

Preface

The idea for this book originated in 1986 and 1987 when I was a graduate student at the University of California, Los Angeles. In an international political economy seminar, I first encountered the story of Britain's conversion to free trade in the mid-nineteenth century. At that time, hegemonic stability theory was the most prominent (at least among IPE scholars) analytical framework for understanding Britain's departure from protection for agriculture (as seen in the repeal of the Corn Laws). I wrote a seminar paper in which I argued that domestic economic interests, and not the structure of the international system, provided the best explanation for the policy shift to free trade. I recall writing that first paper and feeling as though I had opened a Pandora's box of interrelated and overlapping issues, all of which conspired against a simple explanation for the policy shift.

Britain's repeal of its protectionist Corn Laws continued to puzzle and intrigue me (primarily because I was sure that my seminar paper was wholly inadequate). I abandoned my Soviet Union program of study in favor of a Ph.D. dissertation on repeal. John Zaller and Barbara Geddes helped me to discover the joys of empirical analysis and hypothesis testing, but this presented the problem of data collection. I traveled to Britain for what was intended to be four months of field work, but a romantic interest in a certain British economic historian (also my landlord) led me to marry, relocate, and start a family in Britain. (I never imagined that the puzzle of repeal would eventually lead my children to call me "mummy.")

Meanwhile, my intellectual interest in repeal ended (temporarily) with the completion of my Ph.D. in 1991. The dissertation offered an extensive (and data-rich) economic-interest explanation for the policy shift, but it paid scant attention to the role of ideas and institutions. Much to the chagrin of my supervisor, David Lake, I did not turn the

dissertation into a book—basically because I doubted that the sum offered more than three of the core chapters, which had been published separately as articles. (As indicated in various notes in this book, parts of chapters 3 and 4 were published in the *American Political Science Review* and *World Politics*. A fragment of chapter 6 was published in *Parliamentary History*, while the more complete version appeared in the *British Journal of Political Science*.)

In 1995, I returned to the story of repeal when I edited four volumes on Britain's conversion and adherence to free trade in the nineteenth century—*Rise of Free Trade* (Schonhardt-Bailey 1997). Having trawled through a mountain of primary-source documents relating to British trade policy from 1814 to 1906, I could no longer dismiss my earlier (and convenient) notion that ideas were unimportant in explaining the policy shift to free trade. But the methodological challenge was how to model and measure the role of ideas (and, more broadly, ideology) within a policy setting in which I believed that economic interests played a key role. Two possible avenues were (1) more careful dissection of the roll-call votes to measure the ideological motivations of Members of Parliament and (2) a thorough analysis of the parliamentary debates leading up to and including the year of repeal (1846). For the former, I relied on an adaptation of Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal's NOMINATE scores (with, I might add, generous assistance from Keith Poole in adapting NOMINATE to the Parliament of 1841 to 1847), and for the latter, I discovered the delights of computer-assisted content analysis in a little-known software called Alceste. This software made it possible for me to analyze over 3,000 pages of parliamentary debates on trade policy over the period from 1814 to 1846. Readers who wish to examine these debates may find the complete set on the data page of my Web site, <<http://personal.lse.ac.uk/schonhar>>.

Around the same time, Iain McLean shared with me early versions of his interpretation of repeal, which hinged on Sir Robert Peel, the Duke of Wellington, and the House of Lords and was later published in his book *Rational Choice and British Politics: An Analysis of Rhetoric and Manipulation from Peel to Blair* (2001). In a somewhat related vein, Ken Shepsle encouraged me to think more carefully about the institutional setting in which both interests and ideas might interact. Institutions, it seemed, were also central to the policy shift to free trade. It slowly dawned on me that the true story of repeal probably required some understanding of how economic interests interacted with ideas and the institutional setting of mid-nineteenth century Britain. While

attractive for some purposes, the simplicity of economic interests no longer provided me with an adequate explanation for repeal of the Corn Laws.

In the late 1990s, I decided to return to repeal in full force with the hope that I could somehow bring together (both theoretically and empirically) interests, ideas, and institutions in a single framework for understanding the policy shift to free trade. Whether I have succeeded in the pages that follow is for the reader to decide.

The long gestation period for this book has meant that I have acquired a number of debts of gratitude. I have benefited from the comments of various audiences, including numerous annual meetings of the American Political Science Association and the European Public Choice Society; the University of Sussex (1996); the “1846 Freedom and Trade 1996: A Commemoration of the Repeal of the Corn Laws” conference in Manchester (1996); the “Instituting Trade: Trade Policy and Nineteenth-Century Political Institutions” mini-conference at the Center for Political Economy, Washington University (1997); the Rational Choice Group, hosted in Brian Barry’s living room (1997); the Royal Institute of International Affairs; the London School of Economics Government Department Seminar; the Leitner Program in International and Comparative Political Economy, Yale Center for International and Area Studies (2003); and the Richard Cobden Bicentenary Conference, hosted in Cobden’s home in Sussex (2004). A number of individuals have, moreover, kindly provided me with detailed comments, helpful suggestions, and where necessary, unreserved criticisms. These include Nick Allum, Brian Barry, Lance Davis, Jeff Frieden, Barbara Geddes, Miriam Golden, Judy Goldstein, Bernie Grofman, Arye Hillman, Tony Howe, Doug Irwin, Chai Lieven, Fiona McGillivray, Tim McKeown, Iain McLean, Helen Milner, Michael Munger, Angela O’Mahoney, Bob Pahre, John Petrocik, Ron Rogowski, Howard Rosenthal, Ken Scheve, Ken Shepsle, Heidi Ullrich, Eric Uslaner, and Daniel Verdier. I am also grateful to John Covell (MIT Press senior editor) for his enthusiasm and support for this book and to the reviewers of this book for their helpful suggestions.

Because I have sought to measure empirically the three *I*’s (interests, ideas, and institutions) in the context of repeal, this book contains a variety of methodologies, including descriptive statistics; cross-tabulations; linear, logistic, and multinomial logistic regression; NOMINATE; and computer-assisted content analysis (Alceste). But numbers (particularly en masse) can be boring, and so I have tried to present the

results graphically wherever possible. In the early years, Craig Schonhardt (my brother) helped me to prepare the graphs, and in the later stages, Mina Moshkeri of the LSE Design Unit spent endless hours preparing the many graphs for this book. I am extremely grateful to Craig and Mina for their patient assistance over the years.

A number of bodies have generously provided funding for this project, including the UCLA Center for International and Strategic Affairs, the UCLA Political Science Department, the Nuffield Foundation, the LSE Staff Research Fund, and the LSE Suntory and Toyota International Centre for Economics and Related Disciplines (STICERD). I would not have been able to embark on this project let alone bring it to fruition without this funding.

I owe a very special thanks to the late W. O. Aydelotte, who dedicated his academic life to compiling a massive dataset on the MPs of the 1841 to 1847 Parliament. Considering that his dataset was compiled in the 1960s, both his data collection and his methodological pursuits were path breaking. My gratitude also extends to Mrs. Aydelotte, who located the names of MPs and sent them to Iain McLean, who in turn shared them with me. Without the names of the MPs, I would not have been able to complete the analysis of the critical roll-call votes on repeal.

Others lent a hand to this book in an essential but perhaps less direct way. Here I refer to the friendship and support of other women political scientists who also balance motherhood with research. For Barbara Geddes, Fiona McGillivray, and Frances Rosenbluth, I hold special affection and gratitude. I must also note the words of the late Susan Strange, who in her 1995 International Studies Association presidential address shared her personal story of having six children. She encouraged young women political scientists not to defer motherhood for too long. Feminists were not pleased with her remarks, I am told, but her words gave me the courage to take a leap of faith into motherhood, and for that I am deeply grateful.

Finally, I have left the dearest to the last. Four men have—in very different ways—provided me with strength, patience, and the intellectual wherewithal to complete this book. First, my late father, Ray Schonhardt, had a motto: “If it’s worth doing, it’s worth doing right.” Well, Dad, it took me awhile, but this book is about as right as I can get the story of repeal. Second, Gordon Bannerman has been (and continues to be) an outstandingly committed and diligent research assistant. The detailed appendices to this book, in particular, are testament

to his excellent skills as an historian. Third, if ever there was a model supervisor and mentor, David Lake would be it. Never once has David stinted in offering me advice in all aspects of my research and career. For his guidance, wisdom, and friendship over the past nineteen or so years, I am tremendously grateful. And fourth, my husband, Andrew Bailey, is my number one pillar of support. For many years, he has skillfully and patiently helped me to enter data, interpret stacks of computer printouts, edit text (over and over again), and tease out the logic of difficult arguments and even has found time to deal with diapers, laundry, and dinners while I sit at the computer. Most importantly, he has encouraged me to persevere with this project and has provided me with a comfortable and loving environment in which to do so.

This book is dedicated to our children, Hannah Louise Schonhardt Bailey and Samuel John Schonhardt Bailey. My dears, your prayers and your affection got me through the final stages of this project. Hugs and kisses to you both.