



Personality and the Foundations of Political Behavior (Cambridge Studies in Public Opinion and Political Psychology)

By Jeffery J. Mondak

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Personality and the Foundations of Political Behavior is the first study in more than 30 years to investigate the broad significance of personality traits for mass political behavior. Drawing on the Big Five personality trait framework, Jeffery J. Mondak argues that attention to personality provides a valuable means to integrate biological and environmental influences in rich, nuanced theories and empirical tests of the antecedents of political behavior. Development of such holistic accounts is critical, Mondak contends, if inquiry is to move beyond simple "blank slate" environmental depictions of political engagement. Analyses examining multiple facets of political information, political attitudes, and participation reveal that the Big Five trait dimensions - openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability - produce both direct and indirect effects on a wide range of political phenomena.

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Editorial Review

Review

"When virtually all of his colleagues were still treating individual-level political traits as isolated phenomena, Jeff Mondak realized they were in fact intimately connected to larger life forces such as broad personality traits. This original and remarkably creative book makes it clear that the future of research on personality and politics lies not in shallow, speculative Freudian case studies but in objective, rigorous, large-N analyses. Research at the nexus of personality and politics is starting to gain momentum, thanks largely to Mondak's leadership, and if this book does not significantly enhance that momentum by providing an empirical framework and by stimulating numerous new data-based studies, I will be both surprised and bitterly disappointed."

- John R. Hibbing, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

"Mondak argues persuasively that traits shape political behavior. He provides an accurate and balanced account of recent progress in personality research and illustrates its application in his own work. This book - which should be read by sociologists, historians, and journalists as well as political scientists - is an important step in the integration of the social sciences."

- Robert McCrae, author of Personality in Adulthood: A Five-Factor Theory Perspective

About the Author

Jeffery J. Mondak is James M. Benson Chair in Public Issues and Civic Leadership in the Department of Political Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He is the author of *Nothing to Read: Newspapers and Elections in a Social Experiment* (1995) and co-editor of *Fault Lines: Why the Republicans Lost Congress* (2009). Professor Mondak's articles appear in outlets including the *American Journal of Political Science*, the *British Journal of Political Science*, *Cognitive Brain Research*, the *Journal of Politics and Public Opinion Quarterly*. He has received awards for his research from the American Association for Public Opinion Research, the American Political Science Association and the Midwest Political Science Association.

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