CHAPTER 4:
THE SEQUENTIAL INDIVIDUAL

Cultural theory's assessment of the individual can be understood in several ways. This chapter illustrates the Sequential Individual Approach; individuals' cultural biases are determined by the present context, or, in other words, individuals switch from culture to culture in order to achieve consistency between context and cultural bias. We can all cite examples of individuals like this who fulfill several roles in their lives. In *Cultural Theory* this alternative is presented in the following manner:

> [...] we would expect that an individual's bias will be consistent only to the extent that his social context is consistent. An individual may find himself in cutthroat competition with his business rivals, hierarchical relations in the military, egalitarian relations at home, while treating certain areas of life, say inability to carry a tune, with a fatalistic resignation. (Thompson et al. 1990, p.265)

My interpretation of the quotation above is that one uses context as a guiding principle when choosing cultural bias, which again gives answers to most facts of life.[1]

[1] In contrast to this, the authors of *Cultural Theory* also believe that a person who sees many sides in a question will have problems with making decisions. This is based on the idea that the cultural biases are in opposition to each other, and one thus has to choose between them in a concrete situation without a guiding principle. But this does not fit with the Sequential Individual Approach! It belongs to the Synthesized Individual. My interpretation of the

The authors of *Cultural Theory* present compartmentalization as the mechanism people use to keep these different cultural biases separate from each other. There are two different kinds of compartmentalization: first, the individual need not be aware of the contradiction; second, she might believe that this separation is positive (*CT*, p.266-267).

To summarize, I will use these assumptions in the following analysis. Individuals meet conflicting contexts in their lives. The context determines their cultural bias. This would lead to internal conflict and strain, had not there been compartmentalization, i.e., a separation of the different cultural biases from each other. This separation follows the separation of the contexts, both thematically and in time and space. Thus, the individual does not have a coherent and stable set of values and preferences. The individual is instead divided into multiple selves that each demonstrate one of the four cultural biases.[2]

4.1 Recognizing Effects of Sequential Cultural Bias

The most characteristic trait of the Sequential Individual Approach is **the lack of interaction effects** among the four cultural biases. This is because each cultural bias is kept separate from the others through compartmentalization. Another characteristic trait is the cultural biases' **dependency on the different contexts**, since the sequential individual is changing cultural bias from context to context. It would have been preferable to study the

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expectations in *Cultural Theory* is that the degree of difficulty in decision making is related to the number of cultural biases present in the self (this is in conflict with the ideal of compartmentalization!).

[2] The fifth way of life, autonomy or the hermit, is not an independent cultural bias but a combination of all four. The individual has the ability to see all four cultures simultaneously and to consciously choose between them.

respondents' cultural bias in different contexts, but the survey is collected in only one context, which at best can be said to be removed from the respondents' normal contexts. This detachment is a necessity for the survey as a method, but also puts severe limitations on its use. It could be argued that using widely divering topics (childcare, economics, environmental balance, risk, justice etc.), one could recognize the effects of separate contexts, but this is far from certain. If it is so that the context determines respondents' cultural biases, then we cannot use data collected in only one context to generalize to other contexts. Therefore, given the data I have in my use, I cannot study the cultural biases' dependency on the contexts.

The **best way to study** the Sequential Individual, therefore, is probably to search for a lack of interaction effects. This can be done by dividing the sample into small categories according to cultural biases, so that the individuals with a clear single preference are grouped according to their culture, and the individuals with a clear dual preference are grouped in a bicultural group named after these two cultures (for an example see 93).

I would have some expectations for these groups, given that the Sequential Individual Approach assumption holds. First, the monocultural groups should show clear patterns which correspond to their cultural bias. Second, the bicultural groups, i.e. groups containing respondents who support two cultural biases, should demonstrate a pattern which corresponds to either of these two cultural biases. By this I mean that if individualists choose A and hierarchists choose B, a respondent with both individualistic and hierarchical preferences should choose either A or B (depending on the context), and not the alternative

C nor anything between A and B. The point is that the sequential individual compartmentalizes these two cultural biases, and should therefore have opinions based on only one cultural bias at a time. They are thus not prone to compromises (which I expect the synthesized individual to be).

Although I had to abandon the study of the respondents' dependency on different contexts because of the lack of appropriate data, the lack of interaction effects is the clearly defined (even if somewhat abstract) characteristic I am expecting to find if the assumptions for the Sequential Individual Approach hold.

4.2 Establishing the Sequential Individual's Cultural Bias

To empirically determine the strength and the number of cultural biases present in an individual, I need to establish the sequential individuals' cultural biases. As in the previous chapter, I have utilized the cultural bias scales developed in Chapter two. I will divide the respondents into groups according to their cultural biases so that I can separate between respondents with a single cultural bias and those with a multicultural bias.

A sequential individual changes her cultural bias membership, so the variable must be operationalized in a way that it gives information about which cultural biases the respondent generally supports. This cultural bias variable will be on a nominal level with many categories. Some examples of values for this variable could be 'hierarchical', 'either

hierarchical or individualistic', 'either hierarchical or egalitarian', 'either hierarchical, egalitarian or individualistic'.[3]

The respondents have both positive and negative attitudes towards cultures, but I shall use **only positive attitudes** in the determination of the sequential cultural bias. If I would include the rejection of a cultural bias in the attributes used to build the Sequential Individual it would result in impossible combinations. It is possible to imagine an individual who has a high positive score on Egalitarianism, and a high negative on Individualism. This would be an individual who supports Egalitarianism and rejects Individualism. If we apply the Sequential Individual's logic to this situation, we would find an individual who in one context has strong support for Egalitarianism, and in another context a strong rejection of Individualism.[4] Clearly, a situation where the respondent's only culture is a 'negative' one does not allow the individual to act. In addition to rejection of a culture, one needs simultaneously a positive direction, and the compartmentalization of the cultural biases does not allow for this.[5]

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[3] In labeling of the variables I will use a system in which I first indicate the number of cultural biases involved (mono-, bi-, etc.) and then the first letter of the cultural bias. The above mentioned examples are presented as 'mono-H', 'bi-HE', 'tri-HEI'.

[4] With 'context' I refer to the social relations in a situation, so that different situations exhibiting similar social relations (grid-group) can be considered as being equivalent contexts.

[5] It could also be argued that if one is positive to Egalitarianism, this automatically makes one somewhat negative to Individualism. If one accepts this, either the use of the rejected cultural biases in determination of the sequential bias becomes redundant, or one is already moving towards the Synthetic Individual Approach. In the Synthetic Individual Approach (in next chapter) all attitudes the individual has towards the different cultures are taken into account.

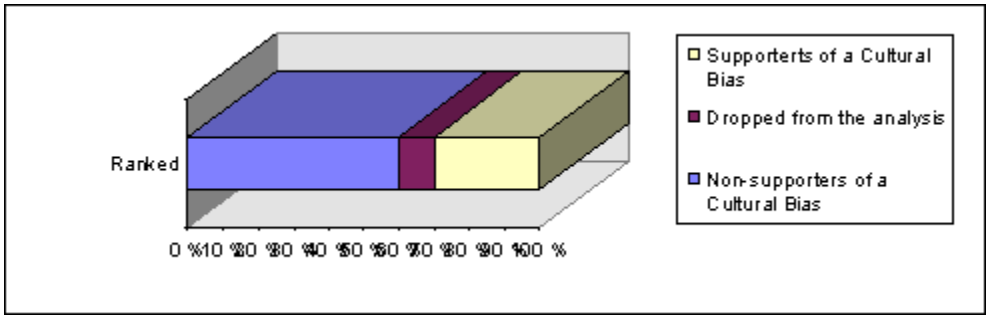

Figure 4.1 Who Are the Supporters of a Cultural Bias?

I have chosen to use the same standardized questions and their averages as were used in the previous chapter to simultaneously give the relative support levels for all four cultural biases. Then I established the level of support required of the respondent in order that it be considered a supporter of that culture, and accordingly placed the respondents as follows: four monocultural bias groups, six bicultural groups, four tricultural and one quadracultural bias group. I have used a manual coding system which registers the respondents belonging to the upper 30% as supporters of a culture, when the respondents are ranked according their support levels for the cultural bias in question (see Figure 4.1).[6] In order to be a nonsupporter of a culture the respondent should not belong to the upper 40% on that culture. The respondents between the upper 30% and 40% are dropped to ensure that there is a significant difference between the supporters and nonsupporters of a cultural bias. This way the uncertainties in the measurement of the cultural biases influences the results as little as possible. The number of supporters for the groups can be seen in Table 4.1.

[6] I chose 30% as a limit because this gives a group where all have a high support for a cultural bias. It seems to be reasonable to expect at least a quarter of the respondents to support each of the four cultural biases. Because the level chosen involves a subjective judgement and some uncertainty about the measurements themselves, I have chosen to remove some of the respondents from the analysis.

In the following analysis I am going to present sets of two pure cultures and the bicultural combination of these two. One example of this treatment would be to present the party preferences for pure Hierarchy, pure Egalitarianism, and the dual Hierarchy-Egalitarianism in the same figure to evaluate the presence of interaction effects. The figures are based on adjusted standardized residuals because these take into account both the size of the parties and the deviation, and this way the residuals can be compared directly with each other, and across the tables. An adjusted standardized residual, can be interpreted as how much and in what direction having the specified culture change the distribution of party preferences, compared with the rest of the sample. Thus, I can with full confidence refer to the sample I am analyzing, but when inferring to the population I need to be cautious since several groups are small.

CULTURE3 Cultural bias single and combinations
Based on the 30% rule.

Value Label	Freq.	Percent	Valid Percent
mono_E	167	11.8	21.3
mono_F	55	3.9	7.0
mono_H	61	4.3	7.8
mono_I	88	6.2	11.2
bi_EF	54	3.8	6.9
bi_HE	46	3.3	5.9
bi_HF	39	2.8	5.0
bi_HI	49	3.5	6.3
bi_IE	33	2.3	4.2
bi_IF	31	2.2	4.0
tri_HEF	29	2.1	3.7
tri_HIE	26	1.8	3.3
tri_HIF	33	2.3	4.2
tri_IEF	20	1.4	2.6
Hermit	53	3.7	6.8
	630	44.6	Missing
Total	1414	100.0	100.0

Table 4.1 Sequential Individuals' Cultural Bias Combinations

The groups formed by the tricultural bias categories are too small for regular parametric techniques, and many of other groups are borderline cases, so I will mainly be using crosstables to present the data.

4.3 The Sequential Individual's Social Background

I shall use some social background variables to describe the different types of sequential individuals to illustrate the Sequential Individual Approach. I shall look upon age, education, and social position, because this gives me some possibility to compare the different versions of the theory later. It is also important to relate any theory about individuals to other well-understood social phenomena that are on an individual level.

In the Sequential Individual Approach the distance between context and the social background variables is so great that it is not meaningful to use these variables to say anything precise about the relation between context and cultural bias. I shall include age, education and social position here only as descriptions of the different groups. With the Coherent Individual Approach the situation is very different: because the cultural bias is constant for each individual, the personal background variables do tell us, in addition to personal traits, something about the context. When the shifting contexts do have an effect (as with the Sequential Individual) this is not possible, because contexts change but these social background variables do not reflect the changes.

4.3.1 The Sequential Individual's Age

The respondents' ages covariate with their **cultural biases**, both according to the combination and the number of cultures involved in that combination. Regarding age the monocultural cultural biases vary in the same manner as with the Coherent Individual; the youngest group of supporters are individualists with a mean age of 36 and the oldest are hierarchists with a mean age of 44 years. The bicultural combinations vary from 39 to 47 years in average, with respondents with both Hierarchy and Individualism as the youngest, and respondents with Hierarchy and Egalitarianism as the oldest group. The other groups are fairly similar with means around 45 years. Thus, there does not seem to be any clear pattern between age and the cultures that are included in the bicultural combinations. The tricultural respondents mean age varies from 42 to 50. And for the last group, which supports all four cultural biases, the average age is 60 years[7].

The **numbers of cultural biases supported** by respondents is also dependent of age. At 37, the monocultural group has the lowest average age. Bicultural and tricultural groups have averages of respectively 42 and 48 years, and the quadracultural (hermits) group is, on average, 60 years old. If we compare the F-values for all the different combinations (F=9.94) with the F-values for the different numbers of cultural biases supported (F=37.3)

[7] These age differences between supporters of mono, bi, tri, and quadracultural biases were even wider when I applied the strongest 20% supporting a cultural bias as a criteria for supporters instead of the strongest 30%. These effects were general and not connected to a single cultural bias. Which shows that the stronger the support for a cultural bias, the bigger the differences in age! This seems to point towards a learning model instead of a generational model to explain the differences, which I will come back to later.

Dependent Variable **AGE**
By levels of

The Sequential Cultural Bial Combinations				**The Number of Biases in the Combination**			Equality of means	Equality of variance
Value Label	Mean	Std Dev	Cases	Mean	Std Dev	Cases	t (sig)	F (sig)
	age			**age**				
mono_E	35.9	13.4	167	37.2	14.3	371		
mono_F	36.6	13.0	55					
mono_H	43.9	16.7	61				-3.49 (.001)	12.6 (.000)
mono_I	35.7	14.0	88					
bi_EF	38.4	16.1	54	41.7	16.6	252		
bi_HE	42.0	16.3	46					
bi_HF	47.4	17.2	39				-2.62 (.010)	6.50 (.011)
bi_HI	42.0	17.0	49					
bi_IE	40.1	14.3	33					
bi_IF	41.1	18.0	31					
tri_HEF	47.4	19.1	29	47.3	19.1	108		
tri_HIE	48.2	18.9	26					
tri_HIF	50.0	18.7	33				-4.46 (.000)	7.15 (.008)
tri_IEF	41.2	20.3	20					
quadra_HIEF	59.9	15.7	53	59.9	15.7	53		
Within Groups	41.6	15.8	784	41.6	15.9	784		
	F = 9.94 Sig.= .0000 Eta = .39			F = 37.32 Sig.= .0000 Eta = .35				

Table 4.2 Sequential Cultural Bias Combinations, Mono, Bi, Tri and Qaudracultural Bias and the Average Age.

we can see that the number of cultural biases per individual is more strongly related to age than are the cultural biases in the combination. Further, the number of cultures the respondents switch between differs in the spread in their ages[8]. This analysis shows that the number of cultural biases supported is clearly related to age.

These findings related to age can be explained by a learning model in which each cultural bias is something that must be acquired through experience. Increasing age makes it more likely that the respondents have had several different contexts over

[8] I have not tested all possible combinations, only those which are adjacent to each other, since there is an increasing age from group to group. Levene's test (F) shows that the variances are unequal, and therefore the t-test used measures unequal variance (using pooled variance). Each of the t-tests shows that each mean is unequal to the mean adjacent to it.

sufficiently long periods of time, a condition required for internalization of a new cultural bias. This also seems to conform with the general belief that young people are more radical (supporting only one or two cultural biases), whereas older generations have a broader perspective (support several cultural biases). This could also explain why older people are less likely to feel strongly about an issue, as they have several cultural biases to fall back on.

4.3.2 The Sequential Individual and Education

Education is also related to cultural biases, but no preferred culture or cultural combination corresponds clearly to an educational level. Among the monocultural groups, the egalitarians have the highest general educational levels. In Table 4.3 perhaps the most interesting phenomena is the negative relation between educational level and the number of cultural biases supported. The more education one has, the fewer cultures one supports. How does this correspond to the Sequential Individual

Dependent Variable EDUCYEAR Education in years
By levels of CULTURE3 Cultural bias
combinations

	Mean	Std Dev	Cases	Mean	Std Dev	Cases
mono_E	13,8	3,3	158	13,2	3,1	348
mono_F	12,6	2,8	50			
mono_H	12,2	3,1	55			
mono_I	12,9	2,8	85			
bi_EF	12,4	3,3	49	11,9	3,1	228
bi_HE	12,3	3,1	39			
bi_HF	10,0	3,0	34			
bi_HI	12,9	2,7	44			
bi_IE	12,0	3,1	32			
bi_IF	11,3	2,6	30			
tri_HEF	10,3	2,6	23	10,3	2,6	90
tri_HIE	10,3	3,4	24			
tri_HIF	10,0	2,3	27			

Table 4.3 Education in Years, Sequential Combinations of Cultural Biases and the Number of Cultural Biases

Approach? It is possible to imagine that higher education has a strong socializing effect, where people coming from different backgrounds will end up with the same kind of cultural bias. For example, if one studies law one starts to think as a lawyer. It is also possible that the results in Table 4.3 are actually caused by the generally lower level of education among the older generations; therefore, it is also important to study how age and education interact together in effecting the respondents' number of cultural biases.

In Figure 4.2 we can see how the probability of supporting two instead of one bias declines with increasing education; i.e. the respondents with higher education more often have a monocultural bias[9]. We can also see that the young and middle age groups are very similar to each other, whereas the oldest age group is much more

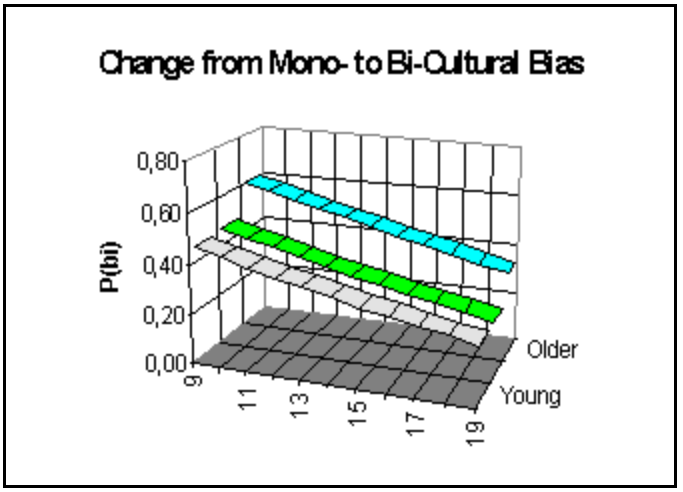

Figure 4.2 Probability of having Two instead of One Bias for Three Age Groups and Education in Years.

[9] This and the following figures are based on a Logit-analysis. The coefficients from the logit regression are used to create the probabilities for having n cultural biases for the different age groups. Even if I use the word **change** I do not imply that all individuals would change their number of cultures if their age changes. The results are based on a assumption that the model specification is correct, and no important variables are left out. The interpretation of these figures is straight forward; the higher the plane, the higher the probability for having a higher number of cultural biases. I have also tested these variables using a continuous age variable, gender, and different interactions between the variables. Age did not work too well because its effect is not monotonic, therefore I use age groups instead of age. Gender does not have any effect. None of the interaction terms for these variables were significant.

likely to have two cultural biases. The effect of belonging to the oldest age group is of the same magnitude as the effect of education across its range[10].

If we look at Figure 4.3 we can see the situation for the change between bi- and tricultural biases. Education has a much stronger effect, and this effect is modified more by the age groups. The more education the respondents have, the smaller the probability that they will have three cultures. For example, for all respondents having a higher university degree, or some other lengthy education, the possibility to have three cultural biases is close to zero. Thus, the effects of age are mainly visible for respondents with less education; for example, highly-educated respondents belonging to the middle-aged group show the lowest likelihood for having a tricultural bias. The oldest group has again the highest likelihood for having three cultural biases, over the whole range of variation in education, so that respondents with both high age and high education still show a small probability of having a tricultural bias. The probability for the youngest group of having a tricultural bias is in between the two other age groups, indicating that the effect of age is not linear.

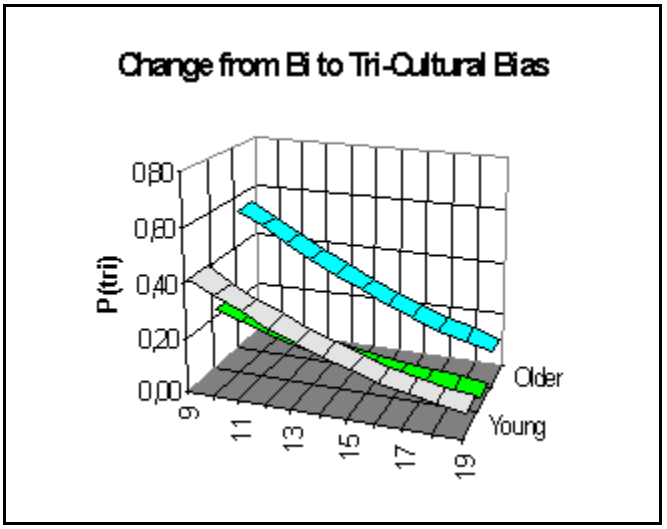

Figure 4.3 Probability of having Three instead of Two Biases for Three Age Groups and Education in Years.

[10] I have used education levels of from 9 to 19 years in the diagram. There are very few respondents having more education than 19 years, and their effect on the model is minor. Thus it would be misleading to use the full range of education in the diagrams, because I can not be sure that the effect of education is same for these respondents.

In Figure 4.4 we cn see that age has a large effect and education a small effect when moving from having three to four cultural biases. Among the youngest and middle-aged groups very few support four cultural biases, regardless of their educational level. Among the oldest age group there is considerable support for all four cultures among those with low education. Education has the same effect here as with the previous examples, even if its effects are visible mainly in the oldest age group.

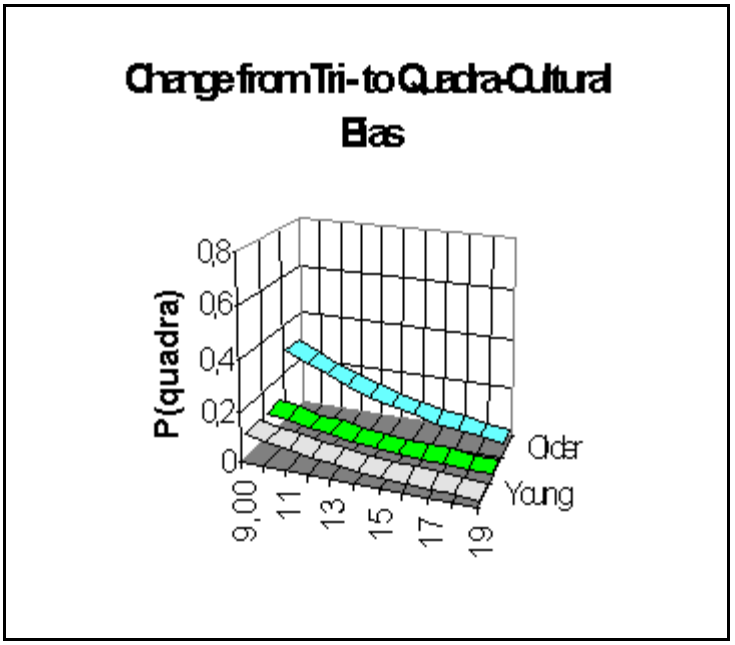

Figure 4.4 Probability of having Four instead of Three Biases for Three Age Groups and Education in Years.

The interpretation of these results is not without some ambiguity. It seems quite certain that age and education do have opposite effects on the number of cultural biases, but what does that mean for cultural theory? First, it could be that education and age provide one with very different types of learning: as regards the number of cultural biases age is broadening one's perspective whereas education narrows it. The second, and more compelling, alternative is that education first and foremost provides theoretical knowledge, which cannot be considered as a source of cultural bias (according to cultural theory, cultural biases arise only from social relations). Age in itself is not a source of cultural bias either, but it makes it possible to have lived for long

periods of time in different contexts,[11] which allows opportunities to internalize the biases in the different contexts. The third alternative is, of course, that the idea of counting the number of cultural biases supported by the individuals is meaningless, but this does not seem as convincing as the second alternative.

4.3.3 The Sequential Individual and Social Position

Given that the Sequential Individual Approach is correct, I have some expectations for social positions' relations to the number of cultural biases supported by the individual. Prolonged location in a context is supposed to teach the individual a new cultural bias; therefore, people who have had prolonged stays in several contexts should have a high number of cultural biases. I expect that the retired respondents have higher numbers of cultural biases than the people who are still working, because they have had a transition from a working lifestyle (context) to the pensioned lifestyle (context).[12]

In Table 4.4 we see how the number of cultural biases individuals support relates to age, the length of education and social position[13]. The model is able to explain a fifth of the total variation in the number of cultures per individual, which is sufficient for the model to be interesting. By looking at the ETA^2 we see that length of education explains four times as much of the variation as does age, and eight times as much as does social

[11] This can happen either by changing position in society, changing jobs, a change in family situation or by a general change in society. High age gives several contexts almost by default, since modern society has gone through significant and numerous changes during the last 50 years.

[12] Among the people coded under living from social support is also unemployed, who have a similar situation as the pensioned, but I believe that the association holds still.

[13] I have chosen to use age divided into 6 groups because the effect of age is non-linear. By using age as one of the factors instead of one of the covariates, the non-linearity of the effect is preserved. There is a problem with heteroscedasticity, and one of the age groups is quite small, but MANOVA should still be robust under these conditions.

position. It is important to notice that the effect of education is much stronger than the effect of age in this table.[14] The model as a whole and the effects of the education and age groups are statistically significant on the 0.05 level, whereas the effect of social position is not statistically significant. *Social position is only weakly or not at all*

Tests of Significance for THE NUMBER OF CULTURAL BIASES
using UNIQUE sums of squares

Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F	Sig of F
WITHIN+RESIDUAL	426,21	683	,62		
EDUCATION (REGRESSION)	35,05	1	35,05	56,16	,000
AGE IN 6 GROUPS	7,54	5	1,51	2,42	,035
SOCIAL POSITION	4,36	6	,73	1,16	,323
(Model)	109,14	12	9,10	14,58	,000
(Total)	535,36	695	,77		

R-Squared = ,204
Adjusted R-Squared = ,190

Effect Size Measures

Source of Variation	Partial ETA2
EDUCATION (Regression)	,076
AGE in 6 GROUPS	,017
SOCIAL POSITION	,010

AGE_6	Coeff.	Std. Err.	t-Value	Sig. t	
<30	,05	,091	,54	,590	
30-40	-,03	,084	-,35	,720	
40-40	,24	,099	2,47	,014	
50-60	,14	,155	,93	,355	
60-70	,50	,212	2,34	,019	

SOCIAL POSITION	Coeff.	Std.Err.	t-Value	Sig. t	
Worker	,03	,103	,31	,755	
Student	,26	,194	1,35	,179	
Retired	,29	,175	1,65	,100	
Social sup.	-,10	,137	-,70	,485	
Work at home	-,15	,181	-,85	,395	
Unemployed	-,22	,247	-,89	,376	

Table 4.4 Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA):
Number of Cultural Biases with Age, Education, and Social Position

[14] This relationship does not change even if age is treated as a continuous variable.

related to the number of supported cultural biases. The coefficients for age reveal that groups over 40 years have a higher than average number of cultures. For the age group 60 to 70 years, though, there is so much variation that the relationship is not significant. The age group over 70 clearly supports the highest number of cultural biases, but the coefficients for social position are not statistically significant. The high number of cultural biases found among the retired can thus be explained by their high age; not by their social position.

What does this mean for cultural theory's relation to social position? There are several **possible interpretations**. First, my attempt to indicate the number of social contexts by using social position is very crude, and does not give valid results. The contexts need to be defined by grid-group dimensions or by the four cultures; simply looking for high numbers of cultural biases is not what this theory is about. Second, it is possible that the correlation between high age and retirement is so strong that the effect of retirement cannot reliably be separated from the effect of high age[15]. Third, while the indication is crude, there should still be at least been some effects for the retired. As long as there are many cultural biases in society, all changes in social position should increase the possibility to encounter different cultural biases. This could indicate that contexts in general have less effect than cultural theory claims, which would be a severe problem for the theory (the Coherent and Sequential Individual Approaches) since the close connection between context and cultural bias is the cornerstone of the theory[16].

[15] When age is excluded from the analysis, the effect of social position becomes statistically significant and the retired have a considerably higher mean number of cultural biases than the still-working respondents.

[16] See the discussion in Chapter 1 on page 10.