Changing Values and Skills Among Western Publics

a significant shift is also taking place in the distribution of political skills. An increasingly large proportion of the public is coming to have sufficient interest and understanding of national and international politics to participate in decision-making at

Current changes enable them to play an increasingly active role in formulating policy, and to engage in what might be called "elite-challenging" as opposed to "elite-directed" activities

Counter-trends

Undoubtedly there will be counter-trends that will slow the process of change and even reverse it for given periods of time. But the principal evolutionary drift is the result of structural changes taking place in advanced industrial societies and is unlikely to be changed unless there are major alterations in the very nature of those societies.



Technological Innovation

The thread of technological innovation ties these changes together. Technology has made possible the unprecedented productivity that underpins advanced industrial society; it renders expanded educational opportunities both necessary and possible; it has created the contemporary mass media; and it involves men and women in drastic shifts in personal environment that uproot them from previous natterns.

The Nature of Value Change

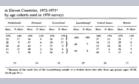
SOURCES of Value Change Individual's outlook on life Goals

Work of Abraham Maslow is particularly interesting, for it suggests a specific direction in which value change will move under given conditions. Maslow argues that people act to fulfill a number of different needs, which are pursued in hierarchical order, according to their relative urgency for survival. Top priority is given to the satisfaction of physiological needs as long as they are in short supply. (...) But when at least minimal economic and physical security are present, the needs for love, belonging, and esteem become increasingly important; and later, a set of goals related to intellectual and aesthetic satisfaction looms large. There does not seem to be any clear hierarchy within the last set of needs, which Maslow called "self-actualization needs.

Do the Materialist/ Post-Materialist value categories reflect a central aspect of the individual's outlook on life, with pervasive ramifications among his political attitudes? Yes, quite impressively, Our <u>value typology</u> proves to be a sensitive indicator of a broad

1970-72 Surveys

of the Materialist/Post-Materialist values



Effect of education

The Silent Revolution

Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics

Dehumanizing tendencies

In the Industrial-driven society, more and more people became organized in hierarchically structured and routinized factories or offices with their relationships governed by impersonal bureaucratic rules. This type of organization makes large-scale enterprises possible, may lead to increased productivity, and, as long as economic considerations are paramount, a majority may be willing to accept the accompanying depersonalization and anonymity.

Post-Materialists are less pre-occupied with the means to physical subsistence and more concerned with ultimate ends.

The course of wisdom is difficult. It requires both a warm heart and cold reason. Perhaps the whales are sacred and the trees are sacred and the land is sacred. But mankind is sacred too and unique in that he seeks salvation and uses tools. If he abandons either, he abandons humanity.

Postmaterialism

Marsh's critique

Marsh's critique
Marsh's critique helps clarify the nature of
value change in Western societies. As he
points out, the emergence of a large PostMaterialist minority among the younger age
cohorts does not reflect the appearance of an
essentially nobler, more altruistic generation.
Like everyone else, they are pursuing the
needs most salient to them. The change lies in
the fact that the Post-Materialists are trying
to maximize different values from those most
emphasized by earlier generations. Marsh
argues that Post-Materialists simply are
trying to capture the admiration and esteem
of their peers in endorsing a change-oriented
ideology and supporting the Left. Their
behavior reflects nothing more than a desire
for Radical Chic.

Global Change

Homeostasis of satisfaction

Post-Materialist value priorities will be found mainly among those who have experienced economic and physical security for a long period of time-throughout their formative years, to be specific. In short, the Post-Materialists are Post-Materialist precisely because they do not derive relatively great subjective satisfaction from their relatively averagle material condition.

Kommt die Moral," as Brecht put it



Life Satisfactiom

- b. One's level of aspirations.

 3. Aspirations tend to adjust to one's circumstances. People adjust them in two ways:
 a. By upward or downward shifts in the level of aspirations—that is, by aspiring to more or less of the same things. One's aspirations rise with prosperity and fall with adversity; but the process is gradual so adjustment is rarely perfect.
 b. By changing the weights accorded to various aspects of life—that is, through changes in value priorities. This process can neutralize or even reverse the normal relationship between material conditions and subjective satisfaction, causing a group with given value priorities to be less satisfied than another group that objectively seems less favorably placed. The time lags associated with change in value priorities seem to be very sizeable, probably involving intergenerational population replacement.
- 4. Hence, within any given culture, Overall Subjective Satisfaction will usually show only modest variation across stable social
- modest variation across stable social categories:

 a. Short-term effects tend to cancel out because those who have had unusually favorable recent personal experiences are likely to be balanced off by those who have had unusually unfavorable recent experiences, in any large social category,
 b. Structural differences tend to be offset by the fact that aspiration levels and values gradually adjust to long-term differences in objective circumstances.

- 5. Nevetheless, we may find relatively large cross-national differences in satisfaction levels:
 a. Insofar as a nation constitutes a distinct cultural unit, its people may display a relative homogeneity of values and expectations, by comparison with members of other cultures. Since different cultures may assign different weight to given domains, satisfaction levels may vary a great deal even among societies facing similar external circumstances. Dational boundaries still define a key unit of socieconomic experience. The impact of short-term changes is often more sharply differentiated according to nationality than according to other social categories.

Overall Satisfactiom

Overall Satisfactiom
Among Materialists, Overall Satisfaction
increases as we move from low to high family
income. Among Post-Materialists there is no
clear pattern and the poorest group is more
satisfied than the wealthiest group. This pattern
reappears in the respective national surveys:
among Materialists, there is invariably a
positive relationship between income and
Overall Life Satisfaction. Among the PostMaterialists, the linkage is consistently weaker
and we actually find a negative relationship in
four of the nine countries.

While increased prosperity may produce a short-term sense of gratification, an individual gradually adjusts his aspiration level to his external circumstances; after a certain time lag, one takes a given level of prosperity for granted and aspires to more. Thus, structural differences in material welfare among groups with a stable membership are linked with surprisingly small differences in subjective satisfaction.

Apparent Paradox

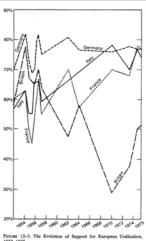


FIGURE 12-3. The Evolution of Support for European Unification, 1952–1953.

Based on percent "for" "efforts to unity Europe." Mining data are included in percentage base; thus, in 1952, 70 percent of the German public was "for," 10 percent "against" and 20 percent "undecided" or "no opinion."

Cognitive Mobilization

Supranational identity

Cognitive Mobilization

compromise is scandalous.

(...)

The first and most widespread form of Post-Materialist response has been a revival of Marxism itself (...) Marx provided a brilliant and productive critique of nineteenth-century industrialization, and insofar as the problems we face remain the same as in his era, his analysis remains relevant. But the problems are not altogether the same. (...) A change in ownership does not seem to make those directing things less rigid or repressive; if anything, Soviet bureaucracy seems more so than Western ones. Nor does it seem to make

