

BRITISH AND AMERICAN POLITICAL ATTITUDES IN 1985

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## INTRODUCTION\*

Just as the Social Attitudes survey assesses British opinions annually, in the United States the NORC (National Opinion Research Center) General Social Survey probes American trends. Beginning in 1985, the two surveys began a cooperative project involving identical questions in both countries. (In addition to Britain and the U.S., the International Social Survey Program includes Germany, Australia, Austria, Ireland, and Italy, but only British and American results are currently available.)

For the 1985 round, a drafting committee, meeting in London and Chicago, developed a self-administered, 25 minute questionnaire on the "role of government" as an "add on" to the main questionnaires. This module gives us 104 chances to compare British and American attitudes on politics - broadly defined. Thus, we learn 46 per cent of Americans and 50 per cent of Britains agree to "smoking in public places should be prohibited by law" (not much of a difference); 18 per cent of Americans and 54 per cent of Britons agree to "all employees should be required to retire at an age set by law" (a more impressive difference).

Such similarities and differences merit serious consideration because (1) the British and U.S. samples are national level area probability designs representing similar adult populations, (2) completion rates are quite satisfactory, (3) the questionnaire was designed by a multi-national team and (4) there are so many questions that noise from specific words or narrow topics is minimized.

What should one expect? Anglo-American similarities and differences are not the freshest topic. From Mrs. Trollope to Alistair Cooke observes have been fascinated by the broad similarities and occasional sharp contrasts. On the whole, one would expect similarities:

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Rogert Jowell, Cathie Marsh and Tom Smith helped me catch many - but perhaps not all - mistakes and ambiguities in the first draft of this chapter.

English is the official language of both nations.

American political and legal institutions emerged from British ones.

British settlers dominated early America.

Both have advanced industrial economies.

Protestant is the most common religious faith in both.

They share a vast film-tv-pop-music culture.

Yes, of course, quite; but -

British films with realistic speech for characters north of, say New Castle, must be dubbed into, ahem, English, for American audiences.

Britain, after all, has a hereditary monarchy and aristocracy. 86 per cent of Britains endorse it (1984 report, p. 24). The question was not even asked in the U.S. but I'd go out on a limb and predict conspicuously lower percentages there (here?).

While British settlers dominated early America, the GSS (The General Social Survey is known by its initials) shows their descendents to be a small minority today. Seventy-nine per cent of GSS respondents (1972-85) could name a single country in answer to, "From what countries or part of the world did you ancestors come?"..if more than one, "Which of these countries do you feel closer to?" Of the 79%, 18% chose England, Scotland, or Wales, giving an overall percentage of 14.

Granted structural similarities in the two economies, the differences in wealth are notorious. The 1985 U.S. Statistical Abstract says in 1982 the American GNP per capita (in 1981 dollars) was \$12,482, while the U.K. figure was \$8,954. This would make Americans 1.4 times as rich. How "big" is 1.4? Social Trends 16 (Central Statistical Office, 1986) tells us for British men in 1984 the average annual income of men in nonmanual occupations is about 1.4 that of men in manual jobs. (Chart 5.5, p. 80). The "subjective" results are

equally sharp. When asked to place themselves in a social class, 71 per cent of Britains put themselves in the Working Class, including 2 per cent "poor" (1984 report, p. 131). In the GSS the comparable figure is 51 per cent (GSS 84).

The Protestant majorities (51 per cent in Britain, 1984 Report p. 195; 64% in the U.S., GSS 84) conceal a paradox. In Britain the Church of England is legally established, in America any establishment is forbidden by the Constitution. But only 13 per cent of Britons attend church weekly (1984 report, p. 195) in comparison with 36 per cent of Americans (GSS 85).

From all of which, the social scientist is in no better position to predict than the occasional visitor. After a visit or two, one comes to think there is really no difference. I, myself, feel as "at home" in Central London as Central Boston. (I have visited England once or twice a year for the last 15 years as tourist or itinerant academic.) But, on almost every visit one is occasionally caught short with shock and bafflement: when one's host says that cricket or A levels or the differences between Liberals and the SDP are really "quite simple" and then proceeds to baffle you for an hour; when one realized that the Sun is read (viewed?) by 16 per cent of Britons, the Times by 2 (1985 report, p. 207); when one realizes one's British companion assumes American bars just like British pubs; in sum - both social science and personal experience lead us to expect broad similarities in American and British political views, along with occasional sharp surprises. And that, of course, is how the numbers turn out.

#### METHOD

My goal was simple: to spot the political attitudes where Americans and Britons are similar and those where the two nations differ. But because the 85 items don't treat 85 totally different topics and because statistical similarity is not a simple "yes" or "no", the analysis required several steps.

I grouped 85 of the 104 items into nine clusters on the basis of common sense:

A) Inequality: 13 items on class differences, government actions to increase equality, union power, etc.

B) Government: economic policies - a battery of 8 items on government economic interventions such as wage controls, cuts in spending, support for new industry, etc.

C) Government: responsibilities - a battery of 7 items asking whether it is government's responsibility to provide jobs, to keep prices under control, to reduce income differences, etc.

D) Government: spending priorities - a battery of 8 items on whether government should spend more, the same, or less on the environment, health, police and law enforcement, education, etc.

E) Responsibility for Children: a battery of 8 items. In each, respondents were given a condition, e.g., "the parents regularly beat the child", "the parents refuse to send their child to school because they wish to educate the child at home", and were asked whether the Public Authorities should "Take no action", "Give warnings or counseling", or "Take the child from its parents".

F) Political efficacy: a battery of 10 standard questions ringing changes on the theme, "The public has little control over what politicians do in office."

G) Civil liberties: 14 items from three batteries with a common theme of willingness to allow various forms of dissent, e.g. "Do you think people who want to overthrow the government by revolution should be allowed to publish books expressing their views?"

H) Rights of suspects: an 8 item battery asking whether the police should be allowed to tail, eavesdrop on, open mail of, or detain a man alleged to be planning burglary of a warehouse.

I) School Priorities: a 9 item battery on whether it is essential, important, or not important for various topics (science and technology, sex education, concern for minorities and the poor, etc.) to be taught in school.

Of the 19 remaining items, six dealt in with gender equality rather than the role of government and the remainder were "singletons" that did not fit neatly into any of the clusters.

Table 1 cites the specific questions for each cluster. (Please ignore the two right hand columns for the moment.)

Table 1

## Item Clusters and Regression Results

Cluster Topic	Question Numbers*	Items	r <sup>2</sup>	Diff in Means
A) Inequality	8, 9, 10a, 10b, 10c, 16, 17a, 17b, 17c, 24, 26, 27, 28	13	.23	+7.7
B) Government: Economic Policies	21a - 21h	8	.60	+19.0
C) Government: Responsibilities	30a - 30g	7	.89	+29.5
D) Government: Spending Priorities	22a - 22h	8	.68	+ 7.7
E) Responsibility for Children	18a - 18h	8	.94	- 0.6
F) Political Efficacy	20a - 20k	10	.76	-12.0
G) Civil Liberties	1a, 1b, 3a-3f, 4ai-4biii	14	.91	+ 4.0
H) Rights of Suspects	5ai-5biv	8	.99	+ 1.3
I) School Priorities	15a-15j	9	.86	- 4.2

My second step was to dichotomize each item, using the same cutting point in each nation and choosing cut points which made psychological sense (e.g. Strongly in Favour or In Favour versus Neither, Against, Strongly Against, Don't Know). Don't know and Can't Choose responses (rare in both countries) were included in one or the other category of each item.

Third, I laid out graphs with U.S. as the X axis, Britain as the Y axis, and scales running from 0 to 100 per cent. Then I entered results for each item on the graph - one graph per cluster. Figure 9 is a good example. It plots the results for cluster D, Government Spending. For example: since 14% of Americans and 9% of Britons endorsed more spending on "culture and the arts", its point is down in the lower left corner (not a high priority in either country). The point for spending on Education (63% "more" in the U.S., 74% in Britain) appears in the upper right sector.

What may be learned from such diagrams? The classic statistical approach to agreement between two sets of numbers is a regression line, a straight line running through the points in such a way as to give the best possible fit ("least squares criterion"). Figure 9 shows such a line. (Figure 9 has two lines. The regression line is the solid one. The dashed line runs through what would be identical values in each country.)

Depending on the data, the points may be very close to the regression line ("good fit") or scattered widely around it ("poor fit"). The classic statistical coefficient,  $r$  squared, is the standard measure of "goodness of fit." A value of 1.00 would mean every point lay on the line, a value of 0.00 would mean purely random scatter around the line.

To the degree the points in our data fall on the fitted line (i.e. high values of  $r$  square) we can say the two countries show similar RANKING of items - questions that get relatively favorable answers in one country tend to get relatively favorable answers in the other. (Assuming of course, the correlations are positive - and they all are). Big  $r$  squares mean similar rankings. ( $r$ , the "Pearson product moment correlation coefficient," is not identical to the "rank correlation coefficient" but it is perfectly proper to treat it as a measure of agreement in ranks.)

The fitted least squares line has a use in addition to generating  $r$  squares. We can use it to "predict". Observe the equation at the top of Figure 9,  $GB = -4.79 + 1.319 USA$ . It not only tells us where to draw the line, we can use it to estimate a British percentage from an American result. Assume, for example, we had an American Spending Priority item with 50% endorsement. The regression formula "predicts" the British answer to be  $-4.79 + 50 * 1.319 = 61.2$  per cent. Actually, of course, we have no need to predict anything, the percentages are all in the chart. But the concept has an interesting wrinkle since we can compare each result with its predicted value. If the points are

above the line, we have "overpredicted" (The British are more favorable than one would expect from the general relationship). If the points are below, we have "underpredicted" (The British are less favorable than one, etc. etc.). Over and under predictions, called "outliers", help us see nuances and exceptions to our generalizations.

The fourth column in Table 1 gives r squares for the nine clusters. They range from .18 to .99 and all but one are .60 or larger. The one value below .60, .23 for cluster a, Inequality, shows virtually random agreement. The high values of r square along with a sharp exceptions illustrate the main theme of our analysis: strong similarities between the two nations with a few sharp and surprising differences of the bar/pub type.

But r square and residuals from prediction do not tell the complete story. Returning to Figure 9 you will see a second, dashed, line. It connects identical values of x and y (e.g. 10,10 or 67, 67). If Britons and Americans had identical responses, the least squares line would be right on top of the dashed line. But is quite possible for data to show big r squares without a single point anywhere near the "identical value" line. For example, look at Figure 6, for cluster C, governmental responsibilities. The r square is large (.89) so the points are close to the least square line, but the whole shebang is shifted up so every point is higher than the identical value line. In simple Anglo-American English: In Figure 6 the high r square shows very similar rankings, while the upshift shows a constant difference - Britons are more likely to favor every government responsibility in the battery.

The difference in national means (the average per cent "favorable" in Britain minus the average per cent "favorable" in the U.S.) appears in the right hand column of Table 1. The smallest difference is 0.6, the largest 29.5. Since a 6 point difference on a single item would be statistically significant at the .05 level, I decided to "take seriously" any mean difference



of 7 or more points. By this rule of thumb five clusters (A, B, C, D, and F) suggest differences, while the other four show essentially similar averages in each nation.

We now have two criteria for similarity and difference: the magnitude of  $r$  square (which taps similar rankings or item "popularities") and the magnitude of the difference in means (which taps across the board differences in "popularity"). We can combine them to give clusters of clusters. To start, let's consider four clusters (E, G, H, I) with high  $r$  squares and small mean differences - i.e. four topics where American and British political opinions seem virtually identical.

#### PERFECT AGREEMENT: Crooks, Cranks, and Kids

Four clusters showed the high  $r$  squares (.50 or larger) and low mean differences (less than 7.0%) that define "perfect agreement" between Britons and Americans, or more exactly the absence of any important national differences:

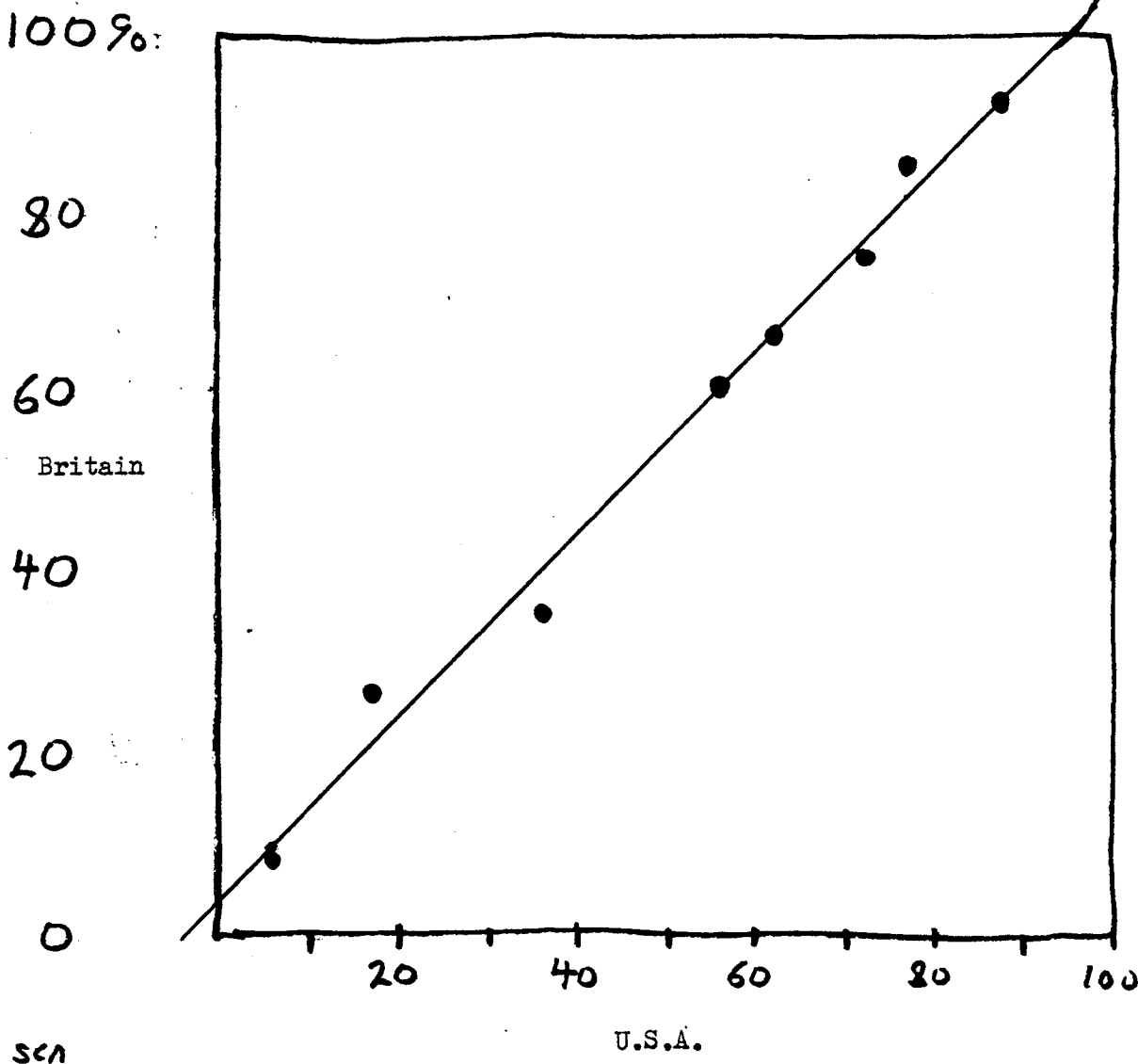
- H) Rights of suspects ( $r$  square = .99, diff = 1.3%)
- E) Parental rights ( $r$  square = .94, diff = 0.6)
- G) Civil Liberties ( $r$  square = .91, diff = +4.0)
- I) School priorities ( $r$  square = .86, diff = -4.2)

The rights of suspects cluster consists of items asking approval or disapproval of four police activities ("keep the man under surveillance", "tap his telephone", "open his mail", "detain the man overnight for questioning") in the situation where "the police get an anonymous tip. . . (he). . . is planning to break into a warehouse". The questions are first asking about "a man with a long criminal record" and then repeated for "a man WITHOUT a criminal record." Figure 1 displays the results.

Figure 1

CLUSTER H: RIGHTS OF SUSPECTS

$$G.B. = 4.457 + 1.011 USA$$



$r^2 = .99$

	Mean
Britain	41.1
U.S.A.	40.8
	1.3

scale = per cent "...police should not be allowed..."

Figure 1 demonstrates extraordinary agreement, such a perfect matching as to be even mildly suspicious. Americans and Britons have remarkably similar distributions on these eight items. Neither is distinctly more or less permissive (the average per cent "not allow" is 41.1 in Britain, 40.8 in the U.S) and the relative standing of the eight situations is identical in each nation. Table 2 show the figures.

Table 2

Per Cent Giving "Libertarian" Response  
(Probably not allow, Definitely not allow)

Not Allow Police to ...	Suspect has .....			
	....Long Record		....No Record	
	U.S.A.	Britain	U.S.A.	Britain
Open his mail	72%	75%	87%	92%
Tap his phone	56%	61%	75%	85%
Detain overnight	36%	36%	62%	66%
Keep under Surveillance	6%	9%	17%	27%

Ns: Britain minimum = 1464, maximum = 1483  
U.S.A. minimum = 656, maximum = 666

We see a range from 6%/9% (U.S./Britain) percent to 87%/92% depending on the action and the previous record. Opening mail and tapping telephones get majority disapproval, almost unanimous for the suspect with no record. At the other end, surveillance, has high acceptability for both records and both nations. The case of detention depends on the man's record. If he has a long one, about two thirds in each country endorse overnight detention, but the figure drops to one third for the unblemished.

Civil libertarians may well be aghast that two thirds of adults in each country would allow overnight detention of a man who has not yet committed a crime - but the point here is trans Atlantic similarity. The sophisticated

observer might well predict greater libertarianism for low crime Britain than high crime America. The sophisticated observer would be wrong.

Cluster E was designed to tap a fundamental issue, parental rights to raise children as they see fit versus the state's obligation to see that children are cared for properly. The cluster gives eight situations where a problem is described (e.g., "the parents fail to provide the child with proper food and clothing") and three options: (a) Take no action, (b) Give warnings or counseling, and (c) Take the child from its parents. Since few respondents in either country said "Take no action", the items were dichotomized as (c) v. (a) or (b). Figure 2 shows the main results:

Table 3

Actual and Predicted Results for Cluster E, Responsibility for Children  
(9% = Percent ticking "Take No Action" or "Give Warnings or Counseling")

Item	Problem	USA	BRITAIN		Diff.*
			Predicted	Actual	
18b	Tolerate child's skipping school	94%	94%	95%	
18h	Allow child to view video nasties	90%	90%	88%	
18c	Allow child to stay out late	88%	88%	88%	
18g	Wish to educate child at home	88%	88%	96%	+ 8
18a	Ignore child's using drugs	76%	76%	63%	- 13
18d	Don't provide proper food and clothing	49%	48%	46%	
18f	Refuse child medical treatment on religious grounds	48%	47%	57%	+ 10
18e	Beat child regularly	19%	17%	14%	

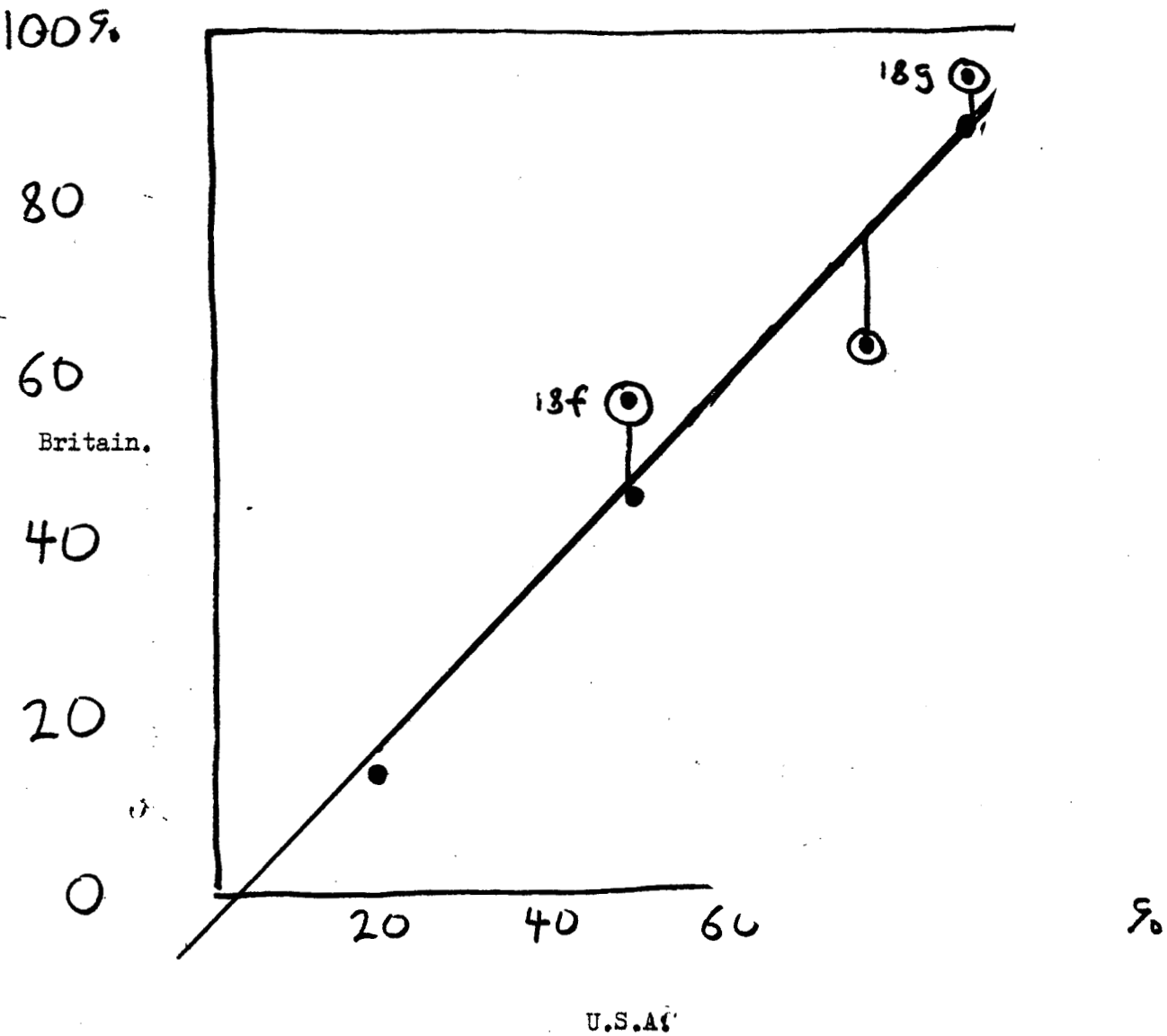
\*for outliner items circled in Figure 2

Ns: Britain minimum = 1,381 maximum = 1480, U.S. minimum = 660, maximum = 665

Figure 2

Cluster E) Responsibility for Children

$$G.B. = -2.82 + 1.032 USA$$



$$r^2 = .94$$

	Mean
Britain	68.4
U.S.A.	69.0
	- 0.6

scale = Per cent "take no action" or "give warnings or counseling"

Figure 2 looks much like Figure 1. That is, Americans and Britons differ little on the issues of parental rights. The mean difference is a trivial 0.6 and r square is .94. But notice that three of the dots are circled. Such circles are drawn when the data are more than six points from the line - i.e. where we would over or underpredict British attitudes from American attitudes (again the 7 point criterion is arbitrary but based on the calculation that, generally speaking, a six point difference is statistically significant at the .05 level). So, Figure 2 is not quite as "perfect" as Figure 1, but the r square of .94 says it is sufficiently perfect to put it in the same group. Table 3 helps us understand the three "outliers".

The left hand column in Table 3 gives the per cent of Americans who are "pro parent" in the sense of not ticking "Take the child from its parents". The middle column gives the regression prediction of the British figure, the third column the actual British percentage. For the three outliers, the over and underpredicted circled points in Figure 2, the discrepancy appears at the far right.

For the first five problems (skipping school, watching video nasties, allowing child to stay out late, wishing to educate child at home, and ignoring drug usage), majorities in both countries side with the parents. For inadequate food the clothing or religious refusal of medical treatment, both countries are close to a 50-50 split. For the case of a beaten child, both Americans and Britons strongly state intervention.

In general then there is a trans Atlantic consensus the state should not remove the child unless there is a severe physical problem.

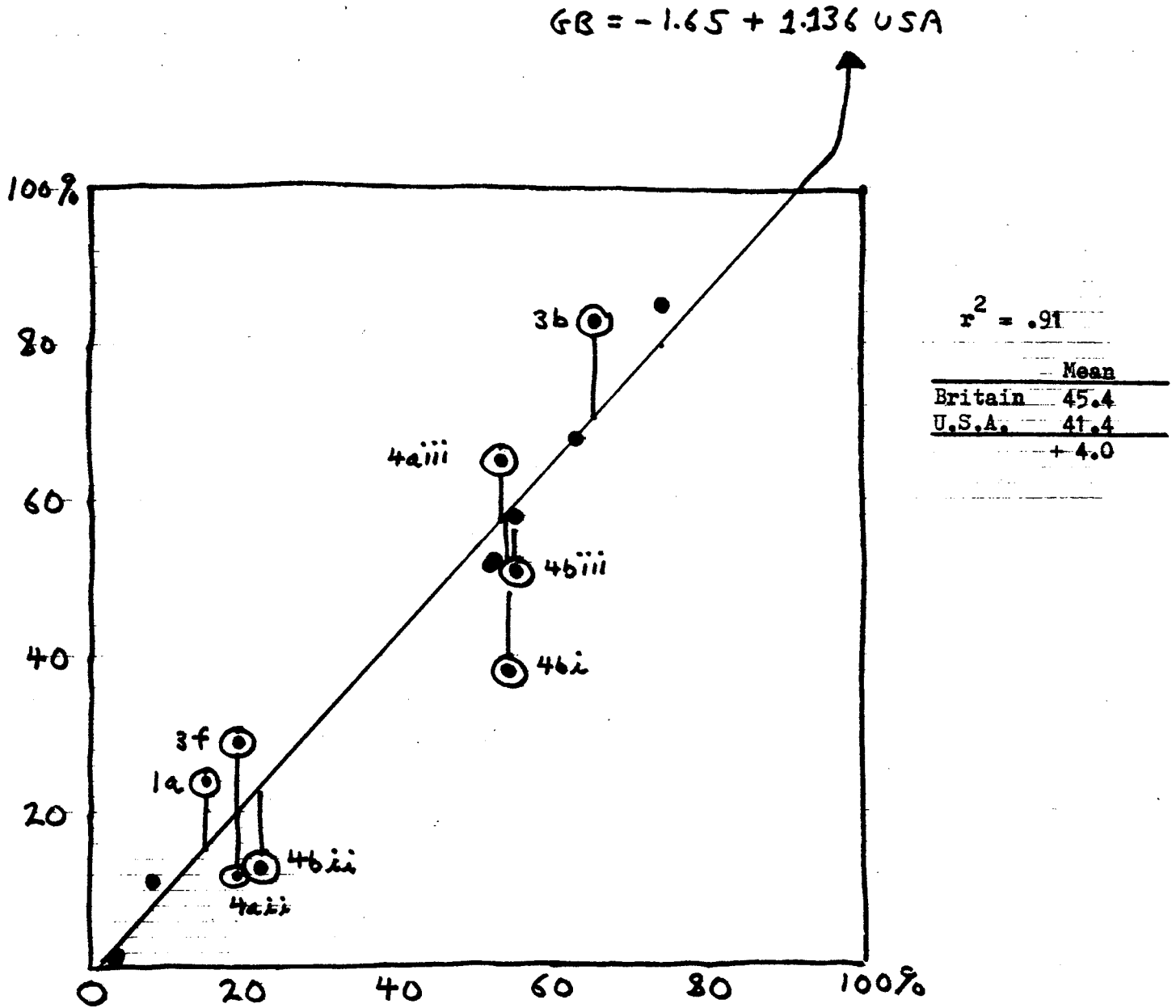
The three outliers do not really vitiate the proposition. Instead they suggest some differences in emphasis: the British are more likely to side with the parent on the "principled" issues of home education and religiously determined medical practice, less likely to side with parents who tolerate drug taking.

From all of this: Americans and Britons are in excellent agreement on (extreme) parent v. state issues. Adults in both countries only clearly favor taking the child from the home in one case - beating. For skipping school, watching "video nasties", staying out late, and educating the child at home, only small minorities in either country would go to the extreme of taking the child. Improper food, refusal of medical treatment, and drug usage fall between, with between a quarter and a half siding with the state. Overlaid on this essential similarity are three small differences, call them differences in emphasis: Britons are more "pro parent" on the issues of education at home and refusal of medical treatment, less pro parent regarding drugs.

The third area of strong similarity is cluster G, Civil Liberties. The 14 items come from three different batteries, but they have a common theme: in each, some type of political dissident (e.g., "people who want to overthrow the government by revolution", "people who believe whites are racially superior") is paired with some expression of their position (e.g. "organizing protest marches and demonstrations", "teach 15 year olds in the schools") and the respondent is asked whether the expression should be permitted. Thus, each answer can be scored "tolerant" v. "less tolerant". Figure 3 shows the generally high agreement between the two nations.

Figure 3

Cluster G) Civil Liberties



scales = per cent who would allow the form of protest or dissent



The dots cluster near the regression line (although there are seven circled outliers), r square equals .91 and the difference in mean tolerance is 4.0 points. What Britons find tolerable Americans tend to accept and where Americans draw the line so do Britons. Table 4 allows us to zoom in on details and national differences in emphasis.

First, lets scan up and down Table 3.

At the most permissive, clear cut majorities (two thirds or more) endorse the classical, well behaved, mild mannered forms of protest, ("organized public meetings to protest against the government", "publishing pamphlets to protest against the government", "organizing protest marches and demonstrations"). What is odd here is that in two great democracies a fifth to a third of respondents say the opposite. Since, however, this finding turns up in study after study and we are concerned with national differences, we'll leave it at that.

Table 4

Actual and Predicted Results for Cluster G, Civil Liberties  
(% = Percent giving "Tolerant" response)

Item	Topic	BRITAIN			
		USA	Predicted	Actual	Diff.*
3a	Protest meeting	78%	87%	89%	
3b	Protest pamphlets	68%	76%	86%	+ 10
3c	Protest march	66%	73%	75%	
1b	Publish government economic plans	62%	69%	63%	
4aiii	Revolutionary - publish books	55%	61%	67%	
4ai	Revolutionary - hold public meeting	54%	60%	54%	
4biii	Racist - Publish books	53%	59%	66%	+ 7
4bi	Racist - hold public meeting	52%	57%	39%	- 18
4aiii	Revolutionary -teach 15 year olds	22%	23%	12%	- 11
4bii	Racist - teach 15 year olds	22%	23%	15%	- 8
3f	Protest general strike	20%	21%	30%	+ 9
1a	Publish government defense plans	15%	18%	26%	+ 8
3d	Protest occupation of government office	8%	8%	12%	
3e	Protest damage government building	3%	2%	2%	

\*for ~~other~~ <sup>circle</sup> items circled in Figure 3

Ns: British minimum = 1,431 maximum = 1494  
U.S. minimum = 615, maximum = 671

When, however, the protesters are less acceptable (revolutionaries or racists) or there is a touch of illegality, libertarian support drops to the fifty-fifty region. And when possible violence enters in (occupying a building, damaging government property, a general strike) or the newspaper intends to publish defense plans, support drops to 20 per cent or less. The cases of racist or revolutionary teachers are at the same low level. Whether this is because of the extremity of the dissidents or the sensitivity of teaching is unknown since we forgot to ask whether persons opposed to government actions should be allowed to teach school. I would not assume 100% "yes" answers in either country.

A cynic might say the data show that in both countries public opinion favors protection of only those forms of dissidence which are so mild they need little or no protection to begin with - but if so, American and British cynics find about equal support in the data.

Reading across we see the "outliers" in the middle and right hand columns. Britons are relatively more tolerant of protest pamphlets, racist books, general strikes, and publishing defense plans. Britons are relatively less tolerant of racist meetings, racist teachers and revolutionary teachers.

In sum: Americans and Britons show essentially similar tolerance and intolerance of protesters, revolutionaries, and "leakers".

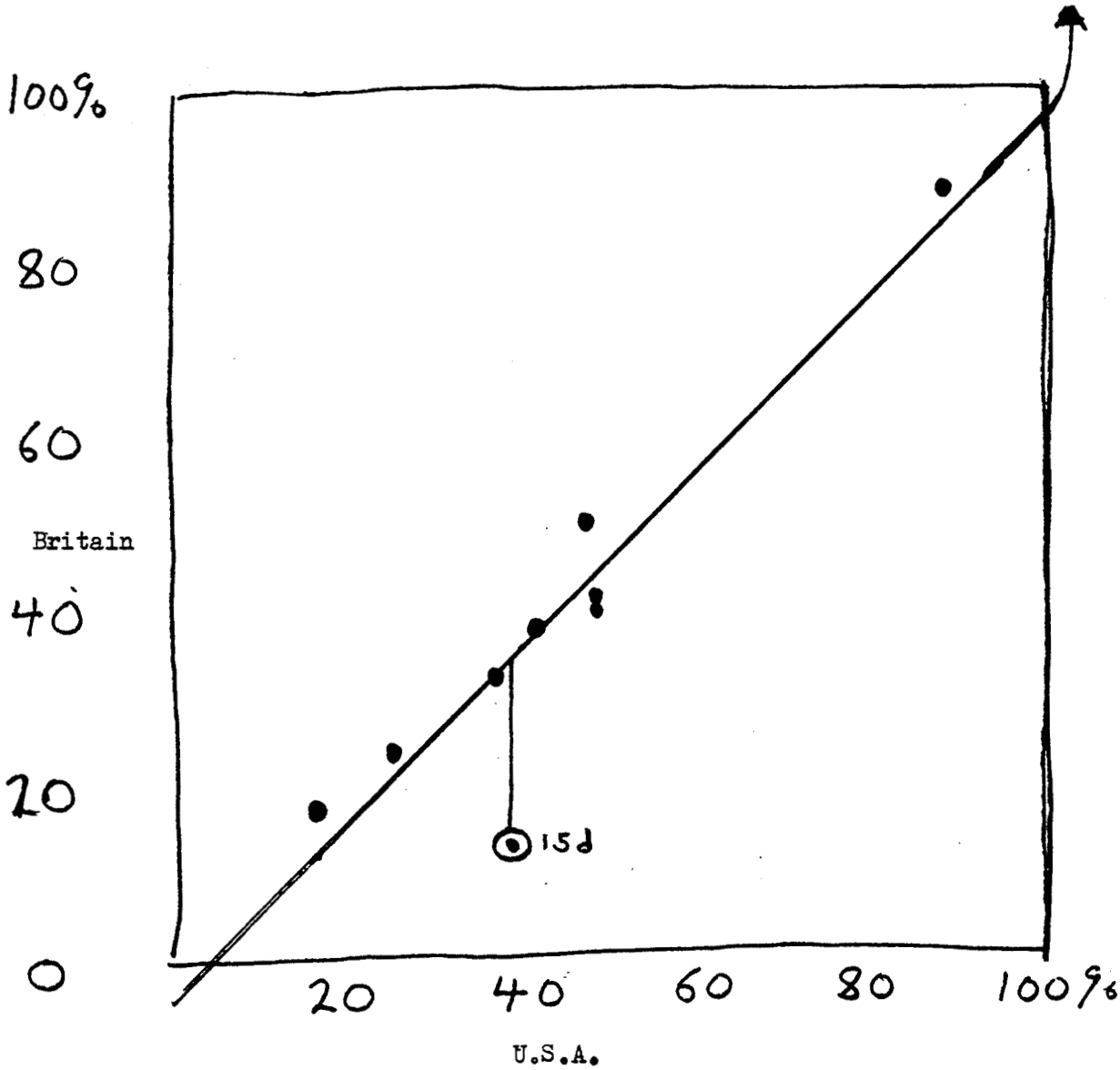
Cluster I is about school curricula. It lists 9 topics (e.g. "Job training", "Sex education", "Science and technology") and asks respondents to rate them from "Essential, must be taught" to "Not needed, should not be taught". The battery was included because schooling is a major activity of government and because such "fundamental" issues might give differences in national values a chance to emerge.

Again, the basic pattern is similarity:  $r$  square is .89, the average difference in endorsement is 2.3. But we will see one striking exception of the pub/bar cricket/baseball sort, Figure 4 displays the data.

Eight of the nine points nestle close to the line, but one (question 15d) is way below. On one of the topics, Britons give substantially lower priority than one would expect from the over all pattern, And that topic? It is "History, Literature, and the Arts". The nation that gave us Shakespeare ranks it below Sex Education, while the philistine Yankees rank it slightly above Science and Technology. Figure 5 gives the details.

Cluster I) School Priorities

$$G.B. = - 5.13 + 1.021 U.S.A.$$



scale = Per cent "essential, must be taught"

Figure 5. Consensus and Disagreement for Cluster I  
Average (Britain + U.S.A. /2)

100%

90

80

70

60

50

40

30

20

10

0

d) History, literature  
and the arts

\*38% (.U.S.A.)

\*14% (Britain)

88% a) Reading, writing and mathematics

49% j) Discipline and orderliness

45% c) Respect for authority

44% e) Ability to make one's own judgments

40% f) Job training

35% g) Science and Technology

24% h) Concern for minorities and poor

17% k) Sex education

The right hand vertical line gives the trans Atlantic consensus, the average percentage for the two countries. As one would expect, academic "basics" (Reading, writing, mathematics) dominate. Eight-eight per cent in each country tick the item as "essential, must be taught". But no other item reaches the majority point of 50 percent. They trail out from 49 to 17. In this clump, "conservative" favorities such as discipline (49%), and "respect for authority" (45%) do better than "liberal" ones such as "concern for minorities and poor" (24%) and "sex education" (17%). I, myself, find it extraordinary that in the mid 80's Science and Technology is rated as essential by only a third (37% U.S., 37% Britain), but it is the unpredictable contrast between the obvious (e.g., reading writing and arithmetic) and the extraordinary (Science, History, Literature, and the Arts) that makes survey analysis addictive.

The left column in Figure 5 shows the U.S. and British results for the outlier item, "History, Literature and the Arts". In the U.S. its 38% rating puts it right in the middle, in Britain it obtains a derisory 14%. Odd, eh? I don't think it is a pure fluke because we will see similar results for government spending, but no explanation leaps to mind. Ex post facto one might say Britain has a surplus of high culture while the U.S. has a shortage. Maybe, but shouldn't the same argument apply to "orderliness" where the percentages come out 51% Britain, 47% U.S.A.?

#### SUMMING UP SIMILARITY

Four clusters - rights of suspects, parental rights, political tolerance, and school priorities - shows very little difference between Americans and Britons. For each, r square, the standard measure of "straight-line-ness", is .86 or higher and the mean difference in "favorable" answers is 4 points or less.

But statistics allow one to see interesting exceptions as well as broad generalizations. Thus, Britons are more likely to support the parent against the state when the hypothetical parents educate the child at home or refuse medical treatment on religious grounds, less likely to do so when the issue is drugs; Britons are relatively less tolerant of racists' meetings; and Britons give striking lower priorities to the teaching of "History, Literature, and the Arts."

Explaining similarity is one of the most difficult research tasks, indeed, some methodologists would argue it is logically impossible. Before commenting on the similarities, we should look at the differences. For now let me merely note: the issues in all four clusters have nothing do with economics or social class.

#### CONSTANT DIFFERENCES: Mingled Emotions Toward the Welfare State

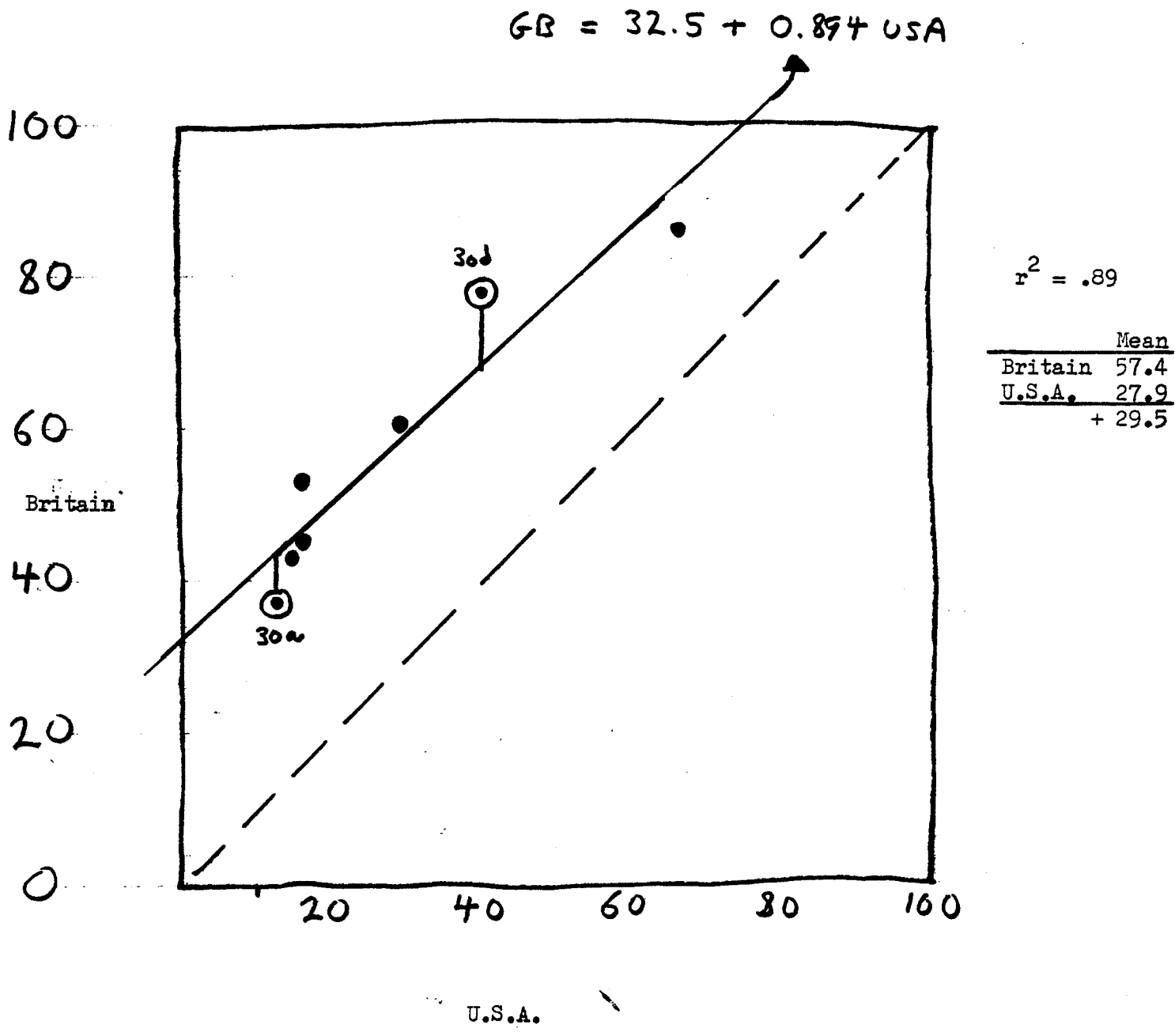
Four clusters fit a pattern one may call "constant differences":

- C) Government: Responsibilities (r square = .89, diff = 29.5)
- B) Government: Economic policies (r square = .60, diff = 19.0)
- F) Political efficacy (r square = .76, diff = 12.0)
- D) Government: spending priorities (r square = .68, diff = 7.7)

Their graphs show unambiguous straight lines (all the r squares are .60 or higher), but differences in means of 7 or more points. Pictorially, such data look like Figures 1,2,3, and 4 but with the lines shoved up above the diagonal equal value line. Figure 6 is a prime example.

Figure 6

Cluster C) Government Responsibilities



scale = Per cent "Definitely should be the government's responsibility"



The seven items for cluster C come from question #30, "On the whole, do you think it should or should not be the government's responsibility to ... ("provide a job for everyone who wants one", "keep prices under control", "provide health care for the sick", etc.). Items were dichotomized as "Definitely should be" versus "Probably should be", "Probably should not be", "Definitely should not be", or "Can't Choose".

Figure 6, like its predecessors, shows "good fit", with just two outliers, neither extreme. But, unlike the predecessors, the entire line falls well above the dashed identical-answer line. Putting the same point in different ways:

....For each of the seven items, Britons are more likely to tick "Definitely should be".

....On the average 57% of the Britons answer "Definitely", compared to 28% of Americans, a 29 point difference.

Table 5, like Tables 4 and 3, shows the raw data and predicted values for each item, with the outliers at the right. I read it like this:

One topic ("provide health care for the sick") gets strong endorsement in both countries. Two thirds of Americans (66%) and almost all Britons (86%) tick "Definitely".

The other six items get middling (40 to 60 per cent "definitely") support in Britain and minority (15 to 30 percent) support in the U.S.

The item "provide a decent standard of living for the old" is especially well received in Britain; the item "provide a job for everyone who needs one" is not rated as highly in Britain as one would expect from the general pattern (though it is still 24 points higher than in the U.S.) Perhaps Britons, aware of their persistent unemployment problem, are less optimistic about government's ability to provide jobs.

Table 5

Actual and Predicted Results for Cluster C, Government Responsibilities  
(% = Percent "Definitely Should be")

Item	Topic	BRITAIN			
		USA	Predicted	Actual	Diff.*
30c	Provide health care for the sick	66%	92%	86%	
30d	Provide decent standard of living for the old	40%	68%	78%	+ 10
30b	Keep prices under control	29%	58%	60%	
30e	Provide industry with the help it needs to grow	16%	47%	53%	
30g	Reduce income differences between the rich and the poor	16%	47%	45%	
30f	Provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed	15%	46%	43%	
30a	Provide a job for everyone who wants one	13%	44%	37%	- 7

\* for outlier items circled in Figure 6

Ns: Britian minimum = 1,476, maximum = 1486  
U.S. minimum = 664, maximum = 670

In simple Anglo-American: Britons and Americans have essentially similar relative priorities for "welfare state" activities, but Britons are more enthusiastic about each and every one of them.

The phrase "welfare state" is germane here. British enthusiasm for government does not extend to the classic socialist principle of state ownership. Question #29 (not treated as a separate cluster because it only had five sub-items) asks about "government's role in each of these industries and services" ("Electricity, Local public transport, the Steel industry, Banking and Insurance, and the Car industry") with the choices: "Own it", "Control prices and profits but not own it" or "Neither own it nor control its prices and profits."

Table 6 shows the answers in each country for the five industries.

Table 6

U.S. and British Responses to Question 29, "What do you think the government's role in each of these industries and services Should be?"\*

Industry	Nation	Neither own it nor control its Prices and Profits	Control Prices and profits but not own it	Own it	Total	N
A) Electricity	Britain	27.2%	45.8%	27.0%	100.0%	(1387)
	U.S.	31.9%	62.2%	5.9%	100.0%	(604)
	diff	- 4.7	-16.4	+21.1		
B) Local public transport	Britain	42.0%	39.1%	19.9%	100.0%	(1376)
	U.S.	42.4%	48.2%	9.4%	100.0%	(585)
	diff	- 0.4	- 9.1	+ 9.5		
C) The Steel industry	Britain	47.3%	34.2%	18.5%	100.0%	(1300)
	U.S.	61.0%	36.3%	2.6%	99.9%	(574)
	diff	-13.7	- 2.1	+ 5.9		
D) Banking and insurance	Britain	55.1%	35.4%	9.4%	99.9%	(1301)
	U.S.	47.1%	49.7%	3.2%	100.0%	(587)
	diff	+ 8.0	-14.3	+ 6.2		
E) The car	Britain	58.9%	32.3%	8.9%	100.0%	(1325)
	U.S.	60.5%	37.1%	2.4%	100.0%	(586)
	diff	- 1.6	- 4.9	+ 6.5		

\*U.S. data are sex weighted. See footnote 1.

Figure 7 presents the same results as a "triangular coordinate" graph - a special graph designed for situations with three possibilities adding to 100. Such graphs have three scales each running from 100 at an apex (point) to zero in the middle of the opposite edge. Cases very high on one or another of the three possibilities will lie along the edges, mixed answers toward the middle. To see national differences we connect the American and British points with arrows. (Such graphs take a bit of getting used to but can be very illuminating.)

Let's start with Autos. The arrow lies toward the top of the page above the 50-50 line and it is fairly short. That is, majorities in both Britain and America give the laissez faire answer ("Neither"). The arrow

does, however, point toward the "Own" apex, i.e. among the minority who wish government control, Britons are more likely (by 6 points) to favor ownership, Americans (by 5 points) regulation.

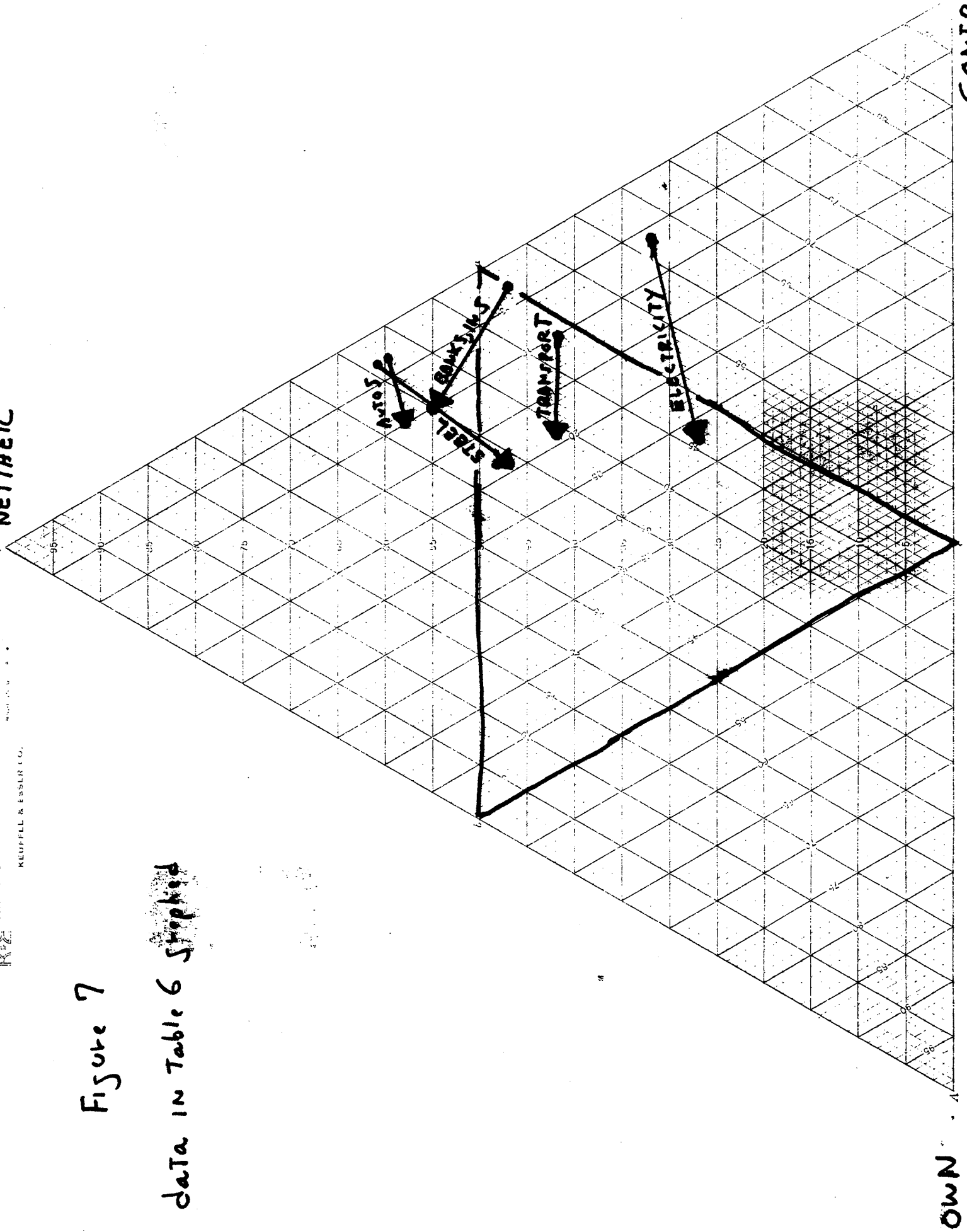
Next, Steel. Americans give essentially the same answer as for Autos, 61% "Neither." What about the British? The arrow points away from Neither to Own, but the head is in the inner region where no single answer gets a majority. For Steel, Britons are less laissez faire and more "socialistic" than Americans, but they do not have consensus (a majority position).

The Transport and Electricity arrows are distinctly lower on the page: in both nations laissez faire is a minority answer. Both arrows point away from control toward Own. Again, the British are more for ownership, the Americans more for "regulation".

For the first four industries then, the pattern is this: Americans have a clear preference for laissez faire (Autos, Steel) or Control (Electricity). The British agree on Autos, but there is enough support for government ownership of Steel, Transport, and Electricity, that no one answer has a majority (the arrows for Steel, Transport, and Electricity are inside the inner "no majority" triangle.)

NEITHER

Figure 7  
data in Table 6 Stopped



And for the final industry, Banking and Insurance, the arrow points up! Britons have a laissez faire majority, Americans are on the border of a Control majority (49.7%).

What do these complex results tell us about national attitudes to government? The main point, I suspect, is that the industry differences are larger than the national ones, e.g. laissez faire for Autos, no laissez faire for Electricity.

Figure 7 can support the case that British are more "socialist" than Americans. In each case British support for Own is greater than among Americans. But the Own percentage never tops 27 points and save for Steel, Britons are not less laissez faire than Americans. For Banks and Insurance they are 8 points more likely to say "Neither". It is clearly over simple to say Americans are laissez faire and Britons Socialist in their industrial policies. One might say that Americans prefer regulation where British prefer regulation or ownership.

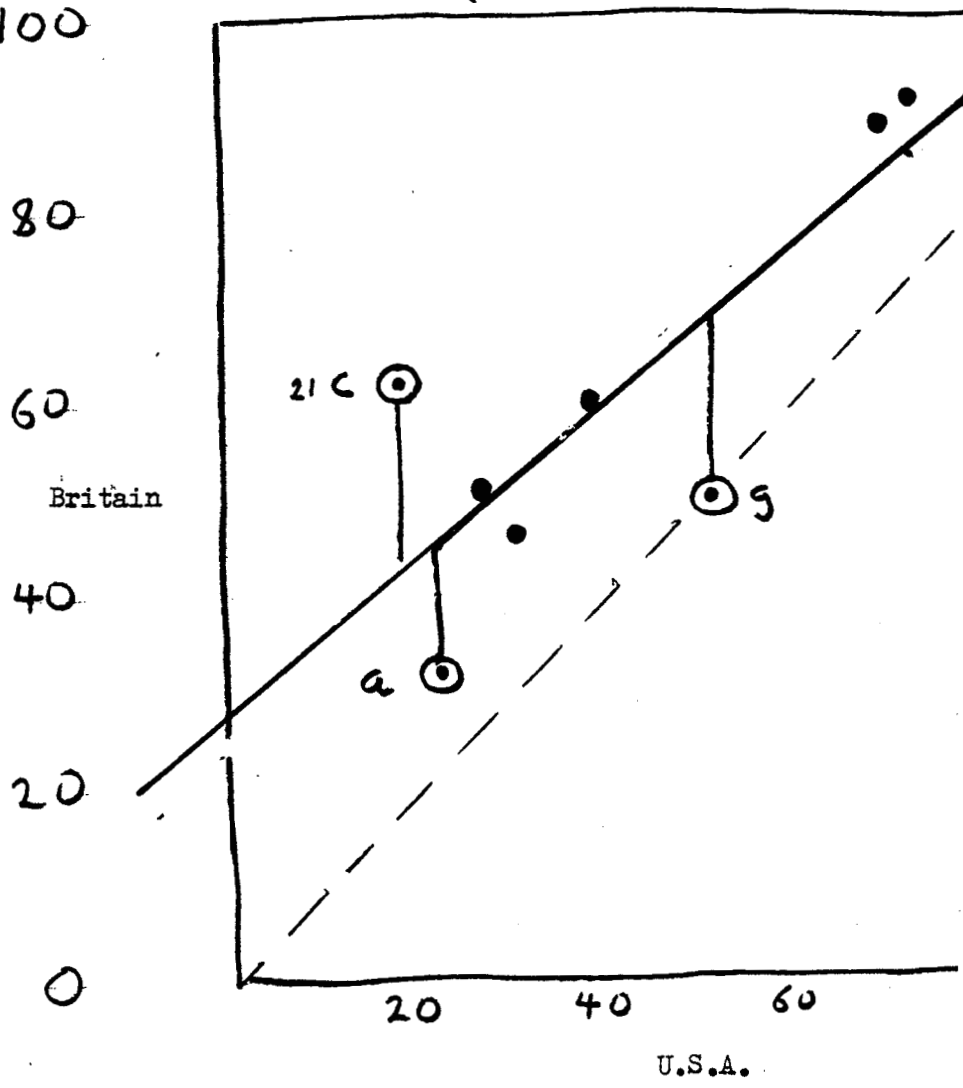
Returning to the original problem - interpreting the 30 point British tilt toward Government in Cluster C, Table 6 and Figure 7 help us qualify the generalization. The national difference does not seem to be across-the-board pro or anti statism but a striking difference on "welfare state" issues, the use of government resources to "promote the general welfare". The nation whose constitution provided that phrase is conspicuously less enthusiastic about its implementations, at least in 1985.

The distinction between welfare and other governmental functions helps shed light on Clusters B and D. Cluster B (Question #21) asks whether the respondent is in favour of or against eight economic policies (e.g. "control of wages by legislation", "governmental financing of projects to create new jobs", "less government regulation of business", etc.) I scored each so that a "plus" answer meant more government control or expenditure. Figure 8 and Table 7 display the results in now familiar ways.

Figure 8

Cluster B) Government, Economic Policies

$$GB = 27.49 + 0.792 USA$$



$$r^2 = .60$$

	Mean
Britain	59.9
U.S.A.	40.9
	19.0

scale = Per Cent "Strongly in favour" or "In favour"

Again the solid line floats above the dashed one and for seven of the eight items Britons give a more "pro-government" response. The difference in means is 19 points. Table 7 puts some substantive flesh on the statistical bones of Figure 8. We see:

Table 7

Actual and Predicted Results for Cluster B, Government Economic Policies  
(% = Percent "Strongly in Favour" or "In Favour")

Item	Topic	BRITAIN			Diff.*
		USA	Predicted	Actual	
21f	Support for new industry	72%	85%	91%	
21d	Financing projects to create new jobs	69%	82%	88%	
21g	Support declining industries	51%	68%	50%	- 18
21b	Control prices	38%	58%	60%	
21e	(No) Less government regulation of business**	30%	51%	46%	
21h	Reduce working week to create jobs	27%	49%	50%	
21a	Control wages	22%	45%	32%	- 13
21c	(No) Cuts in government spending **	18%	42%	62%	+ 20

\*for outlier items circled in Figure 8

\*\* percentage reversed for consistent meaning

Ns: Britain minimum = 1,454, maximum = 1502  
U.S. minimum = 664, maximum = 670

....support for new industries and projects that would create new jobs is high in both countries and near unanimous in Britain.

....support for declining industries gets 50-50 approval in both countries, making it a low outlier for Britain.

....price control, continued business regulation, wage control, and reduced work week get middling support in Britain (32 to 60 per cent) and cool response in the U.S.A. (18 to 38 per cent).

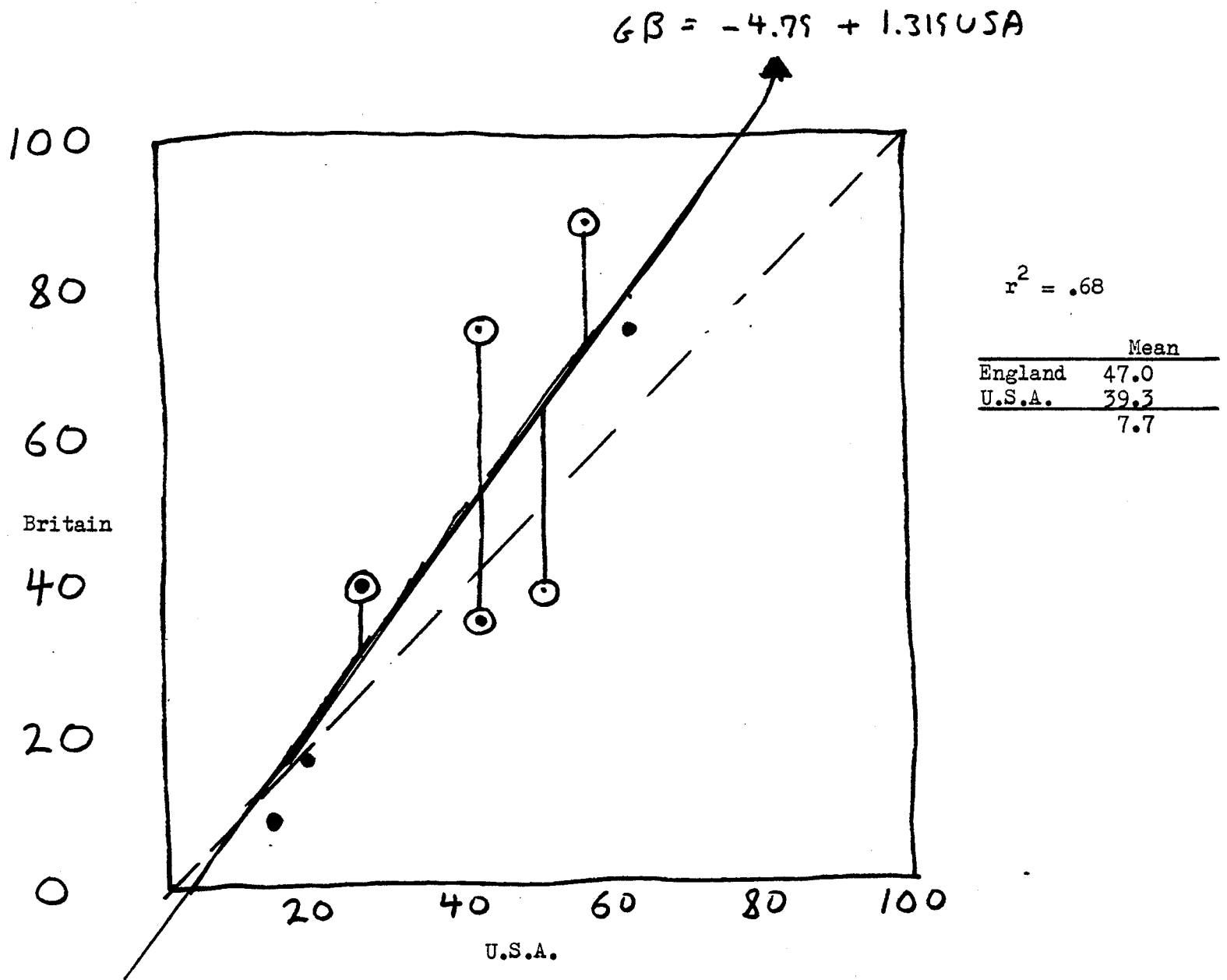
....(no) cuts in government spending is a wild outlier. Only 18 per cent of Americans support it (that is, 82% favor cuts), the predicted British value is 42%, and the actual British result is 62%. The 44 point trans Atlantic gap on government spending is one of the most impressive national differences in the questionnaire.



Figure 9 and Table 8 summarize Cluster D, Government spending priorities (Question #22). Respondents were given 8 areas of government spending ("the environment", "health", "the police and law enforcement") and asked "whether you would like to see more or less government spending in each area".

Figure 9

Cluster D) Government Spending Priorities



scale = Per Cent "Spend much more" or "Spend more"

Figure 9 suggests Cluster D may have obtained admission to this section of the report on false pretenses. While it does have the requisite 7 point difference in means (7.7 to be exact), half of the items (four) do not show a higher British percentage for more spending. Table 8 shows why.

Table 8

Actual and Predicted Results for Cluster D, Government Spending Priorities  
(% = Percent ticking "Spend Much More" or "Spend More")

Item	Topic	USA	BRITAIN		Diff.*
			Predicted	Actual	
22d	Education	63%	78%	74%	
22b	Health for the old	57%	70%	88%	+ 18
22c	The police and law enforcement	51%	63%	39%	- 24
22f	Old age pensions	42%	51%	74%	+ 23
22a	The environment	42%	57%	43%	- 16
22g	Unemployment benefits	26%	30%	40%	+ 10
22e	The military and defense	19%	20%	17%	
22f	Culture and the arts	14%	14%	9%	

\*for outlier items in Figure 9

Ns: Britian minimum = 1,435, maximum = 1481  
U.S.A. minimum = 659, maximum = 664

....Education has high priority in both countries, Military and Culture are both very low. (The British result for Culture and the Arts is 5 points below its predicted value - as noted in the earlier discussion of school curricula.)

....At the right side, Health, Pensions, and Unemployment Benefits, the secular trinity of the welfare state, are high outliers, with British support even higher than one would predict from the regression line.

For the two low outliers, British support of Police and Environmentalism is lower than would be predicted from the overall pattern. Turning it around, spending for police and the environment are rare exceptions to Americans' tighter fisted view of government.

Clusters C, B, and D thus tell a consistent story: when asked whether government should do this or that, Britons and Americans tend to come up with similar relative priorities, but Britons are generally more enthusiastic. Closer scrutiny suggests the core issue here is not "statism" but "the welfare state". On functions such as pensions for the old, money for the unemployed, and health care for all, British endorsement is strikingly greater.

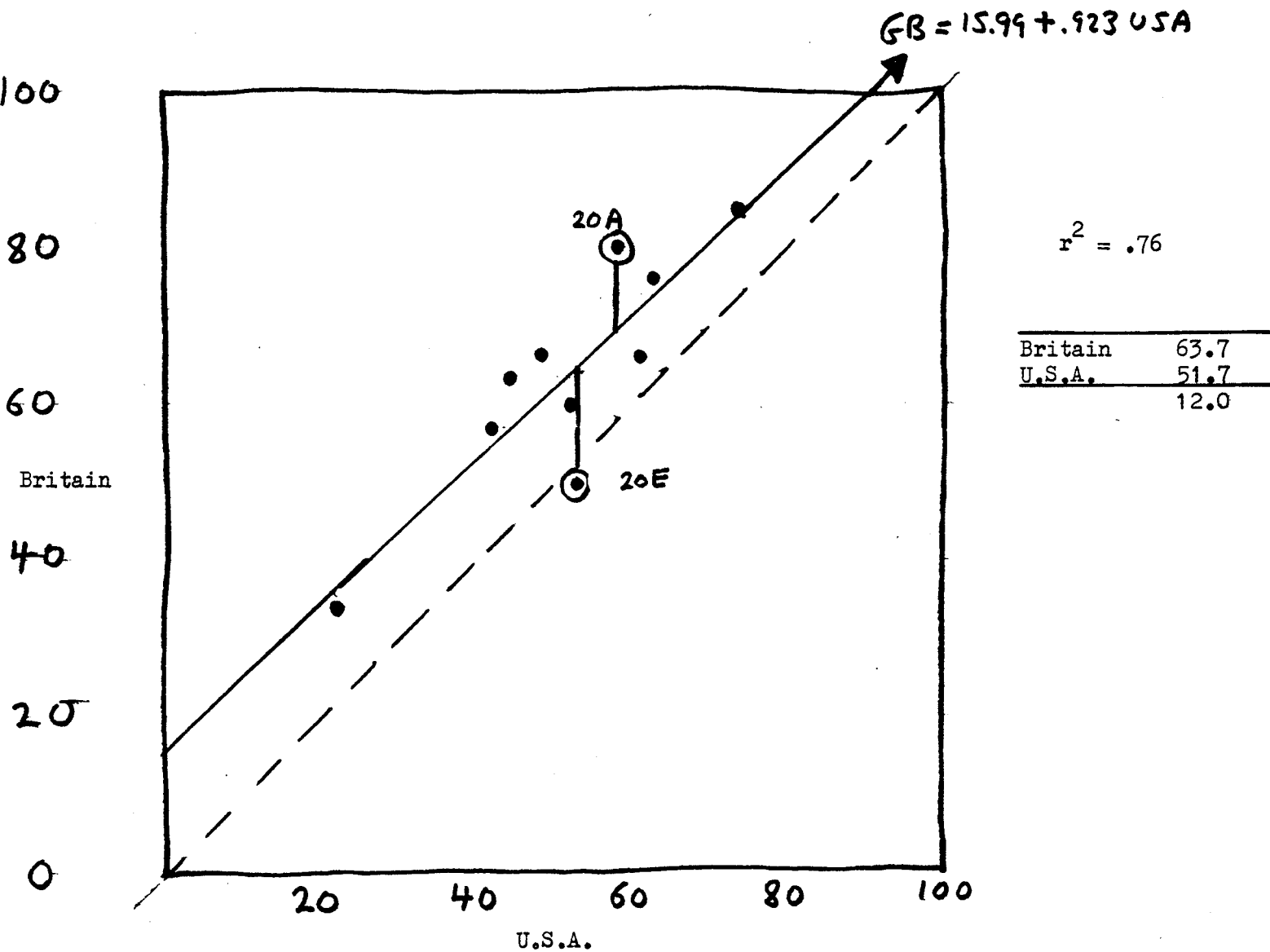
By American standards Britons seem not only to have a taste for governmental activity but almost an addiction. (By British standards, I suppose Americans have a anorexia nervosa). So it comes as a surprise when we compare the two nations on their emotional feelings about governmental performance.

Question #20 comprises a battery of 10 standard items tapping what political scientists call "political efficacy". Seven of the ten ring semantic changes on the proposition that government is/isn't responsive (e.g. "the public has little control over what politicians do in office", "people like me have much to say about government", "the government is generally responsive to public opinion"), the others deal with interest in local elections, efficacy regarding world affaires, and general optimism ("taking everything into account, the world is getting better"). I dichotomized each so a psychologically negative answer was scored plus. That is, high scores mean less efficacy.

Figure 10 shows the national difference.

Figure 10

Cluster F) Political Efficacy



scale = Per Cent agreeing with "negative" statement or disagreeing with "positive" statement

Britons are more negative about politics and government:

....The solid line is well above the dotted one.

....The mean difference is 12.0 points.

....For 9 of 10 items the British percentage is higher.

Since the items are virtually interchangeable in content, details are not particularly illuminating. Therefore, no detailed table will be provided.

Just as the frequent tourist might be surprised by the lack of difference on civil liberties and criminal rights, Figure 1 comes as a surprise. One's impression is that the two democracies work about equally well or even that America's separation of powers makes its government less responsive. But that's not what the customers say. For example, 57 per cent of Britons agree that "The average person can get nowhere by talking to public officials", in contrast with 42 per cent of Americans.

Caveats and qualifications leap to mind: the surveys were taken when the political parties in power were especially popular in the U.S. and less so in Britain; economic gloom may lie at the root; the word "government" has slightly different meanings in the two countries (in Britain, the party in office, in America, the total governing apparatus). My guess is that the apparent finding - lesser British political efficacy - will survive detailed scrutiny, but I don't have a shred of hard evidence now.

Previous research sheds light, albeit pale, on the difference. The classic comparative political survey, "The Civic Culture" asked similar questions of national samples from Great Britain, Germany, Italy, and Mexico (all in 1959) and the U.S. (1960). Table 9 is adapted from Table VI.1, page 142, in their book (2.)

Table 9

## National Differences in Political Efficacy (1960)

(% = Percent who say they can do something about an unjust local or national regulation)

Nation	Local	National
U.S.	77%	75%
Great Britain	78%	62%
Germany	62%	38%
Mexico	52%	38%
Italy	51%	28%

Source: Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in five Nations. Little Brown and Company, Inc. Boston, 1965, Table VI.1, p.142.

The topic - whether one can do something about an unjust local or national regulation - is very close to the 1985 ISSP battery. If we assume the content is the same, Table 9 shows a 13 point difference for "a national regulation", with Americans more efficacious. This is just about what we found in 1985. But for a local regulation, there was no gap in 1960. 78% of Britons and 77% of Americans felt efficacious - locally. Most of our current ISSP items do not distinguish between local and national government. But for two which do so (#20d, "The average person has much to say about running local government" and #20h, "I am usually interested in local elections") we get 5 point and 12 point differences - with English respondents less efficacious.

From all of which, it appears that the trans Atlantic difference is national level political efficacy is long standing, but the difference at the local level is more recent. Whether the difference now occurs because Britons have become disillusioned or Americans "illusioned" can not be determined without much more detailed work.<sup>4</sup>

## SUMMING UP "CONSTANT DIFFERENCES"

When we shift from "crooks, cranks, and kids" to , if you will, political economy, systematic British-American differences begin to appear. The r squares are still high - items that receive high endorsement in one country tend to be the more popular ones in the other. But the regression lines have moved away from the identical-answer dashed line. In other words, we see "across the board" differences. They boil down to this: Britons give strikingly higher endorsement to "welfare state" functions but Britons see their government as distinctly less responsive. The psychologically inclined or the facetious might see masochistic Britons yearning for more sweets from a dour nanny government and Puritan Americans eschewing the comforts of a jollier one. The Sociological data analyst merely notes the opposite signs of the differences in attitude and policy preference.

## GOVERNMENT AND INEQUALITY: Just Plain Different

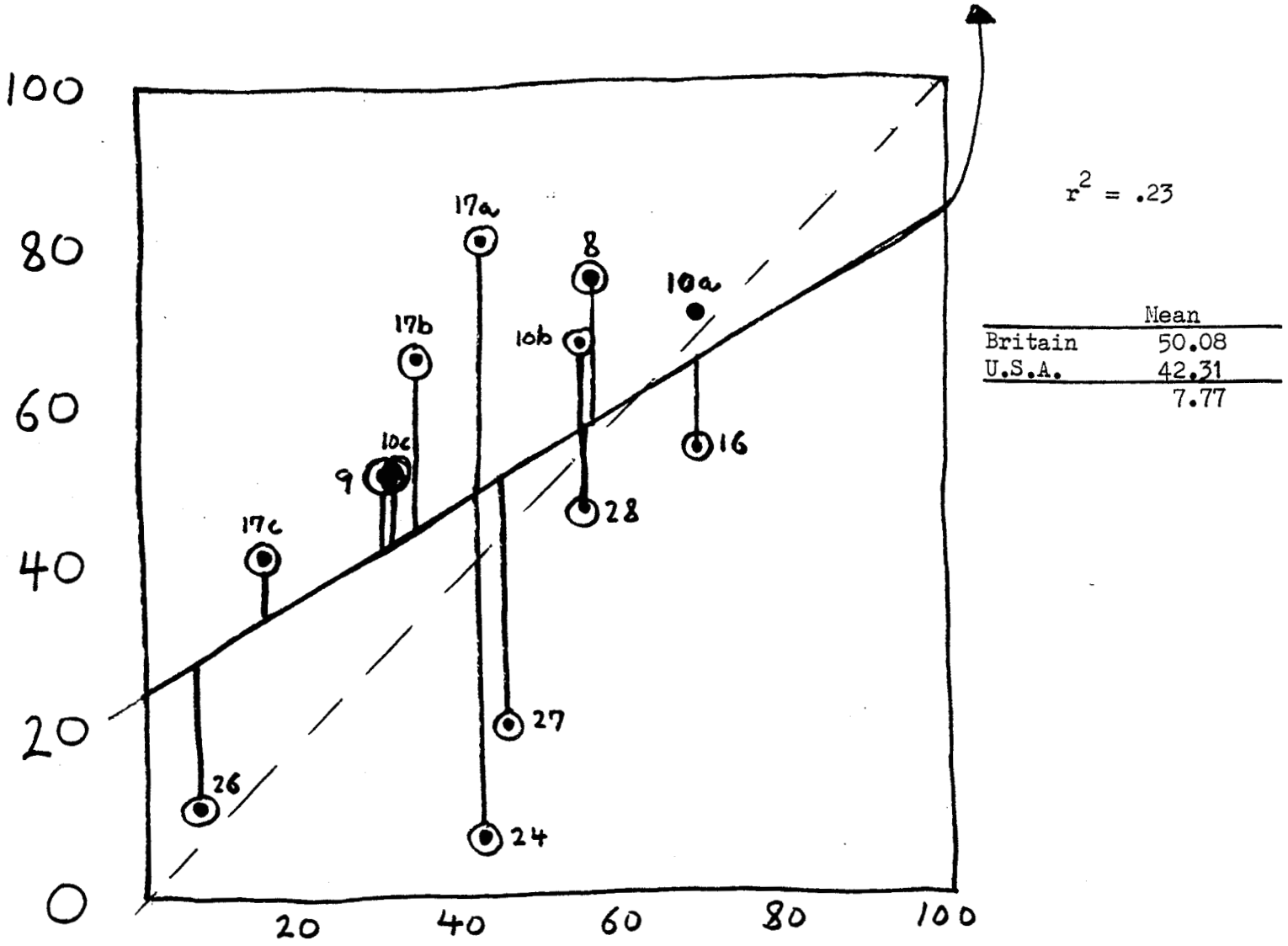
Since it is "well known" that Britain is flawed by an anachronistic and oppressive class system while the U.S.A. is an open society par excellence, and since that which is "well known" is not routinely borne out by social science data, we should be wary in approaching cluster A (Inequality).

The cluster is a grab bag of items, asking views on the existing class system ("A person whose parents are rich has a better chance of earning a lot of money than a person whose parents are poor."), power structure ("Do you think that trade unions in this country have too much power or too little power?") and government policies ("It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes").



Cluster A: Inequality

$GB = 24.19 + .612 USA$



scale = Per cent giving "levelling" ~~class-conscious~~ answer (see text for details)

These data are strikingly different from everything we have seen previously, as you can see by glancing at Figure 11.

The r square in Figure 11 is .23. This value is not only much lower than the goodness of fit for the previous clusters (they ranged from .60 to .99 with a median of .875), it is just plain low. The naked eye detects little clustering around the regression line and 12 of the 13 items are 7 or more points from the line - gaps we have treated previously as outliers.

I scored each item so that a "leveller" ("a person who would abolish social distinctions, advocate of equality") or a truculent working class respondent would (in my opinion) say "yes". But even if this distinction is plausible, it is not obvious how "class ridden" England should differ from egalitarian America. If Britain is more highly stratified (whatever that means) but the British accept it, while Americans are incensed at the least departure from complete equality, then British scores should be lower. If, however, as suggested by contemporary fiction or West End dramas, Britons today are not entirely pleased by their system, British means should be higher.

Putting it another way, the cluster comprises two distinct but related matters: (1) judgments of the sheer amount of inequality and (2) reactions to egalitarian policies and proposals, which assume the present amount is excessive. And it is not clear which applies when we casually say the British are more "class conscious". Table 10 divides the items into these two groups and shows the national differences for each question.

Table 10

Difference (percentage difference) between Britain and U.S.  
on item in Cluster A, Inequality

Item	Topic	British % - U.S%
I) Leveller's Proposals		
17a	Government should give grants to university → health care for the sick	+ 39%
17b	Government should give grants to university students with outstanding exam results	+ 32%
30g	Government should reduce income differences	+ 30%
17c	Government should give grants to university students with average exams and parental income	+ 27%
9	It is the government's responsibility to reduce income differences	+ 22%
8	Favor progressive income tax	+ 16%
16	University places should be increased	- 14%
		21.7% = Average
II) Amount of Inequality		
10c)	What you achieve in life depends largely on your family background	+ 21%
10b)	Professionals' children have a better chance to earn a lot of money	+ 16%
26	Trade unions (do <u>not</u> have) too much power	+ 6
10a)	Children of rich parents have a better chance of earnings a lot	+ 3
27)	Business has too much power	- 24
		3.2 = Average

The two means in Table 10, give a first cut answer: For Amount of inequality, national differences are small (3.2 points on the average), for Leveller proposals, Britons are distinctly more favorable (average difference equal +21.7).

On Amount, four of the five items do show a positive difference and British respondents are 21 points higher in agreement with "What you achieve in life depends largely on your family background." But for an apparently similar item, "Children of rich parents have a better chance of earning a lot", the trans Atlantic gap is a meager 3 points, the difference on labor union power is a modest 6 points and for an anti-business question, "Business has too much power" there is a 24 point gap in the opposite direction: Americans are much more anti-business. I can not conclude from these data that there is a consistent national difference in judgments of the level and form of inequality. (Interestingly, recent, quite persuasive research shows little difference between Britain and America in the actual amount of social mobility - comparing father's and son's occupations. (4))

For levelling, we generally get higher British endorsement, but with a puzzling exception. While British respondents are more likely to endorse redistributive government policies (two items) and much more likely to support grants for various sorts of university students, they are definitely less enthusiastic about increasing the number of university places. Americans are often struck by the relatively low proportions of English men and women with post secondary education and to this American, expansion of university places seems a "very logical" form of levelling. However, it is the Yankee, whose halls of higher learned are gorged, who is more likely to opt for yet more. To underline the puzzle: More Britons (81%) are for grants to low income university students than for expanding university places (55%), while more Americans are for expanding places (69%) than for grants to impecunious incumbents (42%). I suspect we have a pub/bar matter here.

## SUMMING UP INEQUALITY

The results for cluster A, Inequality, are strikingly different from those for the other eight topics. Statistically, the very low r square (.23) suggest that the British and the Americans are "not talking" the same language here. For all the other clusters we found quite similar "item ranking", but here there is very little agreement on the relative acceptability of the items. Thus, in Britain grants for university students are more popular than expanding university places, while in the U.S. expansion is more popular than grants.

Retreating to the question of means we find a small difference in averages (7.7 points) but for specific items inconsistencies abound: Britons are 21 points higher on the belief that family backgrounds influence achievement, but only three points higher on the belief that children of the rich have a better chance!

What survives? On two separate items the British show much stronger support for government action to equalize income differences (30 points and 22 points). Beyond that, few, if any generalizations are supported by the results here.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have examined 85 items on attitudes to government, administered to comparable U.S. and British samples in 1985. The leading hypothesis - or perhaps better, tourist's prejudice - was that we would find broad similarities along with occasionally startling and baffling differences. And that, of course, is how it came out.

In those aspects of government that did not involve economics or social class, trans Atlantic similarity was the rule. Americans and Britons

have surprisingly similar attitudes to (1) rights of criminal suspects, (2) parental rights versus state responsibilities for children, (3) "free speech" for protesters and dissidents and (4) priorities for school curricula. But even here, unexpected exceptions leap out (e.g. lower priority for teaching the humanities in Britain).

For those clusters centered on political economy, the pattern tended to be one of "constant differences" - greater enthusiasm for almost every government program among British respondents. Closer scrutiny, however, led to two qualifications. First, stronger British endorsement of governmental activities is centered on the "welfare state" and does not extend to greater enthusiasm for spending on police or environment on less enthusiasm for laissez faire policies to most industries. Second, the British are consistently more negative than Americans regarding "efficacy", the responsiveness of government to its citizens.

The final cluster, inequality, was clearly of the bars/pubs or baseball/cricket genre. Both the overall statistics and inspection of specific items show enough ambiguity and contradiction to preclude generalizations, with one exception: Britons are definitely more favorable to government policies aimed at redistributing wealth.

We have learned a lot about the trans Atlantic except why it is boiling hot. Which is to say, from the view point of the statistical data analyst we have merely scanned a large number of two variable tables (nation by attitude). In part this represents practical exigencies - these were the only data available as deadlines approached. But in part it represents the policy of the ISSP participants. The data are placed in the public domain for the research community to mine. The chapters in these volumes are essentially professorial adverts to tempt other analysts.

But neither practicality nor policy can inhibit a bit of speculation. When Sociologists talking about "explaining relationships" they do not refer to historical events (Britain had an empire, America had a frontier) but to variables that can be introduced into the analysis - variables that can be controlled. To account for the national differences seen here, we need variables where (a) America and Britain differ and (b) the variables are likely to affect attitudes (America and Britain differ strikingly in wooden v. brick housing, but that is unlikely to affect attitudes to government, Sex (gender) affects some of these attitudes, but the sex composition of the two countries is too similar to produce the differences we've seen.)

Two candidates come to mind from a first scan of the data.

First, there are distinct national differences on SES (socio-economic status) variables. Not only are British incomes lower, British schooling is shorter, and fewer Britons believe they are middle class. (The occupational distributions of the countries are not strikingly different). On such topics as Political Efficacy and Attitudes to Civil Liberties, SES is known to make a difference. Second, there is the distinct difference in religiosity (e.g. Church attendance). Since religiosity generally makes for more conventional attitudes (e.g. less tolerance of nonconformists) it might well affect many of the opinions treated here. Now, very broadly speaking, these variables probably operate in opposite directions - the lower SES of the British probably facilitates "conservatism" on social issues, support for welfare spending, and lesser political efficacy; the lower religiosity of the British probably facilitates liberalis<sup>m</sup> on social issues and lesser political efficacy. The trade-offs of these two possible effects and their net impact on the various <sup>pb</sup> items should make for rather interesting chapters in "British Social Attitudes 1986, 87", etc.

## FOOTNOTES

1.) For GSS85, 78.7% of the predesignated respondents completed the main questionnaire (personal interview). Because of tight budgets, the ISSP (International Social Science Program) module was administered to a random half (N=751) of the respondents. Of these 90 per cent completed the module, giving an overall completion rate of  $.90 * 78.7\% = 70.8\%$  and a maximum N of 676 for U.S. items.

The U.S. sample is smaller than the typical national survey and hence somewhat less reliable. However, after making quite conservative assumptions ( $P*Q=.25$ , Design effect = 1.5) one gets a margin of error (.95 confidence interval) of 4.6 points for a single proportion. Similar calculations give a 50-50 chance of trapping a U.S. percentage within 1.6 points of the true figure.

The British sample has an N of 1530. Making extremely generous allowances for "no answer" on individual items (British N=1450, U.S. = 600), assuming a Design effect of 1.5, and  $P*Q = .25$ , a percentage difference between nations of 5.9 would be statistically significant at the .05 level. Consequently, I decided to "take seriously" national differences of 7 points or more.

One further complication: because of administrative vicissitudes (exact execution of faulty instructions) the U.S. subsample has a sex bias, too many males. (It is complicated and esoteric and has to do with choosing respondents from prepared lists, in which males tend to be concentrated toward the top.) As a check, I had the U.S. data rerun with a correct sex weighting. For almost all items considered here the original and weighted answers were within 1 percentage point. Cluster G, Civil Liberties, was an exception: 4 of the 14 items shifted two or more points. Therefore, I substitute the (sex) weighted U.S. marginals for the raw data in the analysis of Cluster G.

2. Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1965.

3. e.g. a detailed re-analysis of the data sets analysed in Alan Marsh, Protest and Political Consciousness. London: Sage 1978.

4. Alan C. Kerckhoff, Richard T. Campbell, and Idee Winfield-Laird, "Social Mobility in Great Britain and the United States", American Journal of Sociology, September, 1985, 91:281-308.