



# Policy Specific Mood

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APSA Short Course

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- *Policy Mood* is more than an evaluation of government. The public's *Mood* is also a powerful guide of policy-making, a predictor of election outcomes, and a director of Supreme Court decision-making.
- The *Mood* Database consists of nearly 400 survey questions across 60 years with about 8,000 total administrations.
- Because of the size of the database, we now have the opportunity to think about *mood* in policy-specific terms.



## Going Policy-Specific

- This means, we now have enough data to estimate *Education Policy Mood*, *Civil Liberties Mood*, *Gay Rights Mood*, *Healthcare Policy Mood*, etc.
- The first step to accomplishing this was to give policy relevance to the survey items in the *Mood Database* which we did using the *Policy Agendas Codebook*.
- We gave a primary policy code to every survey question and a secondary policy code to about 25% of the questions.
- The result? Dozens of high quality policy-specific mood measures.



# Judging Series Quality

- A few issues to confront:
  - 1 What is a “high quality series”? Low quality? How do we draw the line?
  - 2 There are many topics in which the government is quite active, but lack quality opinion data. (Sorry).
  - 3 But the reverse is true as well—quality opinion data in areas with no real government activity.

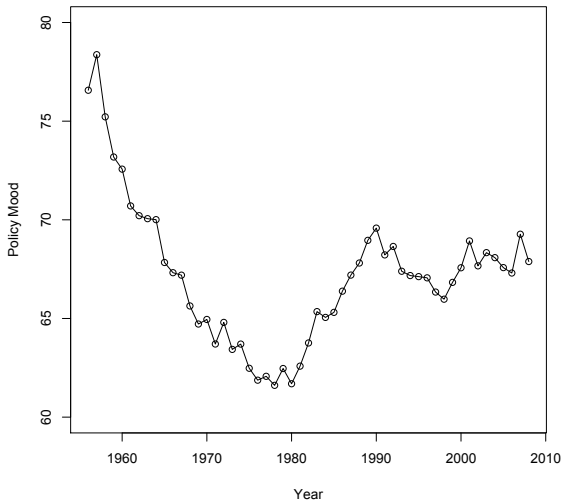


## Back to the Good Stuff

- One detailed example, with a peak under the hood: Education.
- Other high quality examples.
- New additions!



## Education Policy Mood





## 10 Questions Estimating *Education Policy Mood*

Series	Question
VOUCHERS	Do you favor providing parents with tax money in the form of school vouchers to help pay for their children to attend private schools?
SCHAID	Do you favor or oppose federal aid to help build new schools?
NATEDUCY	Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on education?
EDAID	If the cities and towns around the country need help to build more schools, the government in Washington ought to give them the money they need.
NATEDUC	Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on improving the nation's education system?



Series	Question
PRESCHL	A proposal has been made to make child-care centers available for all preschool children. Would you favor or oppose such a program?
PRIVSCH	A proposal would allow parents to send their school-age children to any public, private, or church-related school they choose and government would pay the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?
EDMORE	Please tell me if you would like to see the government do more, less or do about the same amount as they have been on education?
EDTAX	Would you favor this if it required an increase in taxes?
SPSCHOOL	Should federal spending on public schools be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?



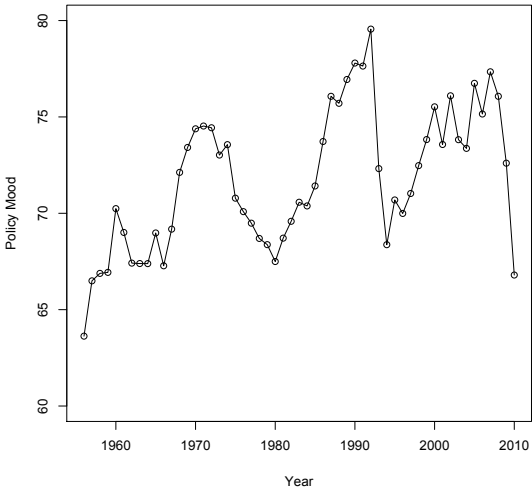
## What Happened Under the Hood

- **“Series”** identifies the question series, **“Years”** identifies the number of years the question was asked, and **“Loading”** gives the factor loadings for each question series.

Series	Years	Loading
VOUCHERS	3	0.98
SCHAID	4	0.93
NATEDUCY	17	0.92
EDAID	4	0.91
NATEDUC	29	0.91
PRESCHL	3	0.86
PRIVSCH	4	0.79
EDMORE	15	0.76
EDTAX	5	0.17
SPSCHOOL	12	0.16
190 Administrations		Variance Explained=77.9

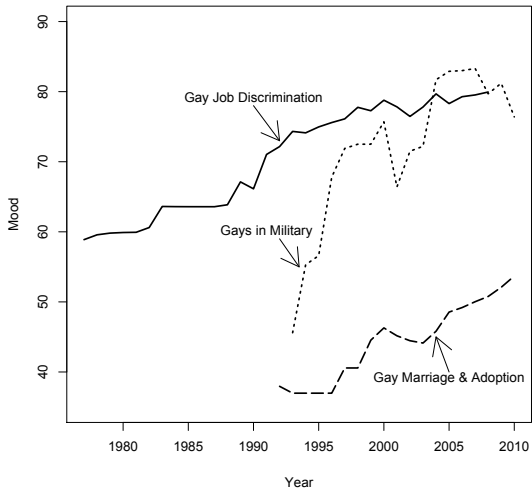


### Health Care Reform Mood



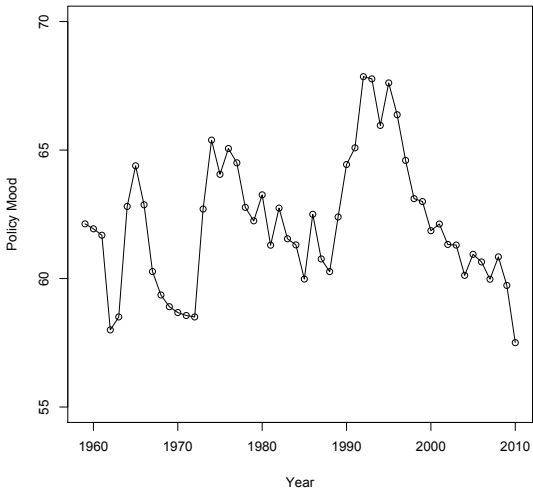


# New Topics!





### Abortion Policy Mood





## What's Next?

- Releasing the data!
- Soon: “precooked” series.
- Later: full integration with the Policy Agendas Website.