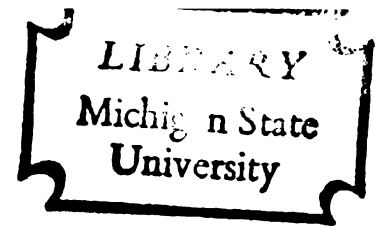


POLITICAL CYNICISM:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
ROBERT I. MENDELSON
1970



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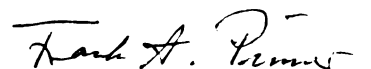
Political Cynicism: A Comparative Analysis

presented by

Robert I. Mendelsohn

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of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Political Science

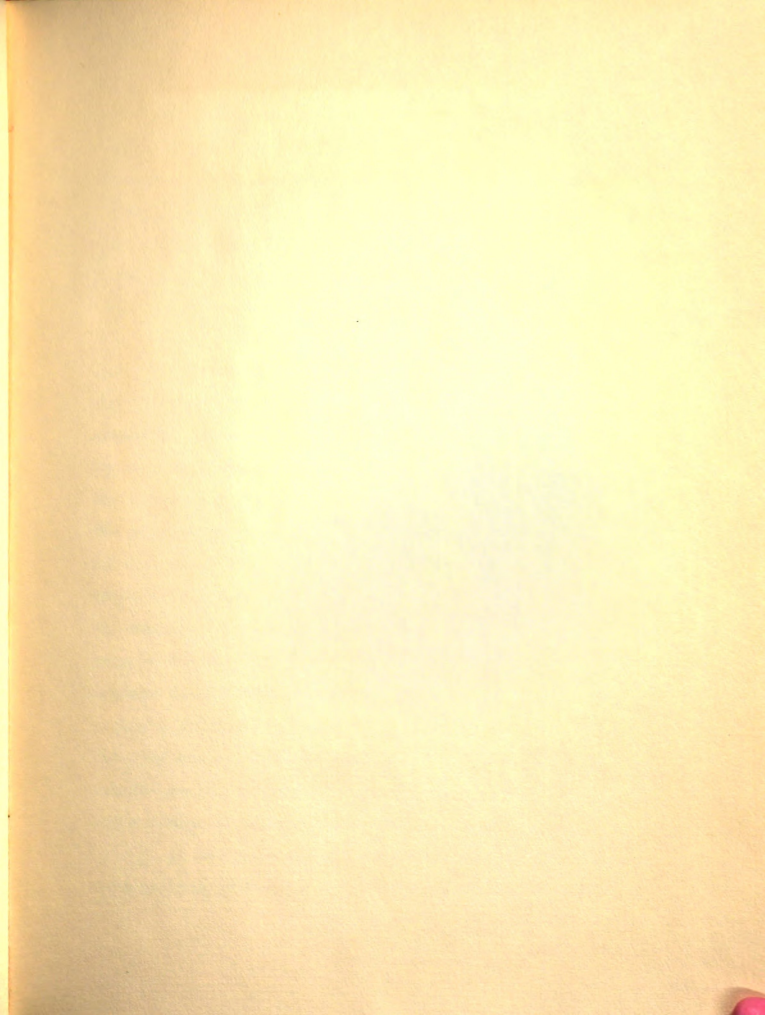

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ABSTRACT

POLITICAL CYNICISM: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Robert A. Dahl

In general the analysis of political cynicism is part of the current concern with the causes of political alienation; the problem and persistence of social apathy; and the stresses and strains of mass social interactions and the consequent organizational activities. It is also related to the alienation of modern man, the search for a new paradigm which has replaced the idealistic view of man's life. Political cynicism is, however, a term that has the concept of political alienation, the two are very many of the same general concepts. Political cynicism focuses on the extent to which political values are held in dispute and it has been related, at least in the folklore of American politics, to low political participation, the choice of less effective political action and a reduction in available leadership talent.

It was pointed out that there are two conceptual explanations in the literature for this. One is that

political orientations and these frequently go unrecognized and undifferentiated. As a result, the analyses of this and other political orientations are frequently confusing.

ABSTRACT

In the interest of reducing this confusion, two explanations of

POLITICAL CYNICISM: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

developed. One was termed the "object model" because of its emphasis on the attitude of the citizen. The

By

Robert I. Mendelsohn

second was termed the "subject model" because of its emphasis on the individual. In general the analysis of political cynicism is part of the current concern with the matters of political alienation; the problem and prospects of mass society; and the stresses and strains of large scale organizations and the consequent organizational society. In social criticism, the alienation of modern man, for example, has become the panacea which has replaced the id as the explanation for man's ills. Political cynicism is, however, separable from the concept of political alienation, though it encompasses many of the same general concerns. Political cynicism focuses on the extent to which politics and politicians are held in disrepute and it has been related, at least in the folklore of American politics, to low political participation, the choice of less effective public policies and a reduction in available leadership talent.

Third, It was pointed out that there are two alternative explanations in the literature for this, as well as other

political orientations and these frequently go unrecognized and undifferentiated. As a result, the analyses of this and other political orientations are frequently confusing. In the interest of reducing this confusion, two explanations of political cynicism were differentiated and developed. One was termed the object model because of its emphasis on the stimulus confronting the citizen. The second was termed the subject model because of its emphasis on the characteristics of the citizen observing the political object. The measures of political cynicism associated with each of the explanations were also named--the first was termed object cynicism and the second was termed subject cynicism.

In the object model, variations in political orientations are explained in terms of variations in the characteristics or attributes of a particular political object. A central hypothesis in this conception is that political orientations, including political cynicism, are focused on a specific political-governmental object rather than being generalized to all objects. A second hypothesis is that the less political the unit or the official, the more trusting the citizen, while the more political the unit or the official, the more cynical the citizen will be. Third, the style of politics in the community will affect the level of political cynicism, though the direction of

its impact is less certain. Last, the level of political information will be related to the level of political cynicism; however, the direction of the affect will be a function of the object.

In contrast, the subject model explains variations in political orientations, including political cynicism, in terms of variations in the individual's personal characteristics. These characteristics are projected on the world, including the political world. The first hypothesis suggested by this model is that political cynicism will not vary by type of individual from community to community. Second, it was hypothesized that political cynicism would be generalized and not specific to a political object. Third, it was hypothesized that political cynicism would vary positively with the level of personal frustration and sense of failure felt by the individual.

To test these hypotheses, three measures were employed--one subject cynicism measure and two object cynicism measures. One object measure dealt with school officials and the other dealt with city officials. The data for the project was taken from a survey study conducted for other purposes. From the five communities included in the original survey, two were selected. In one of the communities, the city officials had been accused of corruption and several had been indicted. Also, in this

community there were frequently contests for office and the party label was frequently cited. The other community was nonpartisan. Elections were uncontested and there was no history of corruption.

The results of the data showed that neither explanation was adequate. The data developed within the framework of each provided some support for each of the conceptions, but neither explanation was fully supported by the data. A demographic analysis of the object measures showed no difference in the instances of the standard variables of sex, political party identification and income. The findings on age, with one exception, were also generally consistent with the model. An analysis of indicators of political information yielded mixed results. There was, however, a higher level of cynicism towards the corrupt officials and this result generally maintained itself throughout the analysis.

The data on the subject model also yielded mixed results. Education was found to be negatively related to political cynicism. The results on income varied by community and no relationship was found between age and cynicism. The findings on life style satisfaction were negative. The data on personal cynicism yielded positive results--the higher the level of personal cynicism, the higher the level of political cynicism; however, when

education was controlled most of these differences disappeared.

The two models were then brought together. Again, the results were mixed. Each of the models showed some explanatory power; however, in general, the results of this analysis confirmed the need to reorder each of the models.

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POLITICAL CYNICISM: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

By

^{win}
Robert I. Mendelsohn

The human debts that have been accumulated in the long process of producing this thesis are truly too many and too varied to adequately acknowledge. Many have contributed more than either they or I fully realize. Words of appreciation are not sufficient.

Though none of the following persons are responsible for my errors, they are responsible for much of what has value. As colleagues, friends and advisors professors Frank Pinner, Charles G. Smith, Leroy Sorenson, Theodore Becker, and James Kloppack saved me from many blunders and intellectual pitfalls and contributed efforts of sharing their thoughts, abilities and wisdom with me. Much of

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Many others have contributed to the total process of life that this effort is founded on. I can only thank them all. However, my family deserves special thanks for what they have contributed. Their patience and assistance has been as unlimited as their love.

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the growing but modest literature now available on the problem of political cynicism. As a minimum, this study is intended to add some "bits and pieces" of data to the existing "bits" that have already been collected on political cynicism. In its grander aspirations, this study is intended to contribute to our more general understanding of the why and how of citizen attitudes of discontent and governmental officials. Whether of social class or interaction are in any way unique--as we shall see, other researchers have provided a foundation for the analysis of political cynicism and this study only adds to their initial work.

If any portion of this work should be considered unique, it is the conceptual apparatus developed for examining and analyzing political cynicism. As we shall attempt to demonstrate throughout this thesis, the analysis of political cynicism has thus far consisted of a mixed and ambiguous conceptual state. As a direct out-

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study is to extend and add to the growing but modest literature now available on the problem of political cynicism. At a minimum, this study is intended to add some "bits and pieces" of data to the existing "bits" that have already been collected on political cynicism. In its grander aspirations, this study is intended to contribute to our more general understanding of the why and how of citizen reaction to government and governmental officials. Neither of these aims or intentions are in any way unique--as we shall see, other researchers have provided the foundation for this analysis of political cynicism and this study only adds to their initial work.

If any portion of this work should be considered unique, it is the conceptual apparatus developed for examining and analyzing political cynicism. As the author shall attempt to demonstrate throughout this thesis, the analyses of political cynicism has thus far consisted of a mixed and ambiguous conceptual stew. As a first set of

efforts in exploring the problems of political cynicism such a mixture is, perhaps, to be expected, and, as an initially developed should be applauded. However, the next step in analyzing political cynicism (aside from the collection of additional data which this project does) is to refine and sort out the explanations and relationships set out in these studies. The assumption is that by sorting out the separate explanations simultaneously imbedded in the existing intellectual potpourri we will be better able to identify the tools we have to work with; the substance of what we know; and, some of the directions that must be taken in future research efforts.

Political Cynicism: Its Place in Political Analysis

In general, the analysis of political cynicism is part of the current concern with the matters of political alienation; the problems, prospects and prescriptions for mass society; the strains, stresses and schemes of large scale organizations and the consequent organizational society. Cops and cop outs, pot and protest, violence and viciousness seem to be part of the scene and are thought by some to be the necessary and natural results of human condition bounded by the antics of "a sick society." In combination or permutation these concerns are seen as the cause or consequence of one another. In social criticism,

the alienation of modern man, for example, has become the panacea which has replaced the id as the explanation for man's ills. Rightly or wrongly, we seem to have shifted from the familial-psychobiological schemas of the Freudian era to the socio-economic-political parameters in the organizational era.

For example, Bollens and Schmandt in their discussion of participation in the urban community make the following case for the relevance of political alienation.

The low level of involvement by many urban residents is attributed to apathy or indifference, which in turn is linked to political alienation--a feeling on the part of the individual that his vote makes no difference and that his political or civic activity can have little influence in determining community policy. This feeling of futility tends to cause a withdrawal by the individual from political participation and a retreat into the little world of his own immediate and personal problems.

Political alienation may involve not only apathy or indifference as a response to feelings of inefficacy but it may also lead to displeasure at being powerless and to a distrust of the persons in power. When such is the case, (political alienation, given the opportunity for expression at the polls, is likely to be translated into a vote of resentment or protest against the 'powers that be,' or an ill-defined 'them.'¹)

The authors then go on to suggest that such feelings are central to the reactions of many voters to issues of local political and community living.

¹John C. Bollens and Henry J. Schmandt, The Metropolis (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 228.

In a more publicized and less academic volume the same general position is developed by the President's National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. The Commission suggests that a basic cause for the disorders is the sense of powerlessness and/or alienation in the black community, particularly among the young.

The frustrations of powerlessness have led some to the conviction that there is no effective alternative to violence as a means of expression and redress, as a way of 'moving the system.' More generally, the result is alienation and hostility toward the institutions of law and government and the white society which controls them. . . .

Moreover, Negro youth, who make up over half of the ghetto population, share the growing sense of alienation felt by many white youth in our country. Thus, their role in the recent civil disorders reflects not only a shared sense of deprivation and victimization by white society but also the rising incidence of disruptive conduct by a segment of American youth throughout the society.²

The Commission goes on to explain and develop this general orientation later in its Report citing again the factors that led to the alienation of the black community from the political system, especially the local governments. In the several streams of development the Commission saw as converging in the mid-sixties and that finally culminated in the riots of 1967 the Commission cited first, the lack of communication that encouraged, reinforced and deepened the

²Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), p. 205.

the sense of isolation and alienation in the black community. In the words of the Report?

First, there is the widening gulf in communications between local government and the residents of the erupting ghettos of the city. As a result, ghetto residents develop a profound sense of isolation and alienation from the processes and programs and government.³

In sum, the Commission places considerable emphasis on the causes and effects of "alienation" in modern society, especially in the black community.

If, as the above quotations and analyses suggest, political alienation is often cited as a cause or effect of political and social behavior, scientifically it would seem to be more honored in the breach than its frequency of citation would lead one to believe. That is to say, if a panacea in the culture of a science is the answer to all, while a useful theoretical concept has limitations in its applications, then alienation comes close to being the nostrum we have suggested it might be. John P. Clark made this same point in his own language when he wrote the following:

The concept of alienation seems to have been assigned to the rank of 'extremely-useful but loosely-defined' higher constructs along with such others as inauthenticity, anomie, and culture. The concept has proven useful to many contemporary sociologists, social philosophers, and social historians in describing and interpreting man's social behavior.

³ Ibid., p. 284.

As the list of authors has grown, however, so has the variety of definitions of the concept or fractions of it. The construct should prove even more helpful in social science if it becomes more clearly defined and if a tool for measuring it can be developed.⁴

Seeman in his classic article on alienation suggests, too, that it is a central concept in contemporary social science and social criticism (with deep historical roots as well) that demands special clarity which it too often lacks.⁵

He then goes on to discuss the five meanings of alienation he finds in the literature: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation and self-estrangement in the interest of the clarity he believes necessary.

While the search for clarity demanded by Seeman is continuing, the present study is more narrowly confined. It shares the general concerns of those involved in re-searching the problem of alienation in the society but is more limited in scope. That is to say, this study is part of the patchwork of knowledge and interest developing about the problems of frustrations and reactions to officialdom

⁴ John P. Clark, "Measuring Alienation within a Social System," American Sociological Review, XXIV (December, 1959), p. 849.

⁵ Melvin Seeman, "On the Meaning of Alienation," American Sociological Review, XXIV (December, 1959), pp. 783-91. Other similar discussions can be found in Lewis S. Feuer, "What Is Alienation: The Career of a Concept," New Politics, Vol. II, No. 3 (Spring, 1962), pp. 116-34; Marvin B. Scott, "The Social Sources of Alienation," Inquiry, Vol. VI, No. 1 (1963), pp. 57-69; and Eric and Mary Josephson, eds., Man Alone: Alienation in Modern Society (New York: Dell, 1962), esp. pp. 9-53.

and organizations that seem to be part of the style of life in the modern and highly complex society. Too, this study draws on and attempts to deal with some of the same general propositions put forth by those concerned with alienation. For example, this study does deal with the problem of ~~love~~ institutional impact as well as that of personal frustration, though on a more limited a basis.

What are the limitations of this study insofar as alienation is at issue? First, this study is restricted to an examination of a political phenomenon. That is to say, this study centers on governmental officials and governmental forms and the public's reactions to the officials and the forms. It is not, as is much of the alienation literature, concerned with public reactions to, or the forms involved in other areas of social activity, e.g., economics and religion. Second, this study focuses on political cynicism and not on alienation in general. (We shall turn to the definition of cynicism shortly.) On occasion, we may use the terms alienation and cynicism interchangeably, but this is for stylistic purposes and not because of conceptual confusion. Hopefully, the context of the terms will make the nature of the usages clear enough to minimize the reader's task in this regard. However, to return to the main point, this study focuses on a specific attitude on the part of members of the public

and is not intended to capture a broader slice of the public's mind as the concept of alienation seems to do--or does by virtue of its conceptual ambiguity. Now, let us turn to the specific problem under consideration in this study and the nature of the framework employed to explore it.

The Problem and the Framework

As even such a brief commentary on alienation makes evident, the analysis of human political reactions is a central theme in American social science (and social policy development most assuredly), if not central to social science analysis in time and space as well. Modern social science has, perhaps, served to make us especially conscious of the significance of people's reactions to an act and that, in terms of outcomes, the reactions may be as important, if not more so, than the acts themselves. The literature on human relations in organizations is replete with material on this point. Similarly, in the more conventionally defined political arena attitude polling has become commonplace both for purposes of candidate selection and for finding out what the public thinks on the issues of the day. Concern with attitudes and potential reactions has penetrated the confines of religion and the secular halls of economics as well. Thus the

psychological dimensions of life are recognized as useful and necessary conceptions for explaining whole ranges of human behavior. They have become the focus of interest as both dependent and independent variables in the construction of such explanations.

The social sciences have taken existing concepts and developed new ones and, through the use of new techniques, have gone about the very important task of giving these concepts measurable meanings. The literature contains numerous studies of, and references to, concepts such as authoritarianism, efficacy, Machiavellianism, rigidity, and legitimacy. The exactness, the measurement, and the significance of most, if not all, of these concepts is still very much open to question, as perhaps, they should be given the state of the art. Nonetheless, the task of development, refinement and demolition goes on in the interest of science and social betterment.

Political cynicism is a conception which has been added to the reservoir of the literature. Certainly, the folklore of American politics has always made much of the extent to which people were or ought to be cynical about politics and the politician. The images of the smoked filled rooms, the greedy professional politician making deals and the party machine vandalizing the public wealth are part of this folklore. In recent years the articulate

sectors of both the right and the left have vented their feelings that the political deck is stacked, and that revolution, withdrawal or reform is the answer. When specific targets have been selected as the sinful elements in the system, they have been many and varied; ranging from Earl Warren to the power structure, and from the lack of primary elections to the intrusions of "politics."

It has been suggested that cynicism has had a number of consequences for the political system and its members. Common sense might suggest that when the players of the political game are immoral those who are moral will have no desire to enter the game; therefore, public cynicism has been seen as the cause of good people staying out of leadership positions in public activities. To the extent that cynicism has given the public a sense that their actions will have no effect on decisions, it has been suggested that general public participation in the political process has been reduced. Too, common sense would suggest that to the extent the better people have refused to participate and the general public saw no sense in expressing its preferences, to that extent also, cynicism has necessarily resulted in the choice of bad or ineffective policies. These would appear to be some of the major proverbs of the folklore on American politics as it speaks to the question of political cynicism.

In the professional literature, Professors Robert E. Agger and Edgar Litt have made the major contributions to the quantitative study and analysis of political cynicism.⁶ Agger was the innovator on this topic, while Litt's work represents a check and a refinement on Agger's initial contribution. Agger defined political cynicism in his work (and we shall follow his lead throughout in this project) as:

" . . . [t]he extent to which people hold politicians and politics in disrepute . . . " [*italics in the original*]⁷

Operationally, political cynicism was defined in terms of scores on a six-item Guttman scale developed by Agger and his co-workers. (This same scale is employed in the analysis executed in Chapter III of this thesis.)

In the main, Agger's work is a thoroughgoing empirical exploration of the correlates of political cynicism. Since the nature of the work required little theory (that is to say, it was straight forward empirical analysis with no prior field research to use as a foundation), it is not surprising to find that Agger dealt with a series of

⁶Robert E. Agger, et al., "Political Cynicism: Measurement and Meaning," Journal of Politics, XXIII (1961), pp. 477-506 and Edgar Litt, "Political Cynicism and Political Futility," Journal of Politics, XXV (1963), pp. 312-23.

⁷Agger, op. cit., p. 477.

discrete hypotheses rather than a set of tightly inter-connected propositions. As a result, it is difficult to identify an obvious theoretical turn in his work. Though Agger offers no explicit theoretical leads, it will be shown shortly that he offers at least one, if not two, implicit theoretical cues. Furthermore, his findings are obviously useful and they create no theoretical problems for the models to be explored in this thesis.

Litt's study (in general) replicated Agger's in a different setting; however, Litt also extended and refined the original project by providing for at least a twofold variation in the field. He did this by comparing his results in Boston proper with those of his study in a Boston suburb (Brookline). Also, since Litt had the benefit of Agger's initial work, the theoretical base is a bit more clearly developed and the theoretical cues are more pronounced, though they are by no means wholly obvious.

Setting theory aside for the moment, what in brief were the major results of the works by Agger and Litt?

✓ Agger found that general personal cynicism was positively related to political cynicism. This relationship was somewhat modified by the variable of education in that the higher the level of education the lower the level of political cynicism at each of the controlled levels of personal

cynicism. Although he found other associations, the relationships among education, personal cynicism and political cynicism undoubtedly were his major findings when political cynicism was treated as a dependent variable. When political cynicism was treated as an independent variable, Agger found that it exerted an independent effect on political participation, especially at the middle and upper end of the social structure.

Litt's findings, as suggested above, refined and extended those of Agger. Litt found that personal cynicism was unrelated to political cynicism in Boston, but in Brookline there was a relationship between personal cynicism and political cynicism. He also found that education was unrelated to political cynicism in Boston but in Brookline it was associated with political cynicism. Litt did not examine the relationship between political cynicism and political participation, so there were no results to compare with Agger's findings on this point.

Now, let us return to the theoretical leads provided by Agger and Litt in their analyses of political cynicism. As suggested above, Agger provides a minimal and mixed source for this purpose; however, he does provide one major cue that appears to be worth following. As noted above, Agger employed a measure of general, or as he calls it personal, cynicism. It was also noted above that one of

his major findings was the positive association between personal cynicism and political cynicism. This suggests that a major theoretical tack may rest in the development of a "projection-like" model to explain the existence of political cynicism, or, as Agger himself states:

The more a person feels himself to be a failure, the more he may decide that it is the politicians who are most responsible for the gap between the promise of America and his own relatively unenviable position in the world. A person who has failed to attain what the society reiterates is accessible to everyone who has the necessary ambition: a college degree, may, upon reflection, decide that the spokesman for the society, its politicians, are deceitful because such is not really the case.

Such feelings of personal impotence may, less 'rationally,' generate a generalized cynicism about people as well as a feeling that politicians are to blame for the failure of the system. Feelings of failure may lead to some degree of self-hate, which can be projected outwards onto a culturally sanctioned substitute target of hostility, politicians and the political process.⁸

We shall pursue this lead at length in Chapter III; however, for the present, let it simply be noted that the emphasis in this core of an explanation is on the feelings and reactions of the individual involved and not on the characteristics or qualities of the object of reaction, e.g., the politician or the governmental form. That is to say, the feelings and reactions develop within the individual in this framework and then are projected outwards on some available object, in this case the politicians and the

⁸Ibid., pp. 502-32.

political process. It is because of this emphasis that we call this explanation for political cynicism the subject model and the associated measure of political cynicism, subject cynicism.

Litt's analysis, on the other hand, tends to move in a much different theoretical direction. As reported above, Litt did not find a consistent positive relationship between personal cynicism and political cynicism; therefore, it is not surprising he did not follow the theoretical lead (as cited above) suggested by Agger. Rather, in the face of the mixed findings on personal and political cynicism, Litt moved in the direction of developing an explanation for political cynicism which emphasizes the characteristics or qualities of the stimuli, e.g., the politician or the nature of the political process. That is to say, Litt's discussion provides the cues which suggest that an explanation for political cynicism is to be found in the quality of community politics and in the behavior of politicians, rather than in the personal or social frustrations and reactions of citizens. For example, Litt states:

It has been established that the apathetic and ineffective citizen feels a high degree of personal futility, lack of trust, and social institutions [sic] characteristics that are projected onto a public screen and the politician who occupies the center of that screen.

Relatively less attention has been directed at the effects of distinctive political environments upon the citizen's evaluation of and response to

is American politicians. What relationships exist among the political milieu, the citizen's evaluation of the professional politician, and the feeling that politicians are responsive to the needs of the voter? And do these factors vary within different political settings?⁹

Or, later when comparing the data he collected to that of Agger he remarks:

The fact that there are proportionately fewer political cynics at each educational level as one moves from the Boston to the Boston suburb to the Oregon communities suggests that a big-city corruption factor . . . is crucial in an explanation of differential rates in political cynicism.¹⁰

These cues suggest that it is the variation in the object (e.g., the politician or the political process) that accounts for political cynicism. It is because of this emphasis on the object that the second proposed explanation, to be dealt with in Chapter II, is called the object model and the operational measures (there are two in this study) of political cynicism associated with it, object cynicism.

The contrasting directions and emphases of these two models are central to this thesis. The object of this thesis is to develop these alternative explanations for political cynicism, explore them and then subject them to testing. The above comments make it apparent that the core of the differences between the subject and object models

⁹Litt, op. cit., p. 313.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 319.

is that the former searches for its answers in the past and current situation of the individual, while the latter seeks its answers in the behavior and attributes of the political object that confronts the citizen. As this research effort will demonstrate, this difference in theoretical orientation leads to differing expectations (hypotheses) on the part of the observer. Also, the development of this thesis will show that the difference in emphasis between these two explanations requires the utilization and application of operational measures that reflect the basic contrast between the object and subject models.

Clearly, the inclination to place one's emphasis on subject or object is not new to political science. These differing emphases appear to be an intimate part of the ancient history of the field and the nature of the mix or separation of the two would seem to remain a central part of the treatment of political problems. By way of example, one need only examine Plato's Republic or Hobbes' Leviathan to see how theorists attempt to use the psychology and/or personality of the individual citizen as the mainspring for the political system. On the other hand, Marx, the political reformers and utopians would seem to be examples of those more prone to emphasize the "objective" qualities of the situation. However, our interest here is not the general history of the field, but rather the examination of

Dimensions of Anxiety, American Sociological Review (February, 1955), pp. 14-40.

alternative explanations for political orientations and, in particular, the alternative explanations for the orientation called political cynicism.¹¹

More specifically, what are the differences between the subject and object models and what hypotheses can be deduced from each of these models? Let us examine the object model first. As noted above, the object model explains political orientations on the basis of the variable characteristics or attributes of a particular political object. That is to say, the variation in a political orientation is a function of the behavior of governmental officials or the attributes of the governmental units which they represent when viewed through the perspective of this model. Such a model is seemingly implied in much of the literature on political reform. Aside from the other ends to be achieved by these reforms, such as greater efficiency or more rational decision making, the proposals for reform also seem to contain the notion that public behavior and public attitudes will change as well.

¹¹For additional commentary on this general problem of subject verses object see the following works: James C. Davies, Human Nature in Politics (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1963); Heinz Eulau, The Behavioral Persuasion in Politics (New York: Random House, 1963); and Lester W. Milbrath, Political Participation (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1965), esp. Chaps. 1-3. McCloskey and Schaar suggest much the same distinction in their discussion of anomie. See: Herbert McCloskey and John H. Schaar, "Psychological Dimensions of Anomy," American Sociological Review, XXX (February, 1965), pp. 14-40.

For example, John Bollens, in his discussion of special districts, notes that among other reasons for the creation of such districts is the hope that the public will exhibit " . . . greater zeal and fervor for an activity when it is independent."¹² The discussions of legislative apportionment are also illustrative of this type of proposition. Gordon Baker, after discussing the consequences of malapportionment on the two-party system, the intraparty structure, and social and economic policies, then goes on to suggest that public confidence, public cynicism, disillusionment, and apathy are functions of the failure of state legislatures to act on this problem and, apparently, the very existence of malapportionment.¹³ It does not seem unfair to suggest then, that a fair reapportionment would reduce all of these negative factors in the system, if Baker's line of analysis is correct. The same general type

¹²John C. Bollens, Special District Governments in the United States (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1957), p. 11.

¹³Gordon E. Baker, Rural versus Urban Political Power (New York: Random House, 1955). For the beginnings of an imaginative treatment of the problem of apportionment in the vein suggested above see Royce Hanson's The Political Thicket (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), esp. pp. 129-35.

of argument has been made with regard to presidential of primaries.¹⁴ The purpose here, however, is not to test these particular propositions, but rather to note their form and to document their existence in the literature. In each of the cases cited above, the propositions take the following form, a change in the object, e.g., from general government corporation to special district government, results in some corresponding attitudinal change, e.g., from less fervor and zeal to more fervor and zeal. Although the line of reasoning suggested by these political reforms and others may be complicated by the introduction of an intervening variable, such as a change in the quality of the officials which in turn induces the attitudinal change on the part of the citizen, still, the basic determinant of public orientations towards officialdom is to be found in an object characteristic such as the behavior of the officials involved or an attribute of the unit they represent.

As noted above in our discussion of Litt's study, when this model is applied to the explanation of political

¹⁴James W. Davis, Presidential Primaries: Road to the White House (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1967), p. 253. Davis' summary of the line of argument in favor of the existing system of presidential primaries implies that a change in the system will change the level of voter interest and concern with the nominating process.

¹⁵Litt, op. cit., p. 244.

cynicism we have to look to the immediate environment of the citizen in order to discover the sources of this attitude. One of the elements in the environment that is productive of cynicism, according to Litt's analysis, is corrupt behavior on the part of public officials. For example, Litt pointedly remarks that the City of Brookline, in which he found a relatively low level of cynicism, had " . . . a history of relatively effective and uncorrupted political rule."¹⁵ On the other hand, he remarks, as did Levin in his study of the alienated voter in Boston,¹⁶ on the perfidious character of the City's politicians and the unsavory atmosphere of Boston politics. In his remarks, Litt comments on the "corruption, shenanigans, and ineptness of the city's political life . . . "¹⁷

If the arguments of the reformers cited above are combined with the explanation advanced by Litt (and Levin), a number of testable hypotheses accounting for political

¹⁵ Litt, op. cit., p. 316.

¹⁶ Murray B. Levin, The Alienated Voter (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960). See especially Chapter I, by George Blackwood, where the author calls Boston "a sick city." To a substantial extent Levin's analysis appears to be built around the object model as I have defined it above. Apparently, alienation, in his analysis, is a function of the objective characteristics of the political game in Boston, including such things as corruption, partisanship, and the effective control of the City by a small elite.

¹⁷ Litt, op. cit., p. 314.

cynicism emerge. A central hypothesis is that political orientations, including political cynicism, are focused on a specific political-governmental object rather than being generalized to all objects. This hypothesis stems from the reformers' contention that the legal-structural separation of an activity from other activities within the political community will result in a change in public orientation. This suggests that in a single community the public may have a cynical attitude towards the officials of the city government, while at the same instant they may have a trusting attitude towards school officials.

A second hypothesis implicit in at least some of the works cited above is that a reduction in the "political" character of government and the processes surrounding it will result in more positive attitudes on the part of the public. The term "political" is defined in a narrow, conventional sense in this equation, and implies a reduction or removal of partisanship or the partisan label from the activity or the official involved. Conversely, it (the reduction) implies an increase in the element of expertise via the mechanism of substituting the professional decision maker with his incantations for the politician and his rituals. Perhaps, the source for this hypothesis is best summed up in the battle cry (or wish) of the reformer to take "it," whatever "it" may be at the moment, "out of

politics."¹⁸ With respect to the immediate problem, this point suggests the hypothesis that respondents will be more trusting in the case of the less "political" unit or officials and more cynical towards the more "political" unit or officials. The findings of Litt and Levin suggest a third hypothesis that turns on the behavior of officials and the atmosphere of the political environment. This variable might be termed the style of politics. The findings suggest that if the style of politics includes rough, competitive and open conflict, the level of cynicism will increase. Apparently, this is especially probable if the style of politics also contains a liberal amount of partisan machine operation.¹⁹ Since previous studies only examined reactions to city politicians, they provide no clue as to how pervasive the effects of style may be. In other words, the findings might be interpreted to mean that attitudes towards all governmental units and officials will be affected by the style of politics in the community. On the other hand,

¹⁸ For a discussion of the importance of this point in political reform in the case of special districts see Bollens, *op. cit.* In the area of administration see Paul Van Riper, History of the United States Civil Service (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson and Company, 1958), and Dwight Waldo, The Administrative State (New York: Ronald Press, 1948). In addition, virtually any basic text on state or local government will make mention of this point.

¹⁹ Levin, *op. cit.*, and James Reichley, The Art of Government (New York: The Fund for the Republic, 1959).

hypothesis number two and the findings of the studies cited could just as easily be interpreted to mean that each governmental unit or set of officials projects its own style of politics and is judged accordingly. If the latter is the case, then the level of political cynicism would be expected to vary independently for each unit or set of officials as the style of politics varied. Last, one additional component of the object model must be mentioned at this point. As is obvious, the object model of cynicism is highly rationalistic in its structure. That is to say, according to the object model the citizen examines the behavior of public officials and, if their behavior is found wanting, he reacts in the appropriate manner--in the case of this study, this means he becomes a political cynic. If official behavior is not found wanting, the citizen is then trusting. Clearly, such a pattern is dependent on the citizen possessing the necessary information about official behavior. Thus, the last necessary component in the object model is level of citizen knowledge.²⁰ The hypothesis to be tested here is that the

²⁰ Any "rational" model for explaining some activity must necessarily give information a central place. For examples of the role of information in such explanations see Herbert A. Simon, Administrative Behavior, 2nd ed. (New York: MacMillan Company, 1957); Anthony Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957); and, David Braybrooke and Charles E. Lindblom, A Strategy of Decision (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963).

higher level of information the greater the level of cynicism or trust depending on the characteristic of the unit or the behavior of the officials. For example, the more political the unit and the higher the level of information, the more likely it is that the respondent will be cynical, while the less political the unit and the higher the level of information, the more likely it is that the respondent will be trusting.

In contrast to the rationalistic bias of the object model, the subject model has an "irrational" bias in its view of political behavior. It starts with the assumption that individual political behavior is a resultant of certain key experiences (typically, nonpolitical experiences in the conventional sense of the term). The individual undergoes or suffers these experiences and they, in turn, through any one of several psychological processes are converted into relatively permanent perspectives or world views. One aspect of the world that the "formed" individual deals with is the political life of his community or nation. In this model, his view on this world, too, is determined by these key experiences.

The nature of the key experiences or underlying processes that account for the views differ according to the basic orientation of the theory employed. Perhaps, the best known, if not the most popular, framework adopted

for purposes of explaining political behavior in terms of the subject is that of psychoanalysis. Here, the example of Harold Lasswell clearly stands out among political scientists. Lasswell's well known statement that the developmental facts about political man can be most fully expressed in the formula $p \} d \} r = P$ (usually translated as, the displacement of private motives on a public object, rationalized in terms of the public interest) is still a model of directness and simplicity as a subject explanation for political behavior and political orientations.²¹

An example of Lasswell's application of this model of explanation is his central hypothesis for the analysis of "the political personality." In his own words:

Our key hypothesis about the power seeker is that he pursues power as a means of compensation against deprivation. Power is expected to overcome low estimates of self, by changing either the traits of self or the environment in which it functions.²² [*italics in original*]

In a more recent volume, Lasswell and Rogow use the same type of framework to explain the behavior of political

²¹Harold D. Lasswell, Psychopathology and Politics (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1930), pp. 75-76. Also see his Power and Personality (New York: W. W. Norton, 1948), and "Democratic Character," in The Political Writings of Harold D. Lasswell (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1951).

²²Power and Personality, p. 29. The concept of "the political personality" is part of Lasswell's conceptual framework.

bosses.²³ In their proposed explanation of corruption, for example, the authors suggest several propositions intended to relate variables in the personality system of "the boss." One illustration of the type of proposition they advance is: "Corruption may ensue when the early environment of the personality system promotes severe deprivation." Another is: "The character of the early deprivation effects the purposes for which power is employed."²⁴ Undoubtedly the modern classic in the social sciences which employs a subject model is The Authoritarian Personality.²⁵ Though not originally undertaken as a study of political behavior, and though it has been soundly and extensively criticized on theoretical and methodological grounds, this volume has, nonetheless, been the foundation for a good deal of research in political science, as well as in psychology.²⁶ Again, the point here is not to

²³ Arnold A. Rogow and Harold D. Lasswell, Power, Corruption, and Rectitude (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), esp. Chap. II.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 54.

²⁵ T. W. Adorno, et al., The Authoritarian Personality (New York: Harper, 1950).

²⁶ For a series of criticism see Studies in the Scope and Method of The Authoritarian Personality, ed. by Richard Christie (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1954). See also Richard Christie, Joan Havel, and Bernard Seidenberg, "Is the F Scale Irreversible?" Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, LVI (March, 1958), pp. 143-59. For a critique and extension of the original

evaluate this particular study and its substance, but rather to note that its framework emphasizes the variability of the subject while minimizing the importance of the object. The guiding hypothesis for the study was that "the political, economic and social convictions of an individual often form a broad and coherent pattern . . . and that this pattern is an expression of deep-lying trends in his personality."²⁷ In other words, political beliefs (and anti-minority sentiments which were more central to the authors' interest in this particular study) are seen as part of a constellation of entrenched personal characteristics and it is the variation in the pattern of these personal characteristics which provides the bulk of the answers to the variation in political beliefs.²⁸

McCloskey and Schaar in their study of anomy choose the same general framework for their analysis, and suggest that anomy is best conceived of as a state of mind and

research see Milton Rokeach, The Open and Closed Mind (New York: Basic Books, 1960). A critical and very brief summary of the research which attempts to relate authoritarianism to political behavior is contained in Milbrath, op. cit., pp. 83-86.

²⁷ Adorno, op. cit., p. 1.

²⁸ Useful summaries of literature in this mold can be found in Robert E. Lane, Political Life (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1959), esp. Chaps. 9-11, and his Political Ideology (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), esp. pp. 400-12.

best accounted for by underlying psychological processes.²⁹ While remaining within the subject framework, McCloskey and Schaar shift the direction a bit by emphasizing the role of cognitive factors, along with personality. However, the significant point for our purposes is that their analysis and research is premised on the basic proposition that anomy is mainly a function of the structure of an individual's psychological world rather than the usual social explanation which treats it mainly as a function of something in the objective world.

As suggested, the nature of the "key" experiences or elements which will determine political orientations, as well as other facets of the individual, vary according to the theoretician. They range from the structure of belief-disbelief systems to problems associated with handling basic bodily functions and from deprivations to interrelationships among attitudes and beliefs and defense mechanisms. In any case, the experiences tend to "set" the individual and result in political personalities or generalized political predispositions. These predispositions, in turn, manifest themselves in generalized political attitudes, the adoption of political ideologies or patterns of political response which are not a function of

²⁹ McCloskey and Schaar, op. cit.

the political stimulus, but are rather a function of the working out of these earlier individual experiences. A "pure" subject theory apparently would explain aggregate political behavior in terms of the differential distribution of personality types.³⁰

Perhaps, Key and Munger in their analysis of what they label "social determinism" provide an apt and incisive summary and critique of the subject model. They make their point as follows:

The style set in the Erie County study of voting, The People's Choice, threatens to take the politics out of the study of electoral behavior. The theoretical heart of The People's Choice rests in the contention that 'social characteristics determine political preferences.' Professor Lazarsfeld and his associates, prudent as they are, do not let so bald a statement stand without qualification or exception. Yet almost inevitable from this basic view which is usually not put so explicitly, there develops a school of analysis that tends to divert attention from critical elements of electoral decision. The focus of analysis under the doctrine of social determinism comes to rest broadly on the capacity of the 'nonpolitical group' to induce conformity to its political standards by the individual voter.

.....
The study of electoral behavior then becomes only a special case of the more general problem of group inducement of individual behavior in accord with group norms. As such it does not invariable throw much light on the broad nature of electoral

³⁰ For a critical analysis of attempts to explain aggregate behavior on the basis of personality types or traits, see Nathan Glazer and Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Polls on Communism and Conformity," in The New American Right, ed. by Daniel Bell (New York: Criterion Books, 1955), pp. 141-65.

decision in the sense of decisions by the electorate as a whole.³¹

At this juncture, however, the point is not to explore the weaknesses of the subject model, but to explore its application to the explanation of political cynicism.

In its current rather crude form the subject model of political cynicism suggests a limited number of hypotheses. The first and dominating hypothesis is that political cynicism is a function of the subject and not the object; therefore, it is predicted that the level of cynicism among comparable groups of individuals will not vary by community. In other words, though the aggregate level of cynicism may vary by community, there should be no variation by type of individual. This proposition, of course, follows quite predictably from the basic premise of the subject model which searches for its answers in the nature of the citizen and deemphasizes the significance of variation in the political stimulus.

Another hypothesis which follows is that political cynicism will be generalized and will not be object specific. An alternative way of stating this proposition

³¹V. O. Key, Jr. and Frank Munger, "Social Determinism and Electoral Decision: The Case of Indiana," in American Voting Behavior, ed. by Eugene Burdick and Arthur J. Brodbeck (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1959), pp. 281-2.

Text lines

is that, according to the subject model, individuals will be equally cynical or equally trusting of different types of officials. That is to say, we would expect that an individual who is cynical about city politicians and city politics will be equally cynical about school politicians and school politics. This proposition, too, follows from a model which treats political cynicism as psychologically functional.

Last, following from the whole structure of the model in its present crude form and, initially, from the cues provided by Agger, it is predicted that political cynicism will vary positively with the level of personal frustration and sense of failure. This proposition is predicated on Agger's findings and his suggestion that a sense of personal impotence will ultimately lead to scapegoating with the politician as the object.

The Methodology

The data employed in this study are the result of a set of surveys conducted by other investigators and for other purposes.³² For this project, a secondary analysis

³²This researcher owes a substantial debt to Professor Robert E. Agger formerly of the Department of Political Science, University of Oregon, who was the principal investigator and directed the design and execution of the original surveys. Professor Agger not only most generously allowed this researcher to use his data for this study, but of equal significance were his comments, insights and gracious words of encouragement.

of the data was executed after the original surveys had been completed and partially analyzed. The design for the original surveys took form in 1962 and early 1963. In the spring of 1963 the original surveys were put in the field in five communities in the State of Oregon. A random sample was selected from each community.

The information on the respondents was gathered in two parts. First, each respondent was interviewed in his home by a professional interviewer. The interviews lasted approximately one hour to one and one-half hours each. At the end of the interview, each respondent was asked to complete a questionnaire containing an additional 40 items. The respondents were asked to return this questionnaire in an addressed, stamped envelope. Respondents were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and that no names were necessary; however, they were informed that each of the questionnaires had a code number on it that would allow the researchers to match it to the correct interview. The rate of return for the mailback varied by community and ranged from approximately 50 percent to slightly more than 65 percent. As might be expected, those nearer the lower end of the social structure had a higher rate of no return.

From among the five cities included in the original study design, two were selected for this analysis. The reason only two were selected is that more than two would

have added nothing to this design. Since the five communities were, quite naturally, chosen in terms of the objectives of the original project, it is not at all surprising that they failed to meet the ideal requirements of the design framework for this secondary analysis. Ideally, the design of this study required a balanced mixture, for example, of partisan and nonpartisan political structures; competitive and noncompetitive electoral histories; and corrupt and noncorrupt patterns of operation.

As is usually the case in secondary analysis and frequently in primary designs, the execution of the design had to be adapted to the limitations of the situation. In this project, for example, an initial limitation was that only one of the communities (Riverview) had any recent history of corruption: it, therefore, had to be included to meet the requirements of the study design.³³ In terms of all the other obvious requirements of the study design, the remaining four communities represent a single type. For example, they were all nonpartisan, noncorrupt, noncompetitive communities. For these reasons, only one other community (Forktown) was selected for analysis.

³³The actual names of the communities will not be used, since this has been the policy of the original investigators for reasons of their own. See, for example, Agger, op. cit., p. 478.

Forktown is a pleasant little community located approximately a hundred miles from Riverview.³⁴ At one time it was a major stopover point for travelers headed for the county seat some thirty miles distant and later drew many travelers driving to and from Riverview; however, a new freeway has reduced its tourist count considerably. It has grown very slowly over the years and now has a population of approximately 3,000, plus a migrant set of residents that appear for the summer growing season and then pass on after the crops are picked and canned. Forktown is a major center for the surrounding agricultural operations. It serves as a shopping area and, more importantly, a large vegetable cannery located in town handles a substantial share of the crops grown nearby. In addition, two lumber and plywood mills are located in Forktown and employ several hundred people.

Politically, it is a quiet place. In the conventional sense, there are no politics in Forktown. This is reflected in the nonpartisan city government and in the prideful boasts of community leaders that "anyone with a reasonable complaint will have it taken care of immediately with no foolishness." Elections for both the school board

³⁴The information on Forktown and Riverview was gathered from published sources, personal observation and interviews, and from interviews with knowledgeable observers of the two communities.

and the city government are for all practical purposes plebiscites. There is little substantial contest for positions and in the mysterious manner of small town politics people seem to be selected for openings and moved upwards when the situation requires it with a high level of agreement and satisfaction.

Formally, Forktown has a council-mayor city government. Its six councilmen are elected two at a time for staggered six-year terms. They run at-large on a non-partisan ballot. The mayor serves a two-year term and runs for office in the even years as do the councilmen. He generally runs unopposed and is usually an ex-councilman chosen with some care by his peers.

The school board, too, is nonpartisan and has six members. Each of the members serves for a six-year term and two are elected each two years. They select their own chairman from the six members of the board. As is the case with the council elections there is some competition for the school board, but it is always generally muted by the atmosphere of community agreement. In both units, of course, the notion of "political organizations" or "machines" committed to winning and controlling offices is unheard of. Not even a hint of corruption appears in the recent and not so recent history of Forktown.

Riverview is several times larger than Forktown--it is more "big city" whereas the latter is "small town." Numerous Forktowns could be tucked within the boundaries of Riverview. Riverview has a tremendously varied industrial and commercial base. It has a substantial "blue collar" population; however, a newcomer to Riverview is not assaulted with the atmosphere of an industrial town, perhaps, because of the generally pleasant physical setting and image of the town. A large concentration of heavy industry is located along the river that bisects the city. Also on the river front are large grain and oil storage facilities. Much of this industrial area is immediately seen by the traveler to Riverview who enters the city by car on the State's major North-South freeway which is located along the river's bank for much of its course through the city. A short distance from the river on the west is Riverview's downtown populated by several large size commercial and retail establishments. Slightly to the south of downtown is a substantial produce and market terminal area where much of the State's agricultural production is traded. A short distance from the river on the east is a new and large commercial-retail area developed after the Korean War. Also west of the river and south of downtown is a major urban renewal area and the city's cultural center.

Politically, Riverview is much more lively than Forktown. Unlike Forktown, politics is very much a part of life in Riverview. Many of the State's leading political figures are residents of, or representatives from Riverview. Riverview, and the county in which it is located, have been the base for the revitalization of the State's Democratic Party organization and, traditionally, both units return a substantial majority for the Democrats. In light of this fact, it is not surprising that the Democrats dominate the partisan elections for the county offices. The Mayor of Riverview receives a great deal of attention from the local newspapers and is a dominant figure in city politics, at least from the standpoint of column inches devoted to his activities. Prior to becoming mayor, he was county sheriff, which is also a partisan office. This piece of history is regularly noted in the local news media and he is regularly and frequently identified as a Democrat. In other words, in Riverview, political organizations and political parties are part of the community's life and, although the Democrats dominate the scene, the Republicans contribute their share to the atmosphere and capture a share of the offices. People organize to capture offices and this is not treated as deviant behavior by the community. This is not to argue

that Riverview is on a par with some of the large Eastern cities in its politics, but it is to argue that Riverview is no Forktown in this regard.

Although politics is part of life in Riverview, the city has often prided itself on being prim and proper. (Some have called it prudish.) However, in 1956 the major city daily paper started a feature series on crime, vice and corruption in the city. Charges of open prostitution, police payoffs and bribery constituted the most delectable morsels in the series. The Mayor, the Prosecuting Attorney and a high union official were the major actors aided by an able cast of supporting players including several other city officials and assorted local underworld characters. A county grand jury investigation was undertaken. As a result, indictments were returned against the Mayor for accepting bribes and for committing perjury. The Prosecuting Attorney was also indicted, as were several other city officials. The usual charges and countercharges were hurled back and forth through the media. Of special interest to this study was the claim of "political prosecution." This had a special flavor in the situation, since the Democrats in the State were just beginning to show new strength and the officials indicted were Democrats.

A U.S. Senate committee appeared on the scene and added color to the events. For the next four years, the

charges and the activities leading to them continued to receive considerable publicity. The original indictments against the Mayor and some of those against the Prosecuting Attorney were nullified by the State Supreme Court; however, in 1959 a conviction against the Prosecuting Attorney was upheld. In this same year, an indictment was returned against a union official in "a vice probe." In the midst of this, the Mayor ran for a second term in 1960 and was reelected in spite of stiff opposition. Although the bulk of the turmoil was over by 1960, there were still occasional flare ups in the first several years of the 1960's. Charges were sometimes renewed and the history of the events were recounted when other distantly related activities provided the newspapers with the opportunity. In any case, vice, official corruption and bribery had become an active part of the local folklore as a result of these events.

In contrast to the excitement generated in its recent political history (which fits the design requirements nicely), on the formal side Riverview has a more traditional and staid structure in its city government (something which does not fit the design requirements as well). It has a commission form of government which, of course, is elected on a nonpartisan ballot. The five commissioners are elected at-large and serve staggered,

four-year terms. The Mayor is also popularly elected on a nonpartisan ballot for a four-year term of office. In contrast to Forktown, there is generally competition for the city offices which sometimes is reasonably fierce. Also, as noted above, the Mayor, at least in recent years, has been the most visible figure and he is regularly and frequently identified as a Democrat.

The fact that the Mayor is so regularly identified as a partisan led this observer to assume the city had a partisan government. In other words, a not uncaredful reading of the newspapers could lead one to such a conclusion. It is interesting to note in this regard that three political scientists who had spent some time working in the community and one administrator working in county government assured this observer, when asked, that Riverview officials were elected on a partisan basis. They, as was this observer, were surprised when the records revealed that Riverview was formally a nonpartisan city. This suggests the possibility that to less knowing observers the impression of partisanship is even stronger. If this possibility is likely, then, although Riverview is not a perfect fit for the design, it is a better fit than a listing of the formal structure would suggest.³⁵

³⁵The implication of this suggestion is that the classification of electoral systems on the partisan-nonpartisan axis involves a continuous variable rather

The school government in Riverview is headed by a "Board of Directors," and six members of the board are also elected at-large on a nonpartisan ballot. Each of the members serves a four-year term and the terms of the members are staggered. Although the board members and the administrative staff are accused of the usual "crimes" of extravagance and inefficiency with predictable regularity, the political history of the school system clearly lacks the color and excitement of its corporate mate. Unlike the city government, no substantial charges of corruption have been made against the school system and no indictments have been returned. It is not, however, a wholly dull unit in that competition for seats on the board is the usual pattern and the races often become fierce. Several groups in the community have organized campaigns at one election or another to unseat board members and/or to get their representative on the board. At one time or another in

than a discrete, dichotomous variable. Support for this methodological point can be found in the substantive discussions of nonpartisan politics. See, for example, Heinz Eulau, et al., "Latent Partisanship in Nonpartisan Elections: Effects of Political Milieu and Mobilization," in M. Kent Jennings and L. Harmon Zeigler, eds., The Electoral Process (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), pp. 208-37; Charles R. Adrian, "A Typology for Nonpartisan Elections," Western Political Quarterly, XII (June, 1959), pp. 452-57; and, Oliver P. Williams and Charles R. Adrian, "The Insulation of Local Politics Under the Nonpartisan Ballot," American Political Science Review, LIII (December, 1959), pp. 1052-63.

recent elections organized labor, the local chapter of the American Federation of Teachers and conservative political groups have engaged in this type of campaign, although they have not met with much success.

The above comments serve to outline the source of the data for this analysis and the general character of the communities and governmental units that will be examined. In the chapters that follow the latter information will form an integral part of the analysis of political cynicism and the interpretation of the data. The actual procedure to be followed in the analysis will be as follows: first, in the next chapter object cynicism will be examined. In Chapter III, we will turn to the analysis of subject cynicism. In each of these chapters, the analysis will treat the relevant data within the framework of the explanation posed by the model of political cynicism being examined. The sharp separation of these alternative models or explanations for political cynicism is emphasized and pursued in this project, not in the interests of reductionism, but rather on the assumption that the worth of an explanation can best be judged when it proves its explanatory power under the most restrictive conditions. In pursuit of this end, each of the explanations presented in these two chapters will be interpreted strictly. In Chapter IV, these alternative explanations will be brought

together and their relative worth will be subjected to another test. The technique for this test will be the empirical device of attempting to predict from one explanation to the other through their respective operational measures for political cynicism. In the final chapter, the results and implications of this project will be analyzed.

CHAPTER II

OBJECT CYNICISM: THE STIMULUS APPROACH

In the first chapter, the structure of the object model was discussed, especially as that model related to political cynicism. A change in the object, e.g., from general government corporation to special district government, should, according to this model, result in some corresponding attitudinal change, e.g., from less fervor and zeal to more fervor and zeal. Thus the basic determinant of orientations towards officialdom should be an object characteristic such as the behavior of the officials involved or an attribute of the unit of government they represent. This model for explaining political phenomena was then extended to the discussion of political cynicism.

It was noted that the research of Litt and Levin, suggested the relevance and some of the characteristics of such a model when applied to political cynicism.¹ To explain their findings, each of these researchers tended

¹Levin, op. cit. and Litt, op. cit.

to turn to an analysis of the political environment in which they conducted their studies. Both performed their analysis in the City of Boston and both used the corrupt character of Boston politics and the "sickness" of the local political system as major pillars in constructing their explanations. Litt highlighted the importance of these conditions by contrasting Boston rule to the "clean history" of Brookline, a second community he used for the purposes of his study.

As a result of these findings and the discussion of them, several propositions relating to political cynicism (as developed within the context of the object model) were suggested. First, when the analysis and discussion were combined with the suggestions of the political reformers the following hypothesis emerged: political orientations, including political cynicism, are focused on a specific object rather than being generalized to all political objects. In the case of political cynicism, this suggested that within a single community the public may have a cynical attitude towards one set of officials while at the time it may have a trusting attitude towards the officials of another unit of government within the same community.

A second hypothesis that followed closely from the first was that a reduction in the "political" character of

government or the processes surrounding it will result in more positive attitudes on the part of the public. With regards to political cynicism, this suggested that the less political the unit, the more trusting the public and the more political the unit, the more cynical the public.

Third, it was suggested that the style of politics will affect the public's orientation to a unit or its officials. The findings suggested that the more open, competitive and "rough" the style of politics, the more likely it is that the public will react in a cynical fashion.

Last, the object model of political cynicism (and for that matter any object model of political orientations) places considerable emphasis on information or knowledge. In other words, object models, with their rationalistic bias, assume that a citizen possesses the necessary information to make the judgments predicted. Seemingly, the model assumes high information on the part of the citizen. (The normative application of the model generally treats low information as a pathological condition.) Therefore, the more knowledgeable the citizen, the more likely it is that he will be either more trusting or more cynical. The direction of the effect will be determined by the behavior of the set of officials under consideration.

In the light of the above information and background presented in Chapter I, the major hypotheses to be

explored are listed below (in a slightly revised form) along with their specific applications to this study.

1. The more political the unit, the more likely it is the respondents will select a cynical alternative.
 - a. More specifically, this suggests there will be more cynical responses to city officials than to school officials.
2. As the style of politics varies, the pattern of cynical responses varies. In terms of the analysis this implies the following:
 - a. In total, more trusting responses will be given in Forktown than in Riverview.
 - b. The impact of political style will further manifest itself in the comparative response patterns between the cities when the set of officials is held constant. That is, a smaller percentage of cynical responses will be recorded in Forktown vis-a-vis city officials than in Riverview. In addition, a smaller percentage of cynical responses will be reported in Forktown than in Riverview when only school officials are considered.
3. The more knowledgeable the citizen, the more likely it is that he will be either more trusting or more cynical.

- a. In Riverview, the level of knowledge will be positively related to degree of cynicism, while in Forktown, there will be a negative relationship between level of knowledge and degree of cynicism.
4. Within a community, if one set of officials has negative attributes and another has positive attributes, then the higher the level of knowledge, the more likely it is that the citizen will be cynical toward the negative set and trusting toward the positive set, i.e., the more likely it is that the citizen will reflect this difference in his responses to the two sets of officials.
 - a. In Riverview, this means that the higher the level of knowledge, the more likely it is that the citizen will be cynical toward city officials and trusting toward school officials. The same expectation holds for Forktown; however, since there are fewer "object" differences in Forktown, level of knowledge should make less difference in Forktown than in Riverview.

Two additional assumptions have been introduced in the specific statements of the hypotheses. First, it is assumed that city governments are more political than

school governments in the sense in which the term "political" is applied in this analysis. This assumption seems reasonable as a starting point both in view of conventional wisdom (which is important for this type of analysis), if not professional inclination on the part of many political scientists.² Second, style of politics has been treated broadly and assumed to have a specific as well as a general effect. This position is taken only because it appears to be the most rigorous assumption from the standpoint of the object model and, as has been indicated, we wish to interpret the models strictly for heuristic purposes. Actually, as has been noted, neither previous findings, nor the model developed thus far offer a sound basis for prediction on this variable.

Aside from examining the above propositions, a standard demographic analysis will also be executed. Several of the usual demographic variables such as age, income, and education will be included. The analysis of these data will provide the reader with some basic descriptive information, but, more important, it will allow an assessment of the impact, if any, of one's position in the

²These points are made very effectively in State Politics and the Public Schools by Nicholas A. Masters, et al. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), esp. Chap. I and Thomas H. Eliot, "Toward an Understanding of Public School Politics," American Political Science Review, LIII (December, 1959), pp. 1032-51.

social structure on object cynicism. The analysis will continue within the boundaries of the object model--that is, predicted relationships will stem from the basic assumption that cynicism is a function of the object and not of the subject. In general, at this point in its development, the object model leads this researcher to predict no association between the usual demographic variables and object cynicism.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore these hypotheses and thereby examine the utility of the object model as an explanatory scheme for political cynicism. The use of two cities in this study will allow us to compare responses to public officials in two environments. As was noted in Chapter I, the City of Riverview is a large community where the competition for office is reasonably strenuous and, most importantly, where several incidents of official corruption have occurred in recent years. On the other hand, Forktown is a relatively small community, where competition is weak and the officials have not been accused of using their office for corrupt purposes.

In order to explore the object model it was necessary to have a measure(s) of cynicism that fitted its theoretical dictates--the most important being that such a measure or measures be object specific. The model required measures of cynicism that treated each set of officials

specifically, so that one could check the impact of variations in official behavior on political cynicism. Too, this allowed us to compare the results obtained through object measures to those suggested by the subject model and through the subject measure of political cynicism. The latter, of course, treats officials in a generic fashion and does not treat them as individual sets of actors. The one assumes a common response to officialdom on the part of the citizen, while the other assumes the citizen has sets of responses that vary according to the character of the officials involved.

Since no tested measure(s) of object cynicism was included in the original study, nor for that matter is there such an established measure available, it was necessary to construct one for the purposes of this study. The measure(s) employed in this analysis is an index score(s) arrived at through a combination of responses to two items on the interview schedule. The two items and their respective response categories appear in Figure 1 below. The matrix form of Figure 1 also shows the manner in which the responses were combined to form the index.

The numerals in the cells indicate the manner in which the cell types were combined in constructing index types. For example, individuals who responded to the "influence question" (vertical axis) by indicating that

Which of the following statements do you think best applies to these officials?	If you were concerned about a local community problem and contacted the appropriate officials, how do you think they would react? Which of the following statements best describes the way officials in each group would respond to you?		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Understand my problem and do what they could about it	Listen to me but would try to avoid doing anything--would try to pass the buck	Ignore me or would dismiss me as soon as they could
(3) Do what some of the more influential people want	4	5	6
(2) Do what they themselves think is best	3	4	5
(1) Do pretty much what the citizens want	2	3	4

Figure 1

Matrix of Influence and Reaction Questions

officials do what "some of the more influential people want" and selected the "understanding" response on the "reactions question" (horizontal axis) received the same index score as individuals with the following combinations on the influence and reaction items: "themselves" and "pass the buck"; and, "citizen" and "ignore me." The index scores and index types were derived on the basis of the points arbitrarily assigned to each of the responses for each of the questions. One point was given for the most "trusting" response to a question, and three points for the most cynical response. The minimal index score was two and the maximum index score was six. The index score is considered to be a measure of object cynicism and the lower the score the more "trusting" the individual, whereas the higher the score the more "cynical" the individual.

One additional point should be made with regard to object cynicism and the object measure. The object measure is geared to the measurement of political cynicism in the case of a specific set of officials rather than to a generic class of figures such as politicians. Thus, two object measures are presented in this chapter for analysis--one for school officials and one for city officials. Throughout, the former will be referred to as object school and the latter as object city. Both indexes were constructed from the same two items and only the names of the officials

were changed when the respondents were interviewed.³ Other than this difference in the group of officials referred to in the items, the indexes duplicate one another in their content and construction.

Rationale of Object Cynicism

The first descriptive question to be raised is the pattern of responses to the individual items employed in constructing the object measures. The distributions are shown by city in the following tables. As the data in the tables indicate, the differences between the cities are significant at the .05 level in three out of the four tables, the exception being the responses to the school influence item. The response patterns to the "reactions" items indicate that in general citizens see both city and school officials in these two communities as understanding of their problems. With the exception of Riverview City Officials, in excess of 60 percent of the respondents selected this alternative. In contrast, less than 10 percent of the respondents perceived officials as likely to ignore their problems, the exception again being Riverview

³In the administration of the schedules, the general questions about reactions and influence were posed to the respondents along with the alternative responses. The format of the question also provided him with a list of officials, e.g., city officials, school officials, and county officials. The latter alternative only appeared on the Riverview schedule and is not considered in this analysis.

TABLE II - 1

OBJECT CITY INDEX ITEMS

Reactions of City Officials
By City

	Understand	Pass Buck	Ignore	N
Forktown	68.2%	23.0%	8.8%	261
Riverview	45.9%	38.8%	15.3%	307
	56.2%	31.5%	12.3%	568

$$\chi^2 = 14.769$$

$$p < .001$$

Influences on City Officials
By City

	Citizens	Themselves	Influentials	N
Forktown	48.3%	23.9%	27.8%	263
Riverview	32.9%	27.8%	39.5%	304
	40.0%	25.9%	34.1%	567

$$\chi^2 = 28.428$$

$$p < .001$$

TABLE II - 2

OBJECT SCHOOL INDEX ITEMS

Reactions of School Officials
By City

	Understand	Pass Buck	Ignore	N
Forktown	72.3%	21.2%	6.6%	274
Riverview	62.3%	28.5%	9.2%	305
	67.0%	25.0%	8.0%	579

$$\chi^2 = 6.497$$

$$p < .05$$

Influences on School Officials
By City

	Citizens	Themselves	Influentials	N
Forktown	37.0%	38.9%	24.1%	270
Riverview	35.4%	39.7%	24.9%	305
	36.2%	39.3%	24.5%	575

$$\chi^2 = 0.168$$

ND

city officials where slightly more than 15 percent of the respondents say officials are likely to ignore their problems. If only the most positive response category is considered ("understand"), the rank order of the four sets of officials is as follows: Forktown school officials; Forktown city officials; Riverview school officials; and, a distant last, Riverview city officials. This rank order supports the hypotheses suggested by the object model, namely that the more "political" officials will be perceived more negatively than less "political" officials and that the political milieu when negative (i.e. corrupt) will lead to negative perceptions.

In general, the data on the response patterns to the "influence" items are similar to those of the reaction items, although the rate of response is more evenly distributed among the three categories. In the case of the school officials in the two cities, approximately 35 percent of the respondents perceive them as citizen oriented (37 percent in Forktown and 35.4 percent in Riverview). The differences between the cities in the case of city officials is much greater in that 48.3 percent of the respondents in Forktown perceive the city officials as citizen oriented whereas only 32.9 percent of the respondents in Riverview selected this alternative. Thus, the rank order of rate of most positive response to this item

is: Forktown city officials; Forktown school officials; Riverview school officials; and Riverview city officials. As compared to the rank order on the response item, the only change is the reversal of positions one and two between the two sets of Forktown officials.⁴

To complete the discussion of index construction and to keep the reader fully informed of exactly how the

⁴A portion of the difference between the response item and the influence item may be a function of the ambiguity of at least two of the response categories employed in the latter. The principal investigators on the original study assumed in the design of the interview that the alternatives "influentials" and "themselves" had but a single affective connotation. Later analysis of this item by them and the author made it clear that these responses as well as the "citizen" alternative could have either a negative or positive connotation for the respondent. For example, in the case of the influence item the alternative "They do what they themselves want." could either be interpreted as negative and self seeking behavior on the part of an official or it could, alternatively, be interpreted as positive, strong professional behavior on the part of an official. Slightly less than 40 percent of the respondents in each of the cities selected this alternative for their respective school officials as compared to an approximate rate of 25 percent for city officials. Perhaps, this is evidence that for a sizeable number of respondents it was conceived of in more positive terms for school officials. In any case, this ambiguity was taken into account in the construction and collapse of the index and must be considered in the interpretation of the findings by the reader. In so far as index collapse is concerned, it should be pointed out that any respondent who selected the "influentials" alternative will be found in the cynical group, whereas, respondents who selected the "themselves" alternative are to be found in either the cynical or trusting group depending on their response to the reactions item.

indexes were formed Tables 3 and 4 are presented. These tables show the response distributions for each set of officials in each of the cities. The data make it evident that there is a strong but, by no means perfect, relationship between the influence and reaction items in each of the four cases under examination here. For example, 95.7 percent of the Forktown respondents who perceived school officials as citizen oriented also perceived them as understanding when handling a problem as compared to 72.4 percent in the case of Riverview city officials. In every one of the four distributions show, the more negative the influence response the more likely it is that the respondent will select one of the two more negative reaction alternatives--"Pass the Buck" or "Ignore Me." These tables also show the type of respondents who will be classified as "Trusting" and "Cynical" when the indexes are collapsed. Those cells marked with an asterisk contain the respondents who will be classified as "Trusting" and the unmarked cells contain those who will be classified as "Cynical."

Object Analysis

The first hypothesis to be tested in this section of the analysis is as follows: on an aggregate level the public will distinguish among officials. The direction of

TABLE II - 3

INFLUENCE vs. REACTIONS
BY TYPE OF OFFICIAL
FORKTOWN

School Items

	Understand	Pass Buck	Ignore	
Citizens	*95.7%	* 4.3%	00.0%	36.4% (94)
Themselves	*71.3%	15.8%	12.9%	39.1% (101)
Influentials	41.3%	55.6%	3.2%	24.4% (63)
	72.9%	21.3%	5.8%	258

City Items

	Understand	Pass Buck	Ignore	
Citizens	*88.2%	*10.1%	1.7%	48.0% (119)
Themselves	*61.0%	18.6%	20.3%	23.8% (59)
Influentials	41.4%	48.6%	10.0%	28.2% (70)
	68.5%	23.0%	8.5%	248

TABLE II - 4
 INFLUENCE vs. REACTIONS
 BY TYPE OF OFFICIAL
 RIVERVIEW

School Items

	Understand	Pass Buck	Ignore	
Citizens	*85.4%	*11.7%	2.9%	35.5% (103)
Themselves	*59.8%	25.6%	14.5%	40.3% (117)
Influentials	32.9%	57.1%	10.0%	24.1% (70)
	62.4%	28.3%	9.3%	290

City Items

	Understand	Pass Buck	Ignore	
Citizens	*72.4%	*20.4%	7.1%	33.4% (98)
Themselves	*38.6%	39.8%	21.7%	28.3% (83)
Influentials	27.7%	54.5%	17.9%	38.2% (112)
	45.7%	38.9%	15.4%	293

the distinction will be a function of the extent to which the official is "political"--the more political the official the more likely it is that the public will give a cynical response and, conversely, the less political the official the more likely it is the public will give a trusting response.

The basis for these hypotheses (or the hypothesis and its corollary) was presented earlier.⁵ It was pointed out the reformers assumed that by separating activities institutionally that one should then expect a different pattern of behavior on the part of the newly separated organization. Thus, for example, it was and is frequently argued that if you wish to develop an effective health or planning operation it is necessary to establish an organization specifically designed to accomplish the goal in question and, where necessary, separate the new unit from previously existing units.

Of more significance for this research, this line of analysis also implies that accompanying attitudinal changes will occur. The analysts imply, though they seldom make it very explicit, that the public will view the new organization in a different light. Since the proposals in this area usually involve the search for the touchstone of

⁵Supra, p. 48.

the rational-technical analysis and solution to problems, the reform is typically accompanied by the conception that the new cause will be aided by the nonpolitical organization. Attitudinally this implies that the public will respond more favorable to the nonpolitical unit.

The focus here is to test these hypotheses in the case of a single attitude, namely, political cynicism. The data for the tests are presented in Table 5 in which the dichotomized index of political cynicism is presented for the two sets of officials in the two communities. The data show that in each of the communities the less political officials--school officials--receive a larger percentage of trusting responses. In Forktown, 64.3 percent of the respondents feel trusting toward the school officials, whereas 61.7 percent feel trusting toward the city officials. In Riverview, the difference is in the same direction and is much more substantial. In this community 58.6 percent of the respondents express trust in the school officials but only 42 percent express trust in the city officials. Although both differences are in the direction predicted by the hypothesis, only the Riverview difference is statistically significant. The data also tend to support the reformers' contention that the public does draw a line between officials on the basis of the officials' institutional affiliation, although, as is the case in Forktown, the distinction may be rather weak, to say the least.

TABLE II - 5

CITY vs. OBJECT CYNICISM

City vs. Object School

	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	64.3%	35.7%	258
Riverview	58.6%	41.4%	290
	61.3%	38.7%	548

$$\chi^2 = 1.883$$

ND

City vs. Object City

	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	61.7%	38.3%	248
Riverview	42.0%	58.0%	293
	51.0%	49.0%	541

$$\chi^2 = 20.888$$

$$p < .001$$

The data do, however, raise a number of questions about the manner in which style of politics functions in the formation of cynical or trusting attitudes. On the one hand, there is only a minor distinction between officials in Forktown while on the other hand, there is the sharp distinction between Riverview officials.

One possibility is that regardless of community each institutional area of politics develops its own style of politics which is not generalized to another area by the citizen. That is to say, style has a limited rather than a pervasive effect. This implies that the difference in the case of Riverview is due to a sharp difference in style between city politics and school politics.

The lack of difference in Forktown may be a function of the separate development of similar styles in each of the political arenas under consideration. This in turn, may be a function of the relative lack of institutional and practical differentiation between the two. For example, both elections are nonpartisan and as far as can be determined both are perceived and treated as such by the populace.

However, an equally tenable explanation is one already suggested by Litt and Agger; namely that styles of politics differ according to size of community and political tradition. Thus, as per Vidich and Bensman for example,

the data could be explained in terms of small town life versus big city life.⁶ In the small town, most of the living patterns, including political life functions on a highly personalized and communal basis. In such a situation distinctions are not drawn on the basis of institutional affiliations but rather on the basis of community or noncommunity membership. Thus, according to this explanation, no distinction would be expected between school and city officials in the small town for we are all in the life of the community and the we implies a rather tightly knit style of life. On the other hand, in the metropolitan area there is a much greater functional specialization in all areas of life, including politics. With the increased specialization one would expect more differentiation in citizen orientations towards officials. The manner and extent of the differentiation would be a function of the institutional histories and, perhaps, of the individuals holding institutional positions.

⁶Arthur J. Vidich and Joseph Bensman, Small Town in Mass Society (Princeton University Press, 1958). See also Robert C. Wood, Suburbia (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959). The critical limitations on this idealized conception of the small town are summarized in Scott Greer, "Individual Participation in Mass Society," in Approaches to the Study of Politics, ed. by Roland Young (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1958), pp. 329-42.

We will return to some of these questions later in the analysis, but now let us turn to a demographic analysis of object cynicism in Riverview and Forktown in order to further test the rational object model. Also, the demographic analysis will perhaps allow us to refine our hypotheses if not our answers. In addition, the analysis will set the stage for the comparison between object and subject cynicism to be dealt with later in this study.

Demographic Analysis

As was noted earlier the object model of cynicism would appear to imply that cynicism should not be unequally distributed among groups in the society. Or, to put it another way, the rate of cynical response should be the same in each group of the population. This hypothesis assumes that an official is perceived in the same manner by all individuals in the society and, furthermore, that the same standard for evaluation is employed by all.

Though these assumptions are highly restrictive and in some cases empirically untenable, they are utilized as a base for the analysis since they do provide a starting point. Furthermore, their explication and utilization permits the direct test of one model of political attitude distribution, at least with regard to one political attitude--cynicism. Thus, they are accepted for their

heuristic value rather than because of the author's view of their tenability.

Political Party Identification

The data in Tables 6 and 7 shows the patterns of response to the object cynicism indexes tabulated by political party identification. Neither of these tables refute the expectation of no difference derived from the object model. Though the percentages vary somewhat in each of the sub-parts of the tables, they do not reach a level of significance. For example, in the case of the object school index all groups except the Riverview Independents are predominantly trusting. On the other hand, in the case of the object city index, all the groups in Riverview plus the Independents in Forktown are predominantly cynical.

If we examine these same tables from the standpoint of party identification, there is some tendency for the Republicans to be the most trusting group in each of the communities on each of the indexes, whereas the Independents tend to be the least trusting in each of the communities on each of the indexes. But in each case there is an exception. In Forktown the Democrats are the least trusting group when it comes to the schools. And in Riverview the Democrats tend (ever so slightly) to be the most trusting when it comes to the city officials. However,

TABLE II - 7

PARTY IDENTIFICATION vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
BY CITY

Forktown	Party Identification	Trusting	Cynical	
	Republican	70.1%	29.9%	38.6% (97)
	Democrat	60.1%	39.9%	55.0% (138)
	Independent	68.8%	31.2%	6.4% (16)
		64.6%	35.4%	251
		$\chi^2 = 2.599$		
		ND		

Riverview	Party Identification	Trusting	Cynical	
	Republican	62.7%	37.0%	36.3% (102)
	Democrat	58.4%	41.6%	54.8% (154)
	Independent	44.0%	56.0%	8.9% (25)
		58.7%	41.3%	281
		$\chi^2 = 2.920$		
		ND		

the basic point must remain--there is no statistically significant difference and each of the differences mentioned is most likely a function of chance and therefore most tenuous.

In summary then, the data show that party identification or lack thereof is not related to cynicism. Thus, we can conclude that this test tends to support the object model and, furthermore, that the variable of party identification is of little assistance in explaining the development of trusting or cynical postures towards officials.

Age

Another factor sometimes cited as related to political cynicism is that of age. Those who would suggest that age and cynicism are related would seem to base their contention on the notion that aging involves the gradual process of embitterment and withdrawal from life. One of the aspects of life effected by embitterment and withdrawal is that of politics. On the other hand, there are those who would seem to deny this contention.

Instead of seeing life as a gradual process of embitterment and withdrawal, they see life as a process of acquiring of knowledge and maturity--the knowledge and maturity which allows one to place politics, among other things, in the proper perspective. The notion of a proper

perspective need not carry with it the idea of political cynicism. It can carry with it the notions of gradualism, compromise and the patience of similar past experiments in public life as in private life that have not wrought any major changes in either.

In direct tests of this relationship the two major studies of cynicism have found that age is related to political cynicism. Both the study by Agger, et al. in Oregon and the work of Litt in the Boston area report such a relationship. Agger found this to be the case even when a control for education was introduced.⁷

On the other hand, Milbrath in his discussion of a number of studies dealing with participation, political effectiveness and cynicism treats age as an indirect indicator of other factors. For example, in his discussion of strength of partisan identification, he notes that older persons tend to have stronger party preferences than younger. However, he then goes on to state, "This age-partisan relationship seems more to be a function of the length of time a person has identified with a party and the length of his residence in his community than it is of aging per se."⁸

⁷Agger, et al., op. cit., pp. 487-92 and Litt, op. cit., p. 316.

⁸Milbrath, op. cit., p. 53.

Although the explanations for and the directions of the relationship may differ, differences by age are suggested by studies. However, the model under discussion here requires once again that a prediction of no difference be offered. The only exception to this no difference prediction would operate on the assumption that age is related to a key variable in the object model, namely, knowledge. If it is reasonable to assume a relationship between knowledge and age then a prediction of positive relationship in the case of school officials could be made.

This is akin to the suggestion made above by Milbrath on the relationship of age and other factors. However, the direction of the relationship was suggested earlier in our discussion of the object model in which it was noted that if the object were positive, then more knowledge should lead to a more positive attitude, but if the object were negative, more knowledge should lead to a more negative attitude. In this case, the positive object is "school officials," thus the prediction of a positive relationship. The negative object is "city officials" (especially in Riverview, as the findings to this point show); thus in this case a negative relationship between age and trust is predicted.

The data in Table 8 show that for school officials there are no differences by age groups. Neither the young nor the old are any more or less cynical than any other age group. There is a very minor tendency for those in the middle age grouping to have a slightly greater tendency to be more trusting of school officials, but the tendency is so slight it is not worth speculating about. As the reader might expect, none of the differences between the cities are statistically significant.

Table 9 presents the same tabulation for city officials. The Forktown data show that once again age is not a factor that explains cynicism or lack thereof. However, the Riverview data show there is a positive relationship between age and the likelihood of a trusting response. The significant distinction is between those under 35 and those over 35. Approximately 28 percent of the former group is trusting, whereas approximately 47 percent of the latter group is trusting. In Forktown there is also a tendency for those under 35 to be more cynical, but the difference is not statistically significant.

These data suggest that if age has any effect on cynicism, the effect is an indirect one which only appears under a set of circumstances as yet unspecified by researchers. For example, in the data at hand, it is only where partisan officials are involved (Riverview city

TABLE II - 8

AGE vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
BY CITY

	Age	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Under 35	61.9%	38.1%	24.4% (63)
	35 - 54	65.2%	43.4%	43.4% (112)
	Over 54	65.1%	34.9%	32.2% (83)
		64.3%	35.7%	258
				$\chi^2 = .215$
				ND
	Age	Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	Under 35	59.5%	40.5%	27.2% (79)
	35 - 54	61.1%	38.9%	43.5% (126)
	Over 54	54.1%	45.9%	29.3% (85)
		58.6%	41.4%	290
				$\chi^2 = 1.056$
				ND

TABLE II - 9

AGE vs. OBJECT CITY
BY CITY

	Age	Trusting	Cynical	
	Under 35	57.6%	42.4%	23.8% (59)
Forktown	35 - 54	63.1%	36.9%	41.5% (103)
	Over 54	62.8%	37.2%	34.7% (86)
		61.7%	38.3%	248
				$\chi^2 = .543$
				ND
	Age	Trusting	Cynical	
	Under 35	28.2%	71.8%	26.6% (78)
Riverview	35 - 54	46.0%	54.0%	42.3% (124)
	Over 54	48.4%	51.6%	31.1% (91)
		42.0%	58.0%	293
				$\chi^2 = 8.402$
				$p < .05$

officials) that age has an effect and then in the direction of the interest hypothesis cited above.

To explain the age differences or lack thereof shown by the data, the rational object model would have little difficulty in the case of both sets of school officials or the city officials in Forktown for there are no age differences. This lack of difference supports a model which suggests that attitude is a function of official performance and attributes. Each of these three sets of officials is non-partisan and none of them have been involved in any illegitimate acts that have come to the attention of the public. However, the findings for the Riverview city officials create a problem for this model. Those under 35 are more likely to be cynical than those over 35. To explain this difference the object model would have to predict that those under 35 are more knowledgeable and therefore more cynical than those over 35, a proposition which we shall examine shortly; however, though this proposition, if true, would explain the age differences in Riverview, it would not explain why for those over 54 there is no significant difference between Forktown and Riverview respondents, but there are significant differences for the two groups under 54.

Sex

Since some studies have found a difference between the sexes where politics is concerned, the author decided to examine the relationship between sex and cynicism. Some studies, for example, report that men are more likely to be psychologically involved in politics than women and that women are likely to be more candidate oriented than men. Almond and Verba suggest that in each of the five countries they studied men are more likely to develop a sense of political competence than women.⁹ None of the recent studies of political cynicism report any findings on sex differences so they provide no basis for prediction. However, it was thought to be important in this study since we were comparing school and city officials and women, it is often suggested, manifest a greater interest and concern in the former because of their mother role.

Tables 10 and 11 show there is a slight tendency for men to be more cynical than women, but none of the differences are statistically significant. Furthermore, when sex is held constant no differences appear between the cities in the case of school officials. For city

⁹Lane, op. cit., pp. 209-16 and Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 387-400.

TABLE II - 10

SEX vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
BY CITY

	Sex	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Male	58.7%	41.3%	48.8% (126)
	Female	69.7%	30.3%	51.2% (132)
		64.3%	35.7%	258
				$\chi^2 = 3.379$
				ND

	Sex	Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	Male	54.9%	45.1%	49.7% (144)
	Female	62.3%	37.7%	50.3% (146)
		58.6%	41.4%	290
				$\chi^2 = 1.666$
				ND

TABLE II - 11

SEX vs. OBJECT CITY
BY CITY

	Sex	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Male	61.3%	38.7%	50.0% (124)
	Female	62.1%	37.9%	50.0% (124)
		61.7%	38.3%	248
				$\chi^2 = .017$
				ND
Riverview	Male	36.5%	63.5%	50.5% (148)
	Female	47.6%	52.4%	49.5% (145)
		42.0%	58.0%	293
				$\chi^2 = 3.704$
				ND

officials, both males and females in Riverview are significantly more cynical than the corresponding group in Forktown. Thus, the sex role per se is of little assistance in explaining cynicism. The findings also support the no difference hypothesis suggested by our object model.

Social Status

Though the explanations differ, status has been found to be a potent variable in dealing with political behavior. Specifically in the case of cynicism, Agger and Litt find status variables useful in explaining cynicism, though the relationship is not constant. In general, formal education as a measure of status has been found to be the most useful in explaining cynicism. The finding has been that the higher the education the more likely it is the individual will express a positive attitude towards politics and politicians. Litt, however, found that education was unrelated to cynicism in Boston though it was in a Boston suburb.

To test these findings against our prediction of no difference, two measures of status shall be employed--income and education. Tables 12 and 13 show the distribution of trusting and cynical responses by income level in the two cities. As the data show there is no significant difference in either of the two cities for either set of

TABLE II - 12

INCOME vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
BY CITY

	Income	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Under \$5000	61.1%	38.9%	30.0% (72)
	\$5000 to \$6999	62.4%	37.6%	35.4% (85)
	Over \$7000	69.9%	30.1%	34.6% (83)
		64.6%	35.4%	240
				$\chi^2 = 1.581$
				ND
	Income	Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	Under \$5000	55.7%	44.3%	37.9% (106)
	\$5000 to \$6999	53.7%	46.3%	23.9% (67)
	\$7000 and over	62.6%	37.4%	38.2% (107)
		57.9%	42.1%	280
				$\chi^2 = 1.670$
				ND

TABLE II - 13

INCOME vs. OBJECT CITY
BY CITY

	Income	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Under \$5000	53.5%	46.5%	30.6% (71)
	\$5000 to \$6999	64.6%	35.4%	35.3% (82)
	\$7000 and over	65.8%	34.2%	34.1% (79)
		61.6%	38.4%	232
				$\chi^2 = 2.873$
				ND

	Income	Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	Under \$5000	38.3%	61.7%	37.9% (107)
	\$5000 to \$6999	37.3%	62.7%	23.8% (67)
	\$7000 and over	48.1%	51.9%	38.3% (108)
		41.8%	58.2%	282
				$\chi^2 = 2.874$
				ND

officials. There is a slight tendency (one exception) for those with incomes of less than \$5,000 to be more cynical, but the differences are minor and not statistically significant.

When type of official and income level is controlled there are no significant differences between Riverview and Forktown respondents at any income level for school officials. For city officials, the differences are significant at all three levels of income. Once again, the findings suggest that a much broader set of factors are operating to produce trusting and cynical responses.

Education

But what of formal education which has generally proven to be so useful in explaining cynicism? The data in Tables 14 and 15 show there is a slight tendency for trusting responses to increase as the level of education increases; however, the only place a statistically significant difference occurs is in the case of Forktown school officials. In this instance, those with at least some college education are more trusting than should be expected and those with ten or less years of formal education are more cynical than should be expected.

The comparisons between the cities with type of official and level of education controlled show no significant differences for school officials. For city officials,

TABLE II - 14

EDUCATION vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
BY CITY

	Education	Trusting	Cynical
Forktown	10 or less years	56.4%	43.6%
			36.4% (94)
	High School	63.7%	36.3%
			43.8% (113)
Riverview	College	80.4%	19.6%
			19.8% (51)
		64.3%	35.7%
			258
			$\chi^2 = 8.340$
			$p < .05$
	Education	Trusting	Cynical
Riverview	10 or less years	53.2%	46.8%
			26.6% (77)
	High School	56.7%	43.3%
			46.2% (134)
Riverview	College	67.1%	32.9%
			27.2% (79)
		58.6%	41.4%
			290
			$\chi^2 = 3.452$
			ND

TABLE II - 15

EDUCATION vs. OBJECT CITY
BY CITY

	Education	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	10 or less years	58.9%	41.1%	36.3% (90)
	High School	63.3%	36.7%	43.9% (109)
	College	63.3%	36.7%	19.8% (49)
		61.7%	38.3%	248
				$\chi^2 = .469$
				ND
Riverview	10 or less years	36.3%	63.7%	27.3% (80)
	High School	40.0%	60.0%	46.1% (135)
	College	51.3%	48.7%	26.6% (78)
		42.0%	58.0%	293
				$\chi^2 = 4.066$
				ND

the differences between the cities are significant for the low and medium educational levels, but there is no significant difference at the high level of education. It should be noted that the percentage of trusting responses for the high education group in Riverview exceeds 50 percent, the first instance in which the balance shifted to the positive side for any group for this set of officials.

These data on education demonstrate that there are some variations in what increasingly appears to be a pattern which is the function of a community norm applied to specific sets of officials. However, what is apparent from these data as well as the data on age is that the variation is restricted to a set of officials in a community. For example, the data on education show significant variation, but only for Forktown school officials and not for the same type of officials in Riverview nor for city officials in either city. The age data showed variation, but only for Riverview city officials and not for city officials in Forktown and not for school officials in either city.

Another set of facts which point to the consistency of the differences or lack thereof is shown by an examination of the city differences when type of official and a second variable is controlled. For school officials, no city differences have manifested themselves regardless of

the control variable introduced, nor has any variable destroyed the differences noted in the first set of tables when type of official was introduced as a variable. Generally, the Forktown respondents have been significantly more likely to give a trusting response for city officials than comparable Riverview respondents. There are three exceptions to this point: (1) there is no significant city difference for those 54 years and older; (2) there is no significant city difference for those with a high level of education; and (3) there is no significant city difference for those who identify themselves as Independents.

Knowledge

As was noted in the introductory chapter, information or knowledge plays a central role in a rational object model. It was predicted that level of knowledge and object cynicism should be related. However, it was also argued that the direction of the relationship would depend on the character of the object. Thus, it was predicted that if the object were negative the rate of cynical responses would increase, but, if the object were positive, the rate of trusting responses would increase. This general line of reasoning is consistent with the findings of Litt in his Boston area study. In Boston, he found that increased exposure to the political milieu (length of residence) was

related to cynicism. However, in Brookline, a suburb of Boston, he found the longer the exposure the more likely the trusting response.

Since length of residence can be conceived of as an indirect indicator of knowledge it was decided to treat the analysis of this variable in this section of the study. Also, our findings thus far have shown that in only two instances do the general findings about the cities cited early in this chapter breakdown--this is when age and education are introduced. These indicators, too, can be conceived of as indirect measures of knowledge; however, these data suggest the rate of trusting responses increases as knowledge (age-education) increases, regardless of the official or the community examined, and this is contrary to the prediction stemming from the object model. Also, the difference between the cities for city officials was insignificant at only the high levels of knowledge (those over 54 and those with a high level of education).

Length of Residence

Tables 16 and 17 show there is no relationship between length of residence and cynicism in either of the communities for either type of official. For school officials, there is a slight tendency for the rate of trusting responses to be higher for the medium group and lower for

TABLE II - 16

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
BY CITY

		Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	3 years or less	66.7%	33.3%	10.5% (27)
	Over 3 years to 15 years	68.5%	31.5%	28.3% (73)
	Over 15 years	62.0%	38.0%	61.2% (158)
		64.3%	35.7%	258
		$\chi^2 = .080$		
		ND		
		Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	3 years or less	51.4%	48.6%	12.1% (35)
	Over 3 years to 15 years	63.8%	36.2%	20.0% (58)
	Over 15 years	58.4%	41.6%	67.9% (197)
		58.6%	41.4%	290
		$\chi^2 = 1.390$		
		ND		

TABLE II - 17

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE vs. OBJECT CITY
BY CITY

		Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	3 years or less	51.7%	42.9%	11.3% (28)
	Over 3 years to 15 years	61.4%	38.6%	28.2% (70)
	Over 15 years	62.7%	37.3%	60.5% (150)
		61.7%	38.3%	248
		$\chi^2 = .306$		
		ND		
		Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	3 years or less	28.6%	71.4%	12.0% (35)
	Over 3 years to 15 years	37.5%	62.5%	19.1% (56)
	Over 15 years	45.5%	54.5%	68.9% (202)
		42.0%	58.0%	293
		$\chi^2 = 4.098$		
		ND		

both the short and long residence groups, whereas for city officials there is a slight tendency for the rate of trusting responses to increase as the length of residence increases. The city differences are consistent with our earlier findings--no significant difference for any of the three categories of length of residence for school officials and significant differences for each of the three groups of city officials.

However, length of residence is a rather indirect indicator of knowledge and is confounded by a number of other factors. For example, an individual of low social status could live in a community for years without interacting with officials or receiving much from the mass media about the local officialdom, thus minimizing any increase in his knowledge of the community.

Index of Knowledge

In order to overcome difficulties inherent in length of residence as an indicator of knowledge and to further test this proposition, it was decided to construct a more direct index of level of information. As the basis of this index four questions about schools and four about cities were combined arithmetically. Two of the questions sought to determine the rate of discussion with officials, and two of the questions sought to determine the

respondent's awareness of two issues involving each of the governmental units. The two discussion questions for each of the governmental units were combined. Then, each of these scores were combined to form a single index for each of the governmental units in each of the communities.¹⁰

The distribution of trusting and cynical response by level of knowledge is shown in Tables 18 and 19. The data show that for both sets of Forktown officials those with a high level of knowledge are more likely to give a trusting response. In both cases the difference is significant beyond the .05 level. For Riverview, neither of the differences shown in the tables are statistically significant; however, it is interesting to note that for Riverview school officials there is a slight tendency for the rate of trusting response to increase as knowledge increases, while for city officials there is a slight tendency in the other direction.

¹⁰The two sets of discussion questions were the same for each of the communities; however, one of the issue questions differed for the two communities. In both communities, respondents were asked about traffic and parking problems, but in Riverview the respondents were asked about city-county merger, while in Forktown they were asked about the city manager form of government. For schools, the discussion questions in each of the communities asked about the rate of discussion with school officials and teachers. For cities, they asked about the rate of discussion with city officials and community for civic leaders.

TABLE II - 18

LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
BY CITY

	Level of Knowledge	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Low	59.6%	40.4%	64.3% (166)
	High	72.8%	27.2%	35.7% (92)
		64.3%	35.7%	258
				$\chi^2 = 4.486$
				$p < .05$

	Level of Knowledge	Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	Low	56.2%	43.8%	63.8% (185)
	High	62.9%	37.1%	36.2% (105)
		58.6%	37.1%	290
				$\chi^2 = 1.217$
				ND

TABLE II - 19

LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE vs. OBJECT CITY
BY CITY

	Level of Knowledge	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Low	57.9%	42.1%	64.3% (183)
	High	72.3%	27.7%	35.7% (65)
		61.7%	38.3%	248
				$x^2 = 4.198$
				$p < .05$
Riverview	Low	42.2%	57.8%	83.3% (244)
	High	40.8%	59.2%	16.7% (49)
		42.0%	58.0%	293
				$x^2 = .032$
				ND

For school officials, the data show there is no significant difference between the cities when level of knowledge is controlled, though, of course, the raw percentages show that there is a higher rate of trusting response for Forktown school officials than for the Riverview school officials. The data on city officials show that even when the level of knowledge is controlled the difference in the rate of positive responses between the cities is significant at each level of knowledge.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL CYNICISM: SUBJECT ANALYSIS

In contrast to the object model, the subject model of cynicism assumes (1) reactions to politicians are generalized (i.e., not specific to any single politician or to any one type of governmental official); and (2) they are a function of the individual's life experiences and not of responses by the public official. In other words, the model suggests that political cynicism is a general perspective of the individual which he projects onto the politician, as contrasted to any specific actual dealings he has had with specific political-system figures. In this formulation "the politician" is the "scapegoat."¹ Thus, political cynicism is a function of the subject's

¹As was noted earlier, the model contains a mixed bag of frustrations in its present underdeveloped state. Thus, in some formulations, authors sometimes imply that the source of frustration is the act or acts of isolated officials or the failure of the "system" to respond to those lacking political power. Where this formulation is employed, though in subject terminology, it would seem to more closely approximate the object formulation dealt with earlier.

general-political Weltanschauung rather than of any official's behavior. Hence, the name subject cynicism.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the responses of the people in Forktown and Riverview to a subject political cynicism measurement device. This device was originally developed by Robert Agger and his colleagues in a study of two small communities in Oregon. A variation of the measure was later tested by Litt in his own study in the Boston area. The line of reasoning, the hypotheses to be tested and the procedures that will be used in this chapter were developed and successfully employed by Agger and Litt and stem from what I am calling the subject model.²

The Measure of Subject Cynicism

The measure of subject cynicism is a six item Guttman scale. The items are shown in Figure 2. Unlike the object measure the items in this scale are general; that is, the subjects of the item statements are "politicians" with no further specification. In other words, they are of a higher level of abstraction than the items in the

²The Agger group's analysis must be classified as being of a subject-model type. Litt, on the other hand, in his data and interpretation, has elements of both types of political cynicism; it is mixed.

1. In order to get nominated, most candidates for political office have to make basic compromises and undesirable commitments.
2. Politicians spend most of their time getting re-elected or reappointed.
3. Money is the most important factor influencing public policies.
4. A large number of city and county politicians are political hacks.
5. People are very frequently manipulated by politicians.
6. Politicians represent the general interest more frequently than they represent special interests.

Figure 2

Political Cynicism Scale Items

object cynicism measure. There is one exception to this--one item refers to city and county politicians. In general, however, these items, unlike the items of the object measure used in the previous chapter, do not provide specific political referents for the respondent.

General Findings

Table 1 shows that in both Riverview and Forktown approximately two-thirds of the respondents were trusting types. At the aggregate level, this rate of trusting response is approximately the same as the aggregate rate

of trusting response on the object measures, shown previously in Table II - 5. The one exception to this similarity is, of course, the previously noted and substantially lower rate of trusting responses on the object measure for Riverview city officials.

TABLE III - 1
CITY vs. SUBJECT CYNICISM

	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	67.6%	32.4%	50.5% (185)
Riverview	66.3%	33.7%	49.5% (181)
	65.9%	33.1%	366

ND

Class

The main question is, however, what produces political cynicism in the society? The subject model under analysis seeks to explain cynicism as a result of projection. For example, Lipset in his Political Man suggests that the lower class suffers from lack of economic and psychological security which in turn leads to personal insecurity and high states of tension.³ These states can

³S. M. Lipset, Political Man (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1960).

result in hostility which may then be vented against scapegoats which, as Agger, suggests includes the politician.

To test this proposition two measures of class were employed--education and income. If Lipset's projection hypothesis is correct, there should be an inverse relationship between the rate of cynical response and level of education. Table 2 shows that the hypothesis is supported by our data from Forktown and Riverview. In each of the communities, the higher the level of education, the lower the rate of cynical response. For example, in Forktown 41 percent of those with a low level of education are political cynics, whereas only 15 percent of those with high education are cynics. In Riverview the pattern is the same--46.8 percent of those with low education are political cynics but only 21 percent of those with high education.

The data for our second indicator of social class, income, are presented in Table 3. These data show that this indicator too is related to political cynicism in the manner suggested by the hypothesis, but only in Forktown is the relationship significant at the .05 level. In Riverview, the difference that does appear is a function of the difference between those with a high income and those with middle and low incomes.

TABLE III - 2

EDUCATION vs. SUBJECT CYNICISM
BY CITY

		Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	10 or less years	58.8%	41.2%	36.8% (68)
	High School	67.9%	32.1%	45.4% (84)
	College	84.8%	15.2%	17.8% (33)
		67.6%	32.4%	185
				$\chi^2 = 6.871$
				$p < .05$
		Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	10 or less years	53.2%	46.8%	26.0% (47)
	High School	65.4%	34.6%	43.1% (78)
	College	78.6%	21.4%	30.9% (56)
		66.3%	33.7%	181
				$\chi^2 = 7.416$
				$p < .05$

TABLE III - 3

INCOME vs. SUBJECT CYNICISM
BY CITY

	Income	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Under \$5000	56.4%	43.6%	32.5% (55)
	\$5000 to \$6999	69.5%	30.5%	34.9% (59)
	\$7000 and over	78.2%	21.8%	32.5% (55)
		68.0%	32.0%	169
				$\chi^2 = 6.106$
				$p < .05$
Riverview	Under \$5000	59.7%	40.3%	37.4% (67)
	\$5000 to \$6999	60.5%	39.5%	24.0% (43)
	\$7000 and over	75.4%	24.6%	38.5% (69)
		65.9%	34.1%	179
				$\chi^2 = 4.459$
				ND

These findings are consistent with those of Agger, Kornhauser and other researchers who have found a relationship between class and either cynicism or alienation.⁴ They are not, however, wholly consistent with those of Litt who found such a relationship only in Boston, but not in a Boston suburb.⁵

Age

Although the data show a relationship between education and cynicism an alternative hypothesis must be considered. Education may covary with another factor.

In our samples, as in other community samples, the aged tend to be poorly educated while younger adults tend to be better educated. Thus, it is quite possible that the underlying source of frustration for the members of our sample is not their lack of education but rather their lack of social significance which determines their political outlook. "Senior Citizen" is, after all, just a euphemism.

⁴Agger, et al., op. cit.; Arthur Kornhauser, et al., When Labor Votes (New York: University Books, 1966); Edward L. McDill and Jeanne C. Ridley, "Status, Anomia, Political Alienation and Political Participation," American Journal of Sociology, LXVIII (1962), pp. 205-13.

⁵Litt, op. cit. See also, Angus Campbell, "The Passive Citizen," Acta Sociologica, VI (1962), pp. 9-21.

This conjecture is supported by folklore and the results of some other research efforts. Folklore would have it that as an individual passes his chronological peak he is likely to start the process of regretting the opportunities he missed and the mistakes he committed. As the physical and social restrictions of age increases the time available for this type of bitter musing, the individual is likely to develop an increased sense of embitterment and frustration. In turn, this sense of frustration is projected outward, toward, among other objects, the political world and the politician. As this analysis would have it, this process results in alienation from and a lack of trust in the political world and the politician who operates it. Thus, according to folk wisdom, one should expect that the aged will be more cynical.

The central thesis of this wisdom has been tested in a number of research situations and been found to have meaning. For example, a central finding of the voting studies is that the rate of participation declines with age following a peak rate of participation in the middle years.⁶ Too, the studies of the radical right, urban renewal and political generations also suggest that the

⁶Angus Campbell, et al., The American Voter (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960), pp. 493-98.

aged are likely to manifest an active hostility and frustration when they engage themselves politically.⁷

The subject model would suggest that age is one of the factors that could contribute to the development of political cynicism; however, its importance is another matter. The model provides no basis for predicting the significance of this variable as opposed to another such as education. The research findings of the two major studies thus far published on political cynicism do provide an empirical basis for making such a judgment though they do little to clear the theoretical picture.

Agger, et al. in their study of a small community in Oregon found age made an independent contribution to political cynicism. They state, " . . . we find that both age and educational levels have independent effects on political cynicism."⁸ Litt in his study of Boston and Brookline reports similar results for his samples. In each of the communities age contributed to political cynicism.⁹

⁷See, for example, the summary in Lane, Political Life, pp. 216-19; and, Wayne E. Thompson and John E. Horton, "Political Alienation as a Force in Political Action," Social Forces, XXXVIII (1960), pp. 190-95.

⁸Agger, et al., op. cit., p. 488.

⁹Litt, op. cit., pp. 316-17.

Both of these sets of findings are consistent with the model of cynicism suggested here. If we assume aging results in the sense of embitterment suggested by folklore then, just as the subject model suggests, we would expect the aged to exhibit a greater degree of political cynicism. What do the data show for the two communities in this study? Table 4 reveals that there is no relationship between age and political cynicism in either of the two communities under examination. Thus, the subject model is not supported in this instance.

Life Style Satisfaction

Perhaps the failure to find a relationship between age and political cynicism is a function of the failure of age per se to include a comparative dimension. In the discussion of age it was assumed that age, as a devalued commodity, would result in a devaluation of self. If this were correct, it was suggested (consistent with the subject model) aging would then result in political cynicism via some set of psychological mechanisms--the final step of which is projection of distrust on the politicians and other available public objects.

However, the findings reveal that this is not the case for the persons in this study. One possible explanation for this finding is that age is not as devalued as

TABLE III - 4

AGE vs. SUBJECT CYNICISM
BY CITY

	Age	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Under 35	73.2%	26.8%	22.2% (41)
	35 - 54	70.4%	29.6%	43.8% (81)
	Over 54	60.3%	39.7%	34.1% (63)
		67.6%	32.4%	185
				$\chi^2 = 2.387$
				ND
	Age	Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	Under 35	71.7%	28.3%	25.4% (46)
	35 - 54	72.1%	27.9%	37.6% (68)
	Over 54	56.7%	43.3%	37.0% (67)
		66.3%	33.7%	181
				$\chi^2 = 4.371$
				ND

was suggested, in these communities, as contrasted with Boston. After all, it is quite possible for an individual to reach the latter stages of his life with some considerable sense of satisfaction. Aging per se is not necessarily a horrible fate to be suffered. This might then mean that the significant comparison for the individual is not the youth-aged dimension but rather some other criterion for comparison. The criterion may well be some measure of relative satisfaction with what one has done with his life.

Age is treated differently from one culture to another. In America, for instance, self-worth and age are seemingly connected to the degree to which someone makes something out of his life--i.e., acquires money or position.

The findings on social class would seem to support the suggestion that a measure of relative satisfaction would be useful in explaining political cynicism within the framework of a subject model. Achievements in education and income not only provide an individual with estimates of relative success on a current basis, but they also represent sources of satisfaction. The individual with more than average achievements in these areas can observe and enjoy the material benefits which he has obtained from these achievements. In turn, they provide him with a sense of relative satisfaction with his station

in life. He has achieved in an achievement oriented society. He can be prideful so long as he is not boastful in a society which values a sense of personal worth while it cautions against "rubbing it in."

Implied within the subject model are perceptions of relative personal success or relative personal failure. Class takes on meaning in the context of this model insofar as it may contribute to or be useful in explaining a sense of relative success or relative failure. However, class is basically a current judgment of one's standing and in measuring the class position of a respondent one can only infer that the subject is assessing, in some indirect fashion, his sense of relative success or relative failure.

In order to explore the matter of relative success or failure and its relations to political cynicism an index of personal satisfaction was constructed. (The index was constructed of four items.) The items do two things that simple measures of class fail to do. First, they include the explicit mention of time--both past and future. Thus in contrast to the measures of class they make a direct appeal to assessment of satisfaction and "success," concomitantly, over time. Second, they explicitly seek out a comparison with the respondent's estimate of progress

1. Compared to your parents, do you feel that in general you've gone up in the world, that you've gone down a little, or that you haven't really gone up or down?

2. Now, compared with your parents, would you say your present standard of living is higher, lower, or about the same as theirs when you were a boy (girl)?

3. Do you think the prospects are good, fair or poor for improving your standard of living over the next few years?

4. If you (or your husband) had a different job in the past five years was it better, not as good, or pretty much the same as your (his) present job?

Figure 3

Life Style Satisfaction Index Items

as compared with his parents and himself in Time 1 as compared to Time 2.¹⁰ On the surface, this index would appear to be a more direct measure of the sense of satisfaction with life than either the measures of class or age. If this is so, then the subject model would predict a positive relation between the score on this index of satisfaction and political cynicism.

The data on satisfaction are presented in Table 5. First, it should be noted that the index does show that a larger percentage of the respondents in Riverview are dissatisfied with their lot in life as compared to Forktown (56.4 percent to 45.9 percent). However, the table also reveals that there is no significant relationship between satisfaction as herein measured and political cynicism, although the data do show a tendency in the predicted direction. In sum then, though the hypothesis on satisfaction seemed reasonable, the data do not support it and in this instance the subject model is not supported by the findings.

¹⁰The work in occupational sociology demonstrates the relevance of family to occupational satisfaction. William G. Dyer has shown that the wife's and children's feelings about the father's job are closely associated with his own feelings about his job. William G. Dyer, "The Interlocking of Work and Family Social Systems Among Lower Occupational Families," Social Forces, Vol. XXXIV, No. 1 (March, 1956), pp. 230-33.

TABLE III - 5

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE vs. SUBJECT CYNICISM
BY CITY

		Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Low	61.2%	38.8%	45.9% (85)
	High	73.0%	27.0%	54.1% (100)
		67.6%	32.4%	185
				$\chi^2 = 2.930$
				ND
Riverview	Low	63.7%	36.3%	56.4% (102)
	High	69.6%	30.4%	43.6% (79)
		66.3%	33.7%	181
				$\chi^2 = 0.692$
				ND

Personal Cynicism

Thus far, the subject model has not fared well. The data have supported it in only one instance,--the level of education. The results on income were inclusive and the findings for age and satisfaction were negative. One defense for the subject model is that this research has chosen inappropriate methods. After all, the data obtained in putting it to test thus far have been sociological in character. Yet the subject model is psychological in structure. In developing this line of reasoning, the defenders of the model might well point to the author's statements on the model which clearly emphasize psychological processes such as frustration and projection, and say: "So why all the testing of class and age and income?" "It is perfectly clear," they would say, "that the fact that sociological factors fail to relate to political cynicism simply demonstrates the significance of psychological factors and our ignorance of how social processes relate to psychological development!" The defenders might go on to suggest that when more direct psychological correlates of cynicism fail to afford an explanation then the time for pessimism may be at hand. These are staunch allies of the subject model. The point is well-taken and must compel at least some testing of a psychological variable.

One psychological correlate that has already been employed in the examination of political cynicism is the variable of "personal cynicism." Personal cynicism is a measure of " . . . people's views of human nature--of what people in general are like . . . " ¹¹

The operational measure for personal cynicism is a four item Guttman scale. The four agree/disagree items are:

1. Barnum was very wrong when he said that there's a sucker born every minute.
2. Generally speaking, men won't work hard unless they are forced to do so.
3. It is safest to assume that all people have a vicious streak and it will come out when they are given a chance.
4. The biggest difference between most criminals and other people is that criminals are stupid enough to get caught.

¹¹Agger, et al., op. cit., p. 489. The terminology is employed by this research group in the original study of political cynicism. The items come from an earlier version of Christie's Mach Scale as the Agger group notes. Richard Christie describes the scale in his unpublished memorandum "A Quantification of Machiavelli" (Department of Social Psychology, Columbia University). See also Richard Christie and Robert K. Merton, "Procedures for the Sociological Study of the Value Climate of Medical Schools," Journal of Medical Education, Vol. XXXIII (1958), pp. 125-53.

Agger found that personal and political cynicism were related. He reported as follows:

We find that there is in fact a correlation between personal and political cynicism. Those who are contemptuous of people in general, the personally cynical, tend to be politically cynical as well, whereas those who are personally trusting tend to be politically trusting.¹²

He goes on to report that this result remained even when he controlled for the level of education. All of which supports the subject model.

Litt, on the other hand, found the relationship to be more complex. In Boston, his data showed that the degree of personal trust was unrelated to political cynicism, whereas in the suburban community the degree of personal trust was directly related to political cynicism.¹³ This finding suggests that personal cynicism affords an explanation, but only under limited conditions. Thus, Litt's work only partially supports (and partially refutes) the defense of the subject model of cynicism.

What do the data in this study reveal on this point? First Table 6 shows that there is a positive relationship between personal cynicism and political cynicism in both of the communities in this study. Those with

¹²Agger, et al., op. cit., p. 490.

¹³Litt, op. cit., p. 317.

TABLE III - 6

PERSONAL CYNICISM vs. SUBJECT CYNICISM
BY CITY

		Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Trusting	74.0%	26.0%	67.2% (123)
	Cynical	55.0%	45.0%	32.8% (60)
		67.8%	32.2%	183
				$\chi^2 = 6.651$
				$p < .01$
		Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	Trusting	71.4%	28.6%	69.6% (126)
	Cynical	54.5%	45.5%	30.4% (55)
		66.3%	33.7%	181
				$\chi^2 = 4.884$
				$p < .05$

high personal trust exhibit a high level of political trust, while those who are personally cynical tend to be politically cynical. At this point, the defense previously offered for the subject model appears to be not only responsible, but, perhaps, correct--that is, when psychological variables are introduced the subject model shows its strength.

However, both Agger and Litt found that personal cynicism as well as political cynicism was related to education. This is generally true for this data as well, thus a control for education is warranted (see Table 7). Tables 8 and 9 show what happens to the relationship between personal cynicism and political cynicism when level of education is controlled. The data show that the relationship disappears when the control is introduced--though the trend remains. The only exception to the general statement is among the poorly educated in Junction City--for this group the relationship between personal and political cynicism remains statistically significant.

What have we found out about the subject model thus far? First, we have discussed that there are two rather strong predictors of the type of generalized political cynicism suggested by this model--education and personal cynicism. The findings on these two predictors generally support the prior findings on this model and add weight

TABLE III - 7

EDUCATION vs. PERSONAL CYNICISM
BY CITY

	Education	Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	10 or less years	59.7%	40.3%	37.5% (72)
	High School	70.9%	29.1%	44.8% (86)
	College	73.5%	26.5%	17.7% (34)
		67.2%	32.8%	192
				$\chi^2 = 2.985$
				ND
	Education	Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	10 or less years	50.0%	50.0%	25.5% (48)
	High School	79.8%	20.2%	44.7% (84)
	College	69.6%	30.4%	29.8% (56)
		69.1%	30.9%	188
				$\chi^2 = 12.690$
				$p < .01$

TABLE III - 8

PERSONAL CYNICISM vs. SUBJECT CYNICISM
 CONTROLLED FOR EDUCATION
 FORKTOWN

	Trusting	Cynical	
Low	Trusting	70.0%	30.0%
	Cynical	42.3%	57.7%
		59.1%	40.9%
			66
			$\chi^2 = 4.995$
			$p < .05$
	Trusting	Cynical	
Middle	Trusting	71.2%	28.8%
	Cynical	60.0%	40.0%
		67.9%	32.1%
			84
			$\chi^2 = 1.005$
			ND
	Trusting	Cynical	
High	Trusting	87.5%	12.5%
	Cynical	77.8%	22.2%
		84.8%	15.2%
			33
			$\chi^2 = 0.091$
			ND

TABLE III - 9

PERSONAL CYNICISM vs. SUBJECT CYNICISM
 CONTROLLED FOR EDUCATION
 RIVERVIEW

		Trusting	Cynical	
Low	Trusting	58.3%	41.7%	51.1% (24)
	Cynical	47.8%	52.2%	48.9% (23)
		53.2%	46.8%	47
		$\chi^2 = 0.517$		
		ND		
		Trusting	Cynical	
Middle	Trusting	68.3%	31.7%	80.8% (63)
	Cynical	53.3%	46.7%	19.2% (15)
		65.4%	34.6%	78
		$\chi^2 = 1.187$		
		ND		
		Trusting	Cynical	
High	Trusting	84.6%	15.4%	69.6% (39)
	Cynical	64.7%	35.3%	30.4% (17)
		78.6%	21.4%	56
		$\chi^2 = 2.205$		
		ND		

to its utility. This is especially true of the finding on the relationship between personal cynicism and political cynicism. However the findings on age, satisfaction with life and the controlled analysis of the finding on personal cynicism raise doubts concerning the strength of this model. The doubts seem especially warranted against the background of the complex relationships found by Litt in his study of the Boston communities.

Insofar as this study is concerned, if the explanation of cynicism suggested by the subject model is to maintain or increase its power, it must somehow salvage its position from the findings on education. Education proved to be a useful predictor of political cynicism and when we controlled for education, we were, for the most part, able to remove the relationship between personal cynicism and political cynicism. Thus, it would seem that if the defenders of this model wish to continue developing its potential they must somehow show us the psychological significance of the educational process as it relates to political cynicism.¹⁴ They must, in addition, show how

¹⁴The author would argue that any such attempt will have to draw a sharp line between itself and the data developed on the political socialization function of the school. That is to say, an attempt to develop an explanation of the psychological significance of education as it relates to political cynicism (in the light of the subject model) cannot then depend on data which visualize the

these psychological processes work themselves out and, in turn, they must indicate the limits of these processes. Such a development may then allow us to explain why it is that in one of our two communities personal cynicism remained as a useful predictor of political cynicism, but only among those with a low level of education. The data to be developed in the next chapter may be of help in this effort.

school as "a force feeder" of a set of political norms, values and beliefs. The latter approach says nothing about projection, a point central to the subject model. This latter approach works in a direction opposite to the subject model in that it says much about a sociological conception of ingestion, but nothing about the psychological process of projection. For an excellent description of the impact of education on self see Jonathan Kozol, Death at an Early Age (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1967), esp. p. 60.

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL CYNICISM: A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

Thus far, the alternative explanations of political cynicism have been dealt with separately. Each has been explored in the light of its own hypotheses and treated in terms of its own data. As the analyses showed, each was found wanting on several counts. Though the data for each offered some support, the data for each also raised questions about the power of each of the explanations in accounting for political cynicism.

The data do make it clear, however, that neither of the explanations is powerful enough in its own right to explain political cynicism. Thus, those who would hold that current feelings of distaste for the political system are simply a function of misshapened personalities, appear to be partially in error. If this is the tack chosen to explain away dissent in the system, then the line of reasoning suggested by it is not supported by the negative findings on the subject model and the positive findings on the object model. By the same token, the critics of the system

who would explain dissent simply as a function of what officials do or do not do would also seem to be partially in error. Though the positive findings on the object model would support their case, the negative findings on the object model and the positive findings on the subject model raise questions about their perspective on the source of distaste for the system.

When faced with highly sophisticated and refined alternatives for explaining a phenomenon, researchers have three basic approaches available for dealing with the competing models. First, they can search for additional evidence and attempt, in the process, to locate critical test situations in order to sort out which of the alternatives is correct, i.e., which is confirmed by the new data. This might be termed the either/or approach inasmuch as the strategy behind it is to rule out one or the other explanation on the basis of the new and critical evidence. The second available approach is to search for higher order theoretical consistency. In this approach, the basic strategy is to reconceptualize the explanations in order to bring the apparently irrevocable conflict of alternative explanations under a new or remodeled theoretical roof that encompasses the alternatives and thereby removes the conflict between them. A third approach is to search out the conditions under which each of the alternative

explanations is most powerful in explaining the data, identify them and then operate with whichever alternative is most powerful in the particular situation at hand. The basic strategy in this approach is to treat the explanations as scientific tools and to apply them to the data as the situations demand. This latter approach might be termed utilitarian, while the second approach might be termed theoretical reordering.

None of these approaches is wholly applicable to this project and the alternative explanations for political cynicism. The data and the models are much too gross to warrant the unmodified application of such approaches. Furthermore, one of the approaches--the either/or approach--is feasible only when one is starting a project anew with all the freedom of design and planning that goes with a fresh research project. This condition does not apply to this analysis and, therefore, this approach would have to be discarded in any case as a feasible alternative.

In the next chapter, some comments will be made on the need for and possible directions of theoretical reordering. As was suggested initially, the two models of political cynicism were interpreted and dealt with strictly in this project for heuristic purposes. However, this should not be interpreted as a denial of the need to reorder our thinking about available explanations for political

cynicism. The models outlined are quite limited; however, both the models and their limits are made clearer by the strategy adopted in this project. Once that purpose is accomplished, theoretical reordering is then an appropriate next step. The mixed findings on the object and subject models already suggest that much might be gained by combining the two into a single, multi-dimensional explanation for political cynicism.

But before any reordering is attempted it might prove helpful to bring both sets of operational measures of political cynicism together. This chapter shall be devoted to that task. By bringing the measures together, we may learn more about the strengths and weakness of each of the explanations thereby assisting in the task of re-ordering them or, perhaps, suggesting new directions. The substance of the analysis in this chapter will involve relating the subject measure to the two object measures. The central operational procedure will consist of examining the relationships between these two sets of measures.

Initially, we will start by asking whether or not people who are classified as cynical on the subject measure are significantly more likely to be cynical on the object measures than those who are classified as trusting on the subject measure. The next step in the analysis will be to introduce controls on this basic relationship. The two

controls that will be tried are education and personal cynicism, in addition to the controls that have been applied throughout, namely, type of city and type of official.

The purpose of this analysis, as noted above, will be to further explore the strengths and weaknesses of each of the explanations for political cynicism. This will be done by examining the pattern of the relationships between the subject and object measures. For example, one possibility is that we will find significant differences in the basic data on the subject and object measures. (This would amount to four significant differences--one subject measure and two object measures in Forktown and one subject measure and two object measures in Riverview.) If this possibility were to occur, we might then infer that the subject explanation is, generally, the more effective of the two. On the other hand, if the pattern varies, it would suggest that the object model is, generally, the more effective of the two. However, it is the overall pattern of the relationship between the subject measure and the object measures which is of interest, for it is the pattern of the relationships that will suggest strengths and weaknesses of use in reordering these explanations.

Subject vs. Object Cynicism

Tables 1 and 2 show what happens when subject and object cynicism are brought together. The tables show that there is a significant difference between the trusting and the cynical respondents, as measured by the subject measure, on the object measures. This is true of each of the four instances presented in the tables. However, as the phi-coefficients show the association between the subject and object measure is not especially high. It is approximately .3 in each of the four instances. The lack of variation in the strength of the association would seem to suggest that the subject measure has a general, though low level of effectiveness in explaining political cynicism. The change in city and type of official neither raises nor lowers the level of association between the two measures to any extent.

Education

What happens to the relationship between subject and object cynicism when education is introduced as a control? In Chapter II, education proved to be related to object cynicism, but only for school officials in Forktown. In Chapter III, education was shown to be related to subject cynicism in both Forktown and Riverview. In addition, prior research would seem to suggest that those with more

TABLE IV - 1

SUBJECT CYNICISM vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
BY CITY

		Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Trusting	73.0%	27.0%	67.3% (111)
	Cynical	40.7%	59.3%	32.7% (54)
		62.4%	37.6%	165
				$\chi^2 = 16.0899$
				$p < .001$
				$\phi = .32$
		Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	Trusting	65.4%	34.6%	66.9% (107)
	Cynical	37.7%	62.3%	33.1% (53)
		56.3%	43.8%	160
				$\chi^2 = 11.0387$
				$p < .001$
				$\phi = .30$

TABLE IV - 2

SUBJECT CYNICISM vs. OBJECT CITY
BY CITY

		Trusting	Cynical	
Forktown	Trusting	74.8%	25.2%	66.9% (103)
	Cynical	52.9%	47.1%	33.1% (51)
		67.5%	32.5%	154
				$\chi^2 = 7.4042$
				$p < .01$
				$\phi = .32$
		Trusting	Cynical	
Riverview	Trusting	51.0%	49.0%	66.2% (109)
	Cynical	34.0%	66.0%	33.8% (53)
		45.2%	54.8%	157
				$\chi^2 = 4.0956$
				$p < .05$
				$\phi = .30$

education may have a more complex picture of the political world, at least as measured by level of information about the political world. For example, the studies of voting behavior report that those with more education are more informed politically.¹ This leads us to hypothesize that the subject model may be more effective when used for those with a low level of education and the object model will be more effective when used for those with a high level of education.

Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6 show that the pattern is much more complex than the hypothesis envisioned. There seems to be a definite pattern for school officials. Table 3 shows statistically significant differences at each level of education in Forktown for school officials, while Table 4 shows no statistically significant differences in Riverview for school officials. (It should be noted, however, that in Forktown the difference at the highest level of education must be treated as tentative because of the small N in this case.) These data suggest that the subject model may be generally effective in a community such as Forktown at all levels of education, but that such a model is not effective in a community such as Riverview at any

¹Lane, op. cit., esp. Chap. 6 and Milbrath, op. cit., pp. 64-68.

TABLE IV - 3

SUBJECT CYNICISM vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
CONTROLLED FOR EDUCATION
FORKTOWN

		Trusting	Cynical	
Low	Trusting	68.6%	31.4%	60.3% (35)
	Cynical	39.1%	60.9%	39.7% (23)
		56.9%	43.1%	58
				$\chi^2 = 4.9054$
				$p < .05$
				$\phi = .30$
		Trusting	Cynical	
Middle	Trusting	69.4%	30.6%	65.3% (49)
	Cynical	46.2%	53.8%	34.7% (26)
		61.3%	38.7%	75
				$\chi^2 = 3.8665$
				$p < .05$
				$\phi = .25$
		Trusting	Cynical	
High	Trusting	85.2%	14.8%	84.4% (27)
	Cynical	20.0%	80.0%	15.6% (5)
		75.0%	25.0%	32
				$\chi^2 = 9.5605$
				$p < .01$
				$\phi = .58$

TABLE IV - 4

SUBJECT CYNICISM vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
CONTROLLED FOR EDUCATION
RIVERVIEW

		Trusting	Cynical	
Low	Trusting	65.2%	34.8%	57.5% (23)
	Cynical	35.3%	64.7%	42.5% (17)
		52.5%	47.5%	40
				$\chi^2 = 3.5098$
				ND
				$\phi = .30$
		Trusting	Cynical	
Middle	Trusting	60.5%	39.5%	62.3% (43)
	Cynical	38.5%	61.5%	37.7% (26)
		52.2%	47.8%	69
				$\chi^2 = 3.1438$
				ND
				$\phi = .23$
		Trusting	Cynical	
High	Trusting	70.7%	29.3%	80.4% (41)
	Cynical	40.0%	60.0%	19.6% (10)
		64.7%	35.3%	51
				$\chi^2 = 3.3246$
				ND
				$\phi = .29$

TABLE IV - 5

SUBJECT CYNICISM vs. OBJECT CITY
CONTROLLED FOR EDUCATION
FORKTOWN

		Trusting	Cynical	
Low	Trusting	71.9%	28.1%	57.1% (32)
	Cynical	58.3%	41.7%	42.9% (24)
		66.1%	33.9%	56
				$\chi^2 = 1.1219$
				ND
				$\phi = .11$
		Trusting	Cynical	
Middle	Trusting	78.3%	21.7%	66.7% (46)
	Cynical	47.8%	52.2%	33.3% (23)
		68.1%	31.9%	69
				$\chi^2 = 6.5397$
				$p < .05$
				$\phi = .32$
		Trusting	Cynical	
High	Trusting	72.0%	28.0%	80.2% (25)
	Cynical	50.0%	50.0%	13.8% (4)
		69.0%	31.0%	29
				$\chi^2 = 0.7798$
				ND
				$\phi = .19$

TABLE IV - 6

SUBJECT CYNICISM vs. OBJECT CITY
CONTROLLED FOR EDUCATION
RIVERVIEW

	Trusting	Cynical	
Low	Trusting	63.6%	36.4%
			55.0% (22)
	Cynical	16.7%	83.3%
			45.0% (18)
		42.5%	57.5%
			40
			$\chi^2 = 8.9375$
			$p < .01$
			$\phi = .50$
Middle	Trusting	41.9%	58.1%
			64.2% (43)
	Cynical	41.7%	58.3%
			35.8% (24)
		41.8%	58.2%
			67
			$\chi^2 = .0000$
			ND
			$\phi = .00$
High	Trusting	53.8%	46.2%
			78.0% (39)
	Cynical	45.5%	54.5%
			22.0% (11)
		52.0%	48.0%
			50
			$\chi^2 = .0002$
			ND
			$\phi = .00$

level of education. However, the phi-coefficients show that the strength of the association between subject cynicism and object school is not changed in any significant way from the coefficients in Table 1. In both Forktown and Riverview, the coefficients remain at about .3, even with education controlled. (The figure for the high education group in Forktown is excluded from this latter statement because of the small N.) The coefficients suggest that the model is about equally effective in both communities and that in neither community is education a significant variable in clarifying the relationship between subject cynicism and object cynicism. Neither interpretation supports the original hypothesis.

What do the data show for city officials and do these data in any way clarify the pattern? Tables 6 and 7 show the data for city officials in Riverview and Forktown. The data in Table 6, unlike those in 3 and 4, support the original hypothesis. These data show that with education controlled there is a significant difference for respondents with a low level of education and none for those with either a medium or high level of education. Furthermore, the phi-coefficients show a substantial change from those in Table 2. The phi-coefficients for the medium and high levels of education drop to .00, while the coefficient for those with a low level of education increases from

approximately .3 to .5. These data suggest that education is a significant factor in explaining the relationship between the subject measure of cynicism and the object measure.

The data in Table 5 on Forktown city officials do not, however, follow the pattern of those for Riverview city officials shown in Table 6, nor do they follow either of the patterns for school officials shown in Tables 3 and 4. In Table 5, the data show that with education controlled there is a significant difference, but only for those with a medium level of education and not for either the high or low education groups. The phi-coefficients change in this table as well, compared to the coefficient shown for Forktown city officials in Table 2. In Table 2, the phi was .30 for Riverview city officials. The data in Table 6 show that the phi decreases to .11 for the low education group and to .19 for the high education group. On the other hand, the phi for the medium education group is .32, approximately the same as the overall figure in Table 2. Thus, as was the case for Forktown city officials, a control for education does change the strength of the relationship between subject cynicism and object cynicism, but the impact of education is different in each.

Overall, what do these data on education contribute to our understanding of the subject and object models of

political cynicism? First, the results from these data on education cannot be fitted to the simple hypothesis suggested initially. Only in the case of Riverview city officials do the data support the hypothesis that the subject model will be most effective for those with little education, while the object model will be most effective for those with more education. In this instance, the only significant difference was among the respondents with a low level of education. Furthermore, in the case of these officials, the phi-coefficient increased for the low education group and was reduced to zero among those with more education. On the other hand, the data in the other tables did not fit the hypothesis. For school officials in both communities, a control for education did not change the strength of the association between subject and object cynicism. In the remaining case, Forktown city officials, the control for education did have an affect, but only for the low and high education groups. For these groups, the control for education reduced the strength of the relationship between subject and object cynicism. In general, the mixed patterns in the data as well as the weak association between subject cynicism and object cynicism would seem to suggest the significance of the specificity of the political object encompassed in the object model of cynicism.

Personal Cynicism

A critical variable in the development and analysis of the subject model of political cynicism is personal cynicism--people's views of what mankind in general is like. This variable was introduced and discussed at length in Chapter III. It was noted there that this factor best expresses the emphasis of the subject model. Prior findings on this variable were discussed and data from this project were presented. The data in this study showed that personal cynicism is positively related to subject cynicism in both Forktown and Riverview.

If personal cynicism is introduced as a control on the subject--object relationship, what happens? It may be that the personally trusting individual is strongly guided by his more positive conception of human nature. If this is the case, then it might be hypothesized that when we add this control to the relationship between subject cynicism and object cynicism, personal trust will dissipate the relationship between the two. But, the same line of reasoning could just as easily be suggested for the personally cynical individuals and there is no apparent reason why it should not be. Perhaps, both are correct, in which case a control for the level of personal trust or cynicism should not effect the relationship between subject and object cynicism.

Tables 7, 8, 9 and 10 present the data which show what happens to the relationship between subject and object cynicism when the level of personal trust is controlled. The data in Tables 7 and 8 show that for school officials there is a significant difference for those who are personally trusting. That is to say, if the personally trusting individual is high on subject cynicism, he is more likely to be high on object cynicism and if he is low on subject cynicism, he is more likely to be low on object cynicism. For those who are personally cynical, however, there is no significant difference in either community. Also, the strength of the relationship between subject and object cynicism is higher among those who are personally trusting than among those who are personally cynical, though the strength of the association is not especially strong in any of these four groups. The highest phi-coefficient is for the personally trusting in Forktown where it is .37.

Tables 9 and 10 present the data on city officials. Table 9 shows that in Forktown the pattern is the same as it was for school officials. Among the personally trusting respondents, those who are trusting on the subject cynicism measure are more likely to be trusting on the object measure and those who are cynical on the subject measure are more likely to be cynical on the object measure.

TABLE IV - 7

SUBJECT CYNICISM vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
CONTROLLED FOR PERSONAL CYNICISM
FORKTOWN

	<u>Trusting</u>		<u>Cynical</u>
	Trusting		
Personally Trusting	76.5%	23.5%	71.7% (81)
	Cynical	40.6%	59.4% 28.3% (32)
		66.4%	33.6% 113
			$\chi^2 = 13.2586$
			$p < .001$
			$\phi = .37$
	<u>Trusting</u>		<u>Cynical</u>
	Trusting		
Personally Cynical	63.3%	36.7%	58.8% (30)
	Cynical	42.9%	57.1% 41.2% (21)
		54.9%	45.1% 51
			$\chi^2 = 2.0918$
			ND
			$\phi = .20$

TABLE IV - 8

SUBJECT CYNICISM vs. OBJECT SCHOOL
 CONTROLLED FOR PERSONAL CYNICISM
 RIVERVIEW

	Trusting	Cynical	
Personally Trusting	Trusting	66.7%	33.3%
			71.7% (81)
	Cynical	34.4%	65.6%
			28.3% (32)
		57.5%	42.5%
			113
			$\chi^2 = 9.7890$
			$p < .01$
			$\phi = .30$
	Trusting	Cynical	
Personally Cynical	Trusting	61.5%	38.5%
			55.3% (26)
	Cynical	42.9%	57.1%
			44.7% (21)
		53.2%	46.8%
			47
			$\chi^2 = 1.6283$
			ND
			$\phi = .20$

TABLE IV - 9

SUBJECT CYNICISM vs. OBJECT CITY
 CONTROLLED FOR PERSONAL CYNICISM
 FORKTOWN

		Trusting	Cynical	
Personally Trusting	Trusting	73.3%	26.7%	70.7% (75)
	Cynical	51.6%	48.4%	29.3% (31)
		67.0%	33.0%	106
				$\chi^2 = 4.6788$
				$p < .05$
				$\phi = .22$
Personally Cynical	Trusting	78.6%	21.9%	59.6% (28)
	Cynical	57.9%	42.1%	40.4% (19)
		70.2%	29.8%	47
				$\chi^2 = 2.3138$
				ND
				$\phi = .24$

TABLE IV - 10

SUBJECT CYNICISM vs. OBJECT CITY
 CONTROLLED FOR PERSONAL CYNICISM
 RIVERVIEW

	Trusting	Cynical	
Personally Trusting	Trusting	49.4%	50.6% 72.5% (79)
	Cynical	30.0%	70.0% 27.5% (30)
		44.0%	56.0% 109
			$\chi^2 = 3.3093$
			ND
			$\phi = .20$
	Trusting	Cynical	
Personally Cynical	Trusting	56.0%	44.0% 52.1% (25)
	Cynical	39.1%	47.9% 47.9% (23)
		47.9%	52.1% 48
			$\chi^2 = 1.3660$
			ND
			$\phi = .20$

However, the strength of the association between the two measures is slightly lower in the case of the personally trusting group than it was for school officials. In Riverview, the pattern seen thus far in the data disappears--there is no significant difference among those who are personally trusting. The pattern among the personally cynical in Riverview is the same, however, as it was in all other groups of those classified as personally cynical--no significant difference. Furthermore, the strength of the association between the two measures is weaker among the personally trusting for Riverview city officials than it was in the case of the other three tests of the relationship for those so classified on the subject measure of cynicism. The phi-coefficient of .20 for the personally cynical in Table 10 is as low as any of the coefficients in Tables 7 through 10.

What do these data tell us about personal cynicism and personal trust? In general, these data seem to suggest that personal trust tends to strengthen the relationship between subject cynicism and object cynicism. On the other hand, personal cynicism seems to weaken the relationship between subject and object cynicism. This would seem to suggest, in turn, that personal trust tends to screen out variations in object characteristics, whereas personal cynicism tends to increase one's sensitivity to variations

in the political object, or, at least, not the screen them out as effectively. In other words, the personal cynic appears to examine critically the political object before him, whereas there is some tendency for the personally trusting individual to accept what is there.

More generally, all the data in this chapter tend to suggest that each of the explanations has a low level of explanatory power in its own right, thus reinforcing what the data in previous chapters have suggested. The data in this chapter also suggest, however, that the models have to be refined and reordered such that a single model is developed taking into account the factors suggested by each separately. For example, the data in this chapter tend to suggest that variables associated with each of the explanations for cynicism tend to interact. Perhaps the best example of this point is what happens to the personally trusting individual when he is confronted with a highly negative political object such as city officials in River-view. In this instance, the decrease in the strength of the association between the two measures of cynicism would seem to suggest that personal characteristics and object characteristics interact. Also, the relatively strong relationship between the subject and object measures for city officials in Riverview among the low education group would also seem to suggest the impact of interaction among object and subject variables.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter contains three sections. In the first section the nature of the problem and the findings of this project will be reviewed and summarized. In section two, the methodological implications of the analysis executed in the previous chapters will be explored. In the third and last section, the implications of this research for future research will be explored.

In the first chapter, the differing underlying conceptions of political cynicism were noted and defined. It was pointed out that there are two alternate explanations in the literature and these frequently go unrecognized and undifferentiated. As a result, it was suggested that analyses of this and other political orientations are frequently confusing. In the interest of reducing this confusion the two explanations of political cynicism were differentiated and developed. One was termed the object model because of its emphasis on the stimulus confronting

the citizen. The second was termed the subject model because of its emphasis on the characteristics of the citizen observing the political object. The measure of political cynicism associated with each of the explanations were also named--the first was termed object cynicism and the second was termed subject cynicism.

It was noted that the object model explains political orientations on the basis of variable characteristics or attributes of a particular political object. In other words, variations in political orientations are explained in terms of variations in the political object in focus. A central hypothesis in this conception is that political orientations, including political cynicism, are focused on a specific political-governmental object rather than being generalized to all objects.

A second hypothesis suggested by this model is that the less political the unit or the official, the more trusting the citizen, while the more political the unit or official the more cynical the citizen will be. A third hypothesis suggested that the style of politics in the community would affect the level of political cynicism, though existing conceptions and findings make a prediction of direction less certain in this instance.

Last, the level of political information is crucial to a model such as this which contains a substantial

rationalistic bias. As is the case with any explanation that assumes some form of rational behavior on the part of the actor, the object model necessarily must speak to the problem of information possessed by the actor. It was hypothesized that the level of political cynicism would vary as a function of the level of information possessed by the citizen. However, the direction of the variation would be a function of the characteristics of the political object observed by the actor. If the object possessed negative characteristics, as defined by the model, more information would lead to greater political cynicism. If the characteristics of the object were positive in terms of the model, more information would lead to a greater sense of political trust.

In contrast to the object model, the subject model has an irrational bias in its view of political behavior. It starts with the assumption that individual political behavior is a resultant of certain key experiences, typically nonpolitical in the conventional sense of the term. These key experiences, through any number of psychological processes, set the individual's general view of the world including the political world. To state it another way, political beliefs are seen as a part of a constellation of entrenched personal characteristics and it is the variation in the pattern of these personal characteristics which

provides the bulk of the answers to the variations in political beliefs and attitudes. As noted above, the object model emphasizes the affective impact of the stimulus on the individual, while this second conception--the subject model--emphasizes the role of deeply entrenched beliefs and perceptions.

The characteristics of the individual, in turn, manifest themselves in a general set of political beliefs and attitudes. Seemingly these beliefs and attitudes are unaffected by variations in information and political behavior. In a pure form of the model, aggregate political behavior would be explained by variations in the social development and physical distribution of basic personality types in the polity. In the framework of such a model, changes in political behavior would necessarily be accounted for by the intrusion of traumatic social events or personal experiences that bring about changes in these basic personality characteristics, or, alternatively, which differentially trigger aspects of the underlying personality.

Hypotheses stemming from this model were then discussed. First, it was hypothesized that political cynicism would not vary by type of individual from community to community. Second, it was hypothesized that political cynicism would be generalized and not specific to a political object. That is to say, according to this

model, one would expect an individual to be as cynical with regards to one type of public official as he is about another, since the level of cynicism is the result of general personal characteristics and not focused on one or another official. Third, it was hypothesized that cynicism would vary positively with the level of personal frustration and sense of failure felt by the individual.

Methodologically, it was noted that the two conceptions of political cynicism not only varied in substance, but they also implied variations in the operational measures consistent with their respective theoretical suppositions. The object model requires several sets of operational measures--one for each set of officials to be examined. This is so because the conception suggests that one can be cynical towards one set of officials and not cynical towards another. In order to explore this conception of cynicism and to test for possible variations, several specific measures have to be used--not one general measure. In contrast, the subject model uses a single general measure. It implies that political cynicism is a general orientation to the political world and to public officialdom. Consistent with this basic assumption only a single generalized measure need be employed. In the research conducted in this project, two object measures were constructed and used plus one subject measure (originally developed and used in previous research)--three measures in all.

What did the analysis of the data show? First, the separate analyses of subject and object cynicism showed that neither explanation was adequate. The data developed within the framework of each provided some support for each of the conceptions but neither explanation was fully supported by the data. More specifically, what did the data for each of these models show? First, the demographic analysis of the object measures showed no difference in the instances of the standard variable of sex, political party identification and income. The analysis of the relationship between age and object cynicism tended to support these findings. There was, however, one exception in this analysis--those under 35 in Riverview were significantly more cynical towards city officials. These are negative findings which, though they do not prove the hypotheses suggested by the model, are consistent with the predictions suggested by the object conception of cynicism.

Perhaps of more significance, the data showed that Riverview respondents were significantly more cynical towards city officials than school officials. This finding was clearly predictable from the object model. The rate of cynical responses for Riverview city officials was also significantly higher than the rate of cynical responses for city officials in Forktown, another finding suggested by the model. This difference was checked by subgroup

throughout the analysis and generally remained for all subgroups regardless of the way in which the samples were subdivided. In addition, there were no significant differences between responses to school officials in the two communities, nor was there a significant difference between responses for school officials and city officials in Forktown. The positive findings lend support to this explanation for cynicism, whereas the findings of no difference, though they do not directly support the explanation, are not inconsistent with it.

An examination of another important aspect of the object model--knowledge or information--yielded very mixed results. Three separate indicators of knowledge were employed--education, length of residence and a knowledge index. The analysis of education was promising if limited. The data showed that only for school officials in Forktown did education make any significant difference. In this instance, those with more education were significantly more trusting--a result consistent with the object model. However, there were no significant differences in either direction in the case of the other three sets of officials. The results for length of residence were less fruitful. When this indicator of knowledge was employed, no significant differences appeared.

In an attempt to deal with the knowledge variable more directly, indexes were constructed to measure the respondents' level of information for school officials and city officials. The data from these indexes yielded mixed results. In Forktown the results tended to support the model--the higher the level of information, the more likely the trusting response. This was the case for both city and school officials in Forktown. In Riverview, this indicator did no better than the others--no significant differences appeared for either set of officials. These results, therefore, failed to offer support for the object model.

The analysis of the subject model also yielded mixed results. In both communities, approximately two-thirds of the respondents were trusting. In line with prior research in this area, we tested the relationship between class and subject cynicism. When education was used as the indicator of class, a significant difference was found--the higher the level of education, the more likely the trusting response. On the other hand, income as an indicator was less successful. In Forktown, a significant difference was found--the higher the income, the more likely the trusting response. In Riverview, however, there was no significant difference by level of income. Continuing the line of reasoning developed in earlier studies of cynicism, the relationship between age

and cynicism was tested. Contrary to prior studies, no significant differences were found among the age groups in either community.

With these mixed results from indicators only roughly related to the subject model, a second step was taken in an attempt to offer a reasonable test for the model. In this step, a life style satisfaction index was constructed. It was reasoned that such an index would be consistent with the positive findings found for education and might usefully explain the reason for the mixed findings associated with income and the negative findings reported for age. The data, however, showed no relationship between life style satisfaction as measured by the index and subject cynicism in each of the communities.

Thus, the variables employed to this point had yielded mixed results at best. It was noted, however, that the variables were partially unfair tests for the subject model since they are sociological while the model under examination is psychological in structure. At this point, a psychological variable--personal cynicism--that had been employed in previous research was introduced into the analysis. It was noted that the results of prior studies had been mixed when this variable had been used.

The data in this analysis yielded significant differences for both Riverview and Forktown populations.

It was found that the more personally trusting were more likely to be politically trusting and, conversely, that the more personally cynical were more likely to be politically cynical. (Political trust and cynicism were measured in this instance by the subject cynicism scale.) This finding, as it stood, offered support for the subject model.

Previous research had, however, noted a relationship between education and personal cynicism. It was possible, therefore, that the above finding was an artifact of this relationship, rather the result of the explanatory power of personal cynicism. When the relationship between personal cynicism and subject cynicism was tested and education controlled, the findings showed that the explanatory power of personal cynicism was considerably reduced. In Forktown in all but the low education group, there were no significant differences between the personally cynical and the personally trusting respondents. Only in the low education group in Riverview was there a significant difference--the personally trusting were more likely to be politically trusting and personally cynical were more likely to be politically cynical.

To this point each of the models of cynicism had been dealt with separately and in isolation. The next step in the analysis was to bring them together. The purpose of this part of the analysis was to sort out the

conditions under which one or the other explanation of political cynicism proved more useful. This test was designed in an effort to see if the empirical patterns developed through it would somehow group themselves so that the necessary choice or choices could be made between these two explanations for cynicism.

The first set of predictions layed out the relationships between the single measure of subject cynicism and the two measures of object cynicism in each of the communities. It was found that each of the four predictions were statistically significant. This suggested that as a general rule one can do a creditable job in predicting the likelihood of a cynical orientation towards specific sets of officials using the general measure of political cynicism.

Next, education was introduced as the first condition on the subject--object relationship. This was done for two reasons--one empirical, the other theoretical. Empirically, it had been shown in earlier segments of the analysis that education was a useful predictor of both object cynicism and subject cynicism--though to differing degrees. In addition, it was reasoned that education and "political vision" should be related. That is, it was reasoned that people have differing "maps" of the political world. Some maps are more extensive than others in that they include more within the scope of their political

borders. Others are refined in that the person's conceptions contain a higher degree of detail and a larger number of subdivisions.

In the instance of political cynicism, this suggested that those with more detailed "vision" might more likely separate political objects; therefore, object cynicism would be a better tool for mapping their political orientations in this dimension of their political world. On the other hand, it was suggested that in the case of those with a more gross conception of the political world subject cynicism would be the more useful and, therefore, the more appropriate tool.

On the basis of the findings from other research--e.g., the voting studies--it appeared that education might prove to be a useful indicator of the scale of detail on a person's political map. It was then hypothesized that the relationship shown to exist between subject and object cynicism would hold for those with a low level of education, but would not hold for those with a high level of education.

The analysis of the data, however, did not support the hypothesis. For school officials, the differences were significant at every level of education in Forktown and none of the differences were significant in Riverview. For city officials, none of the differences were significant in Forktown and in Riverview the only significant difference

was for those with the least education. Though these data did not support the straightforward hypothesis interrelating education and the two conceptions of political cynicism, the mixed findings suggest the potential potency of the object model. The mixture of significant and insignificant differences tend to support the notion of object specificity basic to the object model of cynicism for when education is introduced predictions from subject to object cynicism would be correct in five instances (the five significant differences) and incorrect in seven instances (the seven cases of no difference).

Last, personal cynicism was introduced as a control on the subject-object relationship. Basically, this was done on strictly empirical grounds. Earlier analysis had shown personal cynicism was, without controls, a useful predictor of subject cynicism. Also noted earlier, personal cynicism is central to the theoretical framework of the subject model, at least in its current stage of development.

The results of this analysis were as mixed as those for education. For school officials in both communities, the results were identical--a significant difference for the personally trusting and no significant difference for the personally cynical. For city officials, the results yielded a significant difference for the personally

trusting, but only in Forktown. All other differences were not significant.

In general, the pattern of these findings on personal cynicism along with the other results suggest the need and utility of further exploring each of the explanations for political cynicism and their interrelationships. The relevance of the subject model had been established in the works of previous researchers as noted throughout this analysis. However, the gross character of the theoretical work supporting the research, plus the relatively apparent possibility that sharp distinctions are drawn by some citizens among types of officials set the foundation for the introduction of an object model of cynicism. This was done and this model was shown to be theoretically separate from the subject model which had dominated and done much to determine the direction of prior research on political cynicism.

The analysis and results in this study serve to establish the relevance of the object model on a par with the subject model. Differences were found that one would be led to expect only through the use of the object model. This alone suggests the need to further explore this explanation. Though, in general, it was found that object cynicism could be predicted through the use of the subject measure, further analysis showed that this finding masked

a complex (and perplexing) set of patterns behind it which are barely explored at the level of analysis available to this study--though their presence is rather sharply demonstrated. Thus, though the general finding lends credence to the subject model, the complexity of the more detailed analyses lend credence to the object model. Together, they point to the need for a good deal more theoretical analysis, at least some of it along the lines suggested by the original theoretical statement for this project. In addition, a great deal more empirical research is in order--some of the variety explored here as well as what undoubtedly will be suggested by the needed theoretical work.

Methodologically, this analysis recalls a very basic, though nonetheless, very important lesson about scale construction. (The same could be said about index construction as well.) Referents for scale items (and thereby the scale as a unit) should be clearly specified rather than ambiguously stated. Further, before a general measure is claimed, the empirical work of testing and relating specific measures to the general measure should be executed. This is a basic lesson which psychologists appear to be much more conscious of than are either political scientists or sociologists. Perhaps, it is because of the early debates in psychology about intelligence in

which the merits of explaining intelligence as a general factor versus explaining it as a set of specific factors that this methodological point seems so apparent in their work. However, whatever the source and whatever the skill difference, or lack thereof, among the behavioral sciences on this point, the lesson (and the procedures for following it) is there to be seen.

In the case of political cynicism, the items direct the respondent's attention to a general category of objects such as politicians, though there have been some modifications in this approach. Though often a useful approach and not unreasonable on the surface, items and scales constructed in this fashion leave open the question of what objects come to the respondent's mind as he answers. In the subject cynicism scale, for example, the items could logically refer to any selected group of politicians or officials--city, state, national--and the variety of combinations and delimited groupings that could, within simple reason, be designated.

If one was willing to assume that any object so selected somehow could be thought of as a sample item from the universe of objects that are the foci for subject cynicism, then the respondent's choice would make no difference. However, the empirical research should, seemingly, aid in demonstrating this very point, rather than assuming

it. At a minimum, it would seem that such an assumption should be manifested in items that specify a variety of specific objects which, in turn, are then combined into a scale. The subject cynicism scale does not meet this qualification, it would appear. If it does not, then its apparent claim as a measure of a generally cynical orientation towards politicians and officials would appear to be out of order. If, on the other hand, it lays claim to a more limited focus, then the limits deserve to be more precisely stated. But, if the limits are specified, then the items would apparently be out of order, unless they are reconstructed to reflect these limits. Furthermore, if it does claim a more limited objective, then we are left without a measure for testing the presence and significance of a generally cynical orientation towards politicians and officialdom.

However, the point at issue here is the design, development and testing of several scales for political cynicism--general and specific. Substantively and theoretically, this research project suggests the need and significance of both. The initial research done on what was termed subject cynicism simply appears to have been a premature step in the process, in that the scale design (as well as the theory) ignored and thereby foreclosed the examination of more directed forms of political cynicism.

This research recalls the need and utility of designing and developing scales in a manner such that neither general nor specific factors are assumed, but rather allowed for in a testable situation. Clearly, in such an endeavor, theory and research--as is always the case--interact. Methodologically, there is now the need to employ techniques such as factor analysis on a collection of items in order to more clearly assess the relationships among general political cynicism and its more specific varieties--whatever their number.

These methodologically oriented comments implicitly anticipate what, in this researcher's mind, is one deserving line of future research. The results of this study suggest the utility of pursuing its general approach under more favorable conditions. This was a secondary analysis and the defects of such a study design were noted earlier. A fresh study of the subject--object problem would allow one to mold the design to the needs of the analysis. In light of the general specifications stated in the first chapter, this would require a design that encompassed a selected set of cities in accord with the major variables discussed in the object cynicism model. Variables such as partisan-nonpartisan elections and official misbehavior would form the basis for selection. In addition, possible confounding variables, such as size, could be more easily selected out

or allowed for in the design. In other words, the design would speak directly to the variables deemed significant in the object cynicism model. The object model is given priority in this discussion because, at this point, its theoretical specifications for sample design are more obvious and demanding than those of the subject theory. Substantively, the new design would allow for a more thorough examination of each of the models and thereby contribute significantly to our understanding of political cynicism.

Perhaps of more importance, new research on cynicism should pursue the problem of object specificity raised by the object model. The questions surrounding this problem are of prime importance for political theory and for any adequate understanding of the complexities of our society and the citizen's reactions to the elements contributing to that complexity. The citizen exists in a system made up of several layers of government, each layer divided and subdivided into its institutional arms and its organizational components. It is a system that attempts to draw sharp lines between which units and actors are political and which are something else. It is further complicated by special authorities, temporary committees and then mixed with a variety of means for selecting those who are to serve in these organizations.

If the object model (with its emphasis on specificity) is focused on this multilayered, overlapping organization tangle, it leads one to wonder just how much of it is perceived, in what light by the citizen, and why? This research, as did prior research on cynicism, focused on elected officials and yet the system is more heavily populated by the non-elected official, operating the "non-political" administrative unit. This suggests that if the analytic definition of politics is broad, orientations towards administrative officials and/or the specific agencies they are associated with become an important aspect of the analysis of political cynicism. Individuals are likely to differ in the extent to which they are aware of the multiplicity of units in the system. Differing levels of contact, information and education most probably contribute to such differences.

In turn, this suggests that different individuals harbor various patterns of object cynicism encompassing varying degrees of trust or cynicism. In other words, for some citizens many agencies will, in effect, be nonexistent while for others, a much smaller set of agencies will have this status. Furthermore, even where the same agencies are concerned, one individual may be trusting, another cynical. At this time, the police department may serve as an example of this. One can most reasonably hypothesize that both

whites and blacks in large cities are likely to perceive this agency's existence and that whites are much more likely to have a trusting orientation to such a department than blacks.

Even without a broad analytic definition of politics, the object model calls our attention to the possibility of differences in orientations worthy of examination. A rather straightforward examination of the degrees of cynicism held by citizens toward the three traditional layers of government would be most fruitful. It might, for example, tell us about one aspect of the centralization-decentralization debates that are part of the American political tradition. For example, such an analysis might reveal the extent to which block grants to the states are acceptable or not in the eyes of the citizen. Acceptability of this arrangement (and other policy proposals) may well be a function of the extent to which citizens have a trusting orientation towards the governmental unit.

Once this sort of research is extended, one can more easily proceed to examine the causes of the differences. (In addition, one should then be able to do a good deal more in specifying their effects.) For example, in the case of administrative organizations one is drawn to the question of whether and to what extent agency output

interacts with the manner in which agency decisions are made to produce cynical or trusting orientations on the part of citizens. In some of the recent policy debates about bureaucracy and public policy it has not been at all clear whether the content of the policy or the method of arriving at it was being cited as central. Sometimes, participatory democrats appear to be saying that it is the structure of the agency's decision making apparatus that is the issue. This is likely to be followed by comments that effectively state that if they are given more influence on decisions, they will trust the agency a good deal more. On the other hand, the focus sometimes appears to be on the output of the agency. Cynicism or trust is, in this instance, a function of whether or not the agency collects the garbage or provides adequate protection against street attacks. Both are intriguing hypotheses and their comparative merits might well be effectively examined under experimental conditions--controlled or natural. A dramatic change in agency output or a change in its decisional structure would provide an excellent test for object cynicism hypotheses. They would also provide an intriguing test for the durability of subject cynicism in the face of contradictory stimuli.

Though the emphasis to this point has been on the utilization and development of the object model, this is

not to suggest that the subject orientation be discarded. It was already suggested that more be done to develop a valid scale that measures the more general form of political cynicism. Also, as noted earlier, the subject model, as it stands, is badly in need of theoretical development. References to psychological processes and scapegoating are hardly substitutes for a set of detailed propositions that specify the variables and their interaction as they relate to political cynicism. If, as suggested here, the subject model is basically one that revolves about a set of deep-seated personality traits, then some framework that encompasses these traits will have to be framed or adapted and then connected to political cynicism.

To this point, the terms subject cynicism and general political cynicism have been used interchangeably. It may, however, be useful to point out a possible distinction. Subject cynicism, as outlined in this project, is both general and person oriented. As the term was employed here, it was meant to call attention to the fact that this model of cynicism does not present an orientation conceived of as focusing on one set of officials or one government unit. To the contrary, political cynicism within this framework is conceived of as a generalized orientation that, seemingly, attaches itself to all politicians. Furthermore, the emphasis on the term subject stresses a



conception of political cynicism which grows out of the individual's psychological development rather than the behavior of officials.

The term general political cynicism, on the other hand, denotes a view towards public officials regardless of its source. Instead of combining source and orientation as the subject cynicism terminology does, general political cynicism refers only to the orientation and says nothing about its source. If the latter terminology is used, it immediately suggests a line of research relating general and object cynicism. It may be that general political cynicism is a result of an accumulation of discrete experiences. That is, experience with a single unit may first result in object cynicism focused on that unit. One possibility is that several sets of experiences with several units result in the citizen trusting or not trusting the units he has had contact with. The research problem is at what point do individual agency experiences accumulate and result in either general political trust or cynicism?

To state it another way, it seems worthwhile to posit the existence of a generalized political cynicism. One possible origin of this general orientation may rest in the personality development of the individual, as explained throughout our discussion of subject cynicism. On the other hand, general political cynicism and object

cynicism may interact and this interaction may hold a possible key to the development of general political cynicism. The key rests in determining the point at which an accumulation of object specific experiences finally serves to shape a person's perception of agencies he has not yet dealt with, or "the system."

Mention of the system brings us to another line of research, perhaps already implied. Political cynicism, if it is to be anything other than an interesting sidelight, must be connected with the operation of the system. At several points in the discussion, suggestions have been made about the possible nature of these connections. One connection that deserves special mention, however, is the possible relationship between political cynicism and operating the system or its parts. Previous research indicates that a politically cynical orientation apparently, under some conditions, is likely to depress the rate of political involvement. However, in another population no difference was found and in another, the cynics proved to be politically the most involved.¹ If these findings are taken as valid, they suggest the differential consequences of cynicism for the political system.

¹Agger, et al., op. cit., p. 501.

Perhaps the most discussed consequence is one form or another of what might be called the frustration hypothesis. Generally, this hypothesis suggests that the cynics, the alienated, the unhappy, the frustrated remain aloof from the political process because they find it unproductive and are cynical about it. However, every so often they are triggered into action and when so triggered they radicalize the political process, or at least attempt to do so. At one time or another this general proposition has apparently been applied to the left, right and center of the political spectrum. From the standpoint of traditional democratic theory, this is generally used to demonstrate the negative effects of various political orientations, including cynicism.

On the other hand, very little has been done to assess what some might term the positive consequences of cynicism. In particular, it would be of interest to know whether or not cynics are better able and more likely to facilitate changes in the system as well as make it work than the politically trusting. Under some circumstances, one might expect the cynics to be the doers. Because they are cynical, they are less likely to be mollified by the myths of the system or its promises, less likely to accept passively the gaps that develop between its rules and more likely to be critical of its inadequacies. Observation of

shams and inadequacies in the system may lead to withdrawal, but it can also lead to a balanced critique of the system and a high degree of willingness to manipulate and maneuver within it.

For example, the cynic faced with a decision delivered in the hands of bureaucratic rules might more likely search for the weaknesses in the structure than the trusting individual. To the cynic, the outcome is not likely to be viewed as necessary, and the rules associated with it are not likely to be invested with any superordinate status. Since he neither trusts tradition nor the enduring quality of the rules, a cynic is likely to feel free to move for a change in the outcome by searching for gaps in the rules that can be exploited for this purpose. Or, alternatively, he may view the problem in personal terms and search for individuals who can use their position or influence to make the desired change.

If cynics are more likely to behave this way than politically trusting individuals, then the conditions under which they are drawn to situations rather than withdrawn from them becomes critical. Furthermore, if it proves to be the case that cynics do manipulate the characteristics of the system, then they should be viewed as components useful in overcoming the deficiencies present in any system.

Last, let us return briefly to the earlier comments on cynicism and alienation. In the beginning, it was noted that alienation has, in recent years, seemingly been the dominant concept for explaining and relating dissatisfactions with the system. It was suggested that much of its attraction may rest on its ambiguity; therefore, it was excluded from the analysis and political cynicism was made the focus of attention. Hindsight suggests that the decision was a reasonable one in light of the work needed to be done on cynicism. Alienation would have, as first suggested, only added the extra burden of its problems. Yet, if the power of this concept ever matches its attraction, then, most certainly, exploration of the relationship between cynicism and alienation should prove to be an enjoyable task. In light of the current problems in our society, a thorough understanding of both concepts would seem to be a most fruitful endeavor.

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