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Abstract

This paper examines the link between trait-based evaluations of potential presidents and patterns of candidate centered voting. The 1983 Pilot Study trait battery asked respondents to evaluate 30 candidate traits across five dimensions: competence, leadership, integrity, stability, and empathy. Kinder finds: (1) The trait distribution profiles of the candidates are distinctive in substantively meaningful ways. The Pilot Study results, therefore, provide support for a candidate-centered voting model in general and the five-dimension trait evaluative thesis in particular. (2) Presidential trait judgments are impressively stable over time, on both the individual and aggregate levels. (3) Trait judgments are dependent on both a respondent's political stance and their social position, though political stance plays a greater role in the formation of such assessments. (4) Two-stage least squares regression analysis indicates that trait judgments have a strong influence on evaluations of Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale, independent of any direct effects due to party, ideology, or policy stances.

Presidential Traits

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

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I. Introduction

Americans vote in overwhelming numbers for the presidential candidate they like most (Brody and Page, 1968; Kelley and Mirer, 1974; Kinder and Abelson, 1981; Markus and Converse, 1979; Markus, 1982; Page and Jones, 1979). This unremarkable fact establishes the importance of candidate-centered voting, but fails to disclose what the essential elements of candidate-centered voting might be. In planning the 1980 National Election Study, we assumed that presidential candidates succeed or fail partly because of the people they seem to be and partly because of the particular affects they stir up. That is, candidate-centered voting has two essential elements: traits and feelings.

This report sets out the reasons why NES should continue to make possible the serious and systematic study of candidate-centered voting. I summarize evidence from the 1980 NES study as well as from other sources on the performance of the trait and affect batteries as originally constituted, present detailed findings on the performance of a new and improved version of the trait battery in the 1983 Pilot Study, and draw out the implications of those results for instrumentation in 1984.

II. Background

Our plans for the 1980 National Election Study presumed that the preeminent traits for presidents and presidential hopefuls were competence and integrity. Each emerges frequently in voters' open-ended candidate commentaries (Miller and Miller, 1976, 1977; Page,

1978), as well as in a variety of psychological studies: those focussing on leadership in informal groups (Cartwright and Zander, 1968); on source credibility and attitude change (McGuire, 1969); on interpersonal attraction (Rubin, 1973); and on the tacit theories people possess about others (Rosenberg, 1977). In an effort to tap these dimensions, we drew up a trait inventory in the fall of 1978 and administered it to a sample of New Haven, Connecticut residents. In one section of the survey, respondents were asked how well each of 48 traits characterized each of four prominent national politicians. Based on a mix of statistical criteria, this version of the trait inventory was then greatly reduced and included in the small-scale national pilot study conducted by CPS in the spring of 1979. Analysis of this survey, coupled with discussions with interviewers and staff, produced a set of recommendations for the 1980 National Election Study. Through a final editing process, the trait list shrunk to seven entries: four indicators of competence--knowledgeable, inspiring, weak, provide strong leadership--and three indicators of integrity--moral, dishonest, and power-hungry. In this abbreviated form, the trait inventory was included in all phases of the 1980 National Election Study.

Exploitation of these materials to date has been encouraging on a number of fronts. First, presidential candidates appear to create textured impressions--there is more to candidate evaluation than mere liking and disliking. Moreover, such impressions change over the course of the campaign in ways that seem to correspond to changing events. And most important, prospective voters' assessments of the candidates' competence and integrity substantially influence the

choices they eventually make (Dennis, 1982; Kinder and Abelson, 1981, 1983; Markus, 1982). While assessments of competence seemed generally to carry greater weight than considerations of integrity, there were occasional and revealing exceptions. For Edward Kennedy and John Connally alone among a set of 1980 presidential hopefuls, judgments of integrity were more consequential in shaping preference than were considerations of competence (Kinder and Abelson, 1981). Thus the relative importance voters attach to competence and integrity in particular cases seems to vary as a function of the distinctive and conspicuous qualities of particular candidates.

Candidate-centered voting is based not only on an analysis of the candidate's personal traits, but also on the affective reactions the candidate evokes. The second element of candidate-centered voting is affective: voting based on the discrete emotions a candidate elicits. To test this idea, an affect checklist was developed to represent the basic possibilities in Roseman's (1979) structural theory of emotions. Elements from this list were then included in the 1978 New Haven survey alluded to earlier, the 1979 Pilot Study, and the 1980 National Election Study. Those interviewed were asked whether, say, President Carter had ever made them feel . . . Angry . . . Proud . . . and so forth through the complete list (either 7 or 16 affect terms, depending on the survey).

Evidence from the 1980 NES data indicates that such affective reactions were in fact widespread. Moreover, particular politicians elicited distinctive profiles of affective response. Edward Kennedy elicited anger and sadness while Jimmy Carter provoked frustration and unease. The inclination to report positive feelings for a particular

politician was, surprisingly, only faintly related to the failure to report negative feelings: mixed feelings were the norm. And most important, affective reports were not at all redundant with trait judgments. Reports of affective reactions contributed independently and powerfully to individual choice (Abelson, Kinder, Peters, and Fiske, 1982; Kinder and Abelson, 1981, 1983).

While these results argue in a general way for the maintenance of the affect and trait batteries in future NES surveys, we took advantage of the opportunity provided by the Pilot Study to improve the measurement of presidential trait judgments. We needed more evidence about the technical performance of the trait measures (though not of the affect measures), for two reasons.

First, as originally constituted, the trait battery contains a confound. While three of the four traits signifying competence are positive, two of the three traits signifying integrity are negative. And according to factor analysis results, trait ratings of Carter, Reagan, Kennedy, et al., in 1980 reflected both the distinction between competence and integrity, as expected, and the evaluative distinction between positive traits and negative traits. That is, positive traits like knowledgeable and moral tended to cohere together, as did negative traits like weak and dishonest.

This confound is not fatal. Enforcing the distinction between competence and integrity leads to intelligible results in 1980 that the distinction between positive traits and negative traits would only obscure (Kinder and Abelson, 1981; Markus, 1982). Moreover, the separation of trait assessments into competence and integrity factors shows up neatly in other investigations not subject to the confound:

e.g., in a panel study undertaken in New Haven of the 1976 Vice-Presidential Debate (Kinder, Denney, and Wagner, 1977) and throughout a series of a dozen experiments conducted in New Haven and Ann Arbor with community samples (Iyengar, Peters, and Kinder, 1982; Iyengar and Kinder, 1983). This additional evidence is reassuring on the meaningfulness of the distinction between competence and integrity, but does not relieve us of our obligation to clean up the current NES battery. Exactly how we propose to do that is set out below.

A second and more important goal motivating pilot investigation was to explore dimensions of evaluation in addition to competence and integrity. In voters' reactions to the open-ended candidate questions, competence and integrity show up strongly, to be sure, but on some occasions so do others (Miller and Miller, 1976, 1977; Miller, Wattenberg, and Malanchuk, 1982; Page, 1978). Caddell (described in Drew, 1981) and Popkin (Popkin et al., 1976) also suggest other trait dimensions at work in the voter's calculus. Thus we explored in the pilot study an expanded trait list, one that reflected both the central traits of competence and integrity as well as several others: stability--whether the candidate is seen as prudent and cool in a crisis or as reckless and impulsive--and empathy--whether the candidate is regarded as compassionate and understanding or as out of touch and unfair. We also explored whether citizens distinguish between two forms of competence, as is hinted by our analysis of 1979 pilot study data. One is represented by managerial, technical skills, the other by heroic, mythic leadership. Hereafter we will retain the label competence for the first and will call the second leadership.

For these purposes, pilot study respondents were asked how well their impressions of three prominent national political figures--Ronald Reagan, Edward Kennedy, and Walter Mondale--could be characterized by a string of 30 traits. The trait list was intended to encompass five dimensions: competence, leadership, integrity, stability, and empathy, each represented by six specific traits. Three of the traits are positive and three negative, thereby eliminating the confound that troubles the current trait set. The specific phrases and adjectives are set out in Appendix A. Pilot respondents were asked in the first interview for their impressions of Mr. Reagan and either Mr. Kennedy (Sample A) or Mr. Mondale (Sample B), and in the second interview, for their impressions of Mr. Reagan alone.

With these pilot study data now in hand, it is possible to reach informed decisions about the measurement of presidential traits. In reaching those decisions, I make five empirical demands on the expanded trait battery. First and most subjectively, do the trait ratings associated with particular candidates form sensible and intelligible patterns? Do distinctive candidate profiles emerge on leadership, stability, and empathy, as they did in 1980 on competence and integrity? A second test to be applied to the expanded trait battery is over time stability. Unless dramatic events intervene (and they did not) people interviewed in July who regarded Ronald Reagan a certain way should think much the same of him in August. Third, does the organization of citizens' trait ratings conform to my a priori categories? Do people, as I imagine, distinguish between two forms of competence or do they simply see political figures as generally capable or not? And is there evidence for the existence of stability and

empathy, or alternatively, are such judgments simply assimilated to the more central traits of competence and integrity? Fourth, I also examine the antecedents of trait judgments, looking again for indications that judgments of competence, leadership, integrity, stability, and empathy represent distinctive elements of evaluation. The fifth and final test then is to examine the consequences of these judgments. We assume that trait judgments (along with affective reactions) are the most proximate and powerful antecedents of the vote. This assumption was born out nicely in the 1980 National Election Study for competence and integrity judgments in particular. Here I will ask the same of the expanded trait battery. To what extent do judgments of competence, leadership, integrity, stability, and empathy contribute independently to evaluation and preference?

With these tests completed I will be in a position to make recommendations on two key points regarding candidate-centered voting. Are there consequential dimensions of evaluation underlying candidate-centered voting in addition to competence and integrity? If so, how can they be best measured?

III. Pilot Study Findings

1. Presidential Trait Profiles

Judging the traits of prominent political figures appears to be a natural undertaking. Very few respondents failed to answer questions about their leaders' competence, leadership, integrity, stability or empathy. As Table 1 indicates, virtually everyone answered every question when asked to evaluate President Reagan. On average 98.4% of the (first wave) sample was willing to deliver opinions on Mr. Reagan's

characterological qualities. The percentage diminished only slightly, to 97.3%, when Edward Kennedy became the target, and somewhat more, to 90.6% in trait ratings of Walter Mondale. The same gradient--from Reagan to Kennedy to Mondale--emerged in the proportion of respondents who replied that they "couldn't decide." Interviewers did not volunteer this category, but nevertheless made use of it when respondents seemed genuinely ambivalent. Such responses, which were coded into the middle of the scale, made up on average just 1.6% of those who offered an opinion on Reagan's personal qualities, 3.3% for Kennedy, and 6.0% for Mondale.

These figures compare favorably to the substantially larger proportions of the public who encounter difficulty when asked to make explicitly political judgments about leaders. Many more people concede that they don't know where the President stands on the issues of the day than admit that they don't know about his honesty or intelligence. When interviewed as part of the 1982 National Election Study, for example, 4.1% of Pilot Study respondents were unwilling or unable to say where Mr. Reagan stood on cuts in government services; 11.4% did not know Mr. Reagan's position on government assistance to minorities; 16.6% had no notion where the President stood on equal rights for women. [1]

Perhaps information about political leaders' personal qualities is more available and less ambiguous than is information about their policy position. Perhaps citizens are just naturally inclined to summarize their impression of leaders in terms of broad dispositional qualities--as they seem to be inclined to do towards each other (Schneider, Ellsworth, and Hasturff, 1981). In any event, people appear

quite prepared to undertake and report on their assessments of even rather exotic personal qualities of their most prominent national leaders.

That they are willing to do so does not of course guarantee that their reports carry much meaning. The first test of the meaningfulness of citizens' presidential trait assessments is whether different leaders elicit distinctive profiles. Table 2, which spills across 5 pages, presents the distribution of replies to each of the 30 traits. The table is arranged to enhance comparisons between Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale, with the traits grouped into five categories. The competence traits come first, then those intended to tap leadership, then integrity, then stability, and then empathy.

These detailed comparisons are highly revealing and I will refer to them extensively. But because the details, especially at first, may be overwhelming, they are reported in summary form in Figures 1A-1E. The figures present Reagan's, Kennedy's, and Mondale's average score on competence (IA), leadership (IB), integrity (IC), stability (ID) and empathy (IE). [2] Together, they tell us whether and in what ways Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale cut distinctive public profiles.

Consider comparisons between Reagan and Kennedy. It is clear first of all that the public regards Edward Kennedy to be somewhat more competent than Ronald Reagan. The difference is small, but statistically reliable (t-test for paired observations: $t=1.68$, $p<.10$; Winkler and Hays, 1975, p. 450). [3] Kennedy's advantage in this respect is apparently due to his superior intelligence, knowledge, and experience. (Consult table 2.) On the other indicators of competence, Kennedy does no better than Reagan and in fact the Senator

is regarded as somewhat less hard-working than the President, a difference that may have as much to do with public assumptions about the roles they occupy than with their "real" qualities.

Kennedy's edge on competence reverses on leadership (see Figure 1B; $t=-2.10$, $p<.05$). This switch is important, since it is our first hint that the public does distinguish between managerial and mythic aspects of political leadership. Kennedy's leadership deficit is especially pronounced on commanding respect and avoiding weakness. These are the first traces of Chappaquidick's legacy.

The stain of Chappaquidick is seen more clearly in the public's integrity judgments. As Figure 1C reveals, Kennedy runs far behind Reagan on integrity ($t=-6.02$, $p<.001$). Compared to Kennedy, Reagan is regarded by many more citizens as decent, moral, and as setting a good example; and by many fewer citizens as dishonest, likely to lie to the public, and power-hungry.

President Reagan also enjoys a large advantage over Senator Kennedy on attributes of stability (Figure 1D, $t=-3.85$, $p<.001$). Reagan was regarded as much less reckless, somewhat less likely to lose his temper, less impulsive, somewhat more likely to be cool in a crisis, though really no more cautious or thoughtful.

The public reverses again on judgments of empathy, now preferring Kennedy to Reagan ($t=1.68$, $p=.10$). Kennedy's advantage is most apparent on fairness. Whereas one third of those interviewed said that "unfair" fit their impression of Ronald Reagan a great deal, only 11% said that of Kennedy. More generally, the public was more willing to deliver harsh judgments about Reagan's empathic sensibilities than Kennedy's. More people thought him not at all compassionate (15% for

Reagan, 8% for Kennedy), regarded him as not caring at all about people like them (22% vs. 16%), as not understanding their problems (23% vs. 17%), and as out of touch with the people (25% vs. 16%).

Comparing Reagan with Mondale also leads to sharp contrasts. Reagan and Mondale are regarded as roughly equally competent. Reagan is seen as the more experienced but as also more prone to make mistakes: the perquisites and liabilities of incumbency. Overall, neither candidate is advantaged on competence ($t = -.04$, n.s.). On leadership, in contrast, Reagan leads by a wide margin ($t = -3.51$, $p < .001$), and on all six indicators. Once again, this may reflect the perquisites of the office of the Presidency and also on Mondale's comparatively low profile. In any case, the fact of the difference, and its decisiveness, is important, for it again signals that competence is not the same as leadership.

On matters of integrity, Mondale enjoys an advantage though a modest one ($t = 1.53$, $p = .13$). A look back at table 2 discloses that Mondale and Reagan are judged to be more or less equals except on power-hungry and lies to the public, where Mondale leads. It will be interesting to see whether this difference will disappear as the campaign heats up.

Mondale also comes off well in the public's judgments of stability ($t = 1.65$, $p = .10$). Compared to Reagan, Mondale is regarded as somewhat less impulsive, less likely to lose his temper, and less reckless. Mondale's image suffers only on "cool in a crisis." Again, this may reflect Mondale's lesser visibility--people may reasonably feel that they don't have good evidence about how Mondale would respond in a crisis.

Mondale's advantage over Reagan widens on judgments of empathy ($t=-2.60$, $p<.01$). Although this contrast resembles the Kennedy-Reagan difference, and runs in the same direction, it is substantially greater here. Moreover, whereas the differences are modest to negligible on traits that capture well Reagan's notoriously amiable ways (compassionate, kind, really cares about people like me), they are substantial on the more explicitly political versions of empathy (doesn't understand problems of people like me, out of touch with the people, and unfair). Later on we will see additional hints of this split between personal and political empathy.

Through these various comparisons, Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale emerge as distinctive personalities. Reagan appears as a leader of mythic proportions, commanding respect, setting high moral standards, but perhaps out of touch with the experiences of ordinary people. Kennedy's profile, in contrast, emphasizes competence, compassion, and a powerful and perhaps crippling strain of recklessness and dishonesty. Mondale cuts the least clearly defined profile, but even here distinctive qualities emerge: capable, thoughtful, fair-minded, in touch with ordinary folks. That these profiles are distinctive, and that the distinctions make sense, constitute support for candidate-centered voting in general and the five trait thesis in particular.

2. Continuity and Change

Pilot respondents were interviewed in July and in August, and that on both occasions they were badgered for their assessments of President Reagan's competence, leadership, integrity, stability, and empathy.

Short of the intrusion of dramatic events, such assessments should be quite stable: the public should not have thought Reagan capable in July and a nincompoop in August. Figures 2A-2F reveal in fact that alterations in Reagan's profile in this aggregate sense were practically to negligible. Judgments of the President's competence and leadership did not budge in any discernible way between July and August (Figures 2A and 2B respectively). At the same time, the President's stability and integrity ratings deteriorated slightly (for stability, $t = 2.23$, $p < .05$; for integrity, $t = 1.86$, $p < .10$), while his empathy ratings improved slightly ($t = 1.37$, p).

These results are reassuring on two points. They indicate a heavy inertial component to the President's trait profile, and they demonstrate that the different components of the profile can move simultaneously in opposite directions--another indication of the texture of the public's impressions.

The essential stability of Reagan's trait profile in the public as a whole tells us nothing about the stability of trait judgments at the level of the individual. Stable aggregate judgments are of course compatible with promiscuous vacillation in the trait judgments offered by individuals. Table 3 shows that there was in fact little change at the individual level. Table 3 presents continuity coefficients--Pearson correlations--for each of the five central traits. Of the five, judgments of Reagan's stability were the least stable (Pearson $r = .75$); judgments of his empathy and integrity were the most ($r = .84$). By virtually any standard, these correlations are impressively high. Respondents who thought about President Reagan in a certain way in July were very likely to think the same about him in August.

A more detailed look at the stability of trait judgments is provided by table 4, which presents the over-time coefficients for each of the 30 traits separately. A scan of the table reveals a good bit of variation in individual item stability. The Kendall tau-b's range from .37 ("has little experience") to .68 (power-hungry), averaging .53. As expected, the larger coefficients tended to be found under the heading of empathy or integrity, while the smaller coefficients tended to be associated with stability.

One other useful contrast can be extracted from table 4. It so happens that the trait battery mixes two types of negative judgments. The first type asserts the presence of a negative quality, (e.g. "lies to the public"), the second asserts the absence of a positive quality (as in "has little experience"). There are just four of the latter type on the trait list--"has little experience," "doesn't understand the problems of people like me," "no sense of direction," and "not qualified"--and they are distinguished by their low stability. Two of the four are the least stable in the entire inventory; the other two are way below average.

The empirical contrast here is striking. It can be explained, I think, by noting the steps respondents are likely to go through in answering the trait questions. Consider the two questions:

(1) How well does "lies to the public" fit your impression of Ronald Reagan?

(2) How well does "has little experience" fit your impression of Ronald Reagan?

In the first instance, respondents presumably simply match the trait phrase to their impression and then select the appropriate response category. In the second instance, the procedure is not so simple or

direct. People probably do not lay their impressions of Reagan against the phrase "has little experience." Rather they first translate the negative phrase into its affirmative counterpart--"is experienced"--and then ask themselves how well their impression fits the translated phrase. They ask themselves, in effect, whether Ronald Reagan has lots of experience. Having answered that question, they then have to back translate their answers in order to choose an appropriate response category. This question type can therefore go wrong at several junctures--and by the evidence assembled in table 4, did in fact go wrong. There may be a general measurement lesson here; there certainly seems to be a particular one: in the assessment of negative presidential traits, ask respondents about the presence of negative qualities; do not ask about the absence of positive qualities.

This is a useful conclusion and I will make use of it later in making recommendations for the measurement of presidential traits in 1984. But it should not divert our attention from the central point of this section: presidential trait judgments are impressively stable over time, in both the aggregate and individual level senses.

Structure of Trait Judgments

Argh! Lisrel V has bugs, or maybe it's Kinder. Kinder will talk you through this section of the report on Thursday.

Origins of Trait Judgments

To a conservative corporate executive, President Reagan may seem intelligent and compassionate while to a Democratic blue collar worker, the same President may appear thick-headed and cruel. Trait judgments no doubt depend on the judge's political stance and social position.

To see the degree this is so, trait judgments were regressed against party identification, ideological identity, policy opinions, race, sex, age, and education. In this analysis, trait judgments were represented by the respondent's average reply over the six questions designed to measure each of the hypothetical five central traits (see footnote 2). Party identification is the traditional seven-point scale, ranging from strong Democrat to strong Republican. Ideological identity also takes the traditional seven-point form, from extreme conservative to extreme liberal, with the roughly one-third of the sample who allowed as they never thought of themselves in ideological terms coded at middle-of-the roaders. Policy opinions were measured by a single variable that again ranged from extreme conservative to extreme liberal, reflecting respondent's average position on nuclear arms control, money for defense, government aid to minorities, government guarantees of jobs, and cuts in government services. The three political right hand side variables--party, ideology, and policy--as well as the four measures of social location--race, sex, age, and education--were all taken from the 1982 National Election Study. All variables, including the trait judgment dependent measures, were coded on the 0 to 1 interval.

While the major purpose of this analysis is to estimate the effect of political stance and social position on the trait judgments citizens deliver on presidents and presidential candidates, we should also be sensitive to evidence of discriminant validity in the trait measures themselves. At the least, the impact of political stance and social location on judgments of Reagan should differ in intelligible ways from their impact on judgments of Kennedy which should differ, in turn, in intelligible ways from their impact on trait ratings of Mondale.

Evidence of distinctive patterns should also emerge within candidates. That is, if competence, leadership, integrity, stability, and empathy really do represent distinct components of Reagan evaluations, we should see indications that the five are related to political stance and social position in somewhat different ways.

Table 8 presents the ordinary least squares estimates of the effect of party, ideology, policy, and social location on ratings of President Reagan's traits. They indicate first of all confirmation of the political stance-social position thesis. In particular, judgments of President Reagan's traits depend heavily on citizen's policy preferences. Those who took conservative positions tended to regard Reagan considerably more favorably on all five traits--but especially on ratings of empathy--than did those who took liberal positions. The estimated impact of policy exceeded that due to either party or ideology, although each of these two also exerted sizable effects. And as we will see later, the impact of policy was substantially greater on ratings of Reagan's traits than on judgments directed at Kennedy or Mondale. Quite reasonably, judgments of President Reagan reflect in a distinctive way his conspicuously conservative policies.

Alongside the substantial effects of political stance, the effects of social position pale. A small but reliable racial gap is apparent in table 8: blacks are consistently more critical of Reagan than are whites, with the widest gap coming, understandably, on empathy. Age is utterly unrelated to judgments of the President's competence, leadership, or stability, but is quite sharply related to integrity and empathy: the elderly are less inclined to regard Mr. Reagan as setting a moral example for the country and they are much less willing to say

that he understands their problems. As will be the case for Kennedy and Mondale, education is generally negatively related to trait ratings, meaning that the well-educated are more critical of the personal qualities of political leaders than are the less well-educated. In the case of Mr. Reagan (though not for Kennedy or Mondale) the education difference is most pronounced on matters of integrity. Finally, there are intimations in table 8 of Mr. Reagan's notorious gender gap. Holding constant party, ideology, policy preferences, and other measure of social location, men look more favorably upon Mr. Reagan's personal qualities than do women. The differences, though, were quite small, and even relatively small just where they were expected to be largest, in ratings of the President's empathy.

However, a closer examination of empathy reveals that there is both strong support for this expectation and no support at all. In place of Reagan's overall empathy rating I substituted, in turn, each of the six specific traits that supposedly stand for empathy in the regression equation just described. The results, shown in table 9, are striking. Men and women differ not at all in their ratings of Mr. Reagan's compassion, kindness, or caring for people. But they do differ and sharply in the more expressly political versions of empathy: women much more than men believe that Reagan fails to understand their problems, that he is out of touch with the people, and that he is unfair. So caring for people is not the same as comprehending their problems; compassion is not the same as being in touch; kindness is not fairness. These are not of course logical identities, but the sharpness of the gender differences they provoke is nevertheless

remarkable.

So much for the President. Table 10 presents the estimated effects of political stance and social position on trait ratings of Senator Kennedy. Once again, political stance is the more important. In particular, party, ideology and especially the opinions people take on public policy powerfully shape their judgments of Kennedy. These results resemble those for Reagan, though the impact of policy was somewhat greater in the President's case than in the Senator's. And in contrast to Reagan, the judgments Kennedy elicits are generally unrelated to age and to race, the one exception being that blacks judge Kennedy less harshly on matters of morality than do whites. As in the Reagan analysis, the well-educated are generally more critical than are the less well-educated--though this difference virtually disappears on integrity, where the gap was widest in judgments of Reagan. Finally, table 10 reveals that the President is not alone when it comes to a gender gap. Senator Kennedy owns one, too, though once again the details differ. In the Senator's case, differences between men and women were strongest over matters of morality, the one place where Reagan's gender gap is practically invisible.

This brings us, at last, to Walter Mondale. Table 11 reports the estimated impact of party, ideology, policy, and social location on trait ratings of Mr. Mondale. As indicated there, Mondale's personal qualities are based to some degree on specific policy but less so than was true for Kennedy, and much less so than for the President. Furthermore, in contrast to both Kennedy and Reagan, Mondale suffers no gender gap; men and women differ not at all in their assessments of Mondale's personal qualities. Mondale does have a racial gap; like

Reagan and in contrast to Kennedy, Mondale is generally judged more harshly by blacks than by whites. And as was true for Reagan and not for Kennedy, the elderly tend to worry more about Mondale's moral and empathic sensibilities than the young do. So in this respect, Kennedy is the distinctive candidate: he seems to avoid the criticism that blacks and elderly direct elsewhere. Finally, like Reagan and Kennedy, Mondale comes under general criticism from the well-educated, though once again in ways that seem uniquely his own.

Taken altogether, these findings offer general reassurance that we really are measuring what we purport to measure. Intelligible and even interesting contrasts arise across candidates and within. Having examined the antecedents of trait ratings, the next and final step is to assess their political consequences.

Political Consequences

We need to determine the extent to which citizens' electoral decisions turn on their assessments of the candidates' personal qualities. To what degree do citizens' appraisals of the contenders' competence, leadership, integrity, stability, and empathy influence their votes?

To answer this question adequately requires taking into account determinants of vote other than trait appraisals. Here I assume that vote reflects in part the trait judgments citizens make, but also the party they embrace, the ideological identity they assume, and the policy options they prefer. The question then becomes the extent to which trait appraisals influence vote decisions independently of party, ideology, and policy. Although that is the question of real interest,

the present analysis pursues a slightly different question: the extent to which trait appraisals independently influence overall evaluation.

Ordinary least squares estimates of the impact of trait judgments on evaluations of Reagan, Kennedy and Mondale are presented in table 12. The unstandardized coefficients shown there indicate the direct effect of trait judgments, independent of any direct effects due to party, ideology, and policy. The major message of table 12 is that, indeed, overall evaluations of the President and presidential hopefuls are profoundly influenced by trait judgments. For Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale alike, integrity emerges as the single most powerful component, with competence, leadership, and empathy trailing close behind. Stability, in contrast, trails far behind: the only negatively-signed coefficients in the table belong to stability; in no case does stability's coefficient surpass statistical significance. I regard this failure as a final and decisive blow. But stability aside, the evidence in table 12 emphasizes the power of trait appraisals. Judgments of competence and integrity, but also leadership and empathy, appear to contribute separately and independently to a candidate's popular success.

I say "appear to" advisedly. The OLS estimates displayed in table 12 suffer two defects. One is that they are stained by measurement error. Consequently, perhaps I have underestimated the impact of trait judgments. The other is that the estimates may be corrupted by simultaneity. That is, trait judgments may be both cause and consequence of overall evaluation. Someone who thinks President Reagan to be generally a wonderful fellow may be, as a consequence, more apt to regard him as competent, inspiring, honest, and so forth than is

someone who thinks Reagan is a stinker. The OLS estimates presume that the causal flow is unilaterally from particular traits to general evaluations. To the degree that this presumption is incorrect, the estimated impacts displayed in table 12 may overestimate the impact of trait judgments.

In order to correct these two problems, the evaluation equations were re-estimated, this time following a two-stage least squares procedure. In each equation, trait judgments were treated as endogenous variables. As before, party t-1, ideological identity t-1, and policy t-1 also appeared in each equation, treated 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 trait judgments on candidate evaluation, shown in table 13, strengthen the case for the importance of trait judgments-- for the independent importance of competence, integrity, leadership, and empathy. Once measurement error and simultaneity are controlled, the estimated impact of trait judgments generally increases. Perhaps the most satisfying result in the table, however, is not the enhanced effects but the patterning of effects across candidates. The OLS estimates tended to indicate that (setting stability aside) all trait judgments mattered, and in roughly the same degree across candidates. The 2SLS estimates, in contrast, reveal distinctive and revealing differences across candidates. The strongest effects appear in the Reagan equations. Overall evaluations of Mr. Reagan are powerfully influenced by judgments of his empathy,

integrity, and leadership (not competence), while approval of his performance as President is influenced most by competence (not leadership), integrity (again), and empathy (again). By contrast, only one of the five traits influences overall evaluation of Senator Kennedy--and it, of course, is integrity. Finally there is Mondale. As in other findings through this report, the 2SLS coefficients in the Mondale evaluation equation suggest that the former Vice-President has yet to create a clear image with the public. Voters' general evaluations of Mondale, it is true, have partly to do with their judgment about his empathic sensibilities--and remember, it was on matters of empathy that Mondale's public profile was most distinctive, just as Kennedy's profile was most distinctive on integrity. But otherwise, the sizeable effects of competence, leadership, and integrity revealed by the OLS estimates in table 12 turn out to be apparent effects only. Trait judgments of Mondale seem to be more the consequence of overall evaluation than the cause of overall evaluation. This represents a very substantial opportunity for 1984. It means that the rolling cross-section will be able to do what it was designed, at least in part, to do: to monitor the development and crystallization of candidate impressions and preferences.

Recommended Questions

For each serious contender at each administration of the rolling cross-section.

1. 12 traits, asked in the 1983 pilot study format, to be selected from the following list

- a. competence (3)
 - hard-working
 - intelligent
 - knowledgeable
 - makes lots of mistakes

- b. leadership (3)
 - commands respect
 - inspiring
 - provides strong leadership
 - weak
 - too easily influenced by others

- c. integrity (3)
 - decent
 - moral
 - sets a good example
 - dishonest
 - lies to the public
 - power-hungry

- d. empathy (3)
 - compassionate
 - kind
 - really cares about people like me
 - out of touch with the people
 - unfair

2. 4 affects, in traditional format.

- angry
- fear
- hope
- pride

Footnotes

1. These percentages include only those respondents who themselves had an opinion. Such respondents constituted 85.0% of the full sample with respect to government services, 89.2% for aid to minorities; 95.9% for women's rights.
2. To compute these average scores, replies to the negative traits were first reflected. Then respondents were simply assigned their average score across the six items for each of the five trait categories. To be assigned a score, respondents had to answer at least four of the six items. This requirement resulted in over 98% of the sample receiving a score in trait ratings of Reagan, over 96% in ratings of Kennedy, and over 88% in ratings of Mondale.
3. All these candidate comparisons are based on roughly 150 cases: remember that just one-half the sample was asked about Kennedy with the other half asked about Mondale.

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Trait Assessments
% Providing an Answer

	Reagan I (n=314)	Reagan II (n=274)	Kennedy IA (n=158)	Mondale IB (n=156)
<u>Competence</u>				
Hardworking	99	99	98	93
Intelligent	99	99	99	94
Knowledgeable	99	99	99	92
Has Little Experience	99	99	99	92
Makes a Lot of Mistakes	99	98	94	88
Not Qualified	98	100	98	90
<u>Leadership</u>				
Commands Respect	99	100	99	94
Inspiring	97	97	97	91
Provides Strong Leadership	99	100	99	90
Weak	99	99	97	94
No Direction	98	98	97	91
Too Easily Influenced	97	99	98	87
<u>Integrity</u>				
Decent	99	99	97	94
Moral	98	98	97	94
Sets a Good Example	99	99	98	90
Dishonest	97	99	97	91
Lies to Public	99	98	95	90
Power-Hungry	97	99	99	88
<u>Stability</u>				
Cautious	99	99	99	90
Cool in Crisis	98	98	94	86
Thoughtful	99	99	99	91
Impulsive	97	98	97	89
Loses Temper Too Easily	99	99	94	85
Reckless	98	98	96	89
<u>Empathy</u>				
Compassionate	98	99	98	92
Kind	98	99	98	91
Really Cares	99	99	96	90
Doesn't Understand	99	100	99	89
Out of Touch	99	100	98	83
Unfair	98	100	94	91
Average	98.4	98.9	97.3	90.6

Table 2
Trait Assessments
Marginal Frequencies

<u>Competence</u>	A Great Deal 1	2	3	4	Not at All 5
<hr/>					
Hardworking					
Reagan	43 %	35 %	0 %	16 %	6 %
Kennedy	37	45	1	15	3
Mondale	30	47	3	15	5
Intelligent					
Reagan	52 %	37 %	0 %	10 %	2 %
Kennedy	59	35	1	4	2
Mondale	45	46	2	6	1
Knowledgeable					
Reagan	42 %	41 %	1 %	12 %	4 %
Kennedy	54	36	2	6	2
Mondale	39	45	1	11	4
Little Experience					
Reagan	16 %	29 %	1 %	20 %	33 %
Kennedy	10	21	2	16	52
Mondale	31	33	4	18	31
Lots of Mistakes					
Reagan	22 %	37 %	2 %	37 %	22 %
Kennedy	20	42	3	42	20
Mondale	8	30	8	30	8
Not Qualified					
Reagan	8 %	26 %	2 %	18 %	46 %
Kennedy	15	25	3	17	41
Mondale	9	25	5	20	41

Table 2 continued

<u>Leadership</u>	A Great Deal				Not at All
	1	2	3	4	5
Commands Respect					
Reagan	50 %	33 %	1 %	13 %	4 %
Kennedy	30	34	1	20	15
Mondale	27	48	5	17	3
Inspiring					
Reagan	26 %	35 %	2 %	20 %	18 %
Kennedy	21	28	3	27	22
Mondale	11	38	4	24	23
Provides Strong Leadership					
Reagan	37 %	39 %	1 %	13 %	10 %
Kennedy	30	37	1	15	17
Mondale	16	34	6	26	18
Weak					
Reagan	6 %	24 %	0 %	20 %	51 %
Kennedy	9	29	1	23	38
Mondale	6	30	4	27	33
Has No Clear Sense of Direction					
Reagan	10 %	26 %	2 %	17 %	44 %
Kennedy	10	27	3	16	44
Mondale	9	28	9	24	30
Too Easily Influenced by Others					
Reagan	10 %	33 %	4 %	17 %	30 %
Kennedy	14	28	7	23	28
Mondale	12	33	9	28	18

Table 2 continued

<u>Integrity</u>	A Great Deal				Not at All
	1	2	3	4	5
Decent					
Reagan	53 %	33 %	1 %	9 %	4 %
Kennedy	24	46	1	18	12
Mondale	50	40	1	8	1
Moral					
Reagan	56 %	31 %	0 %	10 %	2 %
Kennedy	14	47	2	23	14
Mondale	51	36	3	8	2
Sets a Good Example					
Reagan	31 %	42 %	3%	14 %	11 %
Kennedy	14	40	5	20	21
Mondale	23	41	6	21	9
Dishonest					
Reagan	4 %	15 %	3 %	18 %	60 %
Kennedy	9	32	4	24	33
Mondale	2	8	4	22	64
Lies to the Public					
Reagan	10 %	29 %	3 %	25 %	33 %
Kennedy	16	37	4	25	19
Mondale	6	13	7	43	43
Power Hungry					
Reagan	27 %	26 %	2 %	16 %	29 %
Kennedy	36	28	4	21	12
Mondale	18	28	5	25	25

Table 2 continued

<u>Stability</u>	A Great Deal				Not at All
	1	2	3	4	5
Cautious					
Reagan	21 %	47 %	1 %	21 %	10 %
Kennedy	16	45	3	24	12
Mondale	24	46	6	19	6
Cool in a Crisis					
Reagan	33 %	45 %	2 %	14 %	6 %
Kennedy	20	50	6	13	11
Mondale	17	40	15	21	8
Thoughtful					
Reagan	22 %	45 %	1 %	25 %	7 %
Kennedy	20	40	4	28	8
Mondale	18	49	6	23	4
Impulsive					
Reagan	20 %	39 %	2 %	18 %	21 %
Kennedy	19	47	3	21	10
Mondale	9	28	9	29	25
Loses Temper Too Easily					
Reagan	9 %	28 %	2 %	25 %	36 %
Kennedy	9	36	7	22	25
Mondale	4	14	11	29	42
Reckless					
Reagan	6 %	22 %	3 %	26 %	44 %
Kennedy	13	34	5	30	19
Mondale	5	10	7	33	45

Table 2 continued

<u>Empathy</u>	A Great Deal				Not at All
	1	2	3	4	5
<hr/>					
Compassionate					
Reagan	24 %	36 %	1 %	23 %	15 %
Kennedy	27	39	3	22	8
Mondale	26	46	7	18	4
Kind					
Reagan	33 %	46 %	2 %	15 %	4 %
Kennedy	32	48	5	14	3
Mondale	28	54	6	11	2
Really Cares About People Like You					
Reagan	18 %	38 %	1 %	21 %	22 %
Kennedy	18	39	3	24	16
Mondale	18	38	7	21	16
Doesn't Understand Problems of People Like You					
Reagan	23 %	14 %	1 %	31 %	31 %
Kennedy	17	32	6	21	24
Mondale	11	29	7	27	26
Out of Touch With the People					
Reagan	25 %	17 %	1 %	34 %	23 %
Kennedy	16	33	2	19	30
Mondale	13	34	2	25	27
Unfair					
Reagan	33 %	26 %	2 %	28 %	12 %
Kennedy	11	26	5	31	29
Mondale	4	15	11	35	37

Table 3

Continuity of Reagan Assessments:
Five Central Traits

	Pearson r's
Competence	.77
Leadership	.81
Integrity	.84
Stability	.75
Empathy	.84

(n = 268; 97.8% of those interviewed at both occasions)

Table 4
 Continuity of Reagan Trait Assessments:
 Individual Item Analysis
 Kendall's Tau-b

<u>Competence</u>	
Hardworking	.62
Intelligent	.62
Knowledgeable	.57
Has Little Experience	.37
Makes a Lot of Mistakes	.51
Not Qualified	.42
<u>Leadership</u>	
Commands Respect	.47
Inspiring	.62
Provides Strong Leadership	.63
Weak	.52
No Direction	.46
Too Easily Influenced	.52
<u>Integrity</u>	
Decent	.58
Moral	.48
Sets a Good Example	.57
Dishonest	.49
Lies to Public	.49
Power-Hungry	.68
<u>Stability</u>	
Cautious	.41
Cool in Crisis	.44
Thoughtful	.55
Impulsive	.54
Loses Temper Too Easily	.42
Reckless	.54
<u>Empathy</u>	
Compassionate	.58
Kind	.54
Really Cares	.63
Doesn't Understand	.39
Out of Touch	.59
Unfair	.59

N ranges from 263 to 271, 96.0% to 98.0% of those interviewed at both occasions.

Consistency of Trait Assessments:

Competence

Pearson r's

Reagan (n = 305)

	Hard- Working	Intelli- gent	Know- ledgeable	Little Experience	Mistakes
Intelligent	.45				
Knowledgeable	.49	.65			
Little Experience	.22	.19	.20		
Mistakes	.27	.29	.32	.23	
Not Qualified	.33	.36	.34	.34	.43

Average r = .34

Kennedy (n = 148)

	Hard- working	Intelli- gent	Know- ledgeable	Little Experience	Mistakes
Intelligent	.39				
Knowledgeable	.37	.60			
Little Experience	.22	.12	.22		
Mistake	.27	.26	.24	.29	
Not Qualified	.32	.31	.21	.35	.36

Average r = .30

Mondale (n = 133)

	Hard- Working	Intelli- gent	Know- ledgeable	Little Experience	Mistakes
Intelligent	.45				
Knowledgeable	.48	.60			
Little Experience	.28	.12	.26		
Mistakes	.26	.15	.29	.24	
Not Qualified	.16	.26	.19	.18	.24

Average r = .28

Table 5B
Consistency of Trait Assessments:
Leadership

Pearson r's

Reagan (n = 299)

	Commands Respect	Inspiring	Strong Leader	Weak	No Direction
Inspiring	.51				
Strong Leader	.50	.60			
Weak	.23	.28	.37		
No Direction	.25	.29	.35	.45	
Easily Influenced	.22	.30	.31	.46	.38

Average r = .37

Kennedy (n = 149)

	Commands Respect	Inspiring	Strong Leader	Weak	No Direction
Inspiring	.55				
Strong Leader	.56	.65			
Weak	.28	.41	.44		
No Direction	.22	.32	.32	.35	
Easily Influenced	.20	.27	.32	.37	.38

Average r = .38

Mondale (n = 133)

	Commands Respect	Inspiring	Strong Leader	Weak	No Direction
Inspiring	.33				
Strong Leader	.36	.57			
Weak	.16	.20	.33		
No Direction	.21	.20	.18	.39	
Easily Influenced	.15	.32	.29	.48	.32

Average r = .30

Consistency of Trait Assessments:
Integrity

Pearson r's

Reagan (n = 298)

	Decent	Moral	Good Example	Dishonest	Lies to Public
Moral	.55				
Good Example	.50	.55			
Dishonest	.39	.42	.44		
Lies to Public	.24	.26	.31	.36	
Power-Hungry	.38	.33	.43	.42	.44

Average r = .40

Kennedy (n = 145)

	Decent	Moral	Good Example	Dishonest	Lies to Public
Moral	.66				
Good Example	.66	.64			
Dishonest	.50	.36	.46		
Lies to Public	.40	.33	.36	.54	
Power-Hungry	.49	.36	.50	.50	.55

Average r = .49

Mondale (n = 130)

	Decent	Moral	Good Example	Dishonest	Lies to Public
Moral	.58				
Good Example	.46	.36			
Dishonest	.38	.44	.30		
Lies to Public	.32	.16	.31	.53	
Power-Hungry	.29	.06	.33	.21	.42

Average r = .34

Table 5D
Consistency of Trait Assessments:
Stability

Pearson r's

Reagan (n = 297)

	Cautious	Cool	Thoughtful	Impulsive	Lose Temper
Cool	.21				
Thoughtful	.27	.34			
Impulsive	.10	.13	.14		
Lose Temper	.16	.24	.19	.31	
Reckless	.26	.23	.40	.33	.39

Average r = .25

Kennedy (n = 144)

	Cautious	Cool	Thoughtful	Impulsive	Lose Temper
Cool	.16				
Thoughtful	.30	.15			
Impulsive	.14	.08	.03		
Lose Temper	.07	.09	.18	.29	
Reckless	.32	.09	.22	.35	.54

Average r = .20

Mondale (n = 124)

	Cautious	Cool	Thoughtful	Impulsive	Lose Temper
Cool	.25				
Thoughtful	.28	.46			
Impulsive	.01	.12	.08		
Lose Temper	.03	.25	.09	.46	
Reckless	.23	.44	.26	.38	.48

Average r = .25

Consistency of Trait Assessments:
Empathy

Pearson r's

Reagan (n = 302)

	Compassionate	Kind	Really Cares	Doesn't Understand	Out of Touch
Kind	.57				
Really Cares	.62	.56			
Doesn't Understand	.26	.23	.36		
Out of Touch	.45	.38	.55	.43	
Unfair	.48	.47	.51	.41	.62

Average r = .46

Kennedy (N = 147)

	Compassionate	Kind	Really Cares	Doesn't Understand	Out of Touch
Kind	.63				
Really Cares	.59	.58			
Doesn't Understand	.35	.33	.29		
Out of Touch	.35	.33	.43	.57	
Unfair	.45	.40	.48	.43	.48

Average r = .45

Mondale (N = 135)

	Compassionate	Kind	Really Cares	Doesn't Understand	Out of Touch
Kind	.48				
Really Cares	.48	.42			
Doesn't Understand	.11	.01	.21		
Out of Touch	.30	.22	.45	.31	
Unfair	.17	.21	.23	.20	.36

Average r = .28

Table 6
Consistency of Trait Assessments

(Average Inter-Item Pearson r)

	Competence	Leadership	Integrity	Stability	Empathy
Reagan	.34	.37	.40	.25	.46
Kennedy	.30	.38	.49	.20	.45
Mondale	.28	.30	.34	.25	.28

Table 7
 Consistency of Trait Assessments
 Based on Trimmed Trait Inventories*

(Average Inter-Item Pearson r)

	Competence	Leadership	Integrity	Stability	Empathy
Reagan	.41	.38	.40	.25	.52
Kennedy	.36	.41	.49	.20	.47
Mondale	.37	.32	.34	.25	.33

*"Has little experience," "not qualified" deleted from competence, "no sense of direction" deleted from leadership, and "doesn't understand problems of people like me" deleted from empathy.

Table 8

Estimated Impact of Party, Ideology, Policy,
and Social Location on Reagan Trait Ratings

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates

Equation	(1) Competence	(2) Leadership	(3) Integrity	(4) Stability	(5) Empathy
Party	-.145 (.039)	-.150 (.042)	-.160 (.039)	-.121 (.038)	-.201 (.043)
Ideology	-.136 (.071)	-.150 (.076)	-.160 (.072)	-.106 (.069)	-.224 (.080)
Policy	-.236 (.072)	-.319 (.077)	-.303 (.072)	-.165 (.070)	-.411 (.080)
Sex	.027 (.024)	.063 (.026)	.013 (.024)	.040 (.024)	.041 (.027)
Race	.065 (.043)	.045 (.046)	.090 (.043)	.076 (.042)	.097 (.048)
Age	.001 (.057)	-.032 (.061)	-.164 (.057)	-.018 (.055)	-.193 (.064)
Education	.019 (.076)	-.129 (.081)	-.231 (.076)	-.070 (.074)	-.097 (.084)
R-squared	.223	.271	.322	.181	.389
Standard error of regression	.195	.208	.195	.189	.217
Number of cases	280	280	280	280	280

Table 9

Estimated Impact of Gender
on Reagan's Empathy Traits

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Compassionate	Kind	Really Cares	Doesn't Understand	Out of Touch	Unfair
Gender	.030 (.040)	-.044 (.035)	.021 (.041)	.132 (.046)	.110 (.044)	.105 (.041)

*Each equation also included party, ideology, policy, race, age, and education, all measured in the 1982 National Election Study.

Table 10

Estimated Impact of Party, Ideology, Policy,
and Social Location on Kennedy Trait Ratings

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates

Equation	(1) Competence	(2) Leadership	(3) Integrity	(4) Stability	(5) Empathy
Party	.057 (.056)	-.104 (.070)	-.164 (.075)	-.069 (.055)	-.075 (.070)
Ideology	.165 (.097)	-.228 (.121)	-.096 (.129)	-.075 (.095)	-.216 (.121)
Policy	.130 (.096)	-.276 (.112)	-.227 (.128)	-.227 (.095)	-.293 (.120)
Sex	-.033 (.032)	.043 (.039)	-.098 (.042)	-.059 (.031)	-.055 (.039)
Race	-.004 (.062)	-.027 (.077)	-.135 (.082)	-.001 (.061)	-.004 (.077)
Age	.019 (.083)	-.045 (.126)	-.035 (.111)	-.070 (.082)	-.076 (.104)
Education	-.268 (.101)	-.046 (.126)	-.071 (.134)	-.120 (.099)	-.198 (.126)
R-squared	.152	.156	.181	.149	.161
Standard error of regression	.185	.231	.246	.182	.231
Number of cases	141	141	141	141	141

Table 11

Estimated Impact of Party, Ideology, Policy,
and Social Location on Mondale Trait Ratings

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates

Equation	(1) Competence	(2) Leadership	(3) Integrity	(4) Stability	(5) Empathy
Party	.133 (.055)	.127 (.065)	.138 (.058)	.118 (.055)	.082 (.059)
Ideology	.212 (.108)	.184 (.127)	-.110 (.113)	.037 (.108)	.047 (.115)
Policy	-.145 (.109)	-.091 (.128)	.160 (.114)	.018 (.109)	.122 (.116)
Sex	.000 (.037)	-.006 (.044)	.041 (.039)	.010 (.037)	.017 (.040)
Race	.049 (.062)	.035 (.072)	.107 (.064)	.085 (.061)	.090 (.066)
Age	.047 (.087)	-.032 (.102)	-.177 (.091)	-.031 (.086)	-.249 (.092)
Education	-.173 (.120)	-.006 (.140)	-.093 (.125)	-.304 (.119)	-.249 (.127)
R-squared	.116	.066	.102	.110	.125
Standard error of regression	.187	.219	.195	.186	.199
Number of cases	121	121	121	121	121

Table 12

Estimated Impact of Trait Ratings
on Overall Evaluations

Ordinary Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1) Reagan Approval	(2) Reagan T-Score	(3) Kennedy T-Score	(4) Mondale T-Score
Competence	.214 (.111)	.243 (.062)	.098 (.108)	.099 (.128)
Leadership	.273 (.105)	.137 (.059)	.183 (.088)	.198 (.098)
Integrity	.313 (.113)	.284 (.063)	.263 (.087)	.231 (.126)
Stability	.135 (.103)	-.032 (.058)	-.056 (.108)	-.123 (.121)
Empathy	.263 (.105)	.238 (.059)	.115 (.095)	.107 (.111)
R-squared	.619	.718	.532	.467
Standard error of regression	.248	.142	.165	.158
Number of cases	277	284	141	117

*Each equation also included party T-1, ideology T-1, and policy T-1.

Table 13

Estimated Impact of Trait Ratings
on Overall Evaluations

Two-Stage Least Squares Estimates*

Equation	(1) Reagan Approval	(2) Reagan T-Score	(3) Kennedy T-Score	(4) Mondale T-Score
Competence	-.041 (.467)	.593 (.276)	-- --	-- --
Leadership	.572 (.452)	-.187 (.278)	.095 (.241)	-.088 (.369)
Integrity	.534 (.423)	.457 (.266)	.407 (.205)	-.131 (.404)
Stability	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --
Empathy	.624 (.352)	.328 (.211)	-- --	.334 (.344)
R-squared	.609	.683	.543	.296
Standard error of regression	.268	.160	.164	.182
Number of cases	230	235	121	98

*Trait ratings were treated as endogenous. Party T-1, ideology T-1, and policy T-1 also appeared in each equation, treated as exogenous. Instruments came from a pool of variables measured in the 1982 interview, including sex, race, age, education, income, region, marital status, rural-urban residence, and assessments of family and national economic conditions. Blanks in the table mean that the coefficient was set to zero, based on interim analyses.

**R-squared is squared correlation between predicted and observed evaluation.

Figure 1A

Assessment of Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale:
Competence Index

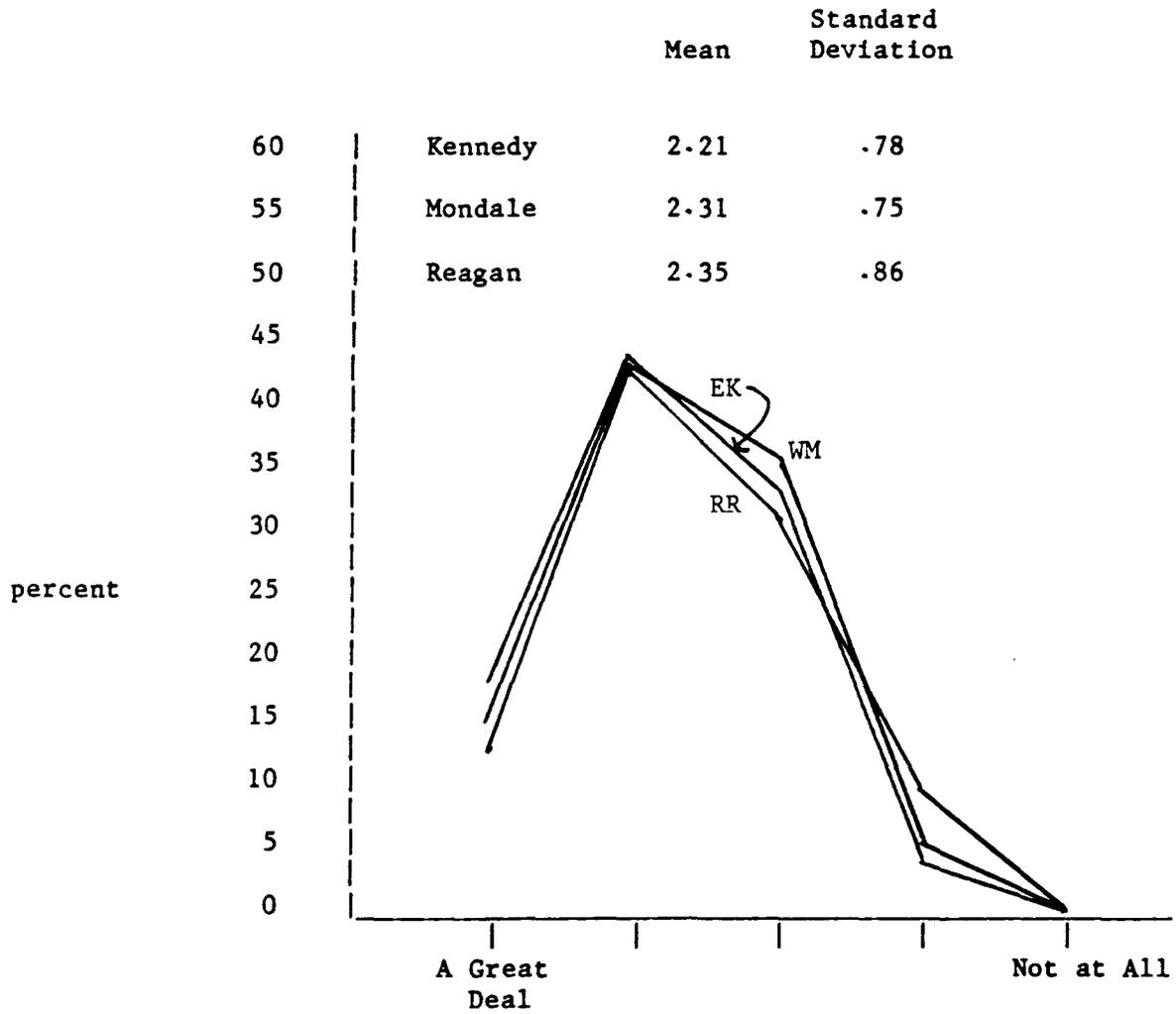


Figure 1B

Assessment of Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale:
Leadership Index

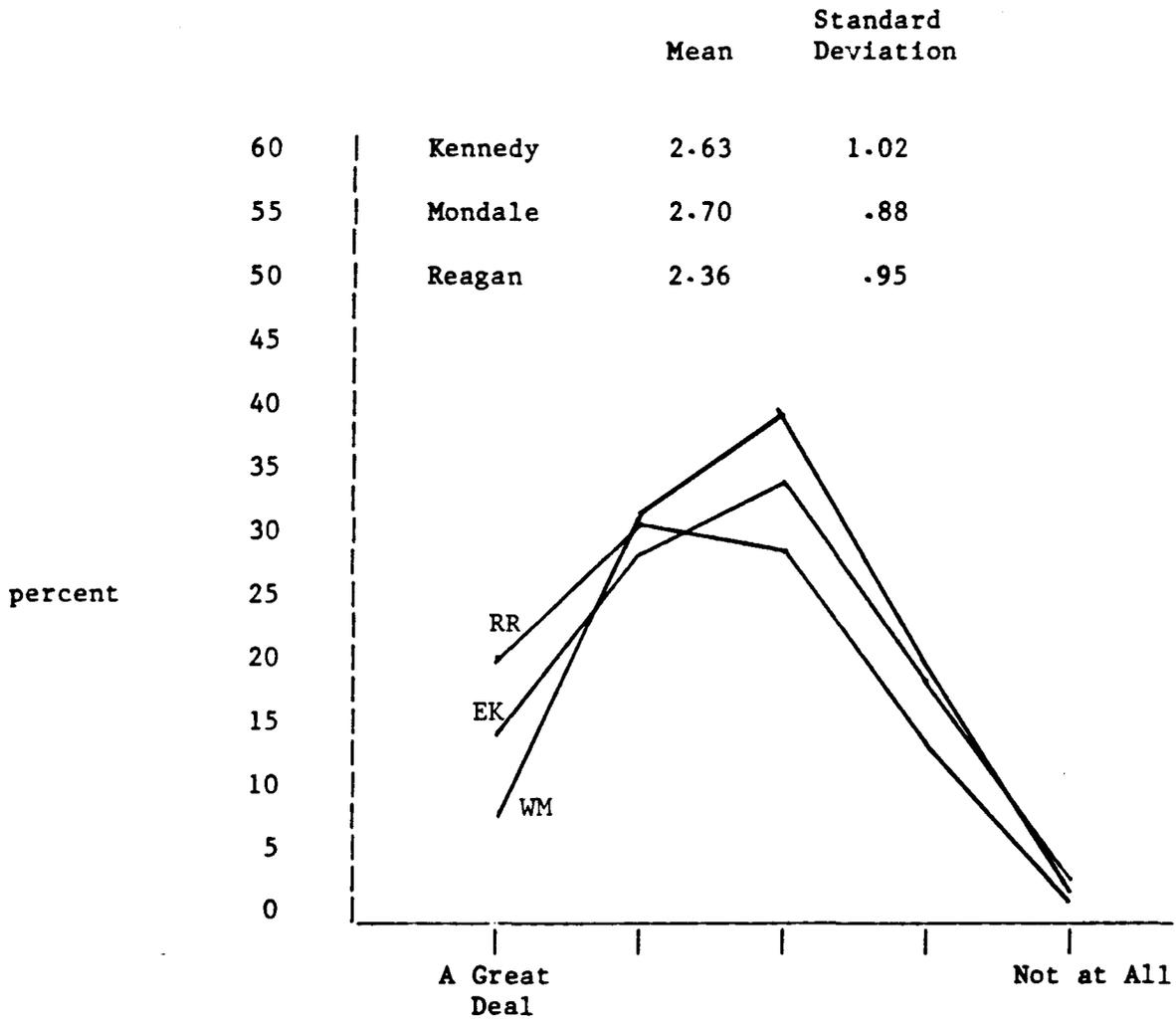


Figure 1C

Assessment of Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale:
Integrity Index

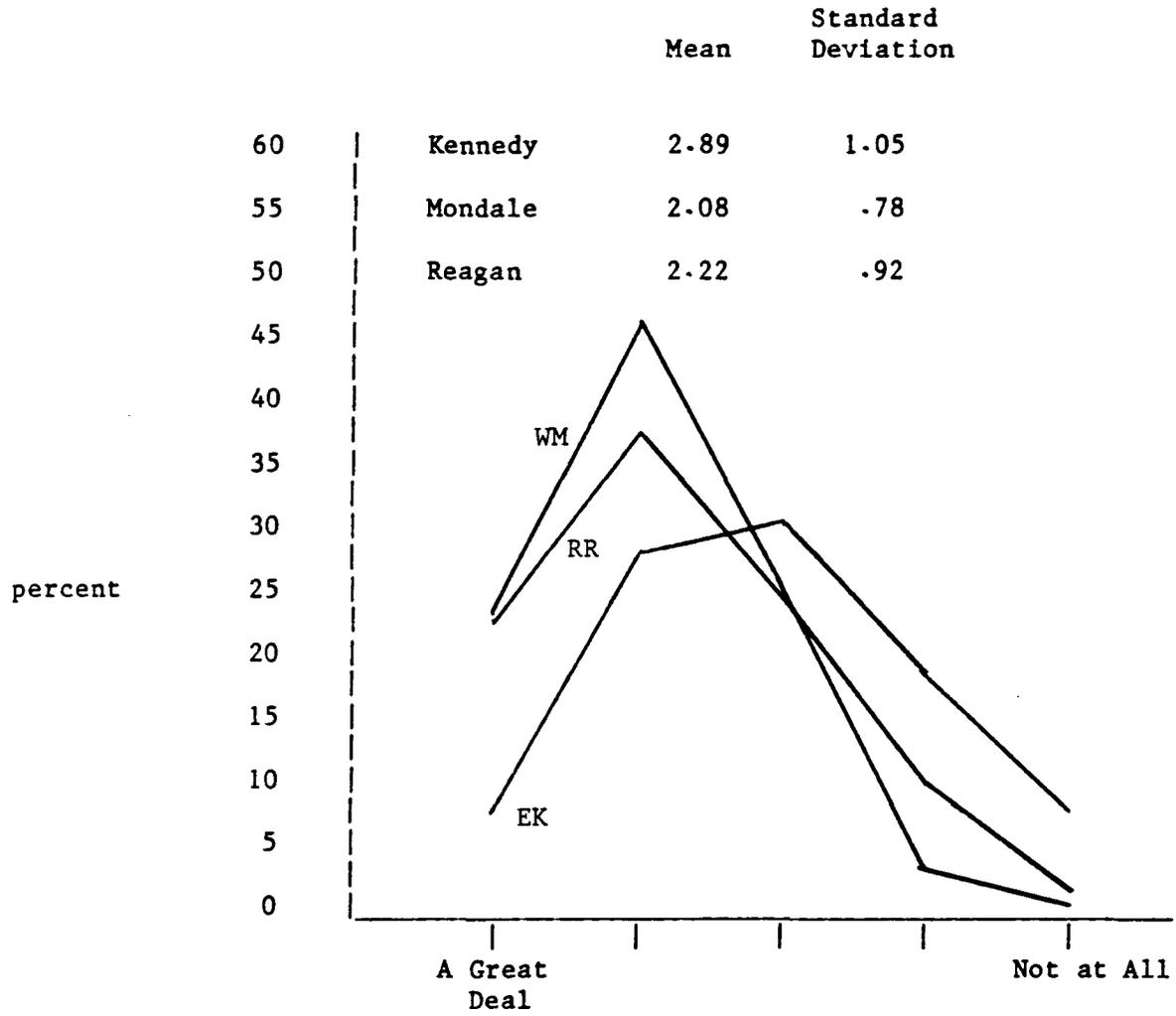


Figure 1D

Assessment of Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale:
Stability Index

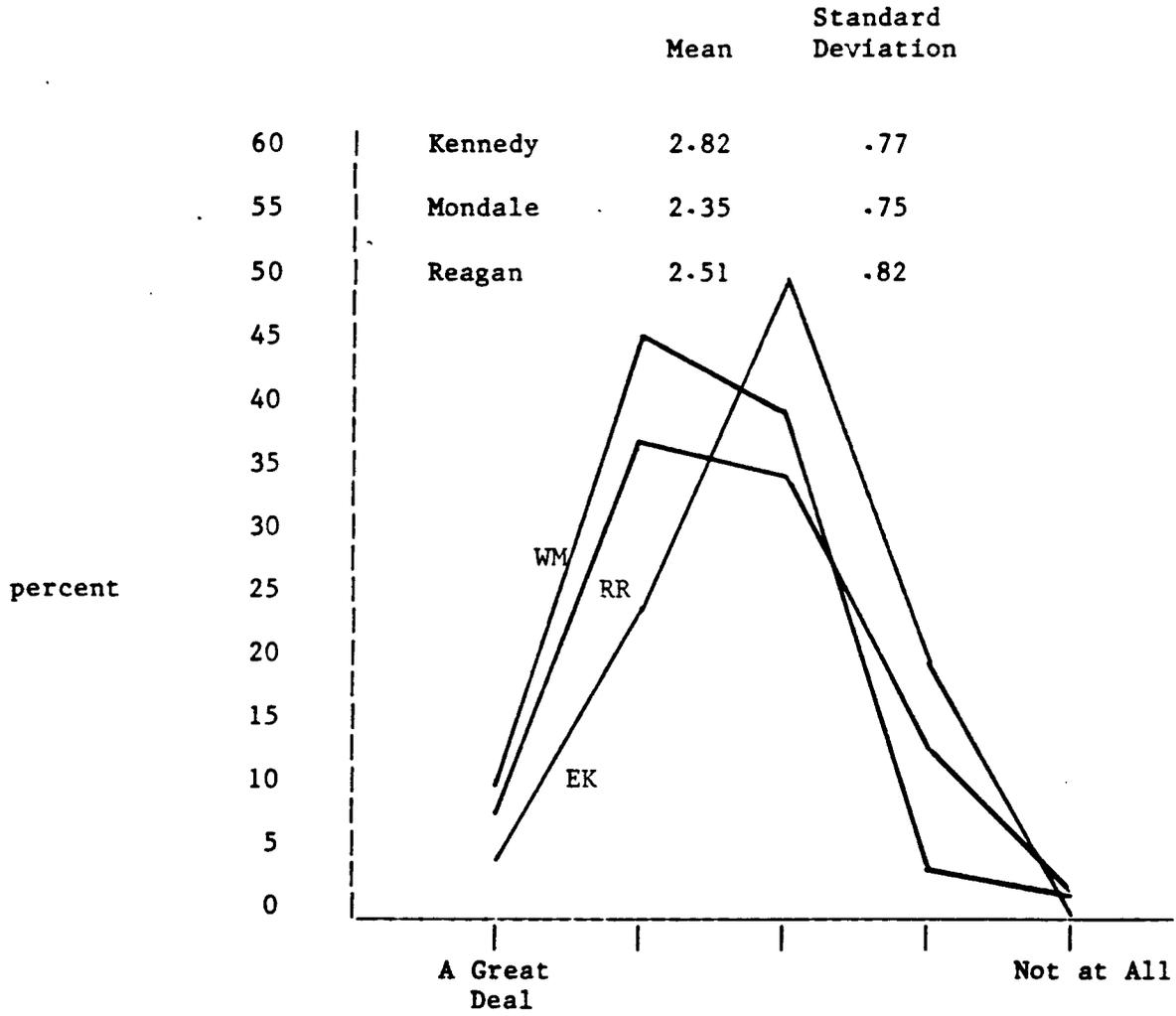


Figure 1E

Assessment of Reagan, Kennedy, and Mondale:
Empathy Index

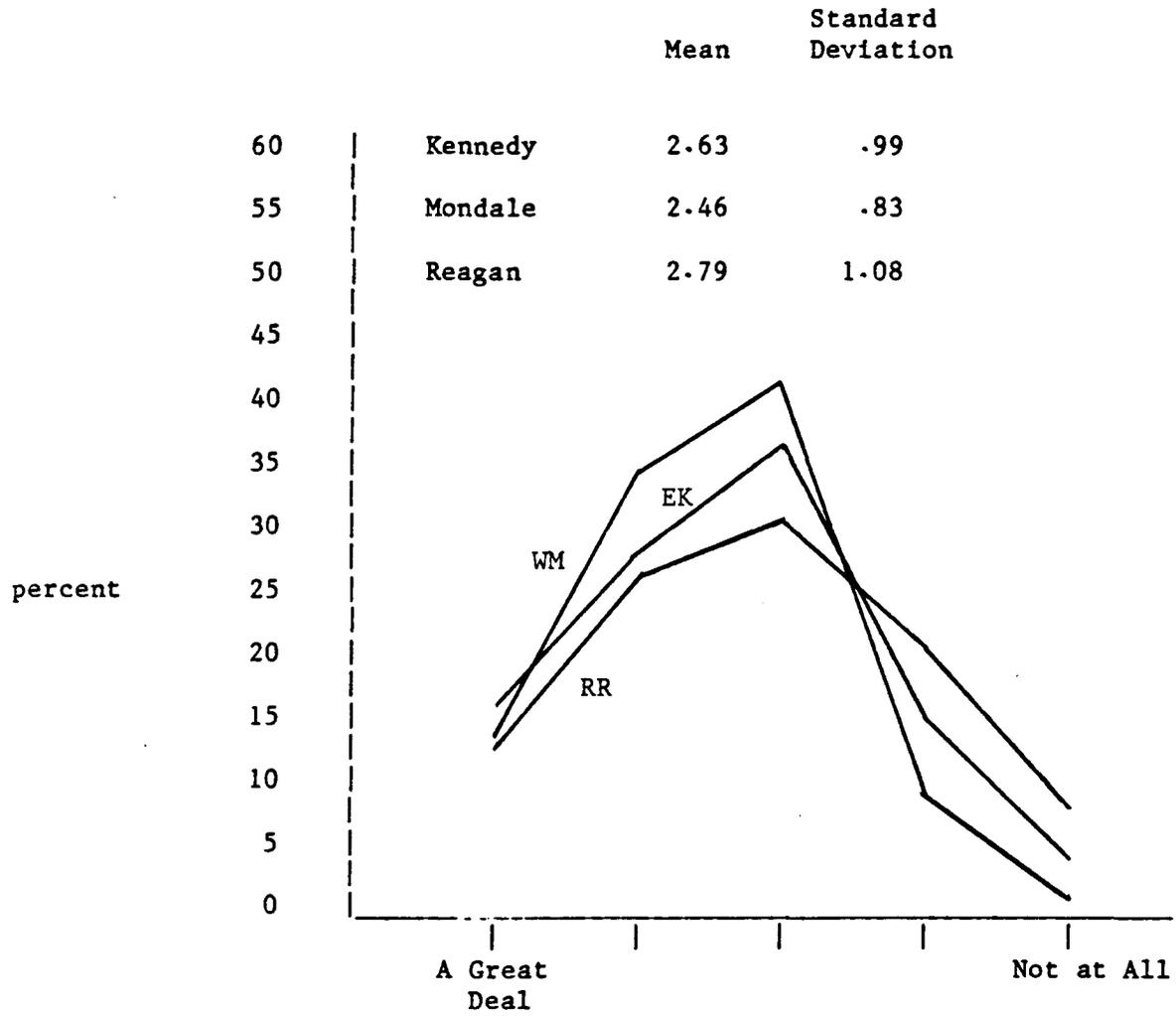


Figure 2A

Reagan's Competence Index:
Wave I vs. Wave II

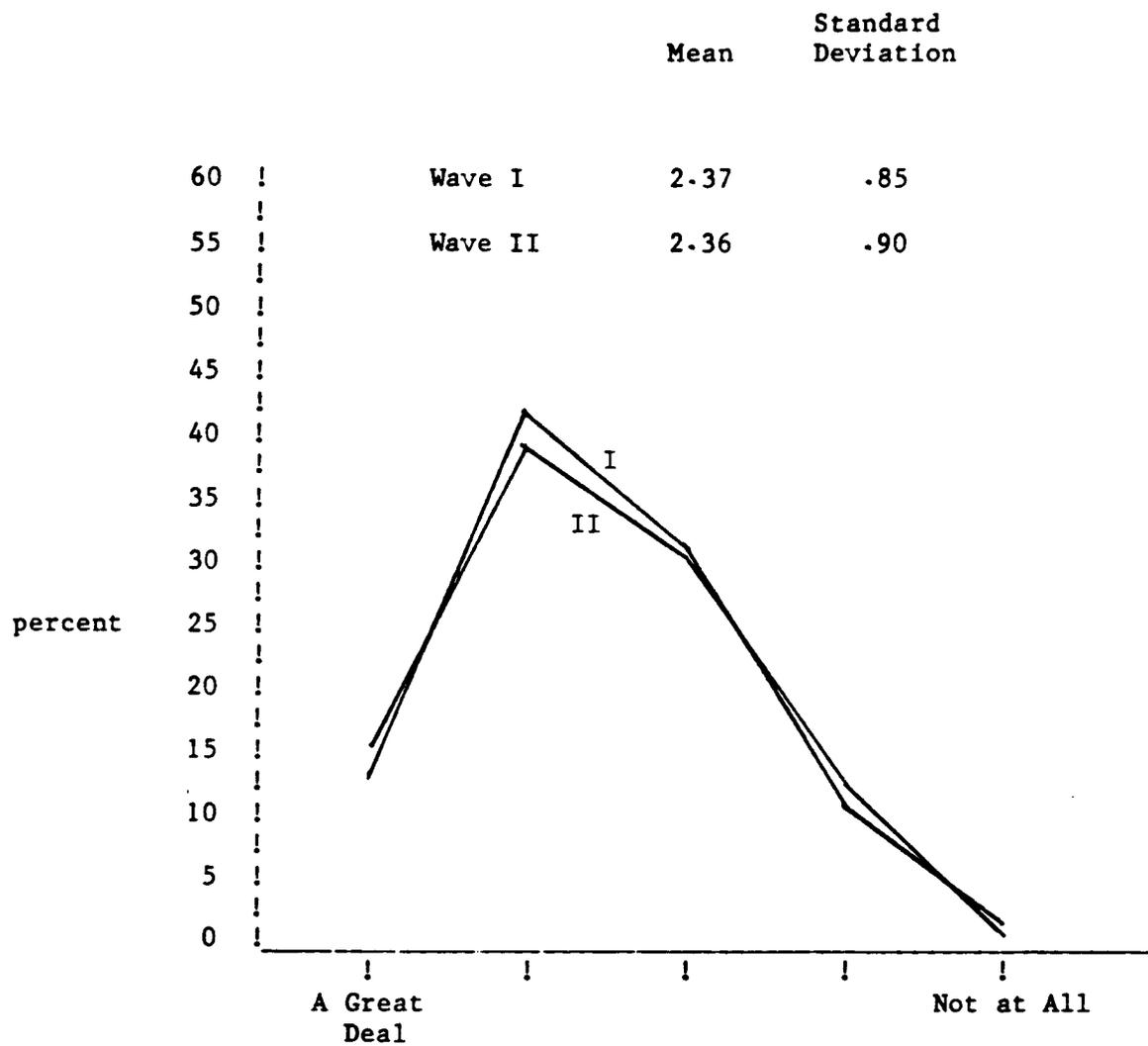


Figure 2B

Reagan's Leadership Index:
Wave I vs. Wave II

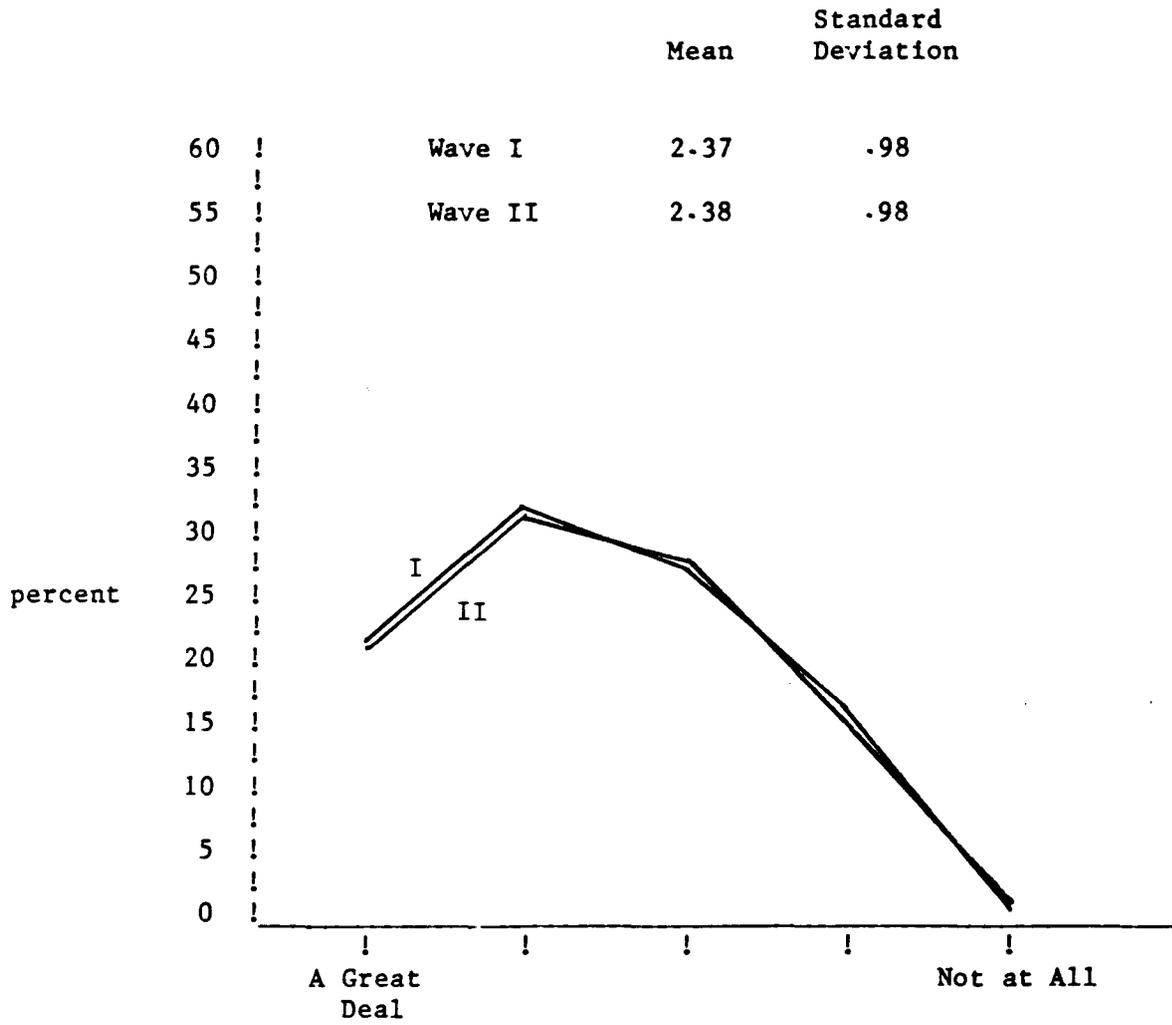


Figure 2C

Reagan's Integrity Index:
Wave I vs. Wave II

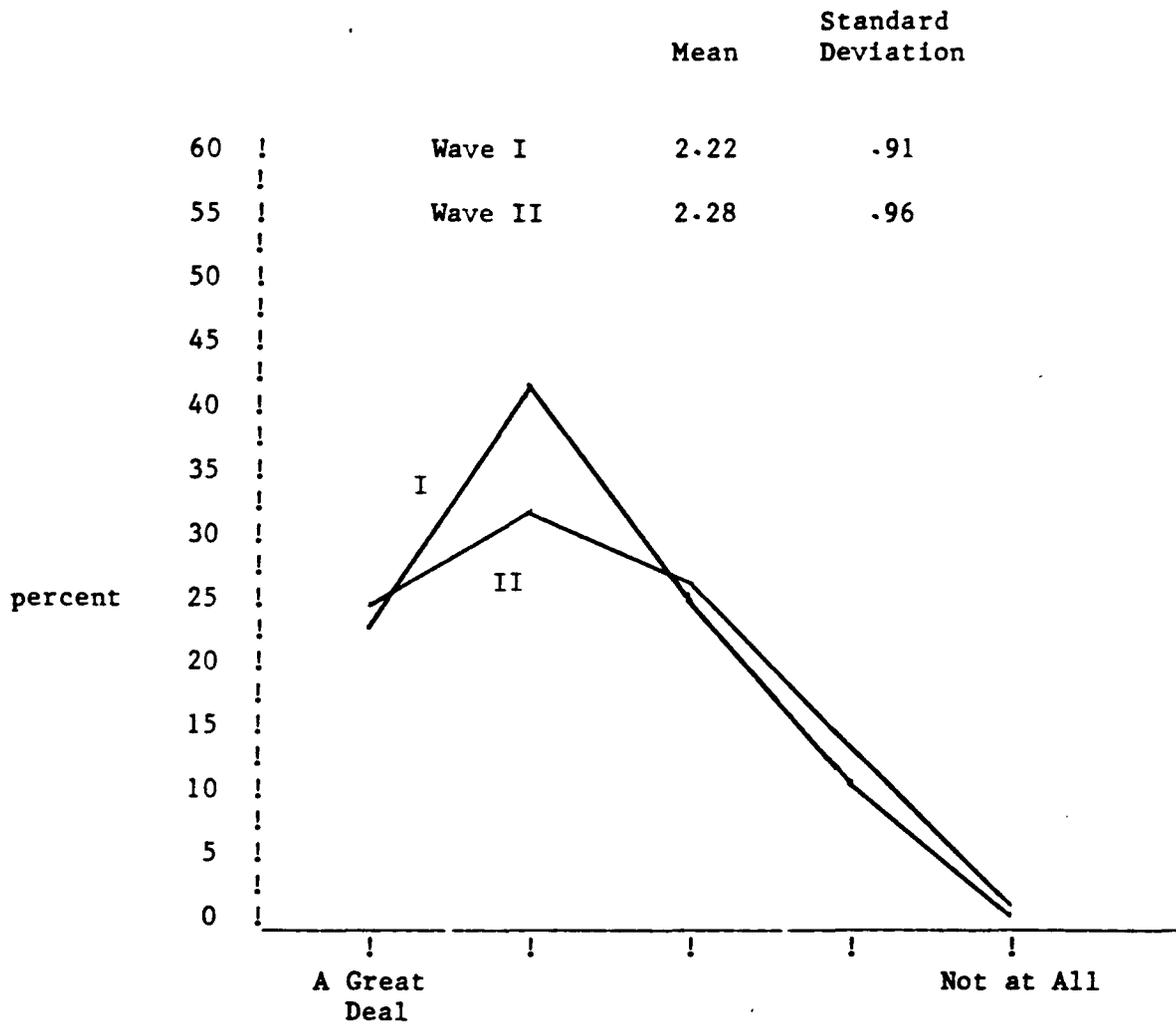


Figure 2D

Reagan's Stability Index:
Wave I vs. Wave II

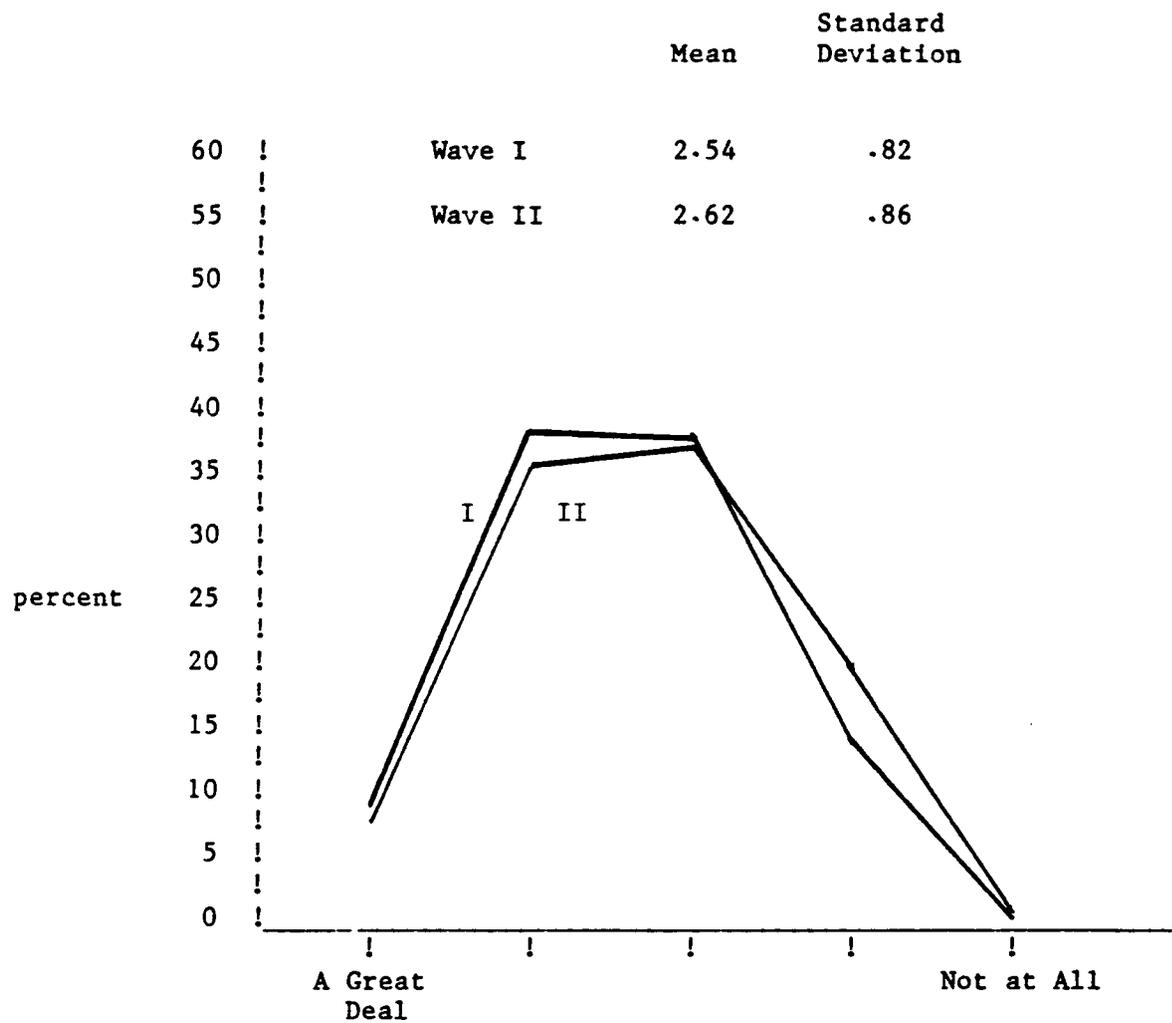
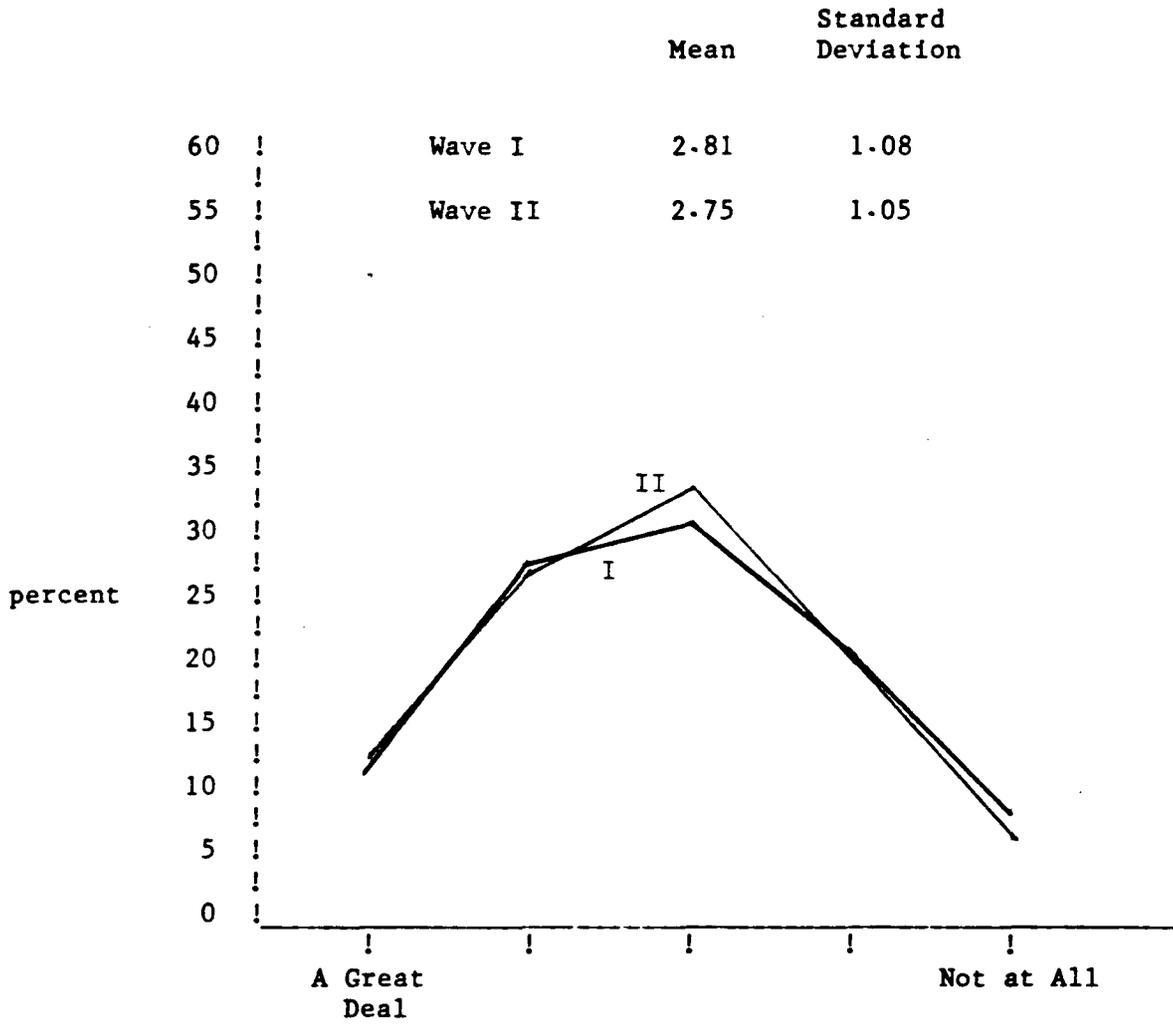


Figure 2E

Reagan's Empathy Index:
Wave I vs. Wave II



Appendix A

Presidential Trait Questions

1983 NES Pilot Study

Now we'd like to know about your impressions of Ronald Reagan. I am going to read a list of words and phrases people use to describe political figures. After each one, I would like you to tell me how much the word or phrase fits your impression of Ronald Reagan.

The first phrase is "hard-working." How much would you say "hard-working" fits your impression of Ronald Reagan: a great deal, somewhat, a little, or not at all?

[Answers were coded: a great deal (1), somewhat (2), can't decide (3), a little (4), not at all (5).]

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. hard-working | 16. makes a lot of mistakes |
| 2. weak | 17. inspiring |
| 3. decent | 18. lies to the public |
| 4. impulsive | 19. cool in a crisis |
| 5. compassionate | 20. out of touch with the people |
| 6. has little experience | 21. knowledgeable |
| 7. commands respect | 22. too easily influenced by others |
| 8. dishonest | 23. sets a good example |
| 9. cautious | 24. reckless |
| 10. doesn't understand the problems of people like you | 25. really cares about people like you |
| 11. intelligent | 26. not qualified |
| 12. has no clear sense of direction | 27. provides strong leadership |
| 13. moral | 28. power-hungry |
| 14. loses his temper too easily | 29. thoughtful |
| 15. kind | 30. unfair |