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INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM
AS IT RELATES TO
AMERICORPS

By

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Dissertation

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Arts in the Department of Political Science

Idaho State University

Fall 2015

To the Graduate Faculty:

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr. Mark K. McBeth has been integral to my professional development. I had a fascination with individualism and collectivism, and he stoked the fires of my curiosity by introducing me to such books as *Wisdom of Crowds* by James Surowiecki and by playing the Prisoner's Dilemma in the classroom. Additionally, he was the first to introduce me to the concept of social capital.

Dr. Donna Lybecker consulted with me about comprehensive exams and was invaluable as a committee member on this dissertation. Also, Dr. Neill Piland allowed me to use office space at the ISU Institute of Rural Health during the weekends and evenings to work on this dissertation.

It took a collective effort from colleagues, friends, and family to get me through the dissertation process. In 2005, it was Debbie Green, a colleague and friend, who suggested that I pursue my Doctor of Arts in Political Science. Also, it was Dr. Peter Huggard, EdD MPH, Med, School of Population Health, University of Auckland, New Zealand, who introduced me to Boaz Shulruf, PhD MPH, Deputy Head, Centre for Medical and Health Sciences Education, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, the University of Auckland, who allowed me to use the Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale for this dissertation.

Furthermore, my mother, Lillie, who is 86 years old at this writing, and who is at the center of our family's universe, waited many nights at home for me. My siblings and their spouses and children have always been supportive of my pursuits in higher education. I deeply appreciate everyone's love, support and confidence in me.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACA – Affordable Care Act

AICS - Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale

CNCS - Corporation for National and Community Service

CHC - Community HealthCorps

COL - Collectivism (or Collectivity)

ICHC - Idaho Community HealthCorps

IHCF – Idaho Health Care for Children and Families

IND - Individualism (or Individuality)

SAE - Sigma Alpha Epsilon

U. S. – United States

YMCA – Young Men’s Christian Association

ABSTRACT

Individuality and collectivity are ideologies that have existed side by side for centuries and they continue to shape societies today. Many social scientists have conducted research on individualism-collectivism (IND-COL) but none have conducted research on these ideologies as they relate to health-related AmeriCorps. In 1994, President Bill Clinton created AmeriCorps as a way to reinvent government. In 2014, it celebrated its 20th Anniversary. After twenty years, some call AmeriCorps a model for a new style of public administration. The author analyzed IND-COL data across ten states to understand the unique regional variations as compared to the research conducted by Vandello and Cohen in their article, "Patterns of Individualism and Collectivism across the United States." The author hypothesized that one year of AmeriCorps would affect an AmeriCorps member's individuality or collectivity. A 2 sample t-test at a 95 percent Confidence Level indicated there was not sufficient evidence to conclude the population mean for IND or COL was greater AFTER participating in AmeriCorps than it was BEFORE. The author's study validated research conducted on volunteering as a pathway to employment and as a way to understand why different individuals performing the same service might have different motivations for doing so, e.g. individualistic or collectivist motivations.

Chapter I

Introduction

“We are an American family, and *we* rise and fall *together* as one nation and one people.”

Barack Obama, Presidential Election 2012

“There are 47 percent of the people who will vote for the president no matter what. All right, there are 47 percent who are with him, who are dependent upon government, who believe that they are victims, who believe the government has a responsibility to care for them, who believe that they are entitled to health care, to food, to housing, to you-name-it.”

Mitt Romney, videotape obtained by David Corn used during Presidential Election 2012

(Kurtz, 2013)

To understand the quotes above it helps to understand the background of the two 2012 presidential candidates. For example, in 2008, during his first bid for the presidency, Barack Obama was callously mocked for having credentials as a community organizer (Butterfield, 1990). However, after being a community organizer from 1985-1988, he went on to Harvard Law School (1988-1991) where he held a full-time volunteer position as editor-in-chief and supervised the law review's staff of 80 editors. In 1992, he directed the Illinois Project Vote, a voter registration drive (Ybarra, 1990). Later, he served as an Illinois State Senator (1997-2004) and U.S. Senator (2005-2008) and was elected the 44th President of the U.S. on November 4, 2008 (whitehouse.gov).

Like Obama, Mitt Romney had his share of volunteerism, too, and it came mainly from his active role in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In 1966, he spent two and a half years in France as a Mormon missionary. Additionally, from 1977 through 1994, while spearheading his business career, he was the bishop of his ward and stake president for his church.

As the stake president, Romney presided as a high priest in the stake (which generally has fewer than 5,000 members). Whereas when he served as a bishop he oversaw a ward or branch (consisting of a single congregation) (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Handbook 2: Administering the Church, 19 and 7.2.1. Callings in the Church).

In 1994, after stepping down from Bain Capital, a private Equity Company, and from his leadership roles in his church, he ran for U.S. Senate and lost to incumbent Ted Kennedy. Later, he was elected Governor of Massachusetts in 2002. In the 2008 Republican Presidential Primary, he lost the nomination to John McCain; and in 2012, he ran for President of the U.S. and lost to Barack Obama (Kranish & Paulson, 2007).

One could say that Obama leans toward collectivism or liberalism and Romney leans toward individualism or conservatism. This dissertation was, in part, motivated by this current polarized state of affairs and the binary nature of the debate. So it seeks to listen to both sides and synthesize the research conducted on collectivism (a collective focus) and individualism (an individual focus)¹ also to relate it to AmeriCorps. Moreover, according to Oyserman, Coon, and Kimmelmeier (2002), the core elements of individualism are personal uniqueness and independence, whereas duty to the in-group and maintenance of harmony are the main constituents of collectivism.

As a Project Director of two AmeriCorps Programs, this author hypothesizes that both collectivism and individualism tendencies are in the ranks of AmeriCorps members in patterns across the U.S. similar to the patterns discovered by Vandello and Cohen in their research (Vandello & Cohen, 1999). Whereby they illustrate that regions of the U.S. show significant variations on these dimensions.

AmeriCorps is a domestic Peace Corps. Instead of sending Americans around the world to provide service, Americans are placed in areas around the U.S. to provide service. In 1993, when President Bill Clinton established AmeriCorps, his vision was that civic service represented “one of the few remaining remedies [left] for the fragmentation and polarization that threaten our country” (Waldman, 1995). This civic consciousness would occur from the

¹ Oyserman, Coon, and Kimmelmeier concluded that this simple usage of collectivism and individualism allows for diverse research of an integrated whole and is the most commonly accepted way of describing collectivism and individualism.

bottom up as AmeriCorps members worked to solve local problems through local community-based organizations (Perry & Thomson, 2004, p. 17).

Solving local problems from the bottom up did not occur in ancient Middle Eastern communities, where the first contrasts between individualism and collectivism appeared in the ancient laws of Hammurabi. For instance, the King of Babylonia (1792-1750 BC) established some of the world's first written laws with universal codes of behaviors that identified the need for individuals to maintain positive relations with others, lest they face heavy sanctions (Triandis & Gelfand, 2012, p.499). From these early beginnings, collectivism and individualism evolved century by century and decade by decade.

For the past eight decades, despite the binary nature of the Collectivism (COL) and Individualism (IND) debate, Presidents from both sides of the political spectrum have supported volunteerism and national service programs. Volunteerism is service provided for free, whereas, national service allows participants to give their time and talents in exchange for subsistent living expenses but reasonable education awards.

National service is attractive to Republicans and Democrats alike because it can connect otherwise disparate service efforts into shared, public work, giving some critical focus and content to what it can mean to be a citizen (Bass, 2003, pp. 2-3).

For example, from 1933 to 1942, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a Democrat, created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) as part of the New Deal. The CCC provided manual labor jobs related to the conservation and development of natural resources in rural lands owned by federal, state and local governments (Bass, 2003).

Years later, in 1989, George H. W. Bush, a Republican, created the international nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, Points of Light Foundation. It is dedicated to solving serious social problems through voluntary service (Wiener, 2008, p. 15). Such support reveals that it is possible to believe in COL or IND and to support still volunteerism and national service.

However, as a result of the worst recession the world has witnessed in over six decades, Republicans and Democrats have been searching for ways to increase revenue and cut expenses. For this reason, since 2010, the U.S. House of Representatives has introduced several bills that would eliminate the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency for service and volunteering (Verick & Islam, 2010, abstract).

Despite these attempts, supporters in the White House and on Capitol Hill have saved the agency from elimination. However, the agency has been cut by eight percent over three appropriations cycles and subjected to a five percent cut due to sequestration (the action of taking legal possession of assets until a debt is paid). The repercussions were devastating: service learning programs, which combine classroom instruction with meaningful community service, were eliminated for 1.5 million students, 14,000 AmeriCorps positions were cut, and 113,500 Senior Corps members were displaced (Voices for National Service, 5/30/13).

Hence, the question of whether AmeriCorps can survive and continue to thrive is being debated, and at the root of the debate is individualism, which demands less government; and collectivism, which demands more government. Debates about these contrasting philosophies or leanings have been of intellectual interest since Fifth Century BC as well as in our politics since the founding of the U.S.

Brief History of Individualism and Collectivism

In the Fifth Century BC the earliest exchanges over IND and COL were between the Sophists and Plato and were antagonistic. This view continues to present day. The Sophists advocated personal agency where individuals are in charge of their lives and free to act as they choose. Plato, on the other hand, criticized the Sophists for lack of moral standards in determining what is right and proper. Instead, he promoted civic life (Nisbett et al. 2001; Nisbett 2003; Triandis 1995, 19-25).²

² Merriam-Webster defines Sophist as ancient Greek teachers of rhetoric, philosophy, and the art of successful living prominent about the middle of the Fifth century B.C. for their adroit subtle and specious reasoning.

Early in the civic life of the U.S., Alexander Hamilton, a founding father and the first Secretary of Treasury, established the Federalists, which favored a strong central government and believed power needed to reside in the executive branch. Additionally, he championed the establishment of a national bank and favored merchants as opposed to farmers (Hamilton vs. Jefferson, U.S. Department of State).

On the other hand, Thomas Jefferson, a founding father, and the third U. S President established the Democratic-Republicans that favored a weak central government and believed power should be centered in the legislature. Additionally, he opposed Alexander Hamilton's national bank and favored farmers as opposed to merchants. Last but not least, Jefferson was the principal author of the Declaration of Independence (Hamilton vs. Jefferson, U.S. Department of State).

One of the most famous passages from the Declaration of Independence is:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...

With the Declaration of Independence, one senses the strong fiery spirit of Americans' need for independence from Great Britain. The title of the document, alone, screams for the desire of individualism, independence, and liberty.

Another document, not written by Thomas Jefferson, is the Constitution of the United States of America. It operationalizes the spirit of America with its fundamental principles and laws of our society and nation. Several committees wrote it and the opening sentence of the Constitution screams for the need for collective action.

We the People of the U.S., in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence (British spelling), promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

In the booklet, *The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the U.S.*, published by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services M-654 (rev.07/08), the Director states:

The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the U.S. are the two most important, and enduring documents in our Nation's history. It has been said that "the Declaration of Independence was the promise; the Constitution was the fulfillment."

As a result of these two documents, one could say the American public was set up to have a long history of debate between Individualism and Collectivism. The primary author of the Declaration of Independence was an individual, and the authors of the Constitution were several committees (Farrand, 2000, pp. 124-134). *Although, because James Madison was the most prepared delegate at the Convention of 1787, the Heritage Foundation, lists him as the Father of the Constitution (Sheehan, 2013).*

Therefore, at the founding of the United States, two individuals stood out, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison; however, our government, made up of individuals, exists if "we the people" consent to be governed. We consented to be governed in order to form a perfect union; and over time that perfect union developed into what William Tyler Page, old U. S. House of Representative employee and Clerk, penned as the American Creed (American Creed @ ushistory.org).

According to William E. Hudson in his provocative book *American Democracy in Peril: Seven Challenges to America's Future*, the American creed can be broken down as follows: limited government, the rule of the law, liberty, political equality, and individualism (Hudson, p. 78). For the purpose of this dissertation, individualism is compared with collectivism and how they relate to AmeriCorps.

From the comparisons, two broad research questions arise. First, does serving for one year in AmeriCorps change a person's individualistic or collectivist leanings? Second, because the U.S. is the most individualist nation and the Mountain West and Great Plains have been

shown to be more individualist than other regions, will the majority of Idaho (Mountain West) members test out as more Individualistic than those members in other states? (Vandello & Cohen, 1999, p. 279).

Whatever the answers to these two questions, the history of Collectivism and Individualism indicates that each leaning may have extremely adverse effects.

In Hudson's chapter "The Second Challenge: Radical Individualism," his reflection portends the dark and paradoxical side of extreme radical individualism. He explains that radicalized individuals lose their perspective and as such lose their capacity to notice when a despotic power is in control. "Unable to act together to resist such power, isolated individuals will inevitably lose their freedom to it" (Hudson, 1998, p. 81).

Radicalized IND can degenerate into what Alexis de Tocqueville, a French observer of democracy, called *egoism*-a condition that leads a person "to think of all things in terms of himself and to prefer himself to all" (Tocqueville, 1835, p. 506). A society of egoists would make a civil society difficult since isolated individuals with no concern for public affairs would lose sight of common interests and fail to participate in public life (Hudson, 1998, p. 81).

Just as radical individualism has a dark side, radical collectivism has a dark side, too. According to Jason Kaufman, the Golden Age of Fraternity was a unique time in history. Between the Civil War and the onset of World War I, which amounts to forty years, more than half of all Americans participated in clubs, fraternities, militias, and mutual benefits societies (Kaufman, 2002, back cover).

A recent case in point is the 2015 Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE) fraternity house at the University of Oklahoma where a video leaked out revealing fraternity members singing, "You can hang 'em from a tree, but they'll never sign with me. There will never be a nigger in the SAE." This racism is not isolated. It is systemic within this fraternity. SAE is "the only national fraternity founded in the Antebellum South," with a Civil War-era membership class of 400, of whom 369 fought for the Confederacy (Breed, 2015).

As a country famed for its individualism, we became the world's greatest example of joiners (Kaufman, p. 6). Without understanding the truth about the Golden Age of Fraternity, many contemporaries see COL as a model for a revitalization of American civil society today.

As is often the case, without a proper understanding of the past, one can be deceived by nostalgia believing that the past is better than the present. In his book, Kaufman explains how fraternal organizations hid the bias of the "us" against "them" mentality (Kaufman, p. 55). Using dozens of charts, graphs, and primary sources, he shows how voluntarism, brotherhood, and mutual aid became bywords for segregation, not integration. Fear was at the foundation of this radical collectivism, and where there is fear, there is dysfunction.

Fear aroused out of broad historical shifts took place during the early 20th Century. These fears came from such issues as immigration, urbanization, and war. One way to combat this fear was to join and make associations. Apparently, as the 2015 Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE) fraternity episode reveals, fear remains with the U. S. in the 21st Century because immigration, urbanization, and war are still with us.

Gravitating to the Center

Radical IND or COL, some political scientists would argue, is rare among the general populace. On a macro level, Morris Fiorina, Stanford University, is one of those political scientists. He was best known for his 1981 book, "Retrospective Voting in American National Elections." Retrospective voting asserts that voters' evaluations of a candidate's past performance in office provide an important cue for vote decisions (Dautrich & Yalof, 2009, p. 440).

In the mid-2000's Fiorina put his focus on polarity. In the quote below he explained that Americans are NOT polarized in their politics:

Americans are closely divided, but we are not deeply divided, and we are closely divided because many of us are ambivalent and uncertain, and consequently reluctant to make firm commitments to parties, politicians, or policies. We divide evenly in elections or sit them out entirely because we instinctively seek

the center while the parties and candidates hang out on the extremes (Fiorina, 2006, p. xiii-xiv).

Clustering is tearing us apart

Bill Bishop, a co-editor of *The Daily Yonder*, a web-based publication covering rural America, and Robert G. Cushing, a retired professor of sociology at the University of Texas at Austin, disagree with Fiorina. In their book, *The Big Sort: Why Clustering of Like-minded America is Tearing Us Apart*, they detail why America is so culturally and politically divided. They arm themselves with demographic data to show how Americans sorted themselves over the past three decades into homogeneous communities by city and neighborhood (Bishop, 2008, book jacket). This *Big Sort* causes not only the polarity but allows some to fall victim to groupthink.

Based on the Morris Fiorina's macro research that citizens of the U.S. gravitate politically to the center and Bill Bishop's macro theory that the political clustering of American citizens is tearing us apart, from a micro or individual level of analysis other questions are generated. For example, a two-part question is, will my research validate the orthogonal³ nature of IND and COL. And, as a result, will the members test out at varying levels of IND and COL based on their circumstances?

Political Culture

To answer these questions, IND and COL are looked at as uni-dimensional at the cultural level (macro politics) and as multidimensional at the individual level (micro-politics). In short, IND and COL will be viewed through the twin lenses of macro politics and micro-politics that make up political culture.

Political culture is the product of both the collective history of a political system and the life histories of the members of the system. Hence, it is rooted equally in public events and

³ When performing statistical analysis, independent variables that affect a particular dependent variable are said to be orthogonal if they are uncorrelated (*Probability, Random Variables and Stochastic Processes*. McGraw-Hill. 2002. p. 211).

private experience (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 1968). Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, political scientists who studied the political culture of five nations (Great Britain, U.S., West Germany, Italy and Mexico), interviewed five thousand persons over five years, and explained political culture as:

[this] relationship between attitudes and motivations of the discrete individuals who make up political systems and the character and performance of political systems may be discovered systematically through the concepts of political culture . . . the connecting link between micro-politics and macro-politics is political culture (1963, 32).

Keith Krehbiel, in his paper, “Macro-Politics and Micro Models: Cartels and Pivots Reconsidered”, explained macro and micro politics another way as follows:

“At the top and highest level of aggregation, elections (E) and governments (G) simply repeatedly succeed one another. Each phase of political behavior is figuratively a black box: individuals reside and take actions within the boxes, but the theoretical analyst does not say much about the individuals and the empirical analyst does not see or measure much individual-level behavior” (Krehbiel, 2002, p.4).

Kriebel’s definition of macro and micro-politics is valuable because it provides a visual image on how this dissertation sets out to better understand not only the highest level of aggregation (collectivity or a collection of individuals) but also inner workings of the black box (individuality or the individuals who reside and take actions within the box) as illustrated below:

Political Culture

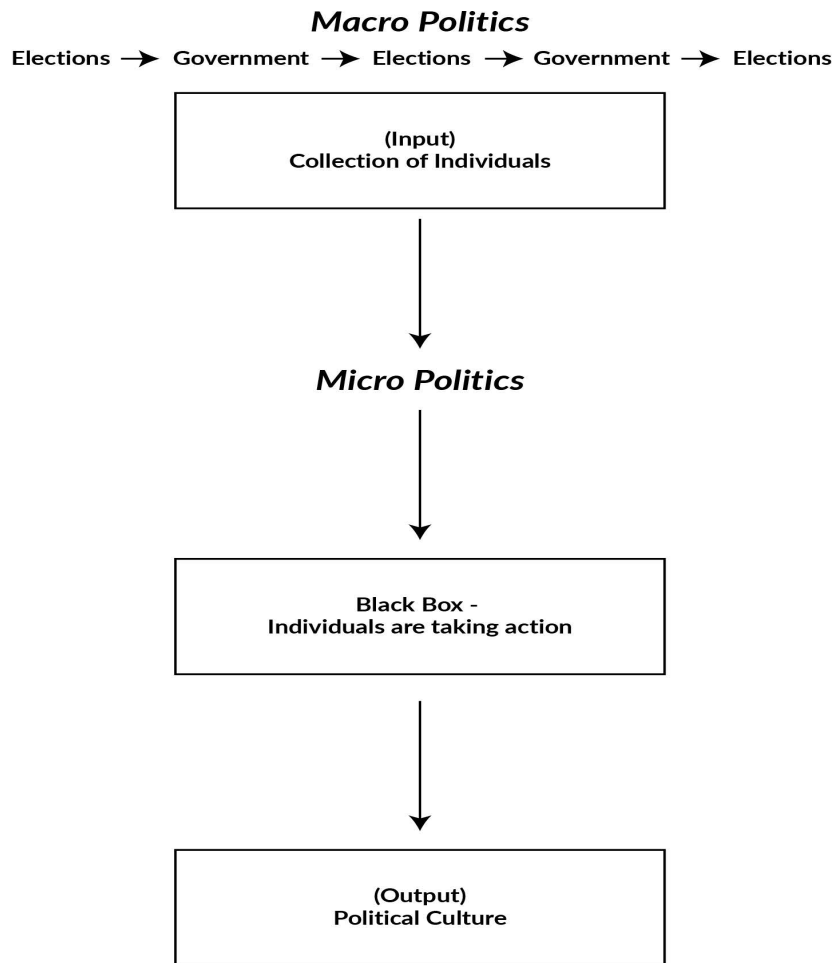


Figure 1. Political Culture

In Chapter II, Review of Literature, this dissertation will analyze political culture throughout time with a historical overview of six primary terms: collectivism, individualism, national service, AmeriCorps and volunteerism. Additionally, it will drill down beyond the top and highest levels of aggregation into the middle and lower levels of aggregation to explain which elections (E) and government (G) actors played primary roles in the evolution of the six primary terms.

Chapter III, Tension between Individualism and Collectivism, will attempt to understand collectivism, individualism, and service by analyzing the tension among them from both macro and micro points of view. And although there is no all-encompassing micro-analytic theory of political behavior that exists, in Chapter IV, Research Design and Methods,

this dissertation will attempt to look into the black box to understand the behavior of individuals participating in health-related AmeriCorps Programs from: Texas, Missouri, Maryland, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Michigan, Idaho and California.

With one pre-survey and post-survey per participant this dissertation will utilize the Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale (AICS) (Shulruf, 2008) that consists of 26 items, of which 11 (seven advice and four harmony) relate to collectivistic attributes and 15 (seven competition, four uniqueness, and four responsibility) relate to individualist attributes.

The AICS is a reliable and valid measure of collectivism and individualism achieving a high level of reliability across all subgroups and cultures in line with previous studies (Shulruf, B., Alesi, M., Ciochina, L., Faria, L., Hattie, J., Hong, F., Pepi, A-M., (2011). Besides a pre and post survey using AICS, a qualitative analysis, using five interview questions, was conducted with five AmeriCorps alumni.

Chapter V, Results, will summarize the findings as they relate to AmeriCorps or national service, and Chapter VI, Conclusions, will discuss the limits of the study, consider the implications of the findings and make conclusions.

As mentioned earlier, the debate between IND and COL has gone on since Fifth Century B. C.; as a result, this dissertation will not attempt to resolve the debate. However, it will seek to contribute new insight into the debate and to learn whether the AmeriCorps program has an impact on a member's orientation towards individualism or collectivism. Additionally, by surveying ten states, it will seek to understand the unique U.S. regional variations as compared to research conducted by Vandello and Cohen in their article "Patterns of Individualism and Collectivism across the United States," (Vandello & Cohen, 1999).

Chapter II

Review of Literature

Introduction

Because the history of collectivism, individualism, national service, AmeriCorps and volunteerism have been preserved and altered at a cultural level (macro politics) across the generations, and they are sure to continue to affect us multi-dimensionally at an individual level (micro-politics) into the future, the focus of this chapter is a literature review of these subjects. Since each topic has an extensive historical background, this dissertation provides only a brief overview.

History of Collectivism

One of the earliest sociologists and philosophers (1887) who formalized the distinction between social groups as related to IND and COL was Ferdinand Toennies. He placed humans into two types of social groups, *Gemeinschaft* (translated means “community”) and *Gesellschaft* (translated means “society”) (Loomis, 1957, pp. 223-231). A quintessential example of *Gemeinschaft* would be a city or neighborhood where the goal is to have feelings of togetherness with mutual bonds. Conversely, excellent examples of *Gesellschaft* are the corporation, the individual states of the U.S, and voluntary associations where the goal is to have social ties through remote connections. In sum, *Gemeinschaft* is unity before the rise of individuality. *Gesellschaft* is individuality before the establishment of unity (Cahnman, 1995, p. 94).

In *Gemeinschaft*, individuals are oriented to the large association as much as, if not more than, to their self-interest. Common mores and homogeneity of view reign supreme in their minds. There is seldom a need to enforce social control externally due to a collective sense of loyalty. Additionally, order exists based on natural law or a “unity of will” resulting from commonly held beliefs. Toennies saw *Gemeinschaft* from a purely sociological point of view and did not expect it in current society (New World Encyclopedia).

In 1993, sociologist Erich H. Loewy, in his illuminating book, *Freedom, and Community: The Ethics of Interdependence*, sums up the importance of collectivity or Gemeinschaft in a few sentences. He states, whether looking back at the Hebrew slaves fleeing Egypt, or Negro slaves being mistreated in the early history of the U.S., the story has been the same. “Humans have needed community to survive or to eventually overcome their oppressors.” He further states that without community individual survival is impossible, and “when solidarity is lost, communities and the individuals within them perish” (Loewy, 1993, p.xii). For example, throughout history there have been at least twelve civilizations, and there is a debate about the cause of the disappearance of seven of them (Huntington, 1996, pp.44-45). To better understand the roles community and individuals play in civilizations, science is necessary.

Therefore, Loewy supports his statements not only in historical terms but also in scientific terms. He explains that in evolution, most newborns, especially human beings, are born into communities and that they are critically dependent upon the communities’ nurturing and caring. He goes on to say that human infants are born without a psychological knowledge of themselves as selves, and they can only distinguish their selfness after some time (Loewy, 1993, p. xvi.)

In fact, he explains, so critical is nurturing and caring to human existence that if people do not get these emotional needs met, they can never attain self-differentiation. In short, “autonomy, therefore, necessarily and inevitably occurs in the embrace of communal nurture” (Loewy, p. xvi). What this tell us is that one cannot have individualism without collectivism and vice versa. Both orientations are necessary for our survival as a species.

The need for self-differentiation comes through social recognition, which continues into maturity. Axel Honneth, a leading philosopher of our time, in his theory of recognition describes it as the “I” seeking out the “We” of the shared group experience. Self-respect and self-esteem require the supportive experience of practicing shared values in a group. Honneth

uses a phrase from Theodor W. Adorno, a German sociologist, philosopher, and musicologist, and says, “Far from constituting a threat to personal identity, groups are, a primary ‘source of humanity’” (Honneth, 2012, p. 214).

Furthermore, Honneth continues, “The pathologizations that we repeatedly observe in the life of the group are, conversely, caused by the infiltration of distinct personality disorders. Therefore, social groups are always as good or as bad as the prevailing conditions of socialization” (Honneth, 2012, p. 214). Hence, one could classify individualism or collectivism as a pathology; and whether it is good or bad depends on one’s belief system.

It is human nature to want to classify people and objects to create order in the world. Cross-cultural group research capitalizes on this need. Geert Hofstede (2001), a pioneer in cross-cultural group research, observed that prevailing conditions in industrialized and wealthy societies; such as those found in the U.S., tend to become increasingly individualistic, whereas traditional, poorer, and rural societies; such as those found in Asia, tend to remain collectivistic. This wealthy individualist-poor collectivist paradigm occurs because wealthy societies have resources to allow them the luxury to be individualistic; whereas, poor and or rural societies lack resources, so they must come together to share them. Thus, the U.S. would be considered an individualistic cultural society (Hofstede, 2001, p. 214).

Hofstede (2001) came to this conclusion through an intense study of fifty national cultures where he identified and elaborated four dimensions of cultural variation: power distance, individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity-femininity. As one would surmise, Hofstede’s research opened the door to new research in cross-cultural analysis.

A distinguished cross-cultural psychologist, Michael H. Bond, called Hofstede’s research a “godsend,” because it provided the integration of cultural differences that was desperately needed not only in sociology but psychology (Allik & Realo, 2004, p. 32). As a

result, without Hofstede's research, the concepts of individualism and collectivism might still be studied separately in psychology and not be taken into account in sociology.

Hofstede's was a macro observation; whereas, in subsequent research, a micro observation argued that cultural and individual levels must be separated for conceptual and empirical purposes (Hofstede, 1994; Kim, Triandis, Kagitcibasi, Choi, & Yoon, 1994; Smith & Schwartz, 1997). Based on Triandis and Suh's research (2002), at a cultural level they saw individualism as the polar opposite of collectivism (as was also shown by Hofstede), whereas at the individual level of analysis, they viewed individualism and collectivism as orthogonal — uncorrelated or statistically independent to each other (Realo, Koido, Ceulemans, & Allik, 2002; Rhee, Uleman, & Lee, 1996). In other words, individualism and collectivism are not opposites. Instead, they are at right angles to each other.

Despite this so-called statistical independence, the newest research posits that it is autonomy of the individual that is perceived as the prerequisite for establishing voluntary associations, trusting relationships, and cooperation with one another (Allik & Realo, 2004, p. 45). It is this paradox that prompted this dissertation. This author, like Durkheim, wants to understand "How can he become at the same time more of an individual and yet more linked to society (Durkheim, 1984 [1893], p. xxx)?" Alternatively, put another way, in the words of Allik and Realo, how is it that when individuals become more autonomous and seemingly liberated from social bonds, they become even more dependent on society (Allik & Realo, 2004, p. 29)

The answer lies in the in-group out-group boundaries. For example, in a collectivist community acts of helping are often matters of normative in-group solidarity; whereas in an individualist community, individuals are valued and considered deserving apart from their group memberships. As such, collectivists are expected to support members of their in-group, but individualists are valued and considered deserving apart from their group memberships.

Thus, in the end, individualists are more welcoming to outsiders and perhaps more willing to trust and see outside of the box (Kimmelmeier, M., Jambor, E. E., & Letner, J., 2006, p. 329).

The in-group out-group boundaries are a result of the uni-dimensionality of IND and COL at the cultural level (macro-political level) of analysis. In contrast, the multi-dimensional nature of IND and COL at the individual level explains how individuals can hold two seemingly contrasting cultural values at the same time, and how those contrasting cultural values can be activated depending on the situation and the issue content at hand (Oyserman, Coon, and Kimmelmeier, 2002, p. 44). Consequently, this multi-dimensional nature of IND and COL allows for more creativity in reaching out to others who are different from ourselves or what Robert Putnam called bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000).

According to sociologist Robert Putnam (2000) who gained national attention for his book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, and who popularized the term “social capital,” people will not benefit individually unless they pursue their goals collectively (Putnam, 2000, p. 124). Even Alexis de Tocqueville, who in 1835, wrote *Democracy in America*, came to the same realization. He says:

All citizens are independent and feeble; they can do hardly anything by themselves, and none of them can oblige his fellow men to lend him their assistance. They all, therefore, become powerless if they do not learn voluntarily to help one another (p. 107).

Twenty-first Century Science supports both these men’s sentiments. In his eye-opening twenty-six-year research on the topic of competition and cooperation, Martin A. Nowak sums up the topic when he captured the cover page of the July 2012 *Scientific American* with the headline, “The Evolution of Cooperation: Competition is not the Only Force that Shaped Life on Earth.” Nowak, like this author, became fascinated by competition and cooperation through the application of a game theory paradox called the *Prisoner’s Dilemma*. In Nowak’s words, the Prisoner’s Dilemma goes like this:

Imagine that two people have been arrested and are facing jail sentences for having conspired to commit a crime. The prosecutor questions each one

privately and lays out the terms of a deal. If one person rats on the other and the other remains silent, the incriminator gets just one year of jail time, whereas the silent person gets slammed with a four-year sentence. If both parties cooperate and do not rat on each other, both get reduced sentences of two years. But if both individuals incriminate each other, they both receive three-year sentences (p. 37).

For anyone who has observed or played the Prisoner's Dilemma game, it is fascinating to question the conduct of the players and why they act the way that they do. Because neither player knows what the other will do, the rational choice – the one that always offers the better payoff – is to defect (get a higher pay off by betraying the other). However, in computer simulations of repeated trials of this game, defecting is not the option always taken.

For example, Nowak learns that “within a few generations all the individuals in the population were defecting in every round of the game. Then, after some time, a new strategy suddenly emerged: players would start by cooperating and then mirror their opponents' moves, tit for tat. The change quickly led to communities dominated by cooperators” (p. 37).

The repeated encounters described above are known as direct reciprocity, which is one of five mechanisms identified by Nowak in the evolution of cooperation. The other four mechanisms are (1) spatial selection, (2) kin selection, (3) indirect reciprocity, and (4) group selection. With spatial selection, “neighbors (or friends in a social network) tend to help one another, so in a population with patches of cooperators, these helpful individuals can form clusters that can then grow and thus prevail in competition with defectors” (pp. 37-38). As a result, through spatial selection, one would be more likely to survive because through time eventually the cooperators would outnumber the defectors.

The second mechanism deals with individuals even closer than an individual's neighbors or friends because it concerns cooperation among genetically related persons. In short, with this mechanism, individuals make sacrifices for their relatives because those relatives share their genes. It is called kin selection. Nowak admitted that he and other

researchers are in an intense debate about the underlying mathematics of kin selection theory; therefore this theory is not accepted.

A more accepted third mechanism is indirect reciprocity, which deals with a person's good reputation. In these instances, those who have a reputation for assisting others may find themselves on the receiving end of goodwill from strangers when their luck takes a turn for the worse. For example, Nowak compares it to what occurs during the grooming rituals of Japanese macaques. When low-ranking monkeys groom high-ranking ones (which have good reputations) it betters their reputations – and hence they receive more grooming – simply by being seen with the “top brass.”

The fourth mechanism, group selection, is the theory that has been around the longest. Darwin first observed it in his 1871 book, *The Descent of Man*. In the book, he witnesses a tribe, including many members who were always ready to aid one another, and who sacrificed themselves for the common good, were made victorious over most other tribes; and this would later come to be known as natural selection” (p. 38).

To understand how group selection operates, Nowak described it in a modern-day analogy as follows: “The employees of a company compete with one another to move up the corporate ladder, but they also cooperate to ensure that the business succeeds in its competition with other companies” (ibid). To put it another way, groups of cooperators out-compete other groups (Nowak, 2005, pp 1291-1298).

All five mechanisms of cooperation, according to Nowak, occur in organisms from amoebas to zebras (and even, in some cases, to genes and other cell components). As proof of the mechanisms' effectiveness, millions of years of evolution have taken us from apes to where we are today with complex societies. In Nowak's words, humans are “super-cooperators” and what differentiates us from others in the animal kingdom is our language. Our verbal communication allows us to share our fixation with who does what to whom and why. The

reason for this obsession is our need to position ourselves the best we can in the social network around us.

However, despite this need to cooperate, Nowak explained that cooperation is intrinsically unstable, and for this reason, “cycles of cooperation and defection are visible in the ups and downs of human history” (p. 39). Thus, similar to a thermostat, one can see, through time, a self-regulating environment where humans lean toward cooperation at one point in history and defection at another point in history.

History of Individualism

Where are we in the ups and downs of this human history? To answer this question, let us review the history not only of collectivism but also of individualism. As mentioned earlier, Ferdinand Toennies was one of the first to identify individualism, but he called it *Gesellschaft*, and it was maintained by individuals acting in their self-interest. In his theory, *Gesellschaft* was made up of secondary relationships rather than familial or community ties, and there was less individual loyalty to society (Loomis, 1957, pp. 223-231).

Toennies developed much of his understanding about *Gesellschaft* by studying Thomas Hobbes, a renowned English political philosopher known for his contract theory. “Hobbes thought that all human behavior derived from the operation of a core set of appetites and aversions which each possessed regardless of his or her social setting” (Fay, 2006, p. 31). In other words, Hobbes believed that humans are selfish creatures who would do anything to better their position (Green, 1993, p. 110). He believed that society could not exist except by the power of the state and that it was necessary for all people to concede their rights to the government in exchange for peace and order (Green, 1993, p. 148).

In contrast, John Locke, an English philosopher, and physician known for his social contract theory and theory of mind is often cited as the originator of our modern concept of the self. He maintained that we are not born with innate ideas. Instead, our knowledge is

determined by our experience from sense perception (Baird & Kaufmann, 2008, pp. 527-529). Since each person is born into different circumstances, their perceptions will differ; thus, diversity is at the center of human nature.

Locke was tolerant of different views, stressed education, and argued that government should exist based on the consent of the people. He further asserted as natural law the inherent freedom and equality of human beings: “Such a vision informed the founding documents of the U.S.” (Ketcham, 1987, pp. 56-57). In short, John Locke believed that the law was not intended to restrain people but rather that it was designed to preserve and enlarge freedom.

As mentioned earlier, another document extensively used by political scientists to understand Democracy in America was Alexis Tocqueville’s 1835 book amply titled *Democracy in America*. In his book, Tocqueville first used the term “individualism”. He saw individualism as a preference for wanting to be on one’s own and having diminished ties to society (Ketcham, 1987, p. ix). He wrote that individualistic society “not only makes every man forget his ancestors, but . . . Hides his descendants, and separates his contemporaries from him; throws him back forever upon himself alone” (Tocqueville, Chapter II, page 1).

As this quote illustrates, Tocqueville saw Americans as individualists who were willing to give up their personal attachments, even to their ancestors, to be in control of their destiny. Paraphrasing Tocqueville, Americans were ready to form a democracy that broke the chain Aristocracy had made of all the members of the community, from the peasant to the king, and sever every link of it. Americans were able to sever every link because it was a young nation and thus more capable of experimenting with new ideas.

President Andrew Jackson’s term in office (1829-1837) dovetails nicely with the publication of Tocqueville’s book. His presidency was referred to by historians as the “Era of the Common Man”. It is ironic that a president who represented the collective body known as the “Common Man” championed individualism.

In his book, *The Politics of Individualism*, Lawrence Kohl theorizes that a division between political parties occurred during the Jackson administration because the Jacksonians, or Democrats, defined freedom as freedom from the government. On the other hand, the Whigs, who had power and wealth, defined freedom as using government to consolidate the powers of individual citizens by public policy and by creating private corporations (Kohl, 1989, p.109, 119). In the Jacksonian mind, public and private were two distinctly separate spheres (p. 108). Jackson preferred power to the people rather than power to the government.

Some eighty-six years after Andrew Jackson's presidency, Herbert Hoover, the thirty-first President of the U.S., took up the mantle of "rugged individualism." In his 1923 book, *American Individualism*, he defines individualism as *an equality of opportunity* (Hoover, p. 8). He goes on to say that democracy is merely the mechanism that individualism invents as a device that carries on the necessary political work of its social organization. Furthermore, he states, democracy arises out of individualism and prospers through it alone (Hoover, p. 48).

In his October 22, 1928, campaign speech, Hoover says, "We were challenged with a peace-time choice between the American system of rugged individualism and a European philosophy of . . . paternalism and state socialism (Miller Center, 2013, Feb. 2). Hoover's campaign speech happened ten years after World War I ended, so it was ten years after the U.S. government had risen in stature with unprecedented economic powers. As a result, American big government threatened the long history it had with individualism.

However, individualism by itself, according to Hoover, would not be the individualism to which Tocqueville referred; rather, Hoover advocated a better, brighter, broader individualism – an individualism that carried increasing responsibility and service to fellow Americans. He said service gave Americans comfort. He explained that veterans are service men, and merchants and business people pride themselves on giving service beyond the price of their goods (Hoover, pp. 28-29).

One could say that Hoover was ahead of his time. Like many advocates today, he was one of the foremost proponents of public-private cooperation—what he termed “volunterism”⁴. However, his brand of volunterism was not premised on governmental coercion or intervention, because he feared it would destroy valuable American ideas like individualism and self-reliance. Instead, he believed in cooperation among individuals and groups” (Miller Center, 2013, Feb. 10). Moreover, he commented that those suspicious that cooperation might lead to socialism need not fear; in an economic sense, cooperation represents the initiative of self-interest blended with a sense of service.

He said, “...for nobody belongs to a cooperative who is not striving to sell his products or services for more or striving to buy from others for less or striving to make his income more secure” (Hoover, p. 44). Thus, he defines cooperation in an economic sense that represents the initiative of self-interest blended with a sense of service, so self-interest and service are not mutually exclusive of one another.

Hoover saw the previous three centuries of individualism or self-interest as the primary force of American civilization. He clarifies, “Our very form of government is the product of the individualism of our people, the demand for an equal opportunity, for a fair chance” (Hoover, p. 63). He saw individualism as being rooted in the American nature and born of experience. “Equal opportunity, the demand for a fair chance, became the formula of American individualism because it is the method of American achievement” (p. 65). What’s more, he said:

The primary safeguard of American individualism is an understanding of it; of faith that it is the most precious possession of American civilization, and a willingness courageously to test every process of national life upon the touchstone of this basic social premise (p. 70).

⁴ Volunterism is purposefully spelled differently than volunteerism or voluntarism to distinguish it from how it is traditionally understood.

In short, Hoover advocated a blending of individualism with collectivism but still believed that individualism reigned supreme.

L. Joseph Hebert, Jr. wrote in his book, *More than Kings and Less than Men: Tocqueville on the Promise and Perils of Democratic Individualism*, that Tocqueville feared individualism, above all else, as the main threat to democracy. In fact, Hebert credits Tocqueville with saying that his principal goal in writing *Democracy in America* was to combat individualism (Hebert, 2010, p. 7). How is it then that Herbert Hoover claims individualism as the touchstone of American civilization, and Alexis Tocqueville claims it as his primary fear in the destruction of American civilization? This author will address this paradox in Chapter VI.

According to Hebert (2010), Tocqueville defined democracy as the perception of equality among citizens (p. 4). As mentioned earlier, Hoover defined American individualism in similar terms. Thus, one could deduct that democracy and American individualism are one and the same. Such a deduction would be wrong because Tocqueville saw IND as the willingness of each citizen to withdraw into the private sphere, and to not act about matters of public concern (p. 7), whereas, Hoover believed in public-private cooperation.

Although Tocqueville defined IND differently from Hoover, his solution to overcoming its negative aspects was similar. He called upon the better angels of our nature (Tocqueville, 1835, p. 521). Hebert (2010) said it in another way. “True citizenship demands that the average person gives not only of his time and material resources but also that he be willing to sacrifice for the sake of public discourse the pride by which he clings to his unreasoned private opinions” (Hebert, 2010, p. 194).

The key word used by Hebert is “sacrifice.” Although Hoover was not aware of Hebert’s existence, had he known him, Hoover would have been willing to give up some ground in his “rugged individualism” philosophy. For example, he launched the largest public works project in history at that time. However, he did not go far enough, because he believed that problems of poverty and unemployment were best left to “voluntary organization and

community service.” He feared that individuals would become too dependent on the government, and it would undermine individual character.

He continued to put “rugged individualism” as a top priority even in the face of monumental economic catastrophe.” (Miller Center, 2013, February 10). Although Hoover spent millions on public work projects, with the Hoover Dam being one of the largest, Hoover’s engineering ethos and lack of political experience forced him not to work with Congress in ways that would have better benefited the U.S. economy at the time (Burner, 2005).

History of National Service

By creating the largest public works project in American history and then not going far enough to sustain it, Hoover set the stage for the thirty-second President, Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR), to build the New Deal coalition. Roosevelt saw the holes in Hoover’s philosophy and capitalized on it. By doing so, one could argue, FDR tilted the leanings of the U.S. in the direction of collectivism.

It is during FDR’s administration that national service took root. In 1933, he formed the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Corps members served 6-18 months and focused on restoring national parks and revitalizing the economy. The CCC helped bring the nation out of recession by 1942. Key senators in the FDR Administration created the GI Bill linking military service to educational benefits (Corporation for National and Community Service).

With the success of the GI Bill as his example, in 1961 President John F. Kennedy established another way for young people to serve their country with the announcement of the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps’ mission has three simple goals: providing technical assistance; helping people outside the U.S. to understand American culture; and helping Americans to understand the cultures of other countries (www.peacecorps.gov).

Building upon this idea, President Johnson continued the creation of service organizations with VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), both of which were created to provide more opportunities for

Americans to serve full time. Additionally, throughout the 1970's Youth Conservation Corps, a cadre of dedicated individuals who work and play in the national parks, were established at both federal and state levels (National Park Service, 2014).

The desire for national service continued into the 1980's with President George H. W. Bush's Point of Light Foundation and the Office of National Service. By 1990, the National and Community Service Act, created to connect Americans of all ages and backgrounds with opportunities to give back to their communities and their nation, was signed into legislation and in 1993 President Bill Clinton created AmeriCorps.

History of AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps grew out of a belief in the importance of civic service. In his 1993 announcement of AmeriCorps, Bill Clinton claimed that civic service:

...is nothing less than the American way to change America. It is rooted in the concept of community: The simple idea that every one of us, no matter how many privileges with which we are born, can still be enriched by the contributions of the least of us (Lenkowsky & Perry, 2000, para.7).

Paul Schmitz, who wrote *Everyone Leads: Building Leadership from the Community Up* agrees with Bill Clinton. Schmitz wrote his book to inspire readers to see new leadership possibilities within themselves and their communities. In fact, Paul Schmitz was one of the original founders of a non-profit organization called Public Allies which was a model for AmeriCorps and later became a proud member of the AmeriCorps National Service Network (Public Allies, 2013).

The predecessor to AmeriCorps was City Year. City Year proved that it was possible to recruit diverse teams of young adults to get things done, and it became the model for AmeriCorps. The first City Year Program partnered with Bank Boston and expanded over a decade from a fifty-person summer pilot to a national program with 1,000 corps members in ten cities (Sagawa, 2000, 109-110).

In 1999, Bank Boston merged with Fleet Financial Group and announced an additional \$1 million gift toward City Year's endowment. It was a testament to the strength of the partnership between the Fleet Financial Group and City Year (Sagawa, 2000). Another testament to the force of these programs has been their longevity due to the reinventing government movement (Lenkowsky & Perry, 2000).

Bill Clinton "decreed that the national service program would be the model of his efforts to 'reinvent government'" (Waldman 1995, 102). The president's reinvention themes were developed and expanded by CNCS, known as the "Corporation for National and Community Service." In addition, Eli Segal, the head of the White House Office of National Service at that time, embedded the themes of reinvention into CNCS.

Segal saw to it that CNCS was an independent agency with a fifteen-member board of directors appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Additionally, by law, no more than eight members could come from the same political party. Also, its chief executive officer reported to the board, who were also presidential appointees subject to Senate confirmation. "Hence, in theory, the Corporation is meant to be a policy-making and funding body, at least partially insulated from administration directives — much as the National Endowments for the Humanities and the Arts —rather than a provider of services and a program operator" (Lenkowsky & Perry, 2000). CNCS's independent status has allowed it not just to survive but to thrive.

As an independent agency, CNCS was able to relax civil service rules and create an alternative personnel system. Today, it does not deliver programs; instead, it provides the framework, so most service programs are operated by local or national nonprofit organizations, or by consortia of nonprofits, under broad priorities set by the President and Congress.

As a result, CNCS is competitive, decentralized, and results oriented. It is competitive because it uses competition for much of the funding it dispenses, e.g. grant awards. It is decentralized because two-thirds of AmeriCorps funds flow through state commissions. Lastly,

it is results-oriented because local programs must have the capacity to identify program objectives, develop performance measures, and collect adequate data to document program outcomes.

In their 2000 article, “Reinventing Government: The Case of National Service,” Lenkowsky and Perry conclude that CNCS remains committed to serving as a model for a new style of public administration. To date, CNCS is still alive and well. Thus, CNCS has learned the most important lesson of survival, according to Lenkowsky and Perry, and that is the ability to evolve and compromise (Lenkowsky & Perry, 2000, p. 306).

History of Volunteerism

The history of the U.S. is a history of its citizens evolving and compromising to survive and thrive. For example, in the early days of the Republic, neighboring farmers combined efforts to clear land, build houses and barns, and harvest crops. The women created quilting parties and spinning bees. Volunteers built Church buildings and early street lighting was shared by homeowners volunteering to perform those duties on a rotating basis. Another example occurred in 1736 when Benjamin Franklin assembled a group of thirty men to form the Union Fire company in Philadelphia, and in 1851 the first YMCA was established in Boston so young men could stay physically and spiritually active (Ellis & Campbell, 2005).

According to Ellis and Campbell authors of *By the People: A History of Americans as Volunteers*, “Three and a half centuries later, volunteerism imbues American Society” (Ibid). Americans volunteer not because of coercion or profit, but because they recognize a need and are willing to take responsibility for meeting that need.

Furthermore, these same authors state that the cumulative effect of countless voluntary actions, occurring in every part of the U.S. and every decade, makes it apparent that volunteers have shaped many aspects of American history and culture. In fact, on January 17, 2014, the U. S. Census Bureau announced that in 2012, 64.5 million Americans volunteered nearly 7.9 billion hours with an estimated value of nearly \$175 billion. As these data reveal, the history of

volunteering in the United States continues into the 21st Century, and will continue to evolve (*Volunteerism in America, C-Span*).

Collectivism, individualism, national service, AmeriCorps and volunteerism grew out of the needs of the human spirit. Individuals throughout history, as evidenced by art in paintings, poetry, and writing; and by science in questions, observations, and experiments, have wanted to understand themselves (individualism) and have done so through alliances and networking (collectivism). The desire to understand ourselves and those around us is innate. It is what makes us tick, and it is what lead to our survival.

Because the author is the Program Director of the Idaho Community HealthCorps and the Idaho Health Care for Children and Families, both AmeriCorps Programs, and she witnessed individual leadership and team spirit among members, she wanted to know whether AmeriCorps members tended to be more individualistic or collectivist and whether a year of service would change a member's leanings toward these two orientations.

The author's access to the Program Directors of Community HealthCorps Programs throughout the U. S. allowed her to survey members in ten U. S. states through a pre-survey and post-survey to determine patterns of individualism and collectivism from region to region. In the next chapter, these patterns and the tensions are discussed.

CHAPTER III

Tension between Individualism and Collectivism

Since AmeriCorps (aka national service) celebrated its 20th Anniversary on September 12, 2014, compared to the history of collectivism, individualism, and volunteerism, it is still in its infancy. Being in its infancy, it has room to grow. One of the best ways to grow is under tension – that is, through listening to diverse public opinions on both sides - the individualistic or conservative side, as well as the collectivist or liberal side.

For the purpose of this dissertation, these orientations or tendencies will be viewed on a continuum between the two extremes of collectivity and individuality as follows:

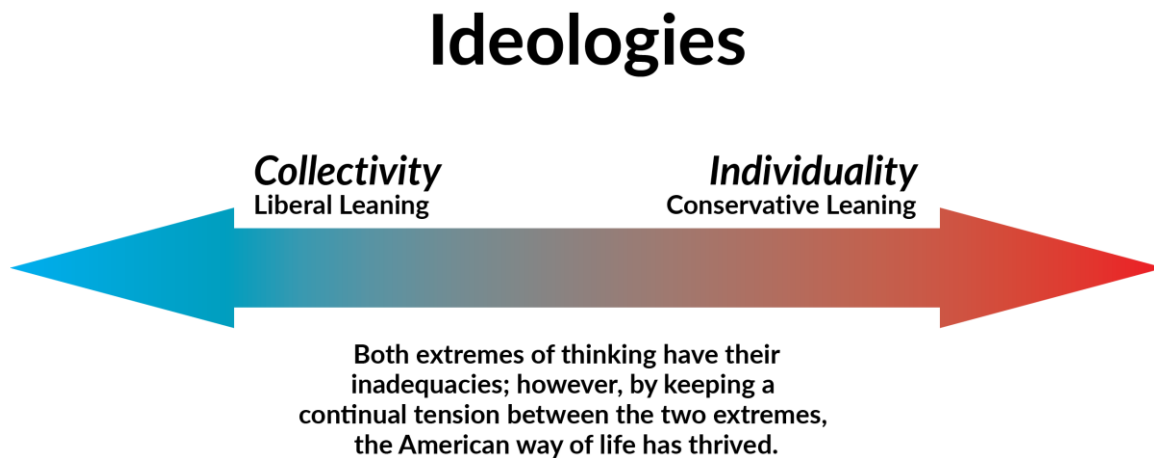


Figure 2. Ideologies

To better understand both sides, continued research needs to be conducted as it relates to the research of Vandello and Cohen, on patterns of individualism and collectivism across the U.S. Their research lends valuable information on how national service may have different impacts in different regions of the U.S. One of the purposes of this dissertation is to validate their observations of regional variations such as collectivist tendencies in the Deep South and individualistic tendencies in the Northwest.

Whereas Chapter I introduced the early 21st Century with its polarized state of affairs and gave a brief history of collectivism, individualism, conservatism and liberalism, Chapter II

provided more detail but was still only an overview because the histories for each topic are massive. Entire books have been written about them.

This chapter will focus on the tension, interplay and contradictions among the four orientations. For instance, just as individuals who live side-by-side inevitably encounter tension in their relationships, collectivism and individualism as well as conservatism and liberalism have lived side-by-side with tension since at least the fifth century B. C. As a result, conflict between these concepts has built up over time.

Which Side of the Fence?

The side of the fence one sits on determines which point of view one may have on these orientations. This idea, that “where you stand depends on where you sit,” is often called Miles’s Law after the Truman-era bureaucrat, Rufus E. Miles, Jr. (1910-1996). He was an assistant secretary under Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson and coined the phrase (Miles Law, Encyclopedia Britannica, 2014).

For example, those who are looking out for the best interests of their organization will pursue policies that benefit the organizations they represent rather than national or collective interests. Additionally, people who serve as part of a temporary political administration, such as political appointees of the U.S. president, may pursue shorter-term interests whereas career civil servants would pursue long-standing organizational affiliations (Bevir, 2007).

Gorodnichenko and Roland researched the effects of short-term versus long-term interests and found that the individualism-collectivism cultural dimension had a significant and robust causal effect on innovation; and hence, on long-term growth (2012, p. 214). Their research showed that although U. S. businesses (possibly the most individualist organizations in the U. S.) may pursue policies that benefit their organizations’ short-term bottom line, in the long-term, such an orientation benefits the U. S. through innovation. Thus, individualism favors innovation more than collectivism.

On the other hand, according to Gorodnichenko and Roland (2012, p. 232), collectivism is associated with higher demand for political and social stability and lower taste for institutional experimentation. Thus, this explains the desire for career civil servants to pursue long-standing organizational affiliations.

An excellent article, “AmeriCorps the Beautiful?” gets across the idea of Miles’s Law by looking at AmeriCorps from both a conservative and a liberal point of view. Asked whether conservatives should support Clinton’s national service programs, Harris Wofford, a former United States Senator and Steven Waldman, a former senior advisor to the CEO of the Corporation for National Service, answered the question with a thought experiment. They asked the reader to imagine that it is 1993 and instead of Bill Clinton introducing AmeriCorps, Newt Gingrich is president and he introduces it (Wofford & Steven, 1996, p.28).

What if Conservatives introduced AmeriCorps?

From the conservative perspective, the authors (1996) put forth reasons why AmeriCorps supports conservative beliefs, for example, it is inexpensive, decentralized, and community-based.

Additionally, the authors quote famous conservatives such as William F. Buckley Jr., a conservative author, commentator, and columnist, who called for a national service program to engage young people to solve problems outside of government bureaucracies. They also quoted William Bennett, a pundit, politician, and former Secretary of Education, who argued that all government benefits ought to require something of the beneficiaries to shatter the entitlement mentality created by years of Democrat-created welfare programs (Wofford & Waldman, 1996, p. 28).

Wofford and Waldman (1996) conclude their article by addressing one of the most common criticisms of AmeriCorps. For instance, there are those who say it is not needed in a nation in which 90 million people volunteer. They give three primary reasons why this argument does not hold water.

First, they explain that one-third of volunteering done by those 90 million Americans consists of serving on committees, babysitting, singing in the church choir or other services that, although beneficial, could hardly substitute for the welfare state.

Second, they state, according to the estimates by the Independent Sector, a leadership network for nonprofits, foundations, and corporations committed to advancing the common good, Americans, in recent times, have been volunteering fewer hours per individual. Besides these limits, Wafford and Waldman said, harnessing the power of volunteers is not easy. Volunteers need to be trained, supervised, and deployed to be effective.

To bring home the point, Wafford and Waldman quoted George Romney, father of 2012 Conservative presidential candidate Mitt Romney, and Governor of Michigan from 1963-1969, who stated that full-time stipend service and unpaid volunteers make up what he termed “twin engines of service.”

To illustrate the impact of the “twin engines of service,” The Conversation Company (TCC), a program and evaluation firm, conducted research. It showed nonprofits that strategically leverage (use a small initial investment to gain a relatively high return) volunteers outperformed their peers on all measures of organizational capacity and had a greater impact (Reimagining Service, 2009, p. 11).

Additionally, the 2009 Reimagining Service, made up of a 26 member council of nonprofit, governmental, and private sectors, found that by utilizing volunteers, organizations can have returns of three to six times the amount invested in those volunteers (Reimagining Service, 2011, Case Study). In essence, by leveraging volunteers, an organization is capable of experiencing the multiplier effect – using a minor factor, such as volunteers, to precipitate a significant change.

A third point opponents of AmeriCorps argue is that it will inevitably evolve into a bloated bureaucracy that smothers local initiative.

Wofford and Waldman (1996) argued against this accusation because AmeriCorps Programs are locally based and rely on a competitive grant making process, two-thirds of the money goes directly to state commissions, who in turn use that money to fund competitive proposals from local nonprofit groups. Besides, AmeriCorps is nonpartisan. By law, its state commissions must be comprised of an equal number of Democrats and Republicans, appointed by governors.

Besides, the Corporation for National and Community Service (see the history of AmeriCorps) can self-correct, and they have done so through time as they learned what works and what does not work. However, AmeriCorps and National Service's capacity to self-correct, according to Doug Bandow, a former special assistant to President Reagan and current Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute, explains that national service has had some unintended consequences.

Unintended consequences

Bandow sees the far-reaching utopian visions of social transformation eschewed by national service advocates as potentially dangerous. He quotes David King of the Ohio-West Virginia YMCA, who warned:

The national service movement and the National Corporation are not about encouraging volunteering or community service. The national service movement is about institutionalizing federal funding for national and community service. It is about changing the language and understanding of service to eliminate the words 'volunteer' and 'community service' and in their place implant the idea that service is something paid for by the government (Bandow, 1996, p.8).

Another unintended consequence, Bandow argues, is that national service participants see their service as a job option and not as a unique opportunity to help the community: participants are more interested in making money and finding employment than they are in providing service. Therefore, they participate to earn credit for college tuition and not particularly to serve their community.

Thus, Bandow sees national service as creating an entitlement mentality; and national service, along with other entitlements, sapping young people of their independence. He says this is especially true of youth's option to choose AmeriCorps over the military. As proof of this, Bandow points out that surveys of potential military recruits showed that they would consider joining AmeriCorps rather than the military because they see it as a better way to gain educational assistance (Wofford & Waldman, 1996, p. 31).

Is AmeriCorps and National Service the Answer?

If national service is not the answer to getting things done that government and private industry cannot get done then what is? Bandow offers two solutions. First, he says, government needs to get out of its own way and dissolve unnecessary barriers it has instigated. Examples of these barriers are such rules as not allowing restaurants to donate food to the hungry because of restrictive food health codes. Another example of a barrier is limiting private transportation for the disabled because of restrictions on para-transit operations, also known as door-to-door transport service for people with disabilities.

Second, Bandow states, leaders throughout society need to create a more traditional sense of compassion whereby lawmakers, clerics, philanthropists, and corporate presidents, take responsibility to help those in need and not the government. In short, the government is not the solution to every problem. Instead, Bandow advocates that there be the need for a renewed commitment to individual service – not “national service.”

James Morone, the author of *The Democratic Wish: Popular Participation and the Limits of American Government* understands the tension between IND and COL. He is an American political scientist who was awarded the Gladys M. Kammerer Award for the best book on American national policy from the American Political Science Association (APSA). He sees this tension as a regular expression of two competing ideologies and says it marks “the soul of American politics” (Morone, 1998, p. 1).

He argues: “Americans dread losing their individual liberties through public power while they simultaneously yearn for ‘an alternative faith in direct communal democracy.’” In other words, Americans want it all. They want their individual liberties, but they do not wish to give up their collective power to make changes in what they see wrong with their government (Morone, 1998, p.1).

One ideology, Individualism, or what Morone calls classic liberalism, emphasizes the individual, limited representative government, private interest, and the primacy of the private realm. The other ideology, Collectivism, or what Morone calls classic republicanism, rests on the equally strong belief that without civic obligation to the whole, the ideal of the republic will never be realized. Morone concludes that both ideologies conspire to make a weak government because this dread and yearning is so ingrained in the American psyche that society is gridlocked (Perry & Thomason, p. 4).

Morris Janowitz, a leading theorist of civic service, sees these ideologies in a different way. He sees the tension between Collectivism and Individualism as a plus instead of a minus. In his view, civic service acts as a self-regulating force between these two ideologies. He explains that civic service has the potential to motivate society to pursue Collectivism ideals, and at the same time, minimize coercive control – the dread of Individualism. He links civic service to social control that involves a society’s capacity to regulate itself according to principles valued by society such as civic virtue. (Janowitz, 1991, p.77).

Civic virtue, also known as citizenship, was rooted in the American founders’ belief that “responsibility for the development of that virtue belonged to individuals, free from authoritarian or paternalistic institutions (whether public, private or religious) that would force them into some predefined and artificial character.” (Perry & Thomson, 2004, p.5). This idea of civic virtue is especially true in the 21st Century.

In the 21st century, a major shift in the cyclical pattern seems to have occurred. As Perry and Thomson note (2004), this is because civic service advocates have successfully

linked the private ethos of voluntarism (characteristic of classic liberalism) with civic republicanism's sense of obligation and citizenship (characteristic of civic republicanism).

The linkage between classic liberalism and civic republicanism have created what Perry and Thomson (2004), in their well thought-out book about civic service, call interdependence. This interdependence has created new types of working relationships between government and community. Perry and Thomson (2004) see these relationships as networks defined as “webs of public, not-for-profit, and business organizations in crosscutting configurations” (Perry & Thomson, 2004, p.5).

National service is centered among these webs and is capable of performing tasks neither the market nor government provides. As such, it can do it at less cost than by other means. It is one of the best bets in helping American society to address complex social issues. By national service bringing together constituencies found in both the public and private spheres of society, Perry and Thomason (2004, p.7) see national service as a way to build civic service as a viable social institution.

In short, American history shows us that citizenship develops through the workings of inner tensions between conflicting relationships such as liberty and obligation, individual rights and public duty, the dread of a strong central government and a yearning for a naturally faithful citizenship rooted in the community or a strong decentralized government.

Charles Moskos, a sociologist of the U.S. military and a professor at Northwestern University, agrees. He observed that civic service has a cyclical pattern in which “a slow inflow of national service support is followed by a rapid ebb and at each upswing in the cycle the level of support for national service is established at a higher level” (Perry & Thomson, 2004, p. 6).

Since civic service is cyclical, and there was an ebb in AmeriCorps funding during 2014-2015, there should be an upswing in financing in 2015-2016. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) website, in 2016,

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/budget>, the mission of President Obama is to provide an on-ramp for Americans of all ages to serve their communities in sustained and efficient ways. As a result, a budget request of \$1.18 billion for CNCS, which, if approved, would mean a record-high of 90,150 AmeriCorps members who will have an opportunity to serve their country. Such a request would mean a 30,150 member increase in AmeriCorps membership over 2015 and into 2016.

Additional AmeriCorps member's participation in communities does not mean life in America will be simpler; it just means that life in America is filled with more opportunities for people to serve their country and strive to make it a better republic.

The Public Broadcast System (PBS) announces, during its nightly programming, that "Life isn't simple. Not in a democracy." This chapter supports that sentiment demonstrating how the tensions between IND and COL, in addition to liberalism and conservatism, are viewed differently by different constituencies. The way in which the U. S. handles this tension is uniquely its own. Other countries may try to imitate the United States, but they cannot be the U. S. because their histories are different from the U. S. history.

As this chapter illustrates, the tensions among the threads that make up the fabric of the United States are its strength. The tension created by the debate is the web that holds us together.

As an AmeriCorps Program Director in Idaho overseeing 21 stipend members and 42 education-award-only members, it is not a simple task to recruit, retain, and educate members. In fact, it is a challenge, but it is a challenge worth taking because this author sees how AmeriCorps engages members to recognize the potential they have within themselves and the impact they can have on their community.

For example, in 2015, one of Idaho's members collected \$4,400 of gifts through fundraising in her community and surrounding areas to reward community members who reached their nutritional and physical goals in small rural Council, Idaho, with a population of

805. The AmeriCorps member, who serves at Adams County Health Center (ACHC), wrote the following in her press release to the local Council newspaper:

Because it is the mission of ACHC to “provide high-quality healthcare services to residents of Adams County and the surrounding area,” it is our contention that ACHC actively participates in its communities by providing a myriad of services that will undoubtedly improve the quality of life for residents. One such service is free nutrition counseling to teach our patient base healthy lifestyle habits. A Weight Loss Challenge is just one method of ensuring further community participation and gives ACHC the chance to teach the participants how they can become healthy role models for their families.

From an individualistic perspective, AmeriCorps members grow within themselves; and in many instances, they take on leadership roles. From a collectivist point of view, they realize that to make a difference, they need to join forces with others to make change happen and “Get Things Done.” From this perspective, the AmeriCorps Program hones the member’s individualist and collectivist leanings through national service and volunteering by offering the member an opportunity to lead and to participate as a team member in their community.

CHAPTER IV

Research Design and Methods

Chapters I through III explore how the literature addresses the concepts of collectivism, individualism, national service, AmeriCorps, and volunteerism. The literature review found that IND and COL have a long history dating as far back as the Fifth Century B. C. These concepts were carried forward by great philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes, who in 1651 wrote the *Leviathan* and established social contract theory and John Locke, who was equally important in writing about social contract theory. In fact, Locke's liberal theory is reflected in the U. S. Declaration of Independence.

Although the United States was founded on the principles of the U. S. Declaration of Independence, and later the U. S. Constitution, a Great Compromise was struck between large states and small states that largely decided the structure of the U. S. Congress. The Great Compromise built a bridge between arguments for collectivism, or a central government, and individualism, or a decentralized government. In the end, it provided for a dual system of congressional representation, and presidents throughout the history of the United States have championed one or the other, or a combination of these philosophies.

In modern times, from a macro-political point of view, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Bill Clinton, and Barrack Obama on the liberal side of governmental politics and George H. W. Bush and his son, George W. Bush, on the conservative side of governmental politics, have expanded, contracted and continued the national service ethic to present day. Therefore, whether one is liberal or conservative, does not matter. What matters, as mentioned in Chapter 1, is that national service is attractive to Republicans and Democrats alike because it can connect otherwise disparate service efforts into shared, national work, giving critical focus to what it means to be a citizen.

Questions and Measures

From a micro-political point of view, this study seeks to determine whether participation by members in THE AmeriCorps “black box” (where the collectivist or individualist orientations occur) affects their surrounding political culture or vice versa.

To accomplish this, a quantitative analysis, using the Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale (AICS) found in Appendix A; and qualitative analysis, using five interview questions with five AmeriCorps alumni found in Chapter V, Results, were used to answer the following three questions:

1. Does serving for one year in AmeriCorps change a person’s IND or COL leanings?
2. Because the U. S. is the most individualistic nation and the Mountain West and Great Plains have been shown to be more individualist than other regions, will the majority of Idaho members test out as more Individualistic than those members in other states as written about by Vandello & Cohen, in 1999?
3. Based on the current political situation and issue content described at the beginning of this paper, at the individual level of analysis, will this author’s research validate the orthogonal* nature of collectivism and individualism and, as a result, will the members test out at varying levels of individualism and collectivism? (**orthogonal are independent variables that affect a particular dependent variable and are said to be orthogonal if they are uncorrelated*)

The Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale (AICS) (Shulruf, 2008) consists of twenty-six items, of which eleven (seven advice and four harmony) relate to collectivistic attributes and fifteen (seven competition, four uniqueness, and four responsibility) relate to individualist attributes. The twenty-six and eleven items were used by the researchers to minimize the major problems identified in previously developed scales, such as the confounding influence of familialism (the insistence that normality resides in the patriarchal nuclear family) and the reference group effect bias (tendency to implicitly compare oneself to others in your group) (Shulruf et al. 2011).

As Shulruf et al. described in their 2011 article, “Measuring Collectivism and Individualism in the Third Millennium,” the items in the survey “are phrased in a manner that fits frequency scales (i.e., *from never or almost never to always*)”. Furthermore, structural

equation modeling was used to fit the five dimensions (advice, harmony, competition, uniqueness, and responsibility) to the higher-order factors of individualism and collectivism for a high level of reliability (.78 for both collectivism and individualism) as well as an adequate standard of a goodness of fit (RMSEA=.1069). (Shulruf, B., Alesi, M., Ciochina, L., Faria, L., Hattie, J., Hong, F., Pepi, A-M., and Watkins, D., (2011), p. 176).

Besides using the AICS survey, background questions were asked to assess the demographics of the survey participants.

Participants

Participants were drawn from two health-related AmeriCorps Programs, the Idaho Community Health Corps (IHC), and the Idaho Health Care for Children and Families (IHCF) and from Community Health Corps (CHC) members in nine other states (Texas, Missouri, Maryland, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Michigan, and California.).

These states were selected because they match seven of the nine cultural regions laid out in the research conducted by Vandella and Cohen, which looked at patterns of individualism and collectivism across the United States. Two states, Utah, and Hawaii, did not have Community Health Corps members serving in them; thus, the author was unable to collect data for them.

The combined total of AmeriCorps members asked to participate was 273 stipend and education-award-only members. In 2014-2015, stipend members received \$12,100 for their one year of service, plus a \$5,550 education award at the end of their service which the member should use for educational expenses (tuition, books, living expenses, and old student loans). Whereas education-award-only members receive varying degrees of an education award based on quarter-time (\$1,750), part-time (\$2,225) and full-time participation (\$5,550); they do not receive a stipend.

The 273 participants were asked to complete the survey before they started AmeriCorps. These results served as a pre-survey of their attitudes towards individualism and collectivism.

The same participants were asked to complete the survey again at the end-of-the-year, which served as a post-survey of members' service in the programs. Members who self-identified as second-year members (154 of them) were dropped from the 2 sample t-test analysis because their prior AmeriCorps experience would possibly bias them in their responses.

The survey was posted on-line using the website: www.surveymonkey.com. The author gave a pre-survey to participants on July 5, 2013, and they were sent a reminder on August 7, 2013, which gave them approximately one month to complete the questionnaire. Additionally, upon exiting from their AmeriCorps term, participants were given the post-survey on June 3, 2014, and sent a reminder on July 27, 2014, which also gave them approximately one month to complete the survey. All data were compiled and analyzed using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) software.

Community HealthCorps (CHCs)

The Community HealthCorps (CHCs) are National Direct AmeriCorps programs—funded by the National Association of Community Health Centers via the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), which funds all AmeriCorps Programs. Whereas the Idaho Health Care for Children and Families (IHCF) is a State Program – funded by Serve Idaho via CNCS - see Appendix B for the CNCS Organization Chart. Both ICHC and IHCF operate under identical AmeriCorps rules and regulations.

The four goals of AmeriCorps are (1) getting things done, (2) strengthening communities, (3) encouraging responsibility, and (4) expanding opportunities. CHC and IHCF stipend members work out of community health centers and non-profit community organizations to provide outreach to families and individuals, assist with advocacy needs, provide health education, and serve as a link between the community and the health center or health-focused non-profit organization.

Major goals of the CHCs include increasing access to and utilization of primary and preventive healthcare and developing tomorrow's health care workforce. CHC and IHCF

stipend members are not allowed to displace current employees at the various sites or to duplicate services. These positions are meant to expand, augment, and/or create new opportunities for the placement site.

The CHC programs have been in existence for twenty years, and the IHCF program has been in existence for six years. Some areas of service provided by Community Health Corps and IHCF members are:

- Health Education on Diabetes and Cancer Prevention (in English & Spanish).
- Healthy Nutrition Classes & dissemination of information (in English & Spanish).
- Outreach at various health fairs
- HIV/AIDS Education.
- Youth Suicide Prevention Project
- Outreach and Services for battered women
- Adult Case Management and Quality Assurance
- Adult Protection, Case Management, and Quality Assurance
- Assisting patients in receiving quality health care (i.e. patient advocate).
- Providing Healthy Tip presentations and healthy snacks
- Developing various resource manuals
- Facilitating and coordinating health education and physical activity classes for elderly citizens
- Free Exercise Classes
- Assistance, access, and translation services for Free Clinic
- Prescription Assistance Program: Assistance for low-income individuals in acquiring prescription medications for free or reduced rates
- Prenatal Education
- Volunteer Experiences: The CHC teams are involved in a minimum of three service projects as a team each year. Some volunteer experiences have included Feeding the Homeless, Habitat for Humanity, and Paintfest.
- Member Development (Training).

Each member is expected to complete 1700 hours of service during one full program year. Members are also required to document extensively their hours and activities each day while in service. This information is reported back to the funding agency. All members are required to participate in a Pre-Service Training, which takes place towards the beginning of their service year. Various conference calls and other training opportunities occur throughout the year. Members are also expected to act as professional AmeriCorps members at the service site where they are appointed and not considered employees. They do not work. They provide service.

As an AmeriCorps member, the focus is on “getting things done.” Each member receives tremendous professional experience in new, creative, innovative, and meaningful positions at each service site. Members understand the meaning of “being involved in their community,” by their essential community service through the various team-related volunteer service projects throughout the year. Also, if there is money provided in the grant, they are strongly encouraged to provide presentations and attend professional health-related conferences to further themselves, their knowledge, and their career.

Idaho Health Care for Children and Families (IHCF)

As mentioned earlier, the IHCF is a State AmeriCorps program where funding comes from CNCS to Idaho State University via Serve Idaho. Whereas CHC members serve at health centers, IHCF members mainly serve at Head Starts or Early Head Start programs or any non-profit organization with a health-related mission. IHCF provides outreach to children and families, assist with advocacy needs, provide health education, and serve as a link between the community and the Head Start/Early Head Start or non-profit program.

Head Start is designed to foster healthy development in low-income children, and Early Head Start promotes healthy prenatal outcomes, enhances the development of infants and toddlers, and promotes healthy family functioning. <http://www.del.wa.gov/care/find-hs-eceap/difference.aspx>.

Major goals of the IHCF AmeriCorps program include direct family services such as developing health resource packets facilitating healthy classroom curriculums, assisting families to find medical and dental services, promoting health at various children’s events, fostering community education, organizing health fairs, workshops, training, and other community outreach. The IHCF stipend and education-award-only members receive the same benefits and follow the same rules and regulations as ICHC stipend and education-award-only members.

In summary, this dissertation looks at not only the history and rationale of collectivism, individualism, national service, AmeriCorps, and volunteerism, but seeks to quantify these topics through statistics and to understand AmeriCorps members at a qualitative level via personal interviews. The personal interviews are important, because they help the interviewer get to the granular level of an AmeriCorps member's mind whereas a quantitative analysis does not.

The personal interviews, on a micro-political level, will give readers a peek into the emotions of five AmeriCorps alumni members, two males, and three females, which is similar to the ratio of males to females who answered the survey in the quantitative analysis. Additionally, the ages of the alumni were 22, 25, 26, 33, and 36. These five alumni participated because they had service experience, were available in person and were knowledgeable about AmeriCorps.

According to Shuy (2003), one assertion in support of in-person interviews is that because both the researcher and participant have access to more than just verbal data, they can build rapport so participants feel free to disclose their experiences more effectively than might occur in telephone interviews.

Understanding the emotions of AmeriCorps members is important because modern science through the use of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), which measures brain activity, shows us that if it were not for our emotions, reason would not exist at all (Lehrer, p. 13). For example, neurologist Antonio Damasio examined a patient named Elliot, who had a small tumor cut from his cortex, near the frontal lobe of his brain. (The frontal lobe is also known as the “**control** panel” of our personality and communication center.)

Elliot's IQ, which was in the 97th percentile, remained, but he was incapable of making a decision. Damasio measured the activity of sweat glands in the palms of Elliot's hands while he showed him emotionally charged photographs. Elliot never reacted, as if “he had the emotional life of a mannequin” (Lehrer, p.15). The removal of Elliot's small brain tumor

proved to Damasio that when we are cut off from our feelings, the everyday decisions become impossible. “The world is full of things, and it is our feelings that help us choose among them” (Lehrer, p. 18). Homo sapiens are the most emotional animal of all; thus, it is critical to not only analyze data about them but to also analyze their stories.

Chapter V will communicate the results obtained quantitatively via surveys and qualitatively via personal interviews. Consequently, we will learn more about AmeriCorps members on a macro and micro political level which will help us understand their propensities toward individualism or collectivism.

CHAPTER V

Results

The Quantitative Analysis

In this chapter, the author looks at IND and COL through the twin lenses of macro politics, using a survey; and micro politics using in-person interviews. With a full year of service under their belts, one would hypothesize that it would affect the AmeriCorps Member's collectivism or individualism orientation.

The pre and post-surveys were sent to 273 AmeriCorps members in ten states, and 260 AmeriCorps members responded pre-survey (95 percent return rate) and 97 responded post-survey (36 percent return rate). For pre-surveys, 78 percent of those who responded were female, and 22 percent were male. The response rate for post-surveys was 80 percent female and 20 percent male, as shown in Table 1. The number of female respondents was approximately 8 percent higher than they were in a 2001 research study of not only health-related AmeriCorps but all State and National AmeriCorps Members (abt associates, 2001).

Table 1
Response Rate and Gender

Table 1				N = 273
Gender	Female	Male	Total	Overall Response Rate
2013 Pre-Survey	204/260=78%	56/260=22%	260	260/273=95%
2014 Post Survey	78/97=80%	19/97=20%	97	97/273=36%

The low post-survey response rate for both genders was the result of two main factors. First, exits among members were variable. That is, all members did not exit at the same time.

For example, many of those who were initially contacted may have left their AmeriCorps program before they received the post-survey. Second, some respondents were unable to access the survey upon their exit, because, by default, the survey was set to allow a single response per computer; if the link was previewed or completed, a cookie was placed in the browser to prevent an additional response on the same computer. Once this error was discovered, the researcher set the link in Survey Monkey to allow for multiple responses. However, for some respondents, this correction may have come too late.

Demographics

Marital Status pre and post survey

Percents are of each N total

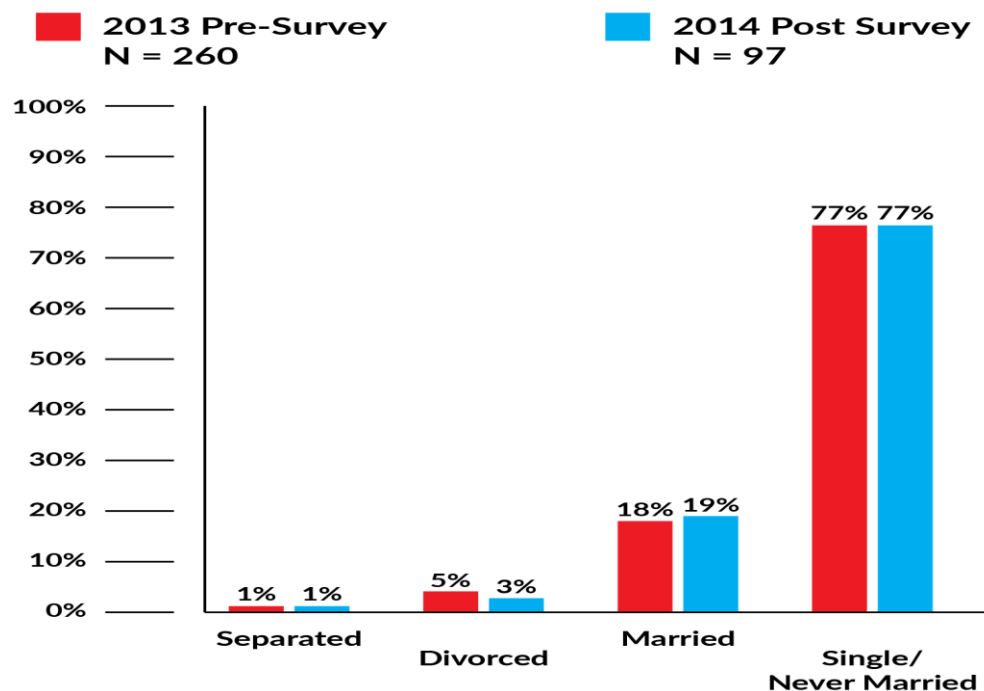


Figure 3. Marital Status pre and post survey

Percent of Members surveyed by age

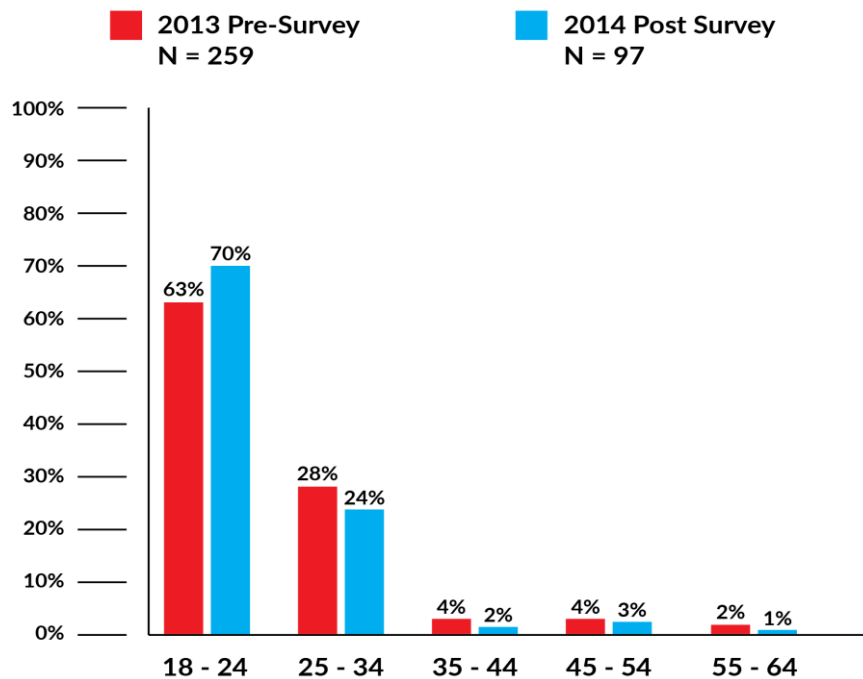


Figure 4. Percent of Members surveyed by age.

From a quantitative perspective, as seen in Figure 3, using pre and post survey data, 77 percent, of AmeriCorps members surveyed were single or never married which left the remaining 23 percent - married, divorced, or separated. Additionally, as shown in Figure 4, the majority (65%) of AmeriCorps members, pre and post survey, were in the age range from 18 to 24 years old followed by 25% who were 25 to 34 years old.

During the pre-survey, 65 percent of members designated White as their race. For example, in Figure 5, the second largest category was “Everything else” (Afghan- American, Asian/Caucasian, Dominican/Hispanic/Latino, Filipino/Eastern European, Hispanic/White, Latino, and Mexican American) followed by Black or African- American, Asian and Hispanic.

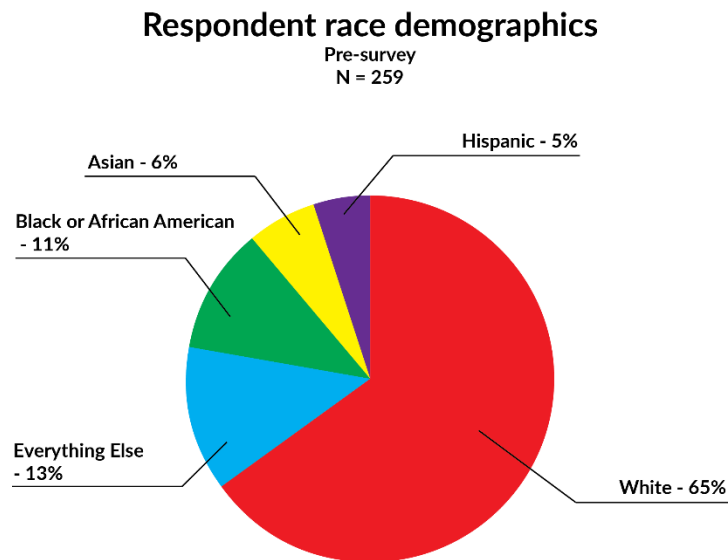


Figure 5. Respondent race demographics, pre-survey

During post-survey, as Figure 6 indicates, the White category grew by 12 percent to equal 77 percent of participants, and all other categories were reduced, with the “Everything else” category being reduced from 13 percent to 7 percent, a 6 percentage point drop. As a result, post-survey results do not reflect the opinions of this rich category of races.

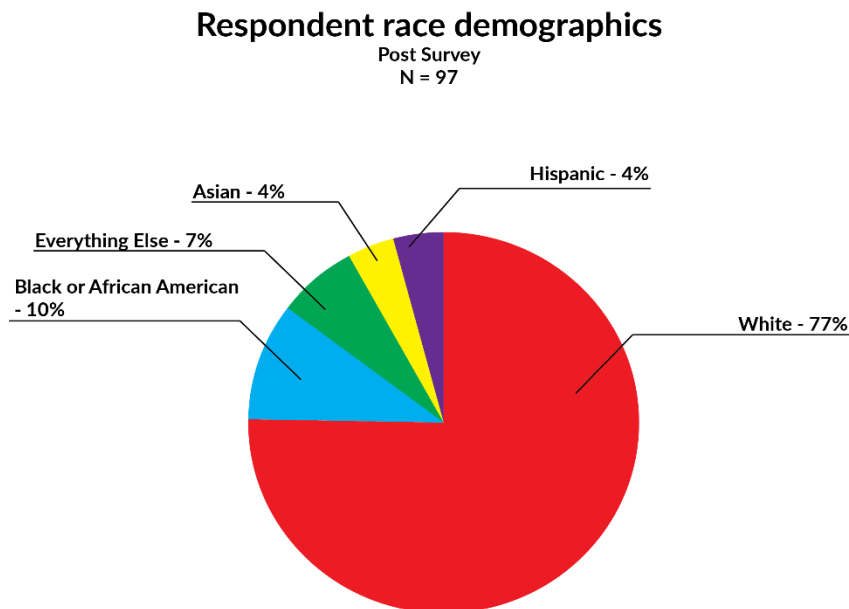


Figure 6. Respondent race demographics, post survey

Despite these differences between pre- and post-survey, the White race represents the majority of surveyed AmeriCorps members with the Black or African American race following in a distant second; these categories are separated by 54 percentage points during pre-survey

and 67 percentage points during post-survey. Thus, the opinions of the Black or African American race are underrepresented in the data.

Besides the majority of pre-surveyed AmeriCorps members being young, white, single or never married, 45 percent of them lived in cities with a population of over 50,000. The remaining members, 31 percent, resided in communities with populations between 10,000 and 50,000; followed by 13 percent who resided in communities with a population of 5,000 to 10,000 and 10 percent who resided in communities with a population under 5,000. The post-surveyed AmeriCorps members fell into these same categories as illustrated in Figure 7.

Additionally, members' current homes mirrored the populations of their permanent homes.

Size of community respondent calls home

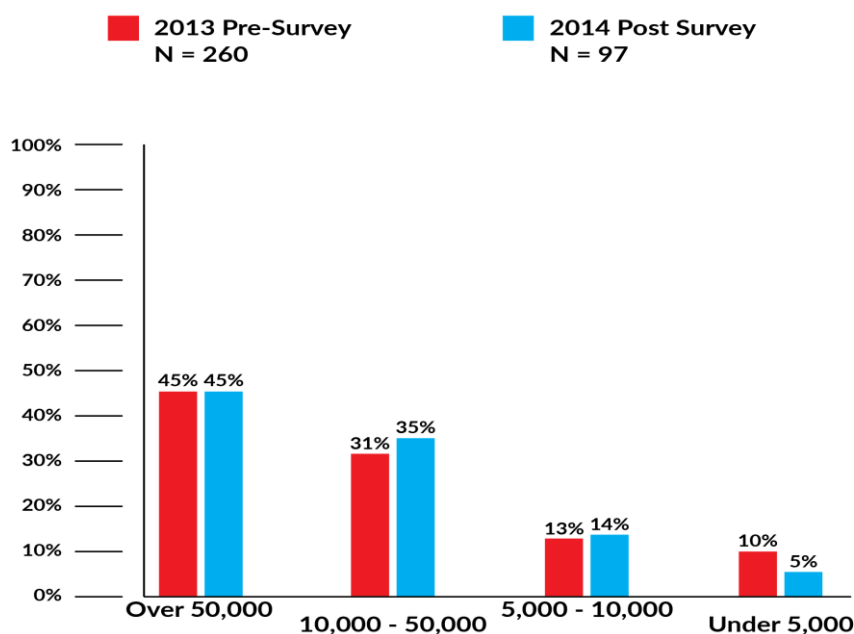


Figure 7. Size of community respondent calls home.

In Figure 8, besides providing service in their communities, 74 percent of the members turned out to vote, which is evidence members took their right to vote seriously. It is especially true of the 90 percent who were young and the 80 percent who were females, both of which proved to be an important voting bloc in 2012.

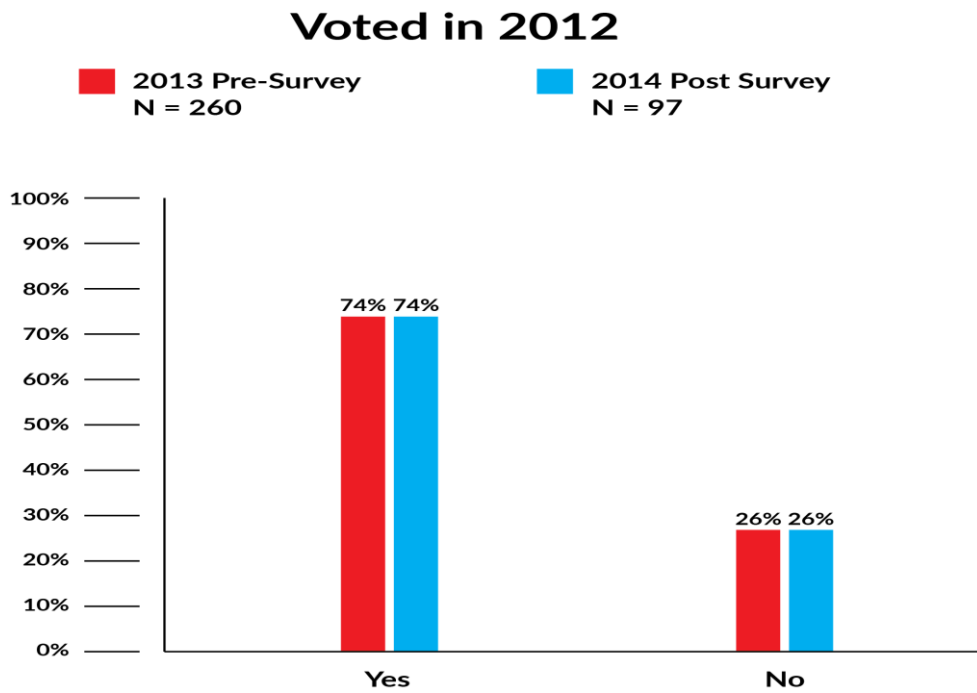


Figure 8. Voted in 2012.

For my research, the seven regions of the United States were broken out to match

Vandello and Cohen's regions as follows:

Northeast: #1 Massachusetts, #2 Connecticut
Periphery #3 New York and #4 New Jersey
Deep South: #8 Texas (with Periphery South: #7 Missouri,
#5 Maryland)
Midwest and Great Lakes: #6 Michigan
Mountain West and Great Plains: #9 Idaho
Southwest: #10 California

U.S. Map By Region

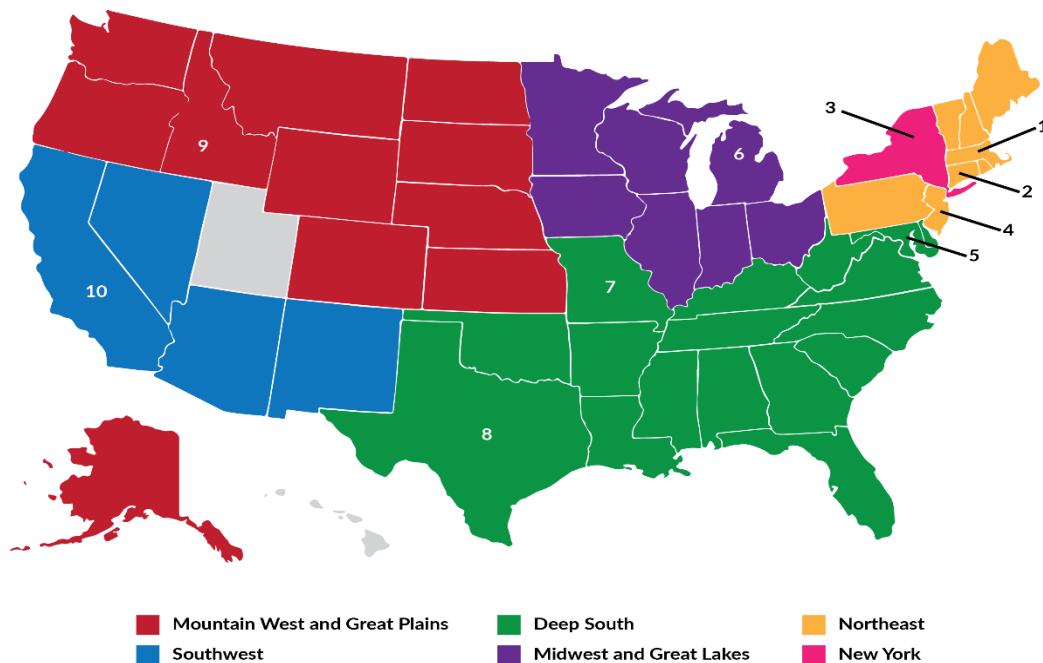


Figure 9. U. S. Map by Region

Tables 2, 3 and Figure 10 look at the means on collectivism and individualism using the Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale (AICS), before and after members participated in AmeriCorps. The AICS results shed light on other behavior, as well as supports similarities between this research and the research of Vandello and Cohen. These authors do not refute that the United States is one of the most individualistic nations in the world; however, they prove that there is a measurable variation on this dimension throughout the U. S. Namely, they predict and verify that the collectivist tendencies are strongest in the Deep South, and individualist tendencies are strongest in the Mountain West and Great Plains (Vandello & Cohen, 1999, p. 279).

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviation by Region before AmeriCorps and after AmeriCorps

N = 151	Before Americorps		After Americorps		Before Americorps		After Americorps	
Regions	Collectivism Means	SD	Collectivism Means	SD	Individualism Means	SD	Individualism Means	SD
Northeast	3.97	0.85	3.92	0.65	4.56	0.52	4.27	0.72
Deep South	3.77	0.74	4.2	0.87	4.85	0.45	4.69	0.84
Midwest	3.76	0.54	3.62	0.16	4.74	0.36	4.37	0.19
Mtn West	3.67	0.59	3.59	0.37	4.43	0.57	4.27	0.70
Southwest	3.58	0.69	3.45	0.77	4.37	0.59	4.26	0.36
New York	3.53	0.68	3.66	0.57	4.2	0.60	4.04	0.47
Periphery	3.51	0.70	3.82	0.70	4.37	0.67	4.24	0.30

Table 3

Means Totals pre survey and post survey

pre_post	N Obs	Variable	N	Mean	Standard Dev	Minimum	Maximum
Pre	108	Individualism	106	4.4022537	0.5812417	3.2500000	5.8690476
		Collectivism	106	3.6267408	0.6520491	2.3392857	5.1964286
Post	69	Individualism	67	4.42914594	0.5958724	2.8928571	5.7738095
		Collectivism	67	3.7331201	0.5980800	2.4464286	5.0714286

Community HealthCorps (AmeriCorps) members were surveyed from ten states; whereas, Vandello and Cohen used data from 50 states. The members located in the Northeast, who took the AICS survey before AmeriCorps participation scored highest on collectivism; however, after AmeriCorps participation, members from the Deep South scored the highest on collectivism. The observation of members AFTER they completed their term with AmeriCorps supports Vandello and Cohen's observation that the Deep South is one of the most collectivist regions in the U. S.

Paradoxically, however, using the Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale, before and after participation in AmeriCorps, the Deep South turns out to have a strong individualistic nature as well.

Collectivism and Individualism (Means) BEFORE and AFTER Americorps

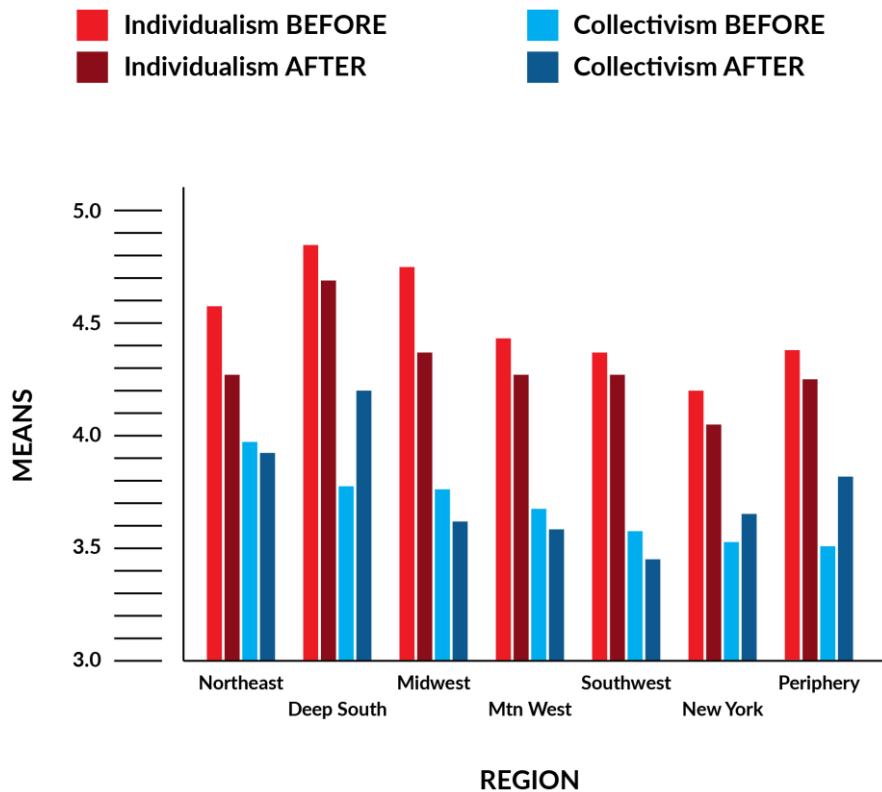


Figure 10. Collectivism and Individualism (Means) BEFORE and AFTER AmeriCorps

In Figure 10, it is evident that across the regional spectrum, after participation in AmeriCorps, members' IND scores went down. However, the same cannot be said for COL, because in three regions (Deep South, New York & the Periphery) COL means actually went up.

A 2 sample t-test was conducted to assess the impact of the AmeriCorps intervention on participants. At a 95 percent Confidence Level, there was not sufficient evidence to conclude the population mean COL score was greater AFTER participating in AmeriCorps than it was BEFORE participating in AmeriCorps ($M_{\text{before}}=3.6$, $M_{\text{after}}=3.7$, $t=-1.08$, $p=.1411$).

The same can be said about the IND score. At a 95 percent Confidence Level, there was not sufficient evidence to conclude the population mean IND was greater AFTER participating in

AmeriCorps than it was BEFORE participating in AmeriCorps ($M_{\text{before}}=4.4$, $M_{\text{after}}=4.3$, $t=1.21$, $p=.1141$).

Survey results, which were discussed above, indicate that no significant difference was found at the macro level between individuals who participated in AmeriCorps for one year and individuals who did not participate in AmeriCorps for one year. On the other hand, qualitative interviews, discussed below, indicate at the micro level emotions and motives of five AmeriCorps members who participated in AmeriCorps for one year.

The Qualitative Analysis

The purpose of the qualitative analysis was to gather information concerning alumni' emotions towards their volunteer experiences, the reasons for enrolling, how their experience measured up to their expectations, and the impact AmeriCorps had on their career path and life. Five AmeriCorps alumni, two males, and three females, ranging in age from 22 to 36, were interviewed from January 5, 2014, through January 31, 2014, and asked the following five questions:

1. Before you started AmeriCorps, had you ever participated in voluntary community service or voluntary activity?
2. What were the main reasons why you enrolled in the AmeriCorps program?
3. How would you describe your experiences in the program in terms of meeting your initial goals?
4. How did the program impact your career path and yourself as an individual?
5. Twenty years from now, how do you think the AmeriCorps program will have impacted your life and career?

The interviews were tape recorded, and anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed. Interviews were conducted in person and notes were transcribed on the same day the interview took place. Each interview lasted 30 minutes. Findings from the interviews are summarized under four main headings:

Service Experience (Question 1)
Why AmeriCorps? (Question 2)
Goals and expectations (Question 3)
Career path and impact on life (Questions 4 and 5)

These findings are presented below, together with illustrative summaries and direct quotes.

1. Service Experience

QUESTION: Before you started AmeriCorps, had you ever participated in voluntary community service or voluntary activity?

ANSWER: “No. I just helped people that I knew who might need help. I hadn’t even heard of AmeriCorps. It was at the clinic where I took my Mom, and one of the managers asked me what I was doing. I said I was looking for a job. She said that we are hiring for an AmeriCorps position, so that’s how I got the position.”

ANSWER: “No. I owned my own business cleaning houses, and it kept me busy. However, I had a friend who told me about AmeriCorps, and I was ready for a change, so that’s when I got involved with service and volunteering.”

ANSWER: “I have a little bit – not the same as AmeriCorps. I was in Boy Scouts, and we did quite a few community service projects, but that was in high school. Other than that I have not had a lot of opportunities to do community service. I went up pretty far in Boy Scouts but not as high as Eagle Scout.”

ANSWER: “Many times. I was a Boy Scout and Eagle Scout. I did tons of service. I built a leadership skills obstacle course, served in soup kitchens, and did yard work for people at the church.”

ANSWER: “Yes. I volunteered during and immediately after high school in my local community, e.g. picking up garbage, reading to children, and such.”

DISCUSSION: Out of the five alumni, when asked about prior community service or volunteering, two had no prior experience, one said a little bit, and two said they had quite a bit of experience. Therefore, since 80 percent of the alumni had prior community service experience, one could surmise that they had a positive experience with it because they were willing to spend an entire year performing community service for AmeriCorps. This could indicate a collectivist leaning.

2. Why AmeriCorps?

QUESTION: What were the main reasons why you enrolled in the AmeriCorps program?

ANSWER: “Because I was going into public health, and I wanted to gain more experience and to meet new people and have a change in experience from what I had been doing.”

ANSWER: “It was local, and it was the education award. I wanted to go back to school, and I did not have money. Also, I had loans that I needed to pay. That was the main motivation because the money obviously was not any motivation to serve in AmeriCorps.”

ANSWER: “I had to do an internship for my degree program. I was made aware of the AmeriCorps Program providing support to do that and it aligned well. It was timed well, and it worked out well.”

ANSWER: “I heard that AmeriCorps positions had flexible schedules, and it appealed to me. The education award was an extra bonus.”

ANSWER: “I wanted professional experiences to put on my resume, and I thought AmeriCorps would give me a good cultural experience, too. Also, I was at a point in my life where I wanted to serve – to do work outside of myself. Part of my motivation was to get out of the drug culture I was falling deeper into. I was afraid that I would not be able to pull myself out of it. I wanted to change my path. During my early service, I participated in lectures for community members with drug problems. I was supposed to be serving them, but it turned out the lectures helped me.”

DISCUSSION: The five responses above are indicative of research titled, “Volunteering as a Pathway to Employment: Does Volunteering Increase Odds of Finding a Job for the Out of Work?” (Spera, C., Ghertner, R., Nerino, A., DiTommaso, A. (2013). The researchers learned the following:

- Volunteers have a 27 percent higher likelihood than non-volunteers of finding a job after being out of work than non-volunteers.
- Volunteers without a high school diploma have a 51 percent higher likelihood of finding employment than non-volunteers.
- Volunteers living in rural areas have a 55 percent higher likelihood of finding employment than non-volunteers.

In the same study, CNCS also found that volunteering is associated with an increased likelihood of finding employment for all volunteers regardless of a person’s gender, age, ethnicity, geographical area, or the job market conditions (Spera et al.)

These five responses are also individualistic responses because they show that the alumni were more interested in joining AmeriCorps for their career benefit than for altruistic reasons.

3. Goals and Expectations

QUESTION: How would you describe your experiences in the program in terms of meeting your initial goals?

ANSWER: “My experiences helped me accomplish my initial goals by allowing me to serve in the social services which helped me make decisions about my educational goals. I switched from Anthropology to Health Education.”

ANSWER: “I got back more than I ever gave. I was able to offer so much more than I thought I would. When I started the program, I did not know how much help I would provide to the

community. It turned out to be beyond what I thought it would be. I saved the health center money, and I saved money for the individuals who came to me.”

ANSWER: “I had no problems meeting any of my goals. I thought upfront paperwork was kind of a pain, but the training and reporting were fine. My internship service and AmeriCorps service blur together, so I am sorry for a lack of extreme distinction between them.”

ANSWER: “The U. S. Department of Education would not cooperate with AmeriCorps on my loans. I ended up paying off the loans myself. However, I did have another reason for joining AmeriCorps. I wanted to go into the medical field. I was contemplating going into nursing. While serving in AmeriCorps, I trained to be a Certified Nursing Assistant. So I guess I did meet my initial goal. I wanted to see if I would like nursing. I am still not sure whether I will go into nursing.”

ANSWER: “It helped me understand more about how public health and how it operated in the health departments. It also gave me the opportunity to meet people in public and to make connections and relationships with those people as well; which otherwise, I would have never had the opportunity to build those relationships. It also gave me an “in” when I applied for the full-time position of health education specialist.”

DISCUSSION: All five alumni admitted that AmeriCorps helped them meet or exceed their goal(s), and all their goals tended to be career related. Also, although one alumnus was disappointed that she was unable to use her education award, she was still satisfied, because AmeriCorps allowed her to gain experience in the medical field. In addition, two alumni experienced collectivity with one saying she got back more than she gave. The other alumni got a taste of collectivity and enjoyed the networking and relationship building. It paid off for him, and he was hired as a health education specialist. As a result, this shows that one can be a collectivist and also help oneself as an individual. Also, comments by all of the interviewees show how a person can pursue individualistic goals which in the end can benefit the collective or community. Individuality and collectivity don’t have to be mutually exclusive.

4. Career Path and Impact

QUESTION: How did the program impact your career path and yourself as an individual?

ANSWER: “AmeriCorps motivated me to do something outside of myself. By switching from Anthropology to Health Education and serving in social services, it set me up to be able to serve two years as an AmeriCorps member in the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program. Currently, I am applying to the Masters of Social Work Program at Boise State University.”

ANSWER: “It really helped with job interviews. Employers appreciate knowing that I did volunteering, and they appreciate the diverse experiences I took away from the experience. I

gave back to the community. They are impressed. With my future career path being teaching, it helped me learn patience. You need the patience to guide students and not give them the answers. Those same qualities help me as an individual. I will probably be working in lower income and disadvantaged areas, so I am sure there will be parents struggling so I will talk to them and let them know what resources are out there.”

ANSWER: “After my internship had ended, I was hired on part-time, and six months later a full-time position opened, and I now work at my placement site full-time. If you count my internship, plus my part-time and full-time work, I have been at my placement site for about 20 months. It had a tremendous impact. I was the only one in my class who had a new job the day after graduation – literally two days after the graduation ceremony; I started work.”

ANSWER: “Well, for me, it has made me tougher. I am not as naïve. It has helped me realize that I need to work on me, and I can’t change others and focus on everyone else. It has helped me a lot. It really did. It definitely has made me consider going to school to become a nurse. Previously I went to BSU, but I wasted my money because I did not know what I wanted to do. I want to find something that will make me happy. I don’t have to make a lot of money. I just don’t want to dread going to work.”

ANSWER: “It opened up some doors for me and got my foot in the door of public health. Maybe it offered a broader insight into opportunities of participating in National Service. It helped me understand service and what some of the people in this field do. However, there is not a lot of money in it. A person doesn’t go into national or community service for money.”

DISCUSSION: All five alumni agreed that AmeriCorps helped them on their career path and had a personal impact on them. One alumni switched majors while another one learned the importance of patience for her future as a teacher. For the others, AmeriCorps not only opened doors, but it also helped one land a job two days after graduation and helped another realize her preference for meaningful work over work which is dreaded. In other words, AmeriCorps helped these alumni grow as individuals, so they could collectively participate in society and make a difference.

Based on the results, from a quantitative point of view, the statistics revealed that one year of AmeriCorps service did not significantly affect a member’s individuality or collectivity. Additionally, from a qualitative point of view, the interviews revealed that member participation in AmeriCorps dealt more with career paths than with an altruistic desire to serve communities. In the next chapter, I will provide an analysis and synthesis of the results and what it all means as it relates to AmeriCorps.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusions

Discussion of Research Findings

The objective of this dissertation was to research IND and COL and to relate it to AmeriCorps. This goal was accomplished by a literature review in Chapter 2, an analysis of the tension between IND and COL in Chapter 3, through methods described in Chapter 4, and through the results provided in Chapter 5. In this chapter, the author will discuss the meaning of the results, make conclusions, explain the limitations of this study, and suggest questions for future inquiry.

Meaning of the Results

Table 1, page 48; and Figures 3 and 4 on pages 49 and 50, generally support key findings in a 2001 research study conducted by Abt Associates, Inc. which found that on the average nationwide, AmeriCorps members were younger than the general population and more likely to be female, single, and a person of color. Age, sex and marital status demographics for this dissertation are similar to those of the Abt study; however, members in this study were mainly white. They were mainly white because eighty-five percent of those surveyed for this dissertation provided service at community health centers that, similar to other health organizations, hire health professionals who tend to be white. According to Aspiringdocs.org at the Association of American Medical Colleges,

While African Americans and Hispanics are among the fastest growing segments of the population, they are also the most severely underrepresented minorities in medicine. Today, African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans together make up 25 percent of the U. S. population. However, only 6 percent of practicing doctors come from these groups. (America Needs a More Diverse Physician Workforce, 2005-2006.)

Whereas the quantitative data in this dissertation measured degrees of collectivism and individualism, as well as demographics, the qualitative interviews determined why members

volunteered for the AmeriCorps. According to Marica A. Finkelstein, neither individualism nor collectivism is predictive of time spent volunteering (Finkelstein, 2011). Instead, her research shows that “the” individualism- collectivism construct is a useful tool for clarifying why people help. Her research finds that even though individualists and collectivists perform the same service, individualists are largely motivated by career-related objectives, while collectivists largely exhibit altruistic goals.

Whether collectivist or individualist, members’ current and permanent home communities (see Figure 7, page 52), indicate that forty-five percent of members resided in urbanized areas, and forty-four to forty-nine percent lived in urban clusters. The U. S. Census Bureau defines urban areas as 50,000 or more people while urban clusters are areas with at least 2,500 people and less than 50,000 people (hrsa.gov). According to Josh Kron, a writer for *The New York Times*, the divide between blue (Democrat) city and red (Republican) countryside has been growing for some time. He comments, “Cities, year by year, have become drenched in more blue. Everywhere else is that much more red” (Kron, 2012, Nov. 30). Kron explains that, as a result, some of America’s bluest cities are in the reddest states, which sets up the U. S. to have an urban-rural divide.

Consequently, based on Kron’s research, the AmeriCorps members surveyed for this dissertation should lean blue (Democrat) because the majority of them served in urban areas. Since the author of this dissertation did not ask members how they voted, she cannot support nor deny Kron’s research. However, her research supports the strong youth voter turnout in 2012, even if it was less than in 2008.

For instance, the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) reports that youth voter turnout was strong in 2008 compared to the average turnout since 1972, but it fell in 2012. CIRCLE explains that young women are more likely to vote than young men. Consequently, since approximately 80 percent of the

AmeriCorps members I surveyed were female, CIRCLE's information explains why 74 percent of all the surveyed members voted in 2012 (see Figure 8, page 53).

Besides a high youth and female turnout for the 2012 election, African- American youth turned out to vote nationwide at a rate of 54 percent. In any election from 1976-2012, 54 percent is much greater than the rate posted for young Americans and higher than the rate posted by young Caucasians, with an exception in the 1992 election (CIRCLE, 2013).

According to Mark Franklin et al. in *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of the Electoral Competition in Established Democracies since 1945*, old voting patterns tend to build upon early life experiences. Thus, the high participation rate demonstrated by the surveyed AmeriCorps members in the research for this dissertation foretells their higher investment in the future, all else being equal. Besides demonstrating their civic responsibility through voting, the surveyed AmeriCorps members are engaged through daily community service. As a result, whether, as collectivists or individualists, they are discovering how they can make a difference in their community and engage in their community beyond just voting.

As discussed in Chapter V, Vandello and Cohen's research revealed that the Deep South was one of the most collectivist regions in the U. S. whereas the results in this dissertation, using the Auckland Individualism and Collectivism Scale (AICS), did not agree. The reason for this paradox may lie in the differences between Vandello and Cohen's collectivism index, which only measures degrees of collectivism and the AICS scale, which measures BOTH collectivism and individualism. The AICS scale consists of 26 items, of which 11 relate to collectivistic attributes and 15 relate to individualist attributes. The AICS scale is in Appendix A.

Vandello and Cohen measure degrees of collectivism based on eight items that reflect a broad range of cultural practices, from family and living arrangements to political, occupational, and religious behaviors. Thus, using the Vandello and Cohen index states with the highest scores were the most collectivist and states with the lowest scores were the most

individualist. Specifically, Hawaii scored 91, so it is the most collectivist state, and Montana scored 31, so it is the least collectivist state. The Vandello and Cohen “State Rankings on the United States Collectivism Index,” can be found in Appendix C.

Furthermore, using the AICS scale, the Deep South also scored highest on individualism before and after AmeriCorps participation but less so after AmeriCorps. From the AICS Likert scale, the means range from 6 (Always) to 1 (Never or almost never), and 2, 3, 4, and 5 are in between. Therefore, whether it was collectivism or individualism, as Figure 10 (p. 56) and Table 2 (p. 55) indicate, the AmeriCorps members hovered between 3.45 at the lowest point and 4.85 at the highest point, which is a 1.40 difference between the collectivism as well as the individualism mean scale. Had the scores been closer to 5 or 6 then the collectivism or individualism tendencies would have reflected a stronger leaning towards either of these trends.

As Hofstede and other researchers have learned, this could be the result of the United States being one of the most individualistic nations in the world. Even so, as the research for this dissertation and the research of Vandello and Cohen reflect, there are collectivist leanings throughout the United States, and they are stronger in some regions than in others.

Research for this dissertation agreed that AFTER ¹ individuals in the Deep South participated in AmeriCorps, they tested out as the most collectivist; however, the dissertation research also showed that AFTER individuals in the Deep South participated in AmeriCorps, they scored the highest on individualism – greater than those individuals serving in the Mountain West. In fact, the dissertation research for this study in the Mountain West showed that collectivism dropped by .08 points from 3.67 BEFORE AmeriCorps to 3.59 AFTER AmeriCorps and individualism also dropped from 4.43 BEFORE AmeriCorps to 4.27 AFTER AmeriCorps. Again, however, these differences in the Mountain West, at a 95 percent confidence level, were not significant enough to say that AmeriCorps caused the drops in IND or COL. ¹ All caps is to emphasize pre-survey and post-survey outcomes.

In summary, none of the variables in this dissertation research reached statistical significance, which is evidence to accept that people exposed to AmeriCorps for one year are no more prone to changing their collectivist or individualist ways than before joining AmeriCorps for one year.

Consistent with viewpoint above, there is evidence to accept that those members located in Idaho were no more prone to being more individualist than those AmeriCorps members located in other states. For instance, Idaho's mean scores for individualism and collectivism measured 4.42 and 3.67 respectively, which puts Idaho's mean scores for IND and COL approximately in the middle: not too high in either direction.

Finally, since the data did not reach statistical significance, and proving a correlation between AmeriCorps and collectivism or individualism is beyond the scope of this dissertation, at the individual level of analysis, the independent variable "collectivity" or "individuality" did not affect the dependent variable "participation in AmeriCorps" or vice versa. In other words, a one year experience in AmeriCorps did not affect one's collectivity or individuality, and one's collectivity and individuality did not change the reason a person joined AmeriCorps. Consequently, "collectivity" and "individuality" are orthogonal to "participation in AmeriCorps."

In other words, collectivity and individuality are non-overlapping, uncorrelated and independent. They bump up against one another at right angles, and just as right angles are essential in architecture, sports, carpentry, and artistry; collectivity and individuality are indispensable in society. They are complex variables, and as mentioned in Chapter 1, these concepts have been discussed since at least Fifth Century B.C. with no specific conclusion.

Adding to the complexity of collectivity and individuality is the complexity of national service, which takes place in a complex network. Ann Marie Thomson, a National Service Fellow from 1998-1999, wrote *AmeriCorps Organizational Networks on the Ground: Six Case Studies of Indiana AmeriCorps Programs*. She states, "Service programs by their very nature,

must collaborate and form partnerships with a wide variety of organizations and individuals Moving from a programmatic to a network perspective poses daunting problems for researchers, but ignoring the complexities may result in irrelevant theories and ineffective practices” (Thomson, i and ix).

That is to say, in 2015, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) continues to use logic models to fund and evaluate AmeriCorps Programs from the top-down at a national level. Logic models look at if-then causal relationships; if inputs and activities then outputs and outcomes. Therefore, CNCS is missing an important piece of the research pie by not looking at programs from the bottom-up and taking into account complex network processes and network outcomes (Ibid). Later in this Chapter, wicked problems will be addressed to help explain the complexity of networks.

In addition to the complexity of IND and COL and national service, qualitative research deals with the complexity of human beings. Since the five alumni interviewed for this dissertation answered four out of five questions with replies linked to career-related objectives, based on Finkelstein’s research, which suggests that individualists and collectivists serve their communities for different reasons, one could conclude that the five alumni were individualistic.

However, a sample of five alumni, from Idaho, is not a representative sample of all Community HealthCorps members or even representative of Community HealthCorps members in Idaho. On the other hand, according to Peter DePaulo, an independent marketing research consultant, the objective in designing qualitative research is not to reduce (quantitative) estimation error, rather it is to discover (not measure) potentially valuable insights (DePaulo, 2000). For instance, the five interviews gave significant insight into the motives of individuals wanting to join AmeriCorps.

The interviews support the research conducted by CNCS, mentioned in Chapter V, Question 3, showing that volunteering is a pathway to employment. Therefore, by combining the quantitative data with the qualitative data, we learned that whether a member is labeled an

individualist or collectivist does not matter, what does matter is that one of the primary reasons the AmeriCorps member chose to serve or volunteer was to assist him or her on a career path.

It was through the qualitative data that the research from this dissertation was able to determine the career path motives of the AmeriCorps Members. The quantitative data, on the other hand, clarified that participating in AmeriCorps did not change AmeriCorps members' collectivist or individualist leanings. If they came into AmeriCorps as an individualist or collectivist chances are they left AmeriCorps as an individualist or collectivist. Therefore, if their primary motive for becoming involved with AmeriCorps was to assist them on their career path, did this intention affect their service? After all, one's motives or intentions affect one's actions. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, who led India to independence through nonviolent civil disobedience, "The moment there is a suspicion about a person's motives, everything he does becomes tainted."

This dissertation began with quotes from Barack Obama and Mitt Romney about their motives, and three years later, it will conclude with quotes from them about their motives. After all, both of them wanted to be President, but only Barack Obama succeeded. Also, in this chapter, this author speculates on the answer to the question: "How it is that individualism is a touchstone of American civilization, and yet Tocqueville claimed it as his primary fear in the destruction of American civilization?" Lastly, this dissertation will conclude with study limitations and questions for future inquiry.

I begin with quotes from Obama and Romney as follows:

That's who we are as Americans. We are rugged individuals. We haven't lost that pioneering spirit that brought many of our grandparents and great-grandparents to these plains. We ask for nothing more than the chance to blaze our own trail. And yet each of us is only here because somebody, somewhere, helped us find our path.

Barack Obama, Lake Area Technical Institute, South Dakota, May 19, 2015

Living life in fullness includes serving others, and doing so without pride or personal gain. It will fill your heart and expand your mind. I've seen that kind of service in large and small ways in my own family.

Mitt Romney, Saint Anselm College, New Hampshire, May 18, 2015

It appears Barack Obama and Mitt Romney switched places. In 2012, Obama talked about the U. S. being an American family, and Romney talked about 47 percent of the U. S. being dependent upon government. Three years later, in 2015, Obama talked about rugged individualism, and Romney talked about serving others. What happened?

Based on the research of Triandis et al. IND and COL on the micro or individual level can be conceptualized as personality traits that are modifiable by situational demands (2001). Thus, since Obama was speaking to a population in South Dakota (a rural and Great Plains State), he and his speechwriters perhaps took his audience into consideration and geared his speech to the individualists of South Dakota. On the flip side, since Romney was speaking to a population in New Hampshire (a more urban and North Eastern State), perhaps he and his speechwriters geared his speech to the collectivists of New Hampshire.

As the example above illustrates, understanding IND and COL in the political culture at the micro-political level can be slippery and not as easy as standing back and viewing it from the macro-political level. As a result, following the lead of renowned sociologist, Hofstede, who brought research for IND and COL to the forefront, collectivism and individualism have been studied more at the macro level and less at the micro level.

Why is this the case? At the micro level, the research becomes complex because individuals and their problems are interconnected. For example, education, poverty, homelessness, nutrition, drinking water, equality, health, and wellness, intertwine; and if a person pulls on one of the strings in the tangled web of issues, he or she affects all of the other strings. AmeriCorps members, in one way or another, deal with all these quality of life issues.

This interconnectedness may suggest it is “impossible” to solve a complex problem. Since society cannot easily solve a multifaceted problem, one strategy is to mitigate or decrease the negative impacts of the problem or to increase the power of the disenfranchised on a small and local level. This strategy is the brainchild of the Austin Center for Design, created to transform society through design and design education (Kolko, J. 2012, March 1).

AmeriCorps was designed to address community issues on a small and local scale to get at deep-rooted problems in small increments, a piece at a time. It is the hope of AmeriCorps that the solutions to local problems will add up, and small community issues will get addressed before they become insurmountable national problems.

As Tip O'Neill, the late Speaker of the House, 1977-1987, used to say, "All politics is local." In other words, a politician needs to understand and influence the local issues that are most relevant to his or her constituents. Perhaps this is one reason why politicians on both sides of the two-party system, liberal and conservative, have supported AmeriCorps for over 20 years.

Tocqueville reminded his readers in his 1838 *Democracy in America* that it is at the local level where communities make democracy work in three main ways: in family life, religious conviction and through participation in local politics. According to Tocqueville, these three activities sustain free institutions and the only threat to come between free institutions and democracy was individualism. He believed that individualism had the potential to set citizens apart from one another, and make positive collective action difficult, if not impossible ([Bella, R., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W., Swidler, A., and Tipton, S., 1985](#)).

However, modern research flips this idea on its head. Oyserman, Coon, and Kimmelmeier (2002) using an evaluation of theoretical assumptions and meta-analysis, deduced that the basic ingredients of individualism are the personal uniqueness and independence, whereas it is the in-group and maintenance of harmony that are the key ingredients for collectivism. Whereas, individualism ends up welcoming out-groups that invite diversity in society. Thus, diversity is not a threat to individualists; it is a threat to collectivists because it disrupts harmony. Individualists, on the other hand, appreciate personal uniqueness and are drawn to it because they respect and appreciate individual differences.

One way individualists seek diversity, based on the research of Allik and Realo, is by joining many associations, which is counterintuitive and paradoxical. It is this paradox that

initially drove the author toward research on IND and COL; she wanted to understand better how it is that as one becomes more individualistic, one becomes more collectivist.

Allik and Realo (2004) argue that individualism may be a precondition for the growth of social capital, as they state, “voluntary cooperation and partnership between individuals are only possible when people have autonomy, self-control, and a developed sense of responsibility.” Furthermore, Allik and Realo (2004) posit that “participation in many groups and associations undermines unquestionable loyalty toward only one in-group, family, or kinsmen and promotes trust toward people of different character.” Allik and Realo back up this idea by referencing research conducted by the “Father” of IND and COL research, Hofstede (2001), who analyzed 26 cultures and discovered that with more individualism, there was also an increase in tolerance and trust.

It is through an AmeriCorps training for Program Directors in Idaho where the author learned that tolerance and trust are at the heart of collaboration. In fact, the trainers explained that one could combine ideas of Machiavelli, the patron saint of looking out for one’s self, with the communal bliss of nirvana. They explained that it is possible to combine these two ideas because when people are sensitive to the needs of everyone around them, even those who disagree or are different, these individuals end up getting ahead in life (Collaborant, 2015).

However, sensitivity to the needs of others must be authentic. From the AmeriCorp training, the author learned that humans are hard-wired to read people. Even if someone expresses in words how much he or she cares, if it is not sincere, people can sense an insincere motive. Thus, we are back to the importance of intention referenced earlier in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, “The moment there is a suspicion about a person’s motives, everything he does becomes tainted.”

Whether the motives for AmeriCorps involvement is altruistic (COL) or to advance one’s career path (IND), both motives bring AmeriCorps members closer to the American Dream. James Truslow Adams, an American writer, and historian wrote that the American

Dream is a set of ideas where “life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement.... regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position” (Adams, 1931).

The motives of AmeriCorps members are similar to the motives of Obama and Romney. All of them were in search of the American Dream or they wanted to bring the American Dream to others. They just had different approaches on how to make it happen. Perhaps one’s upbringing (culture) spawns which direction one takes to realize his or her dream.

For example, Obama’s environment growing up forced him into the role of an individualist. Being half-black and half white, raised by a single mother and his grandparents, he understood what it meant to be an outsider. Before he realized the American Dream, it meant fighting the offensive forces surrounding him, living in near-poverty in Indonesia, and being part of a marijuana-smoking “Choom Gang” in Hawaii; eventually he found his identity by becoming a Black community organizer in Chicago (Frontline, Oct. 9, 2012). He was an individualist who found meaning as a community organizer or a collectivist.

Conversely, Romney grew up in a secure environment with a stay-at-home mother and a father who was a powerful automobile executive and moderate Republican. His environment stressed private enterprise through capitalism, and political conservatism through the Republican Party and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Consequently, he had a privileged life of private schools and guarded ideas in a secure community or a collectivist environment. However, in 1984, he became a Chief Executive Officer of Bain Capital, a highly profitable private equity investment firm, which was an extremely individualistic endeavor (Frontline, 2012).

Despite the differences in their philosophies, both men made a mark on society through their health care plans. Romney did so in Massachusetts with “Romney-care” and Obama did so in the United States with the “Obamacare” or Affordable Care Act (ACA), which borrowed ideas from “Romney-care”. As described by Joe Herring (August 4, 2012) in the *American*

Thinker, the ACA was created by world-renowned experts on the rationing of care in a collectivist model. Herring goes on to say:

It is telling that a collectivist model of medicine requires otherwise rational, intelligent, and highly educated men and women to devise ways of convincing themselves that they are not actively snuffing out the lives of fellow human beings.

These are harsh words for a health care “system” that is supposed to save lives. It is fascinating, too, that two men with such different personal histories contributed to a collectivist outcome in health care. Based on the research of Jo Freeman, in the *Political Science Quarterly*, it may not be the individual backgrounds of Romney and Obama, but rather the political parties they joined, which helped them arrive at similar health care policy.

Throughout Freeman’s article, “The Political Culture of the Democratic and Republican Parties,” one sees the push and pull of IND and COL (Freeman, J., 1986). Freeman explains that since Republicans (as individuals) control most of the major private institutions, especially economic ones, a strong central government is a threat to their power. In contrast, the Democratic periphery feels a strong government is necessary to counterbalance private economic domination. Republicans are the insiders who represent the core of American society and are the carriers of its fundamental values. The word which most characterizes Democrats is fairness, because Democrats are the outsiders and fairness is a common goal of outsiders who do not accept their fate as caused by their failures (Freeman, 1986).

Freeman goes on to say that Republicans embrace order, and they try to impress it on the anarchy of politics. Democrats, on the other hand, resist order or accept it only as a last resort (Freeman, 1986). In the end, Republicans are collectivists with a desire for harmony but a philosophy of individualism, and Democrats are individualists with a desire for fairness but a philosophy of collectivism.

Before this study, the author never considered this to be the case, but after this study, it makes sense. This research explains why Democrats and Republicans slip in and out of collectivist and individualist leanings. Both of these leanings live within them. Thus, there is a little collectivism and individualism in all of us. As such, AmeriCorps members live with both leanings inside of them; and whether they joined AmeriCorps for altruistic reasons, or to improve their career path, the outcome is the same. They gained valuable experience in human relations (collectivism) and learned more about themselves (individualism).

Study Limitations

In this dissertation, a fundamental limit was choosing a 2 sample t-test instead of a paired sample t-test. The 2-sample t-test calculated a range of values that included the difference between the population mean for COL and the population mean for IND. However, it did not drill down to the micro level to determine the “before” and “after” sample measure for the same subjects (minitab.com, 2015). Had the author used a paired sample t-test, she would have been able to determine more definitively the effect AmeriCorps had on each member.

Another limit to this study both at a quantitative (survey) as well as a qualitative (interview) level, was relying on self-reports of activities and perceptions. Many times individuals are not the best judges of themselves. For example, to present themselves in a more positive light, they may answer questions less truthfully so they are socially accepted.

Additionally, although the survey was titled “Self-Attitudes” and there was no mention of IND or COL, the feelings or mood of the member on the day he or she took the survey or participated in the interview may have affected the response. For example, if one day the member was feeling self-centered, he or she might gravitate more IND. On another day, this same member might have felt more altruistic, he or she might have

gravitated towards COL. In both instances, the member's response was not representative of the "real" member but represented how he or she felt on the day of the survey or interview.

Although the ACIS survey fit five dimensions (advice, harmony, competition, uniqueness, and responsibility) of the higher-order factors of individualism and collectivism for a high level of reliability (.78 for both collectivism and individualism), as well as maintaining an adequate level of goodness of fit (RMSEA=.1069), it did not match the survey used by Vandello and Cohen. They ranked states regarding collectivist versus individualist tendencies with an eight-item index. The first three items related to family structure and living arrangements and the five remaining items related to social, political, religious and economic practices.

Another limitation in the research for this dissertation was incongruence in the number of states surveyed and a poor early post-survey return rate when compared to Vandello and Cohen's research. For example, the Community HealthCorps and the Idaho Health Care for Children and Families AmeriCorps members served in ten, not fifty, states, so the author's research did not have the reach of the Vandello and Cohen research.

Also, one of the guiding principles of the scientific method is for fellow scientists to be able to replicate an experiment to see if it is valid. The differences between the ACIS survey and the Vandello and Cohen survey, plus the fact that the author was only able to survey ten states and not fifty, prevents a good replication of their study.

Summary

Despite the above-mentioned limitations, this dissertation discovered valuable insight into IND and COL as it relates to AmeriCorps. Some of the valuable insight

came in 2014, during the 20th Anniversary of AmeriCorps, when President Obama expressed the meaning of AmeriCorps for the civic life of the nation as follows:

Seventy-five thousand members of this year's AmeriCorps class will spread out across the country, and they are doing their part to help make America safer and healthier, and more fair and more just -- because like all those who serve their country through AmeriCorps, they don't just believe in, but live out a fundamental truth, and that is that people who love their country can change it (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2014).

This fundamental truth was present in the founding of America from Alexander Hamilton to Barack Obama, who are covered in this dissertation, and who also believed in the power of the people as set forth in U. S. Constitution.

Besides the history of America, science wrestled with ideas of IND and COL in its debate over evolutionary theory and natural selection as expressed in Charles Darwin's 1864 "On the Origin of Species" (aka Survival of the fittest) and Martin A. Nowak's 2012 scientific article, "The Evolution of Cooperation: Competition is not the Only Force that Shaped Life on Earth."

Between the science of Charles Darwin and Martin A. Nowak, was the sociological terms, developed in 1887 by German sociologist and philosopher, Ferdinand Tonnies, which he coined *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society). *Gemeinschaft* represented the more rural collectivist society, and *Gesellschaft* represented the more urban individualistic society. "The equilibrium in *Gemeinschaft* is achieved through morals, conformism, and exclusion (social control) while *Gesellschaft* keeps its equilibrium through police, laws, tribunals and prisons. Rules in *Gemeinschaft* are implicit while *Gesellschaft* has explicit rules (written laws) (Boundless, 21 Jul 2015)."

Whereas the debate between IND and COL has gone on since at least Fifth Century BC, the discussion between volunteerism and AmeriCorps (national service), in comparison, is in its infancy. Pure volunteerism, service without pay, was the standard

operating procedure throughout early American history. However, with the great depression and World War II, Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced national service, service with pay, and those who followed in his footsteps have kept it alive.

By way of contrast, at this writing, in November 2015, Paul Ryan, who ran for Vice President with Mitt Romney in 2012, was just elected Speaker of the House. In Paul Ryan's March 23, 2012, Concurrent Resolution on the Budget – Fiscal Year 2013, he called for the elimination of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) (Terkel, A. 2012, August 13). Thus, if Paul Ryan, a fan of Ayn Rand and her objectivism philosophy, has his way, potentially, in the future, there will be NO AmeriCorps (aynrand.org).

Instead, there will be a large void where national service used to be and where volunteerism does not have the capacity to fill the void. In short, those seventy-five thousand members of the 2014 AmeriCorps class referenced by Obama above, who were spread out across the country, and doing their part to help make America safer and healthier, and more fair would have needed to be absorbed into the labor market if AmeriCorps did not exist in 2014.

Whereas, with AmeriCorps, in 2015, because it still exists, it allows its members to pursue their individualistic career goals through a collectivist experience while serving in a local community and experiencing the world from the bottom up which gives members the opportunity to combat the wicked problems facing our nation.

Questions for Future Inquiry

Since the author was unable to replicate the research of Cohen and Vandello using AmeriCorps and the AICS survey, one of the first questions for future inquiry is whether their research, as explained in, *Patterns of Individualism and Collectivism across the United States*, can be replicated.

Another issue for future inquiry is whether the individualistic upbringing and collectivist espousing of Obama and the collectivist upbringing and individualistic espousing of Romney are an anomaly or whether it can be shown to be a pattern with past presidents, as well. Perhaps James D. Barber's classic book, *The Presidential Character*, could be researched again from an IND and COL point of view.

In that same vein, research could be conducted reviewing the past twenty years of AmeriCorps to see if its methods combat the free rider problem addressed by Mancur Olson in his classic book, *The Logic of Collective Action*. Olson's thesis was that large or latent groups would not organize for coordinated action without the prodding of an inspired leader just because they had a reason for doing so, whereas smaller groups would. The free rider is one who belongs to a group and receives all the benefits of the group but does not participate or contribute anything to the group. In AmeriCorps, there should be less of a free rider problem.

Whether an AmeriCorps member is leading at his or her placement site or serving as part of a group, he or she is "Getting Things Done" which does not allow him or her time to be a free rider. Whether the impetus for participating in national service is an opportunity to broaden one's career path or to change society, the result is the same – service in local communities is performed throughout the United States one member at a time.

According to CNN Anchor and Reporter, Paul Begala, on the eve of the 20th Anniversary of AmeriCorps, he reported:

Nearly a million Americans have spent 1.2 billion hours serving their country, their community, their neighbors in AmeriCorps. They helped mend hearts after September 11. They helped mend communities after Katrina. Today, they help children from broken homes and veterans with no homes. They have taught countless kids, comforted countless seniors, and touched countless lives.

Whether AmeriCorps members were Collectivists or Individualists did not matter, what did matter is that they made a difference. Only time will tell whether AmeriCorps will continue to make a difference by “Getting Things Done.”

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Appendix A

THE AUCKLAND INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM SCALE

Thank you very much for your interest in the AICS. Below is its final version. You are most welcome to use the AICS provided that you properly cite it in any report/publication you produce.

The proper citations should be:

For the theoretical background and the development of the original version of the AICS:

Shulruf, B., Hattie, J., & Dixon, R. (2007). Development of a New Measurement Tool for Individualism and Collectivism. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 25 (4), 385-401.

For the final version of the AICS (see below)

Shulruf, B., Alesi, M., CiochinNJ, L., Faria, L., Hattie, J., Hong, F., et al. (2011). Measuring Collectivism and Individualism in the Third Millennium. *Social Behavior and Personality: An international journal*, 39(2), 173-188.

The final version of the AICS (Shulruf et al , 2011) repeatedly yields high reliability (Cronbach's a between .70 to 82).

USING THE AICS:

You should calculate Collectivism and Individualism by calculating the mean scores of COL and IND. The scores go from 1 'Never or almost never' to 6 'Always'. You may also wish to use the subscales of the five domains.

For your convenience, below are the items classified by Col and Ind and the five domains:

Collectivism

Advice- 3, 8, 10, 13, 15, 18, 24

Harmony- 4, 9, 16, 20

Individualism

Compete- 1, 6, 7, 14, 21, 23, 25

Unique- 2, 12, 22, 26

Responsibility- 5, 11, 17, 19.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions please contact:

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New Zealand

Anonymous Questionnaire of Self-Attitudes

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out how you think or behave in regard to yourself and to groups to which you belong.

Please read the following questions and answer each question by indicating **how often** you would think or behave as described in each of the following items.

never = 1 always =6

	Never or almost never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very often	Always
1. I define myself as a competitive person.						
2. I enjoy being unique and different from others.						
3. Before I make a major decision I seek advice from people close to me						
4. Even when I strongly disagree with my group members, I avoid an argument.						
5. I consult with superiors on work-related matters.						
6. I believe that competition is a law of nature.						
7. I prefer competitive rather than non-competitive recreational activities						
8. Before taking a major trip, I consult with my friends.						
9. I sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of my group.						
10. I consider my friends' opinions before taking important actions						
11. I like to be accurate when I communicate.						
12. I consider myself as a unique person separate from others.						
13. It is important to consult close friends and get their ideas before making a decision						
14. Without competition, I believe, it is not possible to have a good society						
15. I ask the advice of my friends before making career related decisions						

	Never or almost never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very often	Always
16. I prefer using indirect language rather than upsetting my friends by telling them directly what they may not like to hear						
17. It is important for me to act as an independent person.						
18. I discuss job or study-related problems with my parents/ partner						
19. I take responsibility for my own actions.						
20. I do not reveal my thoughts when it might initiate a dispute						
21. I try to achieve better grades than my peers						
22. My personal identity independent of others is very important to me.						
23. I enjoy working in situations involving competition with others.						
24. I consult my family before making an important decision.						
25. Winning is very important to me						
26. I see myself as "my own person".						

Please let us know more about yourself: Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Age ☐ 15-20 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐ 46+

Ethnicity: ☐ New Zealand European / Pakeha

☐ New Zealand Maori

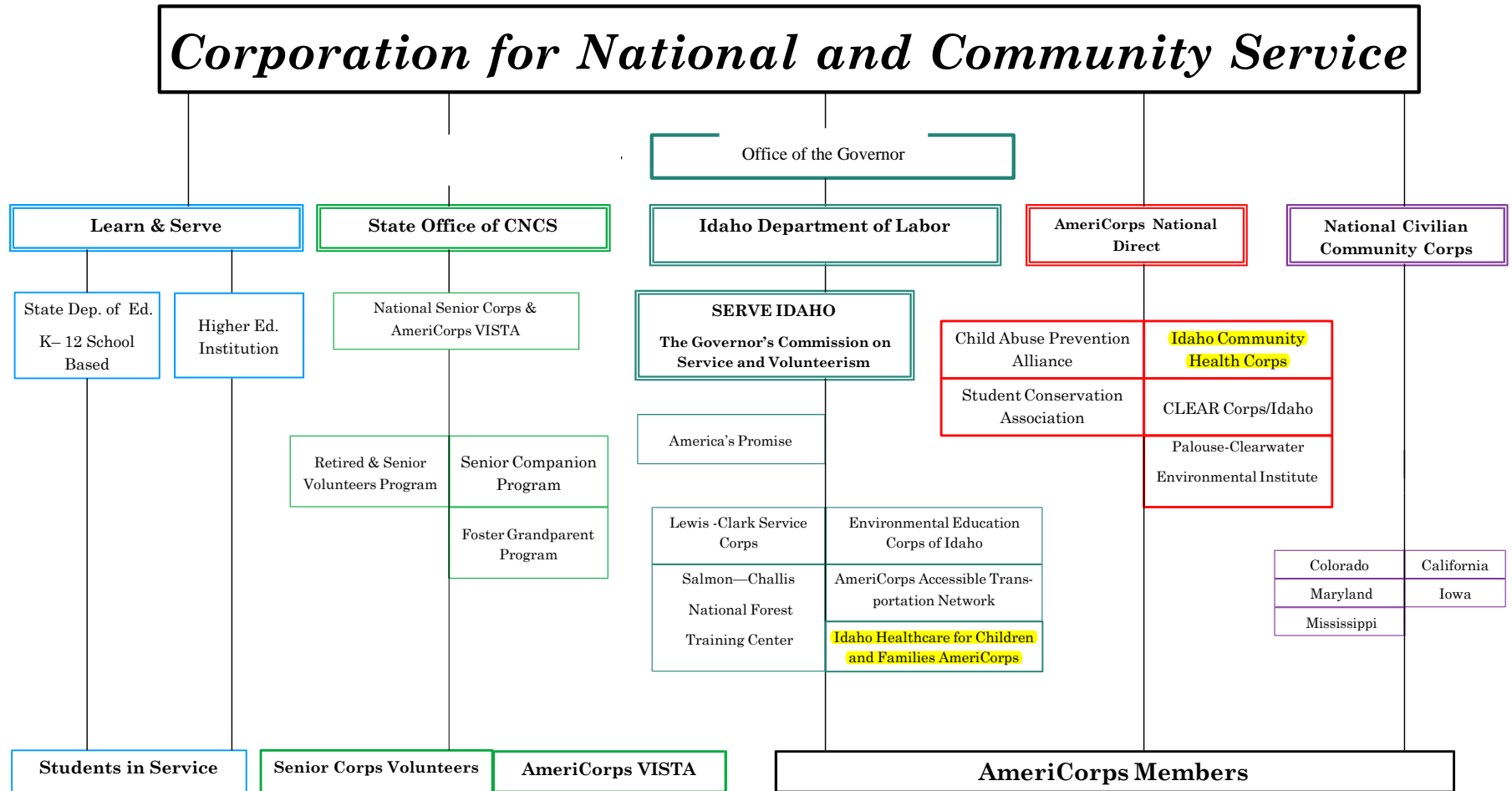
☐ Pacific Nation (please specify)_____

☐ Asian (please specify)_____

☐ Other (please specify)_____

The demographic
variables may be
modified

Appendix B



11/04/2011

Appendix C
State Rankings on the United States Collectivism Index
Joseph A. Vandello and Dov Cohen

Rank	State	Score	Rank	State	Score
1	Hawaii	91	26	Arizona	49
2	Louisiana	72	27	Alaska	48
3	South	70	28	Rhode Island	48
4	Mississippi	64	29	West Virginia	48
5	Maryland	63	30	Michigan	46
6	Utah	61	31	Wisconsin	46
7	Virginia	60	32	Massachusetts	46
8	Georgia	60	33	Missouri	46
9	California	60	34	Ohio	45
10	New Jersey	59	35	Maine	45
11	Texas	58	36	New Hampshire	43
12	Alabama	57	37	Oklahoma	42
13	Indiana	57	38	Idaho	42
14	North Carolina	56	39	Vermont	42
15	Tennessee	56	40	Minnesota	41
16	Delaware	55	41	Iowa	39
17	Arkansas	54	42	Kansas	38
18	Florida	54	43	Washington	37
19	New York	53	44	North Dakota	37
20	Kentucky	53	45	Colorado	36
21	Pennsylvania	52	46	South Dakota	36
22	Nevada	52	47	Wyoming	35
23	Illinois	52	48	Nebraska	35
24	New Mexico	51	49	Oregon	33
25	Connecticut	50	50	Montana	31

Note. Higher score indicate more collectivism