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Sustaining Democracy: A Study of Authoritarianism and Personalism in Irish Political Culture

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This paper offers a solution to a puzzle that arises from current theories about the correlates of stable democracy. The puzzle is how can a country characterized by highly authoritarian social and political structures establish a stable democracy and sustain it for more than seventy years. The country is the Republic of Ireland.

Irish democracy has been called "paradoxical," "ironic," and "unique," precisely because authoritarian social conditions and personalistic political behavior should inhibit such a democratic outcome. Some link the resilience of Irish democracy to the inculcation of British political traditions (Farrell 1971a; Chubb 1982). Others attribute it to the preexisting norms of a peasant society (Carty 1983; Praeger 1986; Schmitt 1973). Still others cite the fact that Ireland was considerably "modernized" when it became independent (Kissane 1995). All of these explanations of stable democracy in Ireland have merit, but none explain how a competitive, participatory, and liberal political order can be based on and rooted in a society that apparently exists in extreme contradiction to that order. This puzzle is especially acute in light of Eckstein's theory of congruence, which asserts that stable democracy requires congruence (resemblance) between governmental authority and the various other authority patterns of society (Eckstein 1966; 1992). The puzzle itself is intriguing and even more so as it seems to directly contradict well-established, plausible theories of the conditions of stable democracy (e.g., Almond and Verba 1963; Pye and Verba 1965; Putnam 1993).

My analysis involves three parts. First, I examine Irish institutions historically, to determine whether they have in fact been authoritarian and personalistic. Second, I empirically investigate contemporary Irish political culture with an emphasis on the effects of authoritarian orientations on that culture. Finally, and most important, I want to demonstrate that authoritarian and personalistic orientations have not only managed to exist in the democratic political order of Ireland but have, in fact, sustained it.

Theoretical Perspectives

To begin, we need to examine the theoretical interpretations of the relationship between political culture and democratic stability, emphasizing how authoritarian values affect a democratic political culture and democratic political processes. This section includes two parts. First, I examine the political culture literature and authority literature to determine the requisite elements for a democratic political culture and, in turn, how authoritarian values may influence or change these elements. Second, I introduce the theoretical structure that frames my explanation for Irish democratic stability. By building on the existing political culture research, I propose that Ireland introduces unique variations, which bring into question current concepts of an ideal democratic political culture and the necessary requisites for democratic stability.

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Political Culture and Authoritarian Values

The concept of political culture embodies a variety of definitions, reflecting the diverse research carried out in this subfield since the 1950s.⁽¹⁾ Gabriel Almond summarizes these ideas into the following general definition: it is the set of subjective orientations towards politics which affects how citizens interact with the political process and thus can influence governmental structures and performance. Political culture has cognitive, effective and evaluative components. In short, it includes knowledge and beliefs about political reality, feelings with respect to politics and commitments to political values (Almond 1993, p.15). Political culture also includes individual social structures and their relationship to governmental structures. Eckstein's congruence theory posits that democratic stability is related to the congruence between social and governmental authority patterns (Eckstein 1992).

The terms "authoritarian" and "authoritarianism" in this paper have a meaning that fits the Irish description: "a collective disposition to defer to decisions from those in superior positions in a power hierarchy" (Coakley 1993, p.30). Such deference to superiors is apparent in the role that the Catholic Church plays in the individual lives of Irish citizens and is emulated in family and work place relations.

Utilizing the general definitions above, this research will focus on the effects of authoritarian values on three specific elements of Irish political culture. I analyze the orientations and attitudes of individuals towards system support, political participation and the values of interpersonal trust and loyalty. What does political culture research identify as elements of a democratic political culture? In addition, how can authoritarian values influence the democratic norms? Finally, if the resulting Irish political culture differs from the civic culture model why has this not led to a less stable democracy?

System Support System support consists of the individual's knowledge, feelings and evaluations vis a vis the political institutions. Almond and Verba argue that confidence in such institutions is a key element in a democratic political culture, or "civic culture" (Almond and Verba 1963). Commitment to the political system must be balanced in terms of the individual combining a commitment to the operation of government and the system as a whole.

Authoritarian values involve allegiance to the system of government. While Almond and Verba do not argue that authoritarian values create a civic culture, such deferential norms reinforce a key element of democratic political cultures; confidence in institutions. Pye and Verba similarly find that power relations can affect individual support for the political system. They argue that democratic political cultures are characterized by hierarchical elements that facilitate effective leadership; however, these must be coupled with widespread sentiments of equality (Pye and Verba 1965). Authoritarian social structures would facilitate centrally effective leadership and, as a consequence, support for the system.

Pye and Verba also argue that a strong sense of civic loyalty is an integral element of democratic political cultures. They characterize this as an overriding identification with the nation as a whole and as a more particularized form in which citizens adhere to family or parochial group identifications. They observe that a healthy democracy is characterized by individuals who possess orientations towards the political system as a whole alongside more "primordial attachments" which give vitality to local community cohesion and participation (Pye and Verba 1965). Adorno similarly maintains that national loyalty is a dominant characteristic of authoritarian personalities. He argues that authoritarian values imbue a strong sense of larger

group identification in the individual (Adorno 1950). Loyalty or national allegiance is reinforced by authoritarian norms.

Political Participation Political participation is also a key element in democratic political cultures. Almond and Verba describe the overall feature of the civic culture as a "mixed" political culture in which individuals are "participants" in the political system, yet also "subject." They argue that participatory activity in politics must be balanced by a measure of passivity and noninvolvement (Almond and Verba 1963), and that a balance between governmental power and responsiveness to participation is also required. A government must act independently, but must be balanced with responsiveness to the concerns of citizens. Political culture research⁽²⁾ warns us that a system tilted toward governmental power, as in a rigidly hierarchical system in which deference to political elites is commonplace, can lead to low levels of political participation and thus potentially may damage the future stability of a democratic system (Almond and Verba 1963; Putnam 1993; Pye and Pye 1985; Berg-Schlosser and Rytlewski 1993; Baker, Dalton and Hildebrandt 1981).

The effect of authoritarian values on democratic participatory norms has generated a debate regarding participatory norms in social structures (Eckstein 1992; Pennock and Chapman 1987; Flathman 1980). This debate focuses on whether structures such as family, church and work place actually can be democratized, and whether these structures are intrinsically hierarchical? Hannah Arendt poses the question whether there are inherent differences between various modes of social activity and whether or not it is appropriate to apply the same concepts and criteria to them all. Hierarchical authority, for instance, may be essential in child rearing, but not in the political sphere (Carter 1979). Adorno argues further that a strongly hierarchical parent-child relationship can lead to general submissiveness and apathy by individuals (Adorno et al. 1950). This debate warns us of the negative influence hierarchical or deference norms may have on democratic values of participation.

Interpersonal Trust Another key element of Almond and Verba's civic culture is the presence of a high level of social and interpersonal trust in society. They argue it is equally important for this trust to penetrate into the realm of political relationships. This enables the citizens to influence the government by collaborating to create ad hoc political structures. Trust is important for political bargaining and consensus building. Failure to attain this, Almond and Verba argue, leads to the "imbalance between consensus and cleavage" (Almond and Verba 1963, p.362). Pye and Verba argue that diffuse distrust and blind or uncritical trust for higher authority forces are equally detrimental forces to the creation of a democratic political culture (Pye and Verba 1965). Both in his historical analysis of Northern and Southern Italy and more generally, Putnam reveals the importance of trust in creating civic capacity, a component he argues is essential for democratic institutions to succeed and flourish (Putnam 1993; 1995).

Political culture research argues that authoritarian values do not promote interpersonal trust. However, when combined with Irish personalistic social relations, authoritarian norms help create and reinforce strong interpersonal trust in society. This relationship between Irish personalism and authoritarianism will be discussed in the following section. For now, it is important to draw attention to this relationship and the importance of social trust for democratic political culture.

In summary, political culture research would suggest that authoritarian values have a distinct effect on a democratic political system. Deference to a higher authority directs the individual's allegiance to the system as a whole; reinforcing both confidence in political institutions and high levels of national loyalty. It has also been found that systems characterized

by hierarchical norms tend to inhibit or discourage individual participation in the political process. Finally, political culture research has demonstrated that interpersonal trust is a key societal component of stable democratic systems. Although, this research has not shown a general link between authoritarian values and social trust, I argue that in Irish society there is a relationship between the two. Authoritarianism, when combined with Irish personalism, reinforces interpersonal trust throughout Irish social relations.

Authority Patterns and Democratic Stability

The role of deference in Irish political culture becomes more understandable in light of Eckstein's congruence theory. A civic culture model fails to explain how hierarchy and deference, conditions that normally suppress "democratic" participatory norms, may create the environment for democratic stability. Eckstein's theory, in contrast, delves further into the examination of democratic stability beyond the element of liberal democratic institutions. Eckstein argues that many theories have explained the institutional conditions connected to stable democracy, such as a certain type of party system or consensus in governmental form. However, congruence theory explains "what conditions underlie the requisite syndrome of favorable conditions" (Eckstein 1992, p.185). This study attempts to understand these underlying conditions.

Ireland stands as a "crucial case" for testing the hypothesis that underlies congruence theory, because the anomalous characteristic of its political culture is a special challenge to the theory. The theory focuses on social authority patterns and their congruence with the governmental authority patterns. The first proposition of the theory is stated as follows:

Government will be stable,

(1) if social authority patterns are identical with the governmental pattern, or

(2) if they constitute a graduated pattern in a proper segmentation of society or

(3) if a high degree of resemblance exists in patterns adjacent to government and one

finds throughout the more distant segments a marked departure from functionally appropriate patterns for the sake of imitating the governmental patterns or extensive imitation of the governmental pattern in ritual practices (Eckstein 1992, p.191).

Furthermore, Eckstein argues that government instability will occur if the authority pattern of the government institutions is significantly different from other social segments of the society. He also notes that instability can result if an abrupt change in authority patterns occurs in an adjacent societal unit. Eckstein concludes that differing authority patterns within societal strata containing political elites can also lead to instability (Eckstein 1992).

The theory's first proposition contains the conditions necessary for governmental stability, and a second proposition relates it to democratic stability. Eckstein maintains that an indispensable element of stable democracy is the need for "balanced disparities" in the government structure. Eckstein's second proposition states "governmental democracy will tend to be stable only if it is to a significant extent impure-if, in short, the governmental authority pattern contains a balance of disparate elements, of which democracy is an important part (but only a part)" (Eckstein 1992, p.207). To clarify and summarize the theory as a whole; it argues that democratic stability is most likely to occur when governmental and social authority patterns are congruent and where governmental authority patterns contain disparate elements (such that a democratic government would not have solely pluralistic authority patterns).

One must realize when studying democratic stability that there are many types of democracies and thus varying conditions or elements characteristic of stable democracies. The special utility of congruence theory is that it permits us to identify these. The theory's second proposition provides a flexible framework in which one can better understand democratic stability in terms of the varying combinations of disparate elements present in different nations. Congruence theory not only provides a framework for understanding Irish democracy, but also stands to explain the varying conditions that characterize stable democracies.

The theoretical perspectives sketched in this section offer a set of testable hypotheses. In moving from the dictates of the political culture framework, I can expect to find predictable outcomes regarding the effects of authoritarian orientations and their interaction with personalism on Irish political culture. These expectations can be stated as propositions. (1) Those individuals with more authoritarian orientations will be more likely to possess attitudes of strong system support and national loyalty. (2) Those individuals who possess stronger authoritarian orientations will be less likely to be active political participants. (3) Those individuals with more authoritarian orientations will be more likely to possess higher levels of interpersonal trust.

These three hypotheses will guide my empirical analysis. However, a separate set of hypotheses is necessary to take this analysis one step further to examine the interaction between authoritarianism and Irish democratic stability. By utilizing Eckstein's theoretical framework, I would expect predictable outcomes. (1) If congruence exists between social and governmental authority patterns and (2) where within the governmental authority pattern there are dominant disparate elements, (3) then one can expect a stable democratic system. Together these two sets of hypotheses guide the core of the analysis in this paper.

The Roots of Irish Political Culture

This section presents an analysis of authoritarianism and personalism in Irish political culture. The first part of the analysis offers a historical account of authoritarian orientations in Irish social structures and governmental institutions. This is followed by a historical account of how these deference authority patterns interact with a dominant element in Irish social networks: personalism. Once I establish that authoritarian attitudes are strongly characteristic of Irish society, the second part of the analysis tests their effect on the political culture.

Social Authority Patterns

Irish authoritarian attitudes or patterns of deference can historically be found in the major social structures of Irish society: the Catholic Church, the family, the education system and the workplace. This analysis relies on sociological and anthropological researchers that have studied Irish social structures in pre-independent Ireland (before 1922) through to contemporary Ireland.

The Catholic Church A full 84 percent of Irish respondents state that religion is important in their lives and 72 percent have confidence in the Church. These high levels of religiosity highlight the importance and dominance of the Catholic Church in Irish society. Its hierarchical pattern not only structures religious social networks, but influences decision-making patterns in the family and the school. The strength of the Catholic Church in Irish society has undergone a noticeable decline over time, as seen from such events as its official separation from the State in 1972 and the recent referendums on abortion and divorce. However, the very high percentage

who still regard it highly in their lives and still possess high levels of confidence in this institution, show that the Catholic Church maintains a strong presence in Irish society.

Chubb (1982) observes that traditionally Irish Catholicism was "cold and authoritarian," a puritanical variety that remained separate from European influences. The Church was structured toward the needs of a peasant population. The "Hierarchy" (the clergy) not only served as spiritual leaders to the people, they played a dominant role in the political creation of the Irish State. The Constitution of Ireland (Bunreacht na hÉireann), after it replaced the negotiated Irish Free State Constitution of 1922, attempted to reconcile British liberal democratic traditions with Catholic social teachings. This is evident from conservative public policies pertaining to marriage and divorce, contraception, censorship and education (Chubb 1982). Although contraception laws were loosened in the 1970's and divorce laws recently underwent change, these alterations offered only piecemeal attempts to loosen the grip of Catholic ideology on public policy.

The individual political power of the "hierarchy" or the state's inclusion of Catholic ideology in the policy area are not the only factors perpetuating the dominance of this belief system in Irish society. Survey results from independence to 1979 led John Whyte to conclude that "the hierarchy is more than just one interest group among many; but it is not so powerful that Ireland must be considered a theocratic state" (Whyte 1980). Instead, the durability of Catholicism throughout Irish society can be seen as an acceptance by a large majority of the people to a set of Catholic values, one of which is deference to a higher authority.

Father A.J. Humphreys, an American sociologist, argues that this particular set of Irish Catholic values is unique from the generalizable beliefs of Catholicism. He identifies the Irish belief system as originating in the Augustinian tradition, in which great emphasis is placed on deference to authority, namely the clergy and God. Humphreys describes this theology as

"It attributes relatively less efficacy to natural knowledge and human action and relatively more validity to God's revelation and more power to the action of God's grace. Under the impact, of this particular Catholic conception of life, aided and abetted by the traditionalism, characteristic of the rural areas, the Irish countryman has acquired a more than average distrust of native human reason. The tradition he inherits tends towards a certain historical and theological positivism in regards to the major truths and values of life, and together with other historical factors has led him to an intensified reliance upon the teaching power of the Church as voiced by the clergy" (Humphreys 1966, p.26).

This type of Catholicism helps to cement a pattern of deference into the everyday lives of the Irish people. This norm of deference is further reinforced by the physical structure of the Catholic Church. This structure became the model social structures throughout Irish society. The structure of the Catholic clergy or "Hierarchy" is just that, hierarchical. Inglis describes the Catholic Church as "a highly authoritarian, bureaucratic organization and also a centralized, multinational organization claiming universal legal competence" (Inglis 1989).

The Catholic Church maintains a highly centralized power structure, yet insures its pervasive dominance through a complex network of trajectory power structures. At the core is the Vatican, from which outstretches a bureaucratic hierarchical structure comprised of bishops, priests, nuns, brothers, and the laity. Each level of this hierarchy follows a rigorous system of deferential discipline. Unlike most bureaucratic organizations, the Catholic Church's administrative staff possesses a quite clear allegiance and deference to their "boss." The staff or clergy, are generally life long members and are dedicated through vows of obedience, celibacy

and poverty (Inglis 1989). This unusual voluntary deference ensures the hierarchical structure of the Church.

Where does the common Irish person fit into this hierarchy? At the bottom. The pattern of deferring decision-making to a higher authority is enforced by Church administrative staff in the act of taking vows, but what ensures similar behavior from the general society? As a state's political power is founded on a monopoly of the means of coercion, the Church's moral power is ultimately grounded in its means of social and religious coercion, i.e. denial of salvation, excommunication and loss of social prestige (Inglis 1989). Detailed personal knowledge of parishioners' behavior is a key element of this coercion and is linked to the unique authority position the priest holds in an Irish community.

While the parish priest stands as the spiritual moral advisor for a community, he is often consulted on a variety of social, political and economic issues. His formal status is derived both from his religious duties in the parish, but also as head manager of the local school and traditionally as one of the more prestigious and educated members of the community. The parish priest holds the informal status of being a highly respected community member. This is displayed by the continual advice and permission sought from the parish priest. If an outside group or individual becomes involved with the community on a social, political, or economic level they will usually make contact with the parish priest (Inglis 1989).

This priest's position of authority in the community is often used by the laity as a vehicle for their own social prestige. The closer one is to the arbiter of morality the more moral one appears. The priest often gains information regarding parishioner behavior from community members who willingly inform the priest of misdemeanors, moral laxity and defiance of the Catholic moral code committed by fellow parishioners. Furthermore, the priest gains information through confession, and house visitations. This unique symbiotic relationship between the priest and the community, in which the priest's superiority and authority is maintained, creates a structure of deference. As the parish priest becomes less prestigious in modern Irish communities and his knowledge of parishioners' lives wanes, there may also be a decline in the priest's ability to secure coercive power. Ultimately, if the Catholic Church diminishes its power in Irish communities, a decline in deference may also occur.

The Family The Irish family is a second important social structure. Catholicism has either an explicit or implicit presence in most social networks in Ireland, and when studying these individual social structures one must keep in mind the underlying presence of the requisite hierarchical pattern of the Irish Catholic Church. One of the most significant elements of the traditional Irish family is male dominance. Major decisions, primarily economic, are made by the male head of household. The role of the father in traditional Irish families is described as "although the father does not take a very active part in family life, he is nevertheless an autocrat, and his word when he chooses is law" (Schmitt 1973, p.46). The role of the mother in the Irish family structure has changed slowly since Independence. As now, education and marriage decisions are largely controlled by the Irish mother.

Another element of Irish family authority patterns is a widely held respect for the elderly. Traditionally the elderly members of the community held more than just honorific positions, and controlled a great amount of the decision-making power (alongside the clergy). In the recent past, it was quite common to find local public opinion and action being determined by an informal group of older men in the community. Thus, even though local elections were held and widespread participation was encouraged, there was a pattern of deference in which community members gave a large share of the decision-making power to a small group of elderly men.

Similar to this community-wide deference to age, a similar pattern exists within the nuclear family. Irish children treat their parents with a unique unconditional respect. This is not only a characteristic of small children towards their parents, but it is found that this deference lasts well into adulthood (Schmitt 1973).

This analysis of Irish family deference patterns illustrates the foundations of the Irish familial tradition. Many of these patterns remained strong until the 1970's, but have begun to experience gradual change in the last 20 years. As more women enter the workforce and more families move to the urban areas, the traditional structure of the family inevitably changes. However, the family structures may have changed with women no longer at home full time and the aged living in the more rural areas and young families moving to the urban areas, yet the cultural patterns are slower to follow suit. Even in present day Ireland, age, both in the family and the greater community still constitutes an important focal point of social authority and deference (Chubb 1982).

The Education System The Irish education system is highly influenced by the Catholic Church, both its physical operation and in its ideological teachings. The result is an education system that closely resembles the deference pattern espoused by the Church. Organized religion has dominated the education system since reforms in the 19th Century. "National" or primary schools are arranged by denomination. Because the government funds both Catholic and Protestant schools, their facilities and curriculum must adhere to national standards. However, the resulting system is described as "fundamentally one of private religious education" (Schmitt 1973, p.50). As mentioned previously, the Church remains a strong influence in certain aspects of government policy, and often government educational standards reveal religious beliefs and attitudes (Atkinson 1969).

The authority pattern within Irish schools, although changing slightly since independence, has largely kept their conditions of being "traditional and authoritarian" (Schmitt 1973, p.50). The students do not participate in daily decision-making roles, boys and girls largely remain at separate institutions and the students are given little freedom to control even their school social activities. The Irish national schools place great emphasis on reinforcing similar deference values as those exhibited in the family. Principle themes in a national school education are "deference to authority, obedience to regulations and veneration of age and religion" (Schmitt 1973, p.50). Excessive corporal punishment was common place in Irish schools.⁽³⁾ However, a national debate in the 1970s arose over the excessive nature of this punishment and the practice subsequently decreased (Schmitt 1973).

There is a direct relation between the learned deference to authority in the education system and the hierarchical pattern of the government bureaucracy. Most politicians and civil servants received their education in national schools. Mathuna has pointed to the fact that the notoriously strict Christian Brother schools were especially prominent in the training of Irish civil servants. His analysis revealed that these authority patterns were retained by the young men and carried over into their work relations. The learned deference behavior helps to explain the substantially deference oriented activities of the Irish civil servant (Schmitt 1973). This will be examined further in the following section on governmental authority patterns.

Another important element of the Irish education system is its role in creating and sustaining a sense of national allegiance. In the early years after independence, this allegiance was based on deference and obedience, rather than values instilled through civic education. These generalized authoritarian values instilled in school children were directly translated into support for the new government and the cultivation of patriotic values. However, by the 1970s

the Department of Education created a formal civics course to further socialize students politically. Interestingly enough, the value of deference remained a strong component in the overall purpose of the course, as stated in the following Department of Education description:

"The special object of a course in Civics will be to ensure that the pupils acquire an adequate knowledge of and a proper respect for local and national institutions and of their own rights and responsibilities as citizens. The course will have, also, as a prime objective the teaching of the young citizen to recognize and obey lawful authority, to help preserve law, order and discipline, to respect private and public rights and property and to be ready to defend the national territory should the need arise" (Schmitt 1973, p.40).

Overall, the authority structure of Irish schools are hierarchical as they are highly influenced by both the belief system and structure of the Catholic Church. Deference continues to be taught as a valued action in both the child's social and future political life.

The Workplace The final social structure this analysis focuses on is the workplace. As most adults spend the majority of their waking hours working, this social structure can be especially important in influencing or reinforcing an individual's behavior. Both Schmitt and Banfield argue that hierarchical norms provided for the development and maintenance of economic and political organizations in the newly independent Republic (Schmitt 1973; Banfield 1958). The principal means for maintenance coordination were hierarchical organizations, in which most organizational tasks were handled by deference oriented administrative units. Banfield also states that this deference structure fostered a feeling of loyalty to the organization that stimulated a willingness to accept direction. A similar authority pattern is seen in the education system. It is argued that these attitudes and actions of loyalty and compliance are especially important to a new nation. They help abate feelings of alienation, uncertainty, and hostility brought on by social change which if let alone could prove detrimental to administrative goals.

Adherence to the Catholic Church plays a strong role in establishing a certain work ethic and belief system that guides economic pursuits. Material possessions are of little value in a belief system in which the "good life" is defined by a commitment to spiritual things and in opposition to materialism. Furthermore, Inglis concluded that "the Church's teaching that salvation is attained by following its rules and regulation has discouraged individuals from making up their own minds about what is right and wrong" (Inglis 1989, p. 72). This belief combined with a suppression of individual interests in favor of the Church, family and community have led to a society characterized by low individual participation and little independent initiative in the workplace (Inglis 1989). Ambitious individualism and the entrepreneurial spirit have traditionally not been encouraged, thus leaving Irish workers more apt to defer to the authority of their managers. The authority pattern of the workplace is largely characterized by deference and respect.

Political Authority Patterns

The previous section revealed that Irish social structures possess hierarchical and deference oriented authority patterns. Following the requisites of congruence theory, we would expect the Irish governmental authority patterns to exhibit similar hierarchical patterns given Ireland's history of stable democracy.

Generally, the structure of the Irish Government is similar to the British model. However, the Irish Cabinet actually has more formal power than the British system, and it is argued that the "cabinet holds within itself a near monopoly of major public decisions" (Farrell 1971b, p.83).

Within the Cabinet, the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) has the predominant role. While he must be cognizant of factions and leaders within his party, he contains relative freedom in choosing Cabinet members and assigning departmental responsibilities. Formally, the Taoiseach sets the agenda for Cabinet meetings, decides when to convene and dissolve the Dáil and acts as the spokesperson for Government decisions. Eamon de Valera exemplifies the power that the Taoiseach can potentially wield within the already highly centralized power of the Cabinet. His domineering personality enabled him to maximize his constitutional powers as he regularly imposed his policy decisions on the Government (Chubb 1982).

From the dominant policymaking role of the Taoiseach and Cabinet one can see that the Dáil plays a small role in initiating legislation. TDs (Teachta Dála-member of parliament) generally defer to the policy decisions of party leaders or the Government, reinforcing a hierarchical authority pattern. As seen in the Dáil, the civil service also maintains a general deference to a centralized power authority. This authority pattern has been studied by scholars from the early years after independence to modern day Ireland (Barrington 1980; Chubb 1982; Whelan 1994). Chubb describes these higher civil servants as "intellectually able and hard working but rather narrowly practical in their approach....They were on account of their schooling, likely to accept the 'system' with little question" (Chubb 1982, p. 267). A distinctively Irish pattern of deference and hierarchy was perpetuated throughout the civil service.

Overall there is great consensus among scholars who study Irish political institutions. The decision-making structure is hierarchical and an accepted norm of deference exists both between and within political institutional structures. From this conclusion, we can now answer the question at the center of this historical analysis. Are the authority patterns of Irish social structures and political institutions congruent? The example of the civil service is the most direct in illustrating the relationship that we have found between norms of behavior in social and political institutions. As mentioned earlier, most Irish civil servants were traditionally schooled by the Christian Brothers, a notoriously strict education; and as we can now see, this learned deference was translated into the behavioral pattern expected of Irish civil servants. From this historical analysis, we can conclude that Irish authority patterns are distinctively and consistently authoritarian. This pervasive deference has created a strong congruence between the social structures and political institutions in Ireland.

Measuring Authoritarian Attitudes

We have discussed how social institutions should develop support for hierarchy and deference to authority in Irish culture. We can test these expectations with a recent survey of Irish public opinion. In 1990 a national sample of Irish citizens were interviewed as part of the World Values Survey. The survey covered such broad topics as work, the meaning and purpose of life, family life and contemporary social issues. In addition, this survey included a variety of questions that directly tap our interests in Irish political culture.

The individual measures in Table 1 are drawn from the following survey questions: (1) Greater respect for authority is a good thing, bad thing or neither? (2) Regardless of what the qualities and faults of one's parents are, one must always love and respect them (3) How much confidence do you have in the church? (4) Some say that one should follow instructions of one's superiors even when one does not fully agree with them.

The table's findings are compatible with the social authority norms revealed in my historical analysis. The hierarchical social structures have led to a culture possessing strong

authoritarian orientations and attitudes. For instance, the Irish possess over 25 percent higher levels of respect for authority than their European counterparts. Two other variables measure deference both in the family and workplace. Almost half of the Irish respondents feel one should unconditionally follow instructions at work and over three-fourths possess unconditional respect for their parents. In a comparative European perspective, the Irish, again, possess stronger authoritarian attitudes. The fourth variable measures confidence in the Catholic Church, and the Irish again score higher than other Europeans. While this is not directly measuring an authoritarian attitude, my historical analysis reveals the value of this variable. This measure reveals public support and acceptance of a social institution that demands a deferential norm and preaches the value of this behavior. These data illustrate how the historical social norm of deference is translated into contemporary public attitudes

Table 1 Ireland and European Comparison on Social Authoritarian Indicators, 1990		
	Percentage agreeing	
	Ireland	European average
Respect for authority is a good thing	83	57
Unconditional respect for parents	77	69
Unconditionally follow instructions at work	47	36
Confidence in Church: great deal or quite a lot	72	51
<i>Source: World Values Survey 1990-1993</i>		

Complementing Authoritarianism: Egalitarian Personalism

The previous discussion of Irish social and governmental authority patterns may leave one wondering why Ireland is a democracy and not a dictatorship? The following historical explanation of Irish personalism will answer this question and introduce the disparate element that is integral to understanding Irish democratic stability. Virtually every individual who has studied Ireland has observed the importance of close personal connections amongst Irish communities and families. Schmitt argues that "while all societies maintain important networks of interpersonal organization, few have such that are as pronounced as the Irish pattern, and many have been far less cohesive" (Schmitt 1973, p.55). In the political arena, personalism is understood in terms of clientalism and brokerage. This personalistic relationship between voters and politicians has been one of the major topics of ethnographic research in Ireland.⁽⁴⁾ I will first briefly describe this phenomenon of Irish personalism and then explain its role in Irish politics.

Schmitt defines personalism "as a pattern of social relations in which people are valued for who they are and whom they know-not solely for what technical qualifications they possess" (Schmitt 1973, p.55). At first glance one might be tempted to apply the patron-client literature to

Irish politics, but it is important to understand why this is not appropriate. While clientalism reveals a predominately unequal quality between superiors or patrons and subordinates to whom favors are dispensed, the Irish pattern is one of brokerage and reciprocal favors among equals. Schmitt argues that Irish personalism, while sub par from participatory norms has acted as a mechanism of political responsiveness and accountability to public demands (Schmitt 1973).

Personalism in Irish society has its historical roots in the clannish quality of early Celtic society. Various studies throughout this century have documented the dominance of personalism in Irish social networks. French scholar Paul-Du Bois, who wrote about early 20th century Ireland, argues that a strong sense of community was the predominate characteristic of Irish people. Plunkett observed the "informal, inherent cooperativeness of Irishmen" and the advantage this had on the newly democratizing Ireland. Arensberg and Kimball carried out a study of Irish social organizations in County Clare and systematically revealed a society "replete with mutual support based upon personal considerations." It was not the mutual support alone that this study claimed was unique, but rather the extraordinary high levels of mutual trust exhibited in these interpersonal relations (Schmitt 1973).

Another study carried out by Hannan revealed multi-level personalistic networks in Irish communities. His study revealed the strength of neighborhood networks, which Hannan argues is derived from wide spread "reciprocal assistance" found throughout Irish society. One might expect to find more personalistic relations in the rural communities, however studies performed in Dublin have revealed similar results. Humphreys conducted research in Dublin and found that "cross-culturally, the urban family and familial kinship and neighborhood groupings in Dublin are undoubtedly among the very strongest in solidarity and power to be found in urban communities in Western societies" (Schmitt 1973, Ch. 5). The overall conclusion of these studies is that personalism in Irish society has created an unwavering amount of interpersonal trust, support and loyalty to the community and system, social cohesion, and equality in the community.

Then how is this personalism translated into the Irish political system? And how does it in affect act as a balancing mechanism to offset the hierarchical nature of Irish government institutions? Personalism acts to facilitate one of the most important aspects of democracy. It creates the perception that one can and will participate in governmental decision-making and that the government is in effect responsive to these actions. This is most widely seen in the relationship between the TD and their constituents. Unlike many larger countries, the average number of constituents in a given district is approximately 20,000 people. This allows for a great deal of individual interaction between TDs and constituents. As explained earlier, one of the main purposes of the TD, as their legislative role is minimal, is service to their constituents. Most TDs live amongst their constituents and devote much of their time to meeting constituent needs. Bax in studying Irish political social relations argues that Irish politics is characterized by a highly developed brokerage system. Citizens place demands on both TDs and local councilors to intercede on their behalf in administrative dealings. However, Bax explicitly notes that the politician does not act as a patron, as they can not directly grant favors, but instead acts as a broker between citizens and the administrators who do hold power over the resources (Bax 1970). This relationship between the constituent and their TD is indicative of the personalistic element, as they are largely characterized by reciprocal loyalty and trust.

Another aspect of personalism is observed in Irish political participation patterns. There is a distinct propensity to act individually and to do so through personal connections. A constituent is more apt to contact their TD personally, or to communicate through a friend or

relative who knows the TD personally. A survey revealed that while 52 percent of national subjective competents (those who could do something about an unjust national law) mentioned personally contacting a TD as a strategy of opposing the unjust law, only 4 percent suggested protesting through a group. Similarly, 42 percent of local subject competents mentioned personally contacting local elected representatives, however only 5 percent would organize a group to do the same activity (Raven and Whelan 1976). A pattern of political contacting characterizes both urban and rural communities. Komito concludes from his study of personalism in Dublin politics that, similar to findings in rural communities, personal links are a key element of urban politics. He did find that although Dubliners are less likely to depend on personal contacts with politicians they did not directly approach state functionaries, but instead utilized other personal mediators who were chosen surprisingly on the basis of being "friends" (Komito 1993).

This interpersonal trust and loyalty is also exhibited in the civil service. While interception by TDs and local councilors serve to put a superficial public check on the bureaucracy's power, an unusual norm of integrity amongst Irish administrators facilitates this, too. The Irish have one of the most honest public bureaucracies in comparison to other political systems (Schmitt 1973; Chubb 1982). These aspects of personalism, trust and loyalty, have successfully acted as a balance to the possible bureaucratic arbitrariness which can occur in a system characterized by a deference authority pattern.

Personalism in Irish politics and society creates a high degree of interpersonal trust, support for the community and political system, equality and a reciprocal loyalty between citizens and government officials. Those individuals who possess strong authoritarian orientations are also inculcated in social networks characterized by egalitarian personalism.

Empirical Investigation of Political Culture

We have seen that the Irish political and social institutions are characterized by strong authoritarian orientations in which deference and respect for a higher authority dominate Irish attitudes and actions. This deference is constrained by the effects of personalism which generally create a high degree of interpersonal trust and a reciprocal loyalty between citizens and government officials. We will now empirically test the effect of these authoritarian values on Irish political culture.

Political culture theory suggests predictable outcomes regarding the effects of authoritarian orientations and their interaction with personalism on Irish political culture. First, those individuals with more authoritarian orientations should possess attitudes of strong system support. Second, those individuals who possess stronger authoritarian orientations should be less active politically. Finally, those individuals with more authoritarian orientations should possess higher levels of interpersonal trust.

As the basis for these analyses, I created an index to measure the strength of Irish authoritarian orientations. The index⁽⁵⁾ is comprised of four indicators of authoritarian orientations from Table 1: authority orientations from the family, workplace, the Catholic Church and general respect for authority. The index is created by counting the respondent's agreement with the authoritarian response on each item. Those who gave no authoritarian responses (only 30 out of the 983 sample) were collapsed into those who gave one response. Table 2 details the distribution of the index. I believe this creates a strong measures of authoritarian orientations in Ireland.

Table 2 Authoritarian Index	
Authoritarian Ranking	Percent
Low (0,1)	12.5
Mid-low (2)	20.3
Mid-high (3)	38.8
High (4)	28.4
Total ^a	100% (983)
^a 17 missing cases <i>Source: World Values Survey 1990-1993</i>	

System Support

Our first analyses examines how authoritarian orientations are translated into support for five different political institutions; parliament, civil service, police, legal system and army (Table 3). I have chosen to focus on the two dichotomous responses of a having "a lot" of support or "none" in order to see if the pattern is consistent within the extremes. An overall pattern is revealed in the responses given for all five institutions. Those who hold a higher authority ranking tend to have more confidence in the institutions. A full 20 percent of those individuals with the highest authority ranking possess "a lot" of confidence in parliament. Whereas, almost an equal percentage of individuals with the lowest authority ranking possess no confidence in the same institution.

This empirical evidence supports the hypothesis that hierarchical and deference orientations have not led to a population that lacks confidence in or lacks a feeling of legitimacy for their political institutions. Instead congruence between the social and political institutions reinforces the authoritarian behavioral norm and leads to stronger support for the system. It is important to note that in comparative perspective Ireland outscored its European counterparts on all institutions. Interestingly, the Irish outscored the European average by 20 percent in confidence for the Civil Service, even though this institution is seen as highly hierarchical and removed from the citizenry.

Similarly, in looking at levels of national loyalty in a comparative perspective, the Irish outscored their European counterparts by nearly 40 percent. However, a noticeable pattern occurs within these high levels of Irish national loyalty. The pattern is similar to support for individual institutions, albeit generally higher, in that those possessing more authoritarian orientations have a stronger national identity. 85.3 percent of those who gave four authoritarian responses are very proud to be Irish compared to only 58.7 percent of those with only one or no authority responses showing strong national loyalty.

Table 3 System Support by Authoritarian Ranking, 1990						
	Authoritarian Ranking					
	Low ----- High					
Support Level	0,1	2	3	4	N=	r=
Parliament a lot	2.2	7.6	13.8	20.1	976	.21**
none	19.4	10.6	9.0	9.0		
Civil Service a lot	4.9	5.6	14.2	18.6	978	.27**
none	18.7	11.2	6.3	2.9		
Police a lot	16.3	20.0	43.2	47.3	980	.28**
none	9.8	1.0	3.2	1.4		
Legal System a lot	2.4	8.6	13.7	16.9	978	.18**
none	22.8	11.7	8.4	6.1		
Army a lot	5.7	11.5	23.6	30.5	983	.28**
none	13.0	10.5	5.5	3.2		
Proud to be Irish very	58.7	69.2	81.0	85.3	976	.21**
* Significance at the .05 level; ** Significance at the .01 level <i>Source: World Values Survey 1990-1993</i>						

Political Participation

The next analysis tests the relationship between political participation and authoritarian orientations (Table 4). The four survey questions regarding political participation offer a measure of the respondents active participation in conventional (sign petition and lawful demonstration) and unconventional (join a boycott and unofficial strike) activities. This participation analysis focuses on physical participation rather than political interest in order to measure the affects of authoritarian norms on actual behavior. Individuals who possess more authoritarian orientations are less likely to participate in any of these political activities. In general, the Irish are not active participants in their political system, and those who possess deferential characteristics are even less participatory. This empirical evidence validates the claim that the hierarchical political and

especially social structures in Ireland have socialized the Irish into less politically active citizens. The lack of active participation in decision-making in the family, school and workplace is translated into similar behavior in the political arena.

Table 4 Political Participation and Protest by Authoritarian Ranking, 1990						
	Authoritarian Ranking					
	Low ----- High					
Type of Participation	0,1	2	3	4	N=	r=
Sign Petition have done never	61.5 7.4	45.2 11.7	40.4 18.1	33.7 28.2	968	-.20**
Lawful Demonstration have done never	27.6 22.8	21.8 37.8	12.4 44.4	13.5 51.5	968	-.19**
Join Boycott have done never	14.9 27.3	8.4 49.7	7.2 62.5	3.0 76.8	956	-.30**
Unofficial Strike have done never	2.5 45.8	3.2 67.9	4.3 75.0	3.7 86.2	946	-.21**
* Significance at the .05 level; ** Significance at the .01 level Source: World Values Survey 1990-1993						

Interpersonal Trust

Our last analyses depict how authoritarian orientations affect levels of interpersonal trust and national loyalty an individual possesses. In European comparisons, the Irish are characterized by extremely high levels of social trust. 80 percent of the Irish possess trust for other nationals and 98 percent possess trust in their families. How do authoritarian orientations cause a variation in these overall high levels of trust? Out of the respondents receiving an authority ranking of 1, only 13.9 percent claimed complete trust in other Irish, whereas, 39.6 percent of respondents who possess the highest authority orientation answered similarly.

Table 5 *Interpersonal Trust by Authoritarian Ranking, 1990*

	Authoritarian Ranking					
	Low - - - - - High					
Type of Trust	0,1	2	3	4	N=	r=
Trust in Family completely	85.4	87.5	95.0	96.8	978	.17**
Trust Irish completely	13.9	21.5	32.6	39.6	980	.22**
* Significance at the .05 level; ** Significance at the .01 level Source: World Values Survey 1990-1993						

Overall, the authority index has illustrated the correlates of the uniquely high authoritarian orientations in Ireland. It demonstrated how the authoritarian attitudes in Irish respondents influences how their feeling and actions towards the political system. This creates a more exact explanation of Irish political culture. The Irish have high levels of support for their political institutions, low levels of political participation and high levels of social trust and loyalty. These analyses also reveal the direct effect of authoritarian attitudes on these characteristics of the political culture.

Conclusions

As this study has demonstrated, Irish social and political institutions are historically characterized by a norm of deference. These institutions are similarly infused with egalitarian personalism and act dynamically with authoritarian values to create a unique political culture. Irish political culture is characterized by high levels of system support, relatively low levels of active participation in the political system, and high levels of social trust. The empirical investigation demonstrated that authoritarian values increased the strength of these three characteristics. These findings present a model deficient of the democratic participatory norms hailed as essential to the civic culture model of democratic political culture. However, I argue that the very cause of this deficiency, authoritarianism and personalism, is the factor that actually creates democratic stability in Ireland.

By utilizing Eckstein's theoretical framework, authoritarianism and personalism explain how democratic stability has been sustained for more than 70 years in Ireland. The historical analysis systematically illustrated that there is strong congruence between the dominant structures in Irish social and governmental institutions, albeit authoritarian and hierarchical. By looking only at the congruence in authority patterns, we can only explain the longevity of governmental stability in Ireland. Eckstein argues that while congruence accounts for the government stability, it is the "balanced disparities" within the government structure that can explain the democratic stability. I argue that egalitarian personalism plays the role of the

essential disparate element and turns what on the surface looks like a dictatorship into a healthy democracy. Personalistic behavior explains why Irish political culture possesses such high levels of social trust and system support, even though it exists in a system characterized by hierarchy, both in social and political structures. Congruence theory serves as a framework to understand the relationship that exists between authoritarianism and personalism in Irish political culture. Together they comprise the essential elements in sustaining democracy in Ireland.

The driving force behind this inquiry is the need to re-examine the existing assumptions and conclusions regarding the type of political culture that stabilizes democracy. This speaks to the political culture literature, in which deference is not recognized as a healthy element of democratic political cultures or institutions. The Irish case presents a model deficient of the democratic participatory norms hailed as essential to the civic culture model, yet democracy has sustained. The personalistic interactions between TDs and their constituents are in fact participatory, but are currently overlooked by the participation literature. Finally, this investigation also addresses the democratic stability literature and re-emphasizes the importance of culture in sustaining political stability.

As Eckstein argues, adaptation is a key element in understanding political culture; a larger question that arises from this research is how will these authoritarian orientations and institutions adapt to change in Irish society? Adaptation is a key element in sustaining democratic stability, yet cultural norms can be highly persistent. The influx of more women in the work force will gradually change both the work place and family structure. The Catholic Church is also gradually declining in its dominance as seen in the most recent divorce and abortion referenda in Ireland. These changes may very well lead to a decline in the existing authoritarian norms. As this analysis demonstrates, these norms of deference have led to a distinct political culture. If societal institutions change, so too, must political institutions. Failure to adapt will lead to incongruence and threaten the stability of Irish democracy.

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Endnotes

1. See Almond (1993) for an extensive discussion of political culture research.
2. This research has focused on both established democracies and transitional systems.
3. This is much evidenced in Irish literature as so plainly described in James Joyce's literary work, *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*.
4. See for instance Gibbon and Higgins (1974); Bax (1976); Higgins (1982); Komito (1992, 1993).
5. A factor analysis was done on the four variables and it determined they are all positively related. The factor matrix is as follows:

Respect Authority	.64
Respect Parents	.65
Follow Instructions	.35
Confidence Church	.76