

To: Members of the Board of Overseers and the Pilot Study
Committee
From: Shanto Iyengar
Re: Whither Political Information*

This memorandum will evaluate the performance of the new political information items included in the 1986 pilot study. The analysis will focus on testing the domain-specificity argument proposed in earlier memos.

I will first discuss the categories developed to code the open-ended items. Next I will consider how the individual items fared in terms of consistency within and distinctiveness across domains. This item analysis led to the construction of four information indices, corresponding to the subject matter domains of race, the economy, foreign affairs, and group politics. These indices were then examined in relation to a host of demographic, media exposure, partisanship, and political involvement indicators in order to assess whether people who are more or less informed about one domain are also more or less informed about other domains. Finally, and most importantly, I tested whether specific or general information induced greater accessibility effects in evaluations of President Reagan. More specifically, I examined the degree to which respondents' current evaluations of President Reagan (as measured by the feeling thermometer), were affected by their beliefs and opinions within particular domains, and whether the effects of these beliefs or opinions were more pronounced among people relatively informed about the relevant domain as compared with people relatively informed on a measure of general information.

Constructing Indices

The coding of the closed-ended items (Var8512-Var8527) is self-explanatory. For the open-ended items (Var8501-Var8511), I distinguished between "strict" and "loose" definitions of the informed response (a distinction that parallels the "correctly identifies" - "partially identifies" classification in the Codebook). The third category consisted of evaluative responses (either positive or negative) since a fair number of respondents saw fit to spontaneously offer such evaluations when presented with the item. Finally, responses that were too wide of the mark to be considered even partially correct were classified as incorrect. In general we found that the strict/loose distinction could be made reliably. (The same coder coded the responses twice over a three week interval with a 95 percent level of stability.). Since the distinction has clear implications, both for determining the relative level of public affairs information, and for analyses of the consequences of this information, it is important that the distinction be made.

The twenty-five information items of interest (I exclude the Nixon and Bush recognition questions since they were included as

*Silvo Lenart, who coded the open-ended questions, and David Moskowitz, who carried out the analyses, contributed significantly to this report.

morale builders) were designed to capture information about four subject matter areas--race/civil rights, the national economy, foreign affairs, and group partisanship. Table 1 presents the percent of the sample classified as informed using both the loose and strict constructions. Also shown are the average correlation of each item (r) with all other items in the same domain, and the average correlation with all items outside the domain.

(Table 1 Here)

One of the items was skewed in the extreme (UN1) and eliminated immediately. Items that required respondents to identify a named public figure also proved problematic in that they seemed to tap name recognition rather than subject matter information. The question on Jack Kemp's partisanship, for instance, was more highly correlated with items outside the group politics domain than with its domain-mates, and its three highest correlations were with Weinberger (.44), Marshall (.42), and Volcker (.40). A similar pattern afflicted the Weinberger, King, Cuomo, Ortega, and Volcker items. (The question on King is also suspect since interviewing was carried out on and around his birthday.) Four non-recognition items were also eliminated on the grounds of unacceptable internal consistency or discriminant validity (Dow Jones, China, Turkey, feminists). Our final selections were thus as follows: Marshall, NAACP, and affirmative action for racial information; the unemployment rate, inflation rate, and budget deficit for economic information; NATO, Poland, India, and the second question on the UN for foreign affairs information; and the party affiliation of executives, blacks, the poor and stock brokers for group partisanship information.. Summary statistics on these indices is presented in Table 2.

(Table 2 Here)

For those who might consider these indices shaky on measurement criteria (the Alpha values are admittedly low), I would point out that the use of product-moment correlations significantly underestimates the underlying interrelationships. If tetrachoric correlations are substituted, the magnitude of the interrelationships both within and outside the domains increases by a factor of some fifty percent. I have chosen to present the r's simply because they are more interpretable and because they are, in this analysis, stringent measures of association. Second, the fourteen items that survived the initial screening were subjected to two measurement models using confirmatory factor analysis (Lisrel VI)--a one-factor (general information) model and a four-factor (domain-specific) model. Though both yielded a significant goodness-of-fit (as indexed by $X^2/d.f.$, the fit was clearly superior when four factors were specified. Thus the $X^2/d.f.$ ratio drops from 4.45 to 2.12.

Antecedents of Information

To further pursue domain-specificity, the four indices were examined for traces of specific antecedents. Each information index was examined in relation to a battery of media exposure, personal background, partisanship, and political involvement

indicators. To the degree political information is general rather than subject matter specific, the same differences between more informed and less informed respondents should emerge in all four domains. The best fitting set of predictors for each of the four indices is presented in Table 3.

(Table 3 Here)

Education and gender differences are common to all four indices. The gender gap is breathtaking, with men scoring on average, twenty percent higher than women. (One might surmise that the oversampling of women may have contributed to the magnitude of this effect.) Respondents declaring themselves to be liberals were also comparatively informed, irrespective of subject matter focus.

Exposure to media coverage of the presidential campaign was associated with greater information in three of the four instances, the exception being race. Race itself affected the level of information in three areas; while blacks were significantly less informed about foreign affairs and the economy, they outscored whites on the racial information index. Six factors predicted two of the indices: older people knew more about foreign affairs and the economy; Catholics tended to be more informed on foreign affairs and group politics; those of Hispanic descent were significantly less informed on matters of the economy and group politics; individuals more apt to participate knew more about the economy and group politics; and finally (a bit of a surprise given the mammoth gender differences), housewives (all 41 of them) were relatively well informed about both foreign affairs and race.

The remaining six information differences were domain-specific. Democrats tended to be aware of group partisan positions while Republicans were well informed on foreign affairs. The wealthy were more apt to follow foreign affairs while those who reported frequently discussing politics tended to know more about racial issues. Not unexpectedly, people with high levels of interest in the presidential campaign were more likely to know the political affiliations of groups. Finally, the poor tended to be significantly less informed on the economy.

These results are inconclusive with respect to the domain-specificity vs. general information argument. The differences associated with education, gender and liberal identification cut across all domains. The fact that there is only one clear reversal (race) may be considered telling by advocates of a general approach to measuring information. However, a fair number of sporadic differences were apparent. Of the eighteen variables found to influence information in at least one domain, the average number of effects they exerted was two. And if education is excluded, the average is closer to one.

Accessibility Effects in Evaluations of President Reagan

The most critical test of domain-specificity, in my view, has to do with the attitudinal or behavioral consequences of information holding. As I suggested in my earlier memoranda, information holding is likely to be associated with accessibility effects. If a person knows more about economic than racial matters, his beliefs and opinions about the former are more accessible and are therefore more likely to be used as evaluative

cues when he thinks about the president or when he confronts a voting choice. If people do organize their knowledge about the political world into subject matter categories, then we can expect accessibility effects to be greater among subject matter specialists rather than among generalists. That is, people relatively informed about race should cue off racial considerations when evaluating the president to a greater degree than people who are informed about issues other than race. Thus the effects of one's opinion concerning whether the federal government should actively assist minorities on one's evaluation of President Reagan should be significantly strengthened by the index of racial information, and this information-opinion interaction should be greater for domain-specific (racial, in this example) information than for general information.

I used the 1986 Reagan feeling thermometer as the measure of respondents' presidential evaluations (V8111). The analyses I report below were also run with earlier Reagan thermometers, with a measure of relative evaluation (Reagan thermometer minus Mondale thermometer) and with respondents' actual vote choice in 1984. The pattern of results did not deviate from those based on the 1986 thermometer. The critical test of domain-specific versus general information is based on specification of the following equations:

$$(1) \text{ Reagan Evaluation} = b_0 + b_1(\text{Republican}) + b_2(\text{Democrat}) + b_3(\text{Opinion}_i) + b_4(\text{Information}_i) + b_5(\text{Opinion}_i \times \text{Information}_i) + e$$

$$(2) \text{ Reagan Evaluation} = c_0 + c_1(\text{Republicans}) + c_2(\text{Democrats}) + c_3(\text{Opinion}_i) + c_4(\text{General Information}) + c_5(\text{Opinion}_i \times \text{General Information}) + e$$

Subject matter domains are represented by $i \dots$ and consist of race, the economy, and foreign affairs. Equation 1 thus matches opinions and information within a particular domain and the coefficient b_5 gauges the domain-specific interaction, e.g. the strengthening of the effects of an opinion in some particular domain on evaluations of Reagan induced by information about that domain. The coefficient c_5 measures the same interaction, this time between some opinion and a measure of general information (information about the remaining domains). The specific prediction, of course, is that b_5 should consistently exceed c_5 . Using this same logic, I also compared the effects of domain-specific information with measures of the perceived salience of particular opinions when these measures were available. Finally, for comparative purposes I also included an alternative measure of general information based on the four questions regarding the partisan control of the House and Senate (V5751-V5754). In the broadest case, therefore, one can compare the degree to which various opinions or beliefs are used as cues for evaluating the president as a function of domain-specific information, information about other domains, information about congressional elections, and subjective salience.

The value of these comparisons depends, of course, upon the availability of opinions or beliefs within the four information

domains. Ideally, the test should be carried out with opinions that fall within one and only one of the subject matter domains. At the very least, the test should be run with opinions or beliefs that are more relevant to one of the domains than the others. After considerable thought I chose the following opinion items to represent the three issue domains. The items are ordered in terms of their "fit" to each domain.

Race

1. A two-item composite index measuring support for affirmative action programs (V7421, V7423, V7425, V7427)
2. Respondents' position on the seven point "help minorities" scale (V714 and V7418, which is a five rather than seven point scale).
3. Respondents' approval/disapproval of President Reagan's handling of relations between blacks and whites (V8418).
4. A two-item index measuring perceptions of the desirability of federal actions to promote equal rights (V7416+v7418).
5. Respondents' approval/disapproval of President Reagan's handling of relations with South Africa (V8420).
6. Respondents' position on the seven point "cuts in social programs" scale (V707 and V5819).

Economy

1. A three-item composite index tapping respondents' perceptions of changes in the health of the national economy over the past year (V436+V424+V438).
2. Respondents' opinion as to whether the economic policies of the federal government were responsible for the current state of the economy (V441).
3. Respondents' position on the seven point "jobs and good standard of living" scale (V746 and V5839).
4. Respondents' approval/disapproval of President Reagan's handling of the economy (V458 and V8414).
5. Respondents' approval/disapproval of President Reagan's handling of balancing the budget (V460 and V5441).

Foreign Affairs

1. Respondents' approval/disapproval of President Reagan's handling of relations with other countries (V462 and V8416).
2. Respondents' opinion concerning U.S. strength in the world (V443).
3. A two-item index measuring concern over the possibility of war (V444+V445).
4. Respondents' preference for internationalism over isolationism (V5848 coded 1 for the former and 0 all others).
5. Respondents' position on the seven point "get tough" with the USSR scale (V740).
6. Respondents' position on the seven point defense spending scale (V727).
7. Respondents' position on the Central America seven point scale (V720 and V7303, which is a five rather than seven point scale).

The results of the domain-specific versus general information test for race are presented in Table 4. The entry is the coefficient for the interaction term associated with the column header. There are two entries for domain-specific information corresponding to strict and loose coding of correct

responses.

(Table 4 Here)

Virtually every interaction term is robust, suggesting that racial opinions are generally apt to enter the political calculations of the more informed. Note, however, that the domain-specific interactions generally come in first. The index of non-racial information edges out racial information in the case of support for federal equal rights actions, the posttest seven point "cuts in social programs" scale, and approval of Reagan's civil rights performance. The cuts in social programs item is clearly relevant to domains other than race and the failure of racial information to win this trial is not particularly telling. On the whole, Table 4 reveals that domain-specific information does perform better than either of the two general measures and the salience item. Considering that the salience question enjoys tremendous advantages (it is asked immediately following the expression of the opinion and is worded so as to make for a perfect fit with the opinion), the performance of racial information is all the more impressive.

Turning to foreign affairs, (see Table 5) the results are less supportive of domain-specificity. Foreign affairs information exerts the strongest interactive effects with internationalism, approval of Reagan's foreign affairs performance (preelection), and concern over war. Information about the congressional elections wins both the defense spending and getting tough with the USSR tests, with foreign affairs information coming in either second or last. Foreign affairs information also does not do particularly well with the Central America scale; here information about the other domains induces stronger interactions.

(Table 5 Here)

In thinking about these results, we must keep in mind that foreign affairs is a rather broad "domain," to say the least. I would have preferred to assess information specific to particular foreign policy issues such as Central America, the Middle-East, terrorism, or national defense (such as the items I field tested in the Suffolk County study). For example, the interaction term formed by multiplying the Central American scale with ability to identify Daniel Ortega is 3.98 (2.96), which far outstrips all other Central American interactions. Similarly, if defense information is defined as being able to identify NATO and Casper Weinberger, the interaction term with the defense spending scale is 1.30 (.87). In short, were we to define foreign affairs information more narrowly, within specific regions or substantive policy areas, the domain-specificity hypothesis fares much better. As it stands, the index of foreign affairs information is too broad to constitute a diagnostic test.

Finally, I examined the index of economic information (see Table 6). The two key tests here entail respondents' assessments of the condition of the national economy and the degree to which they blame/credit the federal government for economic outcomes. On the first, economic information does induce the strongest (and only robust) interaction. On the second, the best one can say about the domain-specific interaction is that it is in the right direction.

(Table 6 Here)

The rest of Table 6 can be interpreted in two ways. From the standpoint of the domain-specificity argument, the charitable interpretation would be that the economic performance, budget performance, and guaranteed jobs items are not only relevant to the economy, but to other domains as well (cuts in social programs, the proper role of government in society, etc.). I reran the interactions between budget performance, economic performance, and guaranteed jobs using racial information instead of economic information and obtained coefficients that were consistently twice the size of their standard errors. Alternatively, one might argue that evaluations of Reagan's economic and budget performance are in fact most relevant to the economic domain and the failure of economic information to do well in Table 6 warrants a rethinking of the specificity argument.

My final test of domain-specificity concerns the group politics index. Here the prediction is that information about the partisan affiliations of groups will make evaluations of the president more partisan. Thus the interaction between the Republican and Democrat dummy variables and group information should exceed the interaction between partisanship and general information. This prediction was generally borne out though the differences in the size of the coefficients were not striking (the interaction between Republican and group information was 2.06 with a standard error of 1.96, while the interaction between being Republican and non-group information was .95 with a standard error of 1.01; for Democrats the counterpart coefficients were 2.08 with a standard error of 2.00, and .93 with a standard error of 1.01).

Summary and Recommendations

In my view, the racial information items are clearly worth preserving given their consistent performance in boosting the effects of racial opinions on presidential evaluations (and on voting). I would urge that the three items used here plus the King question be administered in 1986. Since racial issues are indeed perennials, these items would have long-term relevance. I would also recommend inclusion of items probing foreign affairs information, on the proviso that these items be more focussed on the subjects of arms control/national defense and the politics of Central America. For defense/arms control, I would suggest retention of the NATO item, the addition of the "Star Wars" item from the pre-pilot survey, and a perhaps a question probing respondents' awareness of "SALT Talks." In regard to Central America, questions asking respondents to identify the Contras and which side the U.S. supports in Nicaragua could be added to the question on Ortega.

The performance of the economic information index was clearly sub-par. Moreover, questions on respondents' perceptions of changes in unemployment and inflation may be used as surrogates for information. Finally, even though the group politics questions are in many respects the "cleanest" of the information questions, the index seems to have little applied value.

What of the argument that the salience questions are

potential surrogates for information, either as indicators of issue/domain accessibility or centrality? For each of the salience questions I ran a head-to-head confrontation with domain-specific information. That is, I estimated the following equation.

$$(3) \text{ Reagan Evaluation} = b_0 + b_1(\text{Republican}) + b_2(\text{Democrat}) + b_3(\text{Opinion}_i) + b_4(\text{Salience of Opinion}_i) + b_5(\text{Information}_i) + b_6(\text{Salience}_i \times \text{Opinion}_i) + b_7(\text{Information}_i \times \text{Opinion}_i) + e$$

As it turned out, the salience items were virtually orthogonal to the information indices and so the estimation of two separate interaction terms in the same equation is not problematic. The results (the coefficients b_6 and b_7) are presented in Table 7.

(Table 7 Here)

There are eleven relevant comparisons. Salience wins two, information wins eight, and there is one draw. In neither of the salience "victories" is the interaction robust. Considering the built-in advantages of the salience question, the evidence in Table 7 is overpowering. There is simply no contest: information is the superior indicator of accessibility (or centrality for that matter).

In short, the evidence presented in this report suggests that domain-specific information, particularly in the area of race, outperforms general information in inducing accessibility effects on evaluations of President Reagan. The evidence based on the analysis of foreign policy opinions suggests that if domain-specific effects are to be found, the measure of foreign affairs information must be less global. Finally, there is no evidence to warrant further consideration of the economic and group politics items. As such, I recommend that six of the items included in the pilot be retained in the 1986 study (King, Marshall, Affirmative Action, NAACP, NATO, Ortega). In addition, I suggest the inclusion of four new items, two of which have already been field tested (Star Wars and Contras), the remaining two would be new items, one each in the areas of defense/arms control and Central America.

Table 1
Item Analysis of Full Set

| | % strict | % loose | Average r within domain | Average r outside domain |
|------------------------|----------|---------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <u>Race</u> | | | | |
| King | 41 | 82 | .31 | .28 |
| Marshall | 18 | 23 | .39 | .28 |
| Naacp | 45 | 60 | .35 | .21 |
| Affirmative action | 13 | 30 | .28 | .13 |
| <u>Economy</u> | | | | |
| Unemployment rate | 42 | | .30 | .22 |
| Inflation rate | 42 | | .28 | .20 |
| Deficit | 83 | | .23 | .18 |
| Volcker | 10 | 17 | .29 | .26 |
| Dow Jones | 22 | 69 | .21 | .24 |
| <u>Foreign Affairs</u> | | | | |
| Nato | 21 | 39 | .32 | .25 |
| Weinberger | 19 | 35 | .29 | .26 |
| Ortega | 7 | 12 | .15 | .11 |
| Poland | 47 | | .39 | .26 |
| Turkey | 20 | | .19 | .16 |
| India | 30 | | .33 | .21 |
| China | 70 | | .24 | .20 |
| UN1 | 96 | | | |
| UN2 | 58 | | .39 | .24 |
| <u>Groups</u> | | | | |
| Executives | 60 | | .34 | .22 |
| Blacks | 69 | | .31 | .21 |
| Poor people | 59 | | .30 | .16 |
| Stock brokers | 62 | | .36 | .19 |
| Cuomo | 40 | | .28 | .27 |
| Kemp | 27 | | .24 | .29 |
| Feminists | 46 | | .27 | .18 |

N=345

Table 2
Final Selections

| Race | Economy | Foreign Affairs | Group Politics |
|--|--|--------------------------------|--|
| Marshall Naacp Affirmative action | Unemployment rate Inflation rate Deficit | Nato India UN2 Poland | Executives Blacks Brokers Poor people |
| Coefficient Alpha: .58 | .59 | .78 | .71 |
| Average r within: .33 | .30 | .34 | .39 |
| Average r outside: .19 | .17 | .24 | .22 |
| Average r with other indices .34 | .38 | .45 | .40 |

Table 3

Antecedents of Political Information

| Predictor | Index | | | |
|---|-----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| | Foreign Affairs | Economy | Race | Group Politics |
| Males | .98 (.13) | .51 (.09) | .31 (.10) | .49 (.14) |
| College graduates | .90 (.17) | .46 (.11) | .98 (.12) | .41 (.18) |
| < 11th grade | -.94 (.32) | -.69 (.23) | -.72 (.24) | -.74 (.34) |
| Liberals | .64 (.18) | .32 (.13) | .18 (.13) | .54 (.22) |
| Conservatives | | .38 (.10) | | .59 (.16) |
| Democrats | | | | .49 (.15) |
| Republicans | .31 (.14) | | | |
| Political activity ¹ | | .08 (.04) | | .12 (.07) |
| Exposure to media coverage of the campaign ² | .22 (.07) | | .15 (.05) | .17 (.07) |
| Discusses politics frequently | | | .22 (.11) | |
| Interest in the campaign ³ | | | | .21 (.15) |
| Age | .01 (.00) | .02 (.00) | | |
| Blacks | -.46 (.25) | -.61 (.18) | .46 (.18) | |
| Hispanics | | -.54 (.25) | | -.90 (.40) |
| Catholics | .43 (.15) | | | .42 (.17) |
| Housewives | .37 (.21) | | .26 (.16) | |
| High income (>35,000) | .34 (.14) | | | |
| Low income (<10,000) | | -.40 (.12) | | |
| Adjusted R ² | .37 | .36 | .30 | .22 |
| N | 343 | 343 | 345 | 345 |

1. Composite index based on V5411, V5412, V5414, V5415, and V5416.

2. Composite index based on exposure to tv, radio, magazine, and newspaper coverage of the campaign (V5102, V5104, V5106, and V5108 all scored 1 (yes) and 0 (all others)).

3. "Very much interested" vs. all others (V101).

Table 4

Domain-Specific vs. General Information and Salience: Race

| | Racial Information | | General Information ¹ | General Information ² | Salience |
|---|--------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| | strict | loose | | | |
| Support for affirmative action (320) | .97 (.52) | 1.36 (.39) | .66 (.41) | .46 (.30) | |
| Help minorities/pre. (310) | 2.48 (.90) | 1.90 (.64) | 1.88 (.68) | 1.11 (.50) | |
| Help minorities/pilot (273) | 4.13 (1.40) | 2.41 (.96) | 2.16 (1.04) | 1.72 (.76) | 2.74 (1.23) |
| Approval of Reagan's performance/Race (322) | 1.07 (.91) | 1.39 (.69) | 1.82 (.92) | 1.00 (.50) | |
| Support for equal rights (331) | .70 (.73) | .85 (.49) | 1.04 (.50) | .30 (.34) | |
| Cut social programs/pre. (303) | 3.15 (1.13) | 2.39 (.80) | 1.45 (.78) | .62 (.53) | .90 (.71) |
| Cut social programs/post. (292) | 2.10 (1.06) | 1.76 (.77) | 3.18 (.85) | .83 (.58) | 1.98 (.68) |
| Approval of Reagan's performance/South Africa (336) | 1.10 (.69) | 1.25 (.56) | -.35 (.71) | .86 (.66) | |

Table entries are the interaction coefficients corresponding to b_5 and c_5 in equations 1-2.

All information indices and salience items range from 0-3. General Information¹ is based on the index of non-racial information (foreign affairs+economy+groups) and General Information² is based on the four "party control" items. All items have been scored so that positive coefficients indicate a strengthening of the effect among the more informed or more concerned.

Table 5

Domain-Specific vs. General Information: Foreign Affairs

| | Foreign Affairs Information | | General Information ¹ | General Information ² | Salience |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| | strict | loose | | | |
| Approval of Reagan's foreign policy performance/pre. (316) | .65 (.39) | .57 (.35) | .24 (.52) | .31 (.34) | |
| - - -/pilot (331) | 1.07 (.48) | .86 (.43) | .92 (.51) | 1.26 (.52) | |
| Concern over war (331) | .76 (.29) | .80 (.27) | .84 (.31) | .34 (.34) | |
| Internationalism (336) | 1.04 (.30) | .91 (.29) | .06 (.25) | 1.16 (2.20) | |
| USSR scale (287) | .41 (.47) | .42 (.43) | .16 (.52) | .91 (.53) | |
| Defense spending scale (287) | .43 (.53) | .52 (.49) | .92 (.68) | 1.10 (.46) | |
| Central America scale/pre. (202) | n.a. | 1.83 (3.25) | .91 (.99) | .13 (.97) | .37 (.47) |
| ---/pilot (250) | .63 (.89) | .97 (.80) | 1.48 (.91) | .21 (.45) | .71 (.54) |

All information indices and salience items scored 0 - 3.
 General Information¹ is based on the index of non-foreign information (economic + racial + group).

Table 6

Domain-Specific vs. General Information and Salience: Economy

| | Economic Information | | General Information ¹ | General Information ² | Salience |
|--|----------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| | strict | loose | | | |
| Perceptions of national economy (318) | .37 (.33) | .25 (.32) | -.08 (.35) | .09 (.21) | |
| Blame federal economic policies (321) | .48 (1.15) | .41 (1.14) | -.71 (1.20) | .58 (.68) | |
| Guaranteed jobs scale/pre. (313) | .87 (.62) | 1.24 (.64) | 2.55 (.63) | 1.34 (.60) | -.14 (.76) |
| ---/post. (315) | -.60 (.68) | -.64 (.70) | 1.12 (.33) | -2.50 (2.24) | .54 (.90) |
| Approval of Reagan's economic performance/pre. (326) | .00 (.61) | .02 (.59) | .48 (.65) | .58 (.40) | |
| ---/pilot (329) | -.55 (.64) | -.28 (.65) | .96 (.61) | .43 (.40) | |
| Approval of Reagan's budget performance/pre. (291) | -.03 (.74) | -.39 (.73) | .76 (.75) | .31 (.49) | |
| ----/post. (309) | -.76 (.65) | -.89 (.65) | 1.37 (.71) | .24 (.44) | |

All information indices and salience items scored 0-3.
 General Information¹ is based on non-economic information (racial + groups + foreign).

Table 7

Head-to-Head Competition Between Domain-Specific
Information and Salience

| | Economic Information | Salience |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Guaranteed jobs/ pre. | 1.35 (.65) | .39 (.78) |
| -----/post. | -.55 (.70) | .62 (.89) |
| | Racial Information | Salience |
| Help minorities/pilot | 2.25 (1.23) | 2.11 (1.00) |
| Cut social programs/pre. | 2.31 (.76) | .58 (.61) |
| -----/post. | 1.76 (.77) | 1.76 (.65) |
| Guaranteed jobs/pre. | 2.20 (.62) | .16 (.51) |
| -----/post. | 2.08 (.56) | -.32 (.47) |
| | Foreign Affairs Information | Salience |
| Central America/pre. | 1.65 (3.34) | .37 (1.34) |
| -----/pilot | .37 (.89) | .70 (.54) |
| | Central Am. Information | Salience |
| Central America/pre. | 4.06 (2.98) | .40 (1.22) |
| -----/pilot | 2.02 (1.96) | .61 (.56) |

Entries are interaction coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.