Group Closeness
1997 National Election Study
Pilot Report

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The purpose of this report is to examine the reliability and validity of the group "closeness" items included in the 1997 NES Pilot Study. These measures of group identification form part of a larger effort in the Pilot Study to learn more about group dynamics in American politics. This report, however, represents only a small part of the whole. Since other scholars are looking at the relationships between these closeness items and policy attitudes, party identification, and group threat, I plan to do the following:[1]

1. describe the differences in response patterns attributable to the different formats and question wordings
2. gauge the stability of responses to these items across the 1996-1997 panel
3. assess the extent to which these items actually capture what we mean by "group identity"

"Group closeness" items have a long history with the NES. I begin this report by describing the evolution and performance of these items across time.

THE HISTORY OF AN ITEM

Beginning in 1972, the National Election Study has asked questions that measure respondents' affinity to various groups in society. Although the groups listed have changed slightly over the years, the format remains largely the same: every four years, respondents look in a booklet and tell the interviewer which of the groups in a long list they feel "close to":

> Please read over the list [in the booklet] and tell me the number for those groups you feel particularly close to — people who are most like you in their ideas and interests and feelings about things.

Respondents may name as many groups as they wish, and, if they select more than one, are usually asked a follow-up question that asks them to choose the "closest group":

> Of the groups you just mentioned, which one do you feel the closest to?

In addition to the surveys conducted in presidential-election years, the NES pilot studies of 1983 and 1985 examined different types of group identification and assessed different formats by which to measure this identification. Kinder and colleagues studied an open-ended version of the "closeness" question in 1983 in order to discover, "whether Americans use a group frame of reference in evaluating government performance and in choosing between candidates" (Kinder et al. 1983, 4):

> When people think about their economic situation, they often also think about various groups in society that they feel part of, groups that are being helped or hurt by economic conditions. Sometimes the group will be people in specific occupations--truck drivers or doctors or teachers or farmers, for example. Other times race or age is what defines the

[1]The normal practice with the NES Pilot Studies is for the people who propose items which appear on the Pilot Study to write reports about them. In this case, I did propose a battery of questions for the Pilot Study, and I presume that my focus on group membership, contact, and obligation had something to do with the final shape of the study. However, in the end, only one of my proposed questions was accepted: the open-ended group identification question. None of the other items that I proposed in order to assess the validity of this question appeared on the Pilot Study, so my task here is somewhat more difficult — to assess the validity of an item designed to work in a different context with a different purpose.

> group, as when people think about how blacks or the elderly are doing. These are just some of the groups that people think about when they talk about who is being helped or hurt by economic conditions. Now, think about any groups you feel part of (PAUSE). Do you see your own economic situation tied to any particular group? Which group or groups are those?

When the question was repeated in 1984, the wording reverted closer to the original battery of items and asked respondents which economic groups they felt "close to":

> Sometimes people think about other groups of people in society when they think about their own economic well-being, people who are being helped or hurt by economic conditions. When it comes to economic matters, what groups of people do you feel close to?

Here, the group closeness question was used expressly for the purpose of asking a subsequent question about the economic circumstances of this reference group. Kinder et. al (1983) found that evaluations of President Reagan were significantly related to perceptions that one's "close" group had experienced a decline in economic position. They recommended adding a "group frame of reference" to the family and national frames of reference regarding economic well-being in the National Election Studies.

Sears et al. (1986) also examined alternative methods for identifying the effect of groups on individuals. Rather than explicitly ask respondents to choose which of a wide range of groups in society they felt close to, Sears and his colleagues chose to concentrate on a few salient identities — like gender and age — and start with the assumption that these groups mattered in the current political arena. They measured self-identification by objective members and a range of subgroups. For example, women -- and only women -- were asked the following:

> Sometimes a women might think of herself as a woman, as a working woman, and sometimes as a homemaker. Do you think of yourself as a homemaker most of the time, some of the time, occasionally, or never?

In her 1987 report to NES on measures of group identification, Conover criticizes all the measures of group closeness on a variety of grounds:

- The questions seemed to her to conflate "psychological attachment" and "subjective membership," which are two different aspects of group identification.
- She noted that the word "close" can connote psychological attachment, or empathy, or sympathy, or "simply just proximity."
- Intensity of identification is lost in the "mention/not-mention" format of the question.
- The phrasing of the question "rests implicitly on the assumption that group identification and influence stem from a sense of shared self-interests" (Conover 1987, 7).

She further criticizes the "closest" group item on the grounds that "The group that a person feels closest to may not be the same group that he or she feels closest to when it comes to politics" (8). She criticizes the economic identity question on the same grounds, but also notes that since it does specify a particular context, economics, it may be more useful than the general closeness question.

As Conover's report notes, innovations have appeared briefly in the history of the National Election Study. However, the original "group closeness" battery continues to have the greatest longevity. After reading Conover's criticisms, it is unclear why these particular formulations have been carried forward over

the years. Perhaps, it is because the innovations themselves suffer from flaws as large as those which make the "closeness" items so difficult and ambiguous. Furthermore, the academic literature also contains numerous examples in which these items proved useful in theory testing.[2] Still, it remains unclear how best to approach the measurement of group identification. One aim of the present Pilot Study is to stop and evaluate the extent to which these group closeness items should be carried forward in future Election Studies and, if so, in what form.

DESIGN

The Pilot included an open-ended version of the "group closeness" item that was asked of every respondent. Later in the interview, respondents were administered a split ballot version of the standard closed-ended question, where the versions differed in the list of groups included.[3] Although the experiment was intended, I believe, to compare two subgroups of respondents, there are in fact three. For all of the respondents who did not have a respondent booklet, interviewers read to them the list that was contained in Ballot 2, i.e. the "new list." This raises questions about whether the randomization of Ballots 1 and 2 succeeded, which I address below. Separate analysis of the "no booklet" ballot also provides us with valuable information.

CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS

The 1997 Pilot Study randomly assigned respondents to two ballots. Ballot 1 replicated the standard "group closeness" question asked of these same respondents in 1996. Ballot 2 asked respondents about eight of the same groups from 1996 and five new groups, for a total of thirteen groups.[4] Thus, Ballot 1 allows me to check the cross-time reliability of the closed-ended group closeness item, while Ballot 2 allows me to assess the stability of responses across forms that differ in the list of groups. If group identification, as measured here, is an enduring attribute of individuals, then one would not expect to see large changes in the distribution of cases across groups upon the addition or subtraction of a few groups.

Wording

The question wording for the closed-ended "group closeness" item is almost the same in 1997 as it has been since 1976. Except for small grammatical changes (e.g. changing the format from a question to a statement), respondents have been asked the following over the past 21 years:

> Please read over the list [in the booklet] and tell me the number for those groups you feel particularly close to — people who are most like you in their ideas and interests and feelings about things.

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[2] Some examples include: Kinder et al.'s Pilot Study Report (1983); Stoker's work on white identifiers, social identity theory and group conflict (1997); Conover's work on policy preferences (1984); Lau's work on voting behavior (1983).

[3] Ballot 1 contained a list of seventeen groups, whereas thirteen groups were included in ballot 2. See Appendix A for the full lists. I am not certain as to the purpose of creating unequal numbers of groups for the split ballot experiment, but I will examine the possible implications below.

[4] There are actually *four* new groups included in the 1997 Pilot Study; "Christian Fundamentalists," which is one of the "new" additions, appeared once before in the group closeness battery of 1988.

Although respondents were not asked the follow-up question about their "closest group" in 1996, respondents who named more than one group in 1997 were asked:

> Of the groups you just mentioned, which one do you feel the closest to?

Two other questions followed the "closest group" item: First, respondents were asked about their frequency of contact with the "closest" group, and then about whether or not they belonged to any organizations related to that group:

> How many days in the past week did you talk to [fill name of closest group]?

> Do you belong to any organizations or take part in any activities that represent the interests and viewpoints of [fill name of closest group]?

Results

The randomization for the "group closeness" split ballot experiment split the sample roughly in half: ballot 1 was administered to 225 respondents, and 229 were administered ballot 2. There are no significant differences in the demographic breakdowns of the subgroups.

There is a slight difference between ballots in the distribution of "closeness" to groups contained in each ballot's list. As Table 1 shows, the only significant difference occurs for the case of "young people"; 35 percent of ballot 1 respondents mentioned that they felt close to young people, whereas only 23 percent of ballot 2 did the same. Upon further investigation, I found that while the mean ages of the ballots are not different, there are more middle-aged respondents (age 32 to 51) for ballot 1, and more older respondents (age 52 to 64) for ballot 2. That aside, changes in the composition of the list do not appear to affect the proportion of respondents willing to choose a particular group as close.

From Table 1, we can also see that the new groups tested in ballot 2 were very popular. Between 45 and 50 percent of the respondents chose "People at [their] place of worship," "People in [their] neighborhood," "People at work," and "Americans in general" as close groups. Although many people mentioned these new groups as close, it doesn't appear from this table that other, more traditional groups, such as blacks or middle-class people, received significantly fewer mentions given the change in the number and type of groups available to them in the respondent booklet. Those respondents who did not use a booklet, however, did display a slightly different response pattern, with fewer of them mentioning "whites," "Middle-class" people, and the new groups than respondents who did have a booklet in front of them during the interview. It is possible that this response discrepancy is also due to the fact that, on average, respondents without a booklet only mentioned one group as close, while the average among people who used a booklet was about 4 groups.

Not only did people choose these new groups as a "close group," Table 2 also shows that they were often singled out as the "closest group." Only the "middle class" and "working class" groups were chosen more often, while whites and women were named with about the same frequency as the new groups. Table 3 (stem) and Table 4 (follow-up) provide time series data for the group closeness battery in order to put this popular response to the new additions in a little more perspective. Table 3 demonstrates that many groups have attracted a substantial number of identifiers over time, but Table 4 points out a clear hierarchy of groups: class- and age-related groups are most often chosen as "closest." Still, the new groups are chosen with a frequency that rivals that for class- and age-related groups. Given the nature of these new groups, I

don't think that we are seeing something new about American group identity. The availability of these groups just reminds us that churches are important centers of membership and identity in this country, and that the traditional loci of political organization (geography and workplace) still enjoy substantial allegiance from Americans.

Tables 3 and 4 also tell us a little about the development of the "group closeness" survey item. The groups cited have shifted over the years, but twelve out of the original sixteen asked in 1972 and 1976 were included in the list for 1992, 1996, and 1997 (Ballot 1). There are four other points worth noting about this series:

1. Religious groups appear and disappear rather frequently — Catholics, Protestants, and Jews were included in 1972 and 1976, Evangelists from 1980 to 1988, and Christian Fundamentalists in 1988 and now on ballot 2 of the Pilot Study.

2. Popularity, or the lack thereof, does not seem to be driving the inclusion or exclusion of a group. Environmentalists appeared in 1980 and 1984, and were mentioned as "close groups" by 37 percent and 50 percent of the respondents, respectively. Nevertheless, "environmentalists" disappeared after 1984.

3. Current events do affect the composition of the list to a certain extent, in the same way that the NES feeling thermometer measures have too. The disappearance of farmers and the appearance of feminists and different racial / ethnic groups reflect the changing political relevance of groups.

4. The number of groups included in the list has also varied, from 13 in 1997 (ballot 2) to 19 in 1984.

Whether these changes in the size or composition of the list raise problems for analysts depends upon whether they affect the likelihood that any one group is selected. As noted above when describing the split ballot results, this does not appear to be the case: the distribution across ballots is comparable for groups found in each ballot's list, despite the different size and composition of the lists. This suggests that over-time differences in closeness responses for a given group can be given a substantive interpretation rather than being attributed to over-time differences in list length or composition.

At the same time, changes in the lists' lengths and composition will influence the overall distribution of responses to the group closeness battery. Both because the list serves as a prime and because it can identify groups that vary in their significance to Americans, a list containing, say poor people, blacks, whites, women, and men will generate more closeness responses than a list containing poor people, blacks, whites, women, men, and middle class people.[5] This, however, simply reminds us that the list should regularly contain groups that matter to Americans or otherwise advance substantive aims.[6]

Summary and Initial Recommendations

[5] Consider the 1997 split ballot experiment. For ballot 1, the possible range of number of "close groups" mentioned was from zero to seventeen. The actual sample ranged from zero to sixteen, the mean number of groups was 4.9, and the mode was 4 groups. For ballot 2, the theoretical and actual range of groups was from zero to thirteen. The mean was 4.8 — similar to that for ballot 1 respondents — but the mode was 6. We can see the differences when we look at the histograms in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

[6] One could imagine including a group that one expects *not* to matter simply because one wants to establish that fact.

The willingness of respondents to choose "People at your Place of Worship," "People in your Neighborhood," "People at Work," and "Americans in General" as "closest" and "close" groups leads me to believe that they should be included in future versions of this item. More importantly, these questions ask about affiliations that have traditionally formed the backbone of politics in the United States — religion, geography, and labor. Nevertheless, given analyses of these items that will follow later in this report, I will refrain from making concrete recommendations about exactly which groups should or should not be included in the group closeness item until the conclusion.

The group closeness items have been asked every four years for the last twenty five years, offering the potential for a time series to study changes in attitudes about groups over time. If we are interested in engaging in any such research, however, we need to rule out the possibility that changes in the survey item itself — either in its length of groups or in the particular groups included — are driving fluctuations in closeness attitudes.

Evidence from the split ballot experiment suggests that neither the replacement of groups nor changes in the length of the list of groups leads to substitution by respondents. In other words, a respondent's likelihood of choosing one group appears to be independent of his or her likelihood of choosing another on the list. If one could be sure that responses are not sensitive to compositional changes in the list, then over-time changes could be given a substantive interpretation (for example, the sizeable changes in closeness to poor people from 1972 to 1997, see Table 3).

OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

Wording

The open-ended question did not use "close" in its wording . All respondents in the survey were asked the following:

> We are interested in finding out what kinds of people you think are most like you — in their ideas and interests and feelings about things. Thinking about the different groups in society, which ones would you say are most like you?

People could name as many or as few groups as they liked. If more than one group was chosen, respondents were asked, "Of the groups you just mentioned, which one do you feel *closest* to?" (emphasis added). The fact that the open-ended and closed-ended questions do not have parallel wording is a cause for some concern. For example, "most like you" may not connote psychological attachment or sympathy in the way that "close" does.

Results

The open-ended "group closeness" question was asked early in the survey instrument, before the closed-ended versions and before the respondent had been primed about groups like Blacks and Christian

Fundamentalists.[7] The only questions that preceded the open-ended question pertained to the media. A few respondents appeared to interpret the open-ended question as a continuation of the media-related items -- and named Dan Rather as someone like them, for example -- but the vast majority of the respondents were aware that this question was not about the media.

Most of the groups included in the closed-ended "group closeness" items were cited in responses to the open-ended item. Despite the slight difference in question wording, there is still a great deal of overlap in the types of groups mentioned across question formats; groups pertaining to ideology, race, gender, age, and class or income were all mentioned as ones that people said shared their interests and ideas. The four "new groups" from ballot 2, too, were all cited in the open-ended question, although respondents would sometimes wonder whether "neighbors" and "coworkers" were really groups. Mentions of religion — often denominational and not just references to "people in my church" — were also very common. Table 5 lists some of the broad, overarching categories, and Appendix B contains a full coding description. Word choice may be an issue, but none of the respondents named "Christian Fundamentalists" or "Southerners" as being like themselves, despite the many other religious groups named, as well as a small number of geographical groups chosen. "Feminists" was a response given by only one respondent.

Overall, the open-ended question allowed people to give more detailed descriptions of their "close groups," and joint groups were very common. For example, a respondent who named "Angry White Males" in the open-ended question would probably select "whites" and "men" in the closed-ended version, and the political connotation of the group would be lost. These compound names provide additional meaning, but were difficult to code. A "Middle Class White American," for example, could fall into categories for class, race, and geography. As Appendix B shows, I developed a cross-referenced coding scheme so that a scholar studying national identity could include the latter respondent in their coding, at the same time that another scholar of class could include the same individual in a relevant income/class category.[8]

The open-ended responses can also help us gain understanding about the meaning a group carries. For example, since 1976, "Workingmen / Working People/ Working Class" has been chosen as a close group in the closed-ended versions by more than half of the respondents, but the open-ended responses are illuminating about the many possible reasons for its popularity. Some people clearly see it in class- or income-related terms, identifying themselves as "working class females" or "working class stiffs," for example. Others, however, interpret "working class" to mean that they are employed, irrespective of income level: "upper middle class, working class, white collar" was one such response. "Working" also seems to be used to describe the common person, in responses like "normal everyday working group," "working public," "middle age working class America," and "people that work everyday." Given that no political or economic context was explicit in the question, it is also interesting that the most common personal characteristic mentioned referred to work: "people who have had a rough time in life, really worked for what they have," "the ones that work hard but get little reward in the end," and "hard-working" are some examples.

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[7] Relevant here is Waters's (1990) work on the measurement of ethnic heritage on the US Census. She finds, for example, that the percentage of the population identifying as "Irish" increased dramatically simply because "Irish" were mentioned in the preamble to the question.

[8] Given the limitations of the time needed to prepare this report, I was the only person who coded these open-ended responses. In order to compensate for the lack of inter-coder reliability, I created a very long coding list, with many of the categories containing just one respondent who was particularly difficult to code. At the same time, all codes were also categorized under broader headings to facilitate collapsing. Compound groups like "Angry White Males" and "Caucasian Young Females" were given unique codes, but also placed or referenced under each pertinent and broader category. By doing this, I hoped to maximize the ways that other scholars could use these codes in their own research.

The relative paucity of racial and gender identifications was surprising, with only about 4 percent of the respondents mentioning race and 4 percent mentioning women or men. Political identifications were popular, including, among others, references to partisan groups, issue-specific groups, and apolitical people. It is particularly interesting that there were more open-ended responses mentioning closeness to liberals and conservatives than to Democrats and Republicans. Respondents also mentioned more personal (and less political) groups, like "families," "literary groups," "educated people," and "professionals."

The follow-up question for this item did not "work" very well — relative to the follow-up to the closed-ended "group closeness" question — because many interviewers had trouble deciding whether more than one group had been mentioned. Often, a respondent would give multiple groups which the interviewer interpreted as one long group name. Other ambiguities also arose. For example, one respondent replied "I'm not really politically involved. I'm just an average housewife." This is coded as mentioning two groups because a separate code exists for people who are politically apathetic and for people who are "average, ordinary, etc." Yet in this case, the interviewer did not ask a follow-up question. In the closed-ended version of the question, the interviewer knows exactly what a group is and is not. In essence, the open-ended question requires that the interviewer make coding decisions on the fly. Thus the data from the open-ended follow-up are harder to interpret. About 35 percent of the sample gave more than one response as I coded it, but only 29 percent was asked the follow-up question about their "closest group."[9]

Furthermore, many respondents did not mention a group in response to the open-ended question: 21 percent of the sample answered "don't know," 6 percent refused to give a response, and 4 percent replied "none" or "no groups."[10] Thus, the question was confusing or hard to answer for about a quarter of the sample. Some of the answers people gave were responses like the following few:

> I don't know how to answer that one. Not sure what you mean by groups in society.
>
> I don't have an answer...depends on what the issue is...
>
> Don't know. Never thought about it.

In order to determine whether the respondents who answered "don't know" to the open-ended version were systematically different from the rest of the sample, I ran a logit analysis of who chose a group or not. The results presented in Table 6 show that the "don't know" respondents were younger, less educated, and more likely to be Democrats or Independents.[11] As may be expected given these results, they are also more likely to feel close to poor people, and are less likely to feel close to "conservatives," "people at [their] place of worship," and "Americans in general" (data not shown).

As a point of comparison, only 2 respondents in the Pilot survey gave a "no answer" response to the closed-ended question. Besides this large difference in "don't know" responses between the open and closed questions, the question formats also led to vastly different distributions of responses. In contrast with the

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[9] See Appendix C for the distribution of "closest groups" named in the open-ended question.

[10] As a point of comparison, in 1983, 47 percent of the sample answered "don't know" to Kinder et al.'s open-ended question. In 1984, only 6 respondents in the entire sample said "don't know" to the same question, although 61 percent of the sample was read a definition of groups.

[11] Again, as a point of comparison, Kinder et al. found that group identifiers "tended to be ideologically extreme, well-educated, poor, married, and living outside the Northeast" (5).

closed-ended question, the number of groups named in response to the open-ended question ranged from 0 to 7, and the mode was one group. The average number of groups mentioned for the entire sample was 1.3 (excluding Dks, NAs, and "none's," the average is 1.9). The histogram of this item contrasts rather sharply with that of the closed-ended questions on ballots 1 and 2 (see Figure 3). Thus, we can see that without a list, people are much less likely to name a group. These results are comparable to those of the "no booklet" ballot respondents; Figure 4 shows that the shape of their distributions is similar, although the mean is higher for the "no-booklet" subsample.[12]

Table 7 illustrates that the distributional differences between the open and closed closeness items are also manifested in the groups chosen. Responses are similar in that class-related groups are the most commonly named groups. The new items on ballot 2, are also relatively popular. However, for the close-ended question, respondents were more than three times more likely to choose middle class people as close than respondents asked the open-ended question. The rank ordering of groups share some similarities, but the magnitude of the differences between the likelihood of choosing the same group as close across the different formats is large.

Table 7 also provides a measure of continuity between the different versions of the "closeness" question. For example, the differences between naming men, conservatives, Blacks, and labor union members as close for the open and closed-ended questions are small; on the other hand, the tetrachoric correlation between questions for middle class people, the most commonly named group, and one where the aggregate results across formats were similar (in rank order terms), is very low.

In short, if people are not provided a list, they are less likely to name groups. And, even when they are read a list by an interviewer, they are still less likely to name groups than if they see a list in a booklet in front of them. This finding accords with what Kinder et al. (1983) found in their pilot study. The question wording to their open-ended question about close economic groups mentioned truck drivers, doctors, teachers, and farmers as examples. In their report, they write the following:

> There is more than a suggestion that our question, which is intended to provoke thought about groups in general, may in fact have provoked thought about particular groups...With the exception of truck drivers, all of [the examples given] show up prominently in the replies...The worry, of course, is that they show up too prominently (6).

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[12] Recall that respondents who did not have a booklet were read the list of groups from ballot 2 and asked to "Please listen to the list and tell me the number for those groups you feel particularly close to — people who are most like you..." The range for the "no-booklet" ballot is also 0 to 13, the mean is 3.8, and the mode is 1. Assignment to the "no booklet" ballot was not made at random, but the accidental experiment which resulted hints at a couple of factors that need to be better understood:

1. Is the difference between reading and hearing as large as the differences between ballot 2 and the "no booklet" ballot are hinting at? Would there be a difference if interviewers paused for an answer after each group rather than reading a list in its entirety before respondents answered?

2. How should analysts adjust for loquaciousness? For example, of the people who only mentioned one group for ballots 1 or 2, almost none of them mentioned "whites" as a close group. Only among people who gave 2 or more mentions were "whites" a prevalent close group. Does this mean that groups mentioned first should be thought of as "more authentic" or "closer"? Or is this primarily a function of the order in which the words are printed in the respondent booklets? Essentially, the multiple response format is useful in capturing the whole range of responses, but causes difficulties in interpretation later, which are compounded when differences in list composition, length, and question administration are taken into account.

The cost of a open-ended response with no primes is the high rate of non-response (along with the practical costs associated with administering the question and coding the responses). On the other hand, if we give examples in order to help a respondent understand what we as researchers want to measure, we then bias our results.[13] This raises the possibility that the best use of the open-ended question is to draw lessons from it for both revising the standard closed-ended questions and for understanding its limitations. This is an issue I will return to below.

RELIABILITY

If asked the same question multiple times, to what extent are respondents likely to give the same answer? Table 8 presents tetrachoric correlations between items asked in 1996 and 1997. Specifically, it shows reliabilities for the closed-ended question for respondents given ballot 1, for those given ballot 2, and for the open-ended group closeness question. Several results are obvious:

1. The groups for which there is the lowest reliability are the same ones that are the most often cited as close groups: working class people, whites, and middle class people.
2. Otherwise, it does not appear that any particular type of identification, racial, ideological, or otherwise, is more reliable than any other.
3. The reliabilities are similar for most of the groups. This is especially true when comparisons are made between closed-ended ballots 1 and 2.
4. Larger differences do appear when comparing closed and open-ended reliabilities. The reliabilities are higher for Asian Americans and men for the open-ended item, but lower for Hispanics, conservatives, liberals, and women. The reliability for middle class is especially low.

Due to time limitations, I have not compared these results with previous studies. For example, given the 1992-96 panel, one could compare whether the popular groups are consistently less reliable, and how reliabilities for groups change when the intervening period is four years instead of one. We often assume that group identification is a long-standing predisposition, which can, of course, remain dormant until it is activated by some context, event, or issue. However, given these pilot study results, one has to wonder about the meaning or importance of middle class identification, for example, to an individual.

VALIDITY

Validity is inherently about the intentions of the researcher. On a survey, a question is valid if it measures what the researcher intended it to measure. That said, one can see that assessing the validity of the "group closeness" items is a special problem for several reasons:

1. I do not know the exactly what the original designers of these questions intended back in 1972. However, I can make some educated guesses based on the uses researchers have made of these questions. That is, I take the "intention" behind these questions to consist of what researchers have tried to use them for -- "group identification." (Their purpose may seem ludicrously self-evident, but

[13] In 1984, the open-ended economic group closeness question changed slightly; the initial question did not list any examples, but if the respondent did not understand what was meant by "groups," they were then read a list of examples. While I do not know if the same overrepresentation of farmers, the elderly, etc. occurred again in 1984, it is noteworthy that 1374 out of 2255 respondents did not understand the question and were then read the examples.

researchers such as Kinder et al. did not use these items to represent group identification, but instead used questions like these to measure a "group frame of reference.")

2. As Conover mentioned before, the wording of these items is ambiguous: "close" connotes a variety of orientations, not all of which are clearly parts of "group identification." To repeat Conover: "close" can connote psychological attachment, empathy, sympathy, or "simply just proximity."
3. I am also not sure what the references to new groups, such as "People at your place of worship," are meant to measure.
4. As I have mentioned before, the wording of the open-ended version carries different connotations from the wording of the closed-ended version. Therefore, differences between the versions may mainly tell us that they are "validly" measuring different things, rather than that one is not measuring what it should, given its format.

While I can only guess at the intentions of the designers of the closed-ended group close question in 1972, I can speak directly about the intentions behind the inclusion of the open-ended group close question in 1997. I proposed this question be included on the Pilot Study as part of a battery of questions which aimed to assess the various impacts of "group identification" on, for example, senses of community obligation. That is, I proposed this item in a context in which there were multiple other items, and I had a relatively clear idea about how this item ought to relate to the others. Given that this is the only item that remains of that battery, the task of assessing validity becomes more difficult.

Do these questions measure "group identification"?

This question requires first that I take a stab at defining "group identification," or at least pointing out what this concept is supposed to do or explain or represent. Distinguishing it from related concepts like group sympathy, one could argue that there are at least two necessary conditions for identification: group membership and group attachment.

Conover, for one, recommends that respondents first be asked their subjective group membership.[14] Perhaps this measurement strategy would work for some types of identification, but it too invites confusion. How does one distinguish subjective from objective group membership when the group in question, for example, is gender or race? One assumes that a respondent who gives her race as black is giving both her subjective group membership and what she perceives to be her "objective" group membership.

The measurement of attachment seems equally as problematic. Like Conover, Lau has argued that the question wording of the "closeness" items blends concepts, but notes that "the more generic `feel close to' operationalization was used in the survey rather than the more theoretically precise `identify with' because the former wording was understood more widely by the general public" (Lau 1989, 223). This raises an interesting question: can a survey item be a valid measure of a concept if it is not valid on its face?

In order to gauge the validity of these measures without entering into a debate over semantics or where the meaning of words comes from, I will use the open and closed ended group identification questions in analyses that reflect the scholarly interest in these items, and then compare the results. Five possible areas of interest are the following: group salience, group sympathy, group affect, group obligation, and group-motivated policy preferences.

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[14] Her question wording for subjective group membership includes the following caveat: "It doesn't matter whether you feel close to the category of people named or even how often you think about them. We just want to know whether you *ever* think of yourself as part of that category" (emphasis added).

Group Salience. Public opinion scholars often want to know when and how an identity gets activated in politics, and therefore are interested in the salience of a group identity. Work on group consciousness, for example, takes into account whether an individual identifies with his or her objective group or not (Miller et al. 1981). Table 9 shows that group identity is most salient for racial minorities (Blacks and Hispanics, though not Asian Americans), women, young people and the elderly. However, it is interesting to note that among respondents who are liberals or conservatives, a substantial number also identified with their ideological groups in the open-ended question. Group identification by objective members in general is much more common for respondents of the closed-ended question, although this would be expected, given the way the question was asked. Since respondents mentioned many more groups to the closed-ended version, they are more likely to name groups of which they are objective members. Noticeably, however, salience as evaluated using the open-ended question is much higher for the ideological and age-related groups than for racial minorities and women, in contrast to what is found using the closed-ended question.

Group Sympathy. In discussions of politics in the U.S., it is often helpful to know whether an individual feels close to groups of which she is not an objective member. For example, one could hypothesize that a white woman who feels close to blacks may have different policy opinions from a white woman who identifies with whites. The main point to be taken from Table 10 is that when respondents are forced to name groups "like themselves" without the benefit of a list, they are more likely to name groups of which they are objective members. With a booklet in front of them, respondents are more likely to express group sympathy, listing groups to which they feel some psychological attachment but to which they do not objectively belong. For example, among respondents who said they felt close to blacks for the closed-ended question, only 38 percent were themselves African Americans. The same pattern holds true for closeness to young people.

Group Affect. In order to answer questions about the optimal operationalization of group identification, we also need to consider group affect. Affect, for example, is another component of group consciousness (Miller et al. 1981), and one could argue that group identity should have an effect on attitudes toward nonmembers. Table 11 presents comparisons of the mean feeling thermometer scores for group member identifiers, member non-identifiers, nonmember identifiers, and nonmember non-identifiers. One would expect that group identifiers should feel the most positive affect toward their ingroup, while nonmember identifiers would feel the coldest; for example, one might predict that black identifiers have the highest average feeling thermometer scores for Blacks, and that white identifiers would have the lowest, or coldest attitudes. In fact, the clearest examples of this type of behavior is driven by ideological identities, not racial or gender identities, which holds true for both the open-ended and closed-ended assessment.

Group Obligation. Obligation, as well as affect, may be driven by group identity. Political scientists often try to understand when and why people get politically motivated and involved. One of the follow-up questions to the group closeness question asks respondents whether they belong to any organizations or take part in any activities that represent the interests and viewpoints of their closest group. A third of them do. Unfortunately, the question does not allow us to compare the participation rates of identifiers with nonidentifiers. Fortunately, the 1996 NES contains a battery of questions, asked of all respondents, about what types of organizations they are involved in. Table 12 provides some comparisons between the participation rates of group identifiers and those who are not: respondents who identify with a group in the 1997 Pilot Study were significantly more likely to have participated in an organization, group, or charity that pertained to the group mentioned. Furthermore, this finding holds whether or not the close group had been chosen in the open or closed-ended item. If anything, "obligation" is more pronounced among identifiers in the open-ended question.

Policy Preferences. One of the major goals in public opinion research is to understand the formation of policy attitudes and voting behavior. Scholars often want to compare the effects of values and partisan predispositions with those of interests that are personal, sociotropic, and "group-centric" (Nelson and Kinder 1996). Table 13 provides information about how level of support for various policies varies by group identification as gauged by the open- and closed-ended formats. Group identification, regardless of format, clearly affects policy opinions. However, the results obtained for ideological and racial identifiers using open-ended identification are sharper.

In short, one finds that the open and closed ended group identification measures behaved similarly in predicting affect (particularly ideological affect), belonging to a group or organization, and holding certain policy preferences. Group salience and sympathy varied depending on the question format, but again, this is at least partially a reflection of the ways in which the question were asked, and should not necessarily be given substantive interpretations.

New Closeness Groups

I mentioned above the frequency with which people named as close groups "People at your place of worship," "People in your neighborhood," "People at work," and "Americans in general." However, in order to decide whether these groups should be listed again, we need to know whether the new items relate to other concepts and variables as we might expect. There are 2 basic questions to be answered in this regard: What predicts them and what do they predict?

First, what predicts closeness to the group "Americans in general?" Basically, very little. The better educated are less likely to indicate closeness, while respondents who think that other people are similar to them in their attitudes and beliefs are more likely to feel close to "Americans in general." (See Appendix D for all multivariate analyses predicting the new closeness items.)

Contact seems to be the strongest predictor of the remaining three new closeness items. The only significant indicators of closeness to "people in your neighborhood" are tenure and talking to neighbors. The longer a respondent lives in his city, and the more he talks to his neighbors, the more likely he is to feel close to his neighbors. Hispanics are less likely to feel close to people at their place of worship, while greater attendance at services increases one's likelihood of feeling close. Finally, younger respondents feel closer to people at their place of work, as, of course, do respondents who are employed.

Measuring the predictive ability of these groups is also necessary for determining their utility. Unfortunately, none of them are powerful determinants of political attitudes, even at the bivariate level.[15] The one attitude that closeness to people at the respondent's place of worship, her neighborhood, and Americans in general predicts is whether respondents feel they are similar to other people.[16] Of course, it is unclear conceptually what direction the causal arrow points, but it is clear that feeling similar to other people is related to feelings of closeness toward one's fellow believers, one's neighbors, and one's countrymen.

It is possible that given more pertinent policy questions, these new items could be powerful predictors. For example, closeness to "Americans in general" may be a good indicator of patriotism, or may explain attitudes about cultural policies like making English the official language. It does not, however,

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[15] Analysis is not shown. For this analysis, I combined respondents who were given ballot 2 and the "no booklet ballot."

[16] They are not related to the interpersonal trust items, however.

predict opinions about immigration to the U.S. or the nation's role in world affairs.

Closeness to "people at [one's] place of worship" predicts feeling thermometer scores for Christian Fundamentalists and opposition to laws to protect gays from discrimination, but the addition of a related control variable like church attendance makes the closeness measure completely insignificant. Nonetheless, together with denominational affiliation, closeness to "people at your place of worship" may be capable of doing the work of several related items that the closeness battery has included in the past: closeness to Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Evangelicals, and Christian Fundamentalists. Unfortunately, it is difficult to know if this would be the case, since closeness to Protestants, Catholics, and Jews has not been asked since 1976. However, using the 1997 Pilot Study, a limited comparison is possible using closeness to Christian Fundamentalists and a combination of denominational affiliation and closeness to "People at your place of worship." Among Evangelical Protestants, 30 percent say they are close to Christian Fundamentalists whereas 64 percent say they are close to the "People at [their] place of worship." There is limited evidence, therefore, that religious identification as gauged by this new closeness item does not yield results comparable to those found when listing specific religious groups like "Christian Fundamentalists."

Given the devolution of control over social programs from Washington, D.C. to states and localities, understanding people's attitudes toward their geographically-defined communities is becoming more important. So far, however, it is unclear how useful closeness to "people in your neighborhood" is for predicting policy opinions. It is somewhat related to greater trust of local governments (significant at the $p < .10$ level), and it is a significant predictor of the number of community groups with which an individual is involved, even controlling for tenure in the city.

Finally, the predictive ability of the last new item, closeness to "people at work," is also questionable at this time. At the bivariate level, it predicts the number of labor organizations an individual is involved in, but once a control is added for union membership, the effect of the identification disappears. Given the split ballot experiment, it is impossible to determine whether combining union membership with closeness to "people at work" approximates closeness to labor unions. About half of the union members given ballot 1 felt close to unions, and about half of the union members given ballot 2 felt close to "people at work," but this similarity may be pure coincidence. It would be nice if "people at work" could be used like "people at your place of worship," such that in combination with information about a respondent's occupation, we could create proxies for closeness to various occupational groups.

I have several additional concerns about the new closeness items:.

1. Is it reasonable to think of the new groups included on ballot 2 as candidates for "group identification"? These items emphasize contact more than abstract identification with a group, and therefore may pertain to questions of social cohesion more than social identity. It is also possible that these new group items could simply tap feelings of association, not identification. That is, a respondent could feel close to a group because she sees them all the time, not because she shares "their ideas and interests and feelings about things."[17]
2. These questions may also place greater informational needs on researchers. What distinguishes

[17] On the other hand, it is possible to overstate the importance of physical presence and contact. People were asked how often they talked to members of their closest group. Overall, 60 percent of respondents said that they talked to their closest group seven days a week, and people speak to their closest group members at least four times a week. However, Table 14 shows that there is no obvious relationship between contact and one's closest group. Rates were not higher for the newer groups like "People at your place of worship" than for old groups like "middle class people."

"People at your place of worship" is not the type of beliefs they hold, the religion they practice, or the political goals they share. While the individual who replies that she feels close to people at her synagogue knows the specific beliefs, practices, and goals she shares with them, it does not provide researchers with much information unless we are able to gain more information about the context of her synagogue. Of course, in this case, we do have available information about denominational affiliation that helps in this regard.

3. "People at your place of worship," "people in your neighborhood," and "people at work" rule out the possibility of measuring group sympathy (as defined as closeness to a group of which one is not an objective member). It is easy to imagine a white man feeling close to blacks, but how can I feel close to people in *your* neighborhood, if I do not even know who "you" are?

RECOMMENDATIONS

Where does this all leave us? In order to provide some order to a laundry list of thoughts and recommendations I have concerning the group closeness items and how best to measure group identification, I will first address the standard group closeness question. I will then discuss the new items included in ballot 2 and the open-ended question.

Closed-ended Questions: Old items

1. Continue the closed-ended group closeness question at this time. Sears et al. (1986) suggested, in proposing their "group-based" items, that we concentrate on groups we care about. Perhaps this is what the group closeness battery provides for us: groups that are politically relevant (or so we hope), and an adequate sample size for comparisons of subgroups to be possible, with very little missing data.

2. Keep groups that represent important dimensions of cleavage in American politics:
   - women and men
   - young people, older people, and middle age people (see #3)
   - conservatives and liberals
   - white, Blacks, and Hispanics (for Asian Americans, see #4)
   - poor people, working people, middle class people, and upper middle class people (see #3)

   This yields a core of 14.[18]

3. In order to compare levels of identification, it is important to have exhaustive lists of the relevant groups. If, for example, a scholar is interested in researching people's identification with the elderly, it is useful to compare this to identification with both young *and* middle age people.[19] Similarly, in order to study attitudes (both identification and sympathy) about class and income in the U.S., it is important to span the entire range from the poor to the

[18] "Middle Class people" has been prominent throughout this report as both one of the most commonly chosen "close groups," but also as one of the most unreliable. It is uncertain what explanatory power "closeness to middle class people" provides, especially without a measure of subjective self-identification.

[19] "Middle Age people" was a more common response than "young people" in the open-ended question, and it may be especially pertinent, given current policy concerns about how to address the aging and upcoming retirement of the Baby Boomers.

rich. "Rich people," however, was never mentioned in the open-ended responses, and "affluent" was named only once. "Upper middle class" was the highest income level with which people seemed comfortable identifying.

4. Drop Southerners, Feminists and Asian Americans. These are obviously important groups for understanding American politics, but I do not think we gain much information about them in the group closeness question. When given the opportunity to name people like themselves in the open-ended question, not a single respondent mentioned Southerners, only one mentioned feminists, and only one mentioned Asian Americans.[20]

5. I lean toward dropping business people and labor unions, but feel some ambivalence because they have been included in the list every time the question was asked. It may be worth testing whether closeness to "people at work" in conjunction with occupation and union membership is equivalent before dropping business people and unions. Nevertheless, the presence of certain occupations, like farmers and business people, on the group closeness list and not others does seem rather arbitrary.

6. If "labor unions" is included on future lists, I wonder if its label might be changed to something like "union members," since all of the other groups listed refer to people, not organizations. When this group was first introduced in 1980, "Big Business" was also one of the groups included. The latter was never asked again, while "labor unions" has continued. There is, unfortunately, the tradeoff that changing names affects comparisons over time; however, both "businessmen" and "workingmen" have evolved over the years as well.

7. Consider adding other new groups, based on the open-ended responses. In priority:
   - "Democrats" and "Republicans." In the open-ended question, there were many more respondents who mentioned "liberals" and "conservatives" than partisan groups (and closeness to ideological groups had a strong effect on affect and policy opinions). This is curious, given the traditionally higher non-response rates to ideological self-identification than partisan self-identification. Adding Democrats and Republicans to the list would enable a further exploration of this paradox.
   - "Educated people." This group may measure similar attitudes as toward "Middle-class people." However, it may also tap sentiments about anti-intellectualism or anti-elitism. 4 percent of the open-ended responses referred to education, which is on par with references to race and ethnicity.
   - "People in your state." Combined with "People in your neighborhood" and "Americans in general," this group would allow us to gauge the full range of geographical affinity from locale to state to nation, and compare it with, for example, trust in the varying levels of government.

8. The closest group follow-up should be considered lower priority, if not dropped altogether. It is interesting in the aggregate and in comparison to the "closeness" item, but it is very difficult to use the "closest" identification with a group and have an adequate number of cases.[21]

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[20] Given the salience of racial identity, there is obviously a relationship between closeness to Asian Americans and the number of Asian Americans in the NES samples. However, as important as I think gaining a more nuanced, multiracial understanding of American politics is, this item basically provides us with information about group sympathy, not identity.

[21] See Appendix F for a comparison of "close" and "closest" group responses in the 1997 Pilot Study.

9. What should be done about the follow-up question concerning organizational participation on behalf of the closest group? If the NES plans to continue asking the Walker/ Baumgartner questions about participation in a battery of different types of groups, I do not think the "belonging" follow-up should be asked. First, the follow-up does not allow us to compare non-identifiers with identifiers in their levels of participation. Second, the battery provides much more detailed information about exactly what types of groups are joined, and appears to pick up higher levels of participation than the group closeness follow-up (i.e. only about a third of the respondents said they participated in a group on behalf of their closest group, yet 87% said they are a member of at least one organization.).

Closed-ended Questions: New items

10. "Christian Fundamentalists" should be dropped from the closeness list. No one used that terminology in an open-ended response, and the feelings this tapped could be measured otherwise, as I described above.

11. I am unsure whether "Americans in general" should be kept or dropped — I have reservations about this item because on the one hand, I think it could be a measure of patriotism. It was also mentioned by quite a few respondents in the open-ended question (17 people mentioned being close to "Americans," which, to put it into perspective, is more than the number who volunteered "poor people."). On the other hand, since there were no patriotism or pertinent foreign affairs questions, I did not find that this measure had much predictive ability.

12. Keep closeness to "People at your place of worship." I would recommend keeping this item particularly because it allows us to measure closeness to different religious groups with one question (given we have denominational information).

13. As mentioned earlier, keeping "people at work" could be justified for the same reason as "people at your place of worship." In a similar fashion, "People in your neighborhood" could be combined with various contextual variables from census data to create "closeness" items that tap geographic affinities based on racial context, immigrant population density, or frequency of crime, to name just a few.

14. Given that the NES is beginning to use phone interviews instead of in-person interviews, the problem of people not having respondent booklets during the interview may be significant. Respondents who were read the list of groups by interviewers for the closeness question had much different responses than those who had the booklet in front of them and could read the list. It may be worth testing alternative ways for the question to be read to the respondent — instead of hearing the entire list at once, the interviewer could read a group name and wait for a "close" or "not close" response before reading the next group. I expect that responses gauged this way would be more comparable to those found when respondents have the list in front of them.

15. The follow-up question about contact with the closest group provided interesting new information about the frequency with which respondents talked to their "closest groups." However, given that it showed little variation, and comparisons with groups other than one's closest are not available as a point of comparison, I would recommend that this question not be repeated.

Open-ended Question

16. Consider repeating the open-ended question in 1998, perhaps with a split-half test of alternative wordings: one using the "groups most like you" wording used in the Pilot Study, and one using "group close to" language comparable to the standard wording used in the closed-ended question. I am hesitant to recommend this since it is obviously costly and time consuming. However, the results of this Pilot Study indicate that the open-ended question at least sometimes performed better than the closed-ended question (e.g. in several group-affect and policy preference tests). With a larger sample, analysts would be in a much better position than the Pilot Study affords to examine other intriguing differences -- especially, perhaps, the tendency for individuals to think of themselves with *multiple* group identities and interests. This is an important theory in social identity research, and is one that is usually studied using psychological experiments, not with surveys (Deaux 1993; Deaux et al. 1995; Rosenberg and Gara 1985). Nevertheless, when given an opportunity to describe people most like them, respondents often gave multiple group identities, like "working parents," "right wing Republican," "white Protestant," or "middle class African American," not single identities like "white" or "woman." Furthermore, if the “closeness” language is added to the open-ended question and produces similar results, worries about what is the best -- i.e. theoretically clear for scholars, yet “understandable” and relevant to respondents -- language for measuring group identification can be assuaged. Whether or not “close” or “emotionally attached” or “identify with” is used may not matter to the average NES respondent.

Table 1
Group Closeness
1997 NES Pilot

Question Wording:
Looking at page 3 of the booklet, there is a list of groups. Please read over the list and tell me the number for those groups you feel particularly close to — people who are most like you in their ideas and interests and feelings about things.

		Ballot 1 (Blue booklet)	**Ballot 2** (yellow booklet)	Ballot 3 (no booklet)
Asian-Americans	4%	-	-	
Blacks		11	15	14
Hispanic-Americans		11	14	11
Whites		42	47	34#
Women		47	43	32
Men		27	-	-
Older People		39	-	-
Young People		35	23*	24
Liberals		20	-	-
Conservatives		32	-	-
Feminists		13	-	-
Business people		30	-	-
Labor Unions		18	-	-
Middle-class people		69	65	52#
Working-class people		60	58	46
Poor People		20	18	16
Southerners		13	-	-
Christian Fundamentalists		-	15	11
People at your Place of Worship		-	45	30#
People in your Neighborhood		-	45	26#
People at Work		-	46	37
Americans in General		-	50	46
N		224	228	97

- Group was not included on this ballot.
* The Percent mentioning this group on Ballot 1 is significantly different from the percent mentioning it on Ballot 2 at $p<.05$.
# The Percent mentioning this group on Ballot 2 is significantly different from the percent mentioning it on Ballot 3 at $p<.05$.

Table 2
Closest Group
1997 NES Pilot

Question Wording:
Looking at page 3 of the booklet, there is a list of groups. Please read over the list and tell me the number for those groups you feel particularly close to — people who are most like you in their ideas and interests and feelings about things...*Of the groups you just mentioned, which one do you feel the closest to?*

		Ballot 1 (Blue booklet)	**Ballot 2** (yellow booklet)	Ballot 3 (no booklet)
Asian-Americans	1%	-	-	
Blacks		2	2	4
Hispanic-Americans		4	3	1
Whites		5	6	7
Women		12	8	9
Men		2	-	-
Older People		10	-	-
Young People		4	3	6
Liberals		3	-	-
Conservatives		8	-	-
Feminists		1	-	-
Business people		2	-	-
Labor Unions		1	-	-
Middle-class people		17	13	13
Working-class people		24	19	18
Poor People		5	2	1
Southerners		1	-	-
Christian Fundamentalists		-	2	4
People at your Place of Worship		-	18	10
People in your Neighborhood		-	7	2
People at Work		-	9	13
Americans in General		-	8	11
N		221	221	90

- Group was not included on this ballot.

Table 5
Open-ended Responses to Group Closeness:

1997 NES Pilot

% of all Responses for Overarching Categories*

Question wording:

We are interested in finding out what kinds of people you think are most like you — in their ideas and interests and feelings about things. Thinking about the different groups in society, which ones would you say are most like you?

21%	POLITICAL IDEOLOGY / PARTISANSHIP
	Party Identification
	Ideological Identification
	Other Political Identifications
20	CLASS / INCOME
	Middle Class
	Working Class / Working People
	Poor People
12	RELIGION
	Conservative Christians
	"Christians" (no further specification)
	Other Christians (Denominations given)
	Other Religious groups
	Other references to religion or church
10	OCCUPATION
10	AGE
5	FAMILY
	Marital Status
	Parental Status
	Other references to family
5	GEOGRAPHY
	Neighbors
	Americans
4	EDUCATION
4	RACE / ETHNICITY
4	GENDER / SEXUAL ORIENTATION
3	HOBBIES / ACTIVITIES / SPORTS
3	PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES
3	PEOPLE R HAS CONTACT WITH
3	AVERAGE , COMMON PERSON

** For a full list of categories and more details on the coding, see Appendix B.*

Table 6
Who Chooses a "Close Group"?

(conversely, who are the respondents who choose "don't know", "no answer" & "none")
NES 97 Pilot

	Open-ended Closeness Item	
Black	-.47	(.39)
Hispanic	-.04	(.35)
Age	.02	(.01)**
Education	.30	(.11)**
Democrat	-.56	(.25)*
Independent	-1.34	(.45)**
Liberal	.21	(.26)
Moderate	.04	(.48)
Family Income	-.04	(.08)
South	.14	(.22)
Sex	-.08	(.22)
Constant	-.32	(.69)
n	490	

* $p<.05$
** $p<.01$

Table 9
Salience of Group Identity for Group Members
1997 NES Pilot

Among Respondents who are "Objective" members of a group, the % who mention being close to that group.*

	Closed-Ended**		Open-Ended	
Asian Americans	0%	(3)	0%	(2)
Blacks	73	(30)	9	(22)
Hispanics	64	(45)	9	(32)
Whites	47	(370)	6	(322)
Women	63	(277)	8	(227)
Men	48	(94)	3	(155)
Elderly (65 years +)	73	(55)	18	(87)
Young People (18 to 31 years old)	67	(55)	16	(58)
Liberals	51	(75)	20	(130)
Conservatives	51	(124)	18	(226)
Labor Unions	53	(40)	3	(69)
Poor People (<$20k family income)	35	(104)	10	(97)
Southerner	29	(80)	no mention	
Christian Fundamentalists (measured as Evangelical Protestants)	30	(77)	4	(7)***

* The numbers in the parentheses represent the number of objective members of each group for each question format. DK responses were excluded for both the closed and open-ended columns.

** This includes only ballots 1 and 2 of the split sample. Asian Americans, Men, Elderly, Liberals, Conservatives, Labor Unions, Southerners, and Christian Fundamentalists were only asked on one ballot.

*** Respondents who answered anything under the category of "Conservative Christian" for the open-ended question were considered identifiers for this case.

Table 10
Group Sympathy
1997 NES Pilot

Among Respondents who mentioned being close to a group, the % who *also* are "Objective" members of that group.*

	Closed-Ended**		Open-Ended	
Asian Americans	0% (8)		0% (1)	
Blacks	38	(58)	67	(3)
Hispanics	52	(57)	75	(4)
Whites	86	(201)	90	(20)
Women	86	(204)	100	(19)
Men	74	(61)	100	(5)
Elderly (65 years +)	46	(87)	62	(26)
Young People (18-31 years)	28	(131)	75	(12)
Liberals	86 (44)		93 (28)	
Conservatives	90	(71)	93	(43)
Labor Unions	51	(41)	40	(5)
Poor People (<$20k family income)	46 (87)		72 (14)	
Southerner	77	(30)	no mention	
Christian Fundamentalists (measured as Evangelical Protestants)	68	(34)	71	(7)***

* The numbers in the parentheses represent the number of identifiers for each group for each question format. DK responses were excluded for both the closed and open-ended columns.

** This includes only ballots 1 and 2 of the split sample. Asian Americans, Men, Elderly, Liberals, Conservatives, Labor Unions, Southerners, and Christian Fundamentalists were only asked on one ballot.

*** Respondents who answered anything under the category of "Conservative Christian" for the open-ended question were considered identifiers for this case.

Table 11a
Racial Affect: Mean Feeling Thermometer Scores by Group Identification

1997 NES Pilot
White, Black and Hispanic Respondents only

Mean FT for Blacks

	97 Ballot 1		97 Ballot 2		97 Open-ended	
Black Identifiers	74	(8)	78	(14)	85	(2)
Black Non-Identifiers	84	(6)	100	(1)	81	(19)
White Identifiers	60	(80)	66	(87)	59	(18)
White Non-Identifiers	64	(94)	65	(87)	64	(286)

Mean FT for Hispanics

	97 Ballot 1		97 Ballot 2		97 Open-ended	
Hispanic Identifiers	83	(16)	85	(13)	85	(3)
Hispanic Non-Identifiers	77	(7)	63	(8)	81	(29)
White Identifiers	61	(81)	64	(87)	62	(18)
White Non-Identifiers	61	(93)	64	(87)	64	(285)

Mean FT for Whites

	97 Ballot 1		97 Ballot 2		97 Open-ended	
White Identifiers	71	(81)	74	(88)	76	(18)
White Non-Identifiers	66	(95)	69	(87)	70	(288)
Black Identifiers	73	(8)	73	(14)	65	(2)
Black Non-Identifiers	71	(6)	85	(1)	73	(18)

Note: Number of cases in parentheses

Table 11b
Gender Affect: Mean Feeling Thermometer Scores by Group Identification

1997 NES Pilot

Mean FT for Women

	97 Ballot 1		97 Ballot 2		97 Open-ended	
Women Identifiers	85	(20)	83	(23)	67	(3)
Women Non-Identifiers	66	(13)	78	(18)	82	(55)
Men Identifiers	69	(9)	-		100	(1)
Men Non-Identifiers	74	(14)	-		73	(40)

Mean FT for Men

	97 Ballot 1		97 Ballot 2		97 Open-ended	
Men Identifiers	73	(8)	-		100	(1)
Men Non-Identifiers	62	(13)	-		70	(39)
Women Identifiers	73	(20)	76	(23)	70	(3)
Women Non-Identifiers	67	(13)	73	(18)	73	(55)

Ideological Affect: Mean Feeling Thermometer Scores by Group Identification

Mean FT for Liberals

	97 Ballot 1		97 Open-ended	
Liberal Identifiers	68	(37)	67	(26)
Liberal Non-Identifiers	62	(37)	66	(101)
Conservative Identifiers	38	(63)	34	(40)
Conservative Non-Identifiers	48	(57)	43	(182)

Mean FT for Conservatives

	97 Ballot 1		97 Open-ended	
Conservative Identifiers	72	(62)	77	(40)
Conservative Non-Identifiers	52	(57)	65	(181)
Liberal Identifiers	43	(38)	40	(26)
Liberal Non-Identifiers	53	(37)	52	(102)

Table 12
Group Participation
1997 NES Pilot

Question Wording (1996 NES):
There are many types of organizations, groups, and charities that people might be involved with. We're interested in what kinds of groups you might be involved with. I'm going to read you a list of different types of organizations. For each type, could you tell me the name or names of the organizations you are involved with.

	Participation in an organization, group or charity that pertains to the group mentioned in the closed-ended "closeness" item			Participation in an organization, group or charity that pertains to the group mentioned in the open-ended "closeness" item.		
Close to Labor Unions		49%	(41)		60%	(5)
Not close to Labor Unions	9	(183)		15	(377)	
Close to Business People		29	(68)		30	(10)
Not close to Business People		15	(156)		17	(372)
Close to Older People		26	(87)		35	(26)
Not close to Older People		6	(137)		14	(356)
Close to Racial / Ethnic Minorities*	13	(39)		0	(7)	
Not close to Minorities		2	(185)		5	(375)
Close to Women		4	(204)		11	(19)
Not close to Women		1	(248)		2	(363)
Close to "People in Your Neighborhood"		28	(102)		33	(6)
Not close to "People in Your Neighborhood"	17	(126)		20	(376)	
Close to Ideological group**		17	(115)		25	(69)
Not close to Ideological group		8	(109)		11	(313)
Close to "People at your Place of Worship"		87	(103)		93	(15)
Not close to "People at your Place of Worship"		54	(125)		68	(367)

*Closeness to Racial / Ethnic Minorities combines closeness to Blacks, to Hispanics, and to Asians.
**Closeness to Ideological Group combines closeness to Liberals and to Conservatives.

Note: The numbers in the parentheses represent the number of group identifiers and non-identifiers for each question format. *For this table only, I did not control for objective membership*. For example, among the 41 respondents who felt close to labor unions in the closed-ended question, 49 percent participated in labor groups.

Table 13a
Policy Preferences and Ideological Group Identification

		Closed-ended Identification			Open-ended Identification	
% Decrease Defense Spending						
Liberal Identifiers		79%	(28)		83%	(24)
Liberal Non-Identifiers		45	(22)		48	(96)
Conservative Identifiers	16	(45)		14	(37)	
Conservative Non-Identifiers		25	(36)		20	(168)
% Decrease Welfare Spending						
Liberal Identifiers		36	(28)		31	(26)
Liberal Non-Identifiers		52	(25)		43	(103)
Conservative Identifiers	76	(50)		85	(40)	
Conservative Non-Identifiers		64	(36)		69	(185)
% Fewer Govt Services						
Liberal Identifiers		29	(28)		15	(26)
Liberal Non-Identifiers		30	(23)		25	(96)
Conservative Identifiers	71	(48)		78	(40)	
Conservative Non-Identifiers		49	(33)		52	(166)
% Govt should see to Job						
Liberal Identifiers		50	(26)		58	(26)
Liberal Non-Identifiers		39	(23)		43	(99)
Conservative Identifiers	6	(50)		3	(38)	
Conservative Non-Identifiers		15	(34)		15	(175)

Note: The numbers in the parentheses represent the number of group identifiers and non-identifiers for each question format. For example, among the 28 liberals who said they were close to liberals on the closed-ended question, 79 percent of these identifiers supported decreased defense spending.

Table 13b
Policy Preferences and "White" Group Identification

	Closed-ended Identification		Open-ended Identification	
% Govt see to Fair Treatment of Blacks				
White Identifiers	37%	(99)	31%	(13)
White Non-Identifiers	44	(124)	42	(210)
% Blacks Should Help Themselves				
White Identifiers	59	(142)	71	(17)
White Non-Identifiers	52	(158)	54	(283)
% Oppose Affirmative Action				
White Identifiers	93	(149)	100	(18)
White Non-Identifiers	88	(162)	90	(293)

Policy Preferences and "Poor" Group Identification

	Closed-ended Identification		Open-ended Identification	
% Decrease Welfare Spending				
Poor Identifiers	46	(28)	30	(10)
Poor Non-Identifiers	51	(67)	40	(85)
% Govt Should Provide Fewer Services				
Poor Identifiers	33	(24)	11	(9)
Poor Non-Identifiers	36	(62)	38	(77)
% Govt should See to Job				
Poor Identifiers	44	(27)	50	(10)
Poor Non-Identifiers	30	(64)	32	(81)

Note: The numbers in the parentheses represent the number of group identifiers and non-identifiers for each question format.

Table 13C
Policy Preferences and Religious Group Identification

		Closed-ended Identification			Open-ended Identification	
% Oppose Protection of Gays from Discrimination						
"People at Your Place of Worship" Identifiers*		48	(88)		43	(14)
"People at Your Place of Worship" Non-Identifiers		38	(71)		38	(259)
Christian Fundamentalist Identifiers		68	(22)		50	(4)
Christian Fundamentalist Non-Identifiers	52	(50)		50	(113)	
% No Prayer in School						
"People at Your Place of Worship" Identifiers		9	(90)		0	(14)
"People at Your Place of Worship" Non-Identifiers		6	(73)		11	(265)
Christian Fundamentalist Identifiers		4	(23)		20	(5)
Christian Fundamentalist Non-Identifiers	6	(50)		6	(113)	

* Objective membership was determined by attendance at religious services.
Note: The numbers in the parentheses represent the number of group identifiers and non-identifiers for each question format.

Table 14
Group Contact
1997 NES Pilot

Average number of days per week that R talks to members of his or her closest group

	Ballot 1 (Blue booklet)	**Ballot 2** (yellow booklet)	Ballot 3 (no booklet)
Asian Americans	5 (1)	-	-
Blacks	7 (5)	7 (5)	7 (4)
Hispanic Americans	7 (9)	6 (7)	7 (1)
Whites	7 (10)	7 (13)	7 (6)
Women	7 (26)	7 (18)	7 (8)
Men	7 (3)	-	-
The Elderly	5 (21)	-	-
Young People	6 (9)	6 (7)	6 (5)
Liberals	4 (7)	-	-
Conservatives	5 (15)	-	-
Feminists	4 (1)	-	-
Business People	6 (5)	-	-
Labor Unions	4 (2)	-	-
Middle Class People	7 (36)	6 (29)	7 (12)
Working Class People	6 (53)	6 (41)	6 (16)
Poor People	4 (10)	5 (4)	3 (1)
Southerners	4 (2)	-	-
Christian Fundamentalists	-	4 (5)	5 (4)
People at Your Place of Worship	-	4 (39)	4 (9)
People in your Neighborhood	-	6 (15)	7 (2)
People at Work	-	5 (20)	5 (12)
Americans in General	-	*	*
N	215	203	80

- Group was not included on this ballot.
* Respondents who answered that they felt close to “Americans in General” were not asked this question.
Number of cases in parentheses.

Appendix A

Question Wordings

Open-ended Group Closeness

We are interested in finding out what kinds of people you think are most like you — in their ideas and interests and feelings about things. Thinking about the different groups in society, which ones would you say are most like you? (multiple responses accepted)

"Closest Group" Follow up:
"Of the groups you just mentioned, which one do you feel *closest* to?"

Closed-ended Group Closeness

Looking at page 3 of the booklet, there is a list of groups. Please read over the list and tell me the number for those groups you feel particularly close to — people who are most like you in their ideas and interests and feelings about things.

Ballot 1:
- Poor People
- Asian-Americans
- Liberals
- The Elderly
- Blacks
- Labor Unions
- Feminists
- Southerners
- Business People
- Young People
- Conservatives
- Hispanic-Americans
- Women
- Working-Class People
- Whites
- Middle-Class People
- Men

Ballot 2:
- Blacks
- Whites
- Christian Fundamentalists
- Middle-Class People
- Working-Class People
- Hispanic-Americans
- Young People
- Women
- Poor People
- People at Your Place of Worship
- People in Your Neighborhood
- People at Work
- Americans in General

"Closest Group" Follow up:
Of the groups you just mentioned, which one do you feel the closest to?

"Contact" Follow up:
How many days in the past week did you talk to [fill name of closest group]?

"Belonging to a group" Follow-up:
Do you belong to any organizations or take part in any activities that represent the interests and viewpoints of [fill name of closest group]?

APPENDIX B

1997 NES Pilot Study
Codes for C1 and C1a: Open-ended Group Closeness Item

Question wording:

We are interested in finding out what kinds of people you think are most like you — in their ideas and interests and feelings about things. Thinking about the different groups in society, which ones would you say are most like you?

Of the groups you just mentioned, which one do you feel closest to?

Codes:

Note: Whenever possible, I used quotes from respondents as category labels (highlighted in bold type). For some general categories, I created labels and enclosed them in parentheses in the text below. To illustrate the content of certain categories, I also included examples of the responses given; these examples, however, are not an exhaustive list of what was said.

RELIGION

Conservative Christians

10 **Christian Coalition**
11 **Conservative Christian**
12 **Evangelicals**; Evangelical Presbyterian church groups; Evangelical ministers
13 **Born Again Christians**

Christians (no further specification)

14 **Christians**; Christian people; Judeo-Christian beliefs; Christian families; Groups that believe in Christian value; Christian groups that believe the second coming is coming soon; Non-evangelical Christian
See Also: 15 **American Christians**
16 **Liberal Christian**
17 **Christian Friends**
18 **Christian Women**

Other Christians

19 **(Other Protestants**); Lutherans; Unitarian church; Protestant; Quakers
See Also: 20 **White Protestants**
21 **Catholics**

Other Religious groups

22 **Jews**
23 **Pagans**

Other references to religion or church

25 **(People in R's Church**); Church friends; People that are in my church; People that go to my parish
26 **Church Group**; Church groups; Church
(*Note: This category differs from 25 in that R does not specifically state that the church group or church is R's own.*)
27 (**Other References to Religion or Church, no further specification)**; Religion groups; Church people; People of faith; People that go to church; The Church

CLASS / INCOME

Upper Middle Class

30 **Upper Middle Class**; Affluent; Medium to upper income

Middle Class

31 **Middle Class**; Financial the middle; Medium class; Middle income type of people; Middle class citizens; Middle class society

See Also: 32 **Middle Class America**
33 **Middle Class Whites**
34 **Middle Class White Americans**

Working Middle Class

36 **Working Middle Class people;** Middle class working

See Also: 37 **Middle Class Working Americans**
38 **Middle-Class Blue Collar Group;** Upper blue collar middle class

Lower Middle Class

39 **Lower Middle Class**; Lower middle income.

Working Class / Working People

40 **Working Class;** Working public; The working people; People that work everyday; Wage earners; The common worker; Normal everyday working group

See Also: 41 **Working Class Females**
42 **Working American**
43 **Middle Age Working Class America**
126 **Working parents**
127 **Working couples where both work outside of the home**
130 **Working mother**
161 **Blue Collar Workers**

Poor People

44 **Poor People**; People with low incomes; People with modest income; Underclass; Lower income; People without a whole lot of money

45 **(People on welfare**)

Other references to Economic Status

46 **(Same income as R**)

47 **People Well paid**

48 **Homeowners**

49 **Taxpayers**; Frustrated taxpayers; Taxpayers' association

POLITICAL IDEOLOGY / PARTISANSHIP

Party Identification

50 **Conservative Republicans;** Right wing Republican
51 **Republicans**; The Republican Party
52 **Moderate Republicans**; Weak Republicans; Republican, but I don't agree with everything they say so I'm not strictly Republican
53 **Conservative Democrat**
54 **Moderate Democrats**
55 **Democrats**; Clinton supporters
56 **Other Party References**; The responsibility party; Independent party; Independents

Ideological Identification

57 **Conservatives**; Anyone who would have conservative ideas
See Also: 58 **White Conservative**
59 **Moderate Conservatives**.
60 **Moderates**; I'm in the middle of the road; Not people with strong ideology
61 **Less Conservative**
62 **Moderate Liberal**; Somewhat liberal
63 **Liberal**

Other Political Identifications

64 **Angry White Male**
65 **The KKK, Christian Militia**
66 **Pro gun rights;** NRA
67 **Pro-life**
68 **Pro-choice**
69 **Feminist**
70 **Environmentalist;** People interested in saving the different species of animals in rain forests...; Green party; conservation; Not polluting the air or environment; People that try to clean up the environment
71 **Labor Unions**; Trade unionist; Organized labor
73 (**Political Participant**); Activist; Trying to get involved; People who are trying to make a difference in their own small way; Volunteers; Supporters of causes
74 (**General Reference to Political Groups**, no further specification); Sometimes in social activities we speak about politics; Political
75 **(Apolitical)**; People who don't care much about politics; Not political involved; People who are somewhat jaded by the way things are right now
76 (**Patriot**); People who care about the country

AGE

Young

80 **Young People**; Generation X; The 19-25 age group; People who are 25-30

See Also: 116 **Caucasian Young Females**
121 **Young Marrieds**
124 **Young Parents**

Middle Age

81 **Middle Age**; Baby Boomers; The yuppie-type age people between 35-45; The hippy generation; People in the forties, like my daughter

See Also: 43 **Middle age Working Class America**
102 **Middle Aged Caucasians**
112 **Middle Aged White Males**

Older

82 **(Pre-Boomers)**; 50 Something; Over age 55

See Also: 115 **50-Something Women**

83 S**enior Citizens**; Seniors; Older people; Elderly; Anyone who graduated from high schools in the 1930s

See Also: 84 **White Elderly Population**
85 **Older White Americans**
86 **Senior Community Complex**

87 **Retired people**; AARP; People concerned with pensions

Other reference to Age

88 (**Same age as R**)

EDUCATION

91 **Less educated people**; Not highly educated but not dumb

92 **College groups**; College students

93 **Recent college graduates**; Recent grads; Younger college educated people

94 **Well-educated people**; Educated; College educated; College grads; highly educated

95 **(General reference to school and education)**; Students; Working to get education; School; Education

96 (**Education-related issues)**; Education is very important; People interested in Education; Friends of education; PTA's; People interested in the schools

100 **Whites**.

See Also:

20 **White Protestants**
33 **Middle Class Whites**
34 **Middle Class White Americans**
58 **White Conservative**
64 **Angry White Male**
84 **White Elderly Population**
85 **Older White Americans**
101 **Anglo Saxon White Americans**
102 **Middle aged Caucasians**
103 **Anglo Saxon**
104 **Irish**
111 **Caucasian Males**
112 **Middle Aged White Males**
116 **Caucasian Young Females**

105 **African Americans**; Afro-Americans; Black
106 **Hispanics**; Latinos
107 **(Asian Americans)**; The Asian Community
108 **Native Americans**
109 **(Other References to Race)**; Multiracial

GENDER / SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Gender / Sexual Orientation

110 **Men**

See Also:
- 64 **Angry White Male**
- 111 **Caucasian Males**
- 112 **Middle Aged White Males**

113 **Women**

See Also:
- 18 **Christian Women**
- 41 **Working class females**
- 114 **Working Women**; Professional working women; Career women
- 115 **50-Something Women**; Women 45-50; Older women; Women in menopause in their 50s
- 116 **Caucasian Young Females**
- 132 **Single women**
- 151 **Business Women**

117 **Gay**

FAMILY

Family

120 **Married**

See Also:
- 121 **Young Marrieds**
- 122 **Married Families**
- 163 **Housewife**

123 **Parents**; People with families; Family groups; Couples who have children and families

See Also:
- 122 **Married Families**
- 124 **Young Parents**; Young couples with children; Parents of school age children
- 125 **Parents that take time off work to work with their kids**
- 126 **Working parents**
- 128 **Single Parents**
- 129 **Mothers**
- 130 **Working mother**
- 131 **Single mothers**

127 **Working couples where both work outside of the home**; Couples where both people work

132 **Single women**

Other references to Family

133 **R's Family**; Family members; My children

134 **People who are family-oriented**; Focus on the families

OCCUPATION

Professionals / Media / Technology / Business

140 **Professionals**; Professional people with college education
141 **White Collar Worker**

142 **Doctors**
143 **Engineers**
144 **Teachers**; Professors; Educators
145 **Entertainers and artists**
146 **News Commentators**
147 **Politicians**

148 **Technology Groups**
149 **Technical People**; Professional technical people; Technical people with advanced degrees

150 **Business People**; People in the business world; Businessmen; Business groups; Chamber of Commerce; Business owners; Investors; Entrepreneurs
See also: 151 **Business Women**
152 **Small Businessperson**; Small independent businessman
153 **People in Real Estate**
154 **Salespeople**

Law Enforcement / Farmers / Construction / Blue Collar

155 **Criminal Justice People**
156 **Farmers**
157 **Construction Workers**
158 **Truck Driver**; People that make their living on the highway
159 **Railroad**
160 **Military Personnel**

161 **Blue Collar Workers**; High paid blue collar worker
See Also: 38 **Middle-Class Blue Collar Group**

Other Occupation Reference

162 **Self-employed**
163 **Housewife**
164 **Peace Corp volunteer**

GEOGRAPHY

170 **Neighbors**; My neighborhood; People in the neighborhood
171 **Rural**; Rural area people; The country people
172 **Urban**; The city; Inner city person
173 **Suburban**
174 **(Reference to a State)**; Texans
175 **People in my Community**
See Also: 86 **Senior Community Complex**

Americans

176 **(Reference to America or Americans)**; Middle American; Americans in general
See Also: 15 **American Christians**
32 **Middle Class America**
34 **Middle Class White Americans**
37 **Middle Class Working Americans**
42 **Working American**.
43 **Middle age Working Class America**
85 **Older White Americans**
101 **Anglo Saxon White Americans**

HOBBIES / ACTIVITIES / SPORTS

180 (**Media-related Interests)**; Those who listen to radio part time; Newspaper readers; People who listen to public radio; NPR

181 (**Reading-related Interests**); Readers of science fiction; Interested in reading, fiction reading mainly; Literary group (like friends of the library)

182 **(Sports Activities or Fans**); Ohio State Football Fan; Golfing league; Bowling; Eastern Stars camping group; Sporting groups, hunting and fishing

183 (**Arts-related Interests)**; Actively involved in the theater; Music and theater; People who are interested in the arts

184 (**Other group activities)**; Masonic Fraternity; Health (food groups); Woman's club group; Luncheon groups; Men's group; Cooking groups; Veterans group that is non political

185 **(Traveling**); World travelers

PEOPLE R HAS CONTACT WITH

190 **Friends**; Close friends
See Also: 17 **Christian friends.**

191 **Co-workers**; People that I work [with]; My office mate

192 (**Other Contact references)**; People I associate with; People I come in contact with day by day; Most people you deal with; I'm comfortable with everybody I talk to, I can talk to the highest and lowest in life, doesn't make any difference to me; People that I talk to from all age groups and financial backgrounds

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

200 **Hard-working / Financially motivated;** People who have had a rough time in life, really worked for what they have; People who want a high quality of life; Trying to get out of welfare; The ones that work hard but get little reward in the end

201 **Independent thinkers**; Rugged individualist

202 **Realists**; More down to earth

203 **Optimists**; People that try to have a positive attitude toward life; Positive thinking group

204 **People with morals**; Traditional

205 **(Other Personal Attributes)**; Open-minded people; Easy-going; Creative; Artistic; Caring; Honest people; Well-informed intelligent people

OTHER

210 **Average / Common Person**; Plain down to earth person; Joe average; Just everyday people; Middle group; Just regular people like me

220 **Many Groups or People**; A lot of groups; About half the people...most of the people

230 **None, No groups.**

998 **Don't Know**.

999 **No Answer, Refused**.

Appendix C
Open-ended Responses to "Closest Group":

1997 NES Pilot

% of all Responses for Overarching Categories*

Question wording:

We are interested in finding out what kinds of people you think are most like you — in their ideas and interests and feelings about things. Thinking about the different groups in society, which ones would you say are most like you? *Of the groups you just mentioned, which one do you feel closest to?*

11%	POLITICAL IDEOLOGY / PARTISANSHIP
	Party Identification
	Ideological Identification
	Other Political Identifications
13	CLASS / INCOME
	Middle Class
	Working Class / Working People
	Poor People
22	RELIGION
	Conservative Christians
	"Christians" (no further specification)
	Other Christians (Denominations given)
	Other Religious groups
	Other references to religion or church
13	OCCUPATION
9	AGE
9	FAMILY
	Marital Status
	Parental Status
	Other references to family
3	GEOGRAPHY
	Neighbors
	Americans
1	EDUCATION
3	RACE / ETHNICITY
4	GENDER / SEXUAL ORIENTATION
7	HOBBIES / ACTIVITIES / SPORTS
5	PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES
4	PEOPLE R HAS CONTACT WITH
1	AVERAGE , COMMON PERSON

** For a full list of categories and more details on the coding, see Appendix B.*

Appendix D1
New Group Closeness Item: Close to "Americans in General"

1997 NES Pilot

49% of the respondents mentioned "Americans" as a close group.

In terms of general attitudes and beliefs, how similar would you say other people are to you — very similar, somewhat similar, not very similar, or not at all similar.

	No Mention Of Americans (n=162)	Mention of Americans (n=156)
Very Similar	11%	13%
Somewhat Similar	65	72
Not Very Similar	17	13
Not at all Similar	8	2

	No Mention Of Americans (n=165)	Mention of Americans (n=160)
Mention of Average, American, or "Many Groups" on the Open -ended Question	7%	9%
No Mention	93	91

Logit Analysis

Close to "Americans in General"

Variable		B	S.E.
Black dummy		1.19	.77
Hispanic dummy		-.36	.59
Age		.01	.01
Education		-.28	.15#
Democrat dummy	-.28	.38	
Independent dummy		-.26	.84
Liberal dummy		.15	.42
Moderate dummy	.22	.80	
Family Income		-.00	.12
South dummy		.34	.35
Sex		-.15	.33
Similar to people		-.26	.12*
Immigrant parent	.10	.11	
Trust people		-.02	.08
Constant		1.22	.11
n		196	

significant at the p<.10 level
* significant at the p<.05 level

Appendix D2
New Group Closeness Item: Close to People in your Neighborhood

1997 NES Pilot

Logit Analysis
Close to "People in your Neighborhood"

Variable		B	S.E.
Black dummy		-.20	.69
Hispanic dummy		.43	.54
Age		.01	.01
Education		-.04	.15
Democrat dummy	.17	.37	
Independent dummy		.74	.84
Liberal dummy		-.30	.41
Moderate dummy	.39	.74	
Family Income		.20	.12#
South dummy		.29	.34
Sex		.45	.33
Talk to neighbors	-.22	.11*	
Tenure in city		.23	.10*
Tenure in house		-.08	.10
Constant		-2.85	1.20*
n		204	

New Group Closeness Item: Close to People at Work

Logit Analysis
Close to "People at Work"

Variable		B	S.E.
Black dummy		-.16	.74
Hispanic dummy		-.49	.58
Age		-.03	.01*
Education		-.22	.16
Democrat dummy	.22	.41	
Independent dummy		.59	.96
Liberal dummy		-.84	.46#
Moderate dummy	.62	.85	
Family Income		.18	.12
South dummy		.11	.37
Sex		.34	.36
Employed dummy		1.69	.44*
Constant		-.41	1.29
n		204	

* significant at the p<.05 level

Appendix D3
New Group Closeness Item: Close to People at your Place of Worship

1997 NES Pilot

Logit Analysis
Close to "People at your place of Worship"

Variable		B	S.E.
Black dummy		1.05	.82
Hispanic dummy		-1.31	.62*
Age		-.01	.01
Education		-.22	.18
Democrat dummy	.07	.43	
Independent dummy		-.04	.89
Liberal dummy		-.35	.46#
Moderate dummy	-.11	.82	
Family Income		.08	.13
South		.48	.38
Sex		.63	.37#
Attendance of Services		.78	.13**
Constant		-2.97	1.25*
n		204	

Appendix E
Belonging to an Organization
1997 NES Pilot

Question Wording:
Do you belong to any organizations or take part in any activities that represent the interests and viewpoints of [fill name of closest group]?

	Ballot 1		Ballot 2	
Asian Americans	0%	(1)	-	
Blacks	40	(5)	44	(9)
Hispanic Americans	44	(9)	0	(8)
Whites	30	(10)	10	(20)
Women	35	(26)	31	(26)
Men	0	(4)	-	
The Elderly	36	(22)	-	
Young People	22	(9)	17	(12)
Liberals	43	(7)	-	
Conservatives	28	(18)	-	
Feminists	100	(1)	-	
Business People	60	(5)	-	
Labor Unions	50	(2)	-	
Middle Class People	19	(37)	27	(41)
Working Class People	38	(53)	35	(57)
Poor People	20	(10)	60%	(5)
Southerners	0	(2)	-	
Christian Fundamentalists	-		56	(9)
People at Your Place of Worship	-		57	(47)
People in your Neighborhood	-		35	(17)
People at Work	-		34	(32)
Americans in General	-		**	

- Group was not included on this ballot.
** Respondents who answered that they felt close to “Americans in General” were not asked this question.
Number of cases in parentheses.

Appendix F
Close Group vs. Closest Group
1997 NES Pilot

Among Respondents who mentioned being close to a group, what % *also* chose it as their closest group.

	Ballot 1 (Blue booklet)	**Ballot 2** (yellow booklet)	Ballot 3 (no booklet)
Asian Americans	14%	-	-
Blacks	21	15	31
Hispanic Americans	38	22	10
Whites	11	13	19
Women	25	18	28
Men	7	-	-
The Elderly	26	-	-
Young People	12	14	24
Liberals	16	-	-
Conservatives	26	-	-
Feminists	4	-	-
Business People	8	-	-
Labor Unions	5	-	-
Middle Class People	24	20	25
Working Class People	40	32	37
Poor People	23	10	8
Southerners	7	-	-
Christian Fundamentalists	-	15	40
People at Your Place of Worship	-	38	32
People in your Neighborhood	-	15	8
People at Work	-	19	34
Americans in General	-	15	23
N	221	221	90

- Group was not included on this ballot.

Appendix G
Description of Variables Used in Analysis
1997 NES Pilot

Logit Analyses

Black dummy
Hispanic dummy
Age (continuous)
Education (5 categories)
Democrat dummy
Independent dummy
Liberal dummy
Moderate dummy
Family Income (6 categories)
South dummy
Gender

Employed dummy (created from v960616)
Talk to neighbors (v961260)
Tenure in city (v960712)
Tenure in house (v960713)
Attendance of religious services (scale created from v960576 and v960578)
Similar to people (v970010)
Immigrant parent (v960707)
Trust people (v970011)

Policy Items used for Table 13

R Self-Placement on Defense Spending Scale (v960463)
Federal Spending on Welfare Programs (v960497)
R Self-Placement on Services / Spending Scale (v960450)
R Self-Placement on Guaranteed Job / Standard of Living Scale (v960483)
R Opinion: Govt see to Fair job treatment for blacks (v961206)
R scale Help Blacks (v970193)
Does R favor affirmative action in hiring and promotion (v961209)
Laws to Protect Homosexuals Against Job Discrimination (v961194)
R view on school prayer (v970192)

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Table 3
Group Closeness, NES 1972-1997

	'72	'76	'80	'84	'88	'92	'96	'97 Ballot 1	'97 Ballot 2
Businessmen[1]	16%	20%	28%	44%	26%	25%	25%	30%	-
Liberals	11	13	13	22	11	13	14	20	-
Southerners	15	18	20	27	-	16	15	13	-
Poor People	25	32	42	47	36	32	27	20	18
Catholics	18	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protestants	30	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jews	7	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Young People	44	48	51	62	41	44	34	35	23
Whites	39	47	47	62	38	42	40	42	47
Blacks	15	13	18	28	17	18	16	11	15
Conservatives	16	21	26	41	22	20	29	32	-
Women	33	45	42	59	38	39	44	47	43
Middle Class People	52	66	65	77	66	65	62	69	65
Workingmen[2]	42	56	63	73	70	63	62	60	58
Farmers	26	34	41	47	-	-	-	-	-
Older People	41	52	57	59	47	40	41	39	-
Big Business	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic-Americans	-	-	7	17	-	10	11	11	14
Environmentalists	-	-	37	50	-	-	-	-	-
Labor Unions	-	-	14	18	13	10	11	18	-
Evangelists	-	-	6	16	4	-	-	-	-
Feminists	-	-	-	19	8	12	11	13	-
Men	-	-	-	41	-	-	28	27	-
Christian Fundamentalists	-	-	-	-	15	-	-	-	15
Asian-Americans	-	-	-	-	-	5	6	4	-
People at your Place of Worship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
People in your Neighborhood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
People at Work	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	46
Americans in General	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50

The order of the groups in this table reflects the order in which they were added to the "group closeness" battery over time.
- Group was not included in battery that year.

[1] Alternatively, Businessmen and Businesswomen (1984), Business People (1988)

[2] Alternatively, Workingmen and Workingwomen (1984), Working People (1988), Working Class (1992, 1996, 1997a&b)

Table 4
Closest Group
NES 1972-1997

	'72	'76	'80	'84	'88	'92	'97a	'97b
Businessmen	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%	4%	2%	-
Liberals	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	-
Southerners	2	1	2	1	-	1	1	-
Poor People	5	6	9	9	9	8	5	2
Catholics	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protestants	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jews	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Young People	15	12	8	7	7	7	4	3
Whites	5	5	3	2	2	4	5	6
Blacks	3	3	4	3	4	5	2	2
Conservatives	2	4	3	2	3	3	8	-
Women	6	7	6	4	6	6	12	8
Middle Class People	20	22	18	21	20	21	17	13
Workingmen	13	13	17	21	23	24	24	19
Farmers	5	5	4	6	-	-	-	-
Older People	11	11	13	10	13	12	10	-
Big Business	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic-Americans	-	-	1	2	-	2	4	3
Environmentalists	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-
Labor Unions	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	-
Evangelists	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-
Feminists	-	-	-	1	0	1	1	-
Men	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-
Christian Fundamentalists	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	2
Asian-Americans	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
People at your Place of Worship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
People in your Neighborhood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
People at Work	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
Americans in General	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8

The order of the groups in this table reflects the order in which they were added to the "group closeness" battery over time.
- Group was not included in battery that year.

Table 7
Open vs Closed-ended Group Closeness
1997 NES Pilot

		% of respondents who chose the group in the Closed-ended question		% of respondents who chose the group in the Open-ended question		Correlation between 97 open and 97 Ballot 1	Correlation between 97 open and 97 Ballot 2
1	Middle-class people	67%		19%	(1)*	.14	.08
2	Working-class people	59		12	(2)	.40	.42
3	People at work	50		2	(14)	-	.29
4	People at your place of worship	46		4	(9)	-	.30
5	Women	45		5	(7)	.44	.50
6	Americans	45		5	(8)	-	.06
7	People in your Neighborhood	45		2	(14)	-	.89
8	Whites	45		5	(6)	.50	.03
9	Older People	39		7	(5)	.53	-
10	Conservatives	32		11	(3)	.98	-
11	Business people	30		3	(12)	.46	-
12	Young People	29		3	(11)	.95	.43
13	Men	27		1	(16)	.92	-
14	Liberals	20		7	(4)	.77	-
15	Poor People	19		4	(10)	.62	.49
16	Labor Unions	18		1	(16)	.94	-
17	Christian Fundamentalists	15	2	(13)	-	-	
18	Feminists	13		0	(20)	-	-
19	Southerners	13		0	(22)	-	-
20	Blacks	13		1	(19)	.97	-
21	Hispanic-Americans	13		1	(18)	.49	.97
22	Asian-Americans	4	0	(20)	-	-	

Note: DKs are being excluded in the calculation of the %
* The number in the parentheses is the rank ordering of the groups for the Open-ended question.

Table 8
Reliability of the Group Closeness Items
Comparison of Closed-ended Items from 1996 and 1997 NES Ballot A

	1996 - 1997 Ballot 1 Closed-ended	1996 - 1997 Ballot 2 Closed-ended	1996 - 1997 Open-Ended
Hispanic Americans	.87	.82	.49
Conservatives	.87	-	.62
Feminists	.86	-	-.66
Southerners	.83	-	*
Labor Unions	.79	-	.70
Liberals	.77	-	.36
Women	.75	.70	.56
Blacks	.66	.68	.55
The Elderly	.65	-	.72
Asian Americans	.62	-	.96
Business People	.61	-	.57
Men	.57	-	.94
Poor People	.55	.70	.52
Working Class People	.44	.37	.32
Whites	.41	.23	.39
Young People	.37	.47	.38
Middle Class People	.35	.36	-.04

Note: Entries are tetrachoric correlations.
* No Respondents mentioned Southerners

Figure 1

Number of "close groups" mentioned for ballot 1

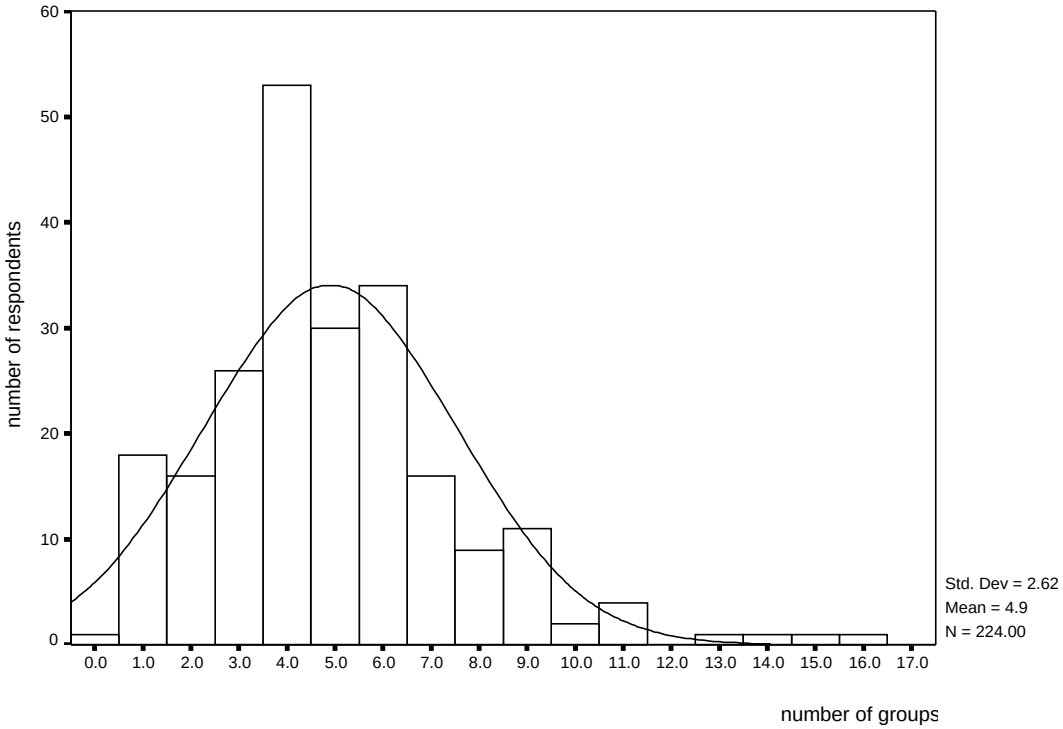

Figure 2

Number of "close groups" mentioned for ballot 2

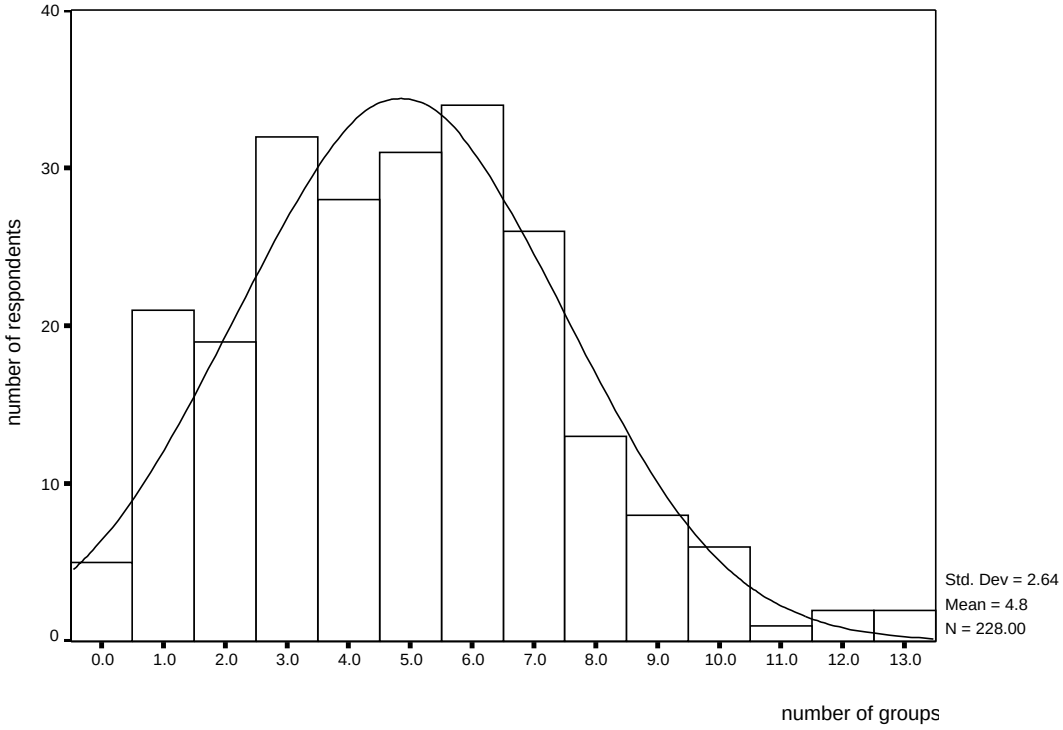

Figure 3

Number of "groups" mentioned in the open-ended question

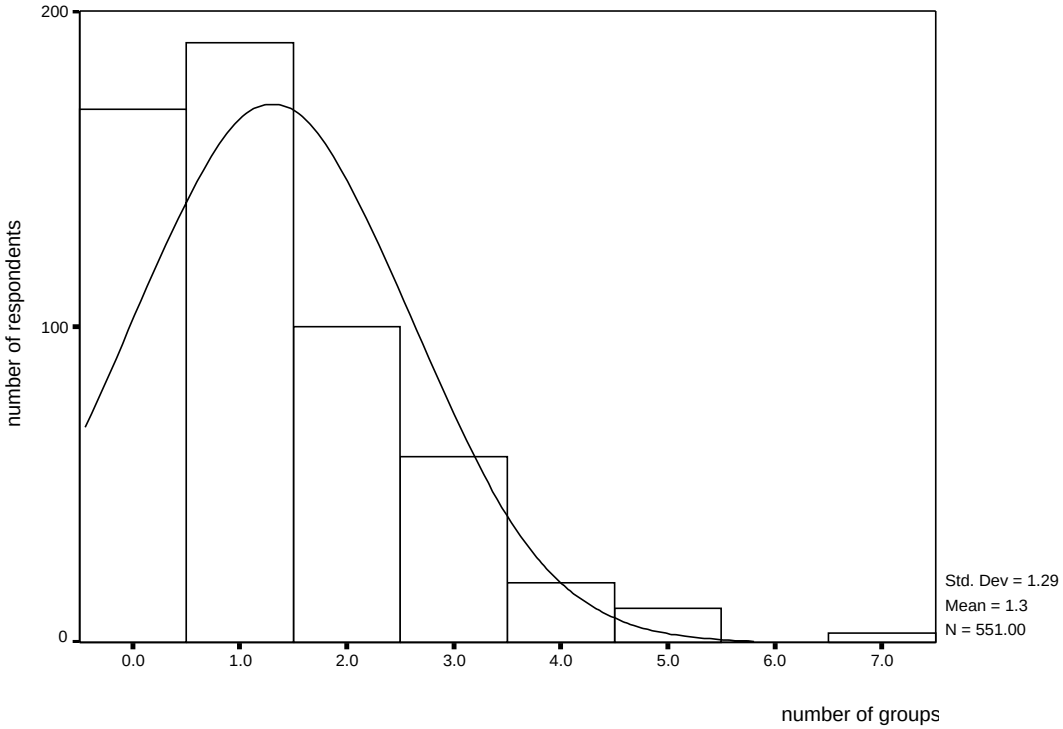

Figure 4: Number of "close groups"

mentioned for the "no booklet" ballot