

AGE, STATUS INCONSISTENCY AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES

by 1264

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Much contemporary sociological research is focused upon either a particular segment of society, or at society in a particular setting. One such setting is the political, and the attempt of this research is to explain and predict the political behavior of people by use of socio-economic determinants. It is hoped that by studying the political consequences of familiar phenomenon, such as stratification and aging, an understanding of political events and the social conditions which determine them will contribute knowledge to other specific areas of social analysis. It is assumed that careful analysis of political behavior will demonstrate relationships that will help explain the broader workings of society.

In this study three variables shall be considered: namely, age, status inconsistency, and political attitudes. Age and status inconsistency are here treated as the independent variables and political attitudes as the dependent variable.

Age and Political Attitudes

Traditionally, a positive relationship between age and conservatism has been assumed, i.e., the older the person the more conservative his political attitudes. Indeed, a substantial amount of research would seem to support the assumed proposition that older persons are more likely to adopt more traditional positions than are the young. "In a word, there are many substantial pieces of evidence which support the popular image of the conservative older person."¹

Stouffer, for example, found that older persons are less tolerant in their political attitudes, but that the degree of toleration was closely correlated with the amount of education received. However, even after controlling for the amount of education received, the older age groups were still less tolerant than the young age groups.² Lipset noted that a person's economic self-interest increases with age. This is so, he argues, because increasing age is associated with advancement in income, status, etc., which in turn affects his opinion formation and political behavior.³

¹Angus Campbell, "Social and Psychological Determinants of Voting Behavior," in Politics of Age, ed. by Wilma Donahue and Clark Tibbits (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), p. 94.

²Samuel A. Stouffer, Communism, Conformity and Civil Liberties (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1955), p. 94.

³Seymour M. Lipset, Political Man, Anchor Edition (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1963), pp. 283-84.

These statements by Campbell, Stouffer, and Lipset ignore differences in regard to the specific type of attitude which is being measured. Some coordination of specific attitudes is not only relevant but essential if one wishes to speak of age differences in political attitudes. In the literature on political attitudes there is a tendency for researchers to regard liberalism and conservatism as a uni-dimensional concept. The result of such uni-dimensional treatment is that a person is said to be either a liberal or a conservative regardless of the subject matter upon which the judgment was made.

Some writers have recognized a distinction between economic and non-economic political attitudes.⁴ Kelly and Chambliss suggest that a person may be a liberal on some issues and a conservative on other issues.⁵ Distinctions between the types of political attitudes which are being measured eliminates much of the confusion and apparent contradictions in the findings of researchers.

By not treating liberalism-conservatism as a uni-dimensional concept, the assumed proposition that aged individuals are conservative in their political attitudes, can be questioned. The question now becomes, "What type

⁴Ibid., p. 92.

⁵Dennis K. Kelly and William J. Chambliss, "Status Consistency and Political Attitudes," American Sociological Review, Vol. 31 (June, 1966), 375-76.

of political attitudes do the older persons give liberal responses to, and what type do they give conservative responses to?"

Campbell points out that one important area in which older people are more liberal than the young is that of governmental social welfare programs. This is an important area because it concerns a basic issue of the proper role of both the individual and the state, and the peoples' desire for governmental action towards welfare programs. The fact that older people are more liberal on welfare issues than young people is probably not an ideological position. Older people are not rejecting the values of private enterprise and limited government, in favor of the modern welfare state, rather they are responding to their economic self-interest. Campbell found in his questionnaire that items concerning government programs which promised direct economic assistance to older people particularly appealed to the older respondents. The popularity of economic assistance to older persons, among themselves, is not that older persons are poor in terms of accumulated capital or assets. One study found that families whose head was over sixty-five years of age had an average asset ownership as high as any of the younger age groups.⁶ Another study reported the median value of the asset

⁶Campbell, "Determinants of Voting Behavior," pp. 96-97.

holdings of couples sixty-five and over as \$11,180, with personal debts very small in relation to assets.⁷ But the aged have a very low income and poor future prospects for additional income. Campbell concludes that the attitudes of a particular age group is simply a reflection of each generation's economic self-interest.⁸

The aged individual would be expected to support governmental welfare policies as a reflection of his economic self-interest because the older person is, to a large extent, dependent upon the state for economic support. Even the more individualistic, secure, and economic self-sufficient aged are exposed to inflationary tendencies in the American economy. This is the case because the income of the older person is frequently in fixed dollar incomes, such as savings and pensions. Their incomes do not adjust to the fluctuating value of the dollar. The aged represent a disadvantaged group which is dependent upon the state for economic support, and they are thereby willing to endorse governmental policies which propose the redistribution of income to some extent.⁹

⁷Lenore A. Epstein and Janet H. Murray, The Aged Population of the United States, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Research Report No. 19, 1967.

⁸Campbell, "Determinants of Voting Behavior," pp. 96-97.

⁹Lipset, Political Man, pp. 284-85.

In a study of an old age political pressure group in California, it was shown that a group of approximately 70,000 aged individuals could sponsor, and have adopted, a constitutional amendment for the liberalization of the public assistance programs for the aged.¹⁰ The researchers interpreted the motivation of the aged in becoming a political pressure group to be caused in large part by their status anxiety. The status anxiety of the aged person is caused by the older person's concern with his relation to, and status in, society. The aged feel a need to be respected by society, but because of their inability to earn respect they are confronted with an ambiguous self-image. The larger society places greatest emphasis upon the achieved status of a person, but the older person is denied the possibility of achievement by this same society. The older person feels he has a right to respect because of his ascribed status of age, a right which society fails to honor. The older person shares in the belief of respect for achieved status and considers himself a failure in not being self-sufficient. This is the contradiction which causes the older person to have an ambiguous self-image: the aged person feels he should have respect, but at the same time feels that he should earn that respect. He is

¹⁰Frank Pinner, Paul Jacobs, and Philip Selznick, Old Age and Political Behavior (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), pp. 69-91.

however, unable to earn respect because of societal limitations.¹¹

Related to the need for respect is the dependence of older persons upon others for sustenance. In many cases this may be their children or a public agency. Although the older person was raised in the tradition of rugged individualism he now has the need for the welfare state.

In modern society the extended family is no longer a unit of monetary support, and children are no longer obliged to support their aged parents. Also, the parents do not want to be dependent upon their children. Placed in the situation where the aged individual is denied the opportunity of individual achievement, and where the primary and familial group no longer feels obligated to support individual members, the older person has no alternative but to accept support from the welfare state.¹²

When the pensioners organized themselves and started their drive to gain more funds from the welfare state, their action was legitimated as the American virtue of self-reliance, i.e., that through their organization they "do for themselves."¹³

Because of the status anxiety of the aged individual, and because of his economic dependence upon the welfare

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., p. 124.

state, there appears to be at least one exception to the stereotypical aged person. Older people are more liberal in their attitudes toward governmental activity in welfare programs, than younger persons.

Status Inconsistency--
Theory and Literature

Max Weber noted that the social status of a person could be derived from either: (a) mode of living, (b) education, or (c) birth or occupation.¹⁴ The important point here is not his classification, but rather that he distinguishes separate hierarchies upon which a person's status can be based. This multiple hierarchy approach deviated from the traditional inclination of social philosophers to describe the hierarchical structure of human groups as a uni-dimensional scheme, i.e. as a single hierarchy with a theoretical continuum. Sociologists since the time of Weber have reasoned that the traditional uni-dimensional scheme failed to accurately describe the complex nature of group structure. Instead they have viewed the structure of human groups as involving a number of parallel vertical hierarchies, which are usually imperfectly correlated with one another. In this conception a person has a series of positions in a series of related vertical

¹⁴Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: The Free Press, 1947), p. 428.

hierarchies. This is in place of the single position of a person in the uni-dimensional hierarchy.

Lenski contributed to the multiple hierarchy model by adding a non-vertical dimension of consistency to the parallel vertical hierarchies,¹⁵ following the lead of Emile Benoit-Smullyan. Benoit-Smullyan specifically raised the notion of equilibration among the ranks of several hierarchical dimensions held by a single person.¹⁶ In this conception individuals are compared in regard to the degree of consistency of their vertical hierarchies.¹⁷ Status consistency does not tell what a person's status is, but rather, how well established or how much in line a person's statuses are. A person can be consistently low or consistently high in his statuses, or he can be status inconsistent with a high status on one status hierarchy and a low status on another status hierarchy. Lenski conceived the degree of status consistency to range from high to low as a continuum.

In the status inconsistency model the individual reacts differently because of the stress which results because of the lack of consistency of his statuses. Lenski

¹⁵Gerhard Lenski, "Status Crystallization: A Non-Vertical Dimension of Social Status," American Sociological Review, Vol. 19 (August, 1954), 405-13.

¹⁶Emile Benoit-Smullyan, "Status, Status Types, and Status Interrelations," American Sociological Review, Vol. 9 (April, 1944), 159-60.

¹⁷Lenski, "Status Crystallization," p. 411.

describes the status inconsistent as a type of marginal man who experiences pressures by the social order not felt by the status consistent.¹⁸ Jackson conceives of the stress of the status inconsistent as a problem of conflicting expectations. The conflicting expectations lead to frustration and uncertainty for the individual, which in turn causes the psychological stress. Frustration results as a consequence of the inconsistent person being unable to satisfy the expectations of others because of the contradiction of his statuses. For example, if we have the case of a person with high income and low education interacting with a person of medium income and medium education, the status inconsistent is superior to the other on the status dimension of income. The contradiction arises because both persons wish to interact with the other as a superior. The status inconsistent person wishes to be deferred to by the other person because he has a high income, whereas his interaction partner has only medium income. The status consistent person feels that the status inconsistent person should defer to him because he has a medium educational status, compared to the low educational status of the

¹⁸What is being reported here is usually referred to as status consistency theory, however Lenski started by calling it status crystallization. Besides consistency and crystallization, other researchers have used the terms congruence and equilibration, however they are all used interchangeably by most writers. Also, the opposite meaning, but the same concept, is referred to as inconsistency, incongruence, and disequilibration.

status inconsistent. Thus, the status inconsistent person finds himself frustrated in his social interactions because of the conflicting expectations. The status consistent individual in this example is also a partner in the frustration, however this is only the case when he is interacting with persons who are status inconsistent. The status inconsistent person is liable to experience frustration in all his social relationships.¹⁹

Another cause of anxiety for the status inconsistent person is the uncertainty as to what deference he can expect of others and the deference they can expect of him. The status inconsistent person, according to Jackson, is placed in a position of psychological stress as a result of both the frustration and the uncertainty which he experiences in his interpersonal relationships.²⁰

Homans conceptualizes status inconsistency on an individual level in terms of rewards and costs. If in interaction, a person presents to another person two inconsistent stimuli in which one stimuli signals reward and the other signals punishment, the two individuals will be in doubt as to which stimuli they should honor. Because of the inconsistent stimuli there will be ambiguity as to what kind of behavior is proper in this situation. The person

¹⁹Elton F. Jackson, "Status Consistency and Symptoms of Stress," American Sociological Review, Vol. 27 (August, 1962), 469-80.

²⁰Ibid.

who is status consistent presents no such problem of ambiguity since the stimuli to behavior he presents are consistent and not conflicting. Thus, in interaction with a status consistent, there is assurance that a single kind of behavior will be rewarded by him. The status consistent person has an established status that is certain, whereas the status inconsistent person has a rather fluid and ambiguous status. Status consistency, then is a condition of social certitude.²¹

Besides the actual determination of whether a kind of behavior will be rewarded or punished, another dimension of fair exchange is important. Men feel they should always realize a fair exchange in their relations with other men. Fair exchange, or distributive justice, results when a man's profit from a social relationship is directly proportional to his investment of age, sex, seniority, skills, etc. Profit here is defined as the sum of the reward of the social interaction, less the cost. Because of the principle of fair exchange, status consistency eases the social relations of men by removing a possible point of conflict and ambiguity.²²

To show that some degree of status inconsistency exists is useful only to the extent that the finding points

²¹George C. Homans, Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1961).

²²Ibid., pp. 249-64.

up significant differences in the behavior of people. In order to test the theory of status inconsistency, concentration upon political values and attitudes will be used to point up significant differences between persons who are status consistents and those who are status inconsistent. Political research is not necessarily the only approach for testing the status inconsistency theory, and a review of the literature on this theory indicates the different areas that have used it. However, much of the research to date, utilizing status inconsistency theory, has used political data.

The political research has shown that the status inconsistent person reacts against society. The status inconsistent person, as indicated by his political attitudes and behavior, sees society as the source of his stress and conflict.

Research using status consistency theory has shown that random inconsistencies between statuses do not produce the same results as when certain other status variables are used. Two researches, which did not confirm nor support the status consistency theory, have been discounted because they did not use both achieved and ascribed status variables in determining their status inconsistent respondents. These two studies were by Kenkel²³

²³William F. Kenkel, "The Relationship Between Status Consistency and Politico-Economic Attitudes," American Sociological Review, Vol. 21 (June, 1956), 365-68.

and Kelly and Chambliss.²⁴

However, research which has employed both achieved and ascribed status variables in determining the degrees of status consistency has produced significant differences between status consistents and status inconsistent. Some researchers have used status variables from only one of the two types and have also shown differences between those who are status consistents and those who are not.²⁵

Commonly used ascribed status variables are race, ethnicity, and religion, and commonly used achieved status variables are occupation, education, and income. Lenski, while showing that status inconsistent were more liberal politically than status consistents, found that the highest per cent of liberals were found in those groups in which a low ethnic status was combined with a high achieved status. This was true whether the achieved status was income, occupation, or education.²⁶

Jackson compared the findings of Lenski with his own and found that those status combinations which were most liberal were also the least likely to report a high physiological symptom rate, and those status inconsistent

²⁴K. Dennis Kelly and William J. Chambliss, "Status Consistency and Political Attitudes," American Sociological Review, Vol. 31 (June, 1966), 375-82.

²⁵Gary B. Rush, "Status Consistency: Right-Wing Extremism," American Sociological Review, Vol. 32 (February, 1967), 86-92.

²⁶Lenski, "Status Crystallization," p. 411.

who were low as political liberals reported high physiological symptom rates. Since Lenski had noted that those status inconsistent who had a high achieved status combined with a low ethnic status were the ones with the highest per cent of liberals, Jackson interpreted his findings accordingly. He interpreted his findings as meaning that status inconsistent who have a high racial-ethnic status combined with a low occupational or educational status respond more to their stressful situation physiologically, while persons of the opposite combination, low racial-ethnic status combined with a high occupational or education status tend to respond to their situation politically.²⁷

Rush found that right-wing extremism was another possible political response to status inconsistency, and he demonstrated that status inconsistent were more right-wing extremists than were status consistent.²⁸ He pointed out that this finding is not necessarily contradictory to Lenski's research which found status inconsistent to be more politically liberal than status consistent. There is evidence which shows that both left-wing and right-wing extremists are similar in social characteristics.²⁹ Rush

²⁷Jackson, "Status Consistency and Symptoms of Stress," p. 426.

²⁸Rush, "Status Consistency: Right-Wing Extremism," p. 91.

²⁹Benjamin B. Ringer and David L. Sills, "Political Extremists in Iran," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 16 (Winter. 1952-53). 689-99.

proposes that some future research should try to ascertain which elements affect the status inconsistencies to determine whether they are left-wing or right-wing in their political response. He suggests that certain configurations of inconsistent statuses may be the crucial factor.³⁰

Lenski showed in his original study that a high achieved status combined with a low ascribed status predisposes a status inconsistent person to a left-wing, or a liberal, political position. He reported percentages of 34.8, 39.3, and 32.4 of persons with a low ascribed status combined with a high achieved status who were strongly liberal. This compared to percentages of 17.2, 19.2, and 21.9 for persons with the opposite combination of a high ascribed status combined with a low achieved status who were strongly liberal.³¹

The findings of Lenski are entirely in line with what would be expected of persons with these traits, since as Lipset states, when a man is accorded a low social evaluation he is going to try to improve his prestige position whenever he can, either through: (a) individual efforts, or (b) a collective action of some sort.³² A person with a high achieved status has one alternative open in his attempt

³⁰Rush, "Status Consistency: Right-Wing Extremism," p. 92.

³¹Lenski, "Status Crystallization," pp. 405-13.

³²Lipset, Political Man, p. 250.

to improve his ascribed status, and this is through collective action which, politically, dictates that he support liberal policies. Since he has already accomplished a high achieved status through his individual efforts, and yet this had done nothing to improve his ascribed status he is left with only the one option. Thus, collective action and a left-wing political stance would appear to be the way in which the status inconsistent can ease his status inconsistency by attempting to bring his ascribed status in line.

Once again, as with the older people, the question can be raised as to whether the status inconsistent is adopting a liberal ideology, or whether he is using collective action as the "American virtue of self-reliance," an attempt to "do for themselves." It may be that the response of the status inconsistent appears to be liberal, but the ideological driving force may be the more conservative ideology of individualism.

Lenski found those status inconsistencies with the characteristics of high ascribed status and low achieved status to be much lower in the percentage of respondents who were strongly liberal, as compared to other status inconsistency types.³³ Jackson found that persons of high ascribed and low achieved status reported a much higher symptom level than status inconsistent types of the reverse

³³Lenski, "Status Crystallization," p. 411.

combination. The persons of high ascribed and low achieved status reported symptom levels of 41 per cent and 37 per cent as compared to 15 per cent and 15 per cent for the high achieved and low ascribed individuals.³⁴

Rush, although he did not include an ascribed status variable in his research, concluded that low education was perhaps a salient factor in predisposing a conservative attitude.³⁵ Education may indeed be the important factor in this conception. Persons who have a high achieved status and a low ascribed status are necessarily high in education, and those persons who have a high ascribed status and low achieved status are likewise necessarily low in education. On education alone persons of high education would be expected to be more liberal politically than persons of low education. Jackson points out that high education may produce a tendency for a person to see his status problems in their social context. This reinforces his tendency to approve of changes in the social system.³⁶ The person who is a status inconsistent and has a low educational achievement, rather than recognizing the social causes of his frustration, would be more likely to search

³⁴Jackson, "Status Consistency and Symptoms of Stress," p. 476.

³⁵Rush, "Status Consistency: Right-Wing Extremism," p. 92.

³⁶Jackson, "Status Consistency and Symptoms of Stress," p. 476.

for the simplistic and the highly structured answers to the problems and the frustrations which arise from his status inconsistency. Because of this, status inconsistent might also strike out at, and hold prejudice against, other disadvantaged and depressed groups. Simplistic and highly structured answers would be offered by right-wing policies, according to Rush.³⁷ An issue raised earlier was whether liberalism-conservatism can be treated as an uni-dimensional concept, or whether the dichotomy depends upon the issues used.

In Lenski's study, political attitudes of status inconsistent were measured only on issues of economic liberalism, rather than on a whole range of attitudes on different subjects. By using an economic liberalism scale he found that status inconsistent were more liberal than status consistent.³⁸

Lipset noted that there is evidence that persons who are status inconsistent are prone to be involved in radical right-wing movements. However, in this instance Lipset is not concerned with issues of economic liberalism, but of civil liberties issues.³⁹ Kelly and Chambliss found

³⁷Rush, "Status Consistency: Right-Wing Extremism," p. 92.

³⁸Lenski, "Status Crystallization," pp. 405-13.

³⁹Seymour M. Lipset, The Radical Right, ed. by Daniel Bell (New York: The Free Press), pp. 333-34.

that on political issues of varying nature, not limited to welfare issues, the status inconsistent were slightly more conservative on civil rights and civil liberties, while being more liberal on welfare issues.⁴⁰

On issues of social justice, Allport noted that the evidence is overwhelming that frustrations may cause out-group hostility, as a displacement of aggression. He also states that when a person is suffering from anxiety, as a result of having failed to win in his encounter with life, he develops a generalized inadequacy. Because of the fear of his own ineffectiveness he grows suspicious of other people. Although the anxiety is partially repressed, it is also given a displaced outlet upon socially sanctioned sources of fear, e.g. communists. In addition, there is considerable evidence that such factors as downward mobility, depression, and a general economic dissatisfaction are all positively correlated with prejudice. Also, men who fear that their status is not secure, or uncertain, tend to reflect this by prejudice. Insecure persons can derive self-esteem by turning their attention to unfavored out-groups. "Out-groups as status builders, have the special advantage of being near at hand, visible, and occupying a lower position by common agreement, thus providing social support for one's own sense of status enhancement."⁴¹ Many

⁴⁰Kelly and Chambliss, "Status Consistency and Political Attitudes," p. 382.

⁴¹Gordon W. Allport, The Nature of Prejudice, Anchor

of the characteristics associated with prejudice are characteristics presumed to be held by status inconsistent persons. The reasoning is that the status inconsistency of a person causes the frustration and uncertainty of status which in turn would induce prejudice in him.

According to the theory of status equilibration, as presented by Benoit-Smullyan, there is a tendency for the different types of statuses to become equilibrated, or to reach a common level. This occurs as a result of what he calls status conversion. Status conversion is a social process whereby a high status position on one hierarchy can be used to convert lower status positions on another hierarchy to a high status position. An example of the status conversion process would be the ability of the nouveaux riches to purchase manifestations of prestige such as titles, badges, offices, etc. Because of the effect of status conversion there tends to exist status equilibration, or a high correlation of a person's status on the different status hierarchies.⁴²

The status conversion process is applicable only to achievable statuses since the status conversion process cannot be applied to ascribed status, by the very nature of ascribed statuses. The effect of this would be to

Book (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., 1958), p. 349.

⁴²Benoit-Smullyan, "Status, Status Types, and Status Interrelations," pp. 159-60.

decrease the number of persons with the characteristics of high ascribed status and low achieved status. It would be possible for these persons to utilize the status conversion process.

At the same time that Lenski was researching the concept of status crystallization, Landecker working jointly on the same project as Lenski, attempted to determine under what conditions high crystallization was more likely to occur. He hypothesized that status crystallization is strongest at the two extremes of the stratification system. He reasoned that persons who are highest in one hierarchy will have the power to monopolize the highest positions on the other hierarchies, thereby creating high crystallization. Conversely, persons at the bottom of one hierarchy are handicapped from gaining access to higher positions in other hierarchies. The hypothesis that crystallization would be strongest at the highest level was supported by the fact that class crystallization showed a higher score at the top status level than at any other level. The other hypothesis, that those at the bottom of a hierarchy would be strongest in crystallization was not confirmed.⁴³

Fenkel, Monderer, and Hartley tested the idea that a person will show greater status strivings in the reference groups in which he has low status, rather than in groups

⁴³Werner S. Landecker, "Class Crystallization and Its Urban Pattern," Social Research, Vol. 27, 308-20.

where he has high status, i.e., the measures of status would therefore tend to meet at a common level. In this attempt to illustrate the dynamics of equilibration, the findings upheld the hypothesis.⁴⁴

Exline and Ziller experimentally varied the status congruence of the individuals in small discussion groups on the dimensions of voting power and task ability. Their findings indicated that congruent groups were more congenial and showed greater discussion agreement than incongruent groups. The authors further suggested that if their situation had permitted it, there was an indication that the incongruent groups would have changed towards a congruent status structure.⁴⁵

Lenski tested to see the relationship between status inconsistency and the tendencies toward social isolation and found that the status inconsistent persons were less likely to have non-business friends and less likely to belong to voluntary associations.⁴⁶

⁴⁴G. H. Fenkel, J. H. Monderer, and E. L. Hartley, "Subjective Status and the Equilibration Hypothesis," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, Vol. 46 (Oct., 1951), 476-79.

⁴⁵R. K. Exline and R. C. Ziller, "Status Congruency and Interpersonal Conflict in Decision-Making Groups," Human Relations, Vol. 12 (April, 1959), 147-62.

⁴⁶G. E. Lenski, "Social Participation and Status Crystallization," American Sociological Review, Vol. 21 (August, 1956), 458-64.

Gibbs and Martin found that there was a relationship between status inconsistency and the propensity toward suicide, this being interpreted as another form of social isolation or withdrawal.⁴⁷

Goffman found that status inconsistencies were more likely to prefer changes in the power distribution within society, than were persons who were status consistent.⁴⁸

Adams, in one of the earliest works in status inconsistency, demonstrated the varying effectiveness of bomber crews according to the degrees of status consistency. He found that the groups which were status congruent were more effective than the groups which were incongruent. He also found, however, that groups which were not as highly congruent were more effective than the groups which were the most congruent.⁴⁹

Homans conducted a study on clerical workers in which he showed the importance of congruence of pay, responsibility, etc., in securing the satisfaction of the worker.⁵⁰ Along the same line, Zalesznik used the status

⁴⁷J. P. Gibbs and W. T. Martin, "Status Integration and Suicide," American Sociological Review, Vol. 23 (April, 1958), 140-47.

⁴⁸Irwin W. Goffman, "Status Consistency and Preference for Change in Power Distribution," American Sociological Review, 22 (June, 1957), 275-88.

⁴⁹S. Adams, "Status Congruency as a Variable in Small Group Performance," Social Forces, Vol. 32 (October, 1953), 16-22.

⁵⁰G. C. Homans, "Status Among Clerical Workers," Human Organization, Vol. 12 (January, 1953), 5-10.

congruence theory in studying the motivations and satisfactions of workers.⁵¹

In reviewing the literature of status consistency it is common to skip back and forth between two quite separate levels of analysis. The works of Lenski, Goffman, Landecker, and Gibbs and Martin are individual analyses in the sense that they are studying the status inconsistencies of a particular person and explaining his behavior in terms of his relation to society as a whole. Another set of studies, such as those by Homans, Adams, and Exline and Ziller, are not studying the status inconsistency of persons, but the incongruence which results because of group structures. For example, Adams in his study of the effectiveness of bomber crews, was not studying the status consistency of each member of a bomber crew. Instead he was studying the status congruence of the group as a whole. In other words, how congruent in status the members of a bomber crew were with each other.⁵²

Hypotheses

Age and political attitudes.--The aged individual is said to react politically the way that he does because of

⁵¹A. Zalesznik, C. R. Christensen, and F. S. Roethlisberger, The Motivation, Productivity, and Satisfaction of Workers (Boston: Harvard Un. Press, 1958), pp. 48-66.

⁵²Adams, "Status Congruency."

his status anxiety, the frustration caused by his desire for respect. His claim for respect has been decreased because of his disadvantaged position in society. The older person would be expected to hold liberal attitudes on welfare questions because it reflects his economic self-interest, and because he views the development of the welfare state as a way of maintaining independence and self-respect.

1. Older persons will be more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare programs of economic assistance, than younger persons.

On the other hand, the older person would be expected to hold conservative attitudes on issues of social justice because of his tradition-oriented position, and because he has vested interest in the on-going social system due to his capital accumulation. He would also be expected to be less liberal because he has not been exposed to the liberalization tendency of higher education, at least not to the same degree as younger generations.

2. Older persons will be less liberal on attitude questions which concern issues of social justice, than younger persons.

Status inconsistency and political attitudes.--The assumption is that the status inconsistent person reacts the way that he does because of the frustrations and the uncertainty that he must experience in his interpersonal

relations. The frustration and uncertainty are a result of the ambiguity of his status. He reacts liberally to welfare-type questions because of his desire to relieve his frustration by means of collective action. He hopes to be able to improve his position by supporting policies which propose to redistribute some of the scarce resources of society.

3. Status inconsistent will be more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare programs of economic assistance, than status consistent.

On other issues, however, the status inconsistent person is likely to react less liberally than status consistent because his frustration leads him to strike out at other depressed and disadvantaged groups, or at anyone viewed as an enemy. This, presumably, would be an attempt to displace his frustrations upon those groups which society already defines as inferior. It would then be expected that the status inconsistent individual would hold more conservative attitudes on issues of social justice as a manifestation of a less tolerant and perhaps a more rigid defense against society.

4. Status inconsistent will be less liberal on attitude questions which concern issues of social justice, than status consistent.

Age, status inconsistency, and political attitudes.--

The individuals who are status inconsistent and are also aged, are expected to experience greater pressures than will persons who are only either status inconsistent or aged. This group of status inconsistent aged persons would be exposed to both the status anxiety of the aged and the frustration and the uncertainties of the status inconsistencies. Because of this the aged status inconsistencies would be expected to hold more liberal attitudes on welfare-type questions, than either persons who are only aged or only status inconsistent. This presumes an additive effect because of the double exposure to the stresses and strains of the two characteristics.

5. Of the older persons, the status inconsistencies will be more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare questions of economic assistance, than the status consistents.

6. Of the status inconsistencies, the older persons will be more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare programs of economic assistance, than younger status inconsistencies.

Conversely, the group of aged status inconsistencies, because of the same additive effect, would be expected to be more conservative on the issues of social justice. This group would be exposed to the conservative producing effects of the tradition orientation of the aged and the frustrations of the status inconsistent person.

7. Of the older persons, the status inconsistent will be less liberal on attitude questions which concern issues of social justice, than status consistent.

8. Of the status inconsistent, the older persons will be less liberal on attitude questions which concern issues of social justice, than younger status inconsistent.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

Source of Data

The aging and status inconsistency concepts were tested by a secondary analysis of a national sample collection in the Fall of 1960. The sample was the 1960 Election Study conducted by the University of Michigan, Survey Research Center Study 440. The data were made available through the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research.

Sample

The sample was based on a population selected for a longitudinal panel study begun in 1956. The 1956 original sample was a simple random cross-section sample of the United States. The original sample of 1,763 respondents in 1956 suffered a mortality of close to 100 persons by 1960, in addition to a small number of other original respondents who were eliminated because of institutionalization, advanced senility, etc. Out of a possible 1,600 remaining respondents, more than 1,100 were interviewed in 1960. The 1960 sample also had a new cross-section sample of the nation added since the 1956 sample was no longer truly representative of the nation because of the aging of the

sample. Of the persons who were reinterviewed from the 1956 study, there was almost no sign of deviation from the social, economic, and political characteristics of the entire 1956 sample. As the result, the 1960 election study was a weighted sample of 1,954 respondents.⁵³ When the data were transferred from cards to a tape disc at the Kansas State University Computing Center, one respondent was mechanically lost, so the sample now contains 1,953 respondents.

Concepts and Definitions

Social status.--In order to use the concept of status inconsistency it is necessary to operationally define the social status variables which were used.

At least one status variable from each nexus of achieved and ascribed statuses was needed. The possible ascribed statuses which could be used were race, religion, and ethnic background. The achievable statuses available from our data were occupation, education, and income.

Religion was eliminated as a variable,⁵⁴ so that race and ethnicity were used as the ascribed variables. In order to use race and ethnicity as rank systems it is

⁵³Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, Elections and the Political Order (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1966), p. 80.

⁵⁴Religion is not a good measure to use, because if ethnicity is used it tends to duplicate or overshadow religion.

necessary to assume that the racial or ethnic, or racial-ethnic ordinal position is an independent basis of evaluation in a society. This means that there would exist a high degree of concensus of the ranking system in all segments of the society, such as the North-Hatt scale does for occupations. If this were the case then persons of low status would agree that they have low status. However, even if there is a considerable agreement among persons of a group to which they do not belong, then a rank system could still be said to exist.⁵⁵

The most developed scale of racial-ethnic status to date is one by Bogardus. He combines the two variables of race and ethnicity into what he terms a social distance scale.⁵⁶ The respondents to the social distance scale were asked to which step on the following scale they would admit the members of each of thirty racial and ethnic groups:

1. to close kinship by marriage,
2. to my club as personal chums,
3. to my street as neighbors,
4. to employment in my occupation,
5. to citizenship in my country,
6. as visitors only to my country,
7. would exclude from my country.

Using this scale to rank racial and ethnic groups, from most favorable to least favorable, three nationwide

⁵⁵Elton F. Jackson and Richard F. Curtis, Methodology in Social Research, ed. by Hubert M. Blalock and Ana B. Blalock (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), pp. 125-26.

⁵⁶Thomas E. Lasswell, Class and Stratum (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1965), pp. 159-61.

surveys were conducted in 1926, 1946, and 1956. Throughout the period of the three surveys there were some changes in the rank order of the thirty racial and ethnic groups, however a definite partial ordering was discovered. The highest ranking ten groups, the Americans (U.S., white), Canadians, English, Irish, French, Swedish, Scots, Germans, Hollanders, and Norwegians remained the top ten throughout the entire thirty year period of the surveys. These ten groups were exclusively of Northern and Western Europeans, and are generally thought of as Caucasian.

The second highest ranking group of ten also remained the same for all the surveys, except for an interchange of Russian and Japanese-Americans. The Japanese-Americans were placed in the second ranking ten in 1956 while the Russians were placed in the third and lowest ranking group in 1956. Besides the Japanese-Americans the other racial and ethnic groups in the middle ranking ten were the Finns, Italians, Poles, Spanish, Greeks, Jews, Czechs, Armenians, and Indians (Americans).

The third and lowest ranking group of ten racial and ethnic groups also remained the same for the period of the surveys, except for the previously mentioned interchange which lowered the Russians to the lowest group. Besides the Russians, the lowest rank contains the Filipinos, Mexican-Americans, Turks, Chinese, Japanese, Negroes, Mexicans, Indians (from India), and Koreans. This last

category contains nearly all of what is usually considered the colored or non-white populations.⁵⁷

Several studies have supported the use of the social distance scale as a prestige scale of racial and ethnic groups. Thurstone found the same pattern as Bogardus in studying the likes and dislikes of middle-western college students. Similar support was provided by other studies conducted by Guilford, Hartley, Bogardus, and Zeligs and Hendrickson.⁵⁸

However, to use the social distance scale as the basis for the racial-ethnic rankings it is assumed that social intimacy (or distance) is closely related to the prestige rank of a group. When the alternatives are considered for the construction of a racial-ethnic scale, this assumption appeared to be worth the risk. The risk being that social distance, as measured by Bogardus, and racial-ethnic rank for which it is used here, are not identical, or nearly so. Lenski utilized a rating scale which he constructed by testing the racial and ethnic attitudes of students enrolled in introductory sociology courses.⁵⁹ This alternative would not be feasible if the results of

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 343.

⁵⁸G. E. Simpson and J. M. Yinger, Racial and Cultural Minorities (New York: Harpers and Brothers, 1953), pp. 136-37.

⁵⁹Lenski, "Status Crystallization," pp. 405-13.

the test were to be applied to a national sample. As a result the social distance scale was used.

For the achieved statuses the available choices are occupation, education, and income. Although Lenski used income as one of his status variables in his original study,⁶⁰ he later reported that there were strong indications that the variable income contributed little to the status inconsistency theory when the other variables of education, occupation, and racial-ethnic background were controlled for.⁶¹

Education was one of the achieved statuses used. It did not pose much of a problem in making it quantitative because amount of formal education is in terms of years of attendance. The actual assignment of rank followed the general divisions set by Jackson.⁶² Education was divided into three ranks, low, middle, and high. The lowest rank was for persons with no formal schooling to those persons who had completed eight years of schooling. The middle rank included those persons who had completed from nine to

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Jackson, "Status Consistency and Symptoms of Stress," p. 471, N. Another problem with using income as a variable in this particular study was that for our sample, income was reported only as the total income for a respondent and his immediate family. This of course would present quite a variety of circumstances under which income was reported for a family; sons working but living at home, grandparents living with one of their children and receiving social security benefits, etc.

⁶²Ibid.

twelve years of formal schooling, also including those persons who had taken non-college schooling beyond their formal schooling. The highest rank contained those persons who had attended college for any length of time.

Occupation, the other achieved status used, was also divided into three ranks. This was identical to the method used by Jackson.⁶³ The highest occupational rank included the professional and the business occupations. The middle rank was comprised of all of the clerical and skilled occupation workers. The lowest rank included the semi-skilled and unskilled and the service workers. Our sample was coded with the three digit codes from the Department of Commerce, Census of Occupations, and because of this it was possible to obtain rather precise occupation ratings for each respondent. For females who were not the heads of their households, the occupational status was determined by the occupation of the head of their household. For persons who were retired or unemployed at the time of the survey, their normal occupation was used.

Status consistency.--The status variables used in this study were occupation, education, and racial-ethnic background, the first two being the achieved variables and the last two the ascribed variable.

In the definition of each status variable they were divided into three ranks. With this ranking device it was

⁶³Ibid.

possible to assign each individual a score for each status variable. This has certain advantages over the total status consistency score method used by Lenski⁶⁴ in that it is possible to discern different types of status inconsistencies. Also this method actually discerns those persons who are status inconsistent and those who are not, thus eliminating the arbitrary cutting point necessary in the Lenski method.

The method used here yields twenty-seven possible status combinations. These twenty-seven combinations were then divided into four status consistency-inconsistency types, again following the method of Jackson.⁶⁵ These four status types are shown in Table 1. Each respondent is given a three number status consistency-inconsistency score with each number indicating a status rank for one of the status variable used. For example, the first number is made to indicate racial-ethnic rank, the second number a person's educational rank, and the third number the respondent's occupational rank. If we have a respondent with a status inconsistency score of 1-2-3 then our example has a high racial-ethnic status, a middle educational rank, and a low occupational rank. The status inconsistent is one who has a 1 rank combined with a 3 rank.

⁶⁴Lenski, "Status Crystallization," pp. 405-13.

⁶⁵Jackson, "Status Consistency and Symptoms of Stress," p. 471.

TABLE 1

STATUS CONSISTENCY-INCONSISTENCY TYPES

Status Consistents		Status Inconsistent	
A	B	C	D
1-1-1	1-1-2	1-2-3	1-1-3
2-2-2	1-2-1	1-3-2	1-3-1
3-3-3	1-2-2	2-1-3	1-3-3
	2-1-1	2-3-1	3-1-1
	2-1-2	3-1-2	3-1-3
	2-2-1	3-2-1	3-3-1
	2-2-3		
	2-3-2		
	2-3-3		
	3-2-2		
	3-2-3		
	3-3-2		

Liberalism-conservatism.--Liberalism-conservatism was not treated as a uni-dimensional phenomenon since persons may be liberal on some issues and conservative on others. From the national sample survey there are four attitude items which were appropriate for this study. They were: (a) the government in Washington ought to see to it that everybody who wants to work can find a job, (b) the government ought to help people get doctors and hospital care at low cost, (c) the government in Washington should stay out of the question of whether white and colored children go to the same school, and (d) if Negroes are not getting fair treatment in jobs and housing, the government should see to it that they do. Each of these attitude items were answered by Likert-type scales: (1) agree strongly, (2) agree but not very strongly, (3) not sure; it

depends, (4) disagree but not very strongly, and (5) disagree strongly.

These items were divided between (a) those attitude items which concern either an increase or a decrease in governmental economic welfare policy, and (b) those which deal with social justice issues, in this case, civil rights and school desegregation. Of the four attitude items which were available, two were welfare items and two were social justice items. The welfare items are those which concern the government's role in seeing that everyone is employed and in seeing that people get medical care at a low cost. The social justice issues are those which concern government's role in seeing that Negroes get fair treatment, and in school integration.

The liberal responses were those which approved of an extension of governmental activity in social and economic issues.

Age.--When testing for age differences the older persons will be those who were sixty years of age and older at the time the survey was taken. The respondents were divided into three age groups: youngest, 20-39 years old; middle, 40-59 years old; and oldest, 60 years old and over.

Test statistic.--The test statistic which will be used in this research is the gamma statistic. Gamma is a

nonparametric statistic that may be used with variables that are at least ordinal measures. It measures the strength of the relationship between two variables.

The test of significance for the gamma will be the z distribution. The z distribution will determine, at a stated level of probability, whether the association found by gamma exists in the population from which the sample was drawn and whether it is reliable.⁶⁶ The .05 level of significance will be used in this research as a compromise between the choice of committing a type I and a type II error.⁶⁷

Status unknowns.--When the respondents were divided into the four predetermined categories of status consistents and status inconsistent, there were 102 respondents who were impossible to place as to their degree of status consistency because of lack of information, i.e., one or more of the essential status variables were missing.

Sex.--The original sample contained 882 males and 1,067 females. However, when the 102 status unknowns were

⁶⁶Robert S. Weiss, Statistics in Social Research (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1968), pp. 201-05; and Matilda White Riley, Sociological Research: Exercises and Manuel (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1963), pp. 116-18 and 141-43.

⁶⁷James K. Skipper, Anthony L. Guenther, and Gilbert Nass, "The Sacredness of '.05': A Note Concerning the Uses of Statistical Levels of Significance in Social Science," The American Sociologist, II (Feb., 1967), 16-18; and Hubert Blalock, Jr., Social Statistics (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), pp. 122-25.

eliminated there were 876 males and 975 females. There was found to be little difference in the proportion of status consistents and status inconsistent by sex. Table 2 shows the groupings of status consistents and status inconsistent by sex. Although it might be argued that sex could be used as a status variable, this has not been taken into account because the occupational rank of a woman was assigned by the occupation of her husband, if she were married.

TABLE 2
STATUS CONSISTENTS AND STATUS
INCONSISTENTS BY SEX

	Males	Females	Total
Status Consistents	46% (552)	54% (637)	100% (1,189)
Status Inconsistent	49% (324)	51% (338)	100% (662)
Total N	876	975	1,851

Table 3 gives the distribution of males and females by the age groups of young and old. As can be seen, there is little difference between the two age groups, although there is a slightly larger percentage of female respondents in the younger age category than in the older one.

TABLE 3
AGE GROUPS BY SEX

Age	Males	Females	Total
20-49	44% (506)	56% (651)	100% (1,157)
50+	47% (376)	53% (416)	100% (792)
Total N	882	1,067	1,949

CHAPTER III

OLD AGE AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES

It has been noted that there is evidence which supports the stereotyped image of the older person as a political conservative. It has been suggested however that liberalism and conservatism should not be treated as a uni-dimensional concept since a person may be liberal on some political issues and conservative on other issues. Accordingly, the political attitude items used in this research have been divided between those which concern governmental activity on welfare questions of economic assistance and those which concern issues of social justice.

It has been assumed that older persons would be expected to support governmental programs of economic assistance because they are dependent upon the state for economic support to a larger extent. In addition, older persons feel a need for respect and self-reliance. They interpret the drive to improve their economic position through increased governmental assistance as the American virtue of self-reliance.

The first hypothesis states that older persons will be more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare issues of economic assistance,

than younger persons. Table 4 shows the liberal and the conservative responses to the first question which deals with governmental activity on welfare programs.

TABLE 4

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO QUESTION
"THE GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON OUGHT TO SEE
TO IT THAT EVERYBODY WHO WANTS TO WORK
CAN FIND A JOB" BY AGE GROUPS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	30% (176)	70% (414)	100% (590)
40-59	32% (209)	68% (439)	100% (643)
60+	20% (69)	80% (271)	100% (340)
Total N	454	1,124	1,578
G = .11			
Z = 1.60 $p \geq .05$			

On this question there is only a weak relationship between the degree of liberalism and age, and this relationship is not reliable at the .05 level. The difference by age is not one of increasing liberalism with advancing age, but rather an increase in liberalism after the age of sixty. There is little difference between the proportion of persons in the two younger age groups who are conservative and liberal. However, for those persons over sixty years of age there is nearly a 10 per cent rise in the percentage of persons who are liberal on this particular question.

Table 4 does not yield evidence which would support an aging interpretation, i.e., that as people age their political attitudes become more liberal or conservative. Rather, this table indicates that all three age groups are heavily liberal on this question.

Table 5 shows the results of the second question which deals with governmental activity on welfare programs. Once again there was essentially no difference in the

TABLE 5

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO QUESTION
"THE GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO HELP PEOPLE GET
DOCTORS AND HOSPITAL CARE AT LOW
COST" BY AGE GROUPS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	28% (158)	72% (397)	100% (555)
40-59	28% (179)	72% (451)	100% (630)
60+	12% (41)	88% (302)	100% (343)
Total N	378	1,150	1,528
G = .24			
Z = 3.35	p<.05		

proportion of the respondents in the youngest and middle age groups who gave liberal responses to the question. However, those respondents over sixty years of age show more than a fourteen per cent increase in the proportion who recorded liberal responses, over the other two age

groups. Two things are worthy of note. First, there is essentially no difference in the proportion of persons who are liberal and conservative between the age group of 20-39 and the age group 40-59. Second, there is a great increase in the proportion of persons who gave liberal responses in the age group of 60+.

As with the first question, as shown in Table 4, there is an indication of but a weak relationship between age and liberalism. This question dealt with the government's role in getting low cost medical care for people. This service would be directly relevant to older people who are in need of medical services, more so than younger age groups. The older people are also least able to afford the medical expenses which they incur.

Both of the questions which deal with the government's role in welfare programs has shown that older people are proportionately more liberal than younger age groups. Both of the questions have shown that there is very little difference between the two younger age groups in the proportion of their liberal and conservative responses.

The evidence does support the acceptance of the hypothesis that older persons are more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare issues of economic assistance, than younger persons. This does not mean that an aging phenomena has been discovered, i.e. that liberalism increases with age. But what is

significant is that the oldest age group, those sixty years of age or older, have been shown to be more liberal on both of the welfare questions, than the two younger age groups. On both questions there was no difference in the proportion of persons who were liberal between the two younger age groups. There appears to be no difference between the age group of 20-39 years of age, and the age group 40-59 years of age. The theoretical orientation led to the assumption that the oldest age group would be more liberal on these questions. Because of their disadvantaged position in society the older people would be more in favor of the redistribution of some of the resources of society. The fact that a strong relationship between liberalism and age was not found on these two questions does not invalidate the general conclusion. If it had been postulated that the aging process would determine attitudinal changes, then a relationship between age and liberalism would not have been warranted. However, the assumption made was that society impinges upon the very old, and the theory did not advocate an additive attitudinal change with age. In other words, nowhere was it stated that the attitude change would be a progressive age-related phenomena. Rather, the evidence points up an abrupt and discrete occurrence, the insecurity of the aged, and this occurs at a more or less fixed time in the life-cycle, not as a slowly progressive or continuously developing phenomena. To reject the data as not

supporting the hypothesis on the grounds that a strong relationship was not found between age and liberalism, would be to ignore the theoretical orientation as presented in Chapter I.

It was desirable to include a breakdown by three age groups in order to ascertain whether or not a progressive or additive age effect was operating. If an additive or progressive pattern had been discovered, the findings would have exceeded the theoretical orientation as given. Also, if a progressive age-related attitude change were present it would have cast some doubt on the validity of the theoretical orientation. The theoretical orientation presented a picture of the social structure impinging upon a particular segment of an age-graded society, solely because of the age of the group. In a study of the American age-grade system, Neugarten and Peterson found that adults were divided into four periods of life, by themselves. The last of these periods was "old age," defined as those over sixty years of age.⁶⁸ The point to be stressed here is that the age-grade structure points up a discernable disconnectiveness between the different life stages.

So, while there was found very little relationship between liberalism and age, there were found to be changes

⁶⁸Bernice L. Neugarten and Warren A. Peterson, "A Study of the American Age-Grade System," Fourth Congress of the International Association of Gerontology, Merano (Bolzano) Italy, Vol. III (July 14-19, 1957), 497-502.

in the attitudes of the aged on the two welfare questions. The older people tended to be more liberal on the two welfare questions, than either of the two younger age categories. The two younger age categories were nearly identical in their responses to both of the questions. This indicated that there was not a progressive age-related attitudinal change, but the change occurred only at the onset of old age. Old age was the disjunctive circumstance.

Older people have been shown to be more conservative in their political attitudes, than younger persons, in several researches. This has been interpreted as meaning that older persons have more of a vested interest in the present social system. They have made advancement in income, status, etc. throughout their life and have become accustomed to the present system.

The second hypothesis states that older persons will be less liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on issues of social justice, than younger persons. The first question which tested this hypothesis concerned the government's activity in assuring fair treatment for the Negro. The data are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 indicates that there is no significant relationship between age groups and political attitudes on this question. It had been predicted that the oldest age group would be the most conservative. This however is not

the case. The most conservative age group is the youngest one, those 20-39 years of age. The most liberal group, according to the data, is the middle age group, those 40-59 years of age.

The important finding from Table 6 is that there is no relationship between age and the degree of liberalism on this particular question.

TABLE 6

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION
"IF NEGROES ARE NOT GETTING FAIR TREATMENT IN
JOBS AND HOUSING, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD
SEE THAT THEY DO" BY AGE GROUPS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	24% (148)	76% (459)	100% (607)
40-59	20% (129)	80% (513)	100% (642)
60+	22% (72)	78% (254)	100% (326)
Total N	349	1,226	1,575
G = .06			
Z = 0.82	p $\geq$.05		

The second question on which hypothesis 2 was tested was, "The government in Washington should stay out of the question of whether white and colored children go to the same school."

Unlike the first question as presented in Table 6, there are differences by age groups on this question. The

gamma score indicates that there is a negative relationship between age and liberalism. Table 7 gives the data for this question. The important point here is not the increasing conservatism with age, but rather the large proportion of persons in the youngest age group who gave liberal responses to the question. The age group of 20-39

TABLE 7

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON SHOULD STAY OUT OF THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WHITE AND COLORED CHILDREN GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL" BY AGE GROUPS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	38% (224)	62% (365)	100% (589)
40-59	54% (349)	46% (299)	100% (648)
60+	57% (174)	43% (132)	100% (306)
Total N	747	796	1,543
G = -.26			
Z = -4.25	p < .05		

years of age reported more than a 15 per cent increase in the proportion of persons who were liberal on the question of school integration. The two older age groups were not nearly so liberal. Neither was there much difference between the two oldest age groups. The middle age group was slightly more liberal than the oldest age group, but there was only a 3 per cent difference between the two.

Even though the relationship in Table 7 is in the predicted direction, the evidence does not support the hypothesis, in other words the relationship is theoretically insignificant. It was expected that those over sixty years of age would be less liberal on this question, than the two younger age groups. Again, it was not anticipated that this would be a progressive effect with age. Rather, it was expected that the oldest age group would be less liberal, not because of a progressive effect of aging, but because of the social situation of the aged. The evidence here suggests that there indeed are age-related differences on this particular question, however the findings do not accommodate the theoretical orientation. The youngest age group is much more liberal on this question than are either of the two oldest age groups. But there is very little difference between the two older groups. The theoretical orientation would have led us to believe that the oldest age group would be significantly less liberal than the other age groups. This clearly is not the case.

So, while the older age groups are less liberal on the question, it is the youngest age group that demonstrates a sharp deviation from the other groups. It would appear that there are forces working, historical or life-cyclical, which predispose the youngest age group to be more liberal on this issue of social justice.

The two different attitude questions used to test hypothesis 2 have produced somewhat different results. On the attitude item, "If Negroes are not getting fair treatment in jobs and housing, the government should see to it that they do," the youngest age group, those between the ages of 20-39 years old, were the least liberal of the three age groups. The oldest age group was between the other two groups in the proportion of persons who gave liberal responses. This certainly did not support the prediction that older persons will be less liberal than younger persons. According to this attitude question the evidence did not support the hypothesis.

On the second question used to test hypothesis 2, the youngest age group was the most liberal and the oldest age group was the least liberal. This finding also did not support the hypothesis. The difference was not the increased conservatism of the older person, but rather the large increase in the proportion of younger persons who were liberal on the question of school integration.

There appears to be a difference in the type of question that is being asked, to test hypothesis 2, although both questions deal with fair treatment of the Negro. The difference may be that in the question of the government assuring fair treatment for the Negro in jobs and housing there is no mention of an immediate threat of integration to the respondent. The term fair treatment may not mean open housing and job integration to the respondent. The

second question also deals with Negroes, but the question concerns school integration, perhaps an immediate threat to the white respondent. If the question had been phrased so that it asked if Negro children should be given fair treatment in the schools, the responses may have been more liberal and there may not have been any differences between the three age groups. If this is the answer, then the younger age group is more liberal on the question of racial integration than are the older age groups. It should be noted that on the question of fair treatment for the Negro, in jobs and housing, every age group is over 75 per cent liberal. However, on the question of school integration the most liberal group recorded a percentage of 62, and the least liberal group was only 43 per cent liberal. If you consider the difference in percentages of liberalism for each age group between the two questions, the two oldest age groups show the biggest differences. The youngest age group was 14 per cent less liberal on Table 7 than on Table 6, whereas the middle age group was 34 per cent less liberal and the oldest age group was 35 per cent less liberal.

It could be, however, that the difference between the questions is not one of threat of integration, but one of the extension of the powers of the federal government. The first question states that the government should assure fair treatment of the Negro, but it does not stipulate

which governmental unit, state, local, or federal, should do so. However, the question on school integration specifically states that the government in Washington should enter or stay out of the issue. If this were the case then it could be said that younger people are more in favor of the extension of the powers of the federal government, whereas the older age groups are more in favor of "states rights" and local control of institutions, etc.

The research indicates that hypothesis 1 is acceptable, i.e. that older persons are more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare questions of economic assistance, than younger persons. Hypothesis 2 cannot be accepted, i.e. that older persons are less liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on issues of social justice, than younger persons.

CHAPTER IV

STATUS INCONSISTENCY AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES

The status inconsistent person is a special case in society and his status inconsistency causes a reaction in his interpersonal relations. The status inconsistent person suffers from frustration and uncertainty of his status. This ambiguity of status causes the status inconsistent person to react liberally on political issues of economic assistance on welfare programs by the government. This way he hopes to be able to improve his social position by supporting policies which would redistribute some of the scarce resources of society. The status inconsistent is dissatisfied with the present structure of society because it causes him stress and discomfort.

The third hypothesis states that status inconsistencies will be more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare programs of economic assistance, than status consistents.

The first attitude question which tests the hypothesis deals again with the government's responsibility in seeing that everyone who wants to work can find employment. Table 8 shows the results for this question.

Table 8 indicates that the relationship between status inconsistency and liberalism is very weak, .16. The association is, however, in the predicted direction. The status inconsistent individuals were more liberal on this question than were the status consistent.

The question used does not discriminate very effectively for the purposes intended here. Over 70 per cent of the sample was liberal on this question.

TABLE 8

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON OUGHT TO SEE TO IT THAT EVERYBODY WHO WANTS TO WORK CAN FIND A JOB" BY DEGREE OF STATUS CONSISTENCY

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistents	31% (308)	69% (680)	100% (988)
Status Inconsistents	24% (132)	76% (407)	100% (539)
Total N	440	1,087	1,527
G = .16			
Z = 1.99 p<.05			

In Chapter III the question was raised concerning the great differences in the percentage of individuals who were liberal on the two issues of social justice. One of the alternative explanations was that perhaps the older age groups objected to the extension of the powers of the federal government. The data from Table 8 would not support

this explanation. This question specifically concerns the extension of federal powers, and the sample is over 70 per cent liberal.

The second question used to test this hypothesis concerns governmental activity in assuring low cost medical care. The results of this test are given in Table 9. On this question the status inconsistent are again more liberal than are the status consistent. The percentage difference between the status consistent and the status inconsistent is almost identical to the difference found in the first question, close to 7 per cent. Also, the strength of the relationship is again rather weak.

TABLE 9

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO HELP PEOPLE GET DOCTORS AND HOSPITAL CARE AT LOW COST" BY DEGREE OF STATUS CONSISTENCY

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistent	28% (261)	72% (671)	100% (932)
Status Inconsistent	21% (111)	79% (427)	100% (538)
Total N	372	1,098	1,470
G = .19			
Z = 2.28	p ≤ .05		

Both of the welfare questions support the hypothesis that status inconsistent are more liberal than status

consistents, even though the relationship was weak in both cases. Unlike the older persons, who were found to be more liberal on the welfare questions, there is no reason to suspect that these particular questions are more relevant to status inconsistent than status consistents. That is, there is no reason to assume that the questions reflect a self-interest for the status inconsistent. This leads to the conclusion that status inconsistent are more liberal on welfare questions which propose the redistribution of the resources of society.

On social justice questions it has been shown that status inconsistent persons are more conservative than are other persons. This has been interpreted as an attempt by the status inconsistent person to reach out for simplistic and highly structured answers which are offered by the more conservative ideologies. Also, status inconsistent are expected to hold prejudice against other disadvantaged and depressed groups. The prejudice of status inconsistent may be an attempt to focus responsibility for their stress and circumstances upon other groups, thereby relieving themselves of responsibility. Prejudice may also serve as a psychological function by providing an outlet for the stress and uncertainty which is caused by the status inconsistency. In this case, the aggression and the hostility which has been stored by them may be released upon those groups and peoples which are void of power and

which do not represent authority, which would typically be minorities or other "outgroups."

The fourth hypothesis states that, status inconsistencies will be less liberal on attitude questions which concern issues of social justice, than status consistents. This is tested by the questions concerning the fair treatment of Negroes in the area of jobs and housing, and the attitudes toward the desegregation of schools by the federal government. The results on the first question are presented in Table 10.

TABLE 10

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "IF NEGROES ARE NOT GETTING FAIR TREATMENT IN JOBS AND HOUSING THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SEE THAT THEY DO" BY DEGREE OF STATUS CONSISTENCY

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistents	23% (227)	77% (758)	100% (985)
Status Inconsistent	21% (114)	79% (429)	100% (543)
Total N	341	1,187	1,528
G = .05			
Z = 0.65	p $\geq$.05		

The data in Table 10 show that there is very little difference between the percentage of liberal and conservative responses between the status consistents and the status inconsistent. The relationship was extremely weak

and not reliable at the .05 level. There was no indication that the status inconsistent persons are more conservative on this type of attitude question. The difference which was observed was not in the predicted direction, since the status inconsistencies were more liberal, 79 per cent, than the status consistent, 77 per cent.

The second question used to test this hypothesis, which concerns the question of forced school desegregation, is presented in Table 11.

TABLE 11

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON SHOULD STAY OUT OF THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WHITE AND COLORED CHILDREN GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL" BY DEGREE OF STATUS CONSISTENCY

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistent	43% (423)	57% (558)	100% (981)
Status Inconsistent	58% (303)	42% (223)	100% (526)
Total N	726	781	1,507
G = .28			
Z = 3.91	p < .05		

Table 11 shows that there is a difference between the liberal and the conservative proportion of responses of the status consistent and the status inconsistent persons. On this question the hypothesis would be supported since the status inconsistent persons are more

conservative in their responses than are the status consistents.

Because of the conflicting evidence, it is not possible to accept the fourth hypothesis. The pattern presented here is the same as that found for older persons. On the question of whether the government should assure the Negro fair treatment in jobs and housing, there was no difference between the responses of the status consistents and the status inconsistent. There was also found to be no differences between the three age groups tested in hypothesis 2. If the theory were correct, the status inconsistent persons should be less liberal on questions such as civil rights for Negroes, because their frustrations would lead them to react emotionally against other depressed and disadvantaged peoples in an attempt to displace his frustration.

It should be noted that there is a great difference in the percentage of persons who gave liberal responses to the two questions used to test hypothesis four. On the question regarding fair treatment for Negroes in jobs and housing, over 75 per cent of the respondents gave liberal responses. However, on the question regarding school integration, less than 52 per cent of the total respondents indicated a liberal attitude.

On the question of whether Negroes should be assured of fair treatment in jobs and housing, most respondents

appear to be liberal. The reason for such response could be that the question falls under the interpretation of separate but equal rights for Negroes. In other words, it is the feeling of Americans that Negroes should be treated fairly, as long as they know their place and do not compete directly with whites.

This interpretation is given support by the fact that when the respondents were asked whether schools should be integrated, the percentage of liberals falls to a little over 50 per cent. A direct threat of integration greatly reduces the percentage of persons who respond liberally.

On the first question regarding the fair treatment of Negroes in jobs and housing, there is no difference between the status consistent and the status inconsistent, just as there were no differences found between age groups in Chapter III. The conclusion is that nearly everyone believes that the Negro should be given fair treatment. Set forth as an ideal, the attitude question is easily accepted by nearly everyone. It is not surprising then that there were found no differences between the status consistent and status inconsistent persons as had been predicted.

However, on the second question, there was not nearly the great degree of agreement as there was on the first question. As was noted, slightly over 50 per cent of the respondents reported a liberal attitude. On this

question there were found to be differences between the responses of status consistent and status inconsistent persons. In line with the theory, the status inconsistent persons were found to be less liberal on this question than were the status consistent persons.

CHAPTER V

INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND STATUS INCONSISTENCY

It has been indicated that older persons are more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on economic welfare questions, than are younger persons. Also, status inconsistent persons have been shown to be more liberal on the welfare questions than are the persons who are status consistent.

Of the status inconsistent persons, it was expected that those persons who are also aged will have experienced greater pressures than will have persons who are only status inconsistent. Therefore it was predicted that of those persons who are status inconsistents, the older persons will be more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare programs of economic assistance, than younger status inconsistent persons.

The first question on which this hypothesis was tested deals with the government's responsibility in assuring that everyone who cares to work, is able to find a job. The data are presented in Table 12. As can be seen, the oldest age group, those respondents over the age

of sixty, is the age category with the largest proportion of individuals who gave liberal responses to the attitude question.

The relationship was weak, as would have been suspected after viewing the results of Table 4. Once again, the fact that nearly everyone is liberal on this question tends to overwhelm any differences between the age groups. The oldest age group is the most liberal, but the difference is not great.

TABLE 12

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE
GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON OUGHT TO SEE TO IT THAT
EVERYBODY WHO WANTS TO WORK CAN FIND A JOB"
BY AGE GROUPS FOR STATUS INCONSISTENTS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	27% (43)	73% (115)	100% (158)
40-59	26% (62)	74% (173)	100% (235)
60+	18% (27)	82% (119)	100% (146)
Total N	132	407	539
G = .14			
Z = 1.73	p < .05		

Table 13, the control table for the status consistent, shows the same general trend as Table 12, and also has only a very weak relationship between age and liberalism. There are only slight percentage differences between the

cells of Table 12 and Table 13. It is interesting to note that the same pattern holds for the age groups for both the status consistent and the status inconsistent. In both cases the aged remain more liberal, with no essential difference between the status consistency types.

TABLE 13

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE
GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON OUGHT TO SEE TO IT THAT
EVERYBODY WHO WANTS TO WORK CAN FIND A JOB"
BY AGE GROUPS FOR STATUS CONSISTENTS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	31% (133)	69% (299)	100% (432)
40-59	36% (147)	64% (266)	100% (413)
60+	22% (42)	78% (152)	100% (194)
Total N	322	717	1,039
G = .07			
Z = .83	p > .05		

On the second question, as presented in Table 14, the results of the first test are supported and strengthened. The relationship found in this test is both significant and dramatic.

Not only are the old people more liberal on this question than the younger age groups, but they are well above the percentage of all status inconsistent of 79 per cent.

This question appears to be more guided by the self-interest of each age group than any other question. The youngest age group, which presumably would not have the great medical expenses of the oldest age group, were only 67 per cent liberal, compared to 90 per cent of the oldest age group.

What is more surprising, however, is that for the youngest age group, those respondents between the ages of twenty and thirty-nine, the status inconsistent persons are less liberal than the age group as a whole.

TABLE 14

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO HELP PEOPLE GET DOCTORS AND HOSPITAL CARE AT LOW COST" BY AGE GROUPS FOR STATUS INCONSISTENTS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	33% (52)	67% (105)	100% (157)
40-59	19% (44)	81% (186)	100% (230)
60+	10% (15)	90% (136)	100% (151)
Total N	111	427	538
G = .43			
Z = 6.24 $p < .05$			

The evidence indicates that among the status inconsistent persons, the older persons are more liberal on the attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare

programs of economic assistance, than are the younger status inconsistent persons.

The control table for the status consistent, Table 15, shows a much weaker relationship between age

TABLE 15

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO HELP PEOPLE GET DOCTORS AND HOSPITAL CARE AT LOW COST" BY AGE GROUPS FOR STATUS CONSISTENTS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	27% (106)	73% (292)	100% (398)
40-59	34% (135)	66% (265)	100% (400)
60+	14% (26)	86% (166)	100% (192)
Total N	267	723	990
G = .12			
Z = 1.34	p > .05		

and liberalism. For status consistent, the gamma is .12, whereas for the status inconsistent the gamma is .43. The differences for the status consistent are not identical to Table 15 in that liberalism does not increase in each age group, as it does for the status inconsistent. This would indicate that status inconsistency does in fact have an effect on the political attitudes of the respondents.

It had been hypothesized that older persons and status inconsistent persons would be less liberal on attitude questions which deal with issues of social justice. It had also been hypothesized that among the status inconsistent, the older persons would be the least liberal. Thus far there has been conflicting evidence, and there is reason to believe that the hypotheses are not entirely correct.

The first question used to test the hypothesis deals again with the fair treatment of Negroes in jobs and housing. The data are presented in Table 16.

TABLE 16

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION, "IF NEGROES ARE NOT GETTING FAIR TREATMENT IN JOBS AND HOUSING THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SEE THAT THEY DO" BY AGE GROUPS FOR STATUS INCONSISTENTS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	24% (41)	76% (128)	100% (169)
40-59	18% (42)	82% (190)	100% (232)
60+	22% (31)	78% (111)	100% (142)
Total N	114	429	543
G = .05			
Z = 0.70	p ≥ .05		

There is no difference between the three age groups in the proportion of respondents who gave liberal responses.

It had been hypothesized that the oldest age group would be the least liberal, but there is no support for this proposition on this test question. Once again it should be noted that on this particular question there is an overwhelming proportion of the entire sample giving a liberal response.

Table 17, testing the same question for the status consistents, shows the same results. There is no real

TABLE 17

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "IF
NEGROES ARE NOT GETTING FAIR TREATMENT IN JOBS AND
HOUSING THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SEE THAT THEY DO"
BY AGE GROUPS FOR STATUS CONSISTENTS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	24% (107)	76% (331)	100% (438)
40-59	21% (87)	79% (323)	100% (410)
60+	22% (41)	78% (143)	100% (184)
Total N	235	797	1,032
G = .06			
Z = .64	p $\geq$.05		

difference between the three age groups and the overwhelming proportion of the respondents who gave liberal responses. The relationship between age and liberalism was again extremely weak.

Table 18 also tested this hypothesis and found that the youngest age group was the most liberal, while the middle age group was the least liberal, with the oldest age group in the middle. This question did not agree with the first question which tested this hypothesis. The gamma score indicated that there was a weak relationship between age and liberalism.

TABLE 18

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON SHOULD STAY OUT OF THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WHITE AND COLORED CHILDREN GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL" BY AGE GROUPS FOR STATUS INCONSISTENTS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	46% (71)	54% (85)	100% (156)
40-59	67% (158)	33% (77)	100% (235)
60+	55% (74)	45% (61)	100% (135)
Total N	303	223	526
G = .13			
Z = 1.20	p > .05		

The control table for the status consistents, on the other hand, showed a much stronger relationship, although negative. Table 19 indicates a gamma score of $-.28$ between age and liberalism. This pattern is what had been predicted for the status inconsistent, but which was not found among the status inconsistent.

There is not conclusive evidence, in fact there is no evidence, to prove that among the status inconsistent the oldest respondents are any less liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on issues of social justice.

TABLE 19

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON SHOULD STAY OUT OF THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WHITE AND COLORED CHILDREN GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL" BY AGE GROUPS FOR STATUS CONSISTENTS

Age	Conservative	Liberal	Total
20-39	35% (153)	65% (280)	100% (433)
40-59	46% (191)	54% (222)	100% (413)
60+	58% (100)	42% (71)	100% (171)
Total N	444	573	1,017
G = -.28			
Z = 3.68			
p < .05			

The aged status inconsistent person, being subjected to both the pressures of the status anxiety of his age group, and the frustration and uncertainty of his status inconsistency, would be expected to be more liberal on welfare questions than both the aged status consistent or other status inconsistent.

Hypothesis 5 states that of the older persons, the status inconsistent will be more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare questions of economic assistance, than the status consistent. Table 20 shows the results of the first test on

TABLE 20

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON OUGHT TO SEE TO IT THAT EVERYBODY WHO WANTS TO WORK CAN FIND A JOB" BY DEGREE OF STATUS CONSISTENCY, AGE 60+

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistents	19% (29)	81% (121)	100% (150)
Status Inconsistent	18% (27)	82% (119)	100% (146)
Total N	56	240	296
G = .02			
Z = 0.13	p>.05		

the question concerning the government's responsibility in seeing that everyone is employed. As can be seen, there is practically no difference in the frequencies for the liberal and the conservative responses for the status consistent and the status inconsistent persons.

Table 21, the control table for those under sixty years of age, demonstrates a stronger relationship between status inconsistency and liberalism than does Table 20, but it is still only a weak relationship. For the younger age

group the relationship is in the direction predicted for the status inconsistent individuals, whereas for the older age group degree of status inconsistency appears to have no effect. From this evidence then, it would be necessary to call into question the viability of the status inconsistency concept since age seems to be the differentiating factor.

TABLE 21

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON OUGHT TO SEE TO IT THAT EVERYBODY WHO WANTS TO WORK CAN FIND A JOB" BY DEGREE OF STATUS CONSISTENCY, AGE 20-59

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistents	33% (279)	67% (559)	100% (838)
Status Inconsistents	27% (105)	73% (288)	100% (393)
Total N	384	847	1,231
G = .16			
Z = 1.72	p<.05		

On the second question, as presented in Table 22, the results agree with the first question. There are no differences between the responses between the status consistent and status inconsistent persons. On this question the relationship is stronger than on the other question, but still not reliable.

TABLE 22

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE
GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO HELP PEOPLE GET DOCTORS AND
HOSPITAL CARE AT LOW COST" BY DEGREE OF
STATUS CONSISTENCY, AGE 60+

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistents	14% (21)	86% (124)	100% (145)
Status Inconsistents	10% (15)	90% (136)	100% (151)
Total N	36	260	296
G = .21			
Z = 0.86	p $\geq$.05		

The control table for this question, Table 23, also does not show much difference for the status consistents and inconsistents among the younger people.

What appears to be significant here is that the age of an individual will tell more about an individual than will his degree of status consistency-inconsistency. It has been discovered that among the old people, there is no difference between the liberalism of the status consistents and the status inconsistents on questions which concern governmental activity on welfare questions. This would imply that, at least for older persons, status inconsistency does not tell as much about their political attitudes.

Thus far there have been found no differences on the attitude questions which deal with governmental activity on

TABLE 23

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE
GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO HELP PEOPLE GET DOCTORS AND
HOSPITAL CARE AT LOW COST" BY DEGREE OF
STATUS CONSISTENCY, AGE 20-59

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistents	30% (240)	70% (547)	100% (787)
Status Inconsistents	25% (96)	75% (291)	100% (387)
Total N	336	838	1,174
G = .14			
Z = 1.44	p>.05		

issues of social justice, whether tested by age groups, by status consistent and status inconsistent groups, or by age groups of only the status inconsistent persons or only the status consistent persons. The data for hypothesis 7, which states that of the older persons the status inconsistencies will be less liberal on the issues of social justice, do not change this pattern. Table 24 reports the results for the first question which was used to test this hypothesis. This question concerns the fair treatment of Negroes in jobs and housing.

Table 24 demonstrates that there are again no differences between the status consistents and the status inconsistencies. The relationship between status consistency and liberalism, as measured by gamma, was extremely weak

and in the opposite direction than had been predicted. The status inconsistent persons do not appear to be less liberal on the issues of social justice than status consistent persons.

TABLE 24

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "IF NEGROES ARE NOT GETTING FAIR TREATMENT IN JOBS AND HOUSING THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SEE THAT THEY DO" BY DEGREE OF STATUS CONSISTENCY, AGE 60+

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistents	25% (35)	75% (106)	100% (141)
Status Inconsistents	22% (31)	78% (111)	100% (142)
Total N	66	217	283
G = .08			
Z = 0.42	p $\geq$.05		

For the younger persons, as reported in Table 25, the pattern still holds. There are no differences between status consistents and status inconsistents on issues of social justice.

The second question used to test this hypothesis is the question concerning attitudes about the government intervening into the school integration issue. The data from Table 26 again demonstrate that there is no difference between the status consistents and the status inconsistents, of those respondents over the age of sixty.

TABLE 25

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "IF
NEGROES ARE NOT GETTING FAIR TREATMENT IN JOBS AND
HOUSING THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SEE THAT THEY DO"
BY DEGREE OF STATUS CONSISTENCY, AGE 20-59

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistents	23% (192)	77% (652)	100% (844)
Status Inconsistents	21% (83)	79% (318)	100% (401)
Total N	275	970	1,245
G = .06			
Z = .57	p>.05		

TABLE 26

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE
GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON SHOULD STAY OUT OF THE
QUESTION OF WHETHER WHITE AND COLORED CHILDREN
GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL" BY DEGREE OF
STATUS CONSISTENCY, AGE 60+

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistents	57% (81)	43% (60)	100% (141)
Status Inconsistents	55% (74)	45% (61)	100% (135)
Total N	155	121	276
G = .05			
Z = 0.30	p>.05		

However, for the younger age group, those between the ages of 20-59, there is a relationship of decreasing liberalism with increasing status inconsistency. The status inconsistent are less liberal on this question than are the status consistent. Table 27 reports a gamma score of $-.35$.

TABLE 27

LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION "THE GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON SHOULD STAY OUT OF THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WHITE AND COLORED CHILDREN GO TO THE SAME SCHOOL" BY DEGREE OF STATUS CONSISTENCY, AGE 20-59

	Conservative	Liberal	Total
Status Consistents	41% (342)	59% (498)	100% (840)
Status Inconsistent	59% (229)	41% (162)	100% (391)
Total N	571	660	1,231
G = $-.35$			
Z = 4.38	P $\leq .05$		

As with the first question there is no evidence to support the hypothesis, especially since the differences are in the opposite direction than predicted. There was no evidence that among the older persons the status inconsistent will be less liberal on attitude questions which deal with governmental activity on issues of social justice.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Old Age and Political Attitudes

In testing the first hypothesis, that older persons will be more liberal on attitude questions which concern governmental activity on welfare programs than younger persons, two different attitude questions were used, one dealing with the federal government's role in assuring employment, and the other with the government's role in assuring low cost medical care. As was reported in Chapter III, both questions demonstrated that the older persons were more liberal than younger persons. In addition, each age group was more liberal on the question dealing with low cost medical care than on the other question, but the greatest percentage difference was in the oldest age group. The older persons were more in favor of the government assuring employment for everyone who desired it, however, they were even more in favor of the government assuring low cost doctor and hospital care. So, although the oldest age group was the more liberal on each question than the other two age groups, they were the most liberal on the question of medical care. The youngest and middle age groups remained nearly the same for the two

questions, with 70 per cent of the young being liberal on the question of employment compared to 72 per cent liberal on the medical question. The middle age group was 68 per cent liberal on the employment question, compared to 72 per cent liberal on the medical question, and the oldest age group were 80 per cent liberal on the employment question and 88 per cent liberal on the medical question.

The data support the statements of both Campbell and of Pinner, Jacobs, and Selznick. Campbell pointed out that older persons are a disadvantaged group, who are dependent upon the state for economic support, support which is not forthcoming from other sources, either in structured or in unstructured alternatives. The majority of economic support comes from the government and the older persons therefore are in favor of liberal or welfare governmental policies.⁶⁹

The aged individual also has a need for self-respect and respect by society, however he is hindered by society from fully participating in the economic life of the society, i.e., he is expelled from the labor force and has inadequate annuities, etc. The older person cannot live by the prescribed norms of individual achievement and self-support. Just the same, the older person desires to be independent, to be self-reliant, and the welfare state can provide the independence, and the older person views the

⁶⁹Campbell, "Determinants of Voting Behavior," p. 94.

attempt to secure greater economic support from the state as a legitimate way to be self-reliant. In this way the older person is not asking for respect because of his ascribed status of age, but because of what he is able to achieve in the form of support from the welfare state.⁷⁰ The data would not contradict these assumptions.

For the other two attitude questions, those which concern governmental activity on issues of social justice, hypothesis 2 stated that older persons will be less liberal than younger persons because the older persons are less willing to accept social change, but rather tend to uphold the traditional values and positions. Also, the older person has more of an economic investment in the status quo than the younger persons, in terms of property and accumulated capital. Moreover, historically in this country the amount of education received has been increasing with each generation, and education has been correlated with liberalism.

However, the finding is that the theory cannot adequately account for all of the results. On the question of whether the federal government should aid Negroes in jobs and housing, there were found to be no significant differences between the three age groups, and the actual percentage showed the youngest age group to be less

⁷⁰Pinner, Old Age and Political Behavior, pp. 69-91.

liberal than the oldest age group, with the middle age group being the most liberal.

On the other attitude question, which dealt with forced school integration, the differences were larger and in the predicted direction. The youngest age group was the most liberal and the oldest age group was the least liberal. This was not in support of the hypothesis since there was found to be no disjunctive process operating only within the oldest age category, but rather a gradual decrease in liberalism from the youngest to the oldest age groups.

Although both questions dealt with some aspect of civil rights for Negroes, there is a vast difference between the two questions, and the degree of liberalism demonstrated by each age group. On the question dealing with government assuring fair treatment for Negroes in jobs and housing, all three age groups were over 75 per cent liberal, whereas on the second question dealing with school integration, the highest age group was only 62 per cent liberal and the lowest age group was only 43 per cent liberal.

On the question dealing with fair treatment for Negroes in jobs and housing, every age group is consistently liberal, and at about the same level. This may be part of the past official position of the government toward Negroes, separate but equal rights, because on the question

of school integration, the degree of liberalism drops severely in every age group. However, the youngest age group appears to be most willing to accept the change from the old policy to the newer policy of integration.

There is no evidence to support the hypothesis concerning attitudes on the issues of social justice. The need here would be to use a liberalism scale made up of several questions, to be able to see just what differences there are by types of questions asked.

Status Inconsistency and Political Attitudes

The third hypothesis predicted that status inconsistent would be more liberal on the questions concerning welfare activity by the government, because they are suffering from psychological stress as a result of their inconsistent statuses and would thus prefer changes in the present social order. The status inconsistent person has been shown to be a political activist and would support left-wing policies because of his desire for a redistribution of scarce resources.

On both questions dealing with employment opportunities and low cost medical care, the hypothesis was upheld with status inconsistent being more liberal.

However, the data did not allow the acceptance of hypothesis 4 which stated that status inconsistent will be less liberal than status consistent on questions which concern government activity on issues of social justice.

Again, the pattern is the same as was found for older persons in hypothesis two. On the question of whether the government should assure the Negro fair treatment in jobs and housing, there were no real differences between the status consistents and the status inconsistent. The status inconsistent were slightly more liberal than the status consistents, 79 per cent to 77 per cent, this being contrary to the predicted direction.

Also, the question regarding school integration failed to receive the liberal support to the same degree as the first question. On this question the status consistents were only 57 per cent liberal and the status inconsistent were only 42 per cent liberal. The second question demonstrated a reliable relationship in the predicted direction; the status consistents were more liberal.

Despite the support on the second question, hypothesis four could not be accepted because of the conflicting evidence from the other question. If the theory were correct, the status inconsistent would be less liberal on questions such as civil rights because their frustrations would lead them to react emotionally against other depressed and disadvantaged peoples in an attempt to displace the frustration. The question concerning school integration bears this out, but the other item did not. It is plausible that the status inconsistent person can sympathize with the Negro for his plight and would support

him in getting fair treatment in housing and jobs. However, when the Negroes are brought into direct contact, as in forced school integration, his status is directly threatened, and now by a low status group.

The Effect of Status Inconsistency on Age

Since both the aged and status inconsistencies had been found to be more liberal than their respective counterparts on welfare issues, it was expected that among only the status inconsistencies, the aged would continue to be more liberal. This was found to be true for both of the questions used to test this hypothesis.

The age patterns also held true for the status consistents, although at generally lower levels of liberalism on both questions. So, after controlling for the effects of status inconsistency types the predicted pattern among the age groups remained. This was true for all questions tested.

On the questions which concerned issues of social justice, after controlling for the effects of status inconsistency types, there still appeared to be no age-related differences which were theoretically relevant.

The Effect of Age on Status Inconsistency

It was also expected that when controlled for age, the status inconsistent persons would still remain more liberal on the welfare questions. This, however, was not

the case. When testing only those over sixty years of age on both questions, the differences that had been found previously for the status inconsistent were not confirmed. By controlling for age the liberalism of the status inconsistent disappeared. This was the major finding of the research.

Once again, when controlled for age, the status inconsistent were not found to be any less liberal on the issues of social justice, than the status consistent.

Conclusions

This research found that it was fruitful to have divided the types of attitude questions into the two types of welfare and social justice issues. There were found to be significant differences on nearly all of the welfare questions, using both status inconsistency types and age groups, but no differences on the issues of social justice.

It was found that status inconsistency is related to liberalism when attitude questions concerning governmental activity on welfare questions are used. Also, that for the same type of attitude question, the aged are more liberal than are the two younger age groups.

It was significant that when controlled for age by using only those respondents over sixty years of age, the differences between status consistent and status inconsistent disappeared. This brought into question the effect that age has upon status consistency. Table 28 shows

a direct relationship between status inconsistency and increasing age. For the youngest age group, 72.5 per cent

TABLE 28

STATUS CONSISTENTS AND INCONSISTENTS BY AGE GROUPS

Age	Status Consistents	Status Inconsistent	Total
20-39	72.5% (518)	27.5% (196)	714
40-59	63.1% (493)	36.9% (288)	781
60+	50.0% (178)	50.0% (178)	356
Total N	1,189	662	1,851

are status consistents and 27.5 per cent are status inconsistent, for the middle age group, 63.1 per cent are status consistents and 36.9 per cent status inconsistent, whereas for the oldest age group 50.0 per cent are status consistents and 50.0 per cent are status inconsistent. This clearly demonstrates an unexpected finding, that a disproportionate number of older persons are status inconsistent.

In an attempt to explain why there would be a larger proportion of older persons who are status inconsistent, the inconsistent persons were divided into types according to their ascribed and achieved statuses and found that the vast majority of status inconsistent are high achieved and low ascribed status types. There were 627

status inconsistencies who had a status inconsistency of high achieved and low ascribed, while there were only 32 respondents who were of the opposite characteristics of high ascribed and low achieved statuses. This would immediately point up the status conversion process of Benoit-Smullyan, whereby a person with a high ascribed status can convert his high status to the other status hierarchies, and thus save themselves from becoming status inconsistent. However, what would seem to cause the large proportion of status inconsistencies of high achieved and low ascribed status would be the proportion of men who were able to fulfill, to some extent, the "American Dream," that is, they are the product of the openness of the American Society; the poor boy makes good, Horatio Alger prototypes. Although it is probably incorrect to think that all of these status inconsistencies are rich, or have an extremely high educational level, it does indicate that they were able to rise above what their ascribed status would dictate. The relationship with age is that older persons have had a longer time period in which to raise their achievable statuses; in other words, they have had a longer time in which to become a status inconsistent.

Another reason that there is a disproportionate number of aged individuals who are status inconsistencies may be because the old people have more low ethnic statuses. The old people in the sample would have been

born in 1900 or earlier, which means they would have been closer to the great waves of migrants which came to the United States. Because of this the older persons would be more likely than the young to be either foreign born, or the first generation offspring of a foreign born person. The effect would be that the older persons are more likely to have a particular ethnic identification. This would not be the case so much with the young. For one thing the young are not so likely to have been born of only one ethnic stock. As a result the person, in reporting his ethnic background, has a choice and may pick the ethnicity which he feels has the greater status.

The question still remains, since it is now known that aged persons are disproportionately represented in the status inconsistent types, what effect this has on the concept of status inconsistency. How much of what is being measured is simply the effect of age. It may not be just coincidence that the pattern of attitudes of aged individuals and status inconsistencies appear to be the same.

Future Research

Some future research should take up the question of the effect of age upon status inconsistency theory, and not be limited to only the type of questions used here. A more complete analysis of the effect of age upon status inconsistency is essential.

The concept of a multi-dimensional view of types of questions which are used on attitude scales needs to be developed. It appears that a simple dichotomy may not be sophisticated enough to handle all of the variability which is found. Perhaps a new referent point is what is now needed.

Another interesting question which needs to be taken up is the effect, if any, that status inconsistency has at retirement for individuals. Does status inconsistency become combined with status anxiety, or do some persons suffer from both status inconsistency and status anxiety?

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AGE, STATUS INCONSISTENCY AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES

by

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The research was undertaken to demonstrate the similarities in the political attitudes of the older person and the status inconsistent person. The older person is said to react politically because of his status anxiety, and the status inconsistent person is said to react because of the frustration and the uncertainty of his status in inter-personal relations.

A national sample of 1953 persons was analyzed. The sample was divided into persons who were status consistent and those who were status inconsistent. The political attitudes of the respondents were measured by means of four attitude questions, two of which were concerned with governmental activity on welfare questions, and two which dealt with issues of social justice.

It was hypothesized that the older persons, and the status inconsistent persons would be more liberal on the welfare questions and less liberal on the questions concerning issues of social justice, than the younger persons and the status consistent persons, respectively. It was also hypothesized that the older persons among the status inconsistent, and the status inconsistent among the older persons, would be more liberal on the attitude questions which concerned governmental activity on welfare questions, and less liberal on those which concerned issues of social justice.

The data revealed that the older persons and the status inconsistent were more liberal on the questions which concerned governmental activity on welfare questions, but that they were not less liberal on the issues of social justice. It was also shown that the older persons among the status inconsistent were more liberal, than the younger persons. However, the status inconsistent among the older persons were not more liberal than the status consistent. This led to questioning the usefulness of the status inconsistency theory, since the data would indicate that perhaps the age differences overwhelm the status inconsistency differences. This was further strengthened when it was discovered that a disproportionate percentage of the status inconsistent were older people.

It was suggested that further research should check the differences and the convergences of age and status inconsistency. Also, further refinement of the types of attitude questions that are used, is needed.