinn in the early days of *glasnost*. There has never been, to my knowledge, a North American study of the RWA Scale that tested as representative a sample.

"together"—even though we may seldom agree, never meet, or even live at the same time. It appears that, psychometrically, we have a good tool here that we can share.

Do RWA Scores Actually Correlate with Right-Wing Authoritarian Behavior?

Let's see. We have inferred that a trait exists. We have defined the trait in some detail. We have a measure of that trait, and the internal consistency of that measure supports the notion that the trait exists. But does that measure actually correlate with the kind of behavior we want to understand? Does the RWA Scale have *empirical* validity, as well as a pretty alpha? This is our second test of the measure's validity, and we shall examine it by looking at studies of authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism.

AUTHORITARIAN SUBMISSION

From its earliest days, the RWA Scale showed it could generally distinguish between people who accepted unfair and even illegal acts by government officials and those who took exception to such acts (RWA, pp. 189–192, 227–228). Using real occurrences of illegal wiretaps, illegal searches, denial of the right to assemble, use of *agents provocateurs*, and so on from the turbulent late 1960s and early 1970s, I found that RWA scores correlated .52 to .59 with Manitoba students' acceptance of these events. The connection among their parents equaled .54 and, among 772 American students at five scattered universities, .63.

A subsequent series of experiments revealed, as one would expect, that High RWAs (those in the top 25% of the distribution of scores in that sample, in contrast to "Lows," who similarly compose the bottom 25%)⁹ showed particular indifference to government injustices directed against *unconventional* groups (RWA, pp. 228–232).

For a more telling connection between authoritarianism and tolerance of official malfeasance, consider the Watergate scandal. Most of over 700 American students, polled after Richard Nixon had accepted a pardon for his felonies, said they had believed the president for a very long time. In fact, many said they *still* believed Nixon was innocent. The correlations between RWA scores and this enduring trust were .48–.51. (RWA, pp. 224–227).¹⁰

Citizens in a democracy are usually protected against abuse of power by constitutional guarantees. But neither the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms nor the U.S. Bill of Rights draws overall support from right-wing authoritarians.

In 1986 I asked over 500 Manitoba students to react to a (bogus) "letter to the editor" attacking the Canadian Charter. This document, it was claimed, was one of the biggest mistakes the country had ever made, causing most of our social problems because "it gives rights to everyone, no matter who he is or what he does." The students showed little overall sympathy with the ridiculous charges I invented, producing (on scales of 0–6) means of 2.46 with "how sensible" the letter seemed and only 1.22 with agreement that the Charter should be repealed. But RWA scores correlated .42 and .45 with these attitudes (EOF, pp. 270–271).

I repeated this study in the fall of 1990 with a sample of 235 parents of Manitoba students. While I thought the "older and wiser" parents would see the enormous danger lurking behind the bogus letter, they actually thought it was a little more "sensible" ($\bar{X} = 2.64$) than the students had and positively *agreed* that the Charter should be abolished (4.91). Again, authoritarianism played its role, with RWA scores correlating .49 and .47 with these two sentiments.

I also did the study in February 1990, with 57 San Francisco State Univer-

sity students. Here the letter attacked the Bill of Rights and the U.S. Supreme Court:

If a person stops to think about it, most of the problems we are having can be traced to the Bill of Rights—or more precisely, to the way it has been interpreted by the Supreme Court. "Freedom of speech" has been twisted to mean that pornographers can sell their filth, and that anybody can say whatever he wants, whether it's good for society or not. And "freedom of religion" has been twisted to mean children can't pray in public schools any more. And the "right to happiness" has been twisted to mean women can have abortion after abortion if they're "unhappy" being pregnant. And think how many drug pushers and criminals have gotten off scot-free because their "rights" were supposedly violated after they had robbed or killed somebody.

A lot of people hoped the new Supreme Court, rid of the "Liberal Majority" which had made all these terrible rulings, would overturn them. But it's clear now that they won't. No Supreme Court can reverse the ruling of an earlier Supreme Court, so we are stuck with these interpretations as long as there is a Bill of Rights. And we will soon be destroyed as a nation because of them.

So the only thing we can do, to make America the free, pure, safe Christian nation that the founding fathers intended it to be, is to repeal the Bill of Rights.

Overall, this appeal was (thankfully) rejected by the San Francisco State students. They produced a mean of 2.24 for the letter's being "sensible" and 1.82 for repeal of the Bill of Rights. But *some* of the students, especially authoritarians, resonated to this ignorant appeal to wipe out America's major defense against tyranny. RWA scores correlated .62 with judgments of sensibility and .50 with agreement for repealing the Bill of Rights.

Other researchers have also found that right-wing authoritarians have little interest in protecting human rights. Moghaddam and Vuksanovic (1990) found RWA Scale correlations of .66, .42, and .52, respectively, with McGill University students' indifference to human rights issues in Canada, the Soviet Union, and the Third World. McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina (1990) found, among Soviet citizens in the dying days of the USSR, RWA correlations of .71 with opposition to dissidents, .72 with sentiments that the youth should be submissive, .65 with rejection of a free press, and .74 with opposition to democracy itself.¹¹

In February 1996 I repeated a study by Blass (1992b) in which I showed the first part of Milgram's (1965) film "Obedience" to my introductory psychology classes. The twelve-minute edited version ended just after the Teacher who is featured in the film delivered the 180-volt shock. I handed out forms that asked each student, among other things, "Suppose you have 100 'Responsibility Votes' to give, altogether, to the three people in this experiment, as a way of showing how much you think each person is responsible for the fact that the Learner was being given electric shocks against his will. How

many of these votes would you give to the Experimenter, the Teacher, and the Learner?" The students were not asked to put their names on the forms until they were about to turn them in. To screen out those familiar with Milgram's results, I discarded all subjects (including 13 Highs and 16 Lows) who said that over 25% of Milgram's sample of 40 men would go all the way to 450 volts. Like Blass, I found the 53 High RWAs were significantly less likely than the 47 Lows to hold the authority, the Experimenter, responsible for what was happening (61.6% versus 70.7% $p < .05$). Instead, authoritarians tended to blame the Teacher (24.7 versus 21.2, not significant) and the Learner (13.6 versus 8.2, $p < .05$).

The data on authoritarian submission speak with one voice. All the studies I know show that High RWAs tend to be more submissive to established authority than most people are. They tolerate and even approve of governmental abuse of power, they are relatively willing to cast aside constitutional shields against such abuse, they are indifferent to human rights issues, and in the USSR they spoke out openly against democracy. Moreover, the relationships in all these studies have proven substantial, often rising over .50.

AUTHORITARIAN AGGRESSION

Punishment of Lawbreakers. RWA scores have often predicted the length of prison terms hypothetically imposed upon persons convicted of crimes. Among Manitoba students, the correlation for overall sentences in a ten-trial survey usually ran between .40 and .50. Follow-up questioning revealed that, compared with Lows, High RWAs believed the crimes had been more serious, and they also had more faith that punishment would change the criminals' behavior. But Highs also revealed, when answering anonymously, that they found criminals more repulsive and disgusting than Lows did, and felt personal pleasure and satisfaction at being able to punish wrongdoers (RWA, pp. 232-234).

Parents of Manitoba students also showed substantial correlations between authoritarianism and punitiveness in a trial situation. A correlation of .52 was obtained in a 1979 study using ten cases (RWA, p. 233), and .33 in a 1986 experiment using just three cases (EOF, p. 181).

Wylie (Wylie and Forest, 1992) mailed a booklet of surveys, including three trials, to 275 Manitobans chosen at random from voter lists. She received 75 completed returns. The sum of sentences imposed correlated .52 with RWA scores.¹²

American students show the same trends as their Manitoba counterparts. The correlation between RWA scores and sentences equaled .48 across four trials in a 1974 experiment run at five universities (RWA, p. 232). Three trials administered in 1990 at the Universities of Pittsburgh and Houston found correlations of .28 and .51. But David Wasieleski (personal communication,

November 2, 1994) found coefficients of only .23 and .16 with reaching guilty verdicts and length of sentence imposed by 272 University of Alabama students.

A series of cases varying the social status of the criminal produced a complex set of results in 1979. On the one hand, Highs were equally severe on the wife of an investment consultant and an unwed mother, who were found guilty of child abuse. They also punished equally an insurance salesman and a tramp drug addict convicted of bank robbery. On the other hand, they showed relative leniency toward a millionaire industrialist convicted of defrauding the government. They went easy on a police chief who beat up an accused child molester in his jail but were more punitive if told another prisoner had done the beating. Finally, they showed an even more striking double standard in sentencing an accountant and a "hippie panhandler" who got into a fight. If the evidence showed the accountant started the fight, they favored leniency. But if the evidence showed the hippie had started the fight, they laid down the law (RWA, pp. 234-238). (Low RWA students punished the two men equally.)

Other studies help us make sense of these seemingly contradictory findings regarding the status of criminals. RWA scores correlated *negatively* with the sentences imposed upon a police officer who beat an "uppity" protestor (RWA, pp. 197-199). They also correlated negatively with punishment of a U.S. Air Force officer convicted of murder. The case paralleled the My Lai massacre; the officer had led unauthorized bombing raids against Vietnamese villages suspected of supporting the enemy (RWA, p. 233). Similarly, High RWA American students did *not* want to punish Richard Nixon after he resigned (RWA, pp. 226-227). Finally, High RWAs showed another pronounced double standard in the sentencing of pro-gay versus anti-gay activists (EOF, pp. 112-114). If an anti-gay leader led an attack on a group of gay demonstrators, High RWAs tended to be lenient. But if it were the other way around, they became significantly more punitive. (Again, Lows punished the two assailants equally.)¹³

It appears, then, that believing in punishment as they do and enjoying dishing it out as they do, High RWAs are more likely in general to sentence wrongdoers to long prison terms. But this is not true if the wrongdoers are officials whom the authoritarian admires, or if the crime involved attacking someone Highs believe *should* be attacked (the child molester, the hippie, the uppity demonstrator, Vietnamese peasants, and gay activists). In these cases the usual positive RWA Scale correlation drops and may even become negative.

Punishment of Peers in a Learning Situation. In 1973 I maneuvered male Manitoba students into being the Teachers in a fake learning experiment involving (supposedly) electric shock. Unlike Milgram's experiment, every time

the Learner made a mistake, the Teacher *chose* which of five shocks to give. If a Teacher wanted to, he could administer "very slight shocks" every time. If someone wanted to give strong shocks each time, however, he could do that too.

Overall, the men did not zap the Learner; the mean shock chosen was 2.4, where 2 indicated slight shock and 3 equaled moderate. But some Teachers proved rather brutal, and RWA scores predicted fairly well who they would be. The correlation with shocks "delivered" was .43 (RWA, pp. 199–202).¹⁴

Prejudice. Prejudice, the unfair *pre-judging* of someone, has many roots (Duckitt, 1992; Zanna and Olson, 1994). But the taproot is probably *ethnocentrism*. Since white Anglophones raised in Christian homes make up the vast majority of my Manitoba samples, I found it easy to construct an ethnocentrism scale (Exhibit 1.2) assessing their attitudes toward various in- and out-groups.

Exhibit 1.2 The Manitoba Ethnocentrism Scale

1. Arabs are too emotional, and they don't fit in well in our country.
2. Indians should keep on protesting and demonstrating until they get just treatment in our country.*
3. Certain races of people clearly do NOT have the natural intelligence and "get up and go" of the white race.
4. The Vietnamese and other Asians who have recently moved to Canada have proven themselves to be industrious citizens, and many more should be invited in.*
5. It is good to live in a country where there are so many minority groups present, such as blacks, Asians, and aboriginals.*
6. There are entirely too many people from the wrong sorts of places being admitted into Canada now.
7. As a group Indians are naturally lazy, promiscuous, and irresponsible.
8. Canada should open its doors to more immigration from Latin America.*
9. Black people as a rule are, by their nature, more violent than white people are.
10. The people from India who have recently come to Canada have mainly brought disease, ignorance, and crime with them.

11. Canada should open its doors to more immigration from the West Indies.*
12. Jews can be trusted as much as everyone else.*
13. It is a waste of time to train certain races for good jobs; they simply don't have the drive and determination it takes to learn a complicated skill.
14. The public needs to become aware of the many ways blacks in Canada suffer from prejudice.*
15. Every person we let in from overseas means either another Canadian won't be able to find a job, or another foreigner will go on welfare here.
16. Canada has much to fear from the Japanese, who are as cruel as they are ambitious.
17. There is nothing wrong with intermarriage among the races.*
18. In general, Indians have gotten *less* than they deserve from our social and anti-poverty programs.*
19. Many minorities are spoiled; if they really wanted to improve their lives, they would get jobs and get off welfare.
20. Canada should guarantee that French language rights exist all across the country.*

Note: Items are answered on a -4 to +4 basis.

* Item is worded in the contrait direction; the ethnocentric response is to disagree.

I reported in *Enemies of Freedom* (pp. 109, 183) that responses to an earlier version of this instrument correlated .30–.43 with Manitoba students' RWA scores. The version of the test shown in Exhibit 1.2, which has a mean inter-item correlation of about .30 and an alpha of about .90 among such students, produces a Pearson *r* of about .45 with their level of authoritarianism.

Parents of Manitoba students showed a correlation of .45–.48 between their RWA scores and ethnocentrism on the earlier version. On the present test, which has the same internal cohesion and alpha among parents that it has among their first derivatives, the correlation roams around .50.

Wylie included the Ethnocentrism Scale in her booklet of materials sent to the random sample of Manitoba voters (Wylie and Forest, 1992). An alpha of .93 was obtained, and RWA Scale scores correlated .54 with prejudice.

An "Americanized" version of the original scale, mentioning blacks and Hispanics more, was administered to students at three U.S. universities in 1990. Alphas fell between .85 and .90 at San Francisco State University (*N* = 57), the University of Pittsburgh (*N* = 200), and the University of

Houston ($N = 101$). Connections with students' RWA scores equaled .38, .35, and .46, respectively.

Elsewhere, McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina (1990) found correlations of .55 with disparagement of Jews in the Soviet Union, and .63 with hostility toward the many ethnic minorities making up the USSR at the time. Duckitt (1992) reported coefficients of .53 to .69 with a variety of anti-black measures among white South Africans.

Overall then, the evidence indicates rather solidly that right-wing authoritarians tend to be relatively ethnocentric. If you look over the range of outgroups displayed in Exhibit 1.2, you can see why I have called High RWAs "equal-opportunity bigots." Compared with others, they dislike almost every group that is different—regardless of race, creed, or color.¹⁵

Hostility toward Homosexuals. You would probably predict that right-wing authoritarians will also be relatively prejudiced against homosexuals. And you would be right. In fact, RWA scores may explain hostility toward gays and lesbians better than any other personality variables (EOF, pp. 166–177).

I have measured this hostility over the years with an Attitudes toward Homosexuals (ATH) Scale (EOF, p. 167). See Exhibit 1.3 for the latest version. This scale assesses condemning, vindictive, and punitive sentiments toward homosexuals in six of its items, and the opposite attitudes in the other six. In Manitoba student samples, interitem connections averaged about .45 on the original scale, and now land about .50 on the revised version, producing an alpha of about .92. Correlations with the RWA Scale used to range from .50 to .60 (EOF, pp. 167, 176, 181, 183). Now they generally come in over .60. Parents of Manitoba students have punched up similar results. Wylie and Forest (1992) found an ATH alpha of .91 among 75 Manitoba adults and an RWA correlation of .72.

Exhibit 1.3 The Attitudes toward Homosexuals Scale

1. I won't associate with known homosexuals if I can help it.
2. The sight of two men kissing does NOT particularly bother me.* **
3. If two homosexuals want to get married, the law should let them.*
4. Homosexuals should be locked up to protect society.
5. Homosexuals should never be given positions of trust in caring for children.
6. I would join an organization even though I knew it had homosexuals in its membership.*
7. In many ways, the AIDS disease currently killing homosexuals is just what they deserve.

8. I wouldn't mind being seen smiling and chatting with a known homosexual.*
9. Homosexuals have a perfect right to their lifestyle, if that's the way they want to live.*
10. Homosexuals should be forced to take whatever treatments science can come up with to make them normal.
11. People should feel sympathetic and understanding of homosexuals, who are unfairly attacked in our society.*
12. Homosexuality is "an abomination" in the sight of God.

Note: Items are answered on a -4 to +4 basis.

* Item is worded in the contrait direction; the rejecting response is to disagree.

** Item 2 will be replaced in the future with "Homosexuals have been treated unfairly for centuries, and should be treated today the same as everyone else."

The original version of the ATH scale was administered for me at the Universities of Pittsburgh and Houston in 1990. The alphas equaled .90 and .91, respectively, with RWA Scale associations of .57 and .71.

On a somewhat related note, Peterson, Doty, and Winter (1993) administered five items about AIDS to 278 Michigan students. All the items had significant correlations with RWA scores, running from .28 to .52. The .52 came from a statement that the "AIDS plague had been passed to decent people." Another item, demanding that everyone with AIDS be quarantined, correlated .46. A third statement, that "AIDS victims have human feelings," had an r of -.43.

Skitka and Tetlock (1993) however found *no* relationship between RWA scores and willingness to fund (hypothetically) AZT treatments for AIDS victims—a definite disconfirmation.¹⁶

Gay-Bashing. In 1991 I asked 175 Manitoba students and 337 parents to respond to the following four items about "gay-bashing": (1) Gays are despicable and disgusting, and deserve to be beaten up. (2) Such attacks are cowardly, cruel, and totally unjustified. (3) The incidents are mostly the homosexuals' fault, who insist upon meeting in public places and flaunting their perversion. (4) "Gay-bashers" are far more despicable and disgusting than gays are.

Most subjects disapproved of the crime of gay-bashing. You might expect that High RWAs, who tend to say all laws must be obeyed, would be at least as condemning as others of these assaults. But recalling the findings from the Trial cases, you might make a smarter prediction. In fact, RWA scores correlated *negatively* with condemnation of gay-bashing on all the items in both samples, the r 's ranging from -.26 to -.51. RWA correlated -.44 with the

sum of opposition to such assaults among the students and $-.41$ among the parents.

You have probably noticed that the RWA Scale connects somewhat stronger with ATH than with Ethnocentrism scores. Why should this be? Well, homosexuals provide an unconventional, socially disreputable (in the minds of some), relatively powerless minority that one can attack with (selective) biblical authority. The same was once true of Jews, blacks, women, and other groups.

Furthermore, as homosexuals have increasingly "come out," they seem to have infuriated authoritarians the way that black Americans did during the civil rights movement. "Don't these people know they should be ashamed of what they are?" and "What makes them think they have the same rights that 'decent people' do?" were heard as often in the 1980s about homosexual protest as they were in the 1960s about black protest. One expects, therefore, that as homosexuality becomes more socially acceptable in society, *some* High RWAs will lower their voices. (However, the connection in the public mind between male homosexuality and AIDS may delay this modulation.)¹⁷

Aggression against Women. I have never found that RWA scores correlated with self-reported sexual assaults against women by male Manitoba introductory psychology students, who acknowledged very few such attacks.¹⁸

By contrast, Walker, Rowe, and Quinsey (1993) found an r of $.18$ between the RWA Scale and sexual assaults admitted on the Sexual Experiences Survey (Koss and Dinero, 1987) among 157 university students. The correlation came in at $.43$ among 41 *non*students recruited through posters and employment centers (Walker and Quinsey, 1991). Also, significant RWA correlations appeared in the whole sample with Malamuth's (1981) Likelihood of Forcing Sex ($.18$); Check et al.'s (1985) Hostility toward Women Scale ($.36$); and Burt's (1980) Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale ($.51$), Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale ($.48$), and Rape Myth Acceptance Scale ($.54$).

These trends were replicated by Walker, Rowe, and Quinsey (1993). RWA scores correlated $.35$ with admitted acts of sexual aggression on the Sexual Experiences Survey among 59 students, and $.37$ among 75 nonstudents. High RWA men were also more likely, at $.53$, to report experiencing sex guilt (Mosher, 1988), which usually predicts *low* levels of sexual behavior. But sex guilt also correlated positively ($.23$) with sexual aggression in this study.

Other Targets. Peterson, Doty, and Winter (1993) found RWA scores correlated $.38$ and $.56$ with sentiments that the homeless were "lazy," not "unlucky." Their University of Michigan High RWAs also considered anti-abortion violence relatively justified ($.21$) and felt that environmentalists who disrupted businesses should be punished ($.32$ and $.56$). Leak and Randall

(1995, also personal communications in April 1994) asked their Omaha student sample simply to indicate on a 1–5 scale how hostile they were toward such targets as atheists, drug users, people on welfare, and the homeless. Small but significant RWA connections were obtained with all of these targets and most of the others named.

Posses. In 1982 I began asking subjects just how far they would go to help the government destroy some group—a fairly direct measure of authoritarian aggression. The current version of this "Posse" measure, in this case involving the elimination of "radicals," appears in Exhibit 1.4.

Exhibit 1.4 The Posse against Radicals Scale

Suppose the Canadian government, sometime in the future, passed a law outlawing "radical" political groups in Canada. Government officials then stated that the law would only be effective if it were vigorously enforced at the local level, and appealed to every Canadian to aid in the fight against all radical political groups.

" -4 " = the statement is extremely untrue of you.

" -3 " = the statement is very untrue of you.

" -2 " = the statement is moderately untrue of you.

" -1 " = the statement is slightly untrue of you.

" 0 " = the statement is neither untrue of you, nor true of you.

" $+1$ " = the statement is slightly true of you.

" $+2$ " = the statement is moderately true of you.

" $+3$ " = the statement is very true of you.

" $+4$ " = the statement is extremely true of you.

1. I would approve of such a law.
2. I would tell my friends and neighbors it was a good law.
3. I would tell the police about any radicals I knew.
4. I would, if asked by the authorities, keep my "ears open" for any radical discussions, and report them to the police.
5. I would, if asked by the authorities, help hunt down and arrest radicals.
6. I would participate in attacks on radical headquarters led by proper authorities.
7. I would support the use of physical force to make radicals reveal the identity of other radicals.

30 The Authoritarian Specter

8. I would support the execution of radical leaders if the government insisted it was necessary to protect Canada.

Responses to the Posse items have tended to intercorrelate about .60 on the average, routinely producing alphas of .90 or higher.

You may be reassured to learn that most participants said they wanted nothing to do with such pogroms. They usually answered with -4 and -3 . But whether the targets were Communists or homosexuals or religious cults or radicals, authoritarian Manitoba students *and* parents were likely to respond with a less reassuring -2 or -1 , and even to choose the “plus” (“Where do I sign?”) side of the options. The overall RWA correlations by 1987 ranged from .42 to .52 (EOF, pp. 114–117, 181, 183) and have been replicated many times since.

At San Francisco State University in 1990 RWA scores correlated .50 with Posse-Homosexuals. Samples from the Universities of Pittsburgh and Houston showed RWA Scale connections of .55 and .61, respectively, with Posse-Radicals.

Leak and Randall (1995) obtained Posse reactions from 131 Creighton University students. The targets were homosexuals, religious cults, and abortionists; RWA scores correlated .38, .45, and .44, respectively, with relative willingness to help destroy these groups.

When I discovered that High RWAs had their own “availability heuristic” when it came to helping the government persecute certain groups, I began searching for targets that *Low* RWAs would be willing to help “ride down.” So I dangled right-wing political parties before samples in new versions of the Posse measure. But *High* RWAs, not *Lows*, proved significantly more willing (that is, less *unwilling*) to help a government destroy the Social Credit Party, the Confederation of Regions Party, and even the mainstream Progressive Conservative Party in Canada. Low RWAs consistently refused to join a posse after anyone. In January 1990 I asked 300 Manitoba students in introductory psychology how willing they would be to help persecute a certain kind of *personality*:

Suppose the Canadian government, some time in the future, passed a law to eliminate right-wing authoritarians. (Right-wing authoritarians are people who are so submissive to authority, so authoritarian aggressive, and so conventional that they may pose a threat to democratic rule.) Government officials stated that the law would only be effective . . .

Perhaps because they realized the obviously self-incriminating implications, people did not leap at this opportunity. The mean was only 15.5, out of a possible range of 0–54. Low RWAs had no interest in helping persecute Highs, and neither did Highs (much). But High RWAs still tended to be *more* willing

to join this posse (to destroy themselves) than anyone else was ($r = .19$; $p < .05$).

Being Mean-Spirited. Highs’ unwitting readiness to crack down on themselves pales, of course, before their hostility toward many others. In 1985 I developed a Mean-Spirited Scale (EOF, p. 156) to assess students’ feelings about peers in high school who had made mistakes and suffered afterward (for example, had “bad trips” on drugs, or become pregnant). Had their fellow students gotten exactly what they deserved, and had the respondent gotten a secret pleasure at their suffering? In three studies of Manitoba students, RWA scores correlated .31 to .41 with such mean-spirited reactions (EOF, pp. 154–156, 173, 183). Leak and Randall (1995) obtained a similar correlation of .34 among Creighton students.

Summary. With a few exceptions, the literature on authoritarian aggression says rather forcefully that High RWAs tend to be hostile when they feel their attacks are sanctioned by authority. They are highly punitive toward criminals (but show double standards when the criminals are authorities, or when the victims of crime represent groups the authoritarian wants to see suffer). High RWAs tried to shock peers more in a fake learning experiment. They also tend to be the most ethnically and racially prejudiced people in samples. They are quite hostile toward homosexuals. High RWA men may be more likely than most to assault women. Right-wing authoritarians would likely be the first to help if the government decided to wipe out some group. They tend to be mean-spirited.

Correlations with such socially sensitive admissions were generally not as high as those concerning authoritarian submission. Nevertheless, a number of relationships over .50 have appeared.

CONVENTIONALISM

The RWA Scale’s connection with adherence to “proper” social conventions has been firmly established in certain religious connotations. Highs have tended to adhere to more traditional religious teachings, with all their do’s and don’ts, in every religion that has been appreciably represented in nearly every sample I have studied. The correlation between authoritarianism and holding conventional religious beliefs has averaged about .50 among Manitoba students *and* parents. Wylie and Forest (1992) found a similar value of .42 among Manitoba adults.

As well, continued acceptance correlated .36 with authoritarianism at SUNY-Potsdam in 1989, and .50 at Tulane, .60 at San Francisco State University, .57 at the University of Pittsburgh, and .54 at the University of Houston in 1990.

A more detailed understanding of this endorsement in Christian populations has been available through the Christian Orthodoxy (CO) Scale (Fullerton and Hunsberger, 1982)—shown in Exhibit 1.5 with less sexist wording than the original version.¹⁹ Most of this scale is based on the Nicene Creed, which, dating back some 1,600 years, seems to qualify as a traditional belief system. As is often true with religious measures, the CO items show tremendous levels of intercorrelation, usually averaging over .60, producing alphas of .98! (We are, after all, measuring the most thoroughly taught ideology in our society.)

Exhibit 1.5 The Revised Christian Orthodoxy Scale

1. God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. Humans are *not* a special creature made in the image of God; we are simply a recent development in the process of animal evolution.*
3. Jesus Christ was the divine Son of God.
4. The Bible is the word of God given to guide humanity to grace and salvation.
5. Those who feel that God answers prayers are just deceiving themselves.*
6. It is ridiculous to believe that Jesus Christ could be both human and divine.*
7. Jesus was born of a virgin.
8. The Bible may be an important book of moral teachings, but it was no more inspired by God than were many other books in the history of humanity.*
9. The concept of God is an old superstition that is no longer needed to explain things in the modern era.*
10. Christ will return to earth someday.
11. Most of the religions in the world have miracle stories in their traditions, but there is no reason to believe any of them are true, including those found in the Bible.*
12. God hears all our prayers.
13. Jesus may have been a great ethical teacher, as other people have been in history, but he was not the divine son of God.*
14. God made man of dust in God's own image and breathed life into him.
15. Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, God provided a way for the forgiveness of humanity's sins.
16. Despite what many people believe, there is no such thing as a God who is aware of our actions.*

17. Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried, but on the third day he arose from the dead.
18. In all likelihood there is no such thing as a God-given immortal soul in us that lives on after death.*
19. If there ever was such a person as Jesus of Nazareth, he is dead now and will never walk the earth again.*
20. Jesus miraculously changed real water into real wine.
21. There is a God who is concerned with everyone's actions.
22. Jesus' death on the cross, if it actually occurred, did nothing in and of itself to save humanity.*
23. There is really no reason to hold to the idea that Jesus was born of a virgin. Jesus' life showed better than anything else that he was exceptional, so why rely on old myths that don't make any sense.*
24. The Resurrection proves beyond a doubt that Jesus was the Christ or Messiah of God.

Note: Items are answered on a -4 to +4 basis.

* Item is worded in the contrait direction; the orthodox response is to disagree.

RWA scores have correlated positively with every item on this scale in all the samples I know of. That is, authoritarian Christians tend to believe *all* of these teachings more than nonauthoritarian Christians and others do. The RWA association with CO has run about .50 among Manitoba students and parents. It came in at .68 in the Tulane sample.

Similarly, Rubinstein (1996) discovered strong ties between RWA scores and orthodox religious beliefs among both Jewish and Palestinian students in Israel. Orthodox Jews scored significantly higher than did traditional Jews, who in turn placed higher than secular Jews. The same pattern appeared among the Palestinian students regarding Islam. The (eta-squared) estimates of variance shared were 37% and 50%, respectively, analogous to correlations of .61 and .71.

Leak and Randall (1995) turned up significant RWA correlations in their Creighton University sample with all eight items of a Religious Attitudes Scale composed to measure Fowler's (1981) theory of faith development (for example, "I believe totally [or almost totally] the teachings of my church"). The relationship over all eight items equaled .51. They also found RWA relationships with a measure based on Fowler's analysis of "religious maturity." In a pattern reminiscent of the connection with (Kohlberg-type) "unsophisticated" moral reasoning (RWA, pp. 192-196), Highs tended to endorse "stage 2" and "stage 3" statements (such as "To me, God is much like a parent, someone who rewards good actions and punishes bad ones," and "I believe that God

is my faithful friend and companion who knows me deeply and totally"). The RWA-stage 2 and -stage 3 connections were .46 and .55.

Persons familiar with research on the psychology of religion, and its pain, know this is the plane where mainly reign Gordon Allport's Intrinsic Orientation and Daniel Batson's Quest Scales. Again, a number of studies have linked these scales with RWA scores, as we shall see in Chapter 6.²⁰

Adherence to Traditional Sex Roles. Several studies have found that right-wing authoritarians tend to endorse traditional sex roles. I uncovered RWA Scale correlations of .59 among 200 female Manitoba students, and .60 among 135 males, with Spence and Helmreich's (1978) Attitudes toward Women Scale in 1991. The figures for 265 mothers and 230 fathers were .59 and .52, respectively. The strongest relationships erupted with "Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers" and "A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man."

Walker and Quinsey (1991) in turn found a correlation of .78 between RWA scores and Kalin and Tilby's (1978) Sex Role Ideology Scale among their 157 student and 41 nonstudent males. This test has items such as "The husband should be regarded as the legal representative of the family group in all matters of law" and "A wife's activities in the community should complement her husband's position."

Leak and Randall (1995) similarly discovered a link of .28 among 95 Creighton females, and .44 among 42 males, with Burt's (1980) Sex-Role Stereotypes measure. Typical items state, "There is something wrong with a woman who doesn't want to marry and raise a family," and "It is better for a woman to use her feminine charm to get what she wants rather than ask for it outright." In addition, authoritarianism correlated .41 and .61, respectively, with females' and males' responses to Burt's (1980) Sexual Conservatism measure (which includes items such as "A nice woman will be offended or embarrassed by dirty jokes").

Dianne Stober and Pauline Clance (personal communication, 1995) found that RWA scores correlated .70 with a balanced twenty-item scale measuring hostile attitudes toward and a backlash against feminists (for example, "Feminism contributes to the breakdown of family values in this country"). The subjects were 158 adults waiting for possible jury duty in a Georgia city. I found a correlation of .40 among 184 Manitoba students in October 1995.

Outside North America, McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina (1990) found RWA scores correlated .39 with five items assessing the role of women in the Soviet Union.

Conformity to Group Norms. In 1983 I gave the RWA Scale to a batch of Manitoba students. The following week I asked them to reanswer the test,

which now included, before each item, the average answer it had received from the whole sample on the first go-around. I explained, "Many students wonder how their attitudes compare with those of others . . . You may take into account the average response printed alongside each statement, or you may ignore it completely."

Both Low and High RWAs, who were by definition equally distant from the average scores, moved a little toward the center on the retest. But the Highs shifted more than twice as much as the Lows ($p < .001$). The difference could not be explained in terms of regression toward the mean (EOF, pp. 310-311).

I got around to repeating this study with 243 Manitoba students in the fall of 1993, only this time I used the Attitudes toward Homosexuals Scale shown in Exhibit 1.3. Lows' mean score rose from 26.8 to 27.8 ($p < .40$). Highs—just as far from the round-one average as the Lows—dropped from 56.7 to 52.3 ($p < .001$).

This greater sensitivity to norms (in the *descriptive* sense), even on an issue such as homosexuality, can be traced to Highs' greater desire to be normal. In 1985 I asked 168 Manitoba students and 270 parents to rank "normality" and nine other values. In both samples, right-wing authoritarians tended to give normality higher marks than others did (EOF, pp. 311-312).

Conformity to Traditional Practices. Emma Clapham (personal communication, October 13, 1994) administered the RWA Scale and the Attitudes toward Treatment Questionnaire to 97 direct-care staff working in English mental hospitals. She found a correlation of .64 between being authoritarian and holding "organic" (as opposed to "psychological") theories of therapy. Organic clinicians believed in "keeping discipline on the ward," "making sure the patients don't have time to think about their problems," "having a ward organized according to strict rules," and keeping nurses from ever disagreeing with doctors in front of patients.

Adherence to Social Norms of Distributive Justice. McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina-Paap (1992) compared Americans' and Russians' beliefs about how the necessities of life should be distributed. They surveyed both a quota sample of 163 Muscovites in May and June 1991 and "opportunity samples" of 97 Kentucky and 182 New Mexico adults. In Russia, RWA scores correlated .36 with belief in "equality"—the official (if thoroughly abused) principle that everyone in a Communist state should get the same share of the pie. In the United States, RWA scores connected —.36 with endorsement of equality. Instead, American authoritarians liked "laissez-faire individualism" (.22), more the American ideal, which Russian Highs rejected (— .34). The authors

observed that in both nations, High RWAs were likely to accept the "conventional philosophy" of the society.²¹

Scores on "Conservatism" Scales. Tarr and Lorr (1991) administered Lorr's (sociopolitical) Conservatism Scale to 339 students in the eastern United States. This test assesses such things as support for strong armed forces and loyalty tests, and opposition to socialized medicine and limitations on the Federal Bureau of Investigation. RWA scores correlated .57 with being conservative.

They also administered Lorr's Rule Bound versus Rule Free test, which measures acceptance of the rules of society and the importance of being conventional. The link with RWA scores equaled .59.

In a promising attempt to understand conservatism, Paul Trapnell (personal communication, July 1993) gave the RWA Scale and eight-item measures of six different aspects of psychological conservatism to 722 University of British Columbia students. He found authoritarianism correlated .41 with Intrinsic Religiosity, .45 with Authority, .52 with Punitiveness, .39 with Sexual Constraint, .62 with Traditionalism, and .50 with Propriety.

Finally, David Lykken (personal communication, March 14, 1994) found a correlation of .76 between RWA scores and the Traditionalism Scale of the Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire among 1,364 twins.

Support for Political Parties. High RWAs have shown a consistent but usually weak tendency to support right-wing, political parties. In English-speaking Canada, people who like the Progressive Conservative Party almost always score higher overall in right-wing authoritarianism than those who favor the more centrist Liberal Party. Liberals in turn usually score higher than those who side with the socialist New Democratic Party. But these relationships, found among university students from Ontario to British Columbia, found among Manitoba parents, and found in two random samples of Manitobans from voter lists, have typically been small, analogous to correlations of .20 to .30 (RWA, pp. 203–204, 209–211, 221–222).

Interest in politics turns out to be an important moderator here, however. A sizable number of my respondents report they have little or no interest in politics. When you set their data to the side, and look instead at just the people who say they are interested in politics, who presumably know better what the parties stand for, the RWA connections with party preference prove substantially richer (RWA, pp. 221–222). But one can still dig up lots of exceptions. *I am not saying all Tories are fascists!* But authoritarian people do *tend* to like the conservative parties in Canada.

Similar results have appeared in the simpler two-party American political system. Every study that has looked at party preference (to my knowledge)

has found that Low RWAs *tend* to like Democrats, while the Republican Party *tends* to win the hearts of Highs (RWA, p. 221). Doty and Larsen (1993) even found that High RWA Michigan students responded physiologically to slides simply showing Ronald Reagan and George Bush. (They also turned on at the sight of a Mercedes-Benz.)

Several studies on other continents have found the same RWA-party pattern. Feather (1993) found authoritarian Australian adults tended (.22) to support the right-wing Liberal Party rather than the Labour Party. In Israel, Rubinstein (1996) discovered High RWA Jewish students tended to identify with the right-wing and religious parties. In turn, Palestinian Highs also tended to support "extreme right-wing parties—most of them religiously fundamentalist." The eta-squared values were 17% and 34%, respectively, analogous to correlations of .41 and .58. (The relationships are probably high in Israel because religion mixes strongly with politics there, as it increasingly does in the United States.)

The most interesting studies of right-wing authoritarianism and political affiliation, for my money, have been carried out by McFarland and his associates in the former USSR and Russia. McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina (1990) found that High RWAs in their samples tended to support the "distinctly conservative" Pamyat group and the Communist Party in 1989. The same authors in 1992 reported that RWA scores still predicted support for hard-line Communists (including a leader of the failed August 1991 coup). Boris Yeltsin was favored by Lows. In 1995 McFarland, Ageyev, and Djintch-aradze reported that they still found RWA correlations of about .30 with support for the Communists (and Russian nationalism), and dislike for democracy, among 440 Muscovites interviewed four months before the battle at the White House in October 1993. But Lows' support for Yeltsin had dropped markedly, as his commitment to democracy appeared to weaken.

Over the course of these three studies, correlations between RWA scores and support for Communism dropped from .69 to .38. It could be that many of the High RWAs who used to back the Communists have gone over to nationalists, Czarist, religious, and anti-Semitic parties. But it could also mean that, as democratic reforms fail, the Communists are attracting a wider range of supporters and could become the major opposition.

North American Lawmakers. In 1979 I asked Manitoba students to role-play the answers that New Democratic (NDP), Liberal, and Progressive Conservative members of the House of Commons would give to the RWA Scale (RWA, pp. 223–224).²² They produced substantial differences in the predictable direction, with an eta-squared of 15% among the caucuses, corresponding to a correlation of .39.

This experiment led me to undertake four studies involving actual Canadian (provincial) lawmakers (*EOF*, pp. 242–252), which suggested the role-playing students had gotten it wrong. They had greatly *underestimated* the actual differences in authoritarianism among the various caucuses.

In the Manitoba legislature, the Tory sample mean was twice as high as that of the NDP (no Liberals sat in the Legislative Assembly at the time), with no overlap in the distributions. The point-biserial correlation was but a trifling .91. Some overlap did appear in the Ontario assembly, but the NDP-Liberal-Conservative means lined up as expected and eta-squared equaled 43%, analogous to a correlation of .66. British Columbia (then with no Liberals) resembled Manitoba, with the Social Credit caucus scoring twice as high as the NDPers, with no overlap, and the correlation a noteworthy .85. The New Brunswick House produced the familiar NDP-Liberal-Conservative order, with appreciable overlap between Liberal and Tory camps. Eta-squared proved 29%, corresponding to an r of .54.

The RWA correlation with left versus right caucuses across the four provinces was .87, one of the strongest findings ever obtained in the social sciences.

I then conducted four inconclusive studies of American state legislatures. In the Minnesota Senate, Republicans scored nonsignificantly higher than Democrats. The California legislature produced a sizable Democrat versus Republican correlation of .59. Not enough Mississippi Republican senators, nor Connecticut Democratic senators, responded to permit meaningful analyses.

Summary. Many studies, approaching the issue from many angles, have found that RWA scores predict conventional behavior. Extensive connections exist with traditional religious beliefs and views of the sexes. High RWAs have also conformed more to group averages, and embraced social norms and traditional institutional practices more. They score higher on various measures of conservatism, and tend to support or belong to right-wing political parties. Some of the relationships discovered to date have been extraordinarily powerful.²³

CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE RWA SCALE'S EMPIRICAL VALIDITY

When it comes to connecting with behaviors that smack of authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism, the studies thus far seem to indicate that the RWA Scale has meaningful empirical validity.²⁴

Mischel (1968) once observed (unfairly, I think: *RWA*, pp. 7–10) that personality tests almost never correlate above .30 with criterion behaviors. Well, nearly all of the correlations on the preceding pages came in higher than that. In fact most of the associations, across quite a range of variables, landed in the .40–.60 domain that behavioral scientists often call “strong relationships.”

Furthermore, you can find correlations *over* .60 on most of the pages of this review. (You will have trouble finding many psychological tests that have produced such strong relationships with such an array of variables.)

True enough, nearly all of these findings involved *other* paper-and-pencil measures, which are easier to correlate to a survey than more important behaviors such as voting or assaulting (Mischel, 1968, p. 78). Also, a lot of the connections might seem to be “catching fish in a barrel.” Most notably, who can be surprised at RWA Scale relationships with religious variables, given the extent to which the RWA Scale has “found religion”—and includes religious issues in many of its items?

But a lot of the paper-and-pencil criteria represented sentiments and attitudes and inclinations and affiliations that have their own independent relevance. And anyone who thinks two measures will correlate just because they appear in the same booklet has not tried it very often.

Item Analyses. I am sure that earlier I hid from you my pleasure at the RWA Scale's internal consistency. A relatively cohesive measure does many things for you, including protecting you from “discovering” tautological relationships. Take those fish in the barrel above. It could be that the RWA associations we discovered with religious variables merely resulted from the religion-related items on the authoritarianism measure. We would then have merely discovered that if you ask people how religious they are on one scale, and then ask them how religious they are on another measure, the two sets of answers will covary, quite amazingly. (Do not laugh. This happened with at least one measure of conservatism [*RWA*, pp. 213–214].)

However, in every instance in which I have found RWA Scale connections with acceptance of traditional beliefs, Christian Orthodoxy scores, and other measures to be discussed in Chapter 6, *all or nearly all* of the items on the RWA Scale had significant correlations with the religious variable. It was not just a trivial religion-religion hookup, although naturally the RWA Scale items touching on religion usually had stronger ties with the religious criteria. Instead we had an *authoritarian submission–authoritarian aggression–conventionalism* correlation with religion. That is, we found a connection between *right-wing authoritarianism*, the (whole) construct we are investigating, and these religious behaviors.

As well, all (or nearly all) of the RWA Scale items also significantly correlated with the Government Injustices, Trials, “electric shock,” and even the general political party preference results (*RWA*, pp. 206–207), and almost every other criterion variable I have used in my research program. *Generally, the whole scale has linked up with the criterion measures of authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism in my studies.*

(Again, you will have trouble finding many other scales that have demonstrated this.)

Why Do Authoritarian Submission, Authoritarian Aggression, and Conventionalism Covary? The network of correlations between the items on the RWA Scale and the criterion behaviors, like the correlations among the items themselves, demonstrates that authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism do covary, in many places around the world. Why should this be so?

Well, one can readily see why authoritarian submission and conventionalism would go together. Usually, established authorities promote the social conventions that make them established authorities. But why should people who submit the submission and convent the conventions also be so aggressive in the name of that authority? The simplest and most data-blessed explanation to date has built upon Bandura's social learning theory.

Bandura (1973) believes aggressive behaviors are instigated by some aversive stimulus, but acted out only if the inhibitions against aggression can be overcome. One can imagine many kinds of painful stimuli (such as guilt, anger, and envy) and disinhibitors (such as drunkenness, deindividuation, and diffusion of responsibility in a group). All of these may play their part in one act of authoritarian aggression or another. But the principal instigator and releaser appear to be fear and self-righteousness (EOF, pp. 124-128).

Highly submissive, highly conventional persons have invested a lot in the status quo. They perceive waves of rebellion and sin constantly shrinking their island of respectable stability, especially if they feel personally vulnerable to attack in a disintegrating, increasingly lawless society. The classic responses to strong fear, after all, are "Fight" or "Run away! Run away!"

Submissive, conventional people could be particularly likely to think they are the good guys, the righteous, God's "designated hitters," because they see themselves allied with the established, morality-deciding authorities in life. One can readily see why they might think of themselves as the "Moral Majority."

In 1985-86 I ran four "pitting experiments" to see which of many possible explanations could best account for authoritarian aggression. I measured fear with a Likert-type instrument, the Fear of a Dangerous World Scale. I assessed self-righteousness by asking subjects to evaluate someone who scored *low* on the RWA Scale. (This may seem unfair to Highs. But I had established earlier that, while Low RWAs evaluated Low and High RWA targets equally, Highs considered someone like themselves vastly superior to someone with opposing opinions.)

In these pitting experiments, which involved a sample of 346 parents as well as nearly 1,500 students, Fear of a Dangerous World correlated between

.24 and .40 with various measures of authoritarian aggression (Attitudes toward Homosexuals, Trials, Ethnocentrism, and several Poses). Self-righteousness in turn correlated .26 to .55 with these measures. More important, combining their effects explained a substantial amount of the RWA Scale's relationship with authoritarian aggression. None of the other explanations could do nearly as much (EOF, pp. 166-186).²⁵

So anger, envy, pain, drunkenness, deindividuation, and diffusion—not to mention the greatest disinhibitor of all, safety from retaliation—may cause some acts of authoritarian aggression. But, by and large, fear puts the High RWA's finger on the trigger, and self-righteousness releases the safety.

By way of cross-validation, data on these measures were collected for me at the Universities of Pittsburgh and Houston in 1990. At both sites, Fear of a Dangerous World and Self-Righteousness explained RWA ties with Attitudes toward Homosexuals, Trials, Ethnocentrism, and Posse-Radicals as well as, or better than, they had in Manitoba.

DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONS WITH THE RWA SCALE

Gender. I know of only one study that uncovered a gender difference in RWA scores: Rubinstein (1996). Otherwise, women have always equaled men in overall authoritarian attitudes.

Age. A number of studies have found that older adults usually score higher on the test than young adults, which could be due to cross-sectional differences or longitudinal change. I shall postpone this discussion until Chapter 3.

Education. University students differ little among themselves in educational attainment, so there is no risk that findings obtained with students have been confounded by years of schooling. On the other hand, many studies of *nonstudent* samples have shown that authoritarians tend to be less educated. But the RWA-education relationships have almost always ranged between .20 and .30. Controlling for this connection reduces RWA-criterion coefficients very little.

Intelligence. On a related note, I have never found that RWA scores correlate with grades obtained in university courses. Also, no connection appeared with a measure of general intellectual ability, the Wonderlic Intelligence Test, among 185 Manitoba students (RWA, p. 325). However, Lykken (personal communication, March 14, 1994) reported that scores on the Weschler Adult Intelligence Survey correlated $-.34$ with RWA scores among

93 females, and $-.61$ among 47 males, drawn from the twins-reared-apart pool of the Minnesota Twin Study.

OTHER FINDINGS WITH THE RWA SCALE

A number of index cards still lay on the desk before me whose findings do *not* seem to bear upon the RWA Scale's construct validity. I shall briefly present them now, to clear the decks for Chapter 2.

The Environmental Movement. Schultz and Stone (1994) found right-wing authoritarians tended *not* to be "tree-huggers," at least as measured by the twelve-item New Environmental Paradigm Scale (Dunlap and van Liere, 1978). The r among 87 students at the University of Maine equaled $-.54$. Peterson, Doty, and Winter (1993) in turn found positive RWA correlations among 278 Michigan students with seven statements belittling the environmental movement, but nothing significant with six others. (Three of the "no-shows" involved punishing polluters, a case where Highs' apparent dislike for the environmental movement could be offset by their general punitiveness.)

Abortion. I doubt this will stun you, but High RWAs tend to be opposed to abortion. Some Lows do, too, depending on the circumstances, so the overall relationships have been less than majestic. For example, I asked 238 Manitoba students in 1990 to indicate how important the rights of the fetus, the mother, the father, and the rest of society were in cases of abortion, by allocating a total of 100 "votes" among these four. Nearly all of the votes were cast for the fetus and the mother, with Highs favoring the fetus ($r = .41$) and Lows favoring the mother ($-.39$). A replication with 491 parents brought in similar values of $.37$ and $-.37$.

Moghaddam and Vuksanovic (1990) involved 74 Montreal pro-life activists in one of their studies. The pro-lifers' mean of 220 on the RWA Scale ranks as about the highest group score ever found.

Drugs. As with abortion, High RWAs tend to be definitely against "drugs," while Lows' attitudes depend on what drugs and circumstances you are talking about. Peterson, Doty, and Winter (1993) administered seven items about America's drug problem to 257 Michigan students. They found RWA correlations from $.19$ to $.48$, including one of $.37$ with desire for a "Rambo-like crusade" against drugs. Debra Cormer (personal communication, January 25, 1993) found High RWAs ($r = .24$) tended to favor workplace drug testing; but there was no relationship with self-reported illicit drug use among her Hofstra University sample.

Social Dominance. Early in 1993 Felicia Pratto at Stanford University sent me a paper describing an admirable array of thirteen studies she and her colleagues had done toward developing a Social Dominance Orientation Scale (personal communication, January 10, 1993). This test (at the time) consisted of ten items measuring American nationalism and eighteen others assessing opposition to greater equality in the United States. (The nationalism items were subsequently dropped, and the published Social Dominance Scale consists of sixteen statements assessing attitudes toward equality: Pratto et al., 1994.)

Pratto administered the RWA Scale and these twenty-eight items to 97 San Jose State University students in April 1992, and (surprisingly) found no links between the two measures. As these students (like Leak and Randall's [1995]) had answered a very long booklet, which tends to promote careless responding, I administered the two scales to a sample of 187 Manitoba students in early March 1993. RWA correlated $.38$ with the sum of the (anti-)equal items (and $.45$ with the sum of the nationalism statements). Moreover, the (anti-)equality scores correlated much better with answers to my Ethnocentrism Scale ($.71$) than the RWA Scale did ($.48$).

The "Big Five." Goldberg administered the RWA Scale and his 235-item measure of the "Big Five" personality factors to 503 Oregon students (Goldberg and Rosolack, 1991). RWA scores correlated $-.30$ with Factor V, which has been interpreted as Intellect or Openness and Culture. It also correlated $.23$ with Factor III, Conscientiousness, and $.14$ with Factor I (Surgency/Extraversion).

Professor Goldberg was kind enough to send me the 235 RWA-item correlations. Only 3 of these exceeded $.30$: Highs said they were not "philosophical," were "conforming," and were "non-introspective." Another 20 items had correlations in the $.20$ s; but only (not) "introspective" and (not) "broad-minded" exceeded $.24$.

However, Trapnell found a much higher correlation ($-.57$) among 722 University of British Columbia students between the RWA Scale and "Factor V" scores obtained with a different measure of the Big Five: Costa and McCrae's Revised NEO Personality Inventory. Trapnell (personal communication, May 4, 1996) kindly sent me the RWA correlations with the 48 NEO items measuring "Openness." The highest correlation ($-.50$) was obtained with an item from the "Values facet" of Openness: "I believe we should look to our religious authorities for decisions on moral issues." This statement, of course, closely resembles some RWA Scale items. Of the twelve next highest correlations (all in the $-.30$ s), five also came from the "Values facet." But some intriguing connections with the "Aesthetics facet" (e.g. "Poetry has

little or no effect on me”) and the “Ideas facet” (e.g. “I find philosophical arguments boring”) also appeared.

Small and Nonexistent Relationships. We are reaching the end of the trail. Some of the relationships that follow are wispy but apparently “there.” Others are profoundly “significance challenged.”

Feather (1993) found that Australian nonstudent Highs tended to favor rewarding “Tall Poppies”—people who had achieved a lot in life ($r = .23$).

In a series of studies involving over a thousand students, Hunsberger and his associates (for example, Hunsberger, Pratt, and Pancer, 1994) have found that RWA scores correlate about $-.20$ to $-.30$ with cognitive complexity (Baker-Brown et al., 1992).

Perrott (1991) found that Halifax police officers did not score high on the RWA Scale as a group.

I found RWA responses to be correlated $-.29$ with Humanism scores, and $.30$ with Normative scores on Stone’s (1988) modification of Tomkin’s Polarity Scale, answered by 155 Manitoba students in February 1993.

Billings, Guastello, and Rieke (1993) sought the RWA Scale’s relationships with Cattell, Eber, and Tatsuoka’s (1970) Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire. They reported only four of the sixteen correlations, ranging from $.22$ to $.36$. High RWAs were described as being low in imagination, high in conscientiousness, low in self-sufficiency, and high in closed-mindedness.

Stone and Schultz (1992), resurrecting an old California Fascism Scale (F Scale) issue, found that High RWAs performed like other subjects in a “low ego-involvement” run of the Einstellung Water Jar problems (in which subjects have to abandon a rule they have developed for solving simple mathematical problems, because it will no longer work). But Highs did significantly worse than others when the situation was more ego-involving. (See Brown, 1953.) I have since twice replicated the latter finding.

Lest you think that everything turns out “ $p < .05$ ” in our subject pool, the RWA Scale has had nonsignificant correlations with Snyder and Gangestad’s (1986) Self-Monitoring Scale, the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, and Cutrona, 1980), Rosenberg’s (1965) Self-Esteem Scale, Taylor and Altman’s (1966) Self-Disclosure Scale, Fenigstein, Scheier, and Buss’s (1975) Self-Consciousness Scale, Ilfeld’s (1976) Psychiatric Symptom Index, and an early (BIDR-6, Form 40a) version of Del Paulhus’s Self-Deception and Impression Management Scales (personal communication, November 1989; Impression Management had a significant $r = .23$).

The Importance of Personality

Does the accumulated literature on right-wing authoritarianism have any larger significance for the science of psychology? It demonstrates to me, as

other research programs have, that *personality counts*. I noted a few pages back that this was seriously doubted following Mischel’s critique in 1968. But here we have a personality construct that connects and explains many different attitudes and behaviors—and not just theoretically, but empirically, often powerfully, and in many places around the world.

The “connecting” particularly fetches me. What links trusting Nixon during Watergate, hating homosexuals, opposing abortion, liking hospitals run in traditional ways, thinking blacks are naturally violent, blaming our social problems on the Bill of Rights, being religious, and so on? To surprisingly large degrees, authoritarianism lay beneath all of these.

To my reflexively reductionist, not-New Age, linear way of thinking, this discovery takes us a goodly stride forward. A lot of complexity has been explained by one thing. A cohesive mass of comprehension, one which social learning theory seems best able to accommodate (EOF, chapters 4 and 5), is accreting.

Oh, I know as a card-carrying social psychologist that personal authoritarianism will interact with situational factors. No one, I hope, expects High RWAs always to submit to authority or to betray their dislike of minorities indiscriminately. But the research indicates that in many contexts, it matters a lot how authoritarian people happen to be. It matters who we are.

Which has, at least, given me something to talk about in the “personality section” of introductory psychology besides Freud. Speaking of whom . . .

Isn’t This Really Just the “Berkeley Theory”?

One can find a certain resemblance between the pioneering “Berkeley theory” of authoritarianism and mine, a connection that is entirely *uncoincidental*. If you look on page 228 of *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al., 1950), you will see that the first three clusters of the Berkeley model were “Conventionalism,” “Authoritarian Submission,” and “Authoritarian Aggression.” Six to nine *additional* clusters follow these three, depending on how you count. (Is “Destructiveness and Cynicism” one thing or two?) But we can infer that the first three clusters formed the starting point of Sanford and associates’ insight into the structure of the authoritarian personality.²⁶

They certainly provided the starting point for me. I never would have found anything about authoritarianism, or even gotten interested in the area, if it had not been for the Berkeley researchers (EOF, p. xxiii). I only noticed the covariation of authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism as a result of studying item analyses of the F Scale (RWA, p. 18). No F Scale, then no novice noticing nothing nowhere nohow now nor never. The Berkeley researchers discovered the covariation of “the three.”

Still, the model of right-wing authoritarianism I am peddling is *not* the model of the authoritarian personality you will find in *The Authoritarian Personality* for at least five reasons.

1. The models may start off looking the same, but mine ends pretty quickly. When people say the research with the RWA Scale confirms the Berkeley theory, I wonder when it has been found that High RWAs are “cynical,” or “superstitious,” or have “exaggerated concerns with sexual ‘goings-on’”? Those are all parts of the original model. (And they were not supported by F Scale research either.) So RWA Scale results can at best reinforce only part of the Berkeley model, because *most* of the pieces of that model are not represented on the RWA Scale.

2. While the cluster titles have the same *names* in three cases, the underlying constructs differ. Actually, one cannot easily discuss the Berkeley constructs, for the researchers said little about them. Take “authoritarian submission.” It was defined as a “submissive, uncritical attitude toward idealized moral authorities of the ingroup.” But what does “submissive” mean—willing to do *anything*? Does “uncritical” mean believing *anything*? Is the prefascist submissive *only* to “idealized” authorities? Are *all* authorities “idealized” by the authoritarian? Is the prefascist submissive only to “moral” authorities? Who is an “authority”? Is there only “the” in-group, and no other?

You can find some elaboration of these terms on page 231 of *The Authoritarian Personality*, but it does not answer these questions and ultimately raises more. For example, the authoritarian supposedly has “an exaggerated, all-out, emotional need to submit.” How can people with such an overwhelming need walk by a police officer without throwing themselves at the officer’s feet?

3. I have tried to describe in some detail what I mean by each of the terms in my definition of right-wing authoritarianism. These conceptualizations differ from the Berkeley model—as much as one can tell what that was—in several important ways. For example, Sanford and his colleagues limited authoritarian aggression to attacks on people who violate conventional values (p. 228). Therefore, shocking the Learner in Milgram’s experiment would not constitute authoritarian aggression. Neither would attacks on women. By contrast, the model of right-wing authoritarianism presented at the beginning of this chapter acknowledges that the victims can be anyone—as indeed they can.

Similarly, the Berkeley theorists thought “that susceptibility to fascism is most characteristically a middle-class phenomenon” (p. 229), and so they defined conventionalism as “rigid adherence to conventional, middle-class values.” My definition of right-wing authoritarianism focuses instead on the *individual’s* perception of the authority-endorsed norms, which may or may not be middle class norms. (And the evidence indicates that, in North America at

least, educational differences help RWA scores to be higher in the “working class” [RWA, p. 242]).

4. The RWA Scale may turn out to correlate with measures that seem to represent some of the Lost Elements of the Berkeley definition (such as “rigidity”). But to prove that these features are so *integral* to the authoritarian personality that they should be part of its definition, the correlations need to be very strong. They are not.²⁷

To put it another way, the RWA Scale correlates with many things. If *mere association*, regardless of size, is all it takes to confirm the Berkeley theory, then we will end up with far more things that were “mistakenly omitted” from that theory than were gotten right. We will also have an enormously fragmented, uncohesive, “multifaceted,” and virtually meaningless conglomeration for a construct.

5. Finally, the Berkeley model was built around Freudian theory, with its emphasis on early childhood roots of behavior, vast (and largely untestable) unconscious struggles, repressed hatreds, projected hostilities, and so on. The present approach uses none of these. So while it turns out that High RWAs do tend to be anti-Semitic, that does not mean they are prejudiced because they unconsciously hate their fathers. Thus any support of the Berkeley research would be limited and not extend at all to the actual theory presented in *The Authoritarian Personality*.

Certain findings on the preceding pages may have reminded you of the Berkeley theory. So may certain findings in the rest of this book. That is to be expected. The two research programs have looked at similar kinds of people and naturally seen some of the same things. But when someone says that the RWA Scale findings confirm the Berkeley theory, or that those findings are very reminiscent of that theory, or that this model is strikingly similar to that theory, I wonder how they ever reached that conclusion.

I am hardly saying we should close the book on psychodynamic attempts to explain authoritarianism (Hopf, 1993; Lederer, 1993; Meloen, 1993). They may turn out to be much better models than anything I, at least, can cobble together. Certainly, as we shall see in later chapters, a lot goes on (and does *not* go on) in the authoritarian mind. It is, undoubtedly, psychodynamic. But if one is to convince the scientific community with such explanations, terms will have to be well defined, constructs will have to be validly measured, hypotheses will have to be falsifiable, and so on. If the advocates of such approaches happen to be right, let us hope they can demonstrate it, so the rest of us can stop following poorer lines of inquiry.

Isn't This Really Just “Conservatism”?

Ray (1985, 1990) has several times asserted that the RWA Scale just measures conservatism (which he does not define).²⁸ You may have been thinking the

same thing as you went through this chapter. Here again we need a clear statement of the alternative explanation before we can proceed.

As I noted in the Introduction, conservatism (and liberalism) mean many different things to different people. For example, some would say, "Conservatives are people who want everybody to obey the government." But others would say, "Conservatives are people who want no government at all." Are both kinds of people conservatives, or is neither, or only one?

That is just the first step into the quagmire. See the symposium in the September 1976 issue of *Commentary*, entitled "What Is a Liberal—Who Is a Conservative?" It contains sixty-four essays on the matter by well-informed writers from many fields. Overall, they provide sixty-four different answers.

As I shall argue in Chapter 11, I think we can explain more clearly (and powerfully) what people often mean by conservatism with right-wing authoritarianism, as defined earlier and measured by the RWA Scale. But let us consider what it would take to do it the other way around and explain our RWA findings in terms of conservatism.

From a *scientific* perspective, we should have a clear, precise, well-delineated definition of conservatism before we assert anything. If we merely wave our hand at the issue and say, "Well, everybody knows what 'conservative' means," or if we give a vague, broad definition that can cover almost anything and never be shown wrong, we are only hurting ourselves. The greatest gift of the scientific method is its ability to prove us mistaken. The more detailed the definition, the greater the chance we shall abandon wrong ideas and make progress. But the vaguer the conceptualization, the greater the chance we shall devote our lives to barking up the wrong tree.

Once a detailed, testable conceptualization of conservatism has been developed (or whatever other construct is advanced as being what right-wing authoritarianism "really" is), we have to show that it can conceptually account for all the relevant findings obtained with the RWA Scale. (There are a few new discoveries in the rest of this book that will need explaining as well.) Some of the findings appear to present large problems for a new interpretation. Why should conservatives (without spilling over into authoritarianism) be prejudiced, have so many double standards, and be so likely to hurt people in a shocking experiment?

Assuming we have a good conceptualization that can plausibly cover the field, it has to be objectively and validly measured. If the assessment is done through a psychological test, that test needs to be broad enough to cover the range of beliefs and attitudes pertinent to the underlying construct, yet cohesive enough to be essentially unidimensional. The farther we fall short on either score, the more grief we shall face further down the road. (So also shall we ultimately grieve over failure to control for response sets and various other sunken reefs in the assessment process.)

If we now have a sound conceptualization and a sound way to measure it, there remains only to demonstrate through pitting experiments its parity with the RWA Scale's breadth of relevant empirical coverage and strength of association.

We would also have to ascertain through item analyses that the validating findings with our new scale were typically attributable to the whole scale, not just a subset of obviously relevant items for one variable, another subset for another variable, and so on.

All of this should be as true of general, nonstudent populations as of our convenient introductory psychology subject pools. And if we want the construct to be relevant to other places than (say) just our country, or just North America, its parity with the RWA Scale should be established hither and yon.

If we think our new explanation is a better or "more basic" explanation, (for example, "Right-wing authoritarianism is just an aspect of conservatism"), it will not be enough to demonstrate parity with what we already have. We shall have to demonstrate overall superiority, as the RWA Scale had to do over the F Scale and other preceding measures of authoritarianism (RWA, chapter 4).

To summarize (and end), it requires no insight or perspicacity or ability to think of countervailing arguments, nor any evidence at all, to say, "Oh, this is really just conservatism" (or whatever else).²⁹ *Proving* it, however, involves substantially more. I do not mean it cannot be done. Someday, I am sure, it will be. But I suspect it requires thoughtful and determined endeavor.

But you may have noticed that I myself put my most important measure at the *beginning* of my booklets, run subjects in *large* numbers, usually in *their* classrooms, *whenever* the class meets, usually in September when it almost always is their *first* experiment; moreover, I frequently have them serve *anonymously*. At the end of a chapter on methodology, you might well say, "If this be methodological sophistication, give me ignorance any day."

Nevertheless, can you see why this increases the chances that other researchers will find as high or higher alphas for the RWA Scale than I do, and the chances that my RWA Scale findings will be replicated elsewhere?²³

— 3 —

The Personal Origins of Right-Wing Authoritarianism

A good and proper personality theory explains how people get the way they are. So how come some of us turn out very right-wing authoritarian, most of us become average, and some of us end up very *unauthoritarian*?

It says in my lecture notes (so it must be true) that behavior results from the interaction of the usual suspects: the genes that created us, and the environment that surrounds them. But because I store my lectures in a different compartment of my brain (teaching department) than I use to conjure up studies (research department), I have managed for many years to ignore the possibility that authoritarianism could have genetic roots.

Genetic Origins

THE MINNESOTA TWIN STUDY

Environmentally oriented researchers like me have lately been jabbed with a pointed stick by the Minnesota Twin Study (Tellegen et al., 1988; Bouchard et al., 1990; Lykken et al., 1990; Waller et al., 1990). This research team has done a remarkable job locating and recruiting for study monozygotic (identical) twins and dizygotic (fraternal) ("sororital"?) twins, tracking down all the multiple births in Minnesota between 1936 and 1955.

In addition, they have located from around the world over fifty pairs of identical twins reared apart. While the members of these monozygotic twins raised apart (MZ-apart twins) would probably not have been raised in starkly different environments, the researchers determined that most of them had been separated soon after birth. None of them had contact during their formative years, and most of them had no contact for most of their lives.

By comparing these MZ-apart twins with monozygotic twins who had grown up together, Bouchard and his colleagues (1990) calculated that about 70% of the variance in intelligence was inherited. Evidence for genetic roots of intelligence had appeared in many earlier studies (Bouchard and McGue, 1981), but not at this magnitude. Growing up in the same home seemed to have almost no effect.

More astounding yet, the Minnesota team uncovered evidence of strong genetic causes for many personality dimensions (Tellegen et al., 1988). Again, precedents existed. Evidence had been accumulating for some time that schizophrenia, manic-depression, and other serious mental illnesses had genetic precursors that put their unlucky inheritors at risk. But the Minnesota data indicated that "ordinary" personality variables, which psychologists had long assumed were almost entirely controlled by environment, appeared to have genetic sources as well, sources that made the environment definitely "second string" by comparison. What sort of ordinary personality dimensions? They cited achievement orientation, social closeness, and alienation, and traditionalism, and religiousness . . . Jab! Jab! Jab!

I first learned of the Minnesota Twin Study while watching the *NBC Nightly News* in 1986. The presentation was sensational: all these identical twins who had been raised apart had been tracked down and discovered to have lived very similar lives. Two had been given the name Jim, for instance, married (and divorced) women named Linda, then married a Betty, and so on. Since I lecture in introductory psychology on the misinterpretation of coincidence, I was thoroughly turned off.

Then, in late December 1986, I read a *New York Times* News Service article by Daniel Goleman based on a paper the Minnesota team had submitted for publication in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. (Newspapers do not ordinarily pick up scientific papers that have just been submitted to a journal.) The news story stated at one point, "Among traits found most strongly determined by heredity were leadership and, surprisingly, traditionalism or obedience to authority." The part about leadership harkened back to Aristotle's view that a few of us are born for greatness, while most of us are born to be followers. Which social psychology texts had long treated the same way a wolf treats a bush he wants to use as a territorial marker. And as for submission to authority (not to mention "territory"), give me a break.

Looking back, I can see that I was blocking out another part of the teaching department. in my cerebral cortex. It says in my *social* psychology lecture notes that most animal societies have well-established dominance systems. "Alpha" animals usually dominate everyone else, who submit to them and all others above them in the pecking order. The behaviors that determine dominance versus submission in a pair of animals were linked long ago by Delgado (1963a, 1963b, 1964, 1965) to parts of the limbic system in the brain, whose

operation could be genetically influenced. Indeed, dominance is purposely bred in some species. So the notion that authoritarian submission among humans could be inherited, to some extent, would not seem as preposterous to a geneticist or a gamecock breeder as it would to a psychologist who paid no attention to his own lectures.

MINNESOTA STUDIES OF SOCIAL ATTITUDES

In December 1988 the anticipated article on genetic determinants of "ordinary" personality traits appeared in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (Tellegen et al., 1988), based on a design other researchers could only lust after. In the study 217 pairs of identical twins reared together had answered Tellegen's Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) between 1970 and 1984, as had 114 pairs of fraternal twins raised together. Another 44 pairs of monozygotic twins reared apart, and 27 dizygotic twins reared apart, also completed this test between 1979 and 1986. The twins reared together were substantially younger (twenty-two years on the average) than those reared apart (with a mean of forty-one years). And 4 (15%) of the fraternal-apart pairs were of different sex (which would introduce a new variable in comparison with identical twins). But these were, on the whole, unprecedented samples.

The MPQ consists of eleven "primary personality dimensions" such as Well-Being, Social Potency, Achievement, Social Closeness, and Traditionalism. The last one, upon which my attention was riveted, is measured by eighteen items. Most (twelve) of these items are protraits and somewhat resemble the "conventionalism" sentiments on the RWA Scale (for example, "I very much dislike it when someone breaks accepted rules of good conduct"). Only three of the items are contraites ("More censorship of books and movies is a violation of free speech and should be abolished"). The other three items use a "forced choice" format ("I would prefer to see: (A) Stricter observance of the Sabbath, (B) Greater freedom in regard to divorce").

The Traditionalism Scale reportedly has an alpha reliability of about .90 (mistakenly given as .49 in table 4 of Bouchard et al., 1990). I do not know the evidence for its empirical validity, but that is not directly the issue here.

When Tellegen and his colleagues compared the similarity within sets of twins in each of their four samples, across *all eleven* MPQ scales, they found the median "personality-resemblance" correlation among the identicals raised together was .52, while that for their fraternal twins raised together equaled .23. Among the twins raised separately, the median level of personality resemblance was .49 for those who had identical genes and .21 for those who did not. Identical twins turned out quite similar, compared with fraternal twins. Being raised in the same home seemed to have almost no effect for either kind of twins.

However, the figures for just the Traditionalism Scale showed much *less* genetic influence. For the large samples of twins reared together, the correlation was .50 for monozygotes and .47 for dizygotes. For the twins reared apart, the values showed a little more spread, .53 for the former and .39 for the latter. If you just look at the identical twins (.50 versus .53), it appears "it's all in the genes." But if you notice how similar the fraternal twins are to the identical ones, genetic *identity* makes little difference. Using the formula for heritability in twins, $h^2 = 2 (R_{MZ} - R_{DZ})$ (Falconer, 1960, cited by Tellegen et al., 1988)—which provides the *upper limit* of heritability (Falconer, 1960, p. 185)¹—you get only 6% heritability for the twins reared together and 28% heritability for the twins reared apart (some of whom were not of the same sex). Genes may call the tune on most of the MPQ scales, but the evidence for Traditionalism was underwhelming.

HERITABILITY OF RELIGIOUS VARIABLES

A paper by Waller and associates (1990) presented more solid evidence for the genetic determination of variables presumably related to right-wing authoritarianism. Pairs of monozygotic twins reared apart, and (same-sexed) dizygotic twins reared apart answered five scales that measured religious values, attitudes, and interests, such as the Religious Values Scale developed by Allport, Vernon, and Lindzey (1960). Religious attitudes were assessed with twelve Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory items that Wiggins (1966) believed measured religious fundamentalism. Two measures of occupational interest in religion were included: nine items from the Strong-Campbell Vocational Interests Inventory and four items assembled by some of the authors. A five-item scale from the latter source, measuring interest in religious leisure time activities, rounded out the package. Large samples of monozygotic and dizygotic twins reared together also answered the last two "home-grown" measures.

These instruments had internal consistency reliabilities varying from .82 to .93 and intercorrelated from .40 to .77. Both sets of results probably benefited from the general protrait direction-of-wording found in the measures.

Looking just at the data from the twins reared apart, the five measures all suggested a powerful genetic factor. The monozygotic correlations varied from .39 to .59; those of the dizygotic twins, from -.22 to .20. When the data from the twins reared together were dealt in, some evidence for environmental influence appeared, especially on the measure of leisure time interest in religion. A model-fitting procedure indicated that about 50% of the variance in scores on the five measures was genetically influenced, which is 50% more than almost anyone would have suspected.

MINNESOTA TWIN STUDIES USING THE RWA SCALE

Toward the end of 1988, David Lykken wrote me a nice letter in which he shared his concerns over right-wing authoritarianism in North America. He

suggested that the prime source of variance in RWA scores would prove to be genetic, as he believed was the case for traditionalism. Lykken proposed that fraternal twins could turn out similar on something like the MPQ's Traditionalism Scale because their parents had chosen each other partly according to how traditional they were ("assortive mating"). When they reproduced, they tended to pass on similar genes for traditionalism to their offspring, including any dizygotic twins that might turn up. He wanted to give the RWA Scale to some of the twins in the Minnesota Registry to see how genetically determined its scores would be.

I have some hesitation about the assortive mating explanation. Why did it not show up on the other MPQ dimensions? And would it not have to be very powerful to bring fraternal twins so close to the level of similarity found in persons who had *identical* genes? But I could easily believe women and men mated assortively when it came to authoritarianism, although it might not be the first topic to come up in the moonlight. Husbands' and wives' RWA scores correlate about .60 in my parent studies (although they had been married long enough simply to have *become* more similar). Moreover, who wouldn't want to have his scale administered to this incredible sample?

Lykken's first study was completed by May 1990 (Lykken, personal communication, May 14, 1990). He sent the RWA Scale to about half of the twins in the Minnesota Twin Registry and obtained scores from 177 pairs of monozygotic twins, and 145 pairs of dizygotic twins, all raised together. (You know what I mean.) The results were broken down by gender. The correlation between RWA scores of male identical twins was .67, while that for females was .73. The values for male and female dizygotic twins were .55 and .71, respectively (Lykken, personal communication, March 14, 1994).

These data basically looked like the Traditionalism Scale results to me. There was not much difference between identical and fraternal twins, and therefore hardly any evidence for genetic determinants of authoritarianism.

However, this conclusion was completely contradicted by a subsequent study, conducted by Thomas Bouchard with his samples of twins reared apart (Lykken, personal communication, March 14, 1994). These data (sensibly *not* broken down by gender since the samples were so small) produced a correlation of .62 between the RWA scores of 44 pairs of identical twins reared apart, and a nonsignificant -.18 among 22 pairs of fraternal twins reared apart. Comparing these two coefficients, I would say that genes rule. (And then some: $h^2 = 160\%$, which is an upper limit with a vengeance!) But where is the assortive mating effect for the dizygotic twins?

Then in 1993 the Minnesota team sent the RWA Scale to the twins reared together who had not been sampled in 1990. They got back answers from 241 monozygotic and 154 dizygotic pairs. A big genetic difference appeared among the males: .57 versus .04 for the two kinds of twins. Among the fe-

males, the difference was smaller but still appreciable: .63 versus .43 (Lykken, personal communication, March 14, 1994).

Lykken combined the results of the two twins-reared-together studies and got male correlations of .61 for the monozygotes and .39 for the dizygotes. For females, the numbers were .68 and .55. Combining the genders gives you something like .65 and .50 (using the z-transformations needed for averaging correlations). That translates into an upper limit of heritability of about 30%, so genes for fascism may exist. If, however, you just consider the twins-reared-apart study, it is all heredity and then some.

I am blithely assuming some things in this discourse that you are probably screaming no one should assume. You might well ask, "Don't identical twins also grow up in more similar *environments* than fraternal twins do, since people are more likely to treat them the same?" And don't children placed for adoption tend to get placed in similar homes, especially if the adoption agency is religious? And are not any conclusions about the power of genes over environment suspect because of the "narrow" range of environments involved? I agree all these need to be considered. The Minnesota team has discussed them (though not always in the context of social attitudes), and you can find their responses in the publications previously cited. But you might also take a look at the give-and-take on pages 191–192 of the April 1991 issue of *Science* (volume 252) and Horgan, 1993.

My conclusion at this point is that the twin data confuse me. The problem is not the monozygotic twins. They rack up correlations in the .60s quite regularly, whether they grew up together or not. But the dizygotic twins blur the picture enormously, for their correlations wander all over the place.

THE MANITOBA ADOPTION DATA

Twin studies potentially give the cleanest answer to nature-nurture questions short of actual DNA connections to behavior. Studies of the similarity of adopted children to their biological and adoptive kin offer another approach, but one that can be easily contaminated by such things as the extent to which the child had contact with the gene-givers. If we wish to test the hypothesis that a trait is *entirely* controlled by DNA, however, as Bouchard's twins-reared-apart study of RWA indicated, we do not have to worry about such contaminants. Compared with children raised by their biological parents, adopted children should not particularly resemble their adoptive parents at all.

I have ascertained the correlation between parents' and students' RWA scores many times, and it usually lands around .40 (EOF, p. 64). The vast majority of these parents fill out my surveys for their own gene-carriers. (A sociobiologist would say that is *why* they fill out the surveys.) But some adoptive parents also appear in my samples.

In the fall of 1993, 1994, and 1995 I ascertained in various ways if students answering my booklets had been adopted. Sometimes their parents told me at the end of a parent's booklet. Sometimes the students themselves told me and I discreetly involved their parents in the study. (I did not want either students or parents to know I was studying adoption situations.)

I now have RWA scores on 75 adoptive parents (35 mothers and 40 fathers) of 44 students. The mother-child correlation equals .61, and that for fathers and their adopted children is .50. Overall, the parental average equals .55, which is both statistically significant and embarrassingly higher than the .40 I usually get across generations with biological connections. These numbers do *not* support the notion of fascism genes and instead direct our attention to environmental influences.

Environmental Origins

THE "CORN PONE" THEORY

Since right-wing authoritarianism consists of a set of attitudes, we must begin our search for any environmental roots of authoritarianism with the dominant theory of opinion formation, which is, of course, Mark Twain's "Corn Pone" theory. Like most psychological explanations, it was based on an earlier theory, in this case credited to a slave named Jerry, who preached mock sermons to the young Samuel Clemens from atop a woodpile. Jerry's explanation of the origin of social attitudes can be summarized in one sentence (which, as far as we know, was also the complete statement of the theory): "You tell me where a man gets his corn pone, and I'll tell you what his 'pinions is'" (Twain, n.d., p. 1400).

Since we all start out getting our corn pone at home, the obvious prediction of this theory (and later, less parsimonious ones) would be that we learn our RWA attitudes from our parents. Yet while this prediction would appear valid for young children, you do not have to hear many adolescents slam doors—or remember the ones we slammed—to realize that the final product is sometimes not a perfect copy.

My own research with the RWA Scale establishes the following family feud by the time the students enter university. The parents want their children to have virtually the same RWA Scale attitudes they do. The children know it. The parents believe that they have largely succeeded, that their children *are* scaled-down versions of themselves. But they misperceive, for the fit between their own and their children's RWA scores, as we saw earlier, averages only about .40 (EOF, pp. 63–64). That boils down to about .02 per year of serving up the corn pone to a twenty-year-old. (If the .40 all came with the DNA, of course, the rate of return on our socialization efforts crumbles to .00. Maybe that's why we resist genetic explanations so.)

OTHER POTENTIAL INFLUENCES THAT ARE NOT

That being the case, you might next think that university students have been more powerfully and more recently influenced by their peer group. But in the fall of 1984 I obtained the RWA scores of the best friends of 206 introductory psychology students, which correlated only .31 with the students' scores (EOF, pp. 71–73). Since friends are more likely to shape each other's opinions *mutually* (whereas my children will tell you that kids have almost no influence over their parents' attitudes), that .31 is worth only about .16 when it comes to explaining where the students' attitudes came from.

Students' RWA scores are correlated with their reports of how much the family religion was emphasized as they were growing up. Correlations with a ten-item Religious Emphasis Scale (EOF, pp. 205–206), which asks such things as how often one went to church and prayed before meals, run about .35 with RWA. Another ten-item scale (EOF, pp. 203–204), which asks more authoritarian-oriented questions about the child's religious training (about submission to church authorities, fear of God, and so on), correlates about .40. But both of these relationships blow away when you partial out the parents' RWA scores, which we need to do since parents usually determine religious practices in the home.

Well then, let's start a trend and blame authoritarianism on schools and the media. But when I asked university students to go through the RWA Scale and indicate, item by item, what effect their educations had on their attitudes, the basic answer was "None." They gave the same answer for the news, except that they thought crime stories made them slightly more authoritarian aggressive (EOF, pp. 66–71).

EFFECTS OF EXPERIENCES

I did not get very far explaining how the environment had shaped students' authoritarianism until I developed a questionnaire measure of the students' *experiences in life* with authorities, social conventions, dissenters, physical punishment, religion, and the other matters brought up on the RWA Scale. Four item-development studies during 1982–1984 eventually produced a twenty-four-statement Experiences Scale, which students were instructed to answer in terms of what had actually happened, *not* in terms of what their opinions were (EOF, pp. 343–349). The first item, for example, reads: "It has been my experience that physical punishment is an effective way to make people behave. (Have you received physical punishment or known others who did? If not, blacken the '0' bubble. If so, to what extent did it make you and/or others behave as intended?)" The second states: "I have known people with 'poor manners' who really did not care whether people thought they were respectable or not, and they seemed basically as good and pleasant as everybody else. (Have you personally known persons with poor manners, who did

not care if they were behaving respectably or not? If *not*, blacken the '0' bubble. If so, did they seem basically as good and pleasant as everybody else?)" These two items are intended to tap experiences that would presumably shape attitudes toward authoritarian aggression and conventionalism. Other items looked for seminal experiences regarding authoritarian submission. For example, "The authorities and officials I have trusted in my life, at home, in school, et cetera have always treated me honestly and fairly. (Has that been your experience?)"

Because the content of the Experiences Scale parallels that of the RWA Scale, I went to some length to dissociate the two tests in subjects' minds. Typically, I would administer one scale, and another experimenter would give out the other several weeks later, in different settings, in supposedly different experiments. Still, the correlation between the two measures always turned up around .70 (EOF, pp. 73–86). *We can therefore predict rather well how authoritarian a university student will be if we merely know his or her answers to the Experiences Scale.*

Cross-Replications. These studies were performed with Manitoba students and reported in Altemeyer, 1988. On October 24, 1989, David Hansen administered the RWA Scale for me to 183 SUNY-Potsdam students. Sixteen days later I visited his campus and gave out the Experiences Scale to 143 of these same participants. The surveys were printed on different size and color paper and answered on different bubble sheets, and no connection was made between the two studies by either experimenter. Yet the scores on the two scales correlated .71.

McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina (1990) had Western Kentucky University students administer the RWA Scale and the Experiences Scale (in the same booklet) to 124 adults. The two scores correlated .78.

Interpretation. I do not think for a second that we have experiences in life independent of all that has happened before. I believe that parents, peers, religion, schools, the media, and *previous* experiences help shape how we will encounter authorities, physical punishment, persons with poor manners, and so on, *and* how we will interpret those encounters. But life can still surprise us. We can be treated unfairly by authorities and know it; we can learn firsthand, from the back of a hand, that physical punishment often does not "work"; experiences with unconventional people can crash through our preconceptions.

A good example of the last was provided in a September 1985 study of the origin of students' attitudes toward homosexuals (EOF, pp. 166–170; see also p. 88). Most students indicated they had never known a homosexual. Those who did know one indicated that before this encounter they had rather neg-

ative attitudes toward gays and lesbians. Now they proved significantly more accepting than most people. This was even true of High RWAs. A few Highs met homosexuals and came away disliking homosexuals as much as ever. But most Highs, despite all their stereotypes and fears, became more tolerant and less prejudiced as a result.

The trouble is, most High RWAs had never (knowingly) met a homosexual. Nor, they said, had they gotten to know any dissenters or "unpatriotic" or nonreligious people either. They had had no close contact with nontraditional families. They had not taken advantage of the greater freedom young people have to explore and experiment. They had not broken rules, smoked things they should not smoke, or read verboten magazines under the covers by flashlight. They had not learned that their parents did not always know what was best for them, in their era with its new problems and angst. They had not had rebellious ideas or done unconventional things, and they were not friends with those who did.

All of these things, by the evidence (EOF, pp. 82–83, 88–89; McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina, 1990), tend to make adolescents *less* authoritarian. And Highs had taken a pass. So they remained highly authoritarian through adolescence, while most of their classmates became less so.

A SOCIAL LEARNING MODEL OF AUTHORITARIAN DEVELOPMENT

Integrating what we know so far, our best present model of how people become authoritarian, or nonauthoritarian, again proceeds from Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. This theory, like others, states that attitudes are shaped by the reinforcements and punishments administered by parents and others as we grow up. It allows that the joys and pains we get from our own experiences will be important, and that self-regulatory, self-evaluative cognitive processes ("I am a fair person"; "I believe in the truth") can reinforce as much as corn pone can. It also states that we will learn as much or more from observing *others* as we will from the personal blessings and batterings bestowed by the Law of Effect.

Direct Teachings. When we are young, we probably learn a lot about authoritarianism from direct teaching. *Obedience* is a key concept, and a battleground, for a two-year old, and parents do not usually hold seminars on civil disobedience with preschoolers. Indeed, in many families obedience remains a bottom-line condition for staying in the family home through adolescence, and beyond. Parents also teach their children to beware of certain threats, such as child molesters and kidnappers. We know from the accounts of both students and parents that as children, High RWA students were taught greater *fear* of these and many other "dangerous people" than others were (EOF, pp. 145–147). The child is directly taught, as well, social *conventions*

about dressing and undressing, eating and evacuating, playing and praying, speaking and sleeping—virtually everything he or she does from morning to night. "And sit up straight while reading this!"

Imitation. Other determined socializers, such as day-care staff, older siblings, grandparents, and Sunday school teachers usually reinforce the parents' attempts to reform the little barbarian in their midst. But besides making direct attempts at shaping, all these older, powerful figures can serve as models whom the child might imitate. Modeling appears to be an important channel of communication when it comes to authoritarian attitudes about society. Both students and parents agree that, with certain exceptions, the parents made only slight to moderate attempts to shape directly the attitudes measured by the RWA Scale (EOF, p. 100). Children therefore probably acquire a lot of their stereotypes from overhearing their elders talk. Television also provides many models, and out-groups.

Early Authoritarianism. We have no "kiddie version" of the RWA Scale, but if such a thing were possible, I believe we would find that children in elementary school are pretty authoritarian. They would believe they *should* obey the authorities in their world and *should* follow the rules (Piaget, 1965). We might even find some vestiges of authoritarian aggression (but nothing like *The Lord of the Flies*). However, right-wing authoritarianism, as I have defined it, probably does not begin coalescing into a personality trait until adolescence. Children's cognitive abilities are simply too limited at younger ages to grasp the issues and connect them.

As they begin the long transition to adulthood, their growing cognitive powers, their awareness of the wider world, and especially their *experiences* in that world can play havoc with the concepts and conditioned emotional responses they picked up in childhood. As they struggle to figure things out for themselves, their understanding increases and their attitudes become more organized—including their beliefs about authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism.

Unlike the Berkeley theory, which traced adult authoritarianism back to events in early childhood, this model says adolescence provides the real crucible. By the time people emerge from it, they have better-organized, more "adult" levels of understanding. As we saw in Chapter 1, the interitem correlation of introductory psychology students on the RWA Scale, and that of their friends from high school who did not go on to university (Holms, 1989), rival that of their parents.

An Illustrative Tale of Two Citizens. What particularly makes some people Highs, and others Lows, according to this social learning explanation?

Let's take two twelfth-grade public high school students, whom I usually name "Hugh" and "Lou," standing at their lockers at the beginning of another wonderful school day. Hugh grew up in a family that stressed dominance and obedience to authority. There is no presumption that his parents were brutes, just that he was taught in hundreds of ways to be "mindful" and "respectful" and "dutiful" within rather narrow tolerances. When he stepped over the line, he was punished, perhaps physically.

Hugh likely comes from a "traditional" family, with predictable gender roles and a pattern of social dominance. He probably was given a religious upbringing, and the family religion was very likely emphasized throughout his youth. The religion itself may have stressed submission to authorities, hostility toward "sinners," and strict observance of a firm moral code. And Hugh would have learned early on that the Truth was already known, so his job was not to find it but to memorize it.

Hugh would likely have been taught to identify with his family, his religion, an ethnic group if he had one, and his country. His parents also emphasized to him that the world harbored dangerous people. He has known for a long time who the "enemies," the "perverts," the "bad guys" are. His friends, his movies, his magazines, his clothes would likely have to meet parental approval, to make sure these did not contradict what had been taught in the home.

In other words, Hugh has been tied to a short leash that has kept him traveling in a relatively small, tight circle. (His parents wish it could be tighter; they would rather he go to a religious high school with others of his faith, one with the "right kind" of teachers.) This "within-group" factor has strongly influenced his "between-groups" interactions, in the jargon of statistics. He has had very few of the *experiences* in life that could change him, make him less submissive, less hostile toward the out-groups, less narrow-minded.

But Hugh does not mind the short leash. He believes that trustworthy authority, safety, and righteousness lie within his tight circle, while danger, evil, and damnation prey without. His friends, who gather around him before the bell rings, agree. (I know Hugh well; I was, in many particulars, Hugh.)

Slamming her locker shut down the hall is Lou, who is *not* one of Hugh's friends and who is—from the sound of it—going to give her teachers a hard time today. She comes from a family much less traditional, much more egalitarian than most. Lou had to obey when she was younger, but her parents—who probably had more formal education than Hugh's—understood and even felt gratified when she showed some independence. She was rarely, if ever, spanked.

Lou's parents did *not* teach her that authority was always right. Precious little "rendering unto Caesar" occurred around her dinner table. Rather than

accept dominance and competition as givens in life, she likely has been taught values of equality and cooperation. Furthermore, Lou may not have been raised in any religion, and if she was, it was not particularly emphasized—maybe because the religion itself did not insist on emphasis and strict devotion.

Lou was not raised with well-defined in-groups, nor was she taught that "different" people were probably dangerous and evil. Her parents may, in fact, have nurtured her awareness of social injustice and human diversity. She has probably traveled more, and seen more of the world, than Hugh. She has also increasingly chosen her own friends, clothes, "looks," activities, and (eventually) curfews, while her parents lie awake at 2:00 A.M. afraid the phone will ring. But disaster has not struck. Lou's experiences, her explorations, her experiments have proved largely benign and fulfilling.

Unlike Hugh, Lou did not learn from her mother and father that Truth was in the bag, or in a book. Instead, it was hers to discover. Her parents offered her guidance, but basically she had to question and decide things for herself. If Lou were to become very different from her folks—say, in religion—her parents might become upset, but not nearly as upset as Hugh's parents would be if he did the same.

As she joins *her* circle of friends before the bell rings, they have their morning gripe session and then talk about going to university next September. If Lou and Hugh go to my university and take introductory psychology, bet on Lou to score pretty low on the RWA Scale, and Hugh to be a definite High.

The Moderates. Lou and Hugh represent unusual cases, in which the circumstances of their respective pasts reinforced one another and pushed in one direction. Around them on the extremes of the RWA Scale distribution lie many others who got there by somewhat different routes. And between the extremes in a sample of 500 students we would find hundreds of others with hundreds of different backgrounds.

Most parents, for example, are not as restrictive as Hugh's but also not as white-knuckled permissive as Lou's. In-groups may have been identified, but less strenuously than they were in Hugh's family. But not many families deliberately jack up the children's social consciousness, as Lou's did. Unconventional behaviors and strange friends from different backgrounds are moderately accepted but hardly welcomed. Religion is present, but it does not dominate daily life. And so on.

On balance, the Moderates' *experiences* in adolescence made them less authoritarian than they had been earlier. They had gotten into disputes with their parents, teachers, the police, and came away feeling they had been unfairly treated. They had spotted hypocrisy in pews and privilege. They had enjoyed the independence a driver's license brought. They had met some dif-

ferent people and been "broadened." They had broken rules and had a good time.

But some broke the rules and got pregnant, or totaled the car, or got ensnared in a vicious drug habit. And some students grew up with a High RWA father and a Low RWA mother. Some had only one parent. Some effectively had none, and grew up on their own. There was probably a different family situation in every house on your block when you were growing up, and all the kids had their own set of experiences in life. Throw in possible genetic factors, and that is where the distribution of RWA scores comes from.

A SLIGHT DIGRESSION: GROUP COHESIVENESS

Let us recapture the image of those little knots of Hugh's friends and Lou's friends waiting for the homeroom bell. We would expect each cluster to have fairly homogeneous attitudes, would we not? We have known since the famous research of Newcomb (1961) that "birds of a feather flock together." That is how people consensually validate their opinions and create their social realities. But would we not also predict that the birds in Hugh's group will have to have more similar plumage than those in Lou's group? Because Hugh has been taught to travel in those "tight circles," will he not mind "difference" more?

I am not saying that Lou would welcome Hugh into her group. Respecting other people's choices does not mean you agree with them, want to spend your time with those people, or even like them. Lou will still feel most comfortable with those like herself, just as you and I do. But I do not think she would build fences around her friendships quite as high as Hugh would.

John Duckitt (1989) has proposed that right-wing authoritarianism is based on a need to identify with important groups. In 1990 he sent me a scale that he thought might measure his construct (Exhibit 3.1). I included these twenty-two items, joyously balanced against yea-saying, in a booklet administered to 422 Manitoba students in the fall of 1990. Their mean interitem correlation was .15, producing an alpha of .81. Summed scores connected .49 with the RWA Scale (which was in the right direction) and correlated a little *better* with attitudes toward Indians, Pakistanis, and Quebecois than the RWA Scale did.

Exhibit 3.1 Duckitt's Group Cohesiveness Scale

1. Our society cannot afford disunity in these difficult times.
2. Diversity in culture and lifestyle must be encouraged in any healthy society.*
3. It is absolutely vital that all true Canadians forget their differences to form a truly united and cohesive nation.

4. If our country is to survive and prosper, it is crucial that we Canadians submerge our differences and succeed in forging a common spirit, purpose, and identity.
5. Differing and even conflicting opinions and even ideologies are absolutely essential for a truly democratic Canadian society.*
6. One of the greatest problems confronting Canadians today is our failure to develop a true unity of purpose and dedication to a common Canadian heritage.
7. It is essential that we encourage rather than stifle dissent.*
8. Nationalism is the last refuge of the scoundrel.*
9. At all costs Canadians must begin to dedicate themselves to the creation of a strong and real sense of national identity.
10. Appeals to national unity and cohesion can easily lead to the oppression of minorities and the stifling of dissent.*
11. It is unlikely that Canada will survive in the long run unless we can bring ourselves to forget our petty differences and disagreements, and pull together as a single united people.
12. In the long run our cultural and ideological differences will make us a healthier, more creative, and stronger society.*
13. Those who would like to push Canadians into a common national identity are ultimately the enemies of liberty.*
14. If we could only create a truly united Canadian people, there will be no difficulty or danger we could not overcome.
15. The greatest asset of our society is our diversity.*
16. If we Canadians cannot achieve total agreement on our national goals, we will never overcome the difficulties confronting us.
17. People who continually emphasize the need for unity will ultimately stifle creativity and impoverish our society.*
18. The most important task for Canadians today is that of developing a strong national identity.
19. Independent thinking and the readiness to be different and express one's individuality are signs of a strong and healthy society.*
20. Unity means strength, and a strong united nation is absolutely essential for progress and prosperity.
21. Most of all our society needs creative and freethinking people who have the courage not to conform to old fashioned ways and traditions even if this upsets many people.*

22. What we need most of all in this country is a single-minded dedication to the task of creating a truly united Canadian nation without petty squabbling and disagreements.

Note: Items are answered on a -4 to +4 basis.

* Item is worded in the contrait direction; the cohesive response is to disagree.

These results encouraged me to try to improve the Group Cohesiveness Scale, for which Professor Duckitt may understandably not be thankful and should not be held responsible. I thought the original set was too nation-oriented to reflect a *general* personality trait. So I tried to broaden its scope to include other groups, developing (over five studies involving 1,175 students and 337 parents) such items as:

For any group to succeed, all its members have to give it their complete loyalty.

If you are a true member of a group, you will support it when it's wrong, not criticize it like some outsider.

Anyone who works for a company owes it loyalty and "team spirit" against outsiders.

People who belong to the same religion should NOT stick together as much as possible. [contrait]

People can easily lose their individuality in groups that stress "being a good, loyal member." [contrait]

Members of a family do NOT need to be loyal to each other in all things. [contrait]

Broadening the content of the scale naturally weakened its internal consistency. My best revised Group Cohesiveness Scale, twenty-six items answered by 252 students in October 1992, had a mean interitem correlation of .13 and an alpha of .80. It correlated .52 with the RWA Scale. But its relationship with scores on my Ethnocentrism Scale came in at only .23, whereas the RWA scale correlated .43 with Ethnocentrism. Cohesiveness also did not correlate as well with continued acceptance of the home religion (.21 versus .44), nor differentiate political party preference as well.²

We can conclude that right-wing authoritarians, as we would expect from their background of tight circles, believe in group cohesiveness, group loyalty, group identification, unity before "outsiders," and so on. Slogans such as "America: Love it or leave it" and "My country, right or wrong" would come easily from them. But to the extent that I have been able to operationalize

John Duckitt's interesting construct, authoritarianism does not appear to be *basically* caused by a need for group identification.

EFFECTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Getting back to our developmental model of right-wing authoritarianism, we have gotten people to university and found we could explain their RWA scores at that point rather well in terms of their backgrounds and the experiences they had in life. What happens to them now? Does development stop once they have answered the RWA Scale in introductory psychology?

Probably not. The social learning model underlying our explanation does *not* hold that personality is cast in iron at some particular age, and thereafter only chipped away at the edges. As long as new learning can occur, new role models can emerge, new circumstances can pop up out of the blue, and new experiences can give us thrills or a poke in the eye, our social attitudes can change.

The attitudes of some university students can be walloped by—university. And not just because their marvelous professors expose them to a wider range of ideas. As well, they encounter a wider range of peers at a school whose catchment area is the world. Furthermore, if higher education usually lowers RWA scores, it should particularly lower those of High RWAs, since they have been traveling in those tight circles up to this point and have more to learn from the new experiences.

A longitudinal study conducted between September 1982 and May 1986 confirmed all this (EOF, pp. 91–95). RWA scores were obtained from 26 liberal arts majors (excluding psychology), 32 commerce majors, and 18 nursing students who were about to graduate. All had filled out the RWA Scale when they first entered university nearly four years earlier. Lo and behold, their authoritarianism had dropped significantly over the interval in all programs, about 11% overall, with the liberal arts students dropping more than the others. Freshman *High* RWAs dropped more than twice as much over the years as the freshman *Lows* did. So they, and our society, were well served by their university experience.

LIFE AFTER UNIVERSITY: THE FIRST ALUMNI STUDY

Well then, does change stop once we stop going to school? The evidence again says "No." In May 1986, at the same time I was contacting those graduating seniors, I also mailed solicitous letters and a one-page survey to 160 Manitoba alumni who had answered the RWA Scale *twelve* years earlier, in the fall of 1974 (EOF, pp. 95–99).³ Reminded of this highlight of their undergraduate career, 90 (of however many I reached) completed the test again and told me a little about themselves. Most of them (58) had gone on to some form of postgraduate education, with the whole sample averaging 17.6 years of formal

schooling. Their mean age was 30.3 years, most were (65) or had been (6) married, and 48 had children. Their first-borns averaged 3.5 years of age.

What do we expect here? Since these folks went to school a lot, their RWA scores should have been at least 10% lower than they were as freshmen. And overall, their authoritarianism *had* dropped over the intervening twelve years, but only about 5%. Maybe their teachers in the mid-1970s were not so hot. Or could their authoritarianism have gone down “a lot” at university but then rebounded. What could have caused this?

I did not have to look far. The participants *without* children—nearly half the sample—had RWA scores 9% lower than they had had at age 18. The ones with kids (who had had the same levels of authoritarianism as introductory psychology students as those who remained childless, and just as much education) were virtually back where they had started. They had “fully recovered” from the beneficial effects of their university experience. And their children were still tots! My RWA score shot up about 20 points, along with my blood pressure, while our children were ricocheting through adolescence.

FURTHER EVIDENCE: THE SECOND ALUMNI STUDY

On May 2, 1994, I repeated this alumni study, sending out surveys to 138 Manitoba graduates who had served in a study I ran in September 1976—nearly eighteen years earlier.⁴ Three of these were returned by the postal service as undeliverable. By June 7, when I mailed the feedback letters, I had received completed surveys from 87 alumni. This response rate of 64% slightly bettered that obtained in the first alumni study. As in 1986, one of the alumni exercised an option to remove the survey number from the questionnaire, reducing the sample available for longitudinal analysis to 86.

The survey consisted of two table-setters and the same twenty-eight-item RWA Scale that had evolved from the 1976 experiment—answered now as then on a -3 to +3 basis. Then I asked for various bits of demographic information, including the ages of any reproductive gambles. I further inquired (on a -2 to +2 scale) how religious they were now, in beliefs and in practices, compared to when they had entered university. I asked each alumnus to chart broadly, on a graph I provided, how “liberal or conservative” their attitudes on the surveyed (RWA) issues had been at various ages, starting at 18. The questionnaire ended with a request for an explanation of any big changes on their graphs.

Sample Characteristics. Forty-five of the respondents were females, 41 males. Their mean age was 36.1 years, with the solid majority being either 35 or 36. Their mean level of education was 17.9 years, comparable to the first alumni study's 17.6. Seven of them had never been married. Six others had been married and now were divorced. The other 73 were married, almost all

of them for the first time. The seven unmarried alumni had no children, and so did 17 other respondents. The other 62 had children, 43 of them having two. The children ranged in age from six months to 16 years. The oldest child averaged 7.7 years. Only three of these alumni had teenagers.

These 86 alumni cannot be considered representative of any larger group, not even of my university's graduates. They went to school for a long time, they allowed the alumni office to keep in touch with them, *and* they answered my request. Most of them still lived in Winnipeg, and all but 8 still lived in Canada. As a group they are Canadian urban professionals, married with children.

Most of them were born in 1958, were just reaching adolescence when the 1960s turned into the 1970s, and entered university as the class of 1980. There they served in a crummy old psychology experiment for which they received no meaningful feedback, and whose results sat in a file drawer for 18 years while they lived the second half of their lives. Until one day out of the blue, the crummy old psychologist asked them to serve science once again.

Results. The intercorrelation of responses to the twenty-eight RWA Scale items averaged .22, yielding an alpha of .89 on this go around—a little higher than that obtained in 1976. But individual scores proved much less stable, the “eighteen-year test-retest reliability” being .59. (The 1986 “twelve-year test-retest reliability” had been .62.) Many people had changed a great deal.

Transposing the means to equivalence with a thirty-item test answered on a -4 to +4 basis, the 86 alumni had a mean score of 153.5 in 1976, and a significantly *lower* mean of 140.0 in 1994. The 24 alumni who were *not* parents (who had gone to school for 18.0 years on average) showed a significant drop of 28.3 points, from 158.9 to 130.6 (or 18%). The 62 alumni who had experienced the bliss of 2:00 A.M. feedings, tooth eruption, and the Terrible Twos, who had 17.8 years of education, also showed a drop, of 7.8 points, from 151.3 to 143.5 (or 5%), which also was significant ($t = 2.06$; $p < .05$). (But the drop among the nonparents was significantly larger.)

Not everyone dropped, naturally. One person shot up 57 points. But 9 others *fell* more than that, including 4 parents. One parent, a rather high 172 at age 18, now scored a very low 64.

As before, people who were relatively authoritarian at age 18 changed the most; initial RWA scores correlated .47 with the amount of subsequent drop. Females and males dropped equally. I had thought that the *longer* parents had been stepping on Lego pieces in their bare feet, the higher their RWA scores would have rebounded. But the correlation equaled only .11 (which is not statistically significant).

The alumni had some insight into what had happened to them, and why. They almost always thought their years at university had been liberalizing.

But most of them (47) thought their present responses to the items would be more "conservative" than they had been as introductory psychology students, whereas actually the solid majority of them (61) scored lower on the RWA Scale. (Eleven thought their attitudes had not changed, 20 thought they would be more liberal now, and 8 did not answer the question.) The parents did not sense how powerfully those little bundles of joy had apparently changed their attitudes. Only 18 of the 62 moms and dads mentioned parenthood as one of the factors that had affected them, and only 5 of these listed it first. Other answers that appeared often ("Life experiences," "More responsibility," "Getting realistic," and "Changes in society") undoubtedly referred to raising children in some cases, but also potentially to other things.⁵

Discussion. Basically, the results confirm the first alumni study. Higher education apparently lowered the authoritarianism of most of these people, especially the Highs who began to experience the wider world (as some of them noted in their comments). The alumni who remained childless stayed low after finishing their educations—a period of many years now, during which they grew older and wealthier, advanced in their careers, and probably acquired a mortgage. These and the other things that are *supposed* to make us more conservative as we grow older could *not* have had much of an impact upon these people's authoritarianism, for they still fall substantially below their freshman RWA level.

But those who became parents apparently bounced back up. In this study, unlike the one in 1986, the parents did not quite rebound to their freshman levels (despite being parents longer than their 1986 counterparts). But they nevertheless ended up close to their initial scores.

I am struck by the considerable changes that occurred in the *second* half of many of these lives. The data hardly confirm Freudian notions that adult personality is set by the age of six. The "formative years" seem to extend to age thirty-six at least!

Finally, I am also impressed by the direction of the change. Because of the large amounts of university experience these people had, their RWA scores dropped a lot. Parenthood ratcheted these scores back up, but even the parents remained significantly less authoritarian than they were as young adults. Although this may disappear once the children hit adolescence, I find it remarkable that these "thirty-somethings" were still less authoritarian than they had been at age eighteen. (Remember the warning, "Never trust anyone *over* thirty"?) We do not, it seems, inevitably grow more conservative as we grow older.

FURTHER CAUSES OF CHANGES IN ADULT AUTHORITARIANISM: SOCIETAL CHANGES

Some of the alumni parents just discussed said that "changes in society" had affected their attitudes. They could well be right. Evidence indicates that major

social events can shift our level of authoritarianism at any point in our adult lives. As the winds of crisis blow, we can become less authoritarian than before, or more so.

As an example, the items on the first version of the RWA Scale could only become relatively unglued over time because they had been strongly bonded in the first place—probably by the civil rights movement, the war in Vietnam, and Watergate. These social upheavals had split American society down to its family roots, polarizing opinions and creating a New Left that challenged the wisdom and integrity of the Establishment and its authorities. Their open talk of revolution accompanied by the battles in the street caused many others to recoil away from them, toward the real winner of the 1968 Democratic national convention in Chicago, Richard Nixon.

The RWA Scale was first used at the end of this era, and its continuous employment at my university ever since lets us see how levels of student authoritarianism have changed over the years. We saw in Figure 2.1 that scores on the Continuing Twelve rose fairly steadily from 1973 until 1987. Then they started a gradual decline that has gotten us, by 1995, essentially back to the levels of the late 1970s and early 1980s. *How* did these changes take place, and *why*?

How? The *rise* occurred basically because the low end of the RWA Scale distribution (in absolute terms) wilted and died. ("Where have all the flowers gone?") At the same time, the number of "slightly" and "moderately" High RWA students increased (EOF, pp. 24–27). ("Gone to business school, every one.") Table 3.1 updates this breakdown of the Continuing Twelve scores. One can see that the pendulum is swinging back, that more Lows and fewer Highs are showing up each year.

Why? Well, Lows probably waned in the first place because the societal issues that nurtured their development in the late 1960s and early 1970s largely disappeared. The civil rights movement drifted to the back pages of newspapers, the war in Vietnam ended, Nixon resigned. But why then did so many young people Velcro themselves onto Ronald Reagan, Brian Mulroney, and Margaret Thatcher? They may have concluded that "conservatives" had the answers liberals lacked.

Why the *drop* then? We are getting some of the children of the flower children now. If you had a child in 1970, he or she would have entered university in 1988 or later. But also some *young* people may have decided that the conservatives do not have the answers and it's time to give the liberals a try. If the times they are a-changing (again), people entering adulthood could be a-changing too.

SOCIETAL THREAT AND SHIFTS IN ADULT AUTHORITARIANISM

A number of writers have presented archival evidence that when American society experiences high levels of social threat, authoritarianism increases

Table 3.1 Distribution of summed scores of Continuing Twelve items among students, 1973–1995

Year	N	Very Low (%)	Moderately low (%)	Slightly low (%)	Slightly high (%)	Moderately high (%)	Very high (%)
1973	976	3.5	11.2	30.9	40.2	13.2	1.0
1979	527	1.3	6.5	31.3	43.8	16.0	1.1
1985	533	0.2	2.8	22.5	51.2	22.0	1.3
1991	902	0.6	3.9	25.9	52.4	16.9	0.3
1995	1070	0.7	5.9	27.2	46.9	18.1	1.2

Note: When RWA Scale items were answered on a -3 to +3 basis (from 1973 through 1979), "very low RWA" meant scores on these twelve items ranged from 12 to 24, "moderately low" from 25 to 36, "slightly low" from 37 to 48, "slightly high" from 49 to 60, "moderately high" from 61 to 72, and "very high" from 73 to 84. When a nine-point (-4 to +4) response scale was adopted for the RWA Scale in 1980, the categories above were redefined as 12–28, 29–44, 45–60, 61–76, 77–92, and 93–108, respectively.

within its people. Economic disaster such as the Great Depression seemed to boost conversion to "authoritarian religions" (Sales, 1972) and elevate authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and other elements of the Berkeley model of the authoritarian personality (Sales, 1973). Periods of high inflation, strikes, and terrorist bombings can also threaten society. Doty, Peterson, and Winter (1991) took these and other indicators into account and found archival evidence of an overall rise in the many traits of "Berkeley authoritarianism" during the relatively threatening years 1983–1987.

Archival evidence convinces me less than laboratory experiments.⁶ But we cannot run laboratory experiments on societies, and the conclusion that social threat leads to increases in right-wing authoritarianism is buttressed by many chilling historical examples, most notably what happened in Germany in the early 1930s. I have tried to study the factors involved in such cases through role-playing experiments conducted in the mid-1980s.

This role-playing convinces one even less than archival studies do, because I was asking participants to *imagine* how they would feel under various circumstances in the future (EOF, pp. 289–310). People sitting in a quiet testing situation almost certainly underestimate how disturbed they would get if their world actually came crashing down around their ears. But we might still learn something by comparing "imaginings" from one situation to another.

First, as a control condition, university students who had already completed the RWA Scale were asked to reanswer the test, imagining they were twenty years older, well off, and the parents of teen-aged children. Overall, they imagined they would become a little more authoritarian as a result.

Then, in another condition, I also threw in economic turmoil in Canada twenty years ahead accompanied by a violent *left-wing* upheaval. Students' role-played RWA scores shot up nearly three times as much as the control groups had.

But when I presented a scenario involving economic turmoil and a violent *right-wing* coup within the government that seemed about to destroy democracy, students did *not* react by becoming *less* right-wing authoritarian. Instead, their RWA scores did not differ significantly from the Controls'.

I repeated the experiment with a sample of parents and got the same overall results: a violent left-wing threat produced a significant rise in projected authoritarianism. But a violent right-wing threat did *not* reduce RWA.

The violent left-wing threat to democracy in these rosy futures involved street violence and urban riots aimed at toppling the government, whereas the right-wing threat came from the government itself, from the top down. How would people react to a violent right-wing movement dedicated to overthrowing the government through violence in the streets? I wrote a "Brownshirts" scenario about an extremist right-wing group that was battling the police in the streets, trying to destroy their political opponents by force, and urging that their leader be given dictatorial power.

Students (and parents) reacted to this scenario by becoming significantly *more* authoritarian, probably hoping the government would crush the extremists. Thus people seem spring-loaded to become more right-wing authoritarian when there is trouble in the streets. But that is exactly the direction an authoritarian leader would want them to go. (If you put these two violent right-wing scenarios together, you have a generally faithful rendering of how the Nazis seized power in Germany. A lot of street violence between the Communists and the Nazis led to electoral victory for the latter. The Nazis portrayed themselves as the defenders of law and order even though Hitler had tried to overthrow the government by force himself, earlier, and his Stormtroopers were causing most of the violence. Once installed as chancellor at the head of a minority government, Hitler seized dictatorial power "temporarily" from the top following the Reichstag fire, to the cheers and relief of millions. The role-players in my experiments appear to have "reacted" in the same way that masses of Germans did in the early 1930s.)

Back to the future. I next determined that *nonviolent* left-wing protest movements did not raise RWA scores nearly as much as violent left-wing protests did. My nonviolent movement was forceful. It held "widespread but peaceful demonstrations" involving large "well-controlled protest marches." Speakers at rallies severely criticized the government, but the audience listened politely to government spokespersons. Many demonstrators carried out acts of civil disobedience, forcing the authorities to arrest them. But the protests were always peaceful, and the role-playing subjects recoiled little.

Finally, I discovered that if a government brutally repressed nonviolent left-wing protestors, participants indicated they would become significantly *less* authoritarian. If inducing left-wing protestors to become violent is the "Nixon trap," inducing a government to use violence against nonviolent protestors can be called the "Gandhi trap."

I should note that in the many scenarios in which I found the role-players became *more* authoritarian, the High RWA subjects did not go up all that much. (They already believed the world teetered on the edge of chaos.) Instead, the Moderate and Low RWA students jumped up the most. Perhaps they would only become more authoritarian *temporarily*. But "temporarily" was all Hitler needed to seize power and eventually plunge the world into the most murderous war of all time.⁷

A Summing Up

What causes personal authoritarianism? It may be genetically determined to some extent. But while a plausible theoretical case for DNA roots can be advanced, the evidence for genetic factors is presently inconsistent and unconvincing.

We can predict introductory psychology students' RWA scores rather accurately if we know whether they have had certain *experiences* in life. The critical period for the development of adult authoritarianism, in terms of these experiences, is probably adolescence.

But we also have evidence that authoritarianism can shift back and forth during adulthood. Higher education usually lowers it, especially among High RWAs. It appears that getting older, *per se*, does *not* cause RWA scores to climb. But becoming parents likely will. We know that levels of right-wing authoritarianism in university students change periodically over time, perhaps even cyclically, arguably in reaction to the events of the preceding era.

Finally, it seems likely that violent societal threats affect the level of authoritarianism within a country. But people appear much more likely to head for the high end of the RWA Scale during such times than for the low end, no matter who is threatening democracy.

— 4 —

The Cognitive Behavior of Authoritarians

In this chapter we shall consider five related lines of evidence about how right-wing authoritarians think and make decisions. All of these cognitive tendencies can be deduced from what we already know about the authoritarian. In particular, they follow fairly directly from authoritarian submission itself and the way High RWAs are often brought up.

Compared with others, authoritarians have not spent much time examining evidence, thinking critically, reaching independent conclusions, and seeing whether their conclusions mesh with the other things they believe. Instead, they have largely accepted what they were told by the authorities in their lives, which leaves them with time for other things, but which also leaves them underpracticed in thinking for themselves. We shall see how this deficiency puts authoritarians themselves at risk, as well as the society in which High RWAs properly have as much right as anyone else to say what our policies should be, and who shall lead us.

The relationships uncovered in this chapter are not large. But by the time you finish it, you may feel you understand authoritarians—and maybe even some recent history—better.

Ability to Make Correct Inferences

We shall begin this exploration in the summer of 1989 in a jury room in the most northwest corner of the mainland United States: Port Angeles, Washington. Within, a group of men and women are trying to break a deadlock over a criminal case, and one of them, a Ph.D. student in psychology named Mary Wegmann, cannot believe what she is hearing. Certain members of the

jury, she thinks, have an amazing tendency to misremember evidence and to make erroneous inferences. As she listens to the arguments going to and fro, it seems to her that the people who cannot remember the trial evidence correctly, and who are leaping to the wrong conclusions, are authoritarians.

Mary Wegmann's inference, in turn, could have been the wrongest in the room. But she was in a position to put it to a test, as she had hit upon her dissertation topic while performing her civic duty.

Dr. Wegmann (1992) (to take the suspense out of the personal story) solicited volunteers from the student body at Peninsula College and from the recent jury pool in Clallam County, Washington, for a study of "ability of the general public to recall conflicting opinions." Volunteers were screened by telephone for perceptual handicaps and reading difficulties and then given an appointment at a computer lab on the college campus. There they were helped to feel comfortable working at a terminal, and tested to make sure their reading comprehension and short-term memory were adequate for the experiment. Then they spent an hour or more, at their own pace, answering the RWA Scale via the computer and learning about the "conflicting opinions."

The fifty students and twenty-nine jurors who participated read a pair of pro and con essays on socialized medicine on the monitor screen for as long as they wanted. Afterward, they answered questions, also on screen, about each essay. They did the same for a pair of essays on corporal punishment in schools. Then they *listened* to ten minutes of a *McNeill/Lehrer News Hour* report on a school segregation court ruling, in which two lawyers debated the merits of the outcome. The subjects then answered questions about what they had heard. Finally, they answered Watson and Glasser's (1980) Critical Thinking Appraisal Test via the computer.

In both samples, High RWAs had more trouble accurately remembering the material they had just read (r 's of $-.37$ for students, $-.46$ for jurors) and heard ($r = -.36, -.15$), and making correct inferences on the critical reasoning test ($r = -.42$ and $-.49$). For each sample, RWA correlated $-.47$ with *overall* ability to remember and reason properly, which is what Mary Wegmann had noticed in the heat of a deadlocked jury.

These results surprised me because I had never discovered Highs to differ from Lows in "intellectual" skills. In the fall of 1980 I had found no RWA correlation with students' performance on the Wonderlic Intelligence Test—a group-administered "twelve-minute dash" through the usual IQ fields of vocabulary, comprehension, and so on. I also had established several times that High RWAs did as well in introductory psychology as others. At one point I had also given out abstract-reasoning tests to my students, such as "If some A are B, and no B are C, is it true that no A can be C?" (Nope.) I found that most of them did not have a clue; they thought almost everything was true. So Mary Wegmann's findings intrigued me.

I was particularly interested in the results of the "inferences test," because I thought people accustomed to agreeing with authorities would be weak at drawing their own conclusions. So in 1991 and 1992 I gave the correct-inferences test Wegmann had used to over 800 students. Both times I found Highs did significantly worse on it than others. The relationships came in somewhat smaller than those Wegmann had found, but in my experiments subjects could look back in their booklets at the evidence under discussion whereas in Wegmann's study that information had been replaced on the computer screen. (And Highs still had trouble making correct inferences.) In both experiments, High RWAs particularly had trouble recognizing decidedly *false* inferences.

I do not mean to imply that right-wing authoritarians believe everything is true. They carry quite a list of "false teachings" and rejected ideologies in their heads. But they usually learned which ideas are bad in the same way they learned which ones are good—from the authorities in their lives. Highs therefore have more trouble identifying falsehoods on their own because they are not as prepared to think critically. They learned to yea-say instead, and "agree" usually leaps to their tongue faster than "disagree"—as we saw in Chapter 2. So if an inference *is* true, they will have a good chance at "getting it right." But should it be false, they often will not notice.

Suppose, then, a vicious, outlandishly false rumor spreads through a community. Suppose an unfair stereotype circulates through a society. Suppose someone tells a Big Lie. Who will be inclined to believe these things, right off the bat, *before we even consider the content* of the rumor, stereotype, and lie?

Agreement with Contradictory Ideas

To the extent that we copy other people's opinions, rather than critically evaluate them and decide for ourselves, we can end up believing a lot of contradictory ideas. Our heads can become depositories for slogans, conventional wisdom, "well-established facts," things that "They say . . ." and religious quotations, each kept in its own compartment (like my teaching department and research department), and pulled out as the situation demands. These beliefs can be antithetical, but as long as our thinking remains highly compartmentalized, we shall probably not notice.

One can cite many examples of compartmentalized thinking in Highs. In the United States, High RWAs would be particularly offended at any suggestion that children stop saying the Pledge of Allegiance in school. I suspect that, if they had their way, we would say it right after we sang the "Star Spangled Banner" at every football, basketball, and baseball game—and then again during the seventh-inning-stretch, just in case we had forgotten what we stood for while we were standing. But curiously, two of the things we stand for are

stated in the conclusion of the pledge: "with liberty and justice for all." No matter how many times Highs say the Pledge of Allegiance, with hands over hearts and heads bowed, they seldom seem to connect those words with the rest of their thinking.

American Highs have been mightily offended by the Supreme Court ruling against prayer in public schools. In Canada children used to recite the Lord's Prayer routinely at the beginning of the school day, until it was challenged in the courts. The case aroused the fury of those who believe in school prayer. These people probably have read the Bible a great deal, but they seem to have missed that Jesus himself was against public prayer, saying we should go into a closet and shut the door when we say the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:5-13)—the very prayer Highs wanted said aloud in public schools. (Right-wing authoritarians also have a pronounced double standard about teaching religion in public school, as we shall see in the next chapter.)

You can find many compartmentalized religious ideas in Highs' thinking, starting with the statement they will often make that every word in the Bible is literally true—even the passages that contradict one another on the same page. (For instance, how many animals of each kind did Noah take into the ark? Compare Genesis 6:19 with Genesis 7:2.) But the writings they compartmentalize the most appear, ironically, in the Gospels, which contain many hard to accept "soft" teachings.

In March 1985, I asked students what they thought of Jesus' admonition during the Sermon on the Mount, "Do not judge, that you may not be judged. For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged" (Matthew 7:1). I also asked about Jesus' resolution of the proposed stoning of the adulteress: "Let he who is without sin among you be the first to cast a stone at her."

Twenty Christian Highs said we should take the teachings literally. Twenty-seven other Christian Highs said we *should* judge and punish others, but none of them explained how they reconciled this view with Jesus' teachings. Apparently, they "believed" both (contradictory) things. But the kicker came when I looked at various measures of authoritarian aggression I had gathered from these students. No matter what they *said* they believed, both these groups of Highs were quick with the stones on the Attitudes toward Homosexuals Scale, the Ethnocentrism Scale, and Posse-Homosexuals (EOF, pp. 222-224).

FURTHER STUDIES

I encountered blatant self-contradiction in the thinking of High RWAs by accident in the fall of 1988 when I tried to develop a Social-Justice Attitude Scale. I asked 393 students to respond to twelve statements about why some people are rich and others are poor. As is my wont, I wrote six items that said, essentially, people get what they deserve in life, while the other six said

that some unfortunate people get treated very unfairly. Unfortunately for me, the responses to the set of items showed little interitem consistency, so the Social Justice Scale never had a chance. (It was not my first "Little Scale That Couldn't.")

When I picked through the psychometric rubble, I found that the twelve items held together quite nicely among the Low RWAs, who typically said, (1) people do *not* always get what they deserve, and (2) some people *are* treated very unfairly. The problems arose among the Highs, who typically said, (1) people *do* get what they deserve in life, and (2) some people *are* treated very unfairly. To be specific, High RWAs tended to agree with such items as "If poor people really wanted to, they could 'pull themselves up by their bootstraps'" and "A person can have lots of drive and determination, but still *not* get very far in life because of discrimination against their sex or race."

If you are one of the heroes who read the methodology chapter of this book, you know that we again have here the bane of poor, honest test developers: High RWAs' tendency to yea-say. But yea-saying does not flow just from confusion or apathy. It can also come from a tendency to "think out of both sides of our heads." The authoritarian with compartmentalized thinking can piously agree that life treats many unfairly and yet also believe that everyone in America has equal opportunity. Highs will say, "racial prejudice does exist. I am against it. I am not myself prejudiced. Why some of my best friends . . ." But they will also say, "Everybody knows 'those people' have chosen to live that way. Otherwise they wouldn't."

FURTHER STUDIES OF SELF-CONTRADICTION

Wondering if Highs would "think with a forked brain" on other issues, I asked 238 students in February 1990 to respond to ten pairs of statements adapted from Tomkins's (1965) Polarity Scale. Each pair supposedly represented opposite opinions on some issue. For example: "If human beings were really honest with each other, there would be a lot more anger and hostility in the world," versus "If human beings were really honest with each other, there would be a lot more sympathy and friendship in the world."

Students trudging through my booklet first encountered ten of Tomkins's statements at the bottom of a page, which they answered on the usual -4 to +4 basis. When they turned the page over, they encountered the "opposites," in somewhat different order, at the top of the back side. (See Exhibit 4.1).

Exhibit 4.1 Ten Contradictory Pairs of Items

1. If human beings were really honest with each other, there would be a lot more anger and hostility in the world.

2. A government should allow total freedom of expression, even if it threatens law and order.
3. If an individual breaks the law, it is NOT always to society's advantage that he be punished.
4. Human beings should be treated with respect only when they deserve respect.
5. Children should be taught to strictly obey their parents, even though they may not always feel like it.
6. Fear can make the bravest man tremble. We should not condemn failure of nerve.
7. Reason and objective facts are the chief means by which human beings make great discoveries.
8. The trouble with democracy is that it usually represents the will of all the people, instead of just the best people.
9. The most important duty of any government is the maintenance of law and order.
10. Parents should first of all be gentle and tender with their children.

[Page is turned over.]

11. If an individual breaks the law, he should be punished for the good of society.
12. If human beings were really honest with each other, there would be a lot more sympathy and friendship in the world.
13. A government should only allow freedom of expression so long as it does not threaten law and order.
14. Faith, not reason, is the chief means by which human beings make great discoveries.
15. All human beings should be treated with respect at all times.
16. Children should be encouraged to express themselves and seek their own ways, even though parents may not always like it.
17. Cowardice is despicable and in a soldier should be severely punished.
18. The trouble with democracy is that it seldom represents the will of the people.
19. Parents should first of all be firm and uncompromising with their children; spare the rod and spoil the child.
20. The most important duty of any government is to promote the welfare of *all* the people.

I found, not surprisingly, a lot of consistent answering. Some people have at least as much internal consistency as some psychological tests do. And others probably noticed they were covering the same ground again, checked back, and got their act together. But I also found considerable inconsistency, as people often agreed with both a statement and its opposite. Lows gave yea-yea responses 114 times, and Highs did 174 times ($p < .05$). (Lows had a nonsignificant tendency to "nay-nay" more than Highs did, 60–47.)

I repeated this experiment with 211 students the following month and got nearly identical results. Lows showed more consistent answering overall than Highs. They again had a nonsignificant tendency to "nay-nay" more than Highs, while Highs proved significantly more likely than Lows to agree with both parts of a seemingly contradictory pair.

In September 1990 I administered eight contradictory pairs to 466 students. Most of the pairs came from the previous studies, but I also dealt in a few of my own, such as "When it comes to love, men and women with opposite points of view are attracted to each other ('opposites attract')," versus " 'Birds of a feather flock together' when it comes to love." The results proved essentially the same: Low RWAs answered "nay-nay" slightly more than High RWAs did, while Highs gave "yea-yea" responses significantly more than Lows did. The same thing happened among 235 parents tested the next month.

So High RWAs contradict themselves more often than Lows, and apparently do not notice it, even when the contradiction occurs within a minute or so. They appear to examine ideas less than most people do. You do not get the feeling they have considered many notions and just "squeezed" them. Instead they seem to be, like Sancho Panza, suckers for slogans and sayings.

As I always say, "It takes one to know one." So how come I do not realize my own compartmentalized thinking? Well, we do not come equipped with self-diagnostic programs. We often need others to point out the inconsistencies in our thoughts. I get such loving help all the time, sometimes prefaced with "You sexist pig!" as I try to unlearn a lifetime of gender conditioning. Oddly, women tend to correct my sexist statements more than my male-bonded buddies do. For some reason, people who think as I do tend *not* to notice the inconsistencies in my beliefs. But that is probably another reason why High RWAs do not realize how compartmentalized and contradictory their ideas are, for (compared to others) they tend to surround themselves more exclusively with people who agree with them.

What Is "Our Most Serious Problem"?

Authoritarians' shortfalls at critical thinking and tendencies to yea-say also surface if you ask them if some particular social problem is our most serious problem. I first discovered this in January 1990 when I asked 300 students if

they thought "the 'drug problem,' and the crime it causes, are the *most* serious problems in our country today." I found that 74% of the Highs, compared with 44% of the Lows, said drugs were problem number one ($p < .001$).

I was not knocked off my horse by the news that Highs considered the drug problem more serious than Lows did. But I was surprised that, three-quarters of the Highs thought it, of all our social ills, was our *most* serious problem. Yet when I asked 238 other students the following month if they thought "the destruction of the family" was our most serious problem, 84% of the Highs wrote "Yes," compared with 38% of the Lows ($p < .001$).

So which one constitutes our most serious problem, drugs or the destruction of the family? They may be related to some extent, but they are not the same thing. Furthermore, when I asked 209 students the following fall if they thought the loss of religion and commitment to God represented the most serious problem afflicting our society, 72% of the Highs said "Yes," compared with 3% of the Lows ($p < .001$). Thus *several* different things are all "our *most* serious problem," in the not altogether reflective minds of right-wing authoritarians.

Perhaps Lows would also overreact if we highlighted their concerns. Indeed, when I asked 211 students in March 1990 if "the destruction of the environment" was our most serious problem, 66% of the Lows agreed. But so did 60% of the Highs ($p > .50$). And when the following fall I polled 213 others on whether "the destruction of individual freedom" was our greatest problem, only 44% of the Lows said "Yes," as did 25% of the Highs ($p > .20$). In January 1991 I tried "poverty"; 35% of the Lows, and 34% of the Highs, agreed it was our most serious problem ($p > .50$).

In summary, when I proposed to university students that something was our biggest problem, Low RWAs usually disagreed—even when I mentioned issues Lows are particularly concerned about. And High RWAs agreed nearly as much as Lows that problems *on the Low RWA agenda* were our biggest trouble. When I lobbed issues from the Highs' own agenda before them, most of them said this, that, and the next thing were all "our most serious problem." When it came to the danger of the drug problem, etcetera, most Highs found it hard to "Just say 'No.'"

Well so what? What is so bad about Highs being a little sloppy in their use of terms? Well, it is more serious than that; the "biggest problem" data speak to more than just imprecision in the authoritarian mind. High RWAs stand about ten steps closer to the panic button than the rest of the population. They see the world as a more dangerous place than most others do, with civilization on the verge of collapse and the world of Mad Max looming just beyond. As we saw earlier, their parents taught them the world was dangerous, and the resulting fear drives a lot of their aggression. Ask the militias training in the woods.

Look back at the RWA Scale items in Chapter 1. Notice how many talk about our imminent *ruin*, about *perversions eating away* at society, about *the situation in our country getting so serious*, about *the rot that is poisoning us*. Such items have always drawn solid agreement from Highs, regardless of how turbulent or placid the times. Problems have come and gone over the past twenty-five years; some things have gotten steadily worse, but other things have gotten steadily better. (Anybody remember 1968?) But the "cry havoc" items have continuously struck a chord in the authoritarian psyche, because authoritarians always perceive society as going to hell in a hand basket. Like the people in River City, "we have Trouble, Trouble, Trouble with a capital T."

High RWAs, accordingly, can be easily frightened, which makes them vulnerable to precisely the kind of overstated, emotional, and dangerous assertions a demagogue would make. So how hard would it be for a sufficiently unscrupulous, power hungry, *real* agitator to turn authoritarians' general anti-Semitism into the Nuremberg Laws? Or for a washed-up, unprincipled senator from Wisconsin to turn Cold War fears into a life-crushing, four-year witch hunt? Or to get Highs to join a "posse" after any vulnerable group today?

I do not mean, in pointing out this latent threat, to move *you* three paces closer to the panic button. High RWAs have been around for a long time, and cooler heads have usually prevailed. But as long as authoritarians do not think much about what they hear, and believe "X is our biggest problem, where X is a variable," and are vulnerable to fear-arousing bombast, they are prone to stampede. And once stampedes start, you either get out of the way, join them, or get trampled.

Biases in Judging "Sufficient Evidence"

Let me repeat: High RWAs do not believe *everything* they hear. They will reject out of hand "dangerous ideas" from "bad sources." But they show a hefty double standard when testing for truth: evidence for disagreeable conclusions is scrutinized more critically than evidence supporting what the authoritarian wants to believe.

I studied this propensity in 466 of my students at the beginning of September 1990 by asking for reactions to the twenty statements in Exhibit 4.2 (shown with correlation to RWA scores in parentheses). Take the first item. Do you agree that "the fact that airplane crashes sometimes occur when the pilots' biorhythms are at a low point proves biorhythms affect our lives?" I hope not. If biorhythms affected *nothing*, you would still find coincidental times when planes crashed and the pilots' biorhythms had been "low" (just as there are days when planes crash and graduate students are caught up in their work—although these are much rarer).

Exhibit 4.2 The Sufficient Evidence Test

1. The fact that airplane crashes sometimes occur when the pilots' biorhythms are at a low point proves biorhythms affect our lives.* (-.12**)
2. There is no way to test the theory that crystals can restore harmony to a person's "spiritual energy," since you *cannot* objectively measure such a thing. (-.05)
3. Skeptics *cannot* explain all the thousands of UFO sightings that have occurred, so there must be something visiting our planet from somewhere else.* (.13**)
4. Even if tarot card readers, fortune tellers, palm readers and "prophets" can tell you things about the past and future that turn out to be true, it does *not* mean these people have any magic or supernatural powers. (-.09**)
5. Just because sensational crimes sometimes occur on nights when there is a full moon, that does *not* prove the full moon has mysterious powers over us. (-.03)
6. The fact that some people make up wild stories, and fake footprints of "Bigfoot" proves that there is *no* such thing as "Sasquatch" or "Bigfoot."** (-.14**)
7. So many people have had dreams about something that later came true, our dreams must be some form of ESP.* (-.04)
8. Just because many religions in the world have legends about a big flood, that does *not* prove the story of Noah in the Bible is true. (-.45**)
9. The explanation that ESP cannot work if there are skeptics present satisfactorily explains why it is hard to demonstrate ESP in scientific experiments.* (-.11**)
10. The fact that the pyramids are very large and precisely built, and that there are ancient lines in the Peruvian desert that resemble an airport, does *not* prove the earth was visited by "ancient astronauts" from other worlds years ago. (.02)
11. So many people sincerely believe they have memories from earlier lives, there must be something to reincarnation.* (.07)
12. The accounts of many people who nearly died, who say they traveled through a dark tunnel toward an all-loving Being of Light, proves the teachings of Christianity are true.* (-.36**)
13. The fact that archaeologists have discovered a fallen wall at the site of ancient Jericho does *not* prove the story in the Bible about Joshua and the horns. (-.48**)
14. Even if most of the people in the world claimed to have seen a ghost, it would *not* prove there is such a thing as a spirit world. (-.07)

15. So many people have been caught cheating while "communicating with the dead," "bending spoons with mind power," "reading minds"—it proves there is *no* such thing as ESP.* (-.11**)
16. Just because many planes and ships have disappeared in the "Bermuda Triangle" over the years, that does *not* prove there are any mysterious forces operating there. (-.05)
17. If someone shows some ESP ability on one occasion, but cannot ever show it again, it *still* proves beyond a doubt that ESP exists.* (-.06)
18. The fact that the Shroud of Turin was scientifically shown to have been made in the Middle Ages indicates it is a fake, *not* a miraculous impression made by God. (-.24**)
19. Whenever science cannot explain something mysterious, it shows there are supernatural and spiritual forces at work in the world.* (-.17**)
20. Astrology should be doubted because no one has explained yet *how* the position of planets in the sky can affect us. (-.07)

Note: Items are answered on a -4 to +4 basis.

* Indicates the item is considered false, so the right answer would be to disagree. Keying is reversed for these items. A high score over all twenty items therefore indicates high critical reasoning ability.

** Indicates the correlation with RWA scores was statistically significant ($p < .05$ by a two-tailed test; $N = 466$). A negative correlation means High RWAs showed *less* reasoning ability.

To *prove* that biorhythms affect pilots' performance, we need (as a start) data for plane crashes for all the days: "high biorhythm" days, "medium" days, and "bad hair" days. So I think one should disagree strongly with item 1.

Yet I wholeheartedly agree with item 2's hesitation about "crystal power." Since we cannot measure immaterial energy, we are going to have trouble testing a crystal's ability to harmonize such energies. (Please do not write me that *your* crystal works.)

As indicated in Exhibit 4.2, I think half of the items on my Sufficient Evidence Test of critical thinking ability are true, and the other half are false. Deeper thinkers may want to pick a fight over some of my calls, but I did try to balance the summed scores against yea-saying.

Overall, my brand new university students did not blow me away with their critical thinking. Summed scores could go from 20 to 180, and someone who did not have a clue and simply guessed would score about 100. The mean among my classes equaled 107.4, and responses to the items usually averaged about 0 on the -4 to +4 format (or, in other words, "Huh?").

When I correlated the students' RWA scores with their reactions to each of these items, I mostly found very small relationships. High RWAs usually did worse than others, but seldom by much. They were only slightly more seduced

by the biorhythm "proof," they did not particularly believe in "crystal power," and they were *more* skeptical than most about UFOs, as well as tarot card readers, full moons, and Bigfoot.

But when it came to "evidence" connected to Highs' religious beliefs, their critical thinking took a hike. They might have been as skeptical as others about ghosts, the Bermuda Triangle and ESP, but to their minds common legends about a big flood *proved* the story of Noah. If one finds a fallen wall at Jericho, that proves Joshua's horns brought it down. "Near-death experiences" prove the teachings of Christianity. And scientific analysis be damned, High RWAs *know* the Shroud of Turin was miraculously created by God.

I included six of the items in Exhibit 4.2 in a booklet answered a few months later by 491 parents. Again, Highs showed minor vulnerabilities to believing that our dreams are a form of ESP and that the full moon has mysterious powers over us. They did not buy the UFO trip any more than Lows did. But they were impressed by the "evidence" for Noah's ark ($r = -.38$), Joshua's horns ($-.31$), and the Being of Light ($-.28$).

Standing back a bit, you could say that Highs' tendency to disengage critical thinking when considering religion is the predictable outcome of being rewarded all their lives for placing faith over reason. I would not dispute this. But I also think the tendency extends beyond religion and has deeper roots, namely, authoritarian submission. Highs' further reliance on social reinforcement for their beliefs ("consensual validation") rather than on thinking for themselves, makes them vulnerable to mistaken judgments in many fields, which leads us to this chapter's final topic.¹

A Special Vulnerability to the Fundamental Attribution Error

The Fundamental Attribution Error (Ross, 1977) describes a common mistake people make when analyzing others' behavior. Simply put, we tend to over-explain others' actions in terms of their personalities, and underexplain their doings in terms of situational factors. (We similarly give ourselves personal credit when analyzing our own wonderfulness, and blame our shortcomings on other people and bad luck.)

Authoritarians' beliefs that poor people are too lazy to improve their lives looks like the Fundamental Attribution Error. So does Highs' self-righteousness. In addition, their tendency to accept inadequate evidence, if it leads to cherished conclusions, suggests they will be particularly likely to make the Fundamental Attribution Error when people say things authoritarians want to hear.

HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS

In the fall of 1990, in a study patterned after the first Fundamental Attribution Error experiment (Jones and Harris, 1967), I asked the same 466 students

who answered my Sufficient Evidence Test to guess someone's true attitude toward homosexual rights. They had to make their inference from a short essay allegedly written for an exam. I told half the subjects the writer had *chosen* the "point of view" of the essay. The other half were told that the professor in the course had *assigned* that point of view. What was the point of view? In each condition, half the students read a pro-homosexual-rights essay, while the others read an anti-homosexual-rights essay.

Imagine you are one of my participants, and it so happens you have drawn a booklet containing the "Choice, Pro-Homosexual Rights" arrangement. You read:

As part of a final exam in a philosophy course at this university last year, the students were assigned to write a short essay supporting *EITHER* of the following principles:

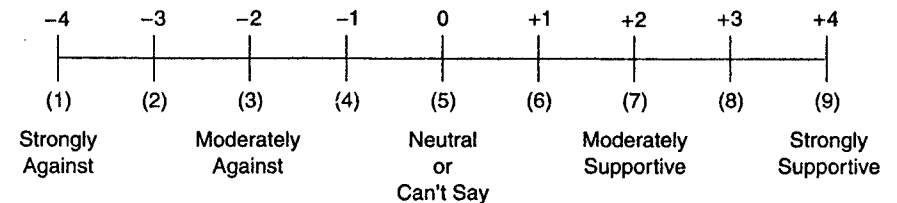
EITHER that homosexuals should have *no* restrictions on their lives in this country, compared with the rest of the population;

OR that homosexuals should have *some* restrictions on their lives in this country, compared with the rest of the population.

Each student was allowed to *choose* which principle to argue for. One of the students in the course wrote the following essay:

Homosexuals are every bit as good as everybody else, and have the right, under the Charter, to be treated equally. They work as hard as everybody else, are usually more creative, and make quiet, responsible neighbors. Fear of homosexuals is largely based upon stereotypes. In most places in the world being "gay" is *not* a bad thing. So there are many reasons why homosexuals should have the same rights to where they live and work that others do.

What would you say is this student's *own, personal attitude* toward homosexuals? (Please mark the scale below with an "X.")



Knowing the situation the essay writer was in, you have several possibilities to consider when estimating his or her real opinion, don't you? Perhaps the essay writer believed the prof would grade "pro-homosexual" essays higher. Perhaps this philosophy student felt he or she could demonstrate debating

skills better on that side of the issue. Perhaps the student knew that side of the debate better. Perhaps the student personally believed what he or she wrote. So the "right answer" is probably either 0 or "plus Something" on the scale above.

While you, my dedicated participant, are trying to figure this out, the person to your immediate left is going through the same procedure. Only this judge was told an essay writer chose to write the following, quite different essay:

Homosexuals can never ask that they be treated like ordinary people. They have an unnatural life style, one that disgusts many and goes against the laws of nature. People always react against somebody who breaks the natural law. Besides, "gay" men are particularly liable to get AIDS, and nobody wants to be around somebody who has a fatal disease. So there are all kinds of reasons why homosexuals should not have the same rights to where they live and work that normal people do.

What did *this* philosophy student really think? Again, you can approach the matter from several angles, but the sensible answer is probably 0 or "minus Something."

The "Choice" conditions in a Fundamental Attribution Error experiment such as this serve as control groups for the real focus of attention: What will subjects infer if they are told the philosophy student *had* to express a certain point of view? That's the task that the person sitting to your right has gotten by the luck of the booklet distribution. His version states:

Last year a professor at this university taught a philosophy course in which he tried to teach his students how to *make strong arguments for any side of an issue, no matter what their personal feelings might be*.

He then told his students he was going to ask them a question, on the final exam, about homosexuality. He said he was going to *assign* them to write an essay on "gay rights."

When the students got their exams, they found they *HAD* to write a short essay arguing strongly for the principle "Homosexuals should have *no* restrictions on their lives in this country, compared with the rest of the population."

One of the students in this course wrote the following essay.

The pro-homosexual-rights essay followed.

And finally, the person sitting two seats away from you (in either direction), got the "Assigned, Anti-Homosexual Rights" version of the task in this "2 × 2" experiment.

Now when you get an essay built around an assigned point of view, written as part of an exam in which students are trying to show how forcefully they can argue for *anything*, what can you say about the student's personal opinion on the issue? Zilch. So if you are asked what the essay writer really believed,

you would have to say 0, right? But people often do not say 0. Instead they ignore the situational constraints on the essay writer, which in this case were very powerful, and say the essay reveals something about the writer's personal feelings. They thus make the Fundamental Attribution Error (FAE).

My *real* subjects in the "Assigned" conditions made the FAE about equally for each essay—which amazes you the first time you see it. But here we are wondering how right-wing authoritarianism figures into the story, so I analyzed the results separately for Lows and Highs (making the study a "2 × 2 × 2"). The ANOVA found, naturally, a strong main effect for the Position of the essays, a significant Choice by Position interaction, and a significant triple interaction ($F = 17.9, p < .05$) that represents the object of the hunt. (Or, in English, the position of the essayist on homosexual rights obviously made a difference, and that difference was affected by whether the position was chosen or forced. But the judges' own authoritarianism affected their judgments too.)

Here are the means for the Low and High RWA students who answered the four versions of the task.

Condition	Low RWAs		High RWAs	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
Choice, Pro-Homosexual Rights (Control)	32	8.16	21	7.86
Assigned, Pro-Homosexual Rights	18	5.39	24	6.63
Choice, Anti-Homosexual Rights (Control)	20	2.20	32	2.16
Assigned, Anti-Homosexual Rights	33	3.24	24	2.25

Let us do this step by step. Thirty-two Lows happened to get an essay that a philosophy student had allegedly *chosen* to write from a pro-homosexual rights viewpoint. What was the essayist's real opinion? You can see that, on a 1–9 scale, the 32 Lows inferred such a student would be strongly pro-homosexual (mean = 8.16). Eighteen other Lows got the same essay, but with the understanding that the point of view had been *assigned* to the writer. What was the writer's personal point of view then? These 18 Lows sensibly said, "Beats me." Their mean equaled 5.39, a shift of only .39 from 5.0 (the "Neutral or Can't Say" midpoint).

Given that this same essay produced a shift of $(8.16 - 5.00 =) 3.16$ units in the (control) "Choice" condition among Lows, we can therefore calculate the Fundamental Attribution Error in the "Assigned" condition in terms of its percentage of the control group shift; that is, 0.39 divided by 3.16, or just 12%. However you cut it, Low RWAs reading the pro-homosexual essay made very little attribution error.

How did *High* RWAs react who read the same pro-homosexual essay? The 21 Highs in the (control) "Choice" condition also inferred that the writer was revealing strong personal feelings (7.86). But when 24 other Highs were told the essay's point of view had been assigned by the teacher, they *still* thought the writer was rather pro-homosexual (6.63).

Let us calculate our "FAE ratio" again, which allows us to take into account the effects of the essay per se upon High RWAs. We get $(6.63 - 5.00 =) 1.63$ for the "Assigned" condition, which is divided by the result for the (control) "Choice" condition $(7.86 - 5.00 =) 2.86$. That gives a 57% Fundamental Attribution Error, a much bigger error than the Lows made on the pro-homosexual essay.

We might guess that Lows in turn would show some attribution error on the *anti*-homosexual essay. And they did, as you can see. Their mean in the "Assigned" condition was $(5.00 - 3.24 =) 1.76$ units away from the sensible "Can't say" neutral point. The Lows who read the "Choice" version ended up $(5.00 - 2.20 =) 2.80$ units away from neutral. So 1.76 divided by 2.80 equals a 63% FAE. But High RWAs still made a bigger one: 2.75 divided by 2.84, a 97% FAE.

What do all these numbers boil down to? Simply this: compared to Lows, High RWAs tended to ignore the fact that the essayist in the "Assigned" condition *had* to express the point of view assigned. They thought the essayist really meant it. They particularly thought the essayist was sincere when writing an anti-homosexual argument. This of course is what most High RWAs would write themselves.

Now I shall reveal a guilt-edged secret. This September 1990 study was my *third* run of this experiment. The first two runs, done in 1989 with smaller samples and slightly different wordings, produced somewhat conflicting results. The first study indicated Highs not only overbelieved assigned anti-homosexual essays, they also *under*believed assigned pro-homosexual ones. This result suggested enormous interpretive bias on the parts of Highs and set my imagination on fire. ("Why, they twist everything to suit themselves!") But when I repeated the study, the results proved much less spectacular, essentially like those from the third experiment described above.

Combining these three experiments ($N = 1001$), the various Fundamental Attribution Errors average out (weighted means) as follows:

	Low RWAs	High RWAs
Pro-Homosexual Essay	36%	57%
Anti-Homosexual Essay	66%	103%

To put it simply, Highs made more attribution errors than Lows, *especially when they tended to agree with the message*. Indeed, Lows were somewhat restrained when they read an agreeable essay they knew had been forced onto the writer (a 36% FAE). Authoritarians, by contrast, completely accepted the essayist's sincerity (103%!), even though they had been told that the writer was simply trying to demonstrate on an exam the ability to argue well. Is this not amazing?

POLITICAL PLATFORMS

The results above suggest that High RWAs will be particularly vulnerable to an insincere communicator who tells them what they want to hear. This observation fits with earlier findings in this chapter, notably those concerning Highs' disengagement of critical thinking when they like the conclusion. In the present context, High RWAs might often fail to take into account the situational pressures that could lead a communicator to say whatever is necessary to manipulate them. So they will be "suckered" more often by "cons," and by "pols," too.

I tested this hypothesis with another $2 \times 2 \times 2$ experiment, also run three times during 1989–90. Instead of making inferences about the beliefs of someone writing an exam, these subjects (654 other students and 235 parents) were asked to evaluate a speech by a politician running for mayor. "Law and order," allegedly, had become the central issue in the campaign.

In the "Speaker *High* Choice" conditions, the students were told that a candidate knew from polls that half the electorate favored a tough law-and-order stand that would crack down on criminals; the other half of the electorate favored a "community-improvement" approach that would go after the origins of crime.² Thus in this situation, a candidate who came out strongly for one or the other could be seen as probably giving a personal position.

In the "Speaker *Low* Choice" conditions, the polls showed overwhelming (90%) support for one of these approaches. A candidate who then came out strongly in favor of the position favored by the voters could thus be seen as merely saying what he or she knew 90% of the electorate wanted to hear, revealing nothing about his or her personal beliefs. (I did not run a third condition in which a politician came out strongly *against* the inclination of 90% of the voters, even though this happens at least three or four times every hundred years.)

Each student received only one speech and one scenario of the circumstances behind it. Half the students read a "Dirty Harry" speech:

I am a very firm believer in law and order. I believe that crime is getting so bad in our city, a decent person takes his life in his hands just walking down the streets now. We need more police, and if I'm elected they're going to get my full

support in cleaning out the drug dealers, break-in gangs, bank robbers, rapists, and all the other criminals who are ruining our city. Furthermore, as mayor I'm going to do everything I can to make sure that thieves and dope-heads and murderers get sent to prison for a long, long time, and not get sent back to us on "day parole" after they have only been in jail a short time.

The other speech advocated improving the communities where crime was rampant:

I am a very firm believer in Community Improvement. I strongly believe the only way to stop crime is to stop producing criminals in our slums. We've got to improve the lives of our poor. We've got to give them good job training, and then good jobs at good wages once they're trained. We have to build good housing in our community for people with low incomes. We have to get the poor involved in shaping their futures. And most of all, we have to change the attitudes of those people in our city who believe that white people are better than brown, yellow, or black people. Crime is caused by the system, and we've got to change the system.

After reading the scenario and speech, students judged the candidate's *real* opinion about how to fight crime on a nine-point scale that ran from "Strongly Pro Community Development" to "Strongly Pro Law and Order." Again, a midpoint of 0 represented "Neutral or Can't Say." We would expect the "Speaker High Choice" condition to give a better idea of the candidate's true position, and we would look for the Fundamental Attribution Error in the "Speaker Low Choice" condition.

This experiment did not produce as much attribution error as the homosexual-rights studies. (Do *you* believe politicians who courageously come out in agreement with strong public opinion?) But the pattern of the FAE below will look familiar.

	Low RWAs	High RWAs
Pro Community Improvement	17%	36%
Pro Law and Order	51%	73%

Authoritarians again made more attribution errors in both cases. Unlike Lows, who were particularly suspicious of someone they knew had strong political reasons for telling them what they wanted to hear, Highs were astoundingly gullible. They basically ignored the politician's knowledge of the 90% poll and believed the law-and-order candidate was sincere.

So let us say, if you don't mind, that you are a crooked, unscrupulous

person who wants to win high public office. You will say whatever you have to say to get elected. Which block of voters are you going to target (besides the moderates of course), the Low RWAs or the High RWAs?

The choice is easy, is it not? Advocating a Low RWA position will alienate the Highs and not necessarily win the more critically inclined Lows. But Highs do not wonder much about the sincerity of someone who tells them what they want to hear. So their votes are yours if you just *say* the right things about law and order, the flag, patriotism, abortion, tax cuts, and so on. Then comes the dessert: even if it comes to light someday that you *are* "a crook," or sold arms to Iran, we know the High RWAs who supported you all along will still believe in you for a long time, come what may. Do you think Low RWAs would trust you no matter what?

Right-wing authoritarians' incredible credulity encourages manipulators to take stands that will be popular with them. I am *not* saying all conservative politicians are beady-eyed, scum-covered Machiavellians. But we can see why such politicians would tend to head to the political right. High RWA voters are such an easy sell, they attract the unscrupulous. And because their votes can be locked up simply by advocating their causes, *their* issues are more likely to set the political agenda in a country.

I have also found that Highs make a strong fundamental attribution error when judging assigned essays on whether the Bible is the word of God. They also were more likely to trust a television evangelist who conducted a poll to find out what kind of revival meeting would maximize financial contributions, and then staged the most lucrative kind of program. So Highs probably fall for deceptive exploiters in religion as well.

EXPLANATION AND OBSERVATION

Why do authoritarians so often ignore situational factors when a communicator tells them what they want to hear? I think it basically goes back to authoritarian submission and those "tight circles" we considered earlier. High RWAs generally have not determined for themselves what is true and false, to the extent that others have. Instead they are more likely to absorb the teachings of the authorities in their lives. They subsequently maintain their beliefs against challenges by limiting their experiences, and surrounding themselves with sources of information that will tell them they are right—including like-minded people.

Compared with others, Highs rely a lot on consensual validation to maintain their views. They develop a noticeable "us-them" outlook on information sources that springs automatically from their general ethnocentrism.³ Who are "us"? They are people who believe what we, "the good people," believe. So people who say what authoritarians want to hear are welcomed, rather

uncritically, because they bring a treasured gift to Highs: confirmation. But this easy access to the in-group—which I think betrays how *uncertain* High RWAs sometimes really are of their beliefs—makes them vulnerable to deceivers who know what song to sing.

All of this explains the conflicting stereotypes of right-wingers' gullibility and right-wingers' paranoia, which I raised in the Introduction. You can expect to see *both* behaviors in High RWAs, because of their underlying ethnocentrism. People from the "us" circle will be trusted, in some instances far more than they should be. Someone *professing* the right religious beliefs, for example, will often get Highs to open their hearts and their pocketbooks. But people from the "them" camp will usually be *distrusted* more than is warranted, sometimes to the point of paranoia, which ranges from believing Communists are poisoning everyone through fluoridation to "knowing" the government is about to swoop down, confiscate your guns, and march you off to a concentration camp. Highs' relative inability to discover the truth on their own forces them to rely more upon inadequate social criteria that lead to both Type I and Type II errors (missing the truth and cherishing falsehoods).

A Caution

Let me summarize this chapter with the observation that right-wing authoritarians have not caught some mysterious disease from outer space that affects their cognitive processes but leaves the rest of humanity untouched. They are not "them" while the rest of the world is "us." Instead, I think they have just gotten an extra helping of some very common human weaknesses.

A lot of people have trouble making the right inferences from evidence, especially when it comes to seeing what is wrongly concluded. Witness advertising copy. (Or, in Chapter 10, witness how horribly *Low* RWAs fall for a Big Lie.) Also, people tend to yea-say in general; Highs just do it more than most. In addition, all minds probably have compartments holding contradictory ideas. And Highs are hardly the only self-righteous people running around; we all seem vulnerable to a self-serving bias.

Similarly, almost everyone can be shaken by fear of "our biggest problem" and various crises, as we saw at the end of Chapter 3. Lows believe in biorhythms and ESP almost as much as Highs do. Who among us does not scrutinize evidence supporting disagreeable conclusions more than evidence for what we want to believe? If Lows and Moderates did not also make the Fundamental Attribution Error, it would not be called the *Fundamental* Attribution Error. Almost everyone uses consensual validation to shore up personal beliefs. And each one of us is probably ethnocentric in many ways.

If you are a Low RWA, Highs just show you what you would be like if you were "somewhat different," not if you were "completely different."

But the evidence *does* indicate that right-wing authoritarians tend to lead the league in these human foibles, and because of that they put themselves—and potentially all of society—at extra risk.

They also occupy first place when it comes to other, more "psychodynamic" failings, as the next chapter reveals.

— 5 —

Inconsistency and Blindness in the Authoritarian Mind

We shall now focus on more “psychodynamic” matters as we continue our explorations of authoritarians’ cognitive processes. Most of what lies ahead in this chapter follows rather directly from what we have already observed, notably the compartmentalization that High RWAs do especially well. But we shall consider more serious contradictions and blindnesses than before—inconsistencies that people would probably find threatening if they realized them, and thus often do *not* realize. We shall again cover five related lines of evidence, as we journey deeper into the twists and turns of the authoritarian mind.

Double Standards

Double standards reveal something truly insidious in our thinking. You can see this in the way we react when we get caught with one. “Defensiveness” shoots right off the scale. I myself desperately try to find some way to slip off the hook, usually by developing some convenient rationale, *after the fact*, that justifies what I did. Have you ever found yourself similarly scrambling for plausible explanations to save face?

I think we dread being skewered on our double standards for several very painful reasons. First, they show how unfair we can be. Second, they show our unfairness hides behind a facade of “principle.” We are therefore hypocrites to boot. And third, because our double standards sometimes come as a surprise to us when we get caught, we see that the person we have been fooling best is *ourselves*.

We often do not realize our double standards because we compartmentalize our thinking, keeping matters that ought to be connected unconnected. Since High RWAs compartmentalize their thinking a lot, we can expect them to have lots of double standards. Thus we saw in Chapter 1 several criminal-sentencing experiments that uncovered bad faith in right-wing authoritarians’ attitudes toward justice. Recall how High RWAs punished a prisoner who beat up another prisoner more than they punished a police chief who did the same thing. They punished a hippie who started a fight with an accountant more than the accountant if the roles were reversed. And they sentenced a gay activist who led an attack on opponents more than an anti-gay activist who did the same in a flip-flop situation.

I uncovered another double standard in a 1978 study in which students were asked to judge the seriousness of an unfair election practice (RWA, p. 323). Half the subjects were told a New Democratic government had discretely threatened Conservative Party supporters if they contributed to a Conservative campaign. The others got the reverse story. Low RWAs condemned both acts of intimidation, equally. Highs proved less concerned overall about official wrongdoing, and were significantly more condemning of a New Democratic government putting the screws to its political opponents than of a Conservative government doing the same.

I also found many High RWA double standards when it comes to gender roles. They were much more likely to say, on Spence and Helmreich’s (1978) Attitudes toward Women Scale, that swearing, drinking, and telling dirty stories are less objectionable when men do them, that the father should have greater authority in raising children, that men should aim for careers and women should aim for housekeeping, and so on. (See Chapter 1.)

RELIGIOUS INDOCTRINATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

I have since completed double-standard studies on several additional topics. The first concerns religious indoctrination in public schools. This study was suggested by an earlier experiment (EOF, pp. 278–281) in which I asked people what they would do if a law were passed requiring the strenuous teaching of Christianity in public schools, aimed at getting all students to accept Jesus Christ as their personal savior. I was stunned when nearly half of the 43 Highs said they approved. I thought more would see the inherent unfairness of such a practice to non-Christians, and to Christians with different views as well.

In September 1991, 483 students answered a booklet containing one of two versions of the religion in public schools issue. One version read:

Suppose a law were passed requiring the strenuous teaching of religion in public schools. Beginning in kindergarten, all children would be taught to believe in God, pray together in school several times each day, memorize the Ten Com-

mandments and other parts of the Bible, learn the principles of Christian morality, and eventually be encouraged to accept Jesus Christ as their personal savior.

How would you react to such a law?

0 = I think this would be a *bad* law; minority rights should be respected, and no particular religion should be taught in public, tax-supported schools.

1 = I think this would be a *good* law; the majority in a country has a right to have its religion taught in its public, tax-supported schools.

Only 3 of 61 Low RWA students (5%) thought this would be a good law; in contrast, 27 of 56 Highs (48%) supported the idea ($p < .01$).

The other half of my sample got a transplanted version of the issue.

Suppose you were living in a modern Arab democracy, whose constitution stated there could be NO state religion—even though the vast majority of the people were Muslims. Then a fundamentalist Islamic movement was elected to power, and passed a law requiring the strenuous teaching of religion in public schools. Beginning in kindergarten, all children would be taught to believe in Allah, pray together facing Mecca several times each day, memorize important parts of the Koran, learn the principles of Islamic morality, and eventually be encouraged to declare their allegiance to Muhammad and become a Muslim.

How would you react to such a law?

The same two response options were provided. Again, only a few (4 of 59, or 7%) of the Lows approved of such an idea. But *this time* Highs were also opposed (3 of 55, or 5%)—significantly less supportive than the 48% endorsement rate Highs gave to Christian indoctrination in Canada.

I repeated this experiment the next month with another 309 students, only this time the foreign situation involved Israel. Accordingly, following the election of a “fundamentalistic Hebrew party,”

all children would be taught to believe in the Jewish God, Jehovah, they would engage in Jewish religious ritual several times each day in school, memorize important parts of the Talmud, learn the principles of Jewish morality, and eventually be encouraged to declare their allegiance to the Jewish faith and become a Jew.

In this study none of 28 Lows favored a law stressing Christian training in Canadian public schools; most Highs (24 of 39; 62%), however, supported a Christian indoctrination law. When the issue was transplanted to Israel, only 1 Low out of 43 (2%) indicated approval, as did only 7 out of 35 Highs (20%). The latter percentage was again significantly lower than the 62% Highs totaled in the Christian condition.

The same month I included the Christian-Islam experiment in a booklet answered by 337 *parents*. Lows again showed almost no support (less than 10% in both cases) for teaching either religion in public schools. However, 16 of 40 Highs (40%) approved of using the public schools in Canada to indoctrinate students in Christianity. But only 10 of 46 other Highs (22%)

said it would be right for Islam to be similarly promoted in an Arab country, again significantly lower than the 40% obtained among Highs in the Christianity in Canada condition.

All three studies showed that Lows very consistently believed in minority rights when it comes to promoting a religion in public schools. However, a sizable percentage (40–62%) of the High RWAs thought the *majority* had a right to have their religion, Christianity, forced upon everyone attending public school in Canada. But they disagreed that an Islamic or Jewish majority in another country had such a right. In those cases, they overwhelmingly said that *minority* rights should be respected.

In other words, Highs often support majority rights when they compose the majority but support minority rights when in the minority. Obviously, they believe in neither. While High RWAs think of themselves as being driven by high principles, in reality they often snatch their “principles” off the shelf, after the fact, to justify getting what they want. Many Highs can speak out of both sides of their mouth on an issue, and perhaps never notice they are doing so.

As another example, High RWA groups can be expected to cry “fascism” and “totalitarianism”—of all things—when their attempts to propagate such views as creationism and denial of the Holocaust are resisted. But we know from their responses to the RWA Scale and the Government Injustices measure that they would censor others much more, if they had the chance.

SEPARATIST RIGHTS

For some time, a separatist movement in Quebec has tried to remove La Belle Province from the confederation of Canada. Separatists cite a long list of grievances against the rest of the country, but more basically, they want to preserve Quebec’s distinct Francophone culture. Many Quebecois want to form their own nation. Do they have the right to leave the rest of us, if most of them want to?

Out on the western prairies where I live, people tend to think Quebec has gotten far more than its fair share of the benefits of Canadian nationhood. Federal policies encouraging or requiring bilingualism, enacted to assuage the Francophone minority in Canada, have created great resentment. An attempt in 1992 to accommodate Quebec’s unique status, and address other problems, through constitutional reform failed miserably when a national referendum was rejected by voters from one ocean to the other to the other.

A balanced eighteen-item Attitudes toward Quebec Scale (alpha .90), answered by those 337 parents mentioned above, found most respondents agreeing with statements such as “The French in Quebec are selfish, spoiled, and greedy” and “The French in Quebec have been taking advantage of the rest of the country for years, and they still aren’t satisfied.” RWA scores correlated

(only) .35 with negative attitudes toward Quebec Francophones, lower than we usually find for a measure tapping ethnocentrism. (Many Lows in Manitoba also resent Quebec.)

Are people in my part of Canada so fed up they are ready to hold the door open so Quebec can leave? No. In the fall of 1993 I gave 183 Manitoba students the following description of the situation.

New France, an area of North America along the St. Lawrence River, had had its own culture, traditions, schools, laws, religion and language for many years until 1759, when it was forced to become part of British North America after the battle of the Plains of Abraham. The people of Quebec never said they wanted to become part of Canada, and for many years an independence movement sought to make Quebec independent. But also, during the years it has been part of Canada, it became an important part of the nation's economy and political structure. Many national facilities and assets were placed there. Soon, the people of Quebec will vote on whether to dissolve their ties with the rest of Canada and become an independent, sovereign state.

Does Quebec have the *right* to withdraw from the rest of Canada, if a majority of the people living there vote to do so?

— No. Quebec could separate only if the rest of the country also agreed to its separation. It has been part of the nation too long, and is too interconnected economically and politically, to be able to quit on its own.

— Yes. The region was forced to become part of Canada in the first place. And the most important consideration has to be, what do the people want? A people have an inherent right to be independent, if they wish to be.

Among the 49 Lows, 26 (53%) said "Yes." Among the 45 Highs, only 9 (20%) thought Quebec had a right to separate on its own ($p < .001$).

Another 187 students got the same question in a different context.

Ukraine, an area of eastern Europe, had had its own culture, traditions, schools, laws, religion and language for many years until 1764, when it was forced to become part of the Russian state by Catherine the Great. The people of Ukraine never said they wanted to become part of Russia, and for many years an independence movement sought to make Ukraine independent. But also, during those years while it was part of Russia, it became an important part of the nation's economy and political structure. Many national facilities and assets were placed there. Last year, the majority of people living in Ukraine voted, in a free election, to dissolve their ties with the rest of the USSR and become an independent, sovereign state.

Did Ukraine have the *right* to withdraw from the rest of the Soviet Union, once a majority of the people living there voted to do so?

— No. Ukraine could separate only if the rest of the country also agreed . . .

Yes. The region was forced to become part of Russia in the first place . . .

In this case, 41 of the 44 answering Lows (93%) said "Yes," as did 42 of the 46 Highs (91%).

Both Lows and Highs therefore showed a significant double standard about the rights of Quebec and Ukraine to separate, although High RWAs showed a much bigger one.

If you are about to say, "Well, the two cases are not comparable. Canada is a democracy, whereas the Soviet Union was a dictatorship," or "Ottawa never tried to starve the population of Quebec to death the way Stalin did Ukrainians," or so on—I agree with you. But such differences, it turns out, have little to do with the double standard shown above.

In October 1993 Canadians went to the polls to elect a new federal government. Quebec voters elected separatists in almost all their ridings. But some federalists, pledged to keeping Quebec part of Canada, were elected in Montreal, Quebec's largest city. That allowed me to give half of a post-election student sample (total $N = 269$) the Quebec-Canada issue presented above. But the other half got a yet more Balkanized possibility.

Montreal and its surrounding cosmopolitan area ("Greater Montreal") are presently part of both Quebec and Canada. In the recent federal election, most of Quebec voted for the Parti Quebecois, which says its goal is to separate the province from the rest of Canada to form its own nation. But Montreal ridings elected a lot of Liberals, who ran as federalists committed to keeping Quebec a part of Canada. Soon, the people of Quebec will vote on whether to dissolve their ties with the rest of Canada and become an independent, sovereign state. SUPPOSE most Quebecois vote to separate, but the people around Montreal to the Ontario border vote to stay part of Canada.

Does Greater Montreal have the *right* to withdraw from the rest of Quebec, if Quebec separates and becomes its own nation?

— No. Greater Montreal could only separate if the rest of Quebec agreed to its separation. It has been part of Quebec too long, and is too interconnected economically and politically, to be able to quit on its own. *The wishes of the people living around Montreal cannot be the most important consideration.*

— Yes. A people have an inherent right to decide what country they want to be. *The wishes of the people living in greater Montreal have to be the most important consideration.*

Again, about half of the 30 participating Lows (47%) said Quebec had a right to separate from Canada. In this sample, so did 38% of the 40 Highs. But a solid majority of both groups said Montreal had a right to separate from Quebec. In the case of the 37 Lows involved, 65% said "Yes" (which was not significantly different from the 47% produced by Lows in the Quebec Separation condition: $z = 1.49$; $p > .10$). Of the 27 Highs who answered the

Montreal question, 67% said "Yes," which *was* significantly different from the 38% chalked up by the Highs considering the separation of Quebec from Canada ($z = 2.34$; $p < .03$).

So what was sauce for the goose was not always sauce for the gander. To double-check this result, I repeated the experiment with another 245 students. This time 44% of 34 Lows said "Oui" to Quebec separation from Canada, and an overwhelming 81% of 27 other Lows said Montreal had a right to leave Quebec ($z = 2.97$; $p < .01$). Among the Highs, only 14% of 35 said "Yes" to Quebec's rights, compared with 68% of 28 Highs, who said "Yes" to Montreals' ($z = 4.35$; $p < .001$).

The three experiments on Quebec's right to separate can thus be summarized as follows. Both Low RWA and High RWA Manitoba students show a double standard toward a people's right to form their own nation. On the one hand, most of them think Quebec has no right to separate from the rest of Canada on its own (although the vote among the Lows was nearly a saw-off). On the other hand both groups think, by large majorities, that Ukraine did have that right to leave the Soviet Union, and that Montreal would have the same right to leave Quebec.

The double standard regarding Montreal versus Quebec particularly strikes me, for many of my subjects seemingly believe Montrealers do not have the right, as *Quebecers*, to leave the nation of Canada if they wish to; but they do have the right, as *Montrealers*, to leave Quebec if it becomes a nation. (Interestingly, separatists in Quebec have adopted precisely the opposite double standard: Quebec has a right to leave Canada, but Montrealers do not have a right to leave Quebec.

In all the studies, Highs showed greater double standards than Lows did.

A DOUBLE STANDARD IN LOWS TOO?

Low RWAs *could* have shown double standards as easily as Highs in the three criminal assault cases, the unfair election practices case, and the Quebec separation experiments. But they were hardly placed in jeopardy in the Christian-Islam-Judaism schooling studies. Lows do not endorse teaching religion in the public schools in their own society, so they can hardly look hypocritical opposing it in another country.

To "catch" Lows being more hypocritical than Highs, you have to turn the tables and put them in conflict over something they believe in. I have been searching for a situation that would do this. For a while, I thought I had found it in the environmental movement.

In September 1992 I asked 176 students to respond to the following "economy versus environment" dilemma, which was based on an actual case in our part of Canada.

Company X is a large, multinational corporation that operates several pulp mills in Northwestern Ontario. Environmentalists have charged, for many years, that these plants routinely dump tons of bleach and other pollutants into rivers in the area, and into Lake of the Woods. The Ontario government is considering forcing the company to modernize its plants over a five-year period, to make them less polluting. But the company says it cannot afford the changes "for the foreseeable future," and will close the plants rather than meet "such unreasonable standards."

Would you have the government *insist* upon imposing the new environmental standards?

0 = No. If the company closes the plants, the entire region will become economically depressed.

1 = Yes. Companies cannot be allowed to go on destroying the environment while they make money.

I gave this description to half the sample, who served as a control group. The others got the same information, plus one additional detail.

Imagine that you work for Company X in a management position. If the company closes the plants, you will lose your job. Imagine also that your family depends heavily upon your income, and that it will probably prove difficult to find another job.

Would you have the government *insist* . . .

I expected High RWAs to be less concerned than Lows about the environment. So I did not expect the "you'll lose your job" manipulation to affect Highs as much as Lows. Instead, the Lows were on the spot in this experiment. Would they put their income where their mouth was, when *their* jobs were at stake in an environmental controversy?

The answer was no. Of the 23 Lows who answered the control version of the case, 22 (96%) wanted the government to insist upon the tough environmental standards. Another 20 Lows answered the "you'll lose your job" version, and significantly fewer of them (75%) wanted the government to stick to its guns ($z = 1.95$, $p < .05$ by a one-tailed test). The values for the Highs were 69% and 76%, respectively.

I then sought to replicate the finding, as I almost always do, using 370 students in September 1993. This time 84% of the Lows in *both* conditions said, "Enforce the standards." The *Highs* showed more sensitivity to losing their jobs (78% versus 67%, but $z > .30$). I tried again, and again, and again, with samples of 245 and 269 students in November 1993 and 468 parents in October 1994. I never found another statistically significant difference for Lows, or for Highs.¹

SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS ABOUT DOUBLE STANDARDS

The administration of justice, abuse of political power, gender roles, the separation of church and state, a people's right to self-governance—on all these

matters, right-wing authoritarians have been found to maintain notable double standards. While I am not proposing that High RWAs have double standards about everything, they do appear to have more than their share, on quite a variety of topics. I think we can call it a feature of their thinking.

If we look back at the findings in this section, we can see afterimages of some of our earlier discoveries about authoritarians. For example, we saw in the attribution error research that they do not reflect much about other people's ideas. Well, here we see that they do not appear to reflect much upon their *own* ideas either. In particular, High RWAs do not seem to challenge their own thinking, to get outside themselves and ask, "Wait a minute. If it's all right for Montreal to leave Quebec, why is it wrong for Quebec to leave Canada?" It is easy to see why they do not. Highs were not raised to criticize the in-group. And who is at the center of their in-group?

Similarly, High RWAs do not seem to consider matters from perspectives other than their own, or mentally reverse situations. They do not appear to wonder, when they belong to the majority, "Suppose I were in the minority. How would I feel if the schools were trying to make my kid believe in some other religion?" Or, "Would I say the same thing if the Conservatives were trying the same kind of intimidation?" So their thinking seems more ad hoc, more one-compartment-at-a-time, than Lows' thinking does. Lows in turn show more interconnectedness, consistency, and fairness. Authoritarians are not as reflective, as systematic, as careful, or as principled as they themselves want to be. But again, they likely received little training in making their own decisions and evaluating things for themselves.

Impressions of American and Soviet Behavior: RWA Images in a Mirror

Let us return to those golden days of yesteryear, to the Cold War, when every dawn presented the possibility of global nuclear destruction.

In 1961, Urie Bronfenbrenner reported how he had been struck, during a visit to the Soviet Union, by the extent to which American and Russian citizens saw the world in opposite ways. Americans generally believed that the Russians were the aggressors on the world scene, that the Soviet government exploited and deluded the Russian people, that the Soviets could not be trusted, and so on. Bronfenbrenner said that the Russians he met felt the same way about the United States government.

Together the two sets of perceptions formed a mirror image—probably distorted and undoubtedly dangerous. This "good guy-bad guy" dichotomy was apparently as stable a feature of the Cold War, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, as it was among the Rattlers and Eagles in the famous Robbers' Cave Experiment (Sherif et al., 1961).²

The intensity of these feelings, on the American side at least, was driven home in a study of the double standards found among a group of California undergraduates (Oskamp, 1965). These students thought it all right that the United States had established rocket bases close to the borders of Russia, that America had carried out blockades, that it had intervened in civil wars in Third World countries, and so on. The same actions by the Soviet Union, however, were roundly condemned.

Care to venture a guess about what sort of student was most likely to show such double standards? We do not know. Oskamp did not measure authoritarianism. But one of the nicest things about science is that you can redo an experiment to see if various interpretations are wrong. One of the nicest things about *Glasnost* was that by 1988 you could dream of doing it on both sides of the conflict.

THE SOVIET STUDY

In the fall of 1988, I asked an undergraduate acquaintance majoring in sociology at Moscow State University, Andre Kamenshikov, if someone on his faculty would be interested in administering a forty-four-item survey to a student sample. Several months later, after Andre had translated the items himself, he received permission to collect the data on his own.

The questionnaire began with the RWA Scale, whose printed instructions described it (as usual) as a survey of public opinion. About a sixth of the items had to be modified to meet Russian circumstances (as was also done by McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina, 1990). For example, a contrait statement about freedom of speech allowing people to advocate overthrowing the government was changed to say Soviet people must have the right to criticize the Communist Party and demand its resignation from power. Similarly, a statement that atheists are as moral as regular churchgoers was modified to say that people who fight the present order are as good as those who defend this order. The "established authorities" were identified as the traditional, pre-Gorbachev Communist officials.

Two items, dealing specifically with Gorbachev's recent reforms, followed the thirty RWA Scale items:

31. The Soviet Union will be a much better country if the policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* prevail.
32. *Perestroika* and *glasnost* are changing society too fast and too intensely; the changes must be limited and much slower.

The next twelve items measured opinions about the Soviet and American governments. Two mirror-image versions of this scale were distributed in the sample, though each subject received just one of the forms. The first item on form A, for example, read: "The Soviet Union has the right to intervene mil-

124 The Authoritarian Specter

itarily when one of its neighbors shows signs of becoming allied with the United States." The same item on form B went: "The United States has the right to intervene militarily when one of its neighbors shows signs of becoming allied with the Soviet Union." Both forms of the survey contained three items favorable, and three items unfavorable, to the USSR and to the United States (see Exhibit 5.1). Like the rest of the questionnaire, each was answered on the usual -4 to +4 basis. The survey ended with a few demographic questions about gender, academic program, and so on.

Exhibit 5.1 "Form A" of the Mirror-Image Scale

33. The Soviet Union has the right to intervene militarily when one of its neighbors shows signs of becoming allied with the United States.
34. The only reason the United States keeps building nuclear weapons is to defend itself from the Soviet Union.
35. When it comes right down to it, Soviet government leaders just want peace and freedom for all the people of the world.
36. American peace and disarmament proposals are not propaganda ploys, but sincere efforts to bring about world peace.
37. When the United States sends foreign aid to foreign countries, its real goal is to dominate and control those countries.
38. Most other countries tend to see the United States as diabolical and evil.
39. If the Soviet Union knew it could do so without being hurt itself, it would probably launch a nuclear attack against the United States.
40. When the Soviet Union intervenes militarily in another country, it really does not care what's good for the people there, but only about its own interests.
41. The government of the Soviet Union tells its people the truth about its actions and goals abroad.
42. When the United States does something nice, such as helping trapped whales, it really doesn't do it for the publicity, but because it genuinely cares.
43. The American government is only pretending to be trying to end injustice in the United States.
44. The leaders of the Soviet Union are basically aggressive, warlike people.

Note: On form B, the proper names were reversed: "Soviet Union" became "United States," "American" became "Soviet," and vice-versa.

Most of the students Andre Kamenshikov tested were recruited in the spring of 1989 during a meeting of a "college orientation" course, and a law course

at Moscow State University. He appeared before class began and announced he was a sociology student conducting an opinion survey under the auspices of a social research laboratory known on campus. He said the completely anonymous survey covered general opinions about society, and Soviet-American relations, and would take about fifteen minutes to complete. Altogether he distributed about 250 surveys in these classes, of which 160 were completed and returned at the end of the period (during which the students were supposed to be listening to a lecture).

To improve this return rate, and to round out his sample of Moscow State undergraduates, Andre set up a table in the halls of other classroom buildings, where about 90% of the passing students he randomly buttonholed completed the questionnaire then and there.

Altogether 236 sets of answers were collected, of which 10 had to be discarded because of incomplete responses. The largest contingents among the 226 remaining participants were 68 philosophy, 58 physics, 37 law and 26 history majors. Their mean age was 20.6 years, and on the average they had completed 1.8 years at university. Most (62%) were males, and nearly all were ethnic Russians.

THE AMERICAN STUDIES

In October 1989, nearly all the students enrolled in the introductory psychology course at Harvard ($N = 172$) answered the same survey. The forty-four items were administered in class by a graduate student, Gregg Solomon, who said he was collecting data on social attitudes and Soviet-American relations.

The same month, 183 introductory psychology students at SUNY-Potsdam served in an experiment outside class time conducted by Dr. David Hanson. Their booklet began with the RWA Scale and continued with one of the two versions of the mirror-image task.

In late January 1990, I administered a booklet of surveys, with the help of a graduate student, Paul Frankel, to 57 Tulane university introductory psychology students. This study also took place outside class time and began the same way as the SUNY-Potsdam experiment.

RESULTS

Moscow State University. As reported in Chapter 1, the RWA Scale had a low alpha (.81) among the Moscow State sample. (It was answered in less than ideal conditions, and McFarland et al.'s [1990] translation is likely superior.) As also reported earlier, the mean RWA score was quite low. Predictably, these students very strongly endorsed Gorbachev's reforms on items 31 and 32.

The means of the 226 Russian answers to the mirror-image questions are presented in Table 5.1. There it can be seen, for example, that the 111 students who answered form A of the survey disagreed fairly strongly with the notion that the Soviet Union has the right to intervene militarily in its neighbors' affairs. It can also be seen that the 115 students who answered form B objected just as strongly, but not more so, to the notion that the United States has such a right. That is, there is no evidence of a double standard in these answers.

But possible nationalistic biases can be found in some of the other items. The Soviet students were inclined to blame both superpowers for the nuclear arms race, but especially the United States (item 34). They also thought that Soviet leaders were more interested in peace and freedom around the world than American leaders were (item 35) and that Soviet peace and disarmament proposals were more sincere (item 36). They doubted either country would launch a surprise nuclear attack against the other, but they still thought the United States was more likely to do such a thing than the Soviet Union was (item 39). And they doubted either government cared much about the people whose countries it invaded, especially the U.S. government (item 40).

Nevertheless, these Russian students thought that the world tended to see the Soviet Union as more diabolical and evil than the United States (item 38), that while neither set of leaders was truthful with its people, the Soviet government was less truthful than the American one (item 41), and that the Soviet Union was less likely than the Americans to act altruistically "because it really cares" (item 42). Finally, these Moscow State students were equally cynical about the motives behind American and Soviet foreign aid (item 37), felt the two governments were equally committed to trying to end injustice in their respective countries (item 43), and perceived neither set of leaders as "basically aggressive and warlike" (item 44).

Overall then, one can find some evidence of a nationalistic orientation in these answers. But just as often there was none, or a seemingly reversed one.

Such were the results for the *overall* sample. Now, to the point: did the more authoritarian Moscow State students favor the Soviet point of view more than their Low RWA classmates did? A net pro-USSR "image" score was calculated for each student by summing all the opinions about the Soviet Union (scored in the direction of a favorable opinion) and subtracting the corresponding sum for the items concerning the United States. In short, how favorable were they to the USSR, compared to the United States? The mean of this image score equaled 5.24 over the twelve items. RWA scores correlated .46 with the students' tendency to view their country as good and America as bad.

American Universities. As can also be seen in Table 5.1, Harvard students produced only four significant differences in their answers to the different

versions of the mirror-image items, with three favoring the United States. Their mean pro-USA Image score barely registered at 1.64, indicating these students had almost no "USA! USA!" orientation. (They also scored low on the RWA Scale, lower than any American student sample before or since.) But relatively authoritarian Harvard undergraduates still tended to be the most nationalistic: the RWA-image correlation came in at .38.

SUNY-Potsdam students showed significant differences in their perceptions of the two countries on five of the twelve items, all favoring the United States. Their mean image score of 5.87 similarly revealed a stronger tendency to see the United States as the good guys and the Soviets as the bad guys than was found at Harvard. Again, Highs tended especially to see the world this way: $r = .40$.

Despite the small sample at Tulane, six of their perceptions of the two nations proved significantly different, and their image score (11.12) strongly favored the United States. Once more, High RWAs were particularly likely to see their country in a good light and their opponent as evil ($r = .47$). (You will notice a fifth column in Table 5.1, reporting the results of a mysterious, even more nationalistic Group X. It will be unmasked in a later chapter.)

DISCUSSION

Much has apparently changed since Urie Bronfenbrenner's visit to the Soviet Union during the depths of the Cold War. The Moscow State students showed little nationalism in their attitudes toward the Soviet and American governments. This relatively balanced view coincides with the low authoritarianism of these reform-minded students. Learning to distrust the traditional regime apparently brought with it a distrust of that regime's depiction of "the enemy." The same could be said for the very Low RWAs at Harvard. But the Cold War was still hot elsewhere in the United States, as doubtless it was elsewhere in the Soviet Union at the time.

Who formed the front ranks of the Cold War warriors, on *both* sides? Which Russians tended to believe their country had a right to intervene in their neighbors' affairs that the United States did not have? Which Americans tended to think they were building nuclear weapons only because of the Russian threat? Which Russians thought their leaders truly wanted peace and freedom around the world while the American leaders did not? Which Americans believed their government invaded other countries because it cared about the people living there? Which Russians believed the United States would launch a surprise nuclear attack if it could get away with it? You will not be surprised by the answer, in all cases: largely the right-wing authoritarians.

So here is an apparent truth that most authoritarians could probably never accept. *If they had grown up to be the kind of person they are, only in the*

Table 5.1 Mean responses to the mirror-image items

										Group X
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
	Very Strongly Disagree		Moderately Disagree		Neutral		Moderately Agree		Very Strongly Agree	
	Moscow State			Harvard			SUNY-Potsdam			Tulane
33A. USSR can invade neighbors			2.33		2.39 *		2.84 *		3.29	2.18 *
33B. USA can invade neighbors			2.30		3.85		4.51		4.28	3.32
34A. USA forced into arms race			2.89 *		4.32 ⊕		4.87		4.54	4.05 *
34B. USSR forced into arms race			4.10		4.95		4.92		4.38	3.44 *
35A. USSR wants world peace			6.42 *		4.23		4.78		3.93 *	3.67 *
35B. USA wants world peace			4.76		4.24		4.78		5.28	5.92
36A. USA peace proposals sincere			5.87 *		5.21		5.30		6.11	6.41 *
36B. USSR peace proposals sincere			7.08		5.59		5.31		5.72	5.27
37A. USA foreign aid insincere			5.96		5.14		4.54		4.00 *	4.07 *
37B. USSR foreign aid insincere			5.89		5.65		4.92		5.24	6.56
38A. Others think USA is evil			4.06 ⊕		4.74		4.73 *		3.32 *	4.72 ⊕
38B. Others think USSR is evil			4.68		4.42		5.23 *		5.55	3.92
39A. USSR would sneak attack USA			2.52 *		3.77		4.21 *		4.50 *	3.61 *
39B. USA would sneak attack USSR			4.28		3.35		3.67		3.14	2.42
40A. USSR invades others for self			5.96 *		6.29 *		5.80 *		6.14 *	6.36 *
40B. USA invades others for self			6.96		5.73		4.30		4.55	4.10
41A. USSR gov't. tells the truth			3.95 ⊕		2.79		3.19		2.32	2.51 *
41B. USA gov't. tells the truth			4.54		3.38 *		3.58		3.69 *	4.22 *
42A. USA genuinely altruistic			6.71 ⊕		5.06		5.61		5.61	5.75
42B. USSR genuinely altruistic			6.24		5.18		5.34		5.59	5.37
43A. USA not ending injustices			4.58		3.90		3.75 *		3.46	3.57 *
43B. USSR not ending injustices			4.93		3.92		4.29		3.41	4.36
44A. USSR leaders are warlike			2.97		2.97		3.70		3.68	3.75 *
44B. USA leaders are warlike			3.30		3.41		3.56		3.21	2.69
Net nationalistic image			5.24		1.64		5.87		11.12	14.22

*Indicates $p < .05$ by a two-tailed t-test.

⊕Indicates the significant difference is in the anti-nationalistic direction.

enemy country, they would hate the people they now love, and despise the ideas they now say they would die for. If American High RWAs had grown up instead to be Russian High RWAs, would they see Communism as a great evil? No. We know in fact that Russian High RWAs tend to see capitalism as a great evil (McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina, 1990). To put it simply, authoritarians believe what their authorities tell them. The script of who is good and who is bad starts off with blanks. The proper names are dutifully filled in as socialization proceeds, and not examined much afterward.

McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina (1990) helped us see how much High RWAs in the United States and Russia have in common, besides their acceptance of the established authorities and conventions in their country. They tend to be the most prejudiced members of their societies. Are American Highs anti-Semitic? Yes, and so are Russian Highs. American Highs do not like "foreigners"? Hey, neither do their Russian counterparts. Do American Highs want to keep women barefoot and pregnant and in the kitchen? How about that, so do Russian Highs. American Highs long for the "good old days" when things were "normal." Russian Highs would drink a toast to them too. American Highs do not really want democracy, and—funniest thing—neither do Russian right-wing authoritarians.

With all these things in common, why then do they hate each other? They were raised to and, after all, they *are* authoritarians, just as the fundamentalist Jews and fundamentalist Arabs studied by Rubinstein (1996) in Israel are. Such people, with their fear and their self-righteousness, tend to drive and perpetuate the conflict between groups. But if you are in the front rank on one side, glaring at your hated enemy in the first rank across the way, you are really looking at a mirror. He is you.³

THE WORLD'S FUTURE ACCORDING TO LOW RWAS AND ACCORDING TO HIGHS: THE GLOBAL CHANGE GAME

What would the world be like if everyone were a Low RWA? What would happen instead if everyone were a High? We shall never know, of course. But on two nights in October 1994, I took a look at the possibilities of these impossibilities in a three-hour simulation of the earth's future entitled the Global Change Game.

This sophisticated simulation, designed to raise environmental awareness, takes place on a large map of the world laid out on a gymnasium floor or other large space. The 65 or so participants are randomly assigned to one of ten regions on the planet: North America, Latin America, Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Africa, the Middle East, India, Southeast Asia, China, and the Pacific Rim. Most players represent approximately 100 million people. The disparity of only a few players standing in the wide

open spaces of North America, while 9 others form a huddled mass in India and 12 players are squeezed into China is pointed out to the participants by the game facilitators, 8 other students who designed and run the simulation.⁴

The regions begin the game with realistic assets and problems. North America, Europe, and the Pacific Rim are well off. India and especially Africa are in dire straits. Food supply, medical facility, and employment-opportunity tokens are distributed to each region according to their actual holdings in the real world. So are armies. North America, the CIS, and Europe have massive nuclear-weapons capabilities. Environmental conundrums of one sort or another plague all the regions.

The "Elites." At the beginning of the simulation, out of the blue, the facilitators ask for a leader to "emerge" in each region: "Whoever is going to be the leader of your region, stand up." These "Elites" are then taken aside and given coats, ties, and hats to wear. They are also told that they will control the finances of their region, and can secretly divert some of their team's assets into personal wealth (by buying chocolate dollars wrapped in gold paper). A "prize" (a book on the environment, it turns out) will be awarded at the end of the game to the Elite who has the greatest personal wealth, they learn.

The Elites stand only for themselves (not 100 million people) and are the only players who may travel freely around the world. They thus become the negotiators for their regions, consulting with their team as they wish. Besides contacting one another, they can visit the Game Bank to buy farms, factories, armies, and so on, and arrange loans. They can also make announcements to the "world" ("China has coal for sale") on an overhead projector.

The rest of the team in each region usually must sit in place on the map, where they do the real work of the group, thinking up solutions to their region's problems. The Elites may hunker down to this too. But they can instead spend most of their time consorting with other Elites.

The Play's the Thing. The game is complex and challenging and has struck knowledgeable people as surprisingly realistic. Latin America, for instance, must focus on economic development while bearing in mind problems of deforestation, water pollution, desertification, and population control. When a team has developed a proposal, one of the facilitators will question it at length, trying to make sure the plan is feasible and sustainable. The facilitator can reward good proposals and also punish regions with famine, strife, and pestilence if they have terribly abused the environment.

The fourth horseman of the apocalypse, war, may also gallop across the globe. Whenever one region invades another, the team with the most army tokens wins and thereby acquires some of the territory and assets of the loser.

However, the two combatants' army tokens cancel each other and are lost to both sides (along with the wealth it took to create them). So a "3-to-2" war would leave the victor with just one army, and the loser with none. In addition, the loser suffers civilian deaths. But the victor can control the conquered territory only by stationing an army there.

A nuclear war kills the entire population of the earth. As the game starts, the three superpowers are asked if they want to relinquish their nuclear weapons.

The simulation begins in 1990, with the earth's population set at 5.5 billion. A large clock marks the passage of the years, to 2030, when the game ends. A census of population, poverty levels, pollution, and income is taken every ten years, based upon complicated formulas. Added population in each region is represented by stuffed animals.

The facilitators point out, at the beginning of the game, that 3.4 billion of the earth's population lack at least one of the "necessities of life" (food, health care, or employment). Players who do not have food, health care, and employment at any census point are given a black arm band. Anyone who receives three such arm bands "dies." Regions can declare some of their population "refugees," but if no one accepts the refugees, they drown in the ocean.

A global environmental crisis is programmed to occur about an hour into the game. One of the facilitators has been mysteriously stamping the hands of some players at random with a red symbol. The facilitators announce that the stamped players have skin cancer, caused by the depletion of the planet's ozone layer. A chart is shown on the projector, revealing that European and North American pollutants are largely causing the problem. But people all over the globe are endangered. If the problem is not dealt with, they and more will die.

This description does not do justice to the complexity possible in the Global Change Game, which has been played in schools across Canada. Although the simulation is designed to heighten environmental awareness, this heightening largely occurs in the debriefing at the end of the game, after the players have created the future.

The Low RWA Game. What kind of future did 67 Low RWAs create on October 18, 1994?⁵ Well, even though women slightly outnumbered men in the room (on both nights), seven of the ten people who made themselves Elites were men.

When the superpowers were asked to stand if they wanted to keep their nuclear weapons, the North Americans rose almost instantly. About five seconds later, after some quick exchanges, the Europeans also stood up. After further hesitation, the CIS followed. So nuclear disarmament went by the board.

As soon as the simulation began, the Pacific Rim Elite called for a global

summit on "the island paradise of Tasmania." There the Elites agreed to meet again whenever big problems arose.

Regions set to work on their individual problems. Swords were converted into plowshares, as the number of armies in the world dropped. No wars occurred during the simulation, and no threats of war were ever made (although the North American Elite proposed the idea to his compatriots, I later discovered).

When the ozone-layer crisis occurred, a global summit was held and 15 "world bucks" were contributed in total from around the globe to buy enough "scrubbers" to reduce CFC emissions and replenish the ozone layer.

Other examples of international cooperation occurred, but the problems of the Third World mounted steadily and black arm bands began to drape like leaves over Africa and India. Europe gave some aid, but North America was conspicuously unconcerned. (The North American players literally turned their backs on the endangered players.) When a global summit was called to deal with the problem, the North American Elite did not attend until two other Elites came over and got him. He then stood outside the gathered circle and gave nothing.

India threw 100 million people (a teddy bear) into the ocean as refugees, which no one accepted. By the end of the game, Africa had lost 300 million people to starvation and disease. Casualties during the Low RWA game therefore totaled 400 million.

The Lows did not focus on population growth, and by the end the earth held 8.7 billion people. But the participants were able to provide food, health facilities, and jobs for almost all of this increased population. The Lows pulled off this remarkable feat by a considerable amount of interregional cooperation, by demilitarizing, by developing sustainable economic programs, and because their Elites diverted only 9 world bucks to their personal wealth. But the "fat" regions still remained much better off than the rest. The North American Elite diverted the most wealth into his own pockets.

The High RWA Game. The next evening, 68 High RWAs showed up for their turn.⁶ Things proceeded rather differently from the start. All ten of the Elites were males. When it came time to retain nuclear weapons, all three superpowers stood up quickly (although only the Elites arose, whereas among the Lows the whole team had stood). And the game had barely begun when the Elite from the Middle East announced an oil shortage that doubled the price of oil. This failed to produce a cartel, however, as other oil-producing regions undercut the higher price.

Next, the CIS began buying armies. It had eight by the year 2006 and invaded North America, which had smaller conventional forces. North America retaliated with nuclear weapons, and a holocaust ensued.

When this happens in the Global Change Game, the facilitators turn out all the lights. They explain the probable consequences of a radioactive atmosphere and nuclear winter. The total human population of the earth (7.4 billion by that point) was declared dead, along with almost all other forms of life.

Then the staff gave the players a second chance, turning the clock back to the situation in 2004. Regions went back to solving their problems. But no team gave up its nuclear weapons.

Soon the CIS attacked China (which had no nuclear weapons, an example of the bullying described in note 3), destroying eight armies, killing 400 million Chinese and occupying a large part of the country. The Middle East Elite convened a "United Nations" (UN) for the Elites to discuss future crises.

At this point the ozone-layer crisis was announced. No one called for a UN meeting, however. Eventually Europe announced it had reduced its CFC emissions and stated on the overhead projector, "If you are not stupid, you'll do the same." Europe also loaned poor countries money to cut their emissions.

By the 2020 census the earth's population was in serious trouble, with poverty spreading unchecked in the underdeveloped nations. The Middle East Elite then talked the Elites of Africa and India into joining a "New Confederacy" with him as its leader. These Elites agreed without consulting their teams and gave the Middle East Elite all their resources. They then spent the rest of the game essentially following him around as he alternately threatened and cajoled others. He quickly bought armies, in response to which the CIS and China—recently at war—formed the "Alliance." Each conglomerate threatened to attack the other, and the CIS promised to use its nuclear weapons if war ensued. But the Middle East Elite successfully argued that would be suicidal, and got what he wanted: a stand-off with a superpower. He then proposed on the overhead a "World Government," to replace the UN, but no one showed any interest.

In the meantime poverty got worse and worse, particularly in the New Confederacy. Another Elite called for a world summit, to deal with the black arm bands swamping Africa and Asia, and drew a crowd of one.

By the time the game ended, 1.7 billion people had died from starvation and disease—nearly all of them in the Third World. Including the 400 million who died in war, the total deaths in the High RWA world reached 2.1 billion. The world was less crowded (6.7 billion) than in the Low RWA run, but Highs achieved population control through starvation, disease, and war. (We should recall the minor fact that *everyone* died earlier from the nuclear war—a new version of zero population growth.)

The High world ended in disaster because the High Elites seldom cooperated but instead tried to dominate one another from the start. Most cooperative acts, such as forming alliances, were still in service to competitive goals.

Highs also spent large parts of their resources on armies, and while they tried intensely to develop economic wealth, they proved insensitive to long-range environmental concerns. For example, one region decided to increase vastly its forest industry. A facilitator warned that converting much of its countryside to a single species of tree would make the ecosystem vulnerable. The team responded, "Let's do it anyway. Lumber is very profitable."

The High Elites also devoted over twice as much (22 world bucks) to their personal fortunes as the Low Elites did. Had they been less greedy, they could have saved hundreds of millions of their own people. Want to guess who ended up the richest person on the planet? You're right.

Observations. All of the game facilitators knew that the exercise was being used for a psychology experiment on these two nights, and two of them knew exactly what variable was being manipulated. But no one knew who was showing up on what night (although the two "in the know" had a good idea, from the guys' haircuts, that the second night featured the High RWAs).

Nevertheless, most of the outcomes reported above arose entirely from the players themselves, not from interactions with the facilitators, who had no influence over who became Elites, how the regions interacted, and whether war broke out.

In this context, I asked the facilitators what they had noticed about the two groups. Here are the three most agreed-upon observations.

1. Big gender differences were evident between the two runs. Women played a much more active role on the first night. On the second, when the players were asked to make themselves Elites, many of the women were observed to have lowered their eyes, "as if afraid someone would pick them if they made eye contact." (I also noticed that, in those situations in the second game when there were not enough stuffed animals to "die" in a region, women almost always ended up with three black arm bands. Men lived in these regions too, but somehow the women mainly perished. The High RWA males "grabbed all the seats in the lifeboats.")

2. The players on the first night were observed to have grasped the inter-regional phase of the game much better. While still driven by self-interest, many regions saw that their interests were best promoted by solving problems with others, sometimes on a planet-wide basis. The Low Elites also used the overhead projector much more often to make announcements to *everyone*, whereas the High Elites did most of their communicating in private huddles. There were more world summits on the first night than in any previous run of the Global Change Game.

3. The Elites on the second night "haggled" much more with the facilitators, and one another, than the Elites on the first night did, over costs of farms

136 The Authoritarian Specter

and factories, interest rates on loans, and so on. They were better “hagglers” too, the game organizers thought.

Conclusions. Obviously, I do not think these results generalize willy-nilly to the real world. The players were about nineteen years old, knew that the situation was a game, knew that no one would really die in their wars or from starvation or skin cancer, and knew that it was a psychology experiment. Also, whatever its sophistication, the Global Change Game cannot be nearly as complicated as the global change game being played in the real world every day.

Still, I would be surprised if you did not note similarities between how these two groups of people acted, when the future of the world was in their hands, and the past history of the world. You may also have noticed the many points at which the results of this experiment connect with other differences we have discovered between Low and High RWAs. And finally you may, with me, greatly prefer the world that the Lows created over that which the Highs burned to a cinder and, upon restarting, filled with corpses.⁷

Highs' Blindness to Themselves

Do High RWAs realize their shortcomings? Well, does anyone? But maybe Highs have more blind spots than most people do. Take authoritarian aggression. Would Highs be relatively willing to join a posse after right-wing authoritarians realize that they are themselves right-wing authoritarians? One can doubt it.

I have tried in a number of ways to see if Highs know how aggressive they are (EOF, pp. 186–190). For example, in 1984 I described my “shocking” experiment to a student sample, and asked them to predict how much shock they would give *relative to others serving in the study*. Highs thought they would give lower than average shocks, whereas in the real experiment Highs did just the opposite.

I asked another group of students, after they had completed the Attitudes toward Homosexuals Scale, how hostile they thought they were compared with the rest of the sample. High RWAs recognized their comparative hostility in that case, to some extent. But their estimates still fell significantly short of the actual difference.

I have several times asked participants who had just answered my Ethnocentrism Scale to indicate how prejudiced they thought they would be compared with the rest of the sample. Consistently, most High RWAs (answering anonymously) thought they would land in the “Average” or “Unprejudiced” ranges.

Finally, several times after describing the RWA Scale and its major correlates in feedback sessions to classes, I have asked the students to guess (an-

onymously) their place in the room's RWA distribution (EOF, pp. 312–317). High RWAs usually thought they would be average. Only a few of them correctly realized they had scored in the top quartile. So Highs almost never grasp, when they hear about authoritarianism, that they are hearing about themselves. (So if you and I think we are *not* Highs, that means diddly.)

DO AUTHORITARIANS REALLY NOT REALIZE?

If Highs base these judgments upon comparisons with the people they know, they could indeed be average in that circle, not realizing how aggressive and authoritarian the circle itself is. But the fact that authoritarians admit to more of their hostility toward homosexuals suggests that they also twitch to the social acceptability of their feelings.

High RWAs may sometimes “know better” than the answers they give us. But they may not tell the truth when personally identifiable because they do not want to admit it to others. And they also *may* not tell the truth, even when answering anonymously, because they do not want to admit it to themselves.

No one can say what someone else realizes and does not realize. I know of at least one major belief, however, that most High RWAs practically shout, but that some of them admit they actually doubt, deep down inside. I am talking about belief in God.

You can unplug such admissions by asking people to respond through their “Hidden Observers”—a technique Hilgard (1973, 1977) invented to see if deeply hypnotized subjects really felt no pain while their arms were immersed in ice water. When asked this way, his subjects revealed much more pain than they otherwise admitted. Hilgard considered the Hidden Observer a subconscious process that knows the real truth. I saw it as a way to allow people, hypnotized or not, to admit things they could not admit otherwise: *they* do not spill the beans; the Hidden Observer does.

When you ask High RWAs in a regular survey format if they believe in God, most of them will fill in the +4 bubble on a -4 to +4 scale, and some will create a +5 bubble in the margin because +4 just does not say it strongly enough. But I have found that about 25% of my Highs will say, on the Secret Survey through their Hidden Observers, that they have secret doubts about God's existence that *they have never revealed to anyone before* (EOF, pp. 152–153). And they have had these secret doubts for many years. This revelation still astonishes me.

Thus many High RWAs, raised all their lives to profess belief in God, and still under considerable pressure to “bear witness,” believe much less than they dare let on. But they have never revealed this. It takes a very special set of circumstances for them to speak the truth. But are there still other things about themselves that they cannot admit, even in these special circumstances?

138 The Authoritarian Specter

THE "NAME YOUR AWFUL FAULTS" STUDY

In January 1988, I gave my students' Hidden Observers a new task on the Secret Survey. It was based upon Shakespeare (1604).⁸ I started off reminding them of the lecture on hypnosis.

I'm sure you recall the evidence about the "Hidden Observer" from Hilgard's research on hypnosis. Suppose there is a "Hidden Observer" system in you, which realizes fully things you would consciously deny. The Hidden Observer only reveals itself when it is safe to do so, and when directly spoken to.

This next question is not really for "you," but for the Hidden Observer.

Name two or three things which your person is very reluctant to admit about herself/himself, and maybe would never admit to herself/himself, but which are still true.

Lines for three such admissions followed on the sheet. While some of the responses were fairly shallow ("He smokes too much") or silly ("She likes bubble gum"), many of them seemed to drip with pain, and some were chilling. As usual, the Secret Survey sheets were coded for Low and High RWAs (see Chapter 2). Overall, the 95 Lows wrote down 1.87 ugly faults, and the 101 Highs, 1.29 ($p < .01$). The lower output from Highs was mainly due to 42 students who did not write down anything (42%, compared with 20% of the Lows).

A little later on the Secret Survey I asked,

If you gave no answer to the Hidden Observer question above, was it because—

_____ I cannot think of anything to say.

_____ I can think of things to put down, but it is too embarrassing, frightening, etc. to admit them.

Nearly all (36) of the 42 Highs, and 15 of the 19 nonresponding Lows, checked the first alternative. They could not think of anything that they were very reluctant to admit to themselves.

I repeated the experiment the following year. Only this time I tried to "prime" retrieval processes by first asking the students to write down "the nicest thing you ever did in your life." But this approach had no effect on the results: 88 Lows mentioned 1.92 faults on the average, and 76 Highs wrote down 1.45 ($p < .05$). Again, more Highs (30%) than Lows (18%) gave no answer to the question, and almost all said later there simply was nothing to put down.

Now when people claim complete self-honesty while stating that they have no faults they are reluctant to admit to themselves, we cannot say they are lying. But we can at least raise an eyebrow, Spock-like. Such people would seem to be very unusual. Are some people *completely* open to their faults?

If all of us do have some ugly truths about ourselves we would just as soon

ignore, then one ugly truth about these nonresponders, right off the top, is that they are *not* as honest with themselves as they say they are. They are defensive about their self-knowledge and defensive about their defensiveness. In this situation, with the Secret Survey and the availability of the Hidden Observer to do the rating, I would say such doubly defensive people were not trying to deceive others but attempting to maintain an exaggerated self-image (an old High RWA habit). For it turns out that, far from being completely open to themselves, High RWAs have a notable tendency to *avoid* unpleasant truths.

The "Learn about Your Faults" Studies

LOW SELF-ESTEEM

This study is not based on Shakespeare. You may find a passing similarity to Shelley (1818), however.

In March 1989 I visited two sections of introductory psychology, ostensibly to reveal the purpose and results of a booklet of surveys administered the previous fall using the attendance-sheet system. Being a somewhat untruthful person on this occasion (at least initially), I told the students I had been studying self-esteem. I reminded them of a self-esteem scale they had completed in the booklet and then went on to give a glowing, highly exaggerated account of the scale's predictive validity. Students who scored high on this test, I declared, were likely to do well at university, be more popular with others, have successful careers, and be good parents. People who scored low in self-esteem were more likely to drop out of university, be unsuccessful at love and marriage, and not get the kinds of jobs they wanted.

All this took about ten minutes. Then I told the class that as part of the feedback process, I was going to give each student his or her score on the test. I laid alphabetized piles of sheets around the front of the room, and told the students to come get theirs. The students found their sheet contained a frequency distribution graph of hundreds of alleged self-esteem scores. When the class was reseated, I told all to tear their names from the upper right corner of the sheets, supposedly to prevent any possible linkage with the score about to be revealed. Actually, I wanted the subjects to be anonymous, and know it, later when I used the sheets for a behavioral measure of defensive avoidance.

I then told all how to find their self-esteem scores on their sheets: "Almost everyone's score is 'a hundred and something.' Look very carefully in the upper left corner of your sheet. I have written the first digit of your score there; it's very small, and probably a '1.' Now look carefully at the lower left corner; I wrote the second digit of your score there. Now look at the lower right corner; it has the last digit." I used the blackboard to illustrate how a

middling score of 150 would be encoded on the sheet, to make sure all got their correct scores—well, “correct” in the sense of being the score I wanted them to think they had gotten. For I had randomly given half the students scores of 182, 183, or 184, which placed them in the top 15% of the self-esteem frequency distribution before them. The other students got scores of 122, 123, or 124, which—you guessed it.

Smiles appeared here and there; other faces went blank. I told the students to tear the remaining corners off the feedback sheet and asked if there were any questions. No hands went up. So, gathering my things, I announced that I had written an “easy-read” summary of the studies I had mentioned earlier, studies that proved the self-esteem scale was valid. I would send copies of this summary to the next class meeting, if anyone was interested, but I needed an idea of how many to print. So I asked the students simply to write “Yes” at the top of the feedback sheet if they wanted a copy, or “No” if not, and then fold the paper several times and pass it to the aisle.

I collected the sheets, which had been discretely premarked for Low and High RWAs and “feedback scores.” These sheets would now tell me how many Lows and how many Highs, after getting good or bad news about their personalities from a psychological test, wanted to see the evidence for the test’s validity.

Immediately after I had collected all the sheets, I came clean. I announced the self-esteem scores were entirely bogus, and demonstrated this by asking all who had gotten 122, 123, 124, 182, 183, or 184 to raise their hands. After the laughing, hissing, and booing died down, I told them everything: RWA Scale, defensive avoidance, the works. Swearing them to secrecy, I promised to report the results of the experiment at their next class meeting. This I did, completely; honestly.

Finally, I made the point before leaving that while psychological tests sometimes can assess *groups* of people validly, no scale can make foolproof individual diagnoses. If they had been buoyed or deflated by their fake self-esteem score, I hoped that would inoculate them against someday putting too much credence in any such test result. I would like to think this insight made the experience worthwhile for the students. (But that may just be a further example of a motivated self-delusion.)

Altogether 42 Low RWA students received high self-esteem scores, and 67% of them asked for a copy of the “evidence for validity.” Another 41 Lows received low self-esteem scores, and 63% of them wanted to see the evidence.⁹ Among High RWA students, 48 received good news about their self-esteem, with all its stated implications for a grand, happy life, and 73% of them wanted to see the validity summary. But only 47% of the 51 Highs who were told they had low self-esteem wanted to see evidence for the scale’s validity ($p < .01$).

In a nutshell, the two groups of Low RWAs showed practically no difference in their desire to see the summary of the literature on the self-esteem scale. I can easily imagine their different motivations. Those told they were great might have been after the thrills. Those told they had crummy self-esteem might have wanted to review the literature for themselves, and perhaps dump all over it. But the latter did *not* particularly flee from an unpleasant truth. By contrast, over half of the authoritarians given the same bad news “ran away, ran away.” So much for being completely willing to deal with their shortcomings.

HIGH PREJUDICE

I next wondered if Highs would directly tell me they flat out did not want to receive bad news about themselves. Beginning in 1992, I frequently inserted the following question at the end of my Ethnocentrism Scale, when students had answered it anonymously. “Suppose, for the sake of argument, that you are *less* accepting, *less* tolerant and *more* prejudiced against minority groups than are most of the other students serving in this experiment. Would you want to find this out, say by having the Experimenter bring individual sheets to your class, showing each student privately his/her prejudice score compared with the rest of the class?”

In 1992–93 I asked this question of 493 students serving anonymously in three different studies. Of the 115 Lows, 76% said yes, they wanted to know if it turned out they were more prejudiced than most. But only 55% of the 123 Highs wanted to know ($p < .001$).

But perhaps Highs simply care less about the results of such scales. So in 1993–94 I asked half the sample in three studies (total $N = 906$) the question above, while the other half were asked, “Suppose, for the sake of argument, you are *more* accepting, *more* tolerant, and *less* prejudiced . . .”

The results in the “Suppose you’re *more* prejudiced” condition closely resembled those of the previous year: 76% of 112 Lows said “Yes,” compared to 56% of 115 Highs ($p < .001$). But when the proposition became “Suppose you’re *less* prejudiced,” 71% of 112 Lows and 74% of 120 Highs wanted to be told. Fewer Highs were willing to find out bad things about themselves than wanted to find out good things ($p < .001$). If you think everyone acts that way, the Lows did not. They wanted to know if it turned out they were relatively prejudiced.¹⁰

To summarize, then, while authoritarians tend to insist they are quite honest with themselves, and ready to admit any failing, the evidence indicates the contrary. The self-esteem experiment showed that many Highs wanted to avoid dealing with personally distressing feedback. They did not even want to examine the evidence to see if they *had* a reason to be worried. Instead one can easily imagine that, had they not been dehoaxed, many Highs would just

have put their "low self-esteem" scores in a mental box and locked it tight. The "Suppose you're prejudiced" studies go a step farther and show that many Highs have so much trouble dealing with unpleasant personal truths, they would keep from learning them. Highs usually think they are average in prejudice or even unprejudiced. But if they are wrong, many prefer to stay prejudiced rather than try to change.

Thus, far from fearlessly facing their failures, Highs seem to run away from them. But as long as Highs screen out, paper over, and erase their shortcomings, they will find it hard to overcome them—which leads us to our last topic.

Cognitive Consistency and Guilt in the Authoritarian Mind

Authoritarian minds challenge our theories of cognitive consistency. For High RWAs, with all their inconsistencies, double standards, and blind spots make a mockery of the notion that people will feel "dissonance" or "imbalance" if their ideas do not fit together properly. Consistency theories will burn out their escape clauses on authoritarians. How many times can they say, "*not enough* dissonance was created," or "this particular imbalance was 'not noticed,'" or "on this occasion the person *ignored* this incongruity."

We *could* dismiss this theoretically dissonant fact with a little name calling: "Authoritarians are sick, mentally 'unbalanced.' Our consistency theories were designed to explain normal behavior, not pathology." But this will not stick. Some right-wing authoritarians have clearly been mentally ill; but most Highs get along well enough in life. They can become successful lawyers and doctors and professors and scientists and managers and presidents of the United States. You will probably find yourself working for one, someday.

I do not mean that the inconsistency of the authoritarian mind defies understanding. It just twists and turns and stops abruptly and sometimes simply skips town. It requires a deeper understanding than we need for more consistent minds. But once you get it, things make sense, loose ends tie together, and you can see why High RWAs act the way they do, why they are so vulnerable, why they are so hostile.

Guilt provides a good example of the nonobvious twists in Highs' thinking. At one time I thought it, not fear, might be the major instigator of authoritarian aggression (EOF, pp. 124–126). I thought High RWAs might, out of guilt about their own sins, attack "sinners" to convince others, and themselves, how holy they were. For Highs *do* sin a lot, by their lights. First of all, they have demanding moral standards in some ways. For example, nowadays most people consider masturbation normal and not sinful—but not most Highs. Just thinking about sex can count as a sin. In an era when the "F word" has become nearly all the parts of speech, many Highs still sin in their

own minds when they say "dammit." Even white lies are verboten, much less the lies some psychologists tell.

Besides stumbling over their high standards, authoritarians also trip over the common do's and don'ts of morality. I have several times given students an opportunity to cheat on exams, to keep quiet about favorable mistakes in determining their grades, and to get experimental credits dishonestly (EOF, pp. 147–151). I have always found that Highs do these things as much as everyone else. So authoritarians could be carrying a lot of heavy guilt trips around in their minds, aversive stimuli that (I thought) could lead them to strike out at others when occasions permitted.

I tested this hypothesis in a January 1987 Secret Survey by asking the Hidden Observers, "Does this person have *secret* guilts about things (s)he has done wrong, which very few persons (or even no one) know about, but which trouble her/him and make her/him wish (s)he had never done these bad things?" Unfortunately for my theory, 108 Highs reported significantly *less* secret guilt (mean = 2.19 on a 0–6 scale) than did 101 Lows (2.76).

Once again, the great thing about the scientific method is that it will tell you when you are wrong, and I undeniably was. I began to peer deeper into the authoritarian mind, asking my next batch of Secret Survey respondents, "Is there something you do to get over the guilt, to 'forgive yourself,' when you have done something morally wrong?" Immediately afterward, I asked these students to indicate how completely forgiven they felt, on a 0–6 scale, when they had done whatever they did to relieve their guilt.

Let me ask *you*. What do you do to quiet your conscience? Apologize to wounded parties? Be extra nice to some third party? Just plain party-party-party? How cleansed do you feel afterwards? Tippy top, like new?

Highs and Lows mentioned all these things and more, and said these erased some of their guilt. But High RWAs had another, very effective guilt-reduction program that Lows almost never mentioned: they asked God for forgiveness. And boy did that take away the stain, they reported (EOF, pp. 189–190).

I objectified this open-ended inquiry with the following item on the subsequent January 1989 Secret Survey. (The numbers in parentheses show how many Highs checked the alternative. Those in brackets show the Lows' answers.)

People sometimes do things they know are morally wrong. When you do such things, which one of the items on the list below are you *most likely* to do to get over the guilt, to "forgive yourself" for what you did?

Go out and do something nice for someone else. (4) [8]

Ask God for forgiveness by prayer, going to Confession, or some other religious act. (37) [6]

- ____ Rationalize the bad act. Tell myself it was not so bad, that I had no choice, etc. (13) [21]
- ____ Talk to someone close, such as a best friend or parent, about what I did. (19) [32]
- ____ Get very busy with some assignment or job to take my mind off it. (3) [8]
- ____ Other: Namely _____ (2) [9]

You can see that Highs and Lows handle guilt in somewhat different ways. Highs are less likely to talk with someone about the bad thing they did, and they are less likely to say they rationalize it. Instead they mainly deal with guilt religiously.

Again, it works better than anything else. On the next question, I asked subjects to indicate "How completely forgiven do you feel, when you have done this?" on a 0-6 scale. Highs felt significantly more forgiven than Lows (means of 3.61 and 2.87, respectively), entirely because of the efficacy of prayer and confession.

Ultimately, then, all of this makes sense: religious training probably gives you more grounds for considering yourself a "sinner," but it also gives you a way of getting rid of your sins that nonbelievers lack: divine forgiveness. The feeling of being cleansed by God's mercy explains why Highs carry less guilt than others. They have put their sins behind them. So when some nosy psychologist self-righteously studying self-righteousness asks, "How good are you?" Highs will not be dragging around residual feelings of guilt.

But while the reward of having guilt removed helps keep the authoritarian religious, wiping the slate clean so easily probably undermines the desire to improve; hence the deeds may well be repeated. And the resulting self-righteousness plays a major role in authoritarian aggression. It disinhibits aggressive impulses. Though it may seem terribly *inconsistent* that feeling forgiven leads to attacking others, it makes sense when you put together the pieces of the authoritarian mind.

"So What's Your Point?"

In the last chapter we saw that right-wing authoritarians tend to be especially good at some common cognitive failings. In this chapter we have seen how these shortcomings, and the cognitive operations they are based upon such as compartmentalization, lead Highs to serious inconsistencies and personal blindness. We saw that authoritarians not only believe contradictory ideas, but also endorse contradictory principles. High RWAs use so many double standards that their behavior shows relatively little fairness and integrity.

They may present themselves as highly principled people, but their principles shift quickly to justify whatever they happen to want—a shift they probably never notice.

Similarly, the mirror-image studies of American-Soviet perceptions show that the High RWAs on both sides of the Cold War were most likely to believe their government's portrayal of the conflict. Right-wing authoritarians tended to be the Cold War warriors, distrusting and threatening each other, bitterly opposed to the other's system. Yet High RWAs on both sides could easily have been in the front ranks on the other side, had they grown up to be the same kind of person in the other country.

When given a chance to control the earth's future in a sophisticated global simulation, Lows cooperated a great deal and solved many of the problems that arose—although some selfishness and ethnocentrism appeared. Highs, by contrast, completely destroyed the planet in a nuclear holocaust and, when given a second chance, still engaged in destructive domination strategies. High RWA leaders also stole more from their peoples to accumulate personal wealth.

Delving into authoritarians' awareness of themselves, we found many "official denials" that anything was amiss. There was virtually nothing about themselves Highs were unwilling to face and deal with, according to them. Yet when we told some High RWAs they were low in self-esteem, and that this had serious implications for their future, a lot of authoritarians fled from the news, not even checking to see if it was correct. And many Highs told us, point blank, that if it turned out they were more prejudiced than average, they did not want to be told. They would rather go on being prejudiced than learn the truth.

Finally, we saw that for all the wrongdoing in their lives, Highs carry around little guilt because they erase their sins so thoroughly through their religion. That *self-righteousness* plays a major role in their authoritarian aggression.

In closing, we should observe once again that in comparing the behavior of Highs with Lows in these experiments, we have usually found differences of degree, not of kind. Many right-wing authoritarians appear seriously low on integrity, self-understanding, and resolve to make themselves better. But who can claim to be filled to the brim?

Fire Test,” and we failed it. Fortunately for us, the prime minister was not intent on establishing a dictatorship (though he may have been mightily interested in having his party win the upcoming provincial election in Quebec).²⁴

In closing, let me tell you a story you have probably *not* heard of a similar crisis in the United States that did not occur, but still might. On July 5, 1987, the *Miami Herald* reported that Oliver North had drawn up a top-secret plan for the National Security Council calling for the “suspension” of the United States Constitution under certain conditions. The “conditions” involved such things as a *nuclear* holocaust, but North also included “national opposition to a U.S. military invasion abroad” as ground for casting aside Congress, the Supreme Court, the Bill of Rights, whatever. (If you have not heard of this plan, it is probably because, curiously, very few newspapers or news broadcasts ever reported the story. Representative Jack Brooks tried to have the matter placed on the agenda of the Iran-Contra hearings, but he was overruled—not because the report was untrue, but because the issue was so highly classified; see the *New York Times*, July 14, 1987, p. A11.)

I myself am not privy to whether the National Security Council ever adopted this plan to overthrow the Constitution of the United States—which all American military officers take an apparently compartmentalizable oath to defend. I do not know whether, if the Executive Branch did once approve this plan, it still holds it at the ready. But the revelation shows that extreme right-wing authoritarianism has, at times in the past, been alive and well in the highest reaches of democratic government, from which it could have sent us to the lowest depths.

Conclusion: A Few Last Words on the Subject

A year has passed since I began writing this book. Some of the twenty stories from the Introduction that were in the news in the fall of 1993 have disappeared. The Pentagon's policy on gays and lesbians has not led to the ruin of the armed forces. And atrocities in Brazil have not drawn much ink lately. Instead, we are hearing of atrocities committed in Argentina during the “dirty war.”

Other stories limped off the pages. The “Democrat-controlled” Congress never passed a health bill in 1993–1994. The Chinese government slapped its dissenters back into jail as soon as it lost its Olympic bid, and the Clinton administration decided to disconnect human rights concerns from its trade negotiations with China. (No other country, including Canada, was pushing the issue when discussing trade with Beijing.)

Other stories happily took a turn for the better. A significant peace accord was reached by a new Israeli government and the PLO. (Whereupon Jewish and Muslim fundamentalists, who want to keep on fighting, did their best to wreck the chances for peace, mostly by killing unarmed civilians.) Free elections were held in South Africa, and Nelson Mandela's Freedom Party swept to power. The IRA announced a cease-fire, which “hard-liners” resisted. Also, I consider it a plus that Oliver North did not get elected to the Senate.

But I still see right-wing authoritarians at work in every paper, every day. The Bosnian Serbs are still pursuing their “final solution.” Another doctor was killed outside an abortion clinic in Florida. Vladimir Zhirinovsky brought a little comic relief to the world scene by announcing he would help reverse Russia's declining birth rate by fathering children all over the country. (But the Parliament his party controlled granted full pardons to all the conspirators

who had been convicted of trying violently to overthrow the new democracy. And people hurt by the economic reforms have begun to support a rejuvenated Communist Party.) Senator Jesse Helms told the president of the United States that if he dared visit any military bases in North Carolina, he had better bring bodyguards. And Rwandans on all sides learned, as the German people did in 1945, the horrific price that ultimately must be paid *by everyone* when the right-wing authoritarians within a population gain absolute control.

The Outcomes of the Studies

THE HIGHS

At the beginning of this book I observed that we often swap a lot of stereotypes when discussing liberals and conservatives. I promised to let the scientific method do the talking, and I hope you agree that the evidence presented in this book cannot be dismissed as "just opinions." Exhibit 12.1 lists fifty noteworthy results of the experiments I conducted, all based on completely objective scoring, not "dream interpretations." The studies turned out the way they did because that is apparently the way things are. Furthermore, in nearly all these cases the RWA relationships proved quite substantial, sometimes ranking among the strongest findings we have ever uncovered in the behavioral sciences. Moreover, RWA Scale findings have a very good record of replication by other researchers, just as some of my findings are replications of others' discoveries.

This summary does not paint a pretty picture of right-wing authoritarians, and it only gets worse when you add in findings by other researchers, such as High men's greater tendency to assault women sexually (Walker, Rowe, and Quinsey, 1993). It may seem one-sided to someone who has not worked through the evidence. But after all, we are talking about people who have Nazi-like inclinations.

As you consider Highs' demonstrated inclinations and orientations, recall my statement at the beginning of this book that, their denial notwithstanding, many conservatives differ from the Oklahoma City bombers more in degree than in kind. Here is the evidence.¹

Exhibit 12.1 Summary of Scientific Research Findings regarding High RWAs.

Compared with others, right-wing authoritarians are significantly more likely to:

- Score on the "Hitler" end of the RWA Scale.
- Accept unfair and illegal abuses of power by government authorities.
- Trust leaders (such as Richard Nixon) who are untrustworthy.
- Weaken constitutional guarantees of liberty, such as the Bill of Rights.
- Punish severely "common" criminals in a role-playing situation.

Admit they get personal pleasure from punishing such people.

But go easy on authorities who commit crimes and people who attack minorities.

Not hold responsible the authority who caused the attacks in the "Milgram experiment."

Attack "learners" in an "electric shock" experiment.

Be prejudiced against many racial, ethnic, nationalistic, and linguistic minorities.

Be hostile toward homosexuals.

Support "gay-bashing."

Volunteer to help the government persecute almost anyone.

Be mean-spirited toward those who have made mistakes and suffered.

Insist on traditional sex roles.

Be hostile toward feminists.

Conform to opinions of others, and be more likely to "yea-say."

Be fearful of a dangerous world.

Be highly self-righteous.

Strongly believe in group cohesiveness and "loyalty."

Make many incorrect inferences from evidence.

Hold contradictory ideas leading them to "speak out of both sides of their mouths."

Uncritically accept that many problems are "our most serious problem."

Uncritically accept insufficient evidence that supports their beliefs.

Uncritically trust people who tell them what they want to hear.

Use many double standards in their thinking and judgments.

Be hypocrites.

Help cause and inflame intergroup conflict.

Be bullies when they have power over others.

Seek dominance over others by being competitive and destructive in situations requiring cooperation.

Believe they have no personal failings.

Avoid learning about their personal failings.

Use religion to erase guilt over their acts and to maintain their self-righteousness.

Be "fundamentalists" and the most prejudiced members of whatever religion they belong to.

Be dogmatic.

Be zealots.

Be less educated.

Sometimes join left-wing movements, where their hostility distinguishes them.

But much more typically endorse right-wing political parties.

Be Conservative/Reform Party (Canada) or Republican Party (United States) lawmakers, who (1) have a conservative economic philosophy; (2) believe in social dominance; (3) are ethnocentric; (4) are highly nationalistic; (5) oppose abortion; (6) support capital punishment; (7) oppose gun-control legislation; (8) say they value freedom but actually want to undermine the Bill of Rights; (9) do not value equality very highly and oppose measures to increase it; (10) are not likely to rise in the Democratic Party, but do so among Republicans.

THE LOWS

If Low RWAs had as little integrity as Highs have, if they were as fearful and self-righteous, if they were as hostile and destructive, if they were as unfair, if they were as defensive and as blind to themselves, if they were as prejudiced, and so on, then the experiments would have turned out differently. Lows had as good a chance of acting these ways as Highs did. But the Lows did not.

Instead, they tended to object strongly to any abuse of power, no matter who was in control and who the victim was. You would wait quite a while for a posse of Lows to help run down some "varmints." They tended to be moderate and evenhanded in their punishment of criminals, responding more to the crime, not to who the criminal was. Their thinking was much less compartmentalized, much more consistent. They were more likely to make correct inferences from facts. They were more willing to admit things about themselves they did not like. When given bad news about their personalities, they faced the news squarely. They were much more open-minded, much less dogmatic than Highs, and more independent, more peaceful and peace-seeking, and much less biased. The dogmatism and hostility one sometimes finds in leftist groups does not seem likely to have sprung from Low RWAs, but instead probably comes from the Wild-Card Authoritarians we discovered.²

CHALLENGING THE RESULTS

If you think I got these results only because I "set up" the Highs by my choice of issues, and manipulations, I think you are wrong. I tried to give both Lows

and Highs equal opportunities to show their good and bad sides. Sometimes Lows behaved badly too, as in their double standard regarding Quebec separation and their greater shift toward intolerance following the 1995 Quebec referendum. They also were just as likely as Highs to cheat on their lovers, and equally susceptible to Holocaust-denial material. Twice they acted *worse* than Highs; see the University of Pittsburgh experiments described in note 13 to Chapter 1. But the point is, Lows *could* have looked bad many other times as well in my studies; but they did not. Never? Hardly ever.

Let me repeat one more time: if the difference between ordinary High RWAs and neo-Nazis is a matter of degree, so also is the difference between Lows and Highs. I would not be surprised if some day researchers find worse things about Lows than we presently know. But considering the overall evidence, I would much rather be a Low RWA than a High.

If you nonetheless think my research has been very unfair to Highs, that they have talents and strengths that I have ignored, then take heart from the fact that all of these findings are based on experiments. That means researchers around the world can design their own studies and determine how limited my findings are. And this will happen in due course, automatically, if these results peak anyone's curiosity. Science is basically a cooperative human adventure, with massive long-run controls for the truth.

Similarly, where my *interpretations* are wrong, we can go beyond arguing—which gains us little because anyone can "talk the talk"—and demonstrate my errors. If, for example, the liberal—conservative dimension in politics is *not* basically synonymous with the Low RWA—High RWA scale, if the political dimension can be better conceptualized in some other way, then that can be proven scientifically. It will take a well-defined alternate conceptualization, and a sound way of measuring it, and then experiments that demonstrate its superiority. But it can be done, and we shall advance when it happens. We know much more on this subject than we knew when we thought we knew a lot. And we shall learn more. There is room for optimism.

Controlling Authoritarianism within Our Societies

My students sometimes challenge my optimism, demanding, "What good does it do to understand bad things if you cannot change them?" I respond, as many have before: "When you understand, you know better how to produce change." That said, I still have to work some to compose a Top Ten list of recommendations for protecting society against right-wing authoritarianism.

1. We are helped, both ethically and practically, by the fact that right-wing authoritarians themselves typically do not want to be so authoritarian. When High RWAs learn they are Highs, about 80% of them are surprised and upset, and they say that they want to change (*EOF*, pp. 312–317). Mind you, they

do not aspire to be Lows; rather, they want to be “average”—which is predictable, but still a big step forward.

We cannot give the RWA Scale to everybody, however, much less tell them their scores. And we know that Highs will usually think these findings apply to someone else, not them. But studies have led to some practical suggestions (EOF, chapter 8).

2. Anti-discrimination laws can be quite beneficial. Ordinary authoritarians appear more likely to obey laws they dislike than others are. (It comes from being an authoritarian.) Such laws, *when enforced*, not only protect the vulnerable minorities, but also bring Highs into more contact, as equals, with the people they would otherwise avoid. Recall that Highs who got to know a homosexual usually lost some of their prejudice.

3. Brother Bernard, my favorite teacher in high school, would not like what I am going to say next, but secular education also helps High RWAs move in wider circles of acquaintances. Highs drop significantly in authoritarianism during public university education mostly, I think, because of the exposure to more diverse people and opinions. Parents should have the right to send their children to private schools. But doing so probably costs all of us in subtle ways.

4. News media that value freedom of the press might resist the temptation to overplay the crime and violence stories. Hying a “dangerous world” increases right-wing authoritarianism in the population, which could lead to authoritarian leaders. What do dictators seize first after a coup?

5. Similarly, churches that value freedom of religion could do much to discourage ethnocentrism, authoritarianism, and self-righteousness, and produce a wonderful *negative* relationship between religiousness and prejudice. (I know many try, and they are often dealing with “hard, hard hearts.”)

6. Reformers who value the right to protest should proceed nonviolently, for many reasons. Violent demonstrations appear to drive the population toward right-wing authoritarianism. Reformers should watch out for the “wild cards” in their ranks, who are most likely to become violent.

7. Groups in conflict with other groups should note the mirror-image studies. The people shouting in the front ranks on the other side are apt to be like the people screaming in the front ranks on your side: right-wing authoritarians. Lows and Moderates in both camps have to see past them and their hatred, and reach over them to one another, to reduce the conflict.

8. We have to speak out against the hatemongers in our society by independently presenting the truth and exposing their lies. Hate campaigners would use freedom of speech to take it away from us. We have to use it to keep it.

9. It is not my place to tell anyone how to vote. But it seems very unwise to elect High RWAs, from any party, to govern a democracy.

10. Finally, I think we should learn a humbling lesson from the experiments on Holocaust denial. Everyone—Lows, Moderates, and Highs—could have done better, just as I could have in the anteroom of the National Socialist White People’s Party headquarters. If you know who “Pogo” was, you know who the real enemy is.

Ordinary People

Sometimes, when I tell people that I study authoritarian personalities, they say things like, “Oh, you mean neo-Nazis and the Klan.” When these people are psychologists at conventions or the president of my university, I say “Right,” because I know they will probably instantly forget whatever I reply. But I am more forthcoming with others.

Most people seem surprised when I say, “No, I study normal folks, not Nazis.” Few people, unless they are familiar with the history of fascism, understand that people as ordinary as you and I, and our friends and neighbors, might bring down democracy if the going got tough enough. But *we* are the people who, driven by fear and cuddling in our self-righteousness, could create the wave that would lift the monsters among us to power. And once the monsters acquire the powers of the state, their evil explodes.

Can one credibly talk about fascism in the North American context as we approach the year 2000? Is it even remotely possible that the horrors of Nazi Germany could someday occur in Canada or the United States? When I talk about prefascist personalities, do I seriously propose that many North Americans could act like Hitler, Himmler, Hoess, and so on?

I have little doubt that most of the “230s,” “240s,” and “250s” could. But, although the Nazis did monstrous things, it is a mistake to think that only ardent fascists and psychopathic killers became Nazis. Adolf Eichmann struck some as a bland person, not particularly anti-Semitic, who basically wanted to advance his career and so worked hard to impress his superiors. His evil was “banal” (Arendt, 1977). I can also imagine that many of those who made the arrests and transported the victims to the death camps would have been described as “good, decent people” by their families and neighbors. So would many of those who ran the slave labor camps in which hundreds of thousands of prisoners perished and maybe even the SS soldiers who massacred whole villages. You can be an ordinary Joe, or Lieutenant Calley, and still do terrible things. One of the first things Americans learned about the militias, in an Associated Press story dated April 27, 1995, was that they were “ordinary people who feel pushed.”

If you think our countries could never elect an Adolf Hitler to power, note that David Duke would have become the governor of Louisiana if it had just

been up to the white voters in the state. Many people vote for extraordinarily High RWA candidates today. Many more would want one during a crisis. About a quarter of American state legislators are already poised to "stomp out the rot." And if you think a North American dictator could not find the people he needed to kill Jews, or professors, or Communists, or trade union leaders, or defiant clergy, or religious minorities, or the mentally "unsuitable," or whomever he wanted to eliminate, then you might recall what Milgram found.

I am now writing the last page in my last book about authoritarianism. So for the last time, I do *not* think a fascist dictatorship lies just over our horizon. But I do not think we are well protected against one. And I think our recent history shows the threat is growing.

Fascism has proven as vile and persistent in this century as prejudice, which has shown it can be quietly passed from generation to generation even when the state vigorously discourages it. And unlike Communism, fascism cannot be expected to fail because it makes some fatally wrong assumptions about human nature. Instead, democracy seems to be fighting the current here: by depending on tolerance, when fear and dislike come so easily; by asking for generosity of spirit, when selfishness is so natural; by championing equality, when hierarchy seems so inevitable.

We cannot secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves, and our posterity, if we sit with our oars out of the water. If we drift mindlessly, circumstances can sweep us to disaster. Our societies presently produce millions of highly authoritarian personalities as a matter of course, enough to stage the Nuremberg Rallies over and over and over again. Turning a blind eye to this could someday point guns at all our heads, and the fingers on the triggers will belong to right-wing authoritarians. We ignore this at our peril.

Notes • References • Index