Chapter 1

Introduction: A Climate of Threat and Vulnerability

The September 11 attacks transformed a nation that had been absorbed in the contentious 2000 presidential election, Republican-proposed tax cuts, shark attacks off the California coast, and Barry Bonds's pace to break Mark McGwire's single-season home run record into a nation contemplating its own mortality and the threat of terrorism. Previous controversies, social conflicts, and esoteric concerns became infinitesimal compared to the newfound sense of fear and vulnerability American citizens suddenly faced. Time literally stood still as the images of that day were replayed in a never-ending loop: passenger airliners exploding into buildings, people leaping from the top floors of the World Trade Center towers, the collapse of the towers onto both office and rescue workers, and the smoldering Pentagon. This came at the hands of foreign terrorists, who used America's openness to carry out a massive and heinous attack against innocent citizens. Perhaps indicative of an increasingly self-absorbed and complacent culture that viewed international affairs as remote and inconsequential, it was simply unimaginable that nineteen men with box cutters from one of the more desolate regions in the world could organize an attack that could kill thousands of American citizens and, in the process, compel American society and political authorities to reassess its security and freedom. In coming to terms with their new sense of vulnerability, American citizens had to confront the fact that they were part of a larger community of nations, in which their happiness and security were increasingly attached to the happiness of others around the world.

Although America had been attacked before—by Japan in 1941, by foreign terrorists, also on the World Trade Center, in 1993, and by domestic terrorists on the Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995—most Americans had neither experienced nor understood what it was like to live under the threat of terror. For much of its existence, America has been a stable and relatively orderly society. Citizens largely have had lit-

tle to fear, and the things they feared the most were usually small and vicarious. Most other societies had already experienced the ravages of war and uncertainty, but Americans had been, for the most part, exempt from direct threats and feelings of vulnerability. Fear that another attack was waiting to happen weakened many previous convictions and governed how Americans interacted with each other and perceived political authorities.

American citizens have also had to adjust to restrictions on their civil liberties and personal freedoms. Political authorities framed and widely promoted the notion that individual citizens would have to accept constraints on some of their freedom and civil liberties if those responsible were to be brought to justice and other attacks thought to be imminent were to be prevented. That citizens' rights should be protected from the government has been a fundamental tenet of American democracy: swapping liberty for greater security, even in the face of an external enemy, meant shifting the balance of procedural rights away from the individual and toward the government—another uncertain and frightening endeavor. Of course, many citizens seemed to tolerate the infringement on their civil rights and liberties as a necessary trade-off, given the threat of terrorism, but many others were also justifiably troubled by the constraints.

The conflict between national security and civil liberties in American society can be placed in a broader historical context. For instance, in 1798, with the threat of war with France and growing criticism of President John Adams's Federalist foreign policy by Thomas Jefferson's Republican Party, American citizens faced imprisonment or deportation for criticizing the government. Intended to silence the opposing Republican Party, the Alien and Sedition Acts could have nullified the First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and an independent press. In 1861, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus and restricted the freedoms of speech and the press for acts that discouraged enlistment or engaged in disloyal practices. World War I ushered in a number of laws and practices intended to crush dissent and leftist activities. Foreigners, generally viewed as suspicious or undesirable, were prohibited from working certain jobs and living in certain areas. With the Palmer Raids of the 1920s, suspected communists and socialists could be arrested or deported. In 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, fearing internal sabotage and attacks, ordered the forcible internment of Japanese Americans, detaining more than 120,000 citizens in prison camps for as long as three years. During this period, the Smith Act was passed, mandating the fingerprinting and registration of aliens in the United States. The 1950s witnessed McCarthyism and the suppression of First Amendment rights of suspected communists. In the

1960s, during the Vietnam War, military and CIA spies targeted war protestors, and President Richard Nixon attempted to stifle criticism from the press. From 1956 to 1971, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) prevented the exercise of the First Amendment rights of speech and association, and engaged in physical violence and false imprisonments, on the theory that preventing the growth of radical and dangerous groups, such as the Black Panther Party and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, protected national security.

With the September 11 terrorist attacks, American citizens experienced more extensive challenges to their freedom and liberty. Although many of the increased powers of law enforcement were unilateral, resulting from executive orders or rule changes quietly announced in the Federal Register, some of the restrictions of civil liberties were approved by Congress as part of the USA Patriot Act. Many of the freedoms and civil liberties frequently claimed to be under attack conflicted with law enforcement efforts to investigate and prevent terrorist attacks. American citizens were forced to weigh the balance between their personal freedoms and government efforts to provide for their personal security. This time, it was not only foreigners or perceived radicals who came under suspicion, but ordinary American citizens as well. Vice President Dick Cheney explained shortly after the attacks,

> We're going to have to take steps, and are taking steps, that'll become a permanent part of the way we live. In terms of security, in terms of the way we deal with travel and airlines, all of those measures that we end up having to adopt in order to sort of harden the target; make it tougher for terrorists to get at us. And I think those will become permanent features in our kind of way of life. ("Cheney Says War Against Terror 'May Never End.'" *Washington Post*, October 21, 2001)

Purpose of the Book

If American society is now at a new stage in its political development, in which citizens perceive greater tension between freedom and security, understanding how exposure to events like the September 11 attacks shapes such decisions is critical. Democracies are not likely to fail in response to reflective thought but rather in response to crisis events in which citizens become more accepting of anti-democratic measures and political authorities who, during such periods, are more likely to act on anti-democratic impulses. Passions, expected to be held in check during quiet times, become excitable in context. As a result, theoretically grounded and systematic analyses of individual attitudes are required to delineate how the overwhelming feelings of threat and vulnerability influence

trade-offs between civil liberties and security. With original data from a national public opinion survey conducted shortly after September 11, and subsequent follow-up interviews, this book provides such an analysis. Its goal is to examine individual citizens' attitudes toward civil liberties in the face of incredible threat and vulnerability. As tragic as the terrorist attacks were, the context provides an incredible and unique opportunity to study the commitment to democratic principles. Never before has liberty clashed with other important values like security, and never before have scholars been prepared to examine the nature of the trade-off. Studying the support for democratic principles in abstract and hypothetical situations has been important, and provides the basis for theoretical expectations, but it is a totally different matter to study the support for democratic values in context, where they clash with other important values and have tangible consequences. Abstract support for democracy and civil liberties usually garner overwhelming support, but in applied contexts where citizens have to practice what they preach, democracy likely suffers. To begin to unravel the viability of liberal democratic principles and where America citizens draw the line, it is critical to examine those rights when they conflict with other values. A person who supports the rights against unreasonable searches and seizure, the right against self-incrimination, jury trials, and the right to privacy might interpret such rights differently when they protect terrorists and constrain political authorities from protecting society. Whereas such values can be perceived in detached terms, they take on different meaning and urgency in context. Hence, this book is about understanding the reactions to the terrorist attacks as much as it is about advancing and challenging various theoretical literatures, though I do not view either as mutually exclusive.

As I mentioned earlier, before the attacks, American citizens probably felt that they had little to fear and little reason to relinquish any of their civil liberties. The stability and orderliness of the American political system, evidenced by the peaceful resolution of the highly contentious 2000 presidential elections, made it inconceivable that security and liberty could conflict in such a way that citizens would be asked to choose between them. Until the democratic resolve of American society was challenged by a heightened sense of vulnerability and governmental policies intended to provide for greater security, most citizens had been spared such discomfort and distress. Under the threat of terrorism, however, individuals were compelled to make that choice and the outcome was attached to substantive consequences. Americans were no longer innocent and dispassionate bystanders in an easily dismissed drama being played out on the other side of the globe. Fear and uncertainty involved in the trade-offs were at their doorstep.

Security trade-offs are not easy. Although it is probably true that "we live almost our entire lives making judgments about security" (Schneier

2003, 7), individual citizens, operating from a heightened sense of fear, patriotism, and renewed faith in government, appeared to give the government the latitude to prevent future attacks and apprehend terrorists. People may have particular difficulty reconciling their desire to conform to democratic values with their fears about terrorism and governmental policies intended to make them safe and secure. To refuse to compromise, even on important civil libertarian values, would have been considered imprudent and unpatriotic, given the threat individual citizens faced. As reflected by the level of fear and threat of future terrorist attacks, Americans were also expected to acquiesce to government under the logic that they themselves were law abiding citizens who had nothing to hide and that increased monitoring and surveillance without prior court approval was not terribly harmful. But the nature and extent of such concessions, and individual perceptions of the proper balance between freedom and security, were open questions. From an academic standpoint, much has been written about the uneasy task of balancing civil liberties and national security in times of crises (Chang 2002; Cole and Dempsey 2002; Leone and Anrig 2003; Rehnquist 1998), but little is known about individual reactions to system norms and principles when the society is attacked and when it is easy to cave in to anti-democratic passions. The attacks created new and unexpected experiences across American society, some of which we are now only beginning to understand.

The questions I find most intriguing and important involve the situational components of liberty and freedom. There are limits to the amount of freedom and liberty civil society can enjoy before it reverts to the state of nature, and the context of the September 11 terrorist attacks takes us closer to understanding the parameters of individual acceptance. The idea of negative liberty captures the essence of the dilemma over the trade-off between liberty and security. Negative liberty is a philosophical concept dating back to classical philosophers such as Hobbes and Rousseau, but promoted more recently by Isaiah Berlin. As he defined it, negative liberty pertains to the idea that there should be a minimum area of personal freedom or a set of rights that are free from external interference or coercion by others and the government. There might be individual rights that are beyond the interference of others, such as the ability to be punished under retroactive law or to being declared guilty without a trial (Berlin 1958, 211), but individual liberty is not considered unequivocal, because it is not the only goal. People may place high values on other goals, such as justice or happiness, or culture, or security, or varying degrees of equality (Berlin 1958, 171). And, because "men are largely interdependent, and no man's activity is so completely private as never to obstruct the lives of others in any way," the clash of values must be weighed against each other and a compromised sought (Berlin 1958, 171).

Understanding the parameters of negative liberty—freedom from external interference or coercion—troubled many American citizens after September 11. Just where should they draw the line between their desire for individual liberty and their need for security? Fitting as the title, negative liberty sums up nicely the debate over individual rights and conveys a basic theme of the book: individual liberty and civil rights are not absolute.

Within an area of negative liberty, American citizens are probably somewhere between the two unfathomable extremes of complete freedom (that is, a state of nature) and complete government control, but it is unclear where individual citizens are willing to draw the line. Questions of particular relevance include: What does it take to transform a staunch supporter of civil liberties into their most ardent antagonist, and what does it take to sustain this decision? How does the context affect the willingness to trade civil liberties for security? What happens to the traditional standard-bearers of democratic rights, such as political liberals, Democratic Party supporters, the young, the highly educated, and African Americans, when they are exposed to anxiety and threat? Can democracy survive if support for civil liberties is situational? These are some of the broader questions I hope to address in this book, but such questions are best addressed incrementally, one puzzle piece at a time.

Understanding how context influences the development of political and social attitudes has become increasingly important (Huckfeldt 1984; MacKuen and Brown 1987), but nowhere more so than in the political tolerance and democratic norms literature (Gibson 1987a, 1992; Gibson and Bingham 1985; Stouffer 1955). Applying democratic principles, unlike many political and social attitudes, hinges on if and how they clash with other important values in real contexts, and research on political tolerance and support for democratic norms has deep roots in studying individual commitment to civil liberties contextually. As Paul Sniderman and his colleagues (1996, 62) observed, "arguments over rights are arguments embedded in a context." The strength of individual commitments to democratic norms may be best understood when people have to tolerate and live with the consequences of their democratic beliefs. According to Herbert McClosky and Alida Brill (1983), "often the question we must face is not whether to grant or to deny freedom, but whether to honor it in a context in which conflicting values and goals are also present" (431).

This book is about the public's reactions to trading off civil liberties for security as political authorities and the media framed it. Using the term *trade-off* to describe the relation is intended to reflect this framing, because the media and authorities in turn shaped how individuals eventually thought about it. Such a disclaimer is necessary because the clash of rights and the eventual politicization of the civil liberties and security decision assumes such values are mutually exclusive, and though this

Hobbesian and Lockean framing of liberty and security as opposites simplifies the issue for individuals with little information to go on, liberty and security traditionally have not been thought of as contradictory. Thomas Hobbes believed that the individual impulses of fear of death and desire for power, if left unchecked, would result in brutish and solitary lives. To keep these impulses in order, individuals would have to cede all authority and sovereignty to a single authority in exchange for security from each other and foreign threats. Through brute force, the sovereign power would control the violent and selfish impulses of individual members of society. They would lose liberty, but they would gain security and community.

Rousseau, however, pointed out that positing freedom and security as inimical was fundamentally flawed. The social contract, for Rousseau, reflected a similar concession of authority to the general will in exchange for safety. However, individuals did not have to be protected from their impulses, but rather from political authority that did not seek to maximize individual liberty while preserving order. Through security and order, individuals gained equality and freedom. Following this line of thought, liberal democratic theory rests on the idea that individuals have certain rights, and that they surrender their liberty to the promise that civil society will protect their rights. Moving from the state of nature, in which there is complete liberty but no security, the purpose of civil society is to protect citizens from each other and from the government. Without security, one cannot enjoy liberty or freedom. John Locke suggested in the *Second Treatise of Government* that "the great and chief end, therefore, of men's uniting into common-wealths, and putting themselves under government, is the preservation of their property," meaning liberty (1690/1980, 66).

American citizens were not asked to make trade-off decisions in a formal sense. Many of the challenges to civil liberties were unnoticeable. The trade-off decisions I refer to involve the decision to protect civil liberties in the face of tangible consequences.

Political Acquiescence and Threat

At the end of the day, American citizens had tangible reasons to remain fearful and discreet in their reactions to efforts to provide for their security. Many traditional defenders of civil rights and liberties, such as the Democratic Party, were notoriously silent on the trade-off decision. Expressing disapproval or disagreement required incredible courage. Individuals appeared to give up their liberty and freedom easily and without regret. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann suggests that such silence on civil liberties in context should not be confused with agreement (1993). Reflecting an aspect of the pressure to acquiesce to popular opinion, the terrorist attacks created a

climate in which there could be no counterargument to the restrictions on civil liberties proposed by the Bush administration to combat terrorism. According to Noelle-Neumann, individuals, using a "quasi-statistical sense" of their environment based on their exposure to media messages, are extremely sensitive to how their opinions match the climate of opinion in different situations. If the current climate is seen as hostile to their own opinions, individuals avoid speaking out and isolating themselves. They are more willing to express their views publicly if they find them to be prevalent or on the rise. People who perceive popular sentiment as consistent with their preferences are more willing to express them than people who see prevailing sentiment as discordant with their preferences.

The paucity of debate on issues that would have otherwise been extremely controversial reflects the core component of Noelle-Neumann's spiral of silence. Perhaps the minimal discussion on the balance of civil liberties and security should not have been too surprising, given the sense of threat and vulnerability among Americans, but people who would normally be expected to counter the challenges to civil liberties were cautious in their criticism. Thinking ahead and to their future accountability, few wanted to be labeled as unpatriotic, anti-American, or weak if they were not willing to acquiesce to the policies and viewpoints of the Bush administration. This meant supporting media reports concerning the continued threat of terrorism, but also accepting restrictions on civil liberties. For Noelle-Neumann (1993), the media play a critical role in political acquiescence. Because the mass media are the primary source of information for most citizens, they become the principal mechanism by which political authorities communicate with citizens and citizens become aware of popular sentiment. To the extent that the mass media reflect the sentiments of political authorities when following national crises, they could account for the continued heightened sense of vulnerability and political acquiescence.

Several scholars have noted how the mass media promote fear and anxiety during quiescent periods. David Altheide (2002) argues that even when there is nothing objectively to fear, the media convey to individuals that they are not safe. This is attributed to an overemphasis on negative and problem-oriented news that promotes a sense of vulnerability, exacerbated by the media's entertainment format. The media use of the word *fear* in headlines, and text has dramatically increased to the point where "it becomes part of the take-for-granted word of 'how things are,' and one consequence is that it begins to influence how we perceive and talk about everyday life" (Altheide 2003, 38). Similarly, Barry Glassner (1999) argues that the mass media stoke societal fear by overemphasizing negative and violent images. He suggests that using anecdotal stories in place of scientific evidence, misusing statistics to convey trends, and using expert opinions legitimize and exacerbate feelings of vulnerability.

Recent studies on the mass media following the September 11 attacks portray a media that tended to promote the preferences of political authorities in the Bush administration. Analyzing the content of stories in *Time* and *Newsweek* following the attacks, John Hutcheson and his colleagues (2004) find that topics related to national identity paralleled the perspectives of U.S. government and military sources rather than other U.S. elites and citizens. By reflecting the sentiment of political authorities, news stories tended to affirm core American values and demonize the enemy, directing blame away from U.S. policies. With most of the information sources created by government officials and used by the media following the attacks (Li and Izard 2003), the mass media was seen as complicit in mobilizing citizens to accept the worldview of the Bush administration. Similarly, content analyses of the editorials in the *New York Times* following the attacks seem to mirror political leaders, urging citizens to prepare for greater sacrifices (Lule 2002). Moreover, according to Brigitte Nacos,

> by dwelling endlessly on the outburst of patriotism and the idea of national unity without paying attention to other important matters in the political realm, the media helped to create an atmosphere in which criticism of the various crisis-related policy initiatives in Washington was mostly absent from the mass-mediated public debate. (2002, 195)

Robert Entman (2004, 107) goes considerably further in asserting that "in the wake of September 11, 2001, the government propound a line designed to revive habits of patriotic deference, to dampen elite dissent, dominate media texts, and reduce the threat of negative public reaction—to work just as the Cold War paradigm once did." Because the Democrats were basically compliant, as one might expect, the media found it especially difficult to challenge the administration, as top officials brought pressure on media personnel and organizations to reflect their worldview and to toe the White House line.

All of this supports Noelle-Neuman's point about the critical role of the media in fostering a silent public. Not only were American citizens likely to develop a keen sense of the risks and acceptable positions that would produce political acquiescence or silence, but they also had every right to believe that another attack was imminent, because they were being told as much. The climate was not conducive to debate or to understanding the implications of surrendering certain liberties and freedoms. However, such a silence, I hope to uncover, was only temporary acquiescence, as opposed to substantive support. American citizens were likely under a different source of threat.

In addition to highlighting a different manifestation of threat, this body of research makes it possible to respond to a common observation

made following the attacks of September 11, 2001. There was a belief that the emotional response and feelings of vulnerability among American citizens were irrational and overblown. Commentators pointed out that the chance of dying from a terrorist attack was so small that anyone concerned about another attack was somehow deranged or overemotional. I completely disagree.

Although it is probably true that the likelihood of death from a terrorist attack is small because there have been so few terrorist attacks on American soil, Americans believed they had a great deal to fear because they were continuously being shown horrifying images, and how politicians and the media framed the issues contributed to that fear. That there might be a discrepancy between an actual and perceived threat does not make the fear of it any less relevant. Unlike other fears that have gripped the nation, the terrorist attacks involved an actual event, coupled with the images and language by the media and political leaders. I submit that Americans were anxious and fearful because they were being told that they needed to be extra vigilant, that other attacks were likely, that they would have to adjust to this new way of life, and because they were being shown images supporting why they should be fearful. The Terror Alert System only exacerbated the anxiety by reminding people that there were terrorists out there trying to hurt them, drawing attention to a threatening situation without an appropriate plan. Of course, this was not the system's intention (though many would probably disagree).

The bottom line is that emotions of despair, anger, and threat are likely ingrained in the consciousness of American citizens and can be recalled with relative ease. Memories of the attacks and associated feelings of vulnerability do not just fade away, but instead become a part of what will define Americans collectively, much like the memories of the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Challenger disaster. The significance of these events is captured in what are considered flashbulb memories (Brown and Kulik 1977). These are distinctively vivid and lasting recollections of the personal circumstances surrounding the discovery of terrifying events. New and significant events cause people to respond with heightened emotional arousal, leading to the encoding of the circumstances. People are likely to remember in detail the context in which they first heard about the news, such as where they were and what they were doing. The degree of emotional arousal causes people to engage in overt rehearsal (conversations about what happened) and covert rehearsal (thinking about the event). Talking about the event and being exposed to pervasive media information can only, it is fair to expect, increase the memories and sustain the associated emotions (Finkenauer, Gisle, and Luminet 1997).

It is only a matter of time before memory researchers show the significance of the September 11 attacks. With the remarkable amount of media attention focused on the event, and the highly disturbing images of

airplanes exploding and buildings collapsing, Americans will not be able to escape the emotional underpinnings of the events. A direct measure of this ingrained event was shown in a 2006 Pew Research Center survey, that indicated 95 percent of respondents remembered exactly where they were and what they were doing the moment they heard the news about the attacks. It is clear from this high percent that memories and emotions of the attacks are highly accessible and, therefore, likely to influence political decisions for a long time to come. Though we can expect the accessibility of such memories to diminish with more time, the process of generational replacement will probably have to occur to diminish the effects of September 11, assuming no future attacks occur. The question I consider incredibly important is whether the consequence of sustained memories will lead to support for further restrictions on civil liberties. Although a heightened sense of vulnerability and the willingness to concede liberties for security are expected immediately following attacks, what happens over time to the trade-off of civil liberties for security as the attacks recede into the past and no others occur on American soil? I hope to describe a "new normal" within American society and how it pertains to support for civil liberties. Can the level of threat that was instrumental in influencing the willingness to concede civil liberties for security be sustained when the political context changes?

Theoretical Importance

Although there is a practical element to examining the trade-off between civil liberties and security in the context of the terrorist attacks, there is also an equally important theoretical element. The theoretical significance of this book centers on how individual citizens think about their democratic rights and respond to the perceptions of threat and vulnerability. We know from the theoretical literature on political tolerance that the support for civil liberties is situational. Some situations require individuals to be flexible with their commitment and, for the most part, American citizens have been. Staunch defenders of democracy in one situation can be made to moderate their beliefs while democratic antagonists can be made to soften their beliefs. But, this type of situation has usually involved the conflict between individuals or groups. It has been certainly true that the exercise of civil liberties and rights of a person or a group can translate into negative liberty for others, and the literature has done a superb job at detailing the parameters of this form of social conflict or where individuals draw the line. What we know about the support for civil liberties and the commitment to democratic principles is based on the willingness to tolerate the behavior of others. However, the clash of individual rights does not just occur between groups. Political authorities and the government often require incredible forbearance among citizens to tolerate restrictions on their civil liberties and rights. I

therefore examine a different form of tolerance, not so much the traditional focus on the willingness to tolerate the behavior of others as on the tolerance for government intrusion on civil liberties. Although the clash over rights frequently occurs between individual citizens, the literature has failed to consider what happens when political authorities and the government want to take away one's rights. This type of trade-off can be expected to involve a different calculus because the government is thought to protect individual rights and liberties. As I will show, how individuals think about government will be an important factor in the willingness to trade civil liberties for security.

Another problem with understanding where individuals might draw the line between democratic beliefs and concerns about security is that the value trade-off has been tied mostly to hypothetical situations. In this book, threat and perceptions of vulnerability are no longer hypothetical. Rather, perceptions of threat and vulnerability are part of the context of the attacks. Because the traditional focus in the study of democratic principles has centered on group behavior and the extent to which a group appeared menacing or threatening, perception of threat has been somewhat of a simulated concept. In the measure of the conflict between values, survey respondents have traditionally been asked to tolerate the behavior of their most "disliked" groups. This was an important approach in considering the nature of the conflict between groups during the early 1950s. Taking a step back from this approach raises questions about the nature of the value conflict between democratic values and threat. Perceptions of threat, the most important factor in determining whether a person is willing to concede support for democratic rights, are taken as the degree to which a person dislikes a certain group. Despite several important attempts to make threat less abstract by studying tolerance in context, threat has remained primarily hypothetical and simulated. We still do not completely understand the nature of threat and how it works. By linking the study of the commitment to democratic principles to the most frightening attacks on innocent American citizens, I consider threat as a direct function of personal reactions to the terrorist attacks.

In short, the major theoretical advancement of this book lies in the two most important aspects of support for democracy: a different and more explicit form of value conflict and the study within the context of a tangible rather than hypothetical threat. With this approach, many of the findings of the political tolerance literature are supported, but at the same time, many also require additional thought.

Data

This approach would not be possible without appropriate data. I will incorporate a variety of public opinion data in this analysis, but the primary data come from the National Civil Liberties Survey conducted by

the Office of Survey Research of IPSIR at Michigan State University. Shortly after September 11, Brian Silver and I, with generous support from the National Science Foundation, the Russell Sage Foundation, and Michigan State University, were able to field a national survey on the reactions to the attacks. The first survey was conducted between November 15 and December 12, 2001. With African American and Latino oversamples, this survey focused on the basic trade-offs between civil liberties and security, reactions to different social groups in society, political trust, patriotism, dogmatism, and perceptions of the root causes of terrorism.

Fearing that more terrorist attacks were likely to occur, just like everyone else, two panel waves were initially planned. The intent was to use the first survey as a baseline against which to compare reactions to subsequent attacks. However, when no further attacks did occur, we waited a year to conduct the second survey (January 21 to May 28, 2003) and still another to conduct the third survey (July 20 to November 5, 2004). Many of the questions were repeated across the panels, but we also considered new issues that came up between panel waves. The analysis for this book draws most heavily from the first wave of the data, with the understanding one must first thoroughly appreciate initial reactions to explore change. Nevertheless, because it contextualizes the initial reactions, change is also important.

Plan of the Book

I examine the support for civil liberties in the highly charged and emotional atmosphere following the 9/11 attacks across several chapters. Each is a puzzle piece; each question I address has a special role toward an ultimately larger argument. I develop different aspects of public perceptions and reactions to the terrorist attacks, the government, civic culture, democratic norms, and other citizens.

Chapter 2 focuses attention on the context of the terrorist attacks and related events. I am interested in showing the significance of the attacks and what it meant for American citizens. However, context is more than the acts of terror themselves. As far as I am concerned, it also encompasses the reactions to government behavior that had the likely consequence of exacerbating concerns about vulnerability.

In chapter 3, I develop the concept of trading off civil liberties for security, fit it into the appropriate theoretical context, and attempt to measure it. Drawing heavily on political tolerance literature, I look at the public support for civil liberties as a process of trade-off reasoning. Because of the social desirability aspects involved in measuring support for democratic norms, and the risk of confounding related preferences, conceptualizing and measuring support for civil liberties involves more of an implicit consideration of competing preferences than of other political attitudes and beliefs. My approach, following the framing of the media

and political authorities, is to make the trade-off decision more explicit. This approach is weighed against the existing literature.

In chapter 4, I disentangle the explanations for the support of civil liberties in the immediate aftermath of the attacks. Relying on eclectic bodies of literature, I develop and test a theoretical model of support for civil liberties. Though my main focus is on the various aspects of threat and vulnerability on the trade-off decision, I consider other relevant aspects of the context, such as the role of political trust, patriotism, political ideology, dogmatism, and sociodemographic factors. The model I develop here is the basic one I use throughout my analyses. It is clear from this chapter that freedom and liberty, unlike certain approaches to issues such as abortion and affirmative action, are not absolutes, because people who are protectors of liberty can become ardent antagonists of liberty.

Chapter 5 relies on several experiments embedded in the National Civil Liberties Survey to assess the extent to which individuals are capable of defending their choices regarding civil liberties and security. I assume here that initial choices reflect an opening bid, with the full range of consequences of individual preferences, either way, not fully appreciated. I challenged respondents' initial preferences confrontationally with the consequences of their choice. How do respondents react when presented with the consequences of their initial attitudes about the trade-off? What this approach reveals is remarkable. People under a heightened sense of threat did not consider the full consequences of their democratic concessions and were willing to go quite far in supporting political authorities.

In chapter 6, I turn to the panel aspects of the National Civil Liberties Survey to consider how support for civil liberties and its associated predictors have changed over a two-year period. Many observers have remarked that American society was changed forever by the attacks of September 11, and that individual citizens would have to develop new ways of thinking about their security and rights. This so-called new normalcy was to usher in new thoughts about vulnerability and weakness in support for civil liberties. I address these questions directly, with an interest in how changes in the political context (that is, decreasing political trust and increasing vulnerability) shape the willingness to trade civil liberties for security.

In chapter 7, I consider the extent of political acquiescence involved in the decision regarding civil liberties and security. A remarkable consequence of the heightened sense of vulnerability after the terrorist attacks seems to be people's adopting preferences they would not ordinarily support. Political partisans, specifically Democratic identifiers, had to accept restrictions on civil liberties—values they have traditionally protected. Given the extent of ideological and partisan polarization in American society, this required amazing forbearance on the part of Democrats.

Using partisanship, I examine the process of depolarization and silence in the context of the terrorist attacks.

Chapter 8 explores in greater detail the role of race and ethnicity in the support for civil liberties. I show that race is one of the most important explanations for supporting civil liberties following the attacks. African American support for civil liberties reflects not only a history of commitment to democratic norms, but also a certain sense of distrust and alienation. The protection of civil liberties among African Americans is not accidental, but it reflects a general support for the political system and its underlying principles.

Chapter 9 considers a different aspect of political tolerance by examining social group affect. American citizens were observed to have a renewed faith in each other after the attacks, but at the same time, social groups perceived as sympathetic to foreign terrorists were targets of violence and harassment. I consider the extent to which social group affect toward Islamic fundamentalists, Middle Easterners, African Americans, Jews, Latinos, whites, and Christian fundamentalists was influenced by feelings of vulnerability. Of particular interest is the extent to which a sense of threat and vulnerability places other groups, which are perceived to not conform to an American identity, at risk of intolerance.

In the final chapter, I step back to interpret the influence of the terrorist attacks on public opinion and the support for civil liberties.