

1976

A Post-Watergate Study of Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority

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<https://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21220/s2-55c7-vv80>

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A POST-WATERGATE STUDY OF CHILDREN'S
ATTITUDES TOWARD POLITICAL
AUTHORITY

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

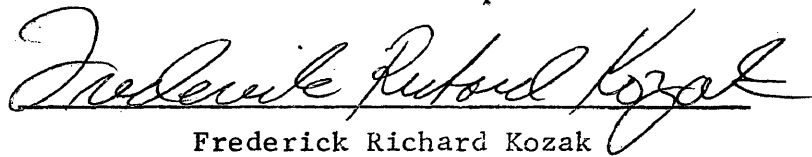
Frederick R. Kozak

August 1976


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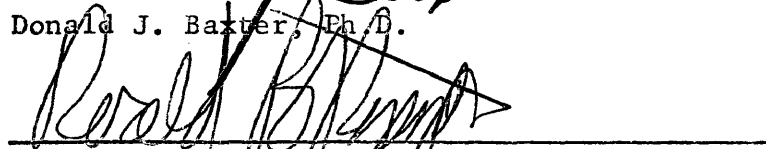
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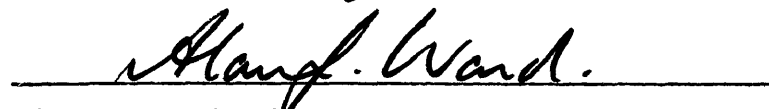
Master of Arts


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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer wishes to express his appreciation and gratitude to Professor Donald J. Baxter, under whose guidance this study was conducted, for his careful attention and assistance throughout this project.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to observe the attitudes of children toward political authority. The data from the current study were compared to the data from similar investigations conducted in 1962 and 1973 in order to determine the direction and magnitude of changes in children's political attitudes over time. In 1962, images of the President were highly idealistic. Opinions of government were also generally favorable. A precipitous drop to extremely negative images of the President was recorded in 1973, presumably as a result of Watergate. Attitudes toward the government also declined in 1973, illustrating a possible spillover of negative affect from the image of the President.

In this 1975 study, it was hypothesized that:

1. Affective images of the President would remain at the same low 1973 levels.
2. Attitudes toward government would also remain dramatically lower than in 1962.
3. Children would demonstrate their ability to differentiate between the President and the presidency by responding differently to questions about the President, President Ford, and former-President Nixon.

A paper-and-pencil questionnaire, with items similar to those used in the 1962 and 1973 studies, was administered to each child in grades four, five, and six of a private school in Williamsburg, Virginia. The data revealed that images of the President were still negative and significantly lower than in 1962; but also significantly higher than in 1973. This improvement in attitudes toward the President was not accompanied by a parallel rise in responses to government. Opinions of government remained as low as in 1973. The evidence as to whether children differentiate between an individual President and the office of the presidency was inconclusive.

The results suggest that the continual, gradual decline in attitudes toward the government may be more important for the future of the political system than the widely fluctuating image of the President. It also appears that contemporary political stimuli, including the incumbent President, play a more prominent role in the political learning of children than suggested by some earlier researchers.

A POST-WATERGATE STUDY OF CHILDREN'S
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INTRODUCTION

Although of interest since the time of the Greeks, the actual study of political socialization is more closely associated with modern political and social developments. The growth of industrialism and democracy, particularly during the 1800s, heightened social theorists' awareness of and concern for the views and opinions of the masses. It was recognized that social and political order depends as much upon the mood of the people as on formal laws and elite behavior. It is important, therefore, to explore the means by which citizens acquire political beliefs and the consequences which these orientations may have for the political system.¹

The term socialization refers to the process by which a person comes to adopt the norms, values, attitudes, and behaviors that are accepted and practiced in his social milieu. In a stricter sense, political socialization may be defined as ". . . those developmental processes through which persons acquire political orientations and patterns of behavior."² As these descriptions imply, socialization is an ongoing process that may take place throughout a person's

¹Richard E. Dawson and Kenneth Prewitt, Political Socialization (Boston, Massachusetts: Little, Brown and Co., 1969), pp. vii-viii.

²David Easton and Jack Dennis, Children in the Political System: Origins of Political Legitimacy (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1969), p. 7. Hereafter cited as Children in the Political System.

lifetime. The process also provides a mechanism by which knowledge is passed from generation to generation. It is commonly held that some form of socialization is essential to the long-term maintenance of any political system. The basic theoretical significance of the study of political socialization, then, lies in the contribution it may make to the understanding of how political systems are able to endure.³

Since political socialization is a continuous process, it follows that one may study its effects and principles at any point in the life of the individual. The study of children, however, appears to be a particularly attractive point of investigation. Political philosophers from Plato to Rousseau have given some attention to early political education, and childhood has always been regarded as perhaps the most formative period of human development.⁴ To be sure, adult experiences are often vivid and significant, yet the conscious and subconscious lessons learned and attitudes acquired in early life appear to be powerful instruments in molding future character and coloring many adult perceptions. In any

³David Easton and Jack Dennis, "The Child's Image of Government," in Learning about Politics: A Reader in Political Socialization, ed. Roberta S. Sigel (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. 31-39 [see especially p. 31] (hereafter cited as Easton and Dennis, Learning about Politics).

⁴The works of these thinkers are well known. For general source see, e.g., Dr. Gez Engelman, Political Philosophy from Plato to Jeremy Bentham, trans. by Karl Frederick Geiser (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1927); and John A. Stoops, Philosophy and Education in Western Civilization (Danville, Illinois: Interstate, 1971).

developmental scheme, one must be mindful of the past if the present is to be effectively understood. It is reasonable, therefore, to suspect that the origins of adult political behavior and feelings of legitimacy may be found in the earliest stages of political awareness.

This paper will attempt to explore the roots of political support and legitimacy by surveying the attitudes and reactions of young children in an American grade school. Studies have shown that by the time these children finish their primary education they will have acquired a wide battery of political orientations.⁵ It is also known that the American child's first link with government is through an awareness of certain authority figures, most prominently the President. The persistent finding has been that children view the President in highly idealistic terms as benevolent, protective, and powerful.⁶ This positive affect toward the figure of the President is believed by some to generalize in time to the political system as a whole.⁷ Research conducted by Arterton in 1973, however, seems to indicate that events surrounding the Watergate scandals

⁵ Joseph Adelson and Robert P. O'Neill, "Growth of Political Ideas in Adolescence: The Sense of Community," in Learning about Politics: A Reader in Political Socialization, ed. Roberta S. Sigel (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. 50-61 [on this point, see p. 50] (hereafter cited as Adelson and O'Neill, "Growth of Political Ideas").

⁶F. Christopher Arterton, "The Impact of Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority," Political Science Quarterly, 89 (June 1974): 269-88 [see especially pp. 276-81] (hereafter cited as Arterton, "Impact of Watergate").

⁷Ibid.

have led to a significant change in children's images of the President to a largely negative view.⁸ Furthermore, Arterton's data seem to indicate that there has been a smaller significant spill-over to other authority figures and the government in general.⁹

In an effort to reproduce these findings, the present study will address itself to several questions relating to children's political attitudes and the impact of Watergate on these attitudes:

Did Watergate have a damaging effect on children's attitudes toward authority?

Were these permanent effects on the way children think about the President and government, or was the damage relatively temporary?

With the passing of time and the swearing in of a new President will we see affect return to the previous high levels?

The answers to these questions may aid in determining if children's attitudes are stable enough to serve as the bases for adult orientations, or fairly shallow and superficial reactions to political events.

Before turning to these questions, however, it may be helpful to the overall understanding to explore some background material in the area. Particularly relevant are some preliminary thoughts on the nature of the socialization process, the psychology of learning, and theories of political socialization.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

Socialization

There is one conception of political socialization which is that it involves more than acquiring the appropriate knowledge about the political environment of a society.¹⁰ It also requires that to be truly effective the individual must internalize values so that he sincerely believes them to be just, right, and moral. The process, therefore, calls for affective commitment as well as cognitive skills. The goal of political socialization, insofar as it is a consciously planned activity or a "system maintenance" strategy, is to train effective citizens along these two dimensions.¹¹ The definition of an effective citizen may vary among different systems, but in general it will be one who internalizes the appropriate political norms and transfers them to future generations.

In actuality, of course, socialization occurs unconsciously for most people and is usually incidental to other types of experiences and learning situations.¹² Although deliberate indoctrination may take place, as in propaganda, national holidays, and government classes, most political socialization is more subtle. The methods are not coercive and the individuals are not resistant. The

¹⁰Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, p. 87.

¹¹William C. Mitchell, Sociological Analysis and Politics: The Theories of Talcott Parsons (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1967), pp. 125-33.

¹²Roberta S. Sigel, ed., Learning about Politics: A Reader in Political Socialization (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. xii-xiii (hereafter cited as Sigel, Learning about Politics).

child born into the system experiences the culture through his contact with people and institutions naturally engaged in the practice of norms and roles. These behaviors are transmitted largely by example and observation. In this respect, early political socialization is different from childhood socialization in general. The young child disciplined to share his toys is being forced to curb activity that he feels is desirable, and the situation may readily produce conflict between the socializer and the socialized. But the child who is told at home and in school of the virtues and advantages of voting and majority rule will likely encounter little or no resistance from previously acquired contrary beliefs or feelings.¹³

It would be an oversimplification, however, to characterize the process of political socialization as a smooth and fixed pattern in which the same values are transmitted in the same ways from generation to generation.¹⁴ Considering the large and varied number of socializing agents in society, it is not difficult to imagine that the individual will inevitably receive some discordant stimuli. The rapid social and technological changes common in the world of today make some values and behaviors obsolete with dizzying speed. The tension, change, and conflict that is part of life is also part of socialization. Even so, successful systems are able to maintain relatively stable procedures. The recurring and basic assumption of

¹³Ibid., p. xiii.

¹⁴Ibid.

all studies of political socialization is that some form of socialization to essential roles and values is in fact fundamental to political stability and legitimacy.

Learning and Development

Despite the fact that political socialization generally has been conceived as a learning process, comparatively little systematic study has been devoted to improving the understanding of the actual procedure by which political attitudes and orientations are acquired. This omission is not vital here, however, since the main interest at this point is in the consequences of what is learned for the political system. Still, any full understanding of how political attitudes are acquired must attempt to identify the relevant aspects of the learning process.¹⁵

Learning may be defined as a relatively permanent modification of behavior as a result of experience or practice. There are two specific types of learning which seem to have special significance for political socialization, namely, imitation and identification.¹⁶

Imitation is the copying or modeling of the behavior of others. Identification normally involves more than imitation in that the individual actually incorporates into his own value system the feelings

¹⁵Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁶Joseph Church and L. Joseph Stone, Childhood and Adolescence: A Psychology of the Growing Person (New York: Random House, 1968), pp. 164-74.

and beliefs of others. Both these learning processes may be motivated by a variety of forces--such as admiration, approval, or status--and also proceed subconsciously.

Along with basic skills like reading and writing, a child gains knowledge of the political system and its institutions, processes, and principles. This activity involves the formation of such ideas as democracy, political parties, and elections. As these ideas become clear, they form a framework for accumulating knowledge about the political system. But the ability to handle such abstractions is preceded by the mastery of simpler notions. Studies have shown that very young children often lack the ability to use general concepts, such as community welfare, to evaluate specific problems.¹⁷ This faculty is, however, well developed by adolescence. It is thought that young children are essentially egocentric.¹⁸ It takes time to think in sociocentric terms. According to Adelson and O'Neill, the largest gain in this process occurs between the ages of eleven and thirteen. By adolescence, the process is virtually complete.¹⁹

Easton and Dennis have argued that children's notions of government increase in complexity and abstraction as they mature.²⁰

¹⁷Adelson and O'Neill, "Growth of Political Ideas," pp. 62-63.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 64.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, pp. 127-28.

The child first becomes aware of government through the recognition of certain salient figures of authority, such as policemen and the President. Gradually, he learns to distinguish principles and institutions independent of the office holders. The implication is that the child's understanding of political phenomena is closely linked to stages of cognitive development, and that the young child's initially naive impression of political institutions and events is fairly complex by the time he reaches adolescence.

As stated, however, political socialization involves more than the accumulation of cognitive skills. The individual must also accept what he has learned as good and proper and incorporate it into his own system of beliefs. He must acquire an affective preference for the values and behaviors deemed appropriate in his society. The effectiveness of political socialization depends largely on the extent to which the individual internalizes the system norms. In the United States, for example, it seems reasonable to assume that few candidates who had internalized the principles of majority rule and free elections would resort to violence to reverse the results of an unsuccessful campaign, whereas the same might not be true in a culture less thoroughly committed to this particular system of values.²¹

²¹Sigel, Learning about Politics, p. 10.

Theories of Political Socialization

From a theoretical standpoint, the study of socialization may be approached from a number of perspectives. Easton and Dennis provide three possibilities: A general theory of socialization, a theory of political socialization, and a political theory of political socialization.²² A general theory of socialization would attempt to describe and explain in broad compass the ways in which socialization occurs in all facets of society. Such a theory, say Easton and Dennis, may be of use to political scientists at some future date. At this point, it could only distract researchers from their major interest in political phenomena.

Political socialization theory would be concerned specifically with how the socialization process operates in the political world. Already something is known about the relationship of political socialization and such agents as the family, the peer group, and certain institutions. It appears, for example, that childhood is the period for acquiring basic orientations and diffuse political support which will influence adults in specific policy decisions. Political scientists are still waiting, however, for empirical evidence to substantiate this and other longitudinal relationships. Until the actual effects of early socialization can be demonstrated in the adult, no truly satisfactory theory of political socialization

²²Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, pp. 18-19.

can be developed.

As a third alternative, Easton and Dennis offer what they call a political theory of political socialization. Before it is possible to construct a relevant theory of political socialization or a general theory of socialization, it is necessary to establish that political socialization does in fact play an important part in the political system. Easton and Dennis propose a systems-persistence function as the primary role of political socialization.²³ Although it is recognized that systems theory, as such, cannot be called a true theory, the conceptual framework it provides may be valuable in examining the relation of political socialization to the system as a whole. Despite the lack of general agreement as to which variables and functions should be included in the systems model, the persistence of the system itself would seem to be a matter of undeniable and universal concern. Within this context, political socialization is seen as an essential element in generating support and legitimacy and, therefore, closely associated with stability and persistence.

There are limits, however, to the systems framework and the particular concept of political socialization thus far presented. If one presumes the presence of some preexisting structure for which the socialized individual is being groomed, the model may lead to the formulation of judgments as to the adequacy of the process for training persons to assume static roles. A view of the process as one

²³Ibid., pp. 48-49.

designed solely to perpetuate the existing regime may thus result in a conservative bias. To avoid this, one may turn to a neutral conception of political socialization as strictly the ". . . acquisition of political orientations and patterns of behavior, . . ." ²⁴ without regard to the appropriateness of the results of the system. Such a view allows one to concentrate on the consequences of political socialization, whether they be for strict conformity, general stability, or drastic change.

Perspectives of the Present Study

This study, then, is an attempt to explore the importance of the impact of political socialization on the political system, ". . . free of preconceptions about what the consequences should be." ²⁵ The question most fundamental to this inquiry concerns the stability and longevity of the political attitudes and images of children. If these perceptions are shown to be durable, the results may support the widely accepted contention that early political images channel and form later adult attitudes of support and legitimacy. If, however, one finds that children's political views are subject to relatively large and rapid fluctuations, one may question whether these attitudes are suitable foundations for the development of long-term orientations.

²⁴Ibid., p. 42.

²⁵Ibid.

CHAPTER I

A REVIEW OF SOME RELEVANT STUDIES IN POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

A systems persistence model favoring neither change nor stability offers one possible theoretical significance of studies in political socialization. There is one condition of persistence which is the capacity of the system to mobilize at least a minimum of support. A substantial amount of recent empirical research has been dedicated to seeking the roots of adult feelings of legitimacy and support in the political orientations of children. By this time, it is well documented that children acquire a reservoir of political beliefs very early in life.²⁶ Before considering the relationship of childhood orientations to adult behavior, it is important that the discipline answer several questions about the nature of these early political attitudes: At what stage of life do members of a society first become capable of forming meaningful political opinions? At what points in the system does the child make his initial choice with government and to what sorts of stimuli does he react in forming his beliefs? What kinds of perceptions does the child have of the

²⁶David Easton and Jack Dennis, Children in the Political System: Origins of Political Legitimacy (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1969), p. 4.

various elements of the political system that he encounters?²⁷ The works cited in this section represent the attempts of earlier researchers to deal with these and similar questions. The present study is built upon the findings, methods, and assumptions of these earlier investigations. A relatively brief survey of the findings of previous studies of childhood political socialization is therefore necessary to develop the conceptual and empirical framework in which the particular hypotheses of the present study will become meaningful.

Before reviewing this literature, however, one should recognize the existence of several theories that would deemphasize altogether the role of childhood socialization in the development of adult political attitudes. Easton and Dennis refer to these groups as the "personality school," the "proximity theorists," and the "state of readiness" theorists.²⁸ The personality school views childhood as a period in which only prepolitical personality takes shape. Authentic political reactions come later in life, although they may then be affected by basic personality traits. According to the proximity theorists, children do learn something about politics, but what is learned later in life eclipses any earlier experiences. In adulthood, recent events are most vivid and therefore decisive in affecting attitudes. The state of readiness theory asserts that children are not capable of absorbing much in the way of significant

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 73-74.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 66-67.

political knowledge or beliefs until they reach certain critical levels of development. Children who have not reached the readiness stage show little interest in politics and so it follows that they cannot be deeply affected.

Easton and Dennis argue that these three viewpoints all share a common, and somewhat narrow, conception of politics. They consider only those aspects of the political world described by such terms as allocative, partisan, controversial, competitive, or active. It is only natural to expect older citizens to be better informed and sophisticated in these matters. Researchers working with children acknowledge that the political awareness of their subjects, while certainly evident, is relatively shallow and general. But to concentrate only on the level and complexity of cognitive processes seems to rob the term politics of some of its richness.

According to Easton and Dennis, system politics refers to ". . . all those behaviors and orientations relevant for the persistence of some kind of system."²⁹ This more complete conception of politics increases the plausibility of a theory that posits direct political socialization which occurs in childhood. If it can be shown that children begin to acquire orientations important to the political system it will be reasonable to conclude that important political socialization does take place in childhood.³⁰

²⁹Ibid., p. 86.

³⁰Ibid.

Supportive Evidence

In recent years, political socialization has been the subject of a growing body of empirical research. An early contributor in this field was Greenstein. In a paper published in 1960, Greenstein reported the findings of his research involving children in grades four through eight of certain public and private schools in New Haven, Connecticut.³¹ Greenstein's purpose was to consider the aspect of childhood development that dealt with the origins of attitudes toward political figures and the possible ways that these attitudes may affect adult responses. He suggested that orientations acquired early in life and tied to "intimate group experiences" should have strong effects on later adult behavior.³²

Comparing his data with adult responses, Greenstein found that the children were much more sympathetic to political leaders and toward politics in general. Images held by the children were extremely positive, especially for such qualities as "benignancy."³³

Greenstein's work was important in demonstrating that children do, in fact, have some political awareness and begin to form certain political attitudes at a very early age. It also led to focusing on

³¹Fred I. Greenstein, "The Benevolent Leader: Children's Images of Political Authority," American Political Science Review 54, 4 (December 1960): 934-43.

³²Ibid., p. 942.

³³Ibid., p. 940.

figures of authority as the most salient objects of childhood experiences. It is important to note that the survey items used measured two dimensions of the authority image; cognitive perceptions, which are not necessarily accurate or specific by adult standards, and affective attitudes, beliefs, judgments, and feelings.

Building upon the Greenstein study, researchers from the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, of whom Easton and Hess were the principle investigators, undertook an expansive project in 1962.³⁴ Easton and Hess intended to probe what they saw as the origins of support for the American political system. They sought to discover the ways in which children make contact with the government, particularly as this contact is made through prominent figures of political authority. They viewed this association, and the attitudes it generated, as a central phenomena in any ongoing system. Specifically, the 1962 study was designed to discover those figures and institutions of political authority that the child first identifies, how he perceives them, and how he feels about them.³⁵

The data from the 1962 study were drawn from a national sample of public school children in grades two through eight. The test instrument was a pencil-and-paper questionnaire administered in

³⁴The results of this study are reported and discussed in Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System. This 1962 research and a study done by F. Christopher Arterton in 1973 provide the specific background and impetus for the present study.

³⁵Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, p. 106.

regular classrooms under the direction of a project staff member. The test items were designed to measure a number of variables including socioeconomic status, levels of political information and cynicism, and cognitive and affective perceptions of authority figures and government in general.³⁶

Results of the survey showed that children early acquire political orientations and begin to form notions about government. The child sees government as right, good, protective, and helpful. It appears, also, that the child first views government as composed of certain individuals such as policemen, politicians, and the President. Among these, it is the President who is the object of the child's earliest awareness, and this initial contact is charged with positive, supportive feelings.³⁷ Easton reports that ". . . In all our testing and interviewing, we were unable to find a child who did not express the highest esteem for the President."³⁸ The President was highly idealized and characterized by such virtues as wisdom, benevolence, power, trustworthiness, and exemplary leadership. There was virtually no criticism, mistrust, or indifference registered against the chief executive. Even those children whose responses ranked lowest on the scales had positive evaluations.³⁹

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 420-25.

³⁷ Ibid., pp. 137-40.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 177.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 178.

Easton and Dennis interpreted this data to mean that children respond to the political system through the figure that, for them, best represents it, the President. The acceptance of this symbol of government appears to come long before the actual comprehension of the institutions, processes, and principles that surround the office of the Presidency. The major significance of these findings is in Easton and Dennis's hypothesis that the early positive image of the President flows naturally and directly into support for the general structure of political authority. This generalization of positive affect is expected to have lasting consequences for the legitimacy of the political system.⁴⁰ For convenience, this view of political socialization will be referred to here as the Easton-Dennis, or System Persistence model.

A question arises as to what a child reacts to when asked about the President. Does he respond to qualities he sees in the incumbent himself, or does he answer according to characteristics he associates with the role or office of the presidency? Easton and Dennis admit that they have no decisive proof either way, but interpret their evidence to suggest that the child reacts to the Presidential role and views the occupant as a symbol of all Presidents.⁴¹ This assumption that children do not distinguish between the man and the office is crucial for Easton and Dennis in

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 207.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 194.

establishing the relationship between the child's image of the President and his attitudes toward the rest of the political system. The nature of this link is explained in another hypothesis of the Easton-Dennis model:

. . . Those children who begin to develop positive feelings toward political authorities will tend to grow into adults who will be less easily disenchanted with the system than those who early acquire negative, hostile sentiments.⁴²

It is evident that Easton and Dennis expect the political acquisitions of childhood to be relatively long-lasting and durable. They do not say that these early orientations will always withstand the effects of later experiences, or that it is impossible to dilute or overshadow them. They do suggest that childhood sentiments are not easily dislodged or modified; that they remain latent, underlying influences of adult attitudes.

It would be hard to overstate the importance of the implications of the argument that adult perceptions of legitimacy derive mainly from the early tendency to idealize the President.⁴³ From about the sixth grade onward, children rapidly gain knowledge of the political system. They learn to differentiate between the role of the presidency and the particular man holding office. Presidents receive less favorable ratings on personal qualities, while items representing

⁴²Ibid., p. 106.

⁴³F. Christopher Arterton, "The Impact of Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority," Political Science Quarterly, 89 (June 1974): 270.

role performance maintain or increase their scores.⁴⁴ As the child grows older, his image of the President becomes increasingly political in terms of awareness of issues and policy decisions. The child's perception of such political events and realities may still be fairly shallow, but he is not ignorant of the major political concerns of the time. Sigel maintains that the image of the President that emerges is not merely symbolic, but is ". . . politically differentiated and somewhat issue oriented."⁴⁵ Children begin to view the President as a political figure and are not attached only because they consider him their "benevolent leader."⁴⁶

Nevertheless, Easton and Dennis argue that a diverse sense of legitimacy and support continues to emanate from earlier idealization of the President.

Even though the older child may see authority in more critical terms, early idealization may create latent feelings that are hard to undo or shake off. This is the major significance of the first bond to the system through the Presidency. The positive feelings generated there can be expected to have lasting consequences.⁴⁷

In 1973, Arterton published an article titled "The Impact of

⁴⁴Robert D. Hess and David Easton, "The Child's Changing Image of the President," Public Opinion Quarterly 14 (Winter 1960): 639.

⁴⁵Roberta Sigel, "Image of a President: Some Insights into the Political View of School Children," American Political Science Review 62, 1 (March 1968): 218.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 226.

⁴⁷Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, p. 207.

Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority."⁴⁸ The primary question of the study was whether the revelations of the Watergate crisis shattered the idealistic view children previously held of the President.

There were several objectives associated with Arterton's research. Among these, one was to determine if the pervasive findings of idealization could be altered by actual political events. There is some evidence that the children of certain subgroups do not share in the general idealization of the President. Jaros, Hirsch, and Fleron, for example, studied children in the Appalachian region of eastern Kentucky, an area that may be classified as a subculture in view of its poverty, isolation, and the extent by which local cultural norms differ from the dominant, standard culture in the United States.⁴⁹ In their survey of public school children in grades five through eight, Jaros and his associates found dramatically less favorable attitudes toward the President than had been reported in studies which drew their samples largely from middle class areas.

A question remained as to the nature of the unfavorable attitudes found by Jaros and his associates. Were these attitudes limited to pockets of the population because of the radically different cultural, social, and family environments found in those areas,

⁴⁸Arterton, "Impact of Watergate," pp. 269-88.

⁴⁹Dean Jaros, Herbert Hirsch, and Frederic J. Fleron, Jr., "The Malevolent Leader: Political Socialization in an American Subculture," in Learning about Politics, ed. Roberta S. Sigel (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. 343-49.

in which case these attitudes would be relatively impervious to the influence of contemporary events? Or, can attitudes be affected by dramatic political episodes that involve the entire nation?⁵⁰

Arterton expected to discuss this question in assessing the long-range effects Watergate might have on the political system. If current events are capable of changing basic orientations, then, by Easton and Dennis's reasoning, at least one generation's view of the legitimacy of political authority may be in jeopardy.⁵¹

Arterton administered questionnaires to children in grades three, four, and five of the public school system in a high socio-economic status suburb of Boston, Massachusetts. For purposes of comparison, many of the test items were replicated from the 1962 national study of Easton and Hess, including measures of general affect toward government and the President, the father, the policeman, and the politician. Arterton then juxtaposed his results with the data collected in 1962 and found that:

In the fall of 1973, children express attitudes toward the President of the United States that are not only much less positive, as has been found before only in certain population subgroups, but can more accurately be described as wholly negative. The once benevolent leader has been transformed into the malevolent leader by the impact of current events; and there can be little doubt that these children have come to view the President as a figure to be strenuously rejected.⁵²

⁵⁰Arterton, "Impact of Watergate," p. 271.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 272.

⁵²Ibid.

Arterton also noticed a "spillover" of antagonism from the affective assessments of the President to those items measuring such performance capabilities as power and leadership. Even though these items were scored less positively than in 1962, however, the performance component of the President's image remained fairly high.⁵³ Finally, the children responded with cynicism and rejection to other aspects of the political system as well. The data indicated a drop in attitudes toward the government in general. This drop was smaller than the decline in the image of the President, but still significant.⁵⁴

Arterton considered several explanations for the change in attitudes between the 1962 and 1973 studies. The magnitude of the difference in ratings of the President between the two studies allowed Arterton to reject the notion that the discrepancy was due to differences in the respective samples.⁵⁵ The 1962 study drew a national sample of a wide range of socioeconomic levels, while the 1973 sample was taken from an upper-income community in Boston. But differences due to socioeconomic class reported by Easton and Dennis amounted to only about 4 percent or 5 percent.⁵⁶ This bias may be

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 274-75.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Easton and Dennis report that, in the 1962 study, upper-class children tended to react less favorably to the President. Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, pp. 342-49.

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 342-46.

considered a minor issue in accounting for the massive swing in attitudes observed when the data from 1973 are compared to the 1962 levels.⁵⁷

Another alternative was that the widespread and extensive coverage of the Watergate events accelerated the socialization process so that the normally gradual awakening of political cynicism was projected to an earlier age. Arterton dismissed this objection by observing that, unlike in 1962, the 1973 children in all grades rejected the President as an appropriate affect symbol. The older children in the 1962 study, though more knowledgeable and cynical than the younger children, still held the President in high esteem. This indicates that in order for the younger children in 1973 to reject the President, something more than an earlier cognition of political reality must have taken place. Arterton argues that:

. . . the responses of children in 1973 indicate an entirely different experience in political socialization from the reports of earlier studies. Political events, and indeed the President himself, do become important variables in the socialization equation, and their present impact should give us cause for greater concern. The President is viewed as truly malevolent, undependable, untrustworthy, and yet powerful and dangerous. If the President is the image of political authority and the central mechanism for building diffuse support of the political system, as Easton and Dennis argue, then for this generation of children, conceptions of authority and the political system which they underpin will be markedly different.⁵⁸

The 1973 data, however, provide an alternate outlook since

⁵⁷Arterton, "Impact of Watergate," p. 271.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 285-86.

they also challenge several major aspects of Easton and Dennis's model of political socialization. One of Easton and Dennis's basic assumptions is that children are unable to differentiate between the President as an individual and the role of the presidency. This proposition may be questioned in light of the marked differentiation Arterton found between affective responses and perceptions of performance variables.

Easton and Dennis also propose a "vulnerability" hypothesis.⁵⁹ According to this idea, when the child is confronted with an overwhelmingly powerful authority, such as the President, he may experience anxiety and feelings of helplessness. As a defense mechanism, then, the child may come to idealize that authority and thereby reduce his anxiety. In 1973, children still viewed the President as a powerful figure. The vulnerability hypothesis would predict that affective levels would also be high, as a means of allaying fear and anxiety. In fact, Arterton found that affective reactions were drastically low.

Another problem for Easton and Dennis is their suggestion that idealization of the President may be a transference of attitudes toward the father.⁶⁰ Arterton found no support for this hypothesis. His data revealed no noticeable difference between 1962 and 1973 ratings of the father on any of the items which measured significant

⁵⁹Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, p. 205.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 372.

changes in attitudes toward the President. Arterton did note, however, the likely possibility that:

. . . parents have explicitly commented on current events, thereby designating the present occupant as an inappropriate model for either transference or identification. But, if these hypotheses lose their inevitability which has been tied to the power of the Presidency, they also lose their explanatory power, for they then lead to the proposition that children idealize only ideal authority figures.⁶¹

Another Approach

Thus far, political socialization in general, and the data from the 1962 and 1973 studies in particular, have been analyzed primarily in terms derived from the Easton-Dennis model of political socialization. An alternate explanation for the change in children's attitudes between 1962 and 1973 may be drawn from the moral development work of Kohlberg.⁶² The hypotheses derived from Kohlberg will be referred to as the Developmental model.

Kohlberg identifies three levels in the development of moral thinking. Each level is composed of two stages. The first level of development has been termed "preconventional moral thinking." Children aged six to ten would probably fall in the first stage of this level. Stage one is described by Kohlberg as:

Orientation toward punishment and unquestioning deference to

⁶¹Arterton, "Impact of Watergate," p. 287.

⁶²Lawrence Kohlberg, "Development of Moral Character and Moral Ideology," in Review of Child Development Research, ed. Martin L. Hoffman and Lois Wladis Hoffman (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1964), pp. 383-432.

superior power. The physical consequences of action regardless of their human meaning or value determine its goodness or badness.⁶³

For our purposes, the most significant hypothesis to be derived from this formulation is that children in the first stage of moral development evaluate actions and actors as either "good" or "bad." Because of his rudimentary thinking processes, the child is unable to make moral judgments except in terms of these two extremes. There is no grey area in between, a person or action is either totally good or totally bad. This view may be applied to an explanation of the shift in children's attitudes toward the President from 1962 to 1973. The earlier study was conducted at a time when the President was viewed as a morally good authority figure. Having made this judgment, children described the President in extremely glowing and highly idealistic terms on all measures. But in 1973, as a result of Watergate, the President was seen as bad, and reactions to him were almost totally negative. As expected from a Kohlberg derived explanation, attitudes shifted dramatically from one extreme to the other in response to children's black-and-white thinking on moral issues.

The present study provides an opportunity to test this explanation further. At the time of this 1975 study, the bad President gone and a new and untainted man was on the job. The new President

⁶³Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Child as Moral Philosopher," Psychology Today, 1, 4 (September 1968): 26.

was accepted as honest and sincere, and once again a suitably positive moral symbol. Children should see this President as good; and since children make only black-and-white moral judgments, this view should result in another reversal in attitudes, this time from totally bad to totally good. In short, the Developmental model predicts that attitudes measured in 1975 should attain the same high levels recorded in 1962, since at both times the President was seen as good.⁶⁴ The opposite and extremely negative attitudes of 1973 are explained by the fact that at that time children viewed the President as totally bad.

If the Kohlberg derived Developmental model is correct, it raises doubts as to whether long-term feelings of political legitimacy could originate in a cognitive structure susceptible to such rapid and wide variation. It would appear more likely that the 1962 and 1973 studies have measured relatively short range cognitions rather than basic attitudes; and that these cognitions are not by nature suited to the formation of fairly permanent orientations. This result would offer a much more optimistic future, following Watergate, for the political system than proceeds from the Easton-Dennis model. The rapid shifts in attitudes would appear much as a ". . . surface manifestation of an underlying process which will in the long run produce much the same results as would have occurred in the absence of

⁶⁴ Arterton, "Impact of Watergate," p. 287.

the Watergate events."⁶⁵

A problem arises, however, in accounting for the decline in general affect toward government found in Arterton's 1973 study. From the Kohlberg derived model, one would have expected either no change in attitudes, or the same large shift seen in presidential ratings. Arterton suggests that the legitimacy of the political system has been eroded by political events and that this moderate deterioration may represent a more serious concern for stability than the more dramatic changes in attitudes toward the President.⁶⁶

The 1973 study suggested that current political events can have an effect on the political beliefs of children. It seems reasonable, then, to consider the incumbent as a relevant variable in determining children's attitudes toward the President. Arterton did not find that children automatically idealize all powerful authority, and the ultimate relationship of children's attitudes, whatever their nature or direction, to adult political behavior has yet to be defined empirically. Still, the 1962 and 1973 studies provide an opportunity to research the question of whether the instruments used in those studies measured a relatively temporary and superficial reaction to political events, or a fundamental change in the developmental dynamic.

The present study is a survey of children's attitudes toward

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 288.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 287.

government and figures of political authority in the aftermath of the damaging effects of the Watergate crisis. The methods and test instrument used closely followed the pattern established by the 1962 and 1973 studies. The data collected were compared to the results obtained in the previous years and one of two attitudes patterns was anticipated. If the data showed that affect toward the President has remained negative, the Easton-Dennis hypothesis that children's images form the basis for long-term orientations may be supported. The shift in attitudes from 1962 to 1973 will be explained with serious implications for the legitimacy of political authority in at least the next generation. If, however, the data indicated a rapid turnaround in attitudes to pre-Watergate levels of positive assessments of the President, the explanation offered by the Developmental model would appear more satisfactory.

Recent Developments

Since Arterton's 1973 findings, several other relevant studies have been conducted. Of these works, two provide particularly strong confirmation of Arterton's results. Hartwig and Tidmarch replicated Easton and Hess type items in upstate New York in June 1974.⁶⁷ They

⁶⁷ Frederick Hartwig and Charles Tidmarch, "Children and Political Reality: Changing Images of the President," paper presented to the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, 7-9 November 1974, cited by F. Christopher Arterton, "The Continuing Impact of Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority," paper presented to the 33rd annual meeting of Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, 1-3 May 1975, p. 2.

found data generally very similar to Arterton's and reported that the children they questioned were ". . . disposed to view the President as a malevolent, rather undependable, and marginally efficacious political figure."⁶⁸

They also complemented Arterton's sample on the matter of socioeconomic status. Arterton's sample was drawn from a relatively high socioeconomic status neighborhood, but Hartwig and Tidmarch reported that children from working class families tend to be even less favorable in their image of the President. Arterton sees this as support for the conclusion that negative feelings may be true for all children.⁶⁹

Joslyn of Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, also replicated Easton and Hess items in upstate New York during the fall and winter of 1973 to 1974.⁷⁰ Joseyn found a decline in attitudes in the seventh and eighth grades. Although this change was not as dramatic as that found by Arterton in the third through fifth grades, the patterns of responses were similar. Both studies showed a substantial decline since 1962, negative assessments of

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ F. Christopher Arterton, "The Continuing Impact of Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority," paper presented to the 33rd annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, 1-3 May 1975, p. 2 (hereafter cited as Arterton, "Continuing Impact of Watergate").

⁷⁰ Richard A. Joslyn, "Adolescent Attitudes toward the Political Process: Political Learning in the Midst of Turmoil," unpublished manuscript, Cornell University, cited by F. Christopher Arterton, "The Impact of Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority," Political Science Quarterly, 89 (June 1974): 270.

the President on affective scales, and mixed views on presidential performance ratings.

In their study of "Watergate and the Benevolent Leader," Hershey and Hill explored the concept of the benevolent leader--how it has been measured, what it means for the individual and the political system, theories of how it is acquired, and changes in the image before and after Watergate.⁷¹ Hershey and Hill explained three theories of the source of the belief in presidential benevolence: Psychodynamic theories, cognitive-developmental theory, and social learning theory.

Much of the Easton-Dennis model utilizes the psychodynamic approach, which has been strongly influenced by Freudian concepts. The vulnerability hypothesis mentioned earlier, as well as the notion that attitudes toward political authority are generalized from parental relations are examples of psychodynamic thinking. Arterton, among others, has found fault with both of these ideas. In any case, the view that early childhood experiences can have deep and lasting effects on an individual is typical of the Freudian impact on the study of political socialization.

Cognitive-developmental theorists, of whom Kohlberg is a good example, propose that children's political images are largely determined by their basic cognitive capabilities. Individuals progress

⁷¹Marjorie Randon Hershey and David B. Hill, "Watergate and the Benevolent Leader," paper presented to the 33rd annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, 1-3 May 1975.

through a number of stages, each stage characterized by a different level and mode of thinking. Children's attitudes, therefore, may not be of lasting significance unless they have reached a certain critical period in their development when their cognitive apparatus is able to assimilate the knowledge properly.

Social learning theory holds that children learn according to the stimuli and reinforcement they receive from their environment. According to these theorists, children would perceive a benevolent leader if they received favorable information about the President from the people and institutions around them.

Hershey and Hill examined the types of children that were most likely to perceive a benevolent leader, the sources of their perceptions, and the generalization into feelings of attachment to the political system. Their data were collected from a survey of Florida public school students in grades two through twelve. The study was conducted in late 1973 and early 1974 and used a series of Easton and Hess items. Findings revealed that while the belief in a responsive President was less common than in earlier studies, fourth and fifth graders still showed signs of the benevolent leader image. The association between presidential affect and positive feelings about the political system were found to be weak. The authors concluded that their data lent themselves most readily to a social learning approach to political socialization. This view will arise in later discussions and will be referred to as the Current Events model.

Greenstein used open-ended questions to find a decrease in

positive imagery toward the President and an increase in negative reactions between 1970 and 1973.⁷² In Greenstein's study, positive responses fell from 56 percent to 45 percent, and unfavorable assessments rose from 1 percent to 7 percent. These changes were not as marked as those found in studies using the typical close-ended Easton and Hess.

In the winter and spring of 1974, Lupfer and Kenny replicated Greenstein's open-ended format.⁷³ Their data, collected from children in Memphis, Tennessee, indicated generally positive evaluations of the President. There was some increase in mixed and negative imagery, but only about 3 percent of the responses could be interpreted as malevolent.

Arterton did a follow-up to his own 1973 study in January 1975.⁷⁴ He administered the same questionnaire used in 1973 to children in the third through sixth grades of the public school system in an upper socioeconomic status suburb in Boston, Massachusetts. Arterton found that attitudes toward the President were still

⁷²Fred I. Greenstein, "The Benevolent Leader Revisited: Children's Images of Political Leaders in Three Democracies," American Political Science Review 69 (December 1975): 1371-89.

⁷³Michael Lupfer and Charles Kenny, "Children's Reactions to the President: Pre- and Post-Watergate Findings," paper presented to the Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, 29 August-2 September 1974, cited by F. Christopher Arterton, "The Impact of Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority," Political Science Quarterly, 89 (June 1974): 2.

⁷⁴Arterton, "Continuing Impact of Watergate."

significantly lower than in 1962, but higher than the extreme rejection registered in 1973. Attitudes toward the rest of the political system seemed to reveal, however, a continued downward trend.

A summary of the preceding articles indicates that attitudes during and after 1973 are generally much lower than those measured in 1962. However, the divergence of the Lupfer and Kenny data from the general pattern suggests additional considerations. In the first place, it may be that region of the country is an important variable in measuring attitudes toward the President. On this point, Arterton comments that:

. . . If this is true, it must be related to the operant political climate within the region of study, especially, I suspect, to the attitudes of parents and teachers, but vested as well in the political opinions held by those in the media organizations . . . to the degree current political debates can be related to children's attitudes we can be less certain of the validity of Easton and Dennis' hypothesis that early idealism generates adult conceptions of the legitimacy of the political system.⁷⁵

It also appears that the types of questions used may affect the results. All of the negative data were generated by Easton and Hess' close-ended question, while Greenstein's open-ended technique yielded generally positive, though not idealistic, responses. Arterton suggests that the appearance of negative opinions on the questionnaire itself may encourage negative replies.⁷⁶

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 4.

⁷⁶Ibid.

Summary

A review of the body of knowledge accumulated by researchers in the field of political socialization reveals that in the early 1960s children held largely favorable and idealistic views of the President and the government. In 1973, however, these attitudes were shown to have suffered a severe blow. Attitudes had shifted dramatically to an almost completely negative evaluation of the President. Attitudes toward the rest of the political system were also clouded by widespread cynicism. The present 1975 study is an attempt to further this investigation of children's political orientations. The persistence of these orientations, or the direction and magnitude of their change, will be of central importance in assessing the nature and consequences of children's political attitudes. There have been three models of political socialization presented, the Easton-Dennis model, the Developmental model, and the Current Events model. The results of this study may aid in determining which of these models offers the most accurate explanation of children's changing attitudes toward the President and government.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

As was stated in the previous chapters, the purpose of this study was to observe and evaluate the political attitudes of children. This was done by comparing the results of this 1975 study with the highly favorable responses recorded by Easton and Dennis in 1962 and the shift to negative images found by Arterton in 1973. It was anticipated that the 1975 data would reveal that:

1. Children's images of the President have remained at the same low levels recorded by Arterton in 1973.
2. Attitudes toward the government in general have also remained dramatically lower than in 1962.
3. Children responded differently to questions about the President and items which referred specifically to President Ford or former-President Nixon.

In this chapter, the particular hypotheses of the study and the research design used to collect the data will be discussed further. Included in this discussion will be a consideration of certain theoretical problems and the limitations of this type of research. This chapter will also include a description of the sample tested and the methods used to measure political attitudes.

Socialization Theory and the Hypotheses
of This Study

There were three major hypotheses of the present study.

Hypothesis 1. Images of the President would be negative and remain at the same low levels found by Arterton in 1973.

Hypothesis 2. Attitudes toward the government would also remain as low as in 1973.

Hypothesis 3. Responses would be different to items concerning the President, President Ford, and former-President Nixon.

Concerning Hypothesis 1, Easton and Dennis argued that children view the President along both affective and performance dimensions. In their description of the benevolent leader image, Easton and Dennis relied most heavily on assessments of the affective dimension. Arterton also found affective responses to be the most prominent indicators of the shift in attitudes toward the President between the 1962 and 1973 studies. In evaluating the nature of children's attitudes, the present study was also concerned primarily with affective ratings. Specifically, it was predicted that the affective content of the authority image of the President in 1975 would be negative and significantly lower than in 1962.

If Easton and Dennis are correct, the children who were exposed to Watergate developed negative images of the President which are expected to remain stable and persistent, for they are to affect future orientations toward the political system. The negative attitudes toward the President recorded by Arterton in 1973 should therefore

continue at the same low levels into 1975. This result would be consistent with the cohort theory previously cited.

The Kohlberg derived Developmental model discussed in the last chapter, however, argues against the cohort theory. According to this model, the children who registered negative affect toward the President during Watergate should revert to the high positive feelings of 1962 now that the waters of political scandal have receded and the President is once again a good moral figure.

Hypothesis 1, therefore, provides an opportunity to test these two models of political socialization. If attitudes remain as low as in 1973, as expected, the Easton-Dennis model will be supported. It will appear that children's attitudes may indeed be stable enough to provide the basis for long-term political orientations. If, however, the pendulum swings back to the previous high levels of 1962, the Developmental model will gain support. Such a shift in political attitudes may be the result of the black-and-white moral thinking of children in response to a President who is viewed as either totally good or totally bad.

Hypothesis 2 of this study is drawn from another aspect of the Easton-Dennis model. According to this model, the image of the President is the primary link between the child and government. If attitudes toward the President are negative, opinions of the government should also be adversely affected. This phenomenon will be called the spillover effect. In 1973, Arterton did notice a spillover of negative affect from the image of the President to reactions toward

the government. If attitudes toward the President remain low in 1975, as predicted by Hypothesis 1 of this study, then general affect toward the government should also be dramatically lower in 1975 than it was in 1962.

Hypothesis 3 of the 1975 study was designed to examine Easton and Dennis's contention that children do not differentiate between the incumbent President as a man and a generalized conception of the role and office of the presidency. If the man is considered at all, Easton and Dennis argue, he is viewed as a symbol of all Presidents.⁷⁷ What this means, then, is that children have only one image of the President and that image, really, is of the presidency, rather than the President. If this is true, items requiring the child to refer in any way to his image of the President in general, the President as a particular individual, or the presidency as an office or role, should elicit consistent responses. An alternate possibility, however, is that significant differences may exist between affective attitudes evoked when children are told to think of the President, and when their attention is specifically directed to President Ford and former-President Nixon. If this study finds that children respond differently to these questions, it will suggest that children are capable of entertaining more than one view of the President. If so, one may be able to question Easton and Dennis's assumption that children

⁷⁷ David Easton and Jack Dennis, Children in the Political System: Origins of Political Legitimacy (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1969), p. 195.

do not differentiate between the President and the presidency. Thus, Hypothesis 3 of this study predicts that there will be significant differences in responses to the President and questions about President Ford and former-President Nixon. As discussed earlier, the assumption that children do not differentiate is essential to the explanatory power of the Easton-Dennis developmental link between early images of the President and later feelings of political legitimacy.

Research Design and Limitations

In work with children, a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, filled out by the child himself, has been the common test instrument. The consistency and similarity of designs and methods have contributed to the attempt to trace the development of political attitudes. The present study was conducted under the general methodological guidelines established by the work of Easton and Dennis and that of Arterton. It was intended that the results of the present research would be compared to the data from the two previous cross-sectional studies in order to contribute to an improved understanding of how children's attitudes toward the President and government have developed over time. Easton and Dennis found highly idealistic attitudes in 1962; Arterton recorded a massive shift to negative images in 1973. This study was also concerned with the direction and magnitude of children's attitudes toward political authority. It was hoped that the composite picture thus assembled would provide some clue as to the nature and durability

of childhood orientations.

Given this purpose, the ideal research design would have been to conduct a longitudinal study in which the same group of children was studied and followed over a broad span of time. Unfortunately, the vast majority of research in political socialization has not followed such a strategy.⁷⁸ Instead, political development has been described by the comparison of a series of cross-sectional studies. Different groups of children at various age intervals have been observed separately, and then linked together in order to get a picture of "year-by-year shifts in political orientations."⁷⁹

Some researchers have questioned the validity of employing cross-sectional data in this way in order to answer questions that, strictly speaking, should be approached with longitudinal data. Jaros, for one, has strongly commented on the need for longitudinal studies of whether adult behavior is, in fact, shaped by orientations acquired in childhood.⁸⁰ As mentioned above, even this most basic assumption of political socialization lacks any completely satisfactory empirical treatment.

⁷⁸For an exception to this general rule, see Kenneth D. Bailey, "Political Environment, Issue Saliency, and Systematic Support among Children: Pre-Watergate/Post-Pardon," paper presented to the 33rd annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, 1-3 May, 1975 (hereafter cited as Bailey, "Pre-Watergate/Post-Pardon").

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 10.

⁸⁰Dean Jaros, "Children's Orientations toward the President: Some Additional Theoretical Considerations and Data," Journal of Politics, 29, 2 (May 1967): 385-86.

Longitudinal studies, however, are as difficult to execute as they are desirable. The cost in time and money is generally prohibitive. In addition, there is a serious problem that results from experimental mortality in the sample. In a survey spanning a large number of years, it would be extremely difficult to preserve the original sample intact. And yet this must be done if the results are not to be confounded by the differential loss of persons from the original group.⁸¹

In place of longitudinal designs, therefore, socialization studies have typically used a series of cross-sectional analyses to examine developmental patterns. These "quasi-longitudinal"⁸² studies must operate on the assumption that the children tested are representative of all children in their respective grade level at the time, that children generally share the same opinions and undergo the same basic experiences, and that, in effect, the groups may be treated as representative of a common population. These are large concessions to make, but in the face of highly significant results, such as those obtained by Arterton, members of the discipline have been inclined to tolerate the logical discontinuities that attend such separate sample designs. Further, the alternatives to this quasi-longitudinal scheme are:

⁸¹ Donald T. Campbell and Julian C. Stanley, Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1973), p. 12.

⁸² Bailey, "Pre-Watergate/Post-Pardon," p. 11.

1. A true longitudinal study, which at this time and for this researcher is impossible

2. No study at all.

The state of the art in political science being what it is, the present effort is offered as the best available design.

In the present study, the questionnaires were administered on April 16, April 21, and April 22, 1975. There were fifty-five items replicated from the 1973 study conducted by Arterton. Many of these items, in turn, had been used in the 1962 study done by researchers from the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois. Comparisons were made possible, therefore, among data collected in the early 1960s, in 1973 during the height of the Watergate crisis, and in 1975 in the aftermath of the upheavals and political scandals of that crisis.

The 1962 study tested children in the second through eighth grades. Arterton surveyed children in the third, fourth, and fifth grades. The fourth, fifth, and sixth grades were chosen for the 1975 study in order to examine the so-called cohort theory; the idea that the group tested by Arterton will move through life and the mainstream of American society with relatively stable negative attitudes, formed when Watergate intruded on the children's formative and most impressionable period. The fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students of the current study, therefore, may be viewed as representative of Arterton's third, fourth, and fifth grade students as they would appear one school year after the December 1973 study.

This type of design is necessary to examine the particular

hypotheses of this study and their relation to the various models of political socialization already presented. The central issue involved is the durability of children's political attitudes, and the direction and magnitude of any shifts in these attitudes. Some scheme for the observation of the development of political attitudes over time is therefore essential. There are two of the three major hypotheses of this study which are directly concerned with possible changes in attitudes toward political authority from 1962 to 1973 and now to 1975. Hypothesis 1 predicts that after the drastic shift from positive attitudes in 1962 to negative images in 1973, attitudes in 1975 will continue to be low. Hypothesis 2 predicts a similar trend in attitudes toward the government in general.

The Sample

The sample for the 1975 study came from the Walsingham Academy, Williamsburg, Virginia, a private school in a relatively high socioeconomic-status neighborhood. All of the children in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades were tested. This amounted to 124 students in the fourth grade, sixty-eight in the fifth grade, and seventy-nine in the sixth grade for a total of 271 students tested.

By comparison, Easton and Hess's 1962 study draw a national sample of public school children in the second through the eighth grades. This sample encompassed a wide range of socioeconomic levels. The numbers tested were also much larger--1,732 in the fourth grade, 1,787 in the fifth grade, and 1,741 in the sixth grade.

In 1973, Arterton used a sample from certain public schools in a relatively high socioeconomic-status suburb of Boston, Massachusetts. Arterton tested 111 third grade students, 124 fourth grade students, and 132 fifth grade students.

Methods of Measurement

The test instrument covered a number of variables; socioeconomic status, general affect toward government and the President, the father, President Ford and former-President Nixon, political cynicism, party identification, and political information.

The twelve items used to measure attitudes toward the authority images of the President and the father with respect to each are shown in the questions in Figure 1.⁸³

Easton and Dennis identified five components of the authority image.⁸⁴ Feelings of attachment, benevolence, and dependability reflected the affective dimension. The cognitive components of power and leadership were used to describe the performance ratings of the figure. As Figure 2 shows, each of the twelve items fell under one of the five components.

For purposes of economy, an abbreviated scale of six items

⁸³These questions were used by University of Chicago researchers in the 1962 national survey and appear in Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System. The same items were used by Arterton in his 1973 study. The whole questionnaire used in the present study appears in the Appendix.

⁸⁴Easton and Dennis, Children in the Political System, pp. 182-90.

1. Do you like him?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Is my favorite of all	Is almost my favorite of all	Is more a favorite of mine than most	Is more a favorite of mine than many	Is more a favorite of mine than a few	Is not one of my favorites

2. Does he protect you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Protects me more than anyone	Protects me more than most do	Protects me more than many do	Protects me more than some do	Protects me less than some do	Protects me less than most do

3. Would he help you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Would always want to help me if I needed it	Would almost always want to help me if I needed it	Would usually want to help me if I needed it	Would sometimes want to help me if I needed it	Would seldom want to help me if I needed it	Would not usually want to help me if I needed it

4. Does he keep his promises?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Always keeps his promises	Almost always keeps his promises	Usually keeps his promises	Sometimes does not keep his promises	Usually does not keep his promises	Almost never keeps his promises

5. Does he make mistakes?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost never makes	Rarely makes mistakes	Sometimes makes mistakes	Often makes mistakes	Usually makes mistakes	Almost always makes mistakes

6. Does he give up?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost always gives up when things are hard to do	Usually gives up when things are hard to do	Sometimes gives up when things are hard to do	Usually does not give up when things are hard to do	Almost never gives up when things are hard to do	Never gives up when things are hard to do

7. Can he make people do what he wants?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Can make anyone do what he wants	Can make almost anyone do what he wants	Can make many people do what he wants	Can make some people do what he wants	Can make a few people do what he wants	Can make almost no one do what he wants

8. Can he punish people?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Can punish anyone	Can punish almost anyone	Can punish many people	Can punish some people	Can punish a few people	Can punish no one

9. How much does he know?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Knows more than any-one	Knows more than most people	Knows more than many people	Knows less than many people	Knows less than most people	Knows less than any-one

10. Does he make important decisions?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Makes important decisions all the time	Makes important decisions a lot of	Makes important decisions sometimes	Makes important decisions seldom	Almost never makes important decisions	Never makes important decisions

11. Does he work hard?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Works harder than almost anyone	Works harder than most people	Works harder than many people	Works less hard than many people	Works less hard than most people	Works less hard than almost anyone

12. Is he a leader?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Always a leader	Usually a leader	More often a leader than a follower	More often a follower than a follower	Usually a follower	Almost always a follower

Fig. 1. Twelve items of measurement for authority images.



Component of Authority Image	Questionnaire Item
High Affective Content	
Attachment	Do you like him?
Benevolence	Does he protect you? Would he help you?
Dependability	Does he keep his promises? Does he make mistakes? Does he give up?
Power	Can he make people do what he wants? Can he punish people?
Leadership	How much does he know? Does he make important decisions? Does he work hard? Is he a leader?
High Cognitive Content	

Fig. 2. Questionnaire items and corresponding component of authority image.

was used to measure attitudes toward the specific figures of President Ford and former-President Nixon. The particular items within each category that showed the most variation between 1962 and 1973 were selected to represent the five components. These items are shown in Table 1.

Summary and Conclusions

The sample has now been discussed, the research design, and the methods of measurement which were used in this study to observe and evaluate children's attitudes toward political authority. The three major hypotheses which were used to analyze the data have also been presented. It remains now to present the actual findings. Mindful of the theoretical limitations of the approach, the results of the 1975 survey will now be compared to the data from the 1962 and 1973 studies in order to observe the trends and stability of children's attitudes over the past decade in the context of the hypotheses set out above. The study will also be concerned with the data insofar as they support or fail to support several theories of political socialization. In particular, it will be concerned with the extent to which the Easton-Dennis model, the Developmental model, or the Current Events model, provide a satisfactory explanation of the data. It is important to evaluate these models in the broader theoretical context from which they were extracted, for beyond the observation of children's political attitudes, the study is ultimately concerned with predicting the consequences of these orientations for the political system.

TABLE 1

ABBREVIATED LIST OF ITEMS USED FOR PRESIDENT
FORD AND FORMER-PRESIDENT NIXON

Component	Item
Attachment	Do you like him?
Benevolence	Would he help you?
Dependability	Does he make mistakes?
	Does he keep his promises?
Power	Can he punish people?
Leadership	Is he a leader?

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS

In order to examine the post-Watergate political attitudes of children, a paper-and-pencil questionnaire was administered to fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade students at the Walsingham Academy, a private elementary school in Williamsburg, Virginia. The data gathered from this study were used to compare the attitudes of children in 1975 to children's views of politics in 1962 and 1973. To facilitate these comparisons, three major hypotheses were examined. Briefly restated, they were:

Hypothesis 1. The affective content of the authority image of the President in 1975 will be negative and significantly lower than in 1962; this difference to be attributed to the lasting damage of Watergate on children's attitudes.

Hypothesis 2. General affect toward the government in general will also be convincingly lower than in 1962; presumably as a result of the spill-over effect from attitudes toward the President.

Hypothesis 3. There will be a significant difference in affective attitudes toward the President and attitudes directed specifically at President Ford and former-President Nixon.

Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 are related to the question of whether the damaging effects of Watergate, as revealed by the severely negative attitudes measured by Arterton in 1973, have become relatively

stable and persistent factors in the political attitudes of children. Hypothesis 3 is directed at Easton and Dennis's assumption that children do not differentiate between the President and the presidency.

Affective Image of the President

The data from the present study indicate that the attitudes of children toward the President have risen considerably from the extreme negative images reported in 1973. Attitudes have not, however, returned to the high positive levels registered in the early benevolent leader studies. The President is still viewed in largely unfavorable terms. Negative affect, though not as extreme as the strong rejection of 1973, is persistent.

In presenting their view of children's idealistic image of the President, Easton and Dennis relied heavily on data gathered from the item in which children were asked if they liked the President, i.e., if he was "a favorite of theirs." Table 2 compares the distribution of responses to this item in the three time periods.

Several observations may be made about these response changes. In the first place, as illustrated by Figure 3, attitudes toward the President have risen from the low of 1973, but still remain well below the 1962 levels.⁸⁵ The level attained by the 1975 responses,

⁸⁵Data for the sixth grade in 1973 were not available, but for the purposes of Figure 3 a hypothetical value was inserted. Judging from the pattern of the other two grades, and the sixth grade values from 1962 and 1975, the placement of the intervening value (indicated by the question mark on the graph) seems to assume the probable location of the missing data.

TABLE 2

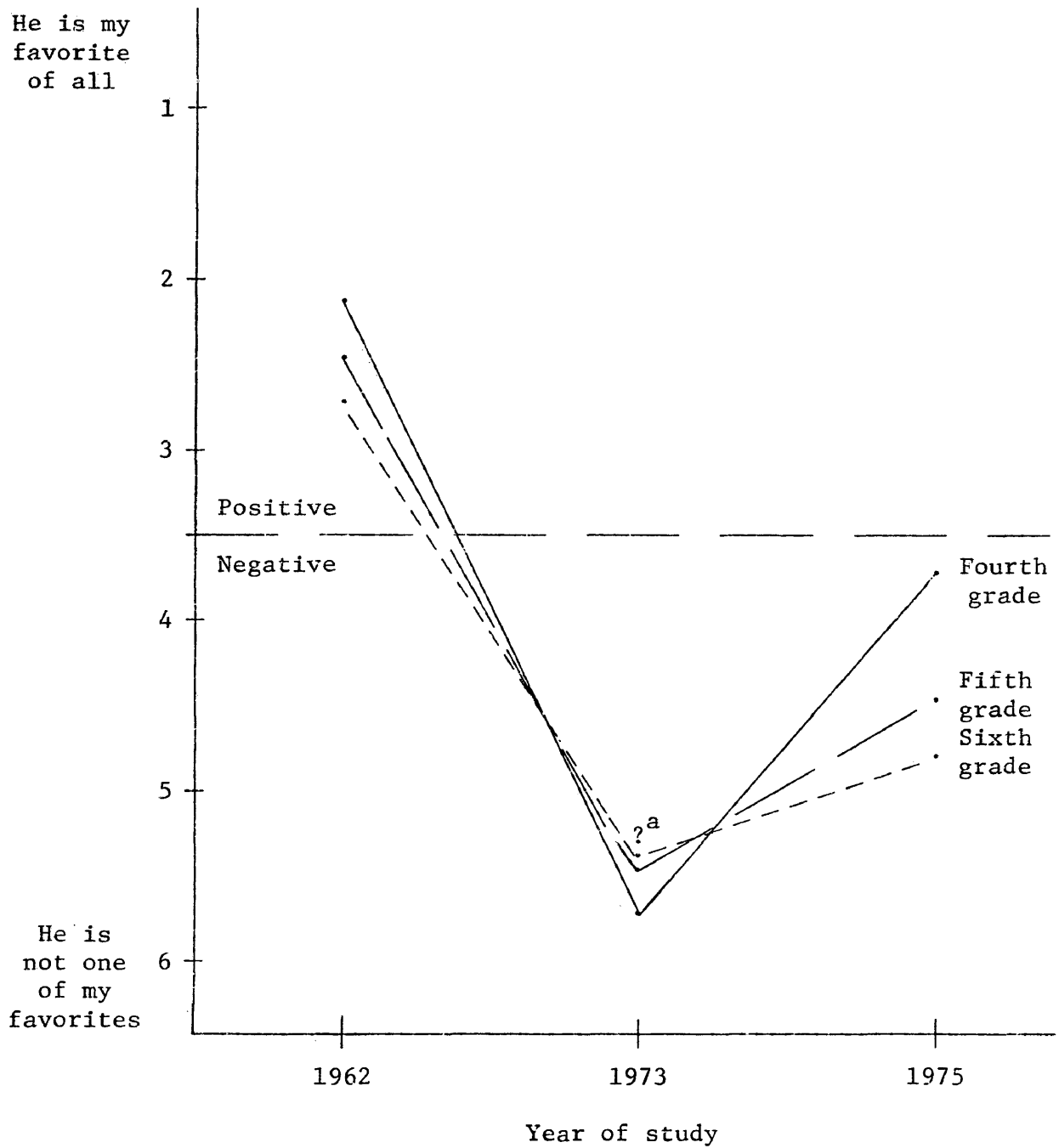
COMPARISON OF 1962, 1973, AND 1975 STUDIES IN RATING
OF THE PRESIDENT FOR "DO YOU LIKE HIM?"

Grade and Year	Mean	Percentage of Children Responding						Total	
		1. He Is My Fav- orite of All	2. He Is almost My Fav- orite of All	3. He Is More a Fav- orite of Mine than Most	4. He Is More a Fav- orite of Mine than Many	5. He Is More a Fav- orite of Mine than a Few	6. He Is Not One of My Fav- orites	Per- cent- age	Num- ber
Fourth									
1962	2.60	28	30	17	11	7	7	100	1,732
1973	5.36	2	5	2	8	13	70	100	124
1975	3.96	11	19	5	7	31	27	100	47
Fifth									
1962	2.83	21	29	21	13	9	8	101	1,787
1973	5.21	2	3	8	13	11	64	101	132

TABLE 2--Continued

Percentage of Children Responding

Grade and Year	Mean	Percentage of Children Responding						Total
		1. He Is My Favorite of All	2. He Is Almost My Favorite of All	3. He Is More a Favorite than Most	4. He Is More a Favorite than Many	5. He Is More a Favorite than a Few	6. He Is Not One of My Favorites	
		Per-centage	Per-centage	Per-centage	Per-centage	Per-centage	Per-centage	Number
1975	4.60	3	12	10	12	23	40	68
Sixth								
1962	2.88	22	26	20	14	9	9	1,741
1975	4.48	4	5	12	22	32	25	79



^aSee footnote 85 in Chapter 3.

Fig. 3. Mean responses by grade for three studies to presidential item "Do you like him?"

furthermore, indicates that perceptions of the President are still negative.

More precisely, t tests revealed that a significant increase in attitudes took place between 1973 and 1975.⁸⁶ The 1975 attitudes, however, were still significantly lower than in 1962--and still negative. The scores are presented in Table 3. Additional information about the groups compared is presented in Table 4, including mean responses of each group to the presidential item, "Do you like him?"; the variance of these responses; and the number of children tested in each group.

According to the logic of the Easton-Dennis model, the severe rejection of the President observed in 1973 should have had a critical and relatively permanent impact on the political development of children. If early images of the President are to form the basic link between the child and later feelings of diffuse support for the political system, these early attitudes must attain a certain level of stability and influence. It seemed reasonable to predict, therefore, from the Easton-Dennis model, that the negative images of 1973 would persist and be reflected in the 1975 results. Such a finding would

⁸⁶The data for this study were gathered from children's responses to questions that asked them to rate the President and other political figures along a six-point scale. There seems little reason to believe that such a scale is an interval measure. Nevertheless, parametric statistics, such as t tests, have been used on similar data by previous researchers. F. Christopher Arterton, for example, used t tests in his 1973 analysis. For the sake of comparability, then, t tests were also calculated on the present data. In some cases, Kendall's tau B, a nonparametric statistic which seems more appropriate for this type of data, was used.

TABLE 3

STUDENTS' \bar{t} SCORES FOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN
 VARIOUS GROUPS IN THE THREE STUDIES ON
 THE THREE STUDIES ON PRESIDENTIAL
 ITEM "DO YOU LIKE HIM?"

Groups Compared	\bar{t} Score	Signif- icance (Two tailed)
Fourth grade 1962--fourth grade 1975	4.69	.01
Fourth grade 1973--fourth grade 1975	3.67	.01
Fifth grade 1962--fifth grade 1975	9.37	.01
Fifth grade 1973--fifth grade 1975	2.83	.01
Sixth grade 1962--sixth grade 1975	10.26	.01

TABLE 4
 RESPONSES OF GROUPS USED IN t SCORE
 COMPARISONS TO PRESIDENTIAL
 ITEM "DO YOU LIKE HIM?"

Group	Mean	Variance	Number
Third grade			
1973	4.44	3.20	111
Fourth grade			
1962	2.60	2.28	1,732
1973	5.36	1.42	124
1975	3.96	3.81	47
Fifth grade			
1962	2.84	2.28	1,787
1973	5.21	1.51	132
1975	4.60	2.34	68
Sixth grade			
1962	2.88	2.49	1,741
1975	4.48	1.79	79

have supported the Easton-Dennis model of political socialization. The 1975 data, at first glance, appear to conform to this expectation. But while attitudes are still negative by comparison with the 1962 levels, they have risen significantly since 1973. It would seem that if children's political attitudes are subject to such rapid and large fluctuations, they may not be suitable for the bases of long-term orientations.

Figure 4 illustrates both the moderation of negative reactions from 1973 to 1975 and the distribution of responses over the six ratings of the "Do you like him?" item. The differences in the three studies are clearly evident in the percentage of children who rated the President at either extreme. In 1962, many more children chose the President as their "favorite of all," while generally avoiding the other end of the scale. In 1973 and 1975, however, very few children chose the President as their favorite, and the incidence of completely negative answers was dramatic. Also, while the 1975 ratings were less negative than in 1973, the pattern of responses in 1975 more closely resembled that of 1973 than 1962.

Easton and Dennis presented five components which they felt made up the composite picture of the President's image--attachment, benevolence, dependability, power, and leadership. The item discussed above, "Do you like him?," was used to measure attachment and, along with items pertaining to benevolence and dependability, identify the affective dimension of the authority image. In addition, Easton and Dennis presented two other components, power and leadership, which

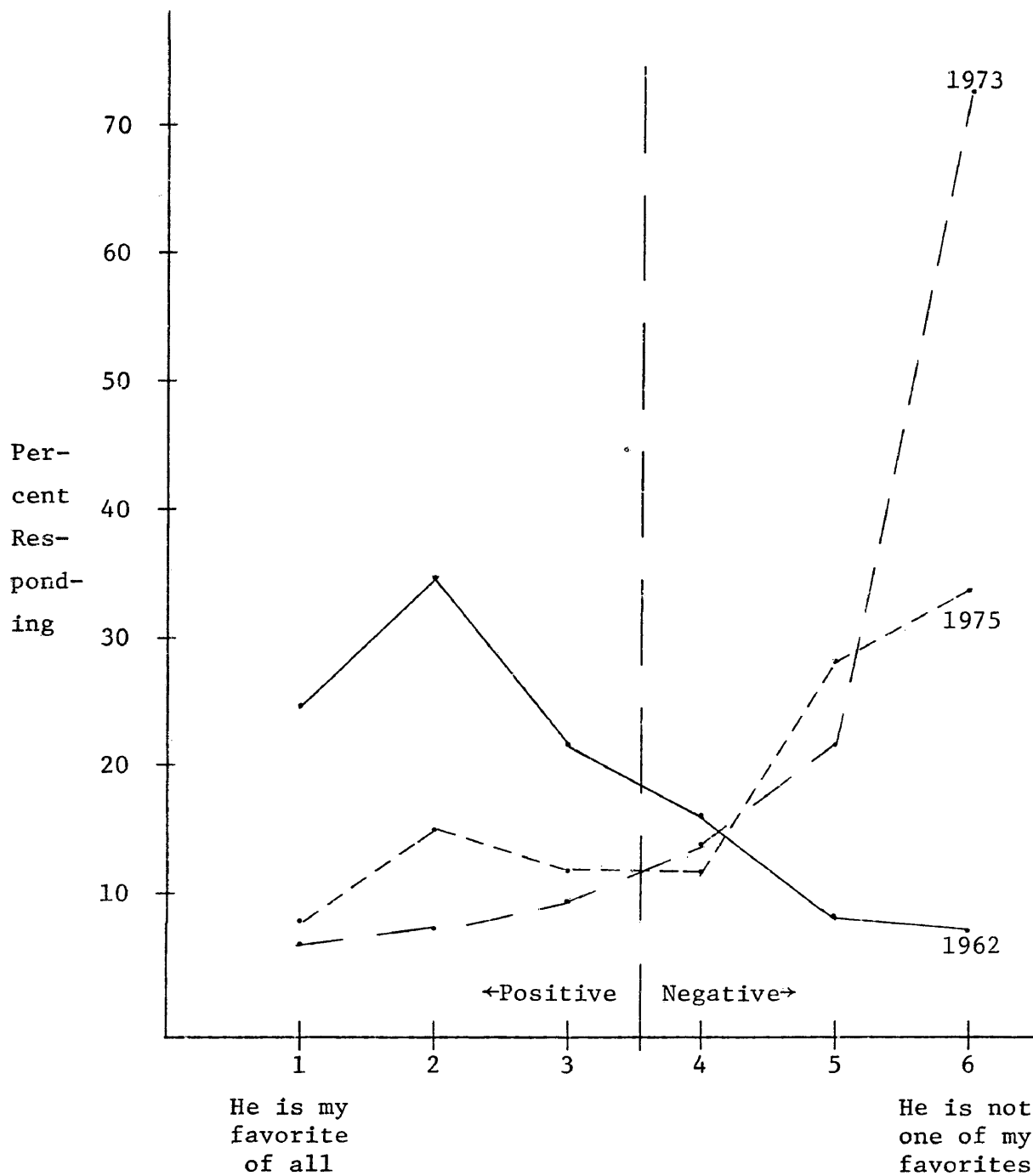


Fig. 4. Distribution of responses to presidential item "Do you like him?" for three studies, fourth and fifth grades aggregate in each year.

were associated with the performance dimension. The 1973 data indicated that while the President's image suffered severely along the affective dimension, changes from 1962 were much less pronounced along the performance gradients.

Table 5 presents the comparative data for the five components of children's image of the President. Along the affective components, as already noted, attitudes have risen since 1973 yet remain much lower than in 1962. The performance ratings of the President, however, do not appear to have changed as noticeably. It does appear that the President's image has continued to decline on the power component, while the leadership qualities have improved, in some cases nearly back to the 1962 levels.

Attitudes toward Government and the
Spill-over Effect

In the Easton-Dennis model, the prime significance of children's attitudes toward the President concerns the role that image plays in generating diffuse support for the political system. If childhood attitudes toward the President are to eventually determine adult feelings of legitimacy, there must be a generalization of those attitudes to other figures of political authority and the government, a phenomenon Arterton has termed the spill-over effect.⁸⁷ Research in

⁸⁷F. Christopher Arterton, "The Continuing Impact of Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority," paper presented to the 33rd annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, 1-3 May 1975, p. 9.

TABLE 5

COMPARISON OF 1962, 1973, AND 1975 STUDIES IN
MEAN RATINGS OF PRESIDENT ON
TWELVE SCALES

	Fourth Grade			Fifth Grade			Sixth Grade		
	1962	1973	1975	1962	1973	1975	1962	1973	1975
Attachment									
1. Do you like him?	2.60	5.36	3.96	2.83	5.21	4.60	2.80	4.49	4.49
Benevolence									
2. Would he help you?	2.09	4.56	3.29	2.20	4.96	3.93	2.32	3.62	3.62
3. Does he protect you?	3.10	4.61	3.74	3.27	4.52	4.15	3.25	3.70	3.70
Dependability									
4. Does he keep his promises?	1.85	4.06	2.51	1.90	4.30	3.19	2.01	2.85	2.85
5. Does he make mistakes?	1.97	3.81	2.63	2.16	4.11	3.10	2.28	3.10	3.10
6. Does he give up?	1.19	3.80	4.35	1.18	3.81	4.24	1.05	4.44	4.44

TABLE 5--Continued

	Fourth Grade		Fifth Grade		Sixth Grade			
	1962	1973	1962	1973	1962	1975		
Power								
7. Can he make people do what he wants?	2.55	2.94	3.55	2.67	3.06	3.72	2.80	3.82
8. Can he punish people?	2.85	3.17	3.78	2.97	2.83	3.78	3.02	4.51
Leadership								
9. How much does he know?	2.18	3.19	2.39	2.22	3.29	2.84	2.30	2.71
10. Does he make important decisions?	1.60	2.18	2.14	1.57	2.45	2.16	1.57	1.90
11. Does he work hard?	2.03	2.46	2.22	2.04	2.58	2.52	2.04	2.25
12. Is he a leader?	1.69	2.01	1.98	1.71	2.16	2.50	1.67	2.20

the early 1960s revealed that along with the highly idealistic views of the President, generally positive opinions were expressed concerning all aspects of the political system. The data from the 1973 study showed a massive shift to negative attitudes toward the President, and a definite negative swing in opinions about the government as well.

According to Easton and Dennis, the prominent figure of the President is the primary link between the child and government. In 1962, the highly idealistic image of the President easily generalized into approval for the political system. In 1973, negative images of the President were translated into a general mistrust and cynicism about government. If attitudes toward the President remained low in 1975, then, following this reasoning, opinions of the government should also have been negative. By predicting this result, Hypothesis 2 of this study hoped to examine the link between the image of the President and attitudes toward government.

The 1975 data indicated that children continue to view the government considerably less favorably than in 1962. Again, these results appear to conform to the predictions of the Easton-Dennis model. As seen previously, however, the 1975 findings revealed that images of the President have risen significantly since 1973. How did this shift affect attitudes toward the government? If Easton and Dennis are correct in their assessment of the relationship between images of the President and attitudes toward government, changes in the image of the President should be paralleled by changes in

attitudes toward government. Even though attitudes toward the government remain low in 1975, then, one might expect to see something of an upward trend in response to the improved image of the President.

Table 6 shows a comparison of 1973 and 1975 responses to two items measuring political cynicism. It appears that while cynicism remains widespread, there is no perceptible pattern of change between the two studies. On the item concerning the motives of politicians, cynicism is very nearly the same between the two studies. The second item drew a slightly more negative response among the fourth graders in 1975, while cynicism was slightly down in the fifth grade.

Table 7 compares the three studies in regard to attitudes toward the government in general. Again, while attitudes are clearly more negative in the latter two studies than in 1962, it is hard to say exactly what direction feelings toward the government have taken between 1973 and 1975. Comparing the fourth grade in 1973 to the fourth grade in 1975 reveals a slight increase in positive attitudes. A comparison of the fifth grade students in both studies, on the other hand, indicates a continued downward trend.

A further test of the spill-over effect between images of the President and attitudes toward government was performed. Kendall's tau B was used to test the relationship between responses to the President on the item "Do you like him?" and each of the four items measuring attitudes toward the government. Table 8 reports the results of those calculations. In general, no significant relationship was found between affect toward the President and opinions about

TABLE 6
 COMPARISON OF RESPONSES TO POLITICAL
 CYNICISM ITEMS IN 1973, AND 1975

Study	Percentage in Agreement with Statements		
	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade	Sixth Grade
1. Most Politicians Are Mainly Out for Themselves.			
1973	35	44	. . .
1975	35	46	29
2. Dishonesty Seems to be More Common in Politics than in Most Other Careers			
1973	43	56	. . .
1975	47	43	41

TABLE 7
 COMPARISON OF 1962, 1973, AND 1975 STUDIES IN
 AGREEMENT WITH THREE STATEMENTS
 ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT

Statements	Percentage of Children Agreeing								
	Fourth Grade			Fifth Grade			Sixth Grade		
	1962	1973	1975	1962	1973	1975	1962	1975	
1. The government has too much power.	19	35	22	22	42	47	10	9	
2. The government meddles too much in our private lives.	21	42	39	17	35	56	19	32	
3. The government should have more power over the people.	33	7	18	24	5	10	13	14	
4. The government knows what is best.	77	. . .	74	87	. . .	68	84	68	

TABLE 8

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AFFECT FOR PRESIDENT AND FOUR ITEMS
MEASURING AFFECT FOR THE GOVERNMENT IN THE 1975 STUDY

Related Items	Fourth Grade Kendall's Signif- <u>tau B</u> icance	Fifth Grade Kendall's Signif- <u>tau B</u> icance	Sixth Grade Kendall's Signif- <u>tau B</u> icance
President--			
The government knows what is best.	0.231 0.036	0.151 0.084	0.169 0.046
The government has too much power.	-0.075 0.277	-0.010 0.463	-0.043 0.333
The government meddles too much in our private lives.	-0.315 0.007	0.244 0.011	-0.042 0.336
The government should have more power over the people.	0.109 0.201	-0.080 0.231	-0.005 0.481

government. These results indicate that improved images of the President in 1975 did not "spill over" into a corresponding rise in attitudes toward government.

The Cohort View

Another way of presenting the data is to assume that children in 1973 were deeply and negatively affected by Watergate and that, as a group, these children will carry through life persistent negative attitudes. This cohort effect may be approached by a special comparison of the 1973 and 1975 children. The 1975 study was undertaken one school year after the 1973 study, so that students in the third grade at the time of the 1973 study were in the fourth grade during the 1975 study, fourth graders in 1973 were in the fifth grade in 1975, and fifth graders in 1973 were sixth grade students in 1975. If one is flexible in his assumptions about the comparability of the two groups, it may be possible to view these studies as measuring the progress of a cohort group. The limitations of such a comparison are recognized; nevertheless, it may prove interesting as a quasi-longitudinal separate sample comparison.

Table 9 shows the results of such a cohort comparison on the primary presidential affect item, "Do you like him?" A small difference was found between the third graders in 1973 and the fourth graders in 1975, and a more significant improvement in attitudes was recorded between the 1973 fourth graders and the 1975 fifth graders, and between the fifth graders in 1973 and the sixth graders of 1975.

TABLE 9

COMPARISON OF 1973, AND 1975 STUDIES AS "COHORTS" IN
MEAN RATINGS OF PRESIDENT FOR "DO YOU LIKE HIM?"

Grade and Year	Mean	Percentage of Children Responding						Total Num- ber
		1. He Is My Fav- orite of All	2. He Is almost My Fav- orite of All	3. He Is More a Fav- orite of Mine than Most	4. He Is More a Fav- orite of Mine than Many	5. He Is More a Fav- orite of Mine than a Few	6. He Is Not One of My Fav- orites	
Third grade, 1973	4.44	8	15	11	4	15	47	111
Fourth grade, 1975	3.96	10	18	4	6	31	27	47
Fourth grade, 1973	5.36	2	5	2	8	13	70	124
Fifth grade, 1975	4.60	3	12	10	12	24	40	68
Fifth grade, 1973	5.21	2	3	8	13	11	64	132
Sixth grade, 1975	4.48	4	5	13	22	32	25	79

This improvement is observed despite the Easton and Dennis findings that political cynicism normally increases as children grow older and become more politically sophisticated.⁸⁸ The statistical analysis of these differences is presented in Table 10, and generally supports the earlier findings of this study that attitudes toward the President have increased significantly from 1973. As noted earlier, this increase represents a moderation of the severe drop in attitudes from 1962 to 1973.

The cohort comparisons of the two studies on three items measuring attitudes toward government are illustrated in Table 11. Again, the results are mixed. Between the 1973 third graders and the 1975 fourth graders, and between the 1973 fifth graders and the 1975 sixth graders, attitudes have risen somewhat. Fifth grade students in 1975, however, have lower attitudes toward the government than the fourth graders of 1973.

The cohort comparisons reported above support the view that, contrary to the Easton-Dennis model, the children who bore the brunt of the adverse effects of Watergate are not destined to move through life and society with the extremely negative attitudes recorded at the height of the crisis. The image of the President, while still negative, has benefited from a significant improvement. Attitudes toward the government, however, remain at a low ebb. There appeared

⁸⁸David Easton and Jack Dennis, Children in the Political System: Origins of Political Legitimacy (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1969), p. 180.

TABLE 10

STUDENTS' \bar{t} SCORES FOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN
 1973 AND 1975 STUDIES COMPARED AS
 "COHORTS" ON PRESIDENTIAL ITEM
 "DO YOU LIKE HIM?"

Groups Compared	\bar{t} Score	Signif- icance (Two tailed)
Third grade 1973--fourth grade 1975	1.45	.80
Fourth grade 1973--fifth grade 1975	3.80	.01
Fifth grade 1973--sixth grade 1975	3.95	.01

TABLE 11

COMPARISON OF 1973, AND 1975 STUDIES AS "COHORTS"
 IN AGREEMENT WITH THREE STATEMENTS
 ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT

Statements	Percentage of Children Agreeing					
	1973			1975		
	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade	Sixth Grade
1. The government has too much power.	34	35	42	22	47	9
2. The government meddles too much in our private lives.	42	42	35	39	56	32
3. The government should have more power over the people.	16	1	5	18	10	4

to be no direct spill over of improved images of the President into more favorable opinions of government in general. It may be that alienation from government is part of a larger trend, not directly traceable solely to Watergate and relatively independent of attitudes toward the President. In the long run, this widespread and general cynicism may prove more troublesome for the political system than the rapid changes in the image of the President.

Comparison of Responses to the President,
President Ford, and Former-
President Nixon

A final consideration was whether children respond to the President as an individual or to the role and office of the presidency. A significant difference was sought between responses to items about the President and items which asked directly about President Ford and former-President Nixon in an attempt to determine if children differentiate between the occupant and the office. Table 12 shows the mean ratings obtained for each of these political figures.

Kendall's tau B was used to test the relationship between the responses to the three figures. The results of this analysis appear in Table 13. The results are highly significant for the relation of the responses to the President and responses to President Ford. But there is generally very little, if any, relation between responses to the President and responses to Nixon, or between responses to Ford and responses to Nixon. This indicates that children may indeed

TABLE 12

COMPARISON IN 1975 STUDY OF MEAN RATINGS OF THE PRESIDENT,
PRESIDENT FORD, AND FORMER-PRESIDENT NIXON
ON SIX SCALES

	Mean Rating					
	Fourth Grade ^a		Fifth Grade ^b		Sixth Grade ^c	
	Pres- ident	Ford Nixon	Pres- ident	Ford Nixon	Pres- ident	Ford Nixon
Attachment						
1. Do you like him?	3.96	3.84	4.10	4.60	4.31	4.57
Benevolence						
2. Would he help you?	3.29	3.82	4.00	3.93	4.22	4.12
Dependability						
3. Does he make mistakes?	2.63	2.98	3.55	3.10	3.19	3.72
4. Does he keep his promises?	2.51	3.00	3.61	3.19	3.40	3.75
				4.49	4.10	4.37
				3.62	3.71	3.73
				3.10	3.01	3.49
				2.55	2.78	3.56

TABLE 12--Continued

		Mean Rating		
		Fourth Grade ^a	Fifth Grade ^b	Sixth Grade ^c
Power				
5.	Can he punish people?	3.78	3.97	4.19
Leadership				
6.	Is he a leader?	1.98	2.56	3.03

^aNumber of subjects--47.

^bNumber of subjects--68.

^cNumber of subjects--79.

TABLE 13

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESPONSES TO "DO YOU LIKE
HIM?" FOR THE PRESIDENT, PRESIDENT FORD,
AND FORMER-PRESIDENT NIXON
IN THE 1975 STUDY

Comparison	Kendall's <u>tau B</u>	Signif- icance
Fourth grade		
President--Ford	0.693	0.000
President--Nixon	0.132	0.138
Ford--Nixon	0.139	0.115
Fifth grade		
President--Ford	0.526	0.000
President--Nixon	-0.038	0.354
Ford--Nixon	-0.110	0.137
Sixth grade		
President--Ford	0.735	0.000
President--Nixon	0.141	0.065
Ford--Nixon	0.189	0.021

respond differently to at least these political figures.

These findings fail, however, to provide conclusive evidence that children think of the President in both general and specific terms. If children do have but one image of the President, there are still theoretical questions as to the genesis of that image. Easton and Dennis assume that it is born of a symbolic conception of Presidents in general. In comparing the image of the President from 1962 to 1975, however, we have seen three distinct views of three different administrations. It may be that the child's image of the President is more reliant on the incumbent than Easton and Dennis suggest.

Summary

The data of the present study reveal that while children's images of the President have moderated considerably from the extreme rejection found in 1973, attitudes are still negative and significantly lower than the highly idealistic views of 1962. Perhaps more alarming is the fact that political cynicism and mistrust are as widespread in 1975 as they were in 1973, when attitudes toward government suffered a drop similar to the loss of positive affect for the President. Further, it seems that attitudes toward the government did not profit from the more favorable reactions to the President in 1975. Finally, this study failed to show conclusively that children differentiate between the President and the presidency. The Easton-Dennis assumption that children do not distinguish the two still

awaits empirical resolution.

The results generally conform to the expectations drawn from the Easton-Dennis model and fail to support the Kohlberg derived Developmental model of political socialization. Some of the findings, however, expose weaknesses in the Easton-Dennis model that are hard to overlook. A further consideration of those weaknesses and of the general theoretical significance of the 1975 findings will be undertaken in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

As discussed earlier, three models of political socialization--the Easton-Dennis model, the Developmental model, and the Current Events model--have been offered as explanations for the dramatic shift in children's attitudes toward the President recorded by studies done in 1962 and 1973. The data from the 1975 study do not appear to support the Kohlberg derived Developmental theory that children in a certain stage of moral growth label the political figure as either totally, or even predominantly, "good" or "bad," and judge him accordingly on all affective dimensions. This model explains that in 1962 the President was seen as good. As a result of children's black-and-white moral thinking, the President held a highly idealistic image and rated extremely well in all aspects of the survey. But in 1973, as a result of Watergate, the President was viewed as bad. Children, therefore, responded to him as totally bad; hence, the extremely negative shift in attitudes found by Arterton. At the time of the 1973 study, a new President had taken office. This President was generally accepted as morally upright and presumably would be viewed as good by children. The reasonable expectation from the Developmental model was that the President would once again receive favorable ratings; and since children respond in extreme terms, the positive feelings

should register as highly as in 1962, when the President was also viewed as good. But the 1975 results indicate that such a pendulum swing did not occur. Affective ratings of the President remained negative and significantly lower than in 1962. It appears that children's attitudes are more complex than a simple black-or-white moral judgment of the President.

The Easton-Dennis model does emerge from the current study as a possible explanation of the origins of adult perceptions of political legitimacy and support. According to Easton and Dennis, children's images of the President are the crucial link to feelings about the government and the political system as a whole. The 1973 findings indicated that children held severely negative attitudes toward the President and other figures of political authority. Since these negative feelings intruded upon a critical stage in the children's political learning, they were predicted to be deeply imbedded and relatively permanent, as they must be if they are to become the origins of adult orientations. The negative responses of children in 1975 are not inconsistent with the Easton-Dennis model; attitudes toward the President do appear to have been severely and adversely affected by Watergate. A strict interpretation of these data could lead to the serious implication that at least this generation of American youth will grow up with impaired perceptions of the legitimacy of the political system. Lacking a "benevolent leader" image, these children cannot generalize positive affect toward the President into diffuse support for the system. In fact, their poor evaluation of the President

may lead to negative feelings about government in general.

Will the future of the American political system, then, conform to the pessimistic predictions of the Easton-Dennis model? A closer examination of the 1975 results suggests not. Although the 1975 data are not inconsistent with the Easton-Dennis model, they do not provide confirming evidence.⁸⁹ Indeed, the data raise several important doubts concerning the solidarity of the conceptual framework built by Easton and Dennis. A closer look at the three major hypotheses of the current study will reveal these possible shortcomings. The discussion will also bring us to a further consideration of the Current Events model as a viable alternative.

In regard to affect toward the President, it was hypothesized that attitudes in 1975 would be significantly lower than in 1962. This was found to be the case. It was also discovered, however, that while images of the President were still negative, they were significantly higher than in 1973. Arterton also found wide fluctuations in his follow-up 1975 study.⁹⁰ Arterton commented that ". . . The studies conducted in the early 1960s seemed to imply, if they did not state

⁸⁹As discussed earlier, one of the major limitations of this study and its research design is that results can only be interpreted as being consistent or not consistent with theoretical hypotheses. Actual confirming evidence would have to come from a genuine panel study.

⁹⁰F. Christopher Arterton, "The Continuing Impact of Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority," paper presented to the 33rd annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, 1-3 May 1975, p. 14.

outright, that idealized attitudes toward the President were independent of the particular incumbent."⁹¹ But with such widely divergent assessments of three different Presidents recorded in 1962, 1973, and 1975, the suggestion is that the incumbent may indeed be the focal point of these perceptions. Furthermore, in the enduring developmental scheme posited by Easton and Dennis, it would seem unlikely that attitudes subject to such rapid and marked change could be suitable as the bases for the formation of long-held and deeply rooted orientations.

Hypothesis 2 of the present study was that affect toward government would be convincingly lower in 1975 than in 1962. Again, this was found to be true. However, if Easton and Dennis are correct in linking images of the President to attitudes toward the government, the significant increase in affect toward the President between 1973 and 1975 should have had some spill-over effect in also raising attitudes toward the government. But negative attitudes toward government and political cynicism seemed as widespread in 1975 as in 1973. Perhaps there is a certain lag time before this relationship is observed. But in 1973, Arterton found a definite and apparently immediate spill over of negative affect from the President to government.⁹² In addition, a statistical analysis of the 1975 data on affect for the President and four indicators of attitudes toward

⁹¹Ibid., pp. 11-12.

⁹²Arterton, "Impact of Watergate," pp. 274-75.

government revealed no significant relationships. There was little evidence, therefore, of the Easton and Dennis hypothesis that attitudes toward the President necessarily generalize into attitudes toward the political system in general.

Hypothesis 3 dealt with the Easton-Dennis proposition that children do not consider the incumbent President as an individual, but respond to questions in reference to some general notion as to the role or office of the presidency. In other words, children have only one view of the President, and this is a symbolic impression of the role of the Presidency. In order to see if children do, in fact, differentiate between the President and the presidency, it was hypothesized that children would respond differently to items about the President and direct questions about President Ford and former-President Nixon. Using Kendall's tau B, there appeared to be a significant relationship between responses to the President and responses to President Ford.⁹³ This result is consistent with the idea that children have only one view of the President. But the same tests showed that there was virtually no consistency in responses to the President and responses to Nixon, nor any relation between responses to Ford and responses to Nixon. These results, in addition to the large variation in reactions to the President recorded in 1962, 1973, and 1975, suggest that the direction of the relationship between President and presidency may be the opposite of the Easton-Dennis

⁹³ See Table 13 of this study.

formula--attitudes toward the incumbent may determine how children view the presidency. In the case of Nixon, the severe criticism leveled against him dealt the image of the President a serious blow, from which it has not yet fully recovered. The fact that affect toward the President has risen significantly since 1973 may mean that the perceived openness and honesty of the Ford administration are revitalizing images of the President. As long as Ford and his successors maintain their popular impressions of integrity and trust, negative images of the President may continue to moderate.

The 1975 data, then, pose serious questions for both the Easton-Dennis psychodynamic model and the Kohlberg derived cognitive-developmental approach to childhood political socialization. Is the image of a benevolent leader really necessary for the development of attachment to the political system? Is the early link between images of the President and generalized affect for the government the basis of the political learning process? Social learning theory may offer a better model to explain the fate and role of the benevolent leader image.

In assessing the influence of Watergate on youths who, as children, learned about politics through "rose-colored glasses," Nygreen studied a group of high school seniors in 1974. She writes that:

The Watergate events represented one of the "biggest" events ever to take place in the personal history of pre-adults; "biggest" in the sense of the combined criteria of media coverage, duration, the nature of the issues or the questions at stake. In the past, studies on the impact on youth of such crises as the

assassinations of Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy, the urban race riots or the Vietnam war have indicated that political events of such magnitude do indeed affect many youth, at times with greater magnitude than they affect adults.⁹⁴

In studying the reactions of young people and adults to one of these "big" political events, the assassination of John Kennedy, Sigel found that very young children were even more likely than adolescents to react emotionally to the event and worry about the country.⁹⁵

If political events can intrude on the lives and emotions of young children to such an extent, it may be that the benevolent leader image is not the critical, enduring link that Easton and Dennis propose. Instead, various political stimuli in the environment, of which the President is likely at any given time to be one, may play the prominent role in the formation of political beliefs. The wide fluctuation of attitudes toward the President from 1962 to 1973 to 1975, if it resulted from reactions to the political atmospheres generated by three different Presidents, may be an indication of the power of such transient stimuli.

⁹⁴Nancy Nygreen, "The Impact of Watergate on Support, Participation and Cognition among Adolescents," paper presented to the 33rd annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, 1-3 May 1975, p. 1.

⁹⁵Roberta S. Sigel, "An Exploration into Some Aspects of Political Socialization: School Children's Reactions to the Death of a President," in Learning about Politics: A Reader in Political Socialization, ed. Roberta S. Sigel (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. 161-62.

Hershey and Hill give support to social learning theory, or as it has been referred to here, the Current Events model, as an explanation for the change in images of the President. They refer to a suggestion by Greenstein that:

. . . early learning will persist when it involves topics that are of low salience or habitual in nature. During the Eisenhower years, the Presidency may have appeared to be low in salience, non-controversial, and very consistent with cultural values. At this time, shortly thereafter, the benevolent leader image seemed rampant.⁹⁶

Since the early 1960s, however, the President and the presidency have become increasingly involved in conflict and controversy, partly due to Watergate and other political events of the late 1960s and the early 1970s. According to the Current Events model, these new political stimuli would influence the political development of children and ". . . the chances that children would continue to see a benign, benevolent President would become increasingly slim."⁹⁷

In 1975, it appears that, in the minds of young people, the image of the President has recovered considerably from the severe rejection felt in 1973. Attitudes toward the government, however, remain as depressed as in 1973; and political cynicism is high. Watergate, therefore, while it tainted the image of the President, may have, as Nygreen concluded from her study, been perceived as merely

⁹⁶ Marjorie Randon Hershey and David B. Hill, "Watergate and the Benevolent Leader," paper presented to the 33rd annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, 1-3 May 1975, p. 18.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

another bad policy at a time when levels of support were already low and cynicism growing.⁹⁸ If the Current Events view is correct, future support and legitimacy for the political system may depend more on the course and outcome of political events than an idealized image of the President.

⁹⁸Nygreen, "The Impact of Watergate on Support, Participation and Cognition among Adolescents," p. 20.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

MY CIVIC ATTITUDES

Directions

Think carefully before you answer. Stay with the person reading the questions, do not read ahead. Mark your answers clearly with a circle. Here are some examples.

RIGHT: Are you a boy or a girl?

1. A BOY 2. A GIRL

RIGHT: Are you a boy or a girl?

1. A BOY 2. A GIRL

WRONG: Are you a boy or a girl?

1. A BOY 2. A GIRL

RIGHT: The President should
be strong?

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

RIGHT: The President should
be strong?

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

WRONG: The President should
be strong?

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

For most of the questions there are no right or wrong answers. We want your opinions only. Do not hesitate to answer "don't know" or leave a question blank if you really do not have an opinion or if you are not certain of the answer. But, usually your first impression of the answer will be the one that most clearly gives your opinion.

Questionnaire

1. NAME _____
2. Are you a boy or a girl?
A. A boy B. A girl
3. How old are you? _____
4. What grade are you in? _____
5. What is your parent's occupation _____

Now, please give your opinion on some thoughts that other

students have given us.

6. Do you agree or disagree with the following ideas?

A. The Government usually knows what is best for the people.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

B. The Government has too much power.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

C. The Government meddles too much in our private lives.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

D. The Government should have more power over the people.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

E. The Government allows problems to get very bad before it tries to solve them.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

F. The Government does a good job of solving the country's problems.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

7. Do you agree or disagree with the following thoughts?

A. The President usually knows what is best for the people.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

B. The President has too much power.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

C. The President allows problems to get very bad before he tries to solve them.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

D. The President does a good job of solving the country's problems.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

E. If the President made a big mistake in his job, it would hurt America a lot.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

F. If the President does not approve of a law, it should not be passed.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

8. Now, for these questions, THINK OF THE PRESIDENT AS HE REALLY IS. Then, circle one answer from each of the questions below.

A. Do you like him?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Is my favorite of all	Is almost my favorite of all	Is more a favorite of mine than most	Is more a favorite of mine than many	Is more a favorite of mine than a few	Is not one of my favorites

B. Would he help you if you needed it?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Would always want to help me if I needed it	Would almost always want to help me if I needed it	Would usually want to help me if I needed it	Would sometimes want to help me if I needed it	Would seldom want to help me if I needed it	Would not usually want to help me if I needed it

C. Does he make mistakes?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost never makes mistakes	Rarely makes mistakes	Sometimes makes mistakes	Often makes mistakes	Usually makes mistakes	Almost always makes mistakes

D. Can he make people do what he wants?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Can make anyone do what he wants	Can make almost anyone do what he wants	Can make many people do what he wants	Can make some people do what he wants	Can make a few people do what he wants	Can make almost no one do what he wants

E. Can he punish people?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Can punish anyone	Can punish almost anyone	Can punish many people	Can punish some people	Can punish a few people	Can punish no one

F. How much does he know?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Knows more than anyone	Knows more than most people	Knows more than many people	Knows less than many people	Knows less than most people	Knows less than anyone

Remember, THINK OF THE PRESIDENT AS HE REALLY IS.

G. Does he protect you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Protects me more than anyone	Protects me more than most do	Protects me more than many do	Protects me more than some do	Protects me less than some do	Protects me less than most do

H. Does he keep his promises?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Always keeps his promises	Almost always keeps his promises	Usually keeps his promises	Sometimes keeps his promises	Sometimes does not keep his promises	Almost never keeps his promises

I. Does he give up when things are hard to do?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost always gives up when things are hard to do	Usually gives up when things are hard to do	Sometimes gives up when things are hard to do	Usually does not give up when things are hard to do	Almost never gives up when things are hard to do	Never gives up when things are hard to do

J. Does he make important decisions?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Makes important decisions all the time	Makes important decisions a lot of the time	Makes important decisions sometimes	Seldom makes important decisions	Almost never makes important decisions	Never makes important decisions

K. Does he work hard?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Works harder than almost anyone	Works harder than most people	Works harder than many people	Works less hard than many people	Works less hard than most people	Works less hard than almost anyone

L. Is he a leader?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Always a leader	Usually a leader	More often a leader than a follower	More often a fol- lower than a leader	Usually a follower	Almost always a follower

9. Now, for these questions, THINK OF YOUR FATHER, AS HE REALLY IS.
Then, circle one answer from each of the questions below.

A. Do you like him?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Is my favorite of all	Is almost my favorite of all	Is more of a favorite of mine than most	Is more of a favorite of mine than many	Is more of a favorite of mine than a few	Is not one of my favorites

B. Would he help you if you needed it?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Would always want to help me if I needed it	Would almost always want to help me if I needed it	Would usually want to help me if I needed it	Would sometimes want to help me if I needed it	Would seldom want to help me if I needed it	Would not usually want to help me if I needed it

C. Does he make mistakes?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost never makes mistakes	Rarely makes mistakes	Sometimes makes mistakes	Often makes mistakes	Usually makes mistakes	Almost always makes mistakes

D. Can he make people do what he wants?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Can make anyone do what he wants	Can make almost anyone do what he wants	Can make many people do what he wants	Can make some people do what he wants	Can make a few people do what he wants	Can make almost no one do what he wants

E. Can he punish people?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Can punish anyone	Can punish almost anyone	Can punish many people	Can punish some people	Can punish a few people	Can punish no one

F. How much does he know?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Knows more than anyone	Knows more than most people	Knows more than many people	Knows less than many people	Knows less than most people	Knows less than anyone

Remember, THINK OF YOUR FATHER AS HE REALLY IS.

G. Does he protect you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Protects me more than anyone	Protects me more than most do	Protects me more than many do	Protects me more than some do	Protects me less than some do	Protects me less than most do

H. Does he keep his promises?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Always keeps his promises	Almost always keeps his promises	Usually keeps his promises	Sometimes keeps his promises	Sometimes does not keep his promises	Almost never keeps his promises

I. Does he give up when things are hard to do?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost always gives up when things are hard to do	Usually gives up when things are hard to do	Sometimes gives up when things are hard to do	Usually does not give up when things are hard to do	Almost never gives up when things are hard to do	Never gives up when things are hard to do

J. Does he make important decisions?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Makes important decisions all the time	Makes important decisions a lot of the time	Makes important decisions sometimes	Seldom makes important decisions	Almost never makes important decisions	Never makes important decisions

K. Does he work hard?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Works harder than almost anyone	Works harder than most people	Works harder than many people	Works less hard than many people	Works less hard than most people	Works less hard than almost anyone

L. Is he a leader?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Always a leader	Usually a leader	More often a leader than a follower	More often a follower than a leader	Usually a follower	Almost always a follower

Multiple choice (make only one selection for each question), place letter in the space provided.

10. Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are:

- A. a little crooked
- B. not very many are crooked
- C. hardly any are crooked
- D. don't know

11. Do you think that people in the government:

- A. waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes
- B. waste some of it
- C. do not waste very much of it
- D. don't know

12. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government

to do the right thing:

- A. just about always
- B. most of the time
- C. only some of the time
- D. don't know

13. Do you feel that almost all of the people running the government are:

- A. smart people who usually know what they are doing
- B. or do you think that most of them do not really seem to know what they are doing
- C. or don't you know

14. Would you say that the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of the people?

- A. by a few big interests
- B. for the benefit of all the people
- C. don't know

15. Do you agree with the following thoughts?

A. Most politicians are mostly out for themselves.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

B. Dishonesty seems to be more common in politics than in most other careers.

1	2	8
Agree	Disagree	Don't know

16. If you could vote, what would you be? (Choose one, circle the letter.)

- A. A Republican
- B. A Democrat
- C. Sometimes a Democrat and sometimes a Republican
- D. I don't know what Democrat and Republican mean
- E. I don't know which I would be.

17. Now, for these questions, THINK OF PRESIDENT FORD AS HE REALLY IS. Then, circle one answer from each of the questions below.

A. Do you like him?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Is my favorite of all	Is almost my favorite of all	Is more a favorite of mine than most	Is more a favorite of mine than many	Is more a favorite of mine than a few	Is not one of my favorites

B. Would he help you if you needed it?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Would always want to help me if I needed it	Would almost always want to help me if I needed it	Would usually want to help me if I needed it	Would sometimes want to help me if I needed it	Would seldom want to help me if I needed it	Would not usu- ally want to help me if I needed it

C. Does he make mistakes?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost never makes mistakes	Rarely makes mistakes	Sometimes makes mistakes	Often makes mistakes	Usually makes mistakes	Almost always makes mistakes

D. Can he punish people?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Can punish anyone	Can punish almost anyone	Can punish many people	Can punish some people	Can punish a few people	Can punish no one

E. Does he keep his promises?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Always keeps his promises	Almost always keeps his promises	Usually keeps his promises	Sometimes keeps his promises	Sometimes does not keep his promises	Almost never keeps his promises

F. Is he a leader?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Always a leader	Usually a leader	More often a leader than a follower	More often a fol- lower than a leader	Usually a follower	Almost always a follower

18. Now, for these questions, THINK OF FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON, AS HE REALLY IS. Then, circle one answer from each of the questions below.

A. Do you like him?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Is my favorite of all	Is almost my favorite of all	Is more of a favorite of mine than most	Is more of a favorite of mine than many	Is more of a favorite of mine than a few	Is not one of my favorites

B. Would he help you if you needed it?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Would always want to help me if I needed it	Would almost always want to help me if I needed it	Would usually want to help me if I needed it	Would sometimes want to help me if I needed it	Would seldom want to help me if I needed it	Would not usually want to help me if I needed it

C. Does he make mistakes?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Almost never makes mistakes	Rarely makes mistakes	Sometimes makes mistakes	Often makes mistakes	Usually makes mistakes	Almost always makes mistakes

D. Can he punish people?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Can punish anyone	Can punish almost anyone	Can punish many people	Can punish some people	Can punish a few people	Can punish no one

E. Does he keep his promises

1	2	3	4	5	6
Always keeps his promises	Almost always keeps his promises	Usually keeps his promises	Sometimes keeps his promises	Sometimes does not keep his promises	Almost never keeps his promises

F. Is he a leader?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Always leader	Usually a leader	More often a leader than a follower	More often a follower than a leader	Usually a follower	Almost always a follower

19. Who is the President of the United States? (Choose one, circle the letter.)

- A. Richard Nixon
- B. Gerald Ford
- C. Henry Kissinger
- D. None of these
- E. I don't know

20. Are all Presidents basically the same?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. I don't know

21. Many people are involved in the events relating to Watergate.

Here are some of them. Can you identify them?

A. Samuel Ervin

1	2	3	4	8
Senator	Lawyer	Friend of President Nixon	Judge	Don't know

B. Robert Halderman

1	2	3	4	8
Senator	Lawyer	Friend of President Nixon	Judge	Don't know

C. John Sirica

1	2	3	4	8
Senator	Lawyer	Friend of President Nixon	Judge	Don't know

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