

# VALUES: Reviving a Dormant Concept

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**Key Words** values measurement, attitudes, social structure and personality, self

■ **Abstract** Over the past decades, the concept of values has gone in and out of fashion within sociology. Relatively recent advances in both the conceptualization and measurement of values offer the potential for a reincorporation of values into sociological work. Sociologists often employ cursory understandings of values, imbuing values with too much determinism or viewing them as too individually subjective. The concept is employed sporadically in sociological subdisciplines. This review maps out the contours of the various approaches to linking values with culture, social structure, and individual behavior. We discuss theoretical and empirical approaches to values, organizing the broad literature to address three questions: (a) What are values? (b) Where do values come from? and (c) What do values do? We identify important research findings and suggest areas for future inquiry.

## INTRODUCTION

It seems *de rigeur* in sociological writing to tack on the phrase “norms and values” to explanations of human behavior to connote the taken-for-granted process through which social structures regulate the actions of individuals. Sociologists often employ cursory understandings of values, labeling a broad array of social psychological phenomena as values. Often, values are considered in an overdetermined way as “causing” observed behaviors. More often, values are ignored as too subjective or too difficult to measure accurately. Sociological work expressly on values—both the nature of individual value systems and values’ place in action—has been sparse since the mid-1960s (Hechter 1992, Spates 1983). The concept drifts in and out of such subdisciplines of sociology as family, organization, and politics. When employed, “the term ‘values’ has been used variously to refer to interests, pleasures, likes, preferences, duties, moral obligations, desires, wants, goals, needs, aversions and attractions, and many other kinds of selective orientations” (Williams 1979, p. 16).

Today, when one reads about values across the disciplines of sociology, psychology, philosophy, and political science, the balkanized nature of the research

is striking.<sup>1</sup> There is little coherence between the different approaches used across conceptualization and measurement of values. Most surprising is the almost complete lack of reference that the major empirical researchers on values make to relevant social theory, and vice versa.<sup>2</sup> The few strands of recent sociological research on values (Hechter 1993, Inglehart & Baker 2000, Lesthaeghe & Moors 2000) ignore useful social psychological approaches to the topic. Turning to the bifurcated field of social psychology, we find almost no work on values in sociological social psychology (Howard 1995, Schuman 1995). We also find values are marginalized within psychology (Rohan 2000); if psychologists employ the concept, they often take a strikingly asocial view of the development of values.

Recent advances in the conceptualization and measurement of values can be useful for sociologists. Here we organize the broad literature on values to address three questions: (a) What are values? (b) Where do values come from (dependent variables)? and (c) What do values do (independent variables)? We intentionally focus primarily on empirical investigations and treatments of values (for a discussion of values in social theory, see Joas 2000).

## WHAT ARE VALUES?

Hechter (1993) claims that the study of values contains four impediments: (a) Values are unobservable, (b) current theories give little guidance for understanding how values shape behavior, (c) behavioral explanations are unconvincing when the process that generates values is unknown, and (d) there are difficult problems with measuring values. Although recent empirical and theoretical work deals satisfactorily with some of these concerns, this list of impediments provides a useful starting point. We add two items: (e) Values are often conflated with other social psychological phenomena and (f) values have historical and cultural variability in their content. Sociologists must not reify historically variable phenomena as timeless human characteristics (B. Schwartz 1993).

## What Values Are Not

There are at least four concepts with which values are conflated: attitudes, traits, norms, and needs. Values are more abstract than attitudes (Rokeach 1973, Williams

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<sup>1</sup>Currently, anthropology does little with the concept of values, especially compared with the concept's heyday in the 1950s and 1960s (Barth 1993). Economics (Scitovsky 1993) and counseling psychology (Davis 2001) have a similar difficulty adequately engaging this topic.

<sup>2</sup>This is not new. Sherif (1936) wrote, "Philosophers, psychologists and sociologists...have had a tendency to build up their own concepts, giving little or no attention to what their colleagues in other fields have been doing on the same problem. If the concept of value with which they are dealing reveals anything in common, a convergence combining philosophy, sociology and psychology may be fruitful in the development of a general theory of value."

1979), which are favorable or unfavorable evaluations of an object (Eagly & Chaiken 1993). Values focus on ideals; attitudes are applied more to concrete social objects. Some researchers (e.g., Bem 1970) hold that values are simply a special kind of attitude object, albeit a more ephemeral kind, that can be assimilated into attitude research (Schuman 1995). Katz (1960) includes value expression as one of the four functions of attitudes, referring to attitudes expressing values central to the self-concept. Attitudes that are value-expressive lead to stronger relations between values and attitudes than do other types of attitudes (Maio & Olson 1994). Kristiansen & Zanna (1991) suggest that attitudes can either express values or influence the perception of values (what they term halo effects). Maio & Olson (2000) found an empirical link between values and attitudes, mediated by what they term goal-expressive attitudes that express an underlying motivational value structure. Other research links values with issues such as out-group prejudice (Biernat et al. 1996) or attitudes toward high achievers (Feather 1995). The general consensus is that values hold a higher place in one's internal evaluative hierarchy than attitudes. Compared with attitudes, values are more central to issues of personhood (Erickson 1995, Hitlin 2003, Smith 1991) and are less directly implicated in behavior (Schwartz 1996). Values and attitudes show marked differences in mutability over the life course (Konty & Dunham 1997); values are more durable than attitudes.

Traits are conceptualized as fixed aspects of personality. Trait-based behavior is often confused with value-based behavior. However, the distinction between the two is important because values-based behavior suggests more cognitive control over one's actions (Roccas et al. 2002). One may have a disposition toward being aggressive (a trait) but may not highly value aggression (Epstein 1989). Roccas et al. (2002) suggest the following differences: Traits are enduring dispositions; values are enduring goals. Traits may be positive or negative; values are considered primarily positive. People refer to values when justifying behavior as legitimate. Values, but not traits, serve as standards for judging others' (and one's own) behavior. Rokeach (1973) argues that it is advantageous to see people as constellations of values rather than as having fixed traits because the latter view allows the possibility that changes in social conditions can lead to personal changes.

Norms are situation based; values are trans-situational. Values, like norms, are a group-level phenomenon requiring shared agreement. However, values typically are measured as an individual-level construct. Norms capture an "ought" sense; values capture a personal or cultural ideal. People acting in accordance with values do not feel pushed as they do when acting under normative pressure. Turner (1976) argues that certain people (impulsives) view social order as a set of constraining norms; others (institutionals) perceive order as a set of shared, motivating values. Marini (2000) offers a detailed comparison of values and norms.

Needs influence human behavior differently than do values. Needs connote biological influences. Values capture a distinguishing feature of social life; we can reflexively examine our needs. Values serve as socially acceptable, culturally defined ways of articulating needs—a need for sex might be culturally reconstituted

as a value for love (Rokeach 1973). The expression and satisfaction of more biological needs can be reflected through culturally prescribed values, but these values are not the needs.

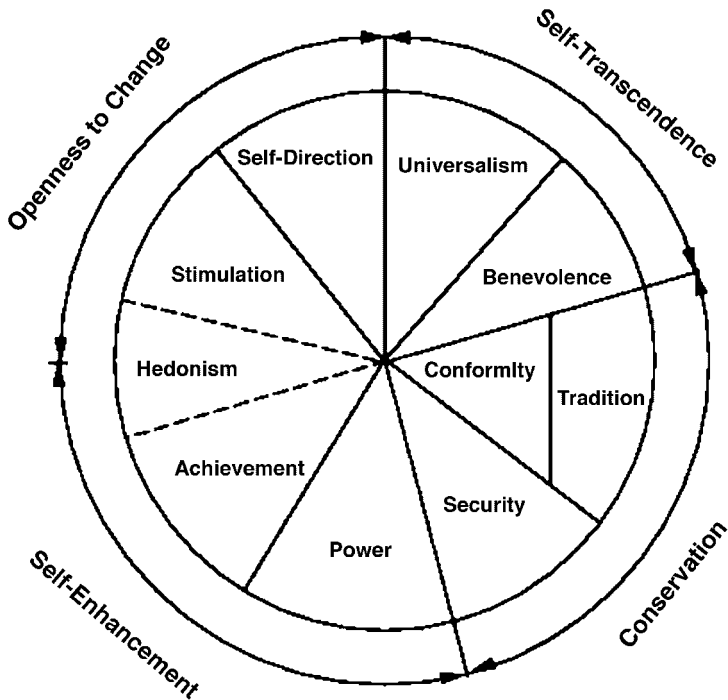
## What Values Are

Conceiving of values as forming an internal moral compass is a relatively recent phenomenon (for a history of values, see Edel 1988; in sociology, see Spates 1983; in social theory, see Joas 2000). By the 1960s, values were an explicit focus of nearly all the social science disciplines, with the possible exception of economics (Hechter 1993). Perhaps the most influential definition of values traces back to Kluckhohn (1951, p. 395): “A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the *desirable*, which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action.” This definition was influential in that behaviorist time because of its focus on the potential for both action and reward and because it covered individuals and groups. Lesthaeghe & Moors (2000) argued that Kluckhohn takes a functionalist, deterministic view in which values are cultural imperatives that necessarily lead to certain actions [this is also Swidler’s (1986) critique of Talcott Parsons’ use of values]. They contrasted this view with the other common definition of values by Rokeach: Values are “enduring beliefs that a specific mode of conduct is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence” (Rokeach 1973, p. 5). Kluckhohn emphasized action; Rokeach saw values as giving meaning to action.

Schwartz & Bilsky (1987, p. 551) summarized five features common to most definitions of values. “According to the literature, values are (a) concepts or beliefs, (b) about desirable end states or behaviors, (c) that transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance.” Schwartz (1992) emphasizes that values are cognitive representations of three universal human requirements: (a) biologically based organism needs, (b) social interactional requirements for interpersonal coordination, and (c) social institutional demands for group welfare and survival.

Values are “evaluative beliefs that synthesize affective and cognitive elements to orient people to the world in which they live” (Marini 2000, p. 2828). Values are derived in part from, but also influence, ideologies (Maio et al. 2003). Values often are treated as static mental structures, with little emphasis on their place within action. Contemporary psychology primarily treats “value” as a noun, that is, as a measurable property of persons (Rohan 2000). Less attention is paid to the valuing process (value as a verb). Sociological theory, especially pragmatist theory, has less trouble with the active nature of valuing. Empirically, however, little attention is paid to the process through which values operate within and across interactions.

**VALUES AS MENTAL STRUCTURES** Values conceived of as static constructs involve a focus on “criteria or standards of preference” (Williams 1968). Values, in this



**Figure 1** Schwartz theoretical model of relations among motivational types of values.

view, are like schemas, “well-organized structure(s) of cognitions about some social entity such as a person, group, role or event” (Michener et al. 2004, p. 107). Values delimit the parameters for behaviors considered acceptable (or just), and they serve to structure our experiences. Values carry with them an inherent positivity, in contrast with attitudes, which carry both positive and negative valences. This difference leads to measurement concerns (discussed below), as respondents often provide little variance with respect to discriminating among values.

Schwartz (1992, 1994) has developed empirically a schematic representation of what he finds to be an almost universal structure of human values. Schwartz’s system has two higher-order dimensions of values: openness to change versus conservation, and self-enhancement versus self-transcendence (see Figure 1). Adjacent values share motivational emphases. For example, power and achievement both emphasize social superiority and esteem. Achievement and hedonism both focus on self-centered satisfaction. The figure and theory represent “conceptually convenient decisions about where one fuzzy set ends and another begins” (Schwartz 1994, p. 25).

Schwartz found a great deal of empirical, cross-cultural support for this scheme, although he has primarily studied developed countries (on anthropological concerns about cross-cultural understandings of values, see Barth 1993). Support for

the Schwartz scheme is somewhat stronger in Western countries than in samples from the Far East or South America, although recently modified methods replicate the structure in these latter areas as well (Schwartz 2004b).<sup>3</sup> The theorized structure is not a perfect representation, but it is “a reasonable approximation of the structure of relations among the ten value types in the vast majority of samples” (Schwartz 1994, p. 35). Schwartz reports that the following ten values, each defined in terms of its motivational goal, are recognized in approximately 70 cultures around the world:

1. Hedonism: self-centered sensual gratification
2. Power: status and prestige, control people and resources
3. Achievement: competitive personal success
4. Stimulation: encourage risk taking and adventure
5. Self-direction: autonomous thought and action (idea of agency)
6. Universalism: tolerance and concern for welfare of all others
7. Benevolence: preserve and enhance welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact
8. Conformity: self-restraint and subordination of one's own inclinations to the expectations of others
9. Tradition: traditional and religious activities
10. Security: stability, safety, and harmony of society, relationships, and self

One other value, which he terms spirituality, is discriminated in some, but not all, samples.

Epstein (1989) holds that there are actually two different value systems: one conscious (reflective and reportable) and one unconscious. We may hold strong cognitive beliefs about the importance of power, for example, yet be quite altruistic in our actions. However, the empirical utility of such a conception of the unconscious is dubious.

**VALUES IN ACTION: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES OF VALUES** Values do not act only as internalized schemata. Values play an important, if unarticulated, role in action. Values, commonly conceived of as ideal ends within an action situation, need to incorporate the means through which they will be reached. Much current empirical psychology artificially separates ends and means when conceptualizing and studying human action. Pragmatists hold this to be a mistake. “[A]s far as valuation and the theory of values are concerned, any theory which isolates valuation of ends from appraisal of means equates the spoiled child and the irresponsible adult to the mature and sane person” (Dewey 1939, p. 218). We do not choose value commitments for ourselves. Dewey (1939) held that values take root in us

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<sup>3</sup>S. Schwartz (personal communication) feels the only current questions involve nonliterate societies.

and are the basis for our goals (Joas 1996). Values operate as guiding mechanisms. As Joas (2000, p. 106) puts it, the “state of nature is not one of apathy.” Valuing occurs necessarily as we encounter the world (Mandler 1993).

Rohan’s (2000) review of values offers Feather’s (1995) work to demonstrate what the active process of valuing might look like. Feather highlights the fact that judging objects according to our value standards is often an effortless process. Feather holds that we appraise objects, actions, situations, and people in relation to our values without engaging a great deal of cognitive effort. Values serve as latent guides for evaluations of the social world without themselves requiring much reflection. Values operate much as the pragmatists described them, rarely consciously applied to an action (Schwartz 1996). Schwartz (2004b) links values and action through four sequential processes: First, values must be activated (see also Verplanken & Holland 2002). Second, values are motivational, lead toward the privileging of certain actions over others (see also Feather 1992), and lead to the third process, the influence of values on attention, perception, and interpretation within situations. Fourth, values, when activated, influence the planning of action. Values motivate behavior, but compete with normative pressures (Schwartz & Bardi 2003).

The value-pluralism model (Tetlock 1986, Tetlock et al. 1996) offers one approach to modeling how people decide among competing values within situations. Key factors in decision making include “accountability” and the “willingness to concede conflicts among values.” The use of these techniques varies by political ideology. There is much work to be done to better delineate the influence of social context on the expression of individual values. Most scholars assume values to be relatively stable across the life course after being shaped through late adolescence. This is, however, an empirical question, and not much work has directly engaged this issue.

## Values Measurement

Measuring values, like measuring many social psychological concepts, is imperfect. There is a distinct lack of standardization across theoretical and empirical research. Many researchers examine attitudes, beliefs, or opinions and categorize their work as a study of values. We highlight the most systematic (and influential) approaches to the topic.<sup>4</sup>

The original empirical work was the development of the Rokeach Value Survey (Rokeach 1967, 1973), which influenced the current Schwartz Value Survey (for

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<sup>4</sup>Other measurement approaches that we do not address in detail include: Kohn’s (1959, 1969) study in which parents were asked to pick their “top 3” values for raising their children, and the percentages of those who chose a particular item were calculated (an approach Kohn later abandoned; see Kohn & Schoenbach 1993); the speculative attempt by Hechter et al. (1999) to extrapolate values from real-life medical decisions; and the use by Inglehart (1990; Inglehart & Baker 2000) of the World Values Survey (choosing yes or no to value items) [Xiao (1999, 2000) also employed these data].

a thorough discussion of pre-Rokeach value instruments, see Braithwaite & Scott 1991). Both scholars conceptualize values similarly, with one notable exception: For Rokeach, the distinction between means (instrumental values) and ends (terminal values) is fundamental. Schwartz, however, found no empirical evidence for this distinction and questions its utility; the same values can express motivations for both means and ends. These two paradigmatic empirical scholars also take different approaches to values measurement. Rokeach advocated asking respondents to rank values; Schwartz defended a rating, nonforced-choice approach.

Rokeach's (1973) ranking approach captures the real-world notion that values are often in competition with one another. Ultimately, Rokeach developed a list of 18 instrumental and 18 terminal values. When values were in conflict, Rokeach argued, individuals were forced to choose between them. Ball-Rokeach & Loges (1996) also supported ranking over rating, but without empirical support; they implied that forced ranking choices are more realistic in a world of limited resources.

The advantages of ranking, however, are not clear-cut (Alwin & Krosnick 1985, Schwartz 1992). Some ranking proponents (Krosnick & Alwin 1988) allow that it is plausible that people do not, in practice, choose between values when faced with action situations. Schwartz explicitly draws on Rokeach's work (including borrowing many of the items from the Rokeach Value Survey); however, the Schwartz Value Survey asks respondents to rate items. Respondents use a 9-point scale and rate the importance of various value-items "as a guiding principle in my life." The scale ranges from 7 (of supreme importance) to 3 (important) to 0 (not important) to -1 (opposed to my values). This allows individuals to rate different values as being equally important to them, and allows for the possibility that a given value-item will be negatively valued. Given the nature of values as "conceptions of the desirable," and given the ubiquity of cultural discourses that serve to legitimate nearly all the values included in the various surveys, we do not expect to find many individuals who feel that a particular item is against their own set of values. People merely value certain items less than they do others.

Schwartz (1994) offered justification for the conceptual superiority of rating over ranking: Rating has more useful statistical properties, allows researchers to use longer lists of values and to note negative values (important in cross-cultural work), and does not force respondents to discriminate among equally important values. Schwartz also argued that rating may be more accurate phenomenologically than ranking is in capturing how values enter into situations of behavioral choice. People do not necessarily rank one value over another in action; different values may be equally compelling. It is an empirical possibility that people may be only vaguely aware of contradictions between values, something that the forced-choice approach of ranking fails to capture. Rating approaches obtain greater variance if respondents are asked to first pick their most- and least-important values from the list before rating the items (McCarty & Shrum 2000). Maio et al. (1996) suggested that rating offers more validity; subjects who were forced to rank values made trivial—and less valid—distinctions between values, which led to smaller empirical relationships with related attitudes.



Schwartz's original survey included 56 value-items derived from a variety of cross-cultural studies presented to respondents on one page, with each item followed by a short explanatory phrase. He used Smallest Space Analysis (Guttman 1968) to assess and confirm an organization of 10 human values with repeated cross-national samples (Schwartz 1992; Schwartz & Bilsky 1990). More recently, Schwartz et al. (2001) developed the Personal Values Questionnaire (PVQ), an instrument containing less-abstract items that are more accessible to a wider population. Responses to this instrument replicate the basic model of value relations.

The fact that values are desirable may lead people to produce very little variation among their ratings on a list of desirable items. Krosnick & Alwin (1988) found evidence that, after removing "nondifferentiating" respondents from their sample, the results of analyses of ranking data resemble those of rating data. Ranking, by necessity, forces negative correlations between values, whereas rating encourages positive correlations. They (Alwin & Krosnick 1985, Krosnick & Alwin 1988) concluded that their work can be interpreted as support for ranking, but that such an approach potentially produces an artificial contrast between values. Schwartz (1992, 2004a), on the other hand, centered each respondent's responses prior to other analyses to correct for the problem of differential uses of the rating scale. Finally, ranking values is potentially difficult and taxing for respondents, especially when the list is lengthy (Alwin & Krosnick 1985). The literature currently contains more work that employs rating.

There are methodological issues other than the rating-ranking controversy. First there is the problem of accessibility. In reality, people may not always know what their values are (Hechter 1993), although psychologists (Rohan 2000, Rokeach 1973, Schwartz 2004c) include "conscious representation of needs" as part of their definition of the concept. Popular discourse is replete with talk of family values or American values, but what those referents mean to specific people may not always be clear to them (Waters 1990). Furthermore, academics tend to be more concerned with abstract issues like values than nonacademics. The abstractness and lack of context of this enterprise are a concern for studying the values of people who do not reside within academia (Searing 1979). Recent work (Schwartz & Bardi 2001, Schwartz 2004b) utilizes the PVQ, a less abstract measurement approach. Measurement of values typically is by self-report and thus is subject to the same biases as other self-report methods. Verbal reports are not necessarily valid indicators of an underlying phenomenon, a problem that plagues attitude researchers (Schuman 1995).

Context may be important in influencing how people fill out value surveys. Using the Rokeach survey, Seligman & Katz (1996) found situational variability of rankings for values such as "freedom" and "wisdom" in situations in which people were primed for their views on abortion and various environmental issues. They hypothesized that there may be different schemas activated by different contexts and issues such that different value systems are activated accordingly. This suggests that the abstract nature of Rokeach's and Schwartz's original inventories influences the values people report as being important. Konty (2002) developed a measure

of values sensitive to contextual concerns and argued that such an approach offers more utility than the original Schwartz Value Survey. These contextual concerns deserve further study.

Finally, there are methodological concerns with studying values across the life course. Specifically, period, cohort, and aging effects are easily conflated (Alwin et al. 1991). Roberts & Bengtson (1999) used hierarchical linear models in an instructive attempt to disentangle these issues. More work needs to engage the longitudinal nature of values.

## WHERE DO VALUES COME FROM?

### Value Antecedents: Empirical Findings

Much of the work of interest to a sociological audience involves patterns of values held by members of different cultural groups who occupy different social structural positions. In this section, we discuss a variety of social categories and their empirical influences on values. We concentrate on broad findings, not on methodological concerns. Bear in mind that the field is far from unified in approaches and even in theoretical assumptions. We begin by briefly touching on biological influences.

**BIOLOGY** Values may be partly rooted in our biology. Some contend that values have adaptive significance, although we might properly argue that cultural evolution occurs much more rapidly—and recently—than biological evolution (Tiger 1993). Michod explicitly claimed that “evolution provided us with values instead of programming us genetically” (Michod 1993, p. 268). Chimpanzees act in gendered ways that appear to be the result of differences in social goals. Such differences can be interpreted to underlie innate value systems, although such a connection need not imply a genetic link between genes and behavior (de Waal 1993). Mandler concluded that “human and simian diversity place somewhat weak constraints on the range of human values” (Mandler 1993, p. 230). Both biological and cultural mechanisms are hypothesized to explain the maintenance of values in populations (Cavalli-Sforza 1993). Roccas et al. (2002) suggested that values may be linked with inborn temperaments, although they advocate for the influence of values on traits more than the reverse.

**RACE/ETHNICITY/GENDER** Not much work expressly on the relationship between race and values exists. The classic work on race relations by Myrdal et al. (1944) notes the hypocrisy of the white majority’s public profession of Christian values, given social conditions in America. Recently, Ball-Rokeach & Loges (1996) argued that values are important for understanding the often-contradictory literature on racial attitudes (e.g., Schuman 1972). Sears (1988) offered the concept of “symbolic racism” to explain that white attitudes toward blacks are not racist on the basis of self-interest. Rather, racism exists at the symbolic level through the conception that blacks violate American values of individualism by expressing a

perceived desire for special treatment (such as affirmative action; see also Lipset & Schneider 1978). Rokeach (1973) found that the value of equality is the second highest ranked value for blacks and eleventh for whites, even when matched on income and education. Van Hook & Thomson (1994) found evidence that higher-status black parents encourage their children to take "conformist, prosystemic" values that they found vital to their own educational and occupational successes.

Waters (1990) argued that various groupings of ethnic Americans share a "symbolic identity," a perceived commonality of values and experiences. This feeling of belonging to an ethnic group and subscribing to a shared set of values allows some Americans to resolve a conflict between American values of "individualism" and "belonging" (Bellah et al. 1985, Hewitt 1989). This symbolic identity is flexible for white Americans in ways it is not for nonwhite (including Hispanic) Americans. Waters found that "people described values and beliefs that are very general—in fact, held by most middle-class Americans—as being specific to their own, and not to other, ethnic groups" (Waters 1990, p. 134). Members of a variety of ethnic groups valued "love of family," "hard work," and a "belief in education," yet they attributed these values to being a product of their own ethnic background.

Stewart et al. (1999) suggested that the internalization of parental expectations is accomplished more effectively in Asian than in Caucasian families. Japanese individuals place a higher value on maintaining relationships than do Americans, indicated by a higher motivational importance of values related to justice (Ohbuchi et al. 1999). Asian American adolescents value achievement and connectedness more than do Caucasian Americans (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi 2000).

Links between gender, values, and social structure are surprisingly understudied (Xiao 2000) and present mixed results: Some researchers find gender differences and some do not. In the former group, Beutel & Marini (1995) found significant gender differences on three value measures representing compassion (concern for well-being of others), materialism (emphasis on material benefit and competition), and meaning (philosophical concern with finding purpose in life). Females score higher on compassion and lower on materialism and competition and are more likely to report finding "meaning in life" as important. These gender differences are rather constant over time, with the exception that females' scores for finding purpose in life declined relative to males' scores over the period 1977–1991. Women in advantaged social positions place a higher value on autonomy than do their male counterparts (Xiao 2000). Marini et al. (1996) found that young women are more concerned with intrinsic, altruistic, and social values than are men, although they found no gender differences in external reward values. Women are more likely to endorse self-direction and less likely to value both traditional gender roles and conformity than are men (Xiao 1999). Other work demonstrates significant gender differences in values of autonomy versus community in Australia (Feather 1984, 1987) and cross-nationally (Bond 1988).

Gender is important for understanding differences in work-related values (Halaby 2003, Lindsay & Knox 1984). Gender does not affect work values

directly; rather, gender influences initial values that in turn have a selection effect on educational attainment, a process that helps explain a portion of gender stratification in the workforce. Xiao (1999) found that American women place a greater emphasis on independence than do men, perhaps because they take it less for granted as an element of their gender identity. Johnson (2002) found that adolescents' values become more realistic as they age and that their aspirations become more limited through experience with the adult world, an effect that occurs most strongly for African American women. Interestingly, parents see daughters, not sons, as holding values more similar to their own (Whitbeck & Gecas 1988).

In other research, gender has not demonstrated significance for helping researchers understand values. Rokeach's (1973) original work found that males and females ranked many values at similar levels in their personal hierarchies. At the top of the list for both included "a world at peace," "freedom," "honest," "ambitious," and "responsible." Values such as "an exciting life," "pleasure," "imaginative," "obedient," "intellectual," and "logical" were placed at the bottom. The largest difference in ranking was for "a comfortable life," which was ranked fourth by men and thirteenth by women. Struch et al. (2002) found strong evidence across cultures that men and women interpret values similarly and that both array values along the basic dimensions developed by Schwartz. Prince-Gibson & Schwartz (1998) found no particular gender difference in value priorities. They suggest that gender differences are perhaps only discernable when other social structural variables have been taken into account. Tavis (1993) contends that work conditions, not gender, determine work-related values. Florentine (1988) argues that collegiate men and women are converging over time with respect to values of status attainment and domestic nurturing.

**SOCIAL STRUCTURE** In this section, we group a variety of structural positions within the class system, including occupation, education, and national-level factors.

***Social class/occupation/education*** Historically, the bulk of values research has revolved (implicitly or explicitly) around the value of self-direction, specifically positing that people who hold advantaged positions in their social structure value self-direction in themselves and their children more than do people in less advantaged positions. Social class is important in predicting parental valuing of intellectual flexibility and self-direction (Kohn 1959, 1969; Kohn et al. 1990). These findings are "strikingly confirmed" in the United States, Japan, and Poland (Kohn et al. 1990)<sup>5</sup>, and similar evidence has been found in Italy (Pearlin & Kohn,

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<sup>5</sup>Kohn operationalizes values more broadly than others. He asks for a ranking of 13 characteristics applied to a hypothetical child the same age as the respondent's own children. Kohn's index taps into constructs similar to Schwartz's values ("self-control," "honest," "trying hard to succeed") as well as items more like personality descriptions ("neat and clean," "good manners," and the gendered "acting as a boy/girl should").

1966). Social stratification is important for understanding children's values as well as those of parents (Kohn & Schoenbach 1993).

The primary mechanism Kohn discussed by which social class influences values involves class-typical occupational conditions. He categorized occupations based on three characteristics: (a) closeness of supervision, (b) routinization of work, and (c) substantive complexity of the work (Kohn & Schooler 1983). Men with complex jobs with less routine and less supervision valued independent skills such as responsibility and curiosity, whereas men with closely supervised, routinized jobs valued conformity. This pattern emerged for employed men and women (Miller et al. 1979) and cross-nationally (Slomczynski et al. 1981, Kohn et al. 1990). Occupational conditions, not occupational status, are the key factor (Kohn 1976). These concepts are incorrectly conflated in some replications of Kohn's thesis (e.g., Wright & Wright 1976). Occupational complexity leads to the valuing of self-direction (Kohn & Schooler 1982, Slomczynski et al. 1981). Over time, this self-directed orientation leads to "more responsible jobs that allow greater latitude for occupational self-direction" (Kohn & Schooler 1982, p. 1282). Alwin (1989) attempted to separate the intertwined effects of occupation and education and found support for Kohn's thesis: Measures of occupational self-direction explain more of the development of parental values than do educational measures. Morgan et al. (1979) also found support for the relationship between a father's occupation and parental values and found limited support for the idea that parental values affect adolescent school experiences for white, but not for black, students. Kasser et al. (2002) hypothesized that lower SES leads to more restrictive parenting styles that become the mechanism whereby Kohn's thesis is actualized within the family.

Mortimer & Lorence (1979) found that occupational experiences perceived as personally rewarding reinforced the values that influenced the selection of that occupation. Autonomy had considerable impact on intrinsic reward values, thus reproducing Kohn's thesis. Other evidence (Lindsay & Knox 1984) demonstrates that the process of occupational selection is more complex and involves a two-stage model: Educational attainment is an important mediating variable between values and occupation. The influence of occupation on parental values is declining; that of education is remaining consistent over time (Alwin 1984). Mortimer et al. (1996) extended the Kohn thesis to adolescents. Job values become increasingly stable during young adulthood, although they change as a function of work rewards (Johnson 2001).

***Family characteristics*** Families are an important context for value socialization (Roberts & Bengtson 1999). Gecas & Seff (1990) concluded that most American adolescents identify with and like their parents. There are persistent long-term trends toward the endorsement of gender equality within American families and toward individual autonomy and tolerance with respect to family issues (Thornton & Young-DeMarco 2001). Parents value autonomy in children to a greater extent, and preferences for obedience are declining (Alwin 1990).

Two issues emerge with respect to value transmission within the family: inter- and intragenerational influences. Most research examines relationships between parents' values and children's values (Gecas & Seff 1990). Hoge et al. (1982) argued that structural characteristics of families (e.g., democratic decision-making styles) were more important than affective factors (quality of relationship) to the transmission of values within the family. Kohn et al. (1986) contended that value transmission within the family occurs subject to effects of social class on parents' values, which in turn affect children's values. This relationship is built into the structure of industrial society. However, this is not a uniform process for all industrial societies: Silver (2002) found differences in value structures between U.S. and Japanese families.

Gecas & Seff (1990) listed three primary mechanisms through which parents' values influence children's values: (a) occupational/social class influences, (b) perceptions of value similarity, and (c) parental behaviors/childrearing practices. The first mechanism has been discussed above. There is a high level of perceived congruence between parents' and children's values (Gecas & Seff 1990), although it is important to distinguish between perceived and actual congruence. Perceived similarity of values is greater than actual similarity within families (Whitbeck & Gecas 1988; see also Acock & Bengtson 1980). Similarity increases as children perceive parents' values more accurately. Value congruence is especially high with respect to values dealing with education, career, and major life concerns. Questions exist, however, about whether the nature of any congruence is due to family processes or simply to sociohistorical circumstances (Gecas & Seff 1990, McBroom et al. 1985). Glass et al. (1986) found that parental attitudes influence children's attitudes, even accounting for family social status, highlighting the importance of family socialization in the development of children's ideologies. Bengtson (1975) found little support for the idea that there is strong similarity between parents' and children's values beyond the wider generational similarities in values within the culture. Children perceive mothers and fathers as more conservative than parental reports substantiate, and they tend to exaggerate the similarity between their parents (Acock & Bengtson 1980).

Another mechanism for the transmission of values involves childrearing practices (Gecas & Seff 1990). Parental socioeconomic status can be viewed as an indicator of the cognitive complexity of a child's environment (Spaeth 1976): Higher parental SES can lead to more and varied possessions and to the greater availability of more complex stimuli to children. Luster et al. (1989) found that social class is significantly correlated with differences in childrearing behaviors, including an emphasis on supportive parenting among those from higher social classes who value self-direction. Simons et al. (1990) suggested that mothers' values are more influential than fathers' for setting the childrearing agenda, although Kohn et al. (1986) found both parents' values are similarly important and are influenced by occupational position and SES conditions. Kasser et al. (2002) hypothesized that SES has a distal influence on children's values through the more proximal mechanism of restrictive parenting styles. Kasser

et al. (1995) found that highly materialistic children came from less-advantaged families.

There is evidence for the effects of specific parental values on children's outcomes. Taris and colleagues (Taris & Semin 1997, Taris et al. 1998) concluded that intergenerational transmission of values of religiosity and of sexual permissiveness benefits from positive mother-child relations. Parents' values have shifted toward a greater preference for more autonomous children and away from a concern with obedience (Alwin 1990). Van Hook & Thomson (1994) found that fathers' independence values are positively associated with children's school performance. For blacks, only mothers' conformity values significantly predict children's school performance. In America, fathers and mothers are relatively equal in terms of their influence on children's values of self-direction, but in Poland, mothers have predominant influence (Kohn et al. 1986).

Little work has examined the relationship between parental values and parental behavior (Luster et al. 1989). Empathetic (versus rigid-authoritarian) parenting styles promote intergenerational transmission of values (Schonpflug 2001). Rohan & Zanna (1996) found evidence that parents with highly authoritarian styles have children who report value profiles either strongly similar or strongly dissimilar to their parents, whereas children of "low right-wing authoritarian parents" generally mirror the values of their parents.

Findings suggest that parents have more influence on children of the same gender (Acock & Bengtson 1978). There is evidence that mothers' attitudes influence daughters more than sons with respect to sexual behavior (Thornton & Camburn 1987). Axinn & Thornton (1993) also found that mothers' attitudes influence children's cohabitation behaviors, especially daughters. Research suggests that parents' influence on children's values extends into adulthood (Alwin et al. 1991).

A second issue concerning family and values about which less is known involves what Secombe (1986) calls intragenerational family relations, the relationship of working conditions to the division of household labor and gender role values held by the parental generation. Klute et al. (2001) found that values mediate the relationship between occupational self-direction and intragenerational (within-marriage) attitudes and behaviors in the directions predicted by Kohn. Specifically, values stemming from occupational self-direction influence the division of household labor. Rohan & Zanna (1996) examined both intra- and intergenerational similarities in value structures. Using the Schwartz Value Survey, they found a correlation of 0.68 between husbands' and wives' values. Children's values correlate 0.54 with parents' values. Wary of homogeneity among subjects, the authors created pseudofamilies by randomly matching parents and children to get a baseline level of similarity to make sense of the within-family correlations. For these pseudofamilies, correlations for couples and families were 0.57 and 0.44, respectively. The difference between real couples and pseudocouples was significant ( $p < .001$ ). The difference between real and pseudofamilies was of borderline significance ( $p < .07$ ). "It seems the folk wisdom that children grow up to be like their parents received some, but not overwhelming, support" (Rohan & Zanna 1996, p. 259).

***Immigrant Status*** Immigrant parents often are forced into a conflict between teaching their children values they find important and encouraging values prevalent within the new society (Kuzynski et al. 1997). Immigrant children report values more similar to nonimmigrant peers than to their parents (Phinney et al. 2000), although this distance between children's and parents' values is greater in domains of "conservation" and "openness" than for "self-enhancement" and "self-transcendence" values (Knafo & Schwartz 2001). Value similarity occurs in two steps: First, children perceive the values endorsed by parents, and second, children accept the values as their own (Grusec & Goodnow 1994). Transmission of similar values within families may break down at either step (Knafo & Schwartz 2001). Immigrant families may focus on fostering collectivist and achievement values in their children in order to support "coordinated family adaptation" to increase potential intergenerational mobility within the new culture (Phalet & Schonpflug 2001a).

Feather (1979) argued that cultural assimilation is, in fact, a rearrangement of value structures. He found that second-generation immigrants in Australia developed similar value systems to members of the dominant culture. More recent findings suggest that first-generation Chinese parents in the United States are more similar to Chinese parents than to American parents on values of parental control over children (Jose et al. 2000). Immigrants acculturating within new social contexts transmit "in-group-serving" types of values across generations (Phalet & Schonpflug 2001b). Collectivist cultural groups tend to possess higher levels of authoritarianism, yet this focus does not preclude the conditions—warmth and benign ways of thinking—that promote the intergenerational transmission of values (Rudy & Grusec 2001). Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi (2000) suggest that the interconnected selves of Asian Americans account for greater intergenerational transmission of parental values.

***Age cohort*** There is some evidence for age-graded systematic changes in value structure. Ryff (1979) found that middle-aged women have a strong orientation toward instrumental values, whereas older women espouse more terminal values. Historical cohort membership also affects values (McBroom et al. 1985). Various work (Hoge 1976, Hoge et al. 1981, Thompson 1981) argues for a shift from a sense of personal responsibility toward a focus on self-gratification and less preference for self-denial during the 1960s and 1970s.

Not surprisingly, there is a substantial body of work on the values of college students. American college students are "exceptional in giving high priority to self-oriented desires" (Schwartz & Bardi 2001, p. 286). Hoge et al. (1981) found that students' values changed over the period 1952–1970 toward a focus on personal gratification and personal freedom and a weakened sense of social responsibility. Earlier, Hoge (1976) found that some conservative values were increasing and that the commitment of students toward higher education had shifted from a liberal to a vocational direction. Easterlin & Crimmins (1991) argued that youth values changed from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s toward private materialism and away from personal self-fulfillment. They also found a corresponding shift in



college majors and career plans toward those leading to higher paying jobs, along with an increase in the desirability of working for large corporations. Pascarella et al. (1988) concluded that undergraduate college experiences have a significant impact on the "humanizing of values" independent of individual characteristics students bring with them to school and regardless of the size, race, and selectivity of the institution. When students are separated into groups defined by sex and race, involvement in social leadership experiences during college has a significant and positive effect on the importance students attach to civic and humanitarian activities after college for all groups except black women, where results are positive but not significant.

**Religion** Limited work directly linking religion and values exists. Religious beliefs can be understood as ideologies, theoretical constructions that subsume attitudes and values (Maio et al. 2003). However, ideologies often contain self-contradictory elements. Thus, exploring religious behavior is more useful for sociologists than simply focusing on such ideologies. For example, church attendance, rather than denomination, is most important for demonstrating value differences among religious groups (Alwin 1984). Expressions of religiosity (such as church attendance) may be more strongly related to parental values than are denominational differences (Alwin 1986). Schwartz & Huisman (1995) argued that influence is bi-directional between individuals' religiosity and their values. Valuing "certainty," "self-restraint," and "submission to external verities" inclines people to be more religious; values of "openness to change" and "self-expression" incline people to become less religious. The perception that others are threatening one's values influences the actions that individuals might approve of in the service of those values. For churchgoing Protestants, the perception that one's values are being threatened is one factor that leads to greater approval of contentious protest tactics (McVeigh & Sikkink 2001). Hoge et al. (1982) argued that value socialization takes place less within the nuclear family than within other socialization arenas such as religious groups.

**National/demographic** The debate over the place of values within individual decision making maps onto debates between cultural and structural explanations for behavior (Hammel 1990). Reviewing a variety of panel studies, Lesthaeghe & Moors (2000, p. 11) concluded, "earlier values orientations are hence predictive for choices with respect to alternative paths in household formation in contexts with plural models of life course structuring and high degrees of individual autonomy." These authors hold that values are adaptable and are important, understudied mechanisms for understanding demographic processes (see also Irwin 2003). Other work links changing values in industrial societies with falling birth rates (Preston 1987), tying together demographic forces with cultural changes.

Work on the place of values within nation-states takes two approaches. The first catalogs changes in a particular nation's aggregate value structures, measured at the individual level, over some time period. The second compares values across

nations and examines elements of the political, social, and/or cultural system of each nation that systematically affect the value structures of individuals. One mechanism through which national culture affects individual value systems is the mass media (Sotirovic & Holbert 1998). Members of more democratic political systems report higher importance of values emphasizing autonomy, openness to change, concern for others, and self-indulgence (Schwartz & Sagie 2000). Democratization is negatively associated with valuing "dominance over others," "self-restraint," and "maintaining the status quo."

Within-nation value systems tend to be stable over time. America has had a constant tension between values of independence and conformity tracing back to Tocqueville's (1835) observations (see Hewitt 1989). Feldman (1988) looked at the beliefs that reflect the core longitudinal values of Americans and argues that support for equality of opportunity, economic individualism, and the free enterprise system are key stabilizing values for Americans. Schwartz et al. (2000) reported that different value priorities distinguished East European from West European nations before the fall of communism and that such differences have largely persisted even over the past 15 years.

Much of Kohn's work falls into the second cross-national comparative approach to examining values. In addition to the previously discussed work, Pearlin & Kohn (1966) found significantly different patterns in various value choices between Italian and American parents. Although both sets of respondents favored "honesty" first, Italian parents valued "manners," "obedience," and "seriousness" more highly than American parents, who valued "happiness," "popularity," and "consideration." Additionally, Italian parental values are more adult centered, emphasizing a child's ability to conform to adult standards. SES influences on values operate similarly in America and Italy.

Schwartz & Bardi (2001) reported that there is a "surprisingly widespread consensus regarding the hierarchical order of values" across all of the inhabited continents (see also Schwartz & Sagiv 1995). They described a "pan-cultural" baseline ranking of values in which benevolence is most often ranked first, followed by self-direction, universalism, security, conformity, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, tradition, and finally, power in 56 nations. This precise order is found within 40–50% of the nations, with values in the middle ranked less consistently. The one notable exception to this pan-cultural pattern was in nations with especially large families (particularly in sub-Saharan Africa), where conformity values ranked first. Schwartz (2004c) compares his value dimensions with others (Inglehart 1997, Hofstede 2001) who focus on national comparisons and concludes there are at least three dimensions that overlap across approaches: desirable degree of independence of individuals from in-groups; desirability of equal versus hierarchical allocation of resources, rights, and obligations; and relative desirability of changing the social and natural environment versus maintaining harmony in the environment.

The most common dimension in cross-national research is the individualist-collectivist dimension (Markus & Kitayama 1991, Triandis 1995). Asian families

traditionally foster collectivistic values. Stewart et al. (1999) found that Asian teenagers' autonomy expectations are more strongly influenced by their mothers' attitudes than are Caucasian teenagers' autonomy expectations. They also found that differences in expressed values between Caucasian and Asian mothers were greater than for Caucasian and Asian teenagers, which they argued demonstrates a convergence around many values within the younger generation. Other authors hold that it is more important to know the values of individuals than the collectivist-individualist leanings of the nation for addressing certain concrete business practices (Kirkman & Shapiro 2001). Other work (Grimm et al. 1999) found support for many of the individualist/collectivist theories as they relate to values, including the higher ranking of freedom for members of individualist cultures and security for collectivist members.

This dimension, however, has been criticized. Oyserman et al. (2002), in a large meta-analysis, supported the theoretical parsimony of this concept but found small effect sizes across studies and many parts of the world where the dimension does not behave as expected. Oyserman et al. (2002) concluded that much of this cross-national work relies on student samples and that researchers are too quick to conclude that any cross-national differences are evidence of the individualist-collectivist dimension. Takano & Osaka (1999) found almost no empirical support for the conventional idea that the Japanese are more collectivistic than Americans. They credit the widespread acceptance of this view to the fundamental attribution error, suggesting that scholars have underestimated the place of situational factors when accounting for Japanese collectivistic behavior. Matsumoto (1999) also found fault with the theme of Markus & Kitayama, holding the possibility that psychologists have focused on mean-level differences rather than within-culture variance and that new methodological approaches need to examine the proximal mechanisms that lead to those differences. In sum, the face validity of this link between culture and values seems to have been disseminated further than the empirical results that question its truthfulness. More focus needs to be placed on within-culture variation in values.

Inglehart (1977, 1990, 1995, 1997) theorized a distinction between "materialist" (modernist) and "postmaterialist" (postmodern) values.<sup>6</sup> He argued that Western societies are entering a phase in which political conflicts arise from tensions between materialists (who favor law and order, a stable economy, affluence, and control) and postmaterialists (who take economic security for granted and focus on quality-of-life issues, a sense of community, and a concern for the environment). This shift toward postmodern values is currently taking place in concert with industrialization and is "eroding many of the key institutions of industrial society" (Inglehart 1997, p. 43). Marks (1997) determined that these two orientations are

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<sup>6</sup>The items used seem to presuppose many of the assumptions embedded in modernization theory. Barnes & Kaase (1979) compared the Rokeach inventory with the materialist/postmaterialist battery and found significant overlap with many of Rokeach's items loading the materialist/postmaterialist scale.

not mirror opposites; valuing issues labeled postmodern does not necessitate a lack of concern for modern values. He distinguished five general influences on these value types—parental socialization, formative security within the family of origin, societal (or economic) formative security on reaching adulthood, education, and contemporary influences—and found socialization to be the most influential.

More recently, Inglehart & Baker (2000) modified modernization theory, arguing that economic changes are associated with the shift from modern (absolute) to postmodern (relativistic) values but that such shifts are path dependent. Specifically, economic development is associated with a shift toward rational, tolerant, and participatory values. These shifts are mediated through the national cultural heritage. Inglehart & Baker hold that cultural zones (the nation's level of Protestant, orthodox, or Islamic tradition) have an effect on national (and the resulting individual) value systems, even controlling for economic development. Thus, the thesis that the world as a whole is becoming more secular is oversimplified and is best applied only to the shift from agrarian to industrial society. Schwartz & Sagie (2000) found support for hypotheses grounded in modernization theory regarding socioeconomic development and value priorities. Values of self-direction, universalism, stimulation, benevolence, and hedonism correlate highly positively with national levels of socioeconomic development; values of power, security, tradition, and conformity correlate negatively. Consensus regarding the importance of most values is greater in more socioeconomically developed countries, but consensus is lower in more democratized countries, controlling for development. The materialist-postmaterialist dimension has been criticized. Clarke et al. (1999) argued that shifts in such values are due to measurement inadequacies, whereas Davis et al. (1999) felt that postmaterialism is not a value dimension in most of the countries studied with the World Value survey and that imposing this classification scheme serves to obscure links between social and economic conditions.

Hofstede (2001) focused extensively on national-level patterns of values, arguing that values form a stable portion of national culture. He categorized societies by placing them on five statistically independent values dimensions: power distance (acceptance of inequality), uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, and long- versus short-term time orientations. He called for "a certain amount of cultural relativism" (Hofstede 2001, p. 1) when studying values across nations. Schwartz (2003c) cautioned that across-nation studies must carefully match samples, but he ultimately supported the nation as a meaningful cultural unit for comparing values.

## Changes in Values

To complete a survey of where values come from, we should touch briefly on how they change. The paucity of research shedding light directly on this issue means that this section is brief and primarily speculative. At the macro level, both Inglehart's and Kohn's ideas suggest how structural and cultural shifts play out within individuals' value systems. For example, Cileli (2000) linked societal changes in Turkey with changes in the value orientations of youth toward more

competitiveness and individualism. Schwartz & Bardi (1997) posited that value formation and change are based on an adaptive process that acclimates one's values to social (and political) circumstances and compensates for deprivations (most often with values relating to security and material well-being). However, the macro level is a necessary but insufficient level to examine the phenomenon of values; stability and change in values are affected by the collective and intrinsic characteristics of the values themselves (Williams 1979). We need to examine local reference groups as well as focus more on how specific values behave differently (Maio et al. 2003).

Attitude change research can offer compelling hypotheses for the nature of changes in values. One such approach holds that changes in values would be more likely to occur through the "central" route as opposed to the "peripheral" route in the model of attitude change by Petty & Cacioppo (1986). Peripheral cues are more emotional and work best to change attitudes when the argument is not personally relevant. Because values have inherent personal relevance, changes would be through the central route, which focuses on actively processing and reflecting upon information. Bernard et al. (2003a) suggested the intriguing hypothesis that analyzing reasons for certain values ("self-transcendence," "conservation," "openness," "self-enhancement," "materialist," and "postmaterialist") leads to changes in values when those values do not have previous cognitive support. Values are often simply truisms (Maio & Olson 1998), endorsed but lacking argumentative support; those with stronger cognitive reasons supporting their values report less change when forced to introspect about those values. Providing cognitive defenses helps inoculate values from attack (Bernard et al. 2003b).

## WHAT DO VALUES DO?

An improved understanding of values is important so that sociologists can begin to "determine the rightful place of subjectivity in social analysis" (Hechter 2000, p. 698). Values are also increasingly important in applied fields dealing with aging, business, and health care issues (e.g., Kane & Degenholtz 1997; Karel 2000; Scott 2000, 2002). There is little work in sociology currently linking social structural influences on values with various social outcomes, with values as intermediate or independent variables. In this section, we briefly summarize what findings there are and suggest areas for future inquiry.

Parsons & Shils (1951) separated individual and group values, with the former revolving around motivational problems (such as controlling aggression), and the latter organized around the normative patterns governing interpersonal relations. This dichotomy is too theoretically schemed; there is no neat bifurcation in the types of values that concern individuals versus those that concern groups (Kluckhohn 1951). Values do, however, have both motivational and normative qualities, and this split between action and motivation mirrors somewhat the different foci of the fields of sociology and psychology as they apply to the study of values. Where these two disciplines meet, in the field of social psychology, the

common area of concern is most often the self, though even there the place of values is underexplored.

## Values and Motivation

The study of values often involves questions about what motivates behavior (Karp 2000). Values express different motivational goals. Like Schwartz (1994), Feather (1995) posited that values are not simply abstract conceptions of the desirable, but are motivational. They express basic human needs (Rokeach 1973, Schwartz 1992), and these needs, by definition, motivate social behavior. Evidence supports the view that Schwartz's value structure captures a two-dimensional motivational continuum: (a) conservation versus openness and (b) self-enhancement versus self-transcendence (for an overview, see Schwartz 2003a). Values, it is hypothesized, are supported more by their affective component than by their cognitive component. Values are socialized into us through the teaching of moral absolutes; they are representations of emotions and are often employed in support of our affective reactions (Maio & Olson 1998). Williams (1979) argued that values are not motivational in an emotional sense, but rather are cognitive structures that provide information that gets coupled with emotion and leads to action. Values are certainly not the sole motivational factor behind action; values act in concert with other motives (Staub 1989). In addition to initial motivation, values seem to be related to the commitment individuals maintain in the face of adversity (Lydon & Zanna 1990).

Volunteer work is one of the few arenas in which the value-motivation link has been empirically examined. Batson (1989) hypothesized a three-path model of the relationship between personal values and prosocial motivation. Values operate through two egoistic motives (hedonism and arousal reduction) and one empathetic, altruistic motive. Benevolence values appear as the most strongly endorsed motivation for volunteer work (Omoto & Snyder 1995) and are highly correlated with most other measures of volunteer activity.

Recent work is beginning to link adult work values—a specific domain of one's value structure—with social stratification outcomes. Valuing "entrepreneurial" versus "bureaucratic" job properties—the former emphasizing self-sufficiency and control at work, the latter focusing on stability and security—strongly mediates the effects of social origins and adult occupational achievement (Halaby 2003). Specifically, gender, years of schooling, and cognitive ability have strong influences on job values, which in turn influence occupational attainment. Johnson (2002) suggested a similar process through which adolescent work values influence job selection and highlighted the reciprocal effects of employment opportunities on those very work values. Exploring such social psychological processes is a fruitful endeavor for scholars desiring to link more completely antecedent structural variables with stratification outcomes of interest to sociologists.

Although values motivate action, they also serve as culturally appropriate discourses to rationalize prior conduct. Rokeach (1973) discussed this in a manner tantamount to Mills's "vocabulary of motives." Kristiansen & Zanna (1994) demonstrated that people appeal to verbalized value commitments as a way to

rationalize prejudicial intergroup attitudes and to justify discrimination. The empirical questions to be answered here revolve around the extent to which initial values motivate various activities, and the ways in which those activities lead either to actual changes in values or simply to individuals employing legitimizing discourses to explain their actions. Psychology has been notably quiet on the relationship of values and action (Feather 1992).

## Concrete Behaviors

Values are only distally related to behavior. This is to be expected, given their abstract nature and what we know about the highly mediated, imperfect relationship between attitudes and behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein 1977). Williams noted that “to hypothesize an influence of values upon social behavior under specified conditions is not to make the absurd claim that all behavior is merely an expression of values and has no other determinants” (Williams 1979, p. 28). Behaviors may also be influenced by more than one value (Bardi & Schwartz 2003). Wojciszke (1989) offered three preconditions for the influence of a cognitive value structure on behavior. The structure must be (a) a well-established entity in a person’s cognitive system, (b) activated from long-term memory, and (c) accepted by a person as relevant and proper for conceiving of the current situation. This is not to say that values are unrelated to behavior, but merely that situational forces can overwhelm values (Maio et al. 2001). One reason for this less-than-perfect fit between attitudes and behaviors is that individuals often hold values without strong cognitive support (Maio & Olson 1998). This approach holds that values are truisms, believed in without well-articulated defenses, rendering them susceptible to arguments or social comparisons that challenge individuals’ values. Accordingly, articulating support for a particular value such as equality can lead toward behaviors enacting that value (Maio et al. 2001).

There is empirical evidence that behavioral changes can be brought about by changing core values (Ball-Rokeach et al. 1984, Rokeach 1973). Rokeach’s value self-confrontation method makes individuals aware of their particular value hierarchy and then gives information about how such a value constellation situates them with respect to positive and negative reference groups. When individuals find their value rankings are divergent from positive reference groups and are closer to negative reference groups, they are more likely to shift both values and behavior (Rokeach 1973). Being confronted with negative feedback leads to self-dissatisfaction and possible changes in values (Sanders & Atwood 1979). For example, influencing values produced significant changes with respect to weight loss (Schwartz & Inbar-Saban 1988) and smoking (Conroy 1979). Peffley et al. (2001) argued that values matter most for the politically sophisticated and presented tentative evidence (with questionable values measures) that such individuals are more tolerant and more easily persuaded to alter an attitude than are people who are less politically knowledgeable. Values that are central to the self, when energized, influence behaviors related to those values, suggesting that behavioral changes can occur through cognitively activating important values (Verplanken & Holland 2002).

A promising approach to theorizing this relationship involves Gecas's (2000) linking values with identity theory. He suggested that "value-identities" are important aspects of collectively shared identifications that become internalized at the individual level. Various social identities may mediate the links between personal values and identity-relevant behavior. Verplanken & Holland (2002) linked values and behavior through the concept of self: Values important to the self, when energized, lead to behavior congruent with those values.

There has been a modest body of work linking specific values with particular behaviors. Bardi & Schwartz (2003) examined the relationship between specific values and accordant behaviors and found that stimulation and tradition values correlate highly with related behaviors; hedonism, self-direction, universalism, and power values show "reasonable" associations; and security, conformity, and benevolence values relate weakly to behaviors expressing those values. The relationship between values and behaviors is qualified by situational influences: Stronger normative pressures can lead individuals to contradict their own values (Bardi & Schwartz 2003). Personal values are highly abstract reference points in the self-regulation of behavior (Wojciszke 1989). There is evidence that values are systematically related to voting behavior, cooperative behavior, and readiness for contact with members of an out-group (Schwartz 1996). Values may be an important part of understanding prejudice toward out-groups, though attitudes appear to be better predictors (Biernat et al. 1996). Values have been linked systematically with particular consumer purchases (see Kahle 1996 for a review). Personal values mix with consumerism to form the driving force behind the rise of pop music as individuals consume music that expresses their sense of identity (Dolfsma 1999). Values serve as moderating factors between role strain and drug use (Liu & Kaplan 2001): Individuals who subscribe to "conventional" values (patriotism, religion, importance of marriage) are more likely to turn to drug use when experiencing role strain. Halpern (2001) speculatively linked specific societal values with changes in national crime rates, offering the perspective that higher levels of "social trust" values in a society lead to more crime by increasing the opportunity for criminal activity by producing trusting potential victims; self-interested values lead to higher crime rates because such values provide psychological justifications for criminal activity.

## Aspects of the Self

Values are intimately tied to the self (Feather 1992, Smith 1991, Sherif 1936), although such links are rarely studied empirically. Recent attempts at such a link in psychology would be well informed by sociological scholarship of the self (i.e., Kasser 2002, Kristiansen & Hotte 1996, Rohan 2000). There is preliminary evidence that values are incorporated in the personal self-concept (Brewer & Roccas 2001); some suggest that values form the core of one's personal identity (Hitlin 2003). Verplanken & Holland (2002) argued that central values orient and regulate value-congruent action, although these authors view values as prior to—and not fundamentally intertwined with—the self. In contrast, Rokeach (1973, 1979)



held that self-conceptions are more central to a person than are values. People incorporate socially shared values into their self-concept, although there may be individual interpretation of these shared values (Smith 1991). Kluckhohn (1951) held that only some values are directly involved in the self. The nature of the self-value relationship is, obviously, an open question.

Values are related to a variety of self-processes. Kristiansen & Zanna (1991) suggested that self-monitoring mediates the relationship between attitudes and values. DeBono (1987) argued that low self-monitors link their attitudes to their values, whereas high self-monitors are more likely to shift their attitudes to be in line with situational pressures (see also Mellema & Bassili 1995). Seligman & Katz (1996) found that self-monitoring is not related to value ranking (nor are other individual differences, such as dogmatism, authoritarianism, need for cognition, and gender). Social commitments are channeled and shaped by one's values (Lydon 1996): The degree to which a goal or decision affirms core beliefs, values, and identities predicted commitment to volunteer work, pregnancy decisions, and long-distance dating relationships. Verplanken & Holland (2002) demonstrated that values important to the self have impacts on behavioral decisions. Allen et al. (2000) argued that individuals tending toward veganism were less likely to endorse values of hierarchical domination.

Finally, values are related to psychological well-being. Kasser & Ryan (1993, 1996) suggested that people who pursue intrinsic values report higher levels of self-actualization and show higher overall global functioning. Sagiv & Schwartz (2000) found no convincing evidence that benevolence and universalism are healthy or that power is unhealthy; rather, it is the congruence of an individual's values with those values emphasized in the social environment that contributes to positive or negative well-being. Mayton et al. (1994) held that values are protective of individuals' self-esteem. There is much work yet to be done to specify the relationships among self, values, and a variety of social identities and social psychological processes.

## CONCLUSION

The volume of empirical links found between social structure and individual values points to a promising arena for engaging debates relating to what has been variously termed "the micro-macro link," "social structure and personality," or the "agency/structure" problem. Values operate at the level of individuals, institutions, and entire societies (B. Schwartz 1993). Thus they provide the possibility for drawing links between individual, social structural, and cultural levels of analysis. We point to values as a potentially propitious arena in which to examine the reciprocal influences between social structural positions and individual functioning and decision making. An example of this is Campbell's (2002) recent call for greater focus on the place of ideas, rather than material interests, with respect to understanding public policy decisions and processes. Individuals' values frame the appropriate means and ends for social action, provide motivational impetus for such actions, and are vital for self-definition. Personal values are developed

and internalized in patterned ways by gender, social class, nation of origin, and a host of other socio-demographic variables. We suggest here that values occupy an important place within individuals' social psychology and thus can help us understand links between antecedent social positions and the individual choices that serve to reproduce aspects of social structure. Such an understanding allows also for individual innovation while allowing elements of agency to enter into the process of social stratification and reproduction. Improvements in both theory and measurement of values allow current scholars to better explore such relationships.

Work on values has grown vastly over the past two decades, both at the individual level and with respect to national-level analyses. Much of this work has failed to seep into sociology, perhaps because the findings are often involved with issues only tangentially important to sociologists. Future work, however, should take advantage of the improved conceptualizations and measurement. We suggest four areas for future research. First, work should engage the received wisdom about the relationship between social structural variables and individuals' values. For example, can the relationship between social class and value socialization include a wider set of values than those originally studied by Kohn and his associates? Second, much more research is needed with respect to the mechanisms by which values are transmitted across generations, as well as the ways in which values remain relatively stable at the level of nations. Third, a temporal dimension about values is virtually absent from the literature. What values do individuals hold at particular points across the life course? To what extent are values stable, and to what extent do they shift with individual and societal changes? Finally, sociological research on values tends to focus on the homogeneity of various social groups; more focus on the variation within social groups would point us toward a more realistic sense of the relationship between individuals and their social memberships. Many of our discipline's original thinkers engaged the concept of values. Recent improvements in the conceptualization and measurement of values may allow us to profitably re-engage some of the core issues of the discipline.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors thank Shalom Schwartz for his helpful review of an earlier draft of this paper.

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