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Abstract

This paper describes the development and testing of a number of survey instruments designed to assess the public's perception of its national political leaders. The five measures examined by Kinder et al. and the authors' findings, based on an analysis of the 1979 Pilot Study, are as follows: (1) Trait based evaluation of leaders. The authors find that positive traits typically have a larger impact than negative traits on evaluations of candidates. In addition, trait evaluations appear to be somewhat candidate specific; a factor analysis of trait ratings uncovers both an underlying generic structure to those ratings and a dimension unique to each particular candidate. (2) Affective response to leaders. Affect scores are useful predictors of thermometer and preference ratings. These measures are not redundant with either trait and behavioral scores or with party identification categories. (3) Behavior-based evaluation of leaders. Respondents disclose predictions of candidate conduct, but these behavior-based measures are redundant with the trait inventory measures. (4) Conceptions of an ideal President. In theory this measure would provide a normative standard for comparisons among candidates, but in practice the measure does not behave this way. Attributes deemed important for an ideal President by the 1979 Pilot Study sample did not figure more heavily into respondents' evaluation of, or preferences for, specific candidates. (5) Spontaneous images of leaders. The standard open-ended candidate evaluation questions yield a wider range of responses than the experimental questions. Affect questions, however, appear to be a more effective way to elicit qualitative candidate impressions than the standard questions because the affect measures curtail the respondents' impulse to rationalize their responses.

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Developmental Research on Candidate Instrumentation:
Results and Recommendations

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1. Introduction

This report describes the development of an ensemble of survey instrumentation designed to assess the American public's perceptions of its national political leaders. It is about political leadership from the perspective of the ordinary citizen.

Defined in this way, the leadership literature is in disarray. It is unsystematic and fragmented, with isolated pockets of understanding here and there. Research has been dominated by descriptively-oriented case studies: e.g., on the special appeal of a particular national leader (Campbell et al., 1960; Converse & Dupeux, 1966; Hyman & Sheatsley, 1953); on the public's response to President Kennedy's assassination (Greenberg & Parker, 1969; Wolfenstein & Kliman, 1965); on the Nixon-Kennedy and Carter-Ford debates (Kraus, 1962; Sears & Chaffee, 1979); and so forth. Coexisting with this empirical literature--and autonomous from it--are both scholarly, speculative essays on political leadership and its meaning for the general public (Burns, 1978; Edelman, 1964; Greenstein, 1965) as well as popularized accounts, usually from an insider's perspective, on the merchandising of a political candidate (e.g., Agranoff, 1972; McGinnis, 1968; Nimmo, 1970; Wyckoff, 1968). The literature is hardly cumulative.

Ironically, research is more systematic and the evidence much stronger, on the need for concerted systematic work on political leadership. The problem of leadership addressed here intersects with a set of enduring general questions in the behavioral analysis of politics: among them, models of individual vote choice, the analysis of electoral change, studies of Presidential power, and theories of political socialization.

Our major objective here is to argue successfully for equipping the

1980 National Election Study with tried and tested instrumentation that will enable--really for the first time--systematic research on political leadership. As we shall see, some of our original hunches about the measurement of public response to national leaders have proved misguided; some, fortunately, have been richly borne out.

The remainder of the report itself comes in six sections. The first five correspond to different facets of leadership, or at least different ways of measuring response to leadership. We shall take up in turn: trait-based evaluation of leaders, the personality characteristics citizens ascribe to leaders; affective response to leaders, the pattern of emotional responses that leaders elicit; behavior-based evaluation of leaders, the behavioral expectations citizens hold about candidates once in office; conceptions of an ideal president, what an ideal president should be and do; and finally, spontaneous images of leaders, which reports our experimentation with three open-ended modes of eliciting leader impressions. Each section contains a description of the development of the relevant measures, an argument about their theoretical status, evidence on their empirical successes and failures, and closes with recommendations for the 1980 National Election Study. The final section then assembles the recommendations from the preceding parts, presenting a complete package of candidate instrumentation for 1980.

Before turning to the various sections, a few preliminary comments are in order. First, the new candidate instrumentation tried out in the CPS survey used as targets Carter, Ford, Kennedy, and Reagan. This group came to be called, affectionately, the gang-of-four. We will often refer to them in that way here.

Second, much of our analysis of the CPS survey explored the relationships between the new candidate instrumentation and other relevant political judgments. We made special use of a pair of criterion variables in particular. The first is preference. All CPS respondents were taken through a series of questions to determine their rank order preference among five would-be presidents: Carter, Ford, Kennedy, Reagan, and Brown (referring to Carter as a would-be president is not intended as a comment on his administration, but rather looks ahead to his probable status in the 1980 campaign). This permits the construction of preference measures for each of the candidates separately, which are displayed in Table 1.1. As shown there, Ford enjoys a narrow advantage over his counterparts, at least in terms of average number of opponents outranked (2.31 out of 5). Ford's edge reflects not so much enthusiasm for his candidacy (only 23% prefer Ford above all others) as it does his capacity to avoid irretrievably alienating large segments of the citizenry (just 14% ranked Ford last among the five). Kennedy makes a nice contrast here. Kennedy evidently polarizes people: 29% prefer him most of all; 28% ranked Kennedy last.

These same contrasts show up in our second criterion variable: evaluation, assessed in terms of the familiar CPS thermometer rating scale. This measure is in fact the unfamiliar CPS thermometer scale. Two forms of the thermometer measure were included in the spring survey: the standard measure, and an experimental version, identical in all respects except that only three points were labelled (0°, 50°, 100°). We relied upon this new version, since it was administered to all respondents, and in the same wave. The marginals are shown in Table 1.2. Ford is

Table 1.1

Candidate Preference Ranking

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1st | 21.1% | 23.1% | 28.8% | 23.4% |
| 2nd | 18.6 | 28.6 | 20.2 | 19.8 |
| 3rd | 25.3 | 17.6 | 12.1 | 14.7 |
| 4th | 18.6 | 17.1 | 10.6 | 16.2 |
| 5th | <u>16.5</u> | <u>13.6</u> | <u>28.3</u> | <u>25.9</u> |
| Mean Opponents Out-Ranked: | 2.09 | 2.31 | 2.11 | 1.98 |

Note: Preference rankings range from 1st to 5th because Jerry Brown was included in the pool of candidates. N is 194.

again the leader, though his margin seems to have diminished. And once again, Ford's "victory" is achieved by avoiding black marks rather than any special talent for stirring up support: only about 7% of the CPS sample evaluated Ford unfavorably (20° or less), about half the total provoked by the other three candidates. Kennedy again provides the sharpest counterpoint: among the gang-of-four, evaluations of Kennedy are the most extreme (compare the standard deviations across the bottom of Table 1.2). Not surprisingly, evaluation and preference are closely related. The Pearson correlation between the two is .55 for Ford, .61 for Carter, .63 for Reagan, and .64 for Kennedy. The analysis that follows makes extensive--and equal--use of these two measures.

One final point: our report of course draws heavily on the CPS spring survey. But at various points it will prove useful to draw comparisons between the results from the CPS spring survey and those from our own more modest study undertaken in November and December in New Haven. In anticipation of those comparisons, we should note now the ways in which the two samples are comparable and the ways in which they differ.

The New Haven sample was drawn by selecting names from the city directory. We contacted potential respondents first by letter and then by telephone to invite their participation and schedule an interview. Face-to-face personal interviews were eventually completed with 135 New Haven residents. We offer no assurance that this sample represents even New Haven faithfully, but in demographic and political terms, the sample did in fact match up well with population figures. More pointedly, the New Haven sample appears comparable to the CPS spring study sample on most demographic variables. There were essentially no differences

Table 1.2

Thermometer Evaluation

| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| 0° | 8.6% | 3.9% | 8.9% | 7.1% |
| 1-10 | 2.5 | 1.9 | 2.2 | 3.6 |
| 11-20 | 2.5 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 3.6 |
| 21-30 | 9.6 | 5.8 | 8.5 | 7.1 |
| 31-40 | 3.2 | 6.1 | 5.0 | 5.4 |
| 41-49 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 2.9 | 3.9 |
| 50 | 19.3 | 26.1 | 21.1 | 22.1 |
| 51-60 | 11.2 | 15.4 | 6.4 | 10.1 |
| 61-70 | 8.3 | 3.7 | 7.5 | 5.4 |
| 71-80 | 15.0 | 17.9 | 12.5 | 13.6 |
| 81-90 | 5.4 | 4.0 | 7.5 | 6.1 |
| 91-99 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 2.3 |
| 100 | 6.1 | 3.9 | 9.3 | 5.0 |
| Can't Judge Don't Know | 2.1 | 3.3 | 4.6 | 5.0 |
| Mean: | 53.6 | 56.0 | 54.9 | 52.8 |
| SD: | 27.3 | 22.6 | 29.0 | 27.1 |

between the two in the distribution of age, race, sex, or marital status, and the New Haven sample was only slightly better educated on the average than was the CPS sample. (Such comparabilities do not necessarily reassure us about the national sample, of course). The single appreciable difference was in partisanship: except for the faculty attracted by Yale's new School of Organization and Management, there are virtually no Republicans in New Haven. Self-identified Democrats outnumbered Republicans in our New Haven sample by more than six to one, a ratio that corresponds roughly to city registration figures. By contrast, Democrats enjoy a much narrower advantage in the CPS spring survey, about three to two. The difference is important. It means that the two samples offer sharply different environments in which to explore candidate instrumentation. To the extent findings from the two samples converge in spite of differences in partisanship, to that extent we should find them more compelling.

2. Trait-Based Evaluation of Leaders

Whenever Americans have been asked what they like and dislike about major party presidential candidates, a substantial proportion have responded with references to the candidates' personal characteristics. From Eisenhower to Carter, such personalizing has been a significant and quite stable part of candidate imagery (Nimmo and Savage, 1976, summarize much of this evidence). In an analysis of the 1972 and 1976 open-ended candidate questions, for example, Miller and Miller (1976, 1977) identified five general categories of personal references: competence (including references to the candidates' experience and ability); trust (statements pertaining to the candidate's honesty and integrity); reliability

(references to the candidate's responsiveness, decisiveness, and stability); leadership (references to the candidate as inspiring, communicative, warm and likable); and finally personal attributes (the candidate's demographic characteristics--e.g., in 1976, Carter's Southern origins). Such qualities were cited by roughly 30% of the national sample interviewed in 1972, and by about the same proportion in 1976, with competence, trust, and reliability mentioned most frequently. Moreover, judgments expressed in these terms were sharply related to overall evaluation (as indexed by the thermometer rating scale; Miller & Miller, 1976, p. 843; 1977, Table II). All this evidence suggests that candidates are evaluated partly in terms of the traits they exemplify--or better, traits they appear to exemplify.

For guidance in understanding trait-based candidate evaluation, we turned first to social psychology. Remarkably enough, four autonomous lines of social psychological research in fact converged in their implicit recommendations: first, that trait-based evaluation of candidates should be multi-dimensional, and second and more precisely, that such evaluations should fall roughly along the largely independent dimensions of competence and sociability. These two dimensions emerge in investigations of leadership in small groups (task versus socio-emotional leadership; Cartwright & Zander, 1968); in attitude change research on source credibility (expertise versus trust; McGuire, 1969); in research on interpersonal attraction (respect versus affection; Rubin, 1973); and in person perception research indicating that people's evaluations of others can be represented in terms of two distinct though related dimensions (intellectual competence versus affection; Rosenberg & Sedlak, 1972;

Rosenberg, 1977).

When we turn back from social psychological investigations to consider candidate evaluations per se, relevant evidence becomes difficult to find. Certainly one precursor of our current activities is a community panel study of voter reaction to the 1976 Vice-Presidential Debate (Kinder, Denney, & Wagner, 1977). By factor analyzing a trait inventory included in both our pre-debate and post-debate interview schedules, we expected to find two correlated but conceptually distinct components to candidate evaluation: a competence dimension ("intelligent, "experienced," "hardworking") and an integrity dimension ("trustworthy," "misleading," "honest"). Evaluations of both Dole and Mondale did indeed fall along the two predicted dimensions--particularly in the post-debate interview and especially for respondents who had watched the Vice Presidential Debate.

These results suggest the promise of a multi-dimensional approach to trait-based evaluation. A preliminary step in developing measures that adequately reflect this was taken in our New Haven survey. New Haven respondents were instructed to think about a specific politician, and then asked how well each of 48 traits characterized him. (These 48 are essentially an elaboration of a briefer inventory that was part of our Vice-Presidential Debate study.) The sample was split at this point: half were asked about Carter and then Ford; half were asked about Kennedy and then Reagan.

Factor analysis of these lengthy inventories did in fact reveal dimensions of competence and integrity, though they emerged in somewhat different ways for each of the gang-of-four. For each, competence and

integrity did constitute the first two, dominant and weakly correlated factors (Pearson r between them was around .2). But overlaid on this structure, the separate factor analyses also identified idiosyncratic themes. For example, traits that defined Kennedy's competence factor included knowledgeable, hard-working, inspiring, and smart. His integrity factor was defined by ruthless, reckless, sneaky, greedy, power-hungry, unstable. Competence and integrity are clearly represented here, but the specific content of the factors seems to bear Kennedy's particular imprint.

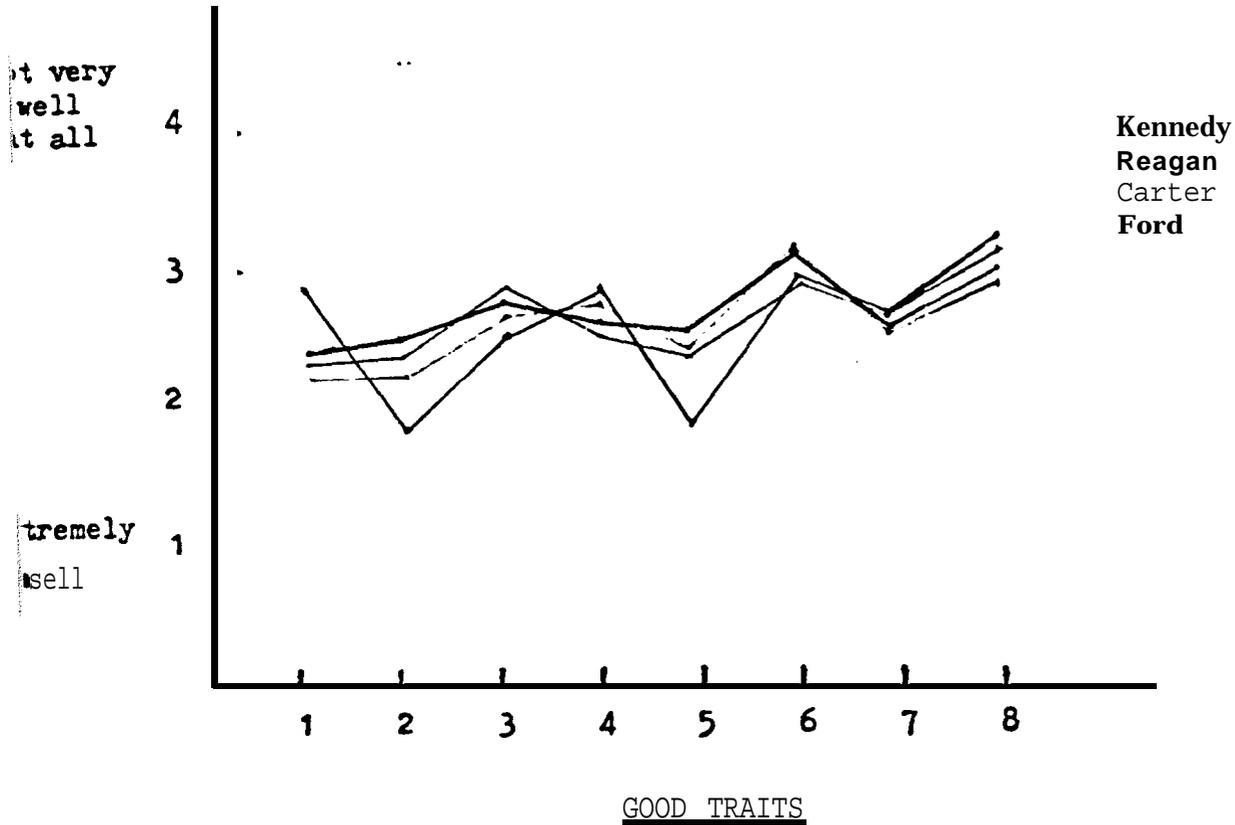
Based on these results, we drew up a trait inventory to be included in the 1979 CPS Pilot Survey. Our objective here was to assure coverage of the themes of competence and integrity, but also to attempt to anticipate the idiosyncratic meaning that candidates might contribute to these themes. As in the New Haven survey, respondents were instructed to think about a particular politician (one of the gang-of-four) and then asked how well each of sixteen traits (8 good, 8 bad) characterized him. The complete trait inventory is presented in Appendix A. It appears in abbreviated form in Figures 2.1 (good traits) and 2.2 (bad traits), along with the corresponding marginals.

Candidates Trait Profiles

These data indicate first of all that there are strong resemblances among the trait profiles associated with each member of our illustrious gang-of-four. Carter, Ford, Kennedy, and Reagan were all thought to be somewhat warm (lukewarm?), none was thought prejudiced, all were judged to be not very inspiring, and so on. Such similarities suggest that citizens may possess evaluatively-laden conceptions of political leaders in

FIGURE 2.1 ,

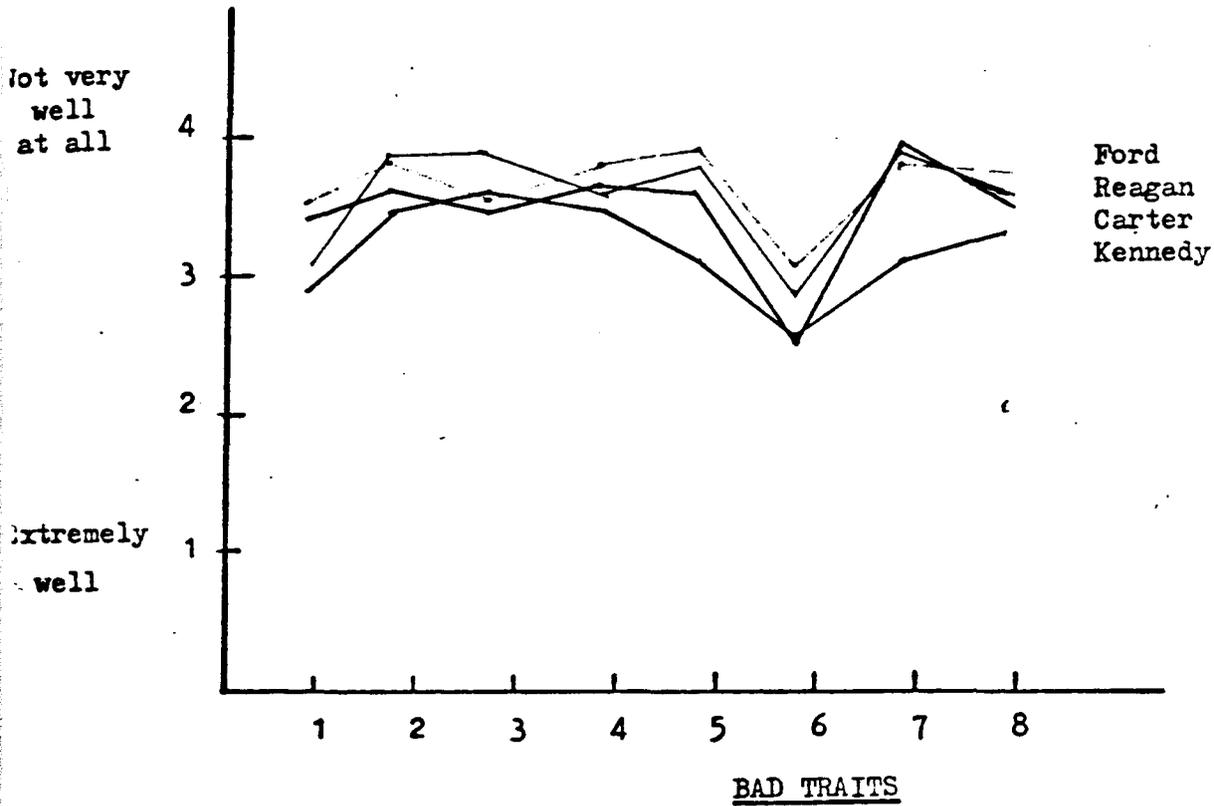
CANDIDATE TRAIT PROFILES



- 1= HONEST
- 2= KNOWLEDGEABLE
- 3= OPEN-MINDED
- 4= COURAGEOUS
- 5= SMART
- 6= INSPIRING
- 7= WARM
- 8= HUMBLE

FIGURE 2.2

CANDIDATE TRAIT PROFILES



- 1= POWER-HUNGRY
- 2= UNSTABLE
- 3= WEAK
- 4= PREJUDICED
- 5= RECKLESS
- 6= TOO-POLITICAL
- 7= IMMORAL
- 8= SELFISH

the abstract, which they then apply to specific cases. Thus merely appreciating Reagan's status as a prominent political actor may be sufficient to generate inferences about his courage, intelligence, stability, and so forth. To invoke a more expressly psychological vocabulary, citizens may hold implicit personality theories about politicians as they appear to do about others--in this case, about would-be presidents.

To be slightly more precise, contingent upon their own partisan identification, citizens may hold one implicit theory about Democratic would-be presidents, and another about Republican would-be Presidents. It should come as no surprise that trait ratings, heavily evaluative as they are, are influenced by citizens' partisanship. Self-identified Democrats tend to attribute favorable traits with greater assurance to Democratic candidates than to Republican candidates, while showing the opposite tendency for negative traits. Republican respondents are no less partisan, manifesting the complementary pattern. These partisan effects are summarized in Table 2.1. As indicated there, Democrats and Republicans generally differ--though not enormously--in their trait-based images of the various candidates. This suggests in turn that they may hold different implicit personality theories about Republican and Democratic candidates.

There is surely more to political trait ascriptions than this, however. Citizens do not merely generate inferences from some abstract prototype they hold about Republican and Democratic leaders. This can be demonstrated most clearly by returning to Figures 2.1 and 2.2. Although the general pattern displayed there is one of strong family resemblances, there are also occasional deviations, most of which are

Table 2.1

Correlation between Trait Attributions and Party Identification

| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| Good Traits | -.19 | .13 | -.20 | .24 |
| Bad Traits | .13 | -.10 | .23 | -.16 |

Entry is average Pearson r. Party identification is coded at 3 levels: Republicans (1), pure Independents (2), and Democrats (3). Typical N is 220.

provided by Kennedy, and in a way that should both dismay and elate Kennedy enthusiasts. The good news for Kennedy supporters is that, by the verdict reached by the CPS sample, Kennedy is judged more competent than the other three: he gets distinctively high ratings on knowledgeable and smart. The bad news for Kennedy enthusiasts is that their candidate also stands out from the rest on matters of trust and morality: he receives distinctively low ratings on honesty, reckless, and immoral. This suggests that citizens' trait-based evaluations of candidates are derived partly from their general understanding of the make-up of Republican and Democratic candidates, and partly from the particular and perceptually prominent qualities of particular candidates--as in Kennedy's much publicized brush with immorality.

Predicting Evaluation and Preference from Traits

Our next step was to explore the political significance of traits. We did this by examining the predictive power of trait ascriptions for overall evaluation and for preference. In the interests of parsimony and comparability with our parallel analysis of affect and behaviors (Sections 3 and 4) we formed two simple additive indices for each respondent for each of the four would-be presidents: one based on attributions of positive traits, the other based on negative traits. Table 2.2 presents the results from regressing thermometer-based evaluations of Carter, Ford, Kennedy, and Reagan on these positive and negative trait indices.

As indicated there, traits citizens ascribe to candidates are sharply related to how they are evaluated overall. Taken together, the positive and negative trait indices account for a substantial portion of variance in evaluation--ranging from about 30% in the case of Ford to

Table 2.2

Predicting Evaluation from Positive and Negative Traits

| | <u>simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <u>Carter</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .51 | 1.89 | .36 | .57 |
| Negative Traits | -.48 | -2.16 | -.30 | |
| <u>Ford</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .49 | 1.98 | .41 | .55 |
| Negative Traits | -.39 | -1.95 | -.26 | |
| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .63 | 2.62 | .48 | .68 |
| Negative Traits | -.54 | -1.57 | -.29 | |
| <u>Reagan</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .65 | 2.57 | .51 | .68 |
| Negative Traits | -.53 | -1.70 | -.24 | |

roughly 46% for both Kennedy and Reagan. (This analysis of course does not settle the causal issue here. To some extent, the perception of positive traits causes citizens to evaluate a candidate positively; to some extent, positive evaluations cause the attribution of positive traits. Traits are both reasons and rationalizations for evaluation--and for preference. We have no intention of resolving that issue here. We make our apologies now for the occasional causal-terminological lapses that will inevitably follow.) Positive traits tend to figure somewhat more heavily into overall evaluations than do negative traits, as indexed either by b, the unstandardized coefficient (i.e., positive traits exert a larger impact on evaluation than do negative traits) or by Beta, the standardized coefficient (i.e., positive traits "explain" more variance in evaluation than do negative traits). This asymmetry runs counter to Kanouse and Hanson's (1971) argument that people generally weight negative attributes more heavily than positive attributes in reaching overall evaluations.

Positive traits also generally predict preference more powerfully than do negative traits, as is shown in Table 2.3. As for evaluation, the relationships here are strong: positive and negative traits together predict, at the top end, roughly one-half the variance in Kennedy preferences and at the bottom, about 15% of the variance in preferences regarding Ford. And as before, positive traits tended to be somewhat more important than negative traits, with Carter again the exception.

This asymmetry, which shows up in both evaluation and preference, emerges in different ways among partisans of different persuasion. Among Democrats, positive traits are tied more powerfully to evaluation and

Table 2.3

Predicting Preference from Positive and Negative Traits

| | <u>simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <u>Carter</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .47 | .08 | .31 | .55 |
| Negative Traits | -.48 | -.12 | -.33 | |
| <u>Ford</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .35 | .09 | .29 | .39 |
| Negative Traits | -.27 | -.09 | -.18 | |
| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .67 | .16 | .51 | .72 |
| Negative Traits | -.58 | -.10 | -.32 | |
| <u>Reagan</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .63 | .14 | .49 | .66 |
| Negative Traits | -.51 | -.10 | -.24 | |

preference than are negative traits, but really only for Republican would-be presidents. The tendency in fact reverses in Democrats' evaluations of and preferences toward Democratic candidates. There negative traits seem to count for more. This same interaction shows up among Republicans: positive traits tend to overshadow negative traits when it comes to judging Democratic candidates; the opposite holds for Republican candidates, for evaluation and preference alike. (Among Independents, evaluation and preference are affected about equally by positive and negative traits.) Thus unfavorable personality characteristics become especially significant--especially troublesome--when they appear in candidates' representing one's own party. It is one thing for a Republican to think Edward Kennedy power-hungry; it may be another and more serious matter to recognize the same attribute in Ronald Reagan.

Finally, the predictive power of traits, both positive and negative, is essentially maintained when party identification is added to the regression analysis. These results are summarized in Tables 2.4 (predicting evaluation) and 2.5 (predicting preference). Notice first that including party identification increases the predictability of evaluation and preference over that accounted for by trait attributions alone only very slightly. For evaluation, the average multiple R improved from .62 to just .66; for preference, from .58 to just .64. (Compare Tables 2.2 with 2.4 and 2.3 with 2.5.) Nor does including party identification much affect the estimates of the effects due to positive and negative traits. As indicated by the unstandardized coefficients, the impact of trait attributions on evaluation and preference are only very slightly reduced when party identification is added to the analysis--by roughly 10-15%.

Table 2.4

Predicting Evaluation from Positive and Negative Traits
and Party Identification

| | <u>simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <u>Carter</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .51 | 1.51 | .28 | |
| Negative Traits | -.51 | -2.03 | -.31 | |
| Party Identification | .44 | 9.31 | .31 | .66 |
| <u>Ford</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .53 | 1.97 | .41 | |
| Negative Traits | -.46 | -1.94 | -.30 | |
| Party Identification | -.12 | -.01 | -.00 | .59 |
| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .63 | 2.38 | .44 | |
| Negative Traits | -.55 | -1.29 | -.18 | |
| Party Identification | .39 | 5.67 | .25 | .70 |
| <u>Reagan</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .64 | 2.43 | .48 | |
| Negative Traits | -.51 | -1.47 | -.21 | |
| Party Identification | -.34 | -3.76 | -.13 | .68 |

Table 2.5

Predicting Preference from Positive and Negative Traits
and Party Identification

| | <u>simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <u>Carter</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .47 | .07 | .26 | |
| Negative Traits | -.48 | -.11 | -.31 | |
| Party Identification | .36 | .37 | .25 | .60 |
| <u>Ford</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .35 | .08 | .27 | |
| Negative Traits | -.27 | -.07 | -.15 | |
| Party Identification | -.30 | -.35 | -.24 | .45 |
| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .67 | .14 | .45 | |
| Negative Traits | -.58 | -.08 | -.27 | |
| Party Identification | .49 | .42 | .24 | .76 |
| <u>Reagan</u> | | | | |
| Positive Traits | .63 | .12 | .41 | |
| Negative Traits | -.51 | -.07 | -.17 | |
| Party Identification | -.55 | -.60 | -.36 | .74 |

Finally, the Beta weights associated with traits tend to be as large--and occasionally substantially larger than--the weights estimated for party identification. In short, traits appear to figure heavily into citizens' evaluation of and preferences among political candidates.

Factor Structure of Traits

We also inquired into the structure of trait-based evaluation. Trait ratings were factor analyzed separately for each of the gang-of-four. Factors were identified and extracted following a principal factoring procedure with iteration. Three factors were so identified for each candidate, which were then rotated to an oblique solution. The final structures are shown in Tables 2.6 to 2.9, separately for each candidate.

Looking across the gang-of-four, the factor analysis results reflect a mix of the generic and the particular: trait-based evaluations can in part be described in terms of an underlying generic structure; and in part they appear to bear the particular imprint of particular candidates. As an illustration, consider the case of Gerald Ford (Table 2.7). Trait-based evaluation of Ford can be described in terms of three separate, though correlated factors. Factor A we shall call competence. It is defined most clearly by the traits of knowledgeable, smart, inspiring, and courageous (all positive loadings). Finding a competence factor is of course consistent with other lines of psychological research referred to earlier. But in our expressly political context, competence seems to incorporate more heroic elements as well: there are hints in the Ford results that a would-be president must not only apparently possess the capacity to make good decisions, but also to convey effectively

Table 2.6

Trait Factor Structure

| <u>Carter</u> | | | |
|---------------|----------|----------|----------|
| | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>C</u> |
| Courageous | .56 | -.22 | -.22 |
| Immoral | -.14 | .47 | .37 |
| Too Political | -.24 | .64 | .23 |
| Warm | .76 | -.23 | -.15 |
| Honest | .73 | -.32 | -.27 |
| Selfish | -.30 | .79 | .41 |
| Smart | .66 | -.09 | -.46 |
| Humble | .64 | -.31 | -.11 |
| Weak | -.35 | .41 | .76 |
| Reckless | -.34 | .43 | .67 |
| Knowledgeable | .70 | -.06 | -.40 |
| Unstable | -.31 | .41 | .77 |
| Open-Minded | .76 | -.31 | -.36 |
| Power-Hungry | -.29 | .75 | .32 |
| Prejudiced | -.32 | .71 | .34 |
| Inspiring | .69 | -.26 | -.29 |
| Pearson r: | | -.31 | .36 |
| | | | -.36 |

(N = 257)

| <u>Principal Factors</u> | <u>% of Common Variance</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 37.4 |
| 2 | 14.8 |
| 3 | 8.4 |
| 4 | 5.4 |
| 5 | 4.3 |
| 6 | 4.2 |

Table 2.7

Trait Factor Structure

| | <u>Ford</u> | | |
|---------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>C</u> |
| Courageous | .64 | -.21 | .24 |
| Immoral | -.00 | .41 | -.03 |
| Too Political | -.18 | .55 | -.22 |
| Warm | .49 | -.19 | .51 |
| Honest | .50 | -.39 | .55 |
| Selfish | -.15 | .55 | -.39 |
| Smart | .76 | -.04 | .04 |
| Humble | .28 | -.17 | .62 |
| Weak | -.50 | .54 | .05 |
| Reckless | -.17 | .69 | -.09 |
| Knowledgeable | .76 | -.12 | .19 |
| Unstable | -.22 | .76 | -.02 |
| Open-Minded | .61 | -.28 | .40 |
| Power-Hungry | -.09 | .70 | -.49 |
| Prejudiced | -.12 | .62 | -.20 |
| Inspiring | .66 | -.11 | .25 |
| Pearson r: | | -.22 | -.22 |
| | | | .25 |

(N = 250)

| <u>Principal Factors</u> | <u>% of Common Variance</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 31.0 |
| 2 | 16.4 |
| 3 | 8.6 |
| 4 | 5.5 |
| 5 | 5.2 |
| 6 | 4.6 |

Table 2.8

Trait Factor Structure

| | <u>Kennedy</u> | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------|----------|
| | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>C</u> |
| Courageous | -.52 | .59 | .30 |
| Immoral | .66 | -.20 | -.24 |
| Too Political | .57 | -.15 | -.32 |
| Warm | -.43 | .66 | .34 |
| Honest | -.60 | .61 | .42 |
| Selfish | .73 | -.36 | -.31 |
| Smart | -.13 | .74 | -.26 |
| Humble | -.42 | .57 | .54 |
| Weak | .67 | -.37 | .09 |
| Reckless | .79 | -.30 | -.20 |
| Knowledgeable | -.19 | .69 | -.07 |
| Unstable | .68 | -.37 | .12 |
| Open-Minded | -.40 | .64 | .32 |
| Power-Hungry | .71 | -.29 | -.48 |
| Prejudiced | .65 | -.27 | -.12 |
| Inspiring | -.42 | .68 | .35 |
| Pearson r: | | -.40 | .11 |
| | | -.27 | |

(N = 241)

| <u>Principal Factors</u> | <u>% of Common Variance</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 41.3 |
| 2 | 13.5 |
| 3 | 7.6 |
| 4 | 4.7 |
| 5 | 4.3 |
| 6 | 3.7 |

Table 2.9

Trait Factor Structure

| | <u>Reagan</u> | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------|----------|
| | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>C</u> |
| Courageous | .68 | -.24 | -.30 |
| Immoral | -.21 | .58 | .24 |
| Too Political | -.36 | .16 | .67 |
| Warm | .75 | -.14 | -.45 |
| Honest | .74 | -.27 | -.46 |
| Selfish | -.45 | .51 | .74 |
| Smart | .77 | -.30 | -.35 |
| Humble | .51 | -.00 | -.44 |
| Weak | -.24 | .78 | .22 |
| Reckless | -.36 | .62 | .52 |
| Knowledgeable | .75 | -.32 | -.32 |
| Unstable | -.29 | .79 | .30 |
| Open-Minded | .77 | -.14 | -.55 |
| Power-Hungry | -.46 | .27 | .82 |
| Prejudiced | -.41 | .42 | .71 |
| Inspiring | .74 | -.13 | -.38 |
| Pearson r: | | -.28 | .30 |
| | | | -.52 |

(N = 238)

| <u>Principal Factors</u> | <u>% of Common Variance</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 40.7 |
| 2 | 13.3 |
| 3 | 9.0 |
| 4 | 4.9 |
| 5 | 4.8 |
| 6 | 4.0 |

the impression of decisive if not fearless leadership. Ford's Factor B, which we call integrity, is defined best by the traits of immoral, reckless, unstable, prejudiced, too political, and power-hungry (all load positively on Factor B). Appropriately enough, this is integrity with a distinctly political cast to it. Judgments of Ford along such an integrity dimension were correlated with judgments of his competence, but quite modestly so (Pearson r between Factor A and Factor B = $-.22$).

This is the generic side to trait-based evaluations of presidential candidates. The pattern described by Ford--a competence factor and a largely independent integrity factor--also emerges for each of the remaining three members of our gang-of-four. The pattern is replicated most completely in the cases of Reagan and Carter, where competence and integrity are defined in essentially the same terms as for Ford, and where the two factors are again weakly correlated (Pearson r for Reagan = $-.28$; for Carter, $-.31$). Kennedy's factor structure only partially replicates this pattern. Kennedy again deviates from the rest; and once again, the deviations are both internally consistent and intriguing. For Kennedy only, the dominant first factor was integrity, not competence. Moreover, this integrity dimension included the familiar traits of immoral, too political, reckless, unstable, and prejudiced common to the other candidates, but more: selfish and weak in particular. Second, Kennedy's competence dimension was defined by smart and knowledgeable, as was true for the others. But the traits of courageous and inspiring which were also key ingredients of competence for Carter, Ford, and Reagan, were not uniquely associated with competence for Kennedy. Rather, these traits bridged between competence and integrity. And finally, competence and

integrity were more sharply associated for Kennedy than for the others (Pearson r between Factors A and B = $-.40$). All this suggests the greater importance of the integrity theme in evaluations of Kennedy: traits that mainly capture competence judgments for Carter, Reagan, and Ford take on a moral cast when Kennedy is judged. Ascriptions of weakness, for example, may mean one thing for most politicians; for Kennedy, weakness implies a more personal, expressly characterological failing.

Thus Kennedy supplies a qualification upon the generic properties of trait-based evaluation. The structural analysis of trait judgments of Kennedy strongly suggests that the properties of specific candidates may shade the meaning and perhaps shift the importance of competence and integrity. But for Kennedy and of course even more plainly for Ford, Carter, and Reagan, competence and integrity emerged as political actors' central traits: effective candidates must presumably convey both. As discussed so far, our factor analysis provides substantial evidence of generic structure underlying trait-based evaluation.

Our analysis also uncovers an idiosyncratic element to the structure of trait attributions--an element that appears to reflect the impact of candidates who are to some degree themselves idiosyncratic. We have already discussed the case of Kennedy, which is one form taken by candidate idiosyncrasy. More generally, candidate idiosyncrasy appears to be associated with the third factor emerging from our analysis. The clearest cases of this are Ford and Carter. Ford's third factor is an amalgam of traits that we label "likability." It is defined most clearly by humble, somewhat less so by warm and honest, and less but still discernibly by power-hungry. (The first three traits load positively, the

last negatively.) This cluster of traits constitutes an efficient thumbnail personality profile of Ford, capturing well his "Mr. Nice Guy" image. Consider, by contrast, Carter's third factor. It is defined by weak, unstable, and reckless--again, a cluster of traits that seem to reflect Carter's characteristics uniquely. These traits define a dimension of public unease about Carter's ability to handle the presidency.

In sum, trait attributions are organized in ways that partly reflect enduring structures that citizens bring to politics. Such cognitive structures are essentially implicit theories citizens hold about the personalities of their political leaders. Such theories specify two general and largely independent dimensions to personality: competence and integrity. The structure of trait attributions also reflects the particular imprint of particular politicians. Thus Kennedy's particular history compels modifications in how traits about him are organized. Thus miscellaneous third factors identify dimensions that are uniquely associated with a particular candidate.

Summary and Recommendations

The trait inventory has performed admirably. In a descriptive way the inventory has proven sensitive to the structure of trait-based images--to how trait impressions are organized. Moreover, it has done this in a way that is faithful both to the generic dimensions that seem to underly trait-based evaluation (namely competence and integrity) and to the particular properties of particular candidates. The first is essential for cross-candidate comparisons; the second for tracing the growth of a single candidate's image over time. And in a predictive sense, trait-based

impressions are powerfully tied to candidate evaluation and preference, as we have just seen. All this indicates the promise of the trait inventory for the 1980 study.

The promise is all the greater given the character of the 1980 study, with its attention to change. In conjunction with the trait inventory (and other forms of candidate instrumentation specified elsewhere in this report) the 1980 National Election Study offers a rich opportunity to track the evolution of candidates imagery over the course of the entire campaign. Such changes might take a number of forms:

1. The most fundamental is change in evaluation--boosts and declines in public popularity. Such change is presumably a function of campaign events and their interpretation by the media in interaction with the predispositions citizens bring to politics. The proposed interface between the 1980 survey and the monitoring of media coverage of the campaign offers exciting possibilities in this regard. Such an interface may provide the empirical basis for beginning to elaborate a set of "mapping rules"--i.e., principles that describe the ways in which citizens draw inferences about candidates from campaign events. This enterprise will be enormously aided to the extent we have measured candidate evaluations sensitively.

2. Change in the structure of evaluation. Our panel study of the Vice-Presidential Debate suggested that the sudden and special visibility that the Debate accorded Mondale and Dole provoked structural changes in citizens' evaluations of them. The same is likely to occur gradually over the course of the January-November period, and in spurts in response to specific dramatic events.

3. Changes in the store of information about candidates. Certainly one thing that occurs over the January-November period is that presidential candidates become better known. (This is of course more true in the case when the incumbent President declines to run or is legally prevented from doing so.) Little is known about this process, although considerable importance is commonly ascribed to the media in this regard, and to its purported "agenda setting" function of defining which issues are important and which candidates legitimate, especially early in an election year. The trait inventory should prove to be a sensitive though indirect measure of this process as well. Media attention directed to a particular candidate should be reflected in less reluctance on the part of survey respondents to attribute traits to the candidate. Thus in addition to change in evaluation, and change in the structure of evaluation, the January-November period will also witness change in the confidence with which candidates are evaluated.

For these reasons--for its demonstrated utility and for the promise afforded by the upcoming election study--we strongly urge including the trait inventory at all interviewing points during 1980.

3. Affective Response to Leaders

One set of new measures, easy to administer and potentially rich in information, arose from our conviction that emotional responses to political leaders might behave differently from the more usual semantically mediated types of survey items.

For each politician in question, we provided the respondent with an "affect check-list." Respondents were asked whether that politician

had ever made them feel any of a number of ways: e.g., whether "Jimmy Carter--because of the kind of person he is or because of something he has done--ever made you feel angry? . . . Ashamed? . . . Happy? . . . Etc." (See Appendix A for the full measure.)

This question format was pretested on our New Haven sample using four political figures (Carter, Ford, Kennedy, Reagan) and 15 affect terms. Respondents were also asked which of their feelings toward each man was the most important, and why they felt this way. Initially we had not known what to expect when eliciting affective responses. Perhaps, we thought, the public is so "tuned out" of politics that rarely would a respondent indicate having felt anything about a candidate. This turned out not to be the case. Nearly half the time, respondents said yes to feeling items.

In the New Haven sample, the four political figures differed systematically in the profiles of how often they elicited different affects. Carter was high on hope and unease, for example, and Kennedy on sadness and shame. We also looked within respondents for generic affect dimensions by factor analyzing the affect inventory, separately for each politician. For each of the four leaders, factoring produced two dominant factors. Oblique rotation yielded in each case a clear positive affect factor and a clear negative affect factor. Rather surprisingly, these two factors were essentially independent. That is, feeling good things about say, Jimmy Carter, does not imply the absence of bad feelings.

Candidate Affect Profiles

These same measures and analyses were repeated in the national CPS sample, each candidate being assessed by half the sample. Table 3.1

shows the percent of respondents saying they have felt each particular affect toward each of the four candidates. Several things are noteworthy about this table:

Carter provokes an extraordinary relative frequency of mention of feeling frustrated and uneasy, but also evokes a high relative number of hopeful and sympathetic mentions. This pattern well reflects popular ambivalence toward Carter. Ford is high on all the positive affects, low on all the negative affects. Perhaps he is the beneficiary of the retrospective impulse that in light of Carter's troubles, Ford wasn't really so bad after all. And Ford was always well liked personally in any case.

Kennedy's profile is relatively prominent on certain of the negative affects such as Anger and Sadness. Reagan evokes many fewer affective responses overall, presumably due to his relative unfamiliarity, but in relative terms is high on Liking, Proud, and perhaps Afraid.

Averaging over the four candidates, there is a strong general effect for positive affect references to occur more often than negative ones. This tendency is consistent with the "positivity bias" documented by Sears (1969) and others, for the public to think well of most specific political leaders at the same time that there is widespread negative evaluation of politicians as an abstract category. Here we find that, if we take the responses at face value, respondents not only think well of particular political figures, but also have good feelings evoked by them.

There is obviously always the potential, however, for a given figure to evoke widespread negative feelings as the result of a given

Table 3.1

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE AFFECT PROFILE

Percent saying, "Yes, have felt"

| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> | <u>Average</u> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Afraid | 25% | 5% | 19% | 16% | 16.25 |
| Angry | 40 | 21 | 37 | 16 | 28.50 |
| Disgusted | 50 | 23 | 39 | 18 | 32.50 |
| Disliking | 28 | 10 | 28 | 15 | 34.50 |
| Frustrated | 71 | 26 | 32 | 23 | 38.00 |
| Sad | 27 | 14 | 39 | 8 | 22.00 |
| Uneasy | 56 | 19 | 38 | 25 | 34.50 |
| Happy | 43 | 40 | 34 | 26 | 35.75 |
| Hopeful | 62 | 56 | 49 | 38 | 51.25 |
| Liking | 59 | 69 | 53 | 54 | 58.75 |
| Proud | 46 | 46 | 34 | 32 | 39.50 |
| Sympathetic | 58 | 58 | 48 | 28 | 48.00 |
| (typical N upon which % is based) | 110 | 110 | 120 | 113 | (113) |

transgression such as Chappaquiddick or Watergate. We do not now have data that register affect mentions in direct response to ongoing public events, but the 1980 CPS studies will provide such an opportunity.

Reasons given for the respondent's most important affect toward each candidate were widely variable, but there were noticeable clusters of mentions of highly salient events such as the MidEast peace initiatives or Chappaquiddick. (This "reasons for feelings" question is similar in format to the CPS standard open-ended "reasons for voting" question. The two are compared in Section 6.)

Predicting evaluation and preference from affect

An interesting set of questions concerns how affective responses are related to general candidate evaluations across respondents. Table 3.2 presents the results of separate simple linear regressions for each candidate and each affect. Candidate thermometer ratings are predicted from whether or not a particular affect is mentioned by the respondent. In effect, the regression coefficients give the number of thermometer points it is worth on average to each candidate to evoke a given feeling in a voter. For example, it is worth an average of 5.9 thermometer points to Carter when a voter says he has felt proud of Carter. In even simpler terms, respondents saying "proud" give an average thermometer rating to Carter which is 5.9 points higher than those not saying "proud." (Of course, as in all of these types of relations, we must not presume the direction of causation. It could be the case that pride leads to higher general evaluation, or that higher general evaluation disposes toward the report of pride experiences. We tend to use phraseology throughout which is consistent with the former interpretation

Table 3.2

PREDICTING THERMOMETER RATINGS FROM AFFECTIVE REACTIONS

Regression coefficients for individual items

| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> | <u>Average</u> |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Afraid | -5.6 | -1.0 | -7.1 | -6.4 | -5.0 |
| Angry | -4.9 | -3.2 | -6.5 | -6.6 | -5.3 |
| Disgusted | -5.8 | -4.0 | -7.9 | -4.3 | -5.5 |
| Disliking | -6.4 | -5.0 | -8.3 | -8.2 | -7.0 |
| Frustrated | -1.9 | - .9 | -4.2 | -4.5 | -2.9 |
| Sad | -1.9 | -2.5 | -2.9 | -4.5 | -2.9 |
| Uneasy | -5.3 | -2.9 | -6.7 | -4.7 | -4.9 |
| Happy | 4.7 | 4.7 | 6.9 | 5.1 | 5.4 |
| Hopeful | 4.7 | 3.7 | 7.0 | 4.4 | 4.9 |
| Liking | 5.3 | 4.3 | 8.2 | 7.0 | 6.2 |
| Proud | 5.9 | 4.9 | 7.0 | 6.0 | 5.9 |
| Sympathetic | 6.1 | 3.2 | 7.1 | 4.2 | 5.2 |

because it is easier to talk in those terms. The reader should remain aware of the alternative interpretation.)

The average thermometer point "worths" of the several affects are not strikingly different. In general, each affect makes a difference of around 5 points, the negative ones hurting and the positive ones helping. The exceptions are "frustrated" and "sad," which hurt on average only 2.9 points. It is possible to feel frustrated by the actions (or inactions) of a political figure without much of a decrease in general evaluation of him by an average respondent. This occurs clearly for Carter and Ford, the two of the four figures who as Presidents were in the clearest position not to perform in the way the respondent may have wanted, yet who at the same time may have merited some credit for at least some effort in the face of highly intractable problems. ("Frustration" carries the semantic connotation of inexorable failure, as opposed to "anger," which arises from unwarranted, blameworthy failure.) The minimal effects of "sad" responses are probably because sadness may arise empathically. For example, some respondents mention sadness at the tragedies befalling the Kennedy family. This carries positive, rather than negative force.

Candidate variation in Table 3.2 occurs not so much in the profiles as in the general absolute levels. The coefficients run especially high for Kennedy and especially low for Ford. One might say that affect toward Kennedy is consequential, and toward Ford, inconsequential for overall thermometer ratings. Reagan is slightly above average in the strength of his profile. Even though fewer respondents know him, among those who do, his affect profile is fairly vividly consequential.

Table 3.3 gives the comparable regression statistics when what is

Table 3.3

PREDICTING PREFERENCE RANK FROM AFFECTIVE REACTIONS

Regression coefficients for individual items

| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> | <u>Average</u> |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Afraid | -.30 | -.09 | -.45 | -.33 | -.29 |
| Angry | -.25 | -.23 | -.26 | -.33 | -.27 |
| Disgusted | -.28 | -.14 | -.47 | -.43 | -.33 |
| Disliking | -.38 | -.37 | +.46 | -.51 | -.43 |
| Frustrated | -.14 | -.06 | -.20 | -.34 | -.18 |
| Sad | -.12 | -.16 | -.10 | -.16 | -.14 |
| Uneasy | -.24 | -.17 | -.39 | -.28 | -.27 |
| Happy | .25 | .27 | .42 | .39 | .33 |
| Hopeful | .24 | .23 | .46 | .42 | .34 |
| Liking | .30 | .27 | ..53 | .51 | .40 |
| Proud | .17 | .31 | .40 | .45 | .33 |
| Sympathetic | .22 | .13 | .44 | .29 | .27 |

being predicted is the preference score (number of other candidates preferred over, with Jerry Brown included). These results parallel the previous ones. Roughly speaking, any given affect mention is worth one third of a preference point. The most notable exceptions are again "frustrated" and "sad," which are worth only half that much. The different patterns of coefficients for different candidates show the same phenomenon as in Table 3.2: Kennedy has relatively high coefficients, and Ford relatively low ones.

Factor structure of affects

A natural question arising in the analysis of affective responses is how they cluster with one another. Table 3.4 presents the results of separate factor analyses for each of the four candidates. Factors were extracted from matrices of correlations (over respondents) of affect mentions, and subjected to oblique rotation. Two factors were sufficient for each candidate, except that a small third factor (omitted in Table 3.4) occurred for Ford.

The pattern in Table 3.4 is strikingly clear, and totally consistent with the results in the earlier New Haven study. For every candidate, one of the factors (labeled A) is a negative affect factor, and the other (B) a positive affect factor. Differences in the coefficients for the different candidates are far less salient than the massive overall pattern agreement. (Reagan tends to have the highest positive loadings throughout, but this is best interpreted as an artifact of his lesser familiarity, leading to many paired non-mentions of affect terms and thus higher correlation coefficients.)

The reader may wonder about the tension between the factor implication

Table 3.4

AFFECT FACTOR STRUCTURE

| | <u>Carter</u> | | <u>Ford</u> | | <u>Kennedy</u> | | <u>Reagan</u> | |
|-------------|---------------|----------|-------------|----------|----------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> |
| Afraid | .49 | -.26 | .37 | .07 | .61 | -.23 | .76 | -.13 |
| Angry | .67 | -.31 | .75 | -.06 | .62 | -.09 | .75 | -.04 |
| Disgusted | .64 | -.42 | .67 | -.15 | .63 | -.43 | .75 | -.19 |
| Disliking | .57 | -.39 | .57 | -.36 | .72 | -.32 | .71 | -.34 |
| Frustrated | .61 | -.09 | .39 | .09 | .60 | -.12 | .66 | -.04 |
| Sad | .40 | .001 | .61 | .01 | .53 | .10 | .55 | -.04 |
| Uneasy | .60 | -.15 | .51 | -.11 | .62 | -.30 | .70 | -.10 |
| Happy | -.17 | .55 | .08 | .65 | -.15 | .71 | -.05 | .72 |
| Hopeful | -.17 | .71 | -.06 | .62 | -.24 | .74 | -.07 | .70 |
| Liking | -.34 | .63 | -.19 | .65 | -.37 | .81 | -.30 | .70 |
| Proud | -.17 | .63 | -.13 | .75 | -.12 | .73 | -.06 | .80 |
| Sympathetic | -.14 | .52 | .09 | .56 | -.14 | .68 | -.12 | .54 |
| | $r = -.30$ | | $r = -.06$ | | $r = -.24$ | | $r = -.16$ | |
| | N=105 | | N=106 | | N=118 | | N=111 | |

Method is oblique rotation of principal factors with iteration.
 Factor A is the negative affect factor, B the positive affect factor.

that all that matters is positive vs. negative affect, and the prior discussion in which individual affect terms showed some articulation between candidates. There is really no contradiction here, because Table 3.1 gives marginal proportions for single affects and the factor analyses are based on correlations. Correlations among similar signed affect terms can all be uniformly rather high despite variations in the marginal frequencies of these affects. One way (but not the only way) to look at this is to conceptualize often-evoked affects for particular candidates as "leading indicators" which may portend a correlated spread to other same-signed affects over time. We presently have no evidence pertinent to such a dynamic process, but the 1980 studies will provide some.

We say "same-signed affects" here because there is very little (negative) correlation between positive and negative affect factors. The figures are given at the bottom of Table 3.4 as $-.31$, $-.06$, $-.24$ and $-.16$. What this means is that the tendency to name good feelings evoked by a candidate is not predictive of the lack of namings of bad feelings! Somehow, there is an absence of consistency pressures to bring these two polarities into natural opposition with one another. We explore this phenomenon more deeply in a later section.

Predicting general response measures from affect factors

For each respondent, a positive affect score for each candidate was assigned by a simple count of the number of positive affects mentioned; a negative affect score was assigned correspondingly. (This procedure was chosen in preference to weighted factor scores because of its simplicity and uniformity across candidates.) These scores were then used

to predict thermometer ratings and preference scores.

Table 3.5 presents data for the multiple regressions of thermometer ratings on the two predictors, positive and negative affect scores. The multiple correlation for each candidate notably exceeds the largest of the two single-variable correlations. Thus for Reagan, for example, the positive affect score correlates .51 with thermometer, the negative score correlates -.44, and the multiple R is .63. The substantial gain from the added predictor accrues, of course, from the near-zero correlation of the two predictors. The smallest gains occur for Ford, where negative affect correlates only -.31 with the thermometer, and for Carter, where positive and negative affect overlap mildly with each other ($r = -.31$).

A general pattern evident throughout Table 3.5 is the superiority of positive over negative affect as a predictor of thermometer ratings: For all four candidates, whether one looks at simple r 's, b 's, or betas, the positive affect coefficient exceeds the negative affect coefficient. This result, although rich in potential implications, should be treated with caution. It is critically dependent on which positive and negative affects happen to be included in the respective clusters. In the present context, both "frustrated" and "sad" are negative affects weakly predictive of thermometer rating, and they pull down the predictive power of the total negative affect score.

As for differences between candidates, we again notice that affects make the strongest predictions for Kennedy, and the weakest for Ford.

Table 3.6 gives the comparable statistics with preference score as the dependent variable instead of thermometer ratings. The above

Table 3.5

PREDICTING THERMOMETER FROM
Positive and Negative Affect

| | <u>simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <u>CARTER</u> (N=105) | | | | |
| Positive Affect | .55 | 6.80 | .44 | .63 |
| Negative Affect | -.47 | -4.14 | -.33 | |
| <u>FORD</u> (N=106) | | | | |
| Positive Affect | .53 | 6.28 | .50 | .59 |
| Negative Affect | -.31 | -3.57 | -.26 | |
| <u>KENNEDY</u> (N=118) | | | | |
| Positive Affect | .64 | 7.34 | .51 | .77 |
| Negative Affect | -.59 | -5.64 | -.44 | |
| <u>REAGAN</u> (N=111) | | | | |
| Positive Affect | .51 | 6.78 | .46 | .63 |
| Negative Affect | -.44 | -4.90 | -.36 | |

The positive and negative affect measures are equally-weighted additive indexes based on replies to the Affect Check-List.

conclusions are substantially unaltered. Again, there are notable predictive gains in using both affect scores rather than one alone. There are slight exceptions (for Carter) to the generalization that positive affect is more predictive than negative. Again, Kennedy shows the strongest prediction and Ford the weakest. Reagan is here almost as predictable ($R = .76$) as Kennedy ($R = .81$). In comparing Table 3.6 with Table 3.5, it can be seen that for Reagan, the positive affect score predicts preference score rather better than it predicts thermometer rating. We have no ready explanation. For the three other candidates, the predictability of preference is roughly comparable to the predictability of thermometer.

In summarizing this section of results, we may put it this way: If all that candidates could do to voters were to activate various feeling states, there would be two modes of achieving high preference or thermometer ratings: making the voters feel good, or avoiding making them feel bad. (The specific positive or negative affects involved do not seem to be differentially consequential.) These two modes are largely independent. The "feel good" mode is at least as powerful as the "not feel bad" mode for the set of affects tested in the present project. This result is consistent with other "positivity" biases in political perception, and is contrary to the folklore that people vote "ag'in" politicians rather than for them. It is also apparently contradictory to a frequent psychological result (Kanouse and Hanson, 1971) that negative attributes have more weight in judgments of people than positive attributes do.

All of this would be much less interesting if the affect responses were themselves highly predictable manifestations of some more standard

Table 3.6

PREDICTING PREFERENCE RANK FROM
Positive and Negative Affect

| | <u>simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <u>CARTER</u> (N=91) | | | | |
| Positive Affect | -.51 | -.30 | -.38 | .63 |
| Negative Affect | .53 | .261 | .40 | |
| <u>FORD</u> (N=) | | | | |
| Positive Affect | -.48 | -.35 | -.46 | .53 |
| Negative Affect | .27 | .19 | .23 | |
| <u>KENNEDY</u> (N=102) | | | | |
| Positive Affect | -.72 | -.50 | -.61 | .81 |
| Negative Affect | .56 | .28 | .38 | |
| <u>REAGAN</u> (N=96) | | | | |
| Positive Affect | -.66 | -.51 | -.60 | .76 |
| Negative Affect | .47 | .29 | .38 | |

The positive and negative affect measures are equally-weighted additive indexes based on replies to the Affect Check-List.

political factor such as party identification. It is conceivable that the tendency to report good (bad) feelings about Democrats (Republicans) is rampant among Democrats and virtually absent among Republicans, for example.

Table 3.7 repeats the analysis for Table 3.5, separately for each partisan political identification. Independents are less critical to the analysis than Republicans or Democrats, and for simplicity are omitted. If selective affect mention is merely a consequence of partisanship, then we should find small within-party predictive power of affect scores for thermometer ratings. Table 3.7, however, completely contradicts such an expectation. For each of the four candidates, the multiple R's within party are virtually as high as the multiple R's for the entire sample. Thus, the high predictive power of affect scores for thermometer ratings is not at all a consequence of party identification.

A sidelight in Table 3.7 is the set of three instances in which negative affect is more predictive than positive affect, contrary to the general trend of Table 3.5. The two strongest of these three instances are: affect toward Kennedy among Republicans, and toward Reagan among Democrats. These cases both represent sharp, natural antagonisms. "Anathema" might aptly describe the status of each among rabid opposition partisans. Susceptibility vs. non-susceptibility to the accompanying organized hatred would be highly predictive of overall thermometer rating. The third case, Ford among Republicans, is less clear. The subsample N's for all three of these comparisons, however, are too small to bestow statistical significance on them.

Table 3.8 presents the comparable subsample analysis, with preference

PREDICTING THERMOMETER FROM AFFECTS

Within Party

| <u>Carter</u> | | <u>Simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Repub's (N=33) | Pos. affect | .74 | 11.48 | .67 | .76 |
| | Neg. affect | -.41 | -2.64 | -.22 | |
| Dems. (N=40) | Pos. affect | .41 | 5.29 | .35 | .48 |
| | Neg. affect | -.35 | -3.63 | -.26 | |
| <u>Ford</u> | | | | | |
| Repub's | Pos. affect | .40 | 2.93 | .31 | .57 |
| | Neg. affect | -.48 | -3.98 | -.41 | |
| Dems. | Pos. affect | .63 | 8.90 | .60 | .66 |
| | Neg. affect | -.28 | -2.55 | -.17 | |
| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | | | |
| Repub's | Pos. affect | .48 | 6.08 | .36 | .69 |
| | Neg. affect | -.60 | -5.79 | -.52 | |
| Dems. | Pos. affect | .65 | 7.59 | .53 | .71 |
| | Neg. affect | -.51 | -4.24 | -.32 | |
| <u>Reagan</u> | | | | | |
| Repub's | Pos. affect | .61 | 7.56 | .67 | .70 |
| | Neg. affect | -.24 | -5.97 | -.36 | |
| Dems. | Pos. affect | .37 | 4.23 | .25 | .57 |
| | Neg. affect | -.51 | -4.82 | -.44 | |

score as the dependent variable. The conclusions parallel those for the predictive power of the two affect scores. Again, the two "anathema" cases--Kennedy among Republicans and Reagan among Democrats--show superior prediction for negative over positive affects. A third reversal occurs in the unclear case of Carter among Democrats. None of these three differences is significant.

Another and more severe test of the predictive robustness of the affect scores arises by considering trait ratings and behavior ratings of candidates (see Sections 2 and 4) as additional predictors. Do the affect scores provide new information not available in judgmental responses toward candidates such as whether so-and-so is honest, immoral, likely to get us into unnecessary wars, etc. etc.? Or is there a redundant situation wherein good (bad) affect scores simply duplicate what can be learned from good (bad) trait and behavior judgments?

We analyzed this question by taking the multiple regressions of thermometer (preference) on good and bad traits, good and bad behaviors, and good and bad affects. Party identification was added as a seventh predictor variable.

Candidate by candidate, one or both affect variables made significant contributions in every case. For Carter and Ford, positive affect score was the significant one; for Reagan, negative affect; for Kennedy, both. Parallel results were obtained with preference as the dependent variable. There, both affect scores made significant contributions for all cases except Ford, where the positive affect regression weight was insignificant.

These results strongly support the conclusion that the affect scores

Table 3.8

PREDICTING PREFERENCE FROM AFFECTS

Within Party

| <u>Carter</u> | | <u>Simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|----------------|-------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| Repub's | Pos. affect | .60 | .37 | .51 | .67 |
| | Neg. affect | -.47 | -.17 | -.32 | |
| Dems. | Pos. affect | .39 | .23 | .28 | .56 |
| | Neg. affect | -.49 | -.31 | -.42 | |
| <u>Ford</u> | | | | | |
| Repub's | Pos. affect | .37 | .28 | .38 | .37 |
| | Neg. affect | -.05 | .02 | .03 | |
| Dems. | Pos. affect | .59 | .45 | .52 | .69 |
| | Neg. affect | -.46 | -.31 | -.37 | |
| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | | | |
| Repub's | Pos. affect | .52 | .39 | .41 | .70 |
| | Neg. affect | -.57 | -.30 | -.47 | |
| Dems. | Pos. affect | .82 | .64 | .78 | .83 |
| | Neg. affect | -.40 | -.09 | -.12 | |
| <u>Reagan</u> | | | | | |
| Repub's | Pos. affect | .66 | .46 | .70 | .70 |
| | Neg. affect | -.11 | -.23 | -.24 | |
| Dems. | Pos. affect | .51 | .30 | .39 | .65 |
| | Neg. affect | -.53 | -.21 | -.43 | |

are useful predictors of thermometer and preference ratings. They are not redundant with trait and behavior scores, or with party identification.

The Independence of Positive and Negative Affect Scores

We have previously noted that the positive and negative affect factors correlated surprisingly little with each other. This is in large measure the secret of their success as predictors of summary responses to candidates. Here we explore further the nature of the near independence of the affect scores. (Note that the scores are simple affect sums, whereas the affect factors were vectors in a factor space. These are not equivalent, so that we must reinspect their intercorrelation.)

One question is whether good and bad traits (behaviors) are indeed more redundant with each other than good and bad affects. The top panel of Table 3.9 shows this comparison. For every candidate, the two affect scores have a smaller intercorrelation than do either the trait or behavior scores. On the average, the affects intercorrelate .23 less than do the traits and behaviors.

However, it seemed likely to us that in particular segments of the population, positive and negative feelings toward particular candidates would be fairly strongly inversely linked. We looked within several subsamples, and the clearest results emerged when the sample was sectioned by party identification. Within one subsample we grouped strong partisans from both parties, within a second subsample the weak identifiers and leaners, and within a third the "true" Independents. The remaining three panels of Table 3.9 show what happened when positive and negative scores for traits, behaviors, and affects respectively were intercorrelated within each subsample.

The results are relatively easy to summarize: the negative correlation between positive and negative affect scores is typically more pronounced among extreme partisans than among moderate partisans or independents, whereas there is no such consistent gradient across subsamples for trait or behavior intercorrelations. Putting the matter another way, the tendency for the two affect scores to be less redundant than the two trait scores or two behavior scores is maximized among independents (average differential correlation = .48), and minimized among extreme partisans (average differential = .13).

These findings are fascinating, and more than justify further explanation of affect score properties in comparison to more usual judgmental properties such as traits. At this point, our main line of speculation about these intercorrelation results is as follows. Trait judgements are filtered through a network of semantic concepts, and this filtering process introduces psychological consistency pressures which make it difficult for respondents to give both good and bad trait ascriptions to a single political figure. However, affective reactions are more experiential, more immediate, less filtered. Respondents report directly on their experiences in reaction to candidates, perhaps without realizing that there is anything "contradictory" about feeling, say, both angry and sympathetic toward a candidate. Naive realism is more possible to elicit, in other words, outside of the self-conscious judgmental realm of trait ascriptions.

With extreme partisans, however, feelings toward candidates become self-consciously semanticized, too. Consistency pressures (from the real or imagined social influence of other party loyalists, perhaps) get introduced even for affective experiences, whether at the time of occurrence or

Table 3.9

Correlations Between Positive and Negative Indicators

| | <u>Whole Sample</u> | | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
| Trait | -.44 | -.35 | -.53 | -.53 |
| Behavior | -.44 | -.44 | -.54 | -.41 |
| Affect | -.34 | -.10 | -.30 | -.16 |
| | <u>Strong Partisans</u> | | | |
| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
| Trait | -.57 | -.29 | -.60 | -.59 |
| Behavior | -.53 | -.51 | -.62 | -.55 |
| Affect | -.69 | -.40 | -.26 | -.26 |
| | <u>Weak Partisans and Leaners</u> | | | |
| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
| Trait | -.42 | -.34 | -.57 | -.46 |
| Behavior | -.39 | -.38 | -.52 | -.37 |
| Affect | -.18 | -.01 | -.32 | -.14 |
| | <u>Pure Independents</u> | | | |
| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
| Trait | -.60 | -.58 | -.36 | -.66 |
| Behavior | -.61 | -.50 | -.58 | -.33 |
| Affect | -.04 | .06 | -.21 | .01 |

at the time of reporting. In either case, there is less independence of the positive and negative sides than there is for the non-extreme party identifiers who live more outside of the nexus of pressures to line up political experiences coherently.

That affective and trait responses should behave differently is consistent with the recent provocative arguments by social psychologist Robert Zajonc (1979), who claims that affective and cognitive judgment systems about objects in the social world are rather independent, and are based on different operating principles.

Recommendations

The affect battery was our most successful new measure. It is so rich in interesting results that in the ideal world one would want to expand its coverage. In particular, one could include more specific affect terms for each candidate, as well as questions on affect toward the political system in general. Since there are severe time limitations, however, more modest aspirations may be forced on us.

The complete affect inventory should be asked of each viable candidate. If this is deemed impractical, then the first affects to sacrifice are "frustrated" and "sad," since they are the least consequential in the prediction of evaluation and preference. If further self-denial must be practiced, our bare-bones minimum set is made up of, on the positive side, "hopeful," "sympathetic," "liking" and "proud"; on the negative, "disgusted," "uneasy," "angry," and "disliking." (In addition to knowing what affects every viable candidate elicits, it may also be useful and interesting to know to what affects each respondent is individually prone, in relation to political stimuli. This measure will be discussed further in Kinder's

memorandum to the 1980 study committee in anticipation of the Philadelphia meeting.)

4. Behavior-Based Evaluation of Candidates

Just as people think about candidates at least partly in terms of traits, so may candidate imagery incorporate behavioral elements. Citizens may react to would-be presidents in terms of what they are expected to do if elected. For example, it may be essential for candidates to create the impression that as president, they would stand up to the Soviet Union, that they would never buckle under to external pressures and threats. A candidate can overdo this, of course. Goldwater in 1964 was perhaps understood by large numbers of the American public to be the kind of President who in standing up to the Communists would all too readily risk nuclear war. To some extent, this element of Goldwater's image is captured by thinking of him as reckless. But an edge is taken off the image when we move from the behavioral-based impression to the trait. Expectations of behaviors may have a life of their own in people's images of candidates.

What expectations do citizens hold regarding Presidential behavior? Our initial speculations about this were guided by a dramaturgical model-- that what the public demands of a president is mythic action and heroic authority. "Real" performance is less important by this scheme than creating the impression of an active, effective presidency. More specifically, the president is expected by the American public to: (1) tell people what to do; (2) take bold initiatives; (3) stir and inspire; (4) win against odds; (5) make wise decisions; (6) protect us from danger; and (7) set a good example. This list of cliches served as the

point of departure in our development of a behavioral inventory.

Our instrumentation was in fact developed in several stages. We began with a questionnaire study in the fall of 1978, in which Carnegie-Mellon undergraduates were asked to name things that a good president might do (good behaviors), or things that a bad president might do (bad behaviors). Based on these replies (and on our intuitions about the peculiarities of undergraduates' politics), we constructed lists of 16 attributes for each of the two types, and included them in the New Haven survey. New Haven respondents were presented with one of two lists, and were instructed to select the six most important for an ideal president (or in the case of negative behaviors, an anti-ideal president). The New Haven survey also repeated the open-ended questions that we administered first at Carnegie-Mellon (the New Haven sample was split for this purpose, with the open-ended question preceding the closed-ended inventory).

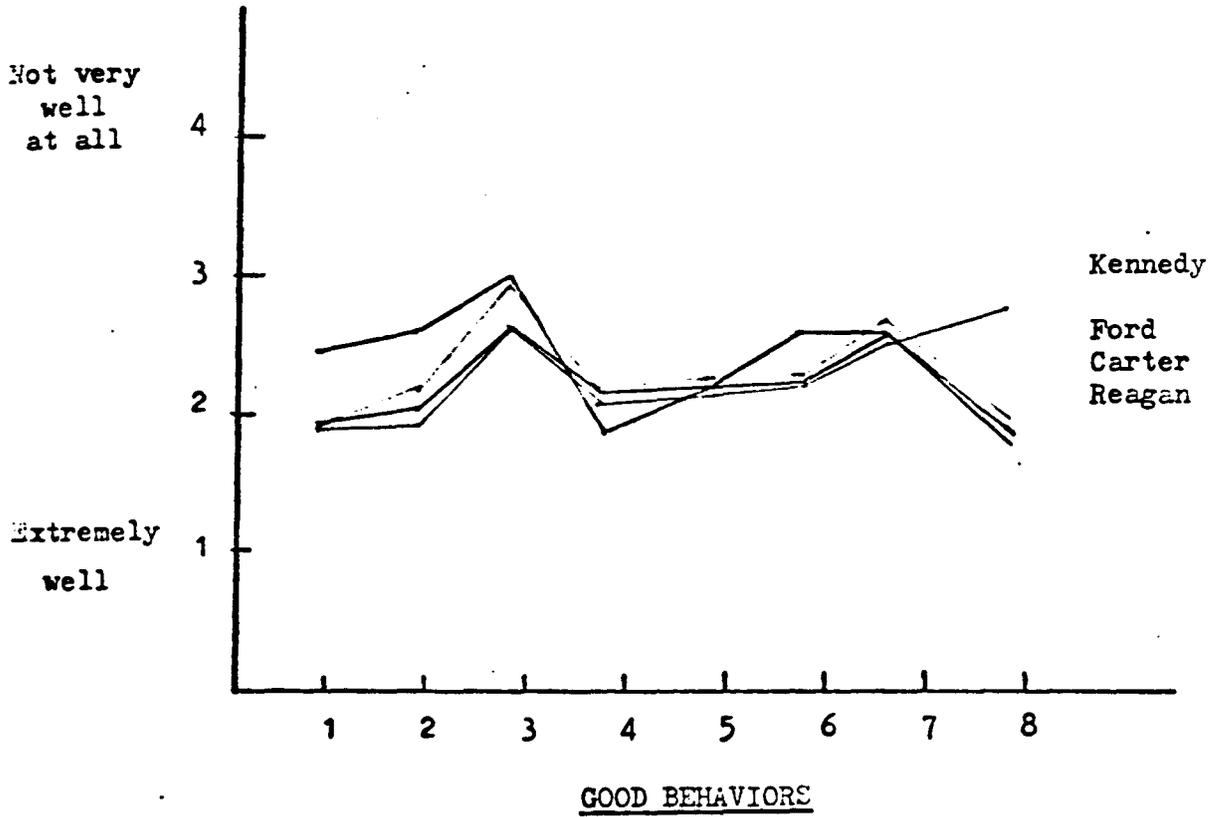
From the responses elicited by these questions in New Haven, we then prepared a single list of 8 good and 8 bad behaviors, which became part of the CPS Spring Survey, administered to the entire sample. As shown in full in Appendix A, CPS respondents were asked to judge how well each of the 16 behaviors might describe each of the gang-of-four, if he were president (or in the case of Carter, simply how well each behavior describes him). The marginals are set out in Figures 4.1 (good behaviors) and 4.2 (bad behaviors), separately for each of the gang-of-four.

Candidate Behavior Profile

Much of what is shown in Figures 4.1 and 4.2 recapitulates what we have already learned from the corresponding displays of trait attributions.

FIGURE 4.1

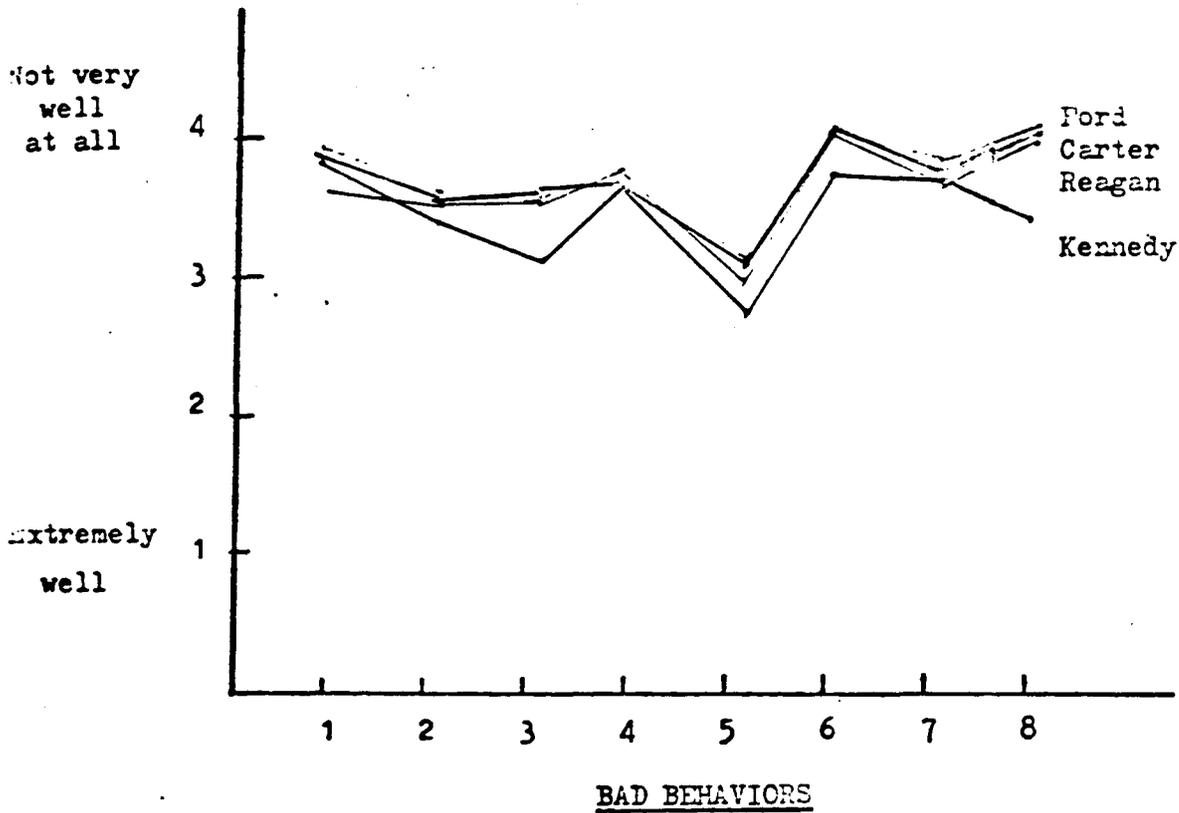
CANDIDATE BEHAVIOR PROFILES



- 1= PROVIDE STRONG LEADERSHIP
- 2= APPOINT GOOD ADVISORS
- 3= SOLVE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS
- 4= DEVELOP GOOD FOREIGN RELATIONS
- 5= COMMUNICATE OPENLY WITH THE PEOPLE
- 6= STICK TO HIS WORD
- 7= UNDERSTAND THE LITTLE PEOPLE
- 8= SET A GOOD MORAL EXAMPLE

FIGURE 4.2

CANDIDATE BEHAVIOR PROFILES



- BAD BEHAVIORS
- 1= GET US INTO UNECESSARY WARS
 - 2= USE POWER FOR PERSONAL GAIN
 - 3= HIDE THINGS FROM THE PUBLIC
 - 4= NOT STAND UP FOR US IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS
 - 5= FAVOR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
 - 6= BREAK THE LAW
 - 7= BECOME ISOLATED FROM THE PEOPLE
 - 8= BE IMMORAL IN PERSONAL CONDUCT

As before, there are pronounced similarities among the candidates: Ford's behavioral profile strongly resembles Carter's, Carter's resembles Reagan's, and so forth. And as before, deviations from general tendencies are themselves interesting. Kennedy again suffers on all behaviors that revolve around the theme of personal integrity: he was thought substantially less likely than the others "to set a good moral example," and more likely "to hide things from the public," "to break the law," and to "be immoral in personal conduct." On the last matter, Kennedy stood absolutely alone: virtually no one in the CPS sample thought that Carter, Ford, or Reagan was capable of immoral conduct in private life. More generally, would-be presidents hardly ever do anything naughty. Figure 4.2 reveals a remarkable reluctance on the part of CPS respondents to describe the gang-of-four unfavorably. The exceptions occur in two places only: for Kennedy on moral questions, as already noted; and for all four on the allure of special interests.

There is substantially more variability in the ascription of positive behaviors. Figure 4.1 nicely reveals the problems and strengths of the Carter Presidency: Carter receives comparatively high ratings on developing good foreign relations, presumably as a consequence of the Mid-East Peace Accords, but fares poorly on economic problems (understandably along with Ford, himself a casualty of sour economic conditions) on the appointment of advisors (Georgia et al.), on sticking to his word (perhaps an endemic problem for elected officials, mid-way into their term), and most dramatically, on his capacity to provide strong leadership.

Not surprisingly, such behavioral descriptions were affected by

Table 4.1

Correlation Between Behavioral Expectations and Party Identification

| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| Good Behaviors | -.25 | .20 | -.28 | .26 |
| Bad Behaviors | .11 | -.13 | .23 | -.16 |

Entry is average Pearson r. Party identification is coded at 3 levels:

Republicans (1), pure Independents (2), Democrats (3). Typical N is 220.

partisanship. Republicans were more quick to recognize Carter's leadership problems than were Democrats, and so on down the line, for Ford, Reagan, and particularly for Kennedy. Evidence on this point, summarized in Table 4.1, closely resembles the data on traits. Partisanship evidently shapes (but certainly does not determine) citizens' behavioral expectations about candidates, just as it affects the attribution of evaluatively-laden traits.

So far the evidence on the expectations citizens hold about the behavior of would-be presidents follows closely the patterns established in our analysis of trait-based evaluation. As do trait descriptions, behavioral descriptions of presidential candidates seem to reflect an interplay between citizens' general understanding of Republican and Democratic would-be presidents--their political prototypes--and specific information about specific candidates.

Predicting Evaluation and Preference from Behaviors

What of the political significance of behavioral expectations? Here our analysis again parallels the procedures followed for traits. We constructed two additive indices for each of the would-be presidents, one based on expectations of positive behaviors, the other based on expectations of negative behaviors. These two were then included in a regression equation, first predicting evaluation and then in a separate analysis, preference.

Table 4.2 summarizes these results for evaluation; Table 4.3, for preference. As indicated there, the expectations citizens held about what candidates are likely to do once in office were strongly related to evaluation and to preference, in about equal measure. And in every

Table 4.2

Predicting Evaluation from Positive and Negative Behaviors

| | <u>simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <u>Carter</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .54 | 2.49 | .44 | .58 |
| Negative Behaviors | -.42 | -1.81 | -.24 | |
| <u>Ford</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .50 | 2.25 | .46 | .51 |
| Negative Behaviors | -.29 | -1.02 | -.12 | |
| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .62 | 2.68 | .53 | .64 |
| Negative Behaviors | -.45 | -1.13 | -.18 | |
| <u>Reagan</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .62 | 2.75 | .52 | .66 |
| Negative Behaviors | -.45 | -1.83 | -.24 | |

Table 4.3

Predicting Preference from Positive and Negative Behaviors

| | <u>simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <u>Carter</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .50 | .12 | .41 | .53 |
| Negative Behaviors | -.38 | -.08 | -.21 | |
| <u>Ford</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .44 | .13 | .41 | .44 |
| Negative Behaviors | -.22 | -.04 | -.07 | |
| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .62 | .14 | .48 | .67 |
| Negative Behaviors | -.52 | -.10 | -.28 | |
| <u>Reagan</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .60 | .15 | .50 | .64 |
| Negative Behaviors | -.45 | -.11 | -.25 | |

case, positive behaviors counted for more than did negative behaviors (by either b or Beta; also, this pattern is largely maintained if the analysis is repeated within party groups).

Finally, none of this changes substantially when party identification is added to the regression analysis (Tables 4.4 and 4.5 summarize these results). This is shown in several ways. First, the prediction of evaluation and preference both is improved only marginally with the addition of party identification. The multiple R associated with the prediction of evaluation increases from an average of .60 when only positive and negative behaviors are the predictors to .63 when party identification is added; for the prediction of preference, the corresponding gain is from .57 to .62. Nor, secondly, does adding party identification diminish substantially the impact ascribed by the earlier analysis to positive and negative behaviors (compare the unstandardized coefficients arrayed in Table 4.2 with those in 4.4; and those in Table 4.3 with those in 4.5). Finally, the impact of behavioral expectations--particularly the expectation of positive behaviors--on evaluation and preference compares favorably with the impact due to party identification itself (as indexed by Beta).

In virtually all respects, then, evidence on the political significance of behavioral expectations replicates our earlier findings on traits. The resemblance is so strict as to be eerie. The mystery is not deep. It is neatly explained by an additional bit of evidence. Table 4.6 presents correlations between the trait and behavioral indices, for each candidate separately. As shown there, the index based on the attribution of positive traits is essentially redundant with the

Table 4.4

Predicting Evaluation from Positive and Negative Behaviors
and Party Identification

| | <u>simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <u>Carter</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .54 | 1.85 | .33 | |
| Negative Behaviors | -.46 | -1.81 | -.26 | |
| Party I.D. | .44 | 8.91 | .29 | .65 |
| <u>Ford</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .54 | 2.32 | .46 | |
| Negative Behaviors | -.38 | -1.47 | -.20 | |
| Party I.D. | -.12 | 1.07 | .04 | .56 |
| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .62 | 2.39 | .48 | |
| Negative Behaviors | -.48 | -1.00 | -.17 | |
| Party I.D. | .38 | 4.85 | .15 | .66 |
| <u>Reagan</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .62 | 2.57 | .49 | |
| Negative Behaviors | -.46 | -1.60 | -.23 | |
| Party I.D. | -.34 | -3.19 | -.11 | .66 |

Table 4.5

Predicting Preference from Positive and Negative Behaviors
and Party Identification

| | <u>simple r</u> | <u>b</u> | <u>Beta</u> | <u>R</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| <u>Carter</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .50 | .10 | .34 | |
| Negative Behaviors | -.38 | -.08 | -.21 | |
| Party I.D. | .37 | .36 | .24 | .58 |
| <u>Ford</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .44 | .12 | .38 | |
| Negative Behaviors | -.22 | -.02 | -.03 | |
| Party I.D. | -.30 | -.30 | -.20 | .48 |
| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .62 | .12 | .40 | |
| Negative Behaviors | -.52 | -.08 | -.24 | |
| Party I.D. | .48 | .43 | .24 | .70 |
| <u>Reagan</u> | | | | |
| Positive Behaviors | .60 | .13 | .41 | |
| Negative Behaviors | -.45 | -.08 | -.18 | |
| Party I.D. | .54 | .57 | .34 | .72 |

Table 4.6

Correlations Between Traits and Behaviors

| <u>Carter</u> | | | <u>Ford</u> | | |
|---------------|--------|-------|-------------|--------|-------|
| | Good T | Bad T | | Good T | Bad T |
| Good B | .84 | -.49 | Good B | .80 | -.38 |
| Bad B | -.47 | .88 | Bad B | -.36 | .78 |

| <u>Kennedy</u> | | | <u>Reagan</u> | | |
|----------------|--------|-------|---------------|--------|-------|
| | Good T | Bad T | | Good T | Bad T |
| Good B | .86 | -.55 | Good B | .85 | -.52 |
| Bad B | -.54 | .79 | Bad B | -.46 | .76 |

Note: Entry is Pearson r between additive Trait and Behavior indices.

index based on expectations regarding positive behaviors: the average Pearson r between them is .83. Negative traits and negative behaviors were nearly as strongly related, with the average Pearson r between these two being .77.

Factor Structure of Behaviors

Our final step is to inquire into the structure of behavioral expectations, and for that we rely again on factor analysis. Here we followed the same procedure as in our structural analysis of the trait inventory. Principal factoring with iteration was used to identify the original factors, which were then rotated following an oblique procedure. The final factor structures are shown in Tables 4.7 to 4.10 separately for each candidate.

In contrast to the trait results, here we find just two meaningful factors for each of the gang-of-four. (Eigenvalues associated with the principal factoring are shown at the base of each Table.) For each, Factor A is an amalgam of positive behavior; Factor B an amalgam of negative behaviors. The two factors are inversely correlated, and quite strongly so, ranging from $-.29$ in the case of Reagan to $-.52$ for Kennedy.

By comparison with the trait factor analysis results, we find these results mildly disappointing. The organization of behavioral expectations is descriptively unrevealing; we see little of an articulated, connotatively-rich structure underlying these responses; we certainly see little of the particular properties of particular candidates showing through. On all these counts, the behavior structure suffers by comparison with our earlier factor analysis of traits. The two-factor solutions shown in Tables 4.7 and 4.10 are quite clean and are

Table 4.7

Behavior Factor Structure

| | <u>Carter</u> | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|----------|
| | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> |
| Favor Special Groups | -.24 | .53 |
| Set a Good Moral Example | .56 | -.34 |
| Solve our Economic Problems | .66 | -.22 |
| Hide Things from Public | -.43 | .78 |
| Not Stand up for us | -.27 | .48 |
| Become Isolated from the People | -.38 | .73 |
| Provide Strong Leadership | .79 | -.29 |
| Appoint Good Advisors | .67 | -.21 |
| Be Immoral in Personal Conduct | -.05 | .36 |
| Get us into Unnecessary Wars | -.33 | .66 |
| Make Good Foreign Relations | .64 | -.29 |
| Communicate Openly with the People | .80 | -.41 |
| Break the Law | -.23 | .64 |
| Understand the Little People | .74 | -.34 |
| Stick to his Word | .73 | -.37 |
| Misuse Presidency for Personal Gain | -.41 | .77 |
| Pearson r: | | -.42 |

(N = 257)

| <u>Principal Factors</u> | <u>% of Common Variance</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 38.0 |
| 2 | 14.8 |
| 3 | 6.1 |
| 4 | 5.8 |
| 5 | 4.8 |
| 6 | 4.3 |

Table 4.8

Behavior Factor Structure

| | <u>Ford</u> | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> |
| Favor Special Groups | -.22 | .44 |
| Set a Good Moral Example | .50 | -.30 |
| Solve our Economic Problems | .65 | -.21 |
| Hide Things from Public | -.41 | .65 |
| Not Stand up for us | -.16 | .45 |
| Become Isolated from the People | -.43 | .62 |
| Provide Strong Leadership | .76 | -.32 |
| Appoint Good Advisors | .76 | -.31 |
| Be Immoral in Personal Conduct | -.15 | .46 |
| Get us into Unnecessary Wars | -.28 | .49 |
| Make Good Foreign Relations | .68 | -.23 |
| Communicate Openly with the People | .70 | -.35 |
| Break the Law | -.28 | .71 |
| Understands the Little People | .73 | -.40 |
| Stick to his Word | .64 | -.40 |
| Misuse Presidency for Personal Gain | -.29 | .63 |
| Pearson r: | | -.44 |

(N = 250)

| <u>Principal Factors</u> | <u>% of Common Variance</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 34.7 |
| 2 | 13.4 |
| 3 | 7.4 |
| 4 | 5.9 |
| 5 | 5.3 |
| 6 | 4.6 |

Table 4.9

Behavior Factor Structure

| | <u>Kennedy</u> | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> |
| Favor Special Groups | -.22 | .57 |
| Set a Good Moral Example | .60 | -.46 |
| Solve our Economic Problems | .79 | -.29 |
| Hide Things from Public | -.50 | .73 |
| Not Stand up for us | -.19 | .43 |
| Become Isolated from the People | -.42 | .54 |
| Provide Strong Leadership | .77 | -.33 |
| Appoint Good Advisors | .73 | -.44 |
| Be Immoral in Personal Conduct | -.36 | .69 |
| Get us into Unnecessary Wars | -.43 | .66 |
| Make Good Foreign Relations | .71 | -.32 |
| Communicate Openly with the People | .82 | -.49 |
| Break the Law | -.39 | .75 |
| Understand the Little People | .74 | -.45 |
| Stick to his Word | .79 | -.52 |
| Misuse Presidency for Personal Gain | -.46 | .76 |
| Pearson r: | | -.52 |

(N = 241)

| <u>Principal Factors</u> | <u>% of Common Variance</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 43.8 |
| 2 | 13.0 |
| 3 | 5.5 |
| 4 | 5.0 |
| 5 | 4.5 |
| 6 | 4.2 |

Table 4.10

Behavior Factor Structure

Reagan

| | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Favor Special Groups | -.28 | .54 |
| Set a Good Moral Example | .58 | -.13 |
| Solve our Economic Problems | .72 | -.21 |
| Hide Things from Public | -.26 | .74 |
| Not Stand up for us | .15 | .23 |
| Become Isolated from the People | -.44 | .73 |
| Provide Strong Leadership | .76 | -.20 |
| Appoint Good Advisors | .78 | -.20 |
| Be Immoral in Personal Conduct | -.09 | .32 |
| Get us into Unnecessary Wars | -.27 | .67 |
| Make Good Foreign Relations | .75 | -.25 |
| Communicate Openly with the People | .82 | -.40 |
| Break the Law | -.19 | .55 |
| Understand the Little People | .75 | -.35 |
| Stick to his Word | .76 | -.31 |
| Misuse Presidency for Personal Gain | -.35 | .67 |

Pearson r: - .29

(N = 238)

| <u>Principal Factors</u> | <u>% of Common Variance</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | 38.6 |
| 2 | 14.3 |
| 3 | 7.9 |
| 4 | 6.2 |
| 5 | 5.0 |
| 6 | 3.9 |

certainly easy to describe, but in their evaluative simplicity they lose the richer descriptive power afforded by the trait inventory.

Summary and Recommendations

Our adventure in developing an inventory to map the behavioral elements of candidate imagery has met with mixed success. On the one hand, people seem to have no trouble revealing their judgments about what would-be presidents would likely do if they were elected. Such judgments, furthermore, are at least somewhat sensitive to the personal histories of our gang-of-four. And finally, expectations about presidential behavior are evaluatively consequential. All of this recommends the assessment of behavioral expectations in the 1980 study. On the other hand, the behavior inventory suffers by comparison at every point with its companion, the trait inventory. The case for the full behavioral inventory is especially compromised by the finding that behavioral expectations and trait ascriptions are evaluatively redundant. This is particularly serious given the ferocious if not homicidal competition anticipated over 1980 interviewing time. Based on these considerations, and on the occasionally strong but uneven empirical performance throughout this section, our recommendation is to include a severely abbreviated form of the behavior inventory--4 items in all. These four are distinguished from the remainder of the inventory on two grounds: first, by their demonstrated capacity to discriminate among candidates; and second, by their expected relevance for the 1980 campaign. The specific items are:

- (1) solve our economic problems
- (2) set a good moral example (particularly relevant if Kennedy enters)

- (3) provide strong leadership
- (4) develop good relations with other countries.

5. Conceptions of an Ideal President

People have little difficulty in cognizing presidential candidates in terms of traits and behaviors. The instrumentation presented in the preceding several sections seems to tap natural modes of thinking about prominent political actors. Our interest in eliciting citizens' conceptions of an ideal president is related to this work, and has two sources.

The first is theoretical: in the vocabulary of contemporary social psychology, the assumptions citizens hold about what a president should be and should do constitute a particular kind of social schema (Taylor and Crocker, in press; Fiske and Kinder, 1980). Social schemas are abstract conceptions people maintain about the social world--about persons, roles, and events. Presidential idealizations in particular (to the extent we can find them) are normative schemas: i.e., they embody the standards that people apply (if tacitly) in the evaluation of would-be presidents. So part of our motivation here was to join the study of response to candidates with current theoretical developments in social psychology.

At a more practical level, developing measures to tap citizens' conceptions of an ideal president should augment our predictive abilities. In a reasonable world, traits and behaviors deemed important for an ideal president (e.g., honest) should count more heavily in evaluation of real candidates than should attributes thought less important (e.g., humble).

The development of an ideal president inventory has been already alluded to in the earlier descriptions of the trait and behavior batteries. We began by asking Carnegie-Mellon undergraduates what they thought an

ideal president should be and do and what an anti-ideal president should be and do. From their replies we fashioned four lists composed of 16 good traits, 16 bad traits, 16 good behaviors, and 16 bad behaviors, which were then included in our New Haven study. Each New Haven respondent received one such list, and was asked to select the six most important attributes. This task was accompanied (and preceded) by a companion open-ended question similar to what we had included in the Carnegie-Mellon study, which also inquired into presidential idealizations.

From the evidence elicited by these questions in New Haven, we generated, finally, a new and refined list, composed of 8 good traits, 8 bad traits, 8 good behaviors, and 8 bad behaviors. It is this form of the ideal president inventory that was part of the CPS Spring survey (wave I, full sample). CPS respondents were presented with each of the four types of attributes separately, and instructed to choose those four among the 8 offered that were the most important for an ideal president. The lists and accompanying instructions are presented in full in Appendix A; they are presented in abbreviated form in Table 5.1, along with the marginal distributions.

Profile of the Ideal President

As shown in Table 5.1, there was widespread agreement that an ideal president must be honest, knowledgeable, and open-minded, must be neither power-hungry nor unstable, must provide strong leadership, appoint good advisors, solve economic problems, and must avoid unnecessary wars, and never use power for personal gain. Notice that far greater significance was attached to presidential knowledgeability than to presidential intelligence: while ideal presidents must know a lot, there was substantially

Table 5.1

Profile of an Ideal President

% selecting attribute as important

Good Traits

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Honest | 91.4 |
| Knowledgeable | 87.5 |
| Open-Minded | 79.3 |
| Courageous | 48.2 |
| Smart | 38.2 |
| Inspiring | 26.8 |
| Warm | 14.6 |
| Humble | 13.2 |

Good Behaviors

| | |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Provide Strong Leadership | 75.2 |
| Appoint Good Advisors | 64.4 |
| Solve our Economic Problems | 62.6 |
| Develop Good For. Relations | 53.6 |
| Communicate Openly with People | 46.4 |
| Stick to his Word | 38.1 |
| Understand Little People | 30.9 |
| Set Good Moral Example | 28.1 |

Bad Traits

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Power-Hungry | 76.3 |
| Unstable | 65.9 |
| Weak | 50.5 |
| Prejudiced | 48.7 |
| Reckless | 46.6 |
| Too Political | 43.7 |
| Immoral | 37.6 |
| Selfish | 29.7 |

Bad Behaviors

| | |
|---|------|
| Get us into Unnecessary Wars | 73.6 |
| Use Power for Personal Gain | 62.1 |
| Hide Things from Public | 55.4 |
| Not Stand up for the U.S. in Foreign Affairs | 53.6 |
| Favor Special Interest Groups | 48.2 |
| Break the Law | 47.9 |
| Become Isolated from People | 31.8 |
| Be Immoral in Personal Conduct | 22.9 |

Note: N is 280.

less enthusiasm for requiring ideal presidents to be smart (88% versus 38%). More generally, whether a president is warm or humble, immoral or selfish, sets a good moral example or becomes isolated from the people was of comparatively little importance. At least by the expressed judgment of CPS respondents, matters of competence appear to count for more than does integrity or likeability.

The conception of an ideal president sketched by the marginals displayed in Table 5.1 was quite widely-shared within the CPS sample. There was, for example, virtually no differences by party identification on which traits and behaviors were deemed important. Thus Republicans, Independents, and Democrats alike agreed on the importance of honesty and the relative unimportance of humility in their presidential idealizations. Likewise, there were few differences associated with ideological self-identification. Conservatives more than liberals emphasized an ideal president's moral responsibilities, and they worried somewhat more about standing up for the United States in foreign affairs and somewhat less about solving economic problems, but elsewhere idealized presidents of the left and the right coincided. (Had we asked more directly about policy we would certainly have uncovered more disagreement.) Nor did we find much variation by demographic characteristics. Southerners, for instance, emphasized the same traits and behaviors in their presidential idealizations as did respondents from other regions. So it went with young and old, and with men and women. (The few sex differences that did show up conform to traditional sex-role stereotypes, with men emphasizing strength and women according more importance to warmth, morality, and developing good relations.)

The one place where we found consistent and occasionally substantial variation was by level of education. The less well-educated tended to emphasize the personal side of the presidency. Their ideal president (more than for the well-educated) is honest, inspiring, smart, warm, not selfish, understanding, and never hides things from the public: this ideal president is a good--in fact, exemplary--person. The well-educated's ideal president seems less nice. Likability is sacrificed for efficiency. The ideal president of the well-educated is courageous, knowledgeable, appoints good advisors, and is impartial to special interests: this ideal president is a good manager.

Augmenting Prediction of Evaluation and Preference by Presidential Idealizations

Of course, whether there is a single, universal conception of an ideal president or whether there are many, the essential question for theory and practice remains: does knowledge of which traits and behaviors citizens emphasize in their thinking about an ideal president assist us in predicting and understanding their evaluation of (perhaps all too) real would-be presidents?

The simple answer is, alas, no. We began with a straightforward test. Our familiar criteria here were again how strongly a candidate's rating on a specific attribute was related to overall evaluation and how strongly it was related to candidate preference. For both, we took the proper measure of strength to be the unstandardized regression coefficient, b. Our first test then was simply to see whether attributes deemed important by the CPS sample for an ideal president figured more heavily into their evaluations of and their preferences among specific

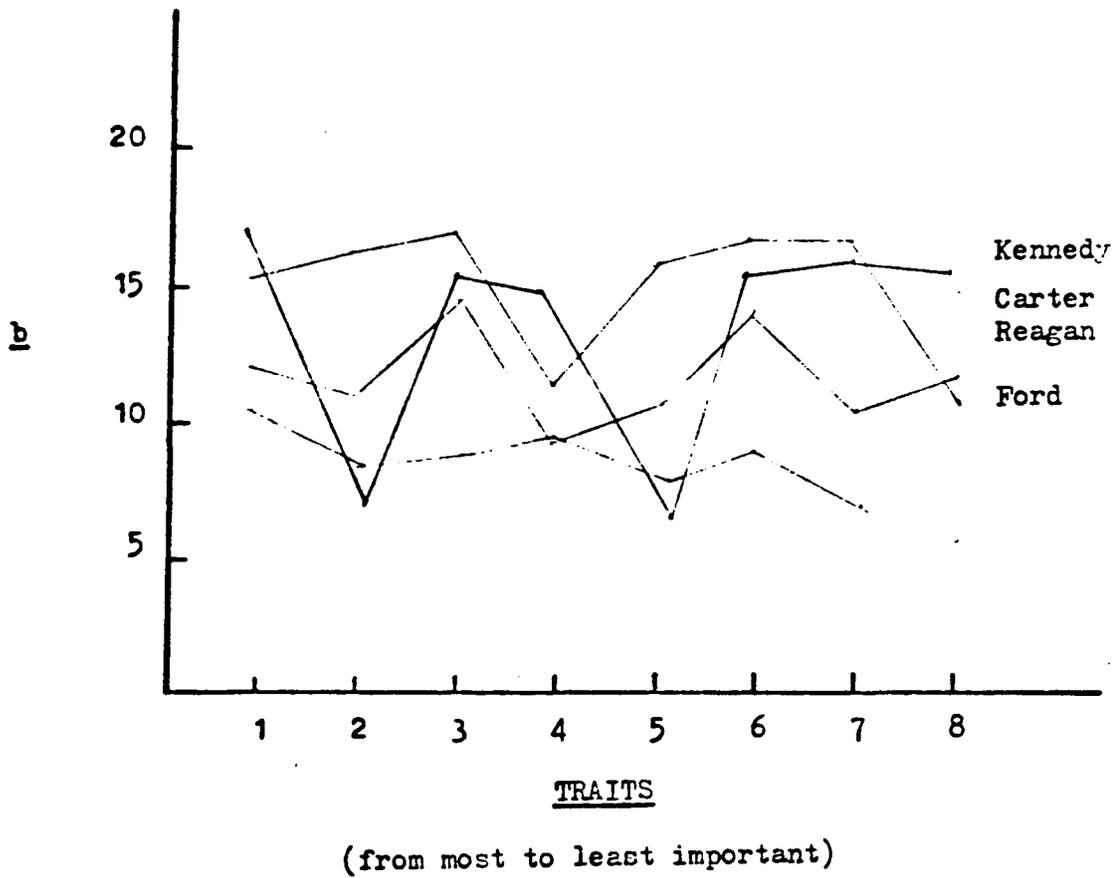
candidates.

Figures 5.1 through 5.4 display the results for the first criterion--evaluation--separately for each type of attribute (good traits, bad traits, good behaviors, bad behaviors), and within each figure, separately for each of the gang-of-four. In all cases, the attributes are arrayed from left to right in descending importance. In Figure 5.1, for example, the entries run from honest, the trait deemed most important for an ideal president, to humble, the least important among the set of eight positive traits. If attributes thought important for an ideal president figure more prominently into evaluations of real candidates, then the regression coefficients displayed in Figures 5.1 to 5.4 should decline from left to right. They do not. Citizens' thoughts about an ideal president do not much impinge upon their evaluations of would-be presidents. Nor do they seem to affect preference. The same ragged pattern of evidence presented in Figures 5.1 to 5.4 is simply recapitulated if preference is substituted for evaluation, as shown in Figures 5.5 to 5.8.

There are interesting results lurking in these displays. For one, only Carter among the gang-of-four provides hints of the predicted relationship. This suggests that although far from ideal in most citizens' eyes, the incumbent president may help define (if by omission) the properties of the ideal. For another, evaluation of Kennedy is tied more than for the other three to specific ratings on attributes that explicitly evoke a moral dimension: on honest, immoral, set a moral example, and be immoral in personal conduct. Even more interesting, Kennedy is distinguished still more sharply on these same attributes

FIGURE 5.1

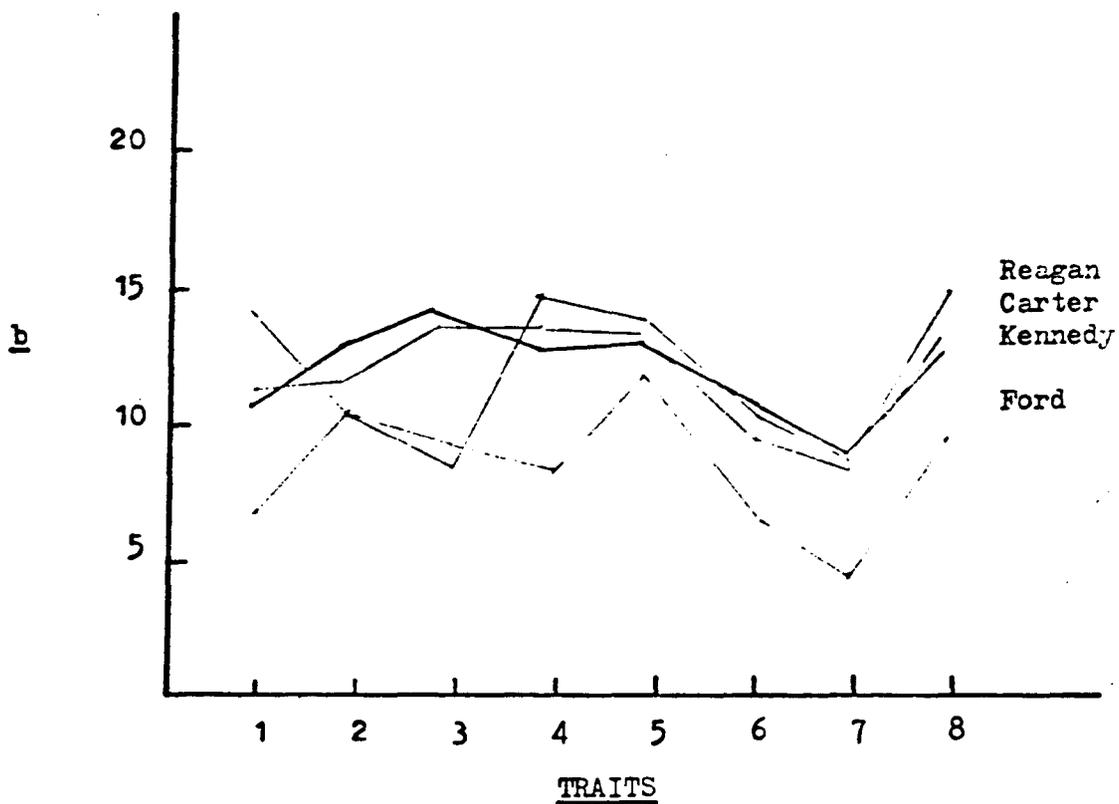
PREDICTING EVALUATION FROM GOOD TRAITS



- 1= HONEST
- 2= KNOWLEDGEABLE
- 3= OPEN-MINDED
- 4= COURAGEOUS
- 5= SMART
- 6= INSPIRING
- 7= WARM
- 8= HUMBLE

FIGURE 5.2

PREDICTING EVALUATION FROM BAD TRAITS

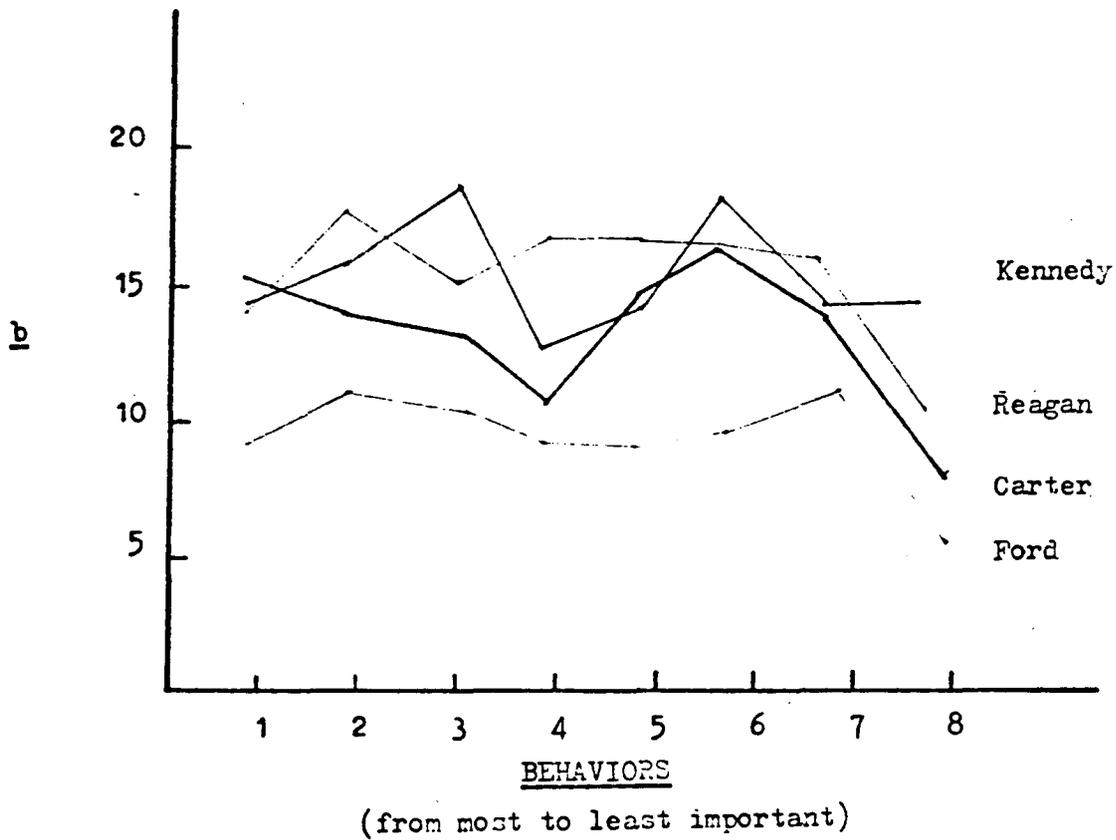


(from most to least important)

- 1= POWER-HUNGRY
- 2= UNSTABLE
- 3= WEAK
- 4= PREJUDICED
- 5= RECKLESS
- 6= TOO-POLITICAL
- 7= IMMORAL
- 8= SELFISH

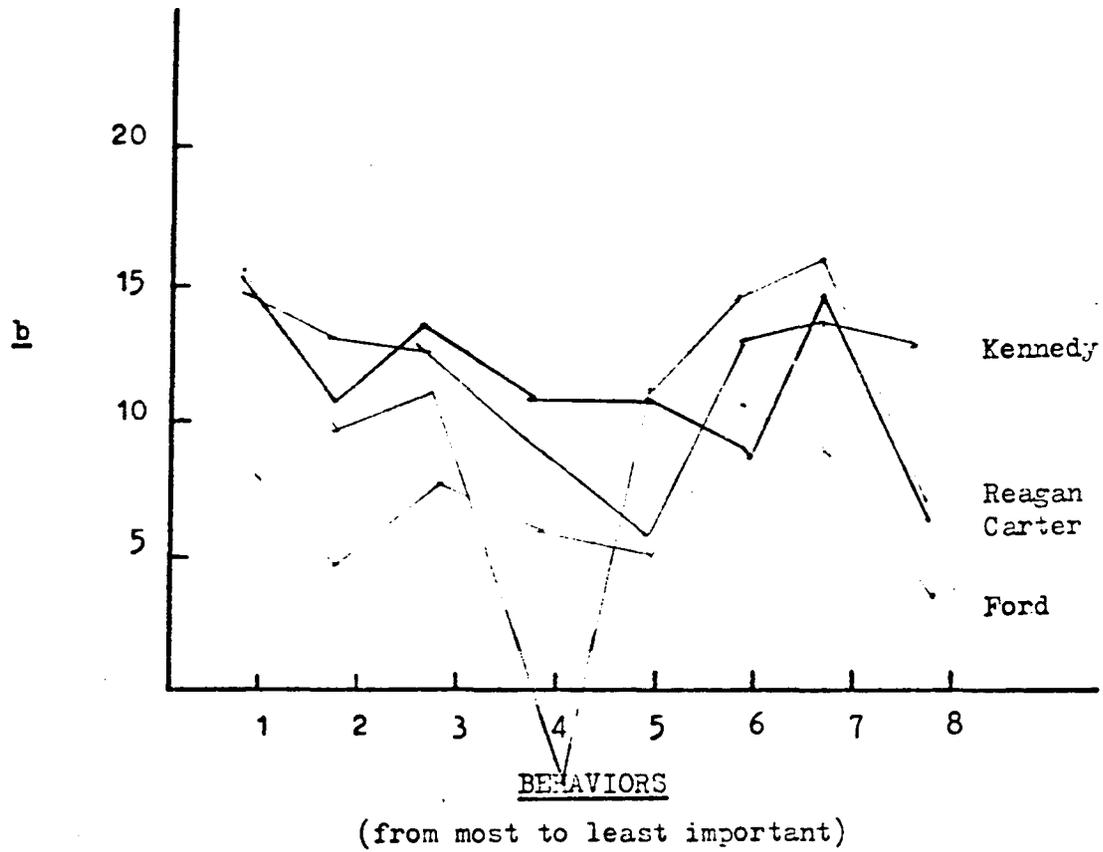
FIGURE 5.3

PREDICTING EVALUATION FROM GOOD BEHAVIORS



- 1= PROVIDE STRONG LEADERSHIP
- 2= APPAOINT GOOD ADVISORS
- 3= SOLVE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS
- 4= DEVELCP GOOD FOREIGN RELATIONS
- 5= COMMUNICATE OPENLY WITH THE PEOPLE
- 6= STICK TO HIS WORD
- 7= UNDERSTAND THE LITTLE PEOPLE
- 8= SET A GOOD MORAL EXAMPLE

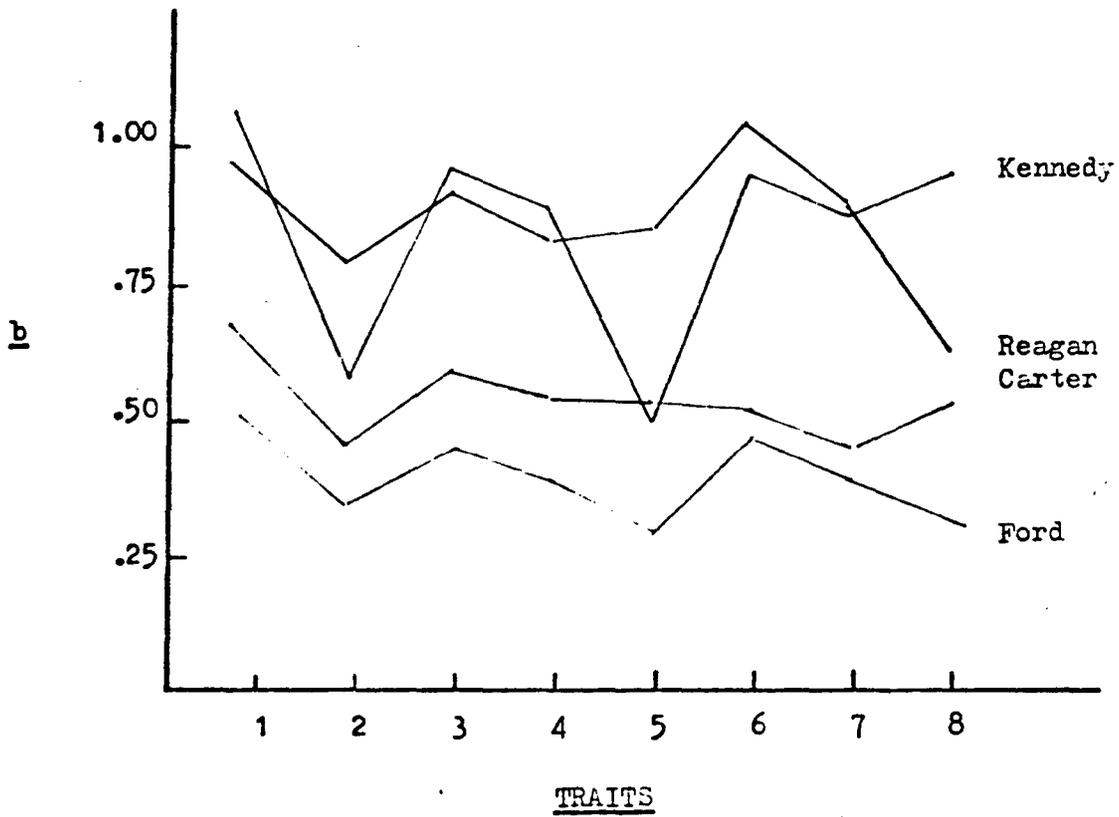
PREDICTING EVALUATION FROM BAD BEHAVIORS



- 1= GET US INTO UNECESSARY WARS
- 2= USE POWER FOR PERSONAL GAIN
- 3= HIDE THINGS FROM THE PUBLIC
- 4= NOT STAND UP FOR US IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS
- 5= FAVOR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
- 6= BREAK THE LAW
- 7= BECOME ISOLATED FROM THE PEOPLE
- 8= BE IMMORAL IN PERSONAL CONDUCT

FIGURE 5.5

PREDICTING PREFERENCE FROM GOOD TRAITS

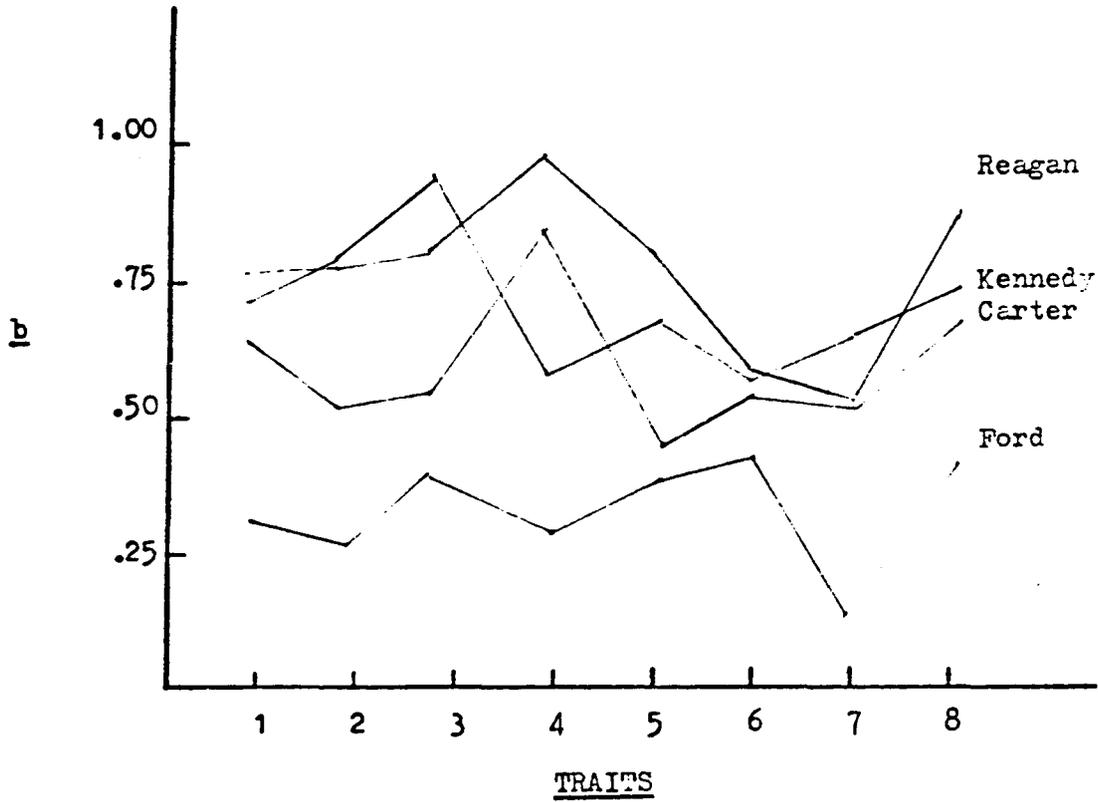


(from most to least important)

- 1= HONEST
- 2= KNOWLEDGEABLE
- 3= OPEN-MINDED
- 4= COURAGEOUS
- 5= SMART
- 6= INSPIRING
- 7= WARM
- 8= HUMBLE

FIGURE 5.6

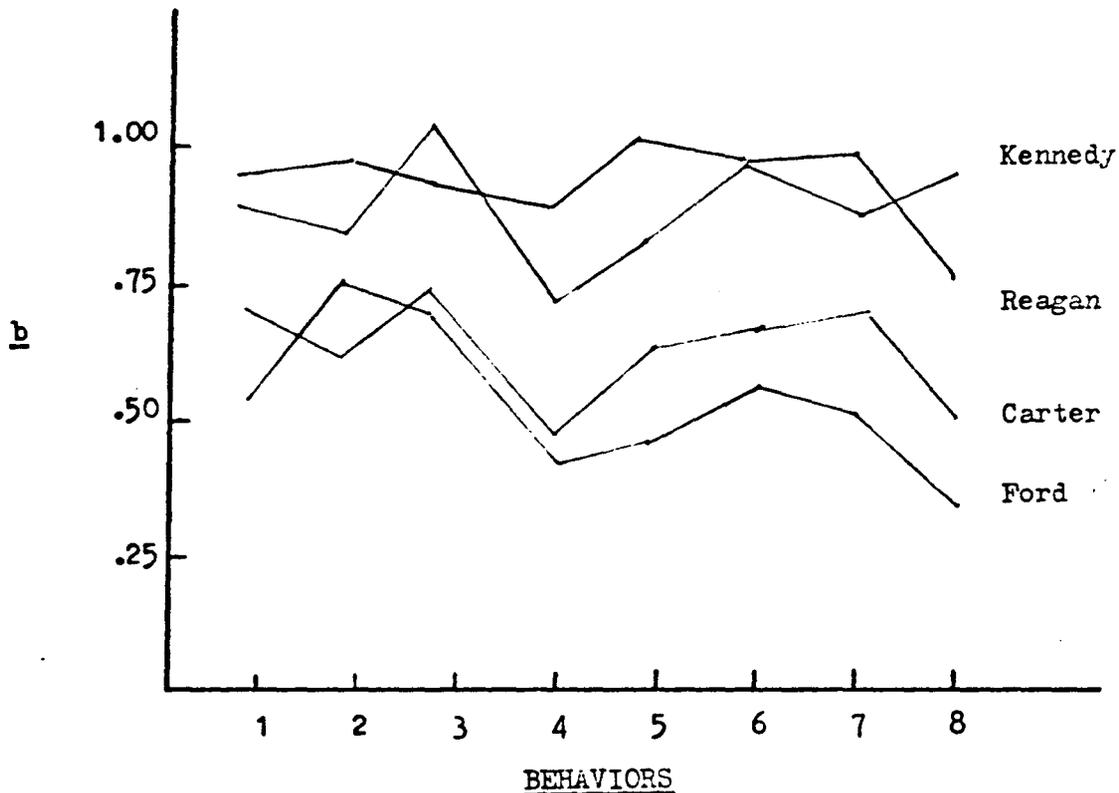
PREDICTING PREFERENCE FROM BAD TRAITS



(from most to least important)

- 1= POWER-HUNGRY
- 2= UNSTABLE
- 3= WEAK
- 4= PREJUDICED
- 5= RECKLESS
- 6= TOO-POLITICAL
- 7= IMMORAL
- 8= SELFISH

PREDICTING PREFERENCE FROM GOOD BEHAVIORS



(from most to least important)

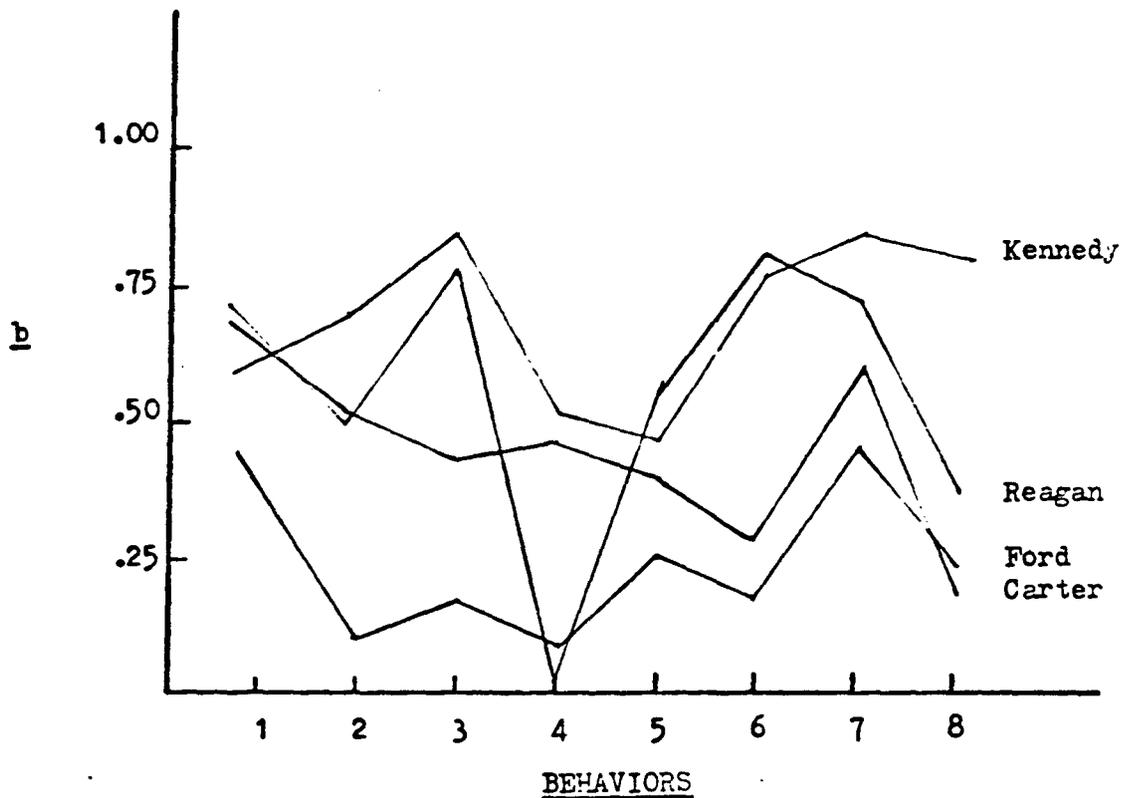
- 1= PROVIDE STRONG LEADERSHIP
- 2= APPOINT GOOD ADVISORS
- 3= SOLVE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS
- 4= DEVELOP GOOD FOREIGN RELATIONS
- 5= COMMUNICATE OPENLY WITH THE PEOPLE
- 6= STICK TO HIS WORD
- 7= UNDERSTAND THE LITTLE PEOPLE
- 8= SET A GOOD MORAL EXAMPLE

when it comes to preference. But all this has little to do with the major business of this section, which is to ascertain whether presidential idealizations generally influence judgments about various would-be presidents. On this matter, our first results are discouraging. ^R Our second test was to compare the collective predictability of evaluation and preference achieved by those attributes deemed important for an ideal president versus the collective predictability achieved by comparatively unimportant attributes. The results are presented in Table 5.2, again separately for each of the gang-of-four. Reading across the Table, the findings represent a remarkable corroboration of the null hypothesis. Evaluation of Kennedy, for example, is predicted just as well by the 16 attributes thought least important for an ideal president (included as separate predictors in a regression analysis) as by the 16 most important: $R^2 = .51$ vs. $.52$. And so on for each of the four candidates, for evaluation and preference alike.

Our third and perhaps more lenient test follows the form of its immediate predecessor, except that now the comparison is drawn between the predictability produced by the eight most important and that produced by the eight least important attributes (thereby excluding the problematic intermediate group). This analysis, summarized in Table 5.3, offers the first bright spot in an otherwise morbid tale. Kennedy aside, evaluation was indeed predicted better by the eight most important attributes (again, traits and behaviors both) than by the eight attributes thought relatively unimportant for an ideal president. These small differences also held for preference, as is also shown in Table 5.3, with Kennedy again the exception.

FIGURE 3.0

PREDICTING PREFERENCE FROM BAD BEHAVIORS



(from most to least important)

- 1= GET US INTO UNECESSARY WARS
- 2= USE POWER FOR PERSONAL GAIN
- 3= HIDE THINGS FROM THE PUBLIC
- 4= NOT STAND UP FOR US IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS
- 5= FAVOR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
- 6= BREAK THE LAW
- 7= BECOME ISOLATED FROM THE PEOPLE
- 8= BE IMMORAL IN PERSONAL CONDUCT

Table 5.3

Predicting Evaluation and Preference from 8
Important and 8 Unimportant Presidential
Attributes

| | Evaluation | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
| <u>Predictors:</u> | | | | |
| 8 Most Important Attributes: | .35 | .30 | .43 | .49 |
| 8 Least Important Attributes: | .26 | .26 | .44 | .41 |
| Preference | | | | |
| 8 Most Important Attributes: | .34 | .21 | .50 | .42 |
| 8 Least Important Attributes: | .26 | .13 | .49 | .36 |

Note: Entry is R^2 from multiple regression analysis predicting evaluation and preference. Attributes (traits and behaviors) treated as separate predictors. Important traits and behaviors are those selected by the sample as important for an ideal President.

Table 5.2

Predicting Evaluation and Preference from 16 Important
and 16 Unimportant Presidential Attributes

| | Evaluation | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
| <u>Predictors:</u> | | | | |
| 16 Most Important Attributes: | .39 | .36 | .52 | .51 |
| 16 Least Important Attributes: | .42 | .37 | .51 | .53 |
| | Preference | | | |
| 16 Most Important Attributes: | .39 | .26 | .56 | .48 |
| 16 Least Important Attributes: | .35 | .25 | .54 | .50 |

Note: Entry is R^2 from multiple regression predicting evaluation and preference. Attributes (traits and behaviors) are treated as separate predictors. Important traits and behaviors are those that the sample selected as important for an ideal President.

Table 5.4

Predicting Evaluation and Preference From Traits and
Behaviors, Taking Into Account Idiosyncratic
Ideal Presidents

| | Evaluation | | | |
|---|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> |
| <u>Predictors:</u> | | | | |
| <u>Group</u> - Defined 16 Most Important Attributes: | .42 | .26 | .53 | .52 |
| <u>Individual</u> - Defined 16 Most Important Attributes: | .37 | .26 | .44 | .45 |
| | Preference | | | |
| <u>Group</u> - Defined 16 Most Important Attributes: | .35 | .18 | .52 | .49 |
| <u>Individual</u> - Defined 16 Most Important Attributes: | .31 | .18 | .50 | .46 |

Note: Entry is R^2 from multiple regression predicting evaluation and preference. Importance is defined in two ways; see text for details.

But even this modest support is equivocal, however. For included among the eight unimportant attributes were three that explicitly evoke morality (set a moral example, be immoral in personal conduct, and immoral). And all three tend to be weakly tied to evaluation and preference for Carter, Ford, and Reagan, though not for Kennedy. So the evidence displayed in Table 5.3 may reflect less the general mediating role of presidential idealizations, and more the particular way moral issues happen to be exemplified by our particular set of politicians.

This brings us to one final test. So far we have operationalized importance in aggregate terms, defined by what the CPS sample thought most important for an ideal president. What if we were to take into account individual variation: What about crazy Harry from Tucson, who believes that an ideal president should most of all be humble? Our last analysis attempted to do this.

For a comparative baseline, we first of all constructed a set of new measures. For each respondent, for each of the gang-of-four taken separately, the sum of the four most important good traits and the four most important good behaviors--as defined by the sample as a whole--was calculated, along with the corresponding sum for bad traits and bad behaviors (again, as defined by the sample), and then the difference between the two sums taken. The resulting new measure was then entered as the sole independent variable in a regression analysis predicting evaluation and in a separate analysis, preference. The results of this procedure are summarized in the first column of Table 5.4. The interesting question then becomes whether we enhance the predictability of evaluation and preference over these benchmark figures by taking into account

individualized conceptions of the ideal president. New measures are needed here, too, but this time in a way that tailors them to individual idiosyncrasy. For each respondent, the sum over the eight good traits and behaviors was taken, this time selecting only those attributes that the individual respondent had identified as important for the ideal president. Then this measure was included as the sole predictor variable in a separate regression analysis. As shown in column 2 of Table 5.4, taking into account individualized conceptions of the ideal president resulted in a consistent decrement in the prediction of both evaluation and preference.

Autopsy

Collectively, this evidence certainly undermines our enthusiasm for the ideal president inventory. We are less certain about why it failed. Perhaps the attributes that make up the inventory are all very important, so that differences between them are trivial. Perhaps ratings of candidates on specific attributes already incorporate importance, thereby subverting our efforts to assess ^{importance} independently in terms of an ideal president. (From evidence not presented here this seems unlikely.) Perhaps people lack the capacity to discern those attributes that are in fact important in shaping their judgments of would-be presidents. Whatever the underlying causes, our recommendation is clear: the ideal president inventory should not be included in the 1980 study.

6. "Spontaneous" impressions of leaders

We have so far described several fixed-format, close-ended strategies for assessing citizens' impressions of political leaders. We also

remain in principle strong advocates of relatively unconstrained questions about candidates—to allow citizens to describe candidates in their own terms. Information important to peoples' impressions of leaders not covered in our close-ended instrumentation will surely emerge in such replies. Moreover, open-ended questions are uniquely suited to provide material for inquiries into the structure of information that underlies candidate evaluation and how this changes over the course of the campaign.

Although we strongly support in principle the importance of collecting free-response remarks about the candidates, we harbored several reservations about current CPS practice in this regard. Candidate evaluation has often been measured by indexes built upon replies to the standard open-ended questions. Such indexes almost certainly reflect well the voter's evaluation of a candidate. But beyond evaluation, and that is what is at issue here, it is not obvious what the open-ended questions are measuring. One interpretation is to accept the questions at face value—that they in fact identify voters' reasons for their evaluations. At least two other interpretations of these replies may have greater psychological plausibility, however.

The first takes voters' replies mainly as convenient rationalizations for evaluations arrived at largely on other grounds. From this perspective, replies to the open-ended questions are less reasons that precede evaluation than they are rationalizations that follow evaluation.

A second interpretation also challenges whether the open-ended questions tap voters' reasons for their evaluations, but from a different theoretical perspective, that articulated recently by Nisbett and Wilson (1977). They argue that people have severely restricted introspective

access to their own decision making processes (though not to the decisions themselves). At the same time, people believe that they possess such access, and are therefore altogether willing to report (often invalid) explanations for their decisions. According to this interpretation, then, voters' answers to the open-ended questions may be revealing not of the factors that actually figured into their evaluations, but of widely-shared and highly available explanations for candidate evaluation (what Nisbett and Wilson call "a priori causal theories").

The general point here is that responses to the open-ended questions are interpretable from several competing perspectives. We are not suggesting that the open-ended questions do not measure well voters' evaluations of the candidates (though there may be more efficient ways to do this). Rather the question is: how should the qualitative nature of the replies be understood?

To help resolve this question, we included in the New Haven survey four different versions of open-ended questions, randomly assigned to respondents. Each respondent received just one form, directed toward Carter, Ford, Reagan, and Kennedy in turn. Form I represented our slight adaptation of the standard CPS question; Form II framed the open-ended question in a political way, but without encouraging rationalization; Form III put the question in explicitly personal terms; Form IV went further in this direction, placing the question in an explicitly personal and concrete context.

The way in which the open-ended questions were asked did indeed influence replies. For example, politicians were much more likely to be described as warm or as cold when they were thought about in a concrete,

personal context (Form IV). Decency and immorality became much more prominent when respondents were asked to think about Jimmy Carter (and the others) as a person. Other differences emerged but these examples make the general point: The qualitative character of leader impressions is a function partly of how the impressions are elicited.

To explore such differences further, three forms of the open-ended question were included in the spring survey: the standard question (slightly modified for a non-campaign context), which we think invites rationalization; a question that asked respondents for their impressions about candidate X as a person; and a third question that required respondents to describe what candidate X would be like in person at an informal neighborhood gathering. (These questions are presented in full in Appendix A.) The standard question was administered to half-sample A respondents, who were asked about Carter and Ford during the first interview and Kennedy and Reagan during the second. Half-sample B respondents were also asked about Carter and Ford during their first interview, but in terms of the in person question. In the second interview they were then asked about their impressions of Kennedy and then Reagan as people.

This design obviously necessitates drawing comparisons between responses offered by the two half-samples. It is therefore imperative that the two are comparable in other respects. Fortunately, they seem to be: On demographic characteristics, and on political predispositions, the two samples are indistinguishable. Thus any differences in the responses to the various open-ended questions can confidently be attributed to variation in question format.

Two criteria are appropriate in assessing differences between the

standard and new open-ended questions. First, do the questions differ in the sheer amount of material elicited? Second, do the questions elicit differing types of information?

Response Rate Results

The percent of people responding is higher in every case for the new questions than for the standard. As can be seen from Table 6.1, however, the average improvement in response rate is rather modest, only 9%. The biggest changes are for Ford and Reagan, the less salient potential candidates.

To assess whether the experimental questions pull responses mainly from politically inattentive and perhaps politically unsophisticated respondents, we re-examined response rate within groups determined by a measure of media exposure. (This is an averaged index based on replies to four questions, tapping: the degree to which the respondent follows public affairs; the frequency with which the respondent reports watching early evening television news; the amount of attention paid to government affairs when watching television news; and finally, the amount of attention reportedly paid to government affairs when reading the newspaper. Responses to these questions were modestly inter-correlated: the mean Pearson $r = .30$.) This analysis is summarized in Tables 6.2 and 6.3. As shown there, the effect of the experimental questions is essentially identical for high and low exposure respondents. A tangential and unsurprising result revealed by this breakdown is that more of the high-exposure respondents than low exposure respondents answer all three types of questions, by about 8%. What is more interesting in this comparison is that the difference is most pronounced on negative responses (i.e.,

Table 6.1

Response to Three Types of Open-ended Questions:
Percent of Respondents Offering a Response

| <u>Question</u> | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> | <u>Mean</u> |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1. CPS</u> | | | | | |
| <u>standard:</u> | | | | | |
| why vote for: | 60 | 49 | 55 | 47 | 53 |
| why vote against: | 75 | 52 | 49 | 48 | 56 |
| answers to either or both: | 92 | 81 | 83 | 74 | 83 |
| <u>2. Experimental</u> | | | | | |
| <u>candidate in person</u> | 98 | 93 | | (not asked) | 95 |
| <u>candidate as person</u> | | (not asked) | 88 | 87 | 88 |
| CPS to Experimental Change | +6 | +12 | +5 | +13 | +9 |

Note: See Appendix A for complete description of the three questions.

Table 6.2

Percent of Low Media Exposure Respondents Offering
a Response

| <u>Question</u> | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> | <u>Mean</u> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1. CPS</u> | | | | | |
| <u>standard:</u> | | | | | |
| why vote for | 59 | 49 | 58 | 49 | 54 |
| why vote against | 67 | 49 | 38 | 41 | 49 |
| answers to either or both | 88 | 78 | 76 | 70 | 78 |
| <u>2. Experimental:</u> | | | | | |
| candidate <u>in person</u> | 96 | 90 | | | 93 |
| candidate <u>as person</u> | | | 83 | 83 | 83 |
| CPS to Experimental Change | +8 | +12 | +7 | +13 | +10 |

Table 6.3

Percent of High Media Exposure Respondents Offering
a Response

| <u>Question</u> | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> | <u>Mean</u> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1. CPS standard:</u> | | | | | |
| <u>why vote for</u> | 61 | 48 | 52 | 44 | 51 |
| <u>why vote against</u> | 84 | 54 | 61 | 55 | 64 |
| <u>answers to either or both</u> | 97 | 84 | 89 | 78 | 87 |
| <u>2. Experimental:</u> | | | | | |
| <u>candidate in person</u> | 100 | 96 | | | 98 |
| <u>candidate as person</u> | | | 94 | 93 | 94 |
| <u>CPS to Experimental Change</u> | +3 | +12 | +5 | +15 | +9 |

on the "why vote against" component of the standard question).

The experimental questions elicit replies from a slightly larger proportion of respondents than does the standard question. Do the experimental questions also elicit more responses from those people that do reply? The answer appears to be no, as indicated by the evidence displayed in Table 6.4. The bottom row of the Table displays the change in average number of responses elicited by the standard and experimental questions, excluding those respondents who had nothing to say at all. By this measure, the new questions show a slight net loss.

In sum, rate and quantity of response do not argue forcefully in favor of the experimental questions. We turn now to the qualitative properties of candidate impressions elicited by the three open-ended questions.

Patterns of Response

Table 6.5 shows the percentage of response to each question for each candidate across ten global CPS candidate categories. The most striking result is that the standard question elicits a wider range of response. The experimental questions yield responses almost exclusively confined to the personality category. This may reflect that although people consider candidate personality an inappropriate justification for voting, personal information pours out in response to both forms of the experimental questions, which allow--perhaps even demand--that type of response. Of the two experimental questions, asking respondents to offer their impressions of the candidate as a person elicits somewhat more varied information. However, this comparison is confounded with the particular candidate being asked about: we cannot legitimately compare

Table 6.4

Response to Three Types of Open-ended Questions:
Average Number of Responses Among Those Who Replied at All

| <u>Question</u> | <u>Carter</u> | <u>Ford</u> | <u>Kennedy</u> | <u>Reagan</u> | <u>Mean</u> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1. CPS standard:</u> | | | | | |
| <u>why vote for</u> | 1.88 | 2.03 | 2.50 | 1.72 | 2.03 |
| <u>why vote against</u> | 1.99 | 1.51 | 1.74 | 1.83 | 1.77 |
| <u>answers to either or both</u> | 2.96 | 2.20 | 2.68 | 2.26 | 2.53 |
| <u>2. Experimental:</u> | | | | | |
| <u>candidate in person</u> | 2.31 | 2.09 | | | 2.20 |
| <u>candidate as person</u> | | | 2.73 | 2.38 | 2.56 |
| <u>CPS to Experimental Change</u> | -.65 | -.11 | +.05 | +.12 | -.15 |

Table 6.5

Response to Three Types of Open-
ended Questions: Global
Category Usage^a

| Question | Category | Carter | | Ford | | Kennedy | | Reagan | | Mean |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------|----|------|----|---------|----|--------|------|-------|
| | | + | - | + | - | + | - | + | - | |
| <u>1. CPS standard</u> ^b | experience | 6 | 11 | 27 | 12 | 10 | 4 | 12 | 5 | 10.88 |
| | leadership | 3 | 11 | 6 | 16 | 18 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 8.62 |
| | personality | 37 | 16 | 29 | 14 | 29 | 34 | 29 | 34 | 27.75 |
| | party ties | 3 | 4 | 8 | 25 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 7.12 |
| | government | | | | | | | | | |
| | management | 4 | 8 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 5.62 |
| | miscellaneous | 3 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 14 | 2 | 3 | 5.50 |
| | philosophy | 6 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 11 | 16 | 7.38 |
| | domestic | | | | | | | | | |
| | policy | 9 | 21 | 4 | 8 | 18 | 21 | 13 | 7 | 12.75 |
| | foreign | | | | | | | | | |
| | policy | 25 | 18 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 10 | 8.88 |
| group ties | 3 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 15 | 1 | 2 | 10 | 5.38 | |
| <u>2. Experimental</u> ^c | experience | 3 | | 3 | | 4 | | 9 | | 4.75 |
| | leadership | 16 | | 12 | | 15 | | 11 | | 13.50 |
| | personality | 74 | | 77 | | 53 | | 52 | | 64.00 |
| | party ties | 0 | | 1 | | 1 | | 0 | | .50 |
| | governmental | | | | | | | | | |
| | management | 2 | | 2 | | 2 | | 3 | | 2.25 |
| | miscellaneous | 2 | | 2 | | 10 | | 6 | | 5.00 |
| | philosophy | 1 | | 2 | | 6 | | 12 | | 6.00 |
| | domestic | | | | | | | | | |
| | policy | 0 | | 0 | | 4 | | 2 | | 1.50 |
| | foreign | | | | | | | | | |
| | policy | 1 | | 0 | | 1 | | 3 | | 1.25 |
| group ties | 1 | | 0 | | 3 | | 3 | | 1.75 | |

^aUsage is recorded as percent of codable responses for that column.

^bWhy vote for is recorded under the + column, against under -.

^cNote that Carter and Ford were described in the in person question, Kennedy and Reagan by the as person question.

Table 6.6

Global Category Usage by Low-Media Exposure Respondents

| <u>Question</u> | <u>Category</u> | <u>Carter</u> | | <u>Ford</u> | | <u>Kennedy</u> | | <u>Reagan</u> | | <u>Mean</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----|-------------|----|----------------|----|---------------|-----|-------------|
| | | + | - | + | - | + | - | + | - | |
| <u>1. CPS standard</u> | experience | 4 | 9 | 25 | 17 | 11 | 3 | 15 | 4 | 11.0 |
| | leadership | 3 | 14 | 5 | 13 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 6.9 |
| | personality | 35 | 14 | 30 | 11 | 40 | 37 | 28 | 27 | 27.8 |
| | party ties | 1 | 6 | 6 | 28 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 7.1 |
| | governmental | | | | | | | | | |
| | management | 5 | 15 | 13 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 7.8 |
| | miscellaneous | 5 | 5 | 11 | 7 | 1 | 13 | 4 | 4 | 6.3 |
| | philosophy | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 11 | 11 | 16 | 7.1 |
| | domestic | | | | | | | | | |
| | policy | 12 | 18 | 3 | 13 | 19 | 21 | 15 | 16 | 14.6 |
| | foreign | | | | | | | | | |
| policy | 31 | 10 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 7.9 | |
| group ties | 3 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 4.8 | |
| <u>2. Experimental</u> | experience | 1 | | 3 | | 4 | | 10 | | 4.5 |
| | leadership | 15 | | 14 | | 16 | | 14 | | 14.8 |
| | personality | 76 | | 80 | | 53 | | 46 | | 63.8 |
| | party ties | 0 | | 2 | | 1 | | 0 | | 0.8 |
| | governmental | | | | | | | | | |
| | management | 2 | | 1 | | 2 | | 4 | | 2.3 |
| | miscellaneous | 2 | | 1 | | 7 | | 6 | | 4.0 |
| | philosophy | 2 | | 1 | | 7 | | 14 | | 6.0 |
| | domestic | | | | | | | | | |
| | policy | 0 | | 0 | | 4 | | 1 | | 1.3 |
| | foreign | | | | | | | | | |
| policy | 1 | | 0 | | 1 | | 4 | | 1.5 | |
| group ties | 1 | | 0 | | 4 | | 2 | | 1.8 | |

Table 6.7

Global Category Usage by High-Media Exposure Respondents

| <u>Question</u> | <u>Category</u> | <u>Carter</u> | | <u>Ford</u> | | <u>Kennedy</u> | | <u>Reagan</u> | | <u>Mean</u> |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----|-------------|----|----------------|----|---------------|----|-------------|
| | | + | - | + | - | + | - | + | - | |
| <u>1. CPS standard</u> | experience | 8 | 12 | 28 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 10.5 |
| | leadership | 3 | 8 | 7 | 20 | 16 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 9.0 |
| | personality | 40 | 16 | 28 | 17 | 28 | 31 | 29 | 40 | 28.6 |
| | party ties | 6 | 6 | 9 | 24 | 1 | 2 | 11 | 6 | 8.1 |
| | government | | | | | | | | | |
| | management | 3 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 0 | 4.3 |
| | miscellaneous | 1 | 2 | 6 | 11 | 3 | 16 | 0 | 2 | 5.1 |
| | philosophy | 10 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 11 | 17 | 7.8 |
| | domestic | | | | | | | | | |
| | policy | 7 | 22 | 4 | 4 | 20 | 20 | 11 | 0 | 11.0 |
| | foreign | | | | | | | | | |
| | policy | 18 | 22 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 11 | 13 | 9.3 |
| | group ties | 4 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 17 | 2 | 2 | 10 | 6.1 |
| <u>2. Experimental</u> | experience | 5 | | 4 | | 5 | | 8 | | 5.5 |
| | leadership | 17 | | 11 | | 15 | | 8 | | 12.8 |
| | personality | 72 | | 74 | | 54 | | 56 | | 64.0 |
| | party ties | 0 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 0.8 |
| | government | | | | | | | | | |
| | management | 2 | | 4 | | 1 | | 3 | | 2.5 |
| | miscellaneous | 2 | | 4 | | 13 | | 5 | | 6.0 |
| | philosophy | 1 | | 3 | | 4 | | 9 | | 4.3 |
| | domestic | | | | | | | | | |
| | policy | 0 | | 0 | | 4 | | 2 | | 1.5 |
| | foreign | | | | | | | | | |
| | policy | 1 | | 1 | | 0 | | 3 | | 1.3 |
| | group ties | 1 | | 0 | | 3 | | 5 | | 2.3 |

the experimental questions with each other, but only separately with the standard. Nevertheless, the as-a-person question does appear superior in allowing the emergence of dimensions unique to the candidate--in Kennedy's case, Chappiquiddick and his alleged ties to working people, and in Reagan's, his extremist political philosophy.

These features, and especially the pronounced differences between responses elicited by the standard question and those elicited by the experimental questions, are preserved within both high and low media exposure groups. These results are shown in Tables 6.6 and 6.7.

One last comparison--and from an unexpected quarter. As a follow-up to the affect inventory, respondents were asked to name for each candidate their strongest feeling and then to describe what lead them to feel that way. These open-ended responses are codable in terms of the standard CPS categories. The marginals are shown in Table 6.8, alongside results from the CPS standard question, summarized earlier.

The similarities are striking in several respects. First of all, the response rate to the affect follow-up question is essentially identical to the rate of response to the standard questions--both in an overall sense and in the sense of preserving candidate differences. As for the standard question, the affect open-ended question elicited responses about Carter most frequently (from 89% of the sample), about Reagan least often (62%), and about Kennedy and Ford with intermediate frequency (80% and 81%, respectively). More impressive still is the qualitative similarity of the candidate impressions elicited by the two questions, which by superficial analysis, seem very different. Nevertheless, whether respondents are asked, in effect, to justify their vote preferences, or whether

Table 6.8

Comparing Responses to CPS Standard Open-Ended
Question with Responses to Reasons for
Strongest Affect Question

| Category | Carter | | Ford | | Kennedy | | Reagan | | Mean | |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | CPS/Affect |
| experience | 8% | 14% | 20% | 16% | 7% | 5% | 8% | 4% | 10.9% | 9.8% |
| leadership | 7 | 5 | 11 | 8 | 12 | 14 | 5 | 13 | 8.6 | 10.0 |
| personality | 27 | 17 | 22 | 34 | 31 | 34 | 31 | 36 | 27.8 | 30.3 |
| party ties | 4 | 1 | 17 | 15 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 5 | 7.1 | 5.3 |
| governmental management | 6 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 5.6 | 4.3 |
| miscellaneous | 3 | 7 | 8 | 18 | 8 | 22 | 2 | 6 | 5.5 | 12.8 |
| philosophy | 5 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 14 | 11 | 7.4 | 6.8 |
| domestic policy | 15 | 12 | 6 | 1 | 20 | 8 | 10 | 4 | 12.3 | 6.3 |
| foreign policy | 22 | 29 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 8.9 | 9.5 |
| group ties | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 5.4 | 4.5 |
| <u>Response Rate:</u> | .92 | .89 | .81 | .81 | .83 | .80 | .74 | .62 | .83 | .78 |

Note: Column's total 100%. The CPS column averages the percentage of responses given to the "vote for" and "vote against" branches.

they are asked for reasons underlying their political affects, they refer in about the same proportion to experience, to personality, to group ties, and so forth.

One notable difference between the two occurs over the "miscellaneous" category: The affect question elicits more responses here than does the standard. This is not necessarily to the detriment of the affect questions. The differences are sharpest for Kennedy and Ford. And it turns out that the miscellaneous category is home to replies recalling Chappaquiddick and Ford's pardon of Nixon.

Recommendations

Putting aside for a moment considerations of time and money (just for a moment), there are excellent reasons to include open-ended candidate instrumentation in the 1980 study (i.e., in addition to the standard question that will surely be part of the immediate pre-election-post-election-preserve-the-time-series-survey). These include: (1) the importance of tracing the evolution of candidate imagery over time, particularly the cognitive or informational elements of images; (2) the capacity to measure the subjective impact of ongoing events in interface with the media monitoring project; (3) the ability to ascertain the extent to which a candidate becomes identified in the public mind with a single, overriding theme (e.g., Kennedy and National Health Insurance).

How then, to measure this (still postponing economic considerations)? The competition we have described between the standard CPS question and our new experimental versions produces a clear winner: namely, the standard question. The new questions offer little advantage in terms of response rate. More decisively, the rich, personal candidate images

that we hoped to discover with them proved elusive. There may be no
~~there,~~
there.

This narrows the field to two: the standard question, and the follow-up question associated with the affect inventory. We prefer the latter on two grounds. First, our experimentation with open-ended questions was originally prompted by reservations about the standard questions—that it encourages rationalization. Although the standard emerges victorious, the victory was achieved on other grounds: our reservations remain largely intact. Moreover, the affect open-ended question may curtail somewhat these rationalization impulses. We believe this partly because of our speculation that affective responses are less filtered, less subject to consistency pressures than are semantically-mediated responses (see section 3 for a fuller discussion); and partly on empirical grounds. As indicated in Table 6.8, the affect question elicits substantially more references to Chappaquaddick and to the Nixon pardon, events that may seem to the respondent as inappropriate or illegitimate bases for reaching preferences, but which in fact may have a great deal to do with preference. We prefer the affect follow-up for another reason, one near and dear to us all: time and money. The affect question appears to be a more efficient way to elicit qualitative candidate impressions than the standard question. It is first of all a single question, not two ("vote for"/"vote against"), and because we also know which affect is the strongest for any particular respondent, there is no problem in figuring out the evaluative meaning of the open-ended response. And secondly, the affect question is less likely to provoke long, rambling answers by those occasional long-winded respondents, presumably because the question

centers attention on a candidate-affect nexus. In short, we recommend including the affect follow-up question in the 1980 study, in conjunction with each administration of the affect inventory itself.

7. Recommendations Re-visited

What follows is our complete package of recommendations regarding candidate instrumentation. Unless otherwise noted, the measures are to be asked exactly as they were in the CPS spring survey, as set out in Appendix A.

* Complete Trait Inventory for each viable candidate.

Early in the January-November period, when the field of candidates is comparatively large, the trait inventory may necessarily be reduced. The essential sub-set of items is: smart, courageous, knowledgeable, inspiring, honest, immoral, reckless, too political, power-hungry, and weak. Later, as candidates drop out, the trait lists can correspondingly be expanded back to their original length, thereby permitting finer measurement of the principal candidates, and without incurring the costs that would be occasioned by the introduction of novel instrumentation.

* Complete Affect Inventory for each viable candidate.

At a minimum, the inventory must include: hopeful, sympathetic, liking, proud, disgusted, uneasy, angry, and disliking. The inventory should include at each administration the follow-up open-ended question--reasons for strongest affect.

* Delete the Behavior Inventory, retaining just 4 items.

The four are: solve our economic problems; set a good moral example; provide strong leadership; develop good relations with

other countries. These items should be incorporated into the trait inventory, and administered with them at each interviewing point for each viable candidate.

- * Delete the Ideal Presidency Inventory.
- * Delete the experimental versions of the candidate open-ended question.
- * Delete the CPS standard open-ended question (except of course for its traditional place in the immediate pre-election/post-election phase of the 1980 study).

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APPENDIX A

Candidate measures included in the CPS spring survey.

1. Trait inventory
2. Affect inventory
3. Behavior inventory
4. Ideal president inventory
5. Open-ended candidate questions
 - a. CPS standard
 - b. candidate as a person
 - c. candidate in person