In Antony S. R. Manstead & Miles Hewstone (eds.), The Blackwell Encyclopedia of social psychology. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1995.

of the effect in question), and that different accounts are appropriate in different circumstances and for different purposes. When explaining why I have written this dictionary entry, for instance, the answer I give would depend on whether I was being asked by my bank manager, my Head of Department, my worst enemy, or my neglected spouse, although it is perfectly possible that my account might in some sense be true in every case. Correspondingly, my typing behavior could be validly explained in terms of physics, physiology, psychology, or economics. The implication of this plurality of practicable accounts for the present analysis is that participants in social psychology experiments may have different criteria from experimenters about what should count as an explanation, or indeed about what they are doing when they are answering questions about their actions, and their answers to postexperimental enquiries need to be interpreted accordingly and with all due care and attention.

See also: DISCOURSE ANALYSIS; SOCIAL COGNITION.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ericsson, K. A., & Simon, H. A. (1980). Verbal reports as data. *Psychological Review*, *87*, 215–51.

Nisbett, R. E., & Wilson, T. D. (1977). Telling more than we can know: Verbal reports on mental processes. *Psychological Review*, *84*, 231–59.

White, P. A. (1988). Knowing more about what we can tell: "Introspective access" and causal report accuracy 10 years later. *British Journal of Psychology*, *79*, 13–45.

BRIAN PARKINSON

violence The infliction of intense force upon persons or property for the purposes of destruction, punishment, or control. Violence may be committed upon a personal scale, as in murder or assault, or on a larger one, as in warfare and riots. Some of the principles that apply to AGGRESSION also apply to violence, although the two terms are generally considered to refer to different degrees of interpersonal conflict.

Violence is often a product of CULTURE. Its causes may lie in beliefs that the goods and services of society are inequitably distributed, so that some groups exerience RELATIVE DEPRIVATION. At other times violence grows out of hostility of an ingroup toward members of an outgroup. Certain cultures and subcultures (e.g., juvenile gangs) may place high values on violent behavior, so that such acts are relatively more likely to occur within these subcultures of violence than in other cultures. Violence or the threat of violence may also be used systematically for the control of others both by individuals and by organizations. At the personal level, violent behavior can result from family conflict, social reinforcement, organic and neurologial disorders, or acculturation within violent groups.

See also: AGGRESSION; CULTURE; RELATIVE DEPRIVATION.

RUSSELL G. GEEN

vividness A property of some stimuli that causes them to attract ATTENTION. Unlike SALIENCE, where stimuli attract attention by virtue of contrasting with their context, vividness is inherent in the stimulus itself. Stimuli are defined as vivid to the extent they are emotionally interesting, imagery provoking, or sensorially prominent.

See also: ATTENTION.

SUSAN T. FISKE
BETH A. MORLING

voting behavior A great deal of research has explored the determinants of citizens' vote choices in elections and the psychological processes by which citizens make those choices. In fact, voting behavior has been one of the central topics of social science research on mass political behavior. Empirical research on voter decision making began in the late 1940s and has progressed through four stages of development, as we shall review below. During the first three phases, research focused primarily on identifying the determinants of citizens' vote choices. In the fourth

stage, interest has shifted to understanding the psychological processes involved.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

During the first phase of voting research, studies focused on the impact of social structure on vote choices. This approach was best exemplified by the classic book, *The People's Choice*, by Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet (1948). These researchers examined data from repeated survey interviews of a panel of citizens and found that their candidate preferences were a function of their memberships in various social groups. Specifically, three demographic variables were found to be particularly strong determinants of citizens' preferences: place of residence, social class, and religion. Living in a rural area, being middle-class, and being Protestant enhanced the likelihood of voting for Republicans, whereas living in urban areas, being working-class, and being Catholic enhanced the likelihood of voting for Democrats. Citizens who belonged to social groups with conflicting tendencies (e.g., an urban, working-class Protestant) were "cross-pressured" and were found to have unstable political preferences, selected a candidate late in the election, and frequently did not vote at all.

PARTY IDENTIFICATION

During the second phase of voting research, the emphasis shifted from a sociological approach to a psychological approach that emphasized attitudes (*see also* ATTITUDE THEORY AND RESEARCH). This new perspective was advanced by University of Michigan researchers Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes (1960) in *The American voter*. The Michigan approach acknowledged both long-term attitudinal influences on voting by party identification and political IDEOLOGY, as well as short-term influences of attitudes on specific policy issues and attitudes towards specific candidates.

The Michigan approach emphasized party identification as the key determinant of vote choice. A citizen's party identification was presumed to be a result of his or her place in the social structure as well as the interpersonal influence of family members, especially parents. Adopted early in life, party identification was hypothesized to be a highly stable orientation that directly influenced voting. Additionally, party identification was thought to function as a perceptual screen that shaped short-term influences on voting.

Although a great deal of research has consistently demonstrated that party identification is a stable and powerful predictor of vote choice, the relation between party identification and short-term influences on voting has turned out to be more complex than originally thought. Specifically, in addition to influencing short-term forces, party identification appears to be influenced by them as well. For example, although party identification has been found to influence citizens' perceptions of economic conditions and their preferences on policy issues, the latter seem to influence the former as well. Thus, the relation among party identification and short-term influences is reciprocal in nature. Consequently, it appears that party identification may reflect other determinants of vote choices rather than being the single, primary engine driving voters' decisions.

ADDITIONAL DETERMINANTS OF VOTING

During the third phase of voting research, researchers maintained the psychological emphasis and expanded the list of vote determinants. One major body of work focused on the impact of attitudes on specific policy issues. In contrast to the *American voter*'s presumption that such attitudes play relatively peripheral roles in vote decisions, more recent work has shown that policy attitudes do indeed have significant impact when the issue is considered personally important by a voter. But when an issue is considered personally unimportant, it appears to have little or no impact on candidate preferences.

Other phase-three research has focused on retrospective judgments of the past performance of the candidates and parties in handling national problems. Judgments in domains such as the economy and foreign affairs have been shown to exert substantial influence on vote choices (e.g., Abramson, Aldrich, & Rohde, 1991).

Finally, voters' perceptions of candidates as people have been found to influence voting. Specifically, perceptions of candidates' personality traits (i.e., competence, integrity, leadership, and empathy), as well as the emotions candidates elicit (e.g., anger, pride), shape the impressions voters form of candidates and thereby determine voting in part (Kinder, 1986).

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES

Most recently, research has moved beyond specifying the determinants of voting and has focused on the processes by which these determinants are combined. It has been suggested that this is a relatively simple process, in which voters simply add up the number of things they like and dislike about each candidate and choose the candidate with the most positive net score. However, Lodge, McGraw, and Stroh (1989) have proposed a more complex psychological process model that distinguishes between on-line and memory-based decision making. Rather than waiting until the end of an election campaign to integrate information from memory about the candidates (as the memory-based perspective would suggest), voters appear to form evaluations of the candidates early on and continually update these attitudes on-line as new information is encountered. This sort of on-line updating seems especially prevalent among citizens who are political experts rather than political novices.

CONCLUSION

Voting researchers have done much to specify the determinants of who a citizen will vote for. Only recently has this work begun to examine carefully the processes by which individual determinants are combined into summary choices. Future research in this area is likely to cast further light on process models of voting with useful implications for an understanding of choice in general.

See also: ATTITUDE THEORY AND RESEARCH; IDEOLOGY.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abramson, P. R., Aldrich, J. H., & Rohde, D. W. (1991). *Change and continuity in the 1988 elections* (rev. ed.). Washington, DC: *Congressional Quarterly*.

Campbell, A., Converse, P. E., Miller, W. E., & Stokes, D. E. (1960). *The American voter*. New York: Wiley.

Kinder, D. R. (1986). *Presidential character revisited*. In R. Lau & D. Sears (Eds.), *Political cognition* (pp. 233–55). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Lazarsfeld, P. F., Berelson, B., & Gaudet, H. (1948). *The people's choice* (2nd ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.

Lodge, M., McGraw, K. M., & Stroh, P. (1989). An impression-driven model of candidate evaluation. *American Political Science Review*, *83*, 401–19.

LEANDRE R. FABRIGAR
JON A. KROSNICK