A Competent Citizenry?

Who Do Citizens Hold Accountable for Economic Inequality

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Abstract

As economic inequality continues to grow, a question emerges over whether citizens are capable of holding accountable politicians for the problem. In the federal system of the United States, the diversity of actors complicates citizen attribution of responsibility, challenging the idea that citizens are competent at blaming and rewarding politicians for economic inequality. This study looks at blame and attribution of responsibility for economic inequality between federal and state, executive and legislative, Democratic and Republican, and rival and co-partisan actors to determine to whom citizens assign accountability for economic inequality. Findings paint a picture of a citizenry that is fairly competent at identifying the actors most responsible for the growing problem of economic inequality.

Introduction

"The attribution of blame and responsibility is a cornerstone of democratic politics" (Malhotra and Kuo 2008, 1). Retrospective theories of voting consider elections referendum on the past behavior of officials. While citizens are often able to employ heuristics to relieve the cognitive burden of making these judgments, the competency of these evaluations has substantial implications for the functioning of government. When citizens do not make proper evaluations, they not only punish those they should support, but they incentivize those they should punish to continue their undesirable behavior. This further decreases legislator responsiveness, as the attribution of blame and responsibility applied through voting is the primary mechanism for holding elected officials accountable. As economic inequality has grown steadily over the past 40 years, the question emerges of whether citizens can hold their government accountable for the rising problem. As multiple actors have a role in policies contributing to economic inequality, the question emerges of who citizens who responsible for the growing divide between the wealthy and the poor. This study attempts to identify how partisanship, level of government and branch of government affect citizens' perceptions of who is responsible for the growing gap.

The literature on inequality has hardly exhausted the detrimental impacts of economic inequality, and yet existing insights can fill volumes. While some individuals may decry complaints about economic inequality as a witch hunt or class warfare, research has shown that economic inequality is real and it has been growing since the 1970s, shifting income growth to the most affluent while stunting it for the poorest elements of the workforce (Gottschalk 1997; Bartels 2016; Hacker and Pierson 2010). It affects who votes (Griffin and Newman 2005; Franko, Kelly, and Witko 2016), and whose voice is heard (Gilens 2012; Rigby and Wright 2013; Carnes 2012). It has exposed citizens to increased risk (Hacker 2004) and affected the ways in which citizens interact with and perceive their government (Soss 1999).

In short, economic inequality is a clear and present danger to society, but yet it continues to grow unchecked. While citizens may not be fully aware of its dangers, they are remarkably adept at knowing how it has changed (Franko 2017). If citizens perceive economic inequality to be a problem, and they can tell when it is growing and when it is declining, it is unclear if citizens know what to do with that information in order to prevent inequality from growing. Perhaps their failure is that while they know it is growing, they do not know who is responsible and as such are unable to use their vote to leverage policy outcomes that reduce inequality. This creates a normative problem, however, as without the ability to hold elected officials accountable, politicians no longer need to be responsive to their constituents and government runs the risk of transitioning from a democracy to an oligarchy. In this paper, I explore the question of who citizens hold accountable for economic inequality. In the following section I develop two primary models to test this question: one that argues that citizens are competent at holding the politicians that cause economic inequality responsible across parties, level and branch of government; and a second model wherein citizens use partisan heuristics to blindly punish their rivals and reward their co-partisans. I find support for elements of both models and evidence that encourages observers to believe that citizens are capable of holding public officials accountable for economic inequality. In the following section, I develop the theoretical arguments for the two main models and then test them using survey data from the 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study.

Theory

Voters possess multiple ways of processing their perceptions of economic inequality and applying those views towards political entities. To determine who citizens blame for economic inequality, an understanding of how citizens assign blame between politicians must be developed. In doing so, I develop two models: A Partisan Model, wherein citizens interpret

perceptions of economic inequality through their partisan lens and blame individuals of the opposition party regardless of their office, and a Responsibility Model, where citizens attribute blame to the offices and partisans most responsible for economic inequality. I develop both theories below, beginning with the Responsibility Model. While I focus on different moderating factors in the theories of both models, the underlying assumption is that voters hold elected officials accountable for economic inequality. This is consistent with most retrospective theories of voting and is a fundamental element of electoral accountability in democracies (Malhotra and Kuo 2008; Malhotra 2008).

In the Responsibility Model, voters are able to assign blame to the entities most responsible for the policies causing economic inequality. I explore this responsibility along three categories of political entities: partisanship, federalism, and political branch. Looking first at the relationship between the partisanship of the political entity and the responsibility, there is a clear culprit for economic responsibility. While Democrats, through the allowance of political drift, have not reversed the damage of economic inequality (Hacker and Pierson 2010), it has been Republican policies that have skyrocketed the gaps between the wealthy and the poor, raising economic inequality to new levels (Bartels 2016; Fox Piven 2006; Gilens 2012; Kelly and Witko 2012). It is therefore reasonable to interpret this clear responsibility with the belief that increasing concern for economic inequality will decrease support for Republicans. The effect for Democrats is a bit more ambiguous as Democrats are not completely without blame for some of the effects of economic inequality (see Hacker and Pierson 2010; Gilens 2012; Rigby and Wright 2013). Given the adversarial nature of the Democratic and Republican parties, one could infer that if the Republican party is most responsible for the policies that fuel economic inequality, then the opposition party must be fighting those policies and thus attempting to combat economic inequality. This, however, ventures outside of the structure of this model, which aims to structure blame as being directed at the appropriate source. As such, there is not sufficient evidence to determine

whether Democrats should be blamed for allowing some economic inequality or support for attempting to limit the development of inequality-boosting Republican policies. Therefore, it should be sufficient to say that Democrats receive less blame for perceptions of economic inequality, without saying whether that attribution is blame or support.

H1: *Citizens blame Republicans more than Democrats for perceptions of economic inequality.*

The second element of the Responsibility Model deals with federalism and the level of office. Recent trends in policy devolution have moved some economic inequality producing policies from the federal government to the states (Kelly and Witko 2012; Zhu and Clark 2015; Mortensen 2015). While this should shift some responsibility to the states, economic policy primarily originates with federal actors − whether through the decision to devolve policy decisions to other levels of government, through the federal tax code, or in other federal policies and laws − the federal government is ultimately responsible for the economic policies of the country, including those that exacerbate inequality. This is consistent with Stein's finding that voter's should attribute responsibility to the federal government rather than state actors, writing:

> *... the scope of subnational economic policies was limited and significantly eclipsed by the role of the federal government. This does not mean that state and local governments are precluded from all arenas of economic policy. States can have a marginal but significant impact on their economy either by minimizing the negative consequences of a national recession or by worsening a bad situation in failing to capitalize on economic opportunities. (1990, 51)*

Even in the literature on economic voting, scholars have found that voters use the national economy rather than any state, local or pocketbook evaluations of the economy to make voting decisions (Eisenberg and Ketcham 2004). In short, the national economy is the driver of economic perceptions and it is the federal government that is primarily responsible for

the national economy. As such, in the Responsibility Model, voters should assign more responsibility to federal actors over state actors (responsibility, in this case, denotes the magnitude of the marginal effect, while blame denotes direction).

H2: *Citizens attribute responsibility to the federal actors more than state actors for perceptions of economic inequality.*

Turning to the final element of the Responsibility Model, branch of government reflects the responsibilities delegated between the executive and legislative branches of government. While executives serve as a unitary figure who can claim credit for outcomes, the legislative branches are those responsible for crafting and passing laws that can most impact economic inequality. This includes the structure of the tax code, the minimum wage, and access to healthcare, to name a few. While executives may have a vision of their desired law, the legislature must write and pass the law and in so doing, compromise occurs amongst legislators. Thus, the final bill must meet the approval of a majority (and in some cases super-majority) of the legislatures. Rudolph (2003) finds that voters in fact do assign responsibility to Congress more than they do to the President for economic conditions, but this attribution is not unanimous. This may reflect the fact that while legislatures have considerable control over legislation design, executives do have some avenues to enact inequality affecting policy outside of the legislative arena, such as with regulations and executive actions. An example of executive action occurred in 2014 when, unable to achieve policy change through Congress, President Obama signed into law Executive Order 13658 raising the federal minimum wage to $10.10 for a subset of workers (Department of Labor 2014). While executive branches of government can affect inequality related policy, legislative branches have substantially greater opportunities to affect economic inequality, and as such the legislative branch should hold a preponderance of responsibility for economic inequality.

H3: *Citizens attribute responsibility to legislatures more than executives for perceptions of economic inequality.*

While the Responsibility Model reflects how voters should assign blame among political actors, the literature also points to a potential second model, the Partisan Model. In the Partisan Model of blame, the complexity of assigning proper blame is obscured by a lack of clarity of responsibility. Cutler finds that "Federalism and intergovernmental policymaking may reduce voters' ability to hold their governments accountable" because of a lack of clarity of responsibility (2004, 19). While it was noted under the Responsibility Model that laws reflect the influence of the legislative branch more than the executive branch, this does not mean that citizens can correctly interpret them as such. This is not due to a lack of political sophistication, but more likely attributed to competing credit claiming among figures. The Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 (EGTRRA) has a formal name depicting its legislative origins, though it is more commonly known as one element of the "Bush tax cuts." The same pattern exists for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), which is known as Obamacare. In both of these cases, executives may receive responsibility for legislative outcomes, adding confusion to the citizen's efforts to properly assign responsibility between branches of government. Duch and Stevenson (2013) find that political actors with veto powers do receive some responsibility for outcomes, which adds to the complexity of attributing blame and only serves to further obfuscate the clarity of responsibility.

In addition to challenges at attributing responsibility between branches of government, voters may also have difficulty assigning responsibility between levels of government due to policy devolution. By shifting some policy decisions to states, federal politicians seek to deflect responsibility for the outcomes to the state levels. While citizens may be able to accurately track changes in economic inequality (Franko 2017), they rely more on macro-indicators of outcomes rather than on the policies that produced the changes. As such, voters may be unaware of who is actually responsible for the policy change. Further complicating this is conflicting partisan beliefs about who should be responsible for policies.

Republicans tend to believe that policy is better handled by state officials, while Democrats tend to believe that policy should be conducted at the federal level (Malhotra 2008). This only further adds to the ambiguity and complexity in assigning Responsibility.

The more complex the decision, the more likely voters are to use heuristics to reduce their cognitive burden (Barker and Hansen 2005; Bodenhausen and Lichtenstein 1987; Shively 1981). The implication here is that assigning responsibility between federal and state actors or executive and legislative actors is too complicated for voters to process directly (what would be consistent with the Responsibility Model), and instead use a partisan heuristic to determine responsibility. Malhotra and Kuo report results consistent with this theory, finding that citizens assigned blame for Hurricane Katrina more to rival partisans than they did to co-partisans (2008). This suggests that citizens do not in fact attribute blame to those who political actors who deserve it, whether state or federal, executive or legislative, but rather to those who are their rivals.

H4: *Citizens blame their rival partisans more than their co-partisans for perceptions of economic inequality.*

To summarize the theory of this paper, I have developed two competing theories of blame attribution for economic inequality: The Responsibility Model and the Partisan Model. In the Responsibility Model, citizens assign blame and responsibility based on whether the actor is responsible for the policy outcomes. They should blame Republicans more than Democrats, legislatures more than executives, and federal actors more than state actors. Unlike the nuance of the Responsibility Model, the Partisan Model argues that voters simply blame their rival partisans more than their co-partisans. In the following section, I outline the methods used to analyze these hypotheses.

Methods

Data

I analyze the questions above using the 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES), Team Module of University of Texas at Dallas data set (Clarke 2017). While an ideal analysis would include data across multiple years to allow for variation in the partisanship and composition of the federal office holders, this data set was unique in its inclusion of evaluations of the president, congress, governors, and state legislatures, as well as its questions on perceptions of economic inequality. As such, I must modify my analyses to account for the lack of variation in partisanship for federal office holders, which I will discuss in more detail in subsequent sections. The data set contains 1,000 observations, with the unit of analysis being one respondent. I supplement this data with data from the 2014 State and Legislative Partisan Composition data set from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) in order to account for legislature partisanship (NCSL 2014).

Variables

To test the hypotheses described above I use four dependent variables for each model, with each dependent variable (political actor approval) run as a separate sub-model. The dependent variable is approval rating, measured on a 4-point scale, and recoded to run from 0 (strongly disapprove) to 1 (strongly approve). The four dependent variables correspond to the four political actors identified in the theory section of this paper, federal-executives (presidents), federal-legislatures (congresses), state-executives (governors) and state-legislatures. This measure accounts for the fact that responsibility does not necessarily translate directly into voting behavior, but instead allows for voters who may blame a politician for something, but still vote for them. Additionally, prior research has shown that "attributions affect evaluations of incumbent performance" (Malhotra and Kuo 2008, 4),

indicating that this is a suitable method for measuring blame. While a feelings thermometer would be an ideal measure to account for smaller changes than my scale can detect, the availability of data with all variables needed for this analysis dictated the measure to be used.

The primary independent variable of interest in this study is perceptions of economic inequality. Perceptions are utilized rather than actual circumstances of economic inequality because voters act on what they believe regardless of its veracity, though, as noted earlier, citizens are fairly competent at tracking changes in economic inequality (Franko 2017). I operationalize perceptions of economic inequality using degree of agreement to the statement "Economic inequality is a major problem in the U.S. these days" (Clarke 2017). I recoded the variable to run from -1 to 1, with -1 indicating strongly disagree and 1 indicating strongly agree. I interpret this variable as concern for economic inequality with higher values being interpreted as a greater concern for economic inequality.

An interaction term is included with the independent variable in each model, consistent with the theory outlined above. In the Responsibility Model, perceptions of inequality are interacted with the partisanship of the political actor. Partisanship here is measured from -1 (Republican) to 1 (Democrat). Independents and divided legislatures are coded as zero. The partisanship of Nebraska's nonpartisan unicameral legislature is coded as a zero, consistent with an independent partisanship, according to its nonpartisan nature. This interaction allows for the theoretical possibility that blame is conditional on the partisanship of the actor. In the Partisan Model, perceptions of inequality are interacted with partisan match. Partisan match corresponds to whether the respondent and the political actor are co-partisans (coded as 1) or rival partisans (coded as 0). This interaction accounts for the theoretical argument that blame is filtered through a lens of partisanship.

In addition to the variables stated above, I also include control variables for the respondent's political knowledge, the actor's partisanship, the respondent's age, the respon-

dent's minority status, the respondent's income, the respondent's partisanship, the respondent's ideology and the respondent's education level. Coding schemes for these controls are included in the appendix. The models are analyzed using OLS regression with robust standard errors.

Results

Before reporting the results of the regression, I begin by exploring the sample of respondents, focusing on perceptions of economic inequality and distinctions between those who believe economic inequality is a problem and those who do not (see Figure 1). Running T-Tests between the two groups, I find that those who believe economic inequality is a problem are substantially more likely, relative to those who do not believe economic inequality is a problem, to identify as a Democrat (diff=0.840, p=0.000), liberal (diff=0.645, p=0.000), and to be younger (diff=6.949, p=0.000), a racial minority (diff=0.135, p=0.000), a woman (diff=-0.229, p=0.000), poorer (diff=1.418, p=0.000), and less educated (diff=0.216, p=0.035). Respondent's are no more likely to have a Democratic governor nor a Democratic-controlled state legislature. The average citizen who believes economic inequality is a problem weakly identifies as a Democrat, weakly identifies as a liberal, is 52, is white, is a woman, has a family income between $40,000 and $60,000, and has completed some college education. The average citizen who does not believe economic inequality is a problem moderately identifies as a Republican, moderately identifies as a conservative, is 59, is white, is a man, has a family income between $60,000 and $80,000, and has completed some college education.

I now turn to an examination of the models. I begin with the Simple Model, the results of which are displayed in Table 1. This model, while not part of the theory outlined above, is tested to provide a base level of aupport for the models. The Simple Model contains the same variables and controls as the Partisan and Responsibility Models, but excludes the
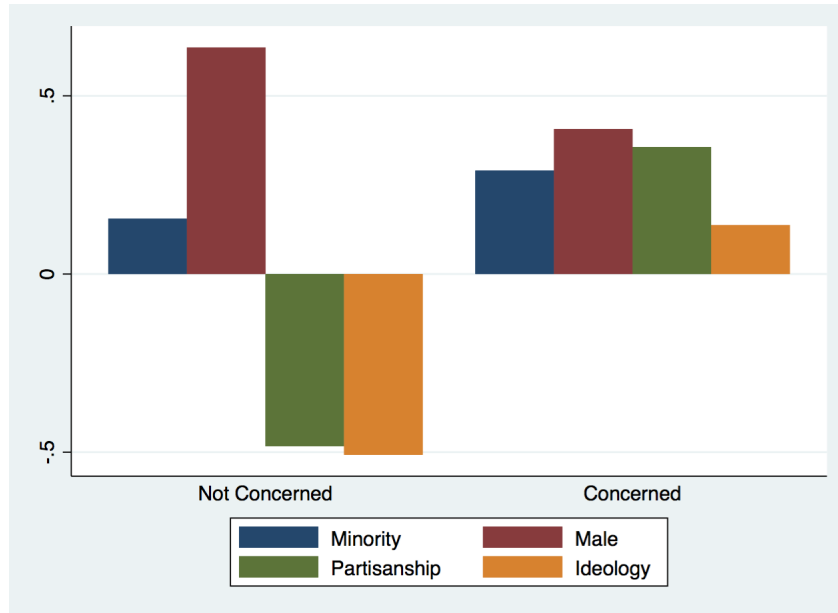
Figure 1: Average Respondent Demographics by Concern for Economic Inequality

interaction terms, described in the previous section, from the models. The availability of data for only a single year eliminates variation in presidential and Congressional partisanship, which means that the results of the Simple Model sub-models for the president and Congress are identical to the results in the Responsibility Model. In order to offer more effective comparisons, I include the Simple Model in the results, though I use the Responsibility Model and Partisan Model to test the hypotheses stated above.

The Simple Model shows a positive and statistically significant coefficient of 0.07 on the inequality variable for the presidential sub-model. This means that increasing concern for economic inequality increases support for the president (in this case President Obama). This adds some tentative support to the belief that voters reward Democrats for concern with economic inequality, suggesting that they may be able to differentiate between partisan actors responsible for economic inequality. Coefficients also reach statistical significance for Congress and state legislatures, but not for Governors. The effects for federal actors between branches are noteworthy with the coefficient for Congress significantly more negative

Simple Model

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.070***	-0.033	-0.080***	-0.052**
	(0.019)	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.023)
President Partisan Match	0.279***			
	(0.062)			
Presidential Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Governor Partisan Match		0.373***		
		(0.026)		
Gubernatorial Partisanship		0.017		
		(0.013)		
Congressional Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Legislature Partisan Match				0.234***
				(0.026)
State Leguslature Partisanship				-0.025*
				(0.013)
Political Knowledge	0.025	-0.065	-0.062	-0.077
	(0.045)	(0.053)	(0.044)	(0.052)
Age	0.000	0.002*	-0.002***	-0.000
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Minority	0.109***	0.052*	0.126***	-0.002
	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.028)	(0.032)
Male	0.002	-0.006	-0.053**	-0.022
	(0.021)	(0.026)	(0.021)	(0.026)
Income Level	0.004	0.014***	0.003	0.003
	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Partisanship (Democrat)	0.100**	-0.024	0.027	0.009
	(0.042)	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.024)
Liberal	0.113***	0.007	-0.067***	0.005
	(0.026)	(0.031)	(0.025)	(0.029)
Education Level	0.015**	-0.009	-0.010	0.006
	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.010)
Constant	0.098	0.169**	0.437***	0.368***
	(0.065)	(0.068)	(0.052)	(0.066)
Observations	648	619	636	537
R^2	0.6076	0.3318	0.1572	0.1670
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.247	0.297	0.247	0.284
F-Statistic	158.798	32.300	14.072	9.368
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 1: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval, Controlling for Actor Partisanship, Actor-Respondent Partisan Match, Respondent Political Knowledge, Age, Minority Status, Income, Partisanship, Ideology and Education Level

than it is for the President (p<0.01), though overall differences in magnitude fail to reach significance. This effect disappears when looking at inter-branch blame at the state level. While more responsibility is placed on state legislatures than governors, the difference fails to achieve statistical significance (p=0.29). Looking at the effects of federalism, the President receives more responsibility for concerns of economic inequality than governors (p=0.111), but the difference just fails to reach statistical significance. Congress is also assigned more responsibility than the state legislatures, but the effect fails to reach statistical significance (p=0.172). These results are limited by the lack of variation in the partisanship of the President and Congress due to the single year of data used, however they offer tepid support for the argument that federalism affects attribution of responsibility, with differences just above conventional levels of significance.

While the Simple Model allows for comparisons using the federal actors, the data available limits the testability of the hypotheses related to the Responsibility Model due to the lack of variation in partisanship for the President and Congress. The regression results for the Responsibility Model are shown in Table 2. The coefficients on Inequality in Table 2 are identical to those reported in Table 1, reflecting the inability of the data to allow for a full test of the model. The marginal effect of perceptions of inequality, shown in Figures 2 and 3 below, are compared between Republican and Democratic governors and between Republican and Democratic state legislatures in order to test hypothesis 1. In both cases, the marginal effects for Republican actors are negative, while the marginal effects for Democratic actors are positive, implying that Republicans are blamed for concern for economic inequality, while Democrats are rewarded for concern for economic inequality. In both cases, the difference between Democratic and Republican actors is statistically significant with p<0.01. This strongly supports the argument that citizens are able to effectively differentiate between Democrat's and Republican's impact on economic inequality.

To test the second hypothesis, that citizens attribute responsibility to federal actors

Responsibility Model

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.070***	-0.023	-0.080***	-0.050**
	(0.019)	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.024)
Inequality*President Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Presidential Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Inequality*Governor Partisanship		0.116***		
		(0.023)		
Gubernatorial Partisanship		-0.014		
		(0.014)		
Inequality*Congress Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Inequality*Legislature Partisanship				0.110***
				(0.022)
State Leguslature Partisanship				-0.055***
				(0.014)
Constant	0.098	0.237***	0.437***	0.415***
	(0.065)	(0.069)	(0.052)	(0.067)
Observations	648	619	636	537
R^2	0.6076	0.3617	0.1572	0.2050
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.247	0.291	0.247	0.278
F-Statistic	158.798	33.736	14.072	11.549
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 2: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval Conditional on Actor Partisanship (Control Variables Omitted)

Figure 2: Marginal Effect of Concern for Economic Inequality on Gubernatorial Approval within the Responsibility Model

Figure 3: Marginal Effect of Concern for Economic Inequality on State Legislature Approval within the Responsibility Model

more than state actors, the magnitude of the marginal effects of perceptions of inequality are compared between Democratic presidents and Democratic governors. The result is that the magnitude of the marginal effect for governors is greater than it is for presidents, contradicting the theory that federal actors are held more responsible, though the difference is not statistically significant. This conclusion is limited by the lack of variation in federal actor partisanship, limiting the robustness of the results.

Hypothesis 3 is tested by comparing the magnitude of the marginal effect across branches of government, holding partisanship and federalism constant. This allows two comparisons, between Democratic state legislatures and governors and between Republican state legislatures and governors. In both cases, the differences are not statistically significant at any conventional level. While branch of government cannot be tested at the federal level due to data constraints, the tests for hypothesis 3 are more substantial than for hypothesis 2. However, there is little evidence in either case that the level of government or the branch of government has a meaningful impact on a citizen's attribution of responsibility.

While the results thus far offer some support for the Responsibility Model, the analysis now turns to the Partisan Model, with results of the regression presented in Table

3. An advantage of this model is that it allows for variation in actor-respondent partisan match even when the partisanship of the actor does not vary. However, a divided Congress still does not allow for meaningful comparisons as no individual holds a divided partisanship and would not be suitable to identify as independent. Hypotheses 2 and 3 are tested using the Partisan Model for additional robustness alongside a test of hypothesis 4. The marginal effects for the Partisan Model are shown in Figures 4-6 below. Here the results suggest that governors are held more responsible than presidents when they are co-partisans, but when they are rival partisans, presidents are held more responsible than governors, though the relationships are not statistically significant. This difference in effects may be attributable to the fact that there is only one president in the sample and thus the co-partisans are exclusively Democrats and the rival partisans Republicans, rather than an average of effects for both partisanships. However, the results do lend some support to the idea that federalism does matter to attribution of responsibility, though with diverging directions based on the respondent's partisanship and the connected belief in the structure of government.
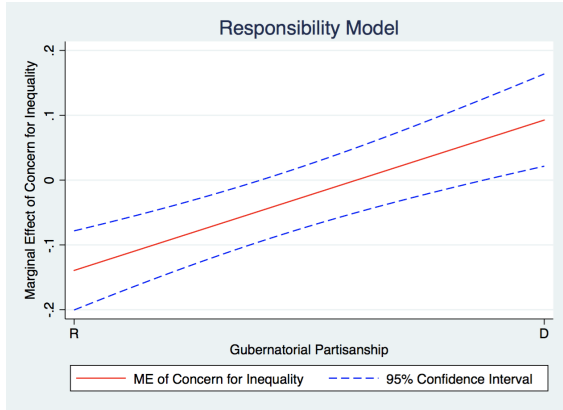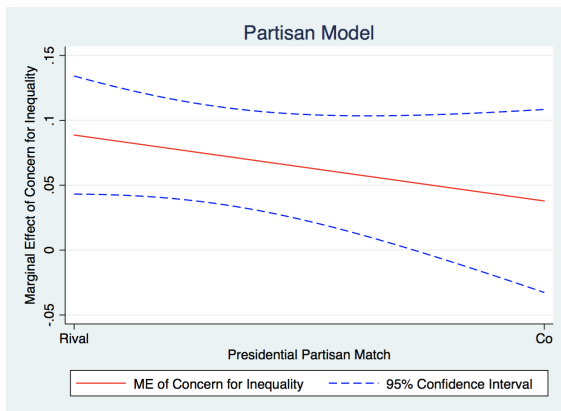

Figure 4: Marginal Effect of Concern for Economic Inequality on Presidential Approval within the Responsibility Model

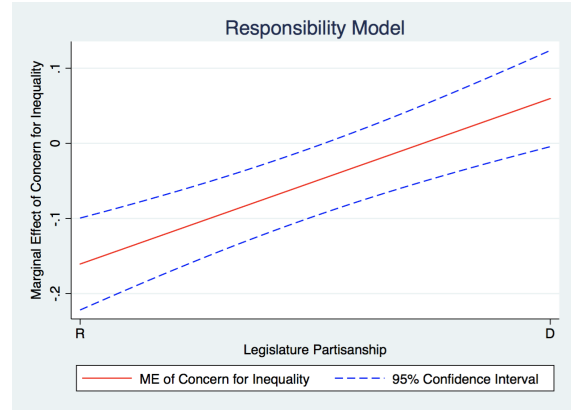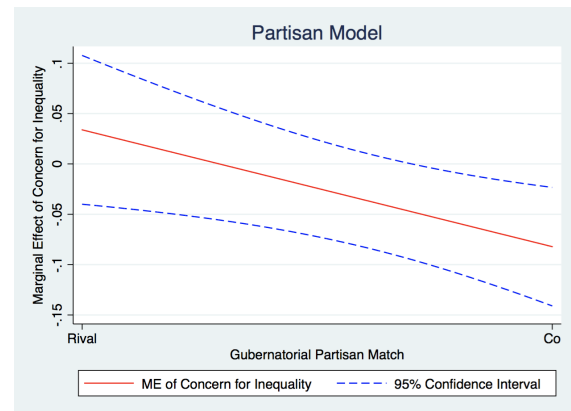Figure 5: Marginal Effect of Concern for Economic Inequality on Gubernatorial Approval within the Responsibility Model

Looking at the implications of branch of government in the Partisan Model, hypothesis 3 continues to find little support. Comparing the marginal effects for state legislatures

16

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Partisan Model				
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.089***	0.034	-0.080***	0.026
	(0.023)	(0.038)	(0.020)	(0.033)
Inequality*President Partisan Match	-0.051			
	(0.044)			
President Partisan Match	0.302***			
	(0.063)			
Inequality*Governor Partisan Match		-0.116**		
		(0.047)		
Governor Partisan Match		0.405***		
		(0.029)		
Inequality*Congress Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Inequality*Legislature Partisan Match				-0.144***
				(0.043)
Legislature Partisan Match				0.273***
				(0.027)
Constant	0.090	0.155**	0.437***	0.343***
	(0.065)	(0.068)	(0.052)	(0.067)
Observations	648	619	636	537
R^2	0.6086	0.3393	0.1572	0.1838
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.247	0.296	0.247	0.281
F-Statistic	147.086	28.945	14.072	10.074
$\text{Prob} > F$	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table 3: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval Conditional on Actor-Respondent Partisan Match (Control Variables Omitted)
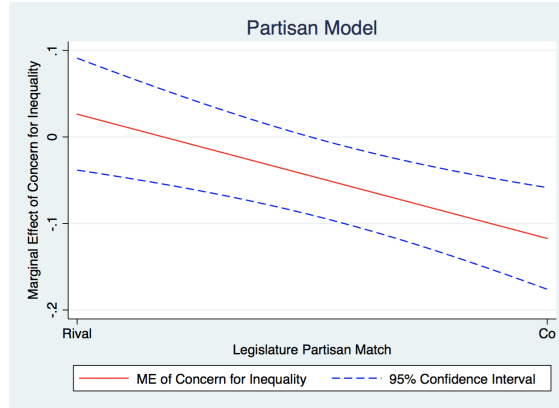
Figure 6: Marginal Effect of Concern for Economic Inequality on State Legislature Approval within the Responsibility Model

and governors, the difference in magnitude is insignificant at any conventional level. This holds whether looking at co-partisans or rival partisans. This dampens the prospects of finding any meaningful support for the argument that the branch of government affects level of responsibility for economic inequality.

Finally, hypothesis 4 is tested by comparing the marginal effect of perceptions of inequality between co-partisans and rival partisans for president, governors and state legislatures. In all three cases, the actor being a rival partisan, relative to a co-partisan, led to a marginal effect that increased approval rating as concern for economic inequality grows with varying levels of significance (presidents, $p=0.118$; governors, $p=0.008$; legislatures, $p=0.001$). Both gubernatorial and state legislature co-partisans were blamed for economic inequality ($p<0.01$ for both), while presidential co-partisans increased their approval, though not at statistically significant levels ($p=0.293$). The marginal effect for rival partisans was insignificant for governors and state legislatures, while it was fairly strong and significant for presidents (ME=0.089, $p=0.000$). There is likely an explanation underlying this finding that has not yet been identified by the theory, and I discuss potential interpretations in the following discussion section.

Discussion

The results discussed in the previous section have provided a fascinating look at how citizens attribute blame and responsibility for economic inequality. Based on the results, there is little support for the argument that voters differentiate between branches of government when assigning responsibility for economic inequality. Congress and the president, all else held constant, are perceived as equally responsible for the problem. The same holds true for governors and state legislatures. However, support for the argument that federalism matters teeters on significance. While this study focused on the partisanship of the political actor and on whether the respondent and the actor shared a partisanship, there is some evidence that the subject's partisanship, or beliefs about the structure of government rooted in partisanship, may affect the way citizens attribute blame.

The findings of the previous section suggest that voters do blame Republicans more than Democrats, but the Partisan Model revealed some conflicting results about shared partisanship. The results suggest that citizens punish their own co-partisans more than rival partisans. One possible explanation for this is that as concern for economic inequality grows, citizens punish their co-partisans for failing to do more to address the problem. Citizens believe that their co-partisans should be responsive to their concerns and when they are not they punish them. Rival partisans are not expected to be responsive and, as such, their approval is not conditional on the concerns of the citizen. The one exception to this lies with the president and is likely due to the lack of variation in the president's partisanship. Rival partisans of the president in this sample are Republicans and as their concern for economic inequality grows, findings from the Responsibility Model suggest that they should reward Democrats with approval.

This study set out to determine whether citizens can hold government officials accountable for their role in producing economic inequality. This question strikes at the core of

democratic accountability and raises the issue of whether citizens can identify those responsible, or whether they misattribute responsibility to the wrong actors. The results of this study provide some relief by suggesting that citizens are in fact capable of holding accountable political actors involved in growing economic inequality. The Responsibility Model gave strong support to the argument that citizens are aware that Republican actors exacerbate inequality more than Democratic actors. The Partisan Model, contrary to expectation, suggests that citizens only hold their co-partisans responsible for economic inequality. Together these findings present a picture of a citizenry that is capable of identifying those political actors responsible for economic inequality, and that holds their co-partisans, for whom they likely voted, accountable. While this research focused primarily on aspects of political actors that cause citizens to attribute blame, future research can benefit from a more citizen-centric analysis that focuses on elements of a citizen's environment that causes them to hold some actors more responsible than others. Additionally, expanding the existing data across multiple years should allow for a more thorough analysis that can include congressional actors. While this project was limited by data, it nevertheless has shown support for the argument that citizens are capable of holding elected officials accountable for economic inequality. This should serve as encouragement for those who wish to reduce inequality and as a sign that the citizenry is able to do its part.

Appendix Table of Contents

Appendix A - Summary Statistics

Variable Coding Schemes

Variable Name	Label	CCES Measure	Coding Scheme	Variable Type
PresApprove	Presidential Approval Rating	cc14_308a	0=strongly disapprove; 1=strongly approve	Continuous
ConApprove	Congressional Approval Rating	cc14_308b	0=strongly disapprove; 1=strongly approve	Continuous
GovApprove	Gubernatorial Approval Rating	cc14_308d	0=strongly disapprove; 1=strongly approve	Continuous
LegApprove	State Legislature Approval Rating	cc14_308e	0=strongly disapprove; 1=strongly approve	Continuous
Inequality	Perception of (Concern for) Economic Inequality	utd362	-1=strongly disagree that economic inequality is a problem; 1=strongly agree that economic inequality is a problem	Continuous
PresPID	Presidential Partisanship	n/a	-1=Republican; 0=Independent; 1=Democrat	Trichotomus
ConPID	Congressional Partisanship	n/a	-1=Republican; 0=Independent; 1=Democrat	Trichotomus
GovPID	Gubernatorial Partisanship	currentgovparty	-1=Republican; 0=Independent; 1=Democrat	Trichotomus
LegPID	State Legislature Partisanship	n/a (NCSL)	-1=Republican; 0=Independent; 1=Democrat	Trichotomus
PresPIDMatch	Respondent-President Same Partisanship	n/a	0=rival partisans; 1=co-partisans	Binary
ConPIDMatch	Respondent-Congress Same Partisanship	n/a	0=rival partisans; 1=co-partisans	Binary
GovPIDMatch	Respondent-Governor Same Partisanship	n/a	0=rival partisans; 1=co-partisans	Binary
LegPIDMatch	Respondent-State Legislature Same Partisanship	n/a	0=rival partisans; 1=co-partisans	Binary
Knowledge	Political Knowledge	cc14_309a; cc14_309b; cc14_309d; cc14_310a; cc14_310b; cc14_310c; cc14_310d;	8-point index, 1 point for each correct answer. Rescaled to run from 0=No Correct Answers; 1=8 correct answers	Continuous
Age	Respondent Age	birthyr	2017-birthyr	Continuous
Minority	Respondent Racial Minority Status	race	0=White; 1=All others	Binary
Male	Respondent Gender (Male)	gender	0=female; 1=male	Binary
Income	Respondent Family Income	faminc	1= Less than $10,000; 16= Greater than $500,000	Continuous
PID3	Respondent Partisanship	pid7	-1=Strongly Republican; 1=Strongly Democrat	Continuous
Ideology	Respondent Ideology	ideo5	-1=Strongly Conservative 1=Strongly Liberal	Continuous
Educ	Respondent Education Level	educ	1=No High School; 6=Post Grad	Continuous

Figure A1: Regression Variable Coding Schemes

Variable Summary Statistics

Table A1 lists the number of observations, minimum value, median value, maximum value, mean and standard deviation for all variables included in the Simple, Responsibility and Partisan Models.

	N	Min	Median	Max	Mean	St. Dev.
Presidential Approval	960	0.000	0.333	1.000	0.408	0.389
President Partisan Match	845	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.598	0.491
Presidential Partisanship	1000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.000
Gubernatorial Approval	909	0.000	0.667	1.000	0.464	0.354
Governor Partisan Match	844	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.531	0.499
Gubernatorial Partisanship	999	-1.000	-1.000	1.000	-0.133	0.992
Congressional Approval	935	0.000	0.333	1.000	0.233	0.265
Congressional Partisan Match	845	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Congressional Partisanship	1000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
State Legislature Approval	838	0.000	0.333	1.000	0.424	0.305
Legislature Partisan Match	797	0.000	1.000	1.000	0.506	0.500
State Leguslature Partisanship	937	-1.000	-1.000	1.000	-0.090	0.974
Concern with Economic Inequality	933	-1.000	0.500	1.000	0.308	0.654
Political Knowledge	1000	0.000	0.536	0.875	0.506	0.303
Age	1000	21.000	57.000	97.000	53.769	16.469
Minority	1000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.261	0.439
Male	1000	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.454	0.498
Income Level	878	1.000	6.000	16.000	6.100	3.224
Partisanship (Democrat)	948	-1.000	0.000	1.000	0.120	0.720
Liberal	909	-1.000	0.000	1.000	-0.053	0.554
Education Level	1000	1.000	3.000	6.000	3.607	1.483

Table A1: Variable Summary Statistics

Distribution of Independent and Dependent Variables

Figures A2-A5 show the distribution of responses that form the actor approval ratings, which are employed as the dependent variables (DV) in the sub-model regressions. Figure A6 shows the distribution of responses for perceptions of economic inequality, employed as the independent variable in the sub-model regressions.
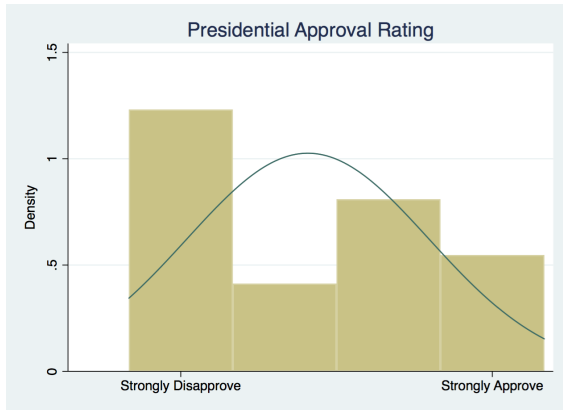
Figure A2: Distribution of Presidential Approval (DV)
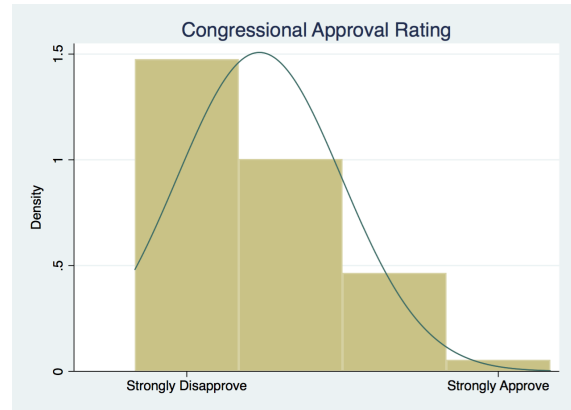
Figure A3: Distribution of Congressional Approval (DV)
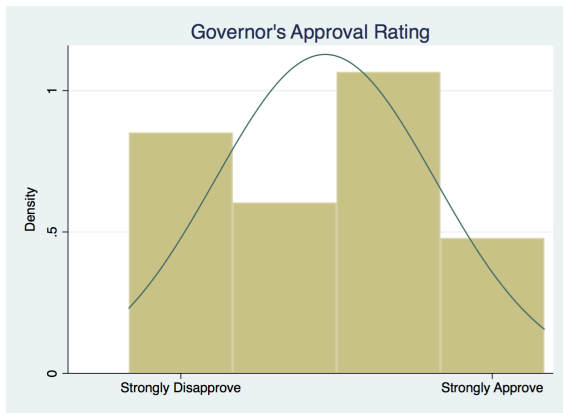
Figure A4: Distribution of Gubernatorial Approval (DV)
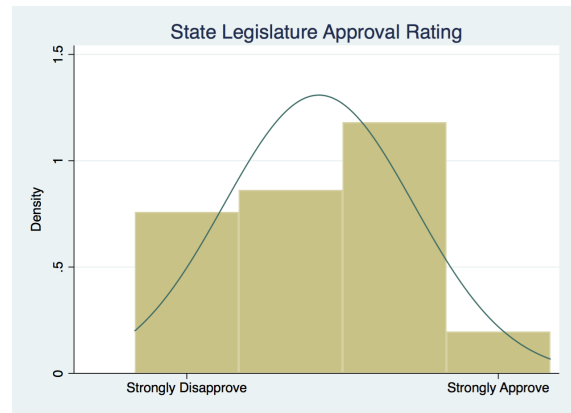
Figure A5: Distribution of State Legislature Approval (DV)
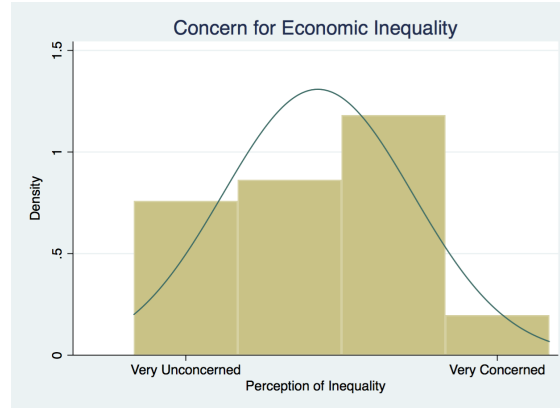
Figure A6: Distribution of Concern for Economic Inequality (IV)

Appendix B - OLS Specification Tests

In this section, I review the relevant assumptions of OLS and test whether the models I use conform to these assumptions. Where they do not, I address how I resolve these issues. I test for homoskedasticity and multicollinearity.

Homoskedasticity

First, I test the assumption of homoskedasticity using the Breusch-Pagan test. While I assume heteroskedasticity is occurring, I test anyways to confirm this finding. The canned Stata test has three options: the default option assumes a normal distribution of residuals and reports a Lagrange Multiplier (LM) statistic, the *iid* option relaxes the normality assumption and produces an LM statistic, and the *fstat* option drops the normality assumption and reports an F-statistic. I present all three for each model and sub-model in Tables A2-A4.

Sub-Model	Test Assumptions	Test Statistic	p-Value
President	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 23.41$	0.000
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 14.83$	0.000
	F-Stat	$F = 15.13$	0.000
Congress	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 30.05$	0.000
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 37.24$	0.000
	F-Stat	$F = 39.44$	0.000
Governor	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 1.22$	0.2685
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 1.65$	0.199
	F-Stat	$F = 1.65$	0.199
State Legislature	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 0.91$	0.340
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 1.24$	0.265
	F-Stat	$F = 1.24$	0.266

Table A2: Breusch-Pagan Test for Heteroskedasticity in the Simple Model - Heteroskedasticity Detected in President and Congress Sub-Models

Sub-Model	Test Assumptions	Test Statistic	p-Value
President	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 23.41$	0.000
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 14.83$	0.000
	F-Stat	$F = 15.13$	0.000
Congress	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 30.05$	0.000
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 37.24$	0.000
	F-Stat	$F = 39.44$	0.000
Governor	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 0.17$	0.676
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 0.21$	0.645
	F-Stat	$F = 0.21$	0.645
State Legislature	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 0.25$	0.612
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 0.31$	0.575
	F-Stat	$F = 0.31$	0.576

Table A3: Breusch-Pagan Test for Heteroskedasticity in the Responsibility Model - Heteroskedasticity Detected in President and Congress Sub-Models

Sub-Model	Test Assumptions	Test Statistic	p-Value
President	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 23.31$	0.000
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 15.00$	0.000
	F-Stat	$F = 15.30$	0.000
Congress	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 30.05$	0.000
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 37.24$	0.000
	F-Stat	$F = 39.44$	0.000
Governor	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 1.60$	0.206
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 2.10$	0.147
	F-Stat	$F = 2.10$	0.147
State Legislature	Default	$\chi_1^2 = 0.01$	0.932
	IID	$\chi_1^2 = 0.01$	0.920
	F-Stat	$F = 0.01$	0.920

Table A4: Breusch-Pagan Test for Heteroskedasticity in the Partisan Model - Heteroskedasticity Detected in President and Congress Sub-Models

Multicollinearity

I now turn to test the assumptions of multicollinearity. Perfect multicollinearity prevents OLS from running, but high multicollinearity inflates the standard errors, reflecting more noise in the sampling distribution. I test for multicollinearity using the VIF test, with results in Tables A4-A16. As the results above show, no multicollinearity is detected in any of the Models or sub-models.

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	1.619
President Partisan Match	8.897
Political Knowledge	1.403
Presidential Partisanship	
Age	1.340
Minority	1.197
Male	1.160
Income Level	1.190
Partisanship (Democrat)	9.367
Liberal	2.032
Education Level	1.275

Table A5: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Simple Model, Presidential Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	1.624
Congressional Partisan Match	
Political Knowledge	1.394
Congressional Partisanship	
Age	1.339
Minority	1.182
Male	1.155
Income Level	1.188
Partisanship (Democrat)	2.168
Liberal	2.068
Education Level	1.280

Table A6: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Simple Model, Congressional Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	1.624
Governor Partisan Match	1.087
Political Knowledge	1.389
Gubernatorial Partisanship	1.051
Age	1.335
Minority	1.191
Male	1.164
Income Level	1.184
Partisanship (Democrat)	2.221
Liberal	2.081
Education Level	1.290

Table A7: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Simple Model, Gubernatorial Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	1.568
Legislature Partisan Match	1.073
Political Knowledge	1.408
State Leguslature Partisanship	1.057
Age	1.364
Minority	1.200
Male	1.162
Income Level	1.203
Partisanship (Democrat)	2.118
Liberal	2.026
Education Level	1.361

Table A8: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Simple Model, State Legislature Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	1.619
Inequality*President Partisanship	
Political Knowledge	1.403
Presidential Partisanship	
President Partisan Match	8.897
Age	1.340
Minority	1.197
Male	1.160
Income Level	1.190
Partisanship (Democrat)	9.367
Liberal	2.032
Education Level	1.275

Table A9: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Responsibility Model, Presidential Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	1.624
Inequality*Congress Partisanship	
Political Knowledge	1.394
Congressional Partisanship	
Congressional Partisan Match	
Age	1.339
Minority	1.182
Male	1.155
Income Level	1.188
Partisanship (Democrat)	2.168
Liberal	2.068
Education Level	1.280

Table A10: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Responsibility Model, Congressional Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	1.634
Inequality*Governor Partisanship	1.884
Political Knowledge	1.390
Gubernatorial Partisanship	1.294
Governor Partisan Match	1.572
Age	1.335
Minority	1.192
Male	1.166
Income Level	1.192
Partisanship (Democrat)	2.223
Liberal	2.081
Education Level	1.297

Table A11: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Responsibility Model, Gubernatorial Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	1.568
Inequality*Legislature Partisanship	1.753
Political Knowledge	1.408
State Leguslature Partisanship	1.292
Legislature Partisan Match	1.464
Age	1.366
Minority	1.201
Male	1.162
Income Level	1.203
Partisanship (Democrat)	2.118
Liberal	2.027
Education Level	1.380

Table A12: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Responsibility Model, State Legislature Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	2.485
President Partisan Match	9.665
Inequality*President Partisan Match	3.246
Presidential Partisanship	
Political Knowledge	1.455
Age	1.341
Minority	1.203
Male	1.161
Income Level	1.190
Partisanship (Democrat)	9.383
Liberal	2.033
Education Level	1.290

Table A13: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Partisan Model, Presidential Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	1.624
Congressional Partisan Match	
Inequality*Congress Partisan Match	
Congressional Partisanship	
Political Knowledge	1.394
Age	1.339
Minority	1.182
Male	1.155
Income Level	1.188
Partisanship (Democrat)	2.168
Liberal	2.068
Education Level	1.280

Table A14: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Partisan Model, Congressional Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	3.604
Governor Partisan Match	1.348
Inequality*Governor Partisan Match	3.478
Gubernatorial Partisanship	1.533
Political Knowledge	1.389
Age	1.337
Minority	1.195
Male	1.164
Income Level	1.184
Partisanship (Democrat)	2.244
Liberal	2.081
Education Level	1.291

Table A15: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Partisan Model, Gubernatorial Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

	VIF
Concern with Economic Inequality	3.223
Legislature Partisan Match	1.313
Inequality*Legislature Partisan Match	3.138
State Leguslature Partisanship	1.444
Political Knowledge	1.409
Age	1.364
Minority	1.201
Male	1.163
Income Level	1.205
Partisanship (Democrat)	2.140
Liberal	2.027
Education Level	1.362

Table A16: VIF Test for Multicollinearity on Partisan Model, State Legislature Sub-Model - No Multicollinearity Detected

Appendix C - Robustness Checks

Results are tested by running regressions among sub-samples of the data. Data is cut along respondent partisanship and respondent political knowledge level. Regression tables and marginal effects plots are reported below.

C1: Results by Respondent Partisanship

Looking at the results in Tables A17-A22, it appears that the results generally do hold consistent when subsetting the data by partisanship. Democrats reward co-partisans, while Republicans punish co-partisans, which is consistent with the finding that citizens do punish Republicans. Both partisans reward politicians who are Democrats and punish Republicans. Regression Tables, listed below, are separated by Model and Sample Partisanship.

Simple Model - Democratic Sample

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.021	-0.079*	-0.129***	-0.121***
	(0.038)	(0.042)	(0.034)	(0.035)
President Partisan Match	0.000			
	(.)			
Presidential Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Governor Partisan Match		0.000		
		(.)		
Gubernatorial Partisanship		0.204***		
		(0.016)		
Congressional Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Legislature Partisan Match				-0.330**
				(0.151)
State Leguslature Partisanship				0.266***
				(0.077)
Political Knowledge	0.108*	-0.023	-0.085	-0.053
	(0.064)	(0.067)	(0.058)	(0.066)
Age	0.001	0.001	-0.004***	-0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Minority	0.086***	0.032	0.095***	-0.015
	(0.033)	(0.035)	(0.031)	(0.037)
Male	0.002	-0.022	-0.080***	-0.067**
	(0.030)	(0.032)	(0.026)	(0.033)
Income Level	0.004	0.011**	-0.001	0.003
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Partisanship (Democrat)	0.239***	0.027	0.143***	-0.011
	(0.067)	(0.063)	(0.052)	(0.066)
Liberal	0.084**	-0.021	-0.106***	-0.004
	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.032)	(0.036)
Education Level	0.026**	-0.009	-0.007	0.003
	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.009)	(0.012)
Constant	0.211***	0.414***	0.529***	0.786***
	(0.081)	(0.090)	(0.072)	(0.121)
Observations	372	358	368	313
R^2	0.1633	0.3635	0.2712	0.1817
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.269	0.290	0.244	0.276
F-Statistic	8.270	23.214	16.682	6.895
Prob > F	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

36

Table A17: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval

Simple Model - Republican Sample

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.073***	-0.007	-0.041*	-0.001
	(0.023)	(0.033)	(0.025)	(0.032)
President Partisan Match	0.000			
	(.)			
Presidential Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Governor Partisan Match		0.000		
		(.)		
Gubernatorial Partisanship		-0.170***		
		(0.021)		
Congressional Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Legislature Partisan Match				-0.439***
				(0.140)
State Leguslature Partisanship				-0.389***
				(0.075)
Political Knowledge	-0.088	-0.089	0.015	-0.008
	(0.063)	(0.089)	(0.074)	(0.101)
Age	-0.001	0.002*	-0.001	0.000
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Minority	0.168***	0.060	0.116**	0.016
	(0.057)	(0.063)	(0.055)	(0.068)
Male	0.033	0.023	-0.015	0.047
	(0.026)	(0.044)	(0.033)	(0.045)
Income Level	0.003	0.019***	0.009*	0.007
	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.006)
Partisanship (Democrat)	-0.072	-0.116*	-0.069	-0.061
	(0.045)	(0.070)	(0.057)	(0.072)
Liberal	0.142***	0.057	0.037	0.065
	(0.039)	(0.058)	(0.042)	(0.054)
Education Level	0.011	-0.002	-0.006	0.015
	(0.010)	(0.016)	(0.011)	(0.015)
Constant	0.114	0.208*	0.224***	0.475***
	(0.083)	(0.119)	(0.080)	(0.124)
Observations	276	261	268	224
R^2	0.2577	0.2702	0.0616	0.2702
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.199	0.309	0.240	0.279
F-Statistic	6.181	10.170	1.832	8.295
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.063	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

37

Table A18: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval

Responsibility Model - Democratic Sample

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.021	-0.084**	-0.129***	-0.128***
	(0.038)	(0.042)	(0.034)	(0.036)
Inequality*President Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Presidential Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Inequality*Governor Partisanship		0.090**		
		(0.040)		
Gubernatorial Partisanship		0.145***		
		(0.032)		
Inequality*Congress Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Inequality*Legislature Partisanship				0.053
				(0.036)
State Leguslature Partisanship				0.232***
				(0.079)
Constant	0.211***	0.422***	0.529***	0.791***
	(0.081)	(0.089)	(0.072)	(0.121)
Observations	372	358	368	313
R^2	0.1633	0.3746	0.2712	0.1873
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.269	0.288	0.244	0.275
F-Statistic	8.270	23.215	16.682	6.543
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A19: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval Conditional on Actor Partisanship (Control Variables Omitted)

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Responsibility Model - Republican Sample				
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.073***	0.018	-0.041*	0.014
	(0.023)	(0.034)	(0.025)	(0.032)
Inequality*President Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Presidential Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Inequality*Governor Partisanship		0.140***		
		(0.029)		
Gubernatorial Partisanship		-0.155***		
		(0.020)		
Inequality*Congress Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Inequality*Legislature Partisanship				0.143***
				(0.027)
State Leguslature Partisanship				-0.381***
				(0.073)
Constant	0.114	0.233**	0.224***	0.453***
	(0.083)	(0.117)	(0.080)	(0.122)
Observations	276	261	268	224
R^2	0.2577	0.3375	0.0616	0.3572
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.199	0.295	0.240	0.263
F-Statistic	6.181	11.557	1.832	12.154
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.063	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A20: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval Conditional on Actor Partisanship (Control Variables Omitted)

<div align="center">**Partisan Model - Democratic Sample**</div>

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.021	-0.175***	-0.129***	-0.177***
	(0.038)	(0.059)	(0.034)	(0.051)
Inequality*President Partisan Match	0.000			
	(.)			
President Partisan Match	0.000			
	(.)			
Inequality*Governor Partisan Match		0.181**		
		(0.080)		
Governor Partisan Match		0.000		
		(.)		
Inequality*Congress Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Inequality*Legislature Partisan Match				0.102
				(0.069)
Legislature Partisan Match				-0.407**
				(0.158)
Constant	0.211***	0.422***	0.529***	0.829***
	(0.081)	(0.089)	(0.072)	(0.124)
Observations	372	358	368	313
R^2	0.1633	0.3746	0.2712	0.1872
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.269	0.288	0.244	0.275
F-Statistic	8.270	23.215	16.682	6.577
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A21: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval Conditional on Actor-Respondent Partisan Match (Control Variables Omitted)

Partisan Model - Republican Sample

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.073***	0.158***	-0.041*	0.150***
	(0.023)	(0.050)	(0.025)	(0.043)
Inequality*President Partisan Match	0.000			
	(.)			
President Partisan Match	0.000			
	(.)			
Inequality*Governor Partisan Match		-0.279***		
		(0.058)		
Governor Partisan Match		0.000		
		(.)		
Inequality*Congress Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Inequality*Legislature Partisan Match				-0.283***
				(0.053)
Legislature Partisan Match				-0.461***
				(0.129)
Constant	0.114	0.233**	0.224***	0.459***
	(0.083)	(0.117)	(0.080)	(0.115)
Observations	276	261	268	224
R^2	0.2577	0.3375	0.0616	0.3597
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.199	0.295	0.240	0.262
F-Statistic	6.181	11.557	1.832	12.137
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.063	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A22: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval Conditional on Actor-Respondent Partisan Match (Control Variables Omitted)

C2: Results by Respondent Political Knowledge

Looking at the results in Tables A23-A28, it appears that the results do not entirely hold when subsetting the data by level of political knowledge. The results suggest that citizens with high political knowledge have results consistent with the findings in the main body of the paper (blaming Republicans and holding their co-partisans responsible), though their effects are even stronger. Citizens with low political knowledge, however, are ineffective at shown to be much less competent at assigning responsibility. Regression Tables, listed below, are separated by Model and Sample Partisanship.

Simple Model - High Political Knowledge Sample

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.089***	-0.025	-0.075***	-0.028
	(0.023)	(0.030)	(0.023)	(0.026)
President Partisan Match	0.432***			
	(0.068)			
Presidential Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Governor Partisan Match		0.466***		
		(0.030)		
Gubernatorial Partisanship		0.008		
		(0.015)		
Congressional Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Legislature Partisan Match				0.325***
				(0.029)
State Leguslature Partisanship				-0.032**
				(0.014)
Political Knowledge	-0.014	-0.013	-0.082	-0.166
	(0.077)	(0.117)	(0.087)	(0.117)
Age	0.001	0.002*	-0.002**	0.000
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Minority	0.097***	0.050	0.112***	-0.030
	(0.033)	(0.039)	(0.035)	(0.040)
Male	-0.006	-0.028	-0.074***	-0.052*
	(0.022)	(0.030)	(0.024)	(0.031)
Income Level	0.006*	0.010**	0.001	0.002
	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.005)
Partisanship (Democrat)	0.016	-0.044	-0.000	-0.008
	(0.045)	(0.034)	(0.026)	(0.031)
Liberal	0.125***	0.046	-0.053*	0.005
	(0.029)	(0.039)	(0.032)	(0.037)
Education Level	0.015*	-0.009	-0.011	0.004
	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.008)	(0.011)
Constant	-0.009	0.098	0.466***	0.392***
	(0.093)	(0.107)	(0.082)	(0.094)
Observations	428	418	429	374
R^2	0.7135	0.4185	0.1429	0.2780
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.217	0.294	0.239	0.276
F-Statistic	196.556	31.302	9.286	13.743
Prob > F	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

43

Table A23: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval

Simple Model - Low Political Knowledge Sample

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.018	-0.063	-0.065*	-0.099**
	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.039)	(0.049)
President Partisan Match	-0.053			
	(0.127)			
Presidential Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Governor Partisan Match		0.147***		
		(0.045)		
Gubernatorial Partisanship		0.065***		
		(0.023)		
Congressional Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Legislature Partisan Match				-0.013
				(0.051)
State Leguslature Partisanship				0.026
				(0.026)
Political Knowledge	-0.141	0.095	-0.137	-0.207
	(0.149)	(0.145)	(0.146)	(0.185)
Age	-0.001	0.001	-0.003***	-0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Minority	0.154***	0.049	0.138***	0.041
	(0.053)	(0.047)	(0.047)	(0.053)
Male	0.047	0.005	-0.012	-0.004
	(0.045)	(0.048)	(0.040)	(0.049)
Income Level	0.000	0.025***	0.010	0.006
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.008)
Partisanship (Democrat)	0.277***	-0.040	0.067**	-0.025
	(0.088)	(0.030)	(0.032)	(0.038)
Liberal	0.060	-0.056	-0.086*	0.036
	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.045)	(0.055)
Education Level	0.009	-0.010	-0.014	0.001
	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.019)
Constant	0.410***	0.252**	0.438***	0.561***
	(0.141)	(0.116)	(0.099)	(0.124)
Observations	220	201	207	163
R^2	0.4431	0.2467	0.1697	0.0723
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.287	0.279	0.263	0.278
F-Statistic	27.126	6.009	5.103	1.594
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.106

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

44

Table A24: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Responsibility Model - High Political Knowledge Sample				
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.089***	-0.023	-0.075***	-0.034
	(0.023)	(0.031)	(0.023)	(0.026)
Inequality*President Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Presidential Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Inequality*Governor Partisanship		0.115***		
		(0.029)		
Gubernatorial Partisanship		-0.022		
		(0.016)		
Inequality*Congress Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Inequality*Legislature Partisanship				0.123***
				(0.024)
State Leguslature Partisanship				-0.064***
				(0.015)
Constant	-0.009	0.154	0.466***	0.449***
	(0.093)	(0.109)	(0.082)	(0.095)
Observations	428	418	429	374
R^2	0.7135	0.4452	0.1429	0.3219
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.217	0.288	0.239	0.267
F-Statistic	196.556	34.024	9.286	16.676
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A25: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval Conditional on Actor Partisanship (Control Variables Omitted)

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Responsibility Model - Low Political Knowledge Sample				
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.018	-0.054	-0.065*	-0.106**
	(0.038)	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.048)
Inequality*President Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Presidential Partisanship	0.000			
	(.)			
Inequality*Governor Partisanship		0.036		
		(0.040)		
Gubernatorial Partisanship		0.053**		
		(0.025)		
Inequality*Congress Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisanship			0.000	
			(.)	
Inequality*Legislature Partisanship				-0.046
				(0.046)
State Leguslature Partisanship				0.043
				(0.029)
Constant	0.410***	0.264**	0.438***	0.558***
	(0.141)	(0.120)	(0.099)	(0.123)
Observations	220	201	207	163
R^2	0.4431	0.2496	0.1697	0.0785
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.287	0.279	0.263	0.278
F-Statistic	27.126	5.542	5.103	1.788
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.055

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A26: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval Conditional on Actor Partisanship (Control Variables Omitted)

Partisan Model - High Political Knowledge Sample

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.072	-0.027	-0.065*	-0.117
	(0.048)	(0.069)	(0.039)	(0.078)
Inequality*President Partisan Match	-0.116			
	(0.076)			
President Partisan Match	0.005			
	(0.130)			
Inequality*Governor Partisan Match		-0.051		
		(0.082)		
Governor Partisan Match		0.165***		
		(0.054)		
Inequality*Congress Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Inequality*Legislature Partisan Match				0.028
				(0.097)
Legislature Partisan Match				-0.024
				(0.058)
Constant	0.403***	0.240**	0.438***	0.565***
	(0.139)	(0.116)	(0.099)	(0.124)
Observations	220	201	207	163
R^2	0.4492	0.2481	0.1697	0.0730
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.286	0.280	0.263	0.279
F-Statistic	24.045	5.458	5.103	1.516
Prob $> F$	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.124

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A27: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval Conditional on Actor-Respondent Partisan Match (Control Variables Omitted)

Partisan Model - Low Political Knowledge Sample

	President	Governor	Congress	Legislature
Concern with Economic Inequality	0.072	-0.027	-0.065*	-0.117
	(0.048)	(0.069)	(0.039)	(0.078)
Inequality*President Partisan Match	-0.116			
	(0.076)			
President Partisan Match	0.005			
	(0.130)			
Inequality*Governor Partisan Match		-0.051		
		(0.082)		
Governor Partisan Match		0.165***		
		(0.054)		
Inequality*Congress Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Congressional Partisan Match			0.000	
			(.)	
Inequality*Legislature Partisan Match				0.028
				(0.097)
Legislature Partisan Match				-0.024
				(0.058)
Constant	0.403***	0.240**	0.438***	0.565***
	(0.139)	(0.116)	(0.099)	(0.124)
Observations	220	201	207	163
R^2	0.4492	0.2481	0.1697	0.0730
$\hat{\sigma}$	0.286	0.280	0.263	0.279
F-Statistic	24.045	5.458	5.103	1.516
$\text{Prob} > F$	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.124

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table A28: The Effects of Concern for Economic Inequality on Political Actor Approval Conditional on Actor-Respondent Partisan Match (Control Variables Omitted)

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