Platform or Personality?
Amanda Bittner

Campaign organizers and the media appear to agree that voters' perceptions of party leaders have an important impact in elections: considerable effort is made to ensure that leaders look good, speak well, and that they are up in the polls. In contrast, the academic literature is much more divided. Some suggest that leaders play an important role in the vote calculus, while others argue that in comparison to other factors, perceptions of leaders have only a minimal impact. This study incorporates data from thirty-five election studies across seven countries with varying institutional environments, and takes both a broad and in-depth look at the role of leaders. A few noteworthy conclusions emerge. First, voters evaluate leaders' traits in terms of two main dimensions: character and competence. Second, voters perceive leaders within the framework of a partisan stereotype in which the party label of the leader imbues meaning; more specifically, leaders of Conservative parties are seen to be more competent while Left leaders are seen to have more character. Third, and most importantly, leaders matter: they affect voters' decisions and have a discernible effect on the distribution of votes in an election. Fourth, there are consistent differences in the perception of party leaders according to voters' level of political sophistication. While all voters evaluate party leaders and consider leaders in their vote calculus, the more sophisticated do so the most. This book argues that personality plays an important role in elections, and that in a healthy democracy, so it should.

The Business of Economics
John Kay
The first section of the book is concerned with how economics is, and should be used, in business. It stresses that the value of economics lies in being able to provide us with a better understanding of social and commercial issues, rather than help us forecast economic trends. Similarly, it provides a direction for the development of management science as a means of understanding the behaviour of firms. The second section of the book examines the application of economics to the central strategic issues facing firms – their choice of activities and markets. It provides an exposition of the resource-based theory of strategy, which examines the dynamics of the successes and failures of firms by reference to their distinctive capabilities. The next section develops some broader themes that are suggested by the resource-base view of strategy that recognizes the importance of corporate personality. This perception implies that large companies are fundamentally social institutions and the economic and social consequences of this result are examined. The final section is a collection of shorter essays, which are designed to illustrate how business economics can be used to analyse a range of individual commercial issues such as pricing positioning and the evolution of industry structure.

The Mutual Relevance of Reputation and Personality
Kenneth H. Craik

in Reputation: A Network Interpretation

Chapter 7 explores the mutual relevance of reputation and personality, two important constructs that appear to address the same question: What kind of person is this individual? A primary claim of the network interpretation is that the reputation of a person resides within the social system. At the same time, constructs such as the self-concept, social selves, and tactics of reputation management can be formulated as reputation-relevant elements of the personality system. At the theoretical level, this chapter demonstrates that a generic model of reputational concepts can be accommodated within a variety of contemporary personality theories. This argument is illustrated by a review of the socioanalytic personality theory and the five-factor personality theory.
This is an introductory chapter, which starts with a general discussion of whether leaders’ personalities really matter in determining the outcome of democratic elections, and then considers a number of preliminary points before the country analyses are presented in the following six chapters. The first point is to differentiate between the indirect influences a leader can have on voters and an election outcome (via his influence on his political party or government or administration) and the direct influence of a candidate’s personality or personal characteristics; this book is about the latter. The second point is to define what is meant by ‘personality or personal characteristics’, and the next two points are a discussion of why leaders’ attributes might, or might not, be thought to matter. The fifth point is to suggest analytical strategies for disentangling the effects of leaders’ personalities or personal characteristics from other factors; the three advanced are the experimental, improved–prediction and counterfactual strategies. Next, previous analytical findings are presented for the six countries studied in the book (United States, Britain, France, Germany, Canada and Russia), and finally, hypotheses are offered for explaining when the impact of candidates’ personalities or personal characteristics might be greatest.

The Impact of Party Leaders in Britain: Strong Assumptions, Weak Evidence

John Bartle and Ivor Crewe

There has been a widespread belief in Britain in recent years (which appears to be corroborated by survey evidence) that leaders’ personalities strongly influence the way that people vote and therefore the results of elections, although in a parliamentary system such as Britain’s, this is less obviously correct than in presidential systems such as the United States, France and Russia. However, British political science has usually reached negative conclusions on this belief, pointing...
out that popular leaders have often lost elections, and that only two of
the eleven elections fought since 1964 (those of 1964 and 1997) stand
out as elections in which leaders’ personalities may have been decisive.
This chapter looks at the 1997 election, for which three separate studies
belonging to the British Election Study are available: the cross-sectional
study, XBES; the campaign study, BECS; and the British Election Panel
Study, BEPS. It first discusses the effect of leaders’ personalities by
constructing a series of vote models, and then looks at the relationship
between leaders’ personalities and the vote. Each of the three British
Election Studies are then analysed; only the BEPS study (which has the
least comprehensive data set) indicates that leaders’ personalities had
anything other than a marginal effect on the election outcome.

Candidate Evaluations and Presidential Electoral Choices in
France
Roy Pierce

in Leaders' Personalities and the Outcomes of Democratic Elections
Published in print: 2002 Published Online: November 2003
type: chapter

There have been only six French presidential elections between 1965
and 1995, but there has been considerable variation between these in
the extent to which the candidates’ leadership attributes might have
contributed to voter choice and electoral outcomes, and during the
same period there has been an unusual degree of constancy in the
nature and strength of the underlying social and political forces. The
theme of this chapter is the collision between these two forces (transient
candidate qualities and long-term electoral forces), but before this
analysis is made, a brief account is given of how presidential elections
are conducted in France. The main part of the chapter is an analysis of
the six elections between 1965 and 1995: the 1965 de Gaulle election;
the 1969 election won by Pompidou; the 1974 election won by Giscard
d’Estaing; the 1981 and 1988 elections won by Mitterrand; and the
1995 election won by Chirac. Constraints on personal candidate appeal
are then discussed, before presenting a further analysis of the 1988
election. The study focuses on the extent to which the traditional left–
right dimension has affected the electorate’s behaviour and electoral
outcome, and whether there were elections in which one candidate
had a clear advantage over the other in terms of personal popularity
or leadership attributes; the objective was to determine whether the
left–right factor was weaker at elections where personal qualities were
presumed stronger, and this hypothesis received some support from the analysis presented.

**Confrontations with the Reaper**
Fred Feldman

Presenting a discussion of classic philosophical questions surrounding death, this book investigates the great metaphysical and moral problems of death. The first part argues that a definition of life is necessary before death can be defined. It maintains that death is a conceptual mystery—it cannot be defined as the cessation of life, or in any other similar way. After an exploration of several of the most plausible accounts of the nature of life and death and a demonstration of their failure, a conceptual scheme involving life, death, existence, personality, and related concepts emerges from the book's analysis. The second part returns to ethical and value-theoretical questions about death. Addressing the ancient Epicurean ethical problems about the evil of death, it argues that death can be a great evil for those who die, even if they do not exist after death, because it may deprive them of the goods they would have enjoyed had they continued to live. After formulating principles that purport to evaluate the badness (or goodness) of death, the book concludes with a novel consequentialist theory about the morality of killing, applying it to such thorny practical issues as abortion, suicide, and euthanasia.

**Character**
Joel J. Kupperman

We often speak of a person's character—good or bad, strong or weak—and think of it as a guide to how that person will behave in a given situation. Oddly, however, philosophers writing about ethics have had virtually nothing to say about the role of character in ethical behavior. What is character? How does it relate to having a self, or to the process of moral decision? Are we responsible for our characters? This book answers these questions, and goes on to examine the place of character in ethical philosophy. Both the Kantian and utilitarian traditions, this book argues, have largely ignored the ways in which decisions are integrated
over time, and instead provide a “snapshot” model of moral decision. The book demonstrates the deficiencies of a number of classic and contemporary ethical theories that do not take account of the idea of character, and offers its own character-based theory. Along the way the book touches on such subjects as personal identity, the importance of happiness, moral education, and the definition of a valuable life.

“The Decider's” Path to War in Iraq and the Importance of Personality
Thomas S. Langston

in The Polarized Presidency of George W. Bush
Published in print: 2007 Published Online: September 2007
Publisher: Oxford University Press DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199217977.003.0005
Item type: chapter

The purpose of this chapter is not to second-guess the president's decision to go to war with Iraq, but to inquire into the possibility that it represents an outstanding example of the influence of personality upon decision making of the highest importance. The chapter proceeds first by presenting a composite view of the personality of the president, taking into account both his major personality traits and his world-view. Next, it breaks down the decision for war in Iraq into seven discrete decisions. The first six progressively made war increasingly likely. The last was the final decision to launch the invasion. Each decision is characterized based on the major actors who influenced the president's choice, the manner in which the decision was made, and the practical consequences of each choice for the likelihood of war. There is compelling evidence that personal factors drove the decision to wage war in Iraq.

Rudolf Otto and the Concept of Holiness
Melissa Raphael

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Publisher: Oxford University Press DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198269328.001.0001
Item type: book

This book presents a critical examination of the central contribution to the twentieth-century concept of holiness made by the German Protestant Rudolf Otto (1869–1937). Whereas Otto's work has usually been studied from a phenomenological perspective, this book is original in offering theological arguments for Otto's idea of the holy becoming an anchor concept of contemporary theistic discourse. The book analyses the scholarly context that shaped Otto's concept of holiness and, finding
that the theological significance of the latter has been overlooked, discusses the relation of the numinous and the holy to the divine personality, morality, religious experience, and emancipatory theology.

How Individual Differences Affect Executive Action
Sydney Finkelstein, Donald C. Hambrick, and Albert A. Cannella

in Strategic Leadership: Theory and Research on Executives, Top Management Teams, and Boards
Published in print: 2008 Published Online: January 2009
Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195162073.003.0003
Item type: chapter

This chapter introduces and elaborates on the central idea that executives differ in what they personally bring to their decision-making situations and therefore differ in what they decide and how they behave. The chapter lays out a comprehensive model of how this process occurs, hinging on the executive's "orientation"—or the amalgam of experiences, values, personality, and mind-set that the executive possesses at any given point. This executive orientation limits and distorts the actual stimuli confronting the executive, such that his or her "construed reality" is a result of a three-stage filtering process: limited field of vision, selective perception, and interpretation. The chapter then addresses the psychological side of executive orientations, focusing on executive values, cognitive content and structure, and personality.

The personal absolute
Jan Olof Bengtsson

in The Worldview of Personalism: Origins and Early Development
Published in print: 2006 Published Online: January 2007
Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199297191.003.0004
Item type: chapter

This chapter introduces the arguments for why, according to the personalists, the absolute cannot be conceived in pantheistic and impersonalistic terms. It discusses the meaning of the new concept of God as a person, and explains the personalists’ insistence that the absolute can be understood as the personal God.
Leaders' Personalities and the Outcomes of Democratic Elections
Anthony King (ed.)

A widely held belief concerning democratic elections is that the votes of many individuals are influenced by their assessments of the competing candidates’ personalities and other personal characteristics and that, as a consequence, the outcomes of entire democratic elections are often decided by ‘personality factors’ of this type. Experts on the electoral politics of six countries – the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Canada and Russia – set out to assess how far this emphasis on personality and personal characteristics is actually warranted by the available empirical evidence. Using a variety of methodologies, the authors seek to isolate and weigh the role played by personality both in influencing individual voters’ behaviour and in deciding election outcomes. They conclude that, even with regard to the United States, the impact of personality on individual voters’ decisions is usually quite small and that, more often than not, it cancels out. They also conclude that, largely for those reasons, the number of elections whose outcomes have been determined by voters’ assessments of the candidates is likewise quite small: much smaller than is usually supposed. Moreover, there are no signs that the importance of personality factors in determining election outcomes is increasing over time.

Violent Video Game Effects on Children and Adolescents
Craig A. Anderson, Douglas A. Gentile, and Katherine E. Buckley

Violent video games are increasingly popular, raising concerns by parents, researchers, policy makers, and informed citizens about potential harmful effects. Chapter 1 describes the history of violent games and their explosive growth. Chapter 2 discusses research methodologies, how one establishes causality in science, and prior research on violent television, film, and video games. Chapter 3 presents the General Aggression Model, focusing on how media violence increases aggression and violence in both short and long-term contexts. Important scientific questions are answered by three new studies. Chapter 4 reports findings from a laboratory experiment: even children's games
with cartoonish violence increased aggression in children and college students. Chapter 5 reports findings from a survey study of high school students: frequent violent game play leads to an angry and hostile personality and to frequent aggression and violence. Chapter 6 reports findings from the first longitudinal study video game effects: elementary school children who frequently played violent games early in the school year became more verbally and physically aggressive, and less helpful. Chapters 7 and 8 compare a host of risk factors for development of aggression, and find video game effects to be quite important. Chapter 9 describes the role of scientific findings in public policy, industry responses to scientific findings, and public policy options. Chapter 10 recommends that public policy debates acknowledge the harmful effects of violent video games on youth, and urges a more productive debate about whether and how modern societies should act.

Autonomy and the Foundations of Contemporary Liberalism

Meira Levinson

in The Demands of Liberal Education

Published in print: 2002 Published Online: November 2003
Item type: chapter

Discusses contemporary liberalism's meaning, character, and justification. Section 1.1 argues that three constitutive commitments define contemporary liberalism and distinguish it from other theories. Section 1.2 demonstrates that, contrary to political liberalism's claims, these three commitments are best linked by the value of autonomy. Hence, contemporary liberalism is best understood as displaying weak perfectionism. Section 1.3 analyses autonomy more carefully, developing it as a substantive notion of higher-order preference formation within a context of cultural coherence, plural constitutive personal values and beliefs, openness to other's evaluations of oneself, and a sufficiently developed moral, spiritual or aesthetic, intellectual, and emotional personality.

From Morality to Mental Health

Mike W. Martin

Published in print: 2006 Published Online: September 2006
Item type: book
Morality and mental health are now inseparably linked in our view of character. Alcoholics are sick, yet they are punished for drunk driving. Drug addicts are criminals, but their punishment can be court ordered therapy. The line between character flaws and personality disorders has become fuzzy, with even the seven deadly sins seen as mental disorders. In addition to pathologizing wrong-doing, we also psychologize virtue; self-respect becomes self-esteem, integrity becomes psychological integration, and responsibility becomes maturity. Moral advice is now sought primarily from psychologists and therapists rather than philosophers or theologians. This book asks: are we replacing morality with therapy, in potentially confused and dangerous ways, or are we creatively integrating morality and mental health? According to the book, it's a little bit of both. It surveys the ways in which morality and mental health are related, touching on practical concerns like love and work, self-respect and self-fulfillment, guilt and depression, crime and violence, and addictions. Terming this integrative development “the therapeutic trend in ethics,” the book uses examples from popular culture, various moral controversies, and draws on line of thought that includes Plato, the Stoics, Freud, Nietzsche, and contemporary psychotherapeutic theories. The book develops some interesting conclusions, among them that sound morality is indeed healthy, and that moral values are inevitably embedded in our conceptions of mental health. In the end, the book shows how both morality and mental health are inextricably intertwined in our pursuit of a meaningful life.

The Impact of Candidate Traits in American Presidential Elections

Larry M. Bartels

in Leaders' Personalities and the Outcomes of Democratic Elections

The aim of this chapter is to provide a systematic test of the conventional wisdom that personality is key in contemporary American electoral politics. Using survey data from the six most recent presidential elections, the contours are examines of the candidates’ images (traits), the bases of those images in voters’ more fundamental political predispositions, and the impact of voters’ assessments of the candidates’ personal qualities on individual voting behaviour and on aggregate election outcomes. In stark contrast with the popular conception of contemporary electoral politics as candidate-centred and image-driven, it is argued that candidates’ images are largely epiphenomenal and
have only a modest impact on election outcomes. This conclusion is underlined by the analysis given of the 2000 (Bush vs. Gore) presidential election, in which the estimated impact of voters’ assessments of the candidates’ personalities was even smaller than in the previous five elections considered here, although quite probably large enough to be decisive in an election decided by a few hundred votes in a single state.

The Nonpersonalization of Voting Behavior in Germany
Frank Brettschneider and Oscar W. Gabriel

in Leaders’ Personalities and the Outcomes of Democratic Elections

The federal elections of 1998 were the first time in Germany that notions of personalization and presidentialization were discussed during an election; before that German voters chose, at least formally, between competing parties rather than between competing chancellor candidates, and only a minor role was accorded to the personalities and circumstances of candidates. The first part of this chapter analyses the role that voters’ orientations towards the chancellor–candidates has played in the broad context of electoral choice, paying particular attention to the influence of candidate orientations on the voting choices of people lacking any long-term party identification; this part of the analysis is based on data pertaining to all the electoral contests fought in Germany from 1961 to 1998. The second part of the chapter analyses the various components of the chancellor–candidates’ images: does the way in which voters evaluate the candidates simply reflect existing patterns of party identification, or do the voters construct their own candidate orientations by fitting separate pieces into a pattern, each of which refers to specific attributes of the candidates as perceived and evaluated by them; and are the proponents of the personalization thesis right in assuming that the candidates’ images are largely determined by the voters’ perceptions of the candidates’ personalities rather than by their performance? These questions are answered with specific reference to data collected by the 1998 German Election Study. Despite the apparent personal favouring of Schröder over Kohl in 1998, it is concluded that there is no real evidence that chancellor–candidates’ personalities and other personal characteristics play any stronger role in German voting patterns than they have in the past.
Prime Ministerial Contenders in Canada
Richard Johnston

in Leaders' Personalities and the Outcomes of Democratic Elections
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Item type: chapter

For the case of elections since 1988, this chapter looks at the suggestion made by Andre Siegfried in 1907 that Canadian elections are peculiarly vulnerable to leader effects. It begins by outlining the specifically Canadian arguments for taking leadership seriously and the evidence said to back them; the arguments are found to refer mainly to ‘indirect’ effects in the sense used by King in Chapter 1 (so that leaders are treated as embodied preferences), with the actual evidence largely silent on the content – personality or otherwise – of Canadian judgments on leaders, at least in so far as those judgments are linked to the vote. Likewise, most accounts control for competing explanations weakly, if at all, and none considers personality for its net, election-day effect. Working through each argument also reveals that each is highly contingent, generally applying more to certain parties or party sizes than others, and more to periods of flux and to new parties than to stable periods and old parties. Filling the gaps requires an account of the personality factors worth taking seriously (the analysis looks at competence and character), a basic estimation strategy setting these attributes into proper context (which is given), and based on this estimation strategy, an accounting for net aggregate effects (also given). The last two sections of the chapter discuss whether perceptions of personality can be modified over the course of a campaign, and give an account of a special sort of ‘indirect’ effect: the case where perceptions of a leader’s personality can be cashed in on perceptions of a policy option (here the proposal for a commercial union between Canada and the United States in 1988).

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS AND PRACTICAL RESPONSIBILITY
David O. Brink

in Perfectionism and the Common Good: Themes in the Philosophy of T. H. Green
Published in print: 2003 Published Online: April 2004
Item type: chapter
This chapter focuses on Green's arguments about the role of self-consciousness in practical responsibility or moral personality. Green denies that moral responsibility is threatened by determinism and requires indeterminism. He believes that indeterminism is a greater threat to responsibility, inasmuch as it is unclear why we should hold a person accountable for actions that are not due to his character. Green shows the influence of a long tradition of thinking about agency that extends back to the Greeks and is given forceful articulation by moderns, such as Butler, Reid, and Kant.