The Slavery Debate in Antebellum America: Cognitive Style, Value Conflict, and the Limits of Compromise

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This article explores the relations among value conflict, cognitive style, and policy preferences in pre-Civil War America. Drawing on major historical works, prominent political figures were classified into 1 of 4 political positions: abolitionists, free-soil Republicans who would tolerate slavery in the South but prevent further spread, Buchanan Democrats who would permit slavery in new territories, and advocates of slavery. Results revealed (a) greatest integrative complexity among free-soil Republicans and Buchanan Democrats, with declines in complexity moving either leftward toward abolitionists or rightward toward slavery supporters; (b) integrative complexity was a positive function of endorsing values widely regarded as in conflict in that historical period (property rights, states' rights, and domestic peace vs. the threat of "Southern slave power" to free labor and democracy). The results are consistent with the value pluralism model and raise warnings against the tendency to view integratively simple reasoning as both cognitively and morally inferior to complex reasoning.

Psychologists and political scientists have completed numerous experimental and archival studies of the integrative complexity of policy reasoning (for reviews, see Tetlock, 1989, 1991). As a result, researchers have learned a good deal about both individual-difference correlates and situational determinants of integrative complexity. Researchers have also learned much about when simple versus complex reasoning is associated with judgments that investigators applaud as normative, adaptive, beneficial, and insightful or deplore as counternormative, maladaptive, harmful, and biased.

In principle, integrative complexity is supposed to be a value-neutral concept (Schroder, 1971; Schroder, Driver, & Streufert, 1967; Suedfeld, Tetlock, & Streufert, 1992). The assessment of integrative complexity focuses not on the content of thought but rather on the structure or style of thinking. Integrative complexity is formally defined in terms of two cognitive stylistic attributes: evaluative differentiation and conceptual integration. Evaluative differentiation requires the emergence of dialectical (thesis–antithesis) reasoning. A speaker is evaluatively undifferentiated if he or she sees the world in rigid, good–bad terms that preclude the existence of reasonable alternative perspectives and that deny the possibility of legitimate trade-offs. There are clear-cut right and wrong ways of viewing the world and making decisions. A speaker is evaluatively differentiated if he or she acknowledges that reasonable people can view the same event in different ways or that decision making requires balancing legitimate competing interests. The second cognitive stylistic attribute, conceptual integration, requires reasoning that builds on earlier evaluative differentiations (it follows that evaluative differentiation is a necessary, but not a sufficient,

condition for conceptual integration). Common forms of integration include developing explanations for why reasonable people view the same events in different ways and specifying forms that trade-offs between conflicting values should take in various circumstances.

In practice, however, investigators have had a hard time treating integrative complexity in a value-neutral fashion. The difficulty stems, in part, from the fact that most investigators work in universities. An oft-proclaimed goal of higher education is to inculcate awareness and tolerance of divergent views and a capacity to reconcile contradictions and to cope with life's trade-offs (cf. Perry, 1970). The difficulty also stems from the fact that the empirical correlates of integrative complexity are often more flattering than those of integrative simplicity (at least from the perspective of late-20th-century American academic observers). Consider the following examples:

1. Integrative complexity and conflict resolution. Experimental research suggests that integratively complex thinkers are better able to reach mutually advantageous agreements in mixed-motive games than are integratively simple thinkers (Driver, 1965; Pruitt & Lewis, 1975). Complex thinkers are widely supposed to be more sensitive to the concerns of the other side and therefore better positioned to think of solutions that leave everyone better off than if the conflict had continued to fester. Archival research amplifies this theme. Declining integrative complexity in diplomatic communications during international crises is a lead indicator of war; rising integrative complexity in international crises is a lead indicator of reaching compromise agreements that avert war (Suedfeld & Tetlock, 1977; Tetlock, 1985, 1988).

2. Integrative complexity, political moderation, and value pluralism. Integrative complexity tends to peak among advocates of moderate centrist and left-of-center political viewpoints and to decline as one moves either to the far left or to the moderate or extreme right (Tetlock, 1981, 1983, 1984). According to the value pluralism model (Tetlock, 1986), this trend arises because advocates of centrist and moderate leftist positions are

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more likely to appreciate that making public policy requires weighing conflicting values such as social equality versus economic efficiency (they want to help the poor but not to strangle economic growth by raising taxes too high or making it too easy not to work), deterrence versus reassurance (they want to persuade would-be adversaries that they cannot be bullied but also to avoid provoking unnecessary conflict spirals), and economic growth versus environmental protection (they want to encourage business expansion that creates jobs and prosperity but also to protect fragile ecosystems). Relative to simple thinkers, complex thinkers are more tolerant of dissonance and ambiguity and therefore less prone to "belief system overkill" (Jervis, 1976)—the tendency to convince oneself that one has discovered a "dominant" policy option that is superior to competing proposals on all major dimensions of comparison.[1]

3. Integrative complexity and cognitive bias. Encouraging integratively complex reasoning in experimental settings reduces or even eliminates such well-replicated judgmental biases as belief perseverance (complex thinkers are less likely to resist revising their first impressions in response to later contradictory evidence), the overattribution effect (complex thinkers are less likely to jump to strong dispositional conclusions about a person when there are plausible situational explanations for that person's conduct), and overconfidence (complex thinkers are less likely to overestimate the accuracy of their factual beliefs and predictions; cf. Tetlock, 1983, 1985; Tetlock & Kim, 1987.) One mechanism underlying the attenuation of these effects is the willingness of integratively complex thinkers to be self-critical, to take seriously the possibility that they might be wrong (Tetlock, 1991, 1992).

Although the preponderance of the evidence favors a flattering normative portrait of integrative complexity (a style of thinking that is associated with heightened ability to resolve conflicts, sensitivity to trade-offs, and immunity to certain cognitive biases), integrative complexity can prove maladaptive under certain circumstances. In a pair of experiments, Tetlock and Boettger (1989) found that integratively complex thinkers were more prone to the dilution effect (the tendency to lose confidence in the predictive power of diagnostic cues when those cues are embedded in arrays of irrelevant evidence). Complex thinkers may be too imaginative in looking for meaning and relevance in evidence that possesses neither property. In another experiment, Tetlock and Boettger (in press) found that complex thinkers were more prone to buck-pass and procrastinate when confronted with difficult cost–benefit decisions on permitting new drugs into the U.S. pharmaceuticals market. Complex thinkers did not like to take responsibility for decisions that would inflict harm on an identifiable constituency (drugs with nonzero risk), even if many more lives would be saved than lost. In a recent literature review, Tetlock, McGuire, and Mitchell (1991) argued that although integratively complex bargainers are more likely to reach mutually advantageous resolutions in mixed-motive games with reasonable adversaries, they are also more vulnerable to exploitation by unreasonable adversaries (who define success not in terms of total number of points accumulated but rather in terms of differential advantage—"I may not have much, but at least I have more than you."). In short, integrative complexity can carry a steep cognitive and political price: Complex thinkers are easily distracted in decision-making environ-

ments with unfavorable signal-to-noise ratios, appear weak, indecisive, and confused in situations that require painful judgment calls, and sometimes try too hard to understand the perspective of the other side (to the point of abandoning core principles in efforts to appease immoral or ruthless opponents).

We do not claim to offer a decisive test of the relative merits of these conflicting normative portraits of integrative simplicity-complexity. Indeed, in the spirit of McGuire's (1983) contextualism, we suspect that there are cultural and historical settings in which each flattering and unflattering portrait applies. We do claim, however, to have identified a particularly revealing historical setting for exploring patterns of covariation between integrative complexity and moral–political orientation: the United States in the decade preceding the Civil War. In the 1850s, the process of political polarization—into the Northern camp of free labor and abolitionism and into the Southern camp of states' rights, property rights, and slavery—picked up momentum. Extremists on both sides called for the use of force (Stampp, 1987), and moderates in the two major political parties—the free-soil Republicans and Buchanan Democrats—were increasingly hard-pressed to satisfy their more radical constituencies. Ultimately, of course, attempts to forge a political compromise failed, and the war between the states ensued.

There are good reasons for expecting integrative complexity to be associated with moral–political positions in the mid-19th century that late-20th-century observers find objectionable. Integrative complexity of policy reasoning has been found in past work to be associated with efforts to achieve peaceful compromise agreements between hostile parties. This argument suggests that politicians who sought to find common ground—integrative formulas for simultaneously containing slavery and protecting slaveholder rights—would be more integratively complex than politicians who took strongly partisan pro- or antislavery positions. Integrative complexity has also been found to be associated with moderate political stands and a willingness to acknowledge that important values come into conflict. This argument suggests that the centrists of the day—free-soil Republicans and Buchanan Democrats, who desperately tried to balance competing values and to build winning electoral coalitions by satisfying increasingly contentious constituencies—would be more integratively complex than extremists of the left or right.

There are, however, also good psychological reasons for expecting integrative complexity to be associated with positions that late-20th-century observers applaud. The classic work on the authoritarian personality posits a special affinity between rigid, dichotomous ways of looking at the world and unthinking support for existing patterns of domination and subordination within society (cf. Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Altemeyer, 1981, 1988; Selznick & Steinberg, 1969). Authoritarian personalities in this view derive self-esteem in important measure by identifying closely with those in

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[1] There may also be a less justifiable reason at work here for preferring integrative complexity. We know from survey evidence that most academic social scientists and psychologists tend to fall in the center left range of the political spectrum. It should not be surprising if these academic observers tend to view integratively complex reasoning on most political issues as relatively enlightened.

power and disparaging marginal groups within their own society. Criticism of accepted authority figures or defense of society's critics typically provokes hostile and punitive responses from authoritarians. In this view, we should expect authoritarianism to be greatest among the most ardent supporters of slavery, to decline gradually as we move to guarded defenders of slavery (Buchanan Democrats), to decline further as we move to those who viewed slavery as an odious necessity to be tolerated only in the South (free-soil Republicans), and to reach its nadir among principled opponents of slavery. Inasmuch as integrative complexity tends to be inversely related to authoritarianism, we should expect integrative complexity to display the opposite functional relationship: to rise as we move from the right to the left in the mid-19th-century political spectrum.[2]

Research on moral reasoning suggests a similar conclusion. Haan (1985), for instance, argued that the highest levels of moral reasoning are characterized by growing capacity for both flexible role taking (the ability to see the world through the eyes of others) and abstract integrative reasoning (emerging recognition of the need for universal principles of justice that respect the fundamental equality and liberty of persons). From this standpoint, radical abolitionists displayed the highest levels of moral reasoning (they most clearly saw the fundamental contradictions in the status quo and the need to restructure the social system on more ethically defensible interpretations of the Constitution), free-soil Republicans and Buchanan Democrats displayed intermediate levels of moral reasoning (they tried to strike various compromises between the conventional morality of the day, which treated slaves as property, and the inalienable "rights of man" enshrined in the Declaration of Independence), and "fire-eater" advocates of slavery displayed the lowest levels of moral reasoning (they saw slaves as property and harbored no doubts about the propriety of this widespread practice). Inasmuch as integrative complexity is positively correlated with measures of moral development (de Vries & Walker, 1986; Perry, 1970; Sullivan, McCullough, & Stager, 1970), we should again expect it to rise monotonically as we move from the far right to the far left of the mid-19th-century political spectrum.

The present study tests predictions derived from these contending positions on the relations between cognitive style and political preference in the United States of the 1850s—a nation deeply divided over the question of slavery and on the verge of civil war. Our methodology was straightforward. Drawing on major historical sources, we classified prominent figures into one of four conceptually distinct categories: abolitionists (resolutely opposed to slavery and committed to its disappearance), free-soil Republicans (opposed to the expansion of slavery into new territories of the country but prepared to tolerate the practice in the South as an odious interim necessity), Buchanan Democrats (aligned with the president and supportive of the right of local majorities to accept or reject slavery), and strong defenders of slavery (for whom the practice was a fully justifiable part of Southern social life and who in most cases advocated its expansion to all parts of the Union). We then sampled statements of the political figures so classified and subjected them to systematic content analysis (for values emphasized or deemphasized) and cognitive structural analysis (for integrative complexity).

If the value pluralism model is correct, integrative complex-ity should peak near the center of the political spectrum (among free-soil Republicans and Buchanan Democrats). Moreover, the inverted-U relationship between cognitive style and political ideology should be mediated by increasing value conflict as we approach the center of the spectrum—the tendency for mainstream politicians to endorse both abolitionist values (especially freedom and equality) and proslavery values (especially states rights and property rights). If the authoritarian personality and moral development hypotheses hold, we should observe a downward monotonic trend in integrative complexity as we move from the left to right of the political spectrum.

Method

We drew on several historical sources to classify prominent mid-19th-century American politicians into one of four distinct ideological categories[3]:

1. Abolitionists. These individuals advocated not merely the containment but the complete elimination of slavery within the union. Even within this camp, however, disagreement emerged over such issues as timing, compensation to former slaveholders, and the treatment of former slaves. Political figures classified as abolitionists included Senator Benjamin Wade (Ohio), Senator Charles Sumner (Massachusetts), Representative Lewis Campbell (Ohio), Representative John Perry, Wendell Phillips, Dr. Gamaliel Bailey (editor, National Era), Representative Gerrit Smith (New York), and Henry Ward Beecher.

2. Free-soil Republicans. These individuals opposed the expansion of slavery into new regions of the country but were disinclined for pragmatic or political reasons to advocate abolitionism throughout the Union. These individuals included Abraham Lincoln, Senator William Henry Seward (New York), Senator Henry Wilson (Massachusetts), Representative Horace Greeley (New York), Charles Frances Adams, Representative N. P. Banks (Massachusetts), Representative William H. Bissel (Illinois), and Representative Joshua Giddings (Ohio). Although the distinction between abolitionists and free-soil Republicans looks clear-cut on first inspection, the differences between the two camps are sometimes more a matter of degree than of kind (e.g., abolitionists who favored federal incentives for slaveholders to give up slaves, but who

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[2] This theoretical argument presumes, follwing Stone (1980) and others, that left-wing authoritarianism is largely or entirely a myth. This issue has long been a point of contention in political psychology (Eysenck, 1981; Shils, 1956; Tetlock, 1989). Our own view is that extremists of the left are often as dogmatic, intolerant of ambiguity, and self-righteous as extremists of the right (Tetlock, 1984), but that one creates needless controversy and terminological confusion by insisting on labeling left-wing rigidity left-wing authoritarianism. (cf. Rokeach, 1960). In past work, Tetlock (1984) distinguished three theory-derived hypotheses: the authoritarian hypothesis (which posits a special affinity between integrative complexity and right-wing positions), the ideologue hypothesis (which posits that although extremists of left and right disagree on almost everything, they think in remarkably similiar ways), and the value pluralism model (which posits that one's style of thinking is a function of the intensity of value conflict activated by an issue and which leads in many, although not all, cases to predictions similar to the ideologue hypothesis. In the current study, the value pluralism model subsumes the ideologue hypothesis (leads to the same predictions as the latter plus some additional ones).

[3] To be included in an ideological classification, a political figure had to be placed in that classification (and no other) by at least two of the following historical sources: Ambrosius, 1990; Auer 1963; Ford, 1988; Gienapp, 1987; Oliver, 1963; Stampp, 1987; and Woodward, 1983.

did not favor infringing on the sovereignty of Southern states, would be difficult to differentiate from the more radical free-soil Republicans).

3. *Buchanan Democrats.* These individuals were willing not only to permit slavery to continue in the Southern states but also to allow slavery to spread into new territories if local majorities approved of the practice. They were also sympathetic to using federal resources to assist in capturing "fugitive slaves" and to the Dred Scott Supreme Court decision that allowed slaveholders to retain rights to their "property" even in free states. Internal disagreements within this camp became especially animated over how far to go in trying to satisfy strong advocates of slavery (e.g., electoral fraud in Kansas). Relevant political figures included President James Buchanan, Representative Graham N. Fitch (Indiana) Senator William Bigler (Pennsylvania), Senator George Pugh (Ohio), Senator Lewis Cass (Michigan), George Templeton Strong, Senator and 1860 presidential candidate Steven Douglas (Illinois), and Judge Black (attorney general, Buchanan cabinet).

4. *Defenders of slavery.* These individuals came from states that practiced slavery and strongly defended the practice on constitutional, moral, economic, biological, and even humanitarian grounds. (Some—such as Senator Robert Toombs—even went so far as to advocate the reopening of the African slave trade and the spread of slavery to all states.) Political figures in this category included Representative Alexander Stephens (Georgia), Representative Lawrence Keitt (South Carolina), Senator Jefferson Davis (Mississippi), Senator Robert Hunter (Virginia), Senator Robert Toombs (Georgia), Representative John Savage (Tennessee), J.B.D. De Bow (newspaper editor), and Senator Hammond (South Carolina).

Value Coding

The two independent coders—one of whom was unaware of the hypotheses—read the political texts for each individual in our sample (average approximate length was 20,500 words). Coders then rated the degree to which each individual strongly endorsed or opposed each of 14 values (interrater agreement; $r = .90$). The values included the following:

1. *Equality of human beings.* This value asserts that all men (not yet women) have equal claim to basic, inalienable human rights and freedoms (e.g., rights to the products of their labor and equal protection under the law).

> There is no reason in the world why the Negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence—the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man. . . . He is not my equal in many respects . . . but in the right to eat the bread, without leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, he is my equal and the equal of Judge Douglass, and the equal of every living man.

2. *Personal freedom.* This value emphasizes the First Amendment rights of the individual to freedom of speech, assembly, and association.

> A man who would not help a fellow-creature flying for his liberty must either be a villain or a politician.

> But slavery is only one of many institutions there—freedom is equally an institution there. Slavery is only a temporary, accidental, partial, and incongruous one; freedom, on the contrary, is a perpetual, organic, universal one.

3. *States' rights.* This value asserts the freedom of state and territorial governments to make whatever internal policy decisions they deem appropriate (e.g., with respect to slavery) as long as those decisions do not contradict the Constitution.

> How easy would it be for the American people to settle the slavery question forever. . . all that is necessary to accomplish the object, and all for which the slave States have ever contended, is to be let alone and permitted to manage their domestic institutions in their own way.

> Nor let it be implied that I am indifferent to State rights. I am strenuous for their maintenance: and I would go to the extreme verge of the Constitution to swell their number.

4. *Constitution as source of moral–political authority.* This value is invoked whenever the speaker refers to the Constitution as a moral reason or political justification—in and of itself—for the existence, abolition, or propagation of slavery.

> Although there has been a slight conflict of opinion among American statesmen and jurists upon this subject, yet a vast majority of the authorities concur in this opinion, that the Constitution is not a league, compact, or confederacy, but a fundamental law.

5. *Biblical–religious sources of moral–political authority.* This value is invoked whenever the speaker refers to biblical or religious sources as reasons or justifications—in and of themselves—for the existence, abolition, or propagation of slavery.

> This is what warrants us in hurling back, upon our traducers, the charges of sin against God; especially when slavery seems so manifestly to be one of the means of his providential ends.

> Slaves! for the very reason that you are believers—for the very reason that you have been redeemed from the darkness of paganism—for that very reason are you still more bound to tribute service to your masters.

6. *Morality (based on other considerations).* This value should be coded whenever the existence, abolition, or propagation of slavery is said to be moral or immoral, in itself, without resting on arguments of the Constitution or religious texts (e.g., natural law or personal conscience).

> Slavery is an infraction of the immutable law of nature, and, as such, cannot be considered a natural incident to any sovereignty, especially in a country which has solemnly declared, in its Declaration of Independence, the inalienable right of all men to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

> With the great majority of northern and western freemen, this is a question, not of politics, but of conviction—not of power, but of conscience.

7. *Existing social structure.* The value of preserving existing institutions and societal arrangements covers such role relationships as between master and servant or employer and employee.

> Christianity deferred to the arrangements of the social organism which it found existing on its advent. Society was then, as it is now, a great body, each member of which has its own special use and assignment—an organization in which each one is commanded by the Master himself, to occupy this station and perform his task.

8. *Familial rights.* This value stresses the importance of keeping the nuclear family (including relations of husband and wife and parent and child) intact.

> For the husband and wife there is no marriage; for the mother there is no assurance that her infant will not be ravished from her breast; for all who bear the name of Slave, there is nothing that they can call their own.

9. Property rights. This value emphasizes the right of owners of property (which may include slaves) to be protected against government or nongovernment attempts to confiscate or seize that property without compensation.

> This Government was established for the protection of the rights of persons and the rights of property of the political communities which adopted it. These are the primary objects of all good government. The protection of property is the corner-stone of industry, of national progress, of civilization.

10. Political unity. This value emphasizes that the United States must, in the case of slavery and deep moral issues, make its policy decisions as a unified body. A corollary is that the nation cannot survive half free, half slave.

> A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe that this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free.

> And why should not all men pour contempt upon these compromises, and upon all other compromises, which aim to "split the difference" between God and the devil?

11. Nationalism. This value stresses the importance of preserving the existing borders of the Untied States of America. The country must be kept intact.

> No, sir; the American people love and reverence the Union; and, in spirit of true patriotism, will they cheerfully endure the ills that are in it until they can be corrected, rather than aid in its destruction.

12. Avoidance of war, chaos, and/or bloodshed. This value emphasizes the need to avoid social upheaval, violence, or full-blown civil war.

> Still less would we tolerate anything like insurrection and servile war. It would be the most cruel, hopeless, and desperate of all conceivable follies, to seek emancipation by the sword and by blood.

> The country must be rescued from the disasters of civil war and anarchy, no matter whose folly and madness have produced the impending peril.

13. Southern independence. Distinct from the value of states rights, the value of Southern independence stresses the desire to preserve the South as a distinct society even if that requires secession.

> Whilst in Charleston recently, I adverted, in conversation with you, to some considerations affecting the question of slavery in its application to the several classes of population at the South and especially to the non-slaveholding class, who, I maintained, were even more deeply interested than any other in the maintenance of our institutions, and in the success of the movement now inaugurated, for the entire social, industrial, and political independence of the South.

14. Founding Fathers' intentions. The value of the intentions of the Founding Fathers is invoked when the words and, more important, the believed intent of the Founding Fathers—the spirit of their designs—are cited as reasons for maintaining or abolishing slavery.

> The opinions of the founders of this Republic were not only acquiesced in and endorsed, but taken as authoritative expositions of the Constitution, by nearly all the great statesmen of the country during the first sixty years of its existence.

Coders used three rating scale formats: (a) rank order—the 14 values were ranked according to the readers' judgments of their importance to the author of the sampled text. A ranking of 1 signifies that a value was judged to be most important, and a ranking of 14 signifies a value was judged least important; (b) standard rating scale—readers rated each of the 14 values on a 100-point scale, where a rating of 100 indicated extreme importance and a rating of 0 indicated a complete lack of importance. Each value was considered independently so, in principle, all values could be rated as extremely important or completely unimportant; (c) Q-sort method—readers assigned each of the 14 values to one of the following five categories: *extremely important, fairly important, moderately important, fairly important,* and *not at all important.* Readers were constrained, however, by Q-sort distribution requirements: Two values had to be assigned to each of the *extremely important* and *not at all important* categories, 3 values to the *fairly important* and *fairly unimportant* categories, and 4 values to the *moderately important* category.

Integrative Complexity Coding

Two trained coders (one of whom was unaware of the hypotheses being tested) scored the integrative complexity of 10 paragraph-length excerpts randomly drawn from the public speeches, writings, and/or Congressional Record of each individual in our sample. Texts sampled ranged in time of authorship from 1844 to 1860 (with over 90% of the sampled texts falling in the 1850–1860 period).[4] The total amount of material collected for each individual averaged approximately 20,500 words; the average amount of material scored for integrative complexity was approximately 1,200 words (equivalent to 10 randomly selected paragraph units averaging 120 words). Intercoder agreement ($r = .85$) was in the customary range for integrative complexity research.

Integrative complexity was assessed on a 7-point scale defined by two cognitive stylistic attributes: evaluative differentiation (the capacity and willingness to acknowledge that reasonable people can view the same event in different ways and that decision making requires balancing legitimate competing interests) and conceptual integration (the capacity and willingness to generate integrative cognitions that explain how reasonable people might view the same event in different ways, how to cope with trade-offs between conflicting values, or how to forge compromises between conflicting interests [Tetlock & Suedfeld, 1988]). Evaluative differentiation is thus a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for conceptual integration.

A score of 1 reflects low evaluative differentiation and low conceptual integration. For example,

> I deny the right of Congress to look at the existence of slavery in the States, that shall be formed within these territories, because I deny that there can be Constitutional slavery in any of the States of the American Union—future States, or present States—new or old. I hold that the Constitution not only authorizes no slavery, but permits no slavery; not only creates no slavery in any part of the land, but abolishes slavery in every part of the land. In other words, I hold that there is no law for American slavery.

A score of 2 reflects implicit evaluative differentiation (partial, veiled, or cryptic recognition of legitimate counterarguments). For example,

> The subject itself is the absorbing topic of the day; and whatever evils it brings with it—and there are many—still it brings with it

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[4] The overall correlation between the date the speech was given and integrative complexity was trivial ($r = -.07$, $M = 1854.1$). There were, however, significant correlations between date and complexity within three of the four ideological groups: $r = -.56$, $M = 1854.2$ for defenders of slavery; $r = .24$, $M = 1856.5$ for Buchanan Democrats; $r = .30$, $M = 1854.5$ for abolitionists; and a nonsignificant $r = .02$, $M = 1853.3$ for free-soil Republicans. These data suggest that Southern secessionists did indeed become less integratively complex as the time of declaring the Confederacy approached.

one consolation, and that in the proof it furnishes of the strength of our institutions, and of the deep-rooted attachment, which exists for them in the hearts of the American people.

A score of 3 reflects explicit evaluative differentiation, but no conceptual integration. For example,

> But, sir, because, on a former occasion, I stated what I believed to be our constitutional rights, but that as there were two great antagonistic principles in this country; the one claiming that slavery shall be excluded from all the Territories, and the other contending that slave-holders have a right to go with their property into all of the territories, and as these two conflicting principles could not be reconciled, as compromise was only to be found in a division of the property, that I would consent to the establishment of a line, on one side of which one of the principles should prevail, and on the other side the other should be recognized.

A score of 4 reflects evaluative differentiation coupled with implicit conceptual integration. For example,

> It may be asked, then, are the people of the States without redress against the tyranny and oppression of the federal government? By no means. The right of resistance on the part of the governed against the oppression of their governments cannot be denied. It exists independently of all constitutions, and has been exercised at all periods of the world's history. Under it, old governments have been destroyed and new ones have taken their place. It is embodied in strong and express language in our own Declaration of Independence. But the distinction must ever be observed that this is revolution against an established government, and not a voluntary secession from it by virtue of an inherent Constitutional right. In short, let us look the danger fairly in the face: secession is neither more nor less than revolution. It may or may not be a justifiable revolution; but still it is revolution.

This passage highlights two competing values (individual autonomy vs. government control) but does not specify how the tension between values should be resolved.

A score of 5 reflects the simultaneous presence of evaluative differentiation and conceptual integration. For example,

> We will not destroy slavery over night and with it enormous investments, nor will we impose slavery against the will of the majority. Let's stop all this disruptive agitation, either for the extension or the abolition of slavery. It only serves to divide us further. There is a viable middle course that does not require subverting the Constitution and making it into an instrument for extending slave power or ignoring the Constitution and appealing to a mysterious higher power or principle. That middle course is one of common sense, good temper, and constitutional governance. We will let the people decide what they want and let the Constitution decide whether they may have it; and if the people don't like the decision, they can work through political and legal means to change it.

Here we see an explicit effort to stake out an integratively complex compromise between radical abolitionists and advocates of slavery.

Scores of 6 and 7 reflect the development of flexible, higher order integrative principles to cope with evaluatively differentiated contradictions. For example,

> The free states, northern and western, acquiesced in the long and nearly unbroken ascendancy of the slave States under the Constitution, because the result happened under the Constitution. But they have honor and interests to preserve; and there is nothing in the nature of mankind, or in the character of that people, to induce an expectation that they, loyal as they are, are insensible to the duty of defending them. But this scheme would still be impracticable, even if this difficulty were overcome. What is proposed, is a political equilibrium. Every political equilibrium requires a physical equi-

librium to rest upon, and is valueless without it. To constitute a physical equilibrium between the slave States, and the free States, requires first an equality of territory, and this is already lost. But it requires much more than this; it requires an equality or a proximate equality, in the number of slaves and freemen. And this must be perpetual!

Here, the speaker recognized the need to achieve an equilibrium between the free states and slave states and specified at least two factors that determine the stability of that equilibrium (territorial and population equality).

Results

The Integrative Complexity Measure

Interrater agreement for integrative complexity was high ($r = .85$). The Cronbach alpha for integrative complexity scores assigned to politicians (10 paragraph units per individual) was .72. The average integrative complexity scores of speakers ranged from 1.3 to 3.1 ($M = 2.0$, $SD = 0.51$); the range using the mean of the five highest scores per individual was 1.6 to 4.4 ($M = 2.6$, $SD = 0.67$). This latter index may be more revealing than the overall average, given the large proportion of scores at the low end of the complexity scale (38.5% at Level 1, 35.5% at Level 2, 19.0% at Level 3, 6.1% at Level 4, and 0.9% at Level 5 and above). The low absolute level and skewed variation in scores are consistent with previous laboratory and archival studies of integrative complexity (Tetlock, 1989).

The average integrative complexity score was 1.6 for abolitionists, 2.5 for free-soil Republicans, 2.2 for Buchanan Democrats, and 1.6 for slavery supporters (see Figure 1). An analysis of variance (ANOVA) yielded significant differences among these four groups, $F(3, 27) = 24.2$, $p < .01$. Pairwise ANOVA comparisons revealed slavery supporters to be significantly less complex than Buchanan Democrats, $F(1, 29) = 24.2$, $p < .01$, and free-soil Republicans, $F(1, 29) = 45.4$, $p < .01$, and aboli-
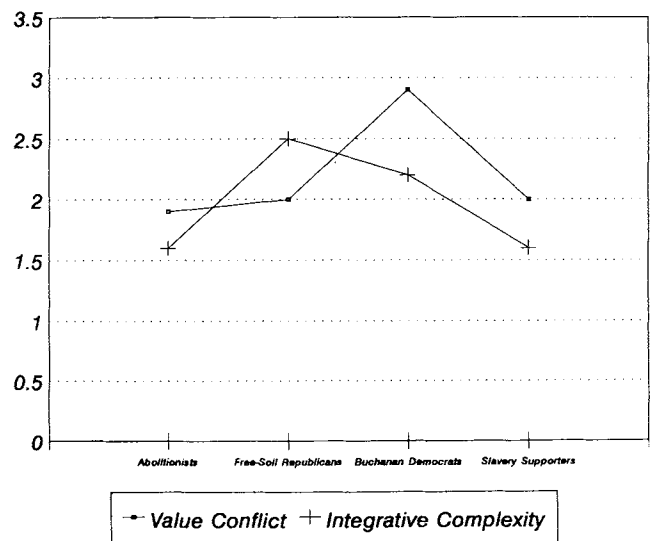
Figure 1. Mean integrative complexity and value conflict index scores by ideological group.

Table 1
Eigenvalues of Component Scores (Varimax Rotation)

Factor	Eigenvalue	% variance
I	6.0	42.6
II	2.5	18.1
III	1.4	9.8
IV	1.1	7.7

tionists to be less complex than Buchanan Democrats, $F(1, 29)$ = 25.1, $p < .01$, and free-soil Republicans, $F(1, 29)$ = 46.8, $p < .01$. The difference between Buchanan Democrats and free-soil Republicans approached but fell short of significance, $F(1, 29)$ = 2.9, $p < .09$, ns. Slavery supporters and abolitionists, $F(1, 29)$ = .01, ns, did not differ in integrative complexity.

Analyses of Value Measures

We computed Cronbach alpha coefficients for each of the 14 value ratings. These coefficients ranged from .87 to .95. To reduce the number of values, we conducted an exploratory principal-components analysis on the 14 value ratings (scored from 0 to 100).[5] Examination of the eigenvalues reported in Table 1 indicated that a four-component solution best characterizes these data. Table 2 reports the results of this principal-components analysis. High positive loading values on Component 1 (which explained 42.6% of the variance) include concern for equality and personal freedom; high negative loading values include property rights, states' rights, and preserving the status quo. High positive loading values on Component 2 (which explained 18.1% of the variance) include avoiding war and preserving the Union; the only high negative loading was the desire to preserve the South as a distinct society, even if that meant

Table 2
Loadings of Value Ratings for Principal-Components Analysis (Varimax Rotation)

Item	Component 1	2	3	4
Equality of human beings	**.94**	−.03	.08	.03
Personal freedoms	**.89**	.09	.06	.08
States' rights	**−.70**	.02	**−.46**	.15
Constitution as source of authority	−.16	.28	−.23	**.83**
Religious teachings as source of authority	.01	−.13	**.86**	.01
Morality (based on other considerations)	**.72**	.20	**.34**	−.09
Existing social structure	**−.91**	−.12	−.01	−.02
Familial rights	**.52**	.02	**.44**	.17
Property rights	**−.94**	.03	.07	−.05
Political unity	**−.65**	.02	**.44**	.17
Nationalism	.16	**.87**	−.14	.23
Avoidance of war	−.17	**.85**	.03	.01
Southern independence	**−.62**	**−.54**	**.31**	.02
Founding fathers' intentions	**.36**	−.02	**.32**	**.76**

Note. Boldfaced data indicate loadings over .3 used in regression analysis. Component 1 = equality versus property rights; Component 2 = avoiding war; Component 3 = morality as political authority; Component 4 = legal precedence.

Table 3
Component Means and Standard Deviations Across Political Groups

Component	SS	BD	FR	AB
Equality versus property rights				
M	−1.13	−0.68	0.74	1.03
SD	0.26	0.35	0.31	0.55
Avoiding war				
M	−0.71	0.82	−0.22	0.16
SD	0.88	0.75	1.00	0.74
Morality as political authority				
M	0.50	−0.41	−0.63	0.52
SD	0.77	0.80	0.70	1.14
Legal precedence				
M	0.06	−0.26	0.09	0.09
SD	0.96	0.82	0.96	1.26

Note. SS = slavery supporters; BD = Buchanan Democrats; FR = free-soil Republicans; AB = abolitionists.

secession. High positive loadings on Component 3 (which explained 9.8% of the variance) included religious teachings as a source of moral authority and a stress on familial rights and the importance of the country's taking a unified stand (one way or the other) on the question of slavery; the only negative loading was states' rights. High positive loadings on Component 4 (which explained 7.7% of the variance) include emphasis on the Constitution and the Founding Fathers' intentions in taking a stand on slavery; there were no large negative loadings on this component.

We created composite component scores for each subject from the principal-components analysis. Table 3 reports the mean scores by ideological grouping. The first component (equality–freedom vs. states'–property rights) differentiates the four a priori groups along a classic left–right dimension, with abolitionists receiving substantially higher scores than free-soil Republicans (Ms = 1.03 vs. 0.74), $F(1, 29)$ = 4.5, $p < .05$; free-soil Republicans receiving higher scores than Buchanan Democrats (Ms = 0.74 and −0.68), $F(1, 29)$ = 103.7, $p < .01$; and Buchanan Democrats receiving higher scores than hard-core advocates of slavery (Ms = −0.68 vs. −1.13), $F(1, 29)$ = 10.5, $p < .05$.

The remaining three components reveal a more complex pattern of value themes. Buchanan Democrats, the political group most committed to reaching a compromise with the radical proslavery forces, received the highest score on Component 2 (avoiding war and preserving the Union). Ardent defenders of slavery received the lowest score on Component 2 (a score suggestive of their willingness to secede violently from the Union). Free-soil Republicans and radical abolitionists received intermediate scores on Component 2 (scores not significantly different from each other (Ms = −0.22 and 0.16) but significantly different from both Buchanan Democrats (M = 0.82),

[5] Although the results of the value ratings (0–100) are reported here, we conducted the parallel analyses with the value rankings (1–14), and the results did not differ in any significant way. Average correlation between methods was .88

$F(1, 29) = 8.2, p < .05$, and slavery supporters ($M = -0.71$), $F(1, 29) = 5.5, p < .05$.

On Component 3 (religious or moral authority) the political extremes converged. Proslavery and abolitionist leaders received the highest scores ($Ms = 0.52$ and 0.50, respectively), scores that did not differ from each other, $F(1, 29) = .003, ns$, but did differ from both Buchanan Democrats (-0.41), $F(1, 29) = 8.5, p < .01$, and free-soil Republicans (-0.63), $F(1, 29) = 13.4, p < .01$. The centrist political groups were markedly less moralistic and less likely to invoke religious imagery and scriptural text to support their positions than were the extremists. Interestingly, abolitionists and proslavery politicians were approximately equally likely to claim Biblical justifications for their views.

Component 4 (invocation of the Constitution or Founding Fathers' intentions) yielded no significant differences among ideological groups.

Measuring Value Conflict

Researchers can adopt either logical or empirical methods of measuring value conflict. The former approach is to posit, based on knowledge of historical context and the issues under debate, that endorsing certain pairs of values leads inexorably to logical contradictions in policy preferences. Thus, endorsing both the positive loading values on Component 1 (freedom and equality) and the negative loading values (property rights and states' rights) would push a politician in the opposing directions of abolishing slavery and respecting the right of Southern states to treat slaves as chattel. The empirical approach is to examine the intercorrelations among values across politicians and conclude either that (a) two values are in conflict if they receive sharply different importance ratings (value rating differences > 40) from advocates of political positions known to be in conflict (e.g., abolitionists vs. fire-eater defenders of slavery) or (b) two values are negatively correlated with each other ($r < -.50$).

We required value pairs to pass both tests. Using this standard, we focused on the following pairs: equality versus property rights, equality versus existing social structure, equality versus states' rights, equality versus Southern independence, personal freedom versus states' rights, personal freedom versus existing social structure, personal freedom versus property rights, and personal freedom versus Southern independence. The value pluralism model predicts that, for each pair, politicians should be more integratively complex to the degree (a) they attach high average importance to both values (average value importance; AVI) in the pair ($/V1 + V2/$) and (b) they attach close to equal importance to both values (differential value importance; DVI) in the pair ($/V1 - V2/$). We created the value conflict index VCI; ($/V1 + V2/$)* $1 / (/V1 - V2/)$ to test the hypothesis that value conflict (and pressure to think in integratively complex ways) is a multiplicative function of AVI and DVI.

The average VCI score was 1.9 for abolitionists, 2.0 for free-soil Republicans, 2.9 for Buchanan Democrats, and 2.0 for slavery supporters (see Figure 1). An ANOVA yielded significant differences among these four groups, $F(3, 27) = 10.0, p < .01$. When we compare the covariation between value conflict and ideology with that between integrative complexity and ideology, the results reveal noteworthy differences. Whereas complexity peaked among free-soil Republicans, value conflict peaked among Buchanan Democrats. Pairwise ANOVA comparisons revealed significantly more value conflict among Buchanan Democrats than among abolitionists, $F(1, 29) = 25.5, p < .01$; free-soil Republicans, $F(1, 29) = 17.6, p < .01$; and slavery supporters, $F(1, 29) = 15.6, p < .01$. Also, in contrast to integrative complexity results, free-soil Republicans did not display significantly greater value conflict than the extremists (abolitionists and slavery advocates). There were no significant differences among abolitionists, free-soil Republicans, and slavery supporters.

To test the value pluralism model, we entered the AVI, DVI, and VCI measures into hierarchical regressions as predictors of integrative complexity. Entered individually, DVI ($\beta = -.48$), $t(30) = -4.4, p < .01$; AVI ($\beta = -.23$), $t(30) = -2.08, p < .05$; and VCI ($\beta = .37$), $t(30) = 3.1, p < .01$, all predicted integrative complexity by themselves. In a simultaneous regression equation, all three predictors were nonsignificant due to multicolinearity ($r = -.88$ for DVI and VCI, $r = .30$ for VCI and AVI, and $r = .07$ for AVI and DVI). The multiple correlation for the simultaneous equation was .54, $F(2, 28) = 8.3, p < .01$.

We also used an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to determine whether controlling for the VCI eliminated the earlier reported relationship between ideological classification and integrative complexity. The results revealed the VCI to be a significant covariate. Not only was VCI related to integrative complexity ($r = .37$), VCI was also related to holding centrist political positions (either free-soil Republicans or Buchanan Democrats) as opposed to extremist ones (abolitionism or advocacy of slavery; $r = .35$). Controlling for VCI reduced, but did not substantially alter, the ideology–complexity relationship, $F(3, 26) = 22.2, p < .01$. All pairwise ANOVA comparisons remained significant in the ANCOVA.

The failure to eliminate the ideology–complexity relationship is not surprising when we compare the magnitude of that relationship ($r = .73$) between the dichotomous variable of extremism–centrism and complexity with the relationships between value conflict and extremism–centrism ($r = .35$) and integrative complexity and value conflict ($r = .37$). Knowing that a politician fell in the middle of the opinion distribution on the slavery question proves here to be a markedly stronger predictor of integrative complexity of reasoning than knowing the degree to which the politician advocated conflicting values.

To explore these relationships further, we distinguished two types of moderates on each of the four value–theme components: those who fell in the middle range of component scores because they endorsed values that loaded both positively and negatively on the component and those who fell in the middle range because they attached low importance to both sets of values. For each of the four components, we (a) identified the value importance ratings with loadings of absolute value .3 or greater, (b) created individual subject scores by additively combining the importance ratings of the high-loading values, and (c) used these scores in regression equations to predict integrative complexity. The combined value ratings of Components 1 and 3 were the most potent predictors of integrative complexity. Speakers who assigned high importance to values that loaded on opposing poles of Components 1 and 3 tended to be more complex than speakers who attached low importance to these

values (for Component 1, β = .52, t[26] = 2.2, p < .05; for Component 3, β = −.58, t[26] = −2.3, p < .05); Components 2 and 4 did not predict integrative complexity (for Component 2, β = −.06, t[26] = 0.45, ns; for Component 4, β = .17, t[26] = 1.21, ns). The multiple correlation for the equation was .35, $F(4, 26)$ = 3.1, p < .05.

Discussion

The functional relationship between integrative complexity and political ideology in antebellum America bears a striking resemblance to data drawn from the British House of Commons in the late 1960s (Tetlock, 1984), the Italian Chamber of Deputies at the same time (diRenzo, 1967; Putnam, 1971), and the Israeli Knesset in the 1980s (Maoz & Shayer, 1987). Centrists, especially those slightly left of center, are more likely to speak about policy problems in integratively complex ways than their left-wing and right-wing colleagues.

The complexity–ideology data also resemble the relationship between integrative complexity and competitive versus accommodationist political strategies in international disputes, such as American–Soviet arms-control talks, Arab and Israeli speeches in international forums, and diplomatic communications exchanged among major European powers during the Agadir crisis of 1911 (peacefully resolved) and the crisis immediately preceding World War I (Suedfeld & Tetlock, 1977; Suedfeld, Tetlock, & Ramirez, 1977; Tetlock, 1985, 1988). Once again, integrative complexity was correlated with efforts to reach flexible compromise agreements that left all sides reasonably satisfied.

Implications for the Value Pluralism Model

The complexity–ideology relationship generally fits the predictions of the value pluralism model of ideological reasoning (Tetlock, 1986). Integrative complexity peaks as a joint function of the degree to which important, and approximately equally important, values are brought into conflict (the VCI). Complex politicians in antebellum America were more likely than their integratively simple counterparts to attach importance to the conflicting values of freedom–equality and property–states' rights. However, the value pluralism model cannot explain all the variance in integrative complexity either across ideological groups or across political speakers within groups (roughly 70% of the variance is unaccounted for). Moreover, value conflict emerged as only a partial mediator of the ideology–complexity relationship. We discuss four possible reasons for the limited predictive success of the model.

One possibility is, of course, that we simply failed to measure all of the values activated by the slavery debate. In this view, the apparent failure of the value pluralism model is really a failure in value measurement. Values are slippery constructs to assess even in controlled research settings (Fischhoff, Slovic, & Lichtenstein, 1980); these difficulties are magnified when we must rely on observer ratings of archival records of speeches and writings from a century and a half ago. Although our measures of values pass all of the conventional psychometric tests (high interobserver agreement in ratings, high internal consistency across scaling methods, meaningful intercorrelations among

values, and clusterings into principal components) and although our value measures do differentiate the four major political groups of the day from each other, we cannot rule out the possibility that our list of 14 values failed to capture all the fundamental concerns of politicians in antebellum America.

A second possibility focuses on the inadequacies of the fourfold scheme we used to classify politicians. Any attempt to classify multidimensional (and often changing) political personalities into four airtight ideological compartments cannot be completely successful. Consider a problematic but by no means unusual example: William H. Seward fits our definition of a free-soil Republican because he held slavery in deep distaste but did not seek to force the South to abandon the slave system. Nevertheless, many viewed him in the late 1850s and, some still do, as a radical abolitionist. This view took hold as a result of a famous speech he gave on the "irrepressible conflict" between the slave system and the system of free labor. Afterward, "the abolitionists gathered him to their bosoms and would not let him go" (Oliver, 1963, p. 50). Although Seward subsequently tried to allay fears that he was an abolitionist agitator by assuring Southern senators that he had no desire to alter the status quo within the South, his presidential aspirations were doomed. Seward might be thought of as a left-wing free-soil Republican.[6]

In short, although there are strong historical justifications for classifying each individual studied here into one of the four ideological categories, we do not downplay the variability in points of view within categories. Such variability surely reduced the predictive power of the value pluralism model.

A third possibility is that the value pluralism model misspecified the causes of integrative complexity by focusing solely on intrapsychic value conflict. Integrative complexity is highly sensitive to accountability demands (Tetlock, 1992). Of special relevance here is the possibility that integrative complexity was driven not by internal value conflict but rather by the desire to appease conflicting external constituencies—a political objective best achieved through "on-the-one-hand" and "on-the-other-hand" rhetoric. The political centrists (Buchanan Democrats and free-soil Republicans) were attempting to forge disparate electoral coalitions to win the presidency, whereas the extremists welcomed further polarization as a way of advancing the cause of either abolition or secession.

Consider the political impression-management goals of the Republicans. Although the Republicans held no hope of winning in the South and although the Republicans saw political benefit in highlighting the contradictions between slavery and democratic governance to Northern audiences, they were acutely aware of the risks of appearing to be radical abolitionists. Moderate Republicans needed to convince Northerners that they did not endorse all this strange talk of "racial equality" from radical abolitionists. The country was manifestly not

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[6] Another problematic case is Stephen Douglas, who fits our definition of a Buchanan Democrat because he supported the principle allowing local majorities to extend slavery into new territories. Senator Douglas did, however, sharply disagree with the Buchanan administration over its support for the proslavery Lecompton Constitution in Kansas and for failing to ensure fair and free elections in Kansas. Senator Douglas, in short, was not as willing to appease fire-eater advocates of slavery as were more right-wing Buchanan Democrats.

ready for that. Moderate Republicans also had to convince Northerners that a vote for Lincoln was not a vote for civil war. Republicans, however, had to be careful in reaching out too far to moderates. Die-hard abolitionists were sharply critical of the more moderate free soilers who were willing to tolerate slavery in the South in order to avert civil war. Theodore Parker, for instance, denounced Republicans such as Lincoln for denying any "intention ever to interfere with slavery in the states! It is my intention as soon as I get the power" (Gienapp, 1987, p. 354). If Republicans equivocated too much on slavery, abolitionists might field their own candidate or stay at home on election day.

The Buchanan Democrats faced a mirror-image set of problems. Just as moderate Republicans were embarrassed by the radical abolitionists, so too were Buchanan Democrats embarrassed by the fire-eater advocates of slavery. The Buchanan Democrats paid a steep political price for the violent physical assault on Senator Charles Sumner by slavery advocate Representative Brooks as well as for the widespread fraud and hooliganism by proslavery forces during the Kansas elections. The insistence of many Southerners that slaves should be treated like any other form of property (and hence be transportable across state boundaries) raised the specter of imposing slavery throughout the Union. The Democrats were well aware that they could not win a national election by carrying only Southern states. They had to win some states in the North, and to do so, they could not appear to be the tools of the slaveholding aristocracy. The Buchanan Democrats could not, however, be too outspokenly critical of slavery. The Democrats needed to win Southern states and confronted stiff regional competition in 1860 from a radically proslavery candidate (John Breckinridge) who supported secession.

As this summary sketch indicates, moderates may have been more integratively complex not because they experienced greater internal value conflict but rather because they had to reconcile more contradictory external demands. Integrative complexity may have depended more on the values of the immediate audience politicians addressed than on the long-term trade-offs politicians perceived. Future work might test this hypothesis by determining whether parallel relationships exist between ideology and complexity in diaries and letters not intended for purposes of mass persuasion.

A fourth possibility is that the conceptual foundation of the value pluralism model—the concept of value—is deeply problematic. Values can be extremely elastic; politicians sometimes invoke the same values to support opposite courses of action. To take an extreme example, the values abolitionists claimed as their own, freedom and equality, were occasionally claimed by Southerners as justification for slavery. From a Southern perspective, the question of slavery (particularly in the territories) raised deep constitutional issues. If slaveholders were prohibited from taking their "property" into the territories, they were denied their full rights as citizens. Ironically, from a contemporary perspective, many Southerners believed deeply in equal treatment among Republican citizens (so deeply entrenched was the notion that people of recent African origin were subhuman that these Southerners saw no inconsistency in invoking the value of equality in support of their cause).

Southern politicians also saw no contradiction between advocating liberty and defending slavery. In fact, some responded to abolitionist attacks on slavery by claiming (in quasi-Marxist fashion) that the industrialization of the North had begun to transform an economy of independent proprietors into one of monopoly capitalism in which White workers were reduced to "wage slavery." In this view, chattel slavery was a more secure economic foundation for republican liberty. The North was on a trajectory not toward a libertarian utopia of prosperous, self-sufficient individualists but rather toward a system of exploitative capitalism with rapacious robber barons, resentful and poverty-stricken wage slaves, and corrupt political leaders. Slavery provided an escape from the grim alternatives of socialist revolution and the cutthroat competition of laissez-faire capitalism.

The plasticity of values—the ease with which certain values can be assimilated into opposing ideological schemes—further weakened the predictive power of the value pluralism model. It is important, however, not to exaggerate this plasticity. Proslavery advocates still put markedly less emphasis on liberty and equality than abolitionists and free-soil Republicans. The 14 values correlated in meaningful patterns with the a priori ideological classification and with each other (strong evidence of convergent validity). In addition, the VCI derived from measures of values predicted integrative complexity of reasoning (support for the value pluralism model and for the construct validity of value measures). The conclusion we draw is that assessing values and value conflict from archival data is possible but fraught with conceptual and methodological traps.

Implications for the Study of Conflict Resolution

As in previous studies, the integratively complex politicians were the counselors of compromise. Integratively simple rhetoric is often a reliable lead indicator that crises will escalate into war; integrative complexity is often a reliable lead indicator that crises will be resolved through compromise, give and take, and negotiation. The quest for integrative solutions failed, however, in the America of the 1850s. The centrists asked the extremists to sacrifice deeply held principles to preserve the Union. However, neither the radical abolitionists from the North nor the conservative legislators from the South were eager to live within a Union that was not governed by the principles that they were asked to sacrifice. Incentives for reaching out and identifying viable integrative compromises were weak. One can draw a number of conclusions at this juncture. One possibility is that the integratively complex politicians were trying to integrate the unintegrable, to reconcile the irreconcilable. There was no viable middle ground, and they were doomed to fail. Another possibility is that had the integratively complex politicians been a little more integratively complex and a little more imaginative, they could have concocted some scheme to avert civil war and to placate both abolitionists and defenders of slavery. Answering such questions requires complex counterfactual reenactments of history (what would have happened if the would-be integratively complex compromisers had made this move instead of that one?). Our assessments of integrative complexity should not, however, be tied strictly to whether this style of thinking was effective in averting cataclysmic conflict. Fundamental moral issues also divided the integratively complex from the integ-

ratively simple. The integratively simple politicians—whether they were radical abolitionists or radical secessionists—agreed that the principles at stake were worth fighting for, whereas the integratively complex politicians—mostly free-soil Republicans and Buchanan Democrats—had a pragmatic commitment to making the Union work and avoiding war, even if that required abandoning a few principles along the way.

Implications for Normative Theories of Cognition and Morality

As we noted at the outset, investigators often find it difficult to adopt a strictly value-neutral stance toward integrative complexity. When simple thinkers fall prey to judgmental biases or fail to see mutually beneficial solutions to conflicts or to recognize trade-offs among values, it is tempting to start looking for ways to "improve" the quality of their thinking. For every shortcoming of integratively simple reasoning, there is, however, a mirror-image shortcoming of integrative complexity. It is possible to be too sensitive to situational causes of behavior (Buss, 1991) and too quick to change one's mind in response to contradictory evidence (Tetlock, 1992). It is also possible to try too hard to accommodate the demands of unreasonable adversaries in negotiations and to trade off values that were best treated as fundamental rights that should not be compromised.

The present study underscores the confusion and contradictions that can emerge when we make value-charged judgments of complex psychological constructs that can take on radically different meanings in different historical circumstances. Integrative complexity is not inherently cognitively or morally superior to integrative simplicity. Our judgments are contingent on the types of mistakes we assume people are at greatest risk of making and on the types of values we believe people should be pursuing. The refusal of the integratively simple to compromise or acknowledge trade-offs may strike observers as shortsighted, dogmatic, and self-righteous or as visionary, principled, and deeply moral; the willingness of the integratively complex to look for common ground and trade-offs may strike observers as reasonable, flexible, and sophisticated or as weak, confused, and hypocritical.

The cognitive stylistic similarity of mid-19th-century moderates (striving to compromise with slaveholders) and late-20th-century moderates (striving to balance equality and efficiency or deterrence and reassurance) serves as a useful reminder that the normative judgments we make reflect both our moral–political priorities and the historical world we inhabit.

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