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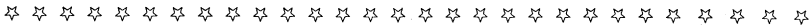Additional services and information for *American Politics Research* can be found at:

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CANDIDATE IMAGE EVALUATIONS
Influence and Rationalization in Presidential Primaries

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This research attempts to distinguish image voting, the influence of the voter's assessment of the candidates' personal qualities on the vote, from image rationalization, the influence of the vote on the voter's assessment of the candidate's personal qualities. From an analysis of the opinions of a panel of voters examined during the 1976 presidential primaries it appears that although candidates' images have a substantial influence on the vote, the vote has nearly as much impact on candidate image. Also, image voting is more prevalent among less politically interested voters but is not significantly affected by the extent of ideological differences between the candidates.

Voting behavior research has repeatedly found a strong association between the vote and image evaluations, evaluations of those personal qualities, traits, and histories that are presented to and perceived by the public. This association has been most clearly observed in studies using explicit causal models of the vote choice process. The longitudinal studies of Schulman and Pomper (1975) and Hartwig and associates (1980) indicate that candidate evaluations usually have had the strongest direct effect on the vote and the second strongest total effect, second only to party identification. Markus and Converse (1979) have also found image evaluations to weigh heavily in the voter's overall assessment of candidates. These and other studies have attributed the association between image evaluations and the vote intention

to the impact of image evaluations on the vote.[1] However, the causal order assumed in these studies, that image-evaluations are causes of vote intentions, is quite possibly at least partially in error.

There are several reasons why a conscientious and even thoughtful voter would consider his or her evaluations of the candidates' images in deciding his or her vote preference. First, voters may be willing to entrust government to candidates they believe have the qualities necessary to handle current public problems and problems not anticipated at the time of the election. Charles Hyneman advised the voter to

> study [the candidate's] face, his words, and his record to see if he is a man who will consult widely and ponder deeply before he acts, and when he acts will be careful that his mistakes are not irrevocable. Study also the men around him, for the strength of his entourage will augment the strength of the official and the flaws in the character of his closest associates are tipoffs to weakness in the candidate. These are inquiries that voters can make and they produce materials that facilitate judgments. If the man appears to be right—intelligent, energetic, properly confident and properly humble, possessed of courage, and devoted to the public welfare— such a man, if he is surrounded by other men of worthy qualities, can be trusted to find solutions for problems as they emerge [1968: 116].

A second but related reason for consulting image evaluations is that other useful information may be simply lacking. Clear, understandable, reliable and direct information about the appro- priate policy direction and the candidates' thinking often is not readily accessible or is in short supply. Moreover, even indirect information about the candidates' policy preferences, such as partisanship and ideological leanings, may at times be inadequate to guide the voter. This may be frequently the case in primary elections in which partisan and ideological differences between candidates are often small. Lacking adequate information and understanding of the candidates' policy positions, voters may decide simply to defer to the judgment of those they regard as better qualified to make policy decisions.

Finally, the candidates' character traits and personal qualities may be taken into account because they may have a substantial and direct impact on the government's performance. Policies are more than the simple products of the public's or leaders' preferences. Experience in government, the ability to lead the nation, the capacity to administer its laws, and even the style in fulfilling the role of a symbol of the government are among the personal characteristics of candidates that may influence the use and effect of governmental powers and may reasonably be considered by the citizen in reaching a vote decision.

While there are a number of reasons for the voter to consider image evaluations in forming a vote preference, the voter may also be influenced by his or her vote preference in evaluating the candidates' personal qualities. The reason for rationalization of image evaluations, like the rationalization of any other evalua-tion, is the reduction of dissonance. Voters who favor for whatever reasons, a particular candidate over another may feel uncomfortable if they also judge the personal qualities of their favored candidate to be inferior to those of the opposing candidate. One method of reducing this psychological discomfort is simply to shift the image evaluation to a position more compatible with the vote choice. Or, as Nimmo and Savage put it,

> once a voter makes a judgment regarding the candidates, he is likely to reinforce that decision by distorting the words and deeds of both candidates to assign most or all highly desirable attributes to the favored candidate and undesirable attributes to the opposition candidate [1976: 83].

This research investigates the causal relationships between evaluations of the candidates' personal qualities and vote inten-tions. In this investigation of these relationships two sets of questions are addressed:

(1) How do voters think about their evaluations of the candidates' images in relation to their vote choice? To what extent do voters take their evaluations of the candidates' personal qualities into account in forming

their vote choices? To what extent do voters rationalize their image evaluations to produce greater congruence with their vote preferences?

(2) Why do voters relate their image evaluations to their vote preferences in the way that they do? What circumstances and voter characteristics facilitate image voting? What circumstances and voter characteristics stimulate image rationalization?

DATA

The nature of the relationship between image evaluation and vote preferences will be investigated using data from the 1976 presidential primaries. The 1976 presidential primary data were gathered from random samples of citizens in Erie, Pennsylvania and Los Angeles, California. A total of 1260 respondents were included in the study. Three waves of interviews were spaced over the primary season. The initial interviewing took place in early February 1976. The second round of interviews was conducted in late April following the Pennsylvania primary. The final wave of primary interviews followed the California primary in June.

Survey questions were constructed to measure opinions about the candidates' personal qualities and the voters' vote intentions as well as opinions about issues, ideology, the candidates' chances of winning, and party identification. With the exception of the measurement of party identification, which followed the CPS wording, all opinions were measured on forced-choice, 7-point scales with opposing statements at the extreme points on the scale.[2] Before being asked questions relating to beliefs about a particular candidate, the voter's awareness of the candidate was questioned. If the voter had never heard of the candidate or only recognized the candidate's name, no beliefs about the candidate were solicited. Opinions about a candidate were asked only of those voters who claimed to know something about the candidate.

The image questions asked voters to appraise the candidates' possession of four qualities. These are the image components of leadership, competence, trustworthiness, and personality (see

Appendix A for the survey items that measured these images).[3] The voters' evaluations of the candidates' qualities were then estimated as the average image difference between the candidates in question on the images considered salient to the voter. That is,

$$I_{12} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} (C_1 - C_2)/n \qquad [1]$$

where

I_{12} is the comparative evaluation of the images of candidates 1 and 2.
C_1 is the voter's belief about candidate 1's image.
C_2 is the voter's belief about candidate 2's image.
n   is the number of salient image characteristics.

The estimation of the vote intention was based on measures of the voters' general feelings toward each candidate on a scale ranging from "favorable" to "unfavorable." The vote intention was estimated as the simple difference between the opinions about each of the candidates except that responses to an open-ended vote choice question were used to break ties. Unlike a dichotomous measure of the actual vote, which fails to distinguish between slight and extreme preferences for one candidate over another, this measure captures variation in the intensity of the voter's overall or summary evaluation of the candidates.

Given the image evaluation and vote intention as well as similarly constructed evaluations of the candidates' issue positions, ideologies, and chances of winning, an organizing scheme was devised to reconstruct the voters' thinking.[4] Three criteria were employed to isolate voters who apparently made a choice between some pair of candidates from fields of seven Democratic and two Republican primary candidates. Included in the Democratic field were George Wallace, Henry Jackson, Hubert Humphrey, Edward Kennedy, Jimmy Carter, Jerry Brown, and Morris Udall. The Republican field consisted of Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford.

Party affiliation was the first criterion used to identify respondents who apparently chose between a particular pair of candidates. The voter's thinking about a particular pair of candidates

was examined only if the voter belonged to the same party as the pair of candidates. Evidence of belonging to a party consisted of identifying with the particular party, declaring an intention to vote in the party's primary prior to the primary, or claiming to have voted in the party's primary after the primary was held.

Second, voters are considered as having made a choice between two candidates only if they recognized both candidates in the pair. This criterion assumes that any meaningful choice can only be made if the voter recognizes his or her alternatives.

Third, voters were considered to have made a choice between a pair of candidates only if one of the two candidates was the voter's first choice in the field of candidates at the end of the period under study (time 2).

The combination of these three criteria permits the identification of a set of voters who apparently made a decision between two particular candidates and thus allows the reconstruction of their decision process. So, for instance, we will assume that respondents made a choice between Wallace and Carter if the respondents had some ties to the Democratic party, recognized Wallace and Carter, and eventually preferred either Wallace or Carter to all other recognized candidates. Given the evidence that some choice was made, it is worthwhile to examine changes in the voters' evaluations of the candidates' qualities and their vote intentions, in the context of other evaluations, over the course of the campaign.[5]

Decisions about fifteen pairings of candidates made over the early and late periods of the primary season were examined. The pairings of candidates and the number of voters who made a decision about each pair in the early or later period of the campaign are presented in Table 1. A total of 2326 decisions are analyzed.

METHODS

The analysis of the nature of the causal relationship between image evaluations and the vote will proceed along two lines. First, a cross-lagged model of the relationship is examined (Pelz and Andrews, 1964; Heise, 1970; Shingles, 1976; McCullough, 1978;

TABLE 1
Candidate Pairings and the Number of Voters Apparently
Making a Decision

Candidate Pairing	Number of Voters
Wallace - Humphrey	119
Wallace - Kennedy	51
Wallace - Carter	246
Wallace - Brown	78
Jackson - Humphrey	45
Humphrey - Kennedy	191
Humphrey - Carter	340
Humphrey - Udall	47
Humphrey - Brown	117
Kennedy - Carter	311
Kennedy - Brown	98
Carter - Udall	74
Carter - Brown	157
Brown - Udall	38
Ford - Reagan	414
Total Decisions	2326

and Markus, 1979).[6] The model is presented in Figure 1. The equations used to estimate the model's coefficients are

$$IMAGE_2 = a_1 \, IMAGE_1 + a_2 \, VOTE_1 + a_3 \, ISSUE_1 + a_4 \, CHANCE_1 + a_5 \, PARTY + a_6 \, IDEOLOGY + e_i \qquad [2]$$

$$VOTE_2 = b_1 \, VOTE_1 + b_2 \, IMAGE_1 + b_3 \, ISSUE_1 + b_4 \, CHANCE_1 + b_5 \, PARTY + b_6 \, IDEOLOGY + e_v \qquad [3]$$

where

VOTE   is the respondent's vote intention.

IMAGE   is the perceived difference between candidates on traits that the voter finds salient.

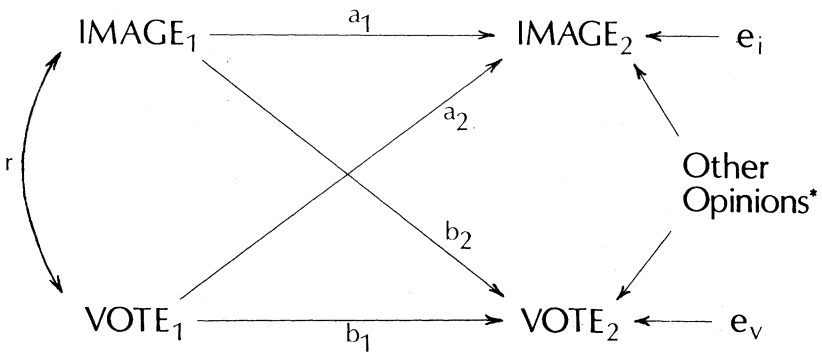ISSUE   is the perceived relative proximity of the candidates to the voter on issues that the voter finds salient.

Figure 1: The Cross-Lagged Model of the Relationship Between Image-Evaluations and Vote Intentions

NOTE: The subscripts of the variables refer to time. "Other Opinions" include evaluations of issues, chances of winning, ideology and party identification, as included in equations 2 and 3. For clarity, coefficients a_3, a_4, a_5 and a_6 are depicted as the path from "Other Opinions" to $Image_2$ and coefficients b_3, b_4, b_5 and b_6 are depicted as the path from "Other Opinions" to $Vote_2$.

CHANCE	is the perceived difference between the candidates in their chances of winning their party's nomination.
PARTY	is the respondent's strength of party identification.
IDEOLOGY	is the perceived relative proximity of the candidates to the voter on the ideology scale.

While the principal concern is with the relationship between image evaluations and the vote, other opinions (i.e, issue, chance, party, and ideology variables) are included to make the model as well specified as possible. This should permit the effects of images and the vote to be estimated more accurately. The coefficients in both equations are estimated using OLS regression analysis.[7]

Previous research on image evaluations and the vote has examined the relationship in the context of cross-sectional, nonlagged, recursive models. In effect, a causal order between the variables was assumed rather than left open to empirical investigation. The cross-lagged model makes no such assumptions

about causal priorities. To be sure, the model makes some assumptions, though these asumptions are weaker than the assumed causal sequence of a nonlagged, recursive model and probably are weaker than the assumption of strong and properly behaved instrumental variables in a nonrecursive model.

One assumption of the cross-lagged model is that there are no instantaneous effects. The assumption is that no variable at one time point affects any other variable at the same time point. All effects are assumed to be lagged. The reasons for this assumption are that the specification of instantaneous two-way causation would cause the model to be underidentified and the specification of one-way causation would defeat the very purpose of the model, to disentangle causal effects. In other words, the assumption of no instantaneous effects is less misleading, a weaker assumption than the assumption of one-way causation. Even so, one may argue that instantaneous effects are present. However, as long as they are similar to the lagged effects, and there is no reason to suppose otherwise in this case, the model permits the researcher to distinguish one causal flow from the other.[8]

Additional insight into the causal order of the relationship may be gained by a second approach.[9] After standardizing both image evaluations and vote intentions, the relationship is analyzed by calculating changes in the differences between the opinions. Changes induced by image voting would be indicated by a positive value of the expression:

$$\text{Image Voting} = |\text{IMAGE}_1 - \text{VOTE}_1| - |\text{IMAGE}_1 - \text{VOTE}_2| \quad [4]$$

That is, if the differences between image evaluations of time 1 and vote intentions decreases between time 1 and time 2, the change may be attributed to the influence of image evaluations on the vote. On the other hand, change induced by image rationalization would be indicated by a positive value of the expression:

$$\text{Image Rationalization} = |\text{VOTE}_1 - |\text{IMAGE}_1|- |\text{VOTE}_1 - \text{IMAGE}_2| \quad [5]$$

If the difference between initial vote intention and image evaluations decreases over time, the change may be considered an instance of rationalization.

IMAGE VOTING AND RATIONALIZATION FINDINGS

The pertinent regression coefficients and the analysis of differences are presented in Table 2. The complete regression results are presented in Appendix B. From these results two conclusions can be drawn.[10]

First, both image voting and image rationalization are significant phenomena. Even given a high degree of initial correspondence between image evaluations and vote intentions, voters continued to adjust each evaluation to fit the other.[11] No other evaluation had as much impact, as measured by standarized regression coefficients, on the vote as image evaluation. By the same token, vote intentions exerted greater influence over image evaluations than any other evaluation: issue, ideological, partisan, or chances of winning.

Second, though the data do not unambiguously testify to the fact, it appears that the rational image-to-vote sequence is slightly more pronounced than the rationalizing vote-to-image order. This is indicated by a comparison of the image-to-vote path coefficient (.18) with the vote-to-image path coefficient (.12). Moreover, while rational change tended to be slightly less common than rationalized opinion change (26.4% versus 30.6%), the increments of rational change tended to be greater than those of rationalized change (.60 versus .47).[12]

Not surprisingly, voters appear to be quite concerned about image evaluations. They want to like the candidates that they vote for and vote for candidates that they like. However, concern for image evaluations should not be confused with the influence of image evaluations. Images unquestionably have a substantial influence on the vote. This influence, however, is easily overestimated if the extent of rationalization is not taken into account. By failing to examine the possibility that vote intentions

TABLE 2

Indicators of Image Voting and Image Rationalization

	Path Coefficients[a]	% Changing in Expected Direction[b]	Mean Amount of Change[c]
Image Voting, Path from Image-to-Vote	.18	26.4%	.60
Image Rationalization, Path from Vote-to-Image	.12	30.6%	.47

a. Both coefficients are significant at the .01 level. The coefficients for all independent variables and their F values may be found in Appendix B.
b. These changes refer to the percentage of respondents having a positive value for equations 4 or 5.
c. This refers to the average number of standard units moved by those apparently engaged in image voting or image rationalization.

influence image evaluations, not only is extensive rationalization not recognized, but its effects are mistakenly interpreted as the effects of image evaluations on the vote.

CAUSES OF IMAGE VOTING AND RATIONALIZATION

To this point this analysis has examined the voters' thinking to estimate the typical influence of image evaluations on the vote and, conversely, the typical influence of vote intentions on image evaluations. The question remains: Why do voters relate image evaluations to vote intentions the way that they typically do?

The first cause of these voter reactions are the set of reasons, noted at the outset, for engaging in image voting or image rationalization. That is, voters may respond to their image evaluations because they regard them as conveying important information about the candidates and may rationalize images simply to reduce any cognitive dissonance that remains.

Aside from the merits of the reasons for image voting or rationalization, the confidence that voters place in their image evaluations relative to the confidence they place in other evaluations of the candidates may greatly affect how voters think about

image evaluations and the vote. Great confidence in the soundness and correctness of image judgments should be reflected, all other things being equal, in the substantial influence of those judgments on the vote and their resistence to rationalization.

The confidence that voters place in their image evaluations depends to a very significant degree on the quality and quantity of image information and information about other evaluative criteria, particularly issues and ideology. With minimal effort, voters may gain enough image information to feel some confidence in their image evaluations. A significant body of relevant, readily understandable information about the candidates' qualities is easily acquired and may be used as a basis for image evaluations. Symbols, style, and surface characteristics are quickly, often unwillingly and uncontrollably, projected by the candidates, absorbed by the voters, and judged to reflect character traits that are either appropriate or inappropriate in a leader.[13] With such effortless information, some insights are easily gained and some impressions are easily formed.

However, while the availability of image information can inspire some confidence, the nature of image information is not likely to inspire great confidence. Compared to other kinds of information about the candidates, image information is soft information. Images are general, amorphous, and intangible. Because of these features, it is extremely difficult to prove or disprove anything about a candidate's character or to place much faith in the reliability of image evaluations.[14]

The nature of image information and its impact on voter confidence in image evaluations may produce quite different consequences for less well-informed and better informed voters. The less well-informed voter may have little choice but to rely on image evaluations. Even though no great trust is placed in images, they may still be more reliable than issue preferences or other evaluations based on minimal information that may not be adequately understood. On the other hand, well-informed voters, armed with harder issue and ideological information and consequently greater confidence in issue and ideological evaluations, need not rely so heavily on image evaluations.

Three factors will be examined that may affect the level of a voter's political understanding, his or her confidence in these evaluations and, thereby, the likelihood of image voting or rationalization. These factors are the voter's level of political interest, the extent of ideological differences between the candidates, and the stage of the primary campaign.

First, political interest should be inversely related to image voting. Compared to a more politically attuned voter, the less politically interested voter is more likely to have a much greater sense of the candidates' personal qualities than knowledge of less visible and less easily understood aspects of the candidates. Without a proper basis for judging the candidates by alternative standards, the less politically inclined voter is left to judge the candidates, in large part, by a relatively reliable image evaluation.

Second, the clarity of ideological differences should be inversely related to image voting. As Key (1966), Page (1978), and others have noted, how a voter thinks may depend upon what alternatives are offered to him or her. If clear ideological differences are presented to the public, voters may feel more confident about their issue or ideological evaluations and less dependent on image evaluations.

Third, the development of the campaign ought to be inversely related to image voting and positively related to image rationalization. If campaigns serve to lower information costs for voters, a more prolonged exposure to the campaign ought to add significantly to the voters' store of nonimage information. As a result, voters may have greater confidence in nonimage evaluations (e.g., issues preferences) later in the campaign. Moreover, since over the course of the campaign voters may gain little added confidence in their image evaluations and may gain greater confidence in their vote intentions, image evaluations ought to be most vulnerable to rationalization late in the campaign.

These propositions may be partially tested by comparing estimated coefficients in the model, equations 2 and 3, for the various categories of decisions: decisions made by less politically interested voters as opposed to decisions by the more politically motivated, decisions made about candidates who were ideological-

TABLE 3
Cause of Image Voting and Rationalization Path Coefficients

	Image Voting Image-to-Vote Path (b_2)	Image Rationalization Vote-to-Image Path (a_2)
Political Interest		
High	.16	.10
Low	.26	.15
Ideological Clarity		
High	.20	.12
Low	.18	.10
Period of Campaign		
Late	.25	.14
Early	.11	.09

NOTE: All coefficients are significant at the .01 level.

ly similar as opposed to decisions about ideologically distinct candidates, and decisions made early in the campaign as opposed to those made in the campaign's later stages.[15] The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3.[16]

The first finding concerns the differences between more and less politically interested voters. As expected, political interest is inversely related to concern for candidate images. This is most evident in the greater weight less interested voters attach to image evaluations in forming a vote choice, but is also apparent in their slightly greater tendency to rationalize.

A second and unexpected finding is that the clarity of the choice presented to voters has little, if any, impact on either image voting or rationalization. Several explanations may account for the lack of a relationship. Although this analysis permits only speculation on this point, perhaps the most plausible explanation is that ideological differences within a party, whether relatively small or relatively large, are minor in absolute terms and thus do not substantially affect the voters' thinking.[17]

Third, the development of the campaign had an unexpected positive effect on image voting. A possible explanation of this relationship is that many voters did not begin seriously to consider certain candidates until the middle or later portion of the primary season. Thus, rather than beginning to accumlate and interpret issue information, many voters in the middle of the primary campaign were just becoming familiar with the candidates and their personal qualities.

Fourth, as expected, the development of the campaign had a significant though modest impact on image rationalization. Image rationalization was less frequently observed in the early stage of the campaign when vote intentions were not firmly established than in the campaign's later stages.[18]

CONCLUSION

Whether attracted to candidates because of their invigorating leadership, trustworthy character, appealing personality, or reassuring competence, or repelled from candidates because of their uninspired leadership, dubious character, obnoxious personality, or bumbling incompetence, voters seem to rely heavily on image evaluations in deciding how to vote. Although image evaluations unquestionably play a leading role in the voter's thinking, two generally unacknowledged limitations on the role of image evaluations have emerged in this analysis. First, after disentangling image rationalization from image voting, it is apparent that much of the influence commonly attributed to image evaluations is in error.

Second, though image evaluations have a considerable influence on the vote even after image rationalization is taken into account, the intrinsic importance of images to voters is somewhat less than their actual influence would suggest. That is, under the best of possible circumstances for making a vote decision, voters would consider images less heavily than they do under typical

circumstances. As the analysis showed, when constraints on the voters' considerations were absent, particularly constraints of limited political interest on the voter's part, voters were less likely to engage in image voting. Apparently voters resort to image evaluations when they lack the motivation or the opportunity to consider other criteria more directly related to public policy.

APPENDIX A

IMAGE ITEMS

(1) Personality:

People have different opinions about the specific qualities of individual candidates.

Some people feel that a certain candidate has an attractive personality, that is, they feel he is engaging, interesting, and appealing.

Others might think that the same candidate has a very unattractive personality.

Anchors on Scale—"Very Attractive Personality" and
"Very Unattractive Personality."

(2) Ability:

Next, whether or not a candidate has a great deal of ability, that is, competence, capability, and skillfulness.

Anchors on Scale—"Great Deal of Ability" and
"Almost No Ability."

(3) Leadership:

Next, whether or not a candidate is an excellent leader, that is, can lead and inspire others.

Anchors on Scale—"Excellent Leader" and "Poor Leader."

(4) Trustworthiness:

Next, whether or not a candidate is very trustworthy, that is, is sincere, truthful, straightforward, and honest.

Anchors on Scale—"Very Trustworthy" and "Very Untrustworthy."

APPENDIX B
Coefficients to Equations 2 and 3

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable[a]			
	$VOTE_2$		$IMAGE_2$	
$VOTE_1$	.36	(183.6)	.12	(19.1)
$IMAGE_1$	.18	(48.2)	.47	(324.1)
$ISSUE_1$	−.01	(.2)	−.03	(3.6)
$CHANCE_1$	.02	(.9)	.03	(2.1)
PARTY	−.04	(4.3)	.00	(.1)
IDEOLOGY	.12	(46.7)	.08	(20.5)
R-square (adjusted)	.31		.34	

a. The coefficients are standardized regression coefficients and F values. The critical F value for significance at the .05 level is 3.85 and the critical F value at the .01 level is 6.66.

NOTES

1. Other research that has emphasized the importance of candidate image includes Lawrence (1978); Popkin et al. (1976); RePass (1976); Kagay and Caldeira (1975); and Janowitz and Marvick (1970).

2. The use of forced-choice image questions has several substantial benefits. First, by using similar measurement techniques for different opinions, the impact of the measurement device on our findings should be minimized. Second, simple like/dislike scales or open-ended questions may produce significant, biased measurement error. These general questions may measure the vote choice as much as they measure opinions about the candidates' images. This would produce artificially high associations between the vote and the measured image opinons. By presenting the voter with four fairly specific image dimensions on which to judge the candidates and by analyzing those dimensions that the voter thinks are salient, this measurement problem can be at least partially solved.

3. Because of the necessary limitations on the survey instrument, only four candidate characteristics could be examined. Although these four qualities certainly are not exhaustive of all candidate qualities, they correspond fairly well with the major image dimensions identified in previous research (see Nimmo and Savage, 1976: 55-59; and Mudd and Pohlman, 1978).

4. The issue and chance variables are computed for time 1. Party and ideology, commonly specified as long-term influences, are average measures for two time periods.

The issue measure is a proximity measure based on the absolute differences between the voter's self-placement on the issue scale and his or her placement of each candidate in the particular pairing. An average was then computed using all issues (a maximum of six) thought salient by the voter. The ideology measure was similarly constructed. The chance-of-winning variable was constructed in the same manner as the image variable. It is the difference between the voter's estimate of his preferred candidate's and his opponent's chances of winning. The party variable is simply the intensity of the partisan preference for the particular party of the candidate pairing.

5. All variables were constructed so that positive values indicated a favorable disposition toward the candidate supported by the particular voter at the conclusion of the voter's deliberations, which will be labeled "time 2".

6. There is a growing body of literature employing the cross-lagged model. See Abramowitz (1978); Iyengar (1978); Campbell and Meier (1979); and Meier and Campbell (1979).

7. There are a number of assumptions involved in using OLS to estimate the paths in this cross-lagged model (Heise, 1979). The assumption that the error terms are uncorrelated with independent variables is of particular concern. Since the error term represents excluded variables related to the dependent variable, it is quite likely that the earlier measurement of the lagged dependent variable will also be related to these excluded variables (Markus, 1979). Although this may be a serious problem of using ordinary least squares to estimate coefficients in lagged models, there are two reasons why bias may be minimal in this instance. First, because the most likely variables to influence the short-term factors have been included in the model, much of the disturbance term is likely to be actual randomness rather than the consequence of omitted stable variables. Also, it is probably the case that any excluded social forces weaken in their direct impact over the course of the campaign and therefore could cause little bias. A second reason for using ordinary least squares in this research is that the consequences of failing to satisfy the error term conditions are not severe. Heise (1970) has shown that stable omitted variables may cause a slight deviation in estimated parameters from their true values (e.g., an inflation of stability coefficients) but the pattern of coefficients corresponds almost perfectly with the actual coefficients even when large measurement errors are introduced.

8. Heise (1970) discussed this and other assumptions peculiar to the cross-lagged model. Pelz and Lew (1970) examined several of these assumptions, such as the difference between true and measured lags. They found that violations generally left the relative strengths of the paths intact and did not severely impair the use of the model in distinguishing causal directions.

9. Beardsley (1980: 102-105) has noted a possibly significant problem in using covariational techniques (e.g., regression) in data analysis. The gist of the problem is that these techniques gauge only the change in variables and not the location of variables. This problem is avoided by using what Beardsley refers to as a "magnetic approach," which is similar to the second approach used here.

10. Although it violates an assumption of the cross-lagged model, it is possible that images and the vote at time 1 had instantaneous effects on other opinions (e.g., issues, chances, and so on), which in turn affected images and the vote at time 2. Such indirect effects, however, appear to be inconsequential. Even if we assume that the vote and images at time 1 affect these other opinions and not vice versa, a highly questionable assumption, the vote at time 1 has only a .02 total indirect effect on image at time 2 and image at time 1 has only a .01 total indirect effect on the vote at time 2. The opposite assumption, that

other opinions influence the vote and images at time 1 and not vice versa, an assumption equally open to question, produces about a .02 total spurious association both between the vote at time 1 and image at time 2 and between image at time 1 and the vote at time 2. It should be emphasized that neither indirect nor spurious effects from images and the vote at time 1 to images and the vote at time 2 affect the observed direct effects between these variables.

11. The initial correlation (Pearson's r) between image evaluations and vote intentions was .75.

12. The apparent contradiction between the path coefficients and the frequency of rational and rationalized change is explainable by two factors: first, the larger increments of rational changes and, second, the smaller frequency of vote change induced by nonimage influences. That is, compared to changes in image evaluations, fewer people made any sort of change, image induced or otherwise, in the vote. Image change was noted in 84% of the decisions, vote change in only 69%.

13. This assessment is consistent with Page's (1978) analysis of images. Page contends that "voters are relatively skillful in judging personal traits; that they can do so at little cost, on the basis of readily available information; and that voting on the basis of candidates' personality can therefore be quite rational" (p. 233).

14. While this analysis presumes that image information in general is softer information than information supporting other opinions (e.g., issue opinions), it is not necessary to presume that all image information is of the same quality. The nature of image information may vary substantially from one situation to another.

15. The voter's level of political interest was calculated as the average response to two questions asked at both time 1 and time 2 about the amount of attention paid to the campaign and the amount of interest in the campaign. The clarity of ideological differences was determined by estimating each candidate's ideological position and then calculating the absolute difference between particular candidates' positions. Each candidate's ideological position on a liberal to conservative scale was estimated using the beliefs of all respondents who knew the candidates, after removing bias by controlling for the respondent's own ideology and general disposition toward the candidate.

16. The analysis of influences in image voting and rationalization was also run with all the variables specified in equations 2 and 3 and with the independent variables multiplied by dummy variables for each contextual variable (i.e., political interest, period in the campaign, and ideological clarity). For instance, to estimate political interest's impact on image voting, the vote at item 2 was estimated as a function of the vote, image, and each of the other opinions at time 1 and the political interest dummy variable multiplied by the vote, image, and each of the other opinions at time 1. This produced a set of twelve explanatory variables with the variable indicating political interest's impact being the interactive term of political interest and image at time 1. The results achieved by this analysis were quite consistent with those of Table 3. The advantage of this technique is that the significance of differences can be gauged by the significance of the interaction terms. In the image voting equation the F values for the political interest/image interaction term was 2.50 (nearly significant at .05), the period of campaign/image interaction term was 7.85 (significant at .01), and the ideological clarity/image interaction term was .18. In the image rationalization equation, the F values for the political interest/vote interaction term was .56, the period of campaign/vote interaction term was 1.27, and the ideological clarity/vote interaction term was .15. As is the case with many interaction terms, multicollinearity may have attenuated a number of these F values.

17. The extent of image voting and rationalization was also estimated using the differences calculated in equations 4 and 5. These differences support the findings of the cross-lagged model with the single exception of the impact of ideological clarity on image voting. When image evaluations and vote choices differed substantially at time 1, change of the image voting sort was particularly frequent in cases of low ideological clarity, as expected. However, when the magnitude of these changes and the control variables are considered, as they are in Table 3's cross-lagged models, the relationship is not evident.

18. The lack of a relationship between political interest or ideological differences and image rationalization may be explained in two ways. First, regardless of political interest and candidate differences, voters may be generally confident in their vote intentions and thus equally likely to rationalize images to conform to the vote. Second, greater political interest and the existence of clear ideological differences may cause voters to be generally less concerned about images and thus not particularly concerned about dissonance between images and the vote.

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