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CLASS VOTING IN BRITAIN IN 1979

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Government
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of The Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by

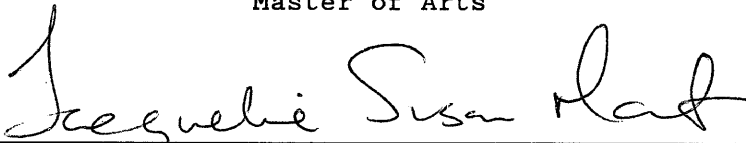
Jacqueline Susan Mart

1987

APPROVAL SHEET


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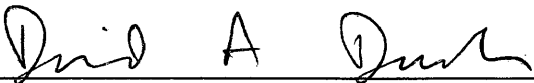


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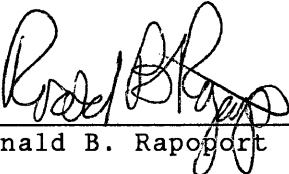
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CLASS VOTING IN BRITAIN IN 1979

ABSTRACT

British people are considered to be very aware of their social class and often categorize each other into either working class or middle class. Social class categorization usually depends upon a person's occupation, where doctors are considered middle class while those doing a manual job are considered to belong to the working class.

As well as categorizing people according to their occupation, a person's social class may depend upon other variables, such as where one lives (working class people usually live in rented accommodation and middle class people buy their own homes), or whether one stayed at school beyond the legal minimum school leaving age (middle class). As well as people categorizing others into a social class, British people also have a subjective class identification and are often eager to admit to which class they belong. From their subjective class identification, the British, in the past, have used it as a guide as to how to vote in elections, so that middle class people usually voted for the Conservative Party, while working class people voted for the Labor Party.

In this study, we wanted to determine if this link between social class and vote has weakened. We find that the link is still quite strong, especially when using particular objective class variables. But we find that there are two types of subjective class identifiers: passive and active. When people feel actively working class, then their tendency to vote Labor is greater than when they have only a passive affinity with the working class.

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CLASS VOTING IN BRITAIN IN 1979

INTRODUCTION

A widely held view of British society is that it is based on class. In this Introduction, we briefly review some of the literature on the subject which explores the nature of class and its link with voting behavior. A second generalization about British society and class is that the link between class and voting behavior has declined over the last decade and continues to weaken. We review some of the literature which looks at this question, paying particular attention to the impact of this decline on the fortunes of the Labor Party in particular. In the final section of the Introduction, we examine the nature of class in more detail.

The underlying theme for the rest of the paper is that because the objective working class are in the majority in Britain, then Labor should be perpetually in power if the link between party and class is unweakened. But there are changes in government from election to election. Before voters can vote according to their class, they must be aware of their class and it is a self-awareness of one's image which is an important factor in converting objective class into vote. Self-image, then, has to be a very powerful characteristic of class and subjective class must come into play because of the changes in government from election to election.

In Chapter One, we look at the global variable of occupational grade and its associated variable, income, in order to determine how the whole of the sample divides on subjective class and vote. We

find that only the two manual occupations contain a majority of the subjective working class and we use the non-manual/manual distinction throughout the paper so as to ensure that when we discuss the subjective working class, we are also referring to the objective working class (and not the objective middle class who may have a subjective working class identification).

We then move on to examine the other class variables: unionization (we also look at work sector: private and public), education and housing status to compare their individual effects on the subjective identity of manual workers. We also look at age and sex because both variables have been found in the past to have important effects on voting behavior. (Butler & Stokes, 1974). The lasting effects of childhood socialization are undisputed (Greenstein, 1965 and Jennings and Niemi, 1968) and we compare the effects of family class and family party on the subjective image of manual employees. We use simple crosstabulations to compare the numbers of working class identifiers within each class variable and we examine the effects of these class variables on the Labor vote of the manual working class.

In Chapter Two, we attempt to look at subjective class in more detail and at the misidentifiers: those who are clearly part of the objective and subjective working class but who fail to register a Labor vote and as a result, vote Conservative. Apart from our findings in Chapter One, we find another possible explanation as to why those who are objective and subjective working class vote Conservative. The explanation is attributed to the strength with which one identifies with the working class: what we label "active"

or "passive" working class. We assess which variables are affecting subjective class compared to those affecting the vote. We end the paper with multivariate analyses of class identification and vote. Our conclusion is that while one cannot look at the British electoral system without looking at social class, looking at social class in terms of objective characteristics only is to ignore the powerful link between subjective class and voting behavior.

METHODOLOGY

Two political parties only are used throughout this paper: Labor and Conservative. The Social Democratic Party (SDP) had not been formed in 1979 and third party shares of the seats in parliament have never exceeded 2.2% and have only ever averaged 1.4%.

Throughout the paper, the tables all reveal certain amounts of objectively working class people subjectively identifying with the middle class. One possible theory is that the working class Tory may have come to acquire a middle class self-image through a Conservative Party socialization process resulting in an affinity with the middle class. Whatever the reason, the phenomenon is not examined in this paper.

THE BRITISH ELECTION SURVEY 1979

This paper is based on the 1979 British Election Survey. The 1979 Survey is a part of a series of surveys which have been conducted between 1974 to 1979 by the British Election Study at the University of Essex and are also part of a series of surveys conducted between 1964 to 1970 by David Butler of Nuffield College,

Oxford and Donald Stokes, formerly of the University of Michigan.

The 1979 Survey was conducted in May of that year, after the general election. The basic sample was drawn from the electoral registers of 1974 and contains 3,400 individuals in a sample of constituencies (Northern Ireland is excluded). These individuals were surveyed in the two election of 1974, polled by mail questionnaires in the 1975 referendum on Britain's membership of the EEC, and interviewed in the 1979 Survey. The interviews for the May 1979 Election Survey were carried out by professional market research bureaux. The British Election Study group at Essex wrote and designed the questionnaires and monitored the fieldwork. Coding of the questionnaires, data preparation and all the analyses were carried out at the University of Essex.

CLASS AND VOTING BEHAVIOR

The first systematic study of class voting in Britain entitled The Middle Class Vote was carried out in 1954 by John Bonham. (Bonham, 1954). The general idea that came out of the work was that there was no emergence of a significant sized 'middle class' until after the second world war. The new Labor Party received a strong mandate from the working class for its program of social and economic reform. However, Bonham identified a large proportion of people who were neither poor, urbanized, nor industrialized, and who did not belong to the Marxist ruling class. This group constitutes what is now known as the middle class. The group did have a class interest as they formed the principal opposition to the working class of that time. By winning the 1945 election, Labor called attention to the

The increasing affluence of the poor and industrialized working class lead Goldthorpe and Lockwood to the embourgeoisement thesis which posited that the Labor Party would increasingly become out of tune with these growing numbers of affluent workers.

(Goldthorpe, et al, 1968). This thesis was based on the growing numbers of affluent, skilled, manual workers who were thought likely to be instrumental in their voting choices, and to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of the parties before voting for the one most likely to protect their affluence. This was in marked contrast to the non-affluent manual worker who would automatically vote Labor because of class loyalty, reinforced by his economic conditions.

Butler and Stokes, on the other hand, argued that the Labor Party had been in existence for approximately sixty years and that later generations would establish an even firmer political loyalty to the Labor Party as children of Conservatives became a less and less significant force. (Butler & Stokes, 1974:267-268). Butler and Stokes felt that the collapse of Conservative strength in the early 1960s disproved the embourgeoisement hypothesis, defined by Butler and Stokes as:

"... a process of conversion whereby the prosperous working class acquires the social and political self-images of the middle class as it acquires middle class consumption patterns." (Butler & Stokes, 1974:101).

Butler and Stokes looked at voting behavior in four different age cohorts: pre-1918; inter-war; 1945 and post-1951. They believed that as the Labor Party had evolved only since the first world war, it would take time for each generation to be exposed to Labor and to socialize its children into a party system where Labor was present.

Because loyalties are transmitted in the childhood home, time was needed for historic attachments to the 'bourgeois' parties to weaken and for 'secondary' processes to complete the realignment by class. Those in the 1945 and post-1950 cohorts are voters who were more strongly affected by such a process than the earlier cohort, and by the presence of Labor in the political system. The gap in cross voting between classes narrowed in the younger cohorts, which Butler and Stokes attributed to the decline of Conservative support in the working class rather than a rise of Labor strength in the middle class.

Although a Marxist analysis of class may be somewhat deficient in analyzing British politics, at least one class theorist agrees that it is the idea of the division of labor rather than property which is the basis for social stratification in Western Democracies. (Parkin, 1971). Hierarchies of occupations come about as a result of levels of authority at the workplace and of the amount of status and prestige that is accorded the occupations by society. Butler and Stokes (Butler & Stokes, 1974:70) found overwhelming evidence that occupation is the best guide to subjective class identity.

When asked what sort of people belong to the middle class, 61% gave the occupational characteristics of non-manual, white collar, skilled, professional, and self-employed as being typical of middle class people. Income and level of living described as rich, wealthy, and comfortably off came next in the characteristics which belong to middle class people (answered by 21%). When asked about working class people, occupation as a characteristic was given by 74% of respondents and working class occupations were described as manual,

semi-skilled and unskilled, people who work for a living, and employees. Income and level of living (poor, low income, people who live in poor housing, in slums) were given next by 10% of respondents.

Authority relations at work were used by Weber (1947) and Dahrendorf (1959) to define class, and both studies are ultimately derived from the division of labor which stratifies Western societies.

In 1958, The Black-Coated Worker (Lockwood) took the discussion of social stratification based on occupation a step further and looked at a worker's "market situation" and his "work situation." This gave consideration to other components of occupation, such as income, job security and social relations. As Robertson notes, there is little problem in producing a ranking of occupations. The problem is where to make the cut-off points. (Robertson, 1984:11).

The most common method of stratification is to divide between manual and non-manual workers where manual workers constitute the working class and where non-manual workers make up the non-working class category. The working class consist of manual occupational grades C2 and D (semi-skilled and unskilled manual work) and the remainder (the non-working class) occupy grades A and B (higher and lower ranks of management), C1A (skilled non-manual workers) and C1B (skilled lower non-manual workers). We discuss these grades in more detail in Chapter One.

Research into voting behavior in Great Britain has

consistently revealed a correlation between the class position of the voter and the party they vote for. Pulzer wrote that:

"... class is the basis of British party politics; all else is embellishment and detail." (Pulzer, 1967:98).

Evidence followed to show that Britain displayed more class voting than any other country in the Anglo-American system. (Alford, 1963).

We can expect a relationship between class and vote in Western Democracies for the following reasons:

"... the existence of class interests, the representation of these interests by political parties, and the regular association of certain parties with certain interests. Given the character of the stratification order and the way political parties act as representatives of different class interests, it would be remarkable if such a relation were not found." (Alford, 1963:68-9).

Alford devised an Index to show the level of class voting cross-nationally. (Alford, 1963:19). The Index equals the percentage of the working class voting for a left-wing party minus the percentage of the country's middle class who vote for the left. In 1979, for example, when 51% of workers voted for Labor and 22% of the middle class voted Labor, the Index was 51-22 or 29. The working class is defined as manual workers and the middle class as non-manual workers. The left-wing party is the party which stood overall for the social and economic interests of the working class in the particular country in question. At the time, (1954-1956), Britain stood out as the most class-ridden of four countries (UK, USA, Canada and Australia). (The Index for the UK was 41, followed by 34 for Australia, 16 for the US and an Index of 8 for Canada).

In the UK, then, a relationship between objective class and vote is expected because of the polarization of the two main political parties' ideology where both parties espouse policies which

have clear class connections. Those who proclaimed the end of ideology in the 1950s and 1960s were wrong. The broad "Butskellite" consensus that reigned from the 1940s to the early 1970s broke down. This consensus consisted of an acceptance of the welfare state, a Keynesian mixed economy and a duty of the government to provide "full" employment, low rates of inflation and economic growth. While the two major parties had different priorities, they both had similar commitments.

During the 1970s, changes came which concentrated on the role of the state in modern society. The burden of the growing welfare state upon the country's economic performance was one of the forces which brought about change. Neo-liberal ideas of Hayek (1944) and Friedman (1971) began to permeate the Conservative Party, while Euro-Communism and professional left-wing activists began to mould Labor Party ideology in response. The Conservative Party in 1979 wanted to vigorously restrict the role of the state and was committed to economic liberalism and deregulation: it is not the duty of the government to seek to implement any particular aspect of the good life; individuals should pursue it in their own way. On the other hand, the Labor Party wanted to extend the role of the state, particularly into the private sector in order to link private industry to social needs, not just to private profit. (See R. Plant, [1985], for a fuller discussion).

In Great Britain, the Conservative Party is a political party representing a variety of issue positions - less welfare legislation, lower personal taxation, less state intervention in the regulation of business. The Labor Party represents interests at the other end of

the spectrum: more welfare spending, the redistribution of wealth and the intervention of the state to regulate business. Originally, the Labor Party was set up by working class institutions to give political representation to working class economic interests. Class interests though are not completely homogeneous and never have been. Britain does not, as Alford notes, divide into two camps: one privileged and the other oppressed. (Alford in Lipset & Rokkan, 1967:78). For this reason, class interests are only one factor, albeit an important one, in voter behavior. Deviations from class voting may come then through a coalition of interests which cut across class lines.

Butler and Stokes (1969:4) speculated that changes in voting behavior could arise through the replacement of the electorate due to birth and death. They cited the transition from the Macmillan triumph in 1959 to the Wilson victory of 1964 as being caused in part by the replacement of older voters by younger cohorts. (Butler & Stokes, 1969: 4). Another cleavage to cut across class voting is the support that is given to a party for various odd reasons. (Butler & Stokes, 1969:5). Most importantly, voting may cut across class lines due to the electors' response to immediate issues and events. (Butler & Stokes, 1969: 5). The 1979 "winter of discontent" was at least partly responsible for Labor's defeat at the polls later on that year. The immigration issue had the ability to convert substantial numbers of voters, both working and middle class, into Conservative support. (Butler & Stokes, 1969: 303-308).

Clearly, given the numerical dominance of the working class in Britain, and the electoral success of the Conservative Party, it is

obvious that there has been substantial working class Toryism. There has always been the phenomenon in Britain of the working class Conservative. Nordlinger observed that due to Britain's gradual political development, there was a fusion of democratic and hierarchical elements, with an emphasis on the latter. (Nordlinger, 1967:Chapter 1). In Beer's words:

"our system is one of democracy, but of democracy by consent and not by delegation, of government of the people, for the people, with, but not by, the people."
(Nordlinger, 1967:16).

The Tory tradition emphasizes hierarchy with the belief that it is authoritative leadership which produces the good society - in essence anti-democratic, although not authoritarian, since it is checked by numerous constitutional conventions. Notwithstanding the differences between Labor and Conservative, it is this Tory conception of the relationship between government and the electorate which is widely diffused through society, and it is this conception that gives rise to working class Conservatism.

RECENT VOLATILITY IN CLASS AND VOTING BEHAVIOR

But, since the 1960s, the British electorate has shown increasing volatility. This volatility has resulted in a decline in class voting with unfortunate results for the Labor Party. Labor's defeat by the Conservatives in 1970 led to four years in opposition but Labor was back in government by February 1974. Most of the writing on Labor's decline begins with the Party's defeat in 1979 and not surprisingly, because it is only in retrospect that the decline in its electoral performance can be assessed. The 1983 election defeat of Labor amounted to a continued erosion of its vote over more

than a quarter of a century.

The elections of February 1974, October 1974 and May 1979 began to show significant departures in traditional voting patterns in Britain. In February 1974, the Conservative vote slumped by 8.6% (the sharpest loss by any party since 1945) while the decline of 6.0% of the Labor vote represented the worst deterioration by a major opposition party in 50 years. The 1970s witnessed a rise in the third party vote with smaller parties trebling their parliamentary representation in February 1974. In 1977, Crewe remarked:

"[T]he coincidence of a national political crisis and marked electoral change can signify very different things. It may amount to no more than an historical movement, a temporary break from normal politics. Or it may mark a historical juncture, the end of one electoral era and the beginning of another." (Crewe, Sarlvik & Alt, 1977:133).

The 1979 election departed even further from old voting patterns producing a 5.2% swing to the Conservatives with an electoral outcome that was highest since the War in geographical unevenness.

"... the Conservatives' low stock in 1974 could be attributed to the combination of an increasingly fickle electorate and short term forces along. But the placing of the 1979 results in a long-term and comparative context does suggest a more enduring basis to Labor's electoral decline." (Crewe in Kavanagh, 1982:12).

Political scientists were cautious about calling the 1979 result a victory for the Conservative Party. Sarlvik and Crewe's analysis of the Conservative victory acknowledges that while the Conservative share of the vote was below earlier post-war election victories and its share of the total electorate was down, the margin of the Conservative win owed itself to a low Labor vote and not a high Conservative one.

"... the 1979 election was lost by the Labor government rather than won by the Conservative opposition. The result spoke

more eloquently of the electorate's rejection of Labor than of its embrace of the Conservatives." (Sarlvik & Crewe, 1983:5).

The Alford Index for Britain shown as a decline over time (1964-1979) and Crewe suggests a partisan dealignment thesis based on the increasing share of the vote gained by third parties. (Crewe, Sarlvik, and Alt, 1977). If party identification has been closely correlated with class in the past, then partisan dealignment also reveals a loosening in class identification.

In 1983, only 20.6% of the total electorate voted Labor, the worst result since 1918 for the Labor Party and a result which confirmed that Labor was now unpopular in opposition as well as in government. The Labor Party has traditionally always been the party of the working class. The emphasis is Crewe's because by the 1980s, he sees the Labor Party as being only a party of the working class. (Crewe in Kavanagh, 1982:11). The Labor Party began as an alliance in parliament of the Social Democratic Federation, the Fabian Society, the Independent Labor Party and the Trade Union movement and its objective was to try and reconcile in parliament the interests of working people with socialism. One of the main reasons why Labor lost the 1979 election was because of the desertion of the working class which actually switched to vote Conservative.

Paul Whiteley (1983:94-99) argues that voters not only have affective evaluations of the parties, but voters need also to make prospective as well as retrospective evaluations on performance. Voters tend to judge Labor on its record in the past, not on future policies. Whiteley's findings that the common origin of the ideological, electoral and financial/membership crises within the

Labor Party is the failure of Labor to achieve its goals, especially in office.

Butler and Kavanagh (1980) identify five reasons for Labor's defeat in 1979: not listening to what the electorate wants; concern about trade union power which is linked to the issues of unemployment; prices and industrial relations; a failure to retain the support of the newly affluent worker and failure of the economy to grow.

Clearly, there are various theories which are put forward to explain the decline in the share of the vote for the Labor Party. Robertson's thesis is that class is still important and the idea of a classless volatile electorate is something which is superficial and hiding something much more complex. (Robertson, 1984). He believes that classes do matter electorally in Britain because nothing else does; for example, religion has ceased to play any part in British politics and there is no linguistic cleavage except where it operates on a small minority in Wales.

While class voting could still be important for the reasons that Robertson states; British electoral politics has clearly changed dramatically in the last 20 years. Franklin attributes the change to the decline of class voting for the simple reason that class voting was held responsible for the stable pattern that persisted in the past. (Franklin, 1985: 5). The consumption model posits that people can be placed in one of two groups depending on whether important services in their lives are provided by the state or by the private sector: housing, health, education and transport. Voting choice is therefore based on rational self-interest, i.e. which party will best

serve and defend the services one uses. Franklin dismisses the consumer model of voting and the consumption cleavage approach because existing research provides no evidence to support the presence of a mechanism which would allow people to become aware of their interests. (Franklin, 1985: 30-33).

While the theories can account for different social groupings in Britain, they do not explain voting behavior. Socialization provides a mechanism by which a child growing up in a working class environment mimics working class behavior. Based on his results, Franklin was unable to confirm that the decline in class alignment was transitory, based on temporary changes in the class profile of the electorate. What he did find is that the decline in class voting has allowed an equivalent rise in issue-based voting choice. The British electorate has now moved to a more sophisticated basis for voting choice, being no longer constrained to the same extent by characteristics established during childhood and that British voters are now more open to issue-based argument.

WHAT IS CLASS?

Up to now, we have spoken about class in very general terms, where the middle class is defined as those engaged in non-manual work, while the working class includes manual or unskilled workers. But class does include more than occupational status, although this is the main component.

Franklin stresses that his model of class and voting behavior is implicit within Butler and Stokes' work although they present no such model and the model begins with the childhood home environment

where children are socialized into political preferences. (Franklin, 1985:20). It is the type of home and the political preferences held by the adults there that determine the initial political socialization choices of the child. Parents voting for Labor will bring about children who initially vote Labor and parents who are working class are likely to raise a child who votes Labor.

The school environment is another important medium of socialization. Before the mid-1960s, schools in Britain were either grammar or secondary modern. Children were segregated into these schools at age 11 by means of an academic aptitude test (the 11-plus). If they failed the test, the children went to the secondary modern school but if they succeeded, they received a grammar school education. (Another alternative was to attend private school if the parents could afford to pay the fees). The middle-class were over-represented in grammar schools and under-represented in secondary modern schools so that two schools within the education system had a class ethos, and education would intervene to reinforce the political preferences of the home environment. Since the 1960s, these schools have been disappearing to be replaced by a single Comprehensive school; however, segregation according to academic prospects still occurs in the school and within the classroom with an over-representation of the middle class amongst those who stay on at school beyond the minimum legal school-leaving age of 16 years.

Socialization does not end on leaving school but continues within the workplace. As we noted earlier, it is through one's occupation that we are able to characterize the political ethos of the workplace. Additionally, unionization is essentially a

characteristic of working class life and membership can reinforce this and increase the likelihood of voting Labor.

Butler and Stokes (1969:46) found that the immediate home environment was a politicizing component. The segregating influence of public housing within areas with large working class populations had political consequences. It limited cross-class contacts (as with educational segregation) and increased conformity of voting choice according to one's class.

CHAPTER ONE

OBJECTIVE CLASS

Social Grade and Income

As we saw in the Introduction to this paper, occupation has provided the main basis for characterizing class. The most commonly used scheme for classifying social grades was that proposed by a Working Committee of the Market Research Society and used by Butler and Stokes in their first work, Political Change in Britain. Married men and unmarried respondents are classified according to their own occupation while married women are classified according to their husband's occupation. The grades divide work into manual or non-manual, the skills and responsibilities of the job, whether employment or supervision of employees is involved, the prestige of the job, and the level of income. Those who think of themselves as working class should come from those jobs which are of a manual nature. The social grades corresponding to manual occupations are C2 and D. The grades are as follows and the figure in parentheses is the percentage of each grade found in the Survey.

HIGHER MANAGERIAL - GRADE A (9%)

Company Directors	University Teachers	Doctors
Dentists	Architects	Surveyors
Clergymen	Barristers	Solicitors

also: Senior Managers with more than 25 subordinates
 Self-employed Builders with 10 or more employees
 Farmers with over 500 acres
 Scientists with professional qualifications
 Senior Government Officials

LOWER MANAGERIAL - GRADE B (13%)

Qualified Nurses	Pharmacists
------------------	-------------

also: Farmers with 100-500 acres
 Shop Proprietors with 4-9 employees
 Senior Managers with 10-25 subordinates
 Other Managers with 25 subordinates
 Company Secretaries without professional qualifications

SKILLED NON-MANUAL - GRADE C1A (10%)

Draughtsmen	Bank Clerks
-------------	-------------

also: Farmers with 30-90 acres
 Telegraph Operators
 Typists or Secretaries with at least one subordinate
 Civil Service Executive Officers
 Local Authority Officers without professional qualifications
 Commercial Travellers
 Salesmen with a least one subordinate
 Shop Proprietors with 3 or less employees
 Managers with less than 25 subordinates

LOWER NON-MANUAL - GRADE C1B (12%)

Policemen	Caretakers	Innkeepers
Street Vendors	Factory Guards	Waiters

also: Shop Salesmen and Assistants
 Telephone Operators
 Non-supervisory Clerks

SKILLED MANUAL - GRADE C2 (39%)

Linesmen	Fitters	Print Workers
Firemen	Painters	Decorators

also: Coal Miners
 Instrument Makers
 Clothing Workers
 Food, Drink and Tobacco Workers
 Construction Workers

SEMI-SKILLED & UNSKILLED MANUAL - GRADE D (17%)

Gardeners	Quarrymen	Postal Workers
Porters	Messengers	Warehousemen
Farm Workers	Dockworkers	Laundry Workers
		Domestic Workers

Turning to subjective class identification, we find somewhat surprisingly that only for the two highest occupational levels do middle class identifiers comprise a majority. (See Table 1). However, the level of middle class identifiers (mc) declines substantially as the occupation grades go down the hierarchy, while the number of working class (wc) identifiers increases. The figures in parentheses are those of Butler and Stokes (1969). Interestingly, there is an increase in 1979 compared to 1969 in the numbers of middle class identifiers amongst unskilled manual workers (Grade D) and a corresponding increase in working class identifiers amongst the skilled non-manual employees and even amongst higher management. This might indicate the lessened polarization among the class at least in terms of identification. While Butler and Stokes found a difference in working class identification between Grade A and D of 69% (22% of Grade A identified with the working class compared to 91% of Grade D), the difference in 1979 was down to 54.5%).

Table 1:

Subjective Class By Occupational Grade In 1979

	(A)	(B)	(C1A)	(C1B)	(C2)	(D)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
mc	74 (78)	63 (65)	48 (60)	35 (32)	19 (17)	17 (9)
wc	26 (22)	37 (35)	52 (40)	65 (65)	82 (83)	82 (91)
	N=140	N=217	N=167	N=191	N=632	N=272

In 1979, the Conservatives gained a majority in all social grades except C2 and D, the two manual occupations. (See Table 2). Given the traditional role of class in British politics, it is not surprising to find that class is highly correlated with vote. But a working class job does not automatically translate into a Labor vote and this was especially true in 1979. While the Labor vote has increased among the three highest job grades since 1969, the Labor vote has declined (with the Conservative vote increasing) within the three lowest occupational groupings, particularly amongst those whom we can confidently call the objective working class (C2 and D). In line with lessened objective class polarization in terms of class identification we find a lessened vote polarization by objective class.

Table 2:
Vote By Occupational Grade In 1979

	(A)	(B)	(C1A)	(C1B)	(C2)	(D)
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Lab	23	28	21	36	59	59
Con	77	72	79	64	41	41
	N=105	N=177	N=117	N=144	N=450	N=203

A working class self-image does not translate into a majority Labor vote from those in C1A and C1B. Although, as Butler and Stokes found, only these two classes deliver majority support for Labor.

Income

But there are other determinants of class besides job classification, and we shall explore several of these. The most frequent alternative to occupation is simply income. The average income in Britain in April 1979 for males and females across all industries was just over 86 pounds per week, with the average household income standing at 104.50 pounds per week. At the very least, we would expect to find that those on a low income would have a self-image of being working class because occupation and income are highly correlated. But one might expect a more substantial effect since those within an occupational grade earning less should be more likely to identify with the working class. Those on higher incomes should therefore have a middle class self-image. Those who think of themselves as middle class then, earn more than those who have a working class self-image. This can be seen to be true from the following table:

Table 3:

Subjective Class Identification By Weekly Income

	Up to 58 ppw	140+ ppw
	%	%
mc	23	77
wc	77	23
	N=658	N=97

While 52% of the sample who earned up to 58 pounds per week voted Labor, 77% of those earning 140+ pounds per week voted Conservative. (See Table 4). (The Conservative vote increases amongst those who earn above average pay and continues to increase as income becomes higher). Labor's lead however over the Conservatives is only marginal amongst the poorest in Britain, whilst among the richest, the Conservative lead is over 50%.

Table 4:

Share Of The Two Party Vote By Weekly Income

	Up to 58 ppw	140+ ppw
	%	%
Lab	52	23
Con	48	77
	N=658	N=97

Since our concern is primarily with the failure of the Labor Party to hold on to working class votes, we will be focussing on occupational

grades C2 and D. These are the two manual categories (which make up 56% of the respondents in the Survey), and are the two categories which have shown majority support for Labor since 1965. This therefore implies that these two grades should also be those who identify with the working class. From this point onwards, we will look at those whom we define as objective working class - manual workers - and who are the only group to vote in a majority for the Labor Party.

Work Sector

Since the second world war, the public sector in Britain has continued to expand with a corresponding increase in persons employed both by central and by local government. The Labor Party has always stood for the further increase and protection of this sector, while the Conservative Party was pledged to reduce its size if the Party was elected at the polls in 1979. Crewe sees these arguments as suggesting that the vote may have divided along these lines. (Sarlvik & Crewe, 1983: 95). This means that those who worked in the public sector were more likely to vote Labor than Conservative in order to protect their jobs. While the Labor vote from the public sector is slightly higher than the Labor vote from those employed in the private sector, it is nothing like the difference between the vote of manual and non-manual workers. (Compare Table 5 with Table 2). Not surprisingly, the fiercest resistance to the Labor government's 5% cap on public sector pay increases in 1979 came from the public sector, resulting in the "winter of discontent." Crewe believes this to be one reason for the lower Labor vote, since the issues in the electoral campaign did not neatly fit into the public/private sector divide, and did not mobilize public sector employees to support Labor. (Sarlvik & Crewe, 1983: 95). If Crewe is

correct about public/private sector differences, and if this extends to differences within the working class, it does not necessarily follow that the abnormally low levels of Labor voting among public sector manual workers should be reflected in low levels of working class identification. That is, public sector workers should see their class interests more clearly than private sector workers and, therefore, identify strongly with the working class.

Table 5:

Vote In 1979 By Private/Public Sector
Manual Employees

	Private	Public
	%	%
Lab	59	64
Con	41	36
	N=304	N=172

Such is not the case, however. In normal times, we would expect Labor to do significantly better amongst manual workers in the public sector.

From Table 6, it can be seen that in 1979, there was a difference of only 4% in the levels of subjective working class identification between private and public sector employees. However, this should not obscure the extremely high levels of identification evident in both groups.

Table 6:
Subjective Class Identification By Private/Public
Manual Employees

	Private	Public
	%	%
mc	18	14
wc	82	86
	N=440	N=228

Union

If public and private sector employment might be expected to have a marginal effect on voting patterns, unionization should be expected to have a much more direct impact. Manual occupation unions have long had a strong identification with the Labor Party. The Labor Party, after all, was set up to give parliamentary representation to working-class institutions, and the unions retain a large official vote in Labor Party internal affairs. Unions organize and bring workers together. In so doing, they stress the commonality of worker and class experience. As Franklin notes, unionization "... can reinforce a working class occupational ethos and so increase the likelihood of Labor voting." (Franklin, 1985: 17). By reinforcing the fact that their members are members of the working class, and by members having a relationship with other unionized workers and an indirect one with the Labor Party, one would expect to find that one's subjective class, if unionized, would be located within the working class. We should expect to find then that union members are more likely to identify with the working class, and to take that class identity with them to the voting booth.

Table: 7

Subjective Class Identification Of Unionized and
Non-Unionized Manual Workers

	Unionized Members	Non-Unionized Families
	%	%
mc	14	18
wc	86	82
	N=346	N=365

Unionization only has a very small effect on one's subjective working class identity (4%), which is surprising considering unionization is a characteristic of life in the working class. (See Table 7). But when it comes to the Labor vote, although the Labor vote drops, it is far better for the Labor Party to rely on union members than on non-unionized workers. Nearly 70% of union members voted Labor, while in families where there are no unionized employees, only 45% of the respondents voted Labor. Unionization increases the Labor vote by almost 25% over its vote from non-unionized workers.

We should expect to find, then, that union members are more likely to identify with the working class, and to take that class identify with them to the voting booth. Table 8 shows strong support for the voting hypothesis. While less than half of all non-unionized families supported Labor in 1979 (45%), almost 70% of unionized manual workers did, a difference of almost 25%. Support for the identification hypothesis is, on the other hand, a bit weaker. Unionized members are only 4% more likely to identify with the working class than are non-unionized manual

employees. Although this difference is small, we must remember that the levels of identification are rather high to begin with and given this fact, the differences are not unimportant.

Table 8:

Vote In 1979 Of Unionized and Non-Unionized
Manual Workers

	Unionized Members	Non-Unionized Families
	%	%
Lab	69.5	45
Con	30.5	55
	N=220	N=182

However, it could be that non-unionized workers tend to be lower in class grade than unionized workers. If so, this might explain the small difference. It does turn out that 75% of unionized manual employees come from the C2 grade whilst only 64% of non-union workers do so. Dividing the sample into these two groups and testing the effect of unionization on class identification, we find an augmented effect on Grade D workers (a difference in working class identification of 10%), and approximately the same impact as before on Grade C2 workers.

Unionization clearly has an added effect on one's working class self-image, (see Table 9). We can control again for the effects of working class occupations upon the relationship between unionization and the vote. (See Table 10).

Table 9:

Subjective Class Identification Of Unionized and
Non-Unionized Skilled Manual Workers

	C2 Unionized	C2 Non- Unionized
	%	%
mc	15	18
wc	85	82
	N=261	N=233

Table 10:

Vote In 1979 Of Unionized And Non-Unionized
Manual Employees

	C2 Unionized	C2 Non- Unionized
	%	%
Lab	71	41.5
Con	29	58.5
	N=176	N=171

Unionization then, has a much larger effect on the Labor vote than on one's subject class image, as seen in comparing Table 9 with Table 10, although occupational Grade D respondents who are not in a union vote Labor in greater numbers than non-unionized workers in Grade C2. In fact, Labor keeps its majority amongst unskilled workers whether they are in a union or not. The Labor Party has a clear lead over the

Conservatives amongst C2 union members but amongst non-unionized Grade C2 employees, there is no natural Labor vote.

Housing Status

Local housing policy has long been a point of contention between the Conservative and Labor Parties. The Conservative Party has supported fewer public housing starts, lower tax rates on property, and higher rents on public housing. Labor has favored the opposite in all cases. As a result, in normal years we should expect to find council housing tenants to be particularly strong Labor supporters. In addition, by bringing working class individuals together in common residential locations, we should expect to find enhanced levels of working class identification among council housing tenants.

But 1979 was no ordinary election year. What made it different in relation to the council housing issue was the Conservatives had pledged to allow council house dwellers to buy their homes at discounted prices. As Sarlvik and Crewe point out, this stand cross-pressured council tenants who were on the verge, given a Conservative victory, of becoming home owners. (Sarlvik & Crewe, 1983: 100). Such an opportunity could be expected to weaken both support for Labor among council housing tenants, and possibly to weaken the levels of class identification, although the latter is clearly more speculative. (Butler and Stokes did find a 20% drop in working class identification among those who moved from council housing into home ownership). (Butler & Stokes, 1969:102-104).

The data are ambiguous on both counts. Council tenants remained more likely to identify with the working class (by a 10% difference compared with home owners), and significantly more likely to vote Labor (by a margin of 21%). (See Tables 11 and 12). Possibly the lack of

confidence in how the program would work out limited the effect of the council housing issue in 1979, although by the 1983 election, its effect was obvious, as council house purchasers shifted in large numbers to the Conservatives. (Sarlvik & Crewe, 1983: 102).

Table 11:

Subjective Class Identification Amongst
Manual Workers By Housing Status

	Home Owners	Council Tenants
	%	%
mc	23	13
wc	77	87
	N=398	N=383

As can be seen from Table 12, 72% of council house tenants registered a Labor vote while amongst home owners, the vote was split practically equally between the two parties.

Table 12:

Vote In 1979 Of Manual Workers
By Housing Status

	Home Owners	Council Tenants
	%	%
Lab	51	72
Con	49	28
	N=298	N=280

Socialization Effects

Up to this point, we have been examining current experiences, and their effect on identification and vote. We will now turn briefly to two variables which predate adult experiences: childhood home and school experiences. As Stern and Searing (1973) and others find, social class is one of the earliest identifications formed by children. As a result we should expect to find important precursors of current identifications, which in turn are molded by childhood experiences.

One of the most important, indeed the most important, of these experiences is one's family's social class identification. Coming from a working class environment exposes one to experiences which will bring out working class identification, but the role of direct transmission should not be ignored. Even though we are looking only at manual workers in the two lowest occupational categories, we should therefore still expect to find important residues of childhood class experience, and an important secondary effect on vote.

As Table 13 shows, there is a very strong support for the childhood socialization model for class identification. Up to now, we have not seen any variable which accounted for more than a 20% difference in working class identification within the manual worker categories. Now, however, we see a 37% difference. Manual workers with middle class parents were almost four times as likely to identify with the middle class as were respondents from a working class background.

The effect on vote is somewhat less (only about 20%), but it is still one of the strongest effects that we have found so far. (See Table 14).

Table 13:

Subjective Class Identification Of Manual Workers
By Parents' Class

	Middle Class	Working Class
	%	%
mc	50	13
wc	50	87
	N=119	N=773

Table 14:

Vote In 1979 Of Manual Workers By Parents' Class

	Middle Class	Working Class
	%	%
Lab	40	61
Con	60	39
	N=83	N=560

Furthermore, if we expand our socialization concerns and look at parents' party in relation to respondent's vote, we find a very wide difference. In Table 16, we see that while over 3/4 of those respondents from Labor homes were Labor voters in 1979, only about 1/4 of those from Conservative homes were Labor supporters in 1979.

Table 15:

Subjective Class Identification Of Manual Workers
By Parents' Party

	Both Conservative	Both Labor
	%	%
mc	26.5	14
wc	73.5	86
	N=147	N=384

Table 16:

Vote In 1979 Of Manual Workers By Parents' Party

	Both Conservative	Both Labor
	%	%
Lab	27	78
Con	73	22
	N=111	N=289

Age Left School

Since the mid 1960s, the number of secondary modern and grammar schools has decreased since the idea of the comprehensive school was introduced. It is therefore a worthless task to try and discern where people were educated. We might ask whether the school was a state school or a private one, but as so few in the Survey were educated in fee-paying schools, we are still not adequately getting at this class

characteristic. This is why Franklin uses the age at which the respondent left school. (Franklin, 1985: 12-15). Most "grammar school types" will be those who stay on at school beyond the minimum legal school-leaving age. Franklin also notes, rightly, that comprehensive schools do not mean that working class and middle class, bright and not so bright, are mixing together. While they may all be schooled under one roof, segregation is carried out between and within the classroom. This variable is of course linked to one's education and eventually one's occupation and income. Those who left school at the earliest legal opportunity are more likely to be from working class backgrounds and to end up in jobs lower down the occupational hierarchy earning an average or below average wage. From the tables below, we can see that those who think of themselves as working class will more than likely have left school at the minimum school-leaving age. (In the Survey, 81% left school before the age of 16 years and another 14% left school at 16 years of age). Those who stayed at school longer are almost twice as likely to think of themselves as middle class as those leaving before the age of 16 years. Notice, though, the majority of manual workers who left school at 15 years as against those who stayed on until 16 years and older.

Table 17:

Subjective Class Identification Of Manual Workers
By Age Left School

	0-15 years	16 years	17-18+ years
	%	%	%
mc	17	23	26
wc	83	77	74
	N=711	N=141	N=46

Table 18:

Vote In 1979 Of Manual Workers By Age Left School

	0-15 years	16 years	17-18+ years
	%	%	%
Lab	61	52.5	48.5
Con	39	47.5	51.5
	N=520	N=101	N=33

Demographics

The final two variables we shall examine are the important demographics of age and sex. All the foregoing components of class play a role in transmitting class identification, and in linking it to vote, but non-class variables may also attenuate or amplify objective-subjective class correspondence by structuring the kinds of experiences that individuals have. Foremost among these are sex and age. By being born into a particular birth cohort, one's future experiences are shaped. If one is born into a small cohort, that might mean higher pay for the same work and even though the class of one's job is the same, the experience of that job, and the monetary reward attached to it may not. On the other hand, being born at a time of relative affluence might make one's own relative poverty stand out more strongly and reinforce class identification.

Age is also important in defining the point at which one is in the life cycle. Being in a lower class job at 55 years of age is very different from being in one at the age of 25 years, and the strength of one's identification might be expected to vary accordingly.

Similarly, males and females have very different experiences. It is important to remember that females are rated according to their husbands' jobs. Since they do not come into close contact with other working class individuals in the work environment, we might expect their levels of class identification to lag behind those of males. Similarly, this might reinforce the expectation, based on the 10 elections between 1945 and 1974, that women are likely to vote Conservative (true in 7 out of the 10 elections) and men are likely to favor Labor (true in 9 of the 10 elections).

Looking first at age effects. We have divided the sample simply into decades of life, while breaking the youngest group in half. This leaves us with the following age categories: 18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60+. Doing so, we find only a very mild effect of age on class identification. Although the relationship is mildly monotonic, levels of working class identification vary only between 86% for the youngest cohort and 22% for the oldest cohort. The youngest cohort includes both the baby boom generation and the group coming of age during relative affluence. This may have served to counteract the "optimism of youth" effect that we had also expected to find. (See Table 19).

Finally, turning to sex differences in identification and vote, we find little of importance. Females from manual worker homes are only slightly less likely to identify with the working class, and not at all more likely to vote for the Conservatives. (See Tables 21 and 22).

Table 19:

Subjective Class Identification Of Manual Workers By Age

	18-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
mc	20.5	13	17	17	19	21
wc	79.5	87	83	83	81	79
	N=78	N=100	N=208	N=160	N=160	N=198

Although the percentage differences across all age groups are not significant, it would seem that from the following table, we can say that the working class are more numerous amongst the young and less numerous amongst older manual workers.

Table 20:

Vote In 1979 Of Manual Workers By Age

	18-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Lab	56.5	63	62	62	57	54
Con	43.5	37	38	38	43	46
	N=46	N=62	N=146	N=122	N=128	N=156

Crewe (Sarlvik & Crewe: 1983: 91-3) finds that when compared with the 1974 election, the swing to the Conservatives from the electorate as a whole was not as great from the old as from the young (+14% amongst the 18-24 year olds and +6% among the over 65s). Labor in fact lost most of its ground since 1974 among the traditionally fickle young.

Table 21:

Subjective Class Identification
Of Manual Workers By Sex

	Male	Female
	%	%
mc	18	18.5
wc	82	81.5
	N=487	N=417

Table 22:

Vote In 1979 Of Manual Workers
By Sex

	Male	Female
	%	%
mc	58	60
wc	42	40
	N=346	N=314

Summary

We began the paper with two generalizations that are widely held by observers of the British political system. First, that British society and politics are based on class; secondly, that the link between class and vote has declined over the last decade and continues to weaken. The results of the elections in Britain since the 1970s show that substantial numbers of the traditional working class (those in manual occupations) have moved from voting in a majority for Labor to dividing their support almost equally between the Conservative Party and the Labor

Party.

To examine the link between class and vote in more detail, we need a more sophisticated definition of class than that of middle class being non-manual workers and working class people being employed in manual occupations. We therefore used Franklin's model of class: childhood socialization : school environment : workplace socialization. Parents' class and parents' party introduce children to their early political values which could be reinforced within the school and within the workplace through income, occupation, work sector and unionization. We looked only at manual employees using this model of class, and their subjective class identification was determined by asking whether the respondent thought of himself or herself as working class or middle class.

We found unionization to have a strong effect on the Labor vote and more particularly, strong support for the childhood socialization effect on class identification as well as on vote.

CHAPTER TWO

SUBJECTIVE CLASS

Up to now, we have been using a simple idea of class identification. We have defined the subjective working class as those who stated that they were working class, whether they gave that response spontaneously in response to an open-ended question, or after being prompted to put themselves into either the working class or the middle class. But those who did not need prompting into their class identification constituted less than half of the sample. Over half did not identify with either class when asked the following question:

"One often hears talk about social classes. Do you ever think of yourself as belonging to any particular class. IF YES, which class is that?"

In response to that question, 17.5% placed themselves in the middle class category, and 30% in the working class. These individuals are considered active class identifiers. When asked to make a choice between being middle class and working class on the follow-up question, less than 10% were unable to do so, and of the 91% who did make a choice, 68% identified with the working class. These respondents are considered passive class identifiers. This gives us four categories:

Active working class (30.2% of all identifiers);
Passive working class (35.4% of all identifiers);
Passive middle class (16.7% of all identifiers);
Active middle class (17.7% of all identifiers).

We will now move to a discussion of the determinants of active class identification among the objective working class (i.e. manual workers), and of the effects of our independent variables on the vote decision, controlling for level of class identification. In order not to be too repetitive, we will first examine the most important determinants individually at the zero-order level and then move to a consideration of the multivariate model relating background variables to class identification, and then relating these, plus class identification, to voting behavior.

Social Grade

We turn first to the two most common objective class components, social grade and income. It is among the two grades of manual workers (C2 and D) that Labor receives a majority of its vote. But within each of these grades, the difference in Labor vote between passive and active class identifiers is substantial. Using the following tables and looking first at skilled manual workers (C2), Labor support is 19% higher among active working class identifiers than among passive identifiers, and Conservative support is twice as great among middle class identifiers as among active working class identifiers. Among the less skilled manual workers, the difference between active and passive identifiers is less (11%) but still clearly significant. Once again, active identifiers are only half as likely to support the Conservatives as the middle class identifiers.

For neither grade does even half the sample actively identify with the working class, and there is little difference between the two grades in the percentage actively identifying with the working class (40% versus 42%). Similarly, there is no difference in Labor support between the two

grades for the active working class. There is, however, a 7% difference in Labor support among the passive working class. That this is so should not be surprising. For those respondents who identify actively with the working class, such identification should result in strong Labor support, particularly as they are objectively working class as well. But for those who identify only passively, their objective situation should have a stronger effect on their vote. And clearly, the unskilled manual workers are going to be subject to more pro-Labor influences than their more affluent brethren.

Table 23:

Vote Of Skilled Manual Workers In 1979

	Active WC	Passive WC	MC
	%	%	%
Lab	71.3	52.4	42.7
Con	28.7	47.6	57.3
	N=181	N=170	N=82

Table 24:

Vote Of Unskilled Manual Workers In 1979

	Active WC	Passive WC	MC
	%	%	%
Lab	70.5	59.1	38.5
Con	29.5	40.9	61.5
	N=78	N=88	N=26

Income

Looking next at income categories, we continue to find the dominant effect of subjective class identification. For both those making less than 58 pounds per week, and for those making more than 58 pounds per week, active identifiers support Labor substantially more than do passive identifiers. The difference is 15% for the low income category and 18% for the higher income category. On the other hand, there is no substantial difference between the income levels in Labor support from either the active or the passive working class. Income is also unrelated to the likelihood of active working class identification. Forty percent of the lower income group and 43% of the higher income group, actively identify with their objective class.

Unions

Unions provide enormous organizational and financial support for the Labor Party. In addition, of course, they have a formal position of power in the Party. We have seen earlier that union membership is strongly related to vote, but how strongly is it related to active class identification, and how much of the effect of union membership remains once we control for level of identification?

To begin with, union membership does not raise the level of active class identification above that of the sample as a whole. Only 45% of the union members with manual jobs actively identify with the working class. For non-union families, the percentage falls only to 39%.

The role of unionization is clear, however, in its ability to blunt the effect of class identification. And the effect is not limited to union members, but extends to spouses with equal impact. For both union members and spouses of union members, it makes little difference

whether one actively or passively identifies with the working class. For both groups, at least 65% of passive working class identifiers and at least 74% of active working class identifiers support the Labor Party, and the difference is, in both cases, 10% or less.

Among those respondents with no union members in the family, the class identification effect reasserts itself. Active working class identifiers are more than 20% more likely to support Labor than are passive working class supporters. Once again, without the constraint of union membership, the natural effect of class identification is evident. (And similarly, the effect of union membership is far greater on the vote of passive identifiers, 28%, than of active identifiers, 18%).

Housing Status

Housing status has an effect very similar to that of union membership. Once again, there is little difference in the percentage of active class identification between those who own their home and those who live in council/new town housing. Forty-three percent of the former and 41% of the latter identify actively with the working class. But, again, there is an overriding effect of council housing on the vote. Among those who live in council housing, 71% of the passive working class and 77% of the active working class voted for the Labor Party, a difference of only 6%.

Again, there is a strong class effect among those respondents who own their houses or flats. Within this group, almost twice as many active working class identifiers as passive working class identifiers supported Labor.

Looking at the data in another way, we find, similar to the effect of social grade, that it is among the passive working class that other

factors come into play. Active identifiers differ by only 8% in their Labor support according to their home-owning status, but among the passive working class, the difference is 34%. Just like the experience of council house living, the subject experience of working class identification can overcome objective differences, resulting in an homogenous vote for the active identifiers.

Family Effects

Turning next to family effects, we will examine both class and political inclinations of family. Our expectation should clearly be that family social class when one is growing up should most strongly affect one's own class identify, but that political inclinations of parents should be more important for voting behavior and partisanship in one's adult years.

Both of these expectations are borne out. Among those manual worker respondents from middle class families, only 10% actively identify as working class, while among those from working class homes, 46% so identify. Although there is a tendency for respondents from Conservative homes to be less likely to actively identify with the working class than those from Labor homes (31% versus 47%), the difference here is far smaller.

On the other hand, the effect of childhood political environment is far greater than that of childhood social class environment. For all three subjective class groups, the effect of family political background on vote is greater than 30%, ranging from 31% for active working class to 56% for passive working class to 52% for the middle class identifiers. The effect of family social class on vote, within categories of subjective class, ranges only from 6% to 25%. Although this latter

effect is not insignificant, it does pale by comparison with partisan background effects.

Sex

Finally, we turn to sex as a determinant of class and vote. Given that a substantial percentage of females are not in the workforce, it might be expected that they would be less likely to identify actively with their objective family class, and that they would be less likely to translate this identification, even when it was present, into votes.

The data however refute this expectation. There is virtually no difference in the percentages of males and of females, from objective working class homes, who actively identify with the working class (42% of females and 41% of males). Furthermore, with the exception of middle class identifiers, where females are actually 10% more likely than males to support Labor, there are no sex differences at all in the level of Labor support within subjective class categories.

Summary

Overall, it is clear that at the zero order at least, the effects of our selected variables (with the notable exception of childhood class environment) on subjective class identification are far weaker than these effects on vote. Furthermore, although the relationship was by no means completely consistent, the passive working class was more subject to objective experience effects than was the passive working class. But what we need to do in order to pull the model together is to test the independent effect of our variables on both subjective class and vote while controlling for all of the other variables' effects. Only in so doing can we ascertain and compare both the direct effects on class identification and the direct and indirect effects of our variables on

vote. It is to these regression models that we now turn.

CHAPTER THREE

MULTIVARIATE ANALYSES OF CLASS IDENTIFICATION AND VOTE

Entering all of the explanatory variables into our regression equation at the same time greatly simplifies our model of class identification. Using all ten predictors emphasizes the strong effect of family social class. Even controlling for education, social grade of job, income, age, sex, and the other predictors, family social class's effect is unchanged. The zero order correlation between subjective class identification and family class was .28. The partial correlation, controlling for nine other variables is .26. Furthermore, the multiple R including all ten predictors is .33, only slightly higher than the partial for family social class.

Remarkably, only one other variable (age) is even significantly related to class identification, and in this the coefficient barely reaches significance ($t=2.042$). This is interesting in that it shows the trend, evident across Western Europe and the United States, that the younger voters are much less class oriented than the parental generation. On the other hand, neither income nor social grade nor work sector achieves significance at even the .10 level.

Obviously, the important factors here are the dominant role of socialization, and the failure to explain subjective class any better than we have. Using 10 plausible predictors, we are able to explain only 8% of the variance. This is partially due to the restricted variance of

both dependent and independent variables (since we are looking at a reasonably homogenous population, i.e. manual workers), but as well, it points out the difficulties in trying to understand the development of class consciousness, even in a class conscious country like Britain. (Obviously, the use of contextual data would improve our ability to explain variance, although it is questionable by how much).

Moving on to the prediction of vote, we find substantially greater predictability overall. Using 11 predictors, we are able to explain more than 16% of the variance. But still the use of regression simplifies our model significantly. Only 4 of the 11 predictors have statistically significant effects on vote, and interestingly, none of these overlap with the predictors of working class identification. Clearly the strongest effect on vote is parental partisanship. This finding is in keeping with the socialization finding of the strong effect of childhood social class experiences on respondent's current identification. In both cases, early experiences continue to influence British voters.

In addition, two other variables have strong effects, union membership and class identification. Interestingly, union membership has no effect on class consciousness, but a strong direct effect on vote. This can of course be attributed to the strong organizational effort that unions are able to mount on behalf of the Labor Party at the time of the election. Even if they can not change long term class attitudes, unions seem to be able to deliver their members on election day.

The effect of subjective class identification is of course to be expected. It is interesting that social grade shows a beta of only .02, and that income is barely significant ($t=2.033$), with a beta of only .11, while class identification shows a beta of .16, even with the controls

for objective class. Furthermore, subjective social class has a substantially greater effect on vote with delineation between active and passive working class identification, than it did without such a distinction.

(Eliminating the non-significant coefficients, and re-running the models produces shifts of no more than .02 in the beta coefficients).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we have established the importance of subjective class identifications, showing them to be more important in terms of the vote than more objective measures. In addition, we have been able to suggest determinants of subjective class. Whether we use a simple dichotomy or a more complicated measure, the role of social class of family while growing up is very strong, especially when we consider the absence of any other strong effects among the variables we examined. Clearly, class is transmitted from generation to generation, and seems to remain relatively impervious to current conditions of employment, education, etc.

The role of this generational transmission is reinforced with the predictions of vote. First, the single most important factor in vote is parental partisanship, a factor which shares the childhood genesis with social class, and second, class identification has a strong direct effect on vote.

To attempt to understand the British electoral decision without reference to social class is futile. But to explain social class with reference to only current job, union membership and the like is telling far less than half the story.

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