

PERSONALITY AND MEDIA  
INFLUENCE ON POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR

THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY  
ON COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA EFFECT  
ON POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR

By

PATRICIA HUGHES, B.A.

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AUTHOR: Patricia Hughes, B.A. (McMaster University)

SUPERVISOR: Dr. R. B. Cunningham

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: The thesis attempts to construct a theory of the influence of personality on the effect of media on political attitudes and behaviour. Since the media are considered to be part of the environment, the theory is based on assumptions about personality-environmental interaction. Although the main scope of the thesis is theoretical, a link with the "real world" is established through the use of data which are employed in the construction of three personality types and in the development of a suggested methodological procedure for testing the theory. This notion of types is the pivotal point of the thesis. It represents an attempt to steer the study of media influence in a new direction which emphasises the whole man rather than just one aspect of him, either "social" or psychological.

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## INTRODUCTION

Political science is no longer concerned primarily with the study of institutions and the political processes related to them: it has expanded its boundaries to include study of the people who compose or employ institutions, who formulate and engage in political processes, and who interact to make political science dynamic rather than stagnant. Political science, then, at least in one context, is concerned with behaviour.

"Behaviour" is an element in a reciprocal process with the environment: it is influenced by and reacts upon environmental forces, in terms of people, conditions, and situations. Such studies cannot be pursued only in terms of social variables. One cannot deny their importance in the study of behaviour, but it is equally true that to deny the relevance and importance of psychological characteristics is to eliminate a vital component in the behaviour-environment interaction. At the basis of this thesis is the belief that the study of political behaviour can be viable and useful only if we examine those characteristics which define man's uniqueness; we cannot isolate a man from the unconscious, or conscious, effects his personality has on his behaviour; personality motivates behaviour. We cannot deny that what



man does is inextricably related to what he is!

These are the conditions under which this thesis has proceeded. It is an attempt to relate man's "being" to man's "action" employing "scientific" techniques. Specifically, it is designed as an approach to the testing of the role played by personality in the effects of the mass media on political behaviour and attitudes.

The impetus for this thesis arose out of two previous papers which I wrote on the subject of media influence on political behaviour: "The Comparative Effects of Mass Media and Personal Contact on the Voter" and "Mass Media Effects on Issue Perception". The research carried out for these papers and the findings resulting from analysis of the data\* emphasised the inconclusive nature of research in the field of media influence. Most of the studies have involved structured, controlled situations concerned predominantly with the effect of social characteristics on media influence. There are obvious advantages in such studies as regards a "scientific, empirical approach", but such advantages seem to me to be outweighed by the disadvantage arising from these studies' isolation from the real world. The media do not act in isolation; they are involved with

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The source for data for the first paper was the 1952 and 1960 Survey Research Center surveys; for the second, the 1968 survey.

many other factors acting upon an individual simultaneously. We can make attempts to define such factors but we cannot expect complete success in doing so; the complexity of the situation prevents that.

My concern is with unstructured, self-selected, long-term media exposure, and with the elucidation of another factor which can define more clearly and definitively the relationship between media exposure and behaviour and attitudes, and which cuts across the boundaries of social characteristics as much as possible. This factor seems to me to be the personality type of the individual involved. Whether or not an individual is influenced by the media to which he is exposed appears to me to be determined by the individual's propensity to suggestibility, by his sense of self-esteem and by other related factors acting in conjunction with one another. I am not ignoring the social variables: I am trying to compare the relative effects of social and personality variables. This is by no means a condemnation of studies employing social characteristics as explanatory factors; nor is it a dogmatic effort to "prove" my belief in the personality characteristics as important sources of explanation. If any word describes this thesis, it is "searching" rather than "dogmatic". The thesis is, in sum, an experience in learning.

The major emphasis is theoretical -- the development of a model of personality effect on media influence. In addition, an attempt has been made to give the study an empirical base by employing data to suggest a way in which the theory could be tested.

The first chapter is concerned with establishing the meaning of the concept of personality and of attitude change, since this lies at the heart of the thesis. Following this is an attempt to relate personality factors and the study of political phenomena with a discussion of the conditions under which these factors are most useful as explanatory factors. The third chapter discusses the relationship between environment and the development of personality and the subsequent perceptions of environmental conditions. Although this is a short chapter, it nevertheless is the core of the thesis. Central is the point that media form part of the environment and that personality determines the perception of the environment and, therefore, of media content. Chapter four examines the various "intermediary factors" which both limit and encourage the media's potential to influence. The following chapter unites the notions presented in the previous chapters into a theoretical base in the form of a schematic representation.

The sixth chapter breaks with the theoretical trend

and suggests a method of empirically studying the problem explored in the thesis. The source of the data which provided the questions is explained in the first section; this is followed by an eight step methodological procedure which may be applied. Theoretical and operational definitions of the major concepts are provided in Chapter Seven. Chapter Eight continues in this vein by providing definitions of the personality dimensions, explaining the derivation of the personality types, and suggesting other traits implied by those which have been operationalised. Chapter Nine is both theoretical and empirical; it begins with a brief theory of personality and goes on to profile the personality types, both conceptually and on the basis of the dimensions presented in Chapter Eight.

The final chapter, entitled "In Conclusion: A Personal Note" is essentially a comment on the value of the thesis, both on the personal and the academic levels. It entails both a summary of the thesis and discussion of the areas which can be explored on the basis of the theoretical considerations which comprise the main element of the work.

# I

## THE CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY

The notion of personality involves the concepts of trait and of character which are dependent not only on internal elements but also on external factors in the environment such as interaction with other people and specific circumstance. There are, no doubt, as many manifestations of personality as there are people: an individual is an individual because he is in some way unique from any other person. Yet he does have some aspects in common and it is on this assumption that we can employ the notion of personality "types" (this will be discussed in Chapter IX). It is necessary first, however, to define the concept of personality in order to clarify this extremely complex notion for the remainder of the thesis.

### 1. A Definition of Personality

Campbell et al. present several definitions of the notion of personality in an attempt to discover which will lead to the most fruitful and catholic analysis of political behavior.<sup>1</sup> These include "any response tendency that emerges consistently in the behavior of the individual" and "certain characteristic lines of organization from deeper

dynamics to surface behavior". The authors reject these definitions because they consider them too broad in scope. The former would allow the classification of "a variable similar to party identification" as a personality factor. The latter definition they view as useful but "it becomes misleading when it is taken to mean that behavior or the dispositions that prompt behavior can only be understood in terms of personality factors". There are other determinants of behaviour, operable under specified conditions, apart from personality factors. These are access to and cognitive organisation of information and differences in environmental conditions including social expectations and culture content. The tendency of these authors is to diminish the role of personality in determining behaviour and to emphasise the social context.

It is the contention of this study, on the contrary, that personality factors are actively present under all conditions, sometimes consciously, but mostly habitually or unconsciously. Thus personality factors would help explain why one individual is afraid to face new situations (that is, in terms of cognitive information, why one person easily grasps new knowledge or skills and another is afraid to try), or why one person conforms to cultural expectations and another does not.

One of the most important points about the concept of personality is that it takes into consideration both the similar and the unique characteristics of a specific individual or of a prescribed group of people. Fromm's definition emphasises the latter quality:

By personality I understand the totality of inherited and acquired psychic qualities which are characteristic of one individual and which make the individual unique.<sup>2</sup>

Both elements are present in another author's definition:

Personality is a stable set of characteristics and tendencies that determine those commonalities and differences in the psychological behavior (thoughts, feelings, and actions) of people that have continuity in time and that may or may not be easily understood in terms of the social and biological pressures of the immediate situation alone.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, another author defines personality as "a changeable product of a character in action under the control of a conscious self".<sup>4</sup> Character is the constant state of an individual's mental composition while the introduction of the notion of a "conscious self" indicates that the individual has freedom of action within the scope of that "character". It is likely that the degree of freedom is not constant but would be delimited or broadened by specific circumstances; in addition, some personality types, the "mature", "adjusted" types, would be able to employ such freedom more often and to greater advantage than, for example, a type characterised by dependence on group norms.

Personality is defined here as:

a set of underlying mental characteristics which act in the manner of a response set to motivate an individual's behaviour, including acceptance or rejection of varying social and personal conditions.

These "underlying mental characteristics" are beliefs, values, and needs as they are manifested in attitudes. Such beliefs, values, and needs are developed through interaction with the environment during the early stages of life, and once formed, are fairly constant. The use of the term "response set" indicates the integrative nature of personality. The component traits or dispositions are "connected" in the sense that knowledge of a certain trait combination can lead to predictions about behaviour.

## 2. The Components of Personality

Our definition of personality included the concept of "a set of underlying mental characteristics" which we defined as beliefs, values, and needs, externally revealed in attitudes. We are employing these concepts in a manner slightly different to that normally followed in the literature. Following Wagner's use of the term "attitude"<sup>5</sup>, we may say that, directed towards one object, belief indicates cognition, attitude represents affection, and value denotes evaluation. Similarly, we may say that belief is a response to the question, "what do I know about this object (situation,



person)?" (it is irrelevant whether the cognition is true or false in the real world, as long as it exists in the perception of the individual); attitude answers the question, "how do I feel about this object?"; and value responds to "how important is this to me?". Thus all three concepts can refer to a single object, situation, or person. We can also speak of belief systems or value systems which involve the concept of core or central and peripheral beliefs within a system of central and peripheral values.

Attitudes and values are closely related: if we hold an extreme (positive or negative) attitude towards an object, we usually consider it as very important to us. Sometimes, this also affects our cognition or belief about an object: if we dislike an object (attitude), and yet consider it very salient (value), we may distort its "real" qualities to fit our cognitive perception (belief).

Needs are deeper psychic tendencies within the individual which surface as attitudes (passive) and behaviour (active). The more value we place on any particular need, the greater salience that need will have as a motivating factor. We are not speaking of motives strictly in the rational sense that McClelland is since his conception of the term "involves a concrete, tangible set of goals and instrumental actions relevant to reaching the goals". Our conception of motive involves conscious

and unconscious dispositions; eventually these motives may become traits which are here defined as "habitual responses" when confronted with specified similar conditions. Another form of unconscious motive is McClelland's "schema" which is based on cultural content, such as ideas or values.<sup>7</sup>

### 3. Attitude Formation and Change

The scope of this thesis is concerned with media's role in attitude formation and attitude change and with the part that personality plays in these processes. This necessitates consideration of several general theories of attitude change.

Hagner suggests four approaches to attitude change and, implicitly, to attitude formation: the functional approach, the learning approach, the perceptual approach,<sup>8</sup> and the consistency approach. Although these are distinct theories, it is likely that they all, or at least most of them, are present in varying degrees during the process of attitude change.

We are mainly concerned with learning theory in this study; the other theories relate to the success with which learning is accomplished. An individual learns some new information about an element of his belief system which eventually results in a change in attitude towards that

element. This particular element is a central belief with a great amount of value placed on it. Now this new information indicates that this element does not conform to the individual's expectations (that is, his perception of the element is subject to re-interpretation); according to the perceptual approach, this should stimulate change in his attitude either toward the element or toward the source of the new information. If he decides that this element is not, in fact, as important to him as he previously thought (that is, he changes his perception of the role the element plays in his belief system), then he will be more willing to change his attitude.

The "old" attitude related to the function which the element played in his belief system, or his hierarchy / of needs; now that the element no longer has the same function, there is adequate condition for attitude change. If the element continues to play a vital function, then the source of the information may lose prestige in the perception of the individual. Another alternative is that the person may effect changes in his attitudes towards peripheral, less important beliefs which are not related to fundamental needs. The important point is that the individual must retain consistency between the elements in his belief system and his attitudes towards them (if only on his own terms --

psycho-logically as opposed to logically); the dissonance created by the new information must be eased somehow, and that means attitude change towards at least one of the factors involved.

Obviously, attitude change is an involved, lengthy process, which cannot be explained in terms of one theory alone. The emphasis here is on learning theory. The media are an important factor in the application of learning theory since they can be a primary source of new cognitive information or new affective perceptions which may result in attitude change. An important factor to consider here is the centrality of the belief to the entire system; we would expect that the media would be less effective in changing central beliefs than peripheral ones. This expectation is based on functional theory: the greater the degree to which the element serves as a need for an individual, the less the chance that media exposure will change his attitude towards a belief connected with that need. He will perhaps distort or even ignore such information if it seems to conflict with his conscious perception of his "needs" (which may be material such as social or economic or psychic) or perhaps to an even greater extent if there is an unperceived conflict with unconscious needs.

This is related to Cantril's notion that "an extreme

attitude is more likely to involve the ego than an attitude which represents compromise in some degree", and that attitudes "on the defensive are more ego-involved". Needs are ego-involved; thus attitudes towards need elements, or important beliefs related to needs, are likely to be less flexible and less responsive to a stimulus for change.

It follows from this that an important factor impeding change is the presence of a strong belief system, preferably internally derived. An individual who lacks such a system or who depends on external sources for the constituent parts of a belief system is more susceptible to attempts to change attitudes or to influence attitude formation. The importance of this notion will be indicated when the personality types are profiled.

#### 4. The Origins of Personality

We have said that personality is formed in the early stages of life through interaction with the environment. The term "environment" here refers to people, events, and physical objects; parents, satisfaction of needs, and the neighbourhood in which the individual grew up provide examples of each type of environmental factor. As these elements interact on the infant and very young child, a distinct personality begins to emerge with various traits

becoming more salient than others. If, for example, a child is continually frustrated in the realisation of his desires or expectations or is more often destructively criticised than praised for his efforts, he may lose confidence in his own abilities and in his worth as an individual (or, probably more to the point, never develop that confidence). A child whose parents deceive him or "let him down" will tend to develop a general distrust of people or feelings of alienation. These early experiences with the environment lay the foundation for later development and help to explain why some people are able to combat negative influences on them while others succumb to such influences. As the child grows older, his personality becomes more directive and his environment becomes more complex and varied. Eventually, he learns to order the environment according to the dictates of his personality characteristics. The degree to which one needs to "structure" situations is in itself a personality attribute.

Thus as a child the individual's personality is affected by the environmental conditions; during his later life, the positions are reversed and his personality determines how he will react to or be affected by these influences.<sup>10</sup> A person with a strong sense of self-esteem will have a greater sense of mastery over external conditions

than one with a low sense of esteem, for example. I do not intend by any means to make this process appear to be a simple one; on the contrary, I wish to emphasise how complex are the forces which act upon the individual at all stages of his life. The interaction which takes place between the inner and outer forces to which any individual is subject is never a limited, one-way situation, except perhaps during the earliest stages of infancy. The action-reaction process is a reciprocal one; it is the direction of the dominant flow of influence which changes.

During "normal" conditions, the mental characteristics we mentioned remain fairly stable and one is able to predict well the behaviour of those people one knows intimately and to varying degrees, of people one knows hardly at all.<sup>\*</sup> It is possible, however, that sudden environmental changes can cause erratic behaviour in an individual whose behaviour previously had been stable.<sup>\*\*</sup> This "erratic behaviour" is actually a shift in saliency: latent traits become manifest and more dominant than the previously manifest traits.

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I am not, of course, talking about neurotics or other "disturbed" people whose behaviour is erratic and almost completely unpredictable -- unless one accepts that unpredictability is itself predictable.

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Again, a well-trained psychologist may have been able to predict this type of apparently "abnormal" response.

Obviously, we would be getting beyond the scope of this study to discuss the origins of personality in any greater depth. The purpose of this brief discussion was to indicate an awareness not only of the complex and dynamic nature of personality, but also to indicate that there are stable and consistent aspects of personality, as well. Some of the points mentioned in this section, particularly the important question of personality-environmental factor effect, will be discussed in greater detail later in the paper.

This section has provided a definition of personality and its components, along with a brief reference to its origin. It still remains, however, to examine and justify the application of psychological variables (here in terms of personality) to political phenomena. This provides the content of the next chapter.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Notes I: The Concept of Personality

1. Campbell et al., The American Voter, pp. 500ff.
2. Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 59.
3. Maddi, Personality Theories: A Comparative Analysis, p. 10.



4. McCurdy, The Personal World, p. 337.
5. Wagner, "An Introduction" in The Study of Attitude Change, edited by Wagner and Sherwood, p. 3.
6. Maddi, op. cit., p. 309.
7. Ibid., p. 310,311.
8. For summaries, see Wagner and Sherwood, op. cit., pp. 4-18.
9. Centril, "Intensity of an Attitude" in Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1946, pp. 132-133.

## II

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES

It seems incredible to me that the application of psychological concepts to the study of political phenomena has to be justified, but, in fact, the issue is still a contentious one and one which lies at the heart of this thesis. The content of this section, therefore, will deal with that issue and with that of psychological versus social characteristics.

#### 1. Personality and Political Behaviour

It is an explicit assumption of this paper that the study of political phenomena cannot be isolated from consideration of the psychological elements inherent in the individuals who produce and are affected by those phenomena; attitudes and beliefs held by individuals as a result not only of their social environmental conditions but also of their inner, psychic needs, cannot be ignored if one wishes to adequately explain behaviour. This does not mean, it should be emphasised, that psychological variables are consistently the most significant factor in the explanation of political behaviour; it is contended, however, that such

factors are always present, their salience increasing and decreasing in accordance with the conditions:

Explanations of political decisions which rely wholly upon analyses of the social environment, while they may have high predictive value, neglect a vital link: they never explain why an individual responds to the environment the way he does. Such purely external analysis tends to presume that two individuals behaving in the same way in a given situation are responding identically. But as seen from the inside out, from the point of view of the individuals, the forces to which they respond may be quite dissimilar.<sup>1</sup>

The application of personality characteristics to the explanation of behaviour involves consideration of several interrelated factors. In all situations, there are at least three factors operating to bring about change or to prevent change: the situational context, the individual's demographic characteristics, and his psychological characteristics. Sometimes, interrelationships with other people are an element comprising the "situational context" or the background characteristics; at other times, they comprise a fourth element to be taken into consideration. An example of other people's being part of the background characteristics can be seen in group membership.

There is nothing permanent about any of these factors, and rarely are they observed in an "objective" sense, in terms only of their physical characteristics. They are

viewed subjectively with values and emotions inextricably intertwined. Thus an essentially harmless situation may be perceived as hostile and frightening by the paranoid. The schizoid may interpret apparently similar conditions differently depending on whichever "part" of him is dominant. Similar action, therefore, does not necessarily indicate similar motivation because perceptions differ. Lane provides the example of a comparison between the motivation behind authoritarian and egalitarian voting behaviour: their similar behaviour is a response to different motivational factors. Authoritarians may vote in order to conform to group norms ("social group pressure") or "to exercise a small degree of political power"; egalitarians, on the other hand, tend to respond to conscience, to vote out of a sense of duty.<sup>2</sup>

Even in the same individual perceptions are constantly being modified or changed: "The perceived world of every individual is a structured one, but it is also an ever-changing one."<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, there are certain factors which remain relatively constant and which relate to certain aspects of political behaviour.

For example, Rosenberg found that inner dispositions helped to explain why people do not participate in the political process. One of the major factors is lack of self-esteem or the existence of a sense of insecurity which results in

a reluctance to participate even in political discussions for fear of revealing ignorance. Writes Rosenberg: "An individual with a highly vulnerable ego may impose a censorship upon himself, which is as rigid as any imposed in an authoritarian state."<sup>4</sup>

Milbrath suggests that different types of needs are fulfilled through different political behaviour. People with expressive needs tend to pursue drive-reducing behaviour while those with instrumental needs "lead through a chain of action to a final goal".<sup>5</sup>

With reference to personality factors and specific political behaviour, Olsen found that his concept of political incapability was associated with Democratic voting while political discontent was related to Republican voting.<sup>6</sup>

It can be seen that the answer to "why do people act the way they do politically?" cannot be adequately answered unless the notion of "who" or "what" the people are is involved in the study of behaviour; the "who" is derived from the inner forces which are first moulded by societal forces and which later reverse the role to shape those forces. Consideration of personality is an attempt to examine and include deeper factors in the shaping of motivation.

## 2. When are Personality Factors Most Salient?

In the previous section, we emphasised the need to include the notion of personality in behavioural analysis. Now we attempt to place the use of that notion in the proper perspective. We are arguing that personality because it is always present, always plays some role in motivating behaviour, but that the salience of personality as a determining factor depends on situations and circumstances: the "situational context" we referred to earlier in this chapter. The following discussion specifies some of these contexts.<sup>7</sup>

Personality becomes most salient in attempts to explain "deviant" behaviour; thus Lane writes that it is easy to account for the relationship between high media exposure and political participation but how do we account for high media exposure and non-participation: "A fruitful analysis must rely upon a psychologically informed interpretation of the meaning of exposure to different people."<sup>8</sup>

When deviation from normal behaviour is permitted by the society (that is, when deviation is not severely sanctioned), there is more scope for individual interpretation and, accordingly, for greater personality influence. Similarly, personality is more influential in decision-

making when the situation is unstructured -- when either internal or external guidelines are lacking or vague. Under these conditions, there are no precedents to govern the direction of the behaviour. Personality may be particularly salient when an individual is subject to cross-pressures such as may occur from conflicting group memberships; the decision reached (if one is reached at all) is more likely to be an internally-derived one under these circumstances.

Peripheral aspects of a situation are more susceptible to personality effects than are the central elements. This is partially because peripheral aspects are usually less structured and less subject to social sanctions. Personality is also more salient when the individual is "emotionally involved" in a situation but less so when the decision or attitude has been made public.<sup>9</sup> These conditions often result in a psychological commitment to the decision by an individual of a rigid personality type.

Obviously, these are generalisations about personality factor salience because personality itself is a decisive factor in creating adherence to group norms, or, of course, in creating a desire to transgress "acceptable" or conventional conduct. Some types have a heavy dependency on external cues while others consistently reject them. It is also true that particular personality characteristics

can determine the dominance or latency of other psychological factors. For example, "dispositions toward conformity . . . reduce the impact of the individual's other psychological characteristics on his behaviour."<sup>10</sup>

However, it should be pointed out that even when psychological factors are salient, they are not acting in isolation from other factors.

### 3. Personality and Social Factors

We have tended to discuss personality and social factors as if they were conflicting elements. Rather, it is important to note that they are, in fact, complementary; not only do they jointly influence a third external factor such as behaviour, but, at times, they influence each other. Since social characteristics are "not states of the organism but of its environment. . .

It follows that social and psychological characteristics are in no way mutually exclusive. They do not compete as candidates for explanation of social behavior, but rather are complementary. Social 'characteristics' can cause psychological 'characteristics'; they are not substitutes for psychological characteristics.<sup>11</sup>

It is obvious that in the real world neither type of factor can operate isolated from the other -- just as



no behaviour is performed which does not have relevance for other behaviours. Sometimes personality traits are the result of the interaction of many social factors and sometimes they arise from human relationships. Similarly, "personal" demographic characteristics play a significant role here, as well. Behaviour which originated in or resulted from strong psychic needs may become habitual as the individual grows older. The introduction of a new environmental factor such as unemployment seems to create changes in the adult personality. Someone whose personality characteristics arose from human relationships which lacked love may become radically more confident and develop a considerably stronger sense of worth should that element be introduced into his life.

Milbrath provides some examples of the interaction of these two sets of factors in his study of the various determinants of participation.<sup>12</sup> He reports Dahl's finding that "if the effects of feelings of confidence and efficacy were controlled statistically, the relationship between SES and political participation was no longer statistically significant". He also suggests that sociability is positively related to participation even with SES controls while feelings of anomie, alienation, and cynicism are related to a lack of participation. However, it appears that background factors play a greater part here:

education and cynicism are inversely related while age and cynicism and alienation are positively related.

Our concern is not to deny the relevance of social and personal variables in influencing an individual's actions, or reactions. On the contrary, a constant theme has been the interplay which occurs between these and personality factors. Interaction between them occurs in a constant and ever-changing flow of persuasion and reaction. We have shown, however, that personality has a prominent role in the deliberation on behaviour, whether that be political or otherwise. Political behaviour is, after all, hardly sacred; it represents only one expression of living, important to some, less significant to others. Accordingly, we must be as cognizant of the formation of men's mental attributes as of any other conduct. We can always find an explanation for action in the more easily measureable social and personal characteristics, yet this approach seems to deny the intricacy of man's existence and so we follow Lane's comments (about voting behaviour) that:

. . . behind the demographic relationships, there lurk the unexplored problems of motivation, both for the portion of the vote that is 'explained' in this fashion and even more for the portion which is considered deviant.<sup>13</sup>

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Notes II: The Saliency of Psychological Variables

1. Lane, Political Life, p. 98.
2. Ibid..
3. Kretch and Crutchfield, Theory and Problems of Social Psychology, p. 110.
4. Rosenberg, "Some Determinants of Political Apathy" in Public Opinion Quarterly, 1954-55, pp. 349-366.
5. Milbrath, Political Participation, p. 87-88.
6. Olsen, "Two Categories of Political Alienation" in Social Forces, March 1969, pp. 297-298.
7. See Greenstein, "The Impact of Personality on Politics: An Attempt to Clear Away Underbrush", American Political Science Review, 1967, pp. 629-641 and Lane, "Political Personality and Electoral Choice" in Politics and Social Life edited by Polsby, Dentler, and Smith, especially pp. 232-234.
8. Lane, Political Life, p. 99.
9. McGuire, "Inducing Resistance to Persuasion: Some Contemporary Approaches" in Wagner and Sherwood, The Study of Attitude Change, pp. 173ff.
10. Greenstein, op. cit., p. 639.
11. Ibid., p. 631.
12. Milbrath, op. cit., especially "Participation as a function of personality", pp. 72-89.
13. Lane, "Political Personality and Electoral Choice", op. cit., p. 233.

### III

#### PERSONALITY-ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTION

This short chapter attempts to clarify the relationship which exists between an individual's personality and the environment in which he functions. Although some of the points which will be mentioned have been considered in other chapters, the whole notion of environmental-personality interaction is an important part of the theory and as such merits at least a brief individual discussion.

It has already been suggested in the section on "Origins of Personality" that the stage to which personality has developed determines the role environment assumes in the interaction process. Thus as an infant, an individual is completely dependent on his environment which consists primarily of his parents. He is simply not aware of his surroundings, although he rapidly becomes so. One author suggests that we become aware of the external world are no longer one. This results in the development of the self,<sup>1</sup> a notion also to be found in Freud's explanation of the development of the ego:

An infant at the breast does not as yet distinguish his ego from the external world

as the source of the sensations flowing in upon him. He gradually learns to do so, in response to various promptings . . . [T]here is for the first time set over against the ego an 'object', in the form of something which exists 'outside' and which is only forced to appear by a special action. A further incentive to a disengagement of the ego from the general mass of sensations -- that is, to the recognition of an 'outside', an external world -- is provided by the frequent, manifold and unavoidable sensations of pain and unpleasure . . . A tendency arises to separate from the ego everything 2 that can become a source of such unpleasure....

There is, then, a growing awareness by the individual that he has an independent existence within a larger milieu; in many respects he becomes dependent on this newly-found milieu for the satisfaction of his needs and for the development of what constitutes his self, that is, for the formation of his personality. The environment as we define it includes people, places, and events, all of which are significant factors in shaping what is essentially the malleable figure of the young child. Although there are few theoretical limitations on this shaping process (both rich and poor can be trusting or suspicious, secure or insecure, aggressive or agreeable), the effect of the environmental conditions is of considerable consequence. A child who is continually confronted with obstacles is not likely to develop traits of security or efficacy, or a good feeling towards the world, and although

individuals of any stratum (social, economic, or political) may develop negative or positive attitudes, a child who spends his years of socialisation in a low social and economic stratum which has little political power may be more likely to develop negative attitudes and perceptions than one in a higher stratum. Some traits are almost completely independent of social status. These would include such feelings as being loved or needed, and such traits as dependency, for example.

Indicative of this approach is Allport's concept of personality development. Under the right conditions, the individual achieves maturity which is the integration of all his dispositions. But this only occurs

. . . when the infant's early dependency has been warmly met. But if succorance and affection are not readily available, the child may react with signs of insecurity, initially including aggression and egotism . . . the individual remaining relatively undifferentiated and deficient in integrative characteristics of maturity . . . Such an adult would show evidence of defensiveness, with attendant lack of awareness of himself.<sup>3</sup>

As the child grows older, the traits he has developed become stabilised, and the totality of his traits denotes the nature of his personality. As this occurs, the role of the environment as a cause of an individual's personality decreases while its role as the

recipient or object of his perceptions increases. At the beginning of life, the environment exercises complete influence in all cases. This is not true of its later role which depends on the type of personality which has been formulated; in no case does it completely relinquish its power to effect or circumvent the individual's power to act in accordance with his potential. Obviously, there are physical limitations on any individual's ability to act and no one can be completely independent of reliance on other people; therefore, the environment never completely loses its capability to influence the individual.

It has, however, by this stage, taken on a new characteristic: meaning. The infant's environment is "objective" in the sense that he is not aware of it and does not really perceive it. As he grows older, his environment more and more assumes a "subjective" element which is actually its "meaning" for the individual. This "meaning" is subjective because it is a result of the individual's projection. The same objective characteristics acquire different meanings for different people and for the same person. Thus the environmental conditions do not have a reality distinct from that imposed by external forces which are themselves at times part of the environment. (I am external to my environment, but a part of someone else's).

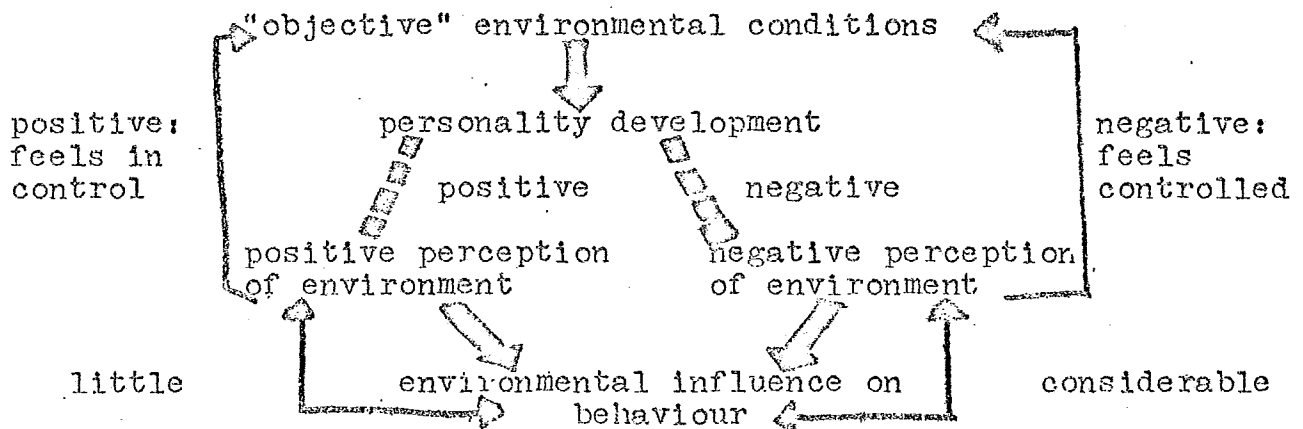
Thus:

Every cognition includes the object, of which we are conscious, and some action 'of the self', an action which produces the object in consciousness.<sup>4</sup>

We cannot distinguish between that which "is" (objectively) and that which we perceive (subjectively) in any cognition or, at times, between cognitions.

Figure 1 represents the interchange between personality and environment as the personality develops into its "mature" stage:

Figure 1: Personality-Environmental Interaction





This notion presented above can be clarified if we apply a specific personality trait, self-image, to the general model; the example refers to development of self-image among blacks. One of the primary environmental factors in the socialisation of black children is the colour caste-system and the failure of parental models to provide adequate examples of a positive self-image. Thus black children deny their "blackness" and attempt to establish a "fantasied" self-image.<sup>5</sup>

This lack of self-worth developed in childhood emerges in adulthood as reactions of hostility toward and distrust in the environment; for example, the individual becomes convinced that the system will not react favourably to his actions and so he takes no action.<sup>6</sup> The individual with a highly developed sense of self-worth will be more optimistic about the responsiveness of the system because he feels that he has more control over it:

A person with a secure sense of self-worth does not take rebuff as a way of life: he finds a way out; he finds another door to open. Having achieved a sense of worth, the individual is able to put to work latent abilities . . . .<sup>7</sup>

This clearly indicates that the same situation can be viewed differently by individuals with different perceptions. Who is to say which is the "real" situation? We can answer that question only for ourselves. Reality

only has meaning when it is acting upon and being acted upon; in a sense, then, one aspect of reality exists only in the mind of the observer, and his "reality" exists only for him (although it is, of course, possible to attempt understanding of another's reality). This is revealed not only in the perception of the environment but also in reactions to it. Eriksen indicates two ways in which different individuals may respond to similar threatening stimuli as manifested in two types of ego-defense mechanisms: denial and repression mechanism result in avoidance of the stimulus, "to keep it from awareness". Essentially, this is to deny external reality. Intellectualisation, on the other hand, recognises the reality but distorts it through rationalisation or projection.

It is environmental factors which determine the type of ego-defense mechanism employed by an individual who feels threatened, but once such mechanisms become a personality trait, they in turn establish the response of the individual to the environment. Again, the influence of the environment on the individual is never held completely in check but as the individual grows older, such influence is always confronted with a personality which distorts its origins and effects the degree to which the influence can be successful.

This does not mean that the boundaries of a particular environment or segment of environment cannot be defined and the physical characteristics described. Obviously, the environment exists whether we realise it does or not (whether we actually see it or not, it is there) and physical characteristics in themselves do not change at any one point in time; no matter who sees them, they are the same. What it does mean is that perceptions of these characteristics will differ and it is from these perceptions that the environment gains its meaning and therefore, its effect.

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### Notes III: Personality-Environmental Interaction

1. See Diggory's comments regarding William James' position in Self-Evaluation: Concepts and Studies, pp. 15-16.
2. Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, pp. 3ff.
3. Maddi, Personality Theories: A Comparative Analysis, pp. 104-105.
4. Diggory, op. cit., p. 11.
5. Kvaraceus, Negro Self-Concept: Implications for School and Citizenship, pp. 15, 19ff.
6. Ibid., p. 55.
7. Ibid., p. 47.
8. Eriksen, "Defense Against Ego-threat in Memory and Perception" in Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1952, pp. 230ff.

#### IV

#### THE COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

A discussion of media involves consideration of several different but related notions: what influence is media supposed to have? how is the potential for media to influence behaviour limited by the existence of extraneous factors? what sort of conditions would result in the most effective media influence? are all the media equally effective (or ineffective)? and finally, just how do personality factors relate to media effect?

##### 1. The Role of the Communications Media in Society

The major difficulty in discussing media effect is that there have been few decisive conclusions reached in the area; this is true of the role which the media should play in the society. They are seen both as a divisive and as a cohesive force. It is, perhaps, significant that the charge that media are responsible for a polarisation of (American) society is a more recent one than is the claim that they are a uniting force; the latter claim, however, is still prominent. In one sense, both lend themselves to a critical analysis of the function of the media.

During the 1940s and 1950s, criticism of the media content focused on the tendency for the material presented through newspapers, radio, magazines, films, and later television, to reflect the established, and thus accepted, norms of American society and to reinforce, therefore, the status quo. The norms and values involved, it was assumed, were those articulated by "big business" and the politically and socially powerful elites.<sup>1</sup> The main purpose of programming was to entertain, and only occasionally to inform; within that narrow scope, the emphasis was on the ideology of individualism. Writes Joseph Klapper:

. . . conflicts stemmed essentially from individual inadequacies and very rarely from social forces, and . . . any deviation from culturally unquestionable behavior led to catastrophe.<sup>2</sup>

As Klapper goes on to explain, media content today is more "relevant" than it was during those years; it deals with "social issues" to a greater extent, both in entertainment and documentary form. The major question which lies at the core of the issue, then, is "who determines taste or ideology -- the media or the public?" Do people believe what they do because of what they are exposed to in the media, or is media content what it is because it is responding to what people want to hear or read? What is the direction of the flow of influence, or is it somehow mysteriously reciprocal?

Media content may be, in fact, primarily a response to prevalent norms and attitudes. "Controversial" issues such as race, abortion, and similar "social" topics, did not comprise story plots until there was likely to be minimal negative response by the audience.<sup>3\*</sup> Although documentaries are more "progressive" in this respect, quite often they too appear to be a response to aggregate demands for more information on topics about which individuals already hold an opinion.

On the other hand, one wonders what generated interest in the first place -- on what basis were opinions formed? Changes in public opinion do occur; attitudes do change. Topics once unacceptable become subjects of everyday conversation. There must be a source of, or impetus for, such change, and an instrument by which such change is made widespread. The media represent one agent through which change is accomplished. At the same time, few challenges to the basic ideology of the society occur through the national media; it may be, then, that the media are simultaneously agents for achieving small social changes, and for maintaining the status quo and the national norms on a larger scale. Problems occur when minority

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Obviously, this is somewhat of a simplification; racial topics, for example, were presented when they were acceptable in the North, but still taboo in the South.

groups demand fundamental and widesweeping reform. Minority media either stimulate or encourage dissatisfaction and the resulting demands, while the larger media take a more moderate stance. Since the early or middle 1960s, demonstrations and other protest tactics have been prevalent in documentaries, news programmes, and entertainment programmes and discussion of the "problems" to which these phenomena are a reaction is also prevalent. Usually, the people who are "against the system" lose in the conflicts which occur, or they are "converted" to the "right" side.

Nevertheless, the charge is made by traditional elements in society (specifically the Nixon Administration in this context)<sup>4</sup> that the media are agents of polarisation, that they undermine traditional American virtues, emphasise the need for change, and report on the radical at the expense of the moderate.

On the other hand, one of the functions which the media fulfill is that of maintaining the social system, according to Porter:

To ensure that a value system does not become so vague that it ceases to perform its social function of providing cohesion, it is necessary to build into certain social roles the task of restating and generalising values . . . In the modern complex society these ideological roles are found in the operation of the mass media, the educational system, and the churches . . . .

. . . the unifying of value themes is achieved through the control of media of communication . . .

The power of the modern mass media also stems from specialization . . . the mass media make 'sense' of and give structure to a wide range of national and international life.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, the Report of the Special Committee on Mass Media (in Canada) stated that the role of the media should be in "preparing its audience for social change".<sup>6</sup> The media are probably considerably restricted in this aim (if, indeed, it is actually their aim), however, because the Committee also found that "people seem to want not to be confronted with issues disturbing to their way of life".<sup>7</sup> This notion of rejecting threatening information and also that of a barrier between media content and the recipients of that content will be examined later in this paper.

These comments refer to Canadian media, but not necessarily to Canadian content. Although concrete attempts are now being made to increase the amount of Canadian content in the media, the predominant matter is still American; therefore, comparisons are feasible. The notions expressed by the Canadians are echoed by Lane:

. . . there are certain kinds of structuring of thinking and basic inarticulate premises which the media promote, but which are difficult to analyze comparatively because they are almost universal. It is in this way, for example, that the media set the stage for political debate through their



emphasis on what is important and their acceptance of certain social goals as the proper criteria for a policy discussion.<sup>8</sup>

The idea that media play a part in the establishment of a broad perspective to which specific issue perceptions, and so on, are then adapted, that their role is a general one, is discussed by the Langs who contend that the media are more effective in establishing opinion with regard to the broadly based issues than with regard to more closely defined topics such as voting behaviour.<sup>9</sup>

The basis of the rest of the thesis is that the media do not make purposive attempts to influence public opinion, although it is assumed to an equal extent that they do not make purposive attempts not to influence public opinion. The important points are these: the media can be used to transmit particular points of view, regardless of doctrine, if this would provide news; secondly, the potential for influence is great but only if certain conditions exist: for the media to have maximum influence, they must be controlled by the dominant political group (as in totalitarian countries) and exposure to external forces of opposition or change must be severely limited.

In the type of society with which we are dealing, the media are subject to three sources of censorship: their audience, their advertisers, and the government. Nevertheless, there is a wide scope of opinion across the

United States evident in all forms of the mass media with a diversity which ranges all across the political spectrum. The possible exception to this may be the biggest television networks which tend to have a liberal bias, although they too provide a forum for a diversity of political expression. In other words, the media are neither intent on formenting immense amounts of attitude change nor are they in actuality an arm of an external and dominant force.\*

In the main, then, the media are purveyors of information rather than of social change. In some ways, they are a hindrance to change because events have to be placed in a narrow perspective and presented in a capsule form; they seem, therefore, to have greater force and impact than they do in actuality and are thus subject to the charge of polarisation or disruption of society.

The media do generally support the dominant ideology of the nation and are often a means of transmission of that ideology from the elites to the "masses". Equally important, or perhaps more so, is the provision by the

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We are speaking here of the "mass" media, that is, nationally circulated or known newspapers, national magazines, and national television networks. Some media on the lower levels, particularly local, are manipulated by a dominant group and exercise a great deal of power.

media of a means of transmitting the opinions of dissatisfied groups in the society to the elites who then have the responsibility of listening to those opinions. Again, their concern (or lack of it) may be indicated to the people by their actions and words as they appear on the media. Obviously, the media are a potent force, less in themselves than as a channel through which other forces can act effectively to prevent disruptive change. It is these forces, rather than the media, which are responsible when such change does occur to the detriment of societal stability.

Because they are a prominent source of information about issues, the media are also an important impetus for political participation by the general population, particularly in terms of the democratic process.

It appears that the media tend to encourage behaviour well within the confines of ideological norms rather than to stimulate efforts to act without those bounds. Even with this limitation there are contradictory findings about the potential of media to influence behaviour and attitude change.

## 2. Do the Media have the Opportunity to Influence?

Much of the literature has indicated that media content is not particularly effective in changing people's

opinions, but tends, instead, to reinforce opinions  
<sup>11</sup>  
 already held.

Belief systems are generally established over a long period of time, beginning during childhood and continuing until early adulthood. Once established, therefore, they are usually relatively stable and firmly held. Unless the individual enters a different milieu (in terms of social, cultural, or economic factors), he will probably modify his beliefs somewhat over time, but he will be unlikely to radically change them: he is more likely to change his interpretation of those events which conflict with a particular belief than to change his attitude towards that belief. It should be noted that the degree to which opinions conform to those held by one of the most influential agents of opinion formation (that is, by the parents) depends on several factors including the type of parental-child relationship which the individual experienced.  
<sup>12</sup>

Lane and Sears present several reasons why individuals are unlikely to change their minds when confronted with conflicting information or opinion.  
<sup>13</sup>  
 Much of the emphasis is on the functional attributes of the opinion: it serves to justify economic actions, for example, or to rationalise a "role-strain". Lane writes that in order for people to pay attention to the media, content "must fit into an

appropriate frame of reference, and it must be functional, that is, it must somehow be rewarding to the individual". It is possible, therefore, that people may choose to disregard the media either entirely or partially if that action results in avoidance of "tension-producing situations".<sup>14</sup> If the media do appear to be emphasising change at the expense of stability, their effect may be to "turn off" the majority of their audience rather than to encourage discontent.

This tends to support findings that people are selective with regard to their exposure to the media and in some ways "manipulate" their reaction to the content they do receive: not only do people discriminate among the media and the content, they also tend to reinterpret unsympathetic material to conform with their already established perspective and to forget hostile content more readily than they,<sup>15</sup> do favourable information or opinion.

The factors which act between media exposure and the media effect are called "intermediary variables". Because of the presence of such intermediary variables as personality, socio-economic characteristics, group membership, and psychic needs, attitude change may occur, but have little correlation with media exposure. This was found by Treneman and McQuail in their study of the 1959 British General Election; they explained this lack of correlation

in terms of "barriers" to effect -- that is, intermediary factors:

It is, perhaps, not easy to see that what is established here is not merely an absence of cause and effect but a definite and consistent barrier between sources of communication and movements of attitude in the political field at the General Election.<sup>16</sup>

One important intermediary factor is that of individuals, so-called "opinion leaders" who act as transmission channels through which media content flows to their followers. Called the "two-step flow" hypothesis by Katz<sup>17</sup> and Lazarsfeld, this process involves three concepts: personal influence by the leader on the follower; the flow of personal influence between the two; and the media effect. The opinion leaders, it was found, were more exposed to the media, especially on the cosmopolitan level, as shown in the following table:

Table 1: Exposure to cosmopolitan media by leaders and followers by education

% who read out-of-town newspapers and news  
in national magazines

| education | leaders | non-leaders |
|-----------|---------|-------------|
| low       | 50      | 20          |
| high      | 55      | 41          |

Source: Katz and Lazarsfeld, Personal Influence, p. 312.

Since the opinion leaders inevitably reinterpret the content to which they are exposed, that content will be distorted when it reaches the followers, who, in turn, will arrive at an opinion based partially on their view of the leader. The content at this point has been filtered through so many intervening variables that any independent effect it might have had has been considerably reduced.

A.W. Van Den Ban's attempt at a more sophisticated analysis of this particular theory results in very similar conclusions to those advanced by Katz and Lazarsfeld: it takes time to initiate or change ideas; the media may arouse initial interest in a new idea, but in the final stages personal contact appears to be the dominant force; the first person to use a new method, or to adapt to a new idea, employs all methods to gain information including both personal contact and the media. 18

It would appear, then, that the opportunity of the media to influence attitudes and behaviour is limited because: 1) people seem to prefer interpersonal communication to the mass media; and 2) since people prefer to maximise enjoyment and to minimise tension, they will restrict their media exposure accordingly. However, the next section will indicate that the media can effect attitudes and behaviour under suitable conditions.

### 3. When do the Media have Effect?

The factors which encourage media influence can be categorised into two broad areas: those external to and those internal to the individual. I shall deal with the first group in this section; the second type will be examined independently.

The media's primary function appears to be within the realm of activating latent dispositions or reinforcing manifest beliefs and attitudes, and, probably their most important function, of providing information. We have seen that their potential for changing attitudes is limited by the presence of other factors which lie deeply in the social and psychological structure.

The media appear to be particularly effective when the individual has no preconceived ideas about a particular issue, when his opinion does not belong to a structure of attitudes or beliefs, or when he is not guided by cues provided by group norms or by socio-economic factors, that is, they appear to be most effective at the awareness stage of opinion formation.

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The media will be more likely to be effective if, for some reason, the mediating factors are inoperative or are themselves acting towards attitude change (since in the latter case they serve as reinforcing agents and in



the former to fill a need for direction). Related to this is the situation in which group norms which had been salient become dysfunctional: instead of aiding the individual by providing cues for his behaviour and the establishment of his "role", they become either valueless or even an impediment to success. This process appears to take place in soldiers, for example, when they are either cut off from their units or when they perceive they are losing the war. In both cases, they are more susceptible to enemy propaganda than they were when adherence to their group norms was functional for their survival -- now their survival depends on breaking with the old norms and values and substituting others.

It has also been found that the source of the media content is important: if the source is liked or respected, the media tend to be more persuasive, although this appears to be a temporary phenomenon and to be primarily in the cognitive rather than affective realm. A study carried out by Hovland and Weiss in 1951 involved college students reading four articles dealing with four different issues.<sup>20</sup> Prior to the reading, the source of each article was established as having high credibility for one half of the group and low credibility for the other half; the results indicated that the former were more often considered "fair" and their conclusions

"justified" than the latter set. There was an equal amount of learning (increase in knowledge) accomplished by both groups, but there was initial resistance to the acceptance of material presented by the "untrustworthy" source. After one month, however, the affective difference disappeared; the group whose source was "untrustworthy" indicated an increase in acceptance of the material, while the group whose source was considered trustworthy indicated a decrease.

This variance of effect in the affective and the cognitive areas was also indicated by a study<sup>21</sup> which employed the film "The Battle of Britain" to a) present facts about the Battle of Britain to American servicemen b) "to induce more favorable opinions and attitudes relative to American participation in the war" and c) to increase American willingness to serve in the armed forces. The film appeared to be successful in relating factual information (a), but did not succeed in changing attitudes held by the servicemen (b and c).

Another important element concerns the notion of presenting one or both sides of the argument. One study<sup>22</sup> found that it is best to present both sides to an audience who are initially opposed to the desired attitude, as well as to better-educated people. It was also found, though, that the omission of relevant arguments was more noticeable

when both sides were presented, thus detracting from the effectiveness of the presentation.

Finally, as Klapper points out, the individual may be more receptive to the medium's message if he perceives it as being rewarding in some fashion:

. . . persons are more likely to be persuaded as they envisage or experience a tangible or psychic reward from being persuaded . . . any reduction in tension, any increase in status, any partial provision for any need might be sufficiently attractive to elicit more widespread consent for the persuasion.

The more commonly offered psychic rewards include a) agreement with social norms or majority opinion, b) various types of in-group membership or "belongingness", and c) release from tension.<sup>23</sup>

Thus the form of the presentation is particularly salient among the factors influencing media's capacity to persuade, as well as consideration of the audience at which the communication is directed. The section following will consider another factor: the type of medium which is employed.

#### 4. Differing Effects of the Various Media

We have spoken of the "media" as though they were a single entity. In one sense they are, since the media together represent one area of communication (mass audiovisual as compared with interpersonal communicative means),

but, in fact, the media are comprised of various unique elements. In terms of this study, these are newspapers, radio, magazines, and television. Each medium possesses distinct advantages and disadvantages in its capacity to influence; different people react in different ways to different media.

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Klapper found that maximum retention of simple material was achieved when both print and aural methods were used but that aural methods employed alone were more effective than print used alone, especially among the less intelligent. With complex or lengthy material, the effect differed: print was more effective with the higher educated, while radio was more influential with the lower-educated.

With print the reader is able to control the "pace" of the exposure so that he can easily re-read anything he did not understand. Exposure may be repeated, achieving a "cumulative" effect and serving as a source of reference. Print enables a fuller and more complex treatment of the subject matter, particularly in the case of magazines. It is also the most easily available medium for the expression of minority views. Finally, there is the potential for greater prestige in the use of print in the sense that a regular reader becomes "attached" to "his" paper; another source of prestige is the association made between print and culture. Newspapers are used universally

while magazines have a greater appeal to better-educated people.

The radio audience, on the other hand, are generally less "cultured" and more suggestible than is the reader. The radio does have the advantage of a greater sense of immediacy and is more dramatic with a resemblance to face-to-face contact. Today, though, radio has little influence and is used mainly as an entertainment medium.

Most of the literature indicates that face-to-face<sup>25</sup> contact is more effective than any of the media. One would expect, then, that the medium with the greatest resemblance to personal contact would be the most effective medium. Although it is true that most people appear to find television the most useful medium, it generally has no greater effect than the other media, and, in fact, both newspapers and magazines appear to be more effective at times than television in producing attitude change. It may be, however, that television's success in this area may be slightly increasing among some groups and under certain circumstances. Table 2 shows that television was the most effective medium in changing Republican to Democratic votes from 1952 to 1960. Of course, the 1960 Democratic candidate was particularly suited to exposure on television.

Table 2: Relationship between source of  
most information and vote by year

| Vote        | Source of most information |        |       |            |           |
|-------------|----------------------------|--------|-------|------------|-----------|
|             | None                       | Papers | Radio | Television | Magazines |
| <u>1952</u> |                            |        |       |            |           |
| Democratic  | 61%                        | 43     | 39    | 47         | 29        |
| Republican  | 39                         | 57     | 61    | 53         | 71        |
| (number)    | (31)                       | (295)  | (306) | (432)      | (65)      |
| <u>1960</u> |                            |        |       |            |           |
| Democratic  |                            | 43     | 40    | 55         | 26        |
| Republican  |                            | 57     | 60    | 45         | 74        |
| (number)    |                            | (212)  | (42)  | (537)      | (46)      |

\*

This is determined by the response to the following question:  
Of all these ways of following the campaign, which would you  
say you got the most information from -- newspapers, radio,  
television, or magazines?

In a unique study by Simon and Stern concerning  
the effect of television on the 1952 Presidential election,  
comparison was made between the voting behaviour of those  
people who lived in counties in Iowa which were within the  
range of television reception and of those who lived in  
counties which had had similar voting behaviour in the past,  
but were outside television range. It was expected that  
television would increase voting turnout and the perception

of "party" issues: in fact, it did neither. The authors explain this by contending that television would have produced the expected results only if interest in the election had been low, whereas interest was actually high. Again, a mediating factor -- interest -- was more influential than the medium.

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A study covering the elections from 1952 to 1960 indicated that television had not resulted in the significant increase in voting turnout that followed the advent of radio. Individual effect was slight because 1) when television appeared in the 1940s most people were already exposed to some form of media; 2) rather than being a new dimension, television has taken over the role of radio; and 3) people who watch television also read papers and listen to radio.

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A later study conducted by Roper and Associates intended to discover television effect from 1959 to 1964 revealed that a majority of the people interviewed thought of television as their primary source of news, as the most believable source of news, and as the medium they would most like to keep. This was especially true of young people who had experienced television all of their lives.. This relationship is shown in Table 3.

In addition, a slight majority felt that television gave them a clearer understanding of election issues than the other media as shown in Table 4.

Table 3: Perceptions of Television  
by Age

|   | Total sample<br>% | 21-25 | 26-34 | 35-49 | 50+ |
|---|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| <u>think television</u><br><u>most believable</u>   |                   |       |       |       |     |
| 1964  | 41                | 52    | 42    | 42    | 36  |
| 1963  | 36                | 50    | 40    | 36    | 32  |
| <u>would most want</u><br><u>to keep television</u> |                   |       |       |       |     |
| 1964  | 49                | 60    | 54    | 48    | 44  |
| 1963  | 44                | 57    | 45    | 44    | 40  |

Source: Roper and Associates, "The Public's View of Television and Other Media: 1959-1964" in Political Opinion and Electoral Behavior: Essays and Studies, p. 311.  
Study conducted by the Television Information Office, November 1964.

\*

Table 4: Relative Effectiveness of the Media

| Media      | % November '63 | % November '64 |
|------------|----------------|----------------|
| television | 49             | 51             |
| newspapers | 24             | 26             |
| magazines  | 8              | 10             |
| radio      | 4              | 6              |

Source: Ibid., p. 314.

\*

The question asked was: which would you say gives you the clearest understanding of the candidates and issues in national elections -- radio, television, newspapers, or magazines.



Finally, it may be that television is actually responding to perceived expectations. Kurt and Gladys Lang found evidence of this in their study of MacArthur Day in Chicago. The study was a comparison of the events and attitudes and behaviour exhibited by the crowd as observed first-hand by their researchers as they (the events and so on) appeared on television. They found a considerable difference in the perspective of the two: "the telecast was made to conform to what was interpreted as the pattern of viewers' expectations" distorting the actual event in order to "match" what was perceived to be the public "sentiment".<sup>29</sup>

Television has the obvious advantage of repetition and even of deceptive camera work but evidence has shown that at present it is not as powerful an influence as it has become in myth.

The form of the content and the type of the medium can be manipulated by the source of the communication. Another type of factor depends on the recipient of the message and, although knowledge of it can be extremely beneficial in terms of maximising influence, it is less open to manipulation. This is the personality factors to be discussed in the next section.

## 5. Psychological Mediating Factors

In this section we shall discuss specific psychological factors which either hinder or increase the media's capacity for influence. The theme of the thesis is that these psychic elements (and similar ones) provide the core of individual receptivity to media influence; it is this type of factor or disposition which determines whether the individual accepts the communication, consciously rejects it, unconsciously ignores it completely, or modifies it so that he can comfortably align it with the existing elements of his belief-value system.

Possibly the most important factor in this regard is that of "persuasibility"<sup>30</sup>. Briefly, "persuasibility is defined as the degree to which an individual is susceptible to influence (in the intended direction) regardless of the type of medium and regardless of the topic of the communication -- the tendency towards suggestibility possessed by the individual. It is suggested that persuasibility is itself inversely related to (or dependent on) another personality factor, self-esteem. Thus an individual with high self-esteem would have a low tendency to persuasibility and therefore be less susceptible to indiscriminate influence.

Persuasibility is probably also related to a factor which combines both internal and external elements: the

salience of group membership. Group membership tends to serve a role-defining function and as a means of over-coming feelings of inadequacy; the norms of the group provide cues for the direction of the individual's behaviour. The more salient membership in a particular group is to a person, the less likely he is to adhere to, or to consider favourable, norms which conflict with those of the group, and the less likely he is to be influenced by external stimuli such as the media.<sup>31</sup> Thus an individual may be "persuasible" within the group context but because of the bond he feels with that group, he is resistant to external pressures.

When a person is subject to cross-pressures (the various sources of his cues suggest more than one direction for his behaviour), he may refrain from making a decision at all until one set of norms eventually assumes dominance. The other alternative is that he may seek guidance externally, and in this case the media may serve to provide guidelines, although perhaps only temporarily until a predominant direction has been re-established through another source. Thus an individual whose self-esteem is externally derived (perhaps through group membership or through even casual interaction with other people -- from the environment rather than from the self), has the most potential for persuasion. Unless the external source loses salience,

the potential would not be realised.

Hovland, Janis and Kelley attempt to relate two other personality factors to persuasibility: intellectual capabilities and "motive factors" which include needs, defence mechanism, frustration tolerance and others. They expected that intelligence would be positively related to persuasibility on the assumption that

. . . opinion change is dependent upon ability to comprehend and interpret verbal symbols. Persons at the lowest end of the intelligence scale, who have great difficulty in understanding any but the simplest messages, would presumably remain uninfluenced by the majority of mass communications.<sup>32</sup>

This appears to be a tenuous hypothesis; the reverse seems more likely to be true in accordance with our definition of persuasibility (which follows Hovland and Janis). Although people with high intelligence may be persuaded, it is likely to be a discriminatory persuasion based on careful consideration of new knowledge to a greater extent than would be true of the less intelligent. In any case, understanding is not a prerequisite to persuasion.

The discussion of motive factors indicated that aggression (uneasiness and hostility towards others) and social withdrawal were inversely related to persuasibility.<sup>33</sup> Aggressive individuals are distrustful of other people and are therefore unlikely to be persuaded by them. Rather,

it is more likely that they would deliberately reject the message. There is a close connection between social withdrawal and non-conformity to group norms, either because the individual has rejected group norms as dysfunctional (the rejection results in social withdrawal) or because the individual has no desire to associate with other people (the social withdrawal tendency is the determining variable).

The degree of self-esteem also appears to be a directly influential disposition, both with regard to content in general and with regard to specific types of content. In a study conducted by Janis, comparison was made with individuals who had sought counselling and those who had not. It was found that there was no difference intergroup but there were differences intra the counselled group:

An outstanding feature in six of the seven cases in the highly influenced group was a subjective feeling of personal inadequacy in connection with everyday interpersonal relationships. Five of the seven cases were diagnosed by the psychiatric staff as "passive-dependent" personalities . . . [T]he clinical data suggest that persons who are chronically disturbed by feelings of shyness, personal inadequacy, and social inhibitions in coping with everyday situations are predisposed to change their opinions more readily than others when exposed to persuasive communications.<sup>34</sup>

"Shyness, personal inadequacy, and social inhibitions"

are all aspects of self-esteem, all negative qualities which are related to suggestibility. Specific content is also perceived differently by people with varying levels of self-esteem:

. . . threatening appeals may be rejected more by those of high self-esteem than by those of low self-esteem. On the other hand, appeals which enhance an individual's self-picture might be accepted more by the highs than by the lows. Thus one determinant of acceptance of mass communication appeals may be the differential responsiveness to threats of negative changes in the self-picture on the part of those with high and low self-esteem.<sup>35</sup>

It should be noted that "threatening appeals" should be perceived less often by people with high self-esteem because such people are able to accept both "good" and "bad" qualities and impulses and still retain their self-esteem.<sup>36</sup> The point is that people with high self-esteem are not intimidated by hostile messages when they do perceive them; their self-esteem serves as a means of self-protection and leads to behaviour which is independent of environmental factors as much as possible.

Lane's concept of "pursuit of meaning" refers to the need of some people to structure their environment, to imbue all the elements comprising it with an "organisation of meaning";<sup>37</sup> this need is manifested in a search for guidelines for the implementation of the structure. The media serve an important functional role as a source of

information which aids in the establishment of the structure.

Halloran employs a similar notion involving the complementary elements of "cognitive styles" and "cognitive needs":

Cognitive styles refer to a characteristic and consistent way in which some people perceive, remember and think about aspects of themselves and the world around them . . . . In addition to differences in cognitive styles, there are also differences in cognitive needs. Some people have a strong need to acquire organized knowledge, to give organized meaning and clarity to all aspects of their experiences . . . . . A person with a strong need to impose structure and meaning on situations will be influenced by this need in response to available information.<sup>38</sup>

We would expect that individuals with a high degree of cognitive needs to have a selective type of cognitive style, that is, to accept some messages and discard others. It may be that this is related to intelligence, that people with high intelligence are selective about cognitive information while people with low intelligence tend to structure their world in affective terms.

It is obvious that deeper personality traits are extremely important determinants of the realisation of the media's potential to influence attitude change. Without consideration of these basic traits, attempts to

manipulate the external factors and the type of medium are of doubtful consequence.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Notes IV: The Communications Media

1. Klapper, The Effects of Mass Communication, p. 39.
2. Ibid.
3. See ibid., pp. 39ff.
4. See Time, November 21st, 1969. A segment entitled "Agnew Demands Equal Time" discusses these charges.
5. Porter, The Vertical Mosaic, pp. 559-461.
6. Article on "Mass Media: Report of the Special Committee on Mass Media", Spectator, December 10th, 1970, p. 20.
7. Ibid., p. 21.
8. Lane, Political Life, p. 282.
9. Lang and Lang, "The Mass Media and Voting" in American Voting Behavior edited by Burdick and Brodbeck, p. 229.
10. See for example, Berelson, Lazarsfeld, McPhee, Voting, pp. 171, 175, 240; Lazarsfeld, The People's Choice, p. 95; Katz and Lazarsfeld, Personal Influence, pp. 82-83; and Klapper, op. cit., pp. 30, 54.
12. See Langton, Political Socialization, pp. 23ff., 66ff.
13. Lane and Sears, Public Opinion, pp. 53-54.
14. Lane, op. cit. pp. 296-297.
15. Klapper, op. cit., pp. 19ff.
16. Treneman and McQuail, Television and the Political Image, p. 192.



17. Katz and Lazarsfeld, op. cit., p. 82. Klapper also discusses this in op. cit., p. 19.
18. Van Den Ban, "A Revision of the Flow of Communication Hypothesis" in Dimensions of Communication edited by Richardson, pp. 263-274.
19. "Mass Media Sources of Information and Influence" in ibid., pp. 205-208.
20. Hovland and Weiss, "The Influence of Source Credibility on Communication Effectiveness" in The Process and Effects of Mass Communication edited by Schramm, pp. 275-288.
21. Klapper, op. cit., pp. 85-86.
22. Hovland, Lumsdaine, and Sheffield, "The Effect of Presenting 'One Side' versus 'Both Sides' in Changing Opinions on a Controversial Subject", in The Process and Effects of Mass Communication, op. cit., pp. 261-274.
23. Klapper, "Mass Media and Persuasion" in ibid., p. 310.
24. Klapper, "The Comparative Effects of the Various Media" in ibid., pp. 93-103.
25. For example, see Lazarsfeld, op. cit., pp. 153-154 and Berelson, "Communication and Public Opinion" in Politics in the United States edited by Turner, p. 53.
26. Simon and Stern, "The Effect of Television upon Voting Behavior in Iowa in the 1952 Presidential Election" in American Political Science Review, 1955, pp. 470-477.
27. Campbell, "Has Television Reshaped Politics?" in Political Opinion and Electoral Behavior: Essays and Studies edited by Dreyer and Rosenbaum, pp. 318-323.
28. Roper and Associates, "The Public's View of Television and other Media: 1959-1964" in ibid., pp. 309-317.
29. Lang and Lang, "The Unique Perspective of Television" in Berelson and Janowitz (et al), Public Opinion and Communication, pp. 278-292.
30. See Hovland and Janis, Personality and Persuasibility, pp. 1-16 and Hovland, Janis and Kelley, Communication and Persuasion, pp. 174-204.

31. Klapper, The Effects of Mass Communication, pp. 66-67.  
Also, see Lipset, Political Man, pp. 209-211 in which  
he discusses voting behaviour as relating to the  
voting norms of reference groups.
32. Hovland, Janis and Kelley, op. cit. p. 181.
33. Ibid., pp. 192-196.
34. Ibid., p. 187.
35. Cohen, "Some Implications of Self-Esteem for Social  
Influence" in Personality and Persuasibility, op. cit.,  
p. 119.
36. Gergen and Marlowe, Personality and Social Behaviour,  
p. 15.
37. Lane, Political Life, p. 112.
38. Halloran, Attitude Formation and Change, pp. 79-80.

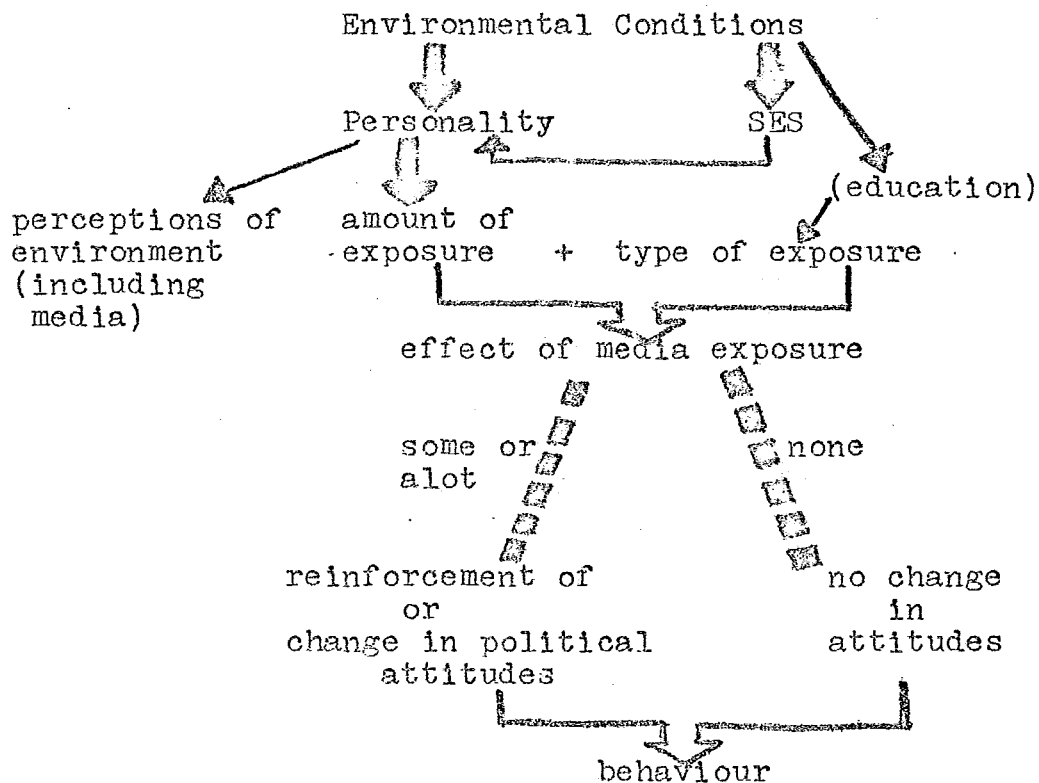
A MODEL OF PERSONALITY INFLUENCE1. The Model

The previous four chapters have each been devoted to a separate discussion of one aspect of the problem being explored in this thesis. This chapter attempts to bring all these notions into a single focus, by expressing the interrelationships between them in the form of a model or schematic representation of the theory. Figure 2 is on page 69.

It will be noted that this diagram is very much related to Figure 1 on page 33 which represents the environmental-personality interaction portion of Figure 2. This is the foundation of the theory and is the reason for considering personality more salient than socio-economic status or other background characteristics in determining media effect.

Environmental conditions result in an individual's specific personality type and socio-economic status. SES may have an indirect effect on the determination of the personality in so far as SES is at one stage an environmental condition. But SES does not directly determine personality

Figure 2: Schematic Representation of the Theory



any more than do other specific background characteristics. After its formation and the achievement of relative stability (although it is never completely "fixed"), personality determines to a great extent the effect that the environment will have on the individual's attitudes and behaviour (some types permit greater environmental influence than do others). The environment is composed of those objects, places, people, and situations which are external to the

individual. Therefore, the media constitute part of the environment and are affected by the personality in the same way as are other environmental conditions. It is the way in which this environmental factor (the media) is perceived that will effect the individual's attitudes and thus behaviour. Although other studies have suggested that behaviour may provide the impetus for attitude change, I am assuming that by definition, attitudes directly precede behaviour and change in the latter must have been preceded by a change in the former.

The failure to induce change in attitudes and behaviour can result from two processes. This observation takes us to the section of the diagram which examines the way in which education effects media exposure. In Chapter IV, we discussed the various effects of the different media and the appeal of each type of medium to a particular audience. One of the major factors was the degree to which the material presented was understood; we also found that print was more useful for presenting complex material requiring deeper understanding. We expect, therefore, that education will be instrumental in determining the type of medium employed. Personality is instrumental in determining the amount of exposure since desirability for structuring the environment will lead to the search for guidelines or at least sources of knowledge. Personality

also effects the type of medium since the need for contact with people may lead to interest in the more "personal" media such as television.

Both the amount of exposure and the type of exposure lead to the effect media exposure has on the individual's attitudes and behaviour. If the individual distrusts the media as a whole or the source of the communication (as discussed in Chapter IV), he may either ignore the media completely or he may reject any information or opinions to which he has been exposed. In either case, the media are not going to influence him. If he is exposed and does not reject the communications, he may react in two ways. If he is presented with conflicting information, he may change his opinion in order to keep his perceptions consistent or simply because he is highly persuasible by external factors.

Media exposure, however, may merely reinforce already held opinions rather than changing them. Again, this goes back to the notions of suggestibility and the need to structure environment which were discussed in the previous chapter.

It is obvious that the media are going to effect different people in different ways. This model has attempted to summarise how this occurs: in conjunction with Chapter III, it was seen that perception of the

environment influences the effect that that environment has on any individual. The perception is determined by the psychological needs and traits which make up the individual's personality. In as much as the media are in effect part of the environment, the theory holds true to notions of media influence as much as it does to any other environmental condition.

## 2. Related Hypotheses

Bearing the above points in mind, it might be useful as a means of clarification to present hypotheses which arise out of the model:

I The major hypothesis is as follows:

Personality is the most salient determinant of /

a) the extent to which media exposure will influence political attitudes and political behaviour.

This arises out of the discussion about the characteristic of "suggestibility" for the most part;

b) the form influence will assume. We refer here to the notion that some people will respond affectively to media content while others will react cognitively. The former would lead to a change in attitude, the latter to a change in

belief (which may or may not lead to attitude change). Again, the theoretical basis for this is the notion of suggestibility, but also involved here are such concepts as dependency on external cues, sociability, trust, and so on.

The sub-hypotheses involved here concern the effect of particular personality types; these will be included in Chapter IX which deals with the development of the types and their expected behavioural responses. Generally, we would expect that the alienated type will be negatively influenced by the media (change would be away from the intended direction); the dependent type will be most influenced by media exposure in the intended direction; and the social type will be the least influenced so that his attitudes and behaviour will be much the same whether or not he is exposed to the media.

II The two secondary hypotheses are an attempt to make as complete an analysis of the problem posed in the thesis as possible:

A. Education will determine what type of medium an individual is exposed to:

- 1) low education will be positively related to television exposure (although nearly everyone watches television, we would expect that the lower educated would be attracted



to a greater degree to this medium than would higher educated people and would claim to be more highly influenced by it than by any other medium);

- ii) high education will be positively related to exposure to magazines.

B. Personality will determine:

- 1) the position held by the respondents with regard to the three attitude areas of Vietnam, civil rights, and protest tactics;
- ii) the degree of participation indicated.

III The last hypothesis is based on the notion suggested by Lane that "displacement of emotion is easier<sup>1</sup> on persons than on groups, issues or symbols". The alienated type actually does displace his emotions on external factors while the dependent type restricts expression of his emotion (unless group norms demand expression). The social type, on the other hand, is able to cope with both desirable and undesirable emotions on his own terms. We would expect that the different types would be influenced either by groups or individuals, but not by both to the same degree: the dependent type is more susceptible to individual influence since he is heavily dependent on other people for his norms of conduct. Fol-

lowing this, we would hypothesise that:

- i) the dependent type will be more responsive towards individuals;
- ii) the alienated type will be more responsive towards individuals; and
- iii) the social type will be more responsive towards groups.

\* \* \* \* \*

Notes V: A Model of Personality Influence

1. Lane, Political Life, p. 139.

## VI

### SUGGESTIONS FOR AN EMPIRICAL APPLICATION

The thesis thus far has dealt in a theoretical way with personality and media effect and has presented a model explaining the effect that personality has on media influence in the political sphere. The value of a model is rather limited unless it can be empirically tested. The purpose of this chapter is to present a method of empirical application of this model. The first section describes the source of the data and the second suggests a methodological procedure which could be followed employing either this data or, quite plausibly, other data.

#### 1. The Data

In an attempt to give the notions presented in this thesis empirical validity, the concepts and personality types were operationally defined on the basis of data selected from the Survey Research Center's study of the 1968 American presidential election. The researchers interviewed 1673 individuals out of the voting population of the United States. There are one or two limitations in

the use of this data: although theoretically it is possible to determine the respondent's perception of the direction of media content, the relevant questions are included among the restricted data. However, one can assume that the content is general and political and this is in keeping with purpose of the thesis. The other difficulty is that the survey was not primarily concerned with personality or psychological concepts (although such factors did constitute a large portion of the questions); this difficulty was overcome by careful selection of relevant questions, particularly those not limited to political phenomena. The period which the survey covered (from September 1968 to the end of November 1968) would probably entail greater media exposure than usual, particularly in the areas involved in the analysis.

Obviously, the ideal method of testing the validity of the model would be to conduct a survey employing a questionnaire specifically designed to test personality effect on media influence on political attitudes and behaviour on the national level. Such an undertaking would require considerable resources (time, financial, and human) to be expended at the time of a national election. It is for this reason that the empirical basis for the thesis was the 1968 survey which provides the opportunity of

analysing a cross-section of socio-economic and personality types with provision for adequate measurement of media exposure.

## 2. A Suggested Methodological Procedure

The following section outlines a procedure which could be employed in order to test the model, making use of the data described in the previous section.

1. The first step would be to determine the major areas of analysis: media exposure, background characteristics, "test" variables, and personality. The questions relating to each area are found in Appendices I, II, III and IV, and V, respectively. The two major areas employed as test factors (to test media influence) are political behaviour and political attitudes (issue perception) which were further subdivided as follows:

### I Political Behaviour

- i) voting behaviour
- ii) political participation

### II Political Attitudes

- i) civil rights
- ii) Vietnam
- iii) protest tactics

The areas of political behaviour were chosen because they are central to any discussion of political activity on the part of the general electorate (we are not concerned with leaders or "activists"); the three areas of political attitudes are considered to be three of the most salient issues in the United States during the 1968 election, issues on which the media and the population were (and are) extremely vocal and which were sources of divergence in national unity and stability. Accordingly, they probably are related to most people's core beliefs and values and are viewed emotionally. Thus any change evident with regard to these issues would be highly supportive of the hypotheses, since we explained that core beliefs and attitudes are less susceptible to change than peripheral ones.

2. Determine the validity of the personality dimensions (which are dealt with theoretically in this thesis), using both factor analysis and inter-item correlation programmes. A factor loading of less than .40 would be considered evidence that the variable was an insufficient indicator of the dimension and that variable would be rejected. A correlation of less than .25 would be generally considered unacceptable. The dimensions would also have to be theoretically justified.

3. The basic information necessary for comparative purposes should be obtained before any further analysis is carried out. This involves establishing the relationship between media exposure (the source of most information and the index), background characteristics, and personality types and the test factors. The test factors would be the dependent variables in these tables. Similarly, media exposure should be run against background characteristics and the personality types (the latter being the independent variables). Finally, the background factors and the personality types should be run against each other (the former as the independent variables).

4. Having established the basic relationships, the next stage would be to run the media variables (independent) against the test factors (issues and behaviour) with control made first for personality and then for background characteristics in order to determine the saliency of each of these factors.

5. Specific background characteristics (such as education and age) should also be controlled for in a relationship between media exposure, the test factors, and personality in order to determine whether these factors accounted for any special characteristics of the relationship. The choice of these background factors would be determined by

their significance as indicated in the first stage of analysis.

6. In order to test for the group/individual sensitivity dimension, each of the groups and individuals comprising the concept would be run against the personality types, first alone and then with provision made for media exposure.

7. If none of the above relationships proved to be significant (in terms of personality), the next step would be to isolate one or more of the personality dimensions and substitute it or them for the personality type variable in order to test whether or not its effect was being distorted by the presence of the other dimensions.

8. If this proved to be of little value, reconsideration would have to be made of the method of defining and the choice of variables.



## VII

### THEORETICAL AND OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS

The conceptualisation and operationalisation of the personality types will be discussed in Chapter IX. This chapter will deal with the other important concepts.

#### 1. Mass Media

The mass media referred to include newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. Since the questions specifically ask whether or not the respondent was exposed to content about the campaign, we expect that the content will be primarily political, although it is, of course, impossible to completely distinguish any effect caused by / political content from that caused by entertainment content. In addition, we assume that some of that content was specifically designed to influence voting behaviour (in the form of political "commercials"); in effect the individuals here are responding to explicit political propaganda. Content referring to the attitudinal issues is considerably more implicit than explicit. However, all three issues were prominent throughout the media during the 1968 campaign and many references were made to them by the candidates; in addition, many "non-political" programmes were broadcast.

and a considerable number of articles appeared in newspapers and magazines.

Both the type of medium and the amount of exposure to each medium require measurement. Exposure is measured as "high", "medium", and "low", and "none" for all the media. For newspapers, high exposure is operationalised as "regularly or often"; medium as "from time to time"; and low as "just once in a great while". For radio, television, and magazines, high is considered "a good many" programmes or articles; medium as "several"; and low as "just one or two". Magazine exposure was also measured by asking the respondent whether or not he regularly reads about politics in magazines. Finally, the importance of each medium for the respondent was determined by asking the source of most information.

An index of media exposure was constructed by summing the degree of exposure to each medium so that the major variables are: 1) index of amount of exposure; and 2) source of most information.

## 2. Background Variables

The background characteristics which appear to be most useful are: age; education; occupation; class; income; sex; and race. Class is the respondent's own perception of his class. Education, occupation, and income were categorised

as "low", "medium", and "high" and were summed to form an index of socio-economic status. For education, low is "no formal education, some primary school and completed primary school"; medium is "some high school, graduated from high school, or technical school"; high is "some college or graduated from college". "Salesworkers, unskilled labour and farmers" constitute the low occupation category; "clerical and skilled labour" comprise the medium category; and "professional and technical or managerial occupations" are considered high. With regard to income, under \$4,999 is considered low, \$5,000 to \$14,999 is medium, and \$15,000 and over is high. Race is limited to white, black, and others (Puerto Ricans, Orientals, Indians). Age is divided into four categories: 18-29; 30-44; 45-64; and 65 and over.

These factors were chosen for two reasons: 1) they are the most salient "personal" background variables; three of them are constant (age, sex and race) while education and socio-economic status usually gain constancy with age; and 2) these factors have been foremost among the social variables discussed in previous studies.

### 3. Voting Behaviour and Participation

Voting behaviour will be measured in the following way: whether or not the respondent intends to vote in the election and whether or not he does vote (termed "change in

intent to vote"); and how he intends to vote and how he actually does vote ("change in intended vote"). The other aspect of voting behaviour is the actual vote, and peripherally, why the respondent did not vote and how long he took to make his decision if he did vote.

The degree of participation is determined by the respondent's score on a participation index which is composed of six items: voting; talking to people about the election; attending political meetings; working for a party or candidate; wearing a campaign button; and belonging to a political club. Each item was scored Yes (1) and No (2). Thus high participation indicates that the respondent has been active in all or all but one of the above ways; low participation means that the individual has been active in none or only one of these ways.

#### 4. The Issues

Two of the issues are measured in separate variables: civil rights is four different questions while the attitude towards the war in Vietnam is three questions. The third issue, position on protest tactics, is actually an index composed of three questions which ask the respondent's feelings about protest meetings or marches, disobeying a law, and sit-ins. Each question has three possible responses: disapprove; depends; and approve.

Someone who approves of all three tactics is considered a "radical" (in the context of 1968); a "conservative" disapproves of all methods; someone with a position in between would be considered a "liberal".

##### 5. Individual/Group Sensitivity

This is the measure employed to test the hypothesis that certain personality types are able to differentiate among individuals more easily than among groups or issues. There are six groups (businessmen, labour unions, the military, Vietnam war protesters, liberals, and conservatives) and four individuals (Wallace, Reagan, McCarthy, and Robert Kennedy), which cross the "liberal-conservative" spectrum, employed in this measure. They are all rated (originally on a thermometer format) as "favourable", "unfavourable", and "neutral" ("no feeling" or "slight feelings" for or against the subject). Sensitivity to individual or group differences would be indicated by a variance of ratings, whereas lack of sensitivity would be indicated by a clustering around any one rating, either for groups or individuals (for example, all or most groups are rated "neutral" or all individuals are considered to be "favourable") or groups and individuals (for instance, all the "liberal" groups and individuals are rated as "favourable").

## 6. What Constitutes "Influence"?

A variable would be said to "influence" the respondent's decision (for example, attitude change) if there was a significant difference at the .05 level between the presence of the variable and its absence in a particular relationship. For example, a medium would be considered "effective" in changing opinion if those with high exposure expressed a significantly different opinion from that expressed by those with low or no exposure. The degree to which influence occurred in the intended direction would be measured by a difference in proportions test. The two test would have to be considered in conjunction with each other. A highly significant change in the opposite (to intended) direction would be considered indicative of less influence than would be a less significant change in the intended direction.

Personality type will be considered the primary determinant of media effect on behaviour and issue perception if two conditions prevail: 1) there is a significant difference evident among the effect of the various types; and 2) if it appears to account for media effect to a greater extent than do socio-economic or other background characteristics. Consideration of the effect of other factors is constituted by testing them in relationships as explained in the previous chapter.

## VIII

### PERSONALITY TYPES 1

#### 1. The Personality Dimensions

This study employs three personality types which are determined operationally by the respondent's position on a scale of summed ratings achieved on ten dimensions, six of which are political in nature and four of which are non-political. The use of political dimensions as psychological measures is justified by the contention that the political realm is not separate from other areas in an individual's life and that attitudes towards political objects are symptomatic of deeper psychological traits to which they can be theoretically linked. Most of these scales are attitude scales; this appears to be an acceptable method of measuring personality on the basis of the trait psychological approach. Attitudes are external manifestations of latent dispositions or traits, which are indicative, in their various combinations, of personality types.

The ten dimensions are: political sensitivity; issue involvement; political concern; political incapability/futility; political cynicism; political efficacy; personal efficacy; traditionalism; personal competence; and trust in people. These scales form the basis of the operationalisation

of the three type concepts (alienated, dependent or fundamental, and integrated or social); the conceptualisation of the types is considerably broader, however, and includes notions which are either merely implied by the available measures or for which measurement is precluded by the the nature of the particular data used in the preparation of this thesis. Obviously, the use of other data may result in the elimination of some of the dimensions considered here or, on the other hand, result in the inclusion of other dimensions.

The scales were derived from a variety of sources: some are taken directly from previous studies; others are modified versions of previously used scales; still others have been constructed specifically for this study. Each dimension will be discussed in terms of its origin, meaning, and theoretical significance. Where applicable, reference will be made to their empirical validity.

#### 1) Political Sensitivity

This scale includes seven questions, all of which asks the respondent to name which party he thinks would be more likely to want the federal government to be involved in a particular issue or action (such as getting doctors and medical care at low cost). The intention of the scale is to determine the respondent's perception of, or sensitivity to, any differences in the position of the major parties.



If he is sensitive to differences, he will name either the Democratic or Republican Party. If he fails to perceive differences between the two major parties and instead prefers Wallace and the American Independent Party he is considered sensitive only to extremes. Complete insensitivity to party differences is indicated by a response that there is no difference between the two parties. A predominance of responses in the last category indicates high political sensitivity while a majority of scores at the opposite end indicates a lack of sensitivity. (As with the remainder of the scales, only the two extremes will be discussed, although, of course, a "medium" position is as theoretically significant as these positions.)

The Political Sensitivity scale is a modified form of the scale used by Campbell et al., in The Voter Decides<sup>1</sup> as part of their notion of "Extent of Issue Orientation". Our scale employs more questions with different subject matter, but the basis of the scale remains the same.

#### ii) Issue Involvement

This scale consists of four questions which measure interest in different issues. There are two possible responses: the first indicates interest in the particular issue while the second, no interest. A person with a high sense of issue involvement would express interest in all the issues and an individual with a low sense of

issue involvement would express interest in none of the questions.

This scale was also based on the "Extent of Issue Orientation" measure discussed above;<sup>2</sup> again, however, the actual content of the questions is different. The authors do not report any data on the reliability of their scales (on which these are based), but "since the items were selected on the basis of their relation to criterion measures, they have a built-in validity component" which<sup>3</sup> appears to be indicative of validity.

The theoretical basis for using this dimension is that it is related to a particular view of the world. Interest in issues indicates a deeper sense of involvement which goes beyond political boundaries (although interest in other areas does not necessarily indicate interest in politics).

### iii) Political Concern

This scale consists of six items which are designed to measure concern with the political process (which represents one aspect of the broader environment). The first three items require responses from the interviewees in terms of their partisan preference, voting consistency, and interest in the campaign. The first and third of these items were employed by Campbell et al. in The American Voter

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in their measure of Political Involvement. The last three questions involve an outside observer's (the interviewer's) impression of the respondent's co-operation, general political interest and general level of political information. The use of internally and externally derived measures together serves as a check on the reliability of the responses.

This scale involves the type of question Lane considers to be measuring political emotion,<sup>5</sup> which again is indicative of the individual's more general emotional makeup.

Each question had three possible responses: the first indicates concern while the third represents a lack of concern. The second response represents either an undecided or middle position. The content of each response is specific to the nature of the question and therefore will not be discussed here. Again, this scale is actually a specific application of a more general attitude.

iv) Political Incapability/futility

This scale was employed by Olsen to measure a form of political alienation.<sup>6</sup> Incapability indicates that the "person feels incapable of participating effectively in social interaction because of the nature of his social environment". The use of the term "political futility"

suggests that the object towards which the incapability is directed is the political system. The questions in this scale, according to Olsen, measure powerlessness (1,2, and 4) and meaningless (3). Olsen found that the coefficient of reproducibility for this scale was 89.3 per cent.<sup>7</sup> In addition to these four items, three other questions were considered to be equally adequate measures of this form of political alienation: the fifth and seventh questions appear to measure the guidelessness which Olsen found to be missing from his scale. The sixth question seems to measure meaningless.

There were two possible responses to each question: agree and disagree. A high level of political incapability is indicated by agreement with all the question or by disagreeing with only one, and a low level by disagreement with all or six of the questions.

#### v) Political Cynicism

This scale contains five items, which are similar in form to the items used by Olsen to measure political discontent or cynicism.<sup>8</sup> Unlike that scale, however, an alternate term for our measure would be "confidence in government" (scored in the opposite way to political cynicism). This measure also seems to relate to an individual's belief of his relationship to government or

authority: to what extent can he identify with the governmental structures? To what degree can he experience personal contact?

Empirically, three questions would have responses scored as 1, 2, and 3 while two questions would be scored 1 and 3 in order to make all the items as equally meaningful as possible. In order to attain a high degree of cynicism, an individual would have to answer four or five questions with a third response. Four or five responses in the first category would be considered a low level of cynicism.

vi) Political Efficacy

Four items comprise this scale which is intended to measure potential efficacy felt by the individual in the area of politics. One question deals with the individual's attitude towards government affairs while the other three measure his perception of the government's attitude towards him. An alternate name for this measure would be "sense of government responsiveness"; the use of these two terms together (efficacy and responsiveness) reflects Lane's notion that the "capacity of the government to adjust to public opinion is related to political efficacy."<sup>9</sup>

The first response represents a negative attitude, the third a positive one. A low degree of political efficacy

would be indicated by a negative response to four or five of the questions while a positive response to four or five would be indicative of a high level of efficacy.

vii) Personal Efficacy

Four items comprise this scale. The first two attempt to discover whether or not the individual has ever taken any action in terms of giving his opinion. The second two test the degree to which the respondent feels he can act as an individual.

The difference between political and personal efficacy is mainly a question of degree or scope: the former measures a limited area of efficacy which involves the participation of external factors as well as the individual himself (for example, the role played by political parties in bringing the demands of the people to the attention of the government); the latter, on the other hand, places greater emphasis on the individuality involved.

In order to keep the measurement standard, the first two questions are scored No (1) and Yes (3) while the second two are scored 1, 2, and 3, with three indicating that the respondent would take individual action to counter-act a law he considered unjust. A response in the second

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"Individual action" consists of using legal means, voting, giving money or merely "act[ing] as an individual".

category indicates that the respondent would work within a group to change a law, and 1 indicates "no action". Therefore, if the respondent answered three or four questions in the third category, he would have a high sense of personal efficacy. If he answered three or four questions with the first response, he would have a low sense of efficacy.

#### viii) Traditionalism

This scale has only two items, both measuring "religious" attitudes. The first item was chosen because regular church attendance indicates either respect for a traditional belief or conformity to one for social gain (in either case the importance of such a belief is indicated whether or not it is actually held). The second measures "traditionalism" or "fundamentalism" more directly since it asks the respondent his view of the Bible.

In order to be considered "traditional", the individual would have to answer both questions with the third response.

#### ix) Personal Competence

This scale consists of five items designed to

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This includes: working through informal groups such as neighbours and friends, through a political party, or through organized groups such as a union.

measure the individual's general attitude towards his life and his sense of control over it (in a sense, this measures mastery over the environment). The items comprising this scale were based on several different scales developed by Campbell <sup>10</sup> et al., to measure Personal Competence and used in The American Voter. These items are also similar to those referred to by Lane as comprising a <sup>11</sup> "neuroticism" index. In that sense, this scale can be said to be measuring a basic perspective of the world.

Despite the similarity in their names, the personal efficacy scale are not measuring the same thing. The former implies an ability to perform a sequence of action and result; the latter is concerned with a more general approach to life.

A "competent" person would respond positively to four or five of the questions; a person with a low level of competence would score negatively on four or five questions.

x) Trust in People

Three items comprise this scale which is intended to measure a feeling of alliance with other people (people in general rather than particular friends, relatives, and so on). Reversing the scoring of this measure indicates a feeling of personal alienation. The source for this measure is Rosenberg's "Trust in People" scale, developed in 1969. <sup>12</sup>



Other implications of this dimension are hostility and suspicion.

The second response to each question is considered "positive". Accordingly, a high degree of trust in people (or a low sense of alienation) is indicated by a positive response to all three questions; a negative response to all three questions.

## 2. The Personality Typology

Empirically, scoring on all the dimensions would be categorised as "high", "medium", and "low". The personality types would be operationally defined by the sum score on all the ten dimensions. The Personality Typology simply indicates the position of each type on each dimension, as a means of clarification.

In order to facilitate this method of establishing the types, the scoring with regard to the high, medium, and low ratings was not consistent: high on some dimensions was scored 3 while on others it was scored 1. The basic discrimination here was between "negative" and "positive" qualities, in the broadest terms (although, admittedly some dimensions do not fit easily into that context). The position defined for each type on each dimension is determined by the conceptualisation of the types as explained in the next chapter. In some cases, two positions on one

dimension are theoretically possible according to the basis of conceptualisation: an "integrated" individual may score medium or high on political concern, for example. It is the overall score which is important rather than the score on a specific dimension.

### 3. Implications for Other Traits

The dimensions which provide the means for the operationalisation of the types have implications for other traits for which the nature of this particular data prohibits direct operationalisation. It is possible, however, to discuss these traits in a theoretical way, basing inferences and conclusions on previous research. This permits a much broader and fuller definition of each personality type than would be possible if we were restricted solely to the ten dimensions measureable by the data. This position depends on one assumption: that there are groups of attitudes or traits which can be interpreted in the manner of a response set, that there are certain traits which can generally be grouped together so that the presence of one or more of the group is a high indicator of the presence of the other traits in the group.

The basis of this approach to the analysis can be seen in McClosky's "Conservatism and Personality" study<sup>13</sup> in which he explores the relationship between various personality

traits and the dimension of liberalism/conservatism.

It should be noted that this is not a political dimension but rather a philosophical or ethical world view. Table 5 shows this for four clinical traits; Table 6, for four social traits.

Table 5: Comparison of Conservatives and Liberals by Personality Traits -- Clinical

| Trait                        | Liberals<br>(190) | Extreme<br>Conservatives (245) |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Hostility                    |                   |                                |
| % low                        | 59                | 9                              |
| % high                       | 18                | 71                             |
| Paranoid Tendencies          |                   |                                |
| % low                        | 56                | 13                             |
| % high                       | 16                | 62                             |
| Need Inviolacy (Ego Defence) |                   |                                |
| % low                        | 68                | 17                             |
| % high                       | 11                | 60                             |
| Rigidity                     |                   |                                |
| % low                        | 58                | 14                             |
| % high                       | 18                | 60                             |

Source: McClosky, "Conservatism and Personality" in Politics and Social Life edited by Polsby, Dentler and Smith, p. 226.

Table 6: Comparison of Conservatives  
and Liberals by Personality  
Traits -- Social

| Trait           | Liberals<br>(190) | Extreme<br>Conservatives (245) |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Dominance       |                   |                                |
| % low           | 9                 | 51                             |
| % high          | 72                | 14                             |
| Alienation      |                   |                                |
| % low           | 57                | 18                             |
| % high          | 11                | 45                             |
| Pessimism       |                   |                                |
| % low           | 44                | 19                             |
| % high          | 25                | 53                             |
| Self-confidence |                   |                                |
| % low           | 18                | 35                             |
| % high          | 46                | 20                             |

Source: Ibid., p. 225.

The implications of one trait or group of traits for the presence of other traits is well-illustrated by Lane. One useful trait which we are unable to measure directly is that of "self-esteem" (although it is related to the efficacy and competence dimensions), which Lane terms "ego-strength".<sup>12.</sup> He found that a sense of efficacy (a component of ego-strength),

both in terms of self and of the democratic process, indicates greater concern, greater consistency with the chosen party's stand on issues, and a greater amount of learning. The "more-effectives" see "unavoidable problems as personal rather than social" because they have to reduce the inner tension which the existence of problems creates.<sup>15</sup>

Cheerful people, Lane suggests, are more trustful, feel more effective, and tend to believe in democracy to a greater degree than do despondent people. Similarly, the dissatisfied people care less, do less, and know less, and tend, according to Lane, to be authoritarian, withdrawing from political participation under normal conditions and attaching themselves to "alienated" movements when they arise.<sup>16</sup>

This section has indicated that our definition of the personality types need not be restricted merely to the ten measureable dimensions; it is quite plausible to conceive theoretically of much more expansive concepts in terms of our personalities which legitimately imbues them with greater breadth and depth than we could otherwise achieve.

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Notes IX: Personality Types 1

1. See Robinson, Rusk, and Head, Measures of Political Attitudes, pp. 463-464.
2. Ibid., pp. 465-466.
3. Ibid., pp. 456-457.
4. Ibid., pp. 466, 463.
5. Lane, Political Life, pp. 133-134.
6. Olsen, "Two Categories of Political Alienation" in Social Forces, March 1969, pp. 288-299.
7. Ibid., p. 293.
8. Ibid., p. 292.
9. Lane, op. cit., pp. 151ff.
10. Robinson and Shaver, Measures of Social Psychological Attitudes, pp. 529-531.
11. Lane, op. cit., p. 117.
12. Robinson and Shaver, op. cit., pp. 529-531.
13. McClosky, "Conservatism and Personality" in Politics and Social Life edited by Polsby, Dentler and Smith, pp. 222-231.
14. Lane, op. cit., p. 148.
15. Ibid., p. 153.
16. Ibid., pp. 155, 156.

## IX

### PERSONALITY TYPES 2

#### 1. A Theory of Personality

We have already implicitly suggested a theory of personality in other sections of this thesis; it seems appropriate, however, to begin this particular chapter with a more precise (albeit brief) personality theory from which to derive our specific types.

Personality theories are generally based on a view of man which takes into consideration the innate nature of man and his maximal potential. It would seem to us that there is within man a need to realise his own potential and to enjoy communion with others. The eternal problem is to integrate successfully the conflict occurring between the internal desires and needs and those of the society (both as a governing body and as an aggregate of individuals). The "mature" individual is able to experience the fulfillment of his potential while at the same time establish successful communion with his fellow men. It should be pointed out that this communion cannot be achieved at the expense of the individual's integrity

because that means a denial of the self-potential, the fulfillment of which is an equally important need.

The three types which are defined later in the chapter represent three possible outcomes with regard to satisfaction of the nature of man. The first (alienated) type has been unable to achieve the communion necessary for mental well-being; the second (dependent) type has denied his potential in order to fulfill the need for union; of the three, the social or integrated type is the only one which represents one expression of the total man.

The definitions are from the political perspective but these are not necessarily "political" types only. They are interpreted in that way simply because of the nature of the thesis. It is hoped, nevertheless, that the notions suggested in the profiles of the types may be applicable to a more general scope than merely the political.

The immature individual finds that his inner needs and those of his social environment are in conflict; this conflict cannot be resolved unless he adapts to the society or unless the society eventually concurs with his ideas. Unfortunately, the society itself is rarely able to allow full realisation of potential. The artist who lives his art may find himself at odds with most of those around him. This type of possibility is peripheral to our frame of consideration, but it is a very real one. This incompat-



ibility remains a serious problem in terms of societal functioning. The two extremes of the communion aspect of man's nature are equally likely to result in neurosis or psychosis, regardless of whether the extreme is constituted by rejection of the need in the conscious behaviour (as seen in the alienated man) or by an overemphasis on that need (as exhibited by the dependent).

It follows from the basic assumptions about the needs of man (to fulfill his potential and to be in contact with others) that two of the most important traits or dispositions (the personality dimensions of the previous chapter) are self-esteem and alienation. We pointed out in the chapter "Personality-Environment Interaction" that the degree of self-esteem was closely related to that of mastery over the environment. Together the degree of alienation and the degree of self-worth can be termed "self-image". The latter notion refers to an individual's perception of his own worth and value while the former (alienation) refers to his perception of himself in his relationship with others. Six of the dimensions discussed in the previous chapter appear to measure the concept of self-image: political incapability; political cynicism; trust in people; political efficacy; personal efficacy; and personal competence.

During the preparation of the personality scales, it was pointed out to me that a specific trait or characteristic might account for a good portion of the behaviour and attitudes employed in the study. This is a possibility; we would hypothesise that this notion of self-image may, in fact, be that factor. It would, in any case, be a fruitful second stage of the procedure to test for such a possibility. The necessity of having an adequate self-image is indicated by Jean Grambs' comments that

Everyone must have some sense of adequacy, no matter how minimal, or he cannot cope with his own existence, and then must escape into psychosis or suicide.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, we would expect that of all personality traits, the ego-centred trait of self-image would be most important in determining success in relating the two aspects of man's nature as we have defined it and in terms of the specific problem explored in the thesis, in determining rejection or acceptance of threats to one's belief structure.

## 2. The Notion of Types

The entire notion of categorising individuals into positions on a typology, of fitting them into "boxes", seems alien at first thought. It seems to be denying the unique and changing character of all individuals which we discussed at the beginning of the thesis. In a sense this is true;

at the same time, however, we are faced with physical limitations which unfortunately overcome our conception of the ideal. Our analysis has to deal with that less personally satisfying, but equally important, "constant portion" of personality of group of traits which Allport refers to in his discussion of trait, character, and personality; he defines trait as:

. . . a broad system of similar action tendencies existing in the person we are studying. 'Similar action tendencies' are those that an observer, looking at them from the actor's point of view, can categorize together under one rubric of meaning.<sup>2</sup>

The notion of "types" suggests that a group of individuals possess this same group of traits; classification of an individual as a specific "type" indicates the position of that individual on a number of different dimensions which have been designed to measure the externalisation of traits. "Traits reside in a person; types in some outside point of view."<sup>3</sup>

We are obviously dealing with an "outside point of view"; we are accepting that personality is not constant but at the same time we are dealing with those consistent elements which enable the formation of types as a useful and convenient concept. We are recognising that there are certain "traits" which groups of people have in common, which categorise them as members of the the same type.

As Fromm notes in his formation of five types, we are dealing with "ideal" types. We have already stressed the complexity of personality; thus it should be obvious that we are aware that no individual ever completely conforms to any one type: each person is, in fact, a composite of several different types which are sometimes apparently opposite in nature. It is also true, however, that usually one type is more dominant than the others, and is more salient in determining the individual's behaviour than any single trait or group of traits. This is the aspect of personality which this study is exploring. Thus, although we are analysing constant, single personality type behaviour and influence, we are also conscious of its changing, integrative nature.

The use of the "type" concept represents a new approach to the study of media influence in that it attempts to define man as a psychological entity and to apply that definition to the influence of the media as an environmental factor. Previous studies have taken into account one major factor: suggestibility, for example, or related to that, self-esteem. What this thesis suggests is that although these factors or characteristics are good determinants of media influence, their effect may be tempered by their interaction with the other related psychological characteristics of the individual. It is obvious that all factors cannot

be accounted for in a study such as this; accordingly, an attempt was made to include the most salient characteristics within the context of the thesis' intention.

### 3. Profiles of the Types

This section will profile in detail the three personality types which provide the basis for the study: the alienated, the dependent or fundamental, and the social or integrated. In so far as we accept Fromm's comments on the desirability of a "mature" or "healthy" type, the third fulfills that condition. It is necessary to recognise, again, that these are three ideal types, that no one individual can be classified merely as one type or another in the real world, but that all types are present (and others besides) in all individuals to some degree. In terms of this analysis, we are dealing only with the dominant aspect, revealed by the sum scores achieved on the measurement scales.

The second point is that these are types constructed in order to measure the effect of media influence on political behaviour; thus types which are not really relevant are excluded. It is obviously not difficult to conceive of innumerable other "types" and there is no pretence here that these types are all-inclusive. They appear, however, to consider accurately and usefully three common personality

types which are independent of ideological restrictions.

The conceptualisation of the types will be followed by the expected political behaviour and response to media exposure.

1) Alienated Type

The alienated individual is unable to establish adequate and reciprocally satisfying relationships with other people or to confront his physical environment effectively or rationally. He feels lost and isolated, yet although he would like to be integrated into a group, he is unable to achieve such a goal. There is a similar internal void, as well: he cannot attach himself to a belief system which will respond to his needs, nor to formulate a satisfactory one of his own.<sup>5</sup> A consistent belief system is necessary in order to stabilise both internal and external factors and to establish a workable notion of one's position in the world. Such a belief system can conflict with the predominant societal norms only if the individual is strong enough to act independently of external forces and to resist pressure to conform.

Most of the alienated man's actions are perfunctory; they are carried out because they have to be, or because the individual can see no alternative, rather than as a means of enjoyment or of self-fulfillment. Such actions

appear to be apart from the performer, functional in terms of their own ends rather than as ends with regard to the individual. Despite this lack of feeling union with anyone or anything, the alienated person is unlikely to search for ways to enrich his life in a positive manner. Yet, ironically, he is less despaired than despairing: he will clutch at radical straws as answers to his problems, since conventional means do little to alleviate it. On the contrary, covention (that is, authority) is often held responsible for his condition. His rebellion takes the form of denying the legitimacy of those forces which he perceives as hostile to him.

The alienated person is likely to see the world in the form of polarised dichotomies -- "them" and "us". Most of the time, he is relatively inactive politically, but when conditions are ripe (as in times of social unrest and upheaval), he does take action; he will lean towards extreme movements which reflect his general dissatisfaction with what he perceives to be the way of the world.

"Extreme" behaviour, it should be noted, can take place within conventionally prescribed bounds (as in voting behaviour) or it can exceed those bounds and take the form of mass movements, both violent and non-violent. This study is concerned only with the first type of "extremism", but it is implicit that there is potential for the other

form to occur.

Persons of this type are most likely to become initiated into peculiar sub-cultures and to "develop full-blown ideologies explaining why they are right and why those who disapprove of and punish them are wrong".<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the lines between issues and personality and the environmental and personal factors become indistinct; issues are seen almost purely as they relate to the self. Thus Lasch describes the emergence of the New Left as a movement "based on 'alienation'"<sup>7</sup> because the distinction between political issues and personal issues has become blurred.

Although the alienated individual is a follower, he rarely joins organizations for the "social" benefits, for pleasure or enjoyment, but rather because they seem to offer solutions which he is unable to formulate or carry out as an individual. One of the reasons this type does not belong to clubs is that he is suspicious of other people and cynical about the whole social (and political) process. He has a tendency, therefore, to reduce society into two camps. In the extreme, the alienated man becomes the paranoid, seeing persecution in every order, opposition in every argument. It is this type which is most susceptible to conspiracy theories as modes of explanation because he projects his own dichotomous, cynical, hostile, and fearful nature onto others. It is not bad luck or his own incompetence which explains his failure but a determined effort by "them"



(whoever "they" may be) to prevent his succeeding.

He rarely makes "rational" decisions but pursues ends almost solely on emotional grounds, emotions which are not internal as in the intuitive or truly caring person, but are aroused by an external element. Thus despite the fact that he believes that belonging to a specific organisation is a means to a desirable end, in fact he is being used once again as an instrument to further the aims of others.

The tendency to extremism is actually an attempt to rejoin the community -- to lose himself in the group, and to substitute group "security" for personal (internally derived) security which he lacks. He is much happier when he can consider himself part of a larger powerful force; then he can associate his identity with that of the group.

Alienation is also reflected in hostility and unwarranted aggression and a tendency toward extreme opinions, although such opinions are lacking in any real or considered base and are therefore also lacking in real conviction.

The alienated type is likely to have a low self-image (although his aggression may make him appear otherwise):

They maintain an image of themselves as a strong people, apparently, by projecting feelings of inadequacy and other unacceptable impulses onto physical symptoms, feared objects, and forces of chaos and

hostility which they then attribute to the world and other people.<sup>8</sup>

The alienated individual, then, has a low sense of self-esteem because he has had little success and much failure in "satisfying central needs" and because there is a considerable gap between his "ideal and actual concepts of himself".<sup>9</sup>

Although like any type, the alienated man may appear in any social stratum, he may be more prevalent in lower class, lower income, and lower educated groups. Among these groups, alienation takes the form of passivity (unless an external stimulus to action is provided) and submissiveness. When he occurs among higher educated, or higher income, middle class groups, the behaviour is, in fact, the opposite. Then, attempts to action, arising out of frustration, may turn to violent and desperate attempts to transform the status quo. Examples here are the young college radicals or Weathermen faction and the young militant black leadership. It should be pointed out, however, that alienation in these two groups stems from different sources: the first from a difference with the status quo ideals, the second from economic and social deprivation.

Because of his tendency to dichotomise issues, he would score low or medium on the political sensitivity scale, either because he sees no difference at all or because

he can perceive only extreme differences between parties. Similarly, he would score low or medium on both the political concern and the issue involvement scales since he is neither interested in nor knowledgeable about issues and political events. On the direct measures of alienation -- the political incapability and the political cynicism dimensions -- he would score high. His lack of self-esteem would be evident in the low scores he would achieve on political efficacy, personal efficacy, and the personal competence dimensions and his innate hostility by his low score on the trust in people index. In the case of the alienated man, the use of the term "neuroticism index" as a substitute for personal competence is particularly appropriate. He would, of course, score high in that case. Traditionalism is somewhat harder to rate in this instance. It would be possible for the alienated type to score either high or low depending on the interpretation placed on the questions. He may reject traditional values along with everything else or he may consider them his only refuge, to which he clings tenaciously.

Of the three types, the alienated individual is least likely to vote and will advance the most minor reasons for not voting (such as being "too busy"); he will be more likely to deviate from this non-voting pattern than the non-voters of the other types, and when he does so, his vote

will go to "extreme" or "non-orthodox" candidates. We expect that a high proportion of the whites of this type will vote for George Wallace.

--- This type will be the least exposed to the media, except for television (to which all types are exposed to some degree) and although all types consider television to be their most important source of information, this is more likely to be true of the alienated type than of the others. He is, moreover, unlikely to be effected by such exposure since he tends to see media on the side of "they" and therefore to distrust them.

ii) Dependent or Fundamentalist Type

In many ways, this type seems similar to the alienated type but the members of this group lack the hostility and frustration and bitterness of those who are alienated.

The use of the term "fundamentalist" is employed in order to indicate the simplistic world view held by this type. This is not in the sense of a dichotomised, hostile view held by the alienated type, but rather in the sense of a closed, secure, traditional belief system. This type is passive because it feels safe while passivity or aggression occurs in the alienated individual as a response

to fears of being attacked. The dependent individual's actions and attitudes are based on satisfaction, while the alienated individual's philosophy is based on distrust and fear. But the dependent's satisfaction is not a healthy one based on rational consideration of his position with a flexible open attitude which allows change when necessary, but one based on submission to external influences -- conformity to group norms or to conventional values for their own sake. This element of this type's nature is indicated by the use of the term "dependent" to describe this type. This term emphasizes the passive nature of this type, and a preference for a subordinate role.

This passivity means that this type is unlikely to enter into a great deal of interaction in terms of being a "joiner" of organisations, clubs, and so on, unless pressed to do so by another individual or unless membership follows from occupational or similar factors. Nevertheless, their sources of opinion lie in those groups to which they do belong. "They apparently lack . . . strong sources of direction within themselves and they come to terms with life by valuing and relying on external sources of persuasion".<sup>10</sup>

They lack self-confidence and deny any ability to influence events, or deny even a desire to want to do so. They are conservative in the sense that they prefer the

"tried and true" to innovative concepts. There is, in fact, a sort of lethargic quality to this type, which tends to be revealed in a complacent contentment, precluding change. As explained above, their sense of self-esteem is fairly low but they do not feel threatened by external forces -- they are quite happy to submit to them and enjoy not having to assume responsibility for their own actions. An extreme of this type would be neurotic, gaining his identity from others and being unable to function without the approval of others. This type is found in all strata and in all elements of life with the possible exception of leaders.

This dependency on other people is repressed to re-emerge as conformity and, accordingly, acceptable behaviour. Their intent, therefore, is to maintain this role as conformists and "worthy" members of society. They are particularly susceptible, then, to societal pressures (or what they perceive as societal pressures). " ... .Persons low in self-esteem have been found to be more prone to yield to social influence than those high in self-esteem."

11

Being relatively apathetic, the individual of this type would be defined as having mainly medium or low scores on the personality dimensions. Unwillingness to make decisions would result in low or medium scores for both political sensitivity and issue involvement: sometimes

individuals of this type do express opinions -- they simply are not his own. The dependent individual would score medium on political concern because he would have a desire to conform to what he perceives as the norm -- to be concerned about the political process. Similarly, there would be a limited amount (medium) of political efficacy exhibited by such people because they would play only a small role in the political process. Complacency would result in a medium score in political incapability and cynicism (this type is not cynical about the political process but neither is he particularly optimistic about it; nor does he feel a bond with it). This type would score low on the personal efficacy scale because any action he took would be group action. The score on traditionalism would depend a great deal on the nature of the peer group with which the individual associates so that it could be high, medium, or low. Personal competence would be scored low or medium as indicative of its function as an element in the notion of self-esteem. Trust in people would be high since to view people in any other light would be a source of real anxiety to an individual of this type.

We expect the dependent individual to be highly exposed to the media which serve as external sources of authority and opinion-formation agencies. He will probably be most influenced by television because it is the most

personal of all the media and has less scope for complex explanation (which this type avoids) than do magazines or even newspapers; the latter may be the second source of information because it is possible to read merely headlines or to "skim" stories. Of all the types, this one will be most likely to change his opinions or to be influenced in his behaviour by the exposure to the media:

The uninvolved member of the electorate is . . . the most likely to change his views. He is more likely to shift away from his sociologically 'natural' positions between elections, when the pressure is off and to shift back again when campaign pressure mounts and his political alignments are again brought into focus . . . He is . . . more at the mercy of social pressures because of the lack of inner convictions to give him a steady orientation in the face of conflicting influence.<sup>12</sup>

Among those who feel that speaking with other people is their source of most information, this type will likely be in the majority.

When this individual votes, he is most likely to vote for conventional candidates. Unless he is urged, however, he may not even register, let alone vote. The major concern to the dependent is the candidate rather than the issues since he is able to relate more easily to people than to impersonal issues.

### 111) Social or Integrated Type

The third type is the only "positive" type of the



three. The term "integrated" is used aptly because of the success such an individual has in integrating the external world with his internal perceptions of his reality. Unlike the alienated individual who fights his environment and projects his own feelings of inadequacy and fear and the causes of his own failure onto external objects, and unlike the dependent type who, unable to cope with changing conditions, withdraws into his own world of safe tradition, the social man tends to initiate change when he believes it to be necessary and valuable to do so. Whereas the radical (as opposed to reactionary) individual interprets change in a destructive idiom in the light of utopian aims and for its own sake, the social man will work "within the system". This does not mean that he always accepts the existing order, but rather that he believes that change can be accomplished best by modifying the system instead of destroying it. He too has his ideals but he is able to place them in a pragmatic perspective.

The social man is exactly what his name implies -- active and tending to join organisations for pleasure as well as for functional reasons. He enjoys this interaction with other people of different types and his attitudes towards his relationships results in a mutual fulfillment or satisfaction. He is continually learning, living, and growing, both through his own actions and experiences and through interaction with other people.

This type is optimistic both about his own personal development and about the development of society in general. This is not a blind optimism or a bland "hoping for the best", but is based on his own life style and sense of reality and arises partially out of his confidence in his own abilities to achieve change; it is also a token of his faith in the ability of his environment to tolerate modification or even a considerable amount of change.

Like the alienated man, the integrated man projects his own perception of himself onto his environment. Confidence in himself becomes confidence in people and events. Nevertheless, he is susceptible: when he recognises the need for change, tries to achieve it, and continually fails to do so, finding his way blocked (perhaps by dependent types), he is likely to become the alienated man of the left, radical and pragmatic in terms of strategy. Then, rather than seeing strategy as means and considering moral responsibility for his actions a vital issue, he becomes concerned only with the end he wishes to achieve, subjecting himself to a "new" morality. But we are concerned here with the undisillusioned social man.

Probably one of his most important traits is his high level of self-esteem which enable him to assume this positive attitude towards both his environment and towards other people. It also means that he can accept criticism

in an intelligent manner rather than either feeling threatened by it or accepting it without thought.

He is also trusting of both people and government (the latter perhaps less so than the former), although he can be objectively critical of the same. This type of individual formulates opinions on the basis of "objective" information gathered from various sources; these opinions are firmly held and are unlikely to change significantly except on the basis of new cognitive information.

Despite his enjoyment of and participation in group activity, he is also able to act independently and to oppose his groups' norms when he considers it necessary.

Lane characterises this type in these terms: he has a sense of social responsibility and accepts the consequences of his own behaviour; accordingly, he is also dependable and trustworthy, has a sense of group obligation (loyalty) and is self-disciplined.<sup>13</sup>

It is this type which initiates new methods and approaches and of the three is the one most capable of abstract thought. In the extreme type (in the disillusioned social man), abstraction becomes paramount and there is little thought given to the implementation of plans and ideas.

Again, this type is found on all levels of society

but perhaps is more common among the better educated and higher income groups since these people would have had favourable experience with their environment to a greater degree than the lower status groups.

Because of his general concern and interest in many fields, a member of this group would score high on political sensitivity and issue involvement. His confidence in his own abilities would be reflected in a high personal competence score. However, he is also realistic and will not usually overrate himself nor his environment; accordingly, he would score either medium or high on the political efficacy and personal efficacy dimensions and medium or low on the incapability and cynicism scales. His score on the political concern dimension would be either high or medium, probably the former, since he interprets the political process as having value for him as an individual. His lack of adherence to the status quo would result in a low score on the traditionalism scale.

This type is the most likely of the three to vote consistently, generally for conventional "liberal" candidates, and to have a high rate of participation generally in political affairs. If he intended to vote and did not, it is probably for a "good" reason. On the other hand, he may rationally choose not to vote if he considers the candidates unsuitable.

He sees the media as sources of information, particularly the newspapers and magazines. There may be some change or influence evidenced in this type's attitudes and behaviour because of the information aspect, but generally little change is expected.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Notes IX: Personality Types 2

1. Grambs, "The Self-Concept: Basis for Reeducation of Negro Youth" in Negro Self-Concept: Implications for School and Citizenship edited by Kvaraceus, p. 12.
2. Allport, Pattern and Growth in Personality, pp. 333-337.
3. Ibid., p. 346.
4. Fromm, Man for Himself, pp. 70ff.
5. See de Grazia, The Political Community: A Study of Anomie, Chapter 1 for a discussion of the role belief systems play and the problems which result when an individual has conflicting systems.
6. Becker, Outsiders, p. 3.
7. Lasch, The Agony of the American Left, p. 180.
8. Linton and Graham, "Personality Correlates of Persuasibility" in Personality and Persuasibility edited by Hovland and Janis, p. 98.
9. Cohen, "Some Implications of Self-Esteem for Social Influence" in ibid., p. 103.
10. Linton and Graham, op. cit., p. 95.
11. Gergen and Marlowe, Personality and Social Behaviour, p. 13.
12. Lane, Political Life, p. 145.
13. Ibid., p. 160.

X

IN CONCLUSION: A PERSONAL NOTE

This thesis has attempted to create a model which would serve as an approach to the study of personality as an intervening variable acting between media exposure and political attitudes and behaviour. Indirectly, it has drawn on theories of attitude change, particularly learning theory and the consistency principle (dissonance reduction). Rather than presenting a theoretical position without an empirical foundation, an effort to establish a link with the "real world" was made by employing specific data as a basis for the concepts discussed and for a suggested methodological procedure. The next step is obviously to carry out such a procedure either by employing the data suggested here or other data specifically collected for the purpose of application within the same basic schema.

The most personally satisfying aspect of writing the thesis is to be found in the construction of the theory and particularly in the construction of the personality types. The latter appears to be an innovation in the field of media influence since previous studies have tended to concentrate on one element of the personality rather than to consider the sum of various elements. Future exploration along this line

may require more elaboration of the types but those presented here provide an adequate foundation for such considerations.

My research in the relevant areas has helped in the formulation of a more definite perception of the whole concept of environmental influence, as represented specifically by the media, and provides the impetus for further thought in the area. What are the implications of understanding the potential of media influence? If the media are part of the environment, then they may be used to change perceptions of the environment either in the sense of improving interaction with the environment or by manipulating environmental perceptions in an unfavourable direction. This is not a new notion of media influence but the consideration of the discussion of personality-environment interaction makes it an even more important one.

The aim of clarifying the vague notions which I held was the impetus for writing the thesis and in that aim, at least, it has been successful one; any further contribution it may have made has merely added to an already personally satisfying process of developing intuitive notions into empirically testable considerations.

## APPENDICES

1. Questions relating to media exposure.
2. Questions relating to background characteristics.
3. Questions measuring political behaviour.
4. Questions measuring political attitudes.
5. Personality dimension scales.



APPENDIX 1: Questions Relating to Media Exposure

1. We're interested in this interview in finding out whether people paid much attention to the election campaign this year. Take newspapers for instance -- did you read about the campaign in any newspaper? (IF YES) How much did you read newspaper articles about the election --
  1. none
  2. just once in a great while
  3. from time to time
  4. regularly, often
2. How about radio -- did you listen to any programs about the campaign on the radio? (IF YES) How many programs about the campaign did you listen to on the radio --
  1. none
  2. just one or two
  3. several
  4. a good many
3. How about magazines -- did you read about the campaign in any magazines? (IF YES) How many magazine articles about the campaign would you say you read --
4. How about television -- did you watch any programs about the campaign on television? (IF YES) How many television programs about the campaign would you say you watched --
5. Do you read about politics pretty regularly in any magazines?
  1. No
  4. Yes
6. (IF YES TO TWO OR MORE OF THE ABOVE) Of all these ways of following the campaign, which one would you say you got the most information from --
  1. newspapers
  2. radio
  3. television
  4. magazines
  5. any combination
  6. all four media equally
  7. talking to other people
  8. no exposure

APPENDIX 2: Questions Relating to Background Characteristics

## 1. Age

- |          |                |
|----------|----------------|
| 1. 18-29 | 3. 45-64       |
| 2. 30-44 | 4. 65 and over |

## 2. Education

- |                                     |                     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. none                             | 4. technical school |
| 2. primary school                   | 5. some college     |
| 3. some or graduated<br>high school | 6. college graduate |

## 3. Occupation

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. professional and<br>technical, managers | 4. skilled labour   |
| 2. clerical                                | 5. unskilled labour |
| 3. salesworkers                            | 6. farmers          |

## 4. (Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to one of these social classes: middle or working class) (IF YES) Which one class?

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. lower class   | 3. middle class |
| 2. working class | 4. upper class  |

## 5. About what do you think your total income will be this year for yourself and your immediate family?

- |                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. under \$4,999   | 3. \$10,000-14,999   |
| 2. \$5,000 - 9,999 | 4. \$15,000 and over |

## 6. Sex

- |         |           |
|---------|-----------|
| 1. male | 2. female |
|---------|-----------|

## 7. Race

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. white | 3. other |
| 2. black |          |

APPENDIX 3: Questions measuring Political Behaviour1) Voting Behaviour

1. So far as you know now, do you expect to vote in November or not?

- |            |       |
|------------|-------|
| 1. Yes     | 3. No |
| 2. Depends |       |

2. (IF PLANS TO VOTE) How do you think you will vote for President in this election?

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Democratic | 4. Other     |
| 2. Republican | 5. undecided |
| 3. Wallace    |              |

3. In talking to people about the election we find that a lot of people weren't able to vote because they weren't registered or they were sick or they just didn't have time. How about you, did you vote this time or did something keep you from voting?

- |       |        |
|-------|--------|
| 1. No | 2. Yes |
|-------|--------|

4. Who did you vote for in the election for President?

- |               |                       |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Democrat   | 4. Cleaver or Gregory |
| 2. Republican | 5. McCarthy           |
| 3. Wallace    | 6. other              |

5. How long before the election did you decide that you were going to vote the way you did?

- |                           |                                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. all along              | 4. during campaign                |
| 2. before the conventions | 5. Johnson announced bombing halt |
| 3. at time of conventions | 6. election day                   |

6. (IF DIDN'T VOTE) What was the main reason you didn't vote in this election?

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. illness        | 3. not registered |
| 2. not interested | 4. too busy, etc. |

ii) Political Participation

1. Did you vote this time, or did something keep you from voting?

1. No

2. Yes

2. During the campaign did you talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for one of the parties or candidates?

3. Did you go to any political meetings, rallies, dinners, or things like that?

4. Did you do any other work for one of the parties or candidates?

5. Did you wear a campaign button or put a campaign sticker on your car?

6. Do you belong to any political club or organization?

APPENDIX 4: Questions measuring Political Attitudesi) Civil Rights

1. In the past few years we have heard a lot about civil rights groups working to improve the position of the Negro in this country. How much real change do you think there has been in the position of the Negro in the past few years:

|                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. not much at all | 3. a lot      |
| 2. some            | 4. don't know |

2. Some say that the civil rights people have been trying to push too fast. Others feel they haven't pushed fast enough. How about you: do you think that civil rights leaders are trying to push too fast, are going too slowly, or are they moving about the right speed?

|                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. too fast    | 3. too slowly |
| 2. about right | 4. DK         |

3. During the past year or so, would you say that most of the actions Negroes have taken to get the things they want have been violent, or have most of these actions been peaceful?

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. most violent | 3. most peaceful |
| 2. depends      | 4. DK            |

4. Do you think the actions Negroes have taken, have, on the whole, helped their cause, or on the whole have hurt their cause?

|              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. most hurt | 3. most helped |
| 2. depends   | 4. DK          |

ii) Vietnam

1. How much attention have you been paying to what is going on in Vietnam?

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| 1. a good deal | 3. not much |
| 2. some        |             |

2. Do you think we did the right thing in getting into the fighting in Vietnam or should we have stayed out?

- 1. did right thing
- 2. depends

- 3. should have stayed out
- 4. DK

3. Which of the following do you think we should do now in Vietnam?

- 1. Pull out of Vietnam entirely
- 2. Keep our soldiers in Vietnam but try to end the fighting
- 3. Take a stronger stand even if it means invading North Vietnam

### iii) Position on Protest Tactics

1. How about taking part in protest meetings or marches that are permitted by the local authorities? Would you approve of doing that, disapprove, or would it depend on the circumstances?

- 1. disapprove
- 2. depends

- 3. approve

2. How about refusing to obey a law which one thinks is unjust, if the person feels so strongly about it that he is willing to go to jail rather than obey the law.

3. Suppose all other methods failed and the person decides to try to stop the government from going about its usual business with sit-ins, mass meetings, demonstrations, and things like that?

APPENDIX 5: Personality Dimension ScalesA. Politicali) Political Sensitivity

1. Which party do you think is more likely to want the federal government to help local communities provide education for our children?
  1. no difference
  2. Wallace would do what I want
  3. Democrats or Republicans
2. Which party do you think is more likely to favor a stronger government in Washington, or wouldn't there be any difference between them on this?
3. Which party do you think is more likely to want the government to help in getting doctors and medical care at low cost?
4. Which party do you think is more likely to favor the government seeing to it that each person has a job and good standard of living?
5. Which party do you think is more likely to want the government to see to it that Negroes get fair treatment in jobs?
6. Which party do you think is more likely to want the government to see to it that the white and Negro children go to the same schools?
7. Which party do you think is more likely to favor the government supporting the right of Negroes to go to any hotel or restaurant?

ii) Issue Involvement

Have you been interested enough (in each of the following issues) to favor one side over the other?

1. Some people think the government in Washington should

see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Others think that the government should just let each person get ahead on his own.

1. no interest

2. interested

2. Some people feel that if Negroes are not getting fair treatment in jobs, the government in Washington should see to it that they do. Others feel that this is not the federal government's business.
3. Some people say that the government in Washington should see to it that white and Negro children are allowed to go to the same schools. Others claim this is not the government's business.
4. As you may know, Congress passed a bill that says that Negroes should have the right to go to any hotel or restaurant they can afford, just like anybody else. Some people feel that this is something the government in Washington should support. Others feel that the government should stay out of this matter.

### iii) Political Concern

1. Generally speaking, would you say that you personally care a good deal which party wins the presidential election this fall or that you don't care very much which party wins?

1. don't care

3. care

2. depends

2. In the elections for President since you have been old enough to vote, would you say that you have voted in

1. none of them

3. all or most of them

2. some of them

3. Some people don't pay much attention to the political campaigns -- how about you, would you say that you have been (interested) in following the political campaigns



so far this year?

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. not much interested | 3. very much interested |
| 2. somewhat interested |                         |

4. Respondent's co-operation was:

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. poor or very poor | 3. good or very good |
| 2. fair              |                      |

5. Respondent's general interest in politics and public affairs seemed:

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. very or fairly low | 3. very or fairly high |
| 2. average            |                        |

6. Respondent's general level of information about politics and public affairs seemed:

iv) Political Incapability/futility

1. People like me don't have any say about what the government does.

- |          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| 1. agree | 2. disagree |
|----------|-------------|

2. Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about how the government runs things.

3. Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.

4. I don't think public officials care much what people like me think.

5. Generally speaking, those we elect to Congress in Washington lose touch with the people pretty quickly.

6. The country would be better off if we just stayed at home and did not concern ourselves with problems in other parts of the world.
7. Parties are only interested in people's votes but not in their opinions.

v) Political Cynicism

1. Do you think that people in the government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?
  1. not much
  2. some
  3. a lot
2. Would you say that the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?
  1. for benefit of all
  3. big interests
3. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right?
  1. always/most of the time
  2. some of the time
  3. none of the time
4. Do you feel that almost all of the people running the government are smart people who usually know what they are doing, or do you think that quite a lot of them don't seem to know what they are doing?
  1. know what they are doing
  3. don't know what they are doing
5. Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are a little crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked at all?
  1. hardly any
  2. not many
  3. quite a lot

vi) Political Efficacy

1. Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs:
 

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. only now and then/<br>hardly at all | 3. most of the<br>time |
| 2. some of the time                    |                        |
  
2. Over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what people think when it decides what to do?
 

|             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. not much | 3. a good deal |
| 2. some     |                |
  
3. How much do you feel that political parties help to make the government pay attention to what the public think when it decides what to do?
  
4. And how much do you feel that having elections makes the government pay attention to what the public think when it decides what to do?

B. Personal1) Personal Efficacy

1. Have you ever written to any public official giving them your opinion about something that should be done?
 

|       |        |
|-------|--------|
| 1. No | 3. Yes |
|-------|--------|
  
2. Have you ever written to the editor of a newspaper or magazine giving any political opinion?
  
3. Suppose a law were being considered by your city government that you considered very unjust or harmful.

What do you think you could do about it?

- |                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. take no action    | 3. take individual |
| 2. take group action | action             |
4. Suppose a law were being considered by the Congress in Washington that you considered very unjust or harmful. What do you think you could do about it?

ii) Traditionalism

1. Would you say you go to church:
- |                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 1. seldom or never | 3. regularly |
| 2. often           |              |
2. Here are four statements about the Bible and I'd like you to tell me which is closest to your own view?
1. The Bible was written by men who lived so long ago that it is worth very little today.
  2. The Bible was written by men inspired by God but it contains some human errors. or The Bible is a good book because it was written by wise men, but God had nothing to do with it.
  3. The Bible is God's Word and all it says is true.

iii) Personal Competence

1. Do you think it's better to plan your life a good way ahead, or would you say life is too much a matter of luck to plan ahead very far?
- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. too much luck | 3. plan ahead |
| 2. depends       |               |
2. When you do make plans ahead do you usually get to carry out things the way you expected, or do things

usually come up to make you change your plans?

- |                         |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. have to change plans | 3. things work out |
| 2. depends              |                    |
3. Have you usually felt pretty sure your life would work out the way you want it to, or have there been times when you haven't been sure about it?
- |            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| 1. unsure  | 3. pretty sure |
| 2. depends |                |
4. Some people feel they can run their lives pretty much the way they want to; others feel the problems of life are sometimes too big for them. Which one are you most like?
- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. problems too big | 3. can run own life |
| 2. depends          |                     |
5. In general, how satisfying do you find the way you're spending your life these days? Would you call it
- |                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. not very satisfying | 3. completely satisfying |
| 2. pretty satisfying   |                          |

iv) Trust in People

1. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?
- |                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. can't be too careful | 2. most people can be trusted |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
2. Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly just looking out for themselves?
- |                                 |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. just look out for themselves | 2. try to be helpful |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|

3. Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance or would they try to be fair?

1. would take advantage  
of you

2. would try to  
be fair

### PERSONALITY TYPOLOGY

The following typology summarises the positions of each type on each dimension:

| Dimension              | Alienated  | Dependent  | Integrated  |
|------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| political sensitivity  | low/medium | low/medium | high        |
| issue involvement      | low/medium | low/medium | high        |
| political concern      | low/medium | medium     | medium/high |
| political incapability | high       | medium     | medium/low  |
| political cynicism     | high       | medium     | medium/low  |
| political efficacy     | low        | medium     | medium/high |
| personal efficacy      | low        | low/medium | medium/high |
| traditionalism         | high/low   | medium     | low         |
| personal competence    | low        | low/medium | high        |
| trust in people        | low        | medium     | high        |

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Categorisation of the bibliography was based on the use made of the books and articles in one of the three major areas of the thesis rather than on their actual content.

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