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Abstract

Kinder, Rosenstone, and Hansen discuss the relationship between group identification and assessments of government performance, in the context of candidate evaluations. The authors find that citizens who believe that the economic position of groups to which they feel economically connected has declined in the recent past evaluate Reagan less favorably and are less inclined to support him in trial heat matchups. This result confirms the authors' initial thesis that a performance-based political calculus depends more heavily on group frames of reference than family or national frames. The authors also find that assessments of the economic performance of "marginal groups" has a large effect on evaluations of Reagan. Furthermore, Kinder, Rosenstone, and Hansen find that assessments of the economic ups and downs of particular social groups are substantially colored by respondents' ideology, but are unaffected by party and social location factors. This result, however, does not indicate that economic evaluations of groups are simply indirect expressions of personal ideology; while judgments of political groups may be ideologically-laden, the political impact of such judgments are maintained when ideology is controlled in analysis. Finally, the authors find that the political effects of assessments of changes in group economic positions are greater when respondents are asked to evaluate change over a one-year time frame, as compared to the six-month frame.

Group Economic Well-Being and Political Choice*

Pilot Study Report to the 1984 NES Planning Committee and NES Board

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I. Introduction

While it is perfectly obvious that presidential elections are, in part, referenda on the administration's performance (e.g., Fiorina, 1981; Kinder and Kiewiet, 1981; Tufte, 1978), it is not at all obvious how the performance calculus proceeds. The purpose of the developmental work reported here is to advance our understanding of the ways in which performance assessments influence the decisions voters make.

A first and major task is to specify how voters decide whether an incumbent has succeeded or failed. Empirical efforts in this regard have so far been confined principally to economic performance. Especially there, a popular possibility has been that voters simply examine their own circumstances, supporting candidates and parties that best advance their own economic interests. But while the economic predicaments of personal life do occasionally influence political choice, the effects are never very strong and usually they are trivial. Declining financial condition, job loss, preoccupation with personal economic problems--none of these seems to drive presidential voting (Fiorina, 1981; Kinder and Kiewiet, 1981; Sigelman and Tsai, 1981).

Perhaps these bleak results reflect problems of measurement. Maybe personal economic well-being really does drive political choice, it's just that so far, we haven't measured it adequately. This possibility is considered in the Rosenstone, Hansen, and Kinder report, which describes our efforts to improve the measurement of personal

economic well-being.

Whereas pocketbook voters ask the political system and its officials, "What have you done for me lately?" (Popkin et al., 1976), voters of another mind ask, "What have you done for the country lately?" And in assessing the country's economic condition, people do not merely extrapolate from their own difficulties or achievements. The judgments Americans reach about economic problems in society are to some degree independent of their own personal economic situations (Kinder and Kiewiet, 1981; Mebane, 1982; the same holds true in Britain; Alt, 1979). Moreover, it is the assessment of national economic conditions that mainly influences presidential voting (Fiorina, 1981; Kiewiet, 1981; Kinder and Abelson, 1981; Kinder and Kiewiet, 1979, 1981; Kinder and Mebane, 1983; Scholzman and Verba, 1979; Sniderman and Brody, 1977).

The familial and the national frames of reference do not exhaust the possibilities, of course. Presidential choice may also reflect assessments of the group's predicament, where group might refer to women, blacks, or air traffic controllers. As the relevant group narrows, group interest becomes difficult to distinguish from self-interest; as it broadens, it becomes difficult to distinguish from the national interest. In between the two extremes are many intermediate possibilities, where group interest may stand independently from the other two. Hence we need to ask not just about the condition of the family and the nation, but also about the groups with which voters identify. We did so in the pilot study; this report

describes the results.

Although the immediate aim of our developmental work is to illuminate the role of performance assessments in voting, the implications go beyond electoral decisions: to cynicism toward government in general, which seems to spring in part from dissatisfaction with government's performance (e.g., Citrin, 1974); to approval of the incumbent president, with its attendant consequences for public policy (e.g., Kernell, 1978; Hibbs et al., 1982a, 1982b); to the energizing of political action (e.g., Rosenstone, 1982); and, not the least, to the dynamics of party identification (Brody, 1977; Fiorina, 1981; Franklin and Jackson, 1983; Kinder and Kiewiet, 1981). Inquiring further into the performance-based underpinnings of political evaluation should push us ahead on a number of significant fronts.

II. Pilot Study Results

Own Group Economic Well-Being

The basic question examined here is whether Americans use a group frame of reference in evaluating government performance and in choosing between candidates. We began by inviting pilot respondents to think about the groups they felt part of, and then whether they saw their own economic situation tied to any particular group. (The full text of the question is given at the base of table 2).

Nearly one-half the sample (46.8%) declined our invitation,

refusing to identify with a group. Those who accepted were a diverse lot--in fact, they were largely indistinguishable from those who declined. Table 1 summarizes the results of our effort to predict who identified and who did not. It is a largely failed effort. On balance, group identifiers tended to be ideologically extreme, well-educated, poor, married, and living outside the Northeast. But otherwise they tended to be very much like their compatriots who failed to identify. This leaves us, on the one hand, perplexed about the causes of identification, but on the other hand, reassured that the sample of identifiers is not wildly peculiar.

Respondents were encouraged to name as many as three groups: 37.9% of the full sample named one; 14.3% named two; and three heroic souls (1.0% of the sample) named three. Table 2 lists the groups so named. It is a fairly long and diverse list. The first set of entries--women, blacks, elderly, poor, rich, and the middle class--constitute six social groups that captured 40.5% of the groups spontaneously mentioned. We will pay special attention to these groups later. Many respondents saw their own economic situation tied to the elderly (16.6%) and the middle-class (16.6%). Fewer saw links between their situation and that of blacks (3.7%), women (1.8%) or the poor (1.8%). Nobody identified their economic interests with those of the rich.[1] The remaining identifications were spread over a wide variety of groups, including most notably, farmers and ranchers (11.7%), professionals (7.4%), blue collar workers (6.1%), teachers (6.7%), and working-class (3.1%). Unions, political and religious

organizations, and the unemployed were, by contrast, virtually invisible.

One early warning about these results. There is more than a suggestion that our question, which was intended to provoke thought about groups in general, may in fact have provoked thought about particular groups. The question named truck drivers, doctors, teachers, farmers, blacks, and the elderly. With the exception of truck drivers, all of these show up prominently in the replies summarized in table 2. The worry, of course, is that they show up too prominently.

Those respondents who did see their own economic situation tied to a group were then asked to assess whether their group's economic position had gotten better, stayed about the same, or had gotten worse. (People who had identified with more than one group were asked only about the group they felt closest to). As table 3 indicates, such assessments were decisively negative, both in absolute terms and by comparison to the economic assessments respondents offered of the family and the nation. While not a single person declared that her group's economic position had become much better, nearly one-quarter (24.1%) of the sample said that it had gotten much worse. Assessments of one's group were substantially more gloomy than assessments of either how one's family or the nation as a whole was doing economically. Perhaps group identification is promoted more by economic hardship than by economic success.

Does group economic assessment have a life of its own? It could

be merely a generalization of one's personal economic situation, or an inference from the assessment of the nation's well-being. As the crosstabulations reported in table 4 show, the three levels of economic evaluation are related: people whose own economic situation had declined tend to be quite negative in assessing their group's economic position and, to a lesser extent, the nation's. But they are not identical. Family, group, and nation are correlated but distinct components of economic assessment.

The next question is whether they also have distinctive political effects. Our first cut at an answer is reported in table 5 where we show the bivariate relationships between each of the three components of economic assessment and evaluations of Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale. Evaluations of the nation's economy are more closely associated with candidate evaluations than assessments of family or group well-being. The relationships are strongest for evaluations of incumbent President Reagan, as expected, and weaken appreciably for evaluations of Reagan's Democratic challengers. For family and nation, the relationships not only declined but the sign reversed. That is, people who thought their own economic condition had declined, or the nation's had, tended to evaluate Kennedy and Mondale somewhat more favorably. In contrast, though the strength of the relationship between group economic assessments and candidate evaluations certainly diminished in moving from Reagan to Kennedy and Mondale, the sign of the relationship did not reverse. People whose group had declined appear to be unhappy with public officials in general; their animosity is focussed on the

president but not confined to him.

We next extend our preliminary assessment of the political effects of the three economic assessments--and especially group assessments--to presidential preference (table 6). In trial heats against Kennedy and Mondale, Reagan does vastly better among those whose economic assessments are positive than among those who say they, their group, or the nation is worse off. As in the preceding analysis, the differences are most pronounced for assessments of the nation's economic well-being. In the Reagan-Mondale "contest", for example, everyone who regarded the national economy as greatly improved supported the President, but only 27.8% of those who thought the national economy had gotten much worse wanted four more years. Assessments of group well-being also showed substantial effects. Reagan was supported over Mondale by 72.2% of those whose group's economic position had improved, but by just 33.3% of those whose group's position had sharply declined. The obvious question, of course, is whether these hefty relationships between group economic assessment, on the one hand, and candidate evaluations and presidential preference, on the other, stand up to multivariate analysis.

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A Methodological Interlude

Before proceeding, we need to resolve the problem of missing data. As mentioned at the outset, nearly one-half the sample declined to identify with a group and therefore did not evaluate any group's

economic position. How should we treat them in analysis? There are at least three options. First, we could simply discard respondents who fail to identify with a group, as we have done so far. The costs of doing so are obvious. Alternatively, we could assume that people who fail to identify with a group are politically neutral with respect to the group frame of reference. Therefore they could be treated as if they had identified with a group but then judged their group's economic position not to have changed, since it is reasonable to presume that the latter group is also politically neutral with respect to the group frame of reference. This has the virtue of maintaining the original sample, but only by making a questionable assumption. Finally, we could represent the group component of economic assessment with a pair of variables. The first is a dummy, coded 1 if the respondent failed to identify with a group and 0 if she did identify. The second variable reflects the respondent's group economic assessment, with respondents who failed to identify coded zero. The last option has the virtue of testing the assumption underlying the previous scheme, but it is somewhat more cumbersome in practice. What to do? We pursued all three options. Happily, there were virtually no differences across methods in the estimated political impact of group economic assessments or any other variable. Consequently, in the interest of maintaining the original sample and keeping the presentation simple, we have chosen the second option. In the analysis that follows, people who failed to identify with a group are treated as if they did identify with a group but judged the group's economic position to have remained the same.

Our multivariate analysis assumes that candidate evaluations and presidential preference reflect, in part, the economic assessments people make, but also the party they embrace, the ideological identity they assume, and the policy opinions they express. That is:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Evaluation/Preference} = & b \text{ (Family Economic Condition)} + \\ & b \text{ (Group Economic Condition)} + b \text{ (National Economic Condition)} \\ & + b \text{ (Party)} + b \text{ (Liberal-Conservative Identity)} + b \text{ (Policy)} \end{aligned}$$

Family, group, and national economic conditions are represented in the analysis by the now familiar three measures. Party is the traditional 7-point identification measure, ranging from strong Democrat to strong Republican. Liberal-Conservative Identity is also measured by the traditional 7-point scale, from extremely liberal to extremely conservative, with those (roughly one-third of the sample) who conceded they never thought of themselves in these terms coded as middle of the roaders. Policy is represented by the respondent's average reply to five policy questions, each coded from an extreme liberal position to an extreme conservative one. The five questions touched on arms controls, defense spending, government assistance to minorities, government guarantee of jobs, and cutting government services. Party, liberal-conservative identity, and policy are based on response given to the November, 1982 National Election Study, and are denoted with a t-1 subscript. All variables were coded on the zero-one interval.

The ordinary least squares estimates of the impact of the three economic components on evaluations of Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale are presented in table 7. The coefficients stand for the direct effect of the economic assessments, independent of the effect contributed by party, ideological identity, and policy.

The results indicate that economic assessments mainly affect evaluations of incumbent Reagan, and quite powerfully. In particular, evaluations of the President are driven importantly by assessments of group economic well-being. Holding constant party, ideological identity, policy, and family and national economic assessments, respondents who characterized their own group as much better off would evaluate President Reagan about 17 degrees more favorably on the thermometer scale than did respondents who thought their group's economic position had sharply declined.

The effects of economic assessments--group economic assessments in particular--diminish precipitously in evaluations of Kennedy and Mondale. In both instances, the direct impact of family's economic well-being disappears altogether. The impact of the nation's condition approaches statistical significance, but its coefficient is only about one-third the size of its counterpart in the Reagan equation. Finally, the effect of group assessment also diminishes sharply. To the degree that there is any group effect here at all, group economic decline is associated with negative evaluations of Kennedy and Mondale. Put differently, whereas Reagan is especially popular among those who regard their group and the nation to have prospered, Kennedy and Mondale do

particularly well among those who believe the country has declined while their own group has moved forward. As we noted earlier, a sense of group decline appears to lead to a general criticism of leadership. But the major finding in table 7 is the powerful impact of group economic assessments on evaluations of President Reagan.

We can look in greater depth at the effect of economic assessments on evaluations of Reagan by replacing the thermometer and approval ratings with the more specific evaluations of Reagan measured by the trait battery. In particular, here we examine the impact of economic assessments on ratings of Reagan's competence, integrity, and empathy (for details on measurement of these dimensions, see Kinder's report on presidential traits).

Table 8 presents the OLS estimates. Once again, we control on party, ideological identity, and policy. As the table makes clear, assessments of group decline or advance strongly color the sort of person Reagan seems to be. Moreover, group fortune seems especially important for judgments of the President's empathy. Is the President in touch with the people? Does the President understand the problems of people like me? Citizens seem to answer such questions with the economic condition of their own group very much in mind.

Finally, we also estimated the effect of economic assessments on presidential preference. [2] The results, shown in table 9, indicate an exceedingly modest role played by the group's economic condition. In each of the two presidential match-ups, a sense that the economic position of one's own group had declined worked to the Democratic

candidate's advantage, but ever so slightly. Mondale benefitted a bit more in this respect than did Kennedy, but the main point is neither candidate benefitted very much. These faint results should not be entirely surprising since, as we have seen, the political effects of group economic assessments appear to cross party lines.

The estimates of the political impact of assessments of group economic well-being, provided by ordinary least squares and displayed in tables 7, 8, and 9, have two problems. One is that they are corrupted by measurement error, leading us to underestimate the impact of group economic well-being. The other is that since assessments of group economic well-being may be both cause and consequence of Reagan evaluations, the OLS procedure may have lead us to overestimate the political importance of the group's economic position. In order to correct for these two problems, we re-estimated the Reagan evaluation and presidential preference equations, this time following a two stage least squares procedure. In each equation, group and national economic assessment were treated as endogenous variables. As before, party t-1, ideological identity t-1, policy t-1, and family economic well-being also appeared in each equation, as exogenous variables. Instruments came from a pool of variables included in the 1982 survey, including sex, race, education, income, age, region, marital status, urban-rural place of residence, and assessments of family and national economic conditions. The 2SLS estimates of the impact of changes in group economic well-being on Reagan evaluations and presidential preference are shown in table 10. They strengthen the case made so far for the

political importance of the group frame of reference. In all but a single instance, the 2SLS estimates exceed these provided by OLS. According to the 2SLS procedure, assessments of change in the economic well-being of one's group powerfully influences overall evaluations of the President, ratings more specifically of his integrity and especially his empathy, and perceptibly shape choice in a Reagan-Mondale contest. These results confirm our original suspicion that a performance-based political calculus depends substantially on frames of reference intermediate between family and nation.

Social Groups' Economic Well-Being

In addition to inquiring into respondents' views of their own group's economic situation, we also asked them to assess the economic well-being of six broad social groups: women, blacks, the elderly, the poor, the rich, and the middle-class.[3] These assessments are displayed in table 11. The first point made there is how few respondents encountered difficulty in assessing the economic conditions of these groups. Fewer than three percent of those questioned said that they did not know about the recent economic fortunes of the elderly; at the opposite extreme, 8 percent said they didn't know about blacks. 80.6% of the sample gave their views about all six groups; 94.9% gave their views about at least five.

On balance, respondents were somewhat negative in their economic assessments, but with sharp variation from group to group. The rich, apparently, have been getting richer: 63.2% of the sample regarded the

rich's economic position as having improved, while just 3.4% thought that the rich's position had eroded. Respondents also thought, though by a less dramatic margin, that women had moved ahead (34.7% vs. 14.7%). On the other hand, by overwhelming majorities, respondents believed that economic conditions had deteriorated for the poor (7.3% better vs. 58.0% worse) and the elderly (7.9% vs. 54.8%), and by a modest margin, that blacks and the middle-class had also suffered setbacks (20.1% better vs. 34.6% worse for blacks; for the middle-class, 14.6% vs. 32.2%).

Table 12 reports the correlations among these various economic assessments. As the coefficients in the last row of the table suggest, these judgments about group economic well-being are not at all identical to judgments about the nation's economic fortunes. Relationships between group and national economic assessments are generally feeble. Elsewhere in table 12, the results hint of an ideology underlying group judgments. People who thought that women had fallen behind also tended to think the same about blacks, the elderly, and the poor--but not about the rich.

We can inquire more directly into the ideological basis of the social group economic judgments by examining their antecedents. Liberals may be sympathetically inclined toward marginal groups--blacks, women, the poor, the elderly--and see them as falling behind. Conservatives, on the other hand, may see these groups everywhere on the advance, evidence either of the beneficence of capitalism or of the capitulation of pointy head bureaucrats to the

demands of the unruly. In either event, liberals and conservatives may look at the same set of conditions and reach vastly different conclusions, a prediction fully in keeping with Conover and Feldman's (1981) splendid analysis of ideological identity.

Judgments of social groups may also reflect partisanship: perhaps Democrats and Republicans differ in their sense of how much economic progress various groups have enjoyed. This hypothesis seems plausible, since when asked what they like and dislike about the parties, Americans refer most often to broad social groups of exactly the kind we are investigating here (evidence summarized in Kinder and Sears, 1983).

Finally, assessments of the groups' economic well-being may grow out of an ideology of a cruder sort, one that arises from location in the social order. Women may naturally have a distinctive view of women's progress; blacks may have a distinctive view of blacks' economic condition; and so forth. Thus, judgments on the rise and fall of social groups may depend very much on one's place in society.

To test these ideas, we regressed each social group economic assessment on ideological identity, party, and a set of demographic variables that define social location: sex, race, age, income, and class. All the right-hand side variables were measured in the 1982 NES survey, and all variables were again coded on the zero to one interval. The ordinary least squares estimates are shown in table 13.

Most conspicuous there is the whopping impact of ideological identity. Liberals and conservatives differ sharply in their

assessments of the economic progress recently made by marginal groups--women, blacks, the elderly, and the poor. Liberals were much less likely than conservatives to see progress: extreme liberals were .392 (on a scale of zero to one) less likely than extreme conservatives to say there has been economic progress for women; .522 less likely to say so for blacks; .248 for the elderly; and .359 for the poor. The dramatic effect of ideological identity on assessments of marginal groups disappears in assessments of the economic condition of the rich and the middle-class.

By comparison to the impact due to ideology, the effect of party pales. On average Democrats are more likely than Republicans to believe that the poor, the middle class, the elderly, and women had fallen behind, and the rich and blacks (!) had moved ahead. But these differences are quite small, with the party coefficient barely surpassing statistical significance in most equations.

A final surprise in table 13 is the faintness of effects traceable to social location. On average, blacks are only slightly more negative than whites in their assessments of change in blacks' economic position; income is utterly unrelated to judgments about the poor and only modestly related to judgments about the rich; class has nothing to do with assessments of changes in the economic position of the middle-class; and women were only slightly less upbeat than men in their assessments of women's economic progress. The only impressive social location coefficient in all six equations is the impact of age on judgments about the elderly: older respondents were quite a bit

more likely than the young to think that the elderly had fallen behind.

In short, judgments about the economic ups and downs of social groups are substantially colored by ideology, surprisingly unaffected by party, and remarkably independent of social location. Next we must see whether such judgments are only creatures of ideology, or whether they have political effects of their own.

Table 14 presents OLS estimates of the impact of social group economic assessments on evaluations of Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale. Included in each equation are measures of ideological identity, party, policy preferences, and social location, all taken from the 1982 NES study. Social group economic assessments are represented by three variables: judgments of recent changes in the economic position of the rich, the middle-class, and marginal groups. The last is the average judgment made with respect to change in the economic well-being of women, blacks, elderly, and the poor. The estimates make clear, in the first place, that judgments of economic change experienced by various social groups have virtually nothing to do with evaluations of Kennedy and Mondale. They do have an effect, however, on evaluations of President Reagan. Reagan is regarded about 8 degrees more favorably among those who believed that the middle-class had moved ahead than among those who believed the middle-class had fallen back. (Ideology, party, social location, and economic assessments of the rich and marginal groups are all held constant.) He is regarded roughly 8 degrees less warmly, on average, among those who believed the rich had moved ahead than among those who believed the rich had fallen back; and

more than 22 degrees more warmly among those who believed women, blacks, the elderly, and the poor had moved ahead than among those who believed these marginal groups had fallen back. (All these figures are derived from column 2 of the table.) If anything, these effects are greater for President Reagan's performance rating (see column 1).

These findings are further reinforced in table 15, which reports the estimated impact of social group economic assessments on evaluations of President Reagan's character: his competence, integrity, and empathy. The table really only adds one footnote to what we have already learned: judgments that the rich have gotten ahead do little damage to ratings of President Reagan's competence, do some damage to his integrity ratings, and do lots of damage to ratings of Reagan's empathy.

Table 16 reports the results of the same analysis, this time applied to presidential preference. Here the impact of social groups assessments is greatly diminished. Judgments that marginal groups have done poorly contribute somewhat to Mondale's and Kennedy's candidacy, but other group judgments seem to be politically neutral.

This is only an interim conclusion, however. Before reaching a final judgment, we need to return to the presidential preference and the Reagan evaluation equations, replacing OLS with 2SLS estimators. As noted earlier this both corrects the estimates for measurement error and takes into account the possible simultaneity between assessments of social group's economic well-being and political evaluations. The latter seems especially plausible here. We have already seen how

ideologically laden are group economic assessments. It would not be surprising if the political effect of group economic assessments estimated by OLS turned out to be mainly a consequence of support or opposition to the President. Is it not a point of faith among Reagan supporters to regard the welfare of the poor to have advanced? Is it not a point of faith among critics to regard the Reagan administration as devoted to the care and feeding of the rich?

To correct for simultaneity and measurement error, we again relied upon 2SLS estimation. In each of the Reagan evaluation and presidential preference equations, economic assessment of marginal groups, the middle-class, and the rich were treated as endogenous variables. Party, ideological identity, and policy, as measured in the 1982 National Election Study, also appeared in each equation, treated as exogenous variables. The 2SLS estimates are shown in table 17, alongside, for convenience's sake, the corresponding OLS estimates.

Under the 2SLS procedures, the political impact of social group economic assessments most emphatically does not go away. Quite the contrary. The 2SLS estimated effect of assessments of marginal groups more than doubles over the OLS estimated effect. Overall evaluations of Reagan, approval of his performance as President, ratings of his competence, integrity, and (especially) empathy, as well as choice between Reagan and Mondale in a trial heat are all powerfully influenced by voters' judgments of change in the economic position of women, blacks, the poor, and the elderly. The 2SLS estimated effects of assessments of the economic well-being of the middle-class are also

striking. Notice that choice in both trial heat contests are substantially affected by judgments of the economic fortunes of the middle-class. For the rich, finally, the results are much less impressive. Overall evaluations of Reagan and (perhaps) ratings of his empathy are tied to voters' sense that the rich have gotten ahead, but elsewhere the estimates hover close to zero.

Overall, the results are striking: judgments about social groups' economic well-being figure very heavily into voters' evaluations of the incumbent president and into the choice voters may eventually confront come November 1984.

Specifying the impact of social group economic assessments

So far we have assumed that the impact of social group economic assessments is uniform across the population. This is a convenient assumption, but it is surely false. Yet to proclaim that the impact of social group economic assessments will certainly vary from one individual to the next is by itself not very helpful. The trick is to identify those variables that modify the impact. One obvious possibility is social location. From a variety of theoretical perspectives, it is reasonable to suppose that the political effect of social group economic assessments will be particularly pronounced when the social group being assessed is one's own. That is, assessments of change in the economic position of women should matter most to women; assessments of blacks' position should matter most to blacks; the position of the elderly should matter most to the elderly; and so

forth.

To test this general prediction, we first "unpacked" the marginal groups variable back into its constituent elements. Then we formed a set of six interaction terms, each pairing the appropriate social location variable (e.g., sex) with the appropriate social group economic assessment variable (e.g., women). When these variables are added to the equations already reported, the results are crystal clear: resounding disconfirmation for the general hypothesis. In general, global evaluations of Reagan, approval of his performance, ratings of his competence, integrity, and empathy were influenced by respondents' social group economic assessments regardless of their social location. There is only one exception to this conclusion, and it runs strongly through all the analysis. Assessments of recent changes in blacks' economic well-being matter much more to blacks than to whites. These differences, which hold both for evaluations of President Reagan and for presidential preferences, are shown in tables 18 and 19. For each equation, three numbers are reported: the estimated impact of assessments of blacks' economic position among blacks; the estimated impact of the same assessment among whites; and the probability that the two estimated impacts are equal. Across the various dependent measures, the same result holds: assessments of change in blacks' economic situation figure not at all into whites' presidential evaluations (table 18) and preferences (table 19), but figure heavily into blacks'.

What is surprising in these results is not that blacks and whites

differ in this way--though the magnitude of the difference is impressive--but that we could find no systematic evidence of similar contrasts between men and women, young and old, rich and poor, working- and middle-class. Perhaps this is yet another indication of the profundity of racial division in the United States. Being black is tantamount to identification with blacks' interests and aspirations in a way that being female, or old, or poor, or rich, or middle-class is not. Social location and psychological identification are of course conceptually separable, but for many blacks, perhaps, they are not.

In any case, these results imply that rather than looking to social location for variables that will specify the political impact of social group economic assessments, we should look instead to psychological variables, and to identification in particular. If the pilot sample were large enough, we could test this idea for each of the six groups: women, blacks, elderly, poor, rich, and middle-class. Alas, the sample does not permit such luxury. Instead, we must be content for the meantime to restrict our attention to the elderly and the middle-class, the two groups among our six with which reasonable numbers of respondents identified (N=27 in each instance). To test the importance of identification, we constructed two pairs of terms. The first pair included a dummy variable, coded 1 if the respondent identified with the elderly and zero otherwise; and a multiplicative term, reflecting the interaction between identification with the elderly (the dummy variable) and assessment of change in the economic position of the elderly. The second pair was composed of the

corresponding two variables for the middle-class. Each pair was then added to the familiar equations, and the impact of social group economic assessments re-estimated.

The results regarding the middle-class were spotty. In some instances, the impact of economic assessments of the middle-class appeared to be greater among middle-class identifiers; in other instances, the reverse was true. The differences were never large and never reliably different from zero. The results for the elderly, in contrast were striking and are displayed in tables 20 (for evaluations of Reagan) and 21 (for presidential preference). We follow the same procedure as before. For each equation three numbers are reported: the first coefficient in each case represents the estimated impact of the elderly's economic position among those who did not identify with the elderly; the second represents the estimated impact of the elderly's economic position among those who did identify; and the third is again the probability that the two coefficients are the same.

As the tables make clear, judgments about changes in economic position of the elderly were politically innocuous for those who did not identify with the elderly but are very powerful for those who did.

Time Frame

This brings us finally to the question of time frame. Remember that respondents were asked to assess the economic position of their family, their group, social groups more generally, and the nation, looking back either over the previous one year or over the previous six

months. As reported in detail in the Rosenstone, Hansen, and Kinder report, this difference did not seem to lead to systematic differences in the effects associated with economic assessments of the family. Nor according to a variety of analyses not reported here did variation in time frame influence the effects associated with economic assessments of the nation. The group level of economic assessment is a different story, however. Asking people to think about change in their group's economic situation or the economic situation of blacks, women, the poor, the elderly, the rich, and the middle-class over the last six months as opposed to over the past year did lead to consistent differences.

We tested the time frame hypothesis separately for own group and social group assessments. With respect to the first, we re-estimated the familiar OLS Reagan evaluation and presidential preference equations, adding to each two new variables: a dummy variable, coded 1 if the respondent was part of sample A (one year frame) and 0 if part of sample B (six months time frame), and one interaction term made up of the dummy variable multiplied by the respondents' assessments of changes in the economic position of their group. The results are shown in tables 22 (evaluation) and 23 (preference). For each equation, three numbers are reported: the estimated effect of assessments of change in the economic position of the respondent's group over the past year; the estimated effect of assessments of change in the economic position of the respondent's group over the past six months; and the probability that the two coefficients are equal. (This third number is

the probability level associated with the interaction term.)

Across tables and equations, the same contrast recurs: the political effect due to assessments of changes in the economic position of one's own group is greater under one year instructions than under six months instructions, both for evaluations of President Reagan and for presidential preference. The last result is particularly important: holding constant party, ideology, policy opinions, and economic assessments of the family and the nation, assessments of change in the group's economic condition over the past year make a noticeable difference in respondents' presidential preferences (see table 23).

The "superiority" of the one year time frame is clearer than the reasons underlying it. Rooting around in these data, we uncovered three possibilities. One is that, although respondents in the two half-samples were asked the identical group identification questions, they nevertheless perversely identified with different groups. As table 24, indicates, respondents in sample A identified more often with farmers, the young, and with low income people than did sample B respondents, while sample B respondents identified more often with women, blacks, the elderly, and the middle-class than did sample A respondents. This is mysterious. The two samples do differ slightly in demographic terms, but not obviously in ways that can explain differences in identification. And whereas the group identification question followed an extensive series of questions focussing on economic matters over the past six months or over the past year, it is

not obvious why the time frame difference would produce the sort of differences set out in table 24. Moreover, it is not apparent to us that such differences in identification would themselves lead to the political differences we found. On to a second possibility. As table 25 reveals, those who were asked to assess change in the economic condition of their group over the past year reported more change--and more negative change--than did those asked about change over the past six months, a result that may go some distance toward explaining the greater political punch associated with one year assessments. A third and final possibility we considered was that perhaps economic assessments of the group become more distinctive, more separate from assessments of the family and the nation, as the time frame expands from six months to one year. It turns out that assessments of change in the economic position of the group and the family are more independent under the one year time frame. In sample A (one year), the association between the two levels of assessment was just .19 (Tau-b); in sample B (six months), the corresponding association was .46. Under one year instructions, assessments of the group appear to emerge more clearly as a distinctive level of economic assessment.

What about social group economic assessments? The simple question here is whether imposing one time frame as against another led to detectable differences in the performance of the social group economic variables.

The simple answer, as in so much social science, is no and yes. To test the time frame hypothesis, we again re-estimated the Reagan

evaluation and presidential preference equations, this time, adding to each a set of six interaction terms that capture whether the impact associated with a social group economic assessment looking back over six months differs from the impact associated with the same assessment looking back one year. In general, across the various equations, there were systematic time frame differences in the impact due to assessments of the economic position of blacks and women, but not for the elderly, the poor, the rich, or the middle-class. The differences for blacks and women, consistent and large, are shown in tables 26 (Reagan evaluation equations) and 27 (presidential preference equations). In all instances, the one year time frame is associated with the greater estimated impact, just as in the results reported earlier regarding the political impact of one's own group. There, too, the one year time frame produced larger estimated effects.

How might the time frame results for social group economic assessments be understood--in particular, why is it that time frame differences emerged in the assessments of blacks and women, but nowhere else? One possibility, following our earlier line of investigation, is that correlations between assessments of women and blacks on the one hand and assessments of the other groups on the other would diminish as the time frame expands from six months to one year. This leads nowhere. As table 28 reveals, the correlations do not vary in any systematic way by time frame.

A more promising possibility is set out in table 29, which displays the distribution of replies to the six social group economic

assessment questions, separately within each half-sample. As indicated there, respondents' impressions of change in the various group's economic positions varied by time frame. Respondents reported more change under one year instructions than under six month instructions--but only in assessments of women, blacks, and the middle-class (see table 30). Perhaps, then, the greater political impact of assessments of blacks and women with a one year time frame is due to the enhanced impressions that the economic position of blacks and women had in fact changed.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Citizens are attentive to the performance of government and reach political evaluations and preferences on that basis. So say, in one way or another, Schattschneider, Downs, Key, Stokes, Kramer, Fiorina, and many others. But as noted at the outset, research in this tradition, lively as it has been, nevertheless has assumed that citizens look at performance through either an egocentric or sociotropic frame of reference. The intermediate possibility of the group was neglected, a neglect that is certainly consistent with the virtual disappearance over the last two decades of the group from accounts of public opinion and voting more generally. Whatever the general merit of the group concept, it now certainly seems indispensable to theories of performance-based politics. The pilot study results presented here argue strongly for the resurrection of the group frame of reference in the 1984 NES.

- Citizens who judged the economic position of their group to have declined evaluated President Reagan less favorably and were less inclined to support him in trial heat matchups. These effects were substantial. They withstood stringent statistical controls. They cannot be explained by citizens projecting their feelings toward the President onto assessments of their group's economic well-being. They appear to be somewhat stronger when citizens are asked to look over the past year rather than the past six months.

- Citizens who thought the economic position of marginal groups--women, blacks, the poor, the elderly--and the middle-class to have declined evaluated President Reagan less favorably and were less inclined to support him in trial heats.

- Judgments about the economic progress of marginal groups were ideologically-laden, but the political impact of such judgments was maintained with stringent controls on ideology. Such judgments, it is clear, are neither rationalizations for ideology nor projections of presidential sentiment.

- The political effects of social group economic assessments were generally not more pronounced where the social group being assessed was one's own. The single conspicuous exception was blacks: assessments of recent changes in blacks' economic well-being matter much more to blacks' political evaluations than to whites'. But in general, social location failed to specify the political effects of social group economic assessments. Psychological identification, in contrast, did: judgments about changes in economic position of the elderly were politically innocuous for those who did not identify with the elderly but very powerful for those who did. All these results underscore the importance of group identification over group membership.

- Citizens who thought the rich had gotten ahead evaluated President Reagan less favorably, but it appears that perceptions of the economic position of the rich may be more a consequence than a cause of presidential evaluations.

- The political impact of judgments about the economic progress of marginal groups--particularly women and blacks--was somewhat greater when citizens were instructed to look back over a year than over the past six months.

These results call for the 1984 rolling cross-section to attend to the group frame of reference. Such attention, we should hasten to add, should not be at the expense of measuring well the family and national frames of reference. We need all three levels represented. (For recommendations regarding the family frame of reference, see Rosenstone, Hansen, and Kinder's report; for recommendations regarding the national frame of reference, see Kinder's memorandum on measuring the public's view of the national condition.) Here we present recommendations on the group frame of reference. Essentially we suggest retaining the battery of items included in the pilot study (with minor tinkering), supplementing the assessments of own group economic well-being with two additional questions. You should pay attention both to the particular questions set out below as well as to the commentary that accompany them.

1. When people think about their economic situation, they often also think about various groups in society that they feel part of, groups that are being helped or hurt by economic conditions. Sometimes the group will be people in specific occupations--truck drivers or doctors or teachers or farmers, for example. Other times race or age is what defines the group, as when people think about how blacks or the elderly are doing. These are just some of the groups that people think about when they talk about who is being helped or hurt by economic conditions.

Now think about groups you feel part of (PAUSE). Do you see your own economic situation tied to any particular group?

YES

NO

DK [Delete some occupational references; add
NA in geographical and letterhead references.]

1a. Which group or groups are those?

[Maybe just one; certainly not three.]

2. Would you say that over the past year the economic position of the GROUP NAMED IN 1A has gotten better, stayed about the same or gotten worse?

1. GOTTEN BETTER
3. STAYED THE SAME
5. GOTTEN WORSE

8. DON'T KNOW
9. NA

2a. Would you say much better or somewhat better?
Would you say much worse or somewhat worse?

3. Would you say that over the past year, the incomes of _____ have kept pace with prices, stayed about even with prices, or falled behind prices?

3a. Kept way ahead or just a little ahead?
Fallen way behind or just a little behind?

4. What about people out of work. Over the past year, would you say that unemployment has gotten worse for _____, stayed about the same, or gotten better?

4a. Gotten much better or only somewhat better?
Gotten much worse or only somewhat worse?

5. Let me ask you about some other groups in society. What about women? Would you say that over the past year the economic position of women has gotten better, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?

- 1. BETTER
- 3. SAME
- 5. WORSE

5a. Much better or somewhat better?
Much worse or somewhat worse?

[repeat for blacks (6,6a), the elderly (7,7a), the poor (8,8a), the middle-class (9,9a) and perhaps the rich (10, 10a).]

FOOTNOTES

- [1] This last result is consistent with the repeated failure of surveys of the American public to turn up people who identify with the upper class. In the 1982 NES survey, for example, exactly one respondent of 1418 interviewed did so.
- [2] In all the multivariate analyses reported here, presidential preference is measured by the difference in the thermometer ratings of the two contenders.
- [3] In rare instances, one of these categories was of course identical to the respondent's own group, and we will see later whether the impact of such assessments differ as a function of identification. But for now, we concentrate on respondents' views of the economic movement of these six social groups regardless of their own social position or identification.

Table 1

Predicting Who Identifies and Who Does Not
Maximum Likelihood Logit Estimates

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error
Intensity of Party ID	-.240	.449
Intensity of Ideological Identity	.648	.492
Race	.291	.487
Sex	.034	.281
Social Class	.101	.306
Education	2.311	.995
Income	-1.355	.595
Age	-.504	.707
Residing in North East	-.817	.460
Residing in South	-.548	.403
Residing in North Central	.202	.429
Single	-1.017	.457
Divorced, Widowed, Separated	-.839	.386
Suburban Residence	.209	.369
Rural Residence	-.313	.363

Number of cases = 266

*Hard to predict
who will identify w/
a group & who won't.*

Table 2

Group Identification on Economic Matters
(Closest Group)
(N = 163)*
(V2146)

Women	1.8%
Blacks	3.7
Elderly	16.6
Poor	1.8
Rich	0
Middle-Class	16.6
Government employees	1.8
Professionals	7.4
Small business	1.8
Management	1.8
Blue collar	6.1
Farmers	11.7
Teachers	6.7
Other specific occupations	1.8
Unions	.6
Work/occupation (unspecified)	1.8
Middle age	0
Young	2.5
Single mothers	1.2
Fixed income	.6
Low income	2.5
Working class	3.1
Unemployed	.6
Political organizations	.6
Religious organizations	0
Mentally handicapped; disabled	1.8
Other	3.1
Total	<u>98.0</u>

Text of question: When people think about their economic situation they often also think about various groups in society that they feel part of, groups that are being helped or hurt by economic conditions. Sometimes the group will be people in specific occupations--truck drivers or doctors or teachers or farmers, for example. Other times race or age is what defines the group, as when people think about how blacks or the elderly are doing. These are just some of the groups that people think about when they talk about who is being helped or hurt by economic conditions.

Now think about groups you feel part of (PAUSE). Do you see your own economic situation tied to any particular group?

(If yes): Which group or groups are those?

*The 46.8 percent of the respondents who did not identify with a group are excluded from this table.

Table 3

Economic Assessments of Family, Group, and Nation

	Family (V2104)	Group (V2149)	Nation (V2113)
Much Better	7.3%	0.0%	7.2%
Somewhat Better	23.9%	13.0%	38.8%
Same	36.3%	34.0%	31.9%
Somewhat Worse	23.9%	24.0%	14.1%
Much Worse	8.6%	24.1%	7.9%
Missing	(0.0%)	(48.4%)	(3.2%)

Table 4

Associations Between Family, Group, and National
Economic Assessments

Group (V2149)

	Much Better	Better	Same	Worse	Much Worse	Total
<u>Family (V2104)</u>						
Much Better	0%	40.0	50.0	10.0	0	100%
Better	0%	23.3	30.2	23.3	23.3	100%
Same	0%	11.3	43.4	32.1	13.2	100%
Worse	0%	2.4	31.7	36.6	29.3	100%
Much Worse	0%	0	6.7	26.7	66.7	100%

Tau-b = .32

Nation (V2113)

	Much Better	Better	Same	Worse	Much Worse	Total
<u>Family (V2104)</u>						
Much Better	17.4%	43.5	30.4	8.7	0	100%
Better	12.0%	49.3	20.0	17.3	1.3	100%
Same	6.4%	43.1	34.9	9.2	6.4	100%
Worse	2.8%	27.8	43.1	19.4	6.9	100%
Much Worse	0%	16.0	24.0	16.0	44.0	100%

Tau-b = .28

Nation (V2113)

	Much Better	Better	Same	Worse	Much Worse	Total
<u>Group (V2149)</u>						
Much Better	0%	0	0	0	0	100%
Better	10.0%	70.0	20.0	0	0	100%
Same	12.7%	36.4	38.2	10.9	1.8	100%
Worse	0%	29.8	42.6	23.4	4.3	100%
Much Worse	5.4%	32.4	24.3	16.2	21.6	100%

Tau-b = .28

Table 5

Bivariate Association Between Family, Group, and National
Economic Assessments and Candidate Evaluation
(% Very Positive)

	Reagan (V2102)	Reagan (V2182)	Mondale (V2185)	Kennedy (V2184)
Family (V2104)				
Much Better	45.5	43.5	0	8.7
Better	41.9	40.0	5.6	10.8
Same	30.8	29.2	13.9	14.4
Worse	15.5	14.9	2.9	9.5
Much Worse	3.7	3.7	33.3	40.0
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Tau-b	.29	.28	-.12	-.13
Group (V2149)				
Much Better	0	0	0	0
Better	33.0	33.3	10.0	23.8
Same	29.6	30.9	11.1	10.9
Worse	17.0	19.1	11.6	11.1
Much Worse	13.5	17.9	12.8	25.6
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Tau-b	.31	.28	-.08	-.06
Nation (V2113)				
Much Better	77.3	72.7	0	0
Better	36.9	38.1	6.0	11.0
Same	18.1	18.6	14.4	13.5
Worse	20.9	11.6	7.5	10.0
Much Worse	4.2	0	20.0	39.1
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Tau-b	.33	.36	.21	-.20

Note: "Very positive" means greater than an 80 degree rating on the thermometer scale (columns 2, 3, and 4) or strongly approve (column 1).

Table 6

Bivariate Associations Between Family, Group, and
National Economic Assessments and Presidential Preference
(% for Reagan)

	Reagan vs. Kennedy (V3103)	Reagan vs. Mondale (V3101)
Family (V2104)		
Much Better	77.8	83.3
Better	72.7	68.2
Same	59.8	51.2
Worse	36.7	43.6
Much Worse	<u>16.2</u>	<u>21.7</u>
Tau-b	.34	.27
Group (V2149)		
Much Better	<u>52.6</u>	<u>72.2</u>
Better	70.5	60.5
Same	51.3	47.4
Worse	41.4	<u>33.3</u>
Much Worse	<u>41.4</u>	<u>33.3</u>
Tau-b	.14	.24
Nation (V2113)		
Much Better	100.0	100.0
Better	64.0	63.6
Same	52.1	46.7
Worse	39.4	33.3
Much Worse	<u>10.5</u>	<u>27.8</u>
Tau-b	.33	.31

Table 7

Estimated Impact of Family, Group, and
National Economic Assessments on Candidate Evaluation

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

	Reagan Approval (V2102)	Reagan Thermometer (V2182)	Kennedy Thermometer (V2185)	Mondale Thermometer (V2184)
Family (V2104)	.236 (.075)	.099 (.049)	.004 (.056)	.011 (.045)
Group (V2149)	.315 (.097)	.174 (.062)	.083 (.070)	.024 (.056)
Nation (V2113)	.203 (.078)	.217 (.050)	-.061 (.057)	-.070 (.047)
R-squared	.438	.456	.264	.183
Standard error of regression	.299	.194	.219	.173
Number of cases	275	281	276	265

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were: party t-1, liberalism-conservatism t-1, and policy t-1 (average opinion on nuclear freeze, defense budget, government aid to minorities, government guarantee of jobs, cut government services).

Table 8

Estimated Impact of Family, Group, and
National Economic Assessments on Reagan Trait Ratings

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

	Competence	Integrity	Empathy
Family (V2104)	.077 (.044)	.096 (.047)	.128 (.051)
Group (V2149)	.118 (.055)	.193 (.059)	.222 (.065)
Nation (V2113)	.168 (.045)	.211 (.048)	.176 (.053)
R-squared	.333	.388	.445
Standard error of regression	.173	.186	.205
Number of cases	279	279	279

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were:
party t-1, liberalism-conservatism t-1, and policy t-1
(average opinion on nuclear freeze, defense budget, government
aid to minorities, government guarantee of jobs, cut
government services).

Table 9

Estimated Impact of Family, Group, and National
Economic Assessments on Presidential Preference

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

	Reagan vs. Kennedy	Reagan vs. Mondale
Family (V2104)	.048 (.037)	.057 (.033)
Group (V2149)	.047 (.047)	.068 (.041)
Nation (V2113)	.141 (.038)	.134 (.034)
R-squared	.518	.507
Standard error of regression	.145	.126
Number of cases	276	265

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were:
party t-1, liberalism-conservatism t-1, and policy t-1
(average opinion on nuclear freeze, defense budget, government
aid to minorities, government guarantee of jobs, cut government
services).

Table 10

Estimated Impact of Group Economic Assessments on
Reagan Evaluations and Presidential Preference

OLS vs. 2SLS Estimates*

Equation	(1) Appro- val	(2) Thermo- meter	(3) Compe- tence	(4) Inte- grity	(5) Em- pathy	(6) RR vs. EK	(7) RR vs. WM
OLS Estimate (SE)	.315 (.097)	.174 (.062)	.118 (.055)	.193 (.059)	.222 (.065)	.047 (.047)	.068 (.041)
2SLS (SE)	.258 (.352)	.344 (.231)	.135 (.184)	.429 (.208)	.820 (.248)	-.096 (.176)	.122 (.134)

*OLS equations also included party t-1, ideological identity t-1, and policy t-1. In the 2SLS procedure, group and national economic assessments were treated as endogenous. Party t-1, ideological identity t-1, policy t-1, and family economic assessments also appeared in each equation, treated as exogenous variables. Instruments came from a pool of variables measured in the 1982 survey, including sex, race, education, income, age, region, marital status, rural-urban, and assessments of family and national economic conditions.

Table 11

Social Group Economic Assessments *

	Women (V2161)	Blacks (V2162)	Elderly (V2163)	Poor (V2164)	Rich (V2165)	Middle-Class (V2166)
Better	34.7%	20.1%	7.9%	7.3%	63.2%	14.6%
Same	50.7	45.3	37.4	34.7	33.4	53.2
Worse	14.7	34.6	58.0	58.0	3.4	32.2
(Missing)	(4.4%)	(8.0%)	(2.9%)	(4.4%)	(5.7%)	(4.1%)

* In each instance, the distribution of replies reflects answers to the 2161-2166 series supplemented by answers to 2148, if respondent either identified with that group most strongly or identified with that group only.

Table 12

Correlations Among Social Group Economic Assessments

Pearson r's

	Women (V2161)	Blacks (V2162)	Elderly (V2163)	Poor (V2164)	Rich (V2165)	Middle- Class (V2166)
Blacks	.30					
Elderly	.13	.27				
Poor	.28	.47	.43			
Rich	.14	.08	.05	.05		
Middle-Class	.23	.10	.34	.24	.02	
Nation (V2113)	.16	-.05	.13	.19	.00	.29

Number of cases = 253

Table 13

Estimated Impact of Ideological Identity, Party, and
Social Location on Social Group Economic Assessments

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates

	Women (V2161)	Blacks (V2162)	Elderly (V2163)	Poor (V2164)	Rich (V2165)	Middle- Class (V2166)
<i>Independent</i> Ideological Identity	-.392 (.116)	-.522 (.133)	-.248 (.117)	-.359 (.113)	-.087 (.103)	-.094 (.122)
Party	-.051 (.064)	.063 (.075)	-.117 (.064)	-.138 (.066)	.089 (.058)	-.124 (.069)
Sex	.113 (.042)	.003 (.047)	-.002 (.041)	-.001 (.040)	.025 (.036)	.063 (.043)
Race	-.112 (.071)	.101 (.084)	-.126 (.071)	.006 (.069)	-.002 (.062)	-.117 (.072)
Age	-.098 (.092)	-.151 (.107)	-.212 (.095)	-.183 (.091)	-.008 (.084)	-.082 (.098)
Income	-.126 (.071)	.117 (.082)	.017 (.072)	.017 (.071)	-.102 (.634)	-.107 (.077)
Class	.031 (.042)	.035 (.049)	-.000 (.043)	-.011 (.042)	-.000 (.038)	-.030 (.043)
R-squared	.122	.091	.070	.106	.023	.060
Standard error of regression	.311	.352	.316	.306	.275	.328
Number of cases	257	247	262	257	256	258

Table 14

Estimated Impact of Social Group Economic Assessments
on Candidate Evaluations

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

	Reagan (Approval) (V2102)	Reagan (Thermometer) (V2182)	Kennedy (Thermometer) (V2184)	Mondale (Thermometer) (V2185)
Marginal (Women, blacks, elderly, poor)	.294 (.093)	.221 (.059)	-.064 (.065)	-.023 (.053)
Rich (V2165)	-.120 (.077)	-.083 (.049)	.082 (.053)	-.004 (.044)
Middle-Class (V2166)	.171 (.063)	.083 (.041)	-.008 (.045)	.023 (.037)
R-squared	.484	.494	.334	.213
Standard error of regression	.293	.190	.207	.169
Number of cases	225	223	229	222

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were:
party, ideological identity, policy, sex, race, age, income,
and subjective social class, all taken from the 1982 NES Survey.
All variables coded 0 to 1.

Table 15

Estimated Impact of Social Group Economic Assessments
on Reagan Trait Ratings

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

	Competence	Integrity	Empathy
Marginal (women, blacks, elderly, poor)	-.150 (.055)	.119 (.059)	.160 (.061)
Rich (V2165)	-.058 (.045)	-.103 .049	-.181 .050
Middle-Class (V2166)	.083 (.038)	.120 (.041)	.157 (.041)
R-squared	.344	.346	.477
Standard error of regression	.177	.190	.197
Number of cases	232	232	232

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were: party, ideological identity, policy, sex, race, age, income, and subjective social class, all taken from the 1982 NES Survey. All variables coded 0 to 1.

Table 16

Estimated Impact of Social Group Economic
Assessments on Presidential Preference

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

	Reagan vs Kennedy	Reagan vs Mondale
Marginal (women, blacks, elderly, poor)	.071 (.044)	.095 .040
Rich (V2165)	-.000 (.036)	-.038 (.033)
Middle-Class (V2166)	.039 (.030)	.043 (.027)
R-squared	.563	.530
Standard error of regression	.141	.126
Number of cases	229	222

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were: party, ideological identity, policy, sex, race, age, income, and subjective social class, all taken from the 1982 NES Survey. All variables coded 0 to 1.

Estimated Impact of Social Group Economic Assessments
on Reagan Evaluations and Presidential Preference

OLS vs. 2SLS Estimates*

Equation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Approval	Thermo- meter	Compe- tence	Inte- grity	Em- pathy	RR vs. EK	RR vs. WM
Marginal							
OLS	.259	.221	.150	.119	.160	.071	.095
(SE)	(.093)	(.059)	(.055)	(.059)	(.061)	(.044)	(.040)
2SLS	.561	.455	.329	.203	.503	-.171	.213
(SE)	(.255)	(.397)	(.192)	(.190)	(.242)	(.195)	(.156)
Middle-Class							
OLS	.171	.083	.083	.120	.157	.039	.043
(SE)	(.063)	(.041)	(.038)	(.041)	(.041)	(.030)	(.027)
2SLS	.480	.610	.198	.198	.455	.174	.299
(SE)	(.157)	(.229)	(.116)	(.145)	(.147)	(.099)	(.095)
Rich							
OLS	-.120	-.083	-.058	-.103	-.181	-.000	-.038
(SE)	(.077)	(.049)	(.045)	(.049)	(.050)	(.036)	(.033)
2SLS	-.065	-.380	.160	-.189	-.246	.012	-.089
(SE)	(.215)	(.307)	(.163)	(.163)	(.208)	(.133)	(.135)

*OLS equations also included party, ideological identity, policy, sex, race, age, income, and social class, all measured in the 1982 interview (t-1). In the 2SLS procedure economic assessments of marginal groups, the middle-class, and the rich were treated as endogenous. Party t-1, ideological identity t-1, and policy t-1 also appeared in each equation, treated as exogenous variables. Race appeared in equations (1), (2), (4), (6), and (7); education appeared in equations (4) and (6); age appeared in equation (6); assessments of Reagan's impact on the national economy t-1 appeared in equations (2) and (3); assessments of Reagan's impact on the family's economic condition t-1 appeared in equation (4). Instruments came from a pool of variables measured in the 1982 interview, including sex, race, education, income, age, region, marital status, rural-urban, and assessments of family and national economic conditions.

Table 18

Estimated Impact of Assessments of Change in Economic
Position of Blacks on Evaluations of President Reagan
Among Blacks and Whites

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1) Thermometer Rating	(2) Performance Approval	(3) Competence	(4) Integrity	(5) Empathy
Blacks	.438	.272	.059	.090	.268
Whites	.012	.043	-.019	.017	.046
Probability that the two coefficients are equal	.00	.35	.78	.64	.16

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were: party, ideological identity, policy, sex, race, age, income, and subjective social class, all taken from the 1982 NES survey, plus economic assessments of women, elderly, poor, rich, middle-class, taken from the 1982 NES Pilot, plus a set of five multiplicative terms: sex x assesment of women's economic position, age x elderly's position, income x poor's position, income x rich's position, and class by middle-class position. All variables coded 0 to 1.

Table 19

Estimated Impact of Assessments of Change in Economic
Position of Blacks on Presidential Preferences
Among Blacks and Whites

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1) Reagan vs. Kennedy	(2) Reagan vs. Mondale
Blacks	.147	.241
Whites	-.010	-.010
Probability that the two coeffi- cients are equal	.23	.08

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were: party, ideological identity, policy, sex, race, age, income, and subjective social class, all taken from the 1982 NES survey, plus economic assessments of women, elderly, poor, rich, middle-class, taken from the 1983 NES Pilot, plus a set of five multiplicative terms: sex x assessment of women's economic position, age x elderly's position, income x poor's position, income x rich's position, and class by middle-class's position. All variables coded 0 to 1.

Table 20

Estimated Impact of Assessments of Change in Economic
Position of Elderly on Evaluations of President Reagan
Among Those Who Identified with the Elderly and Those Who Did Not

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Thermometer Ratings	Performance Approval	Competence	Integrity	Empathy
Not Identified	-.030	-.057	-.078	-.031	-.057
Identified	.141	.404	.153	.391	.084
Probability that the two coeffi- cients are equal	.34	.11	.18	.03	.47

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were: party, ideological identity, policy, sex, race, age, income, and subjective social class, all taken from the 1982 NES survey, a dummy variable representing whether the respondent identified with the elderly, taken from the 1983 Pilot, plus a comparable dummy variable and multiplicative term associated with the middle-class, from the 1983 Pilot, plus economic assessments of women, blacks, poor, rich, and middle-class, also from the 1983 Pilot. All variables coded 0 to 1.

Table 21

Estimated Impact of Assessments of Change in Economic
Position of Elderly on Presidential Preference Among
Those Who Identified with the Elderly and Those Who Did Not

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1) Reagan vs. Kennedy	(2) Reagan vs. Mondale
Not Identified	-.003	-.021
Identified	.250	.269
Probability that the two coeffi- cients are equal	.08	.02

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were: party, ideological identity, policy, sex, race, age, income, and subjective social class, all taken from the 1982 NES survey, a dummy variable representing whether the respondent identified with the elderly, taken from the 1983 Pilot, plus a comparable dummy variable and multiplicative term associated with the middle-class, from the 1983 Pilot, plus economic assessments of women, blacks, poor, rich, and middle-class, also from the 1983 Pilot. All variables coded 0 to 1.

Table 22

Estimated Impact of Group Economic Assessments on
Evaluations of President Reagan by Time Frame

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Thermometer Rating	Performance Approval	Competence	Integrity	Empathy
Group					
One Year	.249	.364	.173	.203	.206
Six Months	-.095	.287	.055	.196	.245
Probability that the two coeffi- cients are equal	.20	.68	.28	.95	.76

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were: party t-1, liberalism-conservatism t-1, and policy t-1 (average opinion on nuclear freeze, defense budget, government aid to minorities, government guarantee of jobs, cut government services).

Table 23

Estimated Impact of Group Economic Assessments on
Evaluations of President Reagan by Time Frame

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1)	(2)
	Reagan vs. Kennedy	Reagan vs. Mondale
Group		
One Year	.110	.111
Six Months	-.031	.016
Probability that the two coefficients are equal	.12	.24

*The other variables that appeared in each equation were:
party t-1, liberalism-conservatism t-1, and policy t-1
(average opinion on nuclear freeze, defense budget, government
aid to minorities, government guarantee of jobs, government
services).

Table 24

Group Identification on Economic Matters by Time Frame

	Sample A One Year	Sample B Six Months
Women	0%	3.8%
Blacks	2.4	5.0
Elderly	12.0	21.3
Poor	1.2	2.5
Rich	0	0
Middle-Class	12.0	21.3
Government Employees	3.6	0
Professionals	6.0	8.8
Small Business	0	3.8
Management	2.4	1.3
Blue Collar	7.2	5.0
Farmers	15.7	7.5
Teachers	8.4	5.0
Other Specific Occupations	3.6	0
Unions	0	1.3
Work/Occupation (Unspecified)	1.2	2.5
Middle Age	0	0
Young	4.8	0
Single Mothers	2.4	0
Fixed Income	1.2	0
Low Income	4.8	0
Working Class	3.6	2.5
Unemployed	1.2	0
Political Organizations	0	1.3
Religious Organizations	2.4	1.3
Mentally Handicapped; disabled	1.2	2.5
Other	2.4	3.8
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	99.7	100.3

Table 25
 Economic Assessments of the Group
 One Year Versus Six Months Time Frame

Group Economic Assessment (V2149)

	One Year (n=83)	Six Months (n=79)
Much Better	0%	0%
Somewhat Better	12.0	13.9
Same	27.7	40.5
Somewhat Worse	34.9	22.8
Much Worse	25.3	22.8
	----	----
Missing	(49.7%)	(47.5%)
	Chi-square	4.23
	(p)	(.24)

Table 26

Estimated Impact of Assessments of Change in Economic
Position of Blacks and Women on Evaluations of
President Reagan by Time Frame

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1) Thermometer Rating	(2) Performance Approval	(3) Competence	(4) Integrity	(5) Empathy
Women (V2161)					
One Year	.173	.219	.186	.099	.149
Six Months	.065	.065	-.008	-.016	-.007
Probability that the two coefficients are equal	.32	.31	.04	.23	.12
Blacks (V2162)					
One Year	.098	.135	.082	.086	.113
Six Months	-.015	-.039	-.043	-.032	.020
Probability that the two coefficients are equal	.20	.22	.14	.20	.33

*Each equation also included party, ideological identity, policy preferences, sex, race, age, income, and subjective social class, all taken from the 1982 NES survey, a dummy variable representing whether respondents were asked the six month or one year time frames in the 1983 Pilot plus economic assessments of poor, rich, elderly, and the middle-class. All variables coded 0 to 1.

Table 27

Estimated Impact of Economic Assessments
of Changes in Economic Position of Blacks
and Women on Presidential Preference
by Time Frame

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1) Reagan vs. Kennedy	(2) Reagan vs. Mondale
Women (V2161)		
One Year	.002	.074
Six Months	-.002	.059
Probability that the two coefficients are equal	.95	.82
Blacks (V2162)		
One Year	.068	.051
Six Months	-.043	-.006
Probability that the two coefficients are equal	.10	.35

*Each equation also included party, ideological identity, policy preferences, sex, race, age, income, and subjective social class, all taken from the 1982 NES survey, a dummy variable representing whether respondents were asked the six month or one year time frames in the 1983 Pilot plus economic assessments of poor, rich, elderly, and the middle-class. All variables coded 0 to 1.

Table 28

Correlations Among Social Group Economic Assessments
One Year Versus Six Months Time Frame

Sample A: One Year
(N = 127)

	Women	Blacks	Elderly	Poor	Rich
Blacks	.25				
Elderly	.16	-.31			
Poor	.22	.44	.46		
Rich	.18	.04	.02	.07	
Middle-Class	.25	.10	.35	.25	-.02

Sample B: Six Months
(N = 128)

Blacks	.36				
Elderly	.07	-.23			
Poor	.32	.49	.40		
Rich	.10	.13	.10	.04	
Middle-Class	.22	.12	.32	.22	.07

Social Group Economic Assessments:
One Year Versus Six Months Time Frame

	One Year Ago	Six Months Ago
Women (V2161)		
Better	41.9%	27.6%
Same	45.3	55.9
Worse	12.8	14.4

Chi-square (p)	6.74 (.03)	
Blacks (V2162)		
Better	23.0%	17.0%
Same	37.8	53.2
Worse	39.2	29.8

Chi-square (p)	6.87 (.03)	
Elderly (V2163)		
Better	11.0%	4.6%
Same	36.4	38.4
Worse	52.6	57.0

Chi-square (p)	4.32 (.12)	
Poor (V2164)		
Better	7.3%	7.4%
Same	36.4	32.9
Worse	56.3	59.7

Chi-square (p)	.42 (.81)	
Rich (V2165)		
Better	62.9%	63.4%
Same	35.1	31.7
Worse	2.0	4.8

Chi-square (p)	2.02 (.36)	
Middle-Class (V2166)		
Better	16.6%	12.7%
Same	47.0	59.3
Worse	36.4	28.0

Chi-square (p)	4.58 (.10)	

Table 30

Proportion Reporting Change in the Economic Position
of Women, Blacks, Elderly, Poor, Rich, and Middle-Class
by Time Frame

	Women	Blacks	Elderly	Poor	Rich	Middle-Class
Sample A						
One Year:	54.7%	62.2%	63.6%	63.6%	64.9%	53.0%
Sample B						
Six Months	44.1%	46.8%	61.6%	67.1%	68.3%	40.7%
2						
Chi-square	3.40	6.87	0.14	0.41	0.38	4.58
(p)	(.07)	(.01)	(.71)	(.52)	(.54)	(.03)