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Kevin R. Carriere

Psychology in Policy

Redefining Politics Through The Individual

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Series Editors' Preface

Politics Brought Home: Cultural Psychology of Generating Values

This book carries an important message for psychology's treatment of politics. To be more precise—psychology has grossly overlooked politics as a specific *psychological* domain of investigations. True, there exists a classificatory realm *Political Psychology*, yet its functions are unclear. Is it a political study of psychology as a science? Or psychology of human beings involved in the complex social processes we label "politics"? Or is it a study of structures of political organizations? All of these (and more) are possible elaborations of that ambiguous descriptive term.

While the focus of *political psychology* remains vague, one aspect is clear—politics as a domain of human social actions is very important. Psychology indeed is dependent on various political stands—but what about the reverse? How is politics itself the result of human inventions—such as technologies or religions? This has not been covered in psychology until cultural psychology came to the scene. This book is a theoretical innovation beyond the first effort to deal with politics in the field (Magioglou, 2014). The difference of this book is its innovative theoretical analysis of how political systems are being set to function between societal structures that set up the frame of "politics" and individuals who establish their particular social role relations with that frame. These role relations are multiple and simultaneous, and have collective consequences. Consider, for example, the issue of citizens of a particular society participating (or not) in the elections. Obviously, 100% participation can be achieved by making participation legally mandatory—but does it make the elections democratic and represent the actual political participation of the populace. Is enforced participation in elections a part of democratic governance? Or is it an administrative feature borrowed from the history of autocratic regimes now masked under the social "duty" to participate? In contrast—if elections are not made mandatory, one may find that less than 50% of the populace actually go to the polls. This means that the actual result of the political participation is

negligible—yet the election results are socially accepted forgetting the silent non-participating majority.

And then there is the aftermath. In recent decades, we observe the post-election political game of the losing side claiming that the publicly announced election results are "rigged" and force some re-count. The final power is then in the hands of the legal systems of the particular country whether to accept or reject such claims. All these publicly visible dramas of politics are very far from the individual person who makes the decision for oneself whether to vote (or not), for whom to vote, and how to feel if one's preferred party wins (or loses). Democracy starts from the depth of the individual mind—a point very strongly made by Kevin Carriere in this book.

On the other side of the organized political systems are the activists—or "hobby politicians" as Carriere nicely describes them in this book. These are individuals who cannot but perform social—and publicly visible—political actions by organizing and joining public demonstrations for, or against, some important social issues. At times such hobbies end in violent clashes—all the more important for the ravens of journalism to pick upon and show in evening television news to the comfortable populace on their living room couches and feeding into their political anxieties and gossips. Such "television politics" has a role to play in the making of the individual minds about politically promoted issues. In the bigger picture, these are mostly futile yet dramatic acts. As Carriere brilliantly points out, all the complex crown of "hobby politicians" are of little consequence for the real making and elaborating political systems of state organizations. Rather, the real makers of politics are the anonymous staffers who set up their political bosses to act in public in particular ways, remaining themselves unknown to the public. Or—sometimes and in some countries of the World—these functions are carried out by equally anonymous military officers who decide at some moment to take the political power into their own hands. This may not last for a long time—the economic interests of the given society may need a transfer to a civilian political administration. What follows then can be a perpetual social accusations of politicians of corruption, nepotism, and all kinds of other scandals. Former elected presidents and prime ministers may end up in prisons. Politics is a dangerous social game.

This book is primarily focused on the United States and the workings of its parliamentary system. The bills, ideas, and political intrigue discussed may not have applicability to other nations with other modes of representation. Yet these other societies have parallel structures of clandestine making of real politics and its social presentations. Purposeful separation of the secret and public domains in politics would be universal for the whole range of political systems ranging from parliamentary democracy through constitutional monarchy to the other extreme of hereditary or military dictatorships. Denial of responsibility for different acts is as important as rushing to take responsibility for others. Secret additional protocols[1] added to public

[1] For example, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939 sealed the fate of the small Baltic states to be taken into Soviet sphere of influence and turned into a travesty of political takeover by the Soviet Union in 1940—supposedly by the wide demands of the populace. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Molotov%E2%80%93Ribbentrop_Pact.

materials of political agreements can fix the fate of entire nations for decades. Politics is a mosaic of social power turned into the organization of human actions in various social role positions that make up the structure of the given society.

The important new feature centrally introduced in this book is the focus on the process of complex political activities. This becomes possible precisely in the framework of cultural psychology. Cultural psychology in its different incarnations is a theoretical branch of psychology, which understands human conduct as organized by meaning-making process between the individual and social-historical frames of existence. These social-historical frames act as masks—political actions are selectively hidden or exposed to public view. Carriere in this book emphasizes the hidden nature of the making of legislative actions by staff members and at holiday times. The politicians themselves bring their efforts to the public domain—and are confronted by the makers and amplifiers of the public presentation in the form of journalists and other whistleblowers. The hidden domains can be strategically revealed by "leaks," or—on the other side—vociferously announced to public, at times telling believable lies at maximum message force.[2] Politics is thus a dance—a masked ball—between the carefully hidden and purposefully publicized perspectives that regulate everyday lives in peace and war. The ongoing making of history in a given society involves parallel processes of public presentations and purposeful "silences." The opponent's actions are advertised as violations of some aspect of some law, while one's own acts that feed into the responses of the other remain carefully out of public eye. This general dialogue of visibility <> non-visibility is carefully orchestrated by policy concerns. Here the participation by individuals is reduced to the expected acceptance of the political presentation of "the Other."

Yet the participation in the political system starts from the persons—and they can see through the veils of political presentations. Back in the middle of the 1990s when the East European societies were changing into Western-style democracies, some adolescents in Hungary remained skeptical and thus surprised positively minded pro-democracy psychologists. Their question was—why should we bother to participate in the games of democracy if as we clearly see its stated and actual realities do not fit with each other (Valsiner, 1997). The psychologists who studied these adolescents were disappointed—after the "triumph of democracy" in the liberated Soviet-bloc countries, these youth demonstrate the win of careful political apathy. How can these youngsters be so ungrateful for their liberation? But they were—and in lieu of further developments in the democratic governance systems of former Soviet-zone countries in Eastern Europe that stance was probably warranted. Trust in a political system is a delicate matter.

[2] In the effort to persuade the World's public that the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq poses grave danger because of its chemical weapons, the then Secretary of State Colin Powell gave a speech in UN on February 5, 2003, and showed satellite photos of a supposed mobile unit to the United Nations. It was the biggest political public lie to start the twenty-first century. No actual weapons were subsequently found after the invasion. For further information see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Security_Council_and_the_Iraq_War#Colin_Powell's_presentation.

How can trust in the political system of a given society develop, and be cultivated? Carriere's answer in this book is—through the values. Regardless of psychologists' levels of political awareness, psychological interventions are woven into societies' fabric, and thus every psychological action is a political statement. The important message here is that psychology is neither neutral nor apolitical. Cultural psychology provides us with a fundamental insight that Carriere brings into this book—psychology is politics, and it starts from the person. We must return to asking what the values, power, and policies are functioning to lead the individual in one direction or another.

If cultural psychology can do that then the future of freedom of human beings may remain.

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Introduction: The Political Power of the Person

The United States Congress[1] is academia, if academia had angry phone calls, actual deadlines, and anonymous publishing. Writing innovative policies is a matter of examining the gap of current law, looking into prior laws in the area, checking the arguments framing both sides of the law, and suggesting an expansion to the law—in various levels of increasing or decreasing complexity—to pursue a certain political and behavioral outcome of the masses. The journal—*House* or *Senate*—has new issues every 2 years, and certain times of the year seem more dedicated to certain topics (like a special issue). Speeches are simply conferences, where Members appear and say things that those who already adhere to a given theoretical and methodological perspectives. And, in both cases, the public remains woefully ill-informed of the job requirements of the position.

This book emerges after a post-doctoral fellowship, where I had the distinct honor to work Congresswoman Debra (Deb) Haaland of New Mexico's first district for 1 year. It was an eye-opening experience and left me in many ways both jaded and hopeful of the state of the politics in America. It was eye-opening in the sense that so much of the work that is done in Congress is never covered or properly explained. So poorly explained, it felt to me, that it almost suggests it is done by design—to obfuscate the truth behind the veil.

Take, for instance, the term "legislative recess". Recess—a time when the legislative bodies are not in session—is anything but recess. Like "summers" for researchers, "recess" is when a large majority of the legislation is crafted, internally debated, and prepared for introduction. News articles, instead, report such recesses as "it will all have to wait, however, until after Congress returns from its Fourth of

[1] The United States Congress is made up of two chambers. The Upper Chamber, the Senate, is comprised of 100 elected individuals serving tri-rotating 6-year terms, with two individuals elected for each of the 50 states. The Lower Chamber, The House of Representatives (colloquially known as the House), is comprised of 435 elected individuals serving 2-year terms, with each state receiving a proportional number of representatives to population, with each representative representing about 700,000 people. The distribution of representatives per state is adjusted based on 10-year census data.

July recess, a 2-week vacation that leaves legislation at a standstill" (Haslett & Pecorin, 2021, 2nd paragraph). If not in vacation-based comparisons, it typically entails some sort of comparison against the average worker ("In 2017, Congress was in session for 145 days out of 261 workdays. That's far less time than the average American worker puts in at the office" (Connley, 2018, 3rd paragraph)). These bylines suggest that Members are going on holiday or break, inferring that their workload decreases, they are less available, and that the government grinds to a halt. But instead—such recesses are when their Representatives are most accessible to them. Members are typically traveling to their home states and districts, hosting town halls, meeting with constituents, and coordinating with their state-level staff on the list of events they must attend and appear at.

Even something as simple as what expertise I had coming onto the Hill seemed to not matter in the end. Congress has an army of non-partisan experts paid through the Congressional Research Services (CRS). Learning the technical details of Medicaid and Medicare is only a phone call and email away, where experts write papers, summarize policy, and even provide perspectives on areas of conflict where legislation has yet to clarify the goal of the federal government. Legal expertise also can be covered, with the non-partisan arm of Legislative Counsel, existing to draft any legislation that is of interest to an Office, given enough clarification, aims, goals, and scope of the problem. In 2021, another non-partisan staff—that of the parliamentarian, whose job it is to know the rules and procedures of Senate and House—made national news when their ruling over Senate procedure led to the exclusion of a 15 dollar minimum wage increase in a specific type of bill (Peterson & Duehren, 2021). So, to work in Congress, one does not need to be an expert in policy (CRS), an expert in legalese (Legislative Counsel), nor rules and procedures of a 300-year-old system (Parliamentarians).

This is both wonderful but also harrowing. Congress is constructed in such a way that anyone can show up and make policy—a system designed for the average person. Yet, such a system opens the door for historically uninformed non-experts to propose and change laws that can affect the lives of millions of individuals.

Who then, makes the laws? That task fell to me, and the thousands of staff members who fill the offices of Congress. Staffers, in many ways, do have expertise in various issue areas. A single glance at job postings for the Senate and the House are looking for aides to work on transportation policy, immigration policy, health, and education. For Fellows like myself, our program was primarily one of climate scientists—an awkward position to be in for a social psychologist who was more interested in studying the changing climate of politics than the changing climate conditions of the world. By luck, I found an office that did not need a climate scientist—they were well-covered in that issue area and were instead looking for someone to cover issues of immigration, criminal justice, police reform, and foreign affairs.

This led to a secondary, troubling reflection—who are all these unelected workers—writing our laws, researching the issues, debating the positives and negatives of voting up or down a specific bill? In my 1 year, I did a reasonable amount of legislative work—two bills introduced, and three more that, if not for the pandemic

and a struggling adjustment to interoffice communication, could have been introduced as well. I wrote "talking points" for a host of events and met with constituents, lobbyists, and interest groups. Some who already shared my (and the Office's) beliefs, some who convinced me to change my beliefs (and not the Office's), and some who at least gave us pause as we considered the systemic impacts of supporting one bill in favor of another. By in large, these meetings rarely moved the needle—one needed to be generally informed of the issue prior to taking it, and in a polarized climate, any one person could guess with reasonable certainty how certain offices would vote on certain issues by glancing at their Party identification along with their caucus (their ideological bent within the larger party). But was I a true representative for the district of New Mexico-01—a district that I had only been to once in my life for an academic conference a few years prior?

Of course, my job was not to represent the District—and offices are designed with enough stopgaps, hierarchies, and approvals that anything that would be against the District's preferences probably would not have made it very far. A staff-level recommendation typically needs to clear the Legislative Director, Chief-of-Staff, and then the Member themselves. It is also the case that staffers own general policy interests and tendencies are aligned with those of the Office's in the first place—else, they would not get the job.

The hard power of the unelected staffer to make laws, even with the stopgaps in place, remained heavy on my heart as I worked on the Hill. But there was a second level of power that also exists while working in the government. Emails would be responded to. Phone calls would be returned. Stating I was calling "from the Office of…" quickly would lead me to being connected with a Director, CEO, or other high-level decision maker I felt I had no business talking to. This "soft power" of knowing my association with the office got entry into social circles I had no business in being in, of meeting individuals I never would have met otherwise.

This book is primarily focused on a United States-centric context. The bills, ideas, and political intrigue discussed may not have applicability to other nations with other modes of representation. However, the goal of this book is to go beyond a singular nation and discuss in detail the psychology that exists in any method of governmental representation. Besides drawing heavily on United States policy examples, the discussions in this book are general enough towards the study of public policy, psychology, and politics that a reader from any country should be able to engage with the text and its underlying ideas. I have tried to be reflective in my examples, ensuring a breadth of global historical comparisons; though I recognize my positionality as a white, heterosexual, Western citizen, and the state of our colonialist world history education.

This also requires noting that any claims made in this book do not describe my own experience on the Hill, nor my experience working for the Congresswoman, who was an inspiration of the care, compassion, and thoughtfulness that should be demanded of every political leader. Instead, it is an amalgamation of stories, experiences, observations from a variety of sources—other Fellows, other Staffers, and other interest groups and visitors. Where possible, I try to avoid any overt generalization of "how an office functions"—since, each Member has a slightly different

office; a different location; a different hierarchy; a different leadership team; a different set of wants and wishes.

I also do not intend, nor do I think my writing reveals, any disparaging words against the devoted, dedicated, and severely underpaid staff that works within the halls of Congress. Their passion to the public, their sustained interest on the most specific policy (I will never forget the staffer who was truly invested into understanding every minutia of corn-related policy), and willingness to work long hours into the night shows the best of democracy. Their passion of their job is matched only by the humility of their egos—unable to ever receive true credit for the unique, inspiring, and revolutionary ideas introduced by their bosses.

What This Book Is

This book is my attempt to link cultural psychology, public policy, and political psychology. In that regard, this book is built around a cultural psychological framework (Valsiner, 2014). There are a host of assumptions that come in within such a framework, and I do my best to briefly explain and acknowledge them throughout this book. However, a cursory summary of such a framework would be that I view the study of psychology to fundamentally be linked to the study of meaning-making. The world as the individual lives it is co-constructed between the individual and the social, historical, and cultural context under which they live.

The co-constructivist, cultural psychological approach (Valsiner, 2020; Wagoner & Carriere, 2021) generally focuses on three principles: *normativity*, *liminality*, and *resistance*. Normativity acknowledges that while the human psyche is individual, it must negotiate itself in the place of social norms, rules, and general laws of the world. These social norms are understood and negotiated with at every moment, and at each moment, the individual could create a new meaning ("Before, I always followed the rules. But today is different!"). In this continual construction across time, the individual is constantly in a between space—a liminal space between future and past, goals and achievements, outside and inside. The liminality principle of cultural psychology requires we consider not just the start and end, but the between space—the in-between, and our movement towards and away from such a space, as a starting point in psychological research. Finally, in the directionality towards new liminalities, new futures, new meanings—we find ourselves faced with resistances—of paths not chosen, of paths not-yet-reachable, of new social norms and meanings we ourselves create to direct our movement.

In such co-constructivist frameworks, the questions of rating scales, averages, and effect sizes is less heavily relied on, compared to the active storytelling, and lived experiences of the individual. Reporting that on a scale of 1–100, I feel that political group X is 85% human compared to political group Y tells the researcher only of the individual's temporary understanding of the question. What does it mean to attribute only a portion of humanity to a person? What part of their humanity is removed, discarded, unrecognized—and how does the removal of a part of such an

identity not remove the identity entirely? The psychological question of "How does one understand 85% of a human" is ignored in the quantification of attributing a numeric value to a purely qualitative feeling.

Instead of focusing on quantitative data, a cultural psychological framework focuses much more on both theoretical elaborations and qualitative methods to supplement and provide evidence for the theoretical elaborations. However, as a mixed-methods researcher, I do find value in using such quantitative results in considering broader qualitative questions. Quantitative data, even in its aggregate, subjective-response form, can give us meaningful insight into broad psychological trends that can be further elaborated on and clarified through a qualitative approach. This is not antithetical to cultural psychological research, which through examining the methodological cycle of the data construction process as a whole, a researcher can find moments under which quantitative analyses are preferred (Branco & Valsiner, 1997). So, throughout this book, you will find references to quantitative, empirical studies. Their presence is twofold: one, to provide evidence to my claims for individuals more of a quantitative mindset, and two, to hopefully work towards uniting these two methodological approaches in the goal of understanding political psychological processes.

This book tackles two very similar concepts: policy and politics. In this book, public policy refers to any formal policy that attempts to influence an individual's psyche—one's thoughts, behaviors, or emotions. There also exist informal policies that attempt to influence our psychological states—such as social norms and traditions—that I call private policy. Private policy and public policy are both social resources that the individual can use to make and guide meaning of their world. Both seek to promote certain behaviors while silencing and ostracizing other behavior—they are value-based apparatuses that co-construct the world alongside the individual.

On a similar vein, there is the construct of politics. Since I am treating policy to acknowledge the private policy of the community, politics within this book includes more than simply one's engagement with the political apparatus that encompasses a government within a town, state, or country. Instead, politics within this book refers to a dialectic system that provides a functional space for public and/or private policy to exist. Politics legitimizes the formal and informal rules into a coherent set of commandments that one must follow to be a part of the social order. Politics is a performance of power dynamics, from which out of policy can foster. Being political, therefore, is interacting with the system that upholds the power of the formal and informal rules.

Political behavior can be a myriad of actions. While voting, running for office, and signing petitions all are the most salient indicators, it serves us well to consider other types of behavior as well. Writing legislation, enforcing rules during a board game, serving on a homeowner's association, endorsing or opposing racist comments online, and celebrating Columbus Day are all political actions. But what matters is not describing behavior, nor listing the infinite number of possible behaviors that could arise in facing a certain policy but understanding the process that occurs when the individual is engaging with the policy in their daily life. The interesting

psychological component that must be explored in political psychology is the public (and private) policy *process*.

This is not the first attempt to link cultural psychology to political psychology, with a well-edited book published on this topic not even 10 years ago (Magioglou, 2014a). Yet, this book seeks to achieve some goals that the book did not, and does not seek to address some of which has already been covered by the prior work (for a review of the book, see Carriere, 2016). Their work is a testament to the benefits of cross-country, multidisciplinary, multimethod work. While past contributors focused on a societal perspective—defined as insisting on "it has to do with conflict, intergroup relations, and situations that arise in society. A societal political psychology insists on the asymmetries of power in these conflicts and interactions; these asymmetries are not viewed as static and given once and for all" (Magioglou, 2014b, p. xiv), I approach this book from a cultural political psychological lens, by centering the discussion on the individual and their meaning-making process in each moment. My definition of a cultural political psychology, presented in chapter "Private and Public Policy: The Intersection of Cultural and Societal Laws", is a psychology that studies the intersection of values, power dynamics, and public policy. Throughout this book, I try to identify the various places where psychology, and research in general, has underconsidered the role of the individual—the individual who writes the policy, the individual who lives the policy, and the individual who researches the policy. In each—policy staffer, person, and researcher—lies a deep political psychological experience.

I also draw more on research within public policy, forcing an applied focus on trying to directly test, expand, and consider both theoretical notions and future research. In chapter "Moving Toward a Cultural Political Psychology", I start with the definition of a cultural political psychology—noting that such a field requires the examination of values, policy, and power dynamics. I go through each in turn in the following three chapters, starting with values. Chapter "Value-Laden and Value-Creation: The Political Process of Values" considers the values that are present within the creation of results between data, scientist, and the publication process. In chapter "Private and Public Policy: The Intersection of Cultural and Societal Laws", the analysis of policy requires not simply an acknowledgement of how policy impacts a person, but the policy generating process by examining the individual staff member who creates the policy. It also requires us to consider non-formal modes of policy, including the role of social norms and interpersonal relationships. Chapter "The Power of Inaction: Power Dynamics and Public Policy" rounds out the topics of a cultural political psychology by exploring the issue of power dynamics. If individuals want to make change, they need to align themselves with a group and feel that they can make such change. I consider how the current state of ingroup and outgroup research is dismissing a swath of betweengroups, not accounting for a variety of alignments groups have with each other. Drawing on notions of secondary control, I further note how even the powerless, apathetic, and unengaged are actively making change—just to fit themselves more towards their environment rather than trying to adjust the environment to their will.

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About the Author

Kevin R. Carriere is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Washington and Jefferson College in Washington, PA. He was the James Marshall Public Policy Postdoctoral Fellow for the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, working as a Policy Advisor for then Congresswoman Deb Haaland of New Mexico's 1st District. His portfolio covered immigration, foreign policy, criminal justice, and labor. His research interests include increasing intergroup contact through disrupting meta-perceptions, effects of intergroup threat and perceived control on restricting human rights, the motivations and identity formation of collective action, and the perception and reactions to performative and structural activism. His edited books include *Where Culture and Mind Meet: Principles for a Dynamic Cultural Psychology* and *Imagining Collective Futures: Perspectives from Social, Cultural, and Political Psychology*. He is the Editorial Director of Culture and Psychology, Editor of the Virtual Series Issues for the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, and an Associate Editor of Current Psychology.

Moving Toward a Cultural Political Psychology

Political psychology has been defined as "a child of political science and psychology … applied to the understanding of political behavior" (Deutsch & Kinnvall, 2002, p. 15), as "the relationships between political and psychological process" (Renshon & Duckitt, 2000, p. 3), and "a comprehensive psychology of social order" (Valsiner, 2014b, p. ix). These vague definitions lead to a conclusion best summed up by Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart: "I know it when I see it" (Jacobellis v. Ohio, 1964).

But what is there to see? Political psychology's expansive covering of topics includes voting behavior, the aspirations of democracy or authoritarianism, personality characteristics, group interactions of xenophobia, multiculturalism, and immigration, of public policy support and civil liberty restrictions. It is about peace (and the cessation of peace, conflict), of communities and authorities, of ideologies and social norms. The vagueness of the definitions – even in their circular definitions – might be necessary due to the expansiveness that politics has on both science and our everyday lives. However, sometimes weak definitions can lead to a narrowing, not expansion, of theoretical and methodological innovations as researchers are unsure where to draw and push the border of inquiry.

This has led to research considering the importance of the content of political psychology rather than the process of political psychology. The contents, to be sure, are quite vast since politics is not something easily avoidable. It is present at every moment, building and maintaining the social order as we know it. To try and grapple with the field, I take two large constructs of political psychological research – ideology and cultural contact – and use them as two short case studies on the state of the field.

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Ideology

Ideology has frequently been used as a synonym for political behavior and belief, even if its historical use had a much wider range of interpretation (Carriere, 2021). Ideology's 1796 conceptualization was a new term for a science of ideas, which later was used by Napoleon as a description of his political opponents (Drucker, 1972). The term was later clarified by Mannheim, who built an understanding of the differences between a partial and total ideology (Hammersley, 2021; Mannheim, 1938). While partial ideologies reflect how the individual understands the world, total ideologies reflect the larger, macro-level understandings of the world – *capitalism, White supremacy* that exist to maintain the status quo and ensure the survival of its belief system. Yet, in research, it is mainly defined as a measure of one's "placement" on the ideological spectrum of left-wing to right-wing political beliefs. As a result, most research within political psychology that references ideology is generally that of description – reporting the latest way in which a variation on the construction of measuring one's political beliefs leads to a certain variation in some new predicted behavior (or, more likely, reported interest in a behavior). By focusing primarily on whether or not one's ideological beliefs (translating to tendency to be liberal or conservative), psychologists have severely limited the expansion of theoretical and methodological advancements of the study of ideology, failing to consider nonpartisan ideologies, their development, and for what purposes ideologies function (Augoustinos, 1999).

Ideological research has mainly focused on description and content of one's values. Yet, it has done very little in examining the *process* of how values and ideological thinking emerge and maintain themselves. Zmigrod (2020) defines ideology as a system that is (1) doctrinal – rigid to its beliefs and averse to new counterevidence and (2) relational – oriented toward providing preferential treatment based on group membership.

This dual-track definition provides a litany of new questions that arise when research moves away from describing the attitudinal predictors of ideology – including thinking about the relational strength of one's ideological membership, the development of ideologies over time (and toward more and more radicalized ideological thinking), and the questions of identity within an ideological framework. The individual with a "Make America Great Again" bumper sticker on their new Toyota car is a deep psychological meaning-complex that the individual must negotiate, far more psychologically deep compared to trying to predict if individuals would display such a sticker in the first place.

It also provides us with much more consideration on the policies that permit ideological thinking to continue to survive. These can be extremely publicly facing policies, such as the Communist Party of Vietnam, which has made it illegal to have other political parties in Vietnam, necessitating the continued existence of the Party. On the other hand, they could be very private-facing policies, such as the ever-evolving definition of "merit" in helping to shape, redefine, and exclude students from elite Ivy League institutions (Karabel, 2005). The use of merit provides a

relational component to maintaining the "elite" and "exclusive" system, which is only exclusive under certain conditions (nondonor, nonlegacy student, nonathlete). The backlash when such doctrinism of the system is tested can also lead to a large range of novel reactions – from the dissolution of the Soviet Union to the rejection of standardized testing. There is much to be gained from considering the unyielding nature of ideologies and considering the limits and borders of the continued existence of ideological support and thinking.

Cultural Contact

Another construct studied in political psychology is the variety of ways we can conceptualize cultural contact – acculturation, multiculturalism, assimilation, omniculturalism, interculturalism, polyculturalism, and more (for a review, see Samson, 2019). Each theory proposes a different model for how the world should negotiate the intersection of two different cultures while considering the power dynamics of the majority and minority group. While a theoretical-rich psychological question, the research around these topics typically focuses on the dynamics of how minority and majority groups perceive various strategies, with multiculturalism typically being the most favored by minority groups (Moghaddam & Breckenridge, 2010). If it is not an attitudinal measure of cultural contact, research generally involves examining outcomes after exposure to a certain strategy (Birnbaum et al., 2021).

However, both research lines tell us very little about the actual experience of facing cultural contact. It is plagued by the same problems outlined above regarding ideology – that the *process* of cultural contact is being missed out in favor of understanding the *content* and *outcomes* of the cultural contact. This leads to proposals such as omniculturalism, which promote a two-pronged cultural contact model, where we emphasize similarities first and only later celebrate differences (Moghaddam & Breckenridge, 2010). In focusing on outcomes, such approaches may be underestimating the present systemic barriers and values that lead to these outcomes in the first place.

Arguing against multiculturalism, Moghaddam (2012) claims that individuals may be in a context under which diversity is heavily downregulated, and therefore, a celebration of diversity is ill-suited for that context. Individuals with devalued traits – stigmas – may receive such strong backlash or discrimination that they try and conceal their stigmatized identity, such as immigrants, LGBTQI, or the differently abled (Pachankis, 2007). Therefore, a multicultural policy that tries to celebrate such diversity may inadvertently put those marginalized communities at greater risk or in harm's way. Yet, this argument against multiculturalism misses the systemic, macro-level racist policies and values that are already in place that allows for (or forces) such downregulation to occur. Downregulation of minority identity should not be an ideal to strive for. A policy that avoids multiculturalism due to the presence of discrimination and prejudice is removing one's umbrella when it is raining. While it may be the case that discrimination and prejudice may encourage

downregulation, the best path forward is to build policies that can better resist downregulation and change the values from the start.

Recently, new theoretical developments surrounding cultural contact have been proposed that shift the conversation toward the individual's adaptations of novelty in engaging in a new culture called proculturation (Gamsakhurdia, 2021). Proculturation's focus on the process of appropriating several cultural positions within one's sense of self permits a deeper examination of how one's individual culture negotiates in the face of new ideas and ways of acting. While it has focused primarily on the study of immigrants and refugees (Gamsakhurdia, 2018), it can also be applied when any shift of culture is occurring, such as in the case of a workplace considering the process of unionizing (Carriere, 2020). Overall, its power relies on an ability to consider cultural contact as a constant repositioning and realignment of the individual within function in those with low power who may be unable to change the cultural setting and instead must exert control by changing their own behavior.

Any cultural contact work requires considerations for how such dynamics would be translated into policy. Canada, for instance, in 1982, when achieving full independence and passing its own Constitution, adopted the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Charter included the following line in Section 27:

> This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians. (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982)

This has allowed Canadians to embrace and create a policy that targets the advancement of multiculturalism (Dewing, 2013). But such actions – such as creating policy – require that the parliament be willing to adopt laws that will further limit or promote certain behaviors. The creation of policy requires the acknowledgment that those who create the policy are at the immediate moment of passage subservient to it. Proposals such as omniculturalism require a fundamental shift in how we teach differences and similarities in schools (Moghaddam, 2012). In the United States, we are already seeing difficulty in how we teach things as simple as the nation's dark history with slavery as politicians scramble to push policies that restrict how teachers discuss topics of race and inequality in the classroom. For some, the discussion of equity is unequal since the burden of evils falls so often to a singular group.

Defining Political Psychology

Both ideology and cultural contact have been well-studied and discussed throughout political psychology. Yet, their focus on the content of the behavior (either ideological content of beliefs or the outcome of cultural exchanges) has left a large theoretical gap in exploring the process and development of these constructs. This gap is revealed when we start examining the development of values and how these outcomes are developed and maintained through both public and private policies.

These policies tend to focus on one group over another, but beyond that, hold several layers of power interaction. Whether this is in the making of the policies themselves (made by individuals to control the behavior of individuals), or how one adjusts themselves to the environment as a mechanism of control over their lives, power dynamics are always being recreated and renegotiated by individuals at each moment.

Thus, a definition of political psychology that encompasses not only these constructs, but the wide range of psychological variation among these constructs would be to define political psychology as the psychological study of the intersections of competing values, policy, and power dynamics. This falls more or less in line with a definition of politics offered by Pye (2000), who noted that both values and power involve the consideration of imaginative properties. The critical point in adding a cultural psychological framework to political psychology is to center the analysis on the individual and their own meaning-making processes.

In what follows, I will take each part of the definition in turn – values, policy, and power dynamics – and consider where current research on these issues resides and, more importantly, where it still can go. In doing so, I will focus on how a cultural political psychology requires the importance of focusing on process in the place of product, the stories in place of the statistics, and the individual in place of the institution.

Political Psychology: Values

The study of values encompasses a wide swath of political behavior. When considering who to vote for, most individuals rely in large part due to their own personal values of what should be the ideal state of the world (Jacoby, 2006; Leimgruber, 2011). The intersection of one's values in their political support and likewise their political beliefs has led political psychology to focus a great deal on trying to explain the possible psychological variables for why an individual would vote for someone like Donald Trump (Womick et al., 2019), or what predicts general conservative or liberal beliefs (Jost et al., 2003).

Instead of considering simply what predicts liberal beliefs, it would be much more theoretically fruitful to consider the boundary conditions that would keep an individual to hold those beliefs – that is, how dedicated we are to our political values (Zmigrod, 2020). What is the process that is undertaken to continue to build and stabilize those values across time, even when the actions of the politician conflict with your beliefs (i.e., a leading politician has a sex scandal) or the actions of the party (i.e., the party gives ground on a particular issue, or fails to live up to a promise)? There also lies in, closely related to the topic of power dynamics, but the values of a political ideology as it relates to those *not* in your ideological group. How do our relationships with others influence not only the political beliefs we hold, but also the kinds of policy we support? Placing a "Keep America Great" bumper sticker on one's car is not simply an individual act for the car owner, but a larger symbol

toward others on the road. There is an agentic quality to holding political beliefs – it creates groups for us that we can use at some times and others. Holding a political belief is not something simply to predict – but it is something that is used at every moment by individuals, against individuals, for certain purposes.

Our values do more than simply provide us with a direction of what political party to back, or who to elect to a local township office, but can direct our individual activism behavior. We take action to make changes for ourselves – not only now, but for our future selves and generations to come. There is an imagined, future-forward goal direction tied to collective action (de Saint-Laurent et al., 2018), where it becomes a bidirectional question of not just asking what the future will bring to us, but what future we can bring to ourselves. In this way, collective action is a deeply personal and value-laden experience. Collective action is personal – we work to make changes for our own future. In engaging in collective action, there is so much more to the showing up of a protest than simply standing in a public space – but the energy of the group, the unification of individuals around a given issue; and the meanings attributed to the movement all bleed together to create a truly unique qualitative experience (Pilkington et al., 2018).

Yet, mainstream research in collective action primarily places itself within the Social Identity Model of Collective Action (SIMCA) (van Zomeren et al., 2018). In this model, collective action is understood as a response to one's social identity. One must identify with the cause or group that needs action, one must perceive and feel the injustice toward the group, and believe one's group can resolve the issue in an effective manner. If all three of these necessary conditions are met, then collective action will be predicted to occur at the individual level. Identification with the group has been generalized to also account for the actions of ally-activism, or individuals who take up a cause even if they are not directly being affected by it (i.e., are not a target of the activism) (Stewart & Tran, 2018). In cases of ally activism, individual differences of personality, rejection of racist beliefs, and anger at inequity between racial groups showed important predictive qualities to engaging in collective action.

In each – the focus of much of the research around activism examines why an individual seeks to protest issue Y – why we rally in support of gay rights yet are silent about the atrocities of the Uyghur people in China. In the original meta-analysis that brought together the theory of SIMCA, van Zomeren and colleagues examine articles that measure "the attitudinal support for protest as well as the protest intentions or behaviors of members of a social group that are directed at removing the perceived underlying causes of the group's disadvantage or problem (e.g., signing a petition, participating in a demonstration)" (2008, p. 512). But the general quantification of a highly qualitative, emotional experience is simply measuring a single action – the product of the experience. It says nothing of what an individual experiences as they sign the petition, or the deep meanings provided in taking a given action, or the struggles one experiences as they negotiate with themselves and others to decide if they identify with that given identity in the first place. While these results can tell us what predicts, with some measure of certainty, a certain product (sign or not, protest or not) – it tells us nothing of the actual process that led

up to this momentary decision – the values, meanings, and future beliefs of the possible states of the world that contribute to deciding to act or not.

Beyond just deciding to act (or not), there also remains the question of private and public values. Individuals and companies alike frequently engage in performative activism, where public actions – such as changing a profile picture, using hashtags, or even showing up at a protest – do not reflect the true private values of the individual, which continue to uphold the exact system that the protest is designed to fight against. Sometimes referred to as woke-washing (Sobande, 2019), companies use politically charged issues as inspiration for their marketing in order to show support, even if they continually have inequity in terms of pay or representation on staff at the company. Other research shows how White individuals have worried about not having a #BlackLivesMatter sign, in fear their neighbors might perceive them to be racist (Hughey, 2021). In one way, these actions are individuals engaging in collective action. Yet, the meaning behind *why* they are engaging in collective action is in stark contrast to the goals of the collective action – one engages for profit, the other, to avoid being targeted by neighbors. By looking too closely at the output of collective action (the placing of a sign on your lawn), we may be misinterpreting the *process* by which political behavior occurs.

Political Psychology: Policy

The intersection of values and power leads to the creation of policy, and thus, is of critical importance to the study of political psychology. There are two general tracks of approaching public policy's intersection with psychology – the evidence track and the polling track. The first, the evidence track, seeks to inform either public policymakers, or psychologists, of the importance of a given psychological problem or the current products of some given instituted policy. The polling track, on the other hand, focuses on how individuals respond on questionnaires to various imagined or real policy proposals.

Academic journals, such as *Social Issues and Policy Review,* focus their attention on summarizing the current known psychological research on things like educational inequalities, violent crime, and overindebtedness. Other psychological research may take the opposite approach, using quantitative psychological methods to test the effectiveness of governmental programs like Head Start,[1] childcare subsidies, and government public service announcements. This evidence track of research focuses on the products of (not) having a certain policy and provides science the opportunity to engage in the political sphere to encourage future policy proposals.

However, this research falls victim to variability across communities and nations. For instance, a recent study examined the effectiveness of the Head Start program in

[1] Head Start is a federally funded program in the United States that provides school readiness programs, medical access, nutritious meals, social-emotional skills, and more to low-income children and families up until 5 years old.

changing parental behavior – from reading to their kids, practicing math, and changing disciplinary behaviors on children. Specifically, the government has a stated goal to reduce spanking as a disciplinary action that parents use on their children, something that is more likely to appear in low-income households (Ryan et al., 2016). Head Start, a federally funded school-readiness program for low-income families, is a national program but has significant variability in not only what is offered (federal guidelines offer minimums, but communities can offer beyond) but also in terms of what communities are receiving the help. Head Start community centers that had no immigrant families reduced their spanking behavior by 4.8%, but Head Start community centers that had 100% immigrant families were modeled to increase in their spanking behavior as a result of Head Start by 8.1% (Padilla, 2019). Understanding the institutional effectiveness of the program requires a deeper exploration of the reasons why different families are reacting to the intervention differently.

The polling track, on the other hand, focuses on how individuals respond on questionnaires to various imagined or real policy proposals. Academic journals, such as the *Journal of Social Issues* or *Political Psychology*, have a variety of experiments that test individuals' support for wiretapping or for anti-immigration measures like Arizona SB 1070 – The Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act – which requires all immigrants to carry their immigration documents with them at all times (Espinosa et al., 2018). They may test to see what personality characteristics predict support for imagined bills – like an even more invasive Patriot Act, or one's approval for war crimes done on "the enemy" during war.

The polling track faces the same issue most mainstream psychological research faces – that our responses to concocted scenarios and vignettes rarely translate to our behavior in the real world. In one study, individuals were presented with the classic moral trolley dilemma, where they were asked if they would be willing to kill one individual to save five. Later, they were brought into a room with two cages, one cage with a single mouse and one with five mice, both cages hooked up to an electrical machine. A timer began counting down from 20 seconds to zero, at which point the five mice would receive an extremely painful but nonlethal shock, unless the participant chose to intervene. Individual responses to the theoretical, philosophical questions did not predict the behavior of choosing to intervene in the mice, real-life situation (Bostyn et al., 2018). We find a litany of other problems as well, including experimenter bias, social desirability bias, framing bias, and misspecifications of researcher's own models (which have been argued to be more of an explanation of the polling errors in the 2016 Presidential Election, pushing against the theory of a shy Trump voter who was scared to admit their preferences) (Kennedy et al., 2018).

The polling track includes the constructed testing of policy proposals as well, which leads to concerns over the feasibility and applicability of their proposed interventions. Many studies that examine the Palestinian–Israeli conflict attempt to examine it through intensive focus-group methodology, where Palestinian and Israeli individuals meet to talk about their life experiences (Abu-Nimer, 2004; Bargal & Bar, 1992; Bekerman & Horenczyk, 2004; Dwairy, 2004; Rouhana &

Kelman, 1994). These small micro-level focus groups typically show a small attitudinal change, but, based on the construction of the setting itself, avoid thinking critically about how it would be impossible to take these focus groups to the lived experience of individual. These focus groups also include within them issues of power dynamics within the conversation and within the situation, which leads to needing to consider how these focus groups are led and organized in the first place (Hammack & Pilecki, 2015).

Both tracks – the evidence and the polling track – attempt to measure how non-powerful individuals interact with political life. But, in focusing on the products of imagined policies, they rarely can describe the actual thoughts, behaviors, and feelings surrounding these policies. While they observe the public-facing evidence, they fail to understand the private-living aspect of public policy. We cannot explain through quantitative methods *why* low-income communities are spanking, or why a governmental program designed in part to lower spanking is increasing the rates of spanking when immigrant communities are more represented in the program. Nor are we able to properly predict an individual's future behavior in surveys. We need to learn much more about the stories behind these policies to get a better grasp of the policies themselves and stop puzzling over the statistics.

Political Psychology: Power Dynamics

Policy without enforcement is simply a (unstated) list of words. The worry within the judicial branch over jury nullification lies in which power of policy is usurped by the people – choosing to reject the law and rule against the evidence in front of them. Policy requires the dutiful obedience of its persons in order to properly promote and share rights across individuals (Finkel & Moghaddam, 2005). Yet, the reliance within this rights and duties relationship can become quickly eroded – leading to revolutions, where power dynamics are radically shifted from one group to another (Wagoner et al., 2018). Revolutions range from simply a replacement of a ruler, without any change in the formal or informal systems, all the way to a change in leadership through social activism, transformation of political and economic systems, and behavioral changes to succeed in the goals of the revolution (Moghaddam et al., 2021; Moghaddam & Hendricks, 2020). While revolutions have been primarily understood at the macro, governmental level, there is room for the exploration of micro-revolutions within political psychology as well, such as revolutions of workplaces beginning to unionize, or one's micro-revolution to dye their hair in defiance of their conservative traditional parents.

But on the other end of the spectrum, we can consider the negotiation of power in something as small as turn-taking. The childhood lesson of turn-taking during speech is a deeply political act (Moghaddam, 2000; Moghaddam et al., 2000) – acknowledging the system of ensuring an equity of voices (or not – such as a King and his peasant); in ensuring both participants keep up their duties to listen to the

other and share in the conversation; and in ensuring that even something as simple as the languages and meanings being spoken are shared across individuals.

Various scales try to measure how different personality characteristics (answers on some set of questions) correlate with measures that try and define how much one supports the inequality between groups (social dominance orientation, Pratto et al., 1994) one's desire for order, structure, and preservation of social norms (Right-wing authoritarianism, Altemeyer, 1996), or one's willingness to restrict rights when feeling threatened (Carriere et al., 2020). These studies can help provide a description of the generalized context under which the individual functions, but their power beyond such a descriptive level is uncertain.

A large cultural power dynamic is found within the realm of elections, voting, and political parties. The expression of our values through voting is itself a claim of power – choosing an individual person to have decision-making power over the development and enforcement of our policies. It also brings about an overt signal for a second type of power – of the power dynamics on considering the types of bills and laws one wishes to be enacted, and against whom those laws are enacted toward/against. When researchers discuss the *othering* aspect of politics, they generally are referring to this process, by which the outcome of a given policy leads to further demarcations of who *is* and who *is not*.

Yet, research frequently discounts the choice of *not* voting. The individual's choice to be apathetic or to not vote could very well be a recognition of their own nonknowledge and the potential consequences for voting for someone who is unbeknownst to them against their own interests. The lack of voting is not apathetic but can also be understood as an adjustment to one's environment. Unengaged voters may be actively choosing not to engage due to their understanding of the environment around them. Knowing their vote has little generalized effect on the result, the individual may choose to not engage with the world to not raise their hopes and be disappointed in the outcome. This future-forward-directed action is understood quite clearly when considering models of primary and secondary control. Research has quite frequently discarded the various types of hidden actions taken against a system when one perceives themselves to be powerless.

Overall, most of the research in political psychology on values focuses primarily on product – the end, in-the-moment response to a scale; the choice of who one votes for; the resulting inequity because of a policy. We have a good grasp on the institution of politics – how it maintains its power, how we continue to justify the system, and how the system supports itself. It has done less well at exploring the development of the dynamics of power for each individual. There have been interesting examinations of the individual using protest symbols (Awad & Wagoner, 2020) and individual-level revolutions of headscarf use (Mandviwala, 2020) – but more research can be done by considering the nonpolitical revolutions that occur on a daily basis. How does an individual understand the political system around them, and how do their small acts of "revolutions" (wearing mismatching socks, for instance) display a deeper understanding of the larger system? What is the process of learning and employing jury nullification and facing the ability to reject the

judicial system's core tenets, and how does an individual negotiate that kind of power? What is the psychology behind editorial decisions? We have much to learn about how the individual faces the border of obedience and rebellion – and it starts with a greater focus on the individual, not the institution. Finally, we should reconsider the conceptualization of the "unengaged and uninformed" voter as the removal of an expected behavior is a behavior in itself. Instead of discounting such actions as being without, their presence of finding control in an uncontrollable landscape is critical to best understand how those without power survive and persist for so long.

A Cultural, Political Psychology

The current field of political psychology is exceptional in its exploration and investigation into the product of values, power dynamics, and policy. We have focused on the antecedents and consequences of certain political ideologies through rating scales and path analyses. We have explored the consequences of policy and the theoretical interactions of groups and their power dynamics. But in creating this vast trove of research, the number of psychological questions remains unanswered, while the amount of descriptive data continues to grow. The numerical data adds more questions but answers none, when we find bizarre results such as an uptick in spanking for high immigrant-serving Head Start centers.

To remedy this, it is critical for political psychology to engage with fields that focus on the process, not the product; that focus on the individual, not the institution; and that focus on the story, not the statistics. A field apt for such a task is cultural psychology. Cultural psychology is a co-constructivist theoretical branch of psychology that understands human behavior as a meaning-making process between the individual and the social, historical, and cultural context under which they live (Valsiner, 2014a). Instead of focusing on quantitative data, a cultural psychological framework focuses much more on qualitative methods to supplement and provide evidence for theoretical elaborations. With an active, meaning-making agent under investigation, the questions surrounding a cultural psychological analysis lie within thinking through how the individual makes meaning and processes the world around them.

What Does Cultural Psychology Bring?

Approaching political psychology with a cultural psychological lens provides an ample amount of new and growing theoretical opportunities. It briefly suggests three main areas: imagination, power of inaction, and normativity and norms.

Imagination Within Public Policy

While there has been work that looks at the role of imagination in terms of values (e.g., activism, see de Saint-Laurent et al., 2018), there has been less work done in considering imagination and its role in the public policy process. The creation of public policy itself is an imaginative, creative act (Glăveanu, 2018), with individuals, interest groups, and lobbyists all constantly looking at new and creative ways to tackle and change policy, and the voices of these experts should be brought forward. How does this creative process occur – and how does it occur within the realm of private policy? How does an individual imagine new social norms and then work to put them into action?

For example, prior to my arrival in the office, the Congresswoman had traveled to the Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, to give the keynote address to the beginning of the Jim Thorpe Sports Days (Hoopes, 2019). The event brings together multiple army colleges to compete in various sporting events, including soccer, golf, relays, a 5K run, and more. The event is named in honor of Jim Thorpe, a Native American who was brought to the Carlisle Indian Boarding School[2] to be "Americanized," who went on to win gold medals at the 1912 Olympics, while only being recognized as a citizen of the United States in 1917. Jim Thorpe's legacy was sullied, sanctioned by racially motivated individuals who sanctioned him on accusations of participating in professional sports, and his medals were stripped away from him (Staurowsky, 2006). After visiting and learning more about the history of Jim Thorpe, the Congresswoman instructed her staff that we (later, me) had to do something about it. A similar push had occurred in 1982, when the International Olympic Committee gave his family replica gold medals and semi-restored his status, claiming he had tied for first. Six months after her visit, we had introduced the resolution to the House of Representatives, but it never found its way to the House floor (Expressing the Sense of the House of Representatives …, 2019).

This is a very specific example of a very specific case – an individual, faced with her individual values to recognize and honor the past, finds a case under which the meaning of the individual has been described as a cheat and seeks to create a policy that addresses that concern. Her actions resemble the use of a circumvention strategy (Josephs & Valsiner, 1998) – allowing an exception to the rule that "Cheaters should not be honored" with the circumvention strategy of challenging the macro-organizer with a competing macro-organizer ("But the rulings of racists should never be acknowledged as true—AND IT WAS FALSE ANYWAY"). Beyond this, the stories that were tied into this legislation were humbling to learn about. I talked with people who were involved in the original push in 1982; received letters of support from various museums, Native and Indigenous communities, and more. They spoke of the need to right the wrong; to honor an athlete that is an inspiration to so many Native children. Rarely is the individual – and the community tied to that

[2] C.f. Dunbar-Ortiz, 2014 on the history, attempted cultural genocide, and resilience of the indigenous people.

individual – examined in context, and more work uncovering these stories is required to truly understand the greater impact of the policy.

Stepping away from the uniqueness of being able to introduce a given policy, the above story provides various psychological considerations for individuals who are not so fortunate. Companies, under pressure from workers, are instituting imaginative solutions to try and "bring individuals back to the office" as life post the COVID-19 pandemic returns. COVID has shown a potential shift in workers' values, with a majority of workers looking for flexibility in their workplace or time (Minahan, 2021). This requires imaginative responses and policies by the employer to meet the demands of the worker. Or, at a micro-level, an individual may push to change their own individual-level behavior after being misidentified in their pronouns, creating a new social rule for themselves "I shall never assume an individual's pronouns again!". In each, there exists an interplay between one's values, policy, and power dynamics, in terms of how much change; change to whom; and the acceptance of such change.

There are various other ways in which imagination can elaborate findings in political psychology outside of the policy process. The signaling of one's political beliefs – through bumper stickers, lawn signs, and social media posts – all require the engagement with an imagined Other. The individual feels the need to express a statement out to the world – but for what purpose? Are we imagining future interactions with others – or perhaps, trying to avoid them? Are we imagining who we want to be, or who we want others to think we are? While in some ways this lines up with work on imagined contact, where individuals imagine interacting with members of outgroups and later report lower bias, less negative emotions, and higher intentions to interact in the future (Miles & Crisp, 2014), imagination in a cultural psychological lens forces us to consider not just the action of imagination, but the process and purpose of imagination as well. Moreover, we can begin to analyze how the development of imaginative processes (fails to) transforms over time through political upheaval, crises, and social transformations. The imagined ideal of a French citizen was heavily debated and under criticism with the introduction of a face-covering ban in 2010 as French politicians tried to organize and expel the full-body burqa from their society. Those who violated the law and covered their faces broke the imagined ideal and were subject to citizenship classes. Ten years later, France has instituted a new imagined citizen – one that wears a mask to cover their face to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. This negotiation of an imagined citizen relies on understanding the process and purpose of politics, policy, and politician.

Power of Inaction

The second place in which cultural psychology can expand is through considerations of power dynamics, especially as it relates to the individual. Switzerland, for instance, is constantly cited as a country with extremely low turnout in elections, generally hitting 40% of its voting-age population. One suggested explanation for

this is that Swiss citizens are more likely to agree that government and politics is too complicated for them to understand compared to their German counterparts (Blais, 2014). Most discussions of voter apathy then end on that kind of argumentation – those voters feel powerless, uninformed, or indifferent, and as such, relinquish their power of their vote.

But choosing not to vote is still a choice. There is action, and with action, comes power. The individual who chooses not to vote may well be signaling that giving up their own power is a better outcome than having to decide between the candidates in the race. It may be a signal that politics has lost its way, and that the individual is deciding to state that they wish for a politics that was less complex. Or, perhaps, they actively worry about getting the choice wrong, and therefore choose to not risk such a large mistake and opt out of voting. Furthermore, it could be an adjustment toward the environment – a recognition of one's lack of power and instead of facing constant disappointment in the political process, chooses to not engage with emotionally traumatic losses. To understand the power on display when one chooses to disengage requires a more qualitative approach that can better unpack the reasons behind one's inaction. Sheerin (2007) suggests that we should move away from a dichotomous approach to political efficacy and engagement, and consider a spectrum of both internal efficacy and external efficacy beliefs. While one can believe that their own power and competence in engaging in politics is high, they may believe that externally politicians and elections are not as responsive to citizens' demands, expressing a low level of external efficacy. Or, on the other hand, one may believe that politicians can respond to the demands of voters but worries about their own internal efficacy in understanding the political choices and chooses to not participate.

It is one thing to consider the outcome of an election – or the outcome of a decision to choose to vote or not. But it is a very different thing to consider the process of coming to that determination – and that process can grant much more psychological nuance and information than a singular outcome could ever hope to provide. The process of how power is negotiated by an individual in facing such institutions is critical for political psychology to understand, and cultural psychology provides a way to begin asking these kinds of questions.

Normativity and Norms

The third way (but by no means final) in which we could see the benefit of a cultural psychological approach to political psychology is through the analysis of normativity. Valsiner states that normativity is "the general process of personal striving towards meaning through setting and maintaining constraint systems upon feelings, thinking and acting" (2021, p. 13) and is one of the three main tenets in what should become a general theory of psychology. Importantly, this process of personal striving through norm creation is developmentally changing at every moment. Larger normative systems are multilayered through the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels of

social organization, which leads to difficulties in attempting to change the status quo. Thus, the failure of revolutions and the inability to reach what political psychologists call *actualized democracies* (Moghaddam, 2018) is to be expected.

For political psychology, normativity calls on us to consider not just what policies *are,* but how they *are understood*. Norms – formal or informal – are locally flexible and express our understanding of ethics and differentiation in every moment. Our norms are private insofar as our acceptance of them provides a personal restriction on ourselves, yet public in their display and shared among others. The humanness of a law comes within the systemic biases of said norms – that their application is not consistent, their targets are not equal, and the punishments or benefits provided are disproportionate.

Since most bills take multiple sessions of Congress to be enacted into law, one could track its changes throughout its life cycle, drawing in from contextual coverage of the proposed law, to see how its language – and coverage of its language – develops across time. If we are concerned over the interpretation of the social norms, then one could examine an individual's understanding of bills by observing how one reacts to engaging with the legal language. By tracing the microgenetic, moment-to-moment meanings of first hearing a politician talk about the bill, then reading the one-pager on the bill (a short summary of the bill sent to media and interest groups), to then reading the bill language in full – at each moment, the individual's understandings and thoughts around the legislation could be probed and the process of meaning-creation around legislation could be better understood.

Conclusion

These examples are not meant to be exhaustive in any manner but provide a snapshot of the types of questions and future directions that a cultural political psychology could look to explore. In each, the importance of the process of imagination, the process of action, and the process of norm creation are central to the development of the field. In the following chapters, I approach each of the three aspects of a cultural political psychology: values, policy, and power dynamics. In chapter "Value-Laden and Value-Creation: The Political Process of Values", I look at the psychology of values, focusing not on the heterogeneous labels of "conservative" or "liberal," but at how our own value systems intersect with science. Chapter "Private & Public Policy: The Intersection of Cultural and Societal Laws" examines the topic of policy, and I consider the often-ignored staff member who creates the policy, as well as the private policy of social norms and informal policy rules that also influence the external behavior of others. Chapter "The Power of Inaction: Power Dynamics and Public Policy" looks at the final part of political psychology – that of power dynamics. By drawing on the construct of secondary control and alignment, I point out the importance of considering inaction as a viable and important behavior that is erroneously dismissed as unengaged and unsophisticated.

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Value-Laden and Value-Creation: The Political Process of Values

> Hence, it is evident that a city is a natural production, and that man is naturally a political animal, and that whosoever is naturally and not accidentally unfit for society, must be either inferior or superior to man: thus the man in Homer, who is reviled for being "without society, without law, without family." Such a one must naturally be of a quarrelsome disposition, and as solitary as the birds. (Aristotle, 1888)

Psychology as Political

In *Politics,* Aristotle sets the stage for our argument – man is a political animal.[1] For Aristotle, political was meant as a comparison to man living in the *polis*, or city-state, which is why he compares it not against apathy of nonengagement in politics, but of a man who lives without society, in exile, in solitude (Mulgan, 1990). Yet, living in a city-state is political by default – the black letter laws and social norms prescribe the individual to what they can and cannot do. Our engagement in politics is not a choice; it is a requirement of living through the human condition. It is humanity that lives in the *polis*, and in humanity, there is a required engagement with the political world. Being political – engaging in politics – are actions that are engaged with and constrained by both informal and formal rules for how one ought to behave.

Such a definition of political behavior does go against some other scholarship on political behavior that centers itself around behavior that creates a distinction between self and other (Glăveanu & de Saint Laurent, 2015) in order to sustain social order (Staerklé, 2014). In doing so, the definition requires a connection to formal or informal policies. While policies are used in a way in which we

[1] This chapter purposefully avoids the discussion of values as it relates to political values and beliefs. That is not to discount the wide swath of research on political values and beliefs within political psychology – it is the first thought one would have when considering what a political psychology should or would examine. Instead, I highlight the presence of political values within the research *process* since the presence of these values will immediately color any examination of others' values down the line.

K. R. Carriere, *Psychology in Policy*, SpringerBriefs in Psychology,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-07619-0_2

distinguish between those who are "us" (and good, and just, and pure) and those who are "bad" (and immoral, unjust, and evil), it is important to acknowledge not only the action itself of othering, but the specific policy that is being used to assist in the othering process.

That is not to say that such othering processes are not political actions – they are. Social identity theory posits that this social categorization process is critical to our self-esteem and self-concept (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). We examine the behavior of others and determine what behavior best matches with our own, and in doing so, begin to elevate the differences between the two groups. In their original minimal group paradigm, participants gave additional rewards to members of their in-the-moment, arbitrarily created ingroup, compared to an equivalent outgroup. This decision to form such a policy – members of my group get additional benefits and members outside of my group suffer – is a political act; it determines the boundaries for acceptable behavior, even if that behavior is uncontrollable (what group you are assigned).

Othering is not always a negative process. Many times, the recognition of groups and separation of who is and who is not provides the ability to see the deeper structure at play. Recognizing the importance of the presence and interplay of multiple identities is the starting point for most critical psychology, and efforts to promote a "sameness" in place of diversity can be accusations of being color-blind. Indeed, focusing on similarities can lead to a destruction of distinctiveness and valuable cultural identities that itself can breed further conflict (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000). By downregulating differences, we risk asking individuals to conceal their marginalized identity, which has been shown to be related to a wide range of poor mental health outcomes, including depression, anxiety, and stress (Pachankis, 2007; Quinn & Earnshaw, 2013).

Social identity creation is a value-based process. Low-status group members that want to increase their self-esteem can employ a variety of strategies to get back a more positive social identity, including valuing only on certain characteristics of their ingroup, of downward comparing against other low-status groups, and engaging in social change to change the system that is placing them within a lower status (Hornsey, 2008). In a globalized world, we are constantly engaging with different groups, different cultures, and different perspectives on life. We choose whether we want a social system that promotes diversity in the forefront, such as multiculturalism (Perry et al., 2018), or a system that promotes diversity second, such as omniculturalism (Moghaddam, 2012). It sets us with questions of who gets, and who does not; who is just; and who is not; what behavior is permissible, and what behavior is not.

But psychology is more than just identity creation. The formation of groups, our social norms that prescribe behavior, and our actions that push back or with these rules are all psychological actions, and all are a negotiation in terms of power. Our obedience and rebellion toward informal and formal rules permit the system to exist. If such systems do not align with our values, one (either the system, our behaviors, or our values) must change to accommodate the differences. To study psychology is to study value-based processes.

Science as Political

On the other hand, science is constantly called on to be as solitary as the birds, taking a birds-eye view of the world and dictating to the *polis* the state of the world. In predictable cycles, individuals demand the apoliticalization of science. The history of the debate around the politicization of science can be found in the Cold War, where the overt, objective separation of science and politics was a cornerstone in the Western machine to push back against communism (Wolfe, 2018). For example, the University California Board of Regents attempted to require its faculty sign a "loyalty" oath, swearing that they did not endorse or support the communist ideology (Radin, 1950).

Yet, at the same moment science is demanded to be apolitical, the values and politics of the consumers of science are ever-present and ever-responsive. Sometimes, science refutes the status quo – such as Galileo being told to renounce his theory of the heliocentric movement of the Earth; or scientists being charged as liberal liars trying to advance their own research interests as they claim the urgency of the climate crisis. If not due to findings, researchers themselves can be placed under heavy scrutiny when their own personal statements become overtly political, such as the Freedom of Information Act release of Dr. Anthony Fauci's emails, and the revocation of a tenure offer from Dr. Nikole Hannah-Jones for her research on the 1619 Project at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

The conversation of the politicization of science is erroneous to begin with since science has always found an overwhelming support from governments. Technological advancements lead to military prowess, and this can be seen throughout history. The emergence of cannons led to the pivotal change away from castles as the new technology changed how warfare, and cities, was constructed. Poison gases choked the fields of World War I as chemists on both sides of the trenches were racing to build better filters and stronger chemicals to incapacitate and kill the other.

Another critical example of the intersection of politics and science can be found in World War II, where the advancement of scientific discoveries was in large part fundamentally tied to the war effort. Beyond the development of the atomic bomb, World War II saw the production of microwaves (for radar), penicillin, night vision, and advancements in blood transfusions. These innovations of science quickly transitioned into societal benefits, and the US government was interested in seeing how far this could go. In 1944, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Professor Vannevar Bush was commissioned by President Roosevelt to examine how the government could utilize the advancement of scientific knowledge from World War II to continue its development across time, discipline, and sectors. In his report, *Science: The Endless Frontier*, Bush advocated for what eventually became the National Science Foundation[2] and pushed for a continued partnership between government, private, and public interests (Bush, 1945).

[2] The National Science Foundation is an independent agency of the US government that focuses on supporting research in nonmedical fields of science and technology, including the behavioral sciences. It supports 25% of all federally supported basic research at American universities (NSF, n.d.) and accounted for 4.3% of all federal research and development funding in 2020 (Sargent Jr., 2020).

While Vannevar Bush was focused primarily on the "hard" sciences in his report, he notes that it would be folly to create a program that took from the social sciences and humanities in favor of the sciences. Bush was not advocating a division of the pie that better suited one discipline over another – but instead, increasing the size of the pie entirely. Moreover, he notes that "in every section of the entire area where the word science may properly be applied, the limiting factor is a human one" (Bush, 1945, p. 45). It is worth considering his words as not simply noting the need for education – that humankind is the lower limit – but that the expansion of science is *limitless* by the power of the individual. The future of science is indeterminate – its functionality rests on the various possible trajectories of individuals who devote their life to the dissemination of knowledge.

The creation of the National Science Foundation, and similar starts of the National Institute for Health, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the National Science and Technology Council, all follow a similar trajectory – a budding interest in a singular political issue leads to a small grant to explore the issue, which later gave rise to deep federal investments into bringing the topic into the federal government's oversight. In doing so, the government provides a clear and rigorous system to decide what projects to fund, and what projects to not fund. This can lead to political influence, where Senators have been known to introduce Amendments to appropriations bills (bills that instruct the government where to spend its money) that can tie up research funding. This came to a head in 2013, when an amendment to prioritize political science proposals that were deemed vital to the economic and political interests of the country led the National Science Foundation to stop their political science funding program entirely, being unsure how to properly judge the national interests of the country (Mervis, 2013). The political interests of a senator, and the passage of his amendment, directly impeded the development of political science research for a year.

American psychology also likes to conveniently side-step its own political history. Francis Galton, the father of psychometrics, was also the first individual to create the idea of eugenics – to selectively encourage breeding – and his flawed attempts at measuring intelligence were simply a way to racially segregate and discriminate against Blacks. California used the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test to measure mental deficiency and used the results to enact over 6700 sterilizations, an overwhelming proportion of these forced sterilizations on minorities (Guthrie, 2004). The independent report of the American Psychological Association's complicit and active engagement in torture interrogations at Guantanamo Bay (Hoffman et al., 2015) shows how this is not a thing of the past – psychology has constantly found itself engaged in political positions, using its knowledge and power to actively hurt the lives of others.

At a macro-level, then, science has always been linked to political aims since it operates within society. Politics can rule on what gets funded, and what does not. This is the public-facing intersection of politics and science – that of public policy. However, there is a second, more private role of the intersection of politics and science – that of the individual researcher. To understand the role of the individual researcher, I first consider how data is constructed and presented to the greater community at large.

The Politicization of Data and Publication

Science starts with observations about our world. We see an apple fall from the tree and wonder why it falls; if it will always fall; and what leads it to eventually fall. We see the depths of human evil through genocide and dehumanization and ask what leads an individual to obediently follow orders, and if the situation can truly lead good individuals to role-play into horrors of mistreatment in prisons.

Take the Stanford Prison Experiment – notably one of the most well-known social psychological studies of all time. In 1971, Phillip Zimbardo wanted to study the psychological effects of prison life. He put an ad in the local paper, looking for male college students to participate in a psychological study of prison life for $15 a day for 1–2 weeks. Participants were randomly selected to be either prisoners or prison guards, and prisoners were arrested by local police and brought to the basement of the psychology department at Stanford University. On his website, Zimbardo details out a few harrowing details of the experiment. If the prisoners wanted to go to the bathroom, they had to be blindfolded, lest they learn how to escape the prison. There were no clocks or windows, distorting the passage of time. They placed chains on their feet and forced them to wear dresses (Stanford Prison Experiment, n.d.). He instructed prison guards about how to act and encouraged them to act harsher. A litany of critiques on the Stanford Prison Experiment have been published in the past years, and I do not wish to repeat all of the points put forward in its re-analyzation of the data, including ethical questions of the consent form, the deletion of film data that showed inactivity, experimenter bias, demand characteristics, failed replications, and more (Haslam et al., 2019; Haslam & Reicher, 2012; Reicher & Haslam, 2006; Texier, 2019).

Instead, each one of these decisions made by Zimbardo points to his own understanding of not only what a prison is – but what being a prisoner is like. And in each step, the constructed world Zimbardo had created within the prison led him to find results that were dependent on his a priori understandings of how he had assumed the world worked. His flyer – meant to attract every day college students – attracted individuals who score higher on measures related to domination and power inequities than the general population (Carnahan & McFarland, 2007). His choices to blindfold prisoners, remove windows, and the placement of chains on feet all are in stark contrast to the actual lived experience of prisoners and prisons, which do not have such dehumanizing tactics. The Stanford Prison Experiment becomes not a study of prison life, but a case study on the way in which a singular individual constructs the life and experience of a prisoner.

Zimbardo unintentionally provided us with the perfect example of the co-construction role of researcher, data, and phenomenon. The investigator who wants to explore a psychological phenomenon carries with them a host of assumptions about the world. These experiences build into the theories they espouse about such phenomenon, which leads to a selective methodological choice to observe the said phenomenon, which then provide a particular observation about the phenomenon to lead back into further assumptions about the world. However, this process can work

in reverse – our assumptions about the world lead to our own understanding of the phenomenon, which then informs us of how we choose to study said the phenomenon, which then furthers theory in a certain direction to feed back into our assumptions of the world. This general notion of the cyclical, not causal, nature of scientific methodology is a cornerstone of a co-constructivist point of view (Branco & Valsiner, 1997; Valsiner, 2014) (see Fig. 1).

The notion of the methodology cycle (Fig. 1) is to acknowledge the construction of data as inherent to the scientific process. The intuitive experience of the researcher is not outside of the process, but a key stakeholder inside of the process influencing each decision. Zimbardo's aspirations of an outcome that displayed the violence of prisons were built from the start by his own conceptualizations, and limited background research done, on the state of prisons in the United States at the time. Yet, instead of embracing this experience as evidence of the fallibility of the generation of data process, Zimbardo has generally gone for a more aggressive approach, writing scathing commentaries against those who suggest the experiment has flaws (Zimbardo, 2006; Zimbardo & Haney, 2020).

The process of science is inherently political since the researcher themselves come with political beliefs, opinions, and biases that center themselves to make decisions in one way or another. In light of the importance of researcher's own experiences, positionality statements of quantitative work have emerged as a new practice (Rios-Aguilar, 2014), where researchers are upfront with what experiences they hold that may influence their own approach to the data, prior to the data having ever been collected.

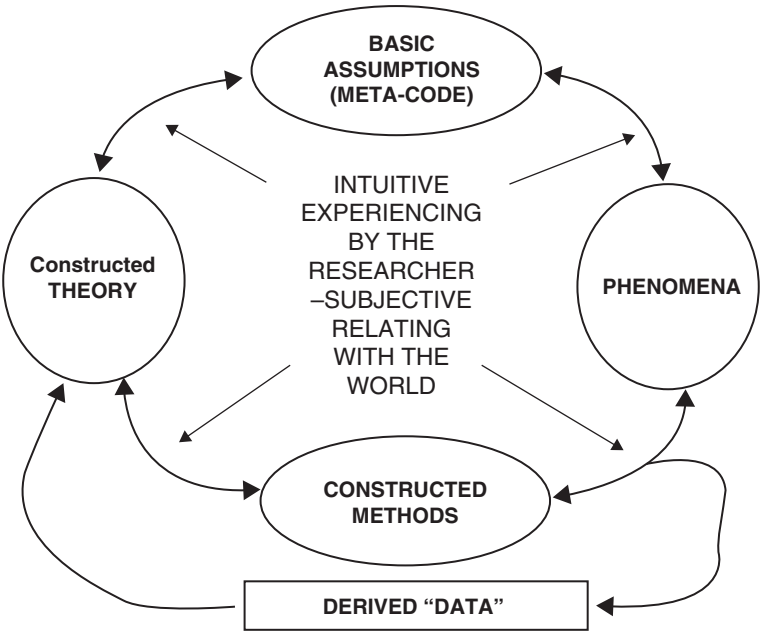

Fig. 1 The methodology cycle. (Adapted from Valsiner, 2014)

The Goal of Methodology: Publication

The methodology cycle provides us with a significant first step in understanding the construction of scientific knowledge. However, the construction of knowledge goes further than simply the researcher and their own political biases. The methodology cycle, in its current form, does not account for the goal direction of its own self – to produce publishable knowledge. Psychology, and science, faces a second level of politics – the private negotiation of the publication process, wrought with its own levels of systemic bias and political ill will.

The publication and dissemination of research is one of a few clear end results of research. As it contributes to the growing body of science, improves one's own recognition, and is used as a comparison case over hiring and promotions. This then incentivizes academics to buy into the notion of "publish or perish," leading to an increased focus on various publication indexes, including one's h-index, the impact factor of journals, a strive for statistical significance, and what has been described as "a focus on scientific enterprise that socially cuts its own intellectual roots" (Valsiner, 2015, p. 424) in focusing on citations within a certain range of years (2–5), instead of the historical life of the manuscript. Beyond this, however, lies the concern that due to the required demand of such publications, researchers may go to great lengths to ensure that their manuscript arrives at its end state, by engaging in questionable research practices (QRPs) to make their research more appealing to the scientific community. This leads to concerns of publication bias, where some research (mostly research that has been dressed up by QRPs) is more likely to be published, while nonsignificant findings and the theoretically interesting failures of research are discarded, never to be published.

For quantitative methods, research has constantly worked to find new methods to account for the *file drawer problem*, where papers that showed nonsignificant results would be discarded or fail to make it through the review process, leading to an overestimation of significant results and their related effect sizes. Faced with the necessity of publishing, and the marketplace of ideas only willing to accept significant results, it seemed only inevitable that QRPs arose that influenced the cherry-picking of data, the increase in testing-until-significance, and theorizing after an experiment has been conducted to explain the results. These QRPs have led to an added call for pre-registration of hypotheses, open science frameworks, and calls to change the reporting of results (Asendorpf et al., 2013; Lambdin, 2012; van't Veer & Giner-Sorolla, 2016).

Qualitative method is not innocent of the sin of publication/dissemination bias (Toews et al., 2016, 2017), and calls have been made to even consider pre-registering qualitative work as well (Haven & Van Grootel, 2019). In 2021, a leading journal in qualitative, critical methods – *Gender & Society*, updated their guidelines to expect that a qualitative study include a sample size of 35 interviews (Gender & Society Guidelines for First-Time Submissions, 2021), even though some research suggests some analyses can be done in as few as 12 (Guest et al., 2006) and others argue such a positivistic approach to qualitative analysis misses the point entirely (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Such decisions are made by at best, a small board of experts, and more likely and at worse, a single editor in chief that decides the direction and type of article that gets published. When editor in chiefs were persons of color, the proportion of papers that focused on race almost tripled, from 4% to 11% (Roberts et al., 2020). The debate over the pros and cons to a double or single-blind peer review process is another example of such political intrigue. Even peer review itself can lead to political concerns as individuals worry about being "scooped" and having their ideas stolen by anonymous reviewers who can delay the authors' publications through requesting endless revisions while writing up their own study at the same time.

This leads researchers to engage in decisions about where to send their article – increasing the demand for high-rated, well-cited journals. Yet, when the measure becomes a target, it stops being a valid measure, and this incentive to publish in these "high-impact" journals has led journals to engage in practices like requiring citations of prior published work to even enter the peer-review process, demands by reviewers to include citations for their work in papers, and even cases where editors have added citations post-peer review into papers. All this impact not only how the final presentation of the data and theory is constructed, but also influence the decisions of individuals at the beginning of the research cycle, who must ensure that their research will meet the standards of the journal before the research has even begun.

All of this to say that science is necessarily political since it engages in a set of rules, norms, and behaviors that guide what is acceptable and what is unacceptable, and the process of the publication process is one that is constructed by individuals and includes a power differential baked into the system. Would we see change, if, for instance, authors had the opportunity to review the reviewers or editors? The private policies of journals and their editors in chief leave a silent political process to run amok throughout science, determining even at the end which data is constructed, how such data is constructed, and who is permitted to see such evidence of its construction.

Value-Laden Outcomes

The result of a value-laden process is a value-laden outcome. For an online Virtual Special Issue, I was tasked with reviewing research on the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. What came out of it was an adequate, toned-down statement of needing true policy changes with leadership buy-in and courage to stand up in the face of injustice (Carriere, 2020). Yet, it was quickly apparent that a true review of the research was impossible since there was a significant lack of attention paid to the Palestinian voices, both as researchers but also as human beings. Very little research was properly considering the asymmetric power dynamics at play in considering the conflict. Conversational focus groups, for instance, in which citizens from both sides of the conflict stick down to talk about their viewpoint, are flawed in their premise. There is no context under which these voices can adequately speak at the same level in

reality – it is a constructed situation with no application. Israel holds all the power, all the resources, all the political capital, and all the cards – and, as it seems, all the research. The voices that are uplifted and the strategies that are suggested are rooted in an individual's own values and perspectives.

One market response to the publication-value problem was the development of an "Open Access" publication system. The goal of open access is to allow anyone to download one's research article without having it locked behind a paywall, requiring high-priced subscriptions are typically bundled by university libraries. Instead, the article is free to download, but the cost of the article shifts to the authors, who must pay thousands of dollars to have their article published. This model provides a benefit of being "available to the public." Yet, this shift has led to concerns over whether adequate fee waivers exist for countries or researchers (such as those without academic institutions, graduate students without grant funding, or others) that cannot afford such a charge. While research may become more assessable, it may be at the same time creating a publication model that does not restrict who can read the publications, but instead, who can write them.

A secondary concern with the Open Access model is within the acceptance rate. Since these journals are now shifting the earnings away from subscriptions and toward authors, there is an economic incentive to accept as many papers as possible to increase the revenue toward the journal. In response, an informal policy of determining which publishers are "predatory" and are not worth submitting to – precisely because of their high acceptance rates and questionable review processes – has emerged (Beall, 2013). The values of who is or is or is not involved in the research process may change, but the borders that limit entry continue to exist.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I closely examined the process of scientific creation. Tracing the interaction of scientists and politicians throughout history, I highlighted how science and politics have always been intertwined – from being on the receiving and restricting ends of the funding process, science both inform policy but is also limited by policy. The co-construction of data, researcher, and method was explored through the methodology cycle, which itself was expanded to consider the future-forward decisions of where to publish that influence how science is created. The value-laden whims of editors and publishers – both in terms of what they want to see in their journals as well as the monetary benefits to the Open Access framework – all include a decision of which values and voices to hold up, and which to silence.

The examination of the process of values is not restricted to the examination of the publication process. A similar treatise could be undertaken regarding one's political beliefs as well. The same questions and considerations would need to be considered – what is the goal of holding one's political beliefs? What influences their continued existence, and why are the choices made to hold one belief or

another? What are the processes behind the displaying out of the outcomes – what is their performative purpose? All these questions deserve further examination in the future.

The importance of *process* in considering values also pointed to the existence of policies – both formal and informal. The formal policy of peer review includes within an informal policy of editorial discretion. The formal policy of Open Access has led to an informal policy of determining predatory open-access journals compared to nonpredatory journals. Both types of policies are significant drivers of process and will be explored in detail in the following chapter, with a considerable focus on the individual-level analysis of such policies – both in the creator of the policy, but also in the individual who must submit themselves to said policy.

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Private and Public Policy: The Intersection of Cultural and Societal Laws

In the United Kingdom in 2014, 21% of individuals over the age of 65 stated that they had no interest in politics, and this number increased to 42% of people aged 16–24 (Randall, 2014). In 2016, the United States placed 30th out of 35 countries a part of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in terms of voting-age population percent turnout, with 55.7% of voting-eligible individuals casting a ballot (Desilver, 2020). People constantly report various levels of voter apathy, saying things like "I'm not very interested in politics" or "I just didn't feel like voting."

Yet, one never hears "I have no interest in breathing" or "one third of America chooses to go without food." Such statements would be considered either bizarre or worrying enough to ask them if they've sought medical help for what could be a behavioral indicator of self-harm since the necessity of oxygen and food is rooted in our ability to function. While not as extreme as our necessity for oxygen and sustenance, politics itself is also inescapable in life. To choose to live an apolitical life is to choose not to live in society. Political standpoints and public policy determine every facet of our lives – from who our neighbors are (from immigration to housing subsidies), to the prices and functionality of groceries [the feasibility of various bartering-based systems to the acceptance of (digital) currencies], to the movement of its people through society (facing lockdowns, travel bans, and wartime curfews).

In considering cases like COVID-19, lockdowns, and masks mandates, it quickly became apparent that public policy is not a panacea. Emergency declarations, laws, executive orders, vaccination goals – all are for nothing if the individual interprets these things as overreaching, dictatorial, or find a new conspiracy theory to add discord and doubt to the situation. To understand the effect of a public policy like a lockdown is to study psychology. The intersection of psychology and public policy is in the *process* of policy creation and policy implementation. Therefore, I first provide a brief overview of what it meant when discussing public policy, and then consider where one can find psychology's presence when studying public policy.

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"Public" (and Private) Policy

Public policy typically refers to such rules, laws, and regulations ("policy") that are provided by the government (the "public"), in comparison to the private sector, or other businesses, corporations, and individuals. This can sometimes get convoluted with word choices of "public perception," which considers the residents of a given area and their averaged thoughts on a given issue. The study of public policy is often considered through the lens of *outcomes and products* – what laws are passed, what laws are opposed, which laws are determined constitutional or not, and what is the resulting world created if a certain law is enacted.

However, psychology can do much better than simply analyzing the products of public policy. While extremely beneficial – we should know what the psychological consequences of torture are; if there is a benefit to free preschool; if there is discrimination present in facial recognition software – these tell us nothing of the psychology that is occurring at every moment within the individual who experiences these policies. There is more to public policy than the outcomes. Instead, the public policy *process*, not its *products*, is of particular importance to observing psychology, and has thus far been inadequately considered in psychological theory.

To make this case, I consider both parts of the notion of public policy. First, what else can be meant by the word public – and how can we consider its opposite of nonpublic (private)? Second, what do we mean by policy – policy by whom, for whom, and enforced by whom? In doing so, we can start to see much more of the psychological nuances within the study of politics and public policy. I then consider how we can see public policy as psychology, and psychology as political, and then consider how we might conceptualize a cultural political psychology.

Public and Private Relationships

Human experience is one of constant public contact, with work, social interactions (those both in-person and exceedingly online), taxes, errands, and more. The public sphere – where eyes are on you at each moment – requires the individual to acknowledge – in some form – the existence of others around them. On the other hand, one's private life – the home, their personal stories, their secrets – exist in a less visible space, where the individual can keep and maintain their own meanings in a more shielded manner.

The meeting point of these arenas – of public and private – can be found in the most mundane of experiences, such as the line-drying of clean underwear, a private clothing in a public sphere, or an open house showing of a home, where the public is invited to imagine their new private lives in this space. The individual who gets a tattoo, then chooses to (or is forced to) cover it up at work, finds their once publicly facing symbol suddenly private and hidden. The street itself functions as an entryway from the private to the public to the unknown side street where private business

may be occurring in a dark alley or turn to an undiscovered bakery for a tourist exploring the cityscape.

More importantly, the meeting points of the private and public provide us with the most psychologically rich data. It is one thing to count the number of tattoos covered or the display of a certain sign in public, but it is another to examine the movement between public to private, and private to public. What is the psychological decision-making ongoing when someone chooses what tattoo to hide, which to show, and at what context? Tattoos, ornaments, and displays provide an insight both into the external, public display of the individual, but point us toward a deeper exploration of the values and everyday life of individuals who choose to display them (c.f. Güss & Tuason, 2008).

The intersection of private and public life is a constant debate in politics. In the United States, multiple states began their decriminalization and legalization of marijuana by permitting the use of recreational marijuana in one's own home. This led to cases where individuals could be arrested if they were smoking in their entryway, while just 5 feet more inside, the individual would be acting in a completely legal manner.

In France, issues over the banning of face coverings, widely seen to be a law designed against Muslim women who choose to wear the veil, are centered on the discussion of whose space is the public space. Muslim women find themselves unable to move into the public sphere wearing their burqas (else, face a fine, citizenship classes, and more), but based on their religious beliefs, cannot enter the public sphere without wearing the burqa. This law has recently come under even heavier scrutiny since due to COVID-19 France has begun fining individuals for not covering their faces in public. Thus, there has developed a double layer of public<>private, whereby masks are both appropriate in the public space, but a larger, more covering mask (such as the burqa) is *too private* and therefore is banned. Many have argued that the law says just as much about the private beliefs of a society, fearful of differences, than of any individual who chooses to don such coverings (Brayson, 2021). Others have noted that in Muslim minority countries some individuals choose to wear the veil as a countermeasure against stereotypes, forcing the larger culture to grapple with an individual who wears it by choice and is not a public threat (Wagner et al., 2012).

Beyond the literal interaction of private and public in terms of physical space, private and public can refer to one's informational spaces as well. The public informational space is that which we know of and are willing to discuss – those nondifficult conversations that allow a very intentionally limited sort of public discussion on issues. For example, while we study the public-facing consequences of a political policy – such as going to war, very rarely do we find examples of the private-facing consequences of going to war – such as the manufacturing of the weapons themselves. Valsiner notes this when he states "I have yet to find a study in psychology of people who make arms, be those rifles, bayonets, tanks, drones or landmines – some manufactured even in the form of children's toys" (Valsiner, 2014, p. 258).

My undergraduates and I have noticed a similar trend in the prison literature, which we are working to write up in greater detail. While research is happy to tell

us about the public-facing roles of prison – what predicts your entry and what predicts your reintegration – very little research occurs on the private life inside of the prison. The little research that is available focuses primarily on that which is already in the public mind – that of the violence within the prison walls (both self-inflicted and other-aimed). Yet, the sub-minimum wages, costs of fees, access to health care, educational resources – all remained woefully studied in a science that seeks to study human conduct. Or, perhaps more harrowingly stated, the lack of true psychological inquiry into the private lives of prisoners leaves a testament to the values that psychology carries as a whole – unwilling or unable to consider a prisoner's life worth studying. Add onto this dearth of research within prisons the fact that such an overwhelming percentage of prisoners are of a minority, non-White race, and we can start to consider the racial biases present within the research process.

Finally, there also exists the individual and their own public and private psychological space. While we observe an individual choosing to wear a mask or not, we do not fully understand the various meanings that have underwritten and influence such masking choices (Tateo, 2021). Obeying (or rebelling) against the current status quo only can describe a superficial attitude toward a policy but tells us nothing of the process that led up to one's willingness to wear a mask. Are they scared of catching a transmissible disease or are they fearful of a giant zit that has appeared on their face? There are values at play at each possible moment within the intersection of the private and public domains: the French Muslim woman, deciding between her religious values and her monetary livelihood; the researcher, valuing to ignore the human life within the confines of gun factories or prison cells; the individual, managing their own values in wearing a mask, which itself becomes a politicized symbol of ideological leanings.

Policy

Public policy examines the outwardly facing, macro-level decisions that lead interest rates to rise, unemployment claims to decrease, or promote the increased take-up of various voucher programs. The question of the "goodness" of a program is not for the scope of this book – nor the question of the "goodness" of government interventions. Instead, it is more important for psychology to consider those programs that do exist – or may exist in some future (as in policy proposals) that are worth examining how those specific programs have tangible costs and benefits to individuals. In a perfect world, all policy proposals are good, they are implemented perfectly, and there are no unknown consequences.

But the implementation of public policy is never tightly controlled – nothing like the experimental paradigms created in labs and through survey platforms. For example, the US government has various mechanisms to help student loan borrowers to repay their debt, including income-driven repayment (IDR) plans, which link the cost of their payments to their monthly incomes while also providing potential for loan forgiveness after a period of time. Yet, fewer than 15 percent of student-loan

borrowers are currently enrolled in IDR (Federal Student Aid, 2016). Such an unbalanced experimental design would be rejected by most mainstream psychological journals, yet the commonplace existence of these programs at the very least puts a question on the applicability of imagining tightly controlled worlds and acknowledges the illogicality of human behavior from an economic point of view.

Public policy also faces a host of systemic issues that plague the system through biases, stereotypes, and even policies intended to create disparities between groups of people. Sometimes "unintended," these consequences have wide-ranging effects beyond the policy's intended outcome. Facial recognition software, for example, has the overt benefit of removing the need to think about carrying a ticket – companies could match a photo to the individual in a millisecond and confirm that they are the ones intended to be on the flight. Ignoring the data privacy concerns, facial recognition faces an additional hurdle – the population from which it is built. Facial recognition software built in the United States is extremely good at detecting white male faces and extremely poor at detecting Black and Asian faces (Grother et al., 2019). On the other hand, Chinese facial recognition is extremely good at detecting Asian faces and performs poorly at detecting White faces (Phillips et al., 2010). This leads to issues within the criminal justice sphere, where Black Americans face more both false negatives and false positives when facial recognition technology is used. The performance difference lies within the coders who create the software, who draw from their own chosen sample set of photos to train the artificial intelligence on, who code based on their own cultural beliefs and life experiences.

In each, the question falls to the individual – and their own private interpretations (and creations) of the policy proposed. While public policy can observe the public outcomes of a given law, psychology allows the examination of not only the public decision – where one moves, what one protests, but also the private decision – how they feel about the decision, how they emotionally balance the laws, and the private systemic issues that surround the public-facing laws.

Policy Influences Our Behavior, Cognitions, and Emotions

Policy is created by individuals, for individuals, to influence individual behavior. Many times, this influence is done through monetary incentives. Taxes on specific goods, like cigarettes, are enacted to dissuade people from purchasing the good. On the other hand, voucher programs – such as the Housing Choice Voucher Program (also known as Section 8 Housing) in the United States – help individuals to afford rental housing, to increase the amount of people with roofs over their heads. These laws are designed to influence behavior to promote a socially desirable behavior, not just in the moment, but toward future moments as well. Social security – the system by which the government will provide you with money post-retirement – is a policy directed both at the present moment (become an active worker to the economy *now*) but also toward the future (so that *later*, you can receive the reward).

But policy is not always about behavior. Policy can be created to change how we think about issues. In Alabama, a bill was recently passed that permits the teaching of yoga in public schools, permitting they use strictly English descriptive names (Act 2021-475, n.d.). In Utah, legislators passed a resolution urging the state's Board of Education to create rules that would limit the teaching of critical race theory in public schools (House Resolution on Critical Race Theory in Public Education, 2021; Senate Resolution on Critical Race Theory in Public Education, 2021). State laws that promote or disavow the teaching of safe sexual education are attempts to control how a child thinks (or does not think) about future sexual encounters. In each, policy shapes how we think – how we learn (or not), how we think (or not), and how we engage in discussions (or not). Likewise, these laws focus both on the present moment – what you are allowed to discuss – but are directed toward the past (you cannot teach on these issues) and the future (which shall lead you to not act against these issues that you did not learn about).

Finally, policy can change our emotions. A striking 20% of bills enacted by Congress from 2003 to 2013 were renaming of local post offices (Name Redacted, 2013), an impressively high number for laws that have no large effect on individual behavior or cognitions. Bills have also been introduced to create a national day of mourning over the COVID-19 pandemic (Expressing Support …, 2020) or requesting that Medals of Honor be rescinded from acts of violence that occurred over 130 years prior (Remove the Stain Act, 2019). These policies are not trying to change a behavior – nor change necessarily how an individual thinks – but are directed to fulfilling a deep emotional need for acknowledgment and recognition of past failures.

Policy also leads to these outcomes solely through existing. People revolt against policies that they disagree with, leading to protests, bombings, and revolutions. The conversations we hold are shaped in large part by our political beliefs, leading some psychologists to even consider our political beliefs as a form of motivated social cognition (Jost et al., 2003). We react to policy proposals with anger, relief, and dismay, with our emotions being predictive of our support for policy (Wang et al., 2018).

In 1917, Charlottesville, Virginia, commissioned a memorial statue of Robert E. Lee, a Confederate general and commander of the Confederate States of America from 1862 to 1865.[1] The policy – to honor a traitor to the Union who fought to protect and keep slavery within the United States – framed how individuals 50 years after the Civil War wanted to remember the past. In 2016, public pressure and political will moved to remove Lee and other Confederate statues throughout Charlottesville. This led to a rally of White supremacists protesting the change, which led to the tragic murder of Heather Heyer and the injury of 35 others when a White supremacist drove his truck into a crowd of counterprotesters. This event led to various other movements, fundraisers, and actions, including a New York state

[1] The Confederate States of America (February 8, 1861, to May 9, 1865) was the unrecognized government of the 11 states that seceded from the United States due to objections against the gradual abolition of slavery and lost the Civil War.

representative to introduce state legislation to rename a local park, currently Donald J. Trump State Park, to Heather Heyer State Park (Directs…, 2021).

The building of a confederate memorial in one state would eventually lead to the proposal to rename a park in a different state, providing an example of how public policy begets psychology, which begets further public policy to clarify the range of acceptable behavior in reacting to such policies – even outside of the state-drawn limits. The presence of laws brings about psychological reactions, even if those reactions are not the intended consequence of them.

Black Letter Law (Public) Versus Commonsense Justice (Private) Policy

In the above, I focused the discussion on black letter laws. These public laws are the laws enshrined in a country's constitution, further defined by laws passed by legislatures and upheld by courts. They are the heart of national conversations – the introduction of Bill Y, the passage of Bill Z. These laws make up our justice system – they define what is right and what is wrong, what is illegal and what is legal, and what is the punishment range for crime is. Black letter laws provide clear punishments for those who are deviant (however the law wishes to describe behaviorally deviant in the given context).

Individuals have reactions to these laws in a variety of ways, and those reactions can vary by individual differences. For example, the relationship between one's political identity and the support of bill passages around hate crime legislation is mediated by one's rationale of their hate crime views (Cramer et al., 2017). Those who focused on the legal argumentation (e.g., "murder is murder") were more likely to disprove additional penalties due to it being a hate crime compared to those who focused on the "offender" argumentation (e.g., "hate crimes show an inability to control one's emotions"). Other studies have shown that support for bills like the Patriot Act also depends on how knowledgeable the individual is about the law, with greater information surrounding the law decreasing support for the law (Best & McDermott, 2007) as well as general knowledge on politics relating to general decreased support for invasive policies (Carriere et al., 2019).

These individual reactions suggest that what the law says may not be exactly what society agrees to or expects. That is, there is a secondary type of law that exists within our society – our social understanding of what *ought* to be done, what the law *should* be – a commonsense parlance of what is just and fair (Finkel, 1995, 2005). Commonsense justice can lead to issues of jury nullification – where a jury rules in contradiction to the law due to their opposition to the law. Courts have tried various ways to avoid jury nullification, but its existence within the system points to the fundamental power that the private – here, the jury has over the public law. The weakness within black letter laws is in its name – the Black and White distinctions of what is legal and what is illegal. Yet, juries can privately rule that law

such-and-such is unfair, bad, or wrong, and refuse to convict based on the law even if the evidence is overwhelming. Recent years have led to the consideration of whether or not prosecutors have the same type of nullification power, overtly choosing to not prosecute certain laws and crimes that they believe are unjust (Foster, 2019).

Therefore, commonsense justice provides consideration for a further type of law – that of the social contract. Social norms – informal as they may be – silently describe a set of behavior that is acceptable (or not) in each moment. They teach us how to behave, how to think, and how to act. They prescribe a list of policies that are enforced not by the larger government – but by the community. These laws feed back to the individual, providing a rich situational context under which they can interpret both public black letter law and private commonsense justice laws (Moghaddam, 2000; Nadler, 2017). These types of social norms are just as important as black letter law, not only for the existence and ethicality of jury and prosecutorial nullification but center the conversation of public policy in terms of how the individual experiences, reacts to, and lives public policy in their private life.

In 1919, the United States ratified the Eighteenth Amendment, prohibiting the sale and consumption of alcohol. This was a long, well-organized social movement within the United States at the time, and similar movements were happening across the globe (Hall, 2010). This black letter law entered the United States into the Prohibition Era and showed a marked decrease in the consumption of alcohol at the start of this era, dropping down to 30% of its original consumption (Miron & Zwiebel, 1991). However, consumption of alcohol started to increase, not decrease, during the later years of the Prohibition Era.

Imaginative solutions to evade the enforcement of the Voldstead Act – the Act created to police consumption of alcohol – were done in the boundary between the private and public – with many bribes and grifts to ensure no one ever asked too many questions (Behr, 1997). Alongside a public era of Prohibition, the 1920s were also considered the "Roaring Twenties," where speakeasies – places that served illicit drinks – bootlegging, and organized crime sprang up to fill in the gap created by the new law. The government faced an additional problem – enforcement of law was low, in part due to bribes, in others, the rejection of the law and a fight over state versus federal enforcement. While the public policy was to prohibit alcohol, the private policy of drinking despite the ban left a telling story of the strength and importance of the private individual choice. Fourteen years later, in 1933, the Twenty-first Amendment was passed to end the Eighteenth Amendment and restore the legal consumption of alcohol. By 1937, two-thirds of individuals would report rejecting a re-entering of Prohibition (McCarthy, 2019), and the era of Prohibition was no more.

Similar contradictions of public and private policy can be found in other cultures. For instance, traditional interpretations of the Islamic faith ban the consumption of alcohol, and consumption of alcohol is criminalized in Muslim-majority countries like Iran (Al-Ansari et al., 2019). Yet, Iran has also permitted the existence of Alcoholic Anonymous groups and ordered addiction centers to also help treat alcoholics, suggesting that even the government recognizes that the public policy is not necessarily having a complete impact on the private policy of their citizens

(Erdbrink, 2017). While the public policy demands abstinence, the private policy is driving behavior that requires the addition of further public policies.

Private Policy: The Legislative Staff Member

In his *Principles of Psychology*, William James wrote on the innate human desire to be noticed and acknowledged for our work. He wrote:

> We have an innate propensity to get ourselves noticed, and noticed favorably, by our kind. No more fiendish punishment could be devised, were such a thing physically possible, than that one should be turned loose in society and remain absolutely unnoticed by all the members thereof. (James, 1890, p. 294)

Yet, there are many individuals within the public sphere that are never noticed. This is the second half of public (private) policy that is rarely considered when discussing issues of public policy – the policy creators. While the elected officials are the face of the legislation, they are rarely the individuals who are researching; drafting; and constructing the talking points around the legislation. Contrary to literature that suggests that the Member is the leading figure writing speeches, drafting legislation, and even determining how one should vote (Schiller, 1995; Wawro, 2000), the true driver of Congress lies outside of the elected officials, and within the office of the official themselves. Legislative staff – both in the Capitol, but also in the various offices within their home states – wield the power of the pen.

In the United States, there are 535 elected members of Congress. A recent 2016 report held that beyond the Members there exist 15,169 staff members (Petersen, 2020; Petersen & Wilhelm, 2016). Offices are given budgets to hire staff based on the number of people they represent – thus, in the House of Representatives, where each member represents an equal number of individuals, offices are generally all the same size, with seven staffers in their home district and eight staffers in their Capitol Hill office. For the Senate, different states represent different populations, so office sizes (and the number of offices, considering the amount of land needed to cover) vary considerably. On top of these, there are a total of 21 Committees in the House and 24 Committees in the Senate, each with their own legislative staff. With high turnover due to elections, politics, and upward mobility, turnover within Congressional offices is quite high (Romzek & Utter, 1996). This does not include the amount of unpaid and underpaid interns, and fails to account for the 600 experts, typically who hold terminal degrees, that work in Congressional Research Services, to provide background and white paper reports on any legislative issue or question. These unelected individuals share no spotlight, receive no recognition, and get no accolades. But they are the ones who craft the policy, who write the speeches, who rehearse the talking points and debate answers. They are the ones answering the phones, replying to emails, and meeting with stakeholders. All for the "Office of Politician Y."

One would hope that as a legislative staffer their job revolves around simply being the politician's extended hand. Yet, recent research has shown that senior legislative staff holds incorrect perceptions of their constituents' opinions (Hertel-Fernandez et al., 2019). In predictable patterns, issues on which the party is in favor of, offices tend to overestimate how much their constituents support the policy and underestimate how much their constituents oppose policies their party is generally against. This suggests that if the role of a legislative staffer is to be "in tune" with the concerns of the public, they are failing at that role.

However, instead, it may be the case that the role of these staff members is not to be their Representative's extended embodiment. They are, indeed, independent experts who have their own pet projects, policy proposals, and issue areas. The expertise of the staffer is tied to the type of policies that they work on, develop, and promote. Like psychology, one would not expect a developmental psychologist to be well-versed or create a novel scientific project in macroeconomic theory. Research has traced this expertise, finding that members who exchange more senior staff were more likely to show similar legislative priorities and projects, more than what would be expected by just considering the individual characteristics of the Members (Montgomery & Nyhan, 2017). The bills the Representative introduces, therefore, seem less of a consideration of who the Representative is, and more in terms of who the Representative's staff is.

This suggests that the interests of the staffer direct the interests of the Members – perhaps. Such a conclusion is a complex causal model to draw. Members who care about climate change will actively seek out staffers who share similar passions for climate change, and staffers who are passionate about climate change will seek out Members who will grant them the space to write policy that promotes climate-based solutions. This is a lived-experience example of the "I create you to control me" model of semiotic regulation (Valsiner, 1999), where Members hire staffers to govern their policy proposals, but also govern the staffers because they are their boss. The cyclical nature of power maintains relative stability – the Member needs the staff to construct policy, but the staff need the Member to promote such policies. This hierarchical relation is sustained by the shared goal orientation of both Staff and Member – to introduce, pass, and enact a certain policy proposal that they both have a shared interest in passing.

The importance of staffers is not a uniquely American phenomenon, nor one that is time dependent. Yet, direct comparisons are relatively difficult in nature since knowing of the contributions of an advisor or staff member suggests a small rebellion in passing all credit toward the leader. The counsel of Grigori Rasputin for the Russian Imperial Family was so widely influential that the Russian nobles murdered him to stymie his influence over Nicholas II. Other famous advisors in history, such as Jean-Baptiste Colbert of France, led to the establishment of Colbertism, an offshoot of mercantilism, which fundamentally changed how France had understood and engaged with colonialism. Yet, one struggles to separate the influence of his counsel to the final decision-making capability of the King, even when he is recognized as King Louis XIV's closest confidant (Soll, 2016).

Speech Writing and the Loss of Identity

The private policy of the staffers around Congresspeople already leads psychology and political science to some deep self-reflection on current methods of political analysis. Research has often examined the speeches of political leaders – for example, in showing that socially liberal representatives use more complex vocabulary than socially conservative representatives (Schoonvelde et al., 2019), or in how Barack Obama and Mitt Romney's speeches in the 2012 Presidential Election were more or less effective in swaying voters (Khajavi & Rasti, 2020). But, once we take a step into private policy, research is no longer studying how any Member uses complex vocabulary – but instead, how the *Office of The Member* uses complex vocabulary. Speeches are given by a singular person, but are created by a litany of voices (Carriere, in press). A speech may be written by a team, a tweet by the social media staffer, a press release by the communications director. It is this construction of an imagined person – the imagined, created vision of who we think we are analyzing – that we analyze at a daily level.

This is the job of a staff member – to be identity-less. Their identity is discarded, and the Member is the one who receives the glory and recognition. Their job is to remain on the silent side of public policy – while having strong unspoken control of the public-facing dynamic of policy. Some work had dubbed this identity experience as being "transindividual when it comes to speechwriting, in that writer and speaker form affective identity relations that exist not within a singular body but exist across bodies." In reflecting on being a speechwriter for a politician, Richardson writes, "No political act is more intensely embodied for the leader [giving a speech]—and yet into this moment slinks the speechwriter, an affective spectre of lingering illegitimacy" (2017, p. 7). The concern over the legitimacy of the politician – their beliefs, their stances, their knowledge of the issues – exists if the speechwriter is revealed. The politician's identity is tied to the feigned ignorance of staffers who build up the politician's identity in the first place.

What kind of generalizations is being made when analyzing an individual's spoken or written word – since the authorship of the word is so rarely properly attributable? This is an interesting theoretical problem – a multitude of voices being presented as one. This implicit polyphony of voices (c.f. Klempe, 2018) has been briefly examined in terms of music and its link to conversations between two voices. But here – in considering a public speech – the conversation between the voices is invisible, the negotiations, silent. Instead, the pseudo-identity of the public figure is co-constructed between figure, staff, and the audience, all working together to form a coherent image for a political end.

Moral Responsibility

The meta-construction of politics is a critically important theoretical consideration for psychological research that is woefully understudied. Harry Truman, the 33rd president of the United States, famously had a sign on his desk stating, "The Buck

Stops Here." A reference to the common saying "passing the buck" or shifting the responsibility of a decision to someone else, Truman wanted to highlight that the moral responsibility for a decision in the end rested in the hands of the leader. Yet, in focusing on the decision-maker obfuscates the litany of hands that the buck passed before reaching his desk, and in what form and presentation that decision arrives at his desk in the first place.

When individuals stated that Donald Trump "tells it like it is," or that George Bush was someone "they'd rather have a drink with," those meanings that the voters are attributing onto the leaders are clearly influenced by the strategies and decisions made by the communications and political staff on the campaign to present the candidate in a certain way. It does not discount the individual who makes that meaning – and clearly, understanding why an individual prescribes these kinds of meanings onto a person, in what contexts, what is the limitation of such meanings, at what point do they say "… in order to poison them!" are all valid and important questions to examine from a psychological perspective. However, there is a secondary psychological perspective within the meta-construction that is being purposefully silent – the staff member themselves. Their identity is not present in the analysis of how such attributes are placed onto the person, yet their identity is critical to the construction's existence in the first place.

The attention to the individual staff member's influence over public policy is dwarfed by an excessive focus of interest groups, corporations, and business interests and their influence on the policy process. I am not suggesting that these forces do not exist, nor should they be ignored when considering the creation of policy. However, a large group of research already exists that considers the influence of these elites and business interests (Gilens & Page, 2014; Miller, 2021). And while large donors do receive in-person face time with Members, a large majority of lobbying efforts do not make it directly to the Member – they begin and end with the legislative staff.

This private policy is just as critical, if not more critical, than public policy. Recognizing the unelected power of the staff of our elected Representatives requires us to consider the variety of private ways under which policy is created. Sitting down and talking with a legislative staff member can have much larger political impacts than calling one's representative and speaking to an intern, asking them for the Member to vote on a certain bill, of which the staffer has already made their recommendation of how to vote. Yet, the phone call is typically considered a behavior of political activism or collective action, even if its impact is nonexistent.

Private Policy: The Individual Story and Hypogeneralization

When promoting a policy proposal, politicians (and the staffers) often lead with a story. They present a case study – a single mother, struggling to pay rent and put food on the table. A veteran, coming home from the war, struggling to get access to

mental health services. A tribe, survived through centuries of persecution and relocation to be denied access to Internet and clean water. In each, the public portion of the policy is in the individual case – the exemplar of why policy Y is so drastically needed. While statistics and quantitative data may drive the specifics of the policy – at what tax rate should corporations be taxed – the qualitative examples ("Billionaire Y paid a real tax rate of 3.4%")manipulate the complexity of a given issue into either lower or higher levels of generalizations.

And truly, the complexities of public policy are quite large. Individuals who are asked to explain how a given policy would be enacted reduce the extremity of their policy supporting position, leading to a more moderate stance (Fernbach et al., 2013). By giving a face to a complex issue, the issue is more tangible, and "getting into the weeds," or diving into deep policy – can be avoided. Since public policy is so complex, the individual case is truly the driver of public policy, insofar as they allow extreme positions to exist by avoiding a deep explanation of the implementation of such policies. By using individual cases, politicians can get people to focus on the broader idea of the legislation while avoiding the considerations of *how* a given policy will be completed. This story importance of policy is supported by research as well. Knowing someone who is gay leads individuals to later support gay rights (Herek & Capitanio, 1996) and pro-gay policies (Barth et al., 2015). The private, individual experience of a given policy proposal can lead us to *hypogeneralize* a policy – decreasing its meaning toward a specific individual ("Jeff Bezos!") to rally around a much larger policy problem.

On the other hand, the introduction of individual stories can also serve to increase the complexity of a given issue by muddling the waters. Many times, the imagined "Other" immigrant who is coming to destroy the culture as we know it leads to an ambiguity of who it is to fear (Glăveanu & de Saint Laurent, 2015). When then-candidate Donald Trump stated that "When Mexico sends its people, it's not sending its best," this kind of targeted story against certain groups showed an increase in tolerability of prejudice against groups targeted by Donald Trump, while there was no such observed increase in groups that were not targeted by the prior president (such as atheists or alcoholics) (Crandall et al., 2018). The use of an individual story can *hypergeneralize* a policy, increasing its meaning toward a large, potentially imagined group of individuals ("Immigrants!") to rally around the same policy problem.

Both hypogeneralization and hypergeneralization use the private, individual-level policy experience to influence the support or opposition to policy. The manipulation of the ambiguity around such policies provides opportunities to change laws that effect a relatively small number of individuals. For example, the 2001 repeal of the American Estate Tax, which only affected 2% of all Americans, was highly supported by American people once the metaphor of a "death tax" instead of "estate tax" (Graetz & Shapiro, 2006). Americans began hypergeneralizing the tax to believe that they would achieve the riches, and that they too were a target of the law and attempts to hypogeneralize the true targeting of a tax overwhelmingly failed.

The Language of Policy

The importance of the individual perspective when considering matters of public policy also lies in the wording of policy itself. What does it mean when the founding documents of one's nation, such as the Declaration of Independence, refer to its native peoples as "the merciless Indian savages" (U.S. Declaration of Independence, 1776), and how does that framing influence how we tell the stories of our past?

The 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which banned the practice of slavery, was ratified on December 6, 1865. Yet, a glance at the 13th Amendment would note that the language surrounding it is not as clear-cut as one would expect since it reads that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime … shall exist within the United States." While three[2] states have moved to change this language, a total of 23 states[3] have what is known as the "exception clause" in their state Constitution. Slavery, one of man's most unjust inventions, remains a legalized practice so long as such practices take place within the justice system.

Soon after the passing of the 13th Amendment, southern states criminalized minor crimes and levied heavy fees against Black Americans for working jobs other than farmers or servants (Gilmore, 2000). By creating these laws, States were able to "lease" convicts to work for no pay, continuing slavery, with the Virginia State Supreme Court ruling that a prisoner was "for the time being the slave of the state" (Ruffin v. Commonwealth, 1871). This ruling was used to forfeit a variety of rights from prisoners, including access to a minimum wage. The median pay of federal prison work detail is 12 cents an hour (Kane, 2017), with their wages subject to a variety of other fees and debts, decreasing real wages even further (Effect of Default, 2006). Even with this phrasing having existed for over 150 years, only in 2020 was the first Amendment to the Constitution proposed in Congress that would change the language of the Constitution to remove the exemption (Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of the United States …, 2020).

In both the Declaration of Independence and the 13th Amendment, we find troubling language that sets boundary conditions on the inclusion or exclusion of certain people. Indigenous people are savages. Convicts can be slaves. The language of the law tells us not just of the values of those who wrote the black letter laws, but the values of those who permit their continued existence. Laws demark who is, and who is not, who wins, and who loses. It places a power dynamic within society that must be negotiated through social pressure, eventually leading to ballot proposals to change the black letter laws again.

The existence of these laws signals not just the legal framework for which laws are written, but the social norms that helped such laws come to be and continue to

[2] Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska.

[3] Alabama, Arkansas, California, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, and Wisconsin.

sustain itself across time. While Indigenous people and Native Americans were finally granted citizenship and legal existence in the United States in 1924 with the passage of the Snyder Act, the White-dominated system continues to discount and regard Native people as savages in other ways. As Littletree and colleagues write, "Native and Indigenous intellectuals are now subjugated in subtle ways, most often by being told by institutional gatekeepers that their ways of knowing are incommensurate with the western European canon and an ill fit within the western bibliographic universe" (2020, p. 412).

For Black Americans, they find themselves overrepresented in the punitive justice system to harrowing conditions. For example, in Louisiana, 52% of its inmates are Black, while only 33% of the state population is Black (Kang-Brown, 2019). The largest maximum-security prison in the United States resides in Louisiana (The Louisiana State Penitentiary) and resides on an old Southern plantation called Angola. Prisoners, many of whom face life without the possibility of parole, are tasked with working the fields for cents on the dollars. This is not just symbolic – this type of invisible labor is exploitative and is seen even by inmates as a reproducer of social inequalities (Feldman, 2020; Silva & Saraiva, 2016). Prison labor is being used more and more to fight wildfires in the West Coast – putting individuals at serious risk who may be unable to refuse their work placement. The structural foundations of criminal justice policy are both public (the racial disparities of these brave men and women fighting fire to protect a community that has locked them away) and private (rarely talked about or discussed in serious depth).

The individual is the one who lives the experiences of these laws – even if the ramifications of the laws are not clearly laid to bare. The systems that build up policy can remain long after new policies emerge to "address" the policy problem created by the first proposal. Statistics cannot grapple with the precarity of being paid pennies on the dollar while being asked to pay exuberant prices for phone or video calls with one's child. While we can examine the average effect of juvenile detention centers on family contact (Mikytuck & Woolard, 2019), we cannot begin to understand the systemic beliefs that led us to the creation of juvenile detention centers without first examining the individuals who created such systems and how those systems influence the individual, not the average, who experiences them.

Conclusion

To study public policy is to study how individuals engage in the interaction of public and private arenas – of black letter laws and social norms. The use of policy is psychological – it aims to influence some part of each individual's psyche. Yet, the presence of policy also provides the avenue for unexpected consequences – including revolutions, protests, counterprotests, and new legislation. These policies are made by private, unelected individuals – staffers, lawyers, interest groups – all leading to questions of the private identities behind the public-facing figures. Once written, public policy utilizes private experiences – individual stories – to hyper- or

hypogeneralize the issue to drive support one way or another. These laws are experienced by individuals through their public wording – leading to discussions comparing the public understanding of the law ("Slavery is illegal") to the private (yet clearly public) display of the law ("Except as a punishment for a crime").

Public policy includes a dual layer of a public–private interaction. In thinking through the creation of policy proposals, we find within the creation of policy the meeting point of that which is public (the document, the law, the speech) and that which is private (the staff, the interest groups, the Member). Once the policy becomes law, we find a secondary public–private interaction, that with the public facing law (and its legal constitutionality), and privately, the individual's interpretation and lived experience (including the systemic and (un)intended consequences that the law brings about, along with all its reactions from its proposed or actualized enforcement).

The analysis of policy in political psychology is one of the most meaningful contributions that psychology has to the world, in its ability to try and ensure that policies are not disproportionally affecting or harming groups in adverse ways. While statistics would suggest that slavery is gone within the United States, the stories around underpaid forced labor or the silencing of non-normative knowledge point to the difference between the public and private policies. While public policy can be changed with a signing of a pen, the private policy of social norms and human behavior is much more inflexible. The people must be willing to act according to a new set of rules – subject themselves to a new rule, a new allegiance and alignment in power dynamics.

In the following chapter, I explore the consideration of power dynamics within a cultural political psychology. I consider not just the alignment of power – in terms of ingroups and outgroups, we miss the betweengroups – but also the actions individuals take to change their world. Like public policy, very little is ever considered about the private actions of resistance and defiance against a policy when one believes they are unable to make tangible change. In shifting to thinking more about the private parts of power dynamics, I consider cases of the "apathetic" voter and the individual who chooses to *not* protest and think through how both can be seen as actions of resistance.

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The Power of Inaction: Power Dynamics and Public Policy

The previous chapter examined the issues of private policy, namely, the private policy of the staff member and the private influence of social norms in regulating behavior. The private policy of the staff member requires a trust between leader and follower, where the leader entrusts the staff member to embody the identity, values, and aspirations of both the Member and the People in creating laws and statements. Social norms also function as a secondary level of policy, where informal rules and regulations inform citizens what is and is not appropriate in each space. Yet, policies – both formal and informal – are made by individuals to order individuals. This produces a codependent but anonymous relationship of creator and created, where our rules are constructed to control our further actions.

To better understand this codependent relationship, it bears further exploration of issues of social power making. Social power – our ability to influence the behavior of others around us – includes both the alignment with others and the primary belief in one's power.

In this chapter, I first outline a general overarching framework of power dynamics and emphasize the importance of nonoppositional dynamics, and how these feed into the understandings of efficacy and belief in one's own power. In drawing from Rothbaum et al.'s (1982) notion of secondary control, I make the case that we need to be much more cognizant of the private power of adjusting to one's environment.

Centering Power Dynamics Within the Individual

There are those with power that demand certain behaviors and obedience from those without power. In comparison, those without social power fight for more power and freedom in their actions. Whether this is at a macro-level in terms of rights and duties of governments and citizens (Finkel & Moghaddam, 2005) or at the meso-level in terms of parental–child relationships (Carriere, 2018), the imbalance of

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power dynamics between individuals has been deeply examined in the literature. Most of the time, this research lends itself to examining an individual's positionality and alignment with others. The research focuses on issues of discrimination and stereotyping, of exclusion and restrictions, of disliking and dehumanization. In doing so, we have broadly approached group interactions in terms of oppositional tension – of *in*groups and *out*groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This dichotomous framework has proved extremely beneficial in understanding intergroup relations when groups are fighting over resources of time, money, food, and space. It centers the conversation on the groups – who is in, who is out – without considering who is in the middle.

But our alignment with others is not always in opposition. Opposing groups may work in parallel – simply ignoring the other group's existence entirely. The Chambers of Congress are an example of these – two groups whose end state relies on the other, yet bills are continually passed in one chamber that are never taken up in the other. Their functionality – while requiring cooperation[1] – rarely sees such cooperation. Groups may also find that their superordinate goal supersedes their current antagonism and agrees to work together on a specific issue while being adversely opposed in most other issues. The United States' alliance with the Soviet Union in World War II to stop Nazi Germany stood in stark contrast to their prior engagements, when just 20 years earlier, the United States had sent forces to Russia to attempt to stop the Bolshevik revolution (Willett, 2003). Group opposition can be singular in direction – the Sentinelese people off the coast of India kill all outsiders who arrive on their island, seeing all as outgroups, yet their extreme isolation from the rest of the world places them outside of the scope and mind of the rest of the world, simply nonexisting individuals in a globalized world.

The concepts of ingroups and outgroups frequently dismiss the individual's agency in placing themselves within a group. Noels et al. (2010) compare how first- and second-generation Chinese Canadian immigrants view their own identities in public and private spaces, and contrast it with how these immigrants believe others' interpretation of their identities. Immigrants view themselves, overall, as more part of the "Canadian" ingroup, but believe that the public will place themselves more in the "Chinese" outgroup. The was a positive correlation between perception of outgroup placement and experienced discrimination. Being a part of the ingroup is not simply a label, but is a contextual, flexible, and transformative alignment-dependent resource that changes not just across cultures, but even within a singular culture of the family unit.

Other work has explored this nonoppositional alignment in terms of ambivalent stereotypes toward certain minority groups in terms of warmth and competence (Lee & Fiske, 2006), with the prototypical outgroup being considered low in both, while ambivalent stereotypes may be high in warmth but low in competence, or vice

[1] For a bill to become law in the United States, both Chambers need to vote on and pass identical bills. This leads to situations where one Chamber passes a bill but is amended in the other Chamber before it passes that Chamber, requiring an additional vote on the already-passed-but-now-different bill in the originating Chamber.

versa. The variation in stereotypes of certain outgroups also includes the movement toward and away from new stereotypes and new group alignments. Islamic women in minority and majority Muslim countries face heavily different contexts in their decision to don the veil, or burqa, which range from wanting to counter stigmatization, as a matter of practicality, and to fit in (Wagner et al., 2012). Each response is a different position from which to approach and engage with the "ingroup" at hand – of rebelling, resisting, and conforming.

Indeed, the most interesting cases of identity development involve not the interaction of group X against group Y – but the individual between the groups, struggling to determine how best to position themselves in a multifaceted identity. It is this betweengroup – not an ingroup, but not a true outgroup – that is the most interesting dynamic. When the individual seeks to create some policy to control others (and themselves), it is not always in an oppositional, antagonistic alignment toward any individual. Instead, the policy – and its messaging – can be targeted toward this betweengroup – the public, the "on the fence," the uninformed, the independent voter – must be considered if change is to occur.

This notion of betweengroups is not unique. The flexibility of identities is a cornerstone of theories like Dialogical Self Theory (Hermans, 2001), which considers how the individual holds a multitude of identities that are brought forward or held back depending on the momentary needs of the individual. Group identity is simply a moment in time as individuals waiver between identifying with one group and not identifying in the next. There needs to be more research on exactly this – not just what predicts an individual to identify as one group or not, but under what circumstances and conditions leads to the movement toward and away from identities.

Efficacy of Self and Group

In thinking about the need to consider the betweengroup – the "average citizen," the individual must determine that they have the power to properly enact the change – that they hold some manner of efficacy as it relates to the situation. This change is many times examined under the auspices of collective action and social movements, where individuals join to make a difference.

Personal efficacy – how effective an individual believes their actions will be – is linked more to interpersonal outcomes. Individuals report understanding that their single solidarity act against the capitalistic system will not lead to serious macro-level changes. Instead, they report caring much more about building power. For individuals who actively identified as members of an organized activist group, their main predictor about intent to engage in collective action was in believing that such action would lead to a growing of the oppositional movement. For individuals who did not identify as members of an activist group, their intents to engage were predictive of believing in the efficacy of the action to gather support from the general public and express their values (Hornsey et al., 2006).

Some research suggests that one's individual efficacy leads to collective efficacy (Fernandez-Ballesteros et al., 2002) and that there is a conceptual difference between believing the group can engage in action and believing that the group's actions will lead to the desired change (Swim et al., 2019). However, a second definition of collective efficacy is focused more on a group-level analysis, defining collective efficacy as the "shared beliefs in their collective power to produce desirable results" (Bandura, 2000, p. 75). This approach considers collective efficacy more than the simple sum of its personal efficacy parts and recognizes that one's understanding of their own personal efficacy is limited and promoted by one's placement within their group.

Consider, for instance, the game of chess. Chess is highly dependent on one's personal efficacy – two players with no outside assistance actively trying to solve the puzzle of the current board state in real time. Yet, at high-level chess, this personal efficacy is dependent on what are called "seconds" – or other high-level players hired by the player to research move orders, new moves, and the history of their opponent – to better prepare themselves for the match. The preparation work from the seconds is such an important part of the match that their identity is typically kept hidden for as long as possible. In judging one's individual efficacy in a match, the players also must recognize the importance of the collective efficacy of how well their team has prepared them for this moment. Collective efficacy, in Bandura's (2000) view, is not separatable from individual efficacy. Collective efficacy is not simply the sum of multiple individual efficacy beliefs but is something that happens among the group because of the group's interactions together.

Recently, researchers have explored considering the merging of both personal and collective efficacy in a broader construct of participatory efficacy. If one believes their group's actions will lead to the necessary change, the rational actress will choose not to participate as their singular presence would not sway the outcome. Instead, research finds that believing one's group actions will lead to change is related to one participating in the collective action. Participatory efficacy tries to explain this phenomenon by measuring how much individuals believe their singular presence will assist in making a difference to further the group's goals (van Zomeren et al., 2013).

In all three – individual, group, and participatory efficacy – the construct focuses itself on thinking about how the target of measurement believes in its ability to actively change the current system. In many ways, this construct is linked to how powerful the target believes it can be in the situation. In approaching power and collective action in this way, the only way to make change is for the individual to act on the environment. This unidirectional public analysis of power (considering how the individual acts against) fails to consider the private directionality of power (considering how the individual changes themselves to adjust to the environment).

Alignment to the Environment: Black Joy

Adjusting to the environment can be just as political of an action as taking directed action to change the policy itself. When Sudan introduced austerity measures, citizens did not take to the streets – they took to their couches (Copnall, 2016). In a 3-day stay-at-home protest, this general strike of refusing to go to work (while also refusing to place oneself in public at risk of a military- or police-led counterattack). This tactic was repeated after the death of a protester in 2019 (Adbelaziz, 2019). In both, the individuals are acting to adjust themselves to this new world – if taxes or death face them on the outside, they retreat inside.

The dismissal of inaction as a nonpolitical act also discounts the vast number of individuals whose grit and perseverance in the face of injustice itself is a call to future collective actions. Whether this is women's rights in Nicaragua (Grabe & Dutt, 2015) or apartheid in South Africa, the mere survival and tenacity of those persecuted is a collective action of never giving up. This is not to say no classically defined collective action existed in these situations throughout their existence. Some scholars argue that the early years of the Apartheid era were instrumental in sowing the seeds necessary for its eventual downfall (Friedman, 2017), and slave resistance and uprising was not only common in America, but feared by slaveholders (Rasmussen, 2012). However, the memories and historical reconstructions of the perseverance of a persecuted people can lead to radical social change (Lyra et al., 2020), and the importance of what may be called "surviving" to one could be lauded as inspirational and transformational to another.

This notion of resistance to oppression in the context of Black Americans has been studied in terms of the concept of "Black joy." Consistently dehumanized over history, "The expression of joy is a subversive intervention insofar as it asserts Black people as possessing a full range of emotion" (Lu & Steele, 2019, p. 9). In reflecting on his own experiences writing poems to reflect on Ferguson, Missouri, when Michael Brown, a Black man, was gunned down by officer Darren Wilson, poet Javon Johnson writes:

> Thinking about black joy beyond Ferguson, beyond the continual pain of being denied basic human rights, beyond, and perhaps outside of, structural racism, anti-blackness, white supremacy, and state-sanctioned terror have allowed black people to continue on, despite every reason to not. In addition, black joy, a real and imagined site of utopian possibility … More than a method to endure, however, black joy allows us the space to stretch our imaginations beyond what we previously thought possible and allows us to theorize a world in which white supremacy does not dictate our everyday lives. (2015, p. 180)

Black joy provides a space for the collective imagination to foster new futures and new ideas (de Saint-Laurent et al., 2018). Amid oppression, hate, discrimination, and murder, Black Americans have found ways to find the joy in the darkness; thus, resisting the White supremacist world that tries to revoke them of their happiness at every moment. It is a strong collective action that places the individual as adjusting themselves within the environment. Not in a powerful position to overthrow the

hegemonic system, individuals can find other ways to resist conditions that provide individual-level change while fitting themselves into the current system in a more comfortable way. To search for collective action only in terms of protests, revolutions, and phone calls dismisses a larger range of resistances that can exist to adjust to the environment as a response to the environment.

Nonsophistication as Sophistication

At the beginning of chapter "Private and Public Policy: The Intersection of Cultural and Societal Laws", I started with the example of surveys showing how a large portion of both the United States and the United Kingdom are generally apathetic to the political system. I used this as a jumping-off point to discuss the absurdity of such a statement since the political system is so inherent to living that it cannot be easily avoided or ignored.

These individuals would be commonly understood as being low in political sophistication – that their contextual information about political topics is minimal, and as such, they are generally unable to connect their personal values with specific policy positions. Compared to their more "sophisticated" peers, individuals who are classified as low sophistication are less likely to complete their ballots when information about the candidates is withheld to some degree (Lamb & Perry, 2020); are more willing to support the restrictions of rights when not threatened (Carriere et al., 2019); and are more multidimensional in their political beliefs (Lupton et al., 2015). As Lamb and Perry note:

> As a result of their political knowledge and capacity to draw important political inferences, these voters are willing to complete more of their ballot even when subjected to significant information asymmetries. The ability of political sophisticates to overcome significant information deficiencies far above the capacity of nonsophisticates provides a far richer insight into understanding both voter decision making and the causes of ballot incompletion. (2020, p. 1146)

The individual's choice to be apathetic or to not hold strong positions is, I argue, not an unengaged or unsophisticated choice. One could easily make the case that the more educated individuals are the ones who do not engage in guesswork and estimations of nonpresented information. While experts were more confident in their forecasting ability, they were no better than novices at forecasting the outcomes of conflicts (Green & Armstrong, 2007) and are frequently incorrect in a wide range of domains (Tetlock, 2006). Choosing to not make assumptions, or choosing to not vote, could very well be a sophisticated meta-recognition of their own nonknowledge and the potential consequences of voting for someone who is unbeknownst to them against their own interests. Or, since low sophisticates show more varied political stances than their more politically sophisticated peers, their lack of voting shows an attentional awareness of their varied stances and seek to ensure that their choices are being accurately represented in their choice to vote.

That is, the lack of voting is not apathetic, but can also be understood as an adjustment to one's environment. Unengaged voters may be actively choosing not to engage due to their understanding of the environment around them. In a world where one believes that their vote will 99% of the time does not lead to the desired outcome, there are two possible choices. The individual could vote, hoping that "this time it will be the 1% chance!" and, in 99% of the situations, be disappointed when their hopes are dashed. Or, a secondary option is to not vote, and not be disappointed when the outcome does not match their hopes and dreams. This future-forward-directed action is understood quite clearly when considering models of primary and secondary control.

Primary Control

Primary control is how an individual's actions can lead to change in their own environment (Skinner, 1996). Primary control originally came into focus when people were studying the importance of learned helplessness. If one experiences pain, one should take action to avoid such pain – jumping away from the electric floor; leaving an abusive relationship; seeking shade to avoid getting sunburn. The individual wants to maintain their own independent control of their surroundings and does so by actively taking action to assert their position in the world around them. Yet, when it seems that such negative experiences are uncontrollable and unavoidable, then the individual reverts to "inward behavior" such as withdrawing, passivity, and compliance. Faced with an electrified floor that cannot be escaped by jumping away from it, the dog lays down on the floor, accepting the shocks. When the opportunity to escape the shocks re-emerges later, the dog does not attempt to escape since it has developed "learned helplessness" – that no matter its efforts, it has learned failure is inevitable, so there is no point in trying to see if the next situation is any different. Primary control behaviors are behaviors that attempt to predict events to succeed at them, influence chance-based outcomes, manipulate powerful others to one's own will, and attempt to understand problems to solve and master them.

Primary control can come in a variety of ways, but each includes the centering of how an individual's behavior can change the current environment. This understanding of primary control is functionally similar to how research has approached collective action and social movements. Yet, this type of control is restricted to cases when one's power is high – when an individual has both high capacity and efficacy to change their situation. This public-facing type of control disregards the private-facing type of control discussed prior – one when an individual, low in power, acts by adjusting themselves to their own environment. This is the notion of secondary control.

Secondary Control

The primary purpose of arguing for the need to acknowledge secondary control was the belief that control is so fundamental and critical to human behavior, that individuals would rarely give it up. Therefore, in instances where it seemed at first glance that control was being forfeited, researchers had to be sure that there are no other possible explanations. In the original conceptualization, this notion of secondary control was supposed to lend itself toward adaptive reactions (the increase in feelings of control), though future research has overall failed to find such a link, finding instead that withdrawal attempts still correlate with feelings of helplessness (Skinner, 2007).

Regardless of whether the adaptive functionality of secondary control exists, the general notion of the ability to exert control (even if one self-reports that felt control is still low) is a theoretically interesting concept, and its suggestion fundamentally changed the field of the psychology of control for years to come. It reinforced the idea that control-seeking is not just an external behavior, but we can find attempts at control if we turn our orientation inward as well. Control is both public (external and primary) and private (internal and secondary).

Secondary control was proposed as an additional explanation for this type of behavior – that compliance and resignation may themselves be signs that individuals are still seeking to maintain control of the situation. Secondary control is defined as actions taken to align the self with the current environment (Rothbaum et al., 1982). Secondary control behaviors are behaviors that may seek to avoid disappointment, associate with chance or powerful others, and derive meaning and accept problems. While not an exhaustive list, the original article explores four forms of control – predictive, illusory, vicarious, and interpretive – and notes both a primary and secondary process of control.

Predictive Control and Avoiding Disappointment

Predictive control involves actively choosing to avoid an event when they have previously experienced failure. Here, the individual is predicting their failure and chooses to avoid engaging in the topic any further. Thus, the individual voter who votes in a district where their candidate has never won may stop voting. While they have overtly stopped engaging with their environment, they are covertly engaging against a future in which they will face disappointment again. Thus, their choice to be inactive rests on a future-forward direction of failure. If the individual had chosen to engage and vote a third time in the hopes it would be different, they would most likely encounter two failures – of the disappointing outcome and of not correctly predicting the result from the start. Here, the secondary control of predictive control entails not the prediction of an event to succeed (“I predict they will test me on X so

I study X") but instead, the prediction of an event in order to avoid disappointment ("I predict that I will fail regardless of my study habits, so I shall not study").

Illusory Control and Associating with Chance

There are many things that can be out of our control – such as the falling of red or black on a game of roulette. Yet, the development of rituals – tapping a table twice, shaking dice in a certain way, or even simply claiming that one is on a "hot streak" – all point to an individual attempting to gain control on things that are uncontrollable. The association with being "on the side of chance" is understood as illusory control. If individuals believe that luck is a personal characteristic – then they are exhibiting control of a situation by regarding one's success or failure not as a measure of one's (in)ability, but instead, as a factor of chance.

Vicarious Control and Associating with Power

In vicarious control, the individual realizes that they do not have the necessary power to make the change they wish to make to the environment. Instead, they turn to associating themselves with powerful others who can control the situation. But, to realize such control over the situation, the individual must first submit to the more powerful person and identify with them. Moreover, the power of vicarious control can come from the deindividuation of the individual once they join the group – the mob mentality of losing one's identity within the group can open new avenues for behaviors not possible. This kind of control has been developed in cultural psychology in Valsiner's "I create you to control me" model of semiotic regulation (Valsiner, 1999), which has been further elaborated in terms of souvenirs and feelings of home (Carriere, 2013; Cornejo et al., 2018).

Interpretive Control and Making Meaning

Finally, interpretive control involves a focus on making meaning of the world and negative results around an individual. Instead of seeking to find new solutions to a problem, individuals engage in secondary interpretive control by focusing instead on understanding the reasons *why* something happened. Two months after the September 11 attacks, two-thirds of a nationally representative sample in the United States were actively seeking to make sense of the attacks and over half reported still being unable to find meaning 1 year after the attacks (Updegraff et al., 2008).

Social Power Making

All four – and other types of control not listed in the original paper – show a secondary form of control – the control of adjusting to one's environment in a future-directed manner. In recognizing the low-power status the individual has, there are other ways to negotiate the situation and make appropriate changes. The average individual, in the end, has no true impact on ultimately changing one's voting environment. Their power is low – yet is frequently assumed to be high. In my own research, I continually note this limitation in my research. In asking participants to rate their agreement and support with such broad questions of invasions of privacy and restrictions of rights (Carriere, 2019), I am asking questions that the average citizen has no power to change; no business in deciding, and no specific understanding of what a 15% reduction in rights may even look like. This is a common symptom of most quantitative research in political psychology: very rarely do these sorts of measures translate into the lived experiences of individuals. While they may be tangentially related, there is a constant, undiscussed application of power dynamics as we survey online samples for opinions on discussions they will never have the chance to influence, never mind decide on.

Choosing not to vote; not to have an opinion; to say "I don't really care about politics" – all are political statements. While they choose to not engage directly in the environment, they instead lead to ways in which the participant is aligning themselves to the environment. Their meaning-making of not caring about politics could reflect a deep understanding of politics – acknowledging their inability to make change as an individual, the variation in their political beliefs, or even simply their hedging against future expectations of failed actions. Each one of these are powerful actions made by a momentarily powerless individual.

Cultural Political Psychology of Power

A cultural political psychology can examine not just the relations of power (who is the ingroup, who is the outgroup, and how they interact) but also the recreating of social power. Making social power requires the relations of others – a large group of individuals will generally have a larger impact than a single individual, and those groups can be expanded through identification processes. Yet, development of social power is not always in direct opposition to the powerful compared to the powerless. The alignment of groups in practice shows that there is clear variability in how groups position themselves to other groups. In thinking about power development, there needs to be a consideration of not those in the *in*group or *out*group, but the *between*group of the individual trying to align themselves at the moment with the group that is most advantageous to their circumstance.

It is not enough to simply have the power – one must believe that the power that they hold can lead to effective change – otherwise known as the efficacy of their

actions. But conceptualizations of efficacy generally focus on primary-control-level actions – that is, actions taken by the individual to influence the environment. They rarely consider actions taken by the individual to better adjust and fit into the environment. In reviewing the importance of secondary control, I noted how the public-facing behavior of resignation and inaction can be an important collective action.

Secondary control acknowledges why some collective action may occur in the face of inefficacy. Consider if someone is told a priori that the actions they are partaking in will not lead to change, yet they choose to continue to act in that manner, such as an individual who knows that their single actions toward recycling will not lead to the saving of the climate but participate in recycling anyway. Or consider two separate cases of learning that the recycling bin is mixed into the trash bin. The first individual learns this information but continues to sort their recycling despite such knowledge. A second individual, who learns the same information, chooses to not engage in recycling anymore.

For these individuals, their external behavior is clear. One exerts control over their situation, demanding that perhaps by their actions the world will bend to their recycling sorting will and yield. Or perhaps their behavior is one of stubborn defiance. The second individual seemingly has given up their control, unwilling to continue their actions in face of past and future failures. Yet, in considering secondary control, we should reflect deeper on what the individual's meanings are that are leading to the inaction. Have they decided to reduce their use of plastics instead? Have they reconsidered the meaning of recycling ("It is a scam, and I do not partake in scams!") or of their world ("We are just in a world that does not care about recycling, and THAT IS OKAY")? These, and a litany of other possible meanings, all engage directly with the world around them. Their inactions are serious actions that are drawing on a host of external meanings. Instead of simply looking at the external behavior, it is important to examine the fundamental process of meaning creation that is done at the individual level (Carriere, 2021). The importance of tracing the psychological meaning process that undercuts one's behavior through examining how one's identity is constantly being recreated. The recreation of identity is inherently linked to issues of power. As discussed in chapter "Private and Public Policy: The Intersection of Cultural and Societal Laws", the identity of most politicians is a negotiation of power – the staff writes the bills, speeches, and vote recommendations, while the politician hires those who will build their identity the way they would like.

Just as it would be fallacious to assume that inaction is not a display of one's power, it would be equally inaccurate to assume that action immediately can lead to, or is intended to lead to, significant change. While 95% of board directors agree that diversity brings unique perspectives to the boardroom, only 24% of women hold S&P500 board seats while making up 47% of the US workforce (Loop & DeNicola, 2019; PricewaterhouseCooopers, 2020). Even if additional changes were made to publicly traded boards, the addition of diverse individuals does not necessitate that change will happen. Women and other minorities can feel particularly silenced and unable to make contributions due to their position as a minority (Kakabadse et al., 2015), or structural rules, regulations, and dynamics that are in place to ensure that

their input is able to be ignored (Heckler, 2019). The act of adding a member to the board to "satisfy" a diversity requirement may be an action to keep the board on its same path, creating solely a nominal change.

Political Hobbyism

A recent expansion on the intersection of politics, engagement, and power is that of political hobbyism. Political hobbyism is another avenue of political engagement – a negation of both secondary and primary control. Political hobbyism is engaging in politics not to seek power, but in order to satisfy emotional needs and intellectual curiosities (Hersh, 2020). In his work, Hersh (2020) argues that political hobbyism gamifies politics, which damages the political structure as politicians work to respond to the ever-changing "sport," while also distracting citizens from building power, allowing those who focus on power building to increase their power while we remain on the sidelines watching the game play out.

For Hersh, engagement in politics is power building. His introduction points to groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, who volunteer their time to help opioid addicts in North Carolina, who are truly engaging in politics and growing their power, while we sit and watch on the TV, outraged by their volunteering. If politics is indeed about gaining power, then Hersh's thesis of political hobbyism being damaging for gaining power has a chilling effect on democracy. The spectacle of elections in America has potentially led to choosing candidates based on whips, one-liners, and headlines, instead of vetting for experience and expertise.

Yet, in this book, engaging in politics is not solely about gaining power. And hobbyists may be making the same psychological calculus that the "unsophisticated" or nonvoter is making. The hobbyist may be choosing for the moment to adjust themselves to their environment, rather than adjust the environment to themselves. Policy is ambiguous. Language use of "recess," the power of the unelected staffer, the complexities of what the law is and whose power determines the application and adjudication of the law – all exist in a way to make it harder to negotiate what change can be done to the system. The difficulties built within the political system of private and public policy make the ambiguity of the process of politics difficult to know where to direct our attention, effort, and outrage.

In hobbyism, protests exist as an emotional release, not a way to make change. The "Women's March" of 2017 brought over 3 million people from across the globe to protest the election of Donald Trump and push for support of a variety of human rights causes. And while local nonviolent protests have been linked to changing of opinions (Thomas & Louis, 2014) and of increased belief in self-efficacy (Wallace et al., 2014), there is mixed evidence on the effectiveness of protesting in trying to fundamentally shift policy. Some have shown that protests can influence political views that can lead to changes in policy (c.f. Madestam et al., 2013 on the Tea Party movement), but others suggest that the evidence for the pace and direction of policy votes can depend on the type of protest (McAdam & Su, 2002).

But political hobbyism, as it is currently defined, is seen as antithetical to building power. In doing so, it disregards the power of that emotional release and emotional engagement with the policy process. The development of opinions, of public sentiment, of pressure from both mainstream, fringe, and social media, all provide their own forms of power onto the political process. Adjusting ourselves to the environment at time one does not determine one's actions at a later date. Demanding a push for change too quickly, or without serious emotional labor, may simply lead to nominal, and not structural, change.

Understanding the complexities of power – both how we choose to use it (adjusting ourselves to the environment or adjusting the environment to us) and for what purposes (to make change or to keep the status quo) – requires a broader examination of the emotions and the values both of the individual and the researcher. The microgenetic development of positioning oneself in relation to the social problems of policy engagement is a specific engagement with power and should not be discounted.

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Applications for a Cultural Political Psychology

In the previous four chapters, I have outlined the theoretical tenets of a cultural political psychology: the psychological meaning-making of values, policy, and power dynamics. Throughout, I have emphasized the importance of focusing on the process instead of the product, the story in place of the statistics, and the individual in place of the institution. Values were examined through the process of scientific creation, turning us to directly consider what kind of peer-review process promotes and inhibits various types of scientific findings and theories. Policy was examined by considering not just the impact of policy on individuals, but also thinking about the psychological individual who creates, justifies, and influences policy at the staff level. Finally, power dynamics were discussed in terms of thinking beyond seeing the result of who shows up to vote, or who acts in a certain way, but the stories behind who does not turn up to vote, or the notion of finding joy amid oppression and discrimination. Throughout the three chapters, the importance of values, power, and policy all came out through the discussion.

Yet, this book would not be complete without testing the tenets of the book. We must be able to learn something *new* from this approach to political psychology that political psychology on its own cannot provide. While small indicators have been present throughout this Brief, this chapter discusses in more detail how a meaning-making-focused political psychology can bring about new theoretical innovations and experimental novelties.

To do this, I task myself with simultaneously considering a current political psychological concept and pairing it with another. Together, I will apply the three tenets of a cultural political psychology – of values, power, and policy – to see what can be gained from both individually, but also in unison. I will allow both concepts to dialogue with each other and provide new theoretical considerations in how both concepts speak to new avenues of research and theory development.

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Unionization as a Cultural Political Process

The first place to examine a cultural political psychology is a meeting point of values, power, and policy. One place where all can easily be seen is the process of unionization. A union is a collective group of individuals who negotiate together for workplace pay, benefits, and other policies. They are formed after a large campaign of organizing and collective action that results in negotiation of contracts between "the management" (i.e., bosses, CEOs) and "the workers" (those represented by the union). Unions can be made up of "members" and "nonmembers," who may pay differential dues to the union to keep it running, but all are protected, represented, and bargained for under contract disputes.

The process of unionization can be quite complex in the United States. Individual workers come together to discuss the consideration of organizing a union. One of the first decisions is which larger union representation the workers of a company would like to organize under – such as United Automobile Workers, the American Federation of Teachers, United Steel Workers, or none at all. The parent union aids throughout the unionization process through advice, support staff, and legal counsel, with the eventual expectation that the election will be won, and a portion of the dues, or payments from members, will go to the parent union. Workers then seek out other workers, gathering their stories and trying to convince them that supporting the union can help their work–life improve. They will grow their network of supporters through pledge cards, membership cards, events, and rallies. Eventually, the union will "go public" – alerting management that there is a union drive happening and that they would like to hold an election. This election can be held by the National Labor Relations Board or can be held by a third-party arbitrator. While other routes to unionization exist (e.g., card checks, where if a majority of the workers are pledged to be members, the union immediately exists), an election is the most common. All eligible workers then vote for whether they would like a union to represent them for purposes of bargaining and mediation of disputes. If elected, the employer must bargain in good faith with the union over workplace-related issues.

Examinations of labor movements in psychological literature are quite lacking, and calls to build a labor psychology have gone mostly unanswered (for a review, see Carriere, 2020). A single dissertation on graduate unionization focused primarily on the discursive aspects of mobilization efforts within the confines of a marginalized individual within academia (Kitchen, 2011). The importance of marginal leadership has only recently started to gain traction in psychology (Rast et al., 2018). However, this growth has focused particularly on race-minority (Packer et al., 2018) or gender-minority (Brescoll et al., 2018) leaders, failing to address unions as a way for workers to find leadership in a minority-power position.

Unionization as a Case Study of Both Fast and Slow Revolutions

The development of the unionizing campaign is a slow, emerging process. The novelty of the idea of a union is presented to workers and slowly develops over time, hoping more and more people engage with the new cultural idea of changing the power dynamics of work. This is a struggling process as people bring with it their own historical perspectives – how they were raised and what beliefs they hold (Barling et al., 1991), on other attempts at unionization they have seen or experienced, their historical interactions with supervisors and management, their own personal situation, how they perceive the efficacy of the union and more. This process takes time and is why unionization campaigns may take years of organizing to reach a vote.

Eventually, however, the revolution stops being slow and moves to an immediate revolution – the results of an election. If successful, individuals are no longer workers, but workers represented by a union. I find it important to consider how the speed of a workplace revolution traces that of any other revolution. However, the important piece of a revolution is rarely the moment under which the regimes change – but instead, the period immediately after, where transitional governments and decisions over what changes will occur within this new system, is examined, evaluated, and put into practice.

Unionization as an Actualized Democracy

All these point to unionization as being a model of the process described in political psychology as an *actualized democracy*. An actualized democracy is one where "there is full, informed, equal participation in wide aspects of political, economic, and cultural decision-making independent of financial investment and resources" (Moghaddam, 2018, p. 4). In outlining the stages toward an actualized democracy, he notes that a true movement toward an actualized democracy includes first-, second-, and third-order change. First-order change is changes that occur with no changes in the public or private laws (noted by "formal law" and "informal normative systems"), such as the development of culture or technology. Second-order change includes changes in the formal law but no changes in the private normative behavior of individuals. Second-order change, Moghaddam argues, is where most revolutions and movements toward an actualized democracy end. We can change the ruler and the laws, but changing the behavior of individuals and the norms that uphold the system remains intact. It is only at third-order change, when there exists change both in the formal and informal systems, where the change occurs not within the system, but the system itself is changed, where actualized democracy occurs.

Moghaddam is generally doubtful that any true actualized democracy exists within the scope of higher-level governments. In terms of governments, he makes a strong case for why this is true, and why, due to the rigid nature of individual

behavior, this probably is not possible to reach in the future either. Yet, if we move the discussion of actualized democracy toward a nongovernmental body, unions are a potential place under which we see such change in the formal and informal system. A cultural political psychological analysis of unions can provide an understanding of the process of values, power dynamics, and public policy of unionization to make the case that actualized democracy is within the people's (worker's) grasp.

Unionization as Value-Laden

At a general level, unionization campaigns bring with them multiple layers of values. Unions themselves are typically seen as a more "left," or liberal, notion, and union members do tend to donate more to more liberal politicians and causes than they do to more conservative causes research has examined the values of those who are in support of unions (Ahlquist, 2017). Yet, psychology has largely ignored the calls to develop a field of "union psychology" (Gordon & Burt, 1981), speaking to the potential values of the publication and research process that choose to ignore something so central to an individual's life (Carriere, 2020; Lott, 2014).

Values are always under dispute in union and antiunion campaigns, with both sides trying to convince the individual of the "family" (or not) of a business and why they should not (or should) unionize. But recent research has started to consider not simply the values within the unionization campaign, but also the values that surround the union campaign by the local population. In measuring how much people attribute nursing and teaching to the moral value of *doing things for love, not money*, Flores-Robles and Gantman (2021) showed that an increase in this moral value led individuals to not support union actions such as strikes for better benefits. This relationship is ripe for further exploration. Does one's system justification, relative deprivation, or own social standing mediate this relationship? How can we shift the nature of defining love and money as nonoppositional forces? Why must there be a trade-off between passion and payment?

In a sociological examination of a janitor's labor union, Terriquez (2011) notes how unions motivate the workers to become critically active in leadership roles and become hands-on in the development and well-being of the community, calling it a building of democracy within the workplace. When examining how these fit into a value-ladened examination of actualized democracy, it behooves us to consider the kind of values that are being replaced and the new values being added. One could imagine a third-order change from democracy to dictatorship – such as the 1973 coup in Chile or the recent coup in Myanmar as it was working on developing its democracy.

There are also values in determining the best path toward an actualized democracy. Moghaddam (2018) points to an idealized meritocracy as one of the possible ways to reach an actualized democracy. In an actualized democracy, "individuals are selected for positions based on their personal merit, independent of their group memberships, affiliations, wealth, and connections" (Moghaddam, 2018, p. 15). He

is quick to point out that capitalistic democracies, like the United States, fail to reach true meritocracy due to various nonmerit, systemic issues that are at play when deciding who leads. Even still, there may be concerns with promoting this system of values. Research suggests that priming the meritocratic norm reduces perceptions of racial privilege among individuals who highly identify with their White race (Knowles & Lowery, 2012). It can be hard to separate one's personal merits from their upbringing, previous connections, and past opportunities, and given the opportunity to solely focus on one's merits outside of the larger context may be particularly damaging for those who start facing various other societal biases. While a meritocracy sounds ideal, its inability to account for the systemic biases that surround the meritocracy leaves it ripe for exploitation and a continuation of oppression.

Other research has suggested that merging meritocracy with multiculturalism, where both diversity and merit are considered as equally valuable to the group's goals and missions, is a better solution in leading to a more equitable and engaged workforce (Gündemir & Galinsky, 2018). For unions, their bargaining ability in salaries, compensation, benefits, and even terminations is structured to remove the private connections and affiliations that could otherwise be influencing such decisions, even if unintentionally. Unions also have been leading advocates in fights for equity and equality in the workplace as well (Kirton, 2015, 2017), demanding that diversity be supported and sought.

Regardless, there are values at stake when we decide what is worth fighting for, or what is worth researching. Union organizing revolves around conversations – of finding out what is bothering people – what do they value that is not being met by the organization. Research has not sufficiently examined unionization as value-defining, nor considered how antiunion activity utilizes other types of values – such as the "love of work," to attempt to disincentivize workers from organizing together. A cultural political psychology could examine what kinds of biases and systems are at play when one chooses to support some system of values and how other values are either hypogeneralized or hypergeneralized to move individuals toward being either pro- or antiunion.

Unionization as Power Dynamics

The problem with union campaigns, and most activism research, is that the status quo exists to be maintained. Its status as the formal power dynamic means that those in power will act in many ways to keep such power in their hands. Castro and Batel (2008) note a number of strategies used by experts to resist change being demanded by the public. Of these arguments, they include the use of an abstract/concrete distinction (similar to hypo-/hypergeneralization), a citizen/expert distinction (maintaining a power over who holds the knowledge of what is "right"), and the claim that change has already been made, disregarding the values of future change-seekers. In the abstract/concrete distinction, experts try and maintain the status quo by pointing

to the good that the change is seeking to reach, but blame the specific actions of a given protest as being misguided, misdirected, or misinformed. The experts can use this specific case to then dismiss the larger issue, avoiding taking any real action.

In my own work examining graduate student-worker unionization,[1] workers are constantly discussing the multilayered issues of power dynamics when considering both their relationships with the administration and the deans, while also worrying about the relationship between themselves and their adviser and other faculty. While research has shown that unionized students have better relationships with their mentors than nonunionized schools (Rogers et al., 2013), there still are many relationships that could be impacted by the presence of a more formalized rule system. One labor organizer spoke directly about this issue when they stated: "One of the lines we'd say is 'Oh, we're not looking to change the relationship between the advisor and the students.' I'm like, I am. I want to put the advisers; I want to put the faculty in a box. I want to make rules that restrict their discretion and require them to perform certain actions." Here, they note that the point of their action is to directly challenge the formal and informal system – to limit professor retaliation, charges of sexual harassment, and define the roles more clearly between student-worker, faculty, and administration.

A less spoken part of revolutions – either in the workplace or in the streets – is that of the revoltless. Their lack of participation is difficult to document – but as discussed in chapter "The Power of Inaction: Power Dynamics and Public Policy", does not imply either indifference or opposition. Yet, the psychology of the relationship between revolutionary and stay-at-home-ionary is an arena of unique psychological relations. How does a revolutionary understand the individual who stays at home? One is putting additional effort into changing both of their worlds for the seemingly better, while the other aims to free ride from their efforts to receive the benefits. There also risks of a black-sheep effect for those who are revolutionaries, in which their attempts to make change could be labeled as "rioters," "rabble-rousers," "insurgents," or "trouble-makers." By choosing not to engage, these individuals maintain a sense of control through the meanings on which they prescribe the revolution. One graduate worker lamented that their activism has led "… some people assume that everyone conversation they have with me is going to be related to grad student issues in some way, which is not true …. And so, I think the assumption that is what is going to color our conversation, that is the identity I bring to the interaction, is bothersome." The activist speaks of being excluded from social networks due to their activism.

The interactions of revolutionary and revolution-not are not adequately discussed in collective action literature. While the common psychological models of collective action include an identification with the disadvantaged group (van Zomeren et al., 2018), we rarely consider not only the individual that does not identify but also the relationship between the those who identify and those who do not. There

[1] Data was drawn from seven interviews, ages ranging from 25 to 36, from 2019 to 2021. Semi-structured interviews ranged between 41 and 79 min. This is ongoing research, and I use their quotes from the research strictly for descriptive purposes.

have been attempts to posit collective action in an understanding of relationship-building (van Zomeren, 2015), but still very little in collective action as relationship-destroying.

The little bit of research on relationship-destroying activism can be found in considering high-profile figures and their choices to make a stand. When football quarterback Colin Kaepernick chose to knee during the national anthem to protest police brutality against Black Americans, the backlash, derision, and contempt he faced started a political debate about the "proper" location, place, and time to protest human rights abuses (Kaufman, 2008). Yet, even with all the pressure – to the point where he has lost his job and no one will hire him to play for their team – Kaepernick continued to maintain his social justice stance and would refuse to apologize, backtrack, or stop his protests.

In both the examples of Colin Kaepernick and the union workers, there is a visible resistance to the attempts to change the public and private policies of a given society. Sometimes, this resistance comes in the form of a system justification perspective – "I do not want to tax the rich, since I could be rich one day." Yet, there are other reasons why backlash can occur. Backlash can come from the individuals being targeted (as was the case with the White National Football League owners, facing the truth of systemic racism) or even from individuals who are being advocated for (where individual workers are worried that labor action will bring harm and negative consequences to themselves or their work culture).

A difficulty in considering these examples within the framework of actualized democracy is in the understanding that actualized democracy includes both a fully informed but also full participation of all individuals. Those who choose to not understand the broader meaning of kneeing may choose to interpret such action as simply being unpatriotic or react due to concerns over respect for authority and tradition (Sevi et al., 2021). Or, on the other hand, Kaepernick's reason that he must protest is that those who would otherwise speak up against police brutality have been killed or scared into silence at the hands of the police. Thus, the outrage and backlash of protests – and the existence of protests themselves – all could suggest that actualized democracies have no protests.

But such a conclusion would be incorrect in the presence of unionization and incorrect for the understanding of an actualized democracy overall. Actualized democracies, while an idealized point in time, are still developmental in nature. States that could reach an actualized democracy must constantly be ensuring that such a state continues to exist and that it does not backslide into a democracy or a dictatorship. Even in considering the application of meritocracy within an actualized democracy, how we judge one's goodness or aptitude on a given task can fundamentally change over time. The moment we begin to use the indicator of how actualized a democracy is, is the moment when the measurement of actualized democracies will begin to fail. Actualized democracies require the full participation of individuals, which includes the protesting and demonstrations of the individuals who protest. The power of a strike – when workers commit to walking off the job to meet their demands – is the ultimate form of protest and power dynamic challenge.

It attempts to exemplify the extent to which the power of the workplace environment is in the hands of the worker, not the administration.

The second concern within an actualized democracy, and where we worry about its existence within the current functioning democracies, is that current democracies do not permit a true full participation of individuals. Election laws tell us who can vote and who cannot. They tell us when we can vote and when we cannot. Political parties jockey for laws that will result in more of their voters being able to vote, while less of the other. Union elections are no different in this regard – management and union representatives will argue over who is covered under the proposed bargaining unit. Yet, while rules still are created that can dictate the method and availability of voting, the promise of a unionization campaign is to move the representation of the laws back to the people – here, the workers. As one union organizer stated, "And just seeing how centralized and authoritarian the decision making is in Higher Ed [sic], it's like foil to that to have the union, where we're all about the democracy of it and democratic decision making and having a voice that can't be dismissed." The democratic, full process of a union is to ensure that the representational power dynamics shift toward that of the voter.

Finally, achieving full information within an actualized democracy also seems to be a difficult thorn to negotiate. The influx of misinformation, malformation, and misguided research has plagued the world in the face of COVID-19. Worse, continued findings of fraudulent data throughout psychological research require us to at the very least be skeptical of any research finding we come across, limiting our ability to trust fully in the results of published research. The publication process itself, as reviewed in chapter "Value-Laden and Value-Creation: The Political Process of Values", can carry with it its own systemic biases and lead some voices to be published and others to be silenced. Therefore, a "fully informed" democracy probably exists only to the extent that an individual believes themselves to be as informed as they need to be for them to come to a decision, and that the society takes appropriate steps to provide as many pathways as possible to gaining information. This process of trying to provide as much information as possible is a central part of the unionization process. The union seeks to inform workers of the benefits and possibilities that exist if they were to unionize, while the management seeks to inform the workers of the costs and consequences of what unionization could bring to the workplace.

Unionization as Public Policy

The presentation of a union campaign is a shift of both the formal and informal systems of a workplace. Workers are asked to decide if they would like to bargain over their contracts together or if they would like to continue in the status quo. Bargaining over things like pay and working conditions can both be a formalized policy of contract negotiation, but also can help subvert the informal system of a "who-you-know" culture. By bargaining together as a single group, unions can provide the full, informed, equal participation in wide aspects of decision-making

powers of the workplace – the critical tenet of an actualized democracy. Unionization also has the private policy of public relations. Unions can put pressure and build collations between other groups as they work to put pressure on management to change their position (Birdsell Bauer, 2017).

Unionization itself undergoes normative changes within the cultural hegemony. Their engagement with policies outside of the normal workplace grievances – such as immigration and the environment – speaks to a necessity to stay relevant and keep up with the current normative system (Kay, 2015). The public's perception of unions has shifted significantly throughout the years, and this is in no small part due to the public policies that have impacted union growth and development. The response of these activist groups to find new pathways to organize speaks to the flexibility of the normative system – while still an agent of workplace grievances, unions partake in engagement with nonworkplace policies to sustain their power in the policy they care the most about. The method of revolution and goals of the revolution may seem different – but the process that the union takes to reach that outcome remains the same.

Conclusion

A cultural approach to political psychology can provide a swarth of new insights into the field by heavily considering the application of values, power, and policy. In applying these three topics to unionization and actualized democracy, I noted the possibility of both being flexible in where we identified democracies, but also considered the developmental and microgenetic nature of these phenomena. Questions arise regarding the inactive and the backlash for being politically active; both of which are understudied in the literature. The dialogical relationship between activist and citizen is an extremely interesting task and could be explored through walk-along methodologies or observational studies examining the experiences of canvassers and those who get canvassed.

Not every political psychological phenomenon will necessarily fit all three groupings of values, power, and policy. A researcher may be devoutly interested in understanding the impact of one's personality characteristics and how those characteristics may differentially predict responses to questions based on one's stated group membership (which itself may be a rating scale). While potentially useful in an abstract way, it tells us very little about both how the individual will respond when faced with a real-life situation and how they came to the determination to make meaning of the questions in the first place. The process of deciding how one will vote, how one will act or not, and how one will silence others for speaking out or not is much more important to understand than the action itself. Examining the development of unionization and actualized democracies provides insight into realizing the limitations of the democratic system and potential consequences of relying too heavily on systems that cannot account for systemic biases.

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Psychology Is Policy: Cultural political psychology's promise

In this short Springer Brief, I have tried to tie together cultural psychology, political psychology, and public policy. The idea for this book came from a postdoctoral experience working on Capitol Hill for a member of Congress. In that brief year, I was taken aback by the amount of power that was being given to the young, bright, but unelected minds of the Congressional staff. The ease at which a bill can be introduced was startling, but it highlighted the ways in which a single individual can begin to influence policy – and how rarely that is discussed. There is a mythical ethos that we have built to define, enshrine, and protect the mysteriousness of policymaking – of backroom deals, of large influencers, of nightly politicians in the news. But behind that visage are individuals, writing some words on a page, hoping that their passionate idea is acknowledged by another individual in another office, and another, and another.

In the process of combining these three fields, I called for the development of a cultural political psychology – one that values individuals over institutions, stories over statistics, and the process over the final product. This kind of political psychology provides additional insight into topics such as political imagination, political inaction, and the influence of norms and social rules. It centers our focus not on the political products – personality traits, voting opinions, and cultural contact – but instead on the process of value-creation, the process of policy, and the process of power. By thinking of the process of politics over the content or outcomes of politics, we can better develop key theoretical insights into the functionality of policy in our everyday lives.

I have noted how politics and psychology both are built around an issue of values. The construction of public policy relies on individual staff members, who carry with them a host of pet projects and are hired to focus on specific policy problems. They are hired by the Member, who also shares similar values, but the passion and drive of the staffer are traceable through tracking high-level staff hires as they progress through different offices. This encompasses the political ideological values of the staffers and their Members, which can be generalized out to considerations

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surrounding political ideologies of any individual. In a similar way, the researcher also faces a host of value propositions and determinations as they engage in the methodological cycle, which goes beyond their own construction of the data, but gets at their own goal-directed end state of the publication process. What the researcher values in terms of criterion for their project's future influences the project's possible future states and the data-generating process involved.

A cultural political psychology relies on the consideration of policy. This can include both the products of public policy – if a given proposal does indeed incentivize or limit various behaviors – but also the creation of public policy. I noted the importance of considering the identity formation of the Member who receives credit for the creation and passage of the policy proposal, and how such an identity is formed in large part due to the private process of the silent staff members. It also includes the private policies of social norms, and how individuals negotiate the acceptance and refusal of both public and private policies in their daily lives. Policy is imbued in the research process, through governmental funding and support, influenced by legislators and political desires, and demands that science place itself during current events when (in)appropriate. Politics determines whose voices get heard and whose voices get silenced; and who was never given the opportunity to speak in the first place. Politics is the ability to decide what we value, how much we value it, and how we can create systems that encode those values into future generations. We see this in the publication process, where the acceptance and rejections of manuscripts, submitted to journals based on externally created indexes of success, are decided by a small group of individuals whose process for making these decisions is kept out of the public view. In thinking of the dialogical relationship between public and private, I also noted the functionality of increasing and decreasing the ambiguity around a specific policy. In examining the movement of hyper- and hypogeneralization, one can start to trace the development of the public attitude and comprehension of a policy problem by seeing if the problem is generalized downward to a specific example, or generalized upward to a large, heterogenous blob of individuals and issues.

Both policy and values work together through the implementation of power dynamics. The staffer and Member relationship is an ideal example of the "I create you to control me" (Valsiner, 1999) model of semiotic regulation, where the Member hires (constructs) a staffer (a sign) to govern their policies and voting behavior (future meanings). This multilevel system of power dynamics provides relative stability to the system, where policy can continually be reproduced without needing to demand that the Member is an expert at any given issue. Policy itself is a powerful dynamic, both in the enforcement of black letter laws, and the response and lived experience of such laws through commonsense justice and social norms. The resistance of Prohibition was actions fraught with power dynamics – of bribes and subterfuge, of state and federal government, and individual understandings of Prohibition itself. Policies are made to support some groups, harm others, and are constantly debated in terms of their public support and political capital for which they are brought forward. Psychology also finds itself within the realm of power, with the publication process being a political dance between reviewers, editors, and

authors. Power also is displayed when the individual chooses to not act – and the notion of secondary control shows itself in the resilience and actions taken to adjust oneself to their own environment. The ambiguity surrounding the policy process is a powerful tool designed to impede the actions of its citizens, which sustain its existence as the dominant power.

The resistance to change due to the high levels of ambiguity within the political process is one of the key reasons why a true actualized democracy has not been seen at a governmental level. But if we turn the search of actualized democracy away from governments and toward workplaces, we may be able to observe the process of democracy-building through the process of unionization. The process of unionization provides researchers with an in-the-moment examination of cultural change and the attempted emergence of a new culture in the workplace. It provides the acknowledgment of the developmental trajectory of democracies continually over time. As one moves from organizing a vote, to winning the vote, to winning a contract, to organizing for the next contract – the development and collective (in)action of a unionization campaign provides an exemplar of ways to examine the process of political psychology. The importance of backlash for both action and inaction requires further examination from research to understand the processes that exist in this moment. This includes a consideration of the psychology of canvassing to understand the dialogical relationship between canvasser and canvasee, between revolutionary to revolutionariless.

Cultural psychology provides us with a fundamental insight that needs to be emphasized: psychology is politics. Public policy functions because it engages, in various capacities, the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of its persons. And psychology is personal. It is our individual engagement – how the individual makes sense of the world. It is our acknowledgment of the laws and our willingness to abide by them, but also our willingness to choose to disengage and change ourselves instead of the world around us. It is responding to activists not by embracing their cause, but also by shunning them and lampooning them for shifting how we think of the workplace or our national anthem.

Psychology is also necessarily political. We engage with others based on a codified set of rules and regulations, which always carry with them the values of those who designed them. This systemic bias function can be traced even to that which seems most objective – the publication process of research itself. The group membership lines we draw, and the borders that we have decided to draw, continually build psychological walls between who is and who is not.

We can do more than simply predict the likelihood of voting for a presidential candidate based on some quantitative measurement. But it starts with examining the process from which psychology or public policy emerges. To do that, we must return to the individual – the individual voter, the individual staffer, and the individual political figure. For each, we must return to asking what the values, power, and policies are functioning to lead the individual in one direction or another. If we can do that, then the future of a cultural political psychology is strong.

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