

Conclusion: Graceful Losers and the Democratic Bargain

This book examines the impact of election outcomes on people's attitudes about government. It traces the differences in attitudes between those on the winning side of an election and those on the losing end. And it does so from a variety of perspectives—across countries and individuals as well as over time. It also examines different dimensions of support for democratic governance in order to see if some attitudes are more strongly affected by how an election comes out than others.

Our book is driven by a concern with electoral losers because the consent of the losers is critical to the maintenance of any political system and because it shapes the dynamics of politics in myriad ways. As a result, understanding what drives losers and leads them to accept their loss is essential for understanding what makes democratic systems function the way they do. And because losers have strong incentives to withhold consent, the question of what makes them acquiesce to a political system run by those they disagree with is a primary question that motivates our analyses and that has important implications for the study of democracy.

To understand the contours and structure of losers' consent and subsequently to answer the question of why losers go along, we focus on citizens who experience defeat on election day and react to this loss in different ways. Employing data on attitudes about government collected in some forty countries at different points in time, we examined the 'winner-loser gap' in attitudes toward the political system across these countries. We also traced the dynamics of losers' attitudes toward government over time—before and after elections, over the course of electoral cycles, and over long periods of historical time. Moreover, we examined how individual predispositions to react to losing in particular ways lead some voters to react more strongly and others less so. Moreover, we argued that losing is experienced in different institutional and historical contexts, all of which help shape losers' responses to election outcomes. Thus, we paint a picture of democratic legitimacy that portrays losers as critical actors whose experience is shaped both by who they are as individuals as well as the environment in which loss is given meaning.

We developed a model that views the making of democratic legitimacy as driven by the consequences of democratic elections. Losers are less willing to bestow legitimacy upon a political system that produced an outcome they actively sought to avert. However, the negative impact of losing (and the positive impact of winning) is conditional—some losers in some contexts translate loss into significantly more negative attitudes toward government than others. As a result, losers' incentives to disagree with the election outcome and accord low levels of legitimacy to the political system is significantly affected by a country's political context as well as voters' own attitudes such that both citizens and institutions have a role in blunting the rougher edge of losing. Thus, in thinking about and examining losers' consent, we followed two major avenues of inquiry. The first revolves around citizens themselves—that is, who they are—and how their predispositions may mold their reaction to loss. The second avenue is focused on the role that political context and institutions play in moderating citizens' sense of loss.

WHAT WE FIND

Our investigation of differences in views about the political system between election winners and losers reveals that being in the political majority generally translates into more positive attitudes toward government, while losers tend to exhibit significantly more negative attitudes toward the political system. We find that there commonly exists a gap in winners' and losers' sense of whether elections are fair, their evaluations of the performance of the political system as well as feelings about whether government is responsive. Moreover, losing elections has the potential to diminish people's support for democratic principles overall, while at the same time heightening their propensity to engage in political protest. However, the evidence also suggests that this gap is not ubiquitous, nor is it of equal size across countries or even within countries over time.

For the winner-loser gap to shape political legitimacy beyond the immediate aftermath of an election and, by implication, the functioning of democratic systems in systematic and fundamental ways, the gap should be observable over time. To examine the dynamics of losers' and winners' attitudes about the political system, we therefore traced support for the political system along three dimensions: immediately before and after an election; over the course of electoral cycles; and, in cases where voters lose repeatedly, over long periods of time. Our results show that winning and losing, once it occurs, has both immediate and lasting effects. When elections reshuffle the cards of the political game, the new losers—that is, those who used to be the winners—become less content with the political system. Conversely, the new winners who used to be the losers become significantly more positive about a political system that produced a favorable outcome.

What is more, these effects persist over the course of an electoral cycle and beyond as losers remain consistently less satisfied than winners between elections. Finally, we show that repeated losing serves to increasingly undermine losers' attitudes toward the political system—while losing once does not immediately serve to undercut losers' attitudes toward government. Losing twice starts a process that leads to a gradual erosion of support for a system that consistently fails to make them winners. Consistent with the idea that context matters, these analyses also show a relatively smaller winner-loser gap when elections cause a change of hands between long-term incumbents and opponents.

We then turn our attention to the question of whether and how voters' own political predispositions may help to mediate the impact of winning and losing on attitudes toward government. Specifically, we focus on how two prominent individual-level differences—partisanship and ideology—affect what makes some winners and losers more likely to have strong reactions to being in the majority and minority, and how they make others less likely to translate the experience of winning and losing into positive or negative attitudes about the political system.

Our results suggest that political predispositions do have a mediating effect; however, individual-level differences in terms of strength of partisanship or ideological extremism do not universally affect levels of winners' and losers' consent. When such mediating effects do exist, however, they point to such predispositions acting as amplifiers rather than muting the winner-loser effect. Specifically, we find that strength of partisan attachment colors and modifies evaluations of the political system's legitimacy among winners and losers such that winners who are strongly attached to their political party offer significantly more positive appraisals of the political system's performance than other winners, for example. However, such effects are somewhat less apparent among losers. This suggests that winners' feelings toward their own party more commonly help color their feelings toward the political system, while losers' attitudes toward their own party matter a bit less for their feelings about the political system.

When it comes to ideological extremism, we found that extremism also adds to the strain of losing and heightens the pleasure of winning. That is, ideologues are particularly prone to view the system through the lens of winning and losing. However, as in the case of partisanship, while these effects can be documented, they are not universal. Moreover, the substantive impact of such effects is only moderately strong. Taken together, then, the evidence suggests that individual-level predispositions act as mediators of the winner-loser effect, but that they do not do so in all circumstances. However, when they do, they serve to magnify the impact of winning and losing.

We then turn to an examination of the contextual influences on losers' consent. Initially, we focus on the difference between established democracies and newly established ones. Specifically, we developed the idea that losing

has stronger negative effects in new democracies relative to mature democracies since losers have not yet learned to lose in countries where democratic governance is of recent vintage and losing elections is a novel experience. Moreover, we investigated how the transition from dictatorship to democracy in Eastern Europe affects political support for the new political system among supporters of the hegemonic Communist parties of the past who frequently find themselves in the opposition under the new system. The results of this analysis demonstrate that political losers have lower support levels than winners across all the dimensions of political support that we investigate, including beliefs in core principles of democracy. Moreover, we find that the winner-loser gap is more prominent in newly democratized and democratizing states.

In addition, our analyses revealed that the supporters of the old Communist parties exhibit significantly lower levels of support for the democratic system than voters for other parties, in particular if they are not in power. This is not unexpected since the followers of these parties are the big losers in the sense that democracy replaced a system where winning was guaranteed for them. In an amendment to these core results, we found that voters for Communist parties are at least as confident in parliament as supporters of non-Communist parties. We speculate that this may be explained by the fact that Communist parties in some of the new democracies have been able to use parliament as a forum that allows them to continue to fight for their cause.

Thus, our cross-national and cross-temporal investigation into the winner-loser gap reveals that context matters—that is, winning and losing are experienced in differently structured historical and political environments, and these differences help to mute or amplify the impact of losing on beliefs about the legitimacy of government. Aside from such historical—and one might even say path-dependent—differences, there also are identifiable and relatively stable features of democratic life that serve to organize and constrain citizens' political experiences, and which affect the development of particular attitudes about the workings of the political system. Specifically, because citizens form attitudes about politics in systemic contexts whose institutional structures affect the expression of preferences, define the choices that are available, and provide citizens with opportunities to be heard in the political process, we next turned to the question of whether and how responses to losing are mediated by political institutions and, further, how specific institutions, and not just combinations of institutions, help to shape the response of losers. Our analyses show that the winner-loser gap in attitudes about the system is smaller when electoral rules are more proportional, when the political system has a greater number of veto players and hence makes it more difficult to bring about wholesale policy change, and when power is shared within the political system. We also show that federalism, as an institution that can be part of either a majoritarian or consensus bundle of institutions, is effective in allowing losers some say in the system, and therefore helps reduce the winner-loser gap as well. Put simply,

then, having a say and sharing in power at some level of government, even when in the opposition at the national level, enhances losers' consent.

We then turned to a comparison of losers with losers in order to identify the factors that affect their evaluations of electoral democracy across countries and across types of losers. For one, we find that, overall, more losers are satisfied with the functioning of democracy than are dissatisfied, that an overwhelming majority believes that the most recent election was fair, and more losers say that parties and politicians care what ordinary people think than the opposite. Thus, we uncovered little evidence of widespread distress among losers across a widely divergent set of countries.

Following the book's theme that both context and individual characteristics help determine the level of losers' consent, we also found that losers' evaluations are more positive in established democracies than in non-established democracies, and that losers' evaluations of the electoral process and the responsiveness of the political system are more positive in countries with more proportional electoral systems. Our results also indicate that losers in developed countries are more satisfied with the performance of democracy and express greater faith in the responsiveness of the political system but also are less positive in their assessments of the fairness of the most recent election.

When we looked at differences across losers' evaluations of electoral democracy with an eye toward the kinds of parties they supported, we found that supporters of losing parties that had never been in government were the most critical of representative democracy, while supporters of the major losing party that formed the government prior to the election felt most positive. Moreover, the data show that such differences between types of losing parties are more pronounced in less developed countries.

Regarding differences across losers' responses that may be driven by individual-level factors, our analyses show that more highly educated losers are more satisfied with the functioning of democracy, more positive about the fairness of the election in less developed democracies, and more sanguine about responsiveness in more developed countries. Aside from levels of education, our results also show that losers' ideology matters: while those who are on the 'extreme' right are not more critical towards representative democracy—in fact, they tend to be slightly more positive—voters on the extreme left expressed more negative evaluations of the political system. This latter effect is particularly pronounced in less developed democracies, where losers who are on the extreme left are more negative than similar losers in more developed countries.

Finally, we consider whether losing translates into lower levels of legitimacy by looking at a variety of behavioral implications of losing. The more people are willing to countenance change in political institutions, or the more changes in those institutions that people are willing to consider, the less legitimate those institutions can be said to be. As it turns out, voters on the losing side are willing

to consider quite sweeping changes in the electoral process, and they do so in terms similar to elites who consider rule changes in terms of partisan self-interest. New Zealand and Great Britain furnish vivid examples of countries where voters are quite willing to support institutional changes, even when the effects of the changes are not entirely clear. Clearly, we find that losing is an important part of the motor that drives institutional change in democracies even after controlling for a variety of other causal explanations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING LEGITIMACY AND DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

Depending on one's perspective, these findings can be taken to be good news or bad news. They are good news for those interested in developing a more systematic understanding of political legitimacy because they confirm the existence of the winner-loser effect with regard to people's attitudes toward the political system in a variety of countries and with regard to different dimensions of legitimacy. Moreover, they provide corroborative evidence that the effect exists in countries as different as the Czech Republic or Japan. The findings are bad news were we to insist that the winner-loser distinction provides empirical and conceptual leverage for every kind of attitude toward politics and unfailingly across all countries or at every point in time. Clearly, the results show that this is not the case.

But it is this lack of uniformity that opens up the opportunity of investigating why this gap does not exist at all times for all types of voters. Our findings regarding differences in individual predispositions—partisanship and ideology—suggest several conclusions for understanding the winner-loser gap at the level of individual voters. First, voters bring political predispositions to the table that heighten the effect of winning and losing. Second, however, because such effects are far from omnipresent and because their substantive impact is modest, they cannot serve as the sole explanation for the sometimes sizable and sometimes more modest winner-loser gap in attitudes toward the political system.

While we believe that understanding how election outcomes affects political attitudes more generally is a critical issue for the study of comparative political behavior, our findings also hold implications for students of comparative politics and democratization more generally. Our results regarding the deteriorating effects of repeated losing on attitudes toward government suggest that long periods without alternation in power lead to progressively less positive views about the political system among those on the losing side and may well produce a breeding ground for significant change in the political system. This is also consistent with the finding that supporters of parties that have never been in power are most critical of electoral democracy. Thus, even apparently stable countries with political cultures that value stability possess

the inherent potential for significant upheaval when losers, instead of tuning out, ask for the political system to address their grievances.

But even in the short run, the relative stability of the winner-loser gap we observe during the course of electoral cycles regardless of who is in power has obvious implications for democratic governance. Unhappy (or at least, relatively unhappy) voters are unlikely to be as cooperative as happy ones when it comes to evaluating policy outcomes positively or supporting government policies or abiding by the rules of the game. And, by democratic design, governments time and again face a sizable and comparatively less happy segment of voters who are liable to view their actions through the lens of losing. Such a dynamics is of obvious relevance for understanding the politics of both established and newly emerging democratic systems.

Put simply, a sizable winner-loser gap makes things difficult for the winners, even if democracy does not automatically fail when it is particularly large. While failure is the worst outcome from the perspective of democratic legitimacy, it is not the only one. Large winner-loser gaps or really unhappy losers also mean that there is likely to be friction that may impede the efficient and proper functioning of democracy during the course of normal business because this gap may well affect the incentives of those in and out of power. When winners are particularly happy, those who represent them have little incentive to push for reform, even if sorely needed. Conversely, particularly unhappy losers have diminished incentives to play by the rules.

Thus, winning and losing are both short-term and long-term based phenomena and they affect high stakes politics—should we keep this political system as is?—and mundane decisions of compliance—should I pay a fine to a government I do not like? In the short run, losers feel bad about a system that did not favor them in the most recent election. In the medium term, the initial disappointment gives way to viewing the political system in ways that are consistent with the initial disappointment and the reality of being out of power.

Knowing that the political losers hold more negative attitudes toward the political system and generally are more willing to engage in political protest activities may mean that they will be less likely than the political winners to exercise the patience so critical for democratic survival. Because unhappy losers are most likely to push for changing the political status quo and because democracies are by their very nature amenable to deliberate change, research into the winner-loser effect and how institutional arrangements determine who ends up in the majority or the minority has direct implications for policy-makers (cf. Huntington 1991; Lijphart 1994; Guinier 1998).

The finding that support for democratic principles is affected by the loser-winner distinction, and particularly so in new democracies, is sobering as it points to inexperienced losers as a particularly weak link in the chain of stable democratic governance. Not only do electoral losers in new democracies express particularly negative attitudes toward regime institutions and processes,

they also are less likely to endorse democracy as a good way of governing their societies. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these negative views are especially evident among supporters of the old regime—in the case of the Central and East European countries, the old, unreformed communist parties, for example. These results point to the need to pay particular attention to this group of disaffected democrats among those concerned with the stability and legitimacy of the new democratic system. Moreover, they suggest that the path to successful democratic consolidation is hazardous during election time and, in large part, a function of the behavior of the electoral losers (see also Casper and Taylor 1996). Thus, efforts to win over the old-winners-turned-new-losers without dampening the enthusiasm of the new winners may be a particularly wise strategy in light of the findings we report in this book.

Although not a primary focus of this study, our findings may have some normative implications for the nature of representative democracy. They suggest that levels of citizen satisfaction in contemporary democracies may not stem from the capacity to process the demands put on the system by citizens who seek to have more input. Thus, asking for more opportunities for citizen input into the system may not be a panacea for perceived inadequacies of democratic governance. Instead, the findings appear to indicate that systems could become unstable if a significant minority is *consistently* excluded from the political process. Because institutions mediate how minorities are treated by the system and, by implication, how these minorities feel about the political process, it may therefore not matter so much that too many people want too many things from their governments but whether everyone gets a hearing at least and a seat at the table every once in a while.

Although it is clear that those who are dissatisfied with the outputs provided by the system are less satisfied with that system, it may matter more what kinds of people want things from the government, given the differences across countries in how inclusive and consensual the democratic process is. Our results show that minorities are more likely to be satisfied with the way democracy works—despite their minority status—if there are mechanisms that provide for procedural justice in the democratic process and opportunities to have an input into the decisions made by the government. Institutional reforms that go in the direction of allowing those citizens who are in the minority more access to the political process, while ensuring that winning elections is still meaningful and allows for the implementation of policies preferred by the majority, may go a long way toward increasing citizen satisfaction with democracy, and toward ensuring the viability of democratic systems in the long term.

Whether citizens evaluate the functioning of their democracy based on the recent performance of their electoral institutions and organization or based on the more lasting institutions, such as electoral laws, holds importance for the broader scholarly debate about the design of democratic institutions. Specifically, political theorists have debated whether it is more important that

the institutions produce superior outcomes or that the institutions are designed in a way that produces maximum process fairness to all participants. One of the difficulties facing the designers of democratic institutions is the need to have institutions that make losers without producing permanent losers, and that allow current losers some reasonable chance of winning in future periods. Put simply, the democratic bargain calls for winners who are willing to ensure that losers are not too unhappy and for losers, in exchange, to extend their consent to the winners' right to rule (see also Weingast 1997).

THE STUDY OF ELECTIONS AND COMPARATIVE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

Aside from pointing to the importance of a critical variable for understanding political legitimacy—being an electoral loser—this book also seeks to contribute to and broaden our understanding of comparative political behavior more generally. That is, we are interested in mapping out a research agenda that promises to generate insights into mass political behavior that are generalizable across individuals and countries and beyond specific historical experiences and political cultures. As such, our agenda is, at least in part, about more than simply examining an interesting effect; instead, it is meant to reorient, to the extent possible, the study of comparative political behavior more fundamentally. To place our study in the proper context of research on political behavior, therefore, it may be useful to take a brief look at the evolution of behavioral political science and how our study fits into the bigger scheme of things.

While the early 1940s do not mark the beginning of time, they certainly constituted the period during which behavioral political science experienced its take-off phase in terms of becoming a modern social science. At the outset, the early survey-based studies of political attitudes and behavior undertaken during this period were explicitly motivated by long-standing normative questions political theorists have posed regarding the prerequisites of stable and well-functioning democracy (e.g. Campbell et al. 1960; Almond and Verba 1963). By placing individuals' behaviors and attitudes in the broader context of understanding how democracy works and the role citizens play in its success, researchers during the initial phase of the behavioral revolution sought to confront classic assumptions about democratic ideals with the reality of systematic empirical inquiry (Miller 1994).

Before too long, it became abundantly clear that most people do not live up to the Aristotelian ideal of the well-informed and enlightened citizen (cf. Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1964). Instead, the picture that emerged was one of democratic citizens who appeared ill-informed and largely uninterested in politics as well as perhaps naïvely trusting of those who exercised control over the levers of

national political institutions. One by-product of these seemingly disappointing findings about citizens' competence to function as envisioned in normative theory may have been the subsequent lack of attention given to developing insights into political behavior that were expressly grounded in theories about how democracy does or should work more generally.¹ Instead, scholars increasingly turned their attention toward somewhat technical issues of methodology and measurement and away from theory (Weatherford 1992; see also Miller 1994).

Part of this shift was fostered by the institutionalization of the *National Election Studies* in the United States and similar efforts in a number of advanced industrial societies, which continue to produce rich and lasting founts of data for understanding mass political behavior. In their wake, issues of survey design and measurement had considerable influence on theory development and seem to have become as important to the science of politics as normative concerns about the proper and ideal functioning of democracy. We suspect that this development was necessary—after all, it is difficult to draw inferences about the world when the data we base them on are inadequate or deficient. Or, as one colleague remarked to one of us at one point during a conversation in the hallway: 'Without good data, you're just another guy with an opinion'.

And hardly coincidentally, the development and analysis of survey items and strategies for improving the collection and quality of reliable data frequently was based on theories imported from psychology, sociology, or economics rather than conceptualizations that were generated from within political science. In particular, among students of political behavior an explicit concern with establishing a connection between individuals and the macro-political (i.e. democratic) environment in which they functioned as citizens became sporadic. Thus, all the while scholars debated the proper measurement of particular concepts, there regularly existed a disconnect between experiences people have—*sui generis*—as participants in the political process and how they interact with the constraints any particular political system or situation provides.² Politics, and the behavior of citizens, it seems, existed in a vacuum.

¹ Naturally, there have been notable exceptions to this rule over the years. In recent years, for example, we note the path-breaking work on how citizens with limited information can make reasonable and rational choices in elections (cf. Lupia and McCubbins 1998).

² There were notable exceptions to the rule of survey research in a vacuum. Most notably, scholars working in the sociological tradition were willing to explore the multifaceted and notably more realistic world of citizens acting in particular social and political environments. An example of such efforts was the South Bend study by Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995), which explored people's richly textured, and difficult to measure, micro-political environment in which they experience politics. In a comparative setting, the contributions in van der Eijk and Franklin (1996) are an example of research aimed at integrating electoral institutions and mass political behavior. Moreover, several scholars have investigated the impact of political participation—in particular voting—on people's sense of political efficacy (Ginsberg and Weisberg 1978; Finkel 1985; Clarke and Acock 1989; Mutz 2002a, b). These efforts are important conceptually because they

And this, we would argue, had implications for the role of political (democratic) institutions in studies of political behavior as well as the acceptance of the importance of explaining election outcomes.

Political Institutions and Political Behavior

Turning first to the issue of how political context affects political behavior, the general finding in this book that contextual variation is an important mediator of public opinion toward political authorities confirms that political behavior cannot be understood in a vacuum. This is important and it should require a rethinking of how we postulate what shapes individuals' political behavior, in particular as it pertains to the role of political institutions. As recent research on government support has shown, institutional variation is an important element for understanding citizens' ability to assign credit and blame to incumbents for economic performance (Powell and Whitten 1993; Anderson 1995). Regarding the study of democratic institutions, our analyses also document important and systematic consequences of different kinds of democracies at the level of mass publics. Aside from affecting policy outcomes (Lijphart 1994; Crepaz 1996), cabinet stability and conflict (Powell 1986), or the congruence of elite and mass policy preferences (Huber and Powell 1994), different forms of democratic organization also have consequences for public attitudes toward democracy as a form of government.

What we have done in this volume, then, is to bring a discussion of institutions explicitly into models of mass opinion and behavior. We know from the study of electoral systems that formal details—of how votes are aggregated, for example—can have sizable impacts on how people behave (see, for example, the contributions in van der Eijk and Franklin 1996). But our concern with institutions has not centered so much on those kinds of details but on the consequences and incentives associated with making winners and losers. In that sense we have built the fundamental consequences of institutions into explanations of mass attitudes and behaviors. For us, institutions are not simply disembodied objects external to voters but, rather, are factors that help shape and give meaning to political attitudes. In a way, then, institutions are both endogenous and exogenous to political behavior.

The gap in opinions between winners and losers has been seen across a varied set of attitudes and behaviours. We have shown that it is important to take account of how citizens stand in relation to those institutions. By building institutions into our models, we have taken account of just what it is that institutions do to and for voters. Institutions make winners and losers and

have sought to redirect scholars' attention to understanding political behavior in the context of constraints shaped by the environment they live in and the experiences they have as active participants in the political process.

those two conditions imply very different sets of attitudes and behaviors for voters, not least of which is that they also create very different sets of attitudes towards the institutions themselves. One lesson to be drawn from this work, then, is that institutions do indeed matter so far as mass opinions are concerned. Institutions matter in part because they create losers and do so in a way that either amplifies or dampens that sense of loss.

Focusing on Understanding the Outcomes of Elections

Perhaps as importantly, another by-product of the institutionalization of behavioral political science via national election studies and other large-scale survey and data collection efforts has been a predominant concern with explaining election outcomes rather than understanding the consequences of elections for how voters behave. This made enormous practical sense. If elections are the most common forum for citizen participation in a democracy, why not try and understand why they come out the way they do and why citizens make the choices they make?

In part, this tendency to focus on election outcomes also can be viewed as a function of the heavy influence of sociology and social-psychology (two fields that were fairly unified at the time of the behavioral revolution) on early studies of political behavior. Given that the behavioral paradigm in these fields, in particular in social-psychology, led scholars to focus on attitudes as independent variables, which were used to explain political behavior (such as electoral choice) or other attitudes (such as partisanship), it should not come as a surprise that much of electoral research, both in the United States and in comparative perspective, has long focused on explaining the behavior of voters with the help of attitudes or people's demographic characteristics. Thus, among the most common research questions in electoral research has long been this: how do we explain wins and losses? That is, what are the underlying determinants of why parties won or lost, increased their share of the vote, and how people came to choose one party or candidate over another?

Given the crucial role elections play in a democracy, this is both proper and unsurprising. Yet, such an approach, in all likelihood unintentionally, led electoral researchers to emphasize winners and winning at the expense of losers when thinking about the functioning of democracies. It also established the dominance of a theoretical paradigm that privileged behavior (such as vote choice) as the outcome of interest (that is, the dependent variable), and attitudes as explanatory factors (independent variables). Regrettably, such a focus on explaining election outcomes made it difficult to imagine that the causal arrow could be reversed and that we should focus on explaining attitudes with the help of behavior. In fact, reviewing the state of the scholarly literature on political participation in the mid-1970s, Robert Salisbury (1975) argued that scholars had made considerable progress toward explaining political behavior

with the help of attitudes, but that it would be a long time before political science would understand the impact of political behavior and its consequences on attitudes (see also Finkel 1985). As it turned out, Salisbury's argument was strikingly prescient; in the ensuing three decades, few scholars have sought to understand how voting behavior and election outcomes affect people's attitudes and behaviors.

In our view, the general lack of attention to questions of democratic governance and institutions in studies of political behavior and the specific lack of attention to how elections affect behaviors and attitudes has limited progress in behavioral research because there are good theoretical reasons for assuming that such influences carry important implications for understanding how democracies work. Thus, to help correct this imbalance and contribute to our understanding of the nexus between citizens and their governments; and in some small part refocus the study of political behavior in democracies, we argue for the importance of understanding what drives the losers of democratic elections and how losing affects their attitudes and behaviors. In a way, then, we are suggesting that future research on political behavior incorporate both the strategic behavior of voters and the impact of institutions as well as the psychological mechanisms at work. To put it in statistical terms, we propose that students of political behavior focus on the outcomes of elections as the independent variable and attitudes—such as trust in the political system or opinions on public policy—as the dependent variables in order to create and test theories that are truly political; inherently dynamic; and that promise leverage for understanding political conflict and its resolution in a wide variety of contexts. Such a strategy would allow for a (re)integration of the study of political behavior with the study of democratic institutions and democratic stability, and it would have the potential to integrate what we know across vibrant yet all-too-frequently separate subfields of the study of politics.

Appendix: Data Sources and Survey Items

The data used in this book come from several survey projects, including the Eurobarometer (EB) surveys (various years), the 1996 International Social Survey Program (ISSP) surveys conducted as part of a study called *Role of Government III*; the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) election surveys conducted between 1996 and 2000; the 1999 European Values Surveys (EVS), which are part of a larger project on World values, as well as the American and Canadian National Election studies surveys, which have been conducted for a number of years. These survey programs are continuing regular programs of surveys covering topics important to social science research. The ISSP, CSES, and EVS jointly develop modules dealing with important areas in the social sciences, and they usually field these modules in supplements to national surveys undertaken by the members. All surveys usually include an extensive common core on background variables, and project members make the data available to the social science community. The Eurobarometer data are collected twice a year by the European Commission and made available to the scholarly community via data archives, including the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan. Additional data used in our analyses come from a variety of stand-alone surveys, including surveys conducted by news organization (such as CBS News) and the authors.

CHAPTER 3

Evaluations of political system performance. 'All in all, how well or badly do you think the system of democracy in (country) works these days?' It works well and needs no changes (4), it works well but needs some changes (3), it does not work well and needs a lot of changes (2), it does not work well and needs to be completely changed (1).

External political efficacy (system responsiveness). Average of four items derived from two internal efficacy items and two external efficacy items that range from 1 to 5, with 1 denoting strongly agree and 5 strongly disagree. Question wording: (a) People like me have no say about what the government does; (b) The average citizen has considerable influence on politics; (c) Elections