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Abstract

This paper examines the utility of adopting the "supporter series" of partisan identification questions. Dennis finds that the traditional and supporter series approaches produce different marginal distributions of partisanship in the response sample. The supporter series also performs differently than the traditional questions in predicting to various criterion variables. The supporter "direction" item is better associated with certain criterion variables -- such as reported Presidential vote in 1976 -- than the traditional party identification question. On the other hand, the traditional "closeness" question is better correlated with other criterion variables -- such as evaluation of the party better able to deal with the country's most important problem -- than the corresponding supporter series variable. Dennis therefore recommends using both the traditional and supporter series question in the 1980 survey. Dennis also finds that a classification of respondents into groups, based on answers to party support and partisanship supporter questions, yields four distinct categories. Finally, Dennis finds that the party support/partisanship patterns derived from the supporter series are not well correlated with the seven point party identification scale, suggesting that the traditional self-classifications are not as firm as they are usually taken to be.

An Analysis of Some Measures
of Partisanship Using the
Pilot Study Data

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August 10, 1979

This is a study of political party identification using some of the data gen-
erated in the 1980 NES Pilot Study. The major questions that I address have to do
with the possible utility of using a set of questions that approach partisanship
from a somewhat different perspective than the traditional one.

The thinking that went into the construction of the pilot study on partisanship
consisted of several parts:

1. Several people voiced concern with the reasons people might have for their
    partisanship or lack of it. This produced a set of followup questions to
    the three traditional items on party identification, as well as some questions
    asking for an assessment of political parties in more general terms. The
    latter we have termed "party system support" items. The latter come out of
    earlier research of my own.

2. We also wanted to see if alternative, but parallel measures might be de-
    vised. One such item, devised by Herbert Weisberg, attempts to measure
    direction and intensity of partisan identification with a single question.
    This is a compact alternative to the usual thermometer items on "Democrats"
    and "Republicans", as well as to the traditional party identification measure.

3. We also wanted to get at the possible multidimensionality of partisanship.
    A series of items that attempts to separate more finely the various elements
    of partisan/nonpartisan self-image, which for lack of a better title I refer
    to as "the supporter series", addresses this area. This approach makes
    an essentially European-style entry in this area, by not asking initially
    whether one is an identifier or an independent but only whether one is a
    supporter or not. People are then asked about degrees of intensity of
    adherence (if supporters), and relative closeness to one of the two major
    parties (if nonsupporters). All respondents are then asked whether they
    think of themselves as independents or not, and if so, how intensely.
    The degrees of intensity and closeness are all measured on seven-point scales.

In order to assess these various alternative approaches to partisanship (and nonpartisanship), a division of labor was informally established in which Herbert Weisberg would focus especially upon the Weisberg scales and the thermometers, and Richard Brody would analyze the "reason for" followups of the traditional items, some semantic differential assessment of Democrats, Republicans, Independents and self, the regular series of open-ended party image questions and other related items, such as those pertaining to partisan preferences for discussion about politics with friends, etc. My own task was to assess the supporter series of partisan identification questions in relation to the traditional items and to bring to bear the party system support questions.

I addressed most fully the question of the relative utility of the various ways of measuring partisan self-image; and I employed essentially two kinds of criteria, both having to do with validity (given that none of the respondents were asked the questions I was concerned with more than once—thus ruling out anything on reliability assessments). The first of these validity criteria is simply whether the measure in question predicts better to various criterion variables than do the alternative measures. The second criterion asks whether we receive from the measure any useful new forms of discrim- ination in our analysis, i.e., some greater insight into the kinds of people who are partisan (or who are not) than we might otherwise have done. Let us take criterion validity first, to see what the evidence tells us.

Data Analysis

The first step in seeing whether and how the new measures are related to criterion variables, relative to the traditional ones, is to review their distributions.

Table 1 presents the marginal percentage distributions on the items for the traditional party identification measure , as well as for the alternative items.

[Insert Table 1 here]

One finds that we obtain somewhat different distributions in the sample for the varying approaches. Whereas some 53% admit to holding a party preference initially, using the traditional stem item, only 40% do so when approached with the supporter series of questions. This suggests either that the latter inquiry produces more

TABLE 1. Marginals on Partisanship Items

(Percent, N=280)

Items	Rep	Dem	Ind	No pref	DK/NA
1. Traditional PID stem	22%	31	29	8	10%

	strong	weak	Inap		
2. Traditional intensity	23%	30	47%		

	Closer to Rep.	Closer to Dem.	Neither	Inap	
3. Traditional closeness	9%	12	15	63%	

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	yes, a supporter	not a supporter	DK/NA	
4. Supporter version, stem	40%	52	8%	

	Rep	Dem	Other	Inap
5. Supporter version, direction	15%	25	1	60%

	7 very strong	6	5	4	3	2	1 not strong	Inap
6. Supporter version, intensity	8%	13	8	6	3	1	1	60%

	yes, closer	no, not closer	Inap
7. Supporter version, whether close or not if nonsupporter	27%	24%	49%

	1 very close to Rep	2	3	4	5	6	7 very close to Dem	NA	Inap
8. Supporter version, how close it nonsupporter?	4%	5	11	10	17	8	7	5	33%

	yes	no	DK/NA
9. Supporter version: Independent?	51%	42	7%

	7 very strong	6	5	4	3	2	1 not very strong	DK	Inap
10. How strong an Independent?	15%	12	11	8	1	1	2	1	49%

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	1 strong Dem	2	3	4	5	6	7 strong Rep	DK/NA
11. Weisberg Scale, 1st time	5%	9	13	49	10	6	4	4%
12. Weisberg Scale, 2nd time	4%	7	12	39	12	6	2	18%

"missing data", in that fewer people are able to respond positively to the notion

of partisanship put in this way, or else that we may have been getting some over-

report (13%) of the number of actual partisans using the more traditional stem item.

One is not able to resolve this question easily, with the evidence in hand,

however.   When the traditional question asks , "Do you think of yourself as"...

it may be picking up some people who imagine themselves in general to have a pre-

ference for one of the parties, but there is little behavioral or psychic investment

behind it.   But when they are asked instead if they "support" a party, they are

probably more apt to think in terms of which party they have actually voted for,

or for which they have a psychologically meaningful feeling of adherence.   Clearly,

both stems admit of some ambiguity; but it is a different set of ambiguities for

the two stems!   Neither of the approaches as it stands resolves this particular

difficulty.

Associations with Criterion Variables

If we consider for the moment the garden variety levels of association that the

various items that measure direction of partisanship have with available criterion

variables, then we see what is shown in Table 2.

[Insert Table 2 here]

This table excludes the main intensity items, and focuses more upon those that measure

direction.   In relation to such criterion measures as reported voting preferences

for 1976 and 1978, leading presidential candidate thermometer ratings, thermometer

ratings of each of the two parties and of their respective bodies of identifiers,

semantic differentials on the parties and such, the Pearson correlations (excluding

missing data, using a variable N program) vary somewhat across the various party

identification items.   The strongest relationship of any here is found for the

supporter party-direction item.   It correlates .88 with reported Congressional vote

in 1978.

TABLE 2. Correlation
of Single Item Measures
of Partisanship with
Criterion Variables

Item Measures of Partianship	Reported direction of Congressional vote in 1978	Reported direction of Presidential vote in 1976	Thermometer on J. Carter 1	Thermometer on E. Kennedy 1	Thermometer on R. Reagan 1	Thermometer on Republicans	Thermometer on Democrats	Thermometer on Republican Party	Thermometer on Democratic Party	Democrats fair	Democrats dangerous	Republicans fair	Republicans dangerous	Better party to help solve most important problem	L/C Scale
1. Traditional PID stem (Rep, Dem, Ind. or what?)	.69	.51	-.40	-.41	.26	.55	-.45	.52	-.55	.46	-.44	-.34	.25	.45	.29
2. Traditional closeness item (which party closer to, if Ind.)	.65	.64	-.26	-.20	.39	.44	-.34	.37	.05	.36	-.34	-.12	.47	.60	.51
3. Supporter item (if supporter: Dem, Rep or what?)	.88	.65	-.46	-.48	.27	.71	-.48	.64	-.63	.55	-.64	-.28	.36	.60	.45
4. How close? (on 7 point scale)	.27	.28	-.23	-.20	.11	.35	-.23	.33	-.11	.13	-.19	-.31	.23	.29	.06
1. Weisberg item/index 1 (direction and intensity)	.62	.55	-.37	-.38	.28	.68	-.44	.50	-.62	.49	-.49	-.32	.26	.50	.37
2. Weisberg item/index 2	.65	.55	-.44	-.44	.30	.61	-.45	.49	-.60	.58	-.52	-.30	.29	.54	.40

If one were interested solely in the question of how we might best identify the people who will, in all likelihood, vote the party line in their Congressional district -- and therefore will not necessarily be voting simply for the incumbent -- then this question might well give one a sharper tool than the present question. The supporter question certainly does pull out a set of respondents (N=83 out of a total of 187 who voted) who, with few exceptions, do connect their partisanship with their Congressional vote. To see which is the chicken and which the egg, however, we would need measurements on these variables at separate times. Obviously, in asking about being a supporter, many respondents may believe that we are asking them to generalize about their own voting behavior, rather than simply some set of general dispositions! It would help some with this problem if we were able to ask a followup probe of some kind, both to the traditional PID item and to the supporter stem. Such a followup would attempt to differentiate between three things: behavioral partisanship, merely holding a preference -- given this particular set of choices -- and having a sense of belonging (and therefore some cathexis with one or both of the parties). We still have not captured this particular set of nuances to this point. Why this may be important will become clearer in the second section of the paper below, when we compare people in different categories of supportive and non-supportive partisanship.

We also find in Table 2 that the supporter direction item does as well or better in level of association than the traditional PID stem on most other criterion variables. For example, reported presidential vote in 1976 correlates .51 with the traditional stem, but .65 with the supporter question. Where the traditional sequence seems to be better correlated with the criterion variables is in its question measuring closeness. Indeed, in some important instances the traditional closeness item shows a higher level of association than does the stem question -- such as on '76 vote and the question of the better party for dealing with the most important problem! The traditional closeness item is clearly more highly related to these criterion variables than the supporter equivalent on closeness. In only one instance does the latter show a stronger relationship (How fair are the Republicans?).

The Weisberg scale (see bottom of Table 2) does moderately well at these same tasks. But it represents a more complex concept in that it contains <u>both direction and intensity</u>. None of the single items shown above it contain any assessments of intensity. Thus, the competition is perhaps a little unfair. Despite this advantage, the Weisberg scale does not seem to add very much to the other ways of measuring partisanship. On the other hand, if one were really pressed for time in an interview schedule at some point, it might not be too bad as a shortcut.

But the Weisberg item/index should also be compared in its levels of association with the criterion variables to other indexes that one might construct from these partisanship measures. In Table 3, a relatively straightforward set of such indexes is presented, in relation to the same set of criterion variables that was shown in Table 2.

[Insert Table 3 here]

When we compare various simple linear combinations of these various items, we find that the relationships are about of equal magnitude for the best alternatives to the traditional index. The pure supporter index 1 does about as well as the traditional seven point scale, as does a mixed index which combines supporter direction and intensity with the traditional closeness measure (#6). A mix of new and old of the opposite kind performs in correlational terms about as well also. Thus, these measures are approximately alike as predictors of the vote or other related expressions of partisanship. One can thus build equally good mousetraps with the alternative questions, although as indexes, none actually outperforms the traditional measure.

Thus, on these grounds alone, there is no necessary reason to abandon the usual way of capturing partisan affiliation. If one wants to isolate people who are especially prone to register consistently their established sense of partisan preference in Congressional elections, however, then there might very well be good reason to add the supporter series. But there is probably <u>not</u> a good case for <u>substituting</u> the new measures for the old. Rather, the argument is probably in favor of using both sets of items, since they give one somewhat different kinds of information.

TABLE 3. Correlation of Indexes with Criterion Variables

Index	Reported direction of Congressional vote in 1978	Reported direction of Presidential vote in 1976	Thermometer on J. Carter 1	Thermometer on E. Kennedy 1	Thermometer on R. Reagan 1	Thermometer on Republicans	Thermometer on Democrats	Thermometer on Republican Party	Thermometer on Democratic Party	Democrats fair	Democrats dangerous	Republicans fair	Republicans dangerous	Better party to help solve most important problem	L/C Scale
1. Traditional PID Index strong Dem to strong Rep on 7 point scale	.77	.61	-.46	-.44	.32	.63	-.48	.56	-.54	.51	-.50	-.35	.32	.54	.39
2. Pure Supporter Index 1 supporter direction and closeness (on 7 point scale) yielding an index with range of 0-8	.77	.57	-.38	-.45	.23	.65	-.44	.61	-.69	.54	-.56	-.32	.33	.56	.35
3. Pure Supporter Index 2 supporter direction and intensity, (on 7 point scale) with nonsupporters and others scored 8, yielding an index with range of 1-15	.64	.50	-.34	-.36	.14	.58	-.36	.44	-.54	.47	-.48	-.20	.21	.46	.34
4. Pure Supporter Index 3 same as above, except that only independents who are not party supporters are scored 8, and all other non supporters are excluded	.69	.51	-.35	-.42	.03	.53	-.34	.55	-.65	.44	-.57	-.40	.19	.51	.22
5. Pure Supporter Index 4 supporter direction, intensity, and closeness scored from 1 (strongest Dem) through 21 (strongest Rep)	.72	.56	-.37	-.44	.18	.63	-.42	.55	-.69	.52	-.55	-.32	.28	.55	.34

TABLE 3. (continued)

Index	Reported direction of Congressional vote in 1978	Reported direction of Presidential vote in 1976	Thermometer on J. Carter 1	Thermometer on E. Kennedy1	Thermometer on R. Reagan 1	Thermometer on Republicans	Thermometer on Democrats	Thermometer on Republican Party	Thermometer on Democratic Party	Democrats fair	Democrats dangerous	Republicans fair	Republicans dangerous	Better party: to help solve most important problem	L/C Scale
6. Mixed Traditional/Supporter Index 1 supporter intensity plus traditional closeness, yielding a scale of 1-17	.74	.58	-.40	-.42	.17	.63	-.44	.52	-.60	.53	-.54	-.24	.27	.54	.39
7. Mixed Traditional/Supporter Index 2 supporter closeness and traditional intensity, range 1-11	.77	.59	-.44	-.49	.27	.66	-.50	.61	-.68	.54	-.53	-.44	.32	.56	.32
8. Net Thermometer Index 1 (Reps-Dems + 100)	.61	.55	-.40	-.53	.41	X	X	--	--	.50	-.45	-.34	.33	.61	.36
9. Net Thermometer Index 2 (Rep Party-Dem Party + 100)	.66	.54	-.48	-.40	.28	--	--	X	X	.54	-.55	-.42	.27	.51	.35

X = correlation of index with constituent items

-- = no data collected

Thus, the recommendation that I would make is to try to include both. I think this case can be strengthened if we look more closely at the types of people that are uncovered by the supporter series of partisanship measures. This addresses more the question of the powers of discrimination that are potentially added by introducing the supporter series of question.

Types of Partisans

In Table 4, I present the cross-tabulation of two of the items in the supporter series. These ask whether the person is a supporter of a party or not, and then asks these same people if they think of themselves as independents or not.

[Insert Table 4 here]

We find some 49 respondents who say they are both a supporter of a party and also an independent. This is nearly a fifth of the sample; and such respondents would appear to have, in terms of the assumptions that underlie the traditional questions on party identification, an inconsistent pattern. In the traditional questions, one is forced to choose between being a partisan or an independent. But a significant fraction of the general population, given the chance, apparently fails to conform to such a "rational" pattern. Indeed, the norms of political independence (including both non-partisanship and anti-partisanship) are strong enough that even hardened party identifiers may feel a strong disposition to assert, at least on a normative level, their own sense being politically independent. Some people apparently believe -- despite their own sense of partisanship -- that they should be able to vote on the basis of the better candidate, relative positions on issues, or something else; and that they are not therefore necessarily bound, at a normative level, by any enduring sense of partisan self-identity.

How do these people look, relative to more consistent people, in terms of the usual categories of party identification? Table 5 presents a cross-tabulation of such categories.

[Insert Table 5 here]

Table 5 divides people into four partisanship categories based on their answers

TABLE 4. Support by Independence
(Supporter Question Series)

A Supporter of a Party?		An Independent?			
		yes		no	
		col %		col %	N
Yes		35		55	111
	row %	44		55	
No		65		35	143
	row %	63		35	
		N=141		113	254*

* missing data = 26

TABLE 5.   Relationship of Traditional PID to Types of
            Partisanship Defined by the Supporter
                    Series of Questions

(col. %)

Traditional PID Index

Type of Partisanship	strong Dem	not strong Dem	Ind Dem	Ind	Ind Rep	not strong Rep	strong Rep	N
Supporter/Partisans	59%	27	3	3	5	23	59%	57
Supporter/Independents	28	24	18	3	27	13	30	45
Nonsupporter/Partisans	6	22	15	30	9	32	11	43
Nonsupporter/Independents	6%	27	64	65	59	32	-%	82
N =	32	45	33	37	22	31	27	227

to these two questions from the supporter series. There are two types of respondents who are consistent in terms of the usual categories. They are the supporter partisans and the nonsupporter independents. But there are also two mixed types -- those who regard themselves as supporters but also as independents, and those who say they are nonsupporters, but nevertheless have a partisan preference (ie, they are not independents). The first of these two mixed types could well be hardened party-identifiers who have nonetheless internalized the norms of the rational, active citizen who is supposed to maintain some studied detachment while deciding among competing candidates. Indeed, the hypothesis that they may show these kinds of attributes is well-known from extant work on the intransitivities and nonmonotonicities of the usual 7-point scale. (I first learned some of the gory details of this effect from Dick Brody some years ago; but I found later additional support for its existence in the Berkeley group APSA paper[1] and in the Political Methodology piece by Petrocik[2]).

The other mixed type appeared to me to be something of a different order, at least a priori. They are people who really don't think of themselves as having established patterns of party loyalty; yet they do discriminate among the available partisan objects. Perhaps they do so with some regularity -- at least enough to disavow being independents.

When we cross these four types of respondents against the traditional 7 point scale, what do we get? Table 5 makes clear that the distribution of traditional PID across these types is by no means the same. There are several effects of interest. First of all, the strong Democrats and Republicans are primarily (59% each) supporter/partisans. But there are significant fractions of these strong identifiers (on the traditional measure) who fall into the mixed types. Indeed, there are relatively more who are strong identifiers (on the traditional questions) who also admit to being independent (28% of the strong Dems and 30% of the strong Reps.) than there are in any of the other traditional categories.

Secondly, it is the weak (traditionally measured) partisans who are more often found (along with pure independents) in the other mixed types -- the nonsupporter

partisans -- rather than the independent leaners.

We also find a few people who say they are pure independents on the traditional items yet are supporters and/or partisans on the supporter series. And the corollary is that a few strong Democrats say they are nonsupporters and independents on the supporter series (but no strong Republicans show this degree of inconsistency). Thus, from either direction, there is some indeterminacy in these more extreme categories; and these self-classifications are not as firm as they are usually taken to be therefore.

Now to take an additional step along this same path, we can also look at how the thermometers fall in terms of this four-fold taxonomy. Table 6 presents some relevant data of this kind.

[Insert Table 6 here]

We find at least some power of discrimination when we compare mean thermometer ratings of various kinds across the four partisanship categories. But such discrimination is not all of one kind. We find for example, considerable differences among the four types on their average thermometer ratings of Independents. The supporter partisans give them a rating of only 36.1, while nonsupporter independents gave this a 62.7. As between the two mixed types, the supporter independents felt more warmly toward Independents (55.6) than did the nonsupporter partisans. But on the companion if rather opposite item which rates political parties, the supporter independents are also higher (with 67.3 as against only 55.0 for nonsupporter partisans). The people who thus most approve of parties in general are also the ones more likely to approve a self-appellation of independent, and who rate Independents fairly high therefore!

Table 7 pursues these patterns of association further.

[Insert Table 7 here]

Part A reveals a transitive pattern on relative strength of traditional partisanship, which suggests some fairly rational ordering of these categories. But in part B we see that this ordering by intensity does not get translated into what is normally thought to be associated with partisan intensity, namely turnout. The people who are most likely to report themselves as having gone to the polls twice in two elections

TABLE 6.   Mean Thermometers by Category
                    of Partisanship

$(\overline{X})$

Thermometer	Supporter Partisans	Supporter Independents	Non Supporter Partisans	Non Supporter Independents
J. Carter 1	55.0	48.0	52.0	57.3
G. Ford 1	58.0	55.6	58.5	53.7
E. Kennedy 1	60.9	50.4	53.3	53.8
R. Reagan 1	58.6	53.1	58.0	45.8
J. Brown 1	56.9	48.6	53.3	51.6
Republicans	62.6	61.7	58.5	52.8
Democrats	57.8	48.3	61.3	55.5
Rep. Party	55.2	51.4	55.6	49.8
Dem. Party	68.5	60.7	46.3	50.7
Independents	36.1	55.6	41.6	62.7
Political parties	62.5	67.3	55.0	44.6
Dem. party leaders	62.8	56.6	53.9	45.8
Rep. party leaders	60.1	53.0	54.4	45.3

TABLE 7.

Some Selected Relationships of other
Variables with Types of Partisanship

A.

(row %)

Traditional Intensity of PID

Type of Partisanship	Strong	Not Strong	N
Supporter/Partisans	65%	35	54
Supporter/Independent	53	47	32
Nonsupporter/Partisans	20	80	25
Nonsupporter/Independents	8%	92%	24
			135

B.

(row %)

Turnout Index ('76 & '78)

	0	1	2	N
Supporter/Partisans	11%	21	68%	62
Supporter/Independents	10	12	77	49
Nonsupporter/Partisans	43	14	43	51
Nonsupporter/Independents	26%	19	55%	92
				254

C.

(row %)

"It is better to be a firm party supporter than to
be a political independent."

	1 Disagree very strongly	2	3	4	5	6	7 Agree very strongly	N
Supporter/Partisan	12%	7	7	7	20	14	24%	59
Supporter/Independents	27	22	8	12	10	12	8	49
Nonsupporter/Partisans	18	21	11	32	7	12	–	44
Nonsupporter/Independents	62%	22	4	5	1	5	–%	92
								244

D.

(row %)

"Democracy works best where competition between
parties is strong."

	1 Disagree very strongly	2	3	4	5	6	7 Agree very strongly	N
Supporter/Partisan	2%	2	5	25	27	17	23%	60
Supporter/Independents	2	2	2	4	8	22	59	49
Nonsupporter/Partisans	5	5	5	12	26	21	26	42
Nonsupporter/Independents	6%	3	3	12	15	34	27%	86
								237

E.

(row %)

"The truth is we probably don't need political
parties in America anymore."

	1 Disagree very strongly	2	3	4	5	6	7 Agree very strongly	N
Supporter/Partisans	49%	12	10	12	–	10	7%	59
Supporter/Independents	58	13	4	8	4	4	8	48
Nonsupporter/Partisans	27	23	18	18	5	7	2	44
Nonsupporter/Independent	29	13	11	14	15	7	11	97

are the supporter independents (77% of them say they voted twice); whereas the least likely to have turned out are the nonsupporter partisans (43% failed to make it even once). This in itself -- assuming we want to give some account of non-voting -- would appear to make including the supporter questions worthwhile, because they allow one more finely to distinguish who is likely to vote and who will not.

We also see (in parts C-E of Table 7) that some general attitudes toward parties are differentially associated with these various types of partisanship. In Part C we find that supporter independents apparently value political independence more than do the nonsupporter partisans. In Part D, we find on the other hand that the people who value party competition the most are also the supporter partisans -- 59% of whom very strongly agree with the proposition as against fewer than 30% in the other types of partisan categories who do so. In Part E, a similar effect is present, in that the supporter independents are those who most strongly disagree with the idea that parties are no longer needed. Thus attitudinally, the supporter partisan is a special mix of pro-party orientations with belief in the virtues of being independent. In some sense, these people most sharply represent the ambivalence toward parties exhibited by the more general population -- an ambivalence which admittedly has turned somewhat more hostile over the past fifteen years.[3] They certainly are a set of respondents who bear close scrutiny as partisanship (and its effects upon voting) enter what may well become a new period of dealignment in the 1980's. Thus, we probably need to address in even a more fine-grained way what being a supporter and/or a non-identifier mean, and how such self-images are expressed attitudinally and behaviorally.

Conclusion

In general, therefore, this brief analysis of one set of party identification measures suggests that:

1. We ought not to abandon to traditional party identification index, because in criterion validity terms, it is still as good as any alternatives we have yet devised, overall.

2. There is nevertheless a case for adding an alternative approach, both in

order to be able to isolate better a group of people who are especially prone to vote their partisan predispositions (esp. in Congressional voting). More importantly, however, as this brief analysis has hopefully demonstrated, there are some interesting new possibilities for analysis of partisanship that open up with the use of the supporter series. Unfortunately, not many of the possible lines of inquiry could be pursued under the time constraints of this investigation and with the small sample size available. (I would have liked, for example, to have pursued voting choice differences and mean thermometers within the full 28-fold table elicited by the four types of partisanship split by the traditional party identification index -- but simply ran out of cases).

3. The party system support items are useful in this context (as well as in the more general "crisis of confidence in institutious and leadership" context). Thus, some subset of these should be included in the final instruments.

Unfortunately, we are just beginning to get the problem of partisanship in contemporary American society well-defined. The small series of steps taken in the pilot study toward clearer conceptualization and better measurement have been useful ones. Perhaps the opportunities of the larger 1980 Election Study will permit some quite incisive inquiries that can build upon this base of reexamination. Certainly the question of partisanship is something that will have relevance to our understanding of mass political behavior for some time to come,even as we possibly enter an age of weak parties,or at least an era of attitudinal and institutional transformation.

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