**Abstract:** Models of population-wide cultural change tend to invoke one of two broad models of individual change. One approach theorizes that people actively update their beliefs in the face of new information. The other argues that, following early socialization experiences, individuals’ dispositions are stable. We formalize these two models, elaborate empirical implications of each, and derive a simple model for comparing their prevalence using panel data. We test this model on more than 184 attitude and behavior items from the 2006-14 rotating panels of the General Social Survey. The pattern of results is more consistent with the settled dispositions model than the active updating model, and most observed change in the GSS appears to be short-term attitude change or measurement error rather than persisting changes in belief. When persistent change occurs, it is somewhat more likely to occur in younger people than older people and more common for public behaviors and beliefs about high-profile issues than private attitudes. We argue that there is a place for both models in our theory of cultural evolution but that we need more evidence on the circumstances under which each is more likely to apply.