

Attitudes, values, ideology

Measurement and Theory of Democratic Attitudes

Course Repository Systems

1. ReaderPlus, for required readings:
<https://www.zdv.uni-mainz.de/readerplus/>
 - ▶ Reader Number: 9419
 - ▶ registration code: support
2. Homepage, for general information, slides, reading list etc.:
<http://kai-arzheimer.com/measurement-democratic-attitudes/>
3. Jogustine, for administration and email:
<https://jogustine.uni-mainz.de/>

Requirements

- ▶ Regular attendance; you may miss not more than two classes
- ▶ *Active* participation ← you *must* do the assigned readings
- ▶ Otherwise: no credits

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- ▶ **You Must Read!**

“Modulabschlußprüfung” / “Schein”

- ▶ An essay (5 000–6 000 words)
 - ▶ Well structured
 - ▶ Properly referenced
 - ▶ Cleverly argued
- ▶ You will pick an essay title from the list that I will distribute
- ▶ More information: Course outline
- ▶ The department's universal deadline applies
- ▶ There is just one deadline
- ▶ Should you fall ill after July 1 you must provide a medical certificate to get an extension.

Basics

April 21	Attitudes, values, ideology	Feldman (2003); Bartels (2003)
April 28	Measuring attitudes	Fabrigar, Krosnick and MacDougall (2005); supp.: Krosnick and Presser (2010)

Classics

May 5	Political Culture	Almond and Verba (1965, ch. 1+2)
May 12	Political Support, old and new	Dalton (1999); Inglehart (1999)
May 19	A classical qualitative approach to democratic ideology	Lane (1962, 1–16; 82–112)
May 26	The original democracy scale and its re-application	McClosky (1964, 365–371); Chong, McClosky and Zaller (1983)

Post-1990 attitudes

June 9	Democracy and Communism in Germany	Dalton (1994)
June 16	From Russia with love	Gibson, Duch and Tedin (1992); supp.: Miller, Hesli and Reisinger (1997)
June 30	Losing my religion	Tessler (2002); Canetti-Nisim (2004)
July 7	What flavour of democrats/democracy? I	Walker (2009)
July 14	What flavour of democrats/democracy? II	Schedler and Sarsfield (2007)

Coda

July 21 Summary: Where do we go from here, and what does it matter? Fails and Pierce (2010)

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A basic premise: people’s ideas about politics matter for (democratic) systems

Dahl: Polyarchy

- ▶ Government officials elected
- ▶ Frequent, fair and free elections
- ▶ Universal suffrage for adults
- ▶ Universal right to run for public office
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So: What/how do people think/feel about their (democratic) political system?

Real People™ have attitudes, not preferences

- ▶ Most normative theories & traditional RC theories/models assume clever actors with *preferences*
 - ▶ Ranked order of end-states
 - ▶ Complete
 - ▶ Transitive ($A > B$ & $B > C \rightarrow A > C$)
 - ▶ Ideally: based on complete information
 - ▶ Stable in the medium-to-long run
 - ▶ (Moderately) *consistent*

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- ▶ Most survey research and other empirical work in political psychology/sociology assumes that people have *attitudes*
 - ▶ Incomplete
 - ▶ Affective and emotional
 - ▶ Inconsistent
 - ▶ Unstable, and only loosely related to actual behaviour
 - ▶ “A catalogue of horrors” (Zaller)

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 - ▶ emotion

Other perspectives on attitudes

- ▶ Three/four-fold perspective
 - ▶ Affect/evaluation
 - ▶ Cognition
 - ▶ Behavioural intentions
- ▶ Physiological/neuroscience perspectives & genetics
- ▶ Focus on cognition (cognitive turn)
 - ▶ Framing
 - ▶ Heuristics & shortcuts
 - ▶ *RAS (Zaller)*

Zaller: Real People™ Receive, Accept, and Sample

- ▶ People *receive* all sorts of political statements and information from elites
- ▶ They *accept* a fraction of these, conditional on their prior beliefs
- ▶ Political information consists as (potentially contradictory) “considerations” in their minds (heads are like buckets)
- ▶ When surveyed, people *sample* from these considerations and construct attitudes on the fly
- ▶ Basically plausible and compatible with much research on public opinion

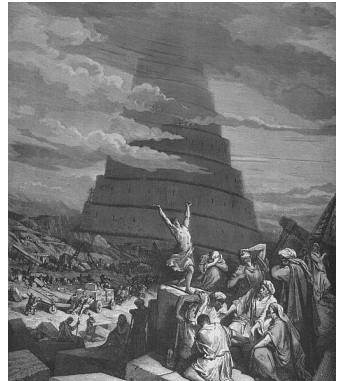
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Bottomline: The public might be fickle, but often in a very systematic way

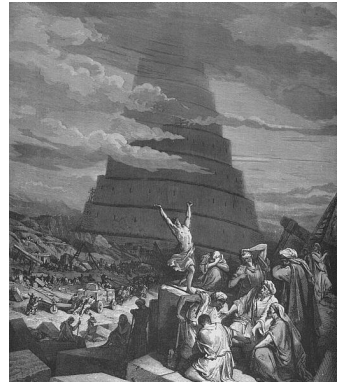
Are we in a terrible mess?

- ▶ Political attitudes often contradictory, incomplete, unstable and unrelated to behaviour
- ▶ Confusion and dispute re the attitude object (democracy)
- ▶ Are we lost? Not necessarily completely.



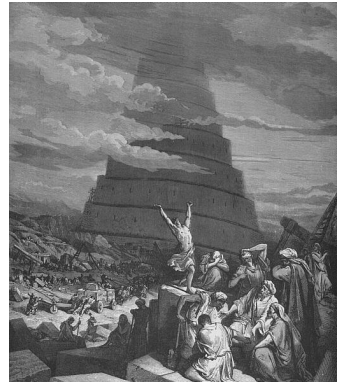
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Who wants what type of democracy? Who holds which considerations that are inconsistent?

Why not? II

- ▶ Democracy as an object is pretty fundamental, related to principles
- ▶ While attitudes on many political objects are muddled, many people rely on ideologies and values to structure their political views
- ▶ **Ideology**
 - ▶ A complex political science concept
 - ▶ In political science, a “super issue” (Lib/Cons, Left/Right)
- ▶ **Values**
 - ▶ “A a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action” (Kluckhohn, 1951, 395)
 - ▶ Very popular in political sociology from the beginning (e. g. Almond and Verba 1965)

Fun with values

- ▶ Values vs. value orientations – usually ignored in (political) psychology
- ▶ Most values universally popular
 - ▶ No variation, no explanation
 - ▶ Force respondents to chose (trade-off)
- ▶ No universally accepted set of values and instruments
 - ▶ Inglehart (1971): Still popular but problematic
 - ▶ Schwartz (1992): Up and coming, loosely coupled to political science
 - ▶ Rokeach (1968, 1973): *Political Psychology*, never widely used and half-forgotten
- ▶ But: obvious link between democracy and freedom, equality, human rights etc. worth exploring

Summary

- ▶ Democracy needs democrats
- ▶ Long tradition of exploring attitudes towards democracy
- ▶ Many problems, but: problems can be seen as opportunities
- ▶ This seminar . . .
 - ▶ Get an idea of what has been done (and was problematic) in the past
 - ▶ Input for your own scale(s) and instruments → Survey Lab Class (you can still enrol)
- ▶ Next week: measuring attitudes

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