

## Conceptions of Good Citizenship in the Class of 1965

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Contemporary challenges to democracy call into question how people understand what it means to be a good citizen. This paper probes how social and economic changes since the 1960s correspond with the way people construct conceptions of good citizenship. We use and build on panel survey data from Jennings et al.'s Youth-Parent Political Socialization Study, a four-wave survey of a national sample of people who graduated from high school in 1965. We combine the insights gleaned from surveys conducted with this cohort in 1965, 1973, 1982, and 1997 with in-depth interviews conducted with 28 of the respondents in 2018 and 2019. We examine the way people in the Class of 1965 conceptualized good citizenship over the course of their lives, and how a subset of them are doing so in the contemporary era. We find an increasing emphasis on connecting to other citizens that is especially apparent in the interviews, and especially prevalent among women.

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It is a challenging time to be a citizen of the United States of America. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the country was experiencing astounding economic inequality alongside persistent racial hatred, a constant march of reminders of climate change, and political divisiveness that is affecting interpersonal relationships and policymakers' ability to do anything about any of this. Even the country's leader, President Donald Trump, has regularly called into question the connections people ought to feel with their democracy. He came to power while claiming that the federal government is failing the American people, and that the United States needed him to "drain the swamp" in Washington, D.C., to "make America great again."

Perhaps all of this gloom and doom is part of a populist moment in which the promise of politicians like Trump to deliver power to "the people" rather than a condescending and incompetent elite will come to fruition (Mudde 2007). Perhaps the success of Trump and other populists around the globe suggests that the pinnacle of the democratic citizen experience is just around the corner, with members of the public about to enjoy more power than ever before.

However, almost two decades ago John Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse (2002, 1) pointed out to us that "The last thing people want is to be more involved in political decision making." We have little reason to expect that the people will soon be rising up to assume more influence in the decisions that affect their lives. What, then, does this historical moment suggest about citizenship? How are people thinking about their roles as members of a democracy? What do these views, in this historical moment, teach us about the nature of democratic citizenship?

## **Our Approach**

What it means to be a citizen in the United States has changed with time. Michael Schudson (1998) notes that the meaning of U.S. citizenship has evolved alongside changes in the political system, from the politics of assent, to a politics of affiliation in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, to the politics of the Progressive Era with its emphasis on rational, informed citizens. How do people construct citizenship as they confront the challenges of their time? "Citizenship ... is a creative act" (Perrin 2006, 9). How do people, in the midst of making sense of their lives, understand their role as citizens?

What are the vocabularies of citizenship (Thorson 2012) or the perspectives they use to think about what it means to be a good citizen these days?

Our intent in this study is to examine how people are making sense of themselves as citizens given the current precarity of democracy in the United States. To do so, we take advantage of a data set that has captured respondents' views about citizenship across the course of their lives, the Youth-Parent Political Socialization Study. The Socialization Study is an ambitious long-term study of political attitudes and behavior conducted by M. Kent Jennings in collaboration with Richard G. Niemi, Gregory B. Markus, and Laura Stoker.<sup>1</sup> It began in 1965 with interviews of 1,669 high school seniors in 97 schools across the United States and one or both of each student's parents.<sup>2</sup> The students were reinterviewed in 1973, 1982, and 1997, providing an unprecedented record of political stability and change over more than three decades. Our analysis relies primarily upon the 935 respondents (56%) who participated in all four waves of the study.<sup>3</sup>

How this cohort has wrestled with the idea of citizenship is of particular interest to us, as they have confronted many of the challenges that we often point to as responsible for the polarized, ineffective nature of our politics today. They came of

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<sup>1</sup> The data are publicly available through the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (Jennings et al. 2005; Jennings 2007). The current paper is part of a larger project in which we are taking advantage of the Jennings study to help us understand the political impact of the economic and social changes that have taken place in the last half of the 20th century. See <https://faculty.polisci.wisc.edu/kwalsh2/current-research/> for related papers.

<sup>2</sup> This study design facilitated the investigators' goal of examining the impact of families and schools on the political socialization of adolescents (Jennings and Niemi 1974). The average number of student interviews per school was 17; the range was from 13 to 21. (The student response rate was 99%, reflecting remarkable cooperation from school officials.)

<sup>3</sup> Unsurprisingly, sample attrition over the four waves of the study was not entirely random. For example, students who were less interested in politics in 1965 were more likely to drop out of the sample by 1997. In order to minimize the impact of differential attrition on our conclusions we weighted the data to reflect as closely as possible the original distribution of key characteristics. The weighting scheme is described in the Appendix, and the resulting sample weights are reported in Table A1.

age during the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement. They entered the workforce at the tip of the slide into massive income inequality. Their partisan lives encountered the rapid change in the formerly Democratic “Solid South” and increasing polarization.

We are interested in their notions of citizenship because we seek to examine how people respond across time to such tumult, but also because we want to understand how, in this moment, perspectives formed while living through that history inform how they are currently making sense of their place in democracy. They were born in the shadow of World War II, a time when citizenship was about loyalty to one’s country. But then they came of age in a time when the connections between people and their government were being called into question in a variety of ways. The Vietnam War called into question whether one should heed the call when the country goes to war. Skyrocketing economic inequality challenged the idea that the government looks out for the economic interests of everyone and political debates questioned whether that should be a priority. The civil rights revolutions of the 60s and 70s called into question the treatment of African-Americans and other minority groups by their fellow citizens and by the government. Growing suburbanization changed the nature of people’s spatial connections with each other, and perhaps their understanding of the meaning of community.

### **Conceptions of Good Citizenship**

In the mid-1960s, Robert Lane (1965) wrote about the conceptions of citizenship that he encountered among the working-class men of “Eastport” whom he studied for *Political Ideology* (1962). He reflected on Charles Merriam’s classic study of citizenship, *The Making of Citizens* (1931), and noted that Merriam had suggested a set of characteristics common to ideas of good citizenship across countries:

- Patriotism and loyalty
- Obedience to the laws of society
- Respect for officials and government
- Recognition of the obligations of political life
- Some minimum of self-control

Response to community needs in times of stress

Ordinary honesty in social relations

Knowledge of and agreement with the ideology forming the rationale for the prevailing form of government and the maintenance of limits on the criticism of this rationale

And, often, special beliefs in the qualities of one's own people compared to others.<sup>4</sup>

Lane had listened for these qualities in the ruminations of his interviewees, and concluded (1965, 737), “[S]omething of the scholarly views reported above appears—but not much.” Instead, he found a wide variety of views and concluded that if there was a central tendency in the conceptions of the men he interviewed, it was the ambiguity of citizenship and the difficulty they had making sense of it.

What good citizenship looks like to people who are tasked with filling this role is not a given. Perhaps there was a central tendency for conceptions of citizenship at the time that Merriam was writing, but Lane did not find one. What do we hear when we listen to ideas of citizenship among people who came of age in one divisive time and find themselves living in another?

Fortunately, the Jennings study presents numerous opportunities for probing notions of good citizenship. In each wave, the respondents were asked this question: “People have different ideas about what being a good citizen means. We’re interested in what you think. How would you describe a good citizen in this country—that is, what things about a person are most important in showing that one is a good citizen?” The open-ended nature of this question invited respondents to describe good citizenship in their own words, in 1965, 1973, 1982 and 1997. Also, in each of these waves except for 1965, this question was the very first question the interviewer asked them. (In 1965 the interview started with a battery of questions about their experiences in high school.)

In each wave, personnel at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan coded up to three responses per respondent for this question. Study staff

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<sup>4</sup> Merriam (1931), as summarized in Lane (1965, 735-6).

developed a detailed code to capture the variety of responses and made slight refinements (additional codes and additional examples for some of the codes) across the 4 waves of the study.<sup>5</sup> The code was organized into several main categories of responses about good citizenship:

- Support for the country
- Active participation in government
- Support for the community
- Interpersonal relations
- Moral and ethical behavior
- Other aspects of good citizenship

The panel nature of the data means that we can probe whether these conceptions changed over time, and how these changes correspond to political and economic changes and events in the respondents' own lives. Figure 1 shows the relative emphasis of these different perspectives on good citizenship and how they changed across the 4 waves of the study. The surveys suggest that 3 perspectives were especially important for this cohort: "support for country," "active in government," and "interpersonal relations" responses.<sup>6</sup>

**\*\*\* Figure 1 \*\*\***

The "support for country" responses included mentions such as obeying laws, paying taxes, serving in the military or serving the country in another form, loyalty to the country, respect for the flag, and not criticizing the country. Given that the members of this cohort were born to people who lived through and sometimes served in World War II, the relatively high and steady emphasis on this type of response may not be surprising. Given that they then lived through and, in some cases, were forced

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<sup>5</sup> Please see Appendix B for the detailed code for these responses.

<sup>6</sup> Figure 1 reflects our recategorization of the subcategory of "active in the community" responses (code 30, categorized under the "Community Virtues" in the codebook) as "Interpersonal relations" responses rather than "Community virtues" responses, as discussed below.

to serve in the Vietnam War, it is perhaps also not surprising that we see a decline in these responses between 1965 and 1973, though they return to 1965 levels by 1982. Looking in closely (Table 1), we see that this movement is primarily among people from affluent schools and non-whites.

\*\*\* *Table 1* \*\*\*

The importance and decrease over time of the Active in Government responses are also perhaps not surprising. The members of the Class of 1965 placed a big emphasis on this aspect of citizenship in high school, but then after graduating they experienced the tumultuous public affairs of the late 1960s and early 1970s—the Vietnam War; Robert Kennedy, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King assassinations; the beginnings of the Watergate scandal—which challenged their attachment to government (Damico, Conway and Damico 2000).

Another category shows up as just as important for this cohort, increasing in importance over time to rival both the Support for Country and the Active in Government responses by 1997: the emphasis on Interpersonal Relations, or what Jennings (2015), in his own analyses of these survey responses, has labeled “Civility.”

It was in fact our own interviews with a subset of the original Jennings respondents that alerted us to this concern with interpersonal relations—what we refer to from here out as connections to other citizens<sup>7</sup>—before we noticed its importance in the survey responses. This emphasis emerged in many of our interviews, both in direct response to conversations about good citizenship, and in other portions of the interview as well. Its prominence led us to look in more closely at the meaning of this interpretation of good citizenship.

We were also motivated to probe this perspective on good citizenship further because its prevalence and increase over time sheds new light on current concerns with divisiveness in U.S. politics. The apparent increase in attention to connections to others between the time that these respondents graduated from high school and when they turned approximately 50 is a reminder that concern with the way people are

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<sup>7</sup> We use the term “citizen” here not as a reference to legal status but as a term for individual resident in the United States.

treating each other in U.S. democracy is not new to the scene since the 2016 election, but has perhaps been building over a much longer time period.

This concern for others did not show up in Charles Merriam's overview of traditional notions of good citizenship across countries mentioned earlier. However, across the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century citizenship theorists have recognized the importance of such concerns for healthy democracies. Writing in 1994, Kymlicka and Norman argued that trends of the latter half of the 20th century such as "increasing voter apathy and long-term welfare dependency in the United States, the resurgence of nationalist movements in Eastern Europe, the stresses created by an increasingly multicultural and multiracial population in Western Europe, the backlash against the welfare state in Thatcher's England, the failure of environmental policies that rely on voluntary citizen cooperation" and others "have made it clear that the health and stability of a modern democracy depends, not only on the justice of its [Rawlsian] 'basic structure' but also on the qualities and attitudes of its citizens." They counted among these qualities citizens' "ability to tolerate and work together with others who are different from themselves." They noted that this was a shift from a postwar tendency to treat citizenship solely as a matter of rights, even when considering the moral responsibility to each other in the form of a social safety net (Kymlicka and Norman 1994, 352, 353, 354).

Other theorists have described this as a shift from liberal individualist to communitarian or civic republican strains of democratic theory. A rights-based or liberal individualist conception of citizenship emphasizes individuals and their connections to the state, with the assumption that citizenship occupies just a small portion of most people's sense of self. Communitarians, on the other hand, emphasize connections among citizens and the attitudes of civility and tolerance that make interaction among them, and therefore democracy as a way of life, possible (e.g. Conover, Crewe and Searing 1991; Cramer Walsh 2007, ch. 2).

This skim of political theory is meant to show that theorists have increasingly recognized healthy connections among citizens as an important aspect of good citizenship. But have members of the public? Previous work gives a limited yes. This concern shows up in previous studies, but as a minor part of conceptions of good citizenship that pales in comparison to the tendency of people to think of citizenship



as rights and duties to the state. This relative lack of emphasis on the connections among citizens is particularly apparent when looking at conceptions among U.S. citizens compared to those in Great Britain (Conover et al. 1991).

It is possible, though, that the tendency to not think of good citizenship as a matter of connections among citizens is changing. Russell Dalton's research suggests that younger people are more likely to think about citizenship this way. He found that people who turned 18 before 1976 are more likely to favor a "duty-based" conception of good citizenship, which centers on duties such as voting, paying taxes, serving in the military, and obeying the law. It "stresses the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, which reinforces the existing political order and existing authority patterns. It is consistent with what is generally described as an elitist model of democracy, which implies the limited role of the citizen." In contrast, younger citizens are more likely to favor an "engaged citizen" conception of citizenship, which focused more on active engagement with others, understanding others, and helping those worse off. In this model of good citizenship, "Participation is not just an expression of allegiance and duty, but an attempt to express policy preferences. Significantly, engaged citizenship also includes a concern for the opinion of others, potentially an expression of support for a more deliberative style of political activity. In addition, these norms include a concern for others" (Dalton 2008, 31, 32).<sup>8</sup>

Dalton's study, published in 2008, analyzed data from the 2004 General Social Survey and from a 2005 Georgetown Center for Democracy and Civil Society survey to establish that younger respondents were more likely to emphasize engaged citizenship conceptions, suggesting a generational shift. Our results showing an increased emphasis on connections among citizens in conceptions of good citizenship among the members of the Class of 1965 over time suggests either that some of this generational shift rubbed off from young people to their elders in this cohort (McDevitt and Chaffee 2010), or a broader increase in concern with connections among citizens took place in the population.

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<sup>8</sup> Dalton (2008, 38, 41) finds more evidence of duty-based citizenship than engaged citizenship among members of our cohort, but expects that higher levels of education, such as among the people in the Jennings cohort, increases adherence to both models, but engaged citizenship in particular.

In 2014 the GSS reran the good citizenship battery, allowing for an investigation of that possibility, but we do not observe more emphasis on connections among citizens in 2014 compared to 2004 in those data.<sup>9</sup> We also do not find in the 2014 data that younger respondents are more likely to emphasize connections among citizens than the older respondents. These data undermine the possibility that there has been a generational shift, but leaves open the possibility that a more general shift toward more emphasis on connections among citizens took place in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>9</sup> The items in the GSS that tap an emphasis on connections among citizens in conceptions of good citizenship are, “There are different opinions as to what it takes to be a good citizen. As far as you are concerned personally, on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is not at all important and 7 is very important, how important is it ...” (1) “To try to understand the reasoning of people with other opinions?” (2) “To help people in America who are worse off than yourself?” (3) “To help people in the rest of the world who are worse off than yourself?” The weighted mean response (and standard errors) for each of these items in both years were as follows, suggesting if anything a modest shift away from this concern during this 10-year period:

	2004	2014
Try to understand the reasoning of people with other opinions	5.84 (.04)	5.81 (.04)
Help people in America who are worse off than yourself	6.04 (.03)	5.87 (.04)
Help people in the rest of the world who are worse off than yourself	4.88 (.04)	4.70 (.05)

One other relevant datapoint comes from a Pew Research Center January 29- February 18, 2018, poll that found a majority of voting-age U.S. respondents felt that to be a good citizen it is “very important” that a person “volunteer to help others” (52%) and “respect the opinions and beliefs of those you disagree with” (62%). Younger people were no more likely than older respondents to perceive either of these things to be more important for good citizenship. Using the survey weights, 55% of people aged 18-29 said that respecting the opinions of those you disagree with was very important for good citizenship, but 60% of people aged 50-64 said the same. Likewise, 50% of people in the youngest category said volunteering was very important for good citizenship, but 50% of the 50-64 year-olds said the same.

As we noted earlier, theorists and a few scholars like Dalton have been recognizing that how people within a democracy treat each other is an important aspect of notions of good citizenship. But notice just how little we consider this in the study of political behavior. The ideal of the rational “informed citizen,” in which people are expected to pay attention to politics, become informed, and make sound decisions on the basis of facts and sturdy underlying belief systems, has been the dominant model of civic competence in the United States across most of the 20th century (Schudson 1998). Such a perception has certainly guided political behavior research in the modern era (Achen and Bartels 2016); the dominance of Converse’s (1964) assessment of voter competency as a matter of adherence to a belief system is one striking case in point. Our notions of competence typically do not consider interpersonal competence, such as the ability to relate to or understand others’ experiences (Cramer and Toff 2019).

Our interviews with a subsample of the Jennings respondents afford us the opportunity to listen to how they are making sense of their place in this challenging moment, and how they are connecting these conceptions to their life experiences. We do not assume that the respondents’ conceptions of good citizenship are reflective of those held by the rest of the population, nor even of other 70-something Americans. All of these people graduated from high school, so they are unique in at least that respect. However, we relish the opportunity to listen in closely to the way people who have shared their political attitudes since 1965 are defining good citizenship in the contemporary era.

In our recent interviews with the subsample, we listened to their conceptions of good citizenship in three main ways. First, we asked them some version<sup>10</sup> of the good citizenship question used in the surveys, “What does it mean to you to be a good citizen these days?” Also, at the end of the interview we asked them to reflect on the country as a whole and offer advice. We asked some version of the following: “Imagine that you had the opportunity to give a message to the entire country. It’s not a high-pressure situation—you do not necessarily have to give a big speech—but somehow

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<sup>10</sup> We say “some version of the following” to note that the precise words we used to ask the question in the course of our interview conversation varied slightly from interview to interview.

you have the ability to address everyone in the United States. What would you say?" Some people found this to be rather stressful and remarked that they had no idea what to say, but nevertheless soon settled on a message they wished to share. Others launched immediately into the words they would convey. In general, these responses were words of advice that characterized how people wished others would behave, value, or demand of each other.

We also listened for conceptions of good citizenship in a third way. We paid attention to what was important to the respondents, what they cared about, what they hoped for and what they wished was different in their lives across the entirety of the conversation. We expected that the interview as a whole would reveal a great deal about what people think about ideal citizen behavior. It is likely that the only times they have consciously defined what it means to be a good citizen is in a civics class as a youth and in response to the question along those lines in the Jennings socialization study. But we expect that these people have had many thoughts across the course of their lives about how they wished people in their democracy would behave. We refrain here from considering whether any one of these approaches provides a truer reflection of their thoughts about good citizenship. We take them each as different measures of an underlying concept.<sup>11</sup>

To analyze the understandings of citizenship revealed in our interviews, we started from a document we created for each interviewee in which we merged together all interview and survey data by topic (e.g. Vietnam War, civil rights, economic perceptions, partisanship, etc.). We culled through this summary document on each interviewee, except for the responses to questions specifically about good citizenship. As we reviewed the summary document, we composed a memo that described the picture of ideal civic behavior emerging from a given respondent. We then recorded an estimate of what this respondent had said in response to the good citizenship

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<sup>11</sup> Jennings (2015, 109) shares a related point when reflecting on the structure of the open-ended good citizenship question. "So it is not the case that one research procedure is necessarily better than another; rather, different procedures can reveal different aspects and dynamics regarding the public's conception of what constitutes good citizen norms."

questions in the surveys and in our interview.<sup>12</sup> We then compared the good citizenship responses and our memo and estimates to look for themes emerging in their views as well as discrepancies between the survey responses and interview conversation.

### **Connections Among Citizens**

The emphasis on connections among citizens was the aspect of good citizenship that most surprised us in our deep listening to our interviewees and the comparison of the survey data to these conversations. To explain, we bring you in close to Beverly Brown, an African-American woman living in a medium-sized industrial city in the Midwest. She grew up in this city, and has lived there most of her life. She worked for 40 years as an administrative assistant in the local school district. She has lived with or near her sister most of her life, and has shared a home with her since her husband died several years ago. We spoke in her duplex at a round glass table in a corner of the brightly lit living room one afternoon while her sister enjoyed the good fall weather on the back deck.

Brown exuded concern about her fellow citizens. She was deeply concerned about poverty and inequality and said that “people should not go hungry.” She felt that it was the role of government to make sure we are safe and that we all have what we need to get by. She called herself a Democrat because “There’s enough in this country for everybody to have. There should be nobody hungry. Nobody. There shouldn’t be anybody laying out in the streets with no roof over their head. There’s enough for everybody.” Her attitudes about racial justice and the civil rights movement were steeped in her devotion to Christianity. She said that things would be better if people would just realize that “we’re all people. God made us all. ... He didn’t make you better than me, he didn’t make me better than you.” When we asked her how she would do things differently if she were in charge of the country, she brought up health care, poverty and immigration. She said, “These illegal immigrants coming into the country, I’m not real clear on that. I watch it on the news and all, but I’m not totally clear on

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<sup>12</sup> We had interviewed 28 respondents at the start of these analyses, so we did not typically remember their specific responses before writing down an estimate of what we expected their good citizenship responses to look like.

that. I can't understand, why is it that—I know we have a lot of people here in this country, why is it that they don't want them in? I mean, these people are running from something bad, so I think we should help them.” She was not a fan of President Trump and was especially put off by his interpersonal behavior. “I think it's terrible the way he talks about people.”

At the end of the interview, we asked her what she would want to say to the whole country. After a long pause, she said: “That we should probably treat everybody the way we would want to be treated .... If we really wanted to see peaceful times, ... if we really wanted to see peaceful times, that's all we have to do, is just treat each other the way we want, I'll treat you the way I want you to treat me.” We asked her,

*KJC:* Why do you think it's so hard for people not to do that?

*Brown:* I don't know. I don't know.

*KJC:* It seems so simple, right?

*Brown:* It is, it's not simple, it seems so simple but it is not simple.

*KJC:* Yeah.

*Brown:* Just why do you want to hate somebody?

*KJC:* I don't know.

*Brown:* Why do you want to hate a person that walks just like you, that has a heart just like you, like they say, we all bleed red blood.

*KJC:* Right.

*Brown:* Why do you want to hate that person when that person's done nothing to you?

*KJC:* Yeah.

*Brown:* I don't know. It's too bad, it's too bad. But that's what we got.

We have not relayed anything about Brown's responses to the survey questions about good citizenship yet, but the reader can likely already see that this person's interview suggested a concern with connections among citizens. She conveys a perspective that ideal members of her democracy are kind to one another, treat each other as equals, and help one another. In our conversation, she did not talk about the

importance of contacting public officials, of getting involved in the policy process somehow, about serving on juries, or obeying the law—other common interpretations of good citizenship. What seemed most central to her conception of the ideal behavior of members of her democracy were concerns about how people treat one another.

When we do take a look at Brown’s responses to the survey questions about good citizenship, we see some resonance with what we heard in the interview (Table 2). In 1965, Brown gave one response that was categorized as an “Interpersonal Relations” response. In 1965, she voiced the “Interpersonal Relations” emphasis as an emphasis on helping other people. Later in life, in the 1982 and 1997 waves of the survey, we do not see a mention that is categorized as “Interpersonal Relations,” but instead there is an emphasis on honesty, as well as “religious” in 1997. This shift could be due to increasing religiosity across her life. (In 1997 she reported in the survey that she had become more religious since 1982. Also, in 1965 she reported attending church “almost every week,” but in 1973 and 1982 she attended just “a few times a year.” In 1997 she was attending “almost every week” again.)

\*\*\* *Table 2* \*\*\*

### **Learning from the Gaps Between the Surveys and Interview Responses**

In our interview, Beverly Brown exuded concern for connections among citizens in public life, but the only indication from the surveys that this concern was such a central part of Brown’s conception of good citizenship was one response in 1965. Such a disjuncture between the interviews and the surveys was common. Respondents would often emphasize connections among citizens in the interview, even though their survey responses had not been coded as “Interpersonal Relations” responses.

The Youth-Parent Political Socialization Study codebook lists the following as types of mentions that fall into the “Interpersonal Relations or Social Behavior” category:

**Helping other people.** Helps those in need, less fortunate. Lend helping hand. Being helpful to others.

**Tolerant**, respectful of others. Respect rights, beliefs, religion, of others. Treat everybody right, same. Not prejudiced or intolerant. Practices golden rule. Doesn't feel superior.

**Kind**, considerate, understanding. Kind to people concerned about people around him. Doesn't hurt people. Compassion, love.

**Good neighbor**, neighborly. Helps his neighbors. Gets along with neighbors. Tries to be good neighbor.

**Gets along with others**. Tries to get along. Cooperative. Likes people. Liked by people. Amicable, friendly.

**Minds own business**. Not a busybody. Doesn't try to tell others what to do.

**Sets good example** for others to follow.

**Joins organizations**; does volunteer work [Added in 1973].

**Helping youth** [Added in 1997].

**Other** references to interpersonal relations, social behavior.

Our comparison of the survey responses and the interview comments suggested that an additional subcategory ought to be treated as a response that indicates concern with connections among citizens. There were several people in our interviews who talked extensively about the importance of engaging with neighbors and others in one's community, as opposed to doing things for the good of the community in the abstract. They had given responses to the open-ended survey question during one or more waves of the study that had been coded as "active in the community," a subcategory listed under "community virtues." Based on our interviews, we decided that these mentions ought to be treated as connections-among-citizens mention. Figure 1 reflects this recategorization, as do the multivariate analyses reported below.

Another example of a mismatch between the notions of good citizenship conveyed in the surveys and in our interview comes from Steve Grove. He grew up in a rural southern community, and eventually settled in a different part of the same state, several hours away. His father was a doctor and public health official appointed by the governor, and a well-known member of his small town. His parents were older than



parents of other kids his age, and his father died when he was young. But he lived a happy childhood in which he felt cared for by the entire community, and also enjoyed a bit of socioeconomic privilege because of his father's occupation. His father's job provided something else: the rare experience of knowing black residents of his highly segregated hometown. His father's job involved serving everyone in the community, so his family had ties to both black and white residents. He had black friends with whom he would sneak in a game of baseball from time to time.

Grove did well in school, went on to college where he majored in math education. He spent a brief time teaching math in a desegregated high school in his state. He became interested in computers and went on to a career in engineering. He lived several places in the United States, but returned with his wife to his home state to raise their two daughters. He travels internationally for pleasure now, in his retirement.

Grove's responses to the good citizenship question in the surveys are displayed in Table 3. These responses suggest that Grove's view of good citizenship centers around a person's relationship with their government: Good citizens obey the laws, remain loyal to the government, vote, and actively engage in making the country a better place. There is no mention of other members of the democracy in these responses.

**\*\*\* Table 3 \*\*\***

However, our conversation with Grove presented a slightly different picture. His concerns with abiding by the laws and making the country a better place to live were evident, and the choices he had made in his life conveyed that he believed in active citizenship. (He had served on his town's school board for 13 years, first as an appointee, and then went on to win re-election several times.) But Grove was also deeply concerned with understanding across divides. When he talked about his experience teaching in a high school that had experienced significant tensions during desegregation, he said, "But it was a very good experience. I mean, I got exposed to cultures and things that I would've never gotten had I not gone there." When we asked at the end of the interview about what message he wished to convey to the country, he said, "I think the main thing is, we got to focus on those things that are valuable to

humanity, and not on those things that divide. You know, let's focus on things that we all share, and all to some extent agree on, and not on the differences. Don't let the differences split us. I guess that's the main [thing]. We're not going to all think alike, we're not going to all act alike, but it's amazing. I've never been anywhere that we didn't seem to enjoy and get along with the local people. We might not agree with the political regime that they were under."

As we were wrapping up the interview, he offered this: "One other thing I'll tell you, I remember in civics, I think about the eighth grade, I was there about the time they were forming The United Nations. And my perception was, that's going to solve ... that's the panacea. All the countries are going to come together and we're going to have these disagreements, but we're going to resolve them peacefully." In the context of an interview, in which Grove had the opportunity to think aloud, his concerns with people bridging divides bubbled up on a variety of topics. That concern had not shown up in the surveys.

We are not claiming that the interviews or the surveys are more or less accurate characterization of Steve Grove's conception of good citizenship. But his comments in both reflect a broader pattern in which respondents who did not offer up a response to the survey question that fell under an "interpersonal relationship and social behavior" code nevertheless emphasized these aspects of human behavior when talking about their recollection of public affairs in the past and their concerns with the political present.

We have been interviewing people 21-23 years after the last wave of the Jennings study, which took place in 1997. Such a long lapse of time means it is possible that any mismatches we observed between the survey responses and the interview comments are due to respondents changing their minds about good citizenship since 1997. It is also possible, though, that the nature of the interview allowed concerns about connections among citizens to emerge in a way that the survey interviews did not afford. We attempted to make personal connections with these people, spending time talking about their families, pastimes and neighborhoods. These were relational exchanges (Fujii 2017) in which we aimed for the interview to be a conversation that entailed sharing personal experiences. Perhaps the experience of

talking about public affairs with one or two eager listeners brought an appreciation or valuing of healthy connections among citizens to the fore.

The examples of Steve Grove and Beverly Brown suggest that the interviews are more likely than the surveys to reveal a concern with connections among citizens. The intensity of Brown's concern with tolerance and her decades-long immersion in her church community suggest that her concerns with the nature of relationships among citizens did not arise between 1997 and 2020. We cannot know that for sure, but our argument is that when we see a mismatch, it is more likely that this is a matter of methodology—of the ability of interviews to pick up on this perspective—than it is a matter of time—the change in importance of connections among citizens to the individual since 1997.

There are two people in our subsample of face-to-face interviewees, notably both women, whose survey responses as well as interview comments do suggest an expanded view of citizenship over time that grew to include concern with the connections among citizens. They both mentioned an “Interpersonal Relations” consideration in response to the good citizenship question in the surveys in 1997 after not doing so in earlier waves. One woman, Karen Robinson, grew up in an East coast suburb and settled over time in a small town 30 miles south. She considers herself an economic conservative and social liberal, and a pro-choice moderate. When recalling past events, she described herself as being somewhat oblivious to political events early in her life, but said her interest in politics had grown. She said that nowadays she remarks to close friends from childhood that she is amazed they weren't paying attention to political events in their teenage years. She is an avid consumer of the news now. The television news was on when we arrived for the interview, and the books she had recently for pleasure were nonfiction books on current events topics.

Robinson's conception of citizenship grew, not only in terms of attentiveness to politics, but with respect to relationships among citizens as well. One book she was reading was about transgender youth. When asked what advice she would give to a student graduating from high school, she advised this hypothetical person to be nice to people and to recognize that there is passion on many sides of an issue, but to try to be understanding. She connected this desire for kindness and understanding to her growing concern with the divisiveness of contemporary politics. Both her interest and

concern with politics had grown over the course of her life, mirroring the shift in her good citizen survey responses over time from an emphasis on voting, military service and being a good worker to voting, being active in the community and volunteer work.

The survey responses of Patricia Myers make similar sense. Myers is a woman who grew up in a middle-American state and later moved to a southern one to accompany her third husband. She, too, was apologetic for not paying more attention to politics early in her life, but when we interviewed her was an avid, almost voracious, consumer of news. She had been a weak Democrat across the waves of the survey, but had become a big fan of Barack Obama, and an intense critic of Donald Trump. In 1965 her idea of good citizenship centered on being interested and informed. In 1973, she mentioned voting and supporting the country. In 1982, she filled out a mailback survey, so did not respond to this question, but by 1997 she described good citizenship as obeying laws and voting, but also being active in community affairs.

Her life went through several twists and turns through the course of 2 divorces and 3 marriages, but along the way she became active in an animal shelter when her son turned 16. She and her current husband started fostering dogs and they both are active volunteers there now. Her husband serves on the board. That level of involvement seemed to us to be a significant development shift for someone who reported no political or civic participation in the surveys. This volunteering, along with her avid news consumption of “even Fox” suggests that Myers’s conception of the way a citizen ought to behave had shifted considerably over time.

Thus, some of the mismatches we observe between the surveys and the interviews are due to shifts in conceptions over time. Some of the mismatches may also be due to the fact that the interviews seemed more likely to bring out notions of good personhood as good citizenship. For some people, being a good person is the same thing as being a good citizen.<sup>13</sup> But for others, these are separate concepts. Some of the Jennings study respondents, when asked by a survey interviewer what it means to be a good citizen, may not have considered kindness, tolerance and helping

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<sup>13</sup> In a September 11-14, 2008, Monmouth University poll of New Jersey residents, 36% of respondents said that being a good person is enough to make someone a good citizen ([https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll\\_nj\\_101208/#Question5](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_nj_101208/#Question5)).

behavior as an important quality, even if being a good person is something that they valued in other parts of the interview.

However, we are not automatically assuming that someone who conveyed that it is a good thing to be nice to other people in general included such a value in her notion of good citizenship. We listened in the interviews for people who themselves made a connection between being good to other people and the healthy functioning of democracy. For example, Steve Grove made the connection between connections among citizens and good citizenship when he said, “Don’t let the differences split us.” For those for whom there is overlap between being a good citizen and being a good person, it appears that overlap is easier to identify in a semi-structured interview.

It may help illuminate the nature of conceptions of good citizenship that emphasized connections among citizens by contrasting them with perspectives that did not. One respondent who conveyed such a view is Ron Sutton, a man who had grown up in a rural southern community and now lives in that same state managing a rental property after a long, successful business career. He exuded pride in his family’s military history, especially his father’s, and regretted that he was unable to serve in the Vietnam War because of a college football injury. He had voted Democratic until after 1976, when he became profoundly disappointed in Jimmy Carter and what he viewed as his weak behavior as president. In his survey responses and in our interview, he stressed the importance of duty, loyalty, individual responsibility and a good work ethic.

This perspective was not unconcerned with other people. But the concern with others was not about kindness, tolerance, or neighborliness. Sutton’s attachment to others was through patriotism, loyalty and duty. In his view, one treated others well in a democracy by contributing to a common object of reverence, the country.

In other words, the perspective of good citizenship that we are drawing your attention to—the emphasis on connections among people—is a perspective in which other people in the population are not an abstract entity such as “the country” or “the American people,” but particular individuals with whom the respondent imagines engaging.

## Who Emphasized Connections Among Citizens?

Who are the people who emphasized connections among citizens? In our conversations, they were not necessarily the gregarious or extraverted types, or people who seemed to particularly like interacting with people. We certainly encountered such people, such as Ed Bradshaw, a former local office holder and Navy veteran who seemed to relish engaging in political back-and-forth and reluctantly let us go 3 hours after the start of our conversation. He was one of the most patriotic people we encountered, and also one of those most concerned about the divisiveness in our political culture. And he was definitely one of the most outgoing. But we also encountered people like Stan Weber, who was much more reserved, but also ruminated about the lack of tolerance in the population. Weber is a former candidate for state office and media celebrity who said he dreaded running for office and running into fans.

Bradshaw and Weber have different personalities, but are both like the other respondents who expressed concerns about the connections among citizens in the following way: they all wove these concerns with other aspects of good citizenship. They talked about concern with relationships among members of the democracy alongside mentions of support for the country, active involvement in government, and other perspectives, as Figure 1 suggests.

We did wonder, though, if the concern with connections among citizens tended to coincide with an active orientation to government. We saw no clear evidence of this in our interviews. Bradshaw and Weber had both run for office. However, another of our interviewees, Karen Robinson, was very concerned with the lack of tolerance in the country but confessed that she had never voted in a presidential election until 1988. Sometimes people who were highly active in a particular community did not convey concern with how people in the democracy more broadly treat one another. For example, Susan Sorsby was highly active in her church community, but did not stress connections among citizens in her discussion of good citizenship.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Thorson (2012, 74) also found a lack of correspondence between the conception of citizenship her interviewees conveyed and their political behaviors.

We also found little connection between partisan or ideological leanings and views of good citizenship that stressed connections among citizens in the interviews. If anything, liberal-leaning people seemed more likely to bring up this concern, as almost all of them did so. However, among those who called themselves conservatives or moderates, we encountered people who did emphasize connections among citizens, as well as those who did not.

There was a slight indication of a relationship between an emphasis on connections among citizens and gender, with women appearing to be more likely to view good citizenship this way. Although our subsample was not intended to be a representative subsample of the full study, the interviews suggested a weak correlation: 7 of our 11 women brought up tolerance, kindness, good neighborliness and other aspects of healthy connections among citizens, while just 9 of our 16 men did so.

This tendency of women in the study to be more likely to emphasize connections among citizens is borne out by the survey data. We analyzed the relationship between mentions coded as Interpersonal Relationships or Active in Community and respondents' gender, race, residence in the South in 1965, family SES,<sup>15</sup> and the SES of their 1965 high school<sup>16</sup> (Table 4). These results provide little indication

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<sup>15</sup> Our measure of *Family SES* is constructed from eight indicators in the 1965 surveys: father's educational attainment, mother's educational attainment, family income, the head of household's occupational prestige, subjective social class, having a telephone, owning a home, and belonging to a labor union. All of these indicators are derived from the parents' survey responses *except* for having a telephone, which is based on the students' responses. The weights attached to the indicators in our summary measure are derived from a factor analysis based on all 1,669 first-wave respondents, regardless of whether they were interviewed in subsequent waves. The first principal factor has an eigenvalue of 2.34; none of the other eigenvalues exceeds 0.25. The factor loadings are .788 for father's educational attainment, .676 for mother's educational attainment, .647 for family income, .644 for occupational prestige, .522 for subjective social class, .259 for having a telephone, .226 for homeownership, and -.200 for union membership.

<sup>16</sup> Our measure of *School SES* is simply the average *Family SES* for the students in each of the 97 high schools represented in the Jennings sample. In most cases *School SES* reflects the

of substantial differences across demographic groups in the frequency of connections-among-citizens responses. But the standout relationship is with gender in 1997. In the first three waves of the study, gender had no clear relationship to talking about the connections-among-citizens aspect of citizenship. But by 1997 something had changed, producing a clear and sizable relationship. (61% of women mentioned at least one such consideration, and 19% mentioned two or more; the corresponding proportions of men were 53% and 13%.)

\*\*\* *Table 4* \*\*\*

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

An emphasis on connections among citizens is just one way people in the Class of 1965 have conceptualized good citizenship during their lives. But this concern was pervasive in our face-to-face interviews with the subsample, including with respondents who had not mentioned this aspect of good citizenship in the 4 waves of the survey.

Maybe there is a cultural change occurring, in which concern for others is becoming more prominent in conceptions of good citizenship (Dalton 2008). If that is the case, it makes sense that some people in the Class of 1965 would register this shift over time. These feelings of social responsibility “have a long tradition in European social democratic and Christian social traditions, and they are present in American political norms” (Dalton 2008, 29). Perhaps, as the people in this cohort went through their lives making sense of the grand “coming-apart” of our political system, economy and social hierarchies (Allen 2019), some of them decided that really good citizens are people who show concern for one another.

In the post-World War II and Civil Rights era, Lane (1965, 748) painted a picture of good citizenship as something that is unwaveringly positive, anti-critical, and supportive of the country. If that was the context in which the Class of 1965 came of age, then perhaps the caustic divisiveness of the contemporary era has brought to the

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composition of the student’s neighborhood as well as her school, although the 11 private or parochial schools in the sample probably drew students from somewhat wider areas than the 86 public schools did.



fore concerns with kindness and tolerance and the nature of relationships between people.<sup>17</sup> It could be that the emphasis on healthy connections among citizens has been spurred by their absence.

We caution, though, against taking the emphasis on connections among citizens as too much of a hopeful sign. Kjerstin Thorson's (2012) work on the vocabularies of citizenship among young people suggests that those who focus on a concern for others are at the opposite end of the continuum from those who idealize active engagement with others. If people are turning away from institutions and discounting collective action as a desirable way to behave in a democracy, the concern with kindness, tolerance and helping others may be small reassurance.

It may be that these concerns with how people in a democracy treat one another are a reflection of a limited conception of citizenship that includes consideration of people whom one knows personally rather than a more global perspective of obligation or connection to others (Thorson 2012, 74-5; Lane 1965, 746). Lane referred to conversations about good citizenship that reference helping neighbors as a kind of restricted definition of citizenship. He treated struggling with interpersonal relations in the context of portions of his interviews about citizenship as a kind of pathology, something of an indictment of an individual's conception of citizenship (Lane 1965, 742, 741).

A different way of thinking about this is to ask whether we observed an emphasis on connections among citizens within this cohort because they were doing well and had the capacity to consider higher-order concerns (Inglehart 1981), or because democracy was working so poorly that people have begun focusing on the connections among people, rather than connections between people and their institutions of government.<sup>18</sup> It appears that the latter is more likely. We take one clue from responses to a question about level of faith in different levels of government. The results suggest that people have turned away from their national institutions, and toward those close to home. Specifically, the Youth-Parent Political Socialization study included a set of questions that asked respondents in which level of government they

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<sup>17</sup> Thank you to Cara Wong for suggesting this possibility.

<sup>18</sup> Thank you to Gustavo Diaz for posing this question.

had the most and least faith: national, state, or local government.<sup>19</sup> Figure 2 displays the responses to this question in each wave of the study. We see a consistent decline in trust in national government mirrored in an increase in trust in local government. The structure of the question means that as one goes down another must go up, but the graph suggests considerable movement toward more trust in institutions closer to oneself over time, which has shown up in analyses of other samples as well (Wolak and Palus 2010; McCarthy 2018).

\*\*\* *Figure 2* \*\*\*

Another clue that the turning toward concern with others is not necessarily good news is that, at the same time that we saw increases in such responses, we also saw a decline in active engagement with government, as the “Active in government” responses declined once these respondents graduated from high school (Figure 1). If an increase in concern with connections among citizens coincided with an increase in emphasis on active engagement in government, we might say there had been a turning toward active engagement in democracy, or a turn toward recognizing that democracy is a way of life in which citizens are actively involved in making decisions that affect each others’ lives. But instead it appears that the turn toward concern with connections among citizens has happened at a time when people are turning away from connections between themselves and their government institutions.

As we have seen, this concern was emerging over the 4 waves of the Jennings study. Thus, it does not seem to be the Trump era, specifically but something longer term that is pulling attention toward how people in our democracy treat each other. One possible cause of this shift is the rising importance of interpersonal networks (primarily online) for news consumption. For younger generations, news consumption is much more a product of online interaction as opposed to one-way consumption of news from traditional sources, and this likely affects how people think about their civic identity (Bennett et al. 2010). If learning about public affairs is increasingly a function of other members of the democracy, as opposed to distant media institutions,

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<sup>19</sup> “We find that people differ in how much faith and confidence they have in various levels of government in this country. In your case, do you have more faith and confidence in the national government, the government of this state, or in the local government around here?”

maybe it is no surprise that thoughts about one's role in the democracy include considerations about links to others as well.

However, the rise in concern with connections among citizens within the Class of 1965 appears to have started before the internet revolution. We see that rise happening before 1997 in the Jennings survey data. Perhaps an even broader change in society has led to a concern with connections among people that is affecting both conceptions of citizenship as well as news consumption.

Our interviews provide some suggestions regarding what this change might be. Listening closely to the women we interviewed who emphasized connections among citizens, we hear them raising these concerns in a context of a broader struggle to make ends meet. Take, for example, Carol Ford, who noted an increasing nastiness in her lifetime and suggested that part of the nastiness had to do with the economy. Ford is a single white woman who works a retail job in a West Coast metro area. She shares her apartment with a workmate in order to make rent. "So much greed," she said. "There are people at [my store] who are fighting really hard right now to unionize [it]. I don't think it's going to happen, but they're ... people who are doing their best. Minimum wage went to \$15 an hour here [recently], but it's not because retail or anybody who pays minimum wage wanted it, it's because [this city] said you have to. It's minimum wage here." When we asked her if she thought that was helping, she said, "Yeah, but it's not enough. [My roommate] and I are really lucky. We each pay \$800 and something a month for this place, which is a two-bedroom townhouse. Most people are going to pay a minimum of \$1,800 a piece for about the same thing."

For Ford, the United States was experiencing a low point, well before the coronavirus pandemic, that was in large part attributable to President Trump. She told a story about a couple from Germany shopping at her store recently who remarked about the lack of pretty colors on the rack. She told them, "Well you know this is America's black period." They laughed and said, "Maybe it will be better in the next election."

She said that things have been particularly hard since the Great Recession, when she lost most of her retirement fund, and that in general it has gotten harder for many people to make ends meet. "I think it's just harder for people," she said. "I can remember when you're younger you would go to the shoe store, mom would take us to

the shoe store in [a nearby town]. And the retail people there were very well respected, they were knowledgeable. Those were careers for people. They raised families on those salaries. They built homes, bought homes. I think opportunities are becoming less and less, and narrower and narrower for people, here especially.” In her early 70s, Ford found herself working in a retail job she enjoyed and was proud of. But for the very first time in her life, even though her sister says, “We were so poor growing up,” she felt economically vulnerable.

In general, it does not seem to be the case that those who are struggling more economically are more likely to emphasize connections among citizens in their conceptions of good citizenship. Indeed, if anything, there is a slight positive relationship between family income and connections-among-citizens mentions in the 1997 survey.<sup>20</sup>

However, in other portions of our project, we have considered the effects of economic struggle on political attitudes and these results gave us some clues about when and where the concern with connections among citizens may have emerged (Bartels and Cramer 2018). Between 1973 and 1982, a period in which the United States experienced stagflation, it was the people who experienced income gains who were more likely to think welfare recipients had too much influence. They were also less likely to think government should help minorities. They tended to trust more in government, but if anything were less likely to trust other people. We find it notable that those with the least economic struggle show these signs of the least amount of concern with their most vulnerable fellow citizens.

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<sup>20</sup> Adding family income percentile to the regression analysis reported in Table 4 produces a parameter estimate of .067 (with a standard error of .034), implying that our most affluent respondents provided 8 or 9% more connections-among-citizens mentions than those at the bottom of the income scale.

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**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics and “Support for Country” Responses in Each Wave of the Jennings Survey**

Ordinary regression parameter estimates (with standard errors in parentheses).

	1965	1973	1982	1997
<i>Family SES</i>	-.009 (.040)	-.000 (.039)	-.041 (.040)	.010 (.036)
<i>School SES</i>	-.001 (.068)	-.225 (.066)	-.065 (.068)	-.009 (.061)
Non-white	.162 (.098)	-.221 (.093)	-.077 (.094)	.044 (.088)
Female	.010 (.053)	-.020 (.051)	.017 (.053)	.050 (.048)
South (1965)	-.025 (.070)	-.056 (.069)	-.032 (.071)	-.116 (.063)
Intercept	.710 (.039)	.682 (.039)	.739 (.041)	.691 (.036)
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Std error of reg	.796	.718	.748	.717
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.00	.02	.00	.00
<i>N</i>	935	797	798	927



**Table 2: Beverly Brown's Good Citizenship Survey Responses<sup>21</sup>**

Year	Response Code	Response Type
1965	Tries to improve self. Work to better self. Learn or study as much as can. Willing to try to improve self.	Other Personal Attributes
	Works to better the community. Tries to improve community, home town. Make community better place to live. Active so that community will profit.	Community Virtues
	Helping other people. Helps those in need, less fortunate. Lend helping hand. Being helpful to others	Interpersonal Relations and Social Behavior
1973	<i>NA/ Respondent completed mail-back questionnaire, which did not include this question.</i>	
1982	Honest, trustworthy. Pays debts. Doesn't cheat people (as distinguished from cheating government.) Truthful. Fair. Straightforward.	Moral, Ethical, Religious Attributes
1997	Honest, trustworthy. Pays debts. Doesn't cheat people (as distinguished from cheating government.) Truthful. Fair. Straightforward.	Moral, Ethical, Religious Attributes
	Religious. Christian, church-going. Works for church. Believes in God.	Moral, Ethical, Religious Attributes

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<sup>21</sup> The text in the "Response Code" column is the description of the code that a coder assigned to one of the respondents' open-ended responses in a given year.

**Table 3: Steve Grove's Good Citizenship Survey Responses<sup>22</sup>**

Year	Response Code	Response Category
1965	Obeying laws. Following laws, rules, regulations respecting the laws. Should uphold the laws. No breaking laws. Obeying law officers.	Indications of Support for the Country, Government, or Political System
	Loyalty to country or government. Standing up and sticking up for country. Supporting government. Being patriotic. Believing in, being proud of country.	Indications of Support for the Country, Government, or Political System
	Voting, votes. Registers and votes. Should exercise right to vote.	Active Orientation to Government, Public Affairs, Matters of the Country
1973	<i>NA/ Mail-back questionnaire</i>	
1982	<i>NA/ Mail-back questionnaire</i>	
1997	Trying to improve the country, government. Help build things up. Improve the country any way possible. Make country better place to live. Better the world.	Active Orientation to Government, Public Affairs, Matters of the Country

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<sup>22</sup> The text in the "Response Code" column is the description of the code that a coder assigned to one of the respondents' open-ended responses in a given year.

**Table 4: Demographic Characteristics and “Connections Among Citizens” Responses in Each Wave of the Jennings Survey**

Ordinary regression parameter estimates (with standard errors in parentheses).

	1965	1973	1982	1997
<i>Family SES</i>	.027 (.034)	-.029 (.037)	.009 (.039)	-.011 (.039)
<i>School SES</i>	-.007 (.056)	.032 (.062)	.072 (.066)	-.019 (.066)
Non-white	.066 (.082)	.078 (.089)	-.118 (.092)	.050 (.094)
Female	-.019 (.044)	.062 (.049)	.032 (.052)	.156 (.051)
South (1965)	.031 (.059)	.033 (.066)	.063 (.069)	-.109 (.068)
Intercept	.510 (.033)	.541 (.037)	.638 (.039)	.691 (.038)
Std error of reg	.668	.681	.726	.769
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.00	.00	.00	.01
<i>N</i>	935	797	798	927

**Table A1: Sample Weights**

Each cell shows the panel weight for respondents with the corresponding combination of characteristics (in italics), the percentage of the original 1965 sample ( $N=1,669$ ), and the raw number of respondents who participated in all four panel waves ( $N=935$ ).

**Partisanship:** Democrats; Independents (including other and apolitical); Republicans.

**Follow politics:** “most of the time”; “some of the time”; “only now and then” or “hardly at all.”

**Race:** white; black; other. **Region:** non-South; South. **Sex:** male; female.

	Dems, Most	Dems, Some	Dems, Less	Inds, Most	Inds, Some	Inds, Less	Reps, Most	Reps, Some	Reps, Less	Total
White NonS Male	<i>1.035</i> 8.8% (78)	<i>.944</i> 7.1% (71)	<i>1.658</i> 3.5% (18)	<i>1.42</i> <i>1</i> 2.6% (17)	<i>.876</i> 2.0% (22)	<i>1.33</i> <i>2</i> 1.5% (9)	<i>.854</i> 6.1% (66)	<i>1.11</i> <i>1</i> 5.9% (50)	<i>1.24</i> <i>2</i> 1.9% (14)	<i>1.05</i> <i>6</i> 39.5% (345)
White NonS Fem	<i>.908</i> 7.9% (75)	<i>.916</i> 9.4% (92)	<i>.981</i> 3.5% (32)	<i>1.06</i> <i>4</i> 1.5% (13)	<i>.917</i> 2.0% (19)	<i>1.78</i> <i>8</i> 1.0% (6)	<i>.816</i> 3.9% (44)	<i>.807</i> 5.5% (59)	<i>1.20</i> <i>5</i> 1.5% (12)	<i>.916</i> <i>36.2</i> % (352)
White South Male	<i>.761</i> 1.9% (26)	<i>.846</i> 2.1% (24)			<i>.964</i> 1.1% (13)		<i>.945</i> 1.0% (11)	<i>.858</i> 1.1% (12)		<i>.851</i> 7.2% (86)
White South Fem	<i>1.085</i> 1.3% (13)	<i>.791</i> 2.5% (31)			<i>.956</i> 1.3% (14)		<i>.756</i> 0.8% (10)	<i>1.083</i> 1.1% (11)		<i>.898</i> 7.1% (79)
Black NonS Male	<i>1.079</i> 1.4% (15)	<i>1.605</i> 2.2% (17)								<i>1.43</i> <i>2</i> 2.2% (20)
Black NonS Fem						<i>2.214</i> 1.6% (8)				<i>1.32</i> <i>9</i> 2.4% (20)
Black South Male	<i>1.374</i> 1.8% (11)	<i>1.940</i> 2.5% (13)								<i>3.36</i> <i>4</i> 2.5% (7)

Black South Fem										1.23 7 2.3% (17)
Other NonS Male	.773 0.6% (9)									.659 0.1% (1)
Other NonS Fem										.788 0.6% (8)
Total	.981 23.3% (221)	.945 23.4% (233)	1.307 9.7% (69)	1.262 5.6% (42)	.954 5.4% (55)	1.383 3.2% (22)	.845 12.1% (134)	.949 13.4% (129)	1.211 3.9% (30)	1669 (935)

**Appendix B**  
1997 Good Citizenship Response Code

*(Refinements since 1965 are noted in brackets)*

- 1) Support for the country, government, political system.
  - 9) Serving on jury duty; willing to do jury service. [Added in 1997]
  - 10) Loyalty to country or government. Standing up and sticking up for country. Supporting government. Being patriotic. Believing in/being proud of country.
  - 11) Respecting or honoring symbols and officials. Respect for the flag/president/government. (note - use of word 'respect' or near equivalent essential for coding in this category.)
  - 12) Not critical of country or government. Doesn't downgrade or disparage country or government's policies. Accepts country as is. Wouldn't change or destroy things in government and country; doesn't rebel/demonstrate. (Note: References to working within system coded 25.) ["Doesn't rebel/demonstrate" was added in 1982]
  - 13) Serving, helping the country/government. Willing to serve/help/do anything; perform duties as asked or which would helpful. Cooperating with government. (in general, specific kinds of help, service, or work are not specified.)
  - 14) Obeying laws. Following rules/regulations respecting the laws; uphold/respect the laws; not breaking laws. Obeying law officers.
  - 15) Paying taxes. Doesn't cheat on taxes.
  - 16) Military service. Serving in armed forces. Willing to defend country (in military sense). Fight for country.
  - 19) Other references to support of country or government.
- 2) Active orientation to government, public affairs
  - 20) Interested and informed. Interested in what's going on, in public affairs/government/country/world; "Should know about politics."
  - 21) Being active. Doing your part. Participates in things, functions. Doesn't sit back. Exercises some leadership. Gets involved. (specific activities not given.) ["Gets involved" was added in 1982]
  - 22) Voting. Registers and votes. Should exercise right to vote. (note - voting in school elections is coded in 32. Voting in local elections coded in 33. Informed voting is coded in 23.)
  - 23) Informed voting. Votes for best man, what he believes in. Finds out about candidates before voting. Votes for person because of ability, qualifications. ["Votes on rational basis" was included in 1965 and 1973, but not included in 1982 and 1997]

- 24) Trying to improve the country, government. Help build things up. Make country better place to live. Better the world. (When posed as alternative to destruction/rioting/protesting, code in 25.) [(When posed as alternative to destruction/rioting/protesting, code in 25.) was added in 1982]
- 25) Works within system to change things rather than tearing it down/rioting/protesting. (Must have explicit reference to alternative here.) [Added in 1973]
- 26) Work to improve the country, government, specific mentions [Added in 1973]
- 27) Writes to public officials. Contacting public officials, speaking out. [Added in 1973]
- 28) Tries to change unjust laws (Qualified mentions of obeying laws here, such as “follows laws as far as conscience allows”) [Added in 1973]
- 29) Other references to active orientation to government and country.
- 3) Community virtues
- 30) Active in community affairs. Help in local, community matters. Taking part in civic affairs, community drives. Civic minded. “Help people in the community.” [“Help people in the community” was added in 1997]
- 31) Works to better the community. Make community better place to live so that community will profit. (note - this category differs from 30 in that R specifically states that improvement or betterment of community should be aim of good citizen. Simply being active is coded in the preceding category. Simply being active in order to improve or wanting to improve community is coded in this category only.)
- 32) Interested/participates/active in in school affairs. Votes in school elections. Serves in PTA. Helps out schools.
- 33) Local government; interested/participates in government and politics. Pays attention to local politics. Votes in local elections. (note - references to voting at local level coded here and not in 22.) [“Pays attention to local as well as federal government” is included in 1965 and 1973, but is changed to “pays attention to local politics” in 1982]
- 34) Works to better community - specific ways mentioned (e.g. try to get rid of pollution in this town; work to improve police force) (not school affairs - 32) [“Works to better community” was added in 1973, specific examples added in 1982]
- 35) Takes care of property; Cleans property [Added in 1973]
- 39) Other references to community virtues.
- 4) Interpersonal relations and social behavior

- 40) Helping people. Helps needy/less fortunate. Being helpful to others. (note - being helpful to neighbors is coded in 43.)
- 41) Tolerant, respectful of others. Respect rights/beliefs/religion of others. Treat everybody right/same. Not prejudiced or intolerant. Practices golden rule. Doesn't feel superior.
- 42) Kind, considerate, understanding to others. Concerned about people around him. Doesn't hurt people; compassion; polite.
- 43) Good neighbor, neighborly. Helps/gets along with his neighbors. (note - all references to neighbors are coded here.)
- 44) Gets along with others. Cooperative. Likes people. Liked by people. Amicable/friendly.
- 45) Minds own business. Not a busybody. Doesn't try to tell others what to do.
- 46) Sets good example for others to follow.
- 47) Joins organizations; does volunteer work
- 48) Helping youth. [Added in 1997]
- 49) Other references to interpersonal relations, social behavior.
- 5) Moral, ethical, religious attributes
  - 50) Honest, trustworthy. Pays debts. Doesn't cheat people (as distinguished from cheating government). Truthful. Fair. Straightforward.
  - 51) Religious, Christian, church-going. Works for church. Believes in God.
  - 52) Moral, clean. High moral standards. Leads moral life. A 'good' person. (specific aspects of morality not given.)
  - 53) Stands on principles, sticks up for what he feels is right. Upholds rights. ["Doesn't give in" was included in 1973, but not included in 1982 or 1997]
  - 59) Other references to moral, ethical, religious attributes.
- 6) Other personal attributes
  - 60) Concerned about home, family. Devotes time to (his) children. Tries to have good home, family.
  - 61) Ambitious, tries to improve self. Work to better self. Learn or study as much as can. ["Ambitious" was added in 1982]
  - 62) Does his best. Does "best he can." (specific aspects not given.)
  - 63) Good worker. Devoted to job or profession. Work hard. Keeps a job. (For anti-welfare responses see 66).
  - 64) Exercises and puts to use his advantages, privileges and freedoms. (non-specific as to application and area.)
  - 65) Be independent, self-sufficient. Take responsibility for own actions. Have self-respect.



- 66) Works for a living and doesn't depend on others; not on welfare unnecessarily; has a job. [Added in 1973]
- 67) General attitude and behavior; good outlook; the way you live; common sense; intelligence. ["General attitude and behavior' good outlook" was added in 1973 and "the way you live; common sense; intelligence" was added in 1982]
- 68) Take responsibilities; is responsible; conscientious-NFS ["Takes responsibilities was added in 1973 and "is responsible; conscientious-NFS" was added in 1997]
- 69) Other references to specific personal attributes.
- 70) Protects environment [Added in 1997]
- 74) Contributions and achievements in sports and athletics
- 97) Other (overall)
- 98) DK (missing)
- 99) NA (missing)
- 0) Inap., (no further mentions; R is not a citizen and no answer given; 98 or 99 in first mention; SAQ). (missing)



