

Open versus Closed

Debates over redistribution, social insurance, and market regulation are central to American politics. Why do some citizens prefer a large role for government in the economic life of the nation while others wish to limit its reach? In *Open versus Closed*, the authors argue that these preferences are not always what they seem. They show how deep-seated personality traits underpinning the culture wars over race, immigration, law and order, sexuality, gender roles, and religion shape how citizens think about economics, binding cultural and economic inclinations together in unexpected ways. Integrating insights from both psychology and political science – and twenty years of observational and experimental data – the authors reveal the deeper motivations driving attitudes toward government. They find that for politically active citizens these attitudes are not driven by self-interest, but by a desire to express the traits and cultural commitments that define their identities.

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Open versus Closed

*Personality, Identity, and the Politics
of Redistribution*

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CJ: For Amy and Hannah

HL: For my fathers, Ira S. Somerson and Edward W. Lavine

CF: For my mother

*We're born to be righteous, but we have to learn
what, exactly, people like us should be righteous about.*

Jonathan Haidt, The Righteous Mind (2012: 26)

We do not see things as they are; we see them as we are.

The Talmud

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>List of Tables</i>	xii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xv
1 Personality and the Foundations of Economic Preferences	I
2 The Psychology of Ideology	19
3 A Dual-Pathway Model of Openness and Economic Preferences	39
4 Testing the Reversal Hypothesis	64
5 Openness and Partisan-Ideological Sorting	111
6 Openness and Elite Influence	149
7 Political Engagement and Self-Interest	195
8 Personality and American Democracy	218
<i>References</i>	247
<i>Index</i>	269

Figures

3.1	Two pathways from openness to economic opinion	<i>page</i> 40
3.2	The rise of cultural concerns in party likes and dislikes over time	54
4.1	The relationship between authoritarianism and liberal economic values across political engagement, 2000–2012 ANES	74
4.2	The relationship between authoritarianism and economic policy liberalism across political engagement, 2000–2012 ANES	75
4.3	The relationship between authoritarianism and changes in support for government health insurance from 1992–1994 across political engagement, ANES	78
4.4	The relationship between need for cognitive closure and economic policy liberalism across political engagement, 2008 KN	83
4.5	The relationship between openness to experience and liberal economic values and policies across political engagement, 2008 CCAP, 2009 CCES, and 2012 ANES	89
4.6	The relationship between conscientiousness and liberal economic values and policies across political engagement, 2008 CCAP, 2009 CCES, and 2012 ANES	90
4.7	The relationship between openness to change vs. conservation and liberal economic values across political engagement, 2011 WVS	94
4.8	The relationship between risk preferences and authoritarianism and support for government spending and services across use of impersonal vs. personal considerations, 2009 ANES	98

	<i>Figures</i>	ix
4.9 The relationship between authoritarianism and liberal economic values and policies across political engagement for African Americans and Latinos, 2000–2012 ANES	101	
4.10 The relationship between openness to experience and liberal economic values and policies across political engagement for African Americans and Latinos, 2012 ANES	102	
4.11 The relationship between conscientiousness and liberal economic values and policies across political engagement for African Americans and Latinos, 2012 ANES	103	
5.1 The relationship between authoritarianism and ideological self-labeling across political engagement, 2012 Model Politics	116	
5.2 The relationship between authoritarianism and political partisanship and ideology across political engagement, 2000–2012 ANES	118	
5.3 The relationship between authoritarianism and changes in partisanship from 1992–1994 across political engagement, ANES	121	
5.4 The relationship between need for cognitive closure and political partisanship and ideology across political engagement, 2008 KN	123	
5.5 The relationship between openness to experience and political partisanship and ideology across political engagement, 2008 CCAP, 2009 CCES, and 2012 ANES	125	
5.6 The relationship between conscientiousness and political partisanship and ideology across political engagement, 2008 CCAP, 2009 CCES, and 2012 ANES	126	
5.7 The relationship between openness to change vs. conservation and left-right identification across political engagement, 2011 WVS	127	
5.8 The relationship between binding moral foundation importance and political partisanship and ideology across political engagement, 2012 CCES	129	
5.9 The relationship between authoritarianism and liberal and conservative media choices across political engagement, 2012 Model Politics	133	
5.10 The relationship between authoritarianism and the partisanship of primary political discussion partners across political engagement, 2000 ANES	135	
5.11 The relationship between authoritarianism and political partisanship and ideology across political engagement for African Americans and Latinos, 2000–2012 ANES	137	

x	<i>Figures</i>	
5.1.2	The relationship between openness to experience and conscientiousness and political partisanship and ideology across political engagement for African Americans and Latinos, 2012 ANES	138
6.1	The moderating effect of partisan and ideological cues on the relationship between openness and economic policy liberalism across political engagement, 2011 YouGov experiment	157
6.2	Descriptive statistics for binding moral foundation importance in the 2012 CCES experiment	162
6.3	The moderating effect of partisan, ideological, and candidate cues on the relationship between binding foundation importance and economic policy liberalism across political engagement, 2012 CCES experiment	165
6.4	The moderating effect of candidate cues on the relationship between binding foundation importance and economic policy liberalism for engaged citizens, 2012 CCES experiment	168
6.5	The moderating effect of cultural signals on the relationship between authoritarianism and economic policy liberalism across political engagement, 2014 CCES experiment	173
6.6	The moderating effect of cultural and economic issues on the relationship between right-wing orientation and libertarianism across political engagement, 2015 GfK Experiment	178
6.7	The relationship between authoritarianism and support for import restrictions across political engagement for the full sample and for African Americans and Latinos, 2000–2012 ANES	187
7.1	The relationship between household income and liberal economic values and policies across political engagement for non-Latino whites, 2000–2012 ANES	202
7.2	The relationship between employment insecurity and support for employment and income protection across political engagement for non-Latino whites, 2000–2012 ANES and 2011 YouGov	206
7.3	The relationship between health insurance insecurity, coverage, and health status and support for government-provided and -regulated health insurance across political engagement for non-Latino whites, 2010 ANES, 2011 YouGov, and 2012 ANES	208

	<i>Figures</i>	xi
7.4	The relationship between household income and liberal economic values and policies across political engagement for African Americans and Latinos, 2000–2012 ANES	211
8.1	The relationship between racial resentment and economic policy liberalism across political engagement for non-Latino whites, 2012 ANES	242

Tables

4.1	Measurement of key variables in the American National Election Studies	<i>page 72</i>
4.2	Measurement of key variables in the 2008 Knowledge Networks Study	82
4.3	Measurement of key variables in the 2008 CCAP, 2009 CCES, and 2012 ANES	86
4.4	Measurement of key variables in the 2011 WVS	93
4.5	Measurement of key variables in the 22nd Wave of the 2008–2009 ANES Panel	96
A4.1	Estimates for authoritarianism in cross-sectional data	106
A4.2	Estimates for authoritarianism in panel data	107
A4.3	Estimates for need for closure	107
A4.4	Estimates for the Big Five	108
A4.5	Estimates for openness to change versus conservation	108
A4.6	Estimates for risk aversion and authoritarianism	109
A4.7	Estimates for authoritarianism among blacks and Latinos	109
A4.8	Estimates for Big Five among blacks and Latinos	110
A5.1	Estimates for authoritarianism and ideological labels	141
A5.2	Estimates for authoritarianism, partisanship, and ideology	142
A5.3	Estimates for authoritarianism in panel data	143
A5.4	Estimates for need for closure	143
A5.5	Estimates for Big Five	144
A5.6	Estimates for openness to change and left-right orientation	145
A5.7	Estimates for moral foundations, partisanship, and ideology	145
A5.8	Estimates for authoritarianism and media consumption	146
A5.9	Estimates for authoritarianism and political discussion partners	146

<i>Tables</i>	xiii
A5.10 Estimates for authoritarianism, partisanship, and ideology, blacks and Latinos	147
A5.11 Estimates for Big Five, partisanship, and ideology, blacks and Latinos	148
6.1 Treatments in the 2011 YouGov experiment	154
6.2 Items measuring openness in the 2011 YouGov experiment	156
6.3 Moral foundations items in the 2012 CCES experiment	160
6.4 Treatments in the 2012 CCES experiment	163
6.5 Treatments in the 2014 CCES experiment	171
6.6 Treatments in the 2015 GfK experiment	176
A6.1 Confirmatory factor analysis estimates	190
A6.2 Estimates for the 2011 YouGov experiment	191
A6.3 Estimates for the 2012 CCES experiment	192
A6.4 Estimates for the 2014 CCES experiment	193
A6.5 Estimates for the 2015 GfK experiment	193
A6.6 Estimates for authoritarianism and import restrictions	194
A7.1 Estimates for income and economic preferences, whites	215
A7.2 Estimates for job worries	215
A7.3 Estimates for health insurance worries	216
A7.4 Estimates for income and economic preferences, blacks and Latinos	217
8.1 The reversal effect with income and education interactions included	230

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