
American Politics Comprehensive Exam Study Guide

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Public Opinion and Political Attitudes

The Big Picture

1. Before Converse (1950s and earlier), we thought the public was politically sophisticated.
2. [Converse \(2006a\)](#) came in to argue that voters are actually not sophisticated at all, and tend not to hold consistent beliefs across issues or over time. Going even deeper, Zaller (1992) introduced his **Receive, Accept, Sample** Model where he argues that most of how people make their political opinions is off the top of their heads. More generally, there was a long term trend in the literature that argued that voters are not very competent.
3. Starting in the late 1990s, scholars turned more of their focus away from “voters are dumb” and towards understanding their biases and the mechanisms by which uninformed voters might act like more informed ones. One of the big thrusts in this literature is **confirmation bias**, which is the idea that people tend to mostly only remember stuff that agrees with their world view and discount information that goes against their beliefs.
4. **Priming** and **framing** both also received a lot of attention, with both contributing to the strengthening of copartisan beliefs.

Literature Outline

1. Before Converse (1950s and earlier) most scholars thought that the mass public was **reasonably sophisticated**, held consistent beliefs, and thought about politics through a partisan lens.
2. [Converse \(2006a\)](#) came along and conducted a number of interviews in NYC and found that most people **do not hold consistent beliefs** across issues or over time, and that to the degree that they made political choices they often did so on the basis of how the candidate looked, etc. Poorer people tended to have less political knowledge than the rich “ideologues”.
3. Zaller (1992) Introduced the **Receive, Accept, Sample** Model which argues people pretty much make political judgments off the top of their heads across the knowledge spectrum and that they are persuadable by the media and elites, violating the democratic ideals of govt responding to citizens. Famous quote: “most of what gets measured as public opinion does not exist except in the presence of a pollster”
4. The upbeat revision: In a meta-analysis of a bunch of surveys, [Carpini and Keeter \(1996\)](#) find that a higher portion of people know about politics than was previously thought.
5. **Psychological Issues with Opinion and Attitudes:**
 - Mutz and Reeves (2005) Found that when people are exposed to confrontational and uncivil debates their trust in government is reduced, but that this effect is mediated by the
 - Berinsky and Kinder (2006) found that how people remember politically relevant facts is determined by how those facts are frame in the news. By reordering sentences in an article about Kosovo, they found they could influence how people recalled the facts.
 - Lenz (2009) argues against the **priming** hypothesis for media effects which states that by calling attention to some things and not others, television alters the issues on which citizens judge candidates. He instead argues that media effects are more consistent with learning and opinion change. **Punchline: rather than causing priming, the analyses reveal that campaign and media attention to an issue led individuals to learn the issue positions of the candidates or parties and then to adopt the position of their preferred party or candidate as their own.**

- Jerit and Barabas (2012) found that people tend to learn and remember more facts that confirm their partisan beliefs than those which challenge them.

BACKGROUND: Belief Systems and Political Decision Making

1. Cite Key:

\citet{Kuklinski2007}

2. **Authors:** Kuklinski, James H and Peyton, Buddy

3. **Year:** 2007

4. **Journal:** The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior

5. **Keywords:** The capacity of the Electorate

6. **Summary:**

7. **Main Findings:**

- (2006a) is the starting point for this research showing that most people hold inconsistent attitudes and cannot use an ideological lens to think about politics.
- The Downbeat Revision: even the people who are politically knowledgeable fail to hold accurate beliefs and devote most of their mental energy to maintaining their false beliefs.
- The super downbeat revision: Zaller (1992) introduces the RAS model and argues people pretty much make political judgments off the top of their heads across the knowledge spectrum and that they are persuadable by the media and elites, violating the democratic ideals of govt responding to citizens.
- The upbeat revision: In a meta-analysis of a bunch of surveys, Carpini and Keeter (1996) find that a higher portion of people know about politics than was previously thought.
- The authors of Kuklinski and Peyton (2007) conclude that the literature is schizophrenic and that we do not know for certain what the capacity of the electorate is.

The Nature of Belief Systems in the Mass Public.

1. **Authors:** Philip Converse

2. **Year:** 1964

3. **Journal:** Ideology and Discontent ed. David Apher 206-261

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** Democratic theory assumes that voters in the "mass public" hold clear ideological values which allow them to make voting decisions based on the positions candidates hold. One of the most prevalent distinctions they are assumed to make is evaluating candidates' positions on the liberal-conservative ideological spectrum. Thus, when the electorate chooses politicians that vary from one end of the spectrum to the other, it is often assumed that the electorate is becoming more conservative or more liberal.

6. **Main Findings:**

- (a) The result of Converse's surveys and analysis cast doubt on many of these assumptions by showing the apparent lack of understanding of ideology or even differentiation between the two political parties on the liberal-conservative continuum. Using open-ended interviews as well as survey data, Converse classifies voters into the following categories based on their understanding of basic ideological differentiation between ideas:
- i. **Ideologues:** These respondents relied on "a relatively abstract and far reaching conceptual dimension as a yardstick against which political objects and their shifting political significance over time were evaluated" (p.216).
 - ii. **Near Ideologues:** These respondents mentioned the liberal-conservative dimension peripherally, but did not appear to place much emphasis on it, or used it in a way that led the researchers to question their understanding of the issues.
 - iii. **Group Interest:** This group did not demonstrate an understanding of the ideological spectrum, but made choices based on which groups they saw the parties representing (e.g. Democrats supporting blacks, Republicans supporting big business or the rich). These people tended to not understand issues that did not clearly benefit the groups they referred to.
 - iv. **Nature of the Times:** The members of this group exhibited no understanding of the ideological differences between parties, but made their decisions on the "nature of the times." Thus, they did not like Republicans because of the Depression, or they didn't like the Democrats because of the Korean war.
 - v. **No issue content:** This group included the respondents whose evaluation of the political scene had "no shred of policy significance whatever" (p. 217). These people included respondents who identified a party affiliation, but had no idea what the party stood for, as well as people who based their decisions on personal qualities of candidates.
- (b) **Elites have Little Influence on Mass Ideology:** Converse also found that the mass public does not seem to share beliefs in any predictable way with elites or that the voting patterns of the people at the lower end of the scale are following the patterns of the ideologues and near ideologues who have a firm grasp of the issues.
- (c) **Response Instability – Random Changes in Responses:** In addition, Converse's interviews with the same respondents over a two-year period often show little correlation with each other. In these cases, only 13 out of 20 managed to locate themselves on the same side of a given controversy in successive interviews. Converse's interpretation is that this change seemed almost exclusively random instead of as a response to changing beliefs.

The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion. Ch. 1-2

1. \cite{zaller1992nature}
\cite{Markus1994} (review)
2. **Authors:** John Zaller
3. **Year:** 1992
4. **Journal:** The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion (book)
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** "Zaller challenges the idea that voters only have one true preference; instead he presents a model where individuals have conflicting views on specific issues and the "winning" view at any given time is determined by what considerations are at the top of your head." ([Source](#))
7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) **Receive, Accept, Sample Model:** This is a model to explain how individuals respond to political information they may encounter. The model consists of four axioms: [\(source\)](#)
 - i. **Reception Axiom:** The greater the person's level of cognitive engagement with an issue the more likely he or she is to be exposed to and comprehend in a word, to receive political messages concerning that issue.
 - ii. **Resistance Axiom:** People tend to resist arguments that are inconsistent with their political predispositions, but they do so only to the extent that they possess the contextual information necessary to perceive a relationship between the message and their predispositions.
 - iii. **Accessibility Axiom:** The more recently a consideration has been called to mind or thought about, the less time it takes to retrieve that consideration or related considerations from memory and bring them to the top of the head for use.
 - iv. **Response Axiom:** Individuals answer survey questions by averaging across the considerations that are immediately salient or accessible to them.
- (b) "most of what gets measured as public opinion does not exist except in the presence of a pollster" (p. 265)
- (c) "To test his RAS model, Zaller relies primarily upon NES survey data. Specifically, he applies his theory to the dynamics of public opinion on a broad range of subjects, including domestic and foreign policy, trust in government, racial equality, the Vietnam War, and presidential approval." [\(Source\)](#)
- (d) Zaller believes that only the most aware citizens will have a consistent ideology or belief system. According to Zaller, highly aware liberals and conservatives look to appropriate partisan elites to find out "what goes with what." Having acquired this information, they are able to become consistently liberal or consistently conservative across a range of issues. The less aware are less likely to acquire the attitude that is consistently appropriate to their partisan orientation, and hence less likely to develop "attitude constraint" across issues. [\(Source\)](#)

Partisan Perceptual Bias and the Information Environment.

1. **Authors:** Jennifer Jerit and Jason Barabas
2. **Year:** 2012
3. **Journal:** Journal of Politics
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Perceptual bias occurs when beliefs deviate from reality. Democrats and Republicans are thought to be especially susceptible to this type of biased-information processing. And yet we know little about the pervasiveness of perceptual bias outside the domain of performance issues (e.g., unemployment, inflation) or how individual-level partisan motivation interacts with the information environment. We investigate these issues in two studies that examine perceptual bias on a wide range of political topics spanning two decades. Using survey data as well as an experiment with diverse subjects, we demonstrate that people perceive the world in a manner consistent with their political views. **The result is a selective pattern of learning in which partisans have higher levels of knowledge for facts that confirm their world view and lower levels of knowledge for facts that challenge them. This basic relationship is exaggerated on topics receiving high levels of media coverage.** T
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) **Theory:** All else equal, we expect that on topics with relevance for one's party, Democrats and Republicans will exhibit selective learning. They will be more likely to learn politically congenial

facts and less likely to learn facts that challenge their partisan leanings (H1).⁴ We further expect that high levels of media coverage will amplify this general pattern of perceptual bias (H2).

- (b) **Study 1:** reanalysis of 43 surveys from 1990-2000s. “Using Lexis-Nexis, we analyze the full text transcripts of a variety of media outlets during the **six weeks prior to the first day of each survey.**” (p. 674) “Once we identified the relevant sample of news stories in each media outlet, **we tallied the total number of articles mentioning the correct answer during the content-analysis period.**” (p. 675)
- (c) **Study 2:** In the spring of 2011, 417 adults came to a university campus to participate in a study. We conducted a between-subjects study with random assignment to one of five conditions. There were four treatment groups, each one corresponding to a type of partisan fact (Democratic-Positive, Democratic-Negative, Republican-Positive, or Republican-Negative). Subjects in the treatment conditions read a short paragraph that was designed to look like an excerpt from a news story. The fifth condition was a placebo control group in which subjects read a paragraph about a blood-donation shortage at the American Red Cross. The four issues in the treatment conditions (the Troubled Asset Relief Program, the trade deficit, Republican control of the U.S. House, and defense spending).
- (d) **Conclusion:** Among partisans in our experiment, we observed the same pattern as in Study 1: a readiness to learn politically congenial facts combined with a reluctance to learn facts that challenge one's political predispositions.

Learning and opinion change, not priming: Reconsidering the priming hypothesis

1. **Authors:** Lenz, Gabriel S.
2. **Year:** 2009
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** According to numerous studies, campaign and news media messages can alter the importance individuals place on an issue when evaluating politicians, an effect called priming. Research on priming revived scholarly interest in campaign and media effects and implied, according to some, that campaigns and the media can manipulate voters. There are, however, alternative explanations for these priming findings, alternatives that previous studies have not fully considered. In this article, I reanalyze four cases of alleged priming, using panel data to test priming effects against these alternatives. Across these four cases, I find little evidence of priming effects. Instead, campaign and media attention to an issue creates the appearance of priming through a two-part process: Exposing individuals to campaign and media messages on an issue (1) informs some of them about the parties' or candidates' positions on that issue. Once informed, (2) these individuals often adopt their preferred party's or candidate's position as their own.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) **The authors of these studies hypothesized that, by calling attention to some matters while ignoring others, television news alters the issues on which the public judges presidents and candidates for public office.** To test this “priming” hypothesis, these studies manipulated the extent to which subjects viewed television news stories on an issue and found that greater exposure led viewers to give greater weight to that issue when evaluating politicians. (p. 821)
 - (b) **LEARNING:** Whether they consist of watching television news or campaign ads in the lab or experiencing a campaign in the field, **the treatments usually convey information about the**

issue being primed... This poses a problem for priming studies because learning these facts can itself create the appearance of priming, even in the absence of priming (Jenkins 2002).

- (c) **about 44% already knew the parties' positions, 22% learned, 13% partially learned, 12% never learned, and 10% forgot.** – indication of learning.
- (d) **ISSUE OPINION CHANGE:** Research on priming has generally assumed that the issue-weight increases occur because people are changing their votes to be more consistent with their opinions on these policies. These issue weights, however, can also increase because people are changing their issue opinions to be more consistent with their votes. Both lead to greater issue-vote consistency and thus to issue-weight increases.
- (e) **Cross Lagged Approach:** A simple approach to determining causation with panel data is to test whether a variable explains later change in other variables. In this case, **if earlier issue attitudes explain later changes in vote choice among learners, then the results support learning effects.** In contrast, **if earlier vote choice explains later changes in issue attitudes, then the results support learning-induced, issue opinion change.**
- (f) **Punchline: rather than causing priming, the analyses reveal that campaign and media attention to an issue led individuals to learn the issue positions of the candidates or parties and then to adopt the position of their preferred party or candidate as their own.**

Making sense of issues through media frames: Understanding the Kosovo crisis

1. **Authors:** Berinsky, Adam J. and Kinder, Donald R.

2. **Year:** 2006

3. **Journal:** JOP

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** How do people make sense of politics? Integrating empirical results in communication studies on framing with models of comprehension in cognitive psychology, we argue that people understand complicated event sequences by organizing information in a manner that conforms to the structure of a good story. To test this claim, we carried out a pair of experiments. In each, we presented people with news reports on the 1999 Kosovo crisis that were framed in story form, either to promote or prevent U.S. intervention. Consistent with expectations, we found that framing news about the crisis as a story affected what people remembered, how they structured what they remembered, and the opinions they expressed on the actions government should take.

6. **Main Findings:**

- (a) **In the first experimental treatment, we reorganized the text in a direction that supported U.S. intervention. We call this frame the “humanitarian crisis” condition... In the second experimental treatment, the newspaper articles were again reorganized to enhance comprehension, but this time in a direction that opposed U.S. intervention. We call this the “risk to America” condition.**
- (b) In all conditions, the only difference among the three treatments is the organization of the text and the presence of headers, which are drawn from the text of the treatments. The emphasis of the stories is different, but the text contained in the complete set of articles is identical. Every subject received the same raw information. By holding information constant, we are therefore able to isolate the effect of “frame” on political understanding.

- (c) The authors find that those in the humanitarian crisis condition remembered more pro intervention tasks, and those in the risk to America treatment remembered more anti intervention facts (significant difference). They also found from their second experiment that those in the humanitarian treatment were more likely to support future interventions than those in the risk treatment.
- (d) I like the reordering the sentences approach.

The New Videomalaise: Effects of Televised Incivility on Political Trust

1. **Authors:** Mutz, Diana C and Byron, Reeves
2. **Year:** 2005
3. **Journal:** APSR
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Does incivility in political discourse have adverse effects on public regard for politics? If so, why? In this study we present a theory suggesting that when viewers are exposed to televised political disagreement, it often violates well-established face-to-face social norms for the polite expression of opposing views. As a result, incivility in public discourse adversely affects trust in government. Drawing on three laboratory experiments, we find that televised presentations of political differences of opinion do not, in and of themselves, harm attitudes toward politics and politicians. However, political trust is adversely affected by levels of incivility in these exchanges. Our findings suggest that the format of much political television effectively promotes viewer interest, but at the expense of political trust.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Videomalaise – negative attitudes that result from watching the news.
 - (b) **Theory:** social norms say to be polite, even when you disagree. While TV is not in person, it is relatively intimate since it is up close pictures. Television stations play up conflict to get better ratings. Televised political debates are often uncivil, which should reduce trust in government.
 - (c) **3 Experiments:** Hired actors to have mock debate and be civil or uncivil, pretending to be candidates for Indiana Senate seat. 4 issues per mock debate. Has subjects watch a 20 clip of those mock debates.
 - (d) Used NES measures of political trust among others.
 - (e) **Results:** People shown uncivil debate trust government less, but this effect is mediated by their conflict avoidance, so people who like conflict actually trusted more in the uncivil case. However, effects go away in followup interview

Voting and Elections

The Big Picture

1. Early work, including Downs (1957), saw voters as rational and considering all of the information before making an informed choice between candidates, which they did so based on which would give them a higher payoff.

2. [Campbell et al. \(1960\)](#) came along to challenge this with “The American Voter”, where they argue that everything boils down to party ID (which is mostly inherited), and that voters are not good at taking their own best interest into account. Notably, they argue that independents are just disinterested.
3. After “The American Voter”, there was a lot of work criticizing it and saying things were not that bad. Notably, [Lupia \(1994\)](#) found that people can use shortcuts to act like smart voters, even if they are not well informed themselves.
4. However, more recent work has again called into question the idea that voters act rationally and make good choices. [Ansolabehere et al. \(2001\)](#) found that candidates do not really respond to local constituencies, and Achen and Bartels (2016) present evidence that voting is basically random and based on party ID, social identity and that voters just change themselves to fit their party’s version of reality.

Literature Outline

1. [Downs \(1957\)](#) “An Economic Theory of Democracy ” – introduces a **spatial model** of rational voting where citizens choose their votes based on which candidate they think will give them the **highest stream of future payoffs from policies** (if they vote at all). In this theory, the voter compares their distance in policy preference space between all candidates and chooses the one with the smallest distance.
2. [Campbell et al. \(1960\)](#) “The American Voter” – most voters cast their ballots primarily on the basis of **partisan identification** (which is often simply inherited from their parents), and that **independent voters are actually the least involved in and attentive to politics**.
3. [Lupia \(1994\)](#) “Shortcuts versus Encyclopedias” – There is encyclopedic knowledge (facts) and there are shortcuts like what people know about insurance company preferences (making more money) allowing them to make decisions like more well informed voters by knowing that because insurance companies did not want the rate cap, they should vote for the rate cap.
4. Achen and Bartels (2016) “Democracy for Realists” – **They demonstrate that voters-even those who are well informed and politically engaged-mostly choose parties and candidates on the basis of social identities and partisan loyalties, not political issues**. They also show that voters **adjust their policy views and even their perceptions of basic matters of fact to match those loyalties**. When parties are roughly evenly matched, elections often turn on irrelevant or misleading considerations such as economic spurts or downturns beyond the incumbents’ control; **the outcomes are essentially random**.
5. [Ansolabehere et al. \(2001\)](#) “Candidate Positioning in U.S. House Elections” – The authors find that throughout this period congressional candidates have primarily espoused the ideology associated with the national party, moderating very little to accommodate local ideological conditions. No convergence to the middle.

Summary of the Debate From UMass Proseminar

During the 1940’s the **Columbia school** had the following two major studies. Lazarsfeld *The people’s choice*, the Elmira study – *voting: a study of opinion formation in presidential campaigns*. Leads to **minimal effects** model. [Downs \(1957\)](#) introduces a **spatial model** of rational voting where citizens choose their votes based on which candidate they think will give them the highest stream of future payoffs from policies (if they vote at all). In this theory, the voter compares their distance in policy preference space between all candidates and chooses the one with the smallest distance. [Fiorina \(1981\)](#) finds a middle ground between retrospective voting proposed by Key and future expectations proposed by Downs. He

theorizes and finds that **expectations concerning the future are dwarfing the effects of retrospective judgments but that there is a determinable developmental sequence**. [Rabinowitz and Macdonald \(1989\)](#) develops a **directional theory** of issue voting in which agreement on the side of an issue is most important even if the other candidate is closer spatially and find empirical support for it. [Lodge et al. \(1989\)](#) find that an online processing model of candidate evaluation (where impressions are formed as needed) is more predictive than a memory based model because psychological biases cause memories to be inaccurate. [Redlawsk \(2001\)](#) challenge the findings of [Lodge et al. \(1989\)](#) and the group working at Stony Brook university on the on-line model. Their findings do not support the pure Stony Brook on-line model, as they show that in all cases voter memory plays an important role in decision making and suggest that a mixed decision-making model is more appropriate. [Lenz \(2012\)](#) finds that voters **lead** their representatives in their views of their economic performance in office (punishing or rewarding them), but that they **follow** their representatives in their ideology and policy views (becoming more like those that represent them over time – conforming)

My Own Theory of Vote Choice

1. Voters make their decisions about who to support in elections differently depending on who they are voting for, so local, state, house of reps, senate and presidential elections are figured out in slightly different ways.
2. There is no one-size fits all theory to explain ho everybody votes.
3. Lots of staunch partisans inherited heir partisanship from parents and just always vote with their party. They use confirmation bais to just keep on thinking what they think.
4. There are some people on the margins who will punish the incumbent.
5. Lots of people abstain because they do not care, or do not see a difference.

An Economic Theory of Democracy (Chapters 1-4, 6-8)

1. Cite Key:

`\cite{Downs1957}`
`\cite{Pennock1958} (review)`

2. Authors: Anthony Downs

3. Year: 1957

4. Journal: An Economic Theory of Democracy (book)

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** The title of the book calls for a word of explanation. What is meant by an "economic" theory of democracy? It is by no means intended to explain democracy in terms of economic motivation or determinism. Downs comes to his study from the field of welfare economics. This subject frequently points to inherent deficiencies in the market mechanism. Even with perfectly rational behavior by all individuals the general interest will not be maximized. In such situations the usual pattern is to suggest that the state should take over where the market mechanism is inadequate. The implicit assumption is that a democratic state in which men behaved rationally would handle these matters in ways that would secure the general interest. This postulate Downs sets out to examine. (Incidentally, he finds it invalid.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **Analysis of the logic of government decision-making leads to some interesting conclusions:** for instance, that the model democracy (assuming a two-party system) would be characterized by regular alternation, at each election, of parties in power. More disturbing, the result in the most probable circumstances would not produce a socially rational policy: that is, one that would maximize welfare in the utilitarian sense... Because voters' preferences on each possible issue can not be known with accuracy, and only for this reason, the democratic process does not break down after all. Thus democracy works (in so far as it does work) only because in certain respects it falls short of its assumed model!
- (b) The consequences of uncertainty and of information costs are so many and varied that only a sketchy sample can be mentioned here. Democratic governments tend to decentralize their own power, regardless of their constitutional structure; it is rational for parties to develop ideologies and to be honest and consistent in putting them into practice; uncertainty and the costliness of information tend to check the otherwise natural tendency to interfere with the natural (i.e., prevailing under free competition) income-distribution process; information costs multiply the number of cases in which rational behavior calls for nonvoting.
- (c) Irrationality is when a person discovers they have been making an error and it is payoff maximizing to correct the error but they chose not to do so for some other reason. Thus we can distinguish between rational and irrational acts.
- (d) Arrows impossibility theorem states that, when voters have three or more distinct alternatives (options), no rank order voting system can convert the ranked preferences of individuals into a community-wide (complete and transitive) ranking while also meeting a specific set of criteria.
- (e) **Chapter 3: The Basic Logic of Voting**
 - i. People get utility streams from government, these streams will vary depending on the party. A person can calculate differences in these streams depending on the party, then seek to maximize their utility.
 - ii. If voters cannot distinguish between parties, they abstain.
- (f) **Chapter 8: The Statics and Dynamics of Party Ideologies**
- (g) Five goals of this chapter – prove the following:
 - i. A two-party democracy cannot provide stable and effective government unless there is a large measure of ideological consensus among its citizens.
 - ii. Parties in a two-party system deliberately change their platforms so that they resemble one another; whereas parties in a multi-party system try to remain as ideologically distinct from each other as possible.
 - iii. If the distribution of ideologies in a society's citizenry remains constant, its political system will move toward a position of equilibrium in which the number of parties and their ideological positions are stable over time.
 - iv. New parties can be most successfully launched immediately after some significant change in the distribution of ideological views among eligible voters.
 - v. In a two-party system, it is rational for each party to encourage voters to be irrational by making its platform vague and ambiguous.
- (h) **Uses spatial model of voting to illustrate points, parties should move towards the middle, but be kept from being exactly the same for fear of losing extremist voters.**

The American Voter - Chapters 2-4, 6-7

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Campbell1960}

2. **Authors:** Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, Donald Stokes
3. **Year:** 1960
4. **Journal:** The American Voter (book)
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** The American Voter, published in 1960, is a seminal study of voting behavior in the United States, authored by Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes, colleagues at the University of Michigan. Among its controversial conclusions, based on one of the first comprehensive studies of election survey data (what eventually became the National Election Studies), is that **most voters cast their ballots primarily on the basis of partisan identification (which is often simply inherited from their parents), and that independent voters are actually the least involved in and attentive to politics. This theory of voter choice became known as the Michigan model.**

The American Voter established a baseline for most of the scholarly debate that has followed in the decades since. Criticism has followed along several different lines. Some argue that Campbell and his colleagues set the bar too high, expecting voters to be far more sophisticated and rational than is reasonable. Some scholars, most notably **V. O. Key, Jr. (in The Responsible Electorate) have argued, in part based on reinterpretation of the same data, that voters are more rational than The American Voter gives them credit for.** His famous line "Voters are not fools" summarizes this view. Successors in the Michigan school have argued that in relying heavily on data from the 1956 presidential election, The American Voter drew conclusions which were not accurate over time; in particular, partisan identification has weakened in the years since 1956, a phenomenon sometimes known as dealignment (see realigning election). "The American Voter" has served as a springboard from which many modern political scientists form their views on voting behavior even though the study only represents one specific time in one particular place

7. Main Findings:

(a) Chapter 2:

- i. Chapter 2 details the "funnel analogy," the central argument in this book. The funnel works like this:
- ii. Political socialization (mainly your parents' party identification) determines party ID, which determines your political attitudes, which determines how you actually vote.
- iii. Party ID is seen as an "enduring psychological attachment." The political attitudes it determines are measured along six dimensions:
 - A. How you feel about the Democratic candidate.
 - B. How you feel about the Republican candidate
 - C. How well each party manages the affairs of government
 - D. Group interests ("he represents business owners" or "little people": people like me vote for so-and-so).
 - E. Domestic policy issues
 - F. Foreign policy issues

(b) Chapter 3: What our attitudes are

- i. **Generalization:** Our attitudes (both cognitive and affective) bleed over from one thing to another. In particular, our attitudes about a party affect our attitudes about a candidate.

- ii. **Threshold of awareness:** It takes a lot for the masses to take note of something. Although Stevenson had a clear, frequently stated position on foreign policy issues, most people didn't know them. They pay far more attention to you once you're president than they do to you as a candidate.
 - iii. **Social bases of stability:** Some perceptions are stable, others fleeting. This can depend on several factors. For example, it took two decades for citizens to forgive Republicans for causing the Depression and give another Republican a chance. But other perceptions seem to fade much more quickly.
- (c) **Chapter 4: How our attitudes affect our voting behavior**
- i. See pg 74 (note 7): you can predict voting behavior well based on attitudes about the candidates. Predictions improve by including attitudes about domestic and partisan issues.
 - ii. See figures starting on pg 82. The authors asked five questions on which people could take a partisan position (or not). Some people took a partisan stand on all five, some on fewer. Some had consistently Republican/Democratic stands, others did not. Based on number and coherence of stands, you can predict party-line voting, passion about the election, how early the respondent will make a decision about who to vote for, etc. [See Zaller and Feldman 1992.]
- (d) **Campbell et al. (1960)** introduce "**the Michigan model**" where they argue most voters cast their ballots primarily on the basis of partisan identification (which is often simply inherited from their parents), and that independent voters are actually the least involved in and attentive to politics.
- (e) **Chapter 6:**
- i. Partisan preferences show great stability between elections.
 - ii. They use self classification to measure party identification on a 7 point democrat to independent to republican scale.
 - iii. The stronger the partisanship, the more likely a person is to consistently vote for that party's candidate.
 - iv. Republicans are much more likely to vote for the republican candidate than democrats are to vote for the democratic candidate.
 - v. Independents have poorly "developed attitudes". (p. 140) They are less involved in politics and less well informed than strong partisans.
- (f) **Chapter 7:**
- i. **Early Politicization** - People whose parents were strongly partisan tend to be strongly partisan and for the same party.
 - ii. **Stability of Political Preferences**- People very rarely change parties.
 - iii. Personal forces may cause people to change affiliation such as marrying somebody from the opposite party or joining a union.
 - iv. Social Forces - Youth (vote democratic), economic groups and being in a minority group can all lead to polarization and changes in political attitudes.
 - v. Younger people tend to be more democrats older tend to be republican. Poses the question: will republican party eventually die out?

Shortcuts versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections.

1. **Authors:** Arthur Lupia
2. **Year:** 1994

3. **Journal:** APSR

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** Lupia argues that there are some widely available information shortcuts that allow relatively uninformed voters to emulate well informed voters. Lupia conducts a survey in California regarding a referendum on a very complex proposed reform to insurance law.

6. **Main Findings:**

- (a) There is encyclopedic knowledge (facts) and there are shortcuts like what people know about insurance company preferences (making more money) allowing them to make decisions like more well informed voters by knowing that because insurance companies did not want the rate cap, they should vote for the rate cap.
- (b) "Voters in mass elections are notorious for their apparent lack of information about relevant political matters. While some scholars argue that an electorate of well-informed voters is necessary for the production of responsive electoral outcomes, others argue that apparently ignorant voters will suffice because they can adapt their behavior to the complexity of electoral choice. To evaluate the validity of these arguments, I develop and analyze a survey of California voters who faced five complicated insurance reform ballot initiatives. I find that access to a particular class of widely available information shortcuts allowed badly informed voters to emulate the behavior of relatively well informed voters. This finding is suggestive of the conditions under which voters who lack encyclopedic information about the content of electoral debates can nevertheless use information shortcuts to vote as though they were well informed" (Abstract)

Democracy for Realists. [Ch. 2, 4, and 5]

1. **Authors:** Achen, Christopher and Larry Bartels

2. **Year:** 2016

3. **Journal:** Book

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** They demonstrate that voterseven those who are well informed and politically engaged-mostly choose parties and candidates on the basis of social identities and partisan loyalties, not political issues. They also show that voters adjust their policy views and even their perceptions of basic matters of fact to match those loyalties. When parties are roughly evenly matched, elections often turn on irrelevant or misleading considerations such as economic spurts or downturns beyond the incumbents' control; the outcomes are essentially random. Thus, voters do not control the course of public policy, even indirectly. Achen and Bartels argue that democratic theory needs to be founded on identity groups and political parties, not on the preferences of individual voters. [\[link\]](#).

6. **Main Findings:**

- (a) **Chapter 2: The Elusive Mandate: Elections and the Mirage of Popular Control**
 - i. Critique of "folk theory" of democracy – that the policies selected are those most preferred by the electorate. Spatial model as an example of this populist ideal.
 - ii. People are confused about their ideology and use heuristics.
 - iii. Converse/Condorcet appeal to "miracle of aggregation" which says that for statistically independent voters, even if each individual is only modestly likely to get it right, they get it right on the whole. The problem is that voter are not statistically independent.
 - iv. Spatial model says people vote on issues, but there is causal ambiguity: does issue agreement cause vote choice or does vote choice cause issue agreement?

- v. Three mechanisms: policy evaluation
- (b) **Chapter 4: A Rational God of Vengeance and Reward? The Logic of Retrospective Accountability**
 - i. Retrospective theory says voters can exert influence on representatives even if they don't pay attention by retrospectively evaluating the performance of their representative. This creates incentives for reps to perform well so that they get elected.
 - ii. Same problem with causality: do people retrospectively evaluations affect voting or do people just rationalize to make the vote choice they were going to anyway.
 - iii. The authors conclude that retrospective voting might work, but if there is almost any degree of randomness in what outcomes for the country people ascribe to incumbents, then it will not work.
- (c) **Chapter 5: Blind Retrospection: Electoral Responses to Droughts, Floods, and Shark Attacks**
 - i. Shark attack data – NJ in 1918, several people were killed by sharks, sitting president lost a large vote share in seaside counties. Voters punished even though there was nothing president could have done.
 - ii. Voters also punish incumbents for droughts and floods – beyond their control. This is why the authors call it Blind Retrospection

Candidate Positioning in U.S. House Elections

1. **Authors:** Ansolabehere, Stephen, James M. Snyder, and Charles Stewart, III
2. **Year:** 2001
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** We analyze the ideological positioning of House candidates running for office from 1874 to 1996. We find that throughout this period congressional candidates have primarily espoused the ideology associated with the national party, moderating very little to accommodate local ideological conditions. District-by-district competition exerts some pressure on candidates to fit with their constituents, and there have been times in American history when this pressure has been more acute than others. From the 1940s to 1970s, candidates became much more responsive to district interests, but that degree of responsiveness waned in the 1980s and 1990s.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) The authors use National Political Awareness Test (NPAT) data from 1994-1996, and then Roll call data back to 1874 (with a bunch of corrections), to scale individual legislators and their challengers. They then use presidential vote share to measure preferences of median voter (strictly following spatial model)
 - (b) Candidates do not converge to the center.
 - (c) The choices voters face locally mainly reflect national politics.
 - (d) Open seat elections are more extreme than those with incumbents.

Political Participation

The Big Picture

1. While things like SES matter quite a bit for individual turnout, systemic factors like party's efforts to turn out voters can explain some recent declines in voter turnout.

2. There is more than one way to participate besides voting including donating and volunteering and when we look at these, poor people are more politically active than we think.
3. While there is mixed evidence in the literature, [Rogowski \(2014\)](#) shows pretty convincingly that a high level of ideological divergence between candidates actually decreases turnout.
4. TV advertising does affect public opinion, but only has a very short term effect, and negative ads tend to only be effective in suppressing turnout when they occur right before an election (after candidate choices have been made).
5. Overall, campaigns matter, but they do so in different ways in different elections and for different people.

Literature Outline

1. [Rosenstone and Hansen \(1993b\)](#) “Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America.” – attempt to explain the decrease in voter turnout between the 60s and 80s and find that decreased efforts at mobilization account for the majority of the decline. Individual level factors (SES) do not explain decreases in turnout (they all increased) so there has to be some larger systemic factors.
2. [Verba et al. \(1995\)](#) “Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics” – the author introduces the **Resource model of participation**. People may want to participate but not have resources (**time, skills, money**). Different resources mean different kinds of participation. One key insight is the role that churches play in developing civic skills and fostering participation among poor and minority voters. The authors also make a distinction between volume and substance of participation and direct (going out and doing things) vs. indirect (voting) political participation.
3. [Rogowski \(2014\)](#) “Electoral Choice, Ideological Conflict, and Political Participation” – The standard conclusion in (the congressional polarization) literature is that polarization “does not seem to have demobilized the electorate”, however, Rogowski finds that polarization does reduce turnout, particularly among low income and low sophistication voters. Specifically, **increasing levels of candidate divergence reduce turnout primarily among citizens with lower levels of political sophistication**.
4. [Enos \(2016\)](#) “What the Demolition of Public Housing Teaches Us about the Impact of Racial Threat on Political Behavior” – Enos found that when African Americans living near whites in Chicago were displaced, white turnout dropped 10%, this drop was mediated by how close the people were to the removed housing projects, and afterward the white became more liberal. His findings strongly suggest that **racial threat occurs because of attitude change rather than selection**.
5. [Gerber et al. \(2011a\)](#) “How Large and Long-Lasting are the Persuasive Effects of Televised Campaign Ads? Results from a Randomized Field Experiment” – The authors got the Perry gubernatorial campaign to randomize \$2 million in campaign advertising. Their **results indicate that televised ads have strong but short-lived effects on voting preferences**. The ephemeral nature of these effects is **more consistent with psychological models of priming than with models of on-line processing**.
6. [Krupnikov \(2011\)](#) “When Does Negativity Demobilize? Tracing the Conditional Effect of Negative Campaigning on Voter Turnout” – The existing literature has produced conflicting results as to whether negative advertising demobilizes, but has ignored the timing of negative advertising. The study finds that **negativity can only demobilize when two conditions are met: (1) a person is exposed to negativity after selecting a preferred candidate and (2) the negativity is about this selected candidate**.

7. **Jacobson (2015)** “How Do Campaigns Matter?” – In presidential campaigns, the fundamentals dominate and most shocks have a short lived effect. In congressional campaigns, more money is associated with a higher vote share and thus campaigns do matter to some extent, as they do for turnout (they do increase it). However, negative ads usually do not have an effect on turnout. Interestingly, getting out the vote efforts can actually increase representational inequality because it only makes sense to target high SES voters with limited funds.

Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America (Chapters 2 and 8)

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Rosenstone1993a}

2. **Authors:** Steven J. Rosenstone, John Mark Hansen

3. **Year:** 2002

4. **Journal:** Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America. (book)

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Why people turn out, and why turnout has declined over time. In particular, we need to take into account the effects of mobilization on turnout.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) The benefits will never exceed the costs for most people. Thus, **two paradoxes: rational non-participation and rational ignorance. Moreover, a model based only on personal-level variables can't explain why participation peaked in the 1960s, dipped in the 1970s, then rose again in the 1980s—even while education, income, and so on rose steadily; thus, they don't explain participation.**
- (b) The authors attempt to explain the decline in turnout between the 1960s and 1980s:
 - i. Mobilization is the major cause: Less effort at mobilization: explains 54% of decline.
 - ii. Voting age drops to 18: explains 17% of the decline in turnout
 - iii. Weakened social involvement: explains 9% of decline
 - iv. Declining feelings of political efficacy: explains 9% of decline
 - v. Weakened attachment to parties/candidates: explains 11% of decline

Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics (Chapters: 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14)

1. **Cite Key:**

\citeyear{Verba1995}

2. **Authors:** Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman, Henry Brady

3. **Year:** 1995

4. **Journal:** Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics (book)

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** The book defines and explores the role and effects of political participation in America. **Resource model of participation.** People may want to participate but not have resources (time, skills, money). Different resources mean different kinds of participation.

7. **Main Findings:**

(a) **Chapter 2:** Defines participation as both direct expression of views through contact and indirect through voting.

Table 2.1 The Attributes of Political Activities

| Activity | Capacity for Conveying Information | Variation in Volume | Requirements |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Vote | Low | Low | Time |
| Campaign Work | Mixed | High | Time, Skills |
| Campaign Contribution | Mixed | Highest | Money |
| Contact an Official | High | Medium | Time, Skills |
| Protest | High | Medium | Time |
| Informal Community Work | High | High | Time, Skills |
| Member of a Local Board | High | High | Time, Skills |
| Affiliation with a Political Organization | Mixed | High | Time, Skills, Money |
| Contribution to a Political Cause | Mixed | Highest | Money |

(b) Participation can have both volume (how much you do it) and substance (how people are participating).

(c) **Chapter 3:** The authors offer a definition of participation that does not include voting with three domains: religious participation, charity, political act beyond voting.

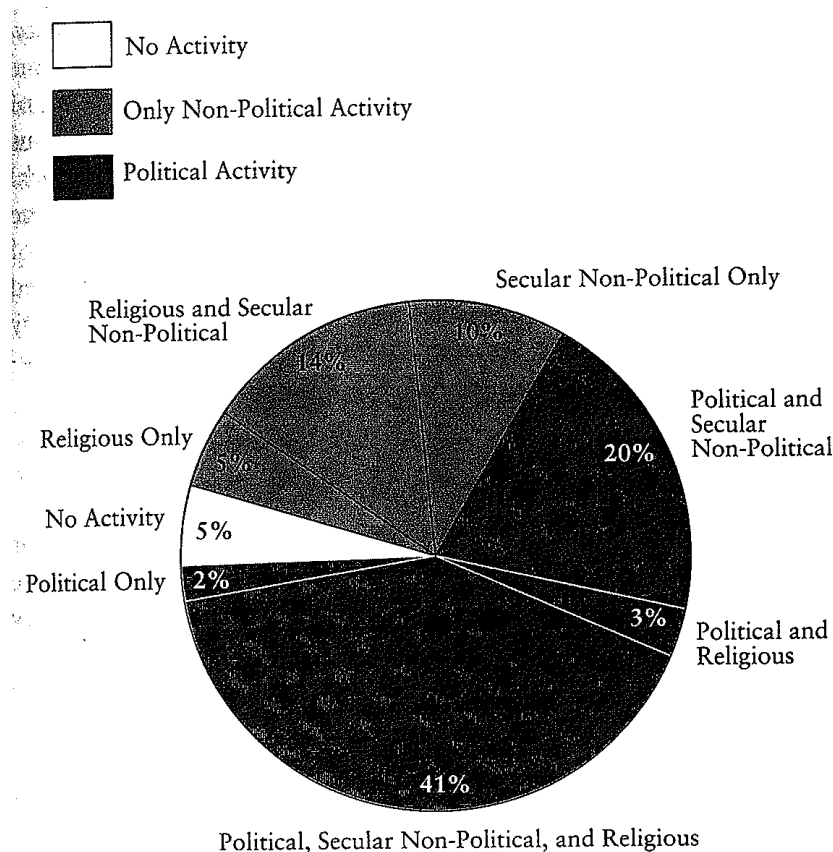


Figure 3.5 Types of Activists.

N = 2,517 weighted cases. See Appendix A for information about sample.

- (d) **Chapter 7** : wealthy people tend to participate at higher rates than poor people. Wealthy people tend to give much more money, but time is about equal between income groups.
- (e) **Chapter 8**: Blacks tend to participate almost as much as whites but Latinos participate at a significantly lower rate. Women and men are about equal in terms of time but men contribute more.
- (f) **Chapter 10**: Money, time and civic skills are the three resources for participation that are identified as important. poor people have more time but less money for politics
- (g) **Chapter 11**: Blacks with low status jobs tend to develop more of their civic skills at church and tend to have more church derived civic skills than low status job whites. However, high status job whites get a lot of civic skills from work.
- (h) **Chapter 12**: Income , education, vocabulary, free time and civic skills are all significant predictors of participation.
- (i) **Chapter 13**: Institutional recruitment and political engagement are also important and positive influence on participation.
- (j) **Chapter 14**: Issue engagement such as views on abortion can bring people into politics independent of other factors because they really care about that one thing.

Electoral Choice, Ideological Conflict, and Political Participation

1. **Authors:** Rogowski, Jon.
2. **Year:** 2013
3. **Journal:** APSR

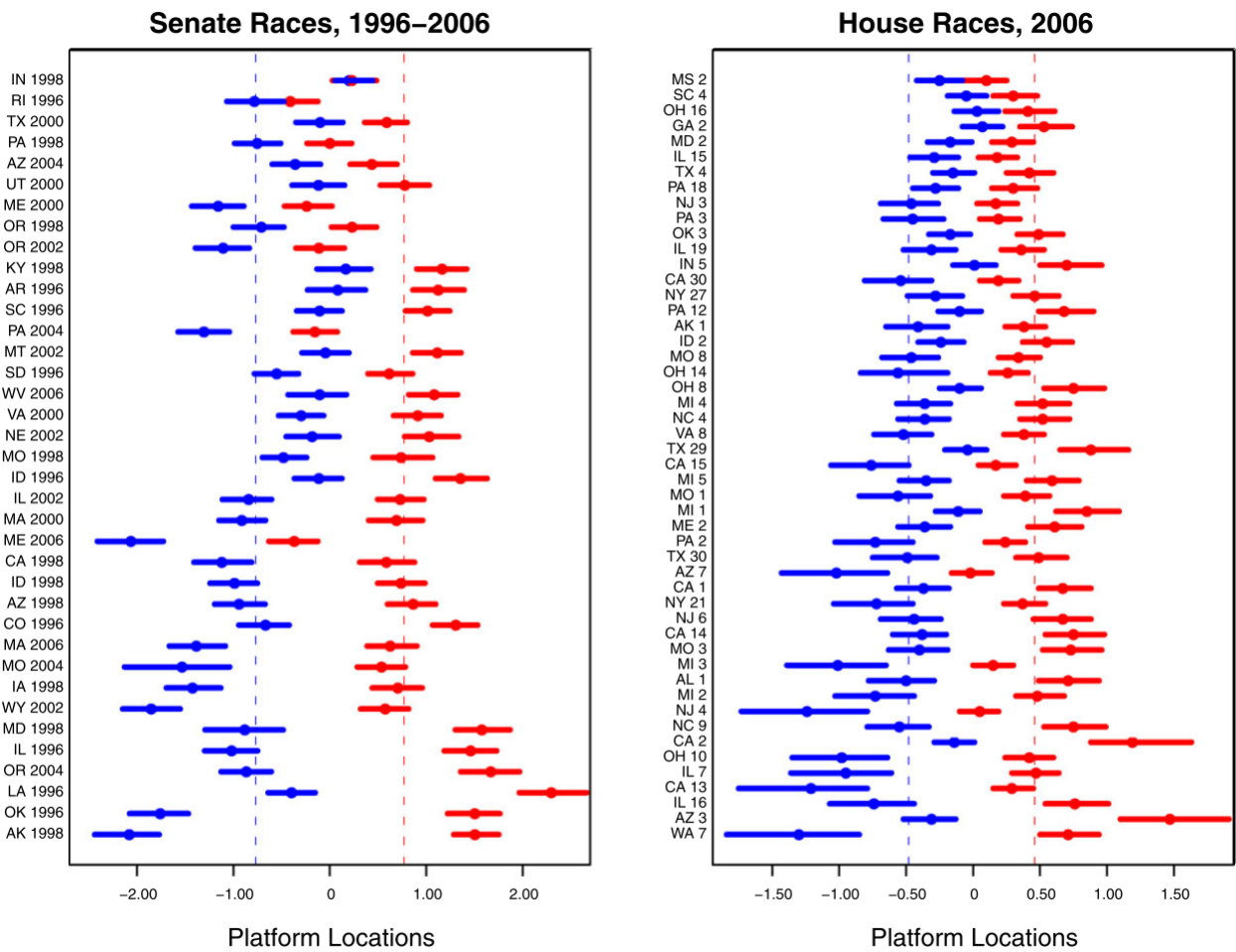
4. Keywords:

5. **Summary:** Generations of democratic theorists argue that democratic systems should present citizens with clear and distinct electoral choices. Responsible party theorists further argued that political participation increases with greater ideological conflict between competing electoral options. Empirical evidence on this question, however, remains deeply ambiguous. This article introduces new joint estimates of citizen preferences and the campaign platforms chosen by pairs of candidates in U.S. House and Senate races. The results show that increasing levels of ideological conflict reduce voter turnout, and are robust across a wide range of empirical specifications. Furthermore, the findings provide no support for existing accounts that emphasize how ideology or partisanship explains the relationship between ideological conflict and turnout. Instead, I find that increasing levels of candidate divergence reduce turnout primarily among citizens with lower levels of political sophistication. These findings provide the strongest evidence to date for how mass political behavior is conditioned by electoral choice.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) Recent empirical work focused on congressional polarization is divided about whether the mass public has responded in positive or negative ways. **The small body of literature that examines the relationship between congressional polarization and turnout finds virtually unanimous support for the mobilization hypothesis. The standard conclusion in this literature is that polarization “does not seem to have demobilized the electorate” (Hetherington 2009, 443). But research that focuses on other consequences of party polarization reaches more conflicting conclusions.**
- (b) I use candidate survey data collected by Project Vote Smart to characterize candidate platforms in U.S. House and Senate races.

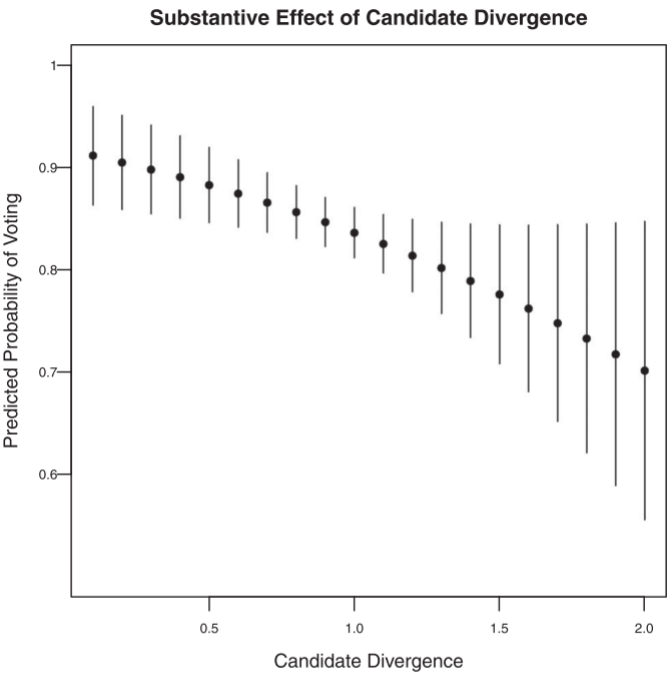
FIGURE 2 Candidate Platforms and Ideological Divergence



Note: The circles represent the point estimates for each candidate's platform, and the horizontal lines are the 95% credible intervals from the posterior distribution. Republicans are shown in red, and Democrats are shown in blue. The dashed lines display the mean platform estimates.

(c)

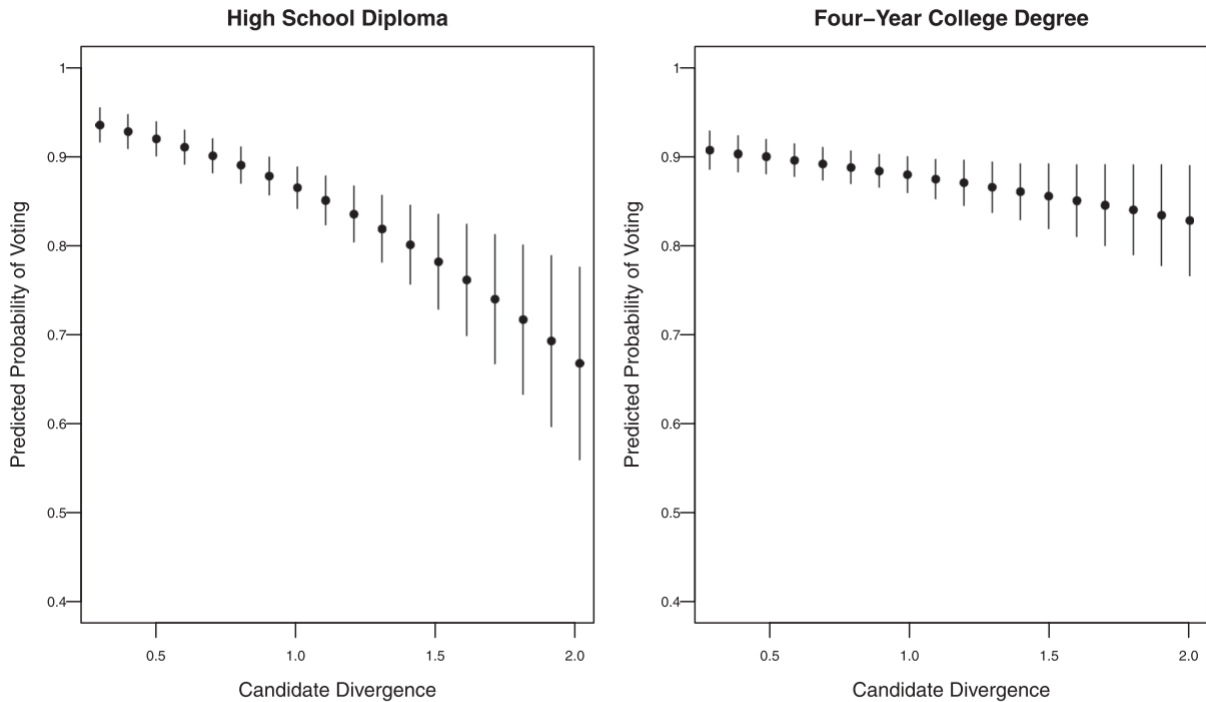
FIGURE 3 Candidate Divergence and Voter Turnout



Note: Predicted probability of voting over the range of values of candidate divergence, while all other covariates are held at their means (dichotomous variables are held at their modes, and categorical variables are held at their medians). The points represent the predicted probability of turning out to vote, and the vertical lines are the 95% confidence intervals. Predicted probabilities are generated from the estimates shown in column (2) of the House elections results shown in Table 1.

(d)

FIGURE 4 Education Level and Ideological Conflict



Note: The plots show the predicted probability of turning out to vote for varying levels of platform divergence. The plot on the left shows the probability of voting for a range of values of divergence among respondents with high school diplomas, and the plot on the right shows the probability of voting among respondents with four-year college degrees. The dots are the point estimates, and the vertical lines are the 95% confidence intervals associated with the probability estimates.

(e)

What the Demolition of Public Housing Teaches Us about the Impact of Racial Threat on Political Behavior.

1. **Authors:** Enos, Ryan
2. **Year:** 2015
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** How does the context in which a person lives affect his or her political behavior? I exploit an event in which demographic context was exogenously changed, leading to a significant change in voters' behavior and demonstrating that voters react strongly to changes in an outgroup population. Between 2000 and 2004, the reconstruction of public housing in Chicago caused the displacement of over 25,000 African Americans, many of whom had previously lived in close proximity to white voters. After the removal of their African American neighbors, the white voters' turnout dropped by over 10 percentage points. Consistent with psychological theories of racial threat, their change in behavior was a function of the size and proximity of the outgroup population. Proximity was also related to increased voting for conservative candidates. These findings strongly suggest that racial threat occurs because of attitude change rather than selection.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Keys (1949) findings set the stage for a long line of re- search on the influence of racial context on behavior. Key found that, at the county level in the American South, white voter turnout and

white vote for conservative politicians were correlated with the number of African Americans in the county. **Key claimed that whites felt threatened by the presence of African Americans and, therefore, were more politically motivated.**

- (b) The problem of scale also often threatens inference in studies of racial threat: Researchers sometimes choose geographic units out of convenience because theories of context are often silent with respect to scale. Often, there is only data for administrative units, such as census tracts. These units may have no relevant social or political meaning, and the correlation of an areal unit with individual behavior may change with the unit chosen by the researcher.
- (c) All of the families in the large multibuilding properties were low income, and the overwhelming majority were African American. Of the demolished projects for which data are available, **the average racial composition was 99.7% black...** The CHAs 1997 “Plan for Transformation” designated certain low-income housing units as requiring demolition. The guidelines for requiring demolition were set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), in Washington, DC. **The process was, more or less, decided exogenously to the particular neighborhood. Rules deciding demolition were based on algorithmic measures of the size of facilities and levels of decay that were outside of the residents control (CHA 2000).** The key assumption in this article is that the choice of units designated for demolition is uncorrelated with the difference in changes in turnout for white and African American voters.
- (d) To execute this study, I obtained four atypical data sources. First, I obtained the 2004 Illinois voter file and augmented it with demographic data from the 2000 and 2010 Census counts. Second, I geocoded the residences of the approximately 1.2 million voters in Chicago and determined their distance from each of the demolished public housing projects using a Geographic Information System (GIS). Third, I was able to identify the exact distance of each voter to the edge of a housing project using data on the two-dimensional spatial boundaries of the housing projects.
- (e) Hypotheses:
 - i. **H1 (Racial Threat and Turnout):** After the demolition of the projects, turnout should decline for white voters close to the projects relative to the rest of the city.
 - ii. **H2 (Proximity and Size):** The salience of a group is a strong predictor of intergroup attitudes (Brewer and Miller 1984). Psychologists have empirically demonstrated the intuitive finding that salience can be a function of the size and “immediacy” of an object ... This leads me to expect a “dose effect,” whereby the treatment should vary with the size and proximity of the treatment. Operationally, the treatment effect should decline as the white voters are farther away from a project and as the population of a project represents a smaller portion of the local outgroup population.
 - iii. **H3 (Racial Threat and Vote Choice):** After the demolition of the projects, white voters close to the former projects should experience a decline in racially conservative voting relative to the rest of the city.

How Large and Long-Lasting are the Persuasive Effects of Televised Campaign Ads? Results from a Randomized Field Experiment

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Gerber2011a}

2. **Authors:** Alan S. Gerber, James G. Gimpel, Donald P. Green, Daron R. Shaw

3. **Year:** 2011

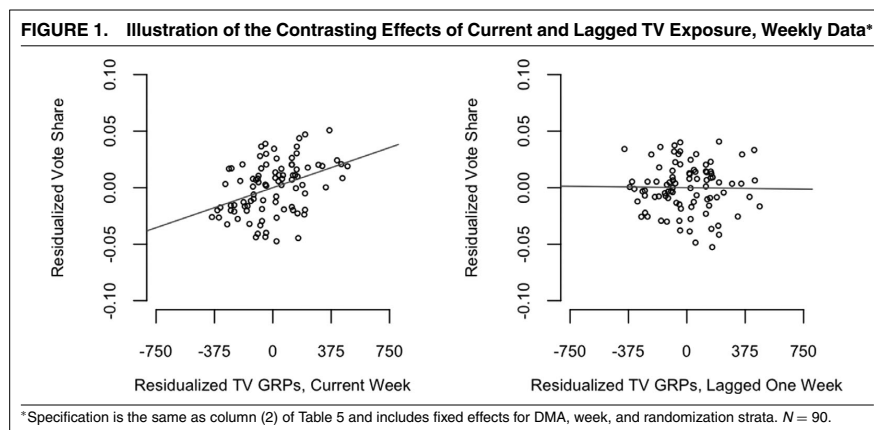
4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** We report the results of the first large-scale experiment involving paid political advertising. During the opening months of a 2006 gubernatorial campaign, approximately \$2 million of television and radio advertising on behalf of the incumbent candidate was deployed experimentally. In each experimental media market, the launch date and volume of television advertising were randomly assigned. In order to gauge movement in public opinion, a tracking poll conducted brief telephone interviews with approximately 1,000 registered voters each day and a brief follow-up one month after the conclusion of the television campaign. Results indicate that televised ads have strong but short-lived effects on voting preferences. The ephemeral nature of these effects is more consistent with psychological models of priming than with models of on-line processing (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “Our analysis focuses on the 2006 reelection campaign of Texas governor Rick Perry. Aside from its receptiveness to experimental evaluation, the Perry campaign started off much like other big-state reelection campaigns. ”
- (b) “Of these 20 media markets, the campaign was willing to allow experiments in 18, regarding the other two (Houston and DallasFortWorth) as too politically important to leave to chance. In light of the heterogeneity of the DMAs, we matched them as closely as possible based on demographic and socioeconomic attributes and then randomly assigned members of each stratum into an ordering that indicated the start date of the broadcast television campaign. See onlineAppendixC for a list of these matches. Within each weekly rollout bracket, we randomly assigned the quantity of weekly GRPs to be purchased: 250, 500, or 1,000. The rollout dates were then given to the campaigns television media buyer, who arranged to purchase the quantity of broadcast TV ads that we specified for each DMA each week. Given the small number of DMAs, the power of the experiment derives from the over-time changes in advertising within DMAs, and the analysis presented below focuses on the within-subjects design. ” (p. 139)
- (c) Quick decay of advertising effects (p. 146)



When Does Negativity Demobilize? Tracing the Conditional Effect of Negative Campaigning on Voter Turnout

1. **Authors:** Yanna Krupnikov

2. **Year:** 2011

3. **Journal:** AJPS

4. Keywords:

5. **Summary:** Do negative campaign advertisements affect voter turnout? Existing literature on this topic has produced conflicting empirical results. Some scholars show that negativity is demobilizing. Others show that negativity is mobilizing. Still others show that negativity has no effect on turnout. Relying on the psychology of decision making, this research argues and shows that this empirical stalemate is due to the fact that existing work ignores a crucial factor: the timing of exposure to negativity. Two independent empirical tests trace the conditional effect of negativity. The first test relies on data from the 2004 presidential campaign. The second test considers the effect of negativity over a broader period of time by considering elections 1976 to 2000. **Taken together, both tests reinforce that negativity can only demobilize when two conditions are met: (1) a person is exposed to negativity after selecting a preferred candidate and (2) the negativity is about this selected candidate.**

6. Main Findings:

- (a) An individual's decision process has two parts: **selection and action** (Svenson 1992). In the first phase, an individual considers his alternatives, determines which alternative is best, and makes his selection. In the second part of the decision process, an individual works to translate his selection into a tangible action... Thus, in a given campaign process an individual will first select which candidate he prefers. Then, he will begin the second phase of decision making: acting on his selection with a vote... **This institutionalized temporal gap between selection and action creates an extended post-selection phase that allows the voter to receive new information after the voter has selected a candidate, but before the voter has had the chance to act on that selection with an irreversible action.**
- (b) Most voters make decisions by October, so negative ads October and after are the only ones that should matter.
- (c) Data: 2004 – coded ads as positive/negative, matched to media markets.
- (d) Ridiculous number of controls in models. Did experiments but did not publish them.

How Do Campaigns Matter?

1. **Authors:** Gary Jacobson

2. **Year:** 2015

3. **Journal:** Annual Review of Political Science

4. **Keywords:** elections, voting, participation, campaign spending Abstract

5. **Summary:** A review of the evidence leaves no doubt election campaigns do matter in a variety of important ways. The serious questions concern when, where, why, how, for what, and for whom they matter. This essay reviews a selection of high-quality studies that address these questions, focusing on several distinct lines of research that have been particularly productive in recent years: on the effects of events and advertising in presidential elections; on the effects of campaign spending in elections for down-ballot offices; on the effects of mobilization campaigns on voting turnout; on campaign influences on the vote choice (with special attention to the effects of negative campaigns); and on the nature of persuadable voters. It also offers some suggestions of areas where additional research should be productive.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) **Presidential Campaigns:** The dominance of fundamentals (once they are brought to the attention of voters during campaigns) and the rapid decay of the impact of ads or other

“shocks” to the equilibrium implies that other events’ effects are also ephemeral. Although they attract much media attention during campaigns, events such as Romneys denigration of the “47%” or Obamas response to Hurricane Sandy in 2012 are likely to prove consequential only when they occur just before election day, if at all.

- (b) **Congressional Campaigns:** In short, campaign spending has been found to matter for at least some candidates in almost every electoral context where its effects on results have been examined, and because spending is arguably the best summary measure of campaign effort, these results leave no doubt that campaigns do matter. But how much they matter depends on the electoral context: more when cues such as party identification or prior information about candidates and issues are scarce; less in contexts where free information is abundant, partisan cues are available, and the candidates are already familiar to voters.
- (c) **Turnout:** Taken together, these results confirm that the traditional mobilization campaigns using volunteers door-to-door or on the phone do in fact pay off.
- (d) **Negative Campaigns:** Meta-analysis suggests that **negative campaigns do not systematically suppress turnout** and may even “have a slight mobilizing effect” (Lau et al. 2007). Negative campaigns do, however, have systematic effects on things other than participation and vote choice. Citizens exposed to them report modestly but consistently **lower political efficacy and trust in government**, and here, if anywhere, is where criticisms of negative campaigning seem warranted.
- (e) **For Whom do campaigns matter?:** Ironically, a recent meta-analysis of the results of 24 experiments reported in 11 papers suggests that **interventions designed to increase turnout actually make the representation problem worse** (Enos et al. 2013). Campaigns can mobilize both low-propensity voters [demographically skewed toward lower socio-economic status (SES)] and high-propensity voters (with the opposite skew), but the latter are easier to contact and respond more readily, so the net effect of these interventions in most cases is to “exacerbate the disparities between voters and the voting-eligible population” (Enos et al. 2013, p. 14). Thus, **routine campaign mobilization efforts may contribute to class bias in the electorate simply by using their scarce resources efficiently, going after the higher-SES citizens who are cheaper to reach and more apt to respond** (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993).

Interest Groups

The Big Picture

- First off, it is important to make the distinction that interest groups care about their issues first, while political parties care about holding office.
- While many scholars had viewed interest groups as a negative and new development, Truman points out that they have always existed and may balance each other out.
- However, the representation of citizens by interest groups is likely to be uneven and skewed towards the wealthy. Moreover, areas can only support as many interest groups as they have resources for, so in more rural areas there will be less specific interest groups.
- On the Congress side of things, there is an interesting finding that interest groups tend to primarily lobby those legislators who already agree with them, instead of those who are on the fence, and this is likely because interest groups work like a subsidy (ally) for those legislators who already agree with them to help them achieve their coincident goals.

Literature Outline

1. Truman (1971) “The Governmental Process – ‘The Alleged Mischiefs of Faction’” – While most think that interest groups are a new and bad development, they are very old and not all bad. People are part of multiple groups, so each group has to moderate, and groups can go in and out of mobilization, so the presence of **potential interest groups** keeps others in check.
2. Olson (1965) “Logic of Collective Action” – Olson introduced the idea of a **social dilemma and a public good where everybody wants the public good but wants somebody else to pay for it**. Thus things like taxes have to be mandatory. The larger the group, the harder it will be for them to coordinate. Thus we should only expect small close-knit groups to be able to work for the common good without some sort of coercive coordinating mechanism.
3. Schattschneider (1975) “The Semisovereign People: A Realist’s View of Democracy in America” – The main point is that **Agenda setting** is the supreme instrument of power. Once the agenda has been set, the game is over. Schattschneider argues that organized interests only represent the wealthy (by and large), and therefore lot of interest groups does not mean everyone has a voice. He argues that only vigorous party competition gives people a real say.
4. Lowery and Gray (1995) “The Population Ecology of Gucci Gulch, or the Natural Regulation of Interest Group Numbers in the American States” – Interest group density conforms to the predictions based on population ecology (constituents, government goods and services, and political stability) – more resources means more can exist, but not those based on economic theories of group mobilization. The larger the number of resources, the more specific interest groups can be.
5. Hojnacki and Kimball (1998) “Organized Interests and the Decision of Whom to Lobby in Congress” – Previous work has suggested a focus on **fence sitters** (undecided or uninterested) as prime target for lobbying but data do not play this out. Interest groups focus more heavily on those legislators who already support them, rather than try to win over opponents. This is because these allies may lobby other members of Congress on a group’s behalf and shape legislation to conform with a group’s preferences.
6. Hall and Deardorff (2006) “Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy” – The authors model lobbying not as exchange (vote buying) or persuasion (informative signaling) but as **a form of legislative subsidy**: a matching grant of policy information, political intelligence, and legislative labor to the enterprises of strategically selected legislators. The proximate political objective of **this strategy is not to change legislators’ minds but to assist natural allies in achieving their own, coincident objectives**.
7. Schnakenberg (2016) “Informational Lobbying and Legislative Voting” – introduces a complicated model that seeks to rectify informational theories of lobbying with the fact that most interest groups only lobby legislators that already agree with them. Under this model, legislators would actually prefer that lobbying was banned because it reduces their welfare overall.

The Governmental Process – “The Alleged Mischiefs of Faction”

1. **Authors:** Truman
2. **Year:** 1971
3. **Journal:** The Enduring Debate (Edited Volume)
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Everybody seem to think that interest groups are out of bounds of normal politics and morally degenerate (folk wisdom). We also think this is a new phenomenon, but it dates back to the beginning of our country. Interest groups are a characteristic trait of our society.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) There are two elements in this conception of the political process in United States that are of crucial significance and that require special emphasis. These are, first, **the notion of multiple or overlapping membership and, second, the function of unorganized interests, or potential interest groups.**
- (b) We belong to multiple interest groups so each group has to account for that fact and moderate its views.
- (c) Even un-organized groups will organize if there is a disturbance of the status quo that animates them. Also, many groups can go in and out of a organized state.
- (d) Because of unorganized potential groups, organized groups have to convince them that what they are doing is right, otherwise they would just do their own thing with no regard for normal folks. So these are like a counter balance.
- (e) Potential groups can be quickly mobilized which makes them important.

Logic of Collective Action (Pages 1-65)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Olson1965}

2. Authors: Mancur Olson

3. Year: 1965

4. Journal: Logic of Collective Action (book)

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Olson introduced the idea of a social dilemma and a public good where everybody wants the public good but wants somebody else to pay for it. Thus things like taxes have to be mandatory. The larger the group, the harder it will be for them to coordinate. Thus we should only expect small close-knit groups to be able to work for the common good without some sort of coercive coordinating mechanism. (not totally true cause we can have a correlated equilibrium that is a bit better than Nash)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Three kinds of groups:
 - i. **Privileged groups** (members of this group would gain more from a public good than it would cost them to provide it unilaterally);
 - ii. **Latent groups** (any member of this group could withhold his contribution to the public good without causing a noticeable reduction in its supply);
 - iii. **Intermediate groups** (if any member of this group withholds his contribution, it will cause a noticeable decrease in supply of the good, or a noticeable rise in cost to other contributors).
- (b) As group size increases, provision of the common good becomes less optimal. You can only have optimal provision of the common good if the marginal costs are shared in "exactly the same proportion as the additional benefits" (30).
- (c) Hypotheses:
 - i. If there is a PRIVILEGED group, the good will always be provided.
 - ii. If there is an INTERMEDIATE group, the good might be provided.

- iii. If there is only a LATENT group, the good won't be provided without coercion or selective incentives.
- iv. Small stakeholders will tend to exploit big stakeholders (i.e. make them pay a larger share)
Why large groups have problems
- (d) **Exclusive vs inclusive** goods: With exclusive common goods, the supply is limited. Think of a cartel; each firm wants to increase output (to increase its profits), but if all firms do this, the profits disappear (as the price falls). The supply of profits is limited, so it is an exclusive good. With inclusive goods, however, supply is not limited. Whether more members are welcome depends on whether the good is exclusive or inclusive. Firms prefer to have few competitors because goods are exclusive; unions prefer to maximize membership because its goods are inclusive, and having more members spreads the costs around more.

The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America (Selection)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{schattschneider1975semi}

2. Authors: E.E. Schattschneider

3. Year: 1975

4. Journal: The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Schattschneider criticizes group theory for trying to explain too much and assuming that government merely ratifies the existing balance of power among groups. The outcome of a controversy is often determined by the success or failure of efforts to enlarge its scope and that the conflicts among private groups are taken into the legislative arena by those groups seeking to alter the power balance. Pressure groups fail to represent the lower income groups. The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent. A vigorously competitive party system offers the semi-sovereign people their best chance for a role in the decision-making process, while one party politics tends to vest political power in the hands of those people who already have economic power. 40% of adult citizens do not vote. They will vote only if they perceive clearer differences between parties. [\(LINK\)](#)

7. Main Findings:

(a) Class Notes:

- i. **Agenda setting** is the supreme instrument of power. Once the agenda has been set, the game is over.
- ii. Charles Block: why the ruling class does not rule.

(b) Some quotes:

- i. **"The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent."** (p. 35)
- ii. In The Semisovereign People, Schattschneider argued the scope of the pressure system is really quite small: The "range of organized, identifiable, known groups is amazingly narrow; there is nothing remotely universal about it" and the "business or upper-class bias of the pressure system shows up everywhere." He says the "notion that the pressure system is automatically representative of the whole community is a myth" and, instead, the "system is skewed, loaded and unbalanced in favor of a fraction of a minority." (p. 30-36)

- iii. "The role of people in the political system is determined largely by the conflict system, for it is conflict that involves the people in politics and the nature of conflict determines the nature of public involvement."
 - iv. "Democracy is a competitive political system in which competing leaders and organizations define the alternatives of public policy in such a way that the public can participate in the decision-making process."
- (c) A vigorously competitive party system, as opposed to competing interest groups, offers the semi-sovereign people their best chance for a role in the decision-making process. Conflict is key. The outcome of every conflict is determined by the extent to which the audience becomes involved in it (scope). The scope of conflict is an aspect of the scale of political organization and the extent of political competition. Pressure groups are small-scale organizations while political parties are large-scale organizations. Hence, the outcome of the political game depends on the scale on which it is played. [\(LINK\)](#)

The Population Ecology of Gucci Gulch, or the Natural Regulation of Interest Group Numbers in the American States

1. **Authors:** Lowery, David and Gray, Virginia

2. **Year:** 1995

3. **Journal:** AJPS

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary: Theory:** The theory of population ecology (in contrast to economic theories of groups) is used to predict the number of interest groups in the United States.

Hypotheses: Interest-group density is a function of potential constituents, potential government goods and services, the stability of the political system, government age, and government size.

Methods: Regression analysis of U.S. state data for interest groups in construction, agriculture, manufacturing, welfare, the environment, and local governments.

Results: Interest group density conforms to the predictions based on population ecology (constituents, government goods and services, and political stability), but not those based on economic theories of group mobilization.

6. **Main Findings:**

- (a) Population biologists make a number of assumptions; the most important is the **isomorphism principle**: "In each distinguishable environmental configuration one finds, in equilibrium, only that organizational form optimally adapted to the demands of the environment" (Hannan and Freeman 1977, 938-939). Other critical assumptions include **resource scarcity** and **population equilibrium**. Scarce resources determine the "carrying capacity" of the environment for populations, which are assumed to be at or near their maximums given those constraints (Eldredge and Grene 1992, 110). Despite considerable debate in the ecological literature over the temporal stability of such equilibria, they are generally taken as a given and become, for the ecologist, the object of explanation.
- (b) Within these assumptions, ecologists use the conceptual tools of Darwinian analysis, including competition and fitness, which is often defined in organization ecology as "expected time to extinction". **Population ecologists assume, as Darwin did, that the locus of competition is largely within species, Species relying on different resources have no reason to compete because access by one does not exclude the other from the resources it needs.** As a result, competition usually entails avoidance via segregation into distinctive niches. Indeed,

species with overlapping niches typically partition access to resources useful to both. This is the **competitive exclusion principle**.

- (c) **Energy-Stability-Area Theory of Biodiversity, or ESA theory:** In a nutshell, the more solar energy the greater the diversity; the more stable the climate, both from season to season and from year to year, the greater the diversity; finally, the larger the area, the greater the diversity.
- (d) Our dependent variables are 1990 numbers of organized interests registered to lobby state legislatures.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{No. of Groups}_i = & a + b_1 \text{No. of Group Constituents}_i \\ & + b_2 \text{No. of Group Constituents Squared}_i \\ & + b_3 \text{Constituent Interest}_i \\ & + b_4 \text{Interest Certainty}_i \\ & + b_5 \text{Interest System Age}_i \\ & + b_6 \text{Size of Government}_i \end{aligned}$$

(e)

- (f) Our model also implies that the specificity of representation may increase with size, with less reliance on encompassing groups and greater reliance on narrower interests

Organized Interests and the Decision of Whom to Lobby in Congress

1. **Authors:** Hojnacki, Marie and David C. Kimball

2. **Year:** 1998

3. **Journal:** APSR

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:**

6. **Main Findings:** In a departure from previous research, we focus on the dyadic relationship between lobbyists and committee members in the House of Representatives in order to test hypotheses about what factors shape the decisions of individual groups to lobby individual committee members. Our primary assumption is that organized interests seek to expand their supportive coalitions and affect the content and fate of bills referred to committees. In order to accomplish these goals, they give highest priority to lobbying their legislative allies in committee; allies may lobby other members of Congress on a group's behalf and shape legislation to conform with a group's preferences. But organizations with access to a strong resource base can move beyond their allies and work directly to expand support among undecided committee members and legislative opponents. Our empirical analysis provides evidence to support our expectations.

- (a) Point of lobbying is to expand supportive coalition and influence the content of the bill.
- (b) Interest groups focus more heavily on those legislators who already support them, rather than try to win over opponents.
- (c) Uses survey of interest groups as data, mail questionnaires to 648 interest groups in 1996. 211 responded (33%). 69 groups taking action in four targeted issue areas used in this study.
- (d) Previous work has suggested a focus on **fence sitters** as prime target for lobbying but data do not play this out.

Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy.

1. **Authors:** Hall, Richard L. and Alan V. Deardorff.

2. **Year:** 2006

3. **Journal:** APSR

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** Professional lobbyists are among the most experienced, knowledgeable, and strategic actors one can find in the everyday practice of politics. Nonetheless, their behavioral patterns often appear anomalous when viewed in the light of existing theories. We revisit these anomalies in search of an alternative theory. We model lobbying not as exchange (vote buying) or persuasion (informative signaling) but as a form of legislative subsidy: a matching grant of policy information, political intelligence, and legislative labor to the enterprises of strategically selected legislators. The proximate political objective of this strategy is not to change legislators' minds but to assist natural allies in achieving their own, coincident objectives. The theory is simple in form, realistic in its principal assumptions, and counterintuitive in its main implications. Empirically, the model renders otherwise anomalous regularities comprehensible and predictable. In a later section, we briefly bring preferences back in, examining the important but relatively uncommon conditions under which preference-centered lobbying should occur.

6. **Main Findings:**

(a) Assumptions of Model:

- i. For a legislator to have much influence on policy, she must work at it.
- ii. Legislators' resources are scarce.
- iii. For any given period, individual legislators care about influencing more than one policy at a time.
- iv. Legislators care about some issues more than others.
- v. Relative to legislators, lobbyists are specialists.

(b) Hypotheses:

- i. Lobbyists will lobby their allies.
- ii. Lobbyists will lobby most their strongest allies.
- iii. Lobbyists will not lobby their enemies.
- iv. Lobbyists will seldom lobby uncommitteds.
- v. As lobbying increases, so will the participation or effort of allies.
- vi. Lobbying will increase most the participation of the lobbyist's strongest legislative allies.
- vii. Lobbying uncommitted legislators or enemies (to the extent that this happens) will not increase those legislators' participation.
- viii. Legislators will give access to (be lobbied by) like-minded public interest groups, even if the latter have no reelection-relevant assets.
- ix. Lobbying by public interest groups without reelection-relevant assets will increase the participation or "effort" of allies.
- x. Lobbyists will lobby legislative allies with the most productive enterprises.
- xi. Lobbying will increase the participation of the lobbyist's most productive allies

(c) In contrast, we suggest three conditions that are together needed for direct lobbying to take the form of a **conventional preference-centered strategy**: (i) **The legislator is perceived to have a weak preference, in the sense defined earlier;** (ii) **a specific matter is likely to be**

decided by a public vote; and (iii) the outcome of that vote is thought to be in doubt. We would simply observe that the occasions when all three conditions hold during a multistage, often behind-the-scenes legislative process are not all that common.

- (d) **If lobbying is a matching grant... Lobbying distorts the representative's allocation of effort in favor of groups sufficiently resource-rich that they can finance an expensive lobbying operation.** But that brings us to the second counterintuitive, in fact, paradoxical implication: **Representation is compromised without individual representatives being compromised.** Only lobby those they agree with.

Informational Lobbying and Legislative Voting.

1. **Authors:** Schnakenberg, Keith
2. **Year:** 2016
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:**
6. **Main Findings:** I analyze a model of interest group influence on legislative voting through information transmission. The model shows how interest groups may craft different messages to target different winning coalitions in order to influence the outcome. If access to legislators is costly, then interest groups prefer to coordinate with allied legislators by providing them with information that helps them to persuade less sympathetic legislators. The model reconciles informational theories of lobbying with empirical evidence suggesting that interest groups predominantly lobby those who already agree with them. The model also makes new predictions about the welfare effects of interest group influence: From an ex ante perspective, informational lobbying negatively affects the welfare of legislators. The results highlight the need for more theories of persuasion that take collective choice institutions into account.
 - (a) In this model, interest group lobbying is bad for legislators welfare: Most legislators expect to be outside of the winning coalition often enough that they would prefer to bar the interest group from offering any advice.
 - (b) **I also show that informational lobbying may be most often directed at allies. This result rests on two facts: Access to legislators is costly, and legislators can actively lobby for their preferred position.** Given this, interest groups prefer to gain access to allied legislators and provide them with information that helps them persuade opponents. The ultimate goal is persuasion of opponents through information transmission, but the mechanism is one in which lobbyists gain influence by supporting the efforts of like-minded legislators.

Political Parties

The Big Picture

1. There have been a number of different theories of parties over time, as detailed in Table 1.1.
2. We can draw a distinction between parties as competing organizations, and as a system of government.
3. While many theories draw into question the role that parties play in congressional politics, they are clearly more powerful than we might think.

4. In elections, parties are both a brand and a collection of important interest groups that can help a candidate get elected.

| Theory | Who | Policy Determined By: | Actor | Problems with Theory |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| Coalitions | V. O. Key | Parties aggregate the preferences of voter coalitions. | Groups of voters (not necessarily well organized, so not that big a deal to step out of line) | Not very realistic. |
| Responsible Party Government | APSA | Distinct policy platforms to give voters a choice. | Informed voters. | Too many assumptions: that two party system is best, will also lead to radical swings in policy |
| Convergence | Downs | Set policies that are attractive to voters which leads to moderate policies and party convergence. | Rational voters/ parties. | Not much evidence that parties have converged (gone to more moderate policies) |
| Collective Action | Aldrich | Product of institutions and social choice problems; Emerges from solution to collective action problem (not voters). Parties exist to aggregate elite preferences. | Part elites | Assumes that party members will go with the flow, even when they do not (Boehner). |
| Extended Party Network | UCLA School (Bawn et al.) | Interest Groups | Policy Demanders (well organized/mobilized groups mean it is very bad to step out of line) | |

Table 1.1:

Literature Outline

1. Aldrich (1995) “Why Parties?” – Argues that parties are an endogenous institution created by politicians to solve collective action/collective choice problems. Historical context determines whether they are the best way to do this at a given time. **Parties only serve politicians.**
2. Key (1949) “Southern Politics in State and Nation” – Key explains the way politics works in the south and introduces friends and neighbors voting and racial threat in this book. In terms of parties, he argues that they serve to aggregate voter preferences. When there is only one party, then politicians may do what they like since there is no meaningful choice for voters.
3. Bawn et al. (2012) “A Theory of Political Parties” – The authors introduce **Extended Party Network** theory, whereby interest groups are the main forces behind political parties. They argue there is an **electoral blind spot** where voters cannot evaluate policy positions, assess performance or tell the difference between parties. This gives them the leeway to pursue policies that benefit interest groups the most.
4. APSA (1950) “Towards a More Responsible Two-Party System: A Report of the Committee on Political Parties” – more of a normative statement than theory, states that there should be two parties, and that they should be very different and in constant (even) competition so as to give voters the most meaningful choices.
5. Gibson et al. (1983) “Assessing Party Organizational Strength” – state level political party organizations have become stronger since the time that “The American Voter” was written and Republicans

enjoy an advantage in party organizational strength over Democrats. More well organized, more complex party organizations aide parties in pursuing their political agendas.

6. [Desmarais et al. \(2014\)](#) “The Fates of Challengers in U.S. House Elections: The Role of Extended Party Networks in Supporting Candidates and Shaping Electoral Outcomes” – the authors find evidence that EPN integration substantially improves the electoral prospects of challengers and that the effect of EPN integration is distinct from that of campaign resources. They argue this is because the EPN lends credibility to a challenger that helps them build legitimacy and support elsewhere in the party.
7. [Cohen et al. \(2009\)](#) “The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform” – argue that the group coalitions that comprise parties have adapted to the new rules governing presidential nominations and continue to dominate the process. Candidates are not the driving forces in this process. To the contrary, as they have in the past, candidates compete for the support of groups that constitute parties. These “**invisible primaries**” determine the front-runners and shape parties strategies.

Why Parties? (ch. 1-2)

1. **Authors:** John Aldrich
2. **Year:** 1995
3. **Journal:** [Summary](#)
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary: Parties are an endogenous institution.** Although much recent literature has focused on the decline of parties, and on the resulting loss of a “major historical vehicle for aggregating the interests of this diverse republic,” parties have always been no more than a tool of the politicians, the ambitious office seekers, and the officeholders. They have maintained or abused the party system “when doing so has furthered their goals and ambitions.” Politicians “do not have partisan goals per se. Rather, they have more fundamental goals, and the party is only the instrument for achieving them.” The goals are varied, but the basic goal is “to have a long and successful career in political office,” in addition to policy and power goals. “These goals are to be sought in government, not in parties, but they are goals that at times have best been realized through the parties.” (4)
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Three major forces shape political parties:
 - i. “**Collective action**,” the usual argument about party’s purposes for individual voters—organize them, aggregate interests, etc.
 - ii. “**Collective choice**”: Is the party a useful tool in solving social choice problems (in interactions between electoral, legislative, and executive institutions) that cannot be solved more easily in other ways?
 - iii. **Historical setting. Technological setting:** Computers, TV, air travel make parties less necessary for organizing a campaign. **Normative setting:** the appropriate (perceived) role of the government
 - (b) Theory:
 - i. **Political parties are created, shaped and transformed by political actors, which are either officeholders, office seekers or benefit seekers.**
 - ii. Voters are not part of the political party, nonetheless they are critical as targets of party activities.

- iii. Rational, elective office seekers and holders use the party to achieve their ends. These actors may have values, principles and preferences over policies and means for reaching policy goals. “They also care about office, both for its own sake and for the opportunities to achieve ends that election and reelection made possible”, therefore they are concerned with winning. Just as winning elections is a means to other ends for politicians (whether career or policy ends), so too is the political party as a means to these other ends. (21)
- (c) **The form in which political parties can “help” ambitious politicians depends on three variables: the polity (electorate), the institutional setting (for example, a republican form of government,) and the historical context (ideas, values, technological conditions and also path of development). The first two variables create collective action and collective choice problems. The historical context determines whether parties are the most efficient means of solving these two problems.**
- (d) **The case for the importance of political parties**
 - Partisanship has remained “as stable and enduring for most adults after dealignment as it did before it” (15)
 - Party organizations are stronger, better financed, and more professional
 - Party provides candidates more electoral support than any other group
 - Officeholders remain loyal to parties in Congress
 - Relationships among branches in government are heavily partisan
- (e) **The case for weak and weakening parties**
 - Elections make incumbents responsible to district, but not for what their party does in Congress
 - Congress has become more fragmented, making it hard for president to deliver policy
 - Divided government has become common
 - “The proportions and strength of party attachments in the electorate declined in the mid-1960s. There was a resurgence in affiliation twenty years later, but to a lower level than before 1966” (17).
 - Incumbents, being less dependent on the party, vote along party lines less frequently (to respond to constituents)

Southern Politics in State and Nation

1. **Authors:** V. O. Key
2. **Year:** 1949
3. **Journal:**
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Key drew on more than five hundred interviews with Southerners to illuminate the political process in the South and in the nation. Factions are bad because they are short lived, thus more turnover, and less choice. This puts the rich more in control. **Friends and neighbors voting and racial threat have their origins here.**
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) **CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF SOUTHERN POLITICS**
 - X: The proportion of blacks in an area (size of “black belts”)
 - Y: Lots of things, but especially the dominance of the Democratic party
 - In their efforts to maintain white rule in the black belts, whites in the black belts have largely

made southern politics what they are. In the Civil War, it was these whites (plantation owners, mostly) who won the vote for secession, even though many yeoman whites preferred not to go to war (recall the West Virginia actually left Virginia over this). In the agrarian Populist uprisings of the 1890s, similar cleavages formed; once again, the black-belt whites won. **The black-belt whites maintain one-party rule to (1) prevent partisan competition for the black vote and (2) present a unified opposition to any Federal attempts to interfere in racial policy.**

(b) **CHAPTER 19: PRIMARY ELECTIONS**

In one-party states, the primary is the election. Thus, all southern states have adopted primaries (not conventions), and most have adopted a two-stage primary (a runoff).

- **How nominations are made:** In states with two dominant factions (usually one dominant faction and an opposition faction), the two groups are actively involved in deciding who will represent them in the primary. Thus, these states (notably Virginia) tend to have only two “serious” contenders in the primary, making run-offs unnecessary. And, sure enough, the two states without runoffs are the two that are dominated by a couple strong factions. But in states without long-standing factions, candidates nominate themselves. Thus, there tend to be more candidates in the primary when the factions are weaker. Thus, these states have runoffs.
- **INSTITUTIONAL explanation:** It’s entirely possible that institutional decisions affect the nature of the factional system. If there is a runoff institution, then factions have no need to coordinate (and become strong). But if there is no runoff, then factions need to be strong in order to promote good electoral outcomes (Duverger, basically). The evidence is mixed, but suggestive. Key looks at the number of serious contenders in different states before and after adoption of the runoff, and finds that more candidates tend to run after adoption than before.

A Theory of Political Parties

1. **Authors:** Bawn, Kathleen and Cohen, Martin and Karol, David and Maskett, Seth and Noel, Hans and Zaller, John
2. **Year:** 2012
3. **Journal:** Perspectives on Politics
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** We propose a theory of political parties in which interest groups and activists are the key actors, and coalitions of groups develop common agendas and screen candidates for party nominations based on loyalty to their agendas. This theoretical stance contrasts with currently dominant theories, which view parties as controlled by election-minded politicians. The difference is normatively important because parties dominated by interest groups and activists are less responsive to voter preferences, even to the point of taking advantage of lapses in voter attention to politics. Our view is consistent with evidence from the formation of national parties in the 1790s, party position change on civil rights and abortion, patterns of polarization in Congress, policy design and nominations for state legislatures, Congress, and the presidency.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) “Contemporary scholarship views a party as a team of politicians whose paramount goal is to win electoral office.” (571)
 - (b) “Most studies of parties assume that voters can judge which party offers more of what they want, implying that parties must construct programs with a keen eye to voter satisfaction. We regard this assumption as unrealistic. In its place we theorize an ‘**electoral blind spot**’ within

which voters are unable to reliably ascertain policy positions or evaluate party performance. Recognizing the limits of voter acuity, our group-centric parties exploit the complexities of politics to disguise the actions they take on behalf of party agendas.” (571)

- (c) More realistic than either extreme is the assumption that voters notice and react to differences in positions only when they are sufficiently large. In figure 2, the dark, smaller circle in the center represents the electoral blind spot, the set of positions that a voter will treat as essentially equivalent. To our inattentive voter, all the positions in the electoral blind spot (which includes her ideal point) sound pretty reasonable; she would not quibble with any of them. Most important, the voter chooses among candidates located within the electoral blind spot on the basis of something other than policy position (charisma, the economy, etc. (578)
- (d) **First, voters do not pay so much attention to politics that politicians must faithfully execute their wishes to win election; within fairly broad limits, obfuscation and phony credit claiming work quite well. Second, interest groups and activists are the dominant players in political parties, insisting on the nomination of candidates who will exploit the limitations of voter monitoring to advance party programs (589)**

Towards a More Responsible Two-Party System: A Report of the Committee on Political Parties

1. **Authors:** American Political Science Association
2. **Year:** 1950
3. **Journal:** APSR
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Less a theory than a normative doctrine, this is an ideal statement of what makes a good party—a bit outdated today, but typical of political science in its earlier years.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Four characteristics of a good party:
 - make policy commitments to electorate
 - carry them out in office
 - when out of office, come up with alternatives to current policies
 - be sufficiently different to offer voters a real choice
 - (b) Problems with this approach:
 - assumes only two-party rule is good
 - alternation of parties in office can result in wildly erratic policy
 - parties don’t actually live up to these ideals very well—they focus on candidates, not policy, and often fail to present a real choice between policy proposals.
 - (c)

Class Notes

1. Aldrich: candidate centered elections. Candidate gets some backing and then party jumps on the train later.
2. Party Decides: Policy demanders drive the bus.
3. If the candidates
4. groups are strategic, they make their decisions about who to support in

Assessing Party Organizational Strength

1. **Authors:** Gibson, James L. and Cotter, Cornelius P. and Bibby, John F. and Huckshorn, Robert J.
2. **Year:** 1983
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Most research on the problem of change in the U.S. political party system relies on trends in electoral behavior to assess the condition of parties. Generally, the conclusions drawn have been pessimistic. But though voters are undeniably an important dimension of party, so too are party organizations. Inferences have been drawn concerning the relationship between electoral behavior and party organizations, but the data that would permit the determination of whether party organizations suffer as a consequence of, or in covariation with, changing patterns of party identification and voting have not been available. This article presents evidence that state party organizations have not suffered during the last two decades. The analysis reveals that party organizations have become stronger since the early 1960s, although it notes a slight decline during the decade of the 1970s. And although interparty differences over the two decades are fairly substantial—with Republican organizations stronger than Democratic organizations—the trend through the early 1970s was one of diminishing differences between the parties. Since then the Republican advantage has increased, largely as a function of a recent Democratic decline in strength. The strength of state party organizations should not be taken to indicate the condition of the party system, but neither can other dimensions of party be understood without recognition that party organizations were weaker in the decade of *The American Voter* than they are today.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) One of the main points from the article is that the organizational structure of parties matters for their relative power, but most people don't think about it. Also the first study to do large scale comparative work across states.
 - (b) Data: Interviews with state party leaders for 27 states, survey to all party leaders in all states. Mail surveys to all county/town party leaders in the USA.
 - (c) "strong parties require both **organizational complexity and programmatic capacity**. The minimal level of organizational complexity of state party organizations is existence of a party headquarters. Beyond this, complexity requires adequate resources (e.g., budget and staff) for the operation of the headquarters. The highest level of organizational complexity implies bureaucratization in the Weberian sense that responsibilities, obligations, and tasks associated with positions are clearly defined." (198)

The Fates of Challengers in U.S. House Elections: The Role of Extended Party Networks in Supporting Candidates and Shaping Electoral Outcomes

1. **Authors:** Desmarais, Bruce A. and La Raja, Raymond J. and Kowal, Michael S.
2. **Year:** 2014
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** Extended party network (EPN) theory characterizes political parties in the United States as dynamic networks of interest groups that collaboratively support favored candidates for office. Electoral predictions derived from EPN theory have yet to be tested on a large sample of races. We operationalize EPNs in the context of organized interest contributions to U.S. House campaigns. We deduce that support by a partisan community of interests signals the ideological credibility and appeal of a candidate. EPN integration overcomes voter ambiguity surrounding challengers ideological preferences, and resources provided by these coordinating interest groups promote a consistent message about the candidate. Using data from the 1994–2010 cycles, we apply network analysis to detect EPN support of challengers and find that EPN integration substantially improves the electoral prospects of challengers. The effect of EPN integration is distinct from that of campaign resources. The findings provide support for EPN theory, as applied to congressional elections.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) “According to this theoretical framework (EPN), the central functions of the political party are to select and support candidates who are deemed likely to advance the party coalitions policy agenda once in office. This stands in contrast to the dominant, politician-centered explanation for party formation (Aldrich 1995), which attributes the origins of parties to the need for legislators to compromise and cooperate in passing legislation.”
- (b) “we deduce that EPN support sends a strong signal regarding a candidates interest in and capacity to deliver on the party agenda. Because different communities of interests (e.g., gun control advocates and environmentalist groups) converge on shared, compromise candidates, the credibility signals afforded by group support are concentrated on single candidates”
- (c) **“Data on political action committee (PAC) and formal party committee contributions to all candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives and data on all House election outcomes from the 1994–2010 cycles form the bases of our empirical analysis.** From here on, we include the formal party committees in our broad references to PACs. We also gather data on additional district and candidate attributes up to the 2008 elections.”
- (d) **“Focusing on ATE, we find that party network integration increases the chance of challenger success by approximately 12 percentage points, an effect that is statistically significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed). This effect is substantively significant considering that a challengers naive chance of success is, in nearly every election cycle, below 10%”**
- (e) **“our community detection algorithm was able to isolate unique subsets of PACs that converged on distinctive subsets of challengers to finance their elections with contributions and independent expenditures. We also provide evidence the first of its kind with a large sample of elections that such backing elevates the chances of electoral success for selected challengers”**
- (f) “If interest groups with strong policy agendas shape who wins office, then officeholders might have far less discretion about the direction of party policy than previously theorized”

The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform

- 1. **Authors:** Cohen, Marty and Karol, David and Noel, Hans and Zaller, John
- 2. **Year:** 2009
- 3. **Journal:** Book
- 4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** Throughout the contest for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination, politicians and voters alike worried that the outcome might depend on the preferences of unelected superdelegates. This concern threw into relief the prevailing notion that—such unusually competitive cases notwithstanding—people, rather than parties, should and do control presidential nominations. But for the past several decades, *The Party Decides* shows, unelected insiders in both major parties have effectively selected candidates long before citizens reached the ballot box. Tracing the evolution of presidential nominations since the 1790s, this volume demonstrates how party insiders have sought since America’s founding to control nominations as a means of getting what they want from government. Contrary to the common view that the party reforms of the 1970s gave voters more power, the authors contend that the most consequential contests remain the candidates’ fights for prominent endorsements and the support of various interest groups and state party leaders. These **invisible primaries** produce frontrunners long before most voters start paying attention, profoundly influencing final election outcomes and investing parties with far more nominating power than is generally recognized.

6. Main Findings:

(a) The authors contest the dominant argument about parties and presidential candidates of recent years—that parties have lost control over nominations as campaigns have become candidate-centered and candidate-run affairs. Instead, **they argue that the group coalitions that comprise parties have adapted to the new rules governing presidential nominations and continue to dominate the process. Candidates are not the driving forces in this process. To the contrary, as they have in the past, candidates compete for the support of groups that constitute parties. These “invisible primaries” determine the front-runners and shape parties strategies.**

(b) Key Passages:

- “(p. 103): A natural question is why party members would abandon the traditional party nominating convention as the mechanism for choosing nominees and begin probably without conscious decision to make decisions ahead of the convention. We offer the following conjecture. Whether on the floor of the convention or in a pre-convention campaign, the choice of nominee is always to some degree a bandwagon process. Candidates and a handful of key backers launch the bandwagons, but a bandwagon succeeds according to whether enough party members see it as the most promising vehicle for achieving group goals.”
- “The second passage (p. 105; emphasis added): ‘We have noticed only one structural difference before and after the McGovern-Fraser reforms. In the prereform period, the leading candidate went from the invisible primary to the national party convention, where his supporters voted him the nomination. In the postreform period, the leading candidate goes from the invisible primary to the state-level primaries and caucuses, where his supporters help him win these public contests.’ **We are asked to conclude that the difference between directly voting for a candidate at a convention and helping the candidate win votes in primaries is not significant. This will be controversial.**”

Congress

The Big Picture

1. Electoral incentives for legislators tend to put their focus on credit claiming, position taking and service to their constituents over the actual act of governing.
2. Legislators have to select a **home style** or way of presenting themselves that best helps them get reelected.

3. Committees are not as powerful as we might think, but they do bring benefits to appropriation sub-committee chairs. Committees also serve an important mechanism for supporting the development of expertise in specific domains.
4. Scholars used to think parties were more important in determining what happens in congress, but some including Krehbiel have argued that parties are not important for legislative outcomes. However other such as Rhode have argued that parties will only be powerful under certain conditions, and yet others like Cox and McCubbins have argued that parties primarily exercise power through agenda control, over vote control.

Literature Outline

1. [Mayhew \(1974\)](#) “Congress: The Electoral Connection” – Legislators act as if all they care about is getting reelected. Parties are not very important and image is everything. Legislators focus on **advertising, position taking and credit claiming**, but this creates a collective action problem for Congress since nobody wants to govern.
2. [Fenno \(1977\)](#) “Congressmen in Their Constituencies: An Exploration.” – Legislators have a **home style** (issue oriented or person-to-person), a way they present themselves that they use to try and get reelected. They see the world in terms of concentric constituencies starting with their personal friends and working out to their geographic district.
3. Fiorina (1978) “Congress: Keystone of the Washington Establishment” – Congressmen can engage in three things: **lawmaking, pork barreling, and casework**. Their incentives are basically just to avoid lawmaking and focus on the other two. MCs also have incentives to allow an opaque bureaucracy that they can both criticize and then help constituents navigate.
4. [Krehbiel \(1991\)](#) “Information and Legislative Organization” – introduces an incomplete information account (**informational theory**) of committee membership whereby legislators know what they want for policy outcomes but not how to get them, so expertise is valued and the institution should be set up to reward building expertise. Thus he predicts heterogenous committees with partisan balance instead of homogeneous, stacked committees.
5. [Cox and McCubbins \(1993\)](#) “Legislative Leviathan” – Parties, acting as types of **legislative cartels**, organize the House in order to solve their collective dilemmas, namely (1) passing party-defined collective policies and (2) minimizing member defection, through the use of rulemaking. The resolution of these dilemmas allows individual party members to sacrifice some individual benefits in order to obtain collective benefits. **Parties want to build a brand name, and parties act like firms.**
6. Maltzman (1995) “Competing Principals: Committees, Parties, and the Organization of Congress” – Committees are alternately viewed as agents of the chamber, the party caucuses, or constituencies outside the institution. Maltzman argues that the responsiveness of the committee to these groups is driven by changes in procedure, the strength of the party caucus, and the salience of a committee’s agenda. This is one of those “the truth is in the middle” kind of articles.
7. [Berry and Fowler \(2016\)](#) “Cardinals or Clerics? Congressional Committees and the Distribution of Pork” – Using a within-member research design, we find that seats on key committees produce little additional spending. The chairs of the Appropriations subcommittee the so called “cardinals” of Congress are an exception to the rule. These leadership positions do generate more funding for constituents, but only from programs under the jurisdiction of their subcommittee.
8. [Krehbiel \(1993\)](#) “Where’s the Party?” – this article assesses the degree to which significant party behaviour - defined and operationalized as behaviour that is independent of preferences - occurs in two key stages of legislative organization: the formation of standing committees and the appointment

of conferees. Four hypotheses are developed and tested. **When controlling for preferences and other hypothesized effects, positive and significant party effects are rare.**

9. Rohde (1991) "Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House" – **Conditional Party Government:** this theory posits that the party leadership in the house will be powerful and important when there is: (1) A lot of conflict between the majority party and minority party. (2) When the preferences of members of the majority party are particularly homogeneous. Thus parties matter more than Krehbiel thinks, just only under certain conditions.
10. Cox and McCubbins (2005) "Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives" – Argues against Krehbiel (who claims parties don't matter) and Rohde (who argues for "conditional" party government). **They develop and extend the procedural cartel theory.** Legislative parties are best analogized to legal or accountancy partnerships, with various gradations of junior and senior partners. They specialize in **controlling the agenda, rather than in controlling votes.** That is, they seek to determine what is voted on to begin with, in order to lessen the pressure on determining how their members' votes are cast (negative agenda control).
11. Jackman (2014) "Parties, Median Legislators, and Agenda Setting: How Legislative Institutions Matter" – Using data from state legislatures she find that the presence of majoritarian rules significantly reduces the majority party's advantage in obtaining its preferred legislative outcomes, particularly as the preferences of the floor and majority-party medians diverge.

Congress: The Electoral Connection

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Mayhew1974}

2. Authors: David Mayhew

3. Year: 1974

4. Journal: Book

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Mayhew makes one simple argument in his book: that members of congress act as if they are solely and rationally interested in getting reelected. This book served as a theoretical broadside aimed at the doctrine of responsible party government which puts party at the center of its explanation of the actions of individual members of congress. Instead, Mayhew focused on individual congressmen and voters, showing that their connection through an MC's bid for reelection is vitally important. Mayhew also points out a major accountability problem in American politics that members of congress need to take popular positions, but they do not necessarily need to follow through on them. This draws an important distinction between position taking and credit claiming as not necessarily going together.

- You have to get elected to represent your constituents!
- Representation is complicated and uneven.
- **Information asymmetries** between constituents and representatives.
- Representatives behave **strategically**.
- **Misaligned incentives** introduce **collective action problems** in congress.
- There is a **principal-agent** problem for representatives and constituents.
- **Image is everything.**
- Senators do more position taking, House members do more credit claiming.

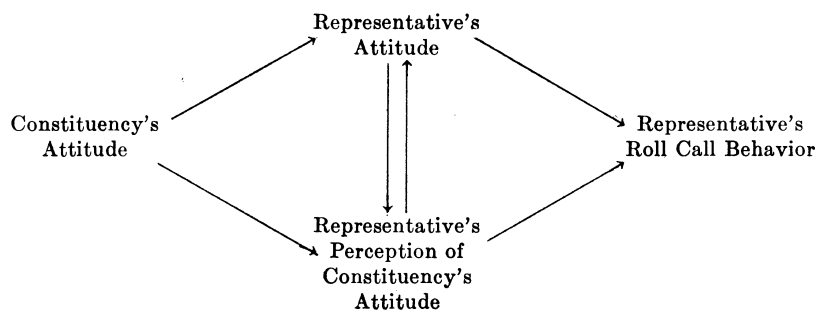
A Chronology

1. Downs – *Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957)
 - Parties are the main actors in politics – “cohesive point-source teams”
2. Miller and Stokes – *Constituency Influence in Congress* (1963)
 - MCs are not as highly or evenly responsive to constituents as we thought.
3. Mayhew – *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (1974)
 - MCs devote the vast majority of their efforts to getting reelected. Parties do not really matter.
4. Fenno – *U.S. House members in their constituencies: An exploration* (1977)
 - MCs see their districts as nested and increasingly important sub-constituencies. They take great care in how they present themselves – their “home style”.

Constituency Influence in Congress - Miller and Stokes

- Do constituents actually exercise control over their representatives?
- Two avenues to constituent control: **Anticipatory, Gyroscopic.**
- Interviewed MCs and constituents in 116 districts about preferences on:
 - **Civil rights** – MCs behave as if they had a mandate.
 - **Social Welfare** – MCs appear to vote party line.
 - **Foreign Policy** – follow the president, nobody cares.
- A mix of representation styles appears to best explain MC roll-call voting.

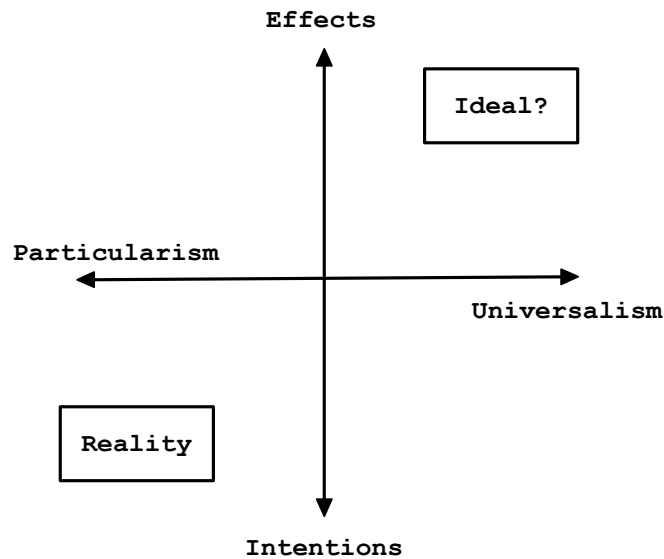
Constituent Attitudes and Roll Call Voting



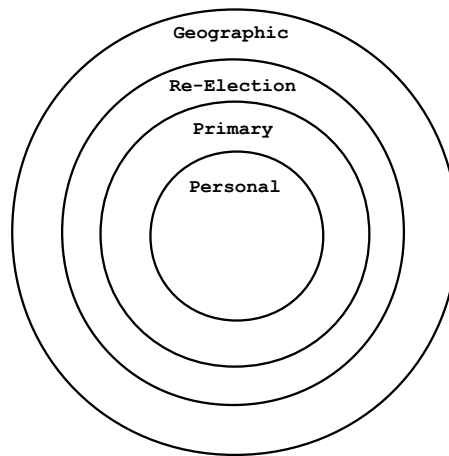
Congress: The Electoral Connection - Mayhew

- Political Parties are not very important.
- Three kinds of electorally useful activity:
 - **Advertising** – get your name out but with no content.
 - **Credit Claiming** – making an argument that you caused something good to happen.
 - **Position Taking** – Saying things your constituents will like to hear.
- Congress as an institution:
 - Is well structured to help MCs get reelected.
 - Committees facilitate credit claiming and position taking.
 - Introduces a collective action problem.
 - Who will do the unglamorous work of governing?

New dimensions for evaluation of MCs



U.S. House members in their constituencies: An exploration “...what does an elected representative see when he or she sees a constituency? And, as a natural follow-up, what consequences do these perceptions have for his or her behavior?”



Trust and Home Style

- Fenno draws on Goffman’s *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*.
- How to gain **trust** → **political support**.
 - **qualification, identification, empathy.**
- Must decide how to allocate *time* and *staff*.
- MCs have a “home style” – how they present themselves:
 - **Person to Person** –face-to-face, mixing and mingling.
 - **Issue Oriented** – accessible, communicative, anti-politician. Projects, issues for the district.

Presentation of Self

- Three factors explain presentation of self:
 - **Contextual** – how do I fit in my district? What worked in the past?

* **Heterogeneous** vs. **homogeneous** districts.

- **Personal** – inclinations and talents.
- **Strategic** – how to allocate time for maximum effect.

- Explaining Washington Activity

- Explanations do not change with audience.
- Different and better than other representatives – down-talking the institution.

Synthesis

- Getting elected must be top priority.
- **Information is everything** – both to constituents and to representatives.
- MCs want to make their constituents happy.
 - Does not mean they will do what constituents would have done.
- Congress as an institution:
 - Committees align incentives.
 - Shield for inaction – somebody else's fault.

Open Questions

- **Catch-22?**
 - Election and representation incompatible?
- Have things changed over time?
 - Parties seem to be more important now than when Mayhew was writing.
 - What about information costs?
- Mansbridge (2003) – four kinds of representation:
 - **Promissory, Anticipatory, Gyroscopic, Surrogate**
 - Which of these should work best?
- Is constituency control a good thing?
- What should constituents want to control?

Congressmen in Their Constituencies: An Exploration.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Fenno1977}

2. Authors: Richard Fenno

3. Year: 1977

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Fenno provides us with one of the most detailed and rich ethnographic studies of how congressmen see and present themselves to their constituencies. Fenno finds that policy preferences are not the only way that constituents and representatives relate, but that they engage on multiple other levels as well. To conduct this study, Fenno followed a total of about 15 members of the house of representatives on one to several trips to their home districts to observe what they did and saw. His first major argument is that congressmen see their constituencies as a series of concentric or nested constituencies or circles with the geographic district as the outer circle. Inside this circle lies the re-election constituency that will potentially vote for the representative when they go up for reelection. Closer and more important is the primary voter constituency and finally the personal constituency. The idea is that members of congress pay more attention to constituencies that are closer to them. The second major contribution Fenno makes is his theory that members of congress have a “home style”. He argues that they will try to present themselves in a particular way to different constituencies and there are several different ways that they tend to present themselves including a person to person style that is meant to paint them as very approachable and down to earth or an issue oriented style that focuses more on something that is particularly important to their constituents. He finds a common set of explanatory factors for a particular MC’s presentation style in that it is contextually based (changing depending on the situation), personal to the MC and usually very strategic. The combination of these two theoretical constructs gives us a considerable amount of leverage in understanding why MC’s do what they do.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **Three factors for Home Style: Allocation of resources, presentation of self, explanation of Washington activities.**
- (b) “What does an elected representative see when he or she sees a constituency? And, as a natural follow-up, what consequences do these perceptions have for her behavior? The key problem is that of perception. And the key assumption is that the constituency a representative reacts to is the constituency he or she sees. The corollary assumption is that the rest of us cannot understand the representative-constituency relationship until we can see the constituency through the eyes of the representative.”(p. 883)
- (c) Fenno followed a total of about 15 members of the house of representatives on one to several trips to their home districts to observe what they did and saw.
- (d) Fenno argues we should see how congressmen see their constituencies as a series of concentric circles with the geographic district as the outer circle.
- (e) Inside the **geographic constituency** the representative sees his **re-election constituency**.
- (f) The **Primary constituency** is the strongest group of supporters.
- (g) The **personal constituency** is the closest circle of people the congressman knows personally.
- (h) Congressman has to decide how much resources and time to devote to their home district. This is part of what Fenno terms the **Home Style**:
- (i) When it comes to allocation of resources, we tend to see that junior senators tend to devote more of their time and resources to being in their district.
- (j) There are also several mode of presentation of self that senators can undertake.
 - i. **Person to Person style:**
 - ii. **Issue Oriented style:**
 - iii. Presentation of self seems to be explainable by three factors: **contextual, personal, strategic.**
- (k) Another part of the home style is how they explain what they have been doing in Washington. They tend to explain themselves and criticize the institution so they can abdicate responsibility for its performance.

Congress: Keystone of the Washington Establishment [Exerpt]

1. **Authors:** Fiorina
2. **Year:** 1978
3. **Journal:** Book
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Create opaque bureaucracy, then intervene to help constituents navigate it.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Primary goal of Congressmen is reelection. Natural selection weeds out people not primarily interested in keeping office.
 - (b) Primary goal of bureaucrats is to expand their agencies.
 - (c) “What should we expect from a legislative body composed of individuals whose first priority is their continued tenure in office? We should expect, that the normal activities of its members are those calculated to enhance their chances of reelection. And we should expect, second, that the members would devise and maintain institutional arrangements which facilitate their electoral activities. . . . For most of the twentieth century, congressmen have engaged in a mix of three kinds of activities: **lawmaking, pork barreling, and casework.**”
 - (d) **Congressmen possess the power to expedite and influence bureaucratic decisions.** This capability flows directly from congressional control over what bureaucrats value most: higher budgets and new program authorizations. In a very real sense each congressman is a monopoly supplier of bureaucratic unsticking services for his district.
 - (e) **In sum, when considering the benefits of his programmatic activities, the congressman must tote up gains and losses to arrive at a net profit. Pork barreling and casework, however, are basically pure profit.**
 - (f) **The key to the rise of the Washington establishment (and the vanishing marginals) is the following observation: the growth of an activist federal government has stimulated a change in the mix of congressional activities: Specifically, a lesser proportion of congressional effort is now going into programmatic activities and a greater proportion into pork-barrel and casework activities.**
 - (g) When the demand for their services rises, they have no real choice except to meet that demand unsticking services—so long as they would rather be elected than unelected.
 - (h) The popular frustration with the permanent government in Washington is partly justified, but to a considerable degree it is misplaced resentment. Congress is the linchpin of the Washington establishment. The bureaucracy serves as a convenient lightning rod for public frustration and a convenient whipping boy for congressmen. But so long as the bureaucracy accommodates congressmen, the latter will oblige with ever larger budgets and grants of authority.

Information and Legislative Organization.

1. **Authors:** Krehbiel, Keith
2. **Year:** 1991
3. **Journal:** Book
4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** The view that Gilligan and Krehbiel have advanced turns on a distinction that is central to the incomplete information framework they employ, between policies and outcomes. Policies are the objects of legislative choice, i.e., bills and their various provisions. Outcomes are the states of the world that policies are intended to affect and that members (and their constituents) ultimately care about. **Members have well-defined preferences over outcomes but not policies, as members are uncertain about whether and to what extent proposed policy alternatives will have their intended effect. Information about the connections between desired outcomes and alternative policies is thus a valuable commodity, both for members individually and Congress collectively. The central problem of legislative organization, then, is to design institutional arrangements that lead legislators to develop policy expertise and to share that expertise with their otherwise ill-informed colleagues.** (from review by Hall)

6. **Main Findings:**

(a) From Review by Hall:

- i. According to the distributive view, for instance, committees will be homogeneous and biased in their preferences, relative to the parent chamber. According to Krehbiel's informational account, committees should be heterogeneous and representative; if there is any favoritism, it is shown to members with relative expertise rather than strong distributive impulses.
- ii. According to the distributive view, restrictive rules will be awarded to biased committees so as to protect the larger cooperative logroll from some majoritarian maverick with a mischievous floor amendment. According to Krehbiel, the chamber is least likely to assign restrictive rules to biased committees trafficking in distributive benefits.
- iii. According to the distributive view, finally, the parent chamber provides standing committees with special post-floor parliamentary rights (i.e., control of the House-Senate conference and hence an ex post veto). Such prerogatives, in turn, insure that majoritarian mavericks will anticipate little ultimate gain from their floor mischief and, in any case, insure that the committees can probably undo in conference any serious damage that might have been done to their bill at some earlier stage. Krehbiel, on the other hand, hypothesizes that post-floor decision processes "should be characterized by selective and carefully monitored delegation of parliamentary rights to relatively expert members of standing committees" (p. 199)

Legislative Leviathan

1. **Authors:** Cox, Gary and Mathew McCubbins

2. **Year:** 2003

3. **Journal:** Book

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary: Research question:** How do we explain the organization of the institutions of the House of Representatives?

Argument: Parties, acting as types of legislative cartels, organize the House in order to solve their collective dilemmas, namely (1) passing party-defined collective policies and (2) minimizing member defection. The resolution of these dilemmas allows individual party members to sacrifice some individual benefits in order to obtain collective benefits. [\[source\]](#)

6. **Main Findings:**

(a) **Parties want to build a brand name, and parties act like firms.**

(b) **Chapter 8:**

- How are committee members selected? — **Committee on Committees**
- Authors argue that parties select committee members to maximize collective chances for reelection. Narrow jurisdiction, less powerful committees can be less representative of party as a whole, while important, broad jurisdiction committees must be more representative.
- Importantly, this partisan model and a self selection model—where legislators select into committees based on their constituents preferences, and the parties just go along—mostly make similar predictions, except when they go against the will of the party.
- Looks at difference in party and committee ADA and NOMINATE scores over time.
- Concludes that both self selection and partisan selection are at play.

(c) **General Argument of Book:**

- Representatives seek re-election.
 - Re-election is a function of two types of reputations: individual and partisan.
 - Legislative action (lawmaking) affects both types of reputations (Implicit)
 - Lawmaking requires collective efforts.
 - Collective action is problematic; there are inherent disincentives against individual cooperation.
 - Delegation to a central authority is a solution to collective action problems.
 - Party leadership is the central authority to which individual representatives delegate.
 - Parties are analogous to market cartels.
 - Parties obtain their power through rulemaking.
 - The majority party uses this power to design the legislature's structure and processes.
 - The majority party organizes itself and structures the House to solve its collective dilemmas (ensure its dominance, pass party defined "collective" policy, and minimize member defection).
- (d) **Majority party uses several structural and procedural rules to minimize agency losses, including: Discharge petitions (Ch. 10) Control of committee assignments (Ch. 7) Seniority violations (Ch. 2)**
- (e) The majority party rules in the House: control of the agenda allows the majority party to favor its members by privileging bills sponsored by members of the majority, and by providing then greater veto-powers over legislation (relative to the minority party).

Competing Principals: Committees, Parties, and the Organization of Congress

1. **Authors:** Forrest Maltzman
2. **Year:** 1995
3. **Journal:**
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:**
6. **Main Findings:** Since Woodrow Wilson, political scientists have recognized the importance of congressional committees in the policy-making process. Congressional committees often determine what legislation will reach the floor of the House or Senate and what form that legislation will take. In spite of the broad consensus on the importance of congressional committees, there is little agreement on what explains committee action. Committees are alternately viewed as agents of the chamber, the

party caucuses, or constituencies outside the institution. Each theory suggests a different distribution of power in the policy-making process.

Forrest Maltzman argues that none of these models fully captures the role performed by congressional committees and that committee members attempt to balance the interests of the chamber, the party caucus, and outside constituencies. Over time, and with the changing importance of a committee's agenda to these groups, the responsiveness of members of committees will vary. Maltzman argues that the responsiveness of the committee to these groups is driven by changes in procedure, the strength of the party caucus, and the salience of a committee's agenda. Maltzman tests his theory against historical data. (from UP website)

(a) Chapter 2:

- First Perspective: Committees do what they want.
- Second Perspective: Self selection — develop specialized policy knowledge.
- Third Perspective: Partisan control — parties choose committees to maximize reelection chances.

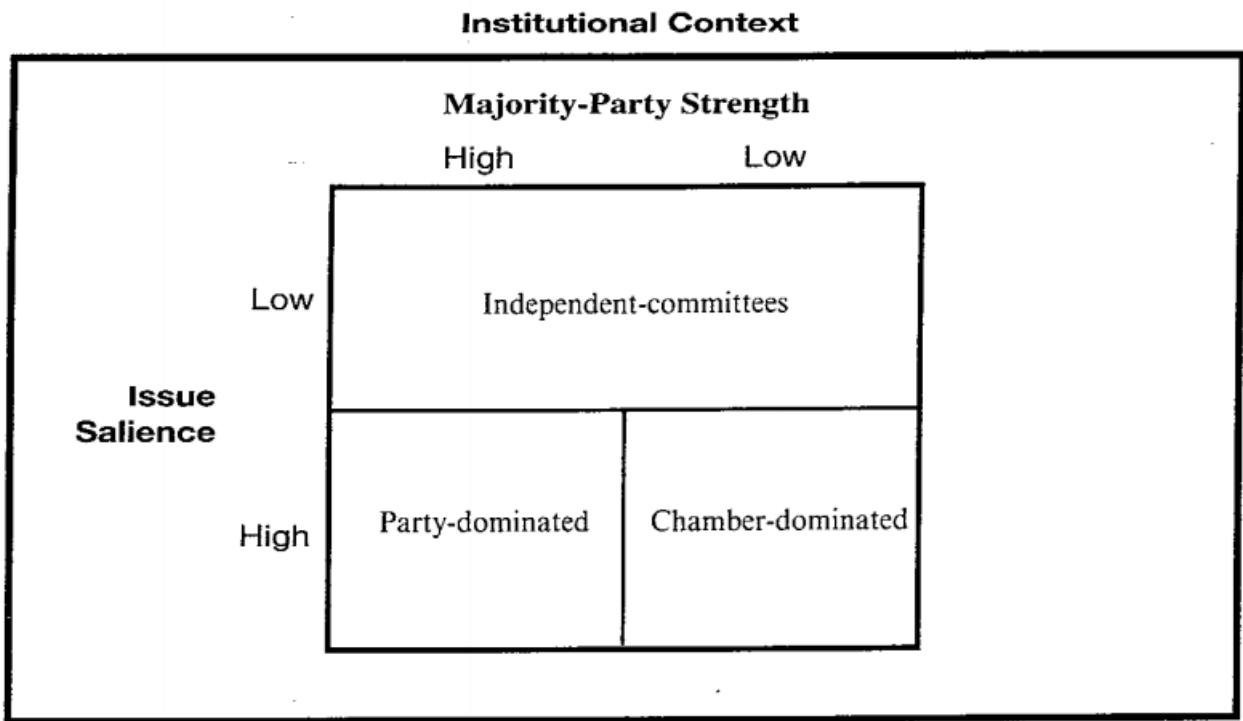


Fig. 2.4. Conditional Model of Committee Responsiveness

(b)

TABLE 2.1. Summary of Models

| Model | Independent-Committees | Party-Dominated | Chamber-Dominated |
|------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Committee's principal | Outside of the institution | Party caucus | Chamber |
| Policy-making process | Logroll/distributive | Political | Informative |
| Rationale for Model | Individual members secure reelection by appeasing outside constituencies. | Electoral outcomes depend primarily upon party record. Members seek to belong to majority party. | Chamber's informational and work-load needs. |
| Committee role | Facilitate trade | ?????b | Provide information/expertise |
| Committee assignments | Self-selecting | Party-selection | Chamber-selection |
| Committee preferences | Committee median distinct (biased) from the chamber as a whole ^a | Committee party contingents are either aligned or more extreme than their caucus. | Committee's median reflects floor's median; committee and floor have similar distribution. |
| Types of expected procedures | Rules (such as ex post veto) that ensure committee autonomy | Rules that ensure and encourage committee compliance with preferences of majority caucus. | Rules that encourage members to specialize. Rules will not infringe on chamber median's capacity to shape outcomes. |
| Committee behavior | Committee members act without regard to the preferences of their colleagues. | Committee members act in a manner consistent with the preferences of their caucus. | Committee members act in a manner consistent with the preferences of the chamber's median. |
| Principal author(s) | Weingast, Marshall, Baron, Ferejohn, Shepsle, Mayhew | Cox, McCubbins, Kiewiet | Maass, Krehbiel, Gilligan |
| Antecedents | Wilson (1885), Goodwin (1970), Lowi (1969) | Silbey (1967), Brady (1973), Hasbrouck (1927), Rohde (1991) | Fenno (1966), Robinson (1963), Cooper (1970), Alexander (1916) |

^aThe bias can result from committees whose members have preferences that are homogenous or bipolar extremes.

^bThere is no apparent reason why bipartisan policy committees have been created.

(c)

Cardinals or Clerics? Congressional Committees and the Distribution of Pork

1. **Authors:** Berry, Christopher R. and Fowler, Anthony
2. **Year:** 2016
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Journalistic and academic accounts of Congress suggest that important committee positions allow members to procure more federal funds for their constituents, but existing evidence on this topic is limited in scope and has failed to distinguish the effects of committee membership

from selection onto committees. We bring together decades of data on federal outlays and congressional committee and subcommittee assignments to provide a comprehensive analysis of committee positions and distributive politics across all policy domains. Using a within-member research design, we find that seats on key committees produce little additional spending. The chairs of the Appropriations subcommittee—the so called cardinals of Congress—are an exception to the rule. These leadership positions do generate more funding for constituents, but only from programs under the jurisdiction of their subcommittee. Our results paint a new picture of distributive politics and call for a reexamination of its canonical theories.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) **In general, we find that committee positions are not nearly as important for pork barrel-ing as previously thought. Membership on important committees such as Appropriations produces no detectable increase in federal funding for a legislators constituents. Even when we focus on the specific programs under their immediate jurisdiction, we find little effect of membership on authorizing committees or Appropriations subcommittees for federal funding. However, we do find strong evidence that the chairs of Appropriations subcommittees—the “cardinals” of Congress—along with the ranking minority members, receive significantly more money from their subcommittee’s programs because of their institutional positions. Therefore, membership on the Appropriations Committee only produces more pork insofar as members are able to achieve a leadership position on a subcommittee—something that half of House Appropriations members do achieve at some point in their career. The effects of these leadership positions are restricted to the policy domains of the subcommittees, further circumscribing the importance of committees for pork.**
- (b) Specifically, we compare changes in pork for individual legislators over time as they switch their committee positions to changes in pork for legislators who do not switch committee positions.
- (c) **A position as a Senate cardinal is even more effective, increasing outlays by 28%, on average, and doubling them in the cases of defense and energy. In the House, we detect even stronger effects of these leadership positions. Ranking minority positions increase outlays by 68%, on average, and subcommittee chair positions increase outlays by 96%. Cardinals in the House, on average, appear to procure approximately twice as much money from their subcommittee as they otherwise would if they were not the chair or ranking minority member.**

Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives.

- 1. **Authors:** Cox, Gary W., and Mathew D. McCubbins
- 2. **Year:** 2005
- 3. **Journal:**
- 4. **Keywords:**
- 5. **Summary:** An elaboration of Cox and McCubbins’s earlier (1993) theory. Argues against Krehbiel (who claims parties don’t matter) and Rohde (who argues for “conditional” party government). **They develop and extend the procedural cartel theory.** Legislative parties are best analogized to legal or accountancy partnerships, with various gradations of junior and senior partners. They specialize in controlling the agenda, rather than in controlling votes. That is, they seek to determine what is voted on to begin with, in order to lessen the pressure on determining how their members’ votes are

cast (negative agenda control).

Given that one party's legislative accomplishments are another party's failures, then each member shares, within his or her party, a desire to control the agenda such that their legislation gets on the agenda and the opposing party's does not. The opportunity costs are large. To the extent possible, members of the majority party will want to monopolize (or cartelize) control of the legislative agenda onto themselves, within the legislature.

The agenda is cartelized when (1) special agenda-setting powers are formally delegated to various offices, such as committee chairs, the Speakership, and the Rules Committee; (2) the majority party's members secure most of these offices, so that "agenda-setting services" can be procured only from members of the procedural cartel, just as certain kinds of economic services or goods can be procured only from the relevant economic cartel; and (3) the majority party's "senior partners," who hold these agenda-setting offices, act according to a minimal fiduciary standard—namely, that they do not use their official powers to push legislation that would pass on the floor against the wishes of most in their party. (this is a quote from ch 1)

It is not just agenda-setting offices but legislative resources more generally that a cartel will seek to control. Yet for good reasons a cartel will not simply take everything for itself; allowing minority rights is important. There is evidence that legislative resource distribution in the House is biased towards the majority party.

6. Main Findings:

(a) **Procedural cartel theory rests on the following assumptions:**

- Members of Congress seek reelection to the House, internal advancement within the House, and majority status.
- The reputation (or brand name) of a member's party affects both the member's personal probability of reelection and, more substantially, the party's probability of securing a majority. [Comment: But the latter matters only if parties matter, so it alone can't explain why members of Congress would want a strong party.]
- The value of a party's reputation in promoting the (re)election of its candidates depends significantly on the party's record of legislative accomplishment. A party's reputation is a public good, and legislation that affects that reputation is itself a public good for members of the party.
- Legislating—hence compiling favorable records of legislative accomplishment—is akin to team production and entails overcoming an array of cooperation and coordination problems. Managing the party label is the primary collective action problem that members of a party must solve, and their collective goal of solving this and other collective action problems is accomplished by the partnership.
- The primary means by which a (majority) party regulates its members' actions, in order to overcome problems of team production, is by delegating to a central authority.
- The key resource that majority parties delegate to their senior partners is the power to set the legislative agenda; the majority party forms a procedural cartel that collectively monopolizes agenda-setting power.

(b) **The Mechanism: How the Cartel Works:** There exist offices endowed with special agenda-setting powers in the House and these offices' powers were in some sense chosen by the majority party. "Special agenda-setting powers," or agenda power for short, means any special ability to determine which bills are considered on the floor and under what procedures. The majority party sets up a procedure for selecting the occupants of the agenda-setting offices that is likely to

lead in principle, and does lead in practice, to its members winning most of the agenda-setting offices. Controlling procedures then enables the majority party to prevent unwanted legislation reaching the floor (negative agenda control).

Where's the Party?

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Krehbiel1993}

2. Authors: Krehbiel, Keith

3. Year: 1993

4. Journal: British journal of Political Science

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Political parties are prominent in legislative politics and legislative research. Using data from the 99th Congress, **this article assesses the degree to which significant party behaviour - defined and operationalized as behaviour that is independent of preferences - occurs in two key stages of legislative organization: the formation of standing committees and the appointment of conferees.** Four hypotheses are developed and tested. **When controlling for preferences and other hypothesized effects, positive and significant party effects are rare.** A discussion addresses some criticisms of this unorthodox approach and attempts to reconcile some differences between these and previous findings. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) "it is one thing to proclaim party as the 'chief and most pervasive influence in Congress' with reference to correlates of so-called partisan behaviour, but quite another to establish that party is a significant and independent cause of such behaviour." (p. 237)
- (b) "In casting apparently partisan votes, do individual legislators vote with fellow party members *in spite of their disagreement* about the policy in question, or do they vote with fellow party members *because of their agreement* about the policy in question?" (p. 238)
- (c) "**A uniquely clear and strong definition of significant party behaviour would be: behaviour that is consistent with known party policy objectives but that is contrary to personal preferences.** Such behaviour takes place, for instance, when voters in the shaded regions in Figure 1b vote for their party's positions even though their personal preferences dictate otherwise. While clear, this strong definition of significant party behaviour is not as empirically tractable as its somewhat weaker analogue, which this study employs. **Specifically, significant party behaviour is behaviour that is consistent with known party policy objectives but that is independent of personal preferences.**" (p. 240)
- (d) "Increasing homogeneity of majority-party preferences and increasingly sharp differences across parties are precisely what make Figure 1a different from Figure 1b. And Figure 1a - towards which the contemporary Congress has evidently progressed - is precisely the configuration of preferences that makes it impossible to discriminate between a simple and parsimonious preference-based theory and a more complex and elaborate preference-and- party theory. In short, Rohde chooses to label as partisanship that which could just as easily (albeit more awkwardly) be labelled preferenceship." (p. 262)

Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House (Pages 1-52, 175-205)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Rohde1991a}

2. Authors: David Rhode

3. Year: 1991

4. Journal: Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** The argument in the book is that: “The reforms in the House in the early 1970s and the growth of partisanship in the 1980s are systematically related. Both were the result of important electoral changes, specifically the realignment of democratic constituencies in the South that led to increased intraparty homogeneity. The reforms of the 1970s were proposed by liberal Democrats frustrated by the inability to pass legislation favored by a majority of the rank and file. The reforms created incentives for party leaders to push legislation that reflected the interests of a majority of House Democrats. Following the reforms, further changes in the electorate brought coalitions of representatives that were more similar within parties and more different between them. Both the rules and the intraparty homogeneity brought about by elections set the conditions for strong party government. **This book lays out the theory of conditional party government, whereby intraparty homogeneity and interparty heterogeneity determine the extent of partisanship in the House of Representatives.**” ([source](#))

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **Conditional Party Government:** this theory posits that the party leadership in the house will be powerful and important when there is:
 - i. A lot of conflict between the majority party and minority party.
 - ii. When the preferences of members of the majority party are particularly homogeneous.
- (b) “This book challenges claims by Mayhew and others that parties do not matter in the U.S. context. The book traces its theoretical heritage to the earliest analyses (Wilson, 1885) of political parties and committees in Congress. Instead of choosing sides in a debate (committee or parties), Rohde puts his and other arguments about how Congress is organized into their historical contexts. During the periods in which Wilson and others wrote (the 1880s, 1950s), committee government prevails. During other periods (particularly the postreform era), the “textbook” view of Congress is less applicable. Rohde draws on past research on partisanship in Congress, especially Brady, Cooper and Hurley (1979), Brady and Ettling (1984) and Collie and Brady (1985). He also incorporates the findings of more recent scholarship on parties and leaders by Sinclair (1978, 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1989), Smith (1989), Smith and Deering (1984), and Smith and Ray (1983). **Rohde argues that there are three necessary and sufficient conditions for a strong party leadership in the House: (1) a homogeneous party membership, (2) enhanced sources of institutional leverage at the hands of the leader, and (3) a leader willing to use his powers.**”([source](#))
- (c) “While in an earlier era, it may have been possible for scholars accurately to assert that political parties were of little theoretical importance in explaining political behavior and legislative results in the House, it is certainly not true now. Parties are consequential in shaping members’ preferences, the character of the issues on the agenda, the nature of legislative alternatives, and ultimate political outcomes, and they will remain important as long as the underlying forces that created this partisan resurgence persist” (p. 192)

Parties, Median Legislators, and Agenda Setting: How Legislative Institutions Matter

1. **Authors:** Jackman, Molly
2. **Year:** 2014
3. **Journal:**
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** A large literature in American politics argues that the procedural rules in Congress allow the majority party to block bills that are opposed by the majority of its members yet supported by the majority of the chamber. However, majority-party agenda-setting influence is rarely absolute. In this article, I use new data on the rules in the U.S. state legislative chambers to show that majoritarian rules (i.e., procedures that allow the chamber majority to circumvent majority-party gatekeeping) are not only common but also consequential for policy. That is, the presence of majoritarian rules significantly reduces the majority party's advantage in obtaining its preferred legislative outcomes, particularly as the preferences of the floor and majority-party medians diverge. These results demonstrate that the distribution of power in a legislature is a function of its full configuration of agenda-setting rules and thus provide an important qualification to theories of legislation organization.
6. **Main Findings:**

TABLE 2 The Effect of Majoritarian Rules on Majority Roll Rates

| Majoritarian Rule | (1) | Committee Stage | | Calendar Stage | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Floor Vote on Committee Appointments | Discharge Procedure | Floor Vote on Bill Scheduler | Calendar Order Amendable |
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| Gatekeeping and majoritarian rules | -0.028 [†] (0.017) | 0.001 (0.025) | -0.032** (0.014) | -0.018 (0.013) | -0.015 (0.014) |
| Gatekeeping and no majoritarian rules | -0.058** (0.018) | -0.040** (0.014) | -0.057** (0.019) | -0.026* (0.013) | -0.043** (0.013) |
| Majority-party size | -0.276** (0.062) | -0.291** (0.061) | -0.286** (0.060) | -0.280** (0.064) | -0.281** (0.064) |
| Intraparty heterogeneity | 0.010 (0.012) | 0.018 [†] (0.012) | 0.014 (0.012) | 0.009 (0.012) | 0.005 (0.012) |
| Interparty heterogeneity | 0.006 (0.014) | 0.003 (0.014) | 0.007 (0.013) | 0.007 (0.016) | 0.001 (0.016) |
| Constant | 0.255** (0.053) | 0.264** (0.048) | 0.256** (0.049) | 0.240** (0.055) | 0.249** (0.054) |
| R ² | 0.268 | 0.278 | 0.254 | 0.229 | 0.253 |
| Observations | 94 | 96 | 96 | 93 | 93 |

Note: Dark gray shading indicates that the coefficient on *Gatekeeping and majoritarian rules* is significantly different from that on *Gatekeeping and no majoritarian rules* at the $p < 0.05$ level. Light gray shading indicates that these coefficients are significantly different from each other at the $p < 0.10$ level. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Significance tests are one-tailed.

(a) [†] $p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Presidency

The Big Picture

1. The prevailing wisdom since 1960 (Neustadt) is that presidents are not particularly powerful, and instead have to try and persuade others to do what they want. Another way they can try to do this is through public appeals.
2. One consistent thread in the literature is that presidents tend to have more power in the domain of foreign affairs than domestic policy (the two presidencies thesis).
3. However, more recent research (particularly Howell, 2005) has shown that presidents have a first mover advantage using executive orders.
4. This power extends to the distribution of federal spending and even post offices, illustrating how even though presidents are probably at an all time high in power now, they have been powerful for a long time.

Literature Outline

1. Neustadt (1960) “Presidential Power” – **“Presidential power is the power to persuade.”** Presidents are expected to do much more than their authority allows them to do. Persuasion and bargaining are the means that presidents use to influence policy. Not only do presidents need to bargain to influence other branches of government (particularly Congress), but presidents also must bargain to influence the executive branch itself
2. Kernell (1997) “Going Public” – divided government makes bargaining a less appealing and successful strategy, forcing presidents into their public appeals. Going public for support has become easier with TV, internet, radio, but a failed effort to go public can really hurt the president.
3. Howell (2005) “Power Without Persuasion” – President has first mover advantage with executive orders, etc. They can simply do something, and if Congress doesn’t like it, they have to actually respond and get it passed. In this way, the president exercises much more unilateral power than we had previously given them credit for.
4. [Canes-Wrone et al. \(2008\)](#) “Toward a Broader Understanding of Presidential Power: A Re-Evaluation of the Two Presidencies Thesis” – The authors test for the existence of two presidencies in a domain that Congress cannot delegate, budgetary appropriations, and a domain that explicitly incorporates delegation, agency creation. Consistent with expectations, we find presidents exercise considerably greater influence over foreign policy.
5. [Kriner and Reeves \(2015\)](#) “Presidential Particularism and Divide-the-Dollar Politics” – In a county-level analysis of federal spending from 1984 to 2008, they find that president reliably direct dollars to districts represented by their **co-partisans** in Congress. Additionally, they show that, at much higher levels, presidents target both **counties within swing states and counties in core states that strongly supported the president in recent elections.**
6. [Rogowski \(2016\)](#) “Presidential Influence in an Era of Congressional Dominance” – Using an original dataset on the county-level distribution of U.S. post offices from 1876 to 1896, he find consistent evidence that **counties represented by a presidents copartisans in the U.S. House received substantially more post offices than other counties, and that these advantages were especially large under divided government and in electorally important states.** More generally, presidents were more powerful during this time than we used to think.

Presidential Power

1. **Authors:** Neustadt, Richard.
2. **Year:** 1960
3. **Journal:**
4. **Keywords:** [summary](#)
5. **Summary:** “Effective influence for the man in the White House stems from three related sources: first are the bargaining advantages inherent in his job with which to persuade other men that what he wants of them is what their own responsibilities require them to do. Second are the expectations of those other men regarding his ability and will to use the various advantages they think he has. Third are those men’s estimates of how his public views him and of how their publics may view them if they do what he wants. In short, his power is the product of his vantage points in government, together with his reputation in the Washington community and his prestige outside.

A President, himself, affects the flow of power from these sources, though whether they flow freely or run dry he never will decide alone. He makes his personal impact by the things he says and does. Accordingly, his choices of what he should say and do, and how and when, are his means to conserve and tap the sources of his power. Alternatively, choices are the means by which he dissipates his power. The outcome, case by case, will often turn on whether he perceives his risk in power terms and takes account of what he sees before he makes his choice. A President is so uniquely situated and his power so bound up with the uniqueness of his place, that he can count on no one else to be perceptive for him” (150).

6. Main Findings:

- (a) **Key Point: “Presidential power is the power to persuade.” (11)** Presidents are expected to do much more than their authority allows them to do. Persuasion and bargaining are the means that presidents use to influence policy. Not only do presidents need to bargain to influence other branches of government (particularly Congress), but presidents also must bargain to influence the executive branch itself; cabinet secretaries, agency heads, and individual bureaucrats all have leverage that they can use against the president, requiring presidents to persuade even the executive branch, not merely command it.
- (b) “The essence of a President’s persuasive task is to convince such men that what the White House wants of them is what they ought to do for their sake and on their authority” (30).
- (c) The president is only one of several masters of the bureaucracy, and even the White House staff have independent sources of power (34-6). People in all positions cannot do much without persuading others to help them, and this applies even to the president. However, more people need favors from the president than from any other person. This gives the president bargaining power.
- (d) The president’s resources include the bargaining powers that come with the position, professional reputation, and public prestige.
 - The president’s **professional reputation** involves how others expect him to react. Isolated failures are not a problem, but if the failures form a pattern, this will weaken him. In addition to anticipating what the president wants, others also have to assess how hard he will try to get it. Tenacity is important. If a president cannot convince others that he will inevitably win, at least he needs to convince them that it will be costly to cross him. You can’t punish everyone, but you need to selectively punish your enemies and reward your allies.

- **Public prestige** deals with the president's popular support outside Washington. (With reputation, people anticipate the reactions of the president; with prestige, they anticipate the reactions of the voters.) Most politicians and bureaucrats do not watch poll numbers directly; they watch Congress. Prestige conveys leeway because low prestige encourages resistance.
- The president must safeguard his power personally. No one else sees politics from the same vantage point, and so no one else can do this for him. Everyone else has the institutional pulls of their position tinting their judgment. "Yet nobody and nothing helps a President to see, save as he helps himself" (127).

Going Public

1. **Authors:** Kernell, Samuel.
2. **Year:** 1997
3. **Journal:**
4. **Keywords:** [summary](#)
5. **Summary:** Increasingly, American presidents have come to rely on "going public"—that is, on making direct appeals to voters in order to scare Congress into passing legislation that the president wants. Naturally, this is not the only strategy available to presidents, and choosing "going public" over negotiation certainly has its costs. As such, Kernell's central research question is this: "Why should presidents come to favor a strategy of leadership that appears so incompatible with the principles of pluralist theory?" (11). The answer, according to Kernell, is that divided government makes bargaining a less appealing and successful strategy, forcing presidents into their public appeals.

6. Main Findings:

(a) Only outsiders can go public

Going public is a strategy for independent politicians with few group or institutional loyalties and who are not so interested in sacrificing short-term gain for the longer-term advantages of bargaining. Since presidents are commonly political outsiders, many feel more at home going public than bargaining.

When going public, a president seeks to mobilize other politicians' supporters on his behalf. Usually, a particular audience or constituency is targeted with a particular message. Organization is crucial to success.

(b) Why Going Public is a New Strategy: Institutionalized vs individualized pluralism

Politics has made the transition from institutionalized pluralism (when Neustadt wrote) to individualized pluralism. Institutionalized pluralism features a small number of fixed groups as actors. The major players include committee chairs, party leaders, interests groups, and other oligarchs. There is continuity among the players, so bargaining can take a long term perspective. Thus, favors today can be exchanged for unspecified future favors.

Individualized pluralism features a plethora of individuals rather than a few leaders. Bargaining in this situation is far more difficult. As such, going public becomes attractive, since it enables a president to rile up public opinion against several individual legislators simultaneously.

Reasons for the change include a decline in party loyalty, an increase in the number of interested parties (interest groups) due to the growth of the welfare state, and the rise of independent

political entrepreneurs (esp. in Congress, but also in the presidency as a result of the increasing importance of primaries). Since there are more players, bargaining is harder. Reneging on deals is easier, and the collective action obstacles are greater. Thus, presidents go public, a more heavy-handed tactic, but an effective one.

(c) **Other (less important) Reasons that Going Public is a New Strategy**

New technologies make going public easy (television especially).

Presidents used to be selected by conventions, and they were always “insiders.” Since the 1970s, the parties have shifted much more toward using primaries, which favor outsiders and strong campaigners. As such, modern presidents have less attachment (and familiarity) to old modes of bargaining, and instead continue doing what they know how to do: campaigning directly to the people.

Divided government has become increasingly common (see table on p 47). In unified government, presidents don’t want to embarrass their co-partisans, since they don’t want to yield seats to the opposition. But under divided government, going public is useful both because it can hurt the other party at election time and because it might be more effective than bargaining with a Congress that sharply disagrees with you.

(d) **Constraints on going public**

There are several constraints on going public. The president can be hurt (politically embarrassed) if going public fails. Thus, the threat of going public is employed more often than the act. The message must be latently popular (see Canes-Wrone 2001). Also, Presidents can’t go public too often, or the public will become fatigued. Going public generates resentment in Congress (since it is, at root, a threat and a shot at their electoral base). There is some loss of flexibility involved. (However, Reagan often staked out a strong position and then caved in.) Finally, going public is a strategy of weakness; When you can’t win by other means, going public is the last resort.

Power Without Persuasion

1. **Authors:** Howell, William G

2. **Year:** 2005

3. **Journal:**

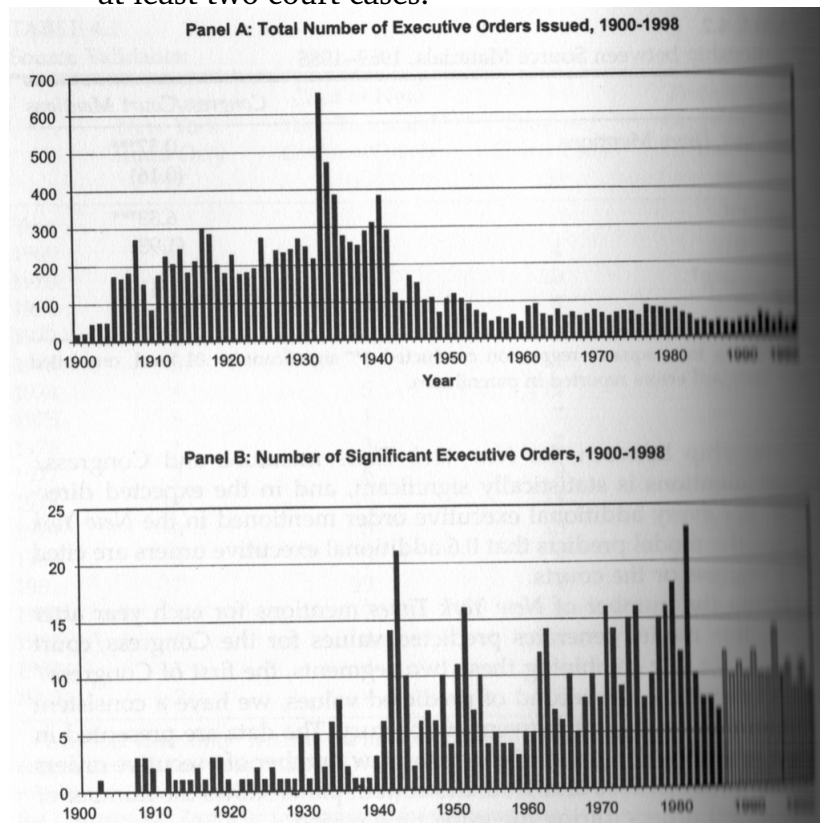
4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** Since the early 1960s, scholarly thinking on the power of U.S. presidents has rested on these words: “Presidential power is the power to persuade.” Power, in this formulation, is strictly about bargaining and convincing other political actors to do things the president cannot accomplish alone. Power without Persuasion argues otherwise. Focusing on presidents’ ability to act unilaterally, William Howell provides the most theoretically substantial and far-reaching reevaluation of presidential power in many years. He argues that presidents regularly set public policies over vocal objections by Congress, interest groups, and the bureaucracy. Throughout U.S. history, going back to the Louisiana Purchase and the Emancipation Proclamation, presidents have set landmark policies on their own. More recently, Roosevelt interned Japanese Americans during World War II, Kennedy established the Peace Corps, Johnson got affirmative action underway, Reagan greatly expanded the president’s powers of regulatory review, and Clinton extended protections to millions of acres of public lands. Since September 11, Bush has created a new cabinet post and constructed a parallel

judicial system to try suspected terrorists. Howell not only presents numerous new empirical findings but goes well beyond the theoretical scope of previous studies. Drawing richly on game theory and the new institutionalism, he examines the political conditions under which presidents can change policy without congressional or judicial consent. Clearly written, *Power without Persuasion* asserts a compelling new formulation of presidential power, one whose implications will resound.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) President has first mover advantage with executive orders, etc. They can simply do something, and if Congress doesn't like it, they have to actually respond and get it passed.
- (b) Several key cases starting in the 1930s solidified the president's authority to issue executive orders that essentially count like laws.
- (c) Chapter 4: Theory Testing
 - **Significant Executive Orders:** need to have been mentioned in the Congressional record or at least two court cases.



- President is strong to the degree that Congress is weak

Toward a Broader Understanding of Presidential Power: A Re-Evaluation of the Two Presidencies Thesis.

1. **Authors:** Canes-Wrone, Brandice, William G. Howell, and David E. Lewis.
2. **Year:** 2008
3. **Journal:** JOP
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** An enduring and controversial debate centers on whether there exist “two presidencies,” that is, whether presidents exercise fundamentally greater influence over foreign than domestic affairs. This paper makes two contributions to understanding this issue and, by extension, presidential

power more generally. First, we distill an institutional logic that both supports the two presidencies thesis and implies that Congress has incentives to delegate foreign policy powers to the president. Accordingly, the logic suggests that empirical analysis should incorporate these incentives. Our second contribution, then, is to test for the existence of two presidencies in a domain that Congress cannot delegate, budgetary appropriations, and a domain that explicitly incorporates delegation, agency creation. Consistent with expectations, we find presidents exercise considerably greater influence over foreign policy.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) **We examine fiscal year 1969-2000 appropriations data in addition to 1946-2000 agency creation and design data.** The budget data enable the examination of a policy that, according to the Constitution, cannot easily be delegated to the executive.
- (b) **Our second contribution is to test for the existence of the two presidencies in a specific domain that Congress cannot delegate, budgetary appropriations, and a domain that explicitly incorporates delegation, agency creation. We find that in these contexts presidents exercise considerably greater influence over foreign than domestic policy. Indeed, in each case this effect on presidential influence is at least as great as the impact of the president's party controlling Congress.** These findings hold even when controlling for a host of other factors, including the possibility

Presidential Particularism and Divide-the-Dollar Politics

1. **Authors:** Kriner, Douglas L. & Reeves, Andrew.

2. **Year:** 2015

3. **Journal:** APSR

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** When influencing the allocation of federal dollars across the country, do presidents strictly pursue maximally efficient outcomes, or do they systematically target dollars to politically influential constituencies? In a county-level analysis of federal spending from 1984 to 2008, we find that presidents are not universalistic, but particularistic—that is, they reliably direct dollars to specific constituents to further their political goals. As others have noted, presidents target districts represented by their co-partisans in Congress in the pursuit of influence vis-a-vis the legislature. But we show that, at much higher levels, presidents target both counties within swing states and counties in core states that strongly supported the president in recent elections. Swing state particularism is especially salient during presidential reelection years, and core partisan counties within swing states are most heavily rewarded. Rather than strictly pursuing visions of good public policy or pandering to the national median voter, our results suggest that presidents systematically prioritize the needs of politically important constituents.

6. Main Findings:

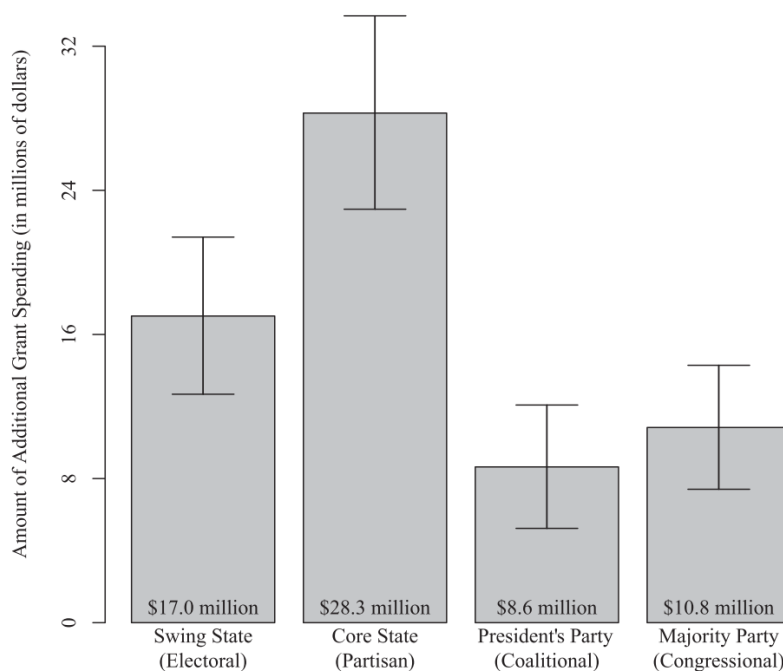
- (a) To what extent do presidents influence the distribution of federal grants across geographic constituencies in the United States? To answer this question, we follow Berry, Burden, and Howell (2010) and Kriner and Reeves (2012) and **compile data from the Consolidated Federal Funds Report (CFFR) on every federal grant program from 1984 to 2008. For each program, the CFFR reports the amount of money spent in each county in a given year.**

TABLE 1. Summary of Hypotheses

| | | |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Null hypothesis | | Universalism The allocation of federal grants across constituencies should not be correlated with a state's or county's political characteristics. |
| | | Type of Presidential Particularism |
| <i>Electoral</i> | Swing state hypothesis | Counties in electorally-competitive swing states should receive more federal grants, all else equal, than counties in states that are uncompetitive in presidential elections. |
| | Election year hypothesis | Counties in swing states should receive an even greater share of federal grant dollars in presidential election years than in off-years. The effect will be even stronger when president is running for re-election. |
| | Swing state core county hypothesis | Within swing states, core counties should receive a larger share of federal grant dollars. |
| <i>Partisan</i> | Core state hypothesis | Core states that strongly support the president's party should receive more federal grants, all else equal, than other states. |
| | Core state core county hypothesis | Within core states, core counties should receive a larger share of federal grant dollars. |
| <i>Coalitional</i> | Congressional co-partisan hypothesis | Presidents should also target grant dollars to constituencies represented by their fellow partisans in Congress. |

(b)

FIGURE 1. Presidential Particularism and Federal Grant Spending (county-level effects)



Notes: Each bar presents the additional estimated amount of money that the median population-weighted county receives if it is in a swing state (electoral particularism) or core state (partisan particularism), is represented in the House of Representatives by a member of the president's party (coalitional particularism), or represented by the majority party in Congress. The effects are estimated from the model in column 1 of Table 2. The amounts are relative to those received by a comparable county in a noncore, nonswing state, represented by a member of Congress not of the President's party. For example, the model estimates that a county in a swing state sees \$17 million more in federal grant spending than a comparable county in a nonswing and noncore state. The I bars around the top of each bar represent the uncertainty (the 95% confidence interval) around each estimate.

(c)

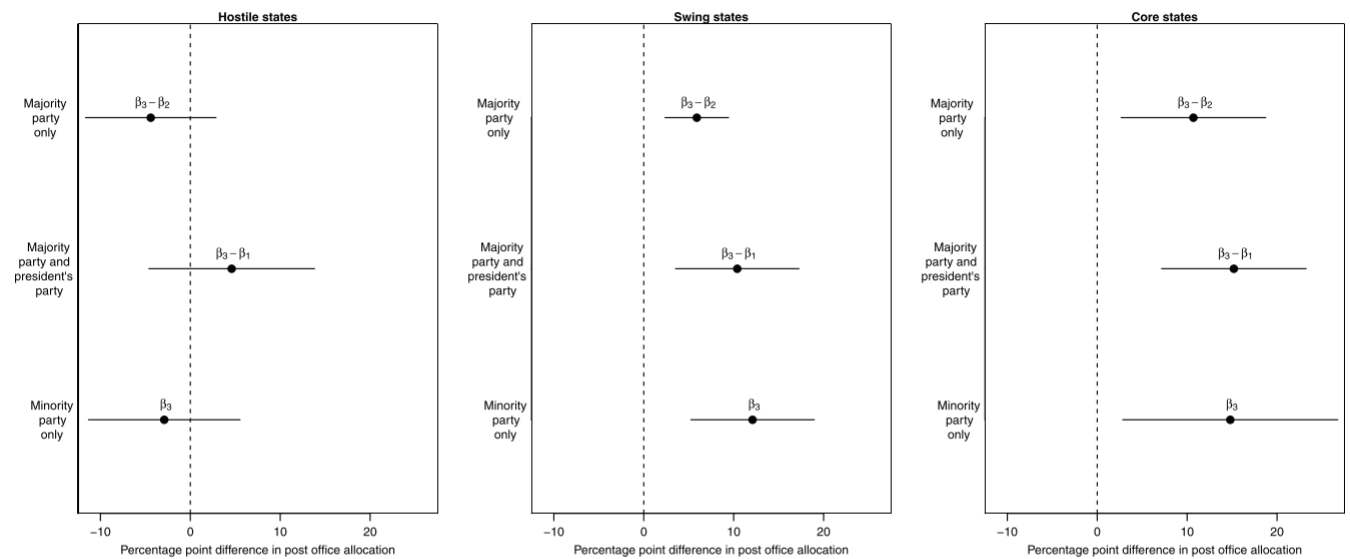
(d) What motivates this consistent and significant geographic inequality in federal funding? We suggest two possibilities. First, such inequalities may be the result of presidents pursuing

universalistic ends through particularistic means. For example, a Democratic president may firmly believe that the national interest is best served by closing the education gap between rich and poor communities through increased federal funding for schools in urban and socioeconomically disadvantaged districts. The result is that poor, urban districts that exhibit the most need and also happen to be staunchly Democratic receive the most money.

Presidential Influence in an Era of Congressional Dominance

1. **Authors:** Rogowski, Jon C.
2. **Year:** 2016
3. **Journal:** APSR
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Research on presidential power focuses almost exclusively on the modern era, while earlier presidents are said to have held office while congressional dominance was at its peak. In this article, I argue that nineteenth-century presidents wielded greater influence than commonly recognized due to their position as head of the executive branch. Using an original dataset on the county-level distribution of U.S. post offices from 1876 to 1896, I find consistent evidence that counties represented by a president's copartisans in the U.S. House received substantially more post offices than other counties, and that these advantages were especially large under divided government and in electorally important states. These results are robust across model specifications and when examining the Senate. The findings challenge key components of the congressional dominance and modern presidency theses, and have important implications for scholarship on interbranch relations, bureaucratic politics, and American political development
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) **The data were collected from the United States Official Postal Guide, which was published annually from 1874 to 1954 and contained information about the organization of the department, postal rates, changes to postal regulations, the names and salaries of postmasters appointed by the president, and a complete list of the locations of post offices by county and state.** These data were collected for even years between 1876 and 1896.¹⁷ The advent of rural free delivery in 1896 altered the need for continued post office expansion, and thus 1896 is a sensible endpoint for the analysis. **The number of post offices in the data nearly doubled over the time period under investigation, from 35,650 in 1876 to 69,116 by 1896.**
 - (b) Based on the panel nature of the data, I use a **differences-in-differences design** to identify the effects of the political factors discussed above on the distribution of post offices.

FIGURE 2. Electoral Context and Presidential Targeting, 1876–1896



Notes: The plotted points show the percentage point advantage in the allocation of post offices for counties represented by presidential copartisans under divided government, compared with majority party legislators under divided government (*Majority party only*), legislators who shared the president's partisanship and were members of the majority party (*Majority party and president's party*), and minority party legislators under unified government (*Minority party only*). *Hostile states* are where the president's party lost by more than 10 percentage points; *Swing states* are where the margin of victory was less than 10 percentage points; and *Core states* are where the president's party won by more than 10 percentage points. Positive numbers indicate that counties represented by presidential copartisans under divided government were advantaged relative to counties represented by other legislators. For instance, in *Swing states*, counties represented by a presidential copartisan legislator under divided government received 5.9 percent more post offices relative to counties represented by a member of the majority party under divided government. The horizontal lines represent the 95 percent confidence intervals. The dashed vertical lines are located at zero, and indicate no difference in the number of county-level post offices.

(c)

- (d) This article provides clear evidence that bureaucratic policymaking in the Gilded Age systematically advantaged the presidents congressional copartisans. Counties represented by members of the presidents party received substantially more post offices, and the advantages conferred to presidential copartisans were significantly greater under divided government. **The findings reported here suggest that presidents played substantially greater roles during this period in directing the activities of the federal government than scholars have typically acknowledged.**

Bureaucracy

The Big Picture

1. Legislators do not like spending too much time keeping an eye on the bureaucracy themselves, so they design administrative procedures to make it harder for bureaucrats to step out of line and get away with it (fire alarms instead of police patrols).
2. Members of the bureaucracy do not act like perfect robots, but instead use lots of heuristics to get the job done, and it works reasonably well.
3. Under divided government, congress will try to create more restrictive procedures and is successful in at least partially restricting the actions of the bureaucracy. However, assigning too many committees to look over the bureaucracy can actually reduce congresses ability to exercise control.
4. To the degree that congress is in a state of gridlock, it makes it easier for the president to exercise more control over the bureaucracy.

Literature Outline

1. [Lindblom \(1959\)](#) “The Science of ‘Muddling Through’” – The U.S. executive bureaucracy uses limited policy analysis, bounded rationality, and limited or no theory at all in formulating policy. This can actually be a more reasonable or “scientific” approach than many give it credit for. Often real policies are too complex to analyze using a full theoretical perspective so a simpler approach may yield better results.
2. [Epstein and O’Halloran \(1996\)](#) “Divided Government and the Design of Administrative Procedures: A Formal Model and Empirical Test” – Main thesis is that congress will give more leeway to bureaucrats under unified than divided government. Thus we get “procedural gridlock” through more restrictive administrative procedures under divided government.
3. [Howell and Lewis \(2002\)](#) “Agencies by Presidential Design” – We analyze the 425 agencies established between 1946 and 1995 and find that agencies created by administrative action are significantly less insulated from presidential control than are agencies created through legislation. We also find that the ease of congressional legislative action is a significant predictor of the number of agencies created by executive action. Congressional inaction leads to more presidential control.
4. [McCubbins and Schwartz \(1984\)](#) “Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms” – Scholars have often remarked that Congress neglects its oversight responsibility. We argue that Congress does no such thing: what appears to be a neglect of oversight really is the rational preference for one form of oversight-which we call fire-alarm oversight-over another form-police-patrol oversight.
5. [McCubbins et al. \(1987\)](#) “Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Political Control” – The authors argue that **much of administrative law is written for the purpose of helping elected politicians retain control of policymaking**. APAs (Administrative Procedures Acts) help overcome information asymmetry. They enable politicians (in executive and legislative branches) to keep administrative decisions in line with their (and their constituents’) interests without having to really pay much attention to the bureaucracy.
6. [Clinton et al. \(2014\)](#) “Influencing the Bureaucracy: The Irony of Congressional Oversight” – Analyzing variation in political influence across and within agencies reveals that **Congress is less influential relative to the White House when more committees are involved**. Increasing the number of involved committees may maximize the electoral benefits for members, but may also undercut oversight.

The Science of “Muddling Through”.

1. **Authors:** Lindblom, Charles
2. **Year:** 1959
3. **Journal:** PAR
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:**
6. **Main Findings:** The U.S. executive bureaucracy uses limited policy analysis, bounded rationality, and limited or no theory at all in formulating policy. This can actually be a more reasonable or “scientific” approach than many give it credit for. Often real policies are too complex to analyze using a full theoretical perspective so a simpler approach may yield better results.

| Rational-Comprehensive (Root) | Successive Limited Comparisons (Branch)(i.e. “muddling through”) |
|--|---|
| 1a. Clarification of values or objectives distinct from and usually prerequisite to empirical analysis of alternative policies. | 1b. Selection of value goals and empirical analysis of the needed action are not distinct from one another but are closely intertwined. |
| 2a. Policy-formulation is therefore approached through means-end analysis: First the ends are isolated, then the means to achieve them are sought. | 2b. Since means and ends are not distinct, means-end analysis is often inappropriate or limited. |
| 3a. The test of a “good” policy is that it can be shown to be the most appropriate means to desired ends. | 3b. The test of a “good” policy is typically that various analysts find themselves directly agreeing on a policy (without their agreeing that it is the most appropriate means to an agreed objective). |
| 4a. analysis is comprehensive; every important relevant factor is taken into account. | 4b. analysis is drastically limited: i) important possible outcomes are neglected. ii) Important alternative potential policies are neglected. iii) Important affected values are neglected. |
| 5a. Theory is often heavily relied upon. | 5b. A succession of comparisons greatly reduces or eliminates reliance on theory. |

(a)

(b)

Divided Government and the Design of Administrative Procedures: A Formal Model and Empirical Test.

1. **Authors:** Epstein, David, and Sharyn O’Halloran

2. **Year:** 1996

3. **Journal:** JOP

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** Despite the abundance of recent studies on divided government, no clear consensus has emerged as to whether divided partisan control has an appreciable impact on policy outcomes. In this article we take a new perspective on the divided government debate by emphasizing the important role that the federal bureaucracy plays in shaping policy. We present a game theoretic model of the policy-making process in which legislators design administrative procedures, the president appoints agency heads, and bureaucrats collect information and promulgate regulations. The model predicts that during times of divided control Congress delegates less discretionary authority to the executive branch, and that these changes in authority have significant policy consequences. We then test the implications of our model with data drawn from U.S. trade policy between 1890 and 1990. Our central finding is that divided government influences policy indirectly, through the procedures that Congress designs to control the bureaucracy.

6. **Main Findings:**

(a) Main thesis is that congress will give more leeway to bureaucrats under unified than divided government. Thus we get “procedural gridlock” through more restrictive administrative procedures under divided government.

- (b) 1946 Administrative Procedures Act: created three categories of permissible actions – rule making, adjudicatory hearings, discretionary actions (informal rule making).
- (c) data drawn from U.S. trade policy between 1890 and 1990, dependent variable is the **amount of tariffs as a percentage of imports**. Independent variable is delegation, which is measured as 1 if congress passed legislation increasing presidential authority in trade the past year, zero if no change, and -1 if they restricted it.
- (d) they find divided government reduces delegation by their measure (using ordered probit). They also find that increasing delegation reduces tariffs.

Agencies by Presidential Design.

1. **Authors:** Howell, William and David E. Lewis.
2. **Year:** 2002
3. **Journal:** JOP
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Scholars have largely ignored one of the most important ways in which presidents influence the administrative state in the modern era, that is, by creating administrative agencies through executive action. Because they can act unilaterally, presidents alter the kinds of administrative agencies that are created and the control they wield over the federal bureaucracy. We analyze the 425 agencies established between 1946 and 1995 and find that agencies created by administrative action are significantly less insulated from presidential control than are agencies created through legislation. We also find that the ease of congressional legislative action is a significant predictor of the number of agencies created by executive action. We conclude that the very institutional factors that make it harder for Congress to legislate provide presidents new opportunities to create administrative agencies on their own, and to design them in ways that maximize executive control.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Presidents created about 40% of new agencies unilaterally during study period. They tend to have much more control over these unilaterally created agencies. However, congress can always cut off budget.
 - (b) Presidents tend to create agencies that congress would support with money, but can't coordinate to create themselves.
 - (c) Congressional weakness is operationalized as variance in ideal points between parties. More difference means more gridlock, means weaker congress.

Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms

1. **Authors:** McCubbins, Matthew D. and Schwartz, Thomas
2. **Year:** 1984
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Scholars have often remarked that Congress neglects its oversight responsibility. We argue that Congress does no such thing: what appears to be a neglect of oversight really is the rational preference for one form of oversight-which we call fire-alarm oversight-over another form-police-patrol oversight. Our analysis supports a somewhat neglected way of looking at the strategies by which legislators seek to achieve their goals.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) **Congress prefers to allow third parties to oversee the executive branch performance by means of established rules and procedures (fire alarms), rather than examining a sample of agencies at its own initiative (police patrol). It is not Congress' neglect of oversight, but just the rational preference for one form over the other.**
- (b) Model:
 - **Police patrol oversight** = centralized, active, and direct: At its own initiative, Congress chooses a sample of executive agencies with the aim of detecting and remedying violations of legislative goals, and by its surveillance, discouraging such violations.
 - **Fire alarms oversight** = less centralized, less active and direct: Congress establishes rules, procedures and informal practices to enable citizens and organized interest groups to examine administrative decisions to charge agencies with violating congressional goals and to seek remedies from agencies, courts and Congress itself.
- (c) Assumptions:
 - Congress can choose either form of oversight or form a combination, (with implicit tradeoffs among them) when writing legislation and when evaluating agency's performance. Technical assumption.
 - Congressmen seek to take as much credit as possible in helping their constituencies. Motivational assumption.
 - Executive agencies act as agents of Congress, specially its subcommittees on which they depend for authorizations and appropriations. Institutional assumption.
- (d) Consequences:
 - Congressmen favor oversight, so they will prefer FA to PP. (PP is more time spending; PP may imply a small sample of agencies, therefore missing potential violations; cost of oversight is borne by third parties).
 - By adopting a somewhat effective oversight policy, Congress is not neglecting its responsibility.
 - **Congress will adopt an extensive policy of FA while largely neglecting PP.**
- (e) Authors argue against: 1) Those who have mentioned that Congress neglects its oversight responsibility by arguing that public policy is complex, and therefore authority has to be delegated over bureaucracy, whose actions it is unable effectively to oversee (Lowi, 1969). 2) Those who say that Congress wishes to keep bureaucracies non-political in the name of public interest, and 3) Those who claim that Congress is too decentralized to make oversight bodies powerful enough to do their job correctly.
- (f) **FA is more effective because legislative goals are stated in an ambiguous way that obstruct violation detections, unless third parties complaint. FA are focused in the sense that identifies the specific offended agency or citizen, a matter that PP would not do.**

Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Political Control

1. **Authors:** McCubbins, Mathew, Roger Noll, and Barry Weingast.
2. **Year:** 1987
3. **Journal:** JLEO
4. **Keywords:** [Summary]
5. **Summary:** "Specifically, the hypothesis we put forth is that much of administrative law ... is written for the purpose of helping elected politicians retain control of policymaking." (246)

6. Main Findings:

- (a) The literature mostly looks to active oversight (i.e. “police patrols,” monitoring and sanctions) for evidence of political control of the bureaucracy (see McCubbins and Schwartz 1984). However, the high cost of monitoring prevents this from working as well as politicians would like. Like McCubbins and Schwartz (1984), then, this article looks to other means over controlling the bureaucracy (in this case, APAs).
- (b) **Theory: APAs as instruments of political control:** APAs (Administrative Procedures Acts) help overcome information asymmetry. They enable politicians (in executive and legislative branches) to keep administrative decisions in line with their (and their constituents’) interests without having to really pay much attention to the bureaucracy.

“By requiring agencies to collect and disseminate politically relevant information, Congress and the president make the threat of sanctions a more efficacious control device. Moreover, the administrative system is designed so that some of the costs of enforcement are borne not by politicians, but by constituents and the courts. Finally, administrative procedures affect the costs to agencies of implementing policies that are opposed by groups enfranchised by these procedures. This alters the incentive structure of the agencies and thereby shapes their decisions.” (246)

Influencing the Bureaucracy: The Irony of Congressional Oversight

1. **Authors:** Clinton, Lewis, and Selin

2. **Year:** 2014

3. **Journal:** AJPS

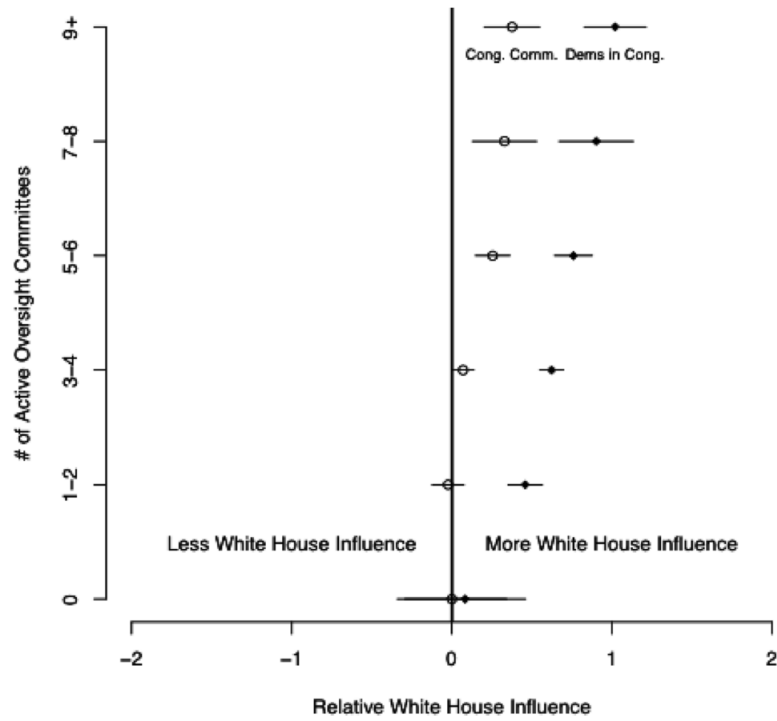
4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** Does the president or Congress have more influence over policymaking by the bureaucracy? Despite a wealth of theoretical guidance, progress on this important question has proven elusive due to competing theoretical predictions and severe difficulties in measuring agency influence and oversight. We use a survey of federal executives to assess political influence, congressional oversight, and the policy preferences of agencies, committees, and the president on a comparable scale. Analyzing variation in political influence across and within agencies reveals that Congress is less influential relative to the White House when more committees are involved. **While increasing the number of involved committees may maximize the electoral benefits for members, it may also undercut the ability of Congress as an institution to collectively respond to the actions of the presidency or the bureaucracy.**

6. Main Findings:

- (a) We address these challenges using a **survey of federal agency administrators and program managers designed to measure congressional and presidential influence over agency policymaking during 2007 and 2008**. In so doing, we use a method that Congress itself has used to measure its own oversight of the bureaucracy. As a result, even if our survey-based measure is imperfect, those imperfections likely also affect the understanding that Congress has about its own relationship with executive agencies. **We attempted to survey every appointed and career federal executive responsible for administering or managing programs in the federal bureaucracy about their opinions and perspectives on political influence in their respective agencies and bureaus.** Of the 6,690 potential respondents, 2,225 executives from 128 different agencies and bureaus provided at least a partial response, and the average agency contains 14 respondents (the overall response rate was 33%).

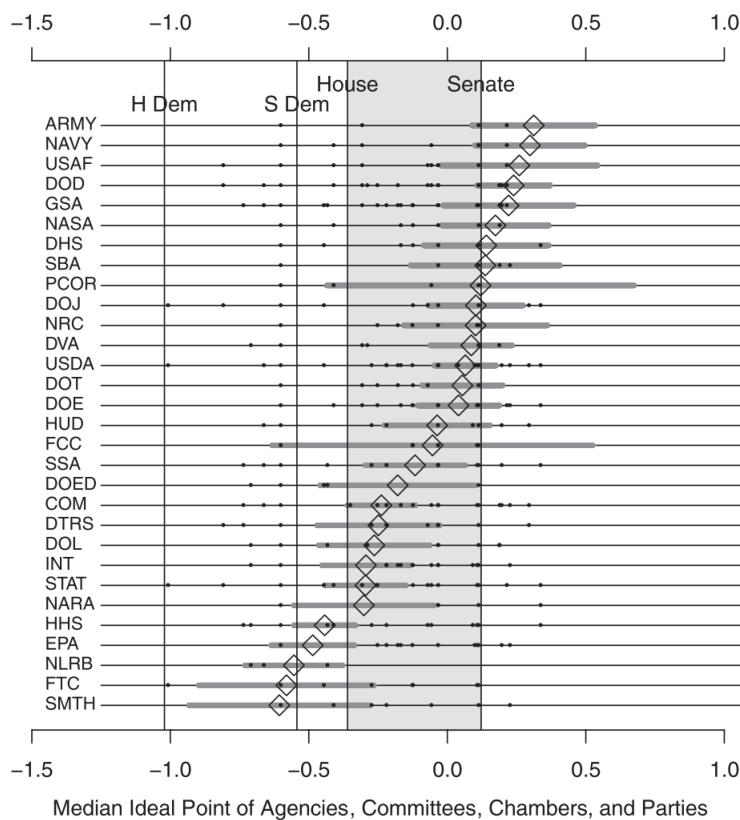
FIGURE 1 Relationship between Relative White House Influence and Number of Committees Exercising Active Oversight



Note: Differences and 95% confidence intervals relative to congressional committees (open) and Democrats in Congress (solid) are plotted.

(b)

FIGURE 2 Policy Preferences of Agencies and the Committees Identified as Exercising Oversight over the Agency in the 110th Congress



Note: Only agencies with at least 10 respondents are graphed. Ideal points are based on the estimates from Clinton et al. (2012). Vertical lines denote the ideal points of the (from left to right) House Democratic median, Senate Democratic median, House median, and Senate median.

(c)

Judiciary

The Big Picture

1. Before [Dahl \(1957\)](#), scholars thought that the supreme court basically only acted on precedent and was not at all political. Dahl said no, the court is actually quite political.
2. This finding is borne out by [Segal and Spaeth \(2002\)](#) and [Hinkle \(2015\)](#) who both find evidence of little to no legal constraint and instead support for an attitudinal model where judges politics determine ruling.
3. Judges also do respond to public opinion, and to the person characteristics like gender in the decisions they make.
4. Rosenberg (1991) showed the court is not as powerful or independent as some had thought, and instead can only affect social change when it has the support of the president.

Literature Outline

1. [Dahl \(1957\)](#) “Decision-Making in a Democracy: The Supreme Court as National Policy-Maker” – Introduced view of court as taking political stances instead of just following precedent. Its “main

task,” Dahl argued, was “to confer legitimacy on the fundamental policies of the successful coalition.”

2. [Segal and Spaeth \(2002\)](#) “The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited” – **Attitudinal model**: judges decide cases on personal policy preferences. **Legal model**: judges are relatively mechanical decision-makers who are fully constrained by pre-existing law. **Rational choice model**: judges constrained by their institutional environment, and will decide cases strategically to avoid being overruled. **Findings**: attitudinal model best, legal model incomplete, rational choice irrelevant.
3. [Hinkle \(2015\)](#) “Legal Constraint in the U.S. Courts of Appeals” – using district court search and seizure cases from 1990-2010, the author finds that the less visible decision of which cases to cite shows no evidence of legal constraint, while there is consistent evidence that the more readily observable act of negatively treating a cited precedent is constrained by the legal doctrine of stare decisis.
4. [Boyd et al. \(2010\)](#) “Untangling the Causal Effects of Sex on Judging” – This article examines whether male and female judges decide cases distinctly—“individual effects”—and whether and in what ways serving with a female judge causes males to behave differently—“panel effects.” The authors look at 13 areas of law and only find gender effects in sex discrimination cases. Men are 10% less likely to find with female complainants, and judges are more likely to find with female complainants when a woman is on the panel.
5. [Canes-Wrone et al. \(2014\)](#) “Judicial Selection and Death Penalty Decisions” – looking at death penalty cases, the authors find that judges face the greatest pressure to uphold capital sentences in systems with nonpartisan ballots. Judges respond to public opinion with partisan elections for reappointment. This behavior emerged after interest groups began achieving success at targeting justices for their decisions.
6. Rosenberg (1991) “The Hollow Hope” – The supreme court faces three constraints that keep it from affecting major social change. First is nature of constitutional rights precludes the Court from hearing many social reform cases. Second is court is not fully independent from control by congress and president. Third is court can only implement rulings with help from congress. thus they are constrained unless congress/president/public go along with them.
7. FROM LAST SECTION: [Clark \(2009\)](#) “The Separation of Powers, Court-curbing and Judicial Legitimacy” – The evidence indicates that public discontent with the Court, as mediated through congressional hostility, creates an incentive for the Court to exercise self-restraint. When Congress is hostile, **the Court uses judicial review to invalidate Acts of Congress less frequently than when Congress is not hostile towards the Court.** Uses counts of court-curbing legislation over 100 year period to test his hypotheses.

The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited (Ch 3,8)

1. **Authors:** Segal and Spaeth
2. **Year:** 1993
3. **Journal:** [\[Great Summary\]](#)
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Segal and Spaeths The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited argues that judges are policymakers who decide cases primarily (and sometimes exclusively) on the basis of their personal policy preferences. This is particularly true of Supreme Court justices, for the American political system leaves them unconstrained when issuing decisions on the merits. Segal and Spaeth

label this thesis the attitudinal model. They contrast the attitudinal model with the legal model, which posits that judges are relatively mechanical decision-makers who are fully constrained by pre-existing law, and the rational choice (or strategic) model, which posits that all judges, including Supreme Court judges, are constrained by their institutional environment (and Congressional preferences), and will hence decide cases strategically to avoid being overruled. **A series of statistical analyses run on post-WWII Supreme Court case law data are interpreted as establishing the superiority of the attitudinal model, the incompleteness of the legal model, and the irrelevance of the rational choice model.**

6. Main Findings:

- (a) Ultimately, despite the “panoply of myth” that judicial decisions “are objective, impartial, and dispassionate,” the truth is that **the combination of four factors endow American judges, and particularly Supreme Court justices, with “virtually untrammelled policymaking authority”** (ibid: 10; 12). First, Americans treat the Constitution as the fundamental law of the land and a benchmark from which to assess the legitimacy of all government action; Second, Americans’ adherence to the principle of limited government engenders distrust of government and politicians from which judges remain immune; Third, the American federal structure, with a vertical division of powers between state and federal government and a horizontal separation of powers between the three branches, requires the adjudication of inter-governmental conflict; Fourth, the Supreme Court in *Marbury v. Madison* bestowed this settlement authority upon itself, and this role for the Court has since become entrenched (ibid: 44).
- (b) To obtain an exogenous measure of the justices attitudes, Segal and Spaeth code “the judgments in newspaper editorials that characterize nominees prior to confirmation as liberal or conservative insofar as civil rights and liberties are concerned” (ibid: 321). While this is an imperfect measure, so long as it is unbiased (as Segal and Spaeth claim) it will merely artificially weaken the correlations with judicial decisionmaking and produce a conservative estimate (ibid: 322). Their dependent variable constitutes whether a liberal decision is issued in a civil liberties case (where a liberal decision is measured as one that is (1) pro-person accused or convicted of a crime; (2) pro-civil liberties or civil rights claimant; (3) proindigent; (4) pro-Indian; or is (5) antigovernment in due process and privacy (ibid: 323). Once this dependent variable is regressed on the facts of the case and the measure of the policy preference of justices, the latter is highly statistically significant: **In fact, attitudes alone predict 70% of outcomes in search and seizure cases** (ibid: 325).

Legal Constraint in the U.S. Courts of Appeals

- 1. **Authors:** Rachael K. Hinkle
- 2. **Year:** 2015
- 3. **Journal:** JOP
- 4. **Keywords:**
- 5. **Summary:** Existing evidence of law constraining judicial behavior is subject to serious endogeneity concerns. Federal circuit courts offer an opportunity to gain leverage on this problem. A precedent is legally binding within its own circuit but only persuasive in other circuits. Legal constraint exists to the extent that use of binding precedents is less influenced by ideology than use of persuasive precedents. Focusing on search and seizure cases, I construct a choice set of published circuit cases from 1953 to 2010 that cite the Fourth Amendment. I model the use of precedent in cases from 1990 to 2010, using matching to ensure that binding and persuasive precedents are otherwise comparable. The less visible decision of which cases to cite shows no evidence of legal constraint, while there is

consistent evidence that the more readily observable act of negatively treating a cited precedent is constrained by the legal doctrine of stare decisis.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) As expected, ideology plays a role in the selection of precedents. Precedents located farther from the opinion author are less likely to be cited. However, this effect is only statistically significant when the precedent is from the same circuit. Rather than showing legal constraint, this finding indicates that the doctrine of stare decisis does not have any diminishing effect on the ideological nature of a judges choice about which binding precedents to cite in an opinion.
- (b) In contrast to ignoring a precedent, the way a judge treats a cited case is clearly visible within the four corners of an opinion. This makes it relatively easier for reviewing courts to observe a departure from stare decisis. Consequently, it would make sense for judges to be constrained by legal doctrine in terms of treatment even though no such pattern emerges for the citation decision. There is no evidence of ideological dampening in the case of positive treatment. In fact, there is no evidence that ideology is a significant factor in the positive treatment decision at all. Most likely this lack of traction is due to similarity between a simple citation and a positive treatment. In practice, merely citing a precedent is a type of soft positive treatment. Within
- (c) However, the results here suggest that legal constraint manifests under conditions when departure from the doctrine of stare decisis is easiest for other actors to observe. This distinction suggests that legal constraint in the circuit courts is driven by strategic concerns such as fear of reversal, desire for promotion, or preserving legitimacy to consolidate policy- making power in future cases.

Untangling the Causal Effects of Sex on Judging.

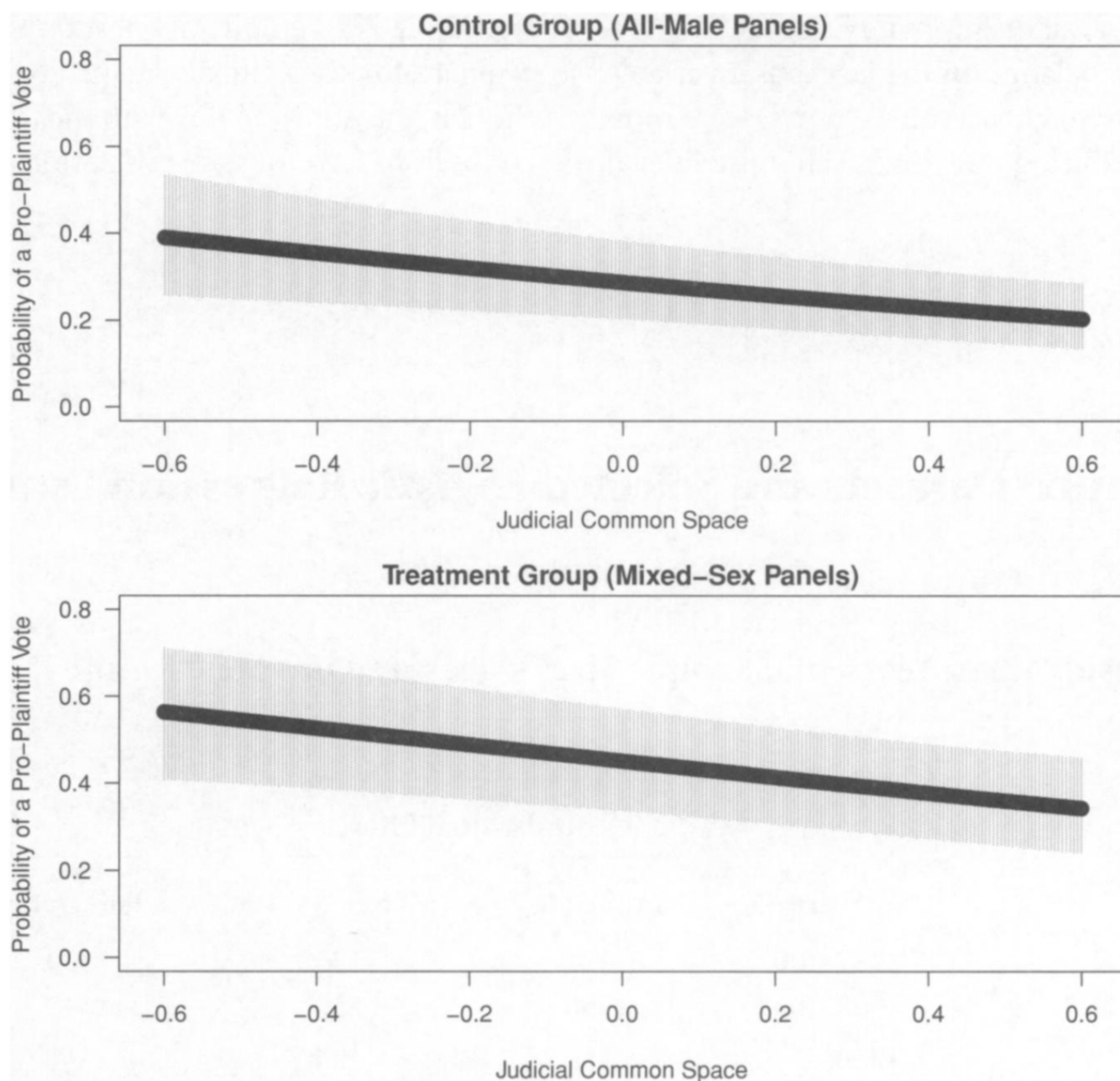
1. **Authors:** Boyd, Christina L., Lee Epstein, and Andrew D. Martin
2. **Year:** 2010
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:** We explore the role of sex in judging by addressing two questions of long-standing interest to political scientists: whether and in what ways male and female judges decide cases distinctly—“individual effects”—and whether and in what ways serving with a female judge causes males to behave differently—“panel effects.” While we attend to the dominant theoretical accounts of why we might expect to observe either or both effects, we do not use the predominant statistical tools to assess them. Instead, we deploy a more appropriate methodology: semiparametric matching, which follows from a formal framework for causal inference. Applying matching methods to 13 areas of law, we observe consistent gender effects in only one—sex discrimination. For these disputes, the probability of a judge deciding in favor of the party alleging discrimination decreases by about 10 percentage points when the judge is a male. Likewise, when a woman serves on a panel with men, the men are significantly more likely to rule in favor of the rights litigant. These results are consistent with an informational account of gendered judging and are inconsistent with several others.
5. **Summary:**
6. **Main Findings:**

| Account | Premise | Empirical Implications | |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | Individual Effects | Panel Effects |
| <i>Different Voice</i> | Males and females develop distinct worldviews and see themselves as differentially connected to society | Yes, across a range of issues | None expected |
| <i>Representational</i> | Female judges serve as representatives of their class and so work toward its protection in litigation of direct interest | Yes, but only on issues of concern to women broadly speaking | None expected |
| <i>Informational</i> | Women possess unique and valuable information emanating from shared professional experiences | Yes, but only on issues on which female judges may possess valuable expertise, experience, or information | Yes, but only on issues on which female judges may possess valuable expertise, experience, or information |
| <i>Organizational</i> | Male and female judges undergo identical professional training, obtain their jobs through the same procedures, and confront similar constraints once on the bench | No. Male and female judges are more alike than dissimilar and face common professional constraints | None expected |

"Individual Effects" are whether and in what ways male and female judges decide cases distinctly; "Panel Effects" are whether and in what ways serving with a female judge causes her male colleagues to behave differently.

- (a)
- (b) Analysis uses propensity score matching. Beginning with the first step, choosing covariates, we took cues from the large and well-established literature on judging in the U.S. Courts of Appeals (e.g., Cross 2007; Hettinger, Lindquist, and Martinek 2004; Scherer 2005) and incorporated both judge-based attributes (e.g., ideology and age) and case-specific factors (e.g., year of decision and the direction of the lower court decision).²¹

FIGURE 7 Predicted Probabilities of Pro-Plaintiff Votes in Title VII Sex Discrimination Cases as a Function of the Judicial Common Space (Ideology) for All-Male (Control) and Mixed-Sex (Treatment) Panels



(c)

Decision-Making in a Democracy: The Supreme Court as National Policy-Maker.

1. **Authors:** Dahl, Robert
2. **Year:** Journal of Public Law
3. **Journal:** 1957

4. **Keywords:** [Review](#)

5. **Summary:** To consider the Supreme Court of the United States strictly as a legal institution is to underestimate its significance in the American political system. For it is also a political institution, an institution, that is to say, for arriving at decisions on controversial questions of national policy. As a political institution, the Court is highly unusual, not least because Americans are not quite willing to accept the fact that it is a political institution and not quite capable of denying it; so that frequently we take both positions at once. This is confusing to foreigners, amusing to logicians, and rewarding to ordinary Americans who thus manage to retain the best of both worlds.

6. **Main Findings:**

- (a) Introduced view of court as taking political stances instead of just following precedent.
- (b) The Supreme Court, in Dahl's opinion, was best understood as a political institution that was part of the dominant national alliance. Moreover, it had limited powers and was more akin to a powerful congressional committee chair than a co-equal branch of government. But it did have some power. The source of that power, Dahl suggested, was the "unique legitimacy attributed to its interpretations of the Constitution." The Court could jeopardize its legitimacy, however, "if it flagrantly opposes the major policies of the dominant alliance," a course, Dahl argued, it was unlikely to follow. Its "main task," Dahl argued, was "to confer legitimacy on the fundamental policies of the successful coalition."

[Judicial Selection and Death Penalty Decisions.](#)

1. **Authors:** Canes-Wrone, Brandice, Tom S. Clark, and Jason P. Kelly.

2. **Year:** 2014

3. **Journal:** APSR

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** Most U.S. state supreme court justices face elections or reappointment by elected officials, and research suggests that judicial campaigns have come to resemble those for other offices. We develop predictions on how selection systems should affect judicial decisions and test these predictions on an extensive dataset of death penalty decisions by state courts of last resort. Specifically, the data include over 12,000 decisions on over 2000 capital punishment cases decided between 1980 and 2006 in systems with partisan, nonpartisan, or retention elections or with reappointment. As predicted, the findings suggest that judges face the greatest pressure to uphold capital sentences in systems with nonpartisan ballots. Also as predicted, judges respond similarly to public opinion in systems with partisan elections or reappointment. Finally, the results indicate that the plebiscitary influences on judicial behavior emerge only after interest groups began achieving success at targeting justices for their decisions.

6. **Main Findings:**

- (a) Judges in nonpartisan election systems are highly likely to affirm death penalty appeals at any level of majority support; the predicted probability of upholding a capital sentence is close to 80% regardless of whether a slim majority supports the death penalty or 85% of the public does. On the one hand, this relatively flat line for nonpartisan elections may seem surprising. On the other hand, as previously discussed, the theory that underlies the Partisan Signals perspective predicts a positive slope that then plateaus.

The Hollow Hope

1. **Authors:** Rosenberg, Gerald

2. **Year:** 1991

3. **Journal:**

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** In his book, Gerald Rosenberg questions the validity of the commonly accepted axiom that the Supreme Court of the United States is able to affect widespread social change. Naturally, such a drastic departure from conventional beliefs drew the ire of many critics, both within and beyond academia. Rosenberg examines two views of the United States Supreme Court: the view of the Dynamic Court and the view of the Constrained Court. The Dynamic Court view maintains that the United States Supreme Court is indeed capable of effecting widespread change, often citing cases such as *Brown v. Board* and *Roe v. Wade* as examples. The Constrained Court view, on the other hand, holds that because of the existing constraints imposed upon the Court by the United States Constitution and the United States Congress, the Court is unable to accomplish significant change.

Rosenberg sides largely with the Constrained Court view. He studies several landmark cases that have been handed down from the Court, such as *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) and *Roe v. Wade* (1973), and asserts that in each examined situation, the Court was largely unable to attain any tangible, empirically-measurable change. Rosenberg names three constraints that preclude the US Supreme Court from being truly effective, and arrives at the conclusion that although the Court is indeed capable of accomplishing significant change, such change can only occur when these three constraints are overcome.

6. **Main Findings:**

- (a) **First Constraint:** The First Constraint is that the nature of constitutional rights precludes the Court from hearing or effectively acting on many significant social reform claims, and lessens the chances of popular mobilization. This Constraint can be overcome if there exists sufficient precedent for change based on the Judiciary's interpretation of the Constitution.
- (b) **Second Constraint:** The Second Constraint is that the Court does not have sufficient independence from the legislative and executive branches to affect significant social reform. This Constraint can be overcome by securing support from substantial numbers in Congress and securing the support of the executive branch.
- (c) **Third Constraint:** The Third Constraint is that the Court does not have the power to develop necessary policy and implement decisions that could affect significant reform. Because, as Alexander Hamilton put it, the Court controls neither the sword (Executive branch) nor the purse (Legislative branch), it must rely on cooperation from the other two branches in order to enforce its decisions. This Constraint can be overcome either by securing support of citizens, or at least not having significant opposition from all citizens.
- (d) Rosenberg maintains that the efforts made by women's rights, pro-choice, and civil rights activists to use the courts to produce social change have not been very effective. To prove and support this claim, he examines a great deal of statistical information. In looking at the effects that *Brown v. Board* had on desegregation, for example, Rosenberg looks at the percentage of black schoolchildren attending mixed schools in the South in the years preceding this landmark decision, and the years following it. He finds that almost no measurable change had occurred in the ten years following this decision. Indeed, it is not until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that the percentage begins to increase annually. Similarly, in looking at *Roe v. Wade*, he finds that the annual number of legal abortions did not seem to be greatly affected by the Court's decision.

Representation and Policymaking

The Big Picture

1. People tend to get better collective than dyadic representation, and it is not as bad as we might think from the Miller-Stokes study, which found that legislators simply did not know what their constituents wanted, and vice-versa. However, there is still only about 50% congruence between majority opinion and policies.
2. Representation also seems to be dynamic, in that legislators respond to changes opinion over time.
3. Racism and political media like Fox News do increase republican voting, but having a African American representative does not increase African American participation. Women do provide better representation for women. We also cannot separate out race and gender, and they have a multiplicative effect on substantive representation.
4. Legislators tend to focus on a particular style of representing their constituents, either by bringing home pork or by taking positions on key issues.

Literature Outline

1. [Miller and Stokes \(1963b\)](#) “Constituency Influence in Congress” – The authors find that Congressmen do vote strongly based on a combination of their own preferences and their perceptions of their constituents preferences, but Congressmen have little information about their constituents actual preferences and constituents have little information about their congressmen’s preferences. The tend to vote like they had a mandate on civil rights, along party lines on social welfare, and with the president on foreign affairs.
2. [Weissberg \(1978\)](#) “Collective vs. Dyadic Representation in Congress” – The authors distinguish between **dyadic and collective representation** and find that collective is better than dyadic (Miller-Stokes analysis) would lead us to think. The amount of representation may be more a function of institutional arrangements than of electoral control, and that citizen indifference towards many aspects of legislative politics is quite reasonable, given the existence of collective representation.
3. [Stimson et al. \(1995b\)](#) “Dynamic Representation” – **If public opinion changes and then public policy responds, this is dynamic representation.** Two mechanisms of policy responsiveness are (1) elections and (2) rational anticipation). For each institution separately, and also in a global analysis of “government as a whole,” they find that policy responds dynamically to public opinion change.
4. [Gay \(2001\)](#) “The Effect of Black Congressional Representation on Political Participation” – Using precinct data from eight midterm elections, I demonstrate that the election of blacks to Congress negatively affects white political involvement and only rarely increases political engagement among African Americans.
5. [Reingold and Smith \(2012\)](#) “Welfare Policymaking and Intersections of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in U.S. State Legislatures” – **Additive approach:** gender and race are distinct, suggests that female state legislators regardless of race/ethnicity will mitigate punitive aspects of welfare reform. **Intersectional approach:** legislative women of color will have the strongest countervailing effect on state welfare reform stronger than that of other women or men of color. Empirical analyses suggest an intersectional approach is best.
6. [Tesler \(2013\)](#) “The Return of Old Fashioned Racism to White Americans’ Partisan Preferences in the Early Obama Era” – Old-Fashioned Racism: blacks are biologically/socially inferior versus Modern Racism: blacks are “lazy” and violate social norms. Study finds that with Obama’s election, there has been an uptick in the relationships between views on interracial dating and white partisanship.

7. [Lax and Phillips \(2012\)](#) “The Democratic Deficit in the States” – authors uncover a striking “democratic deficit”: policy is congruent with majority will only half the time. Interest groups play very little role, but term limits, professionalization and salience all have pretty large (10% +) effects.
8. [Grimmer \(2013\)](#) “Representational Style in Congress: What Legislators Say and Why It Matters” – Senators tend to have a stable presentation style over their careers and the election cycle. Aligned senators focus on articulating positions while marginal senators focus on credit claiming for federal spending. Four major styles are: **Issue Oriented, Policy Wonks, Pork and Policy, Appropriators.**
9. [Canes-Wrone \(2013\)](#) “From Mass Preferences to Policy” – Research provides compelling evidence for “responsiveness”: opinion change causes policy changes, but not for a high level of “congruence”. Both congruence and responsiveness have declined since the 1970s, but they are not historically low, and the evidence on partisan news, primaries, redistricting, and a polarization of mass opinion suggests that none of these is a principal cause.
10. [Arceneaux et al. \(2016\)](#) “The Influence of News Media on Political Elites: Investigating Strategic Responsiveness in Congress” – uses incremental rollout of Fox News. Finds **Fox News caused both Republicans and Democrats in Congress to increase support for the Republican Party position on divisive votes, but only in the waning months of the election cycle and among those members who represent districts with a sizable portion of Republican voters.**

Constituency Influence in Congress.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Miller1963a}

2. Authors: Warren E. Miller, Donald E. Stokes

3. Year: 1963

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: While it had been a commonly held belief that members of the house of representatives are highly responsive to their constituents, there had been no study to see if there were differences in responsiveness on different issues and what was driving this responsiveness.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Interviewed congressmen and constituents in their districts from a probability sample of 116 districts.
- (b) Looked at how constituents preferences comported with congressmen’s preferences in the areas of social welfare, foreign policy and civil rights.
- (c) Two ways for constituents to influence their representative: pick someone like them who will do what they want naturally. The other is for the congressman to follow constituent view so they can get re-elected.
- (d) the constituency must take the policy views of candidates into account when choosing a representative, otherwise their views cannot be expressed.
- (e) **Finding 1:** Congressmen do vote strongly based on a combination of their own preferences and their perceptions of their constituents preferences.
- (f) **Finding 2:** Congressmen have little information about their constituents actual preferences and constituents have little information about their congressmen’s preferences.

- (g) **Finding 3:** Congressmen behave sort of like instructed delegates and sort of like a responsible person that shares the views of the constituency and tries to do their best. This is **mandate-gyroscopic** mix.
- (h) **Finding 4:** Congressmen act most as if they had a mandate on the issue of civil rights.
- (i) **Finding 5:** On the issue of social welfare, congressmen seem to follow the responsible party model where they tend to vote the party line and their constituents know they will. On Foreign affairs they just follow the president and nobody cares.

Collective vs. Dyadic Representation in Congress.

1. **Authors:** Weissberg, Robert
2. **Year:** 1978
3. **Journal:** APSR
4. **Keywords:** Previous studies of legislative-constituency representation have focused almost exclusively on pairs of Congress members and their constituencies. It is possible, however, to think of representation collectively, i.e., to consider the extent to which Congress as an institution represents the American people. Our analysis delineates this concept of representation, analyzes its existence by use of probability theory and the Miller-Stokes data, and then considers the relationship between collective representation and electoral control. We conclude that citizens probably get better representation than is suggested by the Miller-Stokes analysis, that the amount of representation may be more a function of institutional arrangements than of electoral control, and that citizen indifference towards many aspects of legislative politics is quite reasonable, given the existence of collective representation.
5. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) The authors use a random legislative voting model to illustrate worst possible dyadic representation and show that collective representation will actually be better than we think. The use a binomial model with only 40 legislators since computers couldn't handle more at the time (435).
 - (b) Collective representation is better than dyadic might lead us to believe.
 - (c) Public ignorance is reasonable.

**Table 3. Dyadic Versus Collective Representation, by Issue Domain, 1958
(District Majorities)**

| Issue Domain | \bar{X} Difference between Member of Congress and Partisan Constituents on Dyadic Basis | Difference between All Legislators and All Districts in the Aggregate | "Improvement" of Collective over Dyadic* |
|-----------------|---|--|--|
| Social Welfare | 3.26 | 2.45 | 24.8% |
| Civil Rights | 2.92 | 2.41 | 17.5% |
| Foreign Affairs | 4.34 | 2.62 | 39.6% |

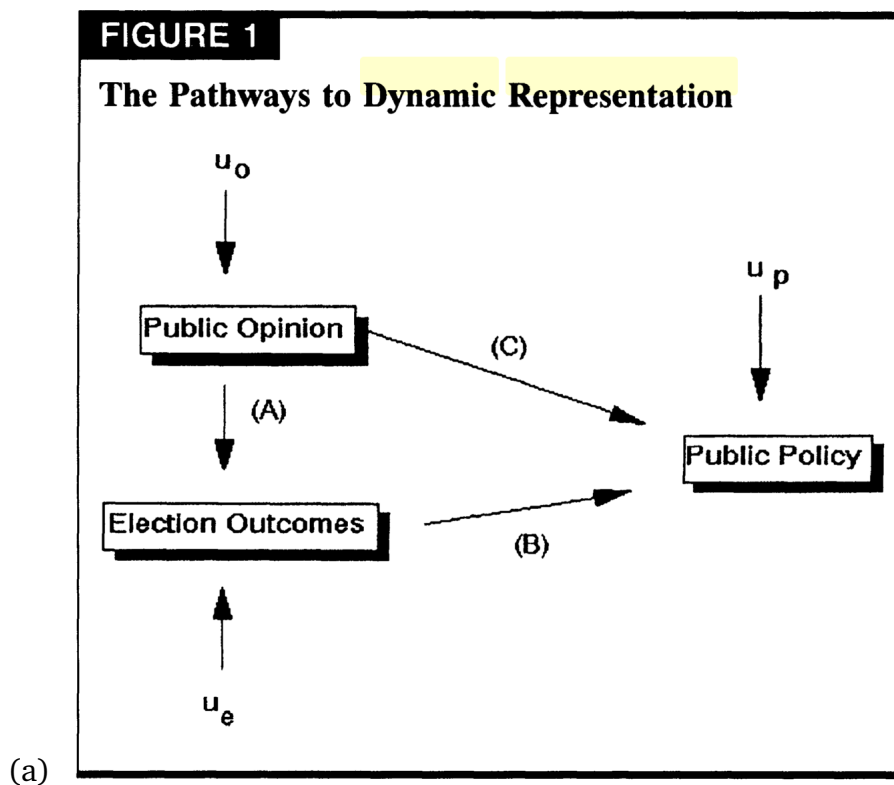
Source: Survey Research Center, University of Michigan.

*Improvement is calculated by subtracting the aggregate from the dyadic scores and dividing the result by the dyadic score.

(d)

Dynamic Representation

1. **Authors:** Stimson, James A., Michael B. MacKuen, and Robert S. Erikson.
2. **Year:** 1995
3. **Journal:** APSR
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** If public opinion changes and then public policy responds, this is dynamic representation. Public opinion is the global policy preference of the American electorate. Policy is a diverse set of acts of elected and unelected officials. Two mechanisms of policy responsiveness are (1) elections change the government's political composition, which is then reflected in new policy and (2) policymakers calculate future (mainly electoral) implications of current public views and act accordingly (rational anticipation). We develop multiple indicators of policy activity for the House, Senate, presidency, and Supreme Court, then model policy liberalism as a joint function of the two mechanisms. For each institution separately, and also in a global analysis of government as a whole, we find that policy responds dynamically to public opinion change. This responsiveness varies by institution, both in level and in mechanism, as would be expected from constitutional design.
6. **Main Findings:**



The Effect of Black Congressional Representation on Political Participation

1. **Authors:** Gay, Claudine
2. **Year:** 2001
3. **Journal:** APSR

4. Keywords:

5. **Summary:** The election of African Americans to Congress is a primary achievement of the post-civil rights transition from protest to politics. I evaluate the link between black congressional representation and political engagement, as measured by voting participation. There are two related objectives: Construct a broader model of participation that takes into account a key component of the political environment since the civil rights era, and more fully appreciate the political significance of minority officeholding by considering its nonpolicy consequences. Using precinct data from eight midterm elections, I demonstrate that the election of blacks to Congress negatively affects white political involvement and only rarely increases political engagement among African Americans.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) This article uses turnout data from midterm elections in eight states: Georgia, Michigan, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania in November 1990; Maryland, Missouri, Tennessee, and Virginia in November 1994. Together these states have 102 congressional districts. Ten were represented by blacks at the time of the midterm election, as shown in Table 1.
- (b) **In districts in which African Americans enjoy political prominence, white constituents are more likely to remain on the margins of the electoral process. Black congressional incumbents routinely experience white turnout rates that are 518 points lower than at polling places elsewhere in the state.** This consistent pattern of white demobilization is not offset by an equally consistent pattern of black mobilization. The optimism of some who champion minority representation (and, by extension, the districting mechanism that ensures it) as a way to increase black voter participation may be misplaced. Only occasionally is there greater political involvement among African Americans represented in Congress by an African American. Those black office-holders who do succeed in making voters out of previously unengaged minority constituents may experience black turnout that is 626 percentage points higher than rates in other districts.

Welfare Policymaking and Intersections of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in U.S. State Legislatures

1. **Authors:** Beth Reingold and Adrienne R. Smith.

2. **Year:** 2012

3. **Journal:** AJPS

4. Keywords:

5. **Summary:** Welfare policy in the American states has been shaped profoundly by race, ethnicity, and representation. Does gender matter as well? Focusing on state welfare reform in the mid-1990s, we test hypotheses derived from two alternative approaches to incorporating gender into the study of representation and welfare policymaking. An additive approach, which assumes gender and race/ethnicity are distinct and independent, suggests that female state legislators regardless of race/ethnicity will mitigate the more restrictive and punitive aspects of welfare reform, much like their African American and Latino counterparts do. In contrast, an intersectional approach, which highlights the overlapping and interdependent nature of gender and race/ethnicity, suggests that legislative women of color will have the strongest countervailing effect on state welfare reform stronger than that of other women or men of color. Our empirical analyses suggest an intersectional approach yields a more accurate understanding of gender, race/ethnicity, and welfare politics in the states.

6. Main Findings:

An Additive Approach, as suggested above, examines welfare policy and politics through a gender (-only) lens, adding women (undifferentiated by race or ethnicity) to the theoretical and empirical story. It begins with the observation that the history and politics of welfare in the United States are gendered in many of the same ways they are raced. One can see gender in the demographic composition of welfare recipients and the poor more generally; in the history of social welfare policymaking and implementation; in public opinion; and in the behavior of elected officials. In all of these arenas, gender biases and differences suggest that welfare is very much a “women’s issue” and that those who advocate for and actively represent women on this issue will fight to make welfare policy more generous and accessible—in effect, more women-friendly.

(a)

H1 (Single-Axis Hypothesis): The greater the incorporation of women in the state legislature, the more generous, accessible, flexible, and lenient the state welfare policy.

An Intersectional Approach posits that welfare politics in the United States is not simply gendered or raced, or even gendered and raced; it is raced-gendered (Hawkesworth 2003; Neubeck and Cazenave 2001). The raced-gendered nature of welfare is perhaps best understood where it is most powerfully manifested: in the distinctive position—real or imagined—of poor women of color (Simien 2007).⁶ It is, after all, not simply women, African Americans, or Latinos who are overrepresented among welfare recipients; it is women of color. As the histories of social welfare policy (cited above) make clear, determinations of which women are more or less deserving of assistance, privacy, and dignity have always been tainted by racial and ethnic biases. As a result, poor women of color have been subject to the most stringent eligibility requirements, the most intense moral

(b)

H2 (*Intersectional Hypothesis*): The (liberal) impact of legislative women of color on state welfare policy will be greater than that of other women or of men of color.

(c)

At first glance, looking through a single-axis lens, it may seem as if state legislative women failed to move welfare policy in a more liberal, women-friendly direction, even in a period of policy disequilibrium. At best, they may have managed to relax the eligibility criteria a bit; at worst, they may have had a hand in reducing cash benefit levels. But on most policy dimensions examined here, the presence and power of (all) women in state legislatures seem to have made very little difference.

The picture looks quite different, however, when viewed through an intersectional lens. Taking into account the intersecting gender and racial/ethnic identities of state legislators highlights both the contingent effects of gender and the pivotal role of women of color. In some instances, our analysis suggests that legislative women of all racial/ethnic backgrounds made a difference in state TANF policy. Eligibility restrictions were eased somewhat in states where legislative women of color and white women were more numerous and powerful. In other instances, legislative women of color seem to have acted without their white female counterparts. It was the in-

(d)

The Return of Old Fashioned Racism to White Americans' Partisan Preferences in the Early Obama Era

1. **Authors:** Tesler, Michael.

2. **Year:** 2013

3. **Journal:** JOP

4. **Keywords:**

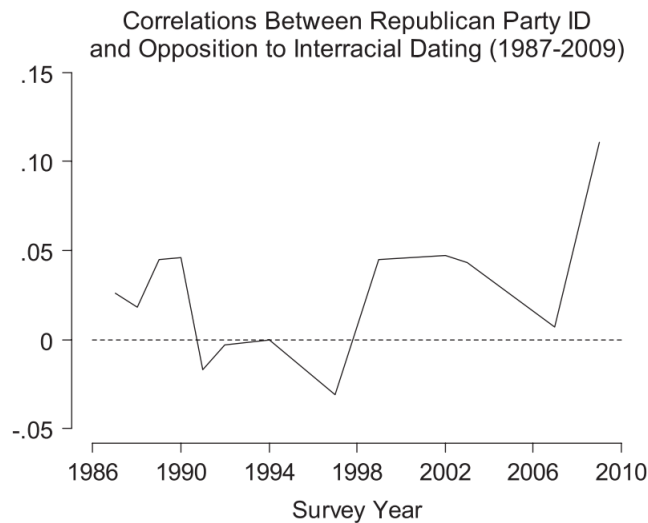
5. **Summary:** Old-fashioned racism (OFR) was unrelated to white Americans partisan preferences throughout the post-civil rights era. This study argues OFR could return to white partisanship following decades of dormancy because of Obamas presidency. After first demonstrating that such attitudes were significantly stronger predictors of opposition to Obama than ideologically similar white Democrats, I support that spillover hypothesis with the following evidence: opposition to interracial dating was correlated with white partisanship in 2009 despite being unrelated to party

identification in 12 earlier surveys; moreover, evaluations of Obama completely mediated that relationship between OFR and partisanship; old-fashioned racism predicted changes in white panelists partisanship between 2006 and 2011; these attitudes were also a stronger determinant of midterm vote preferences in 2010 than they were in 2006, with that relationship once again mediated by President Obama; and experimentally connecting Obama to congressional candidates significantly increased the relationship between OFR and 2010 preferences.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) **DATA: The strength of this study resides in its use of crosssectional data, panel reinterviews, and an original survey experiment to test those hypotheses.** The first cross-sectional analyses draw upon a Pew Research Center Poll from March 2008.² That survey fortuitously asked respondents who they would vote for if the general election was between John McCain and Barack Obama and if it was between John McCain and Hillary Clinton. These hypothetical presidential matchups have been effectively exploited in other datasets to argue that racial resentment, antiblack stereotypes, and white ethnocentrism would have been significantly weaker correlates of 2008 vote choice had John McCain faced Hillary Clinton in the general election instead of Barack Obama (Jackman and Vavreck 2010; Kam and Kinder 2012; Tesler and Sears 2010).
- (b) **Old-Fashioned versus Modern Racism:** New social science theories arose in the post-civil rights era to explain the decline in OFR on the one hand and continued opposition to government action to produce racial equality on the other. These theories, which are variously described as symbolic racism, modern racism, and racial resentment, suggest that a new form of racial animus best explains the influence of antiblack sentiments in contemporary American politics. Unlike OFR, this belief system does not embrace black biological and social inferiority. Instead, the new racism is characterized by “a moral feeling that blacks violate such traditional American values as individualism and self-reliance, the work ethic, obedience, and discipline”
- (c) Old-fashioned racist attitudes, as shown above, were a significant predictor of white Americans partisan preferences 2008 presidential vote intention, 2009 2011 partisanship, and 2010 congressional vote choice in the early Obama era after neither affecting their party identifications nor their partisan voting behavior for at least a generation prior to the 2008 election. These results obtain in spite of the fact that President Obama was substantially less likely to address issues of race during his first two years in office than his predecessors (Gillion 2012). It appears, then, that Obamas rise to prominence, rather than anything he or his party did politically, is primarily responsible for the renewed effects of OFR on partisan preferences.

FIGURE 2 Correlations between Republican Party Identification and Old-Fashioned Racism among White Americans



Note: Dependent variable is a three-category partisanship.

Source: Pew Values Study Merger File

(d)

Linking Womens Descriptive and Substantive Representation in the United States

1. **Authors:** Cowell-Meyers, Kimberley and Laura Langbein.
2. **Year:** 2009
3. **Journal:** Politics and Gender
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** When women are not represented in elected bodies in proportion to their numbers in the general population, a case can be made that their exclusion is unjust, that it impairs the quality of general debate and undermines democratic legitimacy (Mansbridge 1999). But more typically, substantive, not descriptive, representation is the reason scholars and activists concern themselves with numbers of women in legislatures. Because they expect women to act differently than their male colleagues, both scholars and activists expect that electing more women to public office will “make a difference” for women in public policy.... This study aims to determine if having more women in a state legislature makes a state’s policy any more women-friendly.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) We use regression to investigate the relation between descriptive and substantive representation, controlling for variables that affect both the likelihood that women are elected and policy outcomes. Specifically, using least squares or logistic estimation, we regress the extent of or presence/absence of each of the 34 state women-related policies on a set of independent variables common to each regression. Our focus is on the importance of descriptive representation for

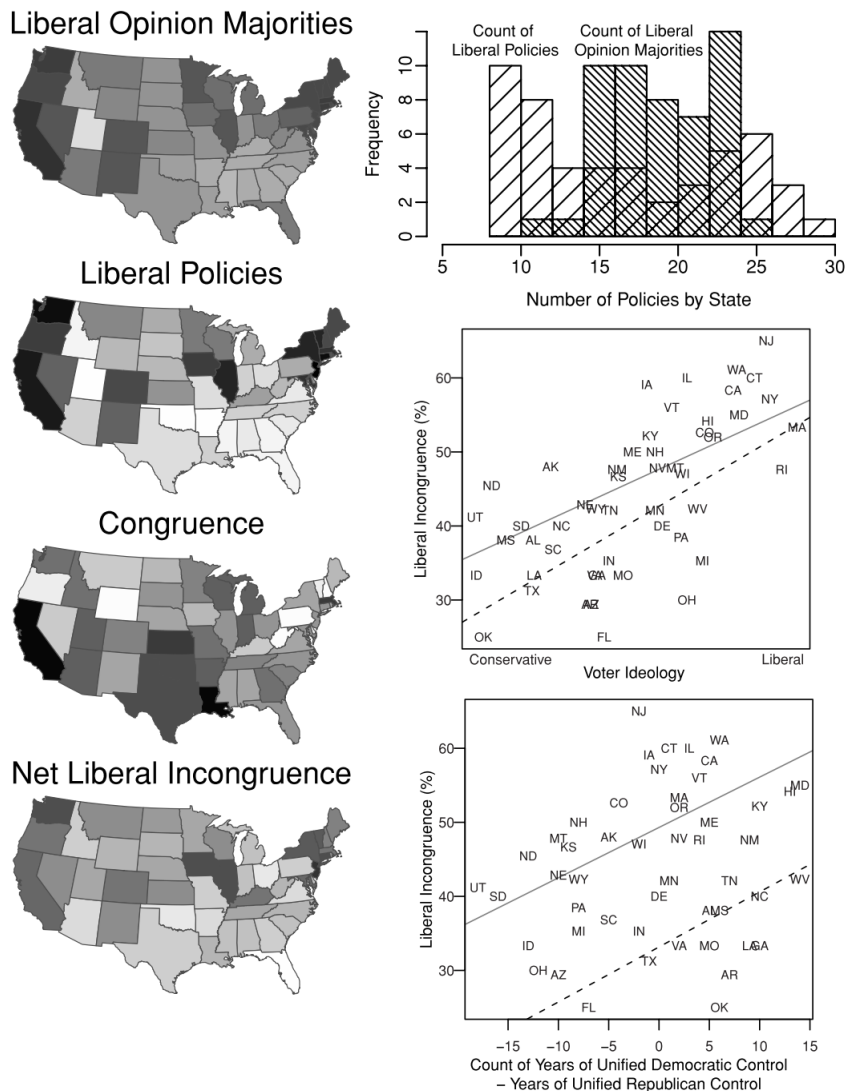
the substantive outcome (policy adoption), controlling for other politically proximate factors common to all policy processes (i.e., the public opinion environment, political party, and interest groups).

- (b) we use the percentage of women in the state legislature, but we average the percentage of women in each state legislature from 1990 to 2000.

The Democratic Deficit in the States

1. **Authors:** Jeffrey R. Lax and Justin H. Phillips
2. **Year:** 2012
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** We study how well states translate public opinion into policy. Using national surveys and advances in subnational opinion estimation, we estimate state-level support for 39 policies across eight issue areas, including abortion, law enforcement, health care, and education. We show that policy is highly responsive to policy-specific opinion, even controlling for other influences. But we also uncover a striking “democratic deficit”: policy is congruent with majority will only half the time. The analysis considers the influence of institutions, salience, partisan control of government, and interest groups on the magnitude and ideological direction of this democratic deficit. We find the largest influences to be legislative professionalization, term limits, and issue salience. Partisanship and interest groups affect the ideological balance of incongruence more than the aggregate degree thereof. Finally, policy is over responsive to ideology and party-leading policy to be polarized relative to state electorates.
6. **Main Findings:**

FIGURE 1 Distribution of Policy and Opinion Majorities



The maps show the number of liberal opinion majorities (darker = liberal; Montana is at the median), number of policies that are liberal (darker = liberal; Pennsylvania is at the median), number of policies that are congruent (darker = congruent; Florida is at the median), and the net liberal incongruence policy bias (darker = liberal; Maine is balanced). The histogram shows the distribution of counts of liberal opinion majorities and of liberal policies. The remaining panels on the lower right show the percentage of incongruence that is liberal for each state against state voter ideology and then against partisan control of government. The dashed regression line shows the southern states and the solid line the rest.

(a)

- (b) We can use our model of congruence to apportion the “blame” for the democratic deficit across the possible culprits. Recall that 48% of policies are congruent with opinion majorities; our model also predicts 48%. If we decrease salience to the minimum across issue areas, or increase it to the maximum, congruence hits 26% and 56%, respectively. Suppose that we maximized professionalization, making every state the equivalent of California in this regard. Our point prediction based on our final model is that congruence would then occur 62% of the time. Giving every state term limits would increase congruence to 57%. Doing both would increase it to 71%. If we remove interest group effects, congruence would be a whopping 49%.

Representational Style in Congress: What Legislators Say and Why It Matters (Ch. 5-6)

1. **Authors:** Justin Grimmer

2. **Year:** 2013

3. **Journal:**

4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** This book demonstrates the consequences of legislators' strategic communication for representation in American politics. *Representational Style in Congress* shows how legislators present their work to cultivate constituent support. Using a massive new data set of texts from legislators and new statistical techniques to analyze the texts, this book provides comprehensive measures of what legislators say to constituents and explains why legislators adopt these styles. Using the new measures, Justin Grimmer shows how legislators affect how constituents evaluate their representatives and the consequences of strategic statements for political discourse. The introduction of new statistical techniques for political texts allows a more comprehensive and systematic analysis of what legislators say and why it matters than was previously possible. Using these new techniques, the book makes the compelling case that to understand political representation, we must understand what legislators say to constituents.

6. **Main Findings:**

(a) **5. Types of presentational styles in the US Senate**

(b) **6. The electoral connection's effect on senators' presentational styles**

3.2 WHY PRESS RELEASES

Press releases avoid many of the problems that plague other data sources: they are regularly used and broadcasted across constituents. They are also relatively easy to collect. To gather the collection of press releases that I use in this book, I wrote a set of web scraping programs to extract the press releases from senators' websites. The result is a comprehensive list of every press release from each Senate office, from 2005, 2006, and 2007 – constituting 64,033 total press releases.¹

(c)

30 *Measuring Presentational Styles with Senate Press Releases*

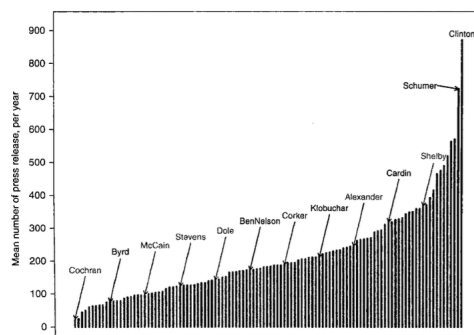


FIGURE 3.1. Press releases are used regularly by each Senate office. This figure shows that press releases are used regularly by each senator. Each bar is the average number of press releases a senator's office issued each year of the study. Both Democrats (in black) and Republicans (in gray) regularly issue a substantial number of press releases, with the average senator issuing about 212 press releases a year.

(d)

31 *Why Press Releases*

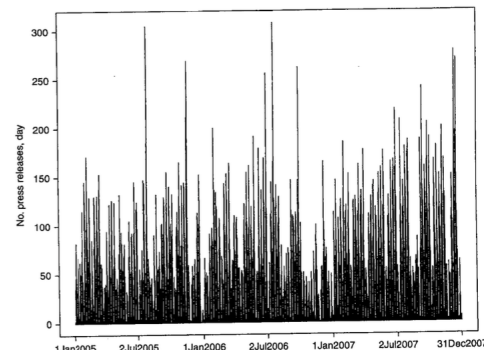


FIGURE 3.2. Press releases are used regularly throughout the year. This figure shows the number of press releases issued each day (across the entire Senate), demonstrating that press releases are issued on nearly every day of the year. On average, fifty-eight press releases are issued each day, and at least one press release is issued on nearly every day of the year.

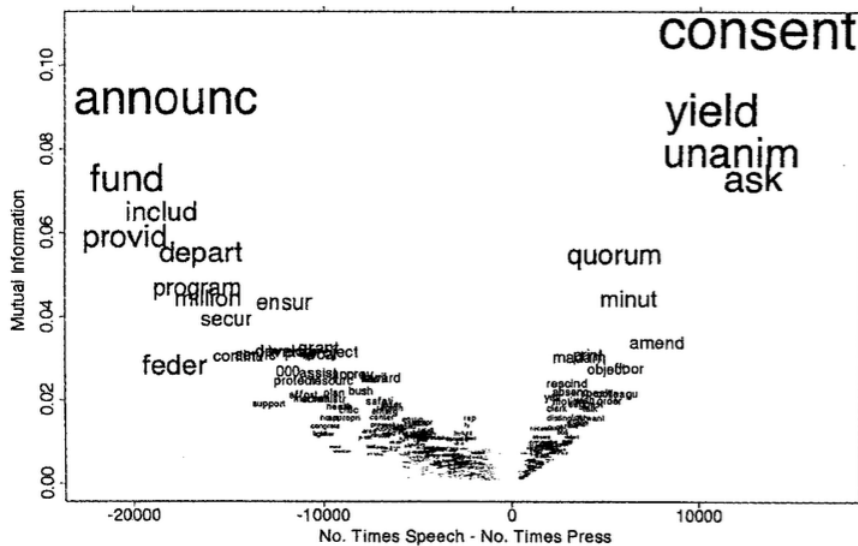


FIGURE 3.3. Comparing press releases with floor speeches. This figure demonstrates that senators are much more likely to discuss appropriations in their press releases than in their floor speeches. To demonstrate this point, I use a statistical method to identify words that distinguish press releases from floor speeches. Words to the left of the plot are distinctive because they are more prevalent in press releases, and words to the right are distinctive because of their prevalence in floor speeches. Floor speeches are distinguished by procedural words (such as *consent* and *yield*), whereas press releases are distinguished by words associated with appropriations (such as *announce* and *fund*).

(e)

5.1 The Types of Presentational Styles in the Senate

61

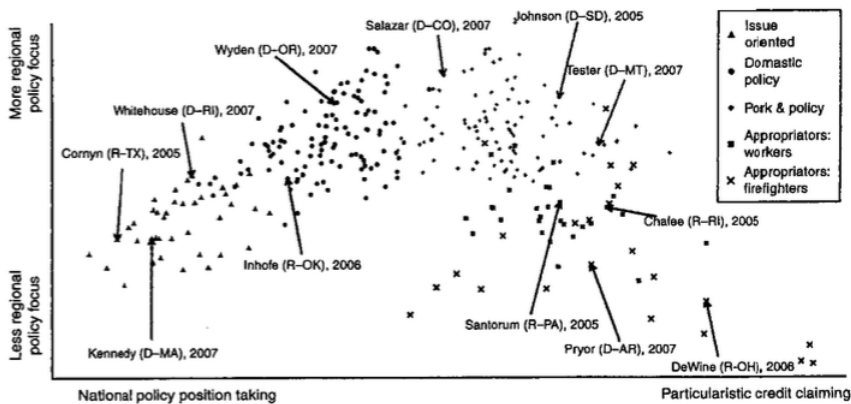


FIGURE 5.1. A typology of presentational styles in the U.S. Senate. This plot represents the typology of presentational styles. To create the plot I used classic multidimensional scaling to identify the two primary dimensions underlying the higher-dimensional expressed priorities. The horizontal dimension captures how senators balance position taking and credit claiming in their press releases, whereas the vertical dimension measures how much attention senators allocate to regional issues.

(f)

TABLE 5.1. *A Typology of Presentational Styles in the U.S. Senate*

| Style name | Exemplar senators | Emphasized topics | Avoided topics | Percent senate |
|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Issue Oriented | John Cornyn (R-TX) | Immigration | Water grants | 13.6 |
| | Russ Feingold (D-WI) | Domestic surveillance | Defense construction | |
| Policy Wonks | Maria Cantwell (D-WA) | Environment | Airport grants | 38.2 |
| | Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) | Gas prices | Firefight grants | |
| | Jeff Sessions (R-AL) | Consumer safety | Police grants | |
| Pork and Policy | Kent Conrad (D-ND) | Water grants | Domestic surveillance | 30.9 |
| | Susan Collins (R-ME) | BRAC | Iraq war | |
| | John Tester (D-MT) | University grants | Budget | |
| Appropriators | Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) | Fire grants | Environment | 17.2 |
| | Mike DeWine (R-OH) | Airport grants | Honorary | |
| | Rick Santorum (R-PA) | University grants | Budget | |

Note: This table summarizes the types of presentational styles in the Senate, as identified by the statistical model. Exemplar senators are senators' whose presentational styles best characterize the style type. Emphasized topics are regularly articulated by senators who adopt the particular style, whereas avoided topics are receive little attention from senators who adopt a particular style. And the last column is the percent of senator who adopt each style type.

(g)

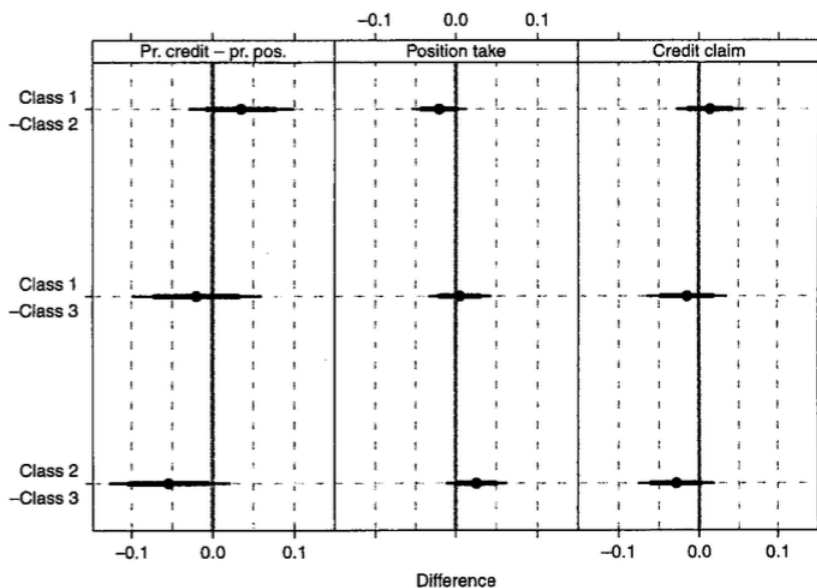


FIGURE 6.4. No systematic shift around electoral cycles. This figure shows that there is little change in senators' presentational styles across years – there is little systematic evidence that senators who are up for reelection claim credit more often for expenditures in their states.

(h)

6.6 CONCLUSION

Senators strategically select their presentational styles to cultivate support among their constituents. But how senators cultivate this support depends on who they represent. Aligned senators focus on articulating positions; marginal senators focus on claiming credit for federal outlays. And because senators are responsive to constituents, they articulate stable styles. Senators' expressed priorities change little over their electoral cycles and tend to be stable over their Senate careers.

Senators' presentational styles have the potential to cultivate support because they allow senators to shape constituent evaluations. Senators' use their expressed priorities to inform constituents about what their senator does while in Washington and to explain why this is valuable. Senators hope that this is able to shift the information constituents use in evaluations. Issue Oriented senators encourage constituents to adopt a greater policy focus in their evaluations, while Appropriators encourage evaluations based on particularistic spending.

(i)

From Mass Preferences to Policy

1. **Authors:** Canes-Wrone, Brandice.
2. **Year:** 2013
3. **Journal:** Annual Review of Political Science
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** This article reviews recent research on how mass opinion affects policy making in the context of US national institutions. Three themes materialize. First, research provides compelling evidence for “responsiveness,” in which change in mass opinion is associated with subsequent policy changes, but not for a high level of “congruence” between the policies that are favored by a majority of the public and those that are enacted. Second, although scholarship suggests that both congruence and responsiveness have declined since the 1970s, they are not low by historic standards; rather, mass opinion was particularly influential in that decade. Third, the literature rebuts conventional explanations for the post-1970s decline and suggests that standard proposals for how to reverse it would not significantly alter the impact of mass preferences on policy. The article concludes by considering the possibility that fundraising developments over the past three decades have changed politicians’ electoral incentives.
6. **Main Findings:**

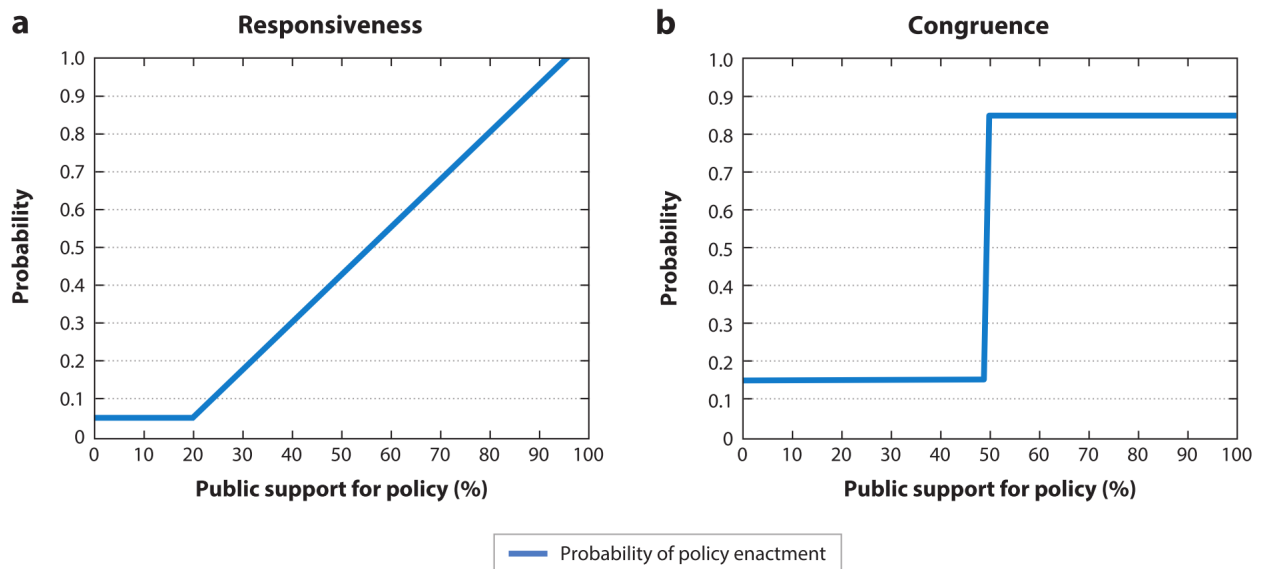


Figure 1

Responsiveness and congruence are distinct. (a) In this example of responsiveness, the likelihood that the government enacts a particular policy change is no better than chance if 55% of the public supports doing so, but it is 80% if 80% of the public supports doing so. (b) In the example of congruence, by comparison, there is always an 85% probability that the government policy is congruent with public opinion. If a majority of the public disfavors the policy change, there is only a 15% probability it is enacted; if majority opinion favors the policy change, there is an 85% probability it is enacted.

(a)

| Category | Theoretical perspective | Summary of argument |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Dynamic responsiveness | Dynamic representation | Electoral pressures induce responsiveness to change/level of mass opinion |
| Divergence | Partisan bias Primaries Partisan brands Individual donors Subconstituencies Legislative institutions | Partisan pressures pull policymakers from representing the median voter |
| | Manipulation of opinion | Leaders use polling and communications to try to generate support for unpopular policies |
| | Republican extremism | Electoral system bias combined with other partisan pressures encourage Republicans to support policies substantially more conservative than the median voter desires |
| Conditional representation | Electoral cycle | Elected officials increasingly cater to mass opinion as term progresses due to voters' recency bias as well as the lower probability that an initially unpopular policy could produce a popular outcome in time for the election |
| | Issue salience | Salience increases politicians' incentives to enact popular policies |
| | Policy domain | Interest group activity, executive-legislative balance of power, and voter knowledge affect responsiveness in ways that correlate with policy domain |
| | Need-based popularity | Higher personal approval decreases politicians' incentives to support popular policies |
| | Conditional pandering | Pandering becomes more likely as personal approval ratings increase from low to average, and less likely as ratings increase from average to high |
| Unequal representation | Income/wealth | Preferences of high-income/wealthy individuals determine policy |
| | Race | White constituents' preferences influence policy more than those of minority constituents |

(b)

- (c) Many intuitive hypotheses regarding the decline in responsiveness do not hold up under empirical scrutiny. The evidence on partisan news, primaries, redistricting, and a polarization of mass opinion suggests that none of these is a principal cause. Some recent work points to campaign finance changes, and in particular the increased importance of individual donors, but more scholarship on the subject is needed in order to better evaluate this impact.

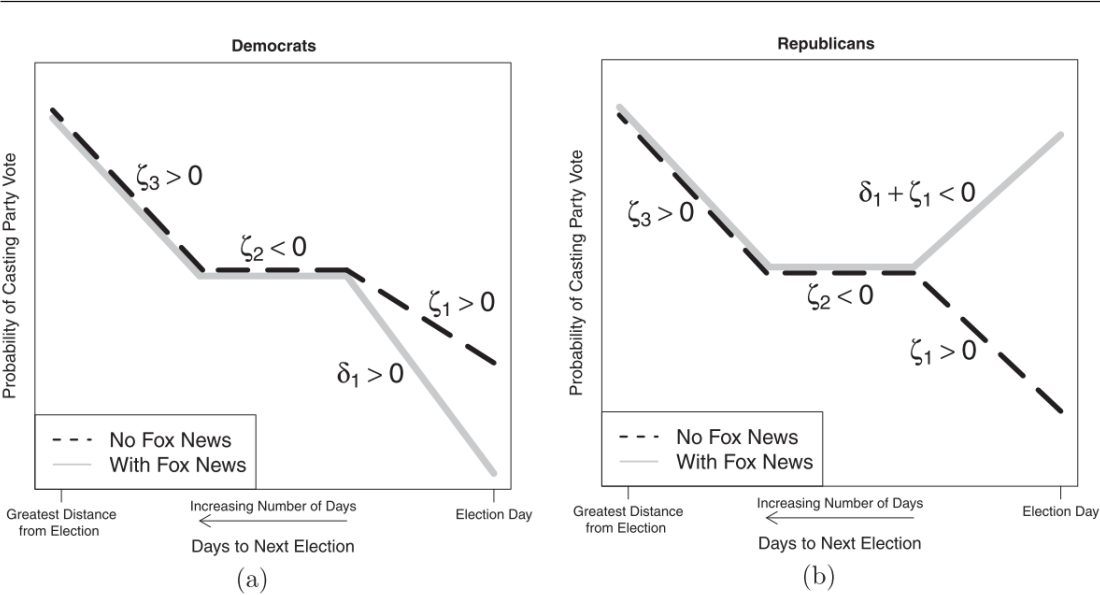
The Influence of News Media on Political Elites: Investigating Strategic Responsiveness in Congress

1. **Authors:** Arceneaux, Kevin, Martin Johnson, Rene Lindstadt, and Ryan J. Vander Wielen
2. **Year:** 2016
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** News media play a central role in democratic politics, yet we know little about how media affect the behavior of policy makers. To understand the conditions under which news media influence political elites, we advance a theory of strategic responsiveness, which contends that elected representatives are more likely to heed their constituents preferences when voters are attentive.

Accordingly, newsmedias influence on legislative behavior should be most apparent near elections and dependent on the partisan composition of the constituency. **We capitalize on the incremental rollout of the conservative Fox News Channel in the late 1990s to evaluate our theoretical predictions.** Fox News caused both Republicans and Democrats in Congress to increase support for the Republican Party position on divisive votes, but only in the waning months of the election cycle and among those members who represent districts with a sizable portion of Republican voters.

6. Main Findings:

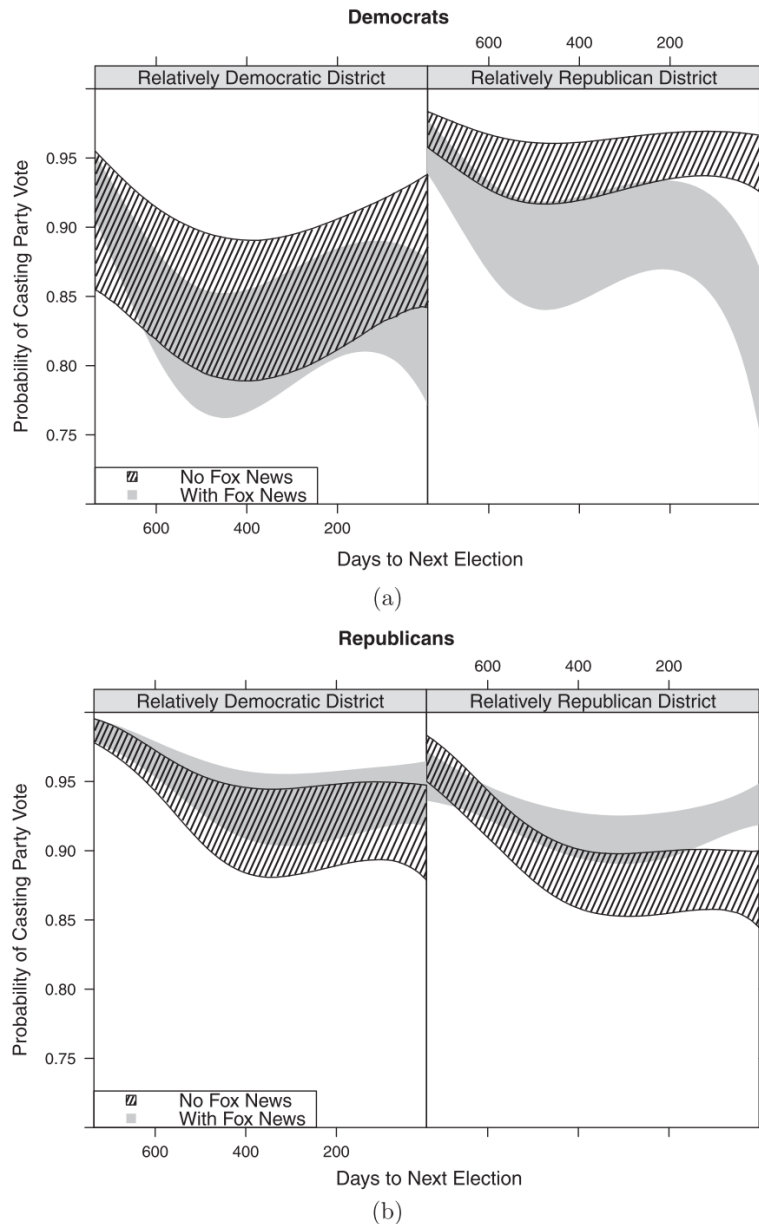
FIGURE 1 Theoretical Predictions: Strategic Responsiveness in Districts with and without Fox News



Note: Refer to Equation 1 for discussion of notation.

(a)

FIGURE 4 Predicted Probability of Party Support by Party, Presence of Fox News, and Partisan Composition of District



Note: To simulate the effect of a “relatively Democratic district,” we set the *Democratic Vote Share* variable to the 90th percentile for each party, respectively. Conversely, we set the *Democratic Vote Share* variable to the 10th percentile for each party to represent “relatively Republican districts.” Reasonable variation in the percentiles does not substantively alter the results.

(b)

Lawmaking in American Politics

The Big Picture

1. The power to get people to vote the way the party leadership wants is the traditionally accepted form of power, but negative agenda control is also a critical form of power.
2. It is hard to introduce major new policy and most of the time major new legislation is only possible during a policy window where a number of political factors work together to make it possible.
3. While Mayhew (1991) argued that divided government did not affect legislative productivity, more

recent work has found that it does decrease passage of major legislation, and that gridlock is getting worse over time.

4. Krehbiel (1998) argues that divided government is not the cause of gridlock, but instead it is the position of a number of pivots in congress that instead determines whether legislation advances.
5. The president can use vetos to effectively extract policy concessions from Congress.

Literature Outline

1. [Bachrach and Baratz \(1962\)](#) “Two Faces of Power” – The first face is more traditionally accepted, as the exercise of power over critical decisions. This involves using argument and leverage. The second, is controlling the agenda such that some decisions do not get made and some voices are not heard.
2. Baumgartner and Jones (1993) “Agendas and Instability in American Politics” – the authors offer a theoretical account for both the long periods of stability that mark American politics, as well as the shorter but dramatic bursts of policy change through punctuated equilibrium. They argue that new ideas may successfully invade a (policy) subsystem, but these new ideas tend not to refute the old ideas that animated the subsystem. Rather, they **offer a new way of looking at a problem, raise a new problem, or redefine the dimension of conflict associated with a problem.**
3. Kingdon (1995) “Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies” – What issues get on the agenda or not in public policy making process is determined by two factors: 1) Participants inside and outside governments and 2) Process which includes the problem stream, the policy stream and the political stream. When the streams come together, a **Policy Window** opens up and that is when an idea has a chance to become a policy.
4. Krehbiel (1998) “Pivotal Politics” – when issues are well-defined and decision-makers’ preferences are well-ordered, a specific decision-maker is shown analytically to be pivotal to the final policy choice. He argues that divided government does not explain why and when gridlock will occur (i.e. parties don’t matter), but that his model of pivotal voters does. **The most important “pivotal players” are the median member of Congress (not clear which house), the (Senate) filibuster pivot, the veto override pivot, and the president.** Moderate policies will fall in gridlock range, policy change will be incremental, president will enjoy an honeymoon phase until pivots are figured out.
5. Cameron (2000) “Veto Bargaining ” – Cameron has two major points: (1) The veto enables presidents to influence legislative outcomes; and (2) Divided government does not make governing impossible, it simply encourages more inter-branch bargaining. Vetos are not rare, part of a chain of bargaining, often extract concessions. His regression results indicate that Congress produces about three fewer landmark bills per session during periods of divided government.
6. [Clark \(2009\)](#) “The Separation of Powers, Court-curbing and Judicial Legitimacy” – The evidence indicates that public discontent with the Court, as mediated through congressional hostility, creates an incentive for the Court to exercise self-restraint. When Congress is hostile, **the Court uses judicial review to invalidate Acts of Congress less frequently than when Congress is not hostile towards the Court.** Uses counts of court-curbing legislation over 100 year period to test his hypotheses.
7. [Binder \(1999\)](#) “The Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock, 1947-96” – New theory: The distribution of policy preferences within the parties, between the two chambers, and across Congress more broadly is central to explaining the dynamics of gridlock. Constructs a newspaper article based measure that assesses legislative output in proportion to the policy agenda to generate Congress-by-Congress gridlock scores. The results suggest that **intrabranh conflict-perhaps more than interbranch rivalry-is critical in shaping deadlock in American politics.**

8. [Howell et al. \(2000\)](#) “Divided Government and the Legislative Productivity of Congress, 1945-94” – We show that [Mayhew \(1991\)](#) claim that divided government does not affect legislative productivity is a consequence of aggregating time series that exhibit different behavior. Using appropriate time-series techniques, we demonstrate that **periods of divided government depress the production of landmark legislation by about 30%, but has no substantive effect on non-landmark legislation and positive effect on trivial laws.**
9. **Main Findings:**
10. [Binder \(2015\)](#) “The Dysfunctional Congress” – Review article: **Divided We Govern** (Mayhew) was the null result for the impact of divided government on lawmaking. The “**pivotal politics theory**” by Krehbiel (1998) is that constitutional and extraconstitutional institutional rules create ‘pivotal’ players on whom collective choice depends. Author argues that even when Congress and the president have reached agreement on the big issues of the day, **Congress’s problem-solving capacity appears to have fallen to new lows in recent years.**

Two Faces of Power

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Bachrach1962}

2. Authors: Bachrach and Baratz

3. Year: 1962

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: “Our argument is cast within the frame of our central thesis: that there are two faces of power, neither of which the sociologists see and only one of which the political scientists see.” (p. 947) The problem with their approach is that it seems to only examine power in a decision making process and not in a process where people set the norms and not groups. Also this seems to ignore preferential attachment and structural power in groups and other unconscious social processes that pretext who is heard and who gets their way in groups.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “the pluralists concentrate their attention, not upon the sources of power, but its exercise. **Power to them means “participation in decision-making” and call be analyzed only after “careful examination of a series of concrete decisions.”** As a result, the pluralist researcher is uninterested in the reputedly powerful...can a sound concept of power be predicated on the assumption that power is totally embodied and fully reflected in “concrete decisions” or in activity bearing directly upon their making? ” (p. 918)
- (b) “**to the extent that a person or group-consciously or unconsciously creates or reinforces barriers to the public airing of policy conflicts, that person or group has power**”. (p. 949)
- (c) “We have contended in this paper that a fresh approach to the study of power is called for, an approach based upon a recognition of the two faces of power. Under this approach the researcher would begin-not, as does **the sociologist who asks, “Who rules?”** nor as does the pluralist who asks, “**Does anyone have power?**” -but by investigating the particular “**mobilization of bias**” in the institution under scrutiny. Then, **having analyzed the dominant values, the myths and the established political procedures and rules of the game, he would make a careful inquiry into which persons or groups, if any, gain from the existing bias and which,**

if any, are handicapped by it. Next, he would investigate the dynamics of nondecision-making; that is, he would examine the extent to which and the manner in which the status quo oriented persons and groups influence those community values and those political institutions (as, e.g., the unanimity “rule” of New York City’s Board of Estimate) which tend to limit the scope of actual decision-making to “safe” issues. Finally, using his knowledge of the restrictive face of power as a foundation for analysis and as a standard for distinguishing between “key” and “routine” political decisions, the researcher would, after the manner of the pluralists, analyze participation in decision-making of concrete issues. We reject in advance as unimpressive the possible criticism that this approach to the study of power is likely to prove fruitless because it goes beyond an investigation of what is objectively measurable. In reacting against the subjective aspects of the sociological model of power, the pluralists have, we believe, made the mistake of discarding “unmeasurable elements” as unreal. It is ironical that, by so doing, they have exposed themselves to the same fundamental criticism they have so forcefully leveled against the elitists: their approach to and assumptions about power predetermine their findings and conclusions.” (p. 952)

- (d) Quoting Schattschneider: “All forms of political organization have a bias in favor of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others because organization is the mobilization of bias. Some issues are organized into politics while others are organized out” (p. 949)

Agendas and Instability in American Politics.

1. **Authors:** Baumgartner, Frank R., and Bryan D. Jones.
2. **Year:** 1993
3. **Journal:**
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Baumgartner and Jones raise the question: How can we theoretically account for both the long periods of stability that mark American politics, as well as the shorter but dramatic bursts of policy change? **They develop the notion of punctuated equilibrium to explain both stability and change.** The foundation for the punctuated equilibrium idea comes from three different literatures: social choice theory, policy agendas, policy subsystems.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) From social choice theory, Baumgartner and Jones borrow the idea that there is no equilibrium in American politics. Instead, they distinguish between stability and equilibrium, and argue that institutions provide a framework that can promote stability. The second literature, that of policy subsystems, helps them explain stability. They view **policy subsystems as a type of institutional arrangement that can promote stability. As long as the subsystem can insulate itself from new policy ideas and policy competitors, it can provide a stable arrangement to the members of the subsystem. Instability and change occur when forces outside of the subsystem mobilize and challenge the existing subsystem.** Lastly, from the agenda-setting literature, Baumgartner and Jones note the importance of ideas. **New ideas may successfully invade a subsystem, leading to dramatic policy change, as the existing subsystem is destroyed and replaced with a new subsystem. These new ideas tend not to refute the old ideas that animated the subsystem. Rather, they offer a new way of looking at a problem, raise a new problem, or redefine the dimension of conflict associated with a problem.**
 - (b) Look at media and Congressional attention to a number of issues, find long periods of inattention punctuated by periods of intense interest.

Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies.

1. **Authors:** Kingdon, John W.
2. **Year:** 1995
3. **Journal:**
4. **Keywords:** Summary
5. **Summary:** What issues get on the agenda or not in public policy making process is determined by two factors: 1) Participants inside and outside governments and 2) Process which includes the problem stream, the policy stream and the political stream. Each of three streams has each distinct life, but when they come together, a specific problem becomes important on the agenda, policies that match to the problem get attentions, and then policy change becomes possible. When these streams come together is sometimes predictable but other times unpredictable. Thus policy entrepreneurs who advocate their own proposals should be well prepared to gain the chance.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) **Chapter 1: How does an idea's time come?**
 - i. In the first chapter, Kingdon explains the aim of his book to explain why and how particular issues come to dominate the government and decision agenda. He makes a distinction between the development of issues and alternatives. Issues are the broad areas of concern health care costs, water-way fees, etc., while alternatives are the specific, practical ideas that could be implemented. He also makes a distinction between the government agenda, which are things that people in and around government are aware of, and the decision agenda, which includes only the issues that are front-burner and on which efforts are made to discuss and take action. He also explains that his research was carried out using a series of interviews and questionnaires.
 - (b) **Chapter 8: The Policy Window, and Joining the Streams**
 - i. Kingdon describes a 'policy window' as similar to a 'launch window' for space rockets there are specific windows of time in which the rocket can launch, and if it misses the window, it has to wait for the next one. A policy window is the particular period of time in which an issue, alternative, and problem can be coupled together and make it onto the decision agenda. The windows can open because a particular problem is brought to the forefront by a disaster or government report, or it could open because of the change in administration. A window opening can even be routine as with the yearly authorization and appropriation of the federal budget.

When the window is open, a policy entrepreneur must be ready to tie all three streams together to push the issue to the decision agenda. If a problem is identified, but no feasible alternatives exist to solve it, it will be unlikely to make it on the agenda. Similarly, if there is political interest in an issue, but it cant be tied to a pressing problem, it will likely fall to the wayside. The entrepreneur has to be ready when the window opens to take action immediately.

Pivotal Politics [Ch. 1-2]

1. **Authors:** Krehbiel, Keith
2. **Year:** 1998
3. **Journal:**

4. Keywords: [source](#)

5. **Summary:** Krehbiel calls his model pivot politics theory because in collective choice settings where issues are well-defined and decision-makers' preferences are well-ordered, a specific decision-maker is shown analytically to be pivotal to the final policy choice. He argues that divided government does not explain why and when gridlock will occur (i.e. parties don't matter), but that his model of pivotal voters does, in addition to explaining why bills pass with greater than minimum-majority size.

Look at table 1.1 in the book as a cheat sheet for comps.

The filibuster interval is defined by the filibuster pivot and the veto pivot, if a policy falls between them, then it will either get filibustered or vetoed.

There is no theory of agenda setting. so how do these status quo point arise. Also there are no parties in the model

6. Main Findings:

- (a) Why does gridlock regularly occur in Washington? (Attempts to explain what he defines as two basic facts: (1) Gridlock usually occurs but not always; (2) Winning coalitions are almost always bipartisan and usually greater than minimum-majority sized.) **Gridlock occurs regularly because of moderate status quo policies, supermajority procedures, and heterogeneous preferences.** Winning coalitions are usually greater than minimum-majority sized because of supermajority procedures.
- (b) The model assumes that all players can be arrayed along a unidimensional policy space. **Parties are not a part of the model**, and the status quo is assumed to be exogenously given. Furthermore, the game is not repeated (formally).

Players: **The most important “pivotal players” are the median member of Congress (not clear which house), the (Senate) filibuster pivot, the veto override pivot, and the president.** Although there could be a veto override pivot and a filibuster pivot on either side of the median pivot, the only relevant players are the veto override pivot on the same ideological side as the president and the filibuster on the opposite side.

Sequence of play: Intuitively, it works something like this. The median pivot moves first, choosing either a new policy or the status quo. The filibuster pivot then decides whether to sustain or block a filibuster attempt. Next, the president decides whether to veto. If he signs the bill, the game ends; otherwise, the veto override pivot decides whether to override the veto. Gridlock can occur at any stage; the places where gridlock can be broken are (1) if the president signs the bill or (2) if the veto override chooses to override the veto.

F = filibuster pivot, P = Presidential pivot, M = Congress (can choose not to introduce bill), V = veto override by congress.

Equilibria: The figure on pg 35 summarizes the general theory. Assuming the president is to the right of Congress, then you have preferences ordered as F - M - V - P. (Note that the veto override pivot and the president might be reversed; if so, substitute “P” for “V” in the discussion below.) As shown in figure 35:

- i. If the status quo is far to the left of F, then the outcome is M (since everybody prefers M to the status quo)
- ii. If the status quo is to the left of F but closer to F than M is, then the outcome gets closer to F (b/c M has to make concessions to get F to go along).

- iii. If the status quo is between F and V, then you are in the gridlock range and policy will not be changed:
 - A. If the status quo is at F, then F uses his “veto power” to prevent any change at all.
 - B. Similarly, if the status quo is at M, then M refuses to change things.
 - C. Finally, if the status quo is at V, then V refuses to override any vetoes.
 - iv. As the status quo moves to the right of V, then policy can move again, and it will slowly move back towards M.
 - v. Once the status quo is as far from V (to the right) as M is (to the left), M will be the outcome. For any status quo to the right of this point, M is the outcome.
- (c) **Implications:** Since the gridlock range includes all status quo points between F and V (or P), this implies that **moderate policy proposals will tend to fall in the gridlock range**. Thus, it isn’t surprising that presidents often have a brief “honeymoon.” Their election changes the alignment of preferences, so some policies that were inside the gridlock range (by the end of the previous president’s term) might now be outside of this range, allowing the president and Congress to rapidly identify these policies and move them into the gridlock interval. But after this brief burst of activity, the president will find a decreasing number of policies that can actually be changed given the current alignment of preferences.

Moreover, **those changes that are made will tend to be incremental**. Unless the status quo is quite far from M, the result of policy change isn’t likely to be M; it is more likely to be close to F or V (or P). Thus, despite initial excitement about a candidate’s bold proposals, the realities of pivotal politics are likely to mean that actual policy changes will be incremental and passed by supermajorities.

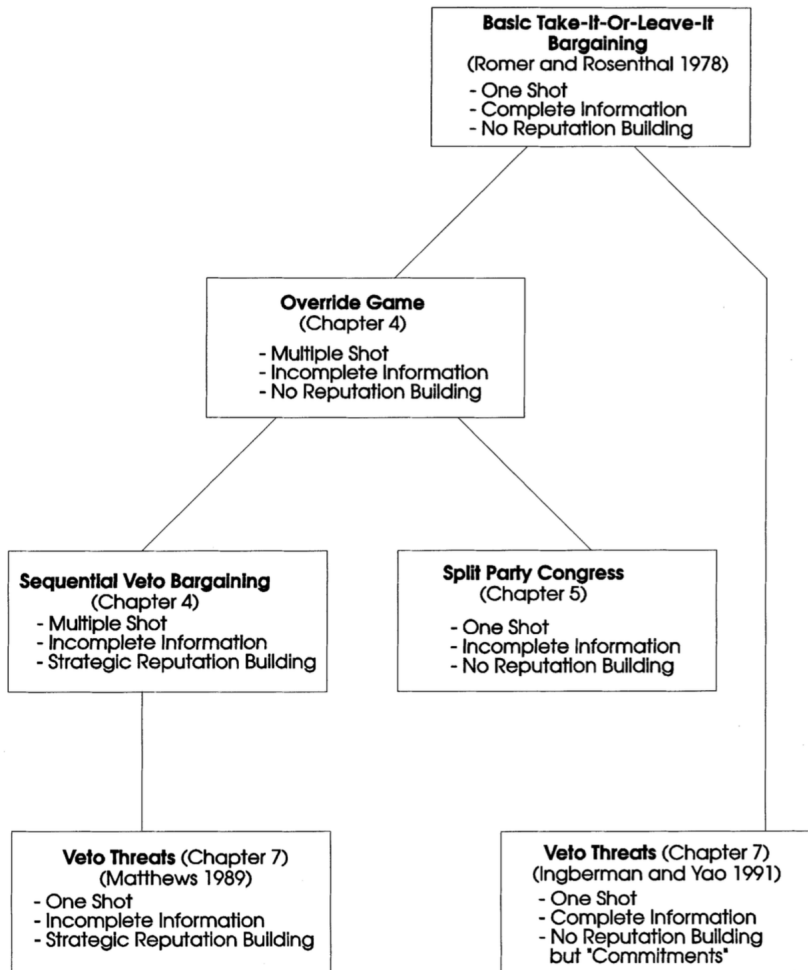
Veto Bargaining [Ch. 1-2]

1. **Authors:** Cameron, Charles
2. **Year:** 2000
3. **Journal:**
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Cameron has two major points: (1) The veto enables presidents to influence legislative outcomes; and (2) Divided government does not make governing impossible, it simply encourages more inter-branch bargaining.

Cameron begins with an empirical analysis of all 434 vetoes issued by U.S. presidents between the beginning of the Truman administration in 1945 and the end of the Bush administration in 1992. In his analysis he focuses particular attention on how veto rates are affected by unified or divided government as well as the relative importance of a piece of legislation. Cameron finds that vetoes on both major and minor legislation are rare under unified government. However, when government is divided and the legislation under consideration is important he finds that: (1) vetoes are not rare events – his results show that the veto rate on “landmark” legislation under divided government is 20%; (2) vetoes are often part of veto chains – a sequential bargaining process between Congress and the president; and (3) **presidents routinely and successfully use vetoes to extract policy concessions from Congress –he finds that in 80% of re-passed bills Congress made some sort of concession**.

Read Table 2.12 as a cheat sheet for exams.

6. Main Findings:



(a)

Figure 1.5. Models of Veto Bargaining

Table 2.12. *Summary of major patterns in veto bargaining, 1945–1992*

-
1. *Probability of a veto of initially passed legislation*
 - 1a. Irrespective of unified or divided government, the probability of a veto for minor legislation is very low (under 2%).
 - 1b. The probability of a veto for nonminor legislation is much higher under divided government than under unified government (up to ten times higher).
 - 1c. Under divided government, the probability of a veto increases steadily with the significance of the legislation (the probability at the highest level is over ten times that of the lowest level). It does not under unified government.
 2. *Chains and sequential veto bargaining*
 - 2a. Most vetoes involve minor legislation and, if so, are usually singletons.
 - 2b. If a veto involves minor legislation, the veto is likely to be a singleton; if it involves more important legislation, it is likely to be part of a chain.
 - 2c. SVB occurs regularly: overall, there were 147 veto chains.
 - 2d. SVB is largely a phenomenon of divided government – singletons prevail during unified government.
 - 2e. Most veto chains are short.
 3. *Breakdown and repassage rates*
 - 3a. Breakdown rates do not differ between unified and divided government; and this is true whether the bill was pocket-vetoed or regularly vetoed, and whether an override attempt failed or was not even attempted.
 - 3b. Among authorization bills, breakdown rates fall (and repassage rates rise) with legislative significance. Again, this occurs regardless whether the bill was pocket-vetoed or regularly vetoed, whether an override attempt failed, or whether no attempt was made to override.
 - 3c. Controlling for legislative significance, breakdown rates (and repassage rates) for authorization bills appear similar across bills that were pocket-vetoed (except by outgoing presidents) and those that were regularly vetoed, both for those with a failed override attempt and those for which no attempt was made.
 - 3d. Repassage of a vetoed appropriations bill was virtually certain, even absent an override attempt.
 4. *Override attempts*
 - 4a. Override attempts after a veto are much more likely during periods of divided government.
 - 4b. However, this is true only when both chambers are controlled by the same party. If only one chamber differs from the president, override attempts are no more frequent than during unified government.
 - 4c. Override attempts are more likely for bills in later rounds of bargaining (95%+ for second round, nonminor legislation during nonsplit divided government).
 - 4d. The probability of an override attempt increases dramatically with legislative significance, under both unified and divided government (80%+ for landmark legislation during nonsplit divided government).
 5. *Probability of success given an override attempt*
 - 5a. Given an override attempt, neither divided government nor legislative significance nor authorization versus appropriation predict the probability of success.
 - 5b. The probability of a successful override was unusually low during the Bush administration.
 6. *Probability of reveto after repassage*
 - 6a. The reveto rate following repassage was much higher if government were divided.
 - 6b. It was higher if the previous bill had failed in an override attempt or had been pocket-vetoed.
 - 6c. It was also higher if the bill had been repassed only once.
 - 6d. It increased with legislative significance.
 7. *Congressional policy concessions in repassed bills*
 - 7a. Congress almost always made concessions in repassed bills, across all categories of legislation, unified and divided government, and presidential administrations.
 - 7b. Concessions appear less likely for very important bills, for bills during divided government, and during the Truman administration.
 8. *Miscellaneous*
 - 8a. Pocket-vetoed bills tend to be less important than regularly vetoed bills.
-

(b)

- (c) **The basic Romer-Rosenthal model of take-it-or-leave-it bargaining** (as applied by Kiewiet and McCubbins) : In this game, it is assumed that both Congress and the president have complete information. Congress moves first and has two options: pass version one of a bill or pass a modified version. The president has the next move and can either veto or accept the passed bill. In this game neither overriding nor re-passing are possible. The solution is that Congress anticipates the president's actions and passes a bill just good enough that he will sign (i.e., Congress will pick from the win set the best possible bill from its perspective). However, if the ideal points of Congress and the president are on opposite sides of the status quo point, Congress will not pass any bill. Despite the obvious simplicity of the game, it suggests that the power to veto can shape the content of legislation even if vetoes are never used.
- (d) **Override model** : This game allows for two rounds of play and a veto override. Additionally it

allows for incomplete information. The president and Congress are somewhat uncertain about the location of the veto override player (Nature randomly selects an override pivot from a range of potential override pivots; Nature makes a new selection at the beginning of each round). In this game, Congress begins by passing a bill; the president can veto or accept it; and the veto player can sustain or override the veto. If the veto is sustained, and if bargaining does not break down (which Cameron incorporates as a known probability), the game repeats itself once.

- (e) **Sequential Veto Bargaining (SVB)** : This game (like the override model) incorporates uncertainty, but in this model the uncertainty concerns the location of the president's ideal point. For Cameron, the inclusion of incomplete knowledge about presidential preferences is generally the same as including some sort of measure of a president's reputation (ala Neustadt 1960; see note below). This game is similar to the override game: there are still two rounds of bargaining, with a possibility of the breakdown of bargaining after the initial veto. However, in SVB the president's true type (preference) is fixed throughout the game whereas the identity of the override player in the previous game varied from the first to the second round. Thus, whatever Congress learns about the president in the first round can and will be used in the second round. Finally, in this game, Cameron examines only the situation in which the president's ideal point is closer to that of the congressional majority than is the ideal point of the override player. (Otherwise, Congress would play the game in Model 2).
- (f) **(Main point: Congress is more productive under unified government than under divided government.)**

Next Cameron employs his models to investigate in greater detail the relationship between divided government and legislative productivity. Here he predicts that divided government will mean slightly fewer significant legislative enactments. According to Cameron, because the ideal points of the important players are more distant from one another under divided (as opposed to unified) government, there are far fewer status quo policies that can be moved when control of government is split between the parties. To test this theory, Cameron constructs a regression with the number of landmark legislative enactments in a given session of Congress as his dependent variable (it should be noted that he controls for the "bulge" in enactments that occurred in the late 1960s and early 1970s). **His regression results indicate that Congress produces about three fewer landmark bills per session during periods of divided government.** However, he notes that even during periods of divided government, Congress and the president still enact landmark pieces of legislation in considerable (though slightly reduced) numbers.

For Cameron, during periods of divided government, a few items are taken off the legislative table that would have found a place under unified government. **Those that remain tend to be shaped by haggling between the branches, but are still often successfully resolved. He shows that breakdowns in bargaining are rare for important bills.** Finally, Cameron claims that veto bargaining (haggling between the branches) tends to move policy toward the center of the political spectrum which in America is increasingly occupied by voters, but has generally been abandoned by the parties.

The Separation of Powers, Court-curbing and Judicial Legitimacy

1. **Authors:** Clark, Tom S.
2. **Year:** 2009
3. **Journal:** AJPS
4. **Keywords:**

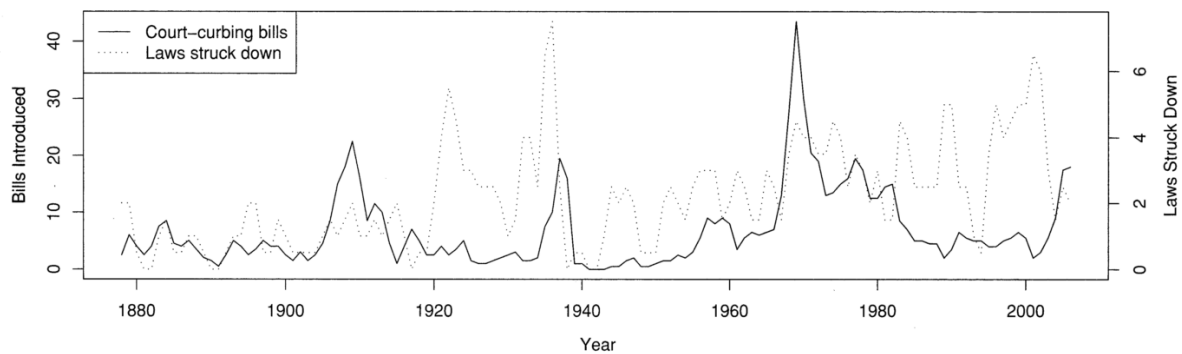
5. **Summary:** A major focus of judicial politics research has been the extent to which ideological divergence between the Court and Congress can explain variation in Supreme Court decision making. However, conflicting theoretical and empirical findings have given rise to a significant discrepancy in the scholarship. Building on evidence from interviews with Supreme Court justices and former law clerks, I develop a formal model of judicial-congressional relations that incorporates judicial preferences for institutional legitimacy and the role of public opinion in congressional hostility towards the Supreme Court. An original dataset identifying all Court-curbing legislation proposed between 1877 and 2006 is then used to assess the influence of congressional hostility on the Court's use of judicial review. **The evidence indicates that public discontent with the Court, as mediated through congressional hostility, creates an incentive for the Court to exercise self-restraint. When Congress is hostile, the Court uses judicial review to invalidate Acts of Congress less frequently than when Congress is not hostile towards the Court.**

6. Main Findings:

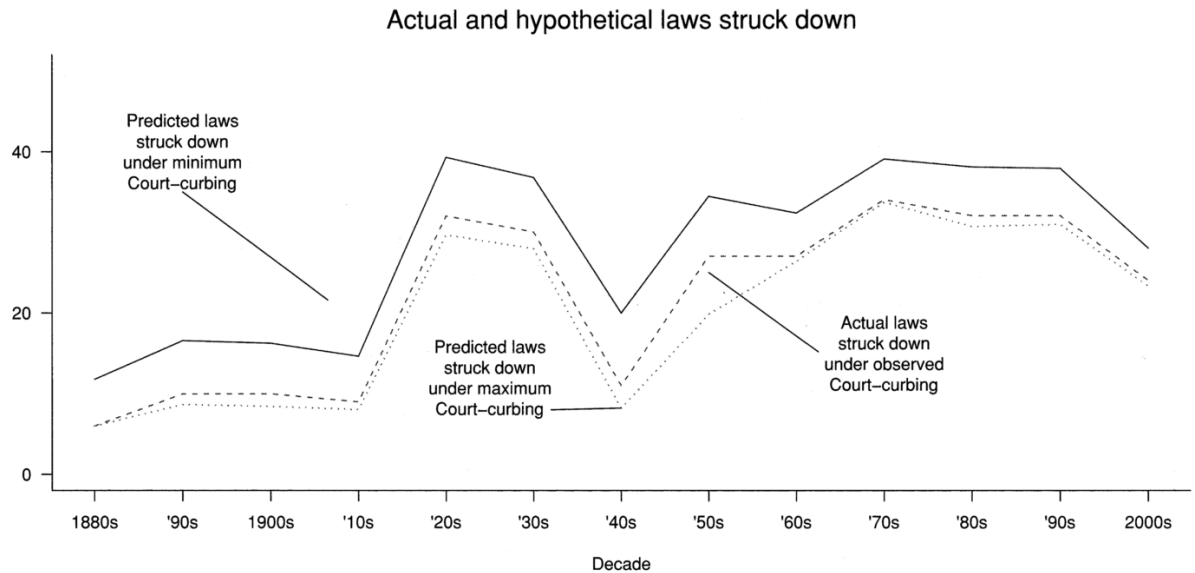
(a) Model Hypotheses

- H1: The Court should be (weakly) more likely to make a constrained decision in the presence of Court curbing than in the absence of Court curbing.
- H2: The Court should be (weakly) more likely to make a constrained decision as its prior belief that it has lost public support increases.
- H3: The constraining effect of Court curbing on the Court should (weakly) decrease as the degree of policy divergence between the Court and Congress increases.
- H4: The constraining effect of Court curbing on the Court should (weakly) increase as the Court's prior belief about its public support becomes more pessimistic.

FIGURE 1 Two-year Moving Average of Court-curbing Bills Introduced in Congress and Federal Laws Invalidated, 1877–2006



(b)



Notes: Estimates based on coefficients from empirical model (1). Dashed line shows the actual number of laws struck down; solid line shows the number of laws that would have been struck down with minimum Court curbing; dotted line shows predicted number of laws that would have been struck down with maximum Court curbing.

(c)

The Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock

1. **Authors:** Sarah Binder
2. **Year:** 1999
3. **Journal:** APSR
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** David Mayhew's *Divided We Govern* (1991) sparked an industry of scholars who alternately challenge or confirm the work on theoretical and empirical grounds. Still, we lack a definitive account of the proportions and causes of legislative gridlock. I revisit the effects of elections and institutions on policy outcomes to propose an alternative theory of gridlock: The distribution of policy preferences within the parties, between the two chambers, and across Congress more broadly is central to explaining the dynamics of gridlock. To test the model, I construct a measure that assesses legislative output in proportion to the policy agenda. Using newspaper editorials to identify every salient legislative issue between 1947 and 1996, I generate Congress-by-Congress gridlock scores and use them to test competing explanations. The results suggest that intrabranched conflict—perhaps more than interbranch rivalry—is critical in shaping deadlock in American politics.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Tries to address demand for major pieces of legislation, not just supply.
 - (b) Uses number of issues brought up by the times unsigned editorials that mention congress as a measure of the number of issues on the agenda, then counts the number of those issues that congress addressed with major bills as the numerator to get a measure of gridlock.

TABLE 3. Determinants of Policy Gridlock, 1953–96

| Hypothesis | Variable | (1) Coefficient (SE) | (2) Change in <i>x</i> (from, to) | (3) Net Change in Expected Probability of Gridlock |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|
| Partisan/ Electoral | Divided government | .340* (.142) | (0, 1) | +8% |
| | Percentage of moderates | -.027* (.013) | (18.47, 33.67) | -10% |
| | Ideological diversity | 6.263* (2.710) | (.47, .55) | +11% |
| | Time out of majority | -.177** (.049) | (0, 2) | -9% |
| Institutional | Bicameral distance | 2.263** (.818) | (.07, .30) | +13% |
| | Severity of filibuster threat | .035 (.039) | (0, 7.5) | +6% |
| Policy | Budgetary situation | -.006 (.009) | (-19.02, -2.09) | -2% |
| | Public mood (lagged) | -.034* (.016) | (55.76, 65.20) | -8% |
| | Constant | -1.509 (1.587) | | |
| | <i>N</i> | 22 | | |
| | <i>F</i> | 4.10** | | |
| | Adjusted <i>R</i> ² | .5413 | | |
| | Durbin-Watson <i>d</i> | 1.921 | | |
| | Breusch-Godfrey | | | |
| | LM test (lag 1) | .0484 | | |
| | LM test (lag 2) | 1.7842 | | |
| | Portmanteau <i>Q</i> | 15.3574 | | |

(c)

Divided Government and the Legislative Productivity of Congress, 1945-94

1. **Authors:** Howell, William, Adler, Scott, Cameron, Charles, Riemann, Charles
2. **Year:** 2000
3. **Journal:** LSQ
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** This paper contributes to the literature on divided government and legislative productivity. We begin by reexamining Mayhew's data on landmark enactments. We show that Mayhew's claim that divided government does not affect legislative productivity is a consequence of aggregating time series that exhibit different behavior. We then extend Mayhew's analysis by broadening the concept of significance and creating a new four-category measure that encompasses all 17,663 public laws enacted in the period of 1945-94. Using appropriate time-series techniques, we demonstrate that periods of divided government depress the production of landmark legislation by about 30%, at least when productivity is measured on the basis of contemporaneous perceptions of legislative significance. Divided government, however, has no substantive effect on the production of important, albeit not landmark, legislation and actually has a positive effect on the passage of trivial laws.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Use Augmented Dickey-Fuller tests to determine that Mayhew's series are not stationary, then need to use time polynomials to make them trend stationary or everything is messed up.

Classifying Enactments by Legislative Significance

Given the analysis reported in the Appendix, we define four significance classes:

1. Group A—Landmark enactments: Mayhew's Sweep One public laws¹¹
2. Group B—Major enactments: all other public laws mentioned in either the *New York Times* or *Washington Post* and greater than or equal to six pages in coverage in the *CQ Almanac*
3. Group C—Ordinary enactments: all other public laws mentioned in the *CQ Summary*¹²
4. Group D—Minor enactments: all remaining public laws, including commemorative legislation

(b)

TABLE 5
Divided Government and the New Measures
(standard errors in parentheses)

| Variables | Group A | Group A1 | Group A-Sum | Group B | Group B-Sum | Group C | Group D |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Unified | 0.281** (0.111) | 0.470** (0.219) | 23.057 (18.554) | 0.150 (0.171) | 5.878 (24.811) | 0.086 (0.120) | -97.42** (43.55) |
| Time | 0.111** (0.032) | 0.093 (0.058) | 13.040** (4.721) | 0.165** (0.050) | 20.214** 6.279 | 0.059* (0.031) | 19.68 (26.00) |
| Time ² | -0.004** (0.001) | -0.003 (0.002) | -0.452** (0.189) | -0.006** (0.002) | -0.626** (0.251) | -0.003** (0.001) | -4.31 (2.56) |
| Time ³ | — | — | — | — | — | — | 0.13** (0.07) |
| Constant | 1.476** (0.202) | 1.451** (0.368) | 33.965 (27.746) | 1.479** (0.323) | 19.211 (37.308) | 4.014** (0.184) | 797.41** (75.45) |
| <i>n</i> | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| Residual Deviance | 16.15 | 51.35 | 44842.85 | 46.32 | 74920.11 | 127.27 | (0.590) ^a |

Note: Results generated from Robust Poisson regressions, except for Group D, for which raw counts from an OLS regression are reported. Therefore, ^a indicates adjusted R², not residual deviance.

*significant at the .10 level; **significant at the .05 level.

(c)

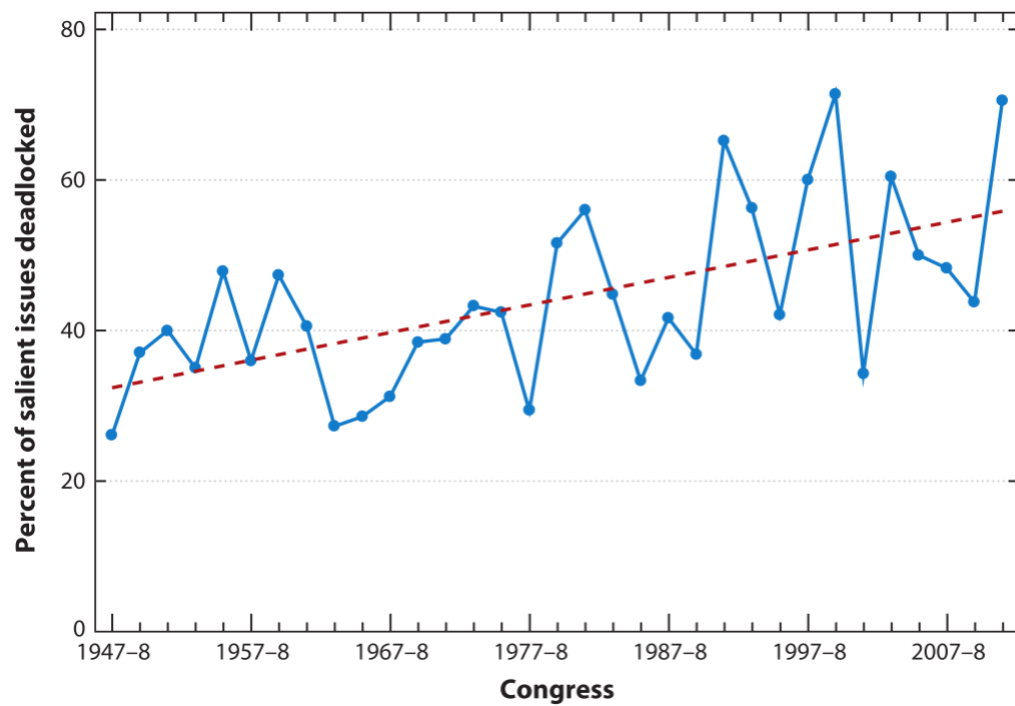
The Dysfunctional Congress.

1. **Authors:** Sarah Binder
2. **Year:** 2015
3. **Journal:** Annual Review of Political Science
4. **Keywords:**

5. **Summary:** Is the US Congress dysfunctional? The American public thinks so: In the summer of 2014, just 7% approved strongly of Congress (Rifkin 2014). Still, legislative scholars disagree about the severity of Congress's legislative challenges. Is legislative deadlock a sign that Congress can no longer identify and resolve major public problems? Or are Congress's difficulties temporary and correctable? In this article, I review theoretical and empirical literatures on the dynamics of lawmaking and evaluate alternative methods for testing lawmaking theories. Finally, I draw on recent research to put contemporary stalemate into historical perspective. I argue that even when Congress and the president have reached agreement on the big issues of the day, Congress's problem-solving capacity appears to have fallen to new lows in recent years. Whether and how well our political system can or will self-correct in the coming years remains an open question.

6. Main Findings:

- (a) **"The signal contribution of Divided We Govern was the null result for the impact of divided government on lawmaking. Unified party control of Congress and the White House in Mayhew's study failed to yield significantly higher levels of lawmaking. The key take-away from Divided We Govern was that it matters little whether a single party controls both the White House and Congress: Not much more gets done than under divided party control.** Mayhew absolved divided government as a cause of legislative inaction and then attempted to disentangle several other primary influences on Congress's performance. Some of those forces including legislators electoral incentives point toward constancy in the record of lawmaking. But other forces, Mayhew demonstrated, appear to be important alternative sources of variation in explaining congressional productivity, including shifting public moods or tastes for activist government, presidents electoral cycles, and issue coalitions that cut across the left-right divide. Mayhew's"
- (b) **"The key insight of these studies dubbed the 'pivotal politics theory' by Krehbiel (1998) is that constitutional and extraconstitutional institutional rules create 'pivotal' players on whom collective choice depends.** In the congressional context, that collective choice is of course the making of public law. Focusing on the presidential veto and the Senate filibuster, both Krehbiel and Brady & Volden argue that the cloture and veto pivots are the critical actors for determining whether changes in public policy will be adopted. **Any existing policy that is located between these pivots (the 'gridlock interval') cannot be changed, assuming that legislative politics follows a single dimension and that lawmakers votes reflect their sincere preference.** In other words, legislative stalemate can occur even in the presence of a congressional majority that favors a policy change... **Second, the pivotal politics model precludes an analytical role for political parties. Legislators in the basic model are individual utility maximizers rather than partisans seeking collective electoral or policy goals for the party"**
- (c) Big issue with this review is that it ignores omnibus bills like ACA, lots of stuff can go in one bill!



(d)

791V Political Behavior (UMASS)

Contents

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The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior (Dalton and Klingemann, 2007)

Belief Systems and Political Decision Making

1. Cite Key:

\citet{Kuklinski2007}

2. **Authors:** Kuklinski, James H and Peyton, Buddy

3. **Year:** 2007

4. **Journal:** The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior

5. **Keywords:** The capacity of the Electorate

6. **Summary:**

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) [Converse \(1962\)](#) is the starting point for this research showing that most people hold inconsistent attitudes and cannot use an ideological lens to think about politics.
- (b) The Downbeat Revision: even the people who are politically knowledgeable fail to hold accurate beliefs and devote most of their mental energy to maintaining their false beliefs.
- (c) The super downbeat revision: [Zaller \(1992\)](#) introduces the RAS model and argues people pretty much make political judgments off the top of their heads across the knowledge spectrum and that they are persuadable by the media and elites, violating the democratic ideals of govt responding to citizens.
- (d) The upbeat revision: In a meta-analysis of a bunch of surveys, [Carpini and Keeter \(1996\)](#) find that a higher portion of people know about politics than was previously thought.
- (e) The authors of [Kuklinski and Peyton \(2007\)](#) conclude that the literature is schizophrenic and that we do not know for certain what the capacity of the electorate is.

Partisanship Reconsidered

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Holmberg2007}

2. **Authors:** Holmberg, Soren

3. **Year:** 2007

4. **Journal:** The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior

5. **Keywords:** Party Identification

6. **Summary:**

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) The concept of voter party ID started with [Campbell et al. \(1960\)](#) called "*The Michigan School*" and was argued to be the most important factor explaining vote choice. They saw party ID as stable, affective, identity based. Party ID is formed through socialization in childhood and then remains stable, it is relatively exogenous to everything else going on in somebody's life.

- (b) Fiorina (1981) argued we should instead see party ID as a cognitive process volatile, rational and policy based, clearly endogenous – it is a "running tally".
- (c) Michigan school model says that party ID should be stable in aggregate but the authors (Holmberg, 2007) note that it has not been particularly stable in aggregate.
- (d) However, Green et al. (2002) argue that a lot of this is due to measurement error and if we use error correction models we end up seeing relative stability of party ID.

Week 1: Overview of Course and Central Questions

1. Explanatory Theories.

- (a) Theories need to **understand, explain and predict** behavior.
- (b) **Rational Choice** is a parsimonious theory that seeks to explain everything. But maybe we should really see it as a middle range theory that explains some stuff.
- (c) We can also take an approach based on individual human **Cognition**.
- (d) **Social Influence and Group Knowledge** can also be used to explain political behavior.

2. How to people think about politics?

- (a) **Public Opinion**
 - i. What is it?
 - ii. Origins - elite opinion theory -what elites say is what we think.
- (b) **Ideology and political sophistication**
 - i. Are people sophisticated political thinkers?
 - ii. How do people think and act on their ideology?
 - iii. What do people think?

3. Bread and Butter of the course

- (a) **Partisan identification**
 - i. What is it?
 - ii. It does a really good job of predicting vote choice.
 - iii. How has its importance changed?
- (b) **Participation**
 - i. Who participates?
 - ii. Is participation rational?
 - iii. Has participation declined over time.
- (c) **Turnout**
 - i. Is turnout rational?
 - ii. Is decreasing turnout a threat to our democracy?
- (d) **Vote choice**
 - i. We evaluate candidates based on a memory based model.
 - ii. Or should we be using more of an online model.
 - iii. Partisanship, performance, policy and personality the 4 P's.

(e) **Media Effects**

- i. Can media change our attitudes.
- ii. What is the impact of the expansion in our access to media on politics.

(f) **Campaign effects**

- i. What is their influence.
- ii. What kinds of campaigns matter positive/negative.

Week 2: Rational Choice and its Critics

Overview from Class Notes

1. Strengths of RC theory:

- (a) Parsimonious.
- (b) Universal.
- (c) Derive predictive hypotheses.
- (d) Actors have agency

2. Weaknesses of RC theory

- (a) inability to explain participation in collective action movements, voting.
- (b) unrealistic assumptions
- (c) tautology - explains everything and nothing.

Summary of the Debate

In their highly provocative article [Green and Shapiro \(1994\)](#) argue that the use of rational choice theory is misguided and inappropriate in political science. They argue it is tautological and cannot be tested and should be thrown out. After a slew of counter-criticisms [Green and Shapiro \(1995\)](#) responds by weakening their objection to RC and argue that it should be limited to very specific domains and not make broad generalizations. There were a number of responses to the original Green and Shapiro article including [Fiorina \(1995\)](#), who argues that GS criticisms pretty much exclude most of social science and that RC is the best we have in many situations so we should use it. [Ferejohn and Satz \(1995\)](#) argues that independence hypotheses that allow us to say that preferences are independent (or at least partially independent) from the choice situation are necessary to make any kind of explanation and not just describe the situation, and that the GS critique is self defeating. [Shepsle \(1995\)](#) ultimately responds by saying: “show me your alternative and let's see how well it compares”. [Chong \(2000\)](#) is more of a postlude in that he actually develops a RC theory and applies it to the analysis of political economic choices.

Summary from Memo

While I do not believe in “being” any particular theory down to my DNA¹, I will say that I mostly agree with rational choice (RC) theorists. Moreover, while I find a number of the critiques put forth by Green and Shapiro ([1994](#)) compelling in the sense that they seem to point to real problems in the cases they bring up, I think their criticism is ultimately misguided and somewhat uninformed. My first problem with their argument was not raised in any of the critiques offered by Fiorina ([1995](#)), Ferejohn and Satz ([1995](#)) or Shepsle ([1995](#)). It seems that Green and Shapiro use the miss-application of statistical methods by some RC scholars in the testing of RC theory to argue that the theory is bad. It is my experience that the most challenging part of using applied statistics is know when to use a particular method and which

¹As Fiorina ([1995](#)) does.

method is best for testing one's particular hypothesis. But this cannot say something about the theory itself because it is necessarily separate from the methods used to evaluate it empirically. To conflate the choice of theory and choice of method strikes me as lacking an understanding of either. There will be good and bad empirical studies but only good ones will actually give us an evaluation of the theory. Talking about bad empirical testing just says that the theory hasn't really been tested, which actually makes a stronger case for more and better empirical work on RC theory, not a case for less of it.

I was also particularly interested in the debate over assumptions in RC models waged in the articles we read for this week. I could not help but feel that the assumptions lined up by Green and Shapiro as being central to RC theory (expected utility maximization, transitivity, weak ordering and methodological individualism) are rather tame by comparison to the assumptions in economic models. For example, the standard assumptions necessary just for the existence of a well behaved utility function² are: completeness, transitivity, preference relation, continuity, non-satiation (strict monotonicity) and convexity (strict convexity). Without anything else thrown on top, these assumptions are far stronger than almost everything we get from RC theory as it seems to be applied in political science. My conception of "rational choice theory" coming from economics was a category of models that made assumptions far beyond those described above. There has been a major movement against these general equilibrium models characterized by the inclusion of behavioral assumptions or the transition to evolutionary game theory, but these models still make the kinds of assumptions that Green and Shapiro seem to have a problem with. This reinforces a sense I have that part of the discomfort expressed by Green and Shapiro could be due to an incomplete understanding of the models they are critiquing.

My own view is that a formal model is an excellent *point of departure* for social scientific inquiry. A formal model where agents are making choices based on some set of incentives and constraints makes a lot of sense if we are interested in intentionality. Testing this sort of model empirically often requires some simplifying assumptions, behavioral theories or empirically observed regularities in addition so as to offer a reasonably well specified description of the case we are studying. However, I feel that adding layers of explanation beyond a simple formal model can be taken too far, ending up with a model that is too complicated to understand or too specific to be useful. Thus being a good social scientist requires engaging in a balancing act.

This brings me to chapter two in Chong (2000) where he introduces a simple yet elegant model of political party affiliation. With its simplicity comes flexibility and applicability to a wide range of political phenomena. I like the asymptotic stability of the p^* equilibrium this model defined but I think it would have made his point stronger in the case of inter-generational transmission and stability if he had derived the equilibrium as an evolutionary stable state. In this view, we see the game and all of its parameters not as static, but itself an equilibrium of an underlying game. We can then make an evolutionary argument that adhering to group norms was the fittest strategy in the long run and that is why we see it today.

“The Nature of Rational Choice Theory” and “Methodological Pathologies”

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Green1994a}

2. Authors: Donald Green and Ian Shapiro

3. Year: 1994

4. Journal: Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory (book)

5. Keywords: Rational Choice, Methods, methodological individualism, critique

²See Jehle and Reny (2011)

6. **Summary:** In these two chapters the authors introduce rational choice theory and methodological individualism as it has been applied in political science and the methods used to empirically evaluate this set of theories. They make a number of scathing criticisms of this approach arguing that it is unrealistic, has poor predictive performance, makes bad assumptions, cherry picks its applications, that the theory follows the data and not the other way around and that the methods for empirically evaluating these theories are flawed and biased towards accepting the theories. They argue that they do not want to throw out rational choice theory totally but that they feel it needs to be totally rethought. I think they miss the point that rational choice theory presents an easy target because it actually makes strong predictions.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) In the first chapter the authors introduce the central tenets of rational choice theory/methodological individualism:
 - i. Individuals (with the key word here being individuals as opposed to groups or systems) seek to maximize their utility.
 - ii. There exists a weak preference ordering.
 - iii. Transitivity of preferences.
 - iv. Under uncertainty, individuals will maximize their expected utility.
 - v. In economics we have Completeness, Transitivity, Preference Relation, Continuity, Nonstatiation, Strict Monotonicity, Convexity, Strict Convexity to give us a utility function.
 - vi. The focus is placed on micro-foundations.
 - vii. We also assume that this kind of model generalizes to all individuals under study and across time.
 - viii. Neoclassical economics also assume perfect information which is not realistic.
 - ix. They distinguish between **thick** and **thin** rationality in terms of the strength of assumptions (thin being not specifying a functional form for the utility function for example).
 - x. Ideally for an action to be rational it would satisfy: best response to beliefs, best beliefs from information and best information.
 - xi. What the rational choice theory gives us is the ability to make unique predictions about behavior using equilibrium concepts.
 - xii. There has been much debate about the degree of generalizability (universality) of rational choice models with some wanting to take a more limited view of their applicability.
 - xiii. The authors argue that the theory has relatively little explanatory power due to unrealistic assumptions like perfect information and perfect rationality and its focus on general types of individuals as a simplifying assumption.
- (b) In chapter two the authors argue that statistical methods and theoretical models used for conducting research in a rational choice framework are often misapplied or missused and that they are also applied with a goal of taking on other rational choice models instead of explaining actual political behavior.
 - i. "We contend that these often mutually reinforcing mistakes stem from a method-driven rather than problem-driven approach to research, in which practitioners are more eager to vindicate one or another universalist model than to understand and explain actual political outcomes" (p. 33).
 - ii. Post Hoc theory development to explain patterns that we already observe. I think this is fine as long as we have good enough data.
 - iii. *Slippery hypothesis* testing when there are a large number of latent variables relative to observed variables that makes it hard to tell whether a theory is confirmed or refuted.

- iv. *Vaguely operationalized predictions* refers to tests that are not well suited to testing the hypothesis, especially inappropriately used point predictions.
- v. The authors also argue that rational choice researchers search for confirming evidence which leads their results to be biased, and make arbitrary domain restrictions in where their theory applies.

Rational Choice, Empirical Contributions, and the Scientific Enterprise

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Fiorina1995}

2. Authors: Morris Fiorina

3. Year: 1995

4. Journal: Critical Review

5. Keywords: Rational Choice, ceteris paribus assumption, RC is not monolithic

6. **Summary:** This is a strongly worded response to Donald Green and Ian Shapiro's (GS) book and critique of rational choice theory. He argues that there is room for many different approaches to political science but that the GS book oversteps and misunderstands some of its criticisms of RC work. He points out that while RC researchers may make generalizations and simplification, that these are not wrong in the sense that they are the best we can do, which I agree with. He also points out that the approach to science outlined in GS pretty much excludes all social science research by its stringency.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Rational Choice (RC) theory is not a monolithic thing, it has internal disagreements.
- (b) While some RC theorists might have grandiose aspirations of creating a general theory, this is not limited to just RC.
- (c) in Rational Choice theory, predictions are made ceteris paribus. This means that we are not so much looking at point predictions as we are at comparative statics holding all else constant.
- (d) Tractability requires simplification but this does not make RC useless.

Unification, Universalism, and Rational Choice Theory

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Ferejohn1995}

2. Authors: John Ferejohn and Debra Satz

3. Year: 1995

4. Journal: Critical Review

5. Keywords: Unification, universalism, rational choice, independence assumptions

6. **Summary:** Another criticism of Green and Shapiro's (GS) book. They argue that independence hypotheses that allow us to say that preferences are independent (or at least partially independent) from the choice situation are necessary to make any kind of explanation and not just describe the situation. They argue that the GS view essentially argues that we should give up on social science because we cannot do it, and they argue this is both wrong and self defeating.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Two main criticisms of GS
 - i. Their conception of what constitutes good social science is too narrow. The success of a theory should not be only associated with its explanatory success.
 - ii. Their views on universalism are flawed because they fail to see how the RC theories evolve to make less assumptions as a result of the scientific process working and they argue for too narrow a window of generalization that just turns into description without expressing any underlying phenomena.
- (b) The authors also point out that a theory does not need to produce a unique prediction to be a good theory and that this is an empirical matter and not an a priori property.
- (c) The authors also point out that some degree of universalism is necessary to drawing any kind of conclusion at all as otherwise we cannot say that any pattern exists or if we do it is so limited as to not be useful.
- (d) What the authors ultimately point out is that our explanations must rely on some sort of intentionality in action, that human actors must want to do something for some reason and so they do it.
- (e) The point here is that intentionality is not necessarily exactly equatable with rational choice theory. This requires a further hypothesis that preferences are independent of choice situations

Statistical Political Philosophy and Positive Political Theory

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Shepsle1995}

2. **Authors:** Kenneth Shepsle

3. **Year:** 1995

4. **Journal:** Critical Review

5. **Keywords:** Show me your alternative theory, Rational Choice Theory, unspecified null hypothesis

6. **Summary:** Shelpse argues that Green and Shapiro (GS) focus too heavily on assessing RC theory from a statistical perspective and that they only try to compare it to some perfect idea and not a viable alternative for explaining behavior. He also points out that the critique does not take into account the current sophisticated empirical tests of theoretical assumptions. Ultimately Shelpse says, “show me your alternative and let's see how well it compares”, to which he has not received an answer.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Shelpse argues the GS suffer from an unspecified null in their analysis because they say that RC is bad but do not compare it against anything. What is it worse than and why?
- (b) GS also do not give the same scrutiny to any alternative theory.
- (c) Shelpse's best point (I think) is that the alternatives to RC theory proposed by GS aren't really alternatives, as they have been incorporated into RC theory (things like institutions, behavior, culture etc.) as a way of making it more nuanced. To this end, RC theorists have already been responding to GS critiques for a long time.

Pathologies Revisited: Reflections on Our Critics

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Green1995}

2. **Authors:** Donald Green and Ian Shapiro

3. **Year:** 1995

4. **Journal:** Critical Review

5. **Keywords:** rational choice theory, domain restrictions, empirical support

6. **Summary:** This is a response to their critics. The authors continue to harp on their conjecture that empirical results do not support RC theory strongly enough for it to be a viable general theory and that it needs to have its domain strongly restricted to be of any use

7. Main Findings:

- (a) They propose five conditions under which rational choice theory might be expected to do well (all the below are quoted from page 267). This can be seen as a kind of domain restriction to say that RC theory is applicable in a much less general sense than its creators envision.
 - i. The stakes are high and the players are self conscious optimizers.
 - ii. Preferences are well ordered and relatively fixed.
 - iii. Actors are presented with a clear range of options and relatively little opportunity for strategic innovation.
 - iv. Situation is not overly complex and everyone has the roughly the same capacities to think things through.
 - v. Actors can learn from feedback and adapt.
- (b) They pretty much boil down their criticism to an argument that RC theory is not empirically sustainable.

“Interest versus Values”, “A Model of Individual Choice” and “Economics Meets Morality in a Texas Community”

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Chong2000}

2. **Authors:** Dennis Chong

3. **Year:** 2000

4. **Journal:** Rational Lives: Norms and Values in Politics and Society (book)

5. **Keywords:** Rational Choice Theory, Methodological Individualism

6. **Summary:** Expressive vs. Instrumental, Symbolic, Rational Choice

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Chapter 1, “Interest versus Values”, provides an introduction to RC theory:
 - i. To be rational, one must act based on preferences which don’t necessarily have to be what is best for you, but have to be reasonably drawn from the evidence at hand.

- ii. RC theory lets us specify a causal mechanism behind some process we already see going on.
 - iii. Cultural inertia and Habit are important: we see more rigidity in courses of action than we might expect given the premise that people will update their strategies as the world changes.
 - iv. Status can be a goal of politics over material rewards.
 - v. A Symbolic view of politics would argue that peoples political attitudes and actions are due to their feelings about larger social issues that do not directly affect them and thus have little to do with their self interest.
 - vi. this article also discusses subjective vs. objective self interest and material vs. social benefits.
 - vii. Chong points out that self interest is not necessarily at odds with value-based motives. People may develop ideologies as a way to efficiently choose between bundles of goods. People may subjectively care about some value.
 - viii. Rationality may be exhibited by groups at a higher level than the individual as in the formation of beliefs and ideology at a young age. RC lets us say why some ideologies are held by people and not others which symbolic theory does not allow us to talk about.
- (b) In chapter 2, “A Model of Individual Choice”, Chong develops a model incorporating dispositions and incentives as a way to talk about stability and change of values.
- i. Conformity to the norms of a reference group can have noticeable benefits to an individual.
 - ii. Chong argues that people only conform to the group to the degree that it is in their best interest to do so.
 - iii. Chong develops a nice little dynamic model of preferences. L and R are two political attitudes. a is a proportion representing reference group identification and values that will make a person more or less receptive to events and communications promoting L , b serves an analogous purpose for R . If we look at the dynamics of this system over time we arrive at the following equation for p^* , the equilibrium proportion of people supporting L or R :

$$p^* = \frac{a\pi_L}{a\pi_L + b\pi_R} \quad (2.1)$$

- iv. π is essentially the likelihood of receiving a pro L or R message, which is instrumentally related to the degree to which they feel the need to, and benefits of, conforming to the group norm of supporting L or R .
 - v. Note that if $a = b$ then preferences are determined entirely by the strength of incentives behind being L or R where as if $\pi_L = \pi_R$ then preferences are determined entirely by dispositions.
 - vi. Chong goes on to apply this model to a whole host of situations such as the interplay of rational choices and habits, principled and partisan choices, early socialization and values and conventions and shows its applicability and explanatory power in all of these situations.
- (c) Chapter 5, “Economics Meets Morality in a Texas Community” is a case study of a Texas community trying to decide whether to give tax breaks to apple to attract them to the community. Apple had a policy of granting health benefits to unmarried partners of employees which went against the values of the community. The council first voted against giving the breaks, which created a firestorm and then reversed the decision. They ended up not giving a tax break but instead giving a refund over 7 years equal to the amount.
- i. The authors argue that people had to make lots of simplifying assumptions in order to wrap their heads around the issue.
 - ii. The authors argue that seeing this issue as a symbolic one misses the point that there are real ramifications to these kinds of decisions for quality of life. This decision was about opening up the community’s norms to possible invasion by outsiders, thus raising tensions and affecting quality of life so people on both sides were likely acting on real incentives.

Week 3: Cognition

Summary of the Debate

All of the readings for this week seek to introduce cognitive psychology to Political Science and challenge the view that people make "rational" voting/political decisions. [Simon \(1985\)](#) argues that we ought to see people as boundedly rational (grounded in psychology understanding) and that this is the best foundation for pursuing political research. [Abelson \(1959\)](#) argues that people first seek to deny belief conflicts, then turn to bolstering one idea, followed by differentiating them and finally transcendence where necessary. He argues this way of thinking is very important to the study of politics. [Lodge and Hamill \(1986\)](#) introduce the idea of a "**partisan schema**" (or way of storing information, like a heuristic). Based on experimental results, they conclude that the simple labeling on a candidate as either Democrat or Republican will have an effect on how information about that candidate is stored and thus will lead to significantly different recall down the road. [Tversky and Kahneman \(1974\)](#) find that people tend to use heuristics (**representativeness, availability, anchoring**) when making judgments about probabilities. The use of these heuristics leads to systematic biases. [Lau and Redlawsk \(2006\)](#) introduce four different models of vote choice that are all steeped in a cognitive psychological view of vote choice. [Lupia et al. \(2000\)](#) argue that the future success of political science hinges on its ability to explain **why** people do what they do in political contexts. They argue for the building of Herbert Simon's bridge between social and cognitive sciences. [Kuklinski and Quirk \(2000\)](#) interrogate two widely held positions in political science that the public is generally rational in their voting decisions and that in aggregate these tend to help them make the right choices. They argue that this does not have to be the case.

Summary from Memo

Our readings for this week broadly focused on bounded rationality, cognitive influences on decisions, the kinds of mechanisms we employ to both make decisions and avoid internal conflicts. The readings this week touched on dissonance reduction, particularly in [Abelson \(1959\)](#). Abelson described a hierarchy of mechanisms for resolving the dissonance felt by holding conflicting ideas in one's head at the same time. Abelson argued that people first seek to deny these conflicts, then turn to bolstering one idea, followed by differentiation and finally transcendence where necessary. This work came only two years after the publication of Festinger et al. ([1956](#)), which introduced the term "cognitive dissonance". My own interest in this area was sparked while reading *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory* by Albert Bandura ([1986](#)). The central thread in this work is that people are motivated to reduce dissonance that occurs when their actions conflict with their ideals, and ideals and ideas conflict themselves.

I think it is important to begin an analysis of dissonance at a more basic level. Before a person arrives in a dissonant situation, we can argue that there is often a process where choices are made involved with getting there. I would argue that there are some circumstances where people have developed the capacity recognize that cognitive dissonance might arise as the result of a course of action. As people are motivated to reduce dissonance, it is also reasonable to posit that people may be motivated to avoid dissonance inducing situations all together. Thus *dissonance avoidance* may be another important mechanism for preempting the cognitive and emotional costs associated with cognitive dissonance reduction. I argue that *dissonance avoidance* is particularly germane to a discussion of optimizing political behavior, particularly as it pertains to voting and political participation.

My understanding is that there is a well developed literature on costs associated with voting (both social and material) in Political Science, and that it is widely accepted that it is irrational to vote, as the benefits (the degree to which you will actually influence the outcome) are incommensurate with the costs in terms of time and effort. While there has been relatively high turnout in the last three presidential elections, many people still do not vote. I am also under the impression that there has been a generally increasing political polarization in America. It would stand to reason that as politics becomes more polarized, this increases the incentives to voting as it increases the importance of getting ones preferred

party in power to partisan voters. However, if we look at this situation from the perspective of dissonance avoidance on the part of voters, there is a more nuanced interpretation.

If people seek to avoid dissonance and hold views we would consider as moderate, or as spanning both party ideologies, then they are likely to be disincentivized from voting as this would incur the cognitive costs of dissonance resolution. But the more partisan a person becomes, the lower the cognitive costs related to voting. The question is how ideological hardening of party lines should affect voting. On the one hand it should reduce dissonance incurred by partisan voters because it gives them a clearer picture of what they are voting for. On the other hand it makes it more costly for moderates to vote. This view makes a strong argument for a multiparty system and suggests that we should see more moderates voting in places with a multiparty system than with just two parties. I could also imagine designing behavioral experiments to test whether people exercise dissonance avoidance.

A Cognitive Approach to Human Nature in Politics.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Simon1985}

2. Authors: Herbert Simon

3. Year: 1985

4. Journal: Political Psychology: Classic and Contemporary Readings (book)

5. Keywords: Bounded Rationality, substantive vs. procedural rationality, assumptions, Duvergers Law

6. Summary: Simon argues that the key premise in any theory that wants to explain political behavior relates to the empirically grounded assumptions about goals of people and the way that people see their decisions. He argues that we ought to see people as boundedly rational (grounded in psychology understanding) and that this is the best foundation for pursuing political research.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Argues there is a natural alliance between empiricism and the cognitive psychology view of reality and between the rationalist and economic version of reality.
- (b) Differentiation between substantive (objective) and procedural (bounded or subjective) rationality. Bounded rationality requires a considerable amount of empirical information about the problem solver, their information and cognitive capacity in order to be a useful assumption. Even neoclassical economics needs auxiliary assumptions to test theory of rationality and these often introduce bounds on rationality.
- (c) Bounded rationality is not irrationality.
- (d) Duvergers Law - plurality election rules (winner take all as in the US) bring about and maintain two party, rather than multiparty competition. - rationality explanation: It is rational to limit your vote choice between two candidates most likely to win.
- (e) Key factors explaining radical deviations from rational behavior are attention, frame of reference and uncertainty in understanding individuals and how they perceive situations.

Modes of Resolution to Belief Dilemmas.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Abelson1959}

2. Authors: Robert Abelson

3. **Year:** 1959
4. **Journal:** Journal of Conflict Resolution
5. **Keywords:** dissonance reduction, denial, bolstering, differentiation, transcendence.
6. **Summary:** The main idea in this paper strikes me as similar to cognitive dissonance reduction. People who hold competing beliefs will try to find ways of resolving that competition through the mechanisms described in the paper. I think that the one point not discussed enough here was when people will actually hold competing beliefs? They may not understand beliefs are competing and make no effort to better understand, this could be sort of a higher level resolution mechanism although it is related to denial. Also are there any situations where people will not try to resolve their dilemmas? Or is it always human nature?
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Four modes of imbalance reduction: denial (change you mind about one element), bolstering (hold one element so much more strongly that it does not matter so much about the other), differentiation (dirty bombs vs. clean bombs, we only don't like the effects of dirty bombs and hydrogen bombs are clean) and transcendence (science vs. religion, we need to cultivate spiritual and rational selves) .
 - (b) Ableson argues that resolution follows a hierarchy of trying denial, then bolstering, then differentiation finally transcendence as a way of dealing with belief dilemmas.
 - (c) Elements related to shame or guilt are most often dealt with through denial.
 - (d) Bolstering will be used most often when one belief is held much ore strongly than the other.
 - (e) Transcendence resolutions are only really likely in persistent and difficult dilemmas.
 - (f) Revolutionary propaganda seeks to both bolster and differentiate between new and old way so as to get more people to be ready for change and then actually want to go for it.

A Partisan Schema for Political Information Processing.

1. **Cite Key:**
`\cite{Lodge1986a}`
2. **Authors:** Milton Lodge, Ruth Hami
3. **Year:** 1986
4. **Journal:** American Political Science Review
5. **Keywords:** Schema, consistency bias
6. **Summary:** A schema is kind of like a heuristic. The authors conduct an experiment where they group subjects into above and below average knowledge and interest in party politics and keep a control group. They find better understanding and recall for the above group, but this is also biased. They interview a convenience sample of about 600 near NYC.
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Authors believe there are multiple schema about politics with no overarching one.
 - (b) The authors classify individuals into three levels of partisan sophistication: those with high interest and knowledge (**Partisan Schematics**), those who fit in a middle group, and those with low knowledge and interest (**Partisan Aschematics**)

- (c) Paritsan schematics prove better than aschematics at classifying political information into the correct party association even when it is inconsistent with the party label or stereotype and also prove better at recall. Aschematics tend to just rely on party label and use stereotypes heavily.
- (d) Schematics also display a **consistency bias** where they tend to be biased in remembering positions and policies taken by each party as being closer to the party line, even when they are not. So if a republican takes a somewhat pro gun control stance, schematics will be more likely to think that they did not take a pro gun control stance, consistent with the overall republican party values.
- (e) A big issue is that because they use ANOVA, we do not get a sense of the magnitude of distortions. Should be redone with OLS.
- (f) the authors conclude that the simple labeling on a candidate as either democrat or republican will have an effect on how information about that candidate is stored and thus will lead to significantly different recall down the road.

Judgment Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Tversky1974a}

2. Authors: Amos Tversky, Daniel Kahneman

3. Year: 1974

4. Journal: Science

5. Keywords: Heuristics, biases, representativeness, availability, anchoring

6. Summary: People tend to use heuristics when making judgments about probabilities. The use of these heuristics leads to systematic biases.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **Representativeness** : probabilities are evaluated by the degree to which A resembles B. A question that showcases this would be: what is the probability that A belongs to class B ? This heuristic leads to the following biases:
 - i. Insensitivity to prior probability of outcome. We do not consider base rates.
 - ii. Insensitivity to sample size.
 - iii. Misconceptions of chance - if it does not look stereotypically random, then we do not think it is random.
 - iv. Insensitivity to predictability - people take favorable information and make favorable predictions even if that information was not germane to making the prediction.
 - v. Illusion of validity - people's confidence in prediction depends on how much output represents input.
 - vi. Regression toward the mean.
- (b) **Availability** - people make judgements about probability based on the ease with which an instance of the event can be brought to mind. This leads to the following biases:
 - i. Biases due to the retrievability of instances- if I know more female movie stars, I will think women are more likely to be famous.
 - ii. Biases due to the effectiveness of a search set- it may be easier to search your memory for one kind of occurrence vs. the other, leading to wrong probability judgments.

- iii. Biases of imaginability - it may be hard to think of things we have not experienced so we underestimate their probability.
- iv. Illusory correlation - people overestimate the degree of correlation between things they naturally associate like being suspicious and having slanted eyes.
- (c) **Adjustment and Anchoring** people will report results that are biased towards an anchoring point provided in a question. This leads to the following biases
 - i. Insufficient adjustment away from anchoring point.
 - ii. Biases in the evaluation of conjunctive and disjunctive events - lots of the same or one different in the sea of same. People overestimate the probability of rare events and underestimate the probability of frequent events.
 - iii. Anchoring in the assessment of subjective probability distributions.

How Voters Decide: Information Processing During Election Campaigns (Selected Chapters)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{lau2006voters}

2. Authors: Richard Lau, David Redlawsk

3. Year: 2007

4. Journal: How Voters Decide: Information Processing During Election Campaigns (book)

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

7. Main Findings:

- (a) "a major contribution of this book is that it provides new criteria for discerning correct voting. This ought to be of practical interest to scholars and students intrigued by the definitional and operational issues of the concept, let alone those interested in the questions the study raises for democratic practice. The second contribution that this book makes is the articulation of the **dynamic process tracing technique** of analysis. Lastly, the book moves the study of vote choice forward with the articulation of a framework for studying the dynamics of vote choice that is steeped in the psychological literature on behavioral decision theory combined with theories from political science". (from (2007))
- (b) The authors then convert the voters into models of voting, with the first model representing the traditional **rational-choice voter**, the second is the classic "Michigan" model (labeled "**early socialization and cognitive consistency**"), the third is the spatial model (labeled "**fast and frugal**"), and the last is the **bounded rationality** model. These models guide the theoretical framework that subsequently emerges.
- (c) the results are troubling for democratic theory. The authors find that, in the best case scenario of a choice of two candidates, approximately 70% of voters choose correctly. The situation is even more disconcerting when voters face a four candidate decision, where only 31% choose correctly.

Beyond Rationality: Reason and the study of politics

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Lupia2000}

2. **Authors:** Arthur Lupia, Mathew Mccubbins, Samuel Popkins (eds)

3. **Year:**

4. **Journal:** Elements of Reason: Cognition, Choice and the Bounds of Rationality (book)

5. **Keywords:** Bounded Rationality, Internal vs. External elements of reason.

6. **Summary:** The authors argue that the future success of political science hinges on its ability to explain **why** people do what they do in political contexts. They argue for the building of Herbert Simon's bridge between social and cognitive sciences.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) The authors conclude that a rational choice is one that is based on reasons, irrespective of what the reasons may be.
- (b) **Standard economic rationality** - actors know the consequences of all possible actions and choose the actions which has the highest benefit to them.
- (c) **Bounded Rationality** - people make domain specific simplifications and maximize on a small subset of outcomes using heuristics. This is still maximizing behavior.
- (d) **External elements of reason** - elements outside of us that alter our incentives. Things like institutions and social groups and norms.
- (e) **Internal elements of reason** - inside us, affective states and prior knowledge that have systematic effects on how we reason.

Reconsidering the Rational Public: Cognition, Heuristics, and Mass Opinion.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Kuklinski2000}

2. **Authors:** James H. Kuklinski, Paul J. Quirk

3. **Year:** 2000

4. **Journal:** Elements of Reason: Cognition, Choice and the Bounds of Rationality (book)

5. **Keywords:** heuristics, biases, cognitive science, aggregate rationality

6. **Summary:** The authors interrogate two widely held positions in political science that the public is generally rational in their voting decisions in aggregate and that to the degree that people use heuristics, these tend to help them make the right choices. The authors argue that we need to take a cognitive science approach which finds that people make systematic biases in their judgments and that we should not expect that people get it right in aggregate.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Two hypotheses: (1) the public use heuristics to make good judgments; (2) the public are rational in aggregate.

- (b) Some heuristics:
 - i. Political party
 - ii. likeability
 - iii. assuming president controls the economy
- (c) But the authors argue that these are not of much value because people miss apply them.
- (d) There is a difference between well informed and relatively well informed.
- (e) Six findings on human cognition:
 - i. much of human cognitive capacity is hard wired.
 - ii. We evolved to survive as hunter gatherers and this makes some modern tasks more challenging.
 - iii. our mind is modular and applies domain specific reasoning.
 - iv. central vs. peripheral processing are quite different in the strategies our brain uses to make calculations.
 - v. emotional systems make crude over-generalizations that affect our reasoning.
 - vi. we subconsciously generate systematically false beliefs to support things like group cohesion
- (f) Implications for mass politics:
 - i. We should not presume that human cognition is well adapted to political thinking.
 - ii. We should expect systematic biases in heuristic judgments.
 - iii. We should not expect a great deal of ordinary citizen's judgments.
- (g) Some common stereotypes are : policy stereotypes, overconfidence, resistance to correction, biased interpretations of messages, over-response to policy positions,

Week 4: Social Influence, Group Context, and Social Networks

Summary of the Debate

[Brown \(1988\)](#) introduces the literature on conformity and points to three main reasons for it – the need to rely on group members for information, the evolutionary argument that conformity is necessary to accomplish group goals and the motivation of people to not want to seem different. [Asch \(1955\)](#) conducted the classic line length matching experiment. The main finding is that subjects will go along with the group even when they think it is wrong unless they have an ally or there is another dissenter. [Sinclair \(2012\)](#) presents findings that in a number of contexts, peer pressure and social influence affect decisions to turnout or who to vote for or support. In a related vein, [Mutz \(2002\)](#) finds that people whose networks involve greater political disagreement are less likely to participate in politics. [Fowler \(2006\)](#) argues that legislators who are better connected in the co-sponsorship network are more influential – that network position gives people power and provides evidence of it. [Mcclurg \(2006\)](#) demonstrates that in addition to the political orientation of alters, the level of political sophistication in a person's social network exerts a positive influence on participation. [Nickerson \(2008\)](#) conducted a door-to-door GOTV experiment and found that the effect of the GOTV treatment was to increase mobilization by about 10% for those who were actually talked to. They also measured a 5.8% indirect mobilization effect on people not treated but who lived in the same household. Finally [Fowler et al. \(2011\)](#) brings in a discussion of how we identify causality when network externalities make most behavior endogenous.

Summary from Memo

I want to take this opportunity to flesh out my thoughts on what it means to be influential and to be influenced. While reading the Fowler (2006) article I started to think back to questions I received while presenting on my Senate Influence paper during the AP mini-conference this summer. People wanted to know why I thought I had identified influence and what I thought influence was. Before I try to give a better answer, I want to walk through the calculation and application of “connectedness” in Fowler’s paper to take some lessons from it.

While I have read Fowler before, I never really dug into the algorithm to calculate “connectedness” because I do not have a lot of faith in what it is measuring. I decided to write out the algorithm in pseudo-code on page two to see if I could make more sense of what he is trying to do. Essentially this measure will say that one congressman is closer to another the more often they cosponsor a bill sponsored by that congressman and the fewer other congressmen cosponsor those bills. This is meant to capture the idea that your friends or confidants will stick with you on bills that do not have a lot of support and generally support you on most issues. I actually do not have a big problem with this but this measure has a lot of limitations:

1. It does not make use of information on bills that are not cosponsored by anyone. This very valuable information as it can tell us about the proportion of the time a senator does not receive support.
2. There is no clear parameterization of the trade off between the number of supporters and the uniqueness of supporters in determining the connectedness of a senator. How these are relatively weighted is unclear.
3. This measure does not take into account the difference between an initial cosponsor and somebody who signs on later, nor does it deal with the importance of cosponsorship delay.
4. It is unclear whether the direction of influence suggested flows from or to the sponsoring senator.
5. There are no controls for the topic of the bill, the seniority of the senator, the political leanings of the other senators, their geographic proximity or campaign support. This means that what “connectedness” can measure is sort of an aggregate index of the competing and mixed effects of all of these things. It does not purely measure some social process of being well connected.

These problems make it very difficult to take this measure seriously as having identified some causal process in determining support for floor amendments and number of roll call supporters for bills sponsored by a senator. And I would argue that this is an important thing for a measure of influence to predict.

This leads me to some thoughts on influence: What we want to measure is some sense of “Nancy asked me to vote for this so I will” while controlling for everything else. We want to capture a process that is about an instrumental connection between two people where the influencer can get the influenced person to do something because they asked or pressured them to do it. Influence can flow both ways along this connection but it should be disentangled from questions like “what is the bill for” and “what do my constituents think” or “what do lobbyists want me to do”. What we want to uncover is a separate, pure dynamic of people doing things for the other person based on their relationship, above and beyond other reasons. This can be linked to that person’s power, but we want it to be separate in the sense that it regards the friendship aspects first. I am still trying to work out exactly what I mean when I say influenced in an interpersonal/relational context, any feedback would be greatly appreciated.

Group Processes (Chapter 4)

1. **Cite Key:**

`\cite{brown1988group}`

2. **Authors:** Rupert Brown

3. **Year:** 2000
4. **Journal:** Group Processes (book)
5. **Keywords:** Social Influence, Conformity, in group, out group, deviant
6. **Summary:** Brown summarizes findings on social influence and conformity.
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Three main explanations for conformity to the group consensus:
 - i. The need to depend on others for information about the world and to test our own opinions. The more novel a situation, the more we feel the need to rely on the group to check our opinions.
 - ii. The achievement of group goals which is facilitated by the uniformity of opinion. (sort of an evolutionary argument)
 - iii. The need for approval arising out of not wishing to seem different.
 - (b) The pressure towards conformity is felt most strongly by deviates. People do not like them as much as other group members on average.
 - (c) When deviants are not totally alone and remain consistent they do have an effect on the majority. They tend to cause a lot of cognitive dissonance for the majority even though the majority behavior does not really change.
 - (d) there is a controversy over whether minority and majority processes are two separate processes with different effects or whether they are the same process with just different magnitudes of effects.
 - i. Moscovici is a proponent of the first citing differences between public and private settings.
 - ii. Latane and Wolf hypothesize the second, because group size effects are consistent across settings
 - (e) People are more likely to conform with people in their in group than those in the out group.
 - (f) In private, people seem to respond more to the minority and than to the majority when talking about gay rights. In public people tend to respond more the majority. This is sort of a paradox.

Opinions and Social Pressure.

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Asch1955}
2. **Authors:** Solomon Asch
3. **Year:** 1955
4. **Journal:** Scientific American
5. **Keywords:** peer pressure, social influence, consensus
6. **Summary:** This is the classic experiment on matching line lengths. There is a group of 8 or 9 but only one is the focal subject. The rest are instructed to give wrong answers with unanimity most of the time. There is one reference card and one card with three lines of varying length. They all choose the wrong length repeatedly. What we find is that subjects will go along with the group even when they think it is wrong.
7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) In a random setting where the subjects are not instructed to do the wrong thing, people get lengths wrong less than one percent of the time. In the experimental treatment, the focal subject gets it wrong 36 percent of the time. This demonstrates a bias towards conforming to the group decision.
- (b) Ran experiment with 123 focal subjects.
- (c) As the number of people giving the wrong answer increases, so does the wrong answers by the focal subject up to three people and then it levels off at 35 percent.
- (d) When subjects were given a supporting partner, their error rate dropped to only 1/4 of what it was without a supporting partner.
- (e) when there was a dissenter that chose the in-between line but not the right one, this reduced errors by one third. When there was an extreme dissenter, this reduced error rates substantially. Thus the presence of another dissenter is freeing to the subject.
- (f) even when the error is enormous (7 inch difference) some people still yield to the majority.

The Social Citizen: Peer Networks and Political Behavior (Selected Chapters).

1. Cite Key:

\cite{sinclair2012social}

2. Authors: Betsy Sinclair

3. Year: 2012

4. Journal: The Social Citizen: Peer Networks and Political Behavior. (book)

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: See Review by [Reedy \(2014\)](#)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Sinclairs book The Social Citizen provides substantial evidence that our social networks – the family and close friends we see often, and the more distant friends and acquaintances we interact with less often – can play an important role in shaping our political actions. For many years, political scholars have focused on individual factors, like income and race, and how those affect citizens choices: whether to participate in politics, what party to join, which candidate to support. Social network researchers instead look at how social ties can influence political behavior. In The Social Citizen, Sinclair takes up the debate over individual and social factors and studies these variables, with a variety of research methods, in four different contexts: citizens' decision to turn out to vote, their choice to donate to a candidate, their party identification, and their vote choice. (from [Reedy \(2014\)](#))
- (b)

The Consequences of Cross Cutting Networks for Political Participation.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Mutz2002}

2. **Authors:** Diana Mutz
3. **Year:** 2002
4. **Journal:** American Journal of Political Science
5. **Keywords:** Cross Pressures, Social Network, Ambivalence, participation.
6. **Summary:** Mutz finds “that **people whose networks involve greater political disagreement are less likely to participate in politics**. Two social psychological processes are suggested to account for this effect. First, those embedded in cross-cutting social and political networks are, as a consequence, more likely to hold ambivalent political views, which in turn discourage political involvement. Second, social accountability pressures in cross-cutting networks discourage political participation the inherently controversial nature of politics is perceived to pose threats to the harmony of social relationships.” (Abstract)
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Cross Pressures - conflicting information and social pressure to vote different ways, tends to make people less likely to vote.
 - (b) Egocentric study where each of 780 participants nominate 3 friends and talk about how closely their views align.
 - (c) “The results of this study suggest that people entrenched in politically heterogeneous social networks retreat from political activity mainly out of a desire to avoid putting their social relationships at risk.” (p. 851)
 - (d) “little is known about cross-cultural comparisons of the extent to which political disagreement is deemed socially acceptable.” (p. 851)
 - (e) I think there is a problem with their dependent variable: How do we know they actually voted? And people will overstate their intent to vote.

Legislative Co-sponsorship Networks in the U.S. House and Senate.

1. **Cite Key:**
`\cite{Fowler2006a}`
2. **Authors:** James Fowler
3. **Year:** 2006
4. **Journal:** Social Networks
5. **Keywords:** Connectedness, Cosponsorship Network, Influence
6. **Summary:** Fowler introduces a new network measure of connectedness and the cosponsorship dataset. This is the companion to his PA article.
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Active cosponsors actually help write bills (usually initial cosponsors). Passive cosponsors do not help write bills but sign on later. Both are important.
 - (b) Bills that do not receive cosponsorship do indicate social information, that nobody wanted to cosponsor which is just as valuable as if they had wanted to cosponsor.
 - (c) A majority of senators receive cosponsorships from 75% of other members at least once while this is the opposite for house of reps.

- (d) cosponsorship networks are very dense with a maximum shortest path length of 2 to 4 depending on chamber and year.
- (e) As Connectedness measure increases, the Senator passes more floor amendments and gets more votes in roll-call vote for passage of bill that they sponsor.
- (f) “When we think of people who are well-connected, we usually think of those who are able to get things done because of their social relationships. I focus on support received because it indicates how well a particular legislator can persuade her peers to behave in a way that will help her to achieve her goals.” (p. 462)
- (g) Bills per senator does not conform to power law of citations in scientific papers.

The Electoral Relevance of Political Talk: Examining Disagreement and Expertise Effects in Social Networks on Political Participation.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{McClurg2006}

2. **Authors:** Scott McClurg

3. **Year:** 2006

4. **Journal:** American Journal of Political Science

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** “Although people with larger, more politicized social networks are more likely to participate in elections, we know very little about what drives this relationship. I argue that the electoral relevance of political talk depends heavily on the political expertise imbedded in discussion networks. Using data gathered during the 1996 presidential election, I demonstrate that the level of political sophistication in a person’s social network exerts a positive influence on participation. Importantly, this effect is greater than the impact of political preferences in the network, the factor that is implicitly considered to be the main link between networks and involvement. ” (Abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Three types of information other than political support and disagreement that people can get from their social networks:
 - i. “All things being equal, people in networks high in expertise can access larger quantities of political information that is higher in quality (Huckfeldt 2001)” (p. 740)
 - ii. “politically expert networks create incentives, opportunities, and pressures that encourage people to make politics a larger part of their identity.” (p. 740)
 - iii. “sophisticated political networks provide environments that support clearer and more contextualized communication of political information, which establishes a more secure attitudinal foundation for involvement”(p. 740)
- (b) “Because networks serve as information shortcuts, people who rely on them are unlikely to become political sophisticates themselves”.
- (c) Study makes use of 1996 presidential election survey data (2,612 interviews in Indianapolis and St. Louis areas)
- (d) Name up to five people they discuss politics with (this kind of measure is prone to boundary effects and thus cannot be taken totally seriously).

- (e) Analysis does not include number of ties in the network in regressions, this is crazy! It uses negative binomial regression.
- (f) “in practice politically relevant conversations need not lead to an ambivalent public that refuses to act on their views in the electoral arena.” (p. 749)

Is Voting Contagious? Evidence from Two Field Experiments.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Nickerson2008}

2. Authors: David Nickerson

3. Year: 2008

4. Journal: American Political Science Review

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: “During a face-to-face canvassing experiment targeting households with two registered voters, residents who answered the door were exposed to either a Get Out the Vote message (treatment) or a recycling pitch (placebo). The turnout of the person in the household not answering the door allows for contagion to be measured. Both experiments find that 60% of the propensity to vote is passed onto the other member of the household. This finding suggests a mechanism by which civic participation norms are adopted and couples grow more similar over time.” (Abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Subjects were targeted in Minneapolis and Denver before the 2002 senatorial primaries and about 470 household contacted in both the GOTV and placebo treatments.
- (b) Effect of the GOTV treatment was to increase mobilization by about 10% for those who were actually talked to. They also measured a 5.8% indirect mobilization effect on people not treated

Causality in Political Networks.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Fowler2011}

2. Authors: James Fowler et al.

3. Year: 2011

4. Journal: American Politics Research

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: As the study of political networks becomes more common in political science, greater attention to questions of causality is warranted. This essay explores competing visions of causality in political networks. Independent essays address issues of statistical model specification, identification of multi-step personal influence, measurement error, causality in historical perspective, and the insights of field experiments. These essays do not agree entirely on the nature of causality in political networks, though they commonly take seriously concerns regarding homophily, time-consistency, and the uniqueness of political network data. Serious consideration of these methodological issues promises to enhance the value-added of network analysis in the study of politics. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a)
- (b)

Week 5: Public Opinion

Summary of the Debate

Zaller (1992) gives us the top down elite led approach and then many authors disagree or point out that non-elites also play an important role.

Zaller (1992) challenges the idea that voters only have one true preference; instead he presents a model where individuals have conflicting views on specific issues and the "winning" view at any given time is determined by what considerations are at the top of your head. He introduces the Receive-Accept-Sample model of survey responses which is a memory based model. Lodge et al. (1995) find support for a theory of candidate evaluation that is on-line instead of memory based. This has implications that voters can be much more strongly affected by campaign advertisements than previously thought. Lee (2002) offers a critique of Zaller and introduces the Activated Mass Opinion model – a more contextualized version of RAS. It foregrounds how issues are defined, who is mobilized and what roles elites and non-elites play in these matters. Berinsky (2004a) tackles non response bias in opinion polling and finds that people who respond that they "don't know" or have an opinion do so for some combination of cognitive costs and social costs. Bullock (2011) presents experimental findings that contradict the elite driven view of public opinion presented by Zaller. He shows that the effects of position-taking by party elites can be more modest than we often imagine, and that the effects of policy considerations can be much greater. Kam (2012) provides a critique of Zaller's assumption that people are only passive processors of information and argues that they are active in many domains but the use of polling data may skew findings to show that they are passive – we need to move beyond RAS. Zaller (2012) responds to his critics and expands his model although he still sticks with a relatively top down approach.

Summary from Memo

Berinsky (2004b) brought up what I thought was a very interesting point about social pressures to respond with a "don't know" answer to an in-person survey on issues where their views might paint them in a negative light to the surveyor. Berinsky uses a model based approach to correcting for this exclusion bias and find that people tend to hold more anti-integration views (for example) than polls would lead us to think. While I think that this model based approach is interesting and could probably do a good job (although we don't have the appendix to see exactly what he is doing), it seems like this problem is crying out for a survey design solution. The key would be to give the respondent confidence that nobody would be able to link them to their responses without making the survey overly complicated.

The solution that comes to mind involves giving respondents a sealed envelope with a correspondence between the Likert scale and a random letter or number that they then tell the survey taker. Clearly this only works for questions with answers that follow a common form so it would not be applicable in a lot of situations. This could be broken up into sections with a new key for each section or one could just give them two possibilities for each answer. This is a way to ensure the survey taker will never be sure what answer the person is giving. A randomly generated alphanumeric sequence on the envelope will let the people organizing the survey know how the keys matched up by comparing after the survey is complete. An example is illustrated below (taken from the [ANES cumulative time series survey](#)). The left column shows the different direct answers that could be given to the survey taker and their coding straight from the NES. The right column shows hypothetical keys that could be used to obscure answers. One could answer "L" if one was really in favor of segregation and the survey taker would have no idea what that meant.

Question: Are you in favor of desegregation, strict segregation, or something in between?

1. Desegregation
2. In between
3. Strict segregation
4. Don't know

- K Desegregation
- 7 In between
- L Strict segregation
- 26 Don't know

I think it would be very interesting to conduct an experiment to test this procedure against a standard elicitation and see what differences arise as a way to check the results in Berinsky. I am wondering if something like this has been tried before? It seems that conducting a survey is a very delicate balance between making it easy, reducing bias in the response and asking the right questions. This is even separate from the challenge of finding the right survey length so you get the most information possible without respondents getting bored.

I think the real interesting question is: How do we move beyond surveys? They are expensive, time consuming and suffer from a very important and foundational problem: respondents do not have incentives to reveal their true preferences or beliefs. This is the million dollar question. Social data can give us some of this in aggregate, but they have their own biases and certainly many topics are excluded or marginalized in social media conversation that are important to people conducting polls. I think that a valid successor would have to meet two main design criteria:

1. The elicitation must be incentive compatible so people have incentives to reveal their true beliefs.
2. The design must explicitly shield respondents from an social feedback or pressures on their responses.

It must also be relatively quick to administer and not terribly expensive, but the two points above are most important. Furthermore, while most of our readings for the week point out that there are also cognitive costs to forming an opinion, I would not be as worried about this in the study design. This of course assumes that we are interested in an analogue to voting behavior where the same cognitive mechanisms will be at work, but this is another can of worms. I see why the problem of survey design is still open.

The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion (Chapters 1-6)

1. \cite{zaller1992nature}
\cite{Markus1994} (review)

2. **Authors:** John Zaller

3. **Year:** 1992

4. **Journal:** The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion (book)

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** “Zaller challenges the idea that voters only have one true preference; instead he presents a model where individuals have conflicting views on specific issues and the “winning” view at any given time is determined by what considerations are at the top of your head.” ([Source](#))

7. **Main Findings:**

(a) **Receive, Accept, Sample Model:** This is a model to explain how individuals respond to political information they may encounter. The model consists of four axioms: ([source](#))

- i. **Reception Axiom:** The greater the person's level of cognitive engagement with an issue the more likely he or she is to be exposed to and comprehend in a word, to receive political messages concerning that issue.

- ii. **Resistance Axiom:** People tend to resist arguments that are inconsistent with their political predispositions, but they do so only to the extent that they possess the contextual information necessary to perceive a relationship between the message and their predispositions.
 - iii. **Accessibility Axiom:** The more recently a consideration has been called to mind or thought about, the less time it takes to retrieve that consideration or related considerations from memory and bring them to the top of the head for use.
 - iv. **Response Axiom:** Individuals answer survey questions by averaging across the considerations that are immediately salient or accessible to them.
- (b) "most of what gets measured as public opinion does not exist except in the presence of a pollster" (p. 265)
- (c) "To test his RAS model, Zaller relies primarily upon NES survey data. Specifically, he applies his theory to the dynamics of public opinion on a broad range of subjects, including domestic and foreign policy, trust in government, racial equality, the Vietnam War, and presidential approval." [\(Source\)](#)
- (d) "Zaller believes that only the most aware citizens will have a consistent ideology or belief system. According to Zaller, highly aware liberals and conservatives look to appropriate partisan elites to find out "what goes with what." Having acquired this information, they are able to become consistently liberal or consistently conservative across a range of issues. The less aware are less likely to acquire the attitude that is consistently appropriate to their partisan orientation, and hence less likely to develop "attitude constraint" across issues." [\(Source\)](#)

The Responsive Voter: Campaign Information and the Dynamics of Candidate Evaluation.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Lodge1995}

2. **Authors:** Milton Lodge, Marco Steenbergen, Shawn Brau

3. **Year:** 1995

4. **Journal:** American Political Science Review

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** The authors find support for a theory of candidate evaluation that is on-line instead of memory based. This has implications that voters can be much more strongly affected by campaign advertisements than previously thought.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) The authors propose a bounded rationality model where people only remember how a candidate made them feel and not the specific issues. People keep an online tally or "affect-integrator" that stores their general affect towards a candidate and is updated in the face of new information. This gets stored to memory and then accessed to make a vote decision.
- (b) It does not matter if people forget the facts as long as they remember their overall feeling.
- (c) "Over time people forget most of the campaign information they are exposed to but are nonetheless able to later recollect their summary affective evaluation of candidates which they then use to inform their preferences and vote choice" (p. 309)

- (d) Study used 356 adults from Long Island. They took a survey and were shown candidate information. Then some time between 1 and 31 days later they were called back and asked about the candidates. Only 204 responded to calls so there was a 40% attrition rate. Shown information about two hypothetical candidates. The Republican candidate was in line with party but democrat had some republican views which made him harder to evaluate. Half of subjects had to take an additional 50 question survey after being shown information to really make them think about it.
- (e) They show we need to measure what information people are actually exposed to over the course of a campaign and when they control for this information they find that NES recall measures are mostly spurious.
- (f) They also show that in general it seems that people are relatively responsive to information they receive from the campaign.
- (g) To me the big implication of this research is that issues don't matter and that campaigns should just try to make people like their candidate as a person.

Mobilizing Public Opinion: Black Insurgency and the Civil Rights Movement (Chapter 1: Elite Opinion Theory and Activated Mass Opinion)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Lee2002}

2. Authors: Taeku Lee

3. Year: 2002

4. Journal: Mobilizing Public Opinion: Black Insurgency and the Civil Rights Movement (book)

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Elite Opinion Theory is Zaller's RAS mode.
- (b) Activated Mass Opinion model is a more contextualized version of RAS. It foregrounds how issues are defined, who is mobilized and what roles elites and non-elites play in these matters.
- (c) **Activated Mass Opinion:** "beliefs and sentiments that are at once *salient* in the mind and *impel* one to political action – incorporates the historically contingent, group based, and issue specific contexts within which our political opinions are formed and out of which they are voiced" (p. 31)
- (d) There is a dominant public at the center of things and then multiple counter-publics. It is in these counter-publics that non elite influences on mass opinion can most easily form.
- (e) Limitations of RAS:
 - i. The influence of elites is fundamentally a theoretical assumption and not really supported by strong empirical evidence.
 - ii. Zaller has a narrow definition of what constitutes political information : the main stream media. This leaves out a lot.

- iii. Ignores the long term formation of dispositions and how it could be endogenous to elite influence over time. Does not say where they come from and just ignores them because it is only looking at the short run. Only considers partisanship and ideology not race (for example)
- (f) “**Counterpublic Spheres** are thus institutionalized and indigenous safe harbors that generate countervailing political information and sustain oppositional political ideologies. They sow seeds for social change that are harvested through the mobilization of social movements and the activation of mass opinion” (p. 33)
- (g) Looks at the case of opinions by race in the 1950’s should be the case that southern whites and the general public follow RAS but blacks will be both subject to dominant elite discourse and the black discourse as well. “strict elite driven accounts of racial attitudes during the civil rights era are false” (p. 42)

Silent Voices: Public Opinion and Political Participation in America (Introduction, Chapters 1 and 3).

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Berinsky2004}

2. Authors: Adam Berinsky

3. Year: 2004

4. Journal: Silent Voices: Public Opinion and Political Participation in America. (book)

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Public opinion polls are biased by people who respond that they “don’t know” or have an opinion for some combination of cognitive costs and social costs. He demonstrates that this biases opinion on the role of government intervention in racial issues.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) public opinion polls matter because they are a low cost way of the public making their preferences known. Politicians focus on these very heavily which makes them the center of politics, even if they are biased.
- (b) The goal of the book is to tell us what polls can tell us and what they cannot.
- (c) “This misrepresentation arises from what I term “**Exclusion Bias**” – the exclusion of the sometimes sizable portion of the public who say they “don’t know” where they stand on the issue of the day, due either to an absence of those resources that would allow them to form a coherent opinion or to a fear of expressing sentiments that might paint them in an unfavorable light” (p. 2) So basically experimenter demand.
- (d) Assumptions of opinion polls:
 - i. Given the chance, all individuals will express their opinions to an interviewer.
 - ii. “The answers individuals express or do not express in opinion polls are a fair representation of their underlying individual wants, needs and desires.” (p. 7)
- (e) Issues can be hard to answer in a cognitive sense and in a social sense and thus responding “don’t know” may be systematically biased and bias our results.
- (f) While polls may be better than other forms of finding out what people want they may still be subject to inequality in the voice they give to the people on some issues.

- (g) There is a problem with answer hedging because people do not like to express to extreme a view when they are not sure how others will react.
- (h) Respondents are not incentivized to respond truthfully.
- (i) Elite discourse framing of questions makes responding easier but if not all questions are in the elite discourse then this still biases results.
- (j) Racially conservative opinion such as anti-integration feelings may be concealed by polls because of the negative social impact taking that position can have in the survey context.
- (k) Berinsky uses a modeling approach (what is it?) to correct for bias which is up to 10%

Elite Influence on Public Opinion in an Informed Electorate.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Bullock2011}

2. Authors: John Bullock

3. Year: 2011

4. Journal: American Political Science Review

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** "An enduring concern about democracies is that citizens conform too readily to the policy views of elites in their own parties, even to the point of ignoring other information about the policies in question. This article presents two experiments that undermine this concern, at least under one important condition. People rarely possess even a modicum of information about policies; but when they do, their attitudes seem to be affected at least as much by that information as by cues from party elites. The experiments also measure the extent to which people think about policy. Contrary to many accounts, they suggest that party cues do not inhibit such thinking. This is not cause for unbridled optimism about citizens' ability to make good decisions, but it is reason to be more sanguine about their ability to use information about policy when they have it." (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) "Although need for cognition moderates policy effects for both Democrats and Republicans, it does so in opposite ways. It makes Democrats more responsive to policy: *Ceteris paribus*, the estimated effect of a change from the conservative to the liberal policy is 2.09 points for Democrats lowest in need for cognition, 3.04 points for Democrats highest in need for cognition. This is the result predicted by dual-process theory. But need for cognition makes Republicans less responsive to policy: The estimated effect of switching from the conservative to the liberal policy is 2.09 points (again) for Republicans lowest in need for cognition but only 0.18 points for those who are highest." (p. 502)
- (b) "Party cues are influential, but partisans in these experiments are generally affected at least as much – and sometimes much more – by exposure to substantial amounts of policy information." (p. 512)
- (c) "One of the most common concerns about elite influence on mass opinion is that it causes people to neglect what they know about relevant policies. But the studies reported here show that the effects of position-taking by party elites can be more modest than we often imagine, and that the effects of policy considerations can be much greater." (p. 513)

The Psychological Veracity of Zaller's Model

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Kam2012}

2. **Authors:** Cindy Kam

3. **Year:** 2012

4. **Journal:** Critical Review

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** RAS can be a good model in a lot of contexts but this hinges critically upon the assumption that people do not process information but just receive it. We need to challenge this assumption and extend the model.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) The RAS model rests on the assumption that citizens are passive processors and are strongly influenced by what they are exposed to by elites. However there are certain contexts in which citizens are active processors but these are not discussed in RAS.
- (b) Kam argues that this focus of RAS on those opinions that can be got at through surveys pretexts what we even think of as public opinion and to the degree that other studies disagree with opinion being elite driven, they often rely on non-polling data.

What Nature and Origins Leaves Out.

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Zaller2012}

2. **Authors:** John Zaller

3. **Year:** 2012

4. **Journal:** Critical Review

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** "The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion synthesizes leading studies of public opinion from the late 1980s in a top-down model of opinion formation and change. The core feature of this synthesis, the Receive-Accept- Sample (RAS) model, remains sound, but the book overstates the importance of the form of public opinion that it explains elite-induced survey statements of issue positions and understates the force of opinions that elites cannot easily shape and that citizens may not be able to articulate in response to survey prompts. Moreover, there are major problems in the book's Parable of Purple Land. What, then, becomes of the top-down view of elite-mass interaction outlined in Nature and Origins? To answer this question, I begin by characterizing the kinds of opinions Nature and Origins leaves out: Converse's "group interest" voters, "nature of the times" voters, and issue publics. I then add a model of political parties as policy-motivated organizers of Converse's voter types. The upshot is an account of elite/mass interactions that is still largely top-down and that has roles for both the elite-led attitudes that the RAS model explains and the less conventional and harder-to-shape attitudes that it overlooks." (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a)
- (b)

Week 6: Ideology and Political Sophistication

Summary of the Debate

Prior to the work of [Converse \(1962\)](#), political scientists generally thought that the public was well informed and that it behaved like invested elites. However, [Converse \(1962\)](#) provocatively argued that voters are not sophisticated and do not make very consistent positions. He finds that people generally break down into 8 different Issue Publics – which feel strongly about a particular issue but not others. [Jennings \(1992\)](#) also finds that overall, political party elites have a vastly more constrained and stable set of political preferences in terms of the traditional liberal-conservative dimension than does the mass public. [Kinder \(2006\)](#) generally agrees with Converse, but introduces the concept that voters might follow a group-centrism heuristic where they relate an issue to a group and use that to make their judgments. He argues that if this works, citizens can actually do pretty well in aggregate. In a response to his critics 40 years later, [Converse \(2006b\)](#) argues that it is a misinterpretation of his work to say that most people only have non-attitudes and that it may be perfectly rational to not engage with political information. He is still concerned that a bunch of ruses put forth by elites remove much of our choice in elections. [Carpini and Keeter \(1996\)](#) find large differences in vote choices between low and high knowledge voters, and that knowledge is highest for white men and lowest for black women. Contrary to the studies above that find many people are uninformed and do not make great choices, [Page and Shapiro \(1992\)](#) find that the public, as a collective body, is stable, absorbs information presented to it in the media, and makes rational policy decisions. They also introduce the idea of **parallel publics** – that the subgroup differences persist over time and rarely converge or diverge across subgroup cleavages. [Krosnick \(1990\)](#) examines **issue publics** (first theorized by Converse) – groups that care strongly about a particular issue and finds little correlation between groups. He concludes that issues publics are the most important groups in the American electorate and that they are very resistant to attitude change.

Summary from Memo

This week we read a number of articles that dealt with the role of ideology in the formation and support of coherent political opinions. Starting with [Converse \(1962\)](#) the view of ideology in political science seems to be a positive one where the most well informed citizens are able to put things in an ideological frame and make the right inferences about where politicians stand. [Jennings \(1992\)](#) finds a much higher degree of ideological constrain and consistency among political elites as opposed to even the most constrained in his sample of mass public opinions. He shows that there is a significant difference with the implied normative conclusion that members of the mass public are not as good democratic citizens as members of the elites. [Kinder \(2006\)](#) reviews five major lines of literature that have emerged from critiques and in support of Converse and concludes that while individuals may be unsophisticated and uninformed, they may do alright on a whole. He argues that the “group centrism” or the use of an association between groups and policies/parties may serve as a heuristic that enables people to make political decisions even when they are uninformed.

To my reading, one thing these articles have in common is an implicit assumption that situating issues, policies and politicians on an ideological continuum makes one a good democratic citizen. I think it is worth unpacking this normative view. I would say I generally agree that more sophisticated citizens are likely to make better contributions to democracy to the degree that they may better understand the issues and implications of electoral decisions which lets them vote and participate in a more informed way. I am also on board with the correlation between sophistication and non-voting forms of participation which I can accept as good for democracy, even though it is unclear which causes which³. Furthermore, I can agree with the conjecture that an understanding of the liberal-conservative dimension of politics can better allow citizens to map the consequences of their vote onto a long term trajectory for American democracy and the character of government. However, I am strongly against an unquestioningly positive

³I am willing to accept that there is at least some causality flowing the right way, and that sophistication reinforces tendencies toward participation.

view of the place of ideology in the mind a good citizen.

There are two main downsides to using ideology in situating political ideas that immediately come to mind. The first is that the ideological position people associate with a policy, candidate or issue relative to where they situate themselves may serve as too strong of a heuristic do to its accessibility and preempt optimizing thinking. This brings to mind another use of the term “ideologue” where one might say that a person was such an ideologue that they just voted with their party/ideology even though it ended up having disastrous consequences for them or society. I do not think the idea that ideology may preempt thinking is using the term ‘ideology’ in the sense that Converse meant it but I do think that the two processes are intertwined. The second downside of using ideology to situate policies, candidates and issues is that it can limit people to dichotomous choices between the liberal and the conservative. People without ideological constraint can do a better job optimizing over their policy/outcome preferences in candidate selection by nature of being less constrained. Thus it seems like the utility of ideological constraint in making a good citizen is atleast highly contingent, and in need of further theoretical and empirical attention.

Hypothesis 1. *Citizens with lower ideological constraint will be better optimizers over candidate choice with regard to implied policy outcomes.*

The Nature of Mass Belief Systems in Mass Publics.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{converse1962nature}

2. Authors: Philip E. Converse

3. Year: 1964

4. Journal: Ideology and Discontent (book)

5. Keywords: belief system, information, ideology

6. Summary: Since Converse’s ”The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics” (1964), students of public opinion have argued that most people lack well-defined or stable opinions on important political issues. Converse concluded ”large portions of an electorate simply do not have meaningful beliefs, even on issues that have formed the basis for intense political controversy among elites for substantial periods of time” (1964, 245). Taken from the first page of [Lacy \(2001\)](#)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Belief system is a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint o functional interdependence (p. 3)
- (b) Idea-elements within a belief system vary in their degree of *centrality*.
- (c) Belief systems can have a different ranges. they can be narrow and focused or broad and encompassing.
- (d) Converse argues that historically, studies have assumed that because people can think things through logically, they will not insist on decreased taxes, increased spending an a balanced budget, for example. These studies also attribute this sort of deliberative thinking to elites like senators and the rich (for which it may be a bit more true), but then also attribute it to ordinary people which Converse thinks is fallacious.
- (e) sources of constrain on belief systems: Logical, psychological, social (path dependency based on history and the way ideas get diffused as tending to be in neat packages)
- (f) Consequences of declining information for beliefs systems as we go from elites to common people:

- i. There will be more clustering of narrower, less consistent belief systems.
 - ii. Ideas will be more concrete and less abstract.
 - iii. limited horizons and myopia.
- (g) people tend to use ideology as a yardstick of liberal-conservative
- (h) Levels of conceptualization (from highest to least)
 - i. **Ideologue** - people who used liberal-conservative as an abstract yardstick.
 - ii. **Near-Ideologue** - people who mentioned ideology but did not rely on it centrally
 - iii. **Group Interest** - people who evaluate parties based on the perceived benefits they provide to their group
 - iv. **Nature of the times** - sort of residual category
 - v. **no issue content** - view of politics did not have anything to do with policies
- (i) Converse finds that Liberal-Conservative is most often conflated with spend-save.
- (j) The higher up the conceptualization scale a person is, the more likely they are to get questions about classifying stereotypical beliefs correct.
- (k) Converse find strong evidence for opinion leadership within a family where wives follow husband's opinions when it comes to politics.
- (l) looking at party identification over time, Converse finds that political party identification is much more central in people's belief systems than the policies parties represent over time. That is to say that people will keep their party identification even if their views change on underlying issues.
- (m) Converse identifies eight different "**issue publics**" from his survey. He finds that these do not fall into a sort of hierarchical structure where everyone cares about some issue and then progressively fewer of the same people care about more abstract issues or something like that. Instead he finds that people care about their issue and this has no bearing on whether they care about other issues.
- (n) argues that democratic party is more unitary and less fractured than republican party.
- (o) The punch line seems to be that complicated belief systems associated with different parties ideologies are important predictors of behavior for elites but not for the uneducated.

Ideological Thinking Among Mass Publics and Political Elites

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Jennings1992}

2. Authors: Kent Jennings

3. Year: 1992

4. Journal: Public Opinion Quarterly

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

7. Main Findings:

- (a) "Overall, political party elites have a vastly more constrained and stable set of political preferences-in terms of the traditional liberal-conservative dimension-than does the mass public, a conclusion that applies whether the test is a demanding one based on opinions about policy issues or a less stringent one based on appraisals of socio-political groups and prominent political actors." (p. 419)

- (b) “A short way of expressing those controversies is to ask whether the relatively low levels of constraint and continuity observed in mass publics are a function of the faulty methods wrapped up in survey instrumentation or of erring respondents, people for whom the discourse and comprehension of matters political are episodic, remote, and inchoate.”(p .420) So is it bad instruments or a bad public?
- (c) Jennings defines elites as party convention attendees and the mass public as people taking the National Election Survey.
- (d) Jennings finds much higher issue constraint among elites than the mass public:

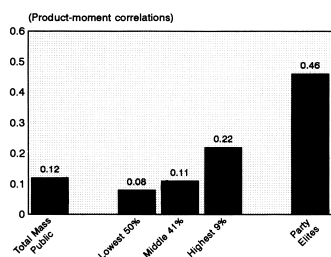


Figure 1. Constraint on seven issue positions

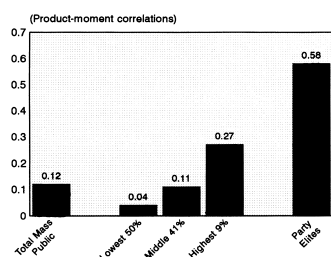


Figure 2. Constraint on evaluations of eight sociopolitical groups

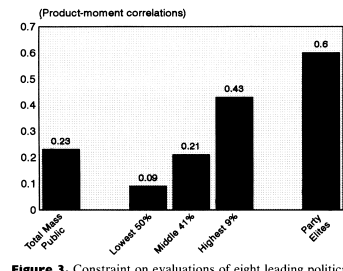


Figure 3. Constraint on evaluations of eight leading political figures.

- (e) “Symbols such as the ”L” word connote different bundles of beliefs for the two sets of actors, even when elites successfully employ them for political gain. Partly as a result of such disjunctures, communications are uneasy and fraught with the possibility of misunderstanding, simplification, and specific demands and appeals. Calls for even more consistent ideology at the elite level ignore the likelihood that this would only increase the noise in the two-way flow of communication between masses and elites.” (p. 436)

Belief Systems Today

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Kinder2006a}

2. Authors: Donald Kinder

3. Year: 2006

4. Journal: Critical Review

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Kinder Provides a review of five lines of research that have spawned from Converse’s “The Nature of Mass Belief Systems in Mass Publics” and provides his own conclusions. He is generally in agreement with converse but has some complications to offer.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “Just as Converse would have it, when it comes to politics, most citizens are ideologically innocent: indifferent to standard ideological concepts, lacking a consistent outlook on public policy, in possession of genuine opinions on only a few issues, and knowing damn little.” (p. 199)
- (b) FIVE CONCLUSIONS:
 - i. “as important as nonattitudes are, we should be paying at least as much attention to their opposite: attitudes held with conviction.” (p. 197)

- ii. **“the problem of insufficient information that resides at the center of Converse’s analysis has not gone away, and that newly fashioned models of information processing offer only partial remedies”** (p. 197)
- iii. **“the concept of the ”average voter” is a malicious fiction, as it blinds us to the enormous variation in political attention, interest, and knowledge that characterizes mass publics, in Converse’s time as in our own”** (p. 197)
- iv. **“if ideological reasoning is beyond most citizens’ capacity and interest, they might fall back on a simple and reasonable alternative, which I will call ”group-centrism.”** (p. 197)
 - A. **“Notice that group-centrism requires that citizens see a connection between some political dispute, on the one hand, and some visible social group, on the other. That is, to get group-centrism up and running, citizens must, as Converse put it, ”be endowed with some cognitions of the group as an entity and with some interstitial linking’ information indicating why a given party or policy is relevant to the group.”** (p. 209)
- v. **“I consider the possibility that while the majority of individual citizens falls short of democratic standards, the public as a whole might do rather well.”** (p. 197)

Democratic Theory and Electoral Reality

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Converse2006a}

2. Authors: Phillip Converse

3. Year: 2006

4. Journal: Critical Review

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Converse addresses a major misinterpretation of his old argument in “The Nature of Mass Belief Systems in Mass Publics” and softens his theory in a couple of places.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **“the worst common misinterpretation of the essay attributes to me the claim that most citizens have only “nonattitudes” on questions of public policy... given that over three-quarters of the respondents had some such policy content in mind, it is hard to read this as a claim on my part that few in the electorate have any “real” policy opinions.”** (p. 300)
- (b) **“Rather soon after the essay was published I began to doubt the extent, if any, of such permanent limitations within the electorate. While I can still imagine chemical traces of such limitations, I am convinced that even if so, they are sufficiently rare as to be of little note for discussions like this symposium”.** (p. 305)
- (c) **“Forty years out and counting, perhaps the most frequent response to the ”Belief Systems” paper has involved the vigorous insertion of two ideas, quite appropriately joined at the hip: the notion that ignorance is often rational, and the notion that since human beings are “cognitive misers,” they depend routinely on cognitive shortcuts** (or more elegantly, “heuristics”) to simplify the forming of judgments where their own easily accessed store of information is limited”
- (d) **“I think the case has been made that interest and engagement are the main missing ingredients in producing a more informed electorate”** (p. 311)

- (e) “My guess is that a still more potent reason why the uninterested are likely to remain so can be found in the surging wealth of competition for leisure-time attention that now marks our culture.” (p. 313) because now we have fantasy sports!
- (f) “I lack philosophy credentials, but on the normative side I shall make my touchstone Bentham’s **“the greatest good for the greatest number.”** That could take elaboration, but not briefly. Another central normative judgment on which all else pivots is that a **reasonable degree of equality** among members of human communities is likely to optimize the Bentham criterion.”
- (g) **“My main concern about the limited information that voters bring to the ballot box is that they are prey to unscrupulous interests who can play off their gullibility.”** (p. 323)
- (h) “I think instead about a **growing stranglehold of the very wealthy on the political process** and its policy agendas, along with a significant fraction of the nation’s mass media. **I can imagine such a state continuing with superficial democratic forms, but with orchestration entirely from the top**, full of ruses and deceptions designed to fool enough faintly informed voters to ensure the election of executives and legislators who obviously owe their high political office to wealthy mentors, and who will do their best to serve their interests on demand”.(p. 328)

What Americans Know About Politics and Why it Matters (Selected Chapters)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Carpini1996}

2. Authors: Carpini, Michael Delli, Scott Keeter

3. Year: 1996

4. Journal: What Americans Know About Politics and Why it Matters (book)

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: In this book, Michael Delli Carpini and Scott Keeter interject new life into the most venerable of questions: Are citizens equipped with the requisite knowledge to make democracy work

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Using survey questions that date back to the 1940s, they conclude that **at best, levels of public knowledge have remained steady, despite the extraordinary changes in technology and the gradual educational upgrading of the population that have occurred in the last half century.** This general pattern obscures several interesting exceptions of large knowledge declines and increases, which demonstrate that there is some elasticity in political knowledge. People can learn (or forget) depending on changing environmental circumstances, a point also emphasized by Jennings (1996) in his study of American high schoolers’ levels of civic knowledge over time. Their survey of existing items also reveals some interesting differences in types of uninformedness. For example, the fact that 89% of the public could not define “Superfund” when asked is simple ignorance. But the fact that 45% explicitly said that a communist could not run for president is a value-laden “political fact,” or what Delli Carpini and Keeter refer to as **misinformation.**
- (b) the authors develop their own instrument for assessing political knowledge. **“Objective” tests of political knowledge have often been criticized as nothing more than a compilation of “factoids.”** These pop quizzes, therefore, are not good measures of citizen abilities. Delli

Carpini and Keeter mute this objection by first asking a group of experts-more than 100 political scientists-what citizens should know about politics. Their **"Survey of Political Knowledge," administered to a national sample in 1989, contained more than 50 items covering a broad collection of topics in American politics and history.**

- (c) In perhaps the book's most pessimistic analysis, Delli Carpini and Keeter examine the distribution of political knowledge across various demographic groups in American society. **Not unexpectedly, older, wealthier men stand at the top of the heap, and poor, black women at the bottom.** What is more distressing to this reader is not just the aggregate distributions, but the fact that age, race, and gender differences persist despite controlling for, in a multivariate model with 15 independent variables, sources of inequality such as income and education levels, and, even more important, political involvement and other motivational variables such as interest in politics and newspaper reading

The Rational Public (Selected Chapters)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Page1992}

2. Authors: Benjamin Page, Robert Shapiro

3. Year: 1992

4. Journal: The Rational Public (book)

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro examine data from national opinion surveys conducted between 1935 and 1990. Relying on the logic of sampling distributions and the law of large numbers, they discover the public's policy preferences after smoothing out random fluctuations from individual surveys or responses. They do not criticize Americans for being uninformed and frequently changing their policy preferences. Instead, they find that the public, as a collective body, is stable, absorbs information presented to it in the media, and makes rational policy decisions.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Page and Shapiro present an adjunct content analysis study in which **they find a substantial effect of television news commentators on public opinion changes.** They see the media focusing attention on certain issues and having a bias of being nationalistic, ethnocentric, pro-capitalist, anticommunist, and in favor of minimalist government.
- (b) The Rational Public's greatest contribution is the concept of **"parallel publics."** Most cross-sectional research looks at attitude differences among subgroups divided by income, education, race, gender, and so on. Page and Shapiro find that the subgroup differences persist over time and rarely converge or diverge across subgroup cleavages. For example, a 30% difference between blacks and whites on school integration has remained about the same for years. When public opinion shifts, all groups tend to shift in a similar direction with intergroup gaps remaining constant.
- (c) **They see well-meaning but busy citizens following their own self interests and tempering this pursuit with shared values about national identity and the common good. The public's political knowledge comes from the media, which is slightly biased and sometimes manipulated by elites. In the authors' optimism for the ideal of pluralist democracy, a rational public realizes most of its preferences in policy outcomes.** The one flaw they see in this ideal is the information provided to the public. Page and Shapiro imply that honest media reporting and divergent information sources can thwart attempts by elites to manipulate a reasonable but divided public and can lead to a realization of the democratic ideal.

Government Policy and Citizen Passion: A Study of Issue Publics in Contemporary America

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Krosnick1990}

2. Authors: Jon Krosnick

3. Year: 1990

4. Journal: Political Behavior

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Policy attitudes that citizens consider very important are highly resistant to change.
- (b) The American public looks mostly like a bunch of small issue publics. Most people only fall into a few of these and these are the main issues which they vote on.
- (c) Sources of Policy Attitude Importance:
 - i. **Educational Stratification Hypothesis:** More education means more strongly held views.
 - ii. **Issue Publics:** People form attitudes because (1) they recognize their self interest is at stake, (2) They can identify with a group that is being effected by the policy, (3) because they recognize that the policy is important to their basic values.
- (d) Krosnick comes down on the side of issue publics being the cause for this because:
 - i. The correlations between strong interest in issues are relatively low, suggesting that people are not interested across the board, just on some issues.
 - ii. Education is actually negatively correlated with view of importance of issues when controlling for general interest in politics.
- (e) Krosnick concludes that issues publics are the most important groups in the American electorate.
- (f) People have more stable opinions on issues that they hold strongly:

TABLE 6. NES 1980 and 1984: Unstandardized Regression Coefficients Estimating the Stability of Attitudes After Correction for Measurement Unreliability

| Issue | Low Importance | High Importance |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <i>1980</i> | | |
| Government services | .61 (N = 179) | .91 (N = 115) |
| Unemployment | .19 (N = 122) | .51 (N = 74) |
| Defense spending | .59 (N = 172) | .75 (N = 167) |
| Relations with Russia | .58 (N = 185) | .87 (N = 130) |
| <i>1984</i> | | |
| Government services | .52 (N = 162) | .85 (N = 329) |
| Guaranteed full employment | .60 (N = 203) | .80 (N = 298) |

Week 7: Partisanship

Summary of the Debate

Campbell et al. (1960) introduce "the Michigan model" where they argue most voters cast their ballots primarily on the basis of partisan identification (which is often simply inherited from their parents), and that independent voters are actually the least involved in and attentive to politics. Fiorina (1984) discusses critiques and offers a theory that extends "The American Voter". He proposes a model where party ID is a running tally of retrospective political evaluations over time but does find a high degree of auto-correlation. Franklin and Jackson (1983) point out Downs (1957) would say that party ID is purely endogenous and that it is a function of comparison between current candidates issue positions and your own. Campbell et al. (1960) would say that it is a predisposition developed in your childhood that is mostly stable and effects everything else you do. They also find that a current comparison of issue stances and voter issue preferences is a much stronger predictor of party ID than previous period party ID. Green et al. (2002) seek to dismiss rational choice-style explanations of partisanship in favor of a theory rooted in emotionally based group ties. The authors argue that partisanship is a form of emotional group identification, like religion, that it is stable over time, and that it matters a lot for engagement in elections. Hetherington (2001) argues that party decline thesis (in the electorate in the 1970-80s) is in need of revision as political parties have become more important to voters recently (due to polarization making it a better heuristic). Fiorina et al. (2006) contradict previous findings of an increasingly polarized electorate and argue that due to decreases in the direct benefits of holding office, more ideologically extreme candidates have sought office and this has lead to the appearance that everything is more polarized Abramowitz and Saunders (2008) directly engages Fiorina et al. (2006) and their findings are that there is in fact a lot of polarization among the mass public. They find that both red-blue and secular-religious polarization is on the rise.

Summary from Memo

The articles we read for this week seem to make an implicit assumption that there is an "independent" type voter who has "moderate" views on things and thus does not strongly fall into one or the other party categorization. On some issues like "how much the government should be spending on new road construction", I can see a middle ground like: "they should be spending a moderate amount, enough to maintain the current roads and build a few more, even though it is not a priority". But on some issues like an assault weapons ban, I do think you will find many voters who would fall into a "lets kind-of ban them, maybe every other person can have one, or there could be a limited number of permits for people to have them" opinion. A voter is much more likely to be either all in, or totally against.

I think it is more appropriate to think about independent voters as following their own distinct typology, with different normative and practical implications of falling into each different category of independent voter. I propose that there are three different kinds of independent:

1. **True Independents:** Voters who genuinely have a middle of the road view of things and value independence.
2. **Party-less Partisans:** Voters who have strong views on issues that are conflicted (some strongly liberal, some strongly conservative) and do not fit into the two party mold.
3. **Apathetic Apoliticals:** Voters who do not care about politics and thus hold relatively weakly partisan views or are confused about what they want.

Each of these categories brings with it different normative implications for the how well government can represent these voters. For example, True Independents would fall into the classical view of a well informed voter who is genuinely close to the median. This is the kind of voter that many political

scientists would say that government cares about and should be trying to represent in aggregate. A Party-less Partisans is one that the two party system has failed. Perhaps they are liberal on budget issues and conservative on family values issues but it may be very hard for them to vote for a candidate that actually truly represents them. These kinds of voters might split their votes and generally end up very frustrated. The Apathetic Apoliticals the bane of democracy by traditional normative standards. These people appear as independents on surveys because they just don't really have opinions one way or another on most issues. They are disengaged and probably don't vote. This kind of independent is likely an outlet for the second kind if voting makes them incur too much of a mental cost, both in dissonance reduction to pick an ill fitting candidate and in general frustration with government. If independents are mostly of this type then we should be happy if we see the public trending toward more partisan views.

Setting aside the normative implications of there being different kinds of independents, we should expect each of these subgroups to behave differently. We should expect True Independents to actually vote for third party candidates and be relatively politically involved outside of elections. I would imagine this subgroup of independents to be very small and to exist in pockets where this kind of independence is highly valued. We should expect Party-less Partisans to vote less often and be less politically involved than the average partisan but have a reasonably high understanding of policies and partisan politics. We should also expect people in this group to be the most frustrated voters and should expect people who stay in this group for a long time to transition to the Apathetic Apoliticals as a way of dealing with their frustration. Apathetic Apoliticals should not really vote much, or only in presidential elections. They either don't have the time to find out about politics or deliberately avoid it because they know they will get frustrated. We should expect almost no involvement in outside political activities. I would guess this is by far the largest group of voters than surveys pick up as independents.

Finally, we should expect these different groups to be embedded in different social structures that both magnify and reflect membership in one of these groups. I would expect True Independents to be embedded in small close-knit, homogeneous personal networks of like minded voters. I would expect these people to have less weak ties outside of their group and for their ego networks to be very dense, helping to support a political viewpoint that is out of the mainstream.

Hypothesis 2. *True Independents are more likely to be embedded in small, dense, homogeneous ego- political conversation networks of like-minded voters and not have many weak ties outside of their group.*

I would generally expect Party-less Partisans to be embedded in a much different social structure, characterized primarily by the heterogeneous political leanings of their friends. I would expect that they will have friends who are strongly partisan but some who are strong liberals and some who are strong conservatives. This would support the holding of individual issue ideas with conviction and also be associated with a relatively sparse ego-network as not many of the individual's clashing partisan friends are likely to be friends. We might also expect this kind of independent to have more weak ties outside of their immediate network to people who share their conflicted views, perhaps through internet message boards as a way to vent and share their frustration.

Hypothesis 3. *Party-less Partisans are more likely to be embedded in sparse heterogeneous ego- political conversation networks of opposing, partisan voters and have weak ties outside of their group t other Party-less Partisans.*

The final category of independents, Apathetic Apoliticals, should be characterized by a relative lack of political networks all together. We ought to expect these people to avoid talking about politics and to the degree that they do, expect their alters to also be weakly political. We should not expect them to form any sort of weak political ties because they are not interested or don't want to gain any novel political information.

Hypothesis 4. *Apathetic Apoliticals are more likely to be embedded in sparse, small ego- political conversation networks of other Apathetic Apoliticals and not to have any weak political conversation ties outside of their immediate group.*

I think that by adopting this kind of framework for understanding and thinking about people that surveys classify as “independents” we can start to get a richer, more accurate picture of the importance and normative implications of this group of survey respondents. This classification helps us get past the problem that -10 and 10 sum to zero just the same as zero and zero do, and helps to situate the dynamics of entrance and exit from the voting population and being an independent in a theoretical framework. I am interested to know if anyone has tried and approach like this and would love to test some of my hypotheses empirically.

The American Voter - (Chapters 6 - “The Impact of Party Identification” and 7 - “The Development of Party Identification”)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Campbell1960}

2. **Authors:** Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, Donald Stokes

3. **Year:** 1960

4. **Journal:** The American Voter (book)

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** The American Voter, published in 1960, is a seminal study of voting behavior in the United States, authored by Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes, colleagues at the University of Michigan. Among its controversial conclusions, based on one of the first comprehensive studies of election survey data (what eventually became the National Election Studies), is that **most voters cast their ballots primarily on the basis of partisan identification (which is often simply inherited from their parents), and that independent voters are actually the least involved in and attentive to politics. This theory of voter choice became known as the Michigan model.**

The American Voter established a baseline for most of the scholarly debate that has followed in the decades since. Criticism has followed along several different lines. Some argue that Campbell and his colleagues set the bar too high, expecting voters to be far more sophisticated and rational than is reasonable. Some scholars, most notably **V. O. Key, Jr. (in The Responsible Electorate) have argued, in part based on reinterpretation of the same data, that voters are more rational than The American Voter gives them credit for.** His famous line “Voters are not fools” summarizes this view. Successors in the Michigan school have argued that in relying heavily on data from the 1956 presidential election, The American Voter drew conclusions which were not accurate over time; in particular, partisan identification has weakened in the years since 1956, a phenomenon sometimes known as dealignment (see realigning election). “The American Voter” has served as a springboard from which many modern political scientists form their views on voting behavior even though the study only represents one specific time in one particular place

7. Main Findings:

(a) Chapter 6:

- i. Partisan preferences show great stability between elections.
- ii. They use self classification to measure party identification on a 7 point democrat to independent to republican scale.
- iii. The stronger the partisanship, the more likely a person is to consistently vote for that party’s candidate.

- iv. Republicans are much more likely to vote for the republican candidate than democrats are to vote for the democratic candidate.
- v. Independents have poorly "developed attitudes". (p. 140) They are less involved in politics and less well informed than strong partisans.

(b) **Chapter 7:**

- i. **Early Politicization** - People whose parents were strongly partisan tend to be strongly partisan and for the same party.
- ii. **Stability o Political Preferences**- People very rarely change parties.
- iii. Personal forces may cause people to change affiliation such as marrying somebody from the opposite party or joining a union.
- iv. Social Forces - Youth (vote democratic), economic groups and being in a minority group can all lead to polarization and changes in political attitudes.
- v. Younger people tend to be more democrats older tend to be republican. Poses the question: will republican party eventually die out?

Explorations of a Political Theory of Party Identification

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Fiorina1984}

2. **Authors:** Morris Fiorina

3. **Year:** 1984

4. **Journal:** Retrospective Voting in American National Elections

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** discusses critiques and offers a theory that extends "The American Voter"

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) SRC Panel study found 15% of people change parties and 40% of people change categories within parties which disagrees empirically with Campbell et al.
- (b) Fiorina proposes a model where party ID is a running tally of retrospective political evaluations.
- (c) In his models party ID in this period is a function of lagged party ID and a whole bunch of views on how things like the economy and foreign relations are going that get incorporated into the new view. So a person has a baseline party ID that then gets changed and updated over time.
- (d) Even when you take this model and look at things, we still find a very high correlation between party ID in the last period and this period. Fiorina argues that this we need to incorporate other information to understand the dynamics of changes in party ID because it is not just a trait, but that it is like a habit in that it is very stable.
- (e) He uses two stage probit to estimate because the previous period party ID is endogenous.
- (f) He points out in the technical appendix that a one dimensional view of party ID might be too narrow and that a second dimension of wanting to be independent might be important to incorporate into future analyses.

The Dynamics of Party Identification

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Franklin1983}

2. **Authors:** Charles Franklin, John Jackson

3. **Year:** 1983

4. **Journal:** American Political Science Review

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** This article develops and tests a new model of partisanship where party ID both affects things and is affected by them.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) Franklin and Jackson note that there were two competing models: **Downs would say that party ID is purely endogenous and that it is a function of comparison between current candidates issue positions and your own. Campbell et al. would say that it is a predisposition developed in your childhood that is mostly stable and effects everything else you do.**
- (b) In their model, party identification at the current time is a function of factors affecting the current decision such as how the economy is doing X and what their party ID was in the last period.

$$P(t) = a_0 + a_1X + a_2P(t-1) + u(t) \quad (2.2)$$

If a_1 is one and a_2 is zero then we have an RC model where people only care about the current agreement. Reverse is true for a_1 is zero and a_2 is one. If a_2 is one then strength of party ID is stable over time but if it is greater than one then we see a self reinforcing mechanism happening over time.

- (c) They use the CPS/NES data. The authors point out that we have to be very careful with using probit and grouping data into different partisan categories because some are smaller than others and this can lead to bias. This is why they rescale everything to reduce the bias in their estimation.
- (d) They find that as age increases, the susceptibility of party ID to change decreases.
- (e) The authors find that a current comparison of issue stances and voter issue preferences is a much stronger predictor of party ID than previous period party ID, although this misses that if policies stay the same then this is measuring the same thing.
- (f) Party ID is endogenous meaning that it is co-determined with policy preferences and this makes it very difficult to say which is affecting which.

Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identity of Voters (Selected Chapters)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Green2002}

2. **Authors:** Donald Green, Bradley Palmquist, Eric Schickler

3. **Year:** 2002

4. **Journal:** Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identity of Voters (book)
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** . In their effort to dismiss rational choice-style explanations of partisanship, the authors set up a dichotomy between retrospective performance-based or policy-based partisanship on the one hand and partisanship rooted in emotionally based group ties on the other. This dichotomy might very well be a false one, with both group identities and issue or performance views possibly affecting vote choice
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Green, Palmquist, and Schickler present three primary arguments regarding partisanship in this volume. The first, discussed at length in chapters 1 and 2 and returned to throughout, is that **partisanship is best understood as a form of social group identification, functioning in much the same way as does an individual's identification with a particular religious denomination, social class, or ethnic group.** In viewing partisanship as a form of social identification, the authors note that "people ask themselves two questions: What kinds of social groups come to mind as I think about Democrats, Republicans, and Independents? Which assemblage of groups (if any) best describes me?" (p. 8)
 - (b) The second main claim presented here deals with the dynamics or, more accurately, the lack of dynamics exhibited by partisanship. Specifically, Green, Palmquist, and Schickler argue, as they did in the journal articles they published throughout the 1990s, that **partisanship is a highly stable phenomenon, much the same as religious affiliation or ethnic identification.**
 - (c) the authors theorize that partisans on election day are much the same as the fans of a particular sports team on the day of the big game. "To those who define themselves in partisan terms, elections represent more than simply a competition between candidates and rival platforms. Elections are also forums for intergroup competition. Individuals who identify with these groups are drawn into this competition. Their interest and level of emotional engagement increase as they embrace the team as their own. Although not irresistible, the desire to see one's team prevail powerfully influences the probability of casting a vote for the candidate of one's party" (p. 206). The above quote illustrates the third main argument presented in this book- **partisanship matters because it affects electoral politics**

Resurgent Mass Partisanship: The Role of Elite Polarization

1. **Cite Key:**
`\cite{Hetherington2002}`
2. **Authors:** Marc Hetherington
3. **Year:** 2001
4. **Journal:** American Political Science Review
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** "For the most part, scholars who study American political parties in the electorate continue to characterize them as weak and in decline. Parties on the elite level, however, have experienced a resurgence over the last two decades. Such a divergence between elite behavior and mass opinion is curious, given that most models of public opinion place the behavior of elites at their core. In fact, **I find that parties in the electorate have experienced a noteworthy resurgence over the last two decades.** Greater partisan polarization in Congress has clarified the parties' ideological

positions for ordinary Americans, which in turn has increased party importance and salience on the mass level. **Although parties in the 1990's are not as central to Americans as they were in the 1950s, they are far more important today than in the 1970's and 1980's. The party decline thesis is in need of revision.**" (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) "Scholars have detailed party decline using data at both the aggregate and individual level, but I confine my analysis to the latter, using data collected by the National Election Study (NES). **To public opinion scholars, the most familiar evidence of party decline is the rapid increase in political independence and the accompanying decrease in strong partisanship after the 1950s.** The percentage of independent leaners nearly doubled between 1960 and 1980, and **the percentage of strong partisans dipped by more than one-third** (Wattenberg 1984).² **One prominent explanation for party decline is that, in a candidate-centered era, parties have become irrelevant to many people.** As evidence, Wattenberg (1984) cites a rapid increase in the percentage of Americans who are neutral toward both parties, as tapped by likes/dislikes questions in the NES survey." (p. 619)
- (b) Hetherington points out that traditional measures which aggregate the number of times a survey respondent says they like or dislike a party to form the positive negative scale is flawed because it does not have an explicit neutral point and gives the same weight to all issues. He uses data where a feeling thermometer is used to elicit feelings which has a neutral point at 50 degrees and can let people give an overall impression. He finds that there is growing partisanship by this measure.
- (c) Hetherington argues that **because congress has grown more partisan this has clarified the party lines and made it easier for people to use party as a signal.** That is, people see more real differences between parties and are better able to correctly classify policies as being related to one party or another.

Culture War?: The Myth of a Polarized America (Selected Chapters)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Fiorina2006}

2. **Authors:** Morris Fiorina et al.

3. **Year:** 2006

4. **Journal:** Culture War?: The Myth of a Polarized America (book)

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Particularly after the 2000 and 2004 elections, there was significant talk in the media about a culture war taking place in America and about deep divisions occurring among the population. Fiorina looks at this issue from a number of angles, using a wide variety of data to determine whether the United States is deeply divided and whether it is becoming more partisan. **He finds that the evidence does not support the idea that the United States is deeply divided or polarized.** Instead, the majority of people seem to be moderate, even on what are thought to be the most controversial issues, such as abortion. **He does find that political candidates and the political class in general (the 1% of the population actively involved in politics day to day), unsurprisingly, is much more polarized than the general public.** He argues that because the candidates are becoming more polarized, this gives the impression that individuals in the general public are more polarized, though this is not the case. He suggests that the change in the political class

and candidates is due to changes in government in the 1960s that resulted in less direct benefits from politics (less appointed civil service positions, etc.), which led to a **decrease in the number of political actors motivated by material benefits and only focused on winning and an increase in the number of political actors motivated by ideology**.[Link](#)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) see [Abramowitz and Saunders \(2008, p.543-44\)](#) for an overview of 5 claims.
- (b)

Is Polarization a Myth

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Abramowitz2008}

2. Authors: Alan Abramowitz, Kyle Saunders

3. Year: 2008

4. Journal: The Journal of Politics

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** This article uses data from the American National Election Studies and national exit polls to test Fiorina's assertion that ideological polarization in the American public is a myth. Fiorina argues that twenty-first-century Americans, like the midtwentieth-century Americans described by Converse, "are not very well-informed about politics, do not hold many of their views very strongly, and are not ideological" (2006, 19). However, **our evidence indicates that since the 1970s, ideological polarization has increased dramatically among the mass public in the United States as well as among political elites**. There are now large differences in outlook between Democrats and Republicans, between red state voters and blue state voters, and between religious voters and secular voters. These divisions are not confined to a small minority of activists-they involve a large segment of the public and the deepest divisions are found among the most interested, informed, and active citizens. Moreover, contrary to Fiorina's suggestion that polarization turns off voters and depresses turnout, our evidence indicates that polarization energizes the electorate and stimulates political participation. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) The authors argue that people are polarized like elites and this actually increases their political participation. The most informed are the most polarized, contradicting what Fiorina says which is that the most informed are moderate.
- (b)

Week 8: Participation

Summary of the Debate

[Verba et al. \(1995\)](#) provide a broad strokes view of political participation. They find that money, time and civic skills are the three resources for participation that are identified as important. Poor people have more time but less money for politics. They also argue that the church is an important institutional support mechanism for learning civic skills and getting engaged with politics. In his pessimistic classic, [Putnam \(1995\)](#) argues that women in the workplace, increased mobility of families and changing demographics

as well as the technologization of leisure have led to an erosion of civic society in America. [Rosenstone and Hansen \(1993a\)](#) addresses two main questions: Why people turn out, and why turnout has declined over time. He finds the largest reason for a decline in turnout between the 1960s and 1980s is due to decreased efforts at mobilization by political parties. In a study of identical twins, [Fowler et al. \(2008\)](#) show that a significant proportion of the variation in voting turnout can be accounted for by genes. Their model is much simpler than previous models and raises questions about the heritability of political participation. [Gerber et al. \(2011b\)](#) find that the effect of personality on political participation is often comparable to the effects of factors that are central in earlier models of turnout, such as education and income. [Olson \(1965\)](#) introduces the idea of a public good and argues that especially in large groups, they will be under-provided. This has implications for political participation as it is a public good. [Rolfe \(2012\)](#) introduces a social theory of voter turnout that seeks to turn traditional economic cost-benefit models of voting on their heads. She contests the idea that personal characteristics such as education lead to increased interest in politics which thus increases voting and instead points to the differences in the social networks people are embedded in based on their education as the real reason for education correlated differences in voter turnout

Summary from Memo

This week we followed the evolution of the literature on voter turnout. This evolution takes us from what I might call unconvincing kitchen sink models (Verba et al. [1995](#); Rosenstone and Hansen [1993a](#); Gerber et al. [2011b](#)) to more convincing and highly parsimonious ones (Fowler et al. [2008](#); Rolfe [2012](#)). It seems that Occam's Razor is alive and well in this context and the two pieces (Fowler et al. and Rolfe) really made me rethink what determines turnout and the correlates and causes of citizen political participation. To be fair, the traditional human capital based models of turnout have something to say and have identified some of the myriad factors that influence a person's decision to vote. But because they ignore the social context of voting, essentially any inference they draw will be biased. This is pretty big news because it essentially says we need to rethink and discount 50 years of research on turnout.

I immediately liked the approach Fowler et al. take⁴ because I think it is probably taboo to talk about a biological basis for any sort of social behavior. They had a really nice "we are stealing this thing from evolutionary biology" lead-in which allows them to make a clean analogy in the voting context. I also like that they did not try to do or claim too much with the article. I most curious about how the heritable genetic factors they find actually affect voting? Is it through the dopamine response mechanism they posit or through physiological differences that affect people's social network structures? Or is there some sort of social intelligence predisposition that the genetic factors are affecting? I think that this line of research is promising, but also just a beginning.

I like Rolfe's model a lot if you couldn't tell. I think that this kind of model really leaves open the question of empirical validation. I think that her hypotheses could be pushed farther with better experimental parameterizations and that larger scale, more network-centric data collection would be a real boon validating her hypotheses. The first step for me would be to design and conduct a laboratory experiment that gets at the relative effects of mean matching and focal point matching. The elicitation would need to independently vary the salience of the modal point while keeping the mean constant or vary the mean while keeping the mode constant. This would give a better justification for her α and β parameter choices and strengthen her argument overall. If we look at the conditional choice model I think that another point that she sort of glosses over is the selection of individual weights($w_{i,j}$) in the second and their terms :

$$\Pr(d_{i,s} = 1) = \alpha_{i,s} 1 + \beta_{i,s} \frac{w_{i,j} d_j}{k_i} + \gamma \frac{1}{1 + e^{a - b \frac{w_{i,j} d_j}{k_i - 1}}} \quad (2.3)$$

This model is clearly crying out for analysis with a weighted exponential random graph model where the

⁴I am predisposed to be extra skeptical of Fowler's work, so this is really saying something

individual tie strengths are the weights and the mixing parameters are experimentally validated.

Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics (Chapters: 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14)

1. **Cite Key:**

\citeyear{Verba1995}

2. **Authors:** Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman, Henry Brady

3. **Year:** 1995

4. **Journal:** Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics (book)

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** The book defines and explores the role and effects of political participation in America.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) **Chapter 2:** Defines participation as both direct expression of views through contact and indirect through voting.

Table 2.1 The Attributes of Political Activities

| Activity | Capacity for Conveying Information | Variation in Volume | Requirements |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Vote | Low | Low | Time |
| Campaign Work | Mixed | High | Time, Skills |
| Campaign Contribution | Mixed | Highest | Money |
| Contact an Official | High | Medium | Time, Skills |
| Protest | High | Medium | Time |
| Informal Community Work | High | High | Time, Skills |
| Member of a Local Board | High | High | Time, Skills |
| Affiliation with a Political Organization | Mixed | High | Time, Skills, Money |
| Contribution to a Political Cause | Mixed | Highest | Money |

- (b) Participation can have both volume (how much you do it) and substance (how people are participating).

- (c) **Chapter 3:** The authors offer a definition of participation that does not include voting with three domains: religious participation, charity, political act beyond voting.

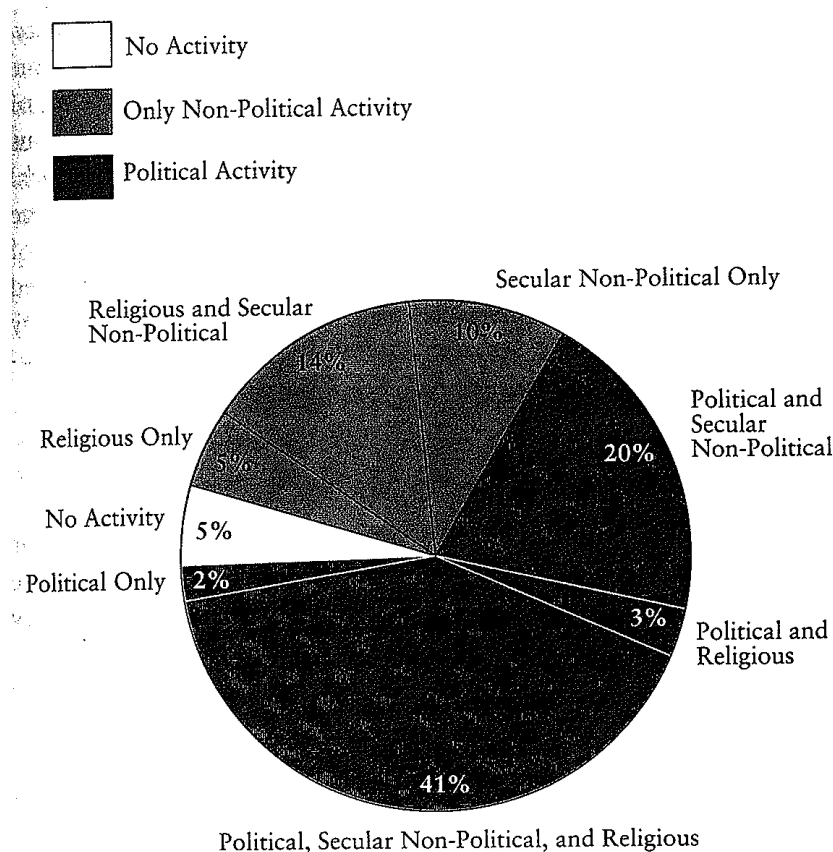


Figure 3.5 Types of Activists.

N = 2,517 weighted cases. See Appendix A for information about sample.

- (d) **Chapter 7** : wealthy people tend to participate at higher rates than poor people. Wealthy people tend to give much more money, but time is about equal between income groups.
- (e) **Chapter 8**: Blacks tend to participate almost as much as whites but Latinos participate at a significantly lower rate. Women and men are about equal in terms of time but men contribute more.
- (f) **Chapter 10**: Money, time and civic skills are the three resources for participation that are identified as important. poor people have more time but less money for politics
- (g) **Chapter 11**: Blacks with low status jobs tend to develop more of their civic skills at church and tend to have more church derived civic skills than low status job whites. However, high status job whites get a lot of civic skills from work.
- (h) **Chapter 12**: Income , education, vocabulary, free time and civic skills are all significant predictors of participation.
- (i) **Chapter 13**: Institutional recruitment and political engagement are also important and positive influence on participation.
- (j) **Chapter 14**: Issue engagement such as views on abortion can bring people into politics independent of other factors because they really care about that one thing.

Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Putnam1995a}

2. Authors: Robert Putnam

3. **Year:** 1995

4. **Journal:** Journal of Democracy

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** The US once had an enviable society, but over the last two or three decades this civic society has shrunk, and more people are watching TV. Possible explanations for this trend include more women in the workplace, increased mobility of families and changing demographics. (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) “For a variety of reasons, life is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital. In the first place, networks of civic engagement foster sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity and encourage the emergence of social trust. Such networks facilitate coordination and communication, amplify reputations, and thus allow dilemmas of collective action to be resolved. When economic and political negotiation is embedded in dense networks of social interaction, incentives for opportunism are reduced. At the same time, networks of civic engagement embody past success at collaboration, which can serve as a cultural template for future collaboration. Finally, dense networks of interaction probably broaden the participants’ sense of self, developing the “I” into the “we,” or (in the language of rational-choice theorists) I enhancing the participants’ “taste” for collective benefits.” (p. 2-3)
- (b) Parent-Teacher Association, League of Women Voters, Boy Scouts and Red Cross participation are all way down since the 60’s.
- (c) “Americans are also less trusting. The proportion of Americans saying that most people can be trusted fell by more than a third between 1960, when 58 percent chose that alternative, and 1993, when only 37 percent did.” (p. 8)
- (d) Reasons for the decline
 - i. “**The movement of women into the labor force.** Over these same two or three decades, many millions of American women have moved out of the home into paid employment.” (p. 9)
 - ii. “**Mobility: The “re-potting” hypothesis.** Numerous studies of organizational involvement have shown that residential stability and such related phenomena as homeownership are clearly associated with greater civic engagement. Mobility, like frequent repotting of plants, tends to disrupt root systems, and it takes time for an uprooted individual to put down new roots” (p. 9)
 - iii. “Other demographic transformations. A range of additional changes have transformed the American family since the 1960s—**fewer marriages, more divorces, fewer children, lower real wages**, and so on. Each of these changes might account for some of the slackening of civic engagement, since married, middle-class parents are generally more socially involved than other people.” (p. 9)
 - iv. “**The technological transformation of leisure.** There is reason to believe that deep-seated technological trends are radically “privatizing” or “individualizing” our use of leisure time and thus disrupting many opportunities for social-capital formation. The most obvious and probably the most powerful instrument of this revolution is **television.**” (p. 9)

Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America (Selected Chapters)

1. **Cite Key:**

\citet{Rosenstone1993}

2. **Authors:** Steven Rosenstone, John Mark Hansen
3. **Year:** 2002
4. **Journal:** Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America (book)
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** The book addresses two main questions: Why people turn out, and why turnout has declined over time: [summary](#)
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) the benefits will never exceed the costs for most people. Thus, two paradoxes: rational non-participation and rational ignorance. Moreover, a model based only on personal-level variables can't explain why participation peaked in the 1960s, dipped in the 1970s, then rose again in the 1980s—even while education, income, and so on rose steadily; thus, they don't explain participation.
 - (b) The authors attempt to explain the decline in turnout between the 1960s and 1980s:
 - i. Mobilization is the major cause: Less effort at mobilization: explains 54% of decline.
 - ii. Voting age drops to 18: explains 17% of the decline in turnout
 - iii. Weakened social involvement: explains 9% of decline
 - iv. Declining feelings of political efficacy: explains 9% of decline
 - v. Weakened attachment to parties/candidates: explains 11% of decline

Genetic Variation in Political Participation

1. **Cite Key:**

`\citet{Fowler2008}`
2. **Authors:** James Fowler, Laura Baker, Christopher Dawes
3. **Year:** 2008
4. **Journal:** APSR
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** The decision to vote has puzzled scholars for decades. Theoretical models predict little or no variation in participation in large population elections and empirical models have typically accounted for only a relatively small portion of individual-level variance in turnout behavior. However, **these models have not considered the hypothesis that part of the variation in voting behavior can be attributed to genetic effects.** Matching public voter turnout records in Los Angeles to a twin registry, we study the heritability of political behavior in monozygotic and dizygotic twins. The results show that a significant proportion of the variation in voting turnout can be accounted for by genes. We also replicate these results with data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health and show that they extend to a broad class of acts of political participation. These are the first findings to suggest that humans exhibit genetic variation in their tendency to participate in political activities. (abstract)
7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) “the large literature on the role of parents in voter turnout nearly always suggests that **the link between parent and child is the result of the transmission of norms rather than the transmission of genes** (Plutzer 2002).As a result, our best work on the subject frequently leaves the impression that **political participation is determined exclusively by environmental factors.**” (p. 234)
- (b) “**In order to estimate the heritability of voting behavior, we study the turnout patterns of (identical) monozygotic (MZ) twins who were conceived from a single fertilized egg and (non-identical) dizygotic (DZ) twins who were conceived from two separate eggs.** MZ twins share 100% of their genes, while DZ twins share only 50% on average. Thus, if voting behavior is heritable, MZtwins should exhibit more concordance (both twins vote or both twins abstain) than DZ twins. Moreover, if we assume that MZ twins and DZ twins share comparable environments (more on this assumption below), then we can use these concordances to estimate explicitly the proportion of the overall variance attributed to genetic, shared environmental, and unshared environmental factors.”
- (c) “**The basic twin model assumes that the variance in observed behavior can be partitioned into additive genetic factors (A), and environmental factors which are shared or common to co-twins (C), and unshared environmental (E). This is the so-called ACE model.**” (p. 234-235)
- (d) Using an additive Bayesian ACE model the authors find that additive genetic effects account for 53% of the variance in voting behavior based on a sample of 396 MZ and DZ twins from the Los Angeles twin database.
- (e) They got the same result using an AddHealth sample.
- (f) This study suggests that there may be some particular genes associated with political participation.

Personality Traits and Participation in Political Processes

1. Cite Key:

\citet{Gerber2011}

2. Authors: Alan Gerber et al.

3. Year: 2011

4. Journal: JOP

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Using data from two recent surveys, we analyze the relationship between Big Five personality traits and political participation. We examine forms of participation that differ in domain (local politics vs. national campaigns) as well as in the amount of conflict involved, whether they are likely to yield instrumental benefits, and whether they are likely to be viewed as a duty – characteristics that may affect the relationships between dispositional personality traits and political activity. We find relationships between personality traits and: (1) both self-reported and actual turnout (measured using administrative records), (2) overreporting of turnout, and (3) a variety of other modes of participation. The effect of personality on political participation is often comparable to the effects of factors that are central in earlier models of turnout, such as education and income. Consistent with our theoretical expectations, these relationships vary depending on personality-relevant characteristics of each participatory act. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) The BIG FIVE Personality Traits: (from quote on page 693)
- Extraversion** implies an energetic approach to the social and material world and includes traits such as sociability, activity, assertiveness, and positive emotionality.
 - Agreeableness** contrasts a prosocial and communal orientation toward others with antagonism and includes traits such as altruism, tender-mindedness, trust, and modesty.
 - Conscientiousness** describes socially prescribed impulse control that facilitates task- and goal-directed behavior, such as thinking before acting, delaying gratification, following norms and rules, and planning, organizing, and prioritizing tasks.
 - Emotional Stability** describes even-temperedness] and contrasts ... with negative emotionality, such as feeling anxious, nervous, sad, and tense ...
 - Openness to Experience** (versus closed-mindedness) describes the breadth, depth, originality, and complexity of an individual's mental and experiential life (bolded personality traits added for emphasis; italics in original).
- (b) “We focus on three broad categories of participation: (1) voting in general elections, (2) participating in national political campaigns, and (3) participating in local community affairs and politics. Within the latter two categories we distinguish among different types of activities” (p. 695)

TABLE 1 Summary of Expectations

| | Vote | National Campaigns | Local Politics |
|------------------------|---|--|--|
| Interpersonal Norm | – | + | + |
| Instrumental Benefit | + | – | + |
| Extraversion | – | – | + |
| Agreeableness | + | ++ | ++ |
| Conscientiousness | None | – | – (+ for less conflictual activities) |
| Emotional Stability | None (– if instrumental benefits dominate, + if norms dominate) | None (may vary across specific activities: see text for details) | None (may vary across specific activities: see text for details) |
| Openness to Experience | + | ++ | ++ |
| | None | + | + |

Note: In the top half of the table, rankings are relative. + indicates participatory activity is higher on characteristic than for activities denoted with a –. In the bottom half of the table, + indicates an expected positive relationship; – indicates an expected negative relationship.

- (c) “Our analysis indicates that **Extraversion** and **Emotional Stability** are associated with higher levels of participation in a broad range of political activities... **Agreeableness** is associated with lower levels of participation across a variety of participatory acts, this negative relationship is most pronounced for modes of participation likely to involve conflict (e.g., speaking at a local meeting)... The findings we report about Emotional Stability are the most inconsistent with prior work. Most notably, we find strong positive relationships between **Emotional Stability** and turnout (both validated and reported) and donating money to a political candidate, while Mondak et al. (2010) find negative associations” (p. 703)
- (d) “Conscientiousness is consistently found to be associated with conservatism. We find that individuals high on this trait are also less likely to turn out to vote.” (p. 704)

Logic of Collective Action (Pages 1-65)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Olson1965}

2. **Authors:** Mancur Olson
3. **Year:** 1965
4. **Journal:** Logic of Collective Action (book)
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** Olson introduced the idea of a social dilemma and a public good where everybody wants the public good but wants somebody else to pay for it. Thus things like taxes have to be mandatory. The larger the group, the harder it will be for them to coordinate. Thus we should only expect small close-knit groups to be able to work for the common good without some sort of coercive coordinating mechanism. (not totally true cause we can have a correlated equilibrium that is a bit better than Nash)
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Three kinds of groups:
 - i. **Privileged groups** (members of this group would gain more from a public good than it would cost them to provide it unilaterally);
 - ii. **Latent groups** (any member of this group could withhold his contribution to the public good without causing a noticeable reduction in its supply);
 - iii. **Intermediate groups** (if any member of this group withholds his contribution, it will cause a noticeable decrease in supply of the good, or a noticeable rise in cost to other contributors).
 - (b) As group size increases, provision of the common good becomes less optimal. You can only have optimal provision of the common good if the marginal costs are shared in "exactly the same proportion as the additional benefits" (30).
 - (c) Hypotheses:
 - i. If there is a PRIVILEGED group, the good will always be provided.
 - ii. If there is an INTERMEDIATE group, the good might be provided.
 - iii. If there is only a LATENT group, the good won't be provided without coercion or selective incentives.
 - iv. Small stakeholders will tend to exploit big stakeholders (i.e. make them pay a larger share)
Why large groups have problems
 - (d) **Exclusive vs inclusive** goods: With exclusive common goods, the supply is limited. Think of a cartel; each firm wants to increase output (to increase its profits), but if all firms do this, the profits disappear (as the price falls). The supply of profits is limited, so it is an exclusive good. With inclusive goods, however, supply is not limited. Whether more members are welcome depends on whether the good is exclusive or inclusive. Firms prefer to have few competitors because goods are exclusive; unions prefer to maximize membership because its goods are inclusive, and having more members spreads the costs around more.

Voter turnout: a social theory of political participation (Chapters 1-3, 7-8)

1. **Cite Key:**
`\citet{rolfe2012voter}`
2. **Authors:** Meredith Rolfe
3. **Year:** 2012

4. **Journal:** Voter turnout: a social theory of political participation (book)

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Rolfe introduces a social theory of voter turnout that seeks to turn traditional economic cost-benefit models of voting on their heads. She contests the idea that personal characteristics such as education lead to increased interest in politics which thus increases voting and instead points to the differences in the social networks people are embedded in based on their education as the real reason for education correlated differences in voter turnout. The other big point of the book is that essentially all voters are mobilized (either directly or indirectly) by candidates as the first part of a campaign and that the network structures invoked by the degree of mobilization set the upper and lower bounds for the overall degree of voter turnout in the election.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) Rolfe employs a conditional choice framework where people make decisions based on a **weighted additive combination** of **unconditional decision** making, linear conditional (or **mean matching**) decision making and non-linear conditional (or **focal point/median matching**) decision making
- (b) This can be represented as a model where the weights α , β and γ are multiplied by the three terms in the model to determine the likelihood of voting. Let $d_{i,s}$ be an indicator that is one if person i makes the binary choice in domain s (to vote). Let k_i be the subjective number of network neighbors that a person might discuss the decision with and $w_{i,j}$ be the relative weight they give to that person's actions. Thus we have the following model:

$$\Pr(d_{i,s} = 1) = \alpha_{i,s} + \beta_{i,s} \frac{w_{i,j} d_j}{k_i} + \gamma \frac{1}{1 + e^{a - b \frac{w_{i,j} d_j}{k_i - 1}}} \quad (2.4)$$

- (c) Rolfe makes the empirical determination that voting has an uncontested meaning as THE act of a citizen and is essentially indefensible for choosing not to do, so we can consider the American electorate in the same domain and taking the same general positive form with a model of voting.
- (d) Experimental studies have shown that unconditional cooperation rates are somewhere in the neighborhood of 10-20% of the population and she argues that mean matching and focal point matching should make up an even portion of the social aspects and thus fixes their proportions as equal.
- (e) Rolfe argues that education and social capital are just proxies for underlying social network dynamics and that they do not act through some increased likelihood of unconditionally voting but rather through changing the character of the person's social network.

Week 9: Voter Turnout

Summary of the Debate

[Downs \(1957\)](#) introduces an economic theory of democracy – for how parties, government officials and citizens will act to maximize utility (assuming that is all they will do). In this model, imperfect information and uncertainty are the only things that keep the government from extracting huge rents and ruining things for everyone. [Aldrich \(1993\)](#) argues that a basic RC model of turnout is incomplete and argues that “**strategic politicians**” need to be added. He then lays out the **strategic challenger hypothesis**: strong challengers will only run when things are going badly and voters will vote for a strong challenger so more voters will vote for the challenger when times are bad even if they do not understand that things are bad. [Green and Shapiro \(1994\)](#) argue that the use of rational choice theory

is misguided and inappropriate in political science. They argue it is tautological and cannot be tested and should be thrown out. [Rosenstone and Hansen \(1993a\)](#) addresses two main questions: Why people turn out, and why turnout has declined over time. He finds the largest reason for a decline in turnout between the 1960s and 1980s is due to decreased efforts at mobilization by political parties. [Gerber and Green \(2000a\)](#) present results of an nonpartisan GOTV experiment where they find that voter turnout was increased substantially by personal canvassing, slightly by direct mail, and not at all by telephone calls. These findings support our hypothesis that **the long-term retrenchment in voter turnout is partly attributable to the decline in face-to-face political mobilization**. [Arceneaux and Nickerson \(2009\)](#) develop a model of voter turnout where the excitement around an election mediates the effect of GOTV campaigns. In a re-analysis of 11 experiments, they find that face-to-face mobilization is better at stimulating turnout among low-propensity voters in prominent elections than it is in unexciting ones. [Gerber et al. \(2008\)](#) conduct a field experiment to test extrinsic vs. intrinsic motivations to turnout. Substantially higher turnout was observed among those who received mailings promising to **publicize their turnout** to their household or their neighbors. These findings demonstrate the deep importance of social pressure as an inducement to political participation. [Jr \(1986\)](#) compares turnout in the US to other industrialized democracies and finds that turnout in the United States is advantaged about 5% by political attitudes, but disadvantaged 13% by the party system and institutional factors, and up to 14% by the registration laws. [Earl et al. \(1990\)](#) use survey data to argue that nonvoting is not a threat to democracy, but that it does skew some domestic policy issues. [Citrin et al. \(2003\)](#) find that if we did have universal turnout, things would be better for Democrats, but that because there are not many close races, it would not really change things in the aggregate.

An Economic Theory of Democracy (Chapters 1,2,4,6,7)

1. Cite Key:

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\cite{Downs1957}
\cite{Pennock1958} (review)
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2. Authors: Anthony Downs

3. Year: 1957

4. Journal: An Economic Theory of Democracy (book)

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** The title of the book calls for a word of explanation. What is meant by an "economic" theory of democracy? It is by no means intended to explain democracy in terms of economic motivation or determinism. Downs comes to his study from the field of welfare economics. This subject frequently points to inherent deficiencies in the market mechanism. Even with perfectly rational behavior by all individuals the general interest will not be maximized. In such situations the usual pattern is to suggest that the state should take over where the market mechanism is inadequate. The implicit assumption is that a democratic state in which men behaved rationally would handle these matters in ways that would secure the general interest. This postulate Downs sets out to examine. (Incidentally, he finds it invalid.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **Analysis of the logic of government decision-making leads to some interesting conclusions: for instance, that the model democracy (assuming a two-party system) would be characterized by regular alternation, at each election, of parties in power. More disturbing, the result in the most probable circumstances would not produce a socially rational policy: that is, one that would maximize welfare in the utilitarian sense... Because voters'**

preferences on each possible issue can not be known with accuracy, and only for this reason, the democratic process does not break down after all. Thus democracy works (in so far as it does work) only because in certain respects it falls short of its assumed model!

- (b) The consequences of uncertainty and of information costs are so many and varied that only a sketchy sample can be mentioned here. Democratic governments tend to decentralize their own power, regardless of their constitutional structure; it is rational for parties to develop ideologies and to be honest and consistent in putting them into practice; uncertainty and the costliness of information tend to check the otherwise natural tendency to interfere with the natural (i.e., prevailing under free competition) income-distribution process; information costs multiply the number of cases in which rational behavior calls for nonvoting.
- (c) Irrationality is when a person discovers they have been making an error and it is payoff maximizing to correct the error but they chose not to do so for some other reason. Thus we can distinguish between rational and irrational acts.
- (d) Arrows impossibility theorem states that, when voters have three or more distinct alternatives (options), no rank order voting system can convert the ranked preferences of individuals into a community-wide (complete and transitive) ranking while also meeting a specific set of criteria.

Rational Choice and Turnout

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Aldrich1993}

2. Authors: John Aldrich

3. Year: 1993

4. Journal: AJPS

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

This paper begins by examining the problem of explaining turnout. A basic form of rational choice models of turnout is developed—basic in the sense that it is common to all such models. This basic model is shown to be incomplete, and the two most important models, the calculus of voting and the minimax regret model, are illustrated as alternative ways to complete this basic model, along with mention of game-theoretic models. Their strengths and weaknesses are then assessed.

The remainder of the paper argues that rational choice accounts of turnout are possible. The first step is to argue that turnout is not an especially problematic version of the collective action problem because it is, for many, a low cost, low (expected) benefit decision. A “strategic politicians” account of turnout and campaigns is examined next. A reinterpretation of the intrinsic benefits of voting is then considered and is used to examine the most important substantive problem in the turnout literature, its decline. These steps, I argue, make theories of ordinary political decisions at once both more political and more integrated into the politics of the larger system.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Turnout is not a particularly good example of a collective action problem because it is a relatively minor one (p. 274)

- (b) Because the decision to turn out is a relatively small one (marginal), this opens it up to relatively small influences and suggests that “strategic politicians” will have a strong effect on turnout.
- (c) **Strategic challenger hypothesis:** strong challengers will only run when things are going badly and voters will vote for a strong challenger so more voters will vote for the challenger when times are bad even if they do not understand that things are bad.

“The Nature of Rational Choice Theory” and “Methodological Pathologies” Add chapter 4

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Green1994a}

2. Authors: Donald Green and Ian Shapiro

3. Year: 1994

4. Journal: Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory (book)

5. Keywords: Rational Choice, Methods, methodological individualism, critique

6. **Summary:** In these two chapters the authors introduce rational choice theory and methodological individualism as it has been applied in political science and the methods used to empirically evaluate this set of theories. They make a number of scathing criticisms of this approach arguing that it is unrealistic, has poor predictive performance, makes bad assumptions, cherry picks its applications, that the theory follows the data and not the other way around and that the methods for empirically evaluating these theories are flawed and biased towards accepting the theories. They argue that they do not want to throw out rational choice theory totally but that they feel it needs to be totally rethought. I think they miss the point that rational choice theory presents an easy target because it actually makes strong predictions.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) In the first chapter the authors introduce the central tenets of rational choice theory/methodological individualism:
 - i. Individuals (with the key word here being individuals as opposed to groups or systems) seek to maximize their utility.
 - ii. There exists a weak preference ordering
 - iii. Transitivity of preferences.
 - iv. Under uncertainty, individuals will maximize their expected utility.
 - v. In economics we have Completeness, Transitivity, Preference Relation, Continuity, Nonstationarity, Strict Monotonicity, Convexity, Strict Convexity to give us a utility function.
 - vi. The focus is placed on micro-foundations.
 - vii. We also assume that this kind of model generalizes to all individuals under study and across time.
 - viii. Neoclassical economics also assume perfect information which is not realistic.
 - ix. They distinguish between thick and thin rationality in terms of the strength of assumptions (thin being not specifying a functional form for the utility function for example).
 - x. Ideally for an action to be rational it would satisfy: best response to beliefs, best beliefs from information and best information.
 - xi. What the rational choice theory gives us is the ability to make unique predictions about behavior using equilibrium concepts.

- xii. There has been much debate about the degree of generalizability (universality) of rational choice models with some wanting to take a more limited view of their applicability.
 - xiii. The authors argue that the theory has relatively little explanatory power due to unrealistic assumptions like perfect information and perfect rationality and its focus on general types of individuals as a simplifying assumption.
- (b) In chapter two the authors argue that statistical methods and theoretical models used for conducting research in a rational choice framework are often misapplied or missused and that they are also applied with a goal of taking on other rational choice models instead of explaining actual political behavior.
- i. “We contend that these often mutually reinforcing mistakes stem from a method-driven rather than problem-driven approach to research, in which practitioners are more eager to vindicate one or another universalist model than to understand and explain actual political outcomes” (p. 33).
 - ii. Post Hoc theory development to explain patterns that we already observe. I think this is fine as long as we have good enough data.
 - iii. *Slippery hypothesis* testing when there are a large number of latent variables relative to observed variables that makes it hard to tell whether a theory is confirmed or refuted.
 - iv. *Vaguely operationalized predictions* refers to tests that are not well suited to testing the hypothesis, especially inappropriately used point predictions.
 - v. The authors also argue that rational choice researchers search for confirming evidence which leads their results to be biased, and make arbitrary domain restrictions in where their theory applies.

Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America (Chapters 2 and 8 (need to read 1,2,4,6,7))

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Rosenstone1993}

2. Authors: Steven J. Rosenstone, John Mark Hansen

3. Year: 2002

4. Journal: Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America. (book)

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Why people turn out, and why turnout has declined over time.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) the benefits will never exceed the costs for most people. Thus, two paradoxes: rational non-participation and rational ignorance. Moreover, a model based only on personal-level variables can't explain why participation peaked in the 1960s, dipped in the 1970s, then rose again in the 1980s—even while education, income, and so on rose steadily; thus, they don't explain participation.
- (b) The authors attempt to explain the decline in turnout between the 1960s and 1980s:
 - i. Mobilization is the major cause: Less effort at mobilization: explains 54% of decline.
 - ii. Voting age drops to 18: explains 17% of the decline in turnout
 - iii. Weakened social involvement: explains 9% of decline
 - iv. Declining feelings of political efficacy: explains 9% of decline
 - v. Weakened attachment to parties/candidates: explains 11% of decline

The Effects of Personal Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Gerber2000}

2. Authors: Alan Gerber, Donald P. Green

3. Year: 2000

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: We report the results of a randomized field experiment involving approximately 30,000 registered voters in New Haven, Connecticut. Nonpartisan get-out-the-vote messages were conveyed through personal canvassing, direct mail, and telephone calls shortly before the November 1998 election. A variety of substantive messages were used. Voter turnout was increased substantially by personal canvassing, slightly by direct mail, and not at all by telephone calls. These findings support our hypothesis that the long-term retrenchment in voter turnout is partly attributable to the decline in face-to-face political mobilization

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Regression results showing that personal contact and direct mailings increase turnout but phone does not. (p. 659)

| TABLE 5. Linear and Nonlinear Regression of Voter Turnout on Mode of Contact, with and without Covariates | | | |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Independent Variables | Two-Stage Least Squares | | Two-Stage Probit |
| | Coefficient (SE) | Coefficient (SE) | Coefficient (SE) |
| Personal contact | .087 (.026) | .098 (.022) | .323 (.074) |
| Direct mailings (0 to 3) | .0058 (.0027) | .0063 (.0023) | .0214 (.0067) |
| Telephone contact | -.047 (.023) | -.035 (.020) | -.130 (.056) |

- (b) reported effects of personal canvasing (p. 657)

| TABLE 3. Effects of Personal Canvassing on Voter Turnout | | |
|--|---|--|
| Unadjusted Relationship between Actual (as Opposed to Attempted) Contact and Voter Turnout | | |
| | Not Contacted in Person | Successfully Contacted in Person |
| Percentage voting | 44.5% | 59.0% |
| Number of persons | 27,765 | 1,615 |
| Unadjusted Relationship between Experimental Subgroups and Voter Turnout | | |
| | Assigned to the Control Group (no personal contact) | Assigned to the Treatment Group (attempted personal contact) |
| Percentage voting | 44.8% | 47.2% |
| Number of persons | 23,586 | 5,794 |
| Number actually contacted | | 1,615 |
| Contact rate | | 27.9% |
| Estimated Effect of Personal Contact on Voter Turnout | | |
| Turnout Differential (2.43%)/Contact Rate (27.87%) = 8.7% | | |
| Standard Error (2.6) | | |

Who is Mobilized to Vote? A Re-Analysis of 11 Field Experiments

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Arceneaux2009}

2. Authors: Kevin Arceneaux, David Nickerson

3. Year: 2009

4. Journal: AJPS

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: “Many political observers view get-out-the-vote (GOTV) mobilization drives as a way to increase turnout among chronic nonvoters. However, such a strategy assumes that GOTV efforts are effective at increasing turnout in this population, and the extant research offers contradictory evidence regarding the empirical validity of this assumption. We propose a model where only those citizens whose propensity to vote is near the indifference threshold are mobilized to vote and the threshold is determined by the general interest in the election. Our three-parameter model reconciles prior inconsistent empirical results and argues that low-propensity voters can be effectively mobilized only in high-turnout elections. The model is tested on 11 randomized face-to-face voter mobilization field experiments in which we specifically analyze whether subjects’ baseline propensity to vote conditions the effectiveness of door-to-door GOTV canvassing. **The evidence is consistent with the model and suggests that face-to-face mobilization is better at stimulating turnout among low-propensity voters in prominent elections than it is in quiescent ones.**” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- To state our expectations formally, let V_i denote whether an individual votes in the current election, P_i is an individual’s latent propensity to vote, M is the effect of any mobilization conducted by the campaign, G is the general interest among the electorate in the election, and V^* is a latent variable that reflects an individual’s decision to vote in a particular election. Note that P_i and V^* are distinct but related constructs. One’s propensity to vote is an enduring individual-level trait, while the decision to vote is an episodic choice subject to short-term forces. Also note that P_i , M , and G are exogenous to V_i and V^* (we will say more about this assumption below).

We model an individual's decision to vote as a function of his or her underlying propensity and the effect of any GOTV efforts. An individual will vote in the upcoming election, V_i , if V^* surpasses a threshold of interest, which is dictated by G . (p. 4)

$$V^* = P + M \quad (2.5)$$

$$\text{and } V = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } V^* \leq -G \\ 1 & \text{if } V^* > -G \end{cases} \quad (2.6)$$

(b)

Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large Scale Field Experiment

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Gerber2008}

2. Authors: Alan Gerber et al.

3. Year: 2008

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Voter turnout theories based on rational self-interested behavior generally fail to predict significant turnout unless they account for the utility that citizens receive from performing their civic duty. We distinguish between two aspects of this type of utility, intrinsic satisfaction from behaving in accordance with a norm and extrinsic incentives to comply, and test the effects of priming intrinsic motives and applying varying degrees of extrinsic pressure. A large-scale field experiment involving several hundred thousand registered voters used a series of mailings to gauge these effects. Substantially higher turnout was observed among those who received mailings promising to publicize their turnout to their household or their neighbors. These findings demonstrate the profound importance of social pressure as an inducement to political participation. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

(a)

(b)

American Voter Turnout in Comparative Perspective

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Powell1986}

2. Authors: Bingham Powell

3. Year: 1986

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Despite relatively favorable citizen attitudes, voter turnout in American national elections is far below the average of 80% of the eligible electorate that votes in other industrialized democracies. The American institutional setting-particularly the party system and the registration laws-severely inhibits voter turnout, and probably also accounts for the unusual degree to which education and other socioeconomic resources are directly linked to voting participation in the United States. Using a combination of aggregate and comparative survey data, the present analysis suggests that in comparative perspective, turnout in the United States is advantaged about 5% by political attitudes, but disadvantaged 13% by the party system and institutional factors, and up to 14% by the registration laws. The experience of other democracies suggests that encouraging voter participation would contribute to channeling discontent through the electoral process. Even a significantly expanded American electorate would be more interested and involved in political activity than are present voters in most other democracies. (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a)
- (b)

The Implications of Non-Voting for Democracy in the United States

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Earl1990}

2. **Authors:** Stephen Bennett, David Resnick

3. **Year:** 1990

4. **Journal:** AJPS

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** This paper reconsiders several of the arguments normative theorists have constructed about political participation's impact on the democratic polity. Two key arguments are addressed in the context of the United States today: (1) does nonvoting pose a threat to democracy; and (2) does nonvoting cause skewed public policies? The CPS's National Election Studies, NORC's 1985 General Social Survey, and Gallup's 1987 "The People, Press, and Politics" poll indicate the first can be answered in the negative, but there may be some skews on domestic issues, particularly those dealing with spending for welfare state programs. On the other hand, nonvoters are not more egalitarian or in favor of government ownership or control of industry. Nonetheless, it would be erroneous to discount participation's worth for democratic politics because, if it makes elites pay attention to public opinion, its value is firmly established (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) Finds that nonvoters are not alienated, do not threaten civil liberties, are not particularly bigoted, and do not want radically different foreign policy. However, "non-voters and voters do not differ significantly on abortion or government assistance to minorities" (p. 798)
- (b)

What if Everyone Voted? Simulating the Impact of Increased Turnout in Senate Elections

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Citrin2003a}

2. **Authors:** Jack Citrin, Eric Schickler, John Sides

3. **Year:** 2003

4. **Journal:** AJPS

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** The conventional wisdom among journalists and politicians is that higher turnout would benefit Democrats, although extant scholarly research suggests otherwise. We adopt a new approach to assessing the partisan impact of higher turnout. We use state-level exit polls and Census data to estimate the partisan preferences of nonvoters in Senate elections and then simulate the outcome of these elections under universal turnout. While nonvoters are generally more Democratic than voters, the dearth of close races means that very few election outcomes would have changed had everyone voted. Other scenarios—full turnout among registered voters, equal turnout rates for whites and African-Americans, and equal turnout rates across income groups—generate similar results: although Democrats fare better in each scenario, few outcomes would have changed. However, the gap between voters and nonvoters' partisan preference varies considerably across states and across years, suggesting that this "partisan differential" warrants further examination. (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

(a)

(b)

Week 10: Candidate Evaluation & Vote Choice

Summary of the Debate

Downs (1957) introduces a **spatial model** of rational voting where citizens choose their votes based on which candidate they think will give them the highest stream of future payoffs from policies (if they vote at all). In this theory, the voter compares their distance in policy preference space between all candidates and chooses the one with the smallest distance. Fiorina (1981) finds a middle ground between retrospective voting proposed by Key and future expectations proposed by Downs. He theorizes and finds that **expectations concerning the future are dwarfing the effects of retrospective judgments but that there is a determinable developmental sequence**. Rabinowitz and Macdonald (1989) develops a **directional theory** of issue voting in which agreement on the side of an issue is most important even if the other candidate is closer spatially and find empirical support for it. Green et al. (2002) (did not read) Lodge et al. (1989) find that an online processing model of candidate evaluation (where impressions are formed as needed) is more predictive than a memory based model because psychological biases cause memories to be inaccurate. Redlawsk (2001) challenge the findings of Lodge et al. (1989) and the group working at Stony Brook university on the on-line model. Their findings do not support the pure Stony Brook on-line model, as they show that in all cases voter memory plays an important role in decision making and suggest that a mixed decision-making model is more appropriate. Lenz (2012) finds that voters **lead** their representatives in their views of their economic performance in office (punishing or rewarding them), but that they **follow** their representatives in their ideology and policy views (becoming more like those that represent them over time – conforming)

An Economic Theory of Democracy (Chapter 3)

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Downs1957}
\cite{Pennock1958} (review)

2. **Authors:** Anthony Downs

3. **Year:** 1957

4. **Journal:** An Economic Theory of Democracy

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Downs introduces a theory of rational voting where citizens choose their votes based on which candidate they think will give them the highest payoff.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) The benefits to voting are streams of utility derived from policies enacted by government.
- (b)

Retrospective Voting in American National Elections (Selected Chapters)

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{fiorina1981retrospective}
\cite{Eulau1982} (review)

2. **Authors:** Morris Fiorina

3. **Year:** 1981

4. **Journal:** Retrospective Voting in American National Elections

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Fiorina's theoretical point of departure is V.O. Key's perceptive formulation of the role of "retrospective evaluations," on the one hand, and Anthony Downs's imaginative formulation of the role of "future expectations," on the other, in vote choice. [Eulau \(1982\)](#)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) What, then, is Fiorina's "case"? In starkest outline, Fiorina's final model of the simple act of voting posits that **expectations concerning the future are dwarfing the effects of retrospective judgments but that there is a determinable developmental sequence**. As Fiorina puts it in a succinct summary statement: "Directly experienced and/or perceived events and conditions first contribute to performance evaluations, and both in turn contribute to future expectations. At both stages the mediating influence of past party identification operates, but it too incorporates the retrospective judgments of past periods. Future expectations are so important empirically because they are the end of the chain, the distillation of numerous evaluations and experiences from a voter's past" (p. 197). If this sounds like so much gobbledygook, there is only one remedy-reading the book.

(b)

Eulau1982

A Directional Theory of Issue Voting

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Rabinowitz1989}

2. Authors: George Rabinowitz, Stuart Elaine MacDonald

3. Year: 1989

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** From Stokes's (1963) early critique on, it has been clear to empirical researchers that the traditional spatial theory of elections is seriously flawed. Yet fully a quarter century later, that theory remains the dominant paradigm for understanding mass-elite linkage in politics. **We present an alternative spatial theory of elections that we argue has greater empirical verisimilitude** We present an alternative spatial theory of elections that we argue has greater empirical verisimilitude. Based on the ideas of symbolic politics, the directional theory assumes that most people have a diffuse preference for a certain direction of policy-making and that people vary in the intensity with which they hold those preferences. We test the two competing theories at the individual level with National Election Study data and find the directional theory more strongly supported than the traditional spatial theory. We then develop the implications of the directional theory for candidate behavior and assess the predictions in light of evidence from the U.S. Congress.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) A set of models of voting behaviour in which a voter's strength of preference for a candidate depends on whether the voter and the candidate take the same side on a policy issue/dimension. **These contrast with the theory of spatial competition (or proximity model) in which voters prefer the candidate closest to them in the policy space irrespective of whether they lie on different sides of a neutral (or status-quo) point. In its simplest form, voters prefer candidates on the same side to those on the opposite side of a single dimension.** If the single dimension is the left-right dimension, right-wing voters would prefer all the right-wing candidates to the left-wing candidates, even if they are closer to a left-wing candidate. This model can be extended to allow for different dimensions of varying importance or salience. Rabinowitz and Macdonald (1989, American Political Science Review) elaborate further by incorporating intensity. Both voters and candidates can vary in the extent to which they take a particular stance. This is modelled as distance from the neutral point. The utility function (strength of preference for a candidate) is the product of the voter and candidate intensities, accounting for direction. This implies that right-wing voters prefer the most right-wing candidate, no matter how right-wing they are themselves. The model therefore predicts that candidates have an incentive to be the most extreme candidate on their side of any particular dimension. Since this is an unattractive feature of the model, mechanisms have been proposed to constrain movement, such as a region of acceptability outside of which candidates are penalized. [Link](#)

(b)

green2004partisan

Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identity of Voters (Chapter 8)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Green2002}
\cite{Brewer2003} (review)

2. **Authors:** Donald Green, Bradley Palmquist, Eric Schickler
3. **Year:** 2002
4. **Journal:** Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identity of Voters
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** . In their effort to dismiss rational choice-style explanations of partisanship, the authors set up a dichotomy between retrospective performance-based or policy-based partisanship on the one hand and partisanship rooted in emotionally based group ties on the other. This dichotomy might very well be a false one, with both group identities and issue or performance views possibly affecting vote choice
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Green, Palmquist, and Schickler present three primary arguments regarding partisanship in this volume. The first, discussed at length in chapters 1 and 2 and returned to throughout, is that **partisanship is best understood as a form of social group identification, functioning in much the same way as does an individual's identification with a particular religious denomination, social class, or ethnic group.** In viewing partisanship as a form of social identification, the authors note that "people ask themselves two questions: What kinds of social groups come to mind as I think about Democrats, Republicans, and Independents? Which assemblage of groups (if any) best describes me?" (p. 8)
 - (b) The second main claim presented here deals with the dynamics or, more accurately, the lack of dynamics exhibited by partisanship. Specifically, Green, Palmquist, and Schickler argue, as they did in the journal articles they published throughout the 1990s, that **partisanship is a highly stable phenomenon, much the same as religious affiliation or ethnic identification.**
 - (c) the authors theorize that partisans on election day are much the same as the fans of a particular sports team on the day of the big game. "To those who define themselves in partisan terms, elections represent more than simply a competition between candidates and rival platforms. Elections are also forums for intergroup competition. Individuals who identify with these groups are drawn into this competition. Their interest and level of emotional engagement increase as they embrace the team as their own. Although not irresistible, the desire to see one's team prevail powerfully influences the probability of casting a vote for the candidate of one's party" (p. 206). The above quote illustrates the third main argument presented in this book- **partisanship matters because it affects electoral politics**

An Impression Driven Model of Candidate Evaluation

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Lodge1989}
2. **Authors:** Milton Lodge, Kathleen McGraw, Patrick Stroh
3. **Year:** 1989
4. **Journal:** APSR
5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** We describe and test two process models of candidate evaluation. The memory-based model holds that evaluations are dependent on the mix of pro and con information retrieved from memory. The impression-driven model holds that evaluations are formed and updated "on-line" as information is encountered. The results provide evidence for the existence of stereotyping and projection biases that render the mix of evidence available in memory a nonveridical representation of the information to which subjects were exposed. People do not rely on the specific candidate information available in memory. Rather, consistent with the logic of the impression-driven processing model, an "on-line" judgment formed when the information was encountered best predicts candidate evaluation. The results raise both methodological and substantive challenges to how political scientists measure and model the candidate evaluation process. (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) An implicit assumption of on-line processing is that "first impressions" (that is, the initial input into the judgment counter) should be a particularly powerful determinant of judgments. (p. 402)
- (b)

You Must Remember This: A Test of the On-Line Model of Voting

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Redlawsk2001}

2. **Authors:** David Redlawsk

3. **Year:** 2001

4. **Journal:** JOP

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Milton Lodge and his colleagues at Stony Brook have argued that voters process campaign information on-line, summarizing their affect toward candidates as campaign information is encountered. Consequently, recall of campaign information and vote choice are believed by Lodge to be a weak predictor of actual vote decision, which is determined almost solely by the on-line tally. The claims made by the on-line model have not been tested in a dynamic election context, however, in which two or more candidates compete for the vote. This study uses a new experimental methodology that more accurately depicts the realities of a campaign environment to assess the relative importance of memory and the on-line tally in predicting both the direction and accuracy of the vote choice. Findings do not support the pure Stony Brook on-line model, as they show that in all cases voter memory plays an important role in decision making and suggest that a mixed decision-making model is more appropriate.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a)
- (b)

Follow the Leader: How Voters Respond to Politicians' Policies and Performance (Selected Chapters)

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{lennz2012follow}
\cite{Jerit2013} (review)

2. **Authors:** Gabriel Lenz

3. **Year:** 2012

4. **Journal:** Follow the Leader: How Voters Respond to Politicians' Policies and Performance

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:**

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) The public may be leading politicians by assessing their policy stands and rewarding or punishing them accordingly. Or, the public may first decide whether they like a politician and then adopt his or her views. The two possibilities are observationally equivalent in cross-sectional data. Lenz solves this problem by leveraging existing data sets that interview the same respondents at multiple points in time (what researchers call panel surveys) and which allow him to employ an empirical strategy called the "three-wave test."... Thus, Lenz can make stronger inferences about whether people bring their support for politicians in line with their earlier stated views (leading) or whether they modify their opinions to match their party identification or candidate preferences (following). [Jerit \(2013\)](#)
- (b) allowing Lenz to examine three different kinds of shifts in voters thinking. The first type of shift, **media priming**, occurs when there is an increase in the salience of a policy or performance issue. The second, **persuasion**, takes place when voters change their views about an issue. And the third, **learning**, happens when the public increases their knowledge about a politicians policy stand.
- (c) finds that when people change their performance assessments, they subsequently alter their support for politicians, but when they change their opinion on policy issues, they do not later change their vote or candidate evaluation.
- (d) Chapter 8 presents some of the most conclusive evidence for following. There, **Lenz demonstrates that across a wide range of topics, people change their policy views to be in line with their votes, candidate evaluations, and party allegiances.** One of the most striking findings involves ideology, with people changing their self-reported ideology to be more consistent with the party of the president they support. Thus, the public appears to follow politicians even when it comes to an outcome that has long been thought of as a stable predisposition

Week 11: Media

Summary of the Debate

[Sears and Kosterman \(1994\)](#) discuss the **Minimal Effects Model** which posits that political campaigns only marginally persuade and convert voters. Through a series of experiments [Iyengar and Kinder \(1987\)](#) demonstrate that exposure to political news has neither a fleeting nor a permanent effect on political views of viewers. They also introduce what they call the The Priming Effect where by calling the attention of viewers to some aspects of policy or a debate over others, television can set the standards by which political candidates are judged. However, their empirical analysis to support their theory is not very strong. [Arceneaux and Johnson \(2013\)](#) conduct a pair of experiments to parse out the role of dilution and differential effects in media watching experiments where people get to choose what to watch or not. They find that the role played by partisan news is limited by the audience and the availability of

choices, and in general is not very large in magnitude. [Prior \(2007\)](#) argues that the fragmentation of audiences leads to polarized elections because news junkies attend to political news while less interested citizens flock to entertainment. General elections then become more like current primaries where partisan zealots dominate because political centrists tend to be absent. [Wallsten \(2007\)](#) examines political news coverage in 50 A-List blogs and the NY Times and finds that on the vast majority of issues there was a complex, bidirectional relationship between mainstream media coverage and blog discussion rather than a unidirectional media or blog agenda-setting effect. In an examination of over-reporting of political news watching by survey respondents, [Prior \(2009\)](#) sets forth the **flawed estimation hypothesis** – that respondents use inappropriate estimation strategies to infer their news exposure based on limited recall of relevant episodes which causes them to over-report.

Political Persuasion

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Sears1994}

2. Authors: David Sears, Richard Kosterman

3. Year: 1994

4. Journal: Persuasion: Psychological Insights and Perspectives

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Hadley Cantril (1952) study of Orson Well's "war of the worlds" Halloween radio broadcast claiming world was being invaded by martians had hundreds of thousands of people certain it was happening.
- (b) This was indicative of a 1930s view of propaganda as subtle, pervasive and omnipotent.
- (c) **The Minimal Effects Model:** in the 1950's researchers started finding and arguing that the media actually have very little effect on political attitudes.
- (d) two stages in the impact of mass communication: **reception and acceptance.**
- (e) Factors affecting reception: selectivity and memory.
- (f) Political predispositions affect acceptance.
- (g) This article shows its age: "the media themselves have become less partisan" (p. 265)
- (h) Long term effects: agenda setting and giving people very little in the way of real political knowledge.
- (i) The authors conclude:
 - i. In general the public faces low levels of exposure to political communications and low attention to it.
 - ii. Political communication tends to mostly reinforce prior attitudes.
 - iii. Exceptions : massive exposure and weak attitudes .

News That Matters (Chapters 1-3, 6-7, 9-10 (pp. 1-33, 54-72, 82-97))

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Iyengar1987}

2. **Authors:** Shanto Iyengar, Donald Kinder

3. **Year:** 1987

4. **Journal:** News That Matters

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:**

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) **Chapter 2:** The authors conduct an experiment where they show subjects news clips. One set of experiments was **sequential** where subjects came in for 30 minutes every week and were told not to watch the evening news and then were either show stories on one of three topics: US defense incapability, pollution, or economic problems. At the beginning and end they were given a survey and the experimenters wanted to see how attitudes changed. In the second set of experiments (**assemblage**) subjects were brought in for one session and shown between 8 and 30 news stories from the last year and then asked about their opinion directly afterward.
- (b) The authors' interest is in the effects of ordinary news under ordinary circumstances on citizens' beliefs.
- (c) **Chapter 3:** The author focuses on a hypothesis that what gets set forth as the nation's major problems in the news ends up being what people actually think are the nation's major problems. Based on the results of the sequential experiments they find that subjects exposed to intense coverage that something was a problem tend to be significantly more likely to think it was a problem.
- (d) The authors find that even one week after the experiment, differences in opinions remained between treatment and control groups.
- (e) After including time series results, the authors conclude that television does shape the American public's political opinions but the effects are neither momentary nor permanent, falling somewhere in-between.
- (f) **Chapter 7:** The Priming Effect - by calling the attention of viewers to some aspects of policy or a debate over others, television can set the standards by which political candidates are judged.
- (g) "Put more formally, we estimate priming as the difference between the impact of ratings of the president's handling of a particular problem on evaluations of the president's general performance when television news covers the problem and when it does not." (p. 66)
- (h) **Chapter 11:** the authors argue (unconvincingly) that priming has an effect on voting decisions.

Changing Minds or Changing Channels? Partisan News in an Age of Choice (Selected Chapters)

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Arceneaux2013} (stores a review article)

2. **Authors:** Kevin Arceneaux, Martin Johnson

3. **Year:** 2013

4. **Journal:** Changing Minds or Changing Channels? Partisan News in an Age of Choice

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** In the recent book *Changing Minds or Changing Channels? Partisan News in an Age of Choice*, Kevin Arceneaux and Martin Johnson examine the effects of partisan cable news. **They propose that the small, and unique, audience drawn to partisan cable news blunts its possible effects.**

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) Previous methods, they argue, do a poor job of capturing media effects in an era of choice. They hone in on one particular external validity weakness that plagues media effects experiments: Respondents are forced to look at media content, rather than being given a choice. Although forced-exposure studies are valuable, Arceneaux and Johnson argue, they produce maximal effects that may be significantly more modest when taking into account who would have chosen the mediated content outside an experimental context
- (b) Two possibilities are offered. The first is obvious: Fewer people will watch partisan news in the choice condition compared to conditions in which they are forced to watch partisan news (the pro- and counter-attitudinal conditions). If fewer people watch partisan news, then partisan news will have less of an effect. Arceneaux and Johnson call this a **dilution effect**. The second rationale is more complicated. Those preferring entertainment may be more likely to change their attitudes in response to partisan news compared to those preferring news. Why? News viewers have deeper stores of preexisting knowledge that result in more stable attitudes in the face of new information. In contrast, entertainment viewers are more prone to attitudinal shifts because they don't have the stored information that anchors their attitudes. If entertainment viewers are more affected by partisan news than news viewers are, then studies forcing entertainment viewers to watch news will have larger effect sizes than we would expect in situations where they would simply choose to watch something else. This, Arceneaux and Johnson explain, is a **differential effect** between news and entertainment seekers.
- (c) The final chapter of the book (chapter 8) presents the results of a meta-analysis of the experiments from the previous chapters and proposes that partisan news may not have massive effects on political attitudes. The conclusion is nuanced. It is not a claim that partisan news has no effects. Instead, it is a claim that the role played by partisan news is limited by the audience and the availability of choices.

Post-Broadcast Democracy: How Media Choice Increases Inequality in Political Involvement and Polarizes Elections (Selected Chapters)

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Prior2007}

2. **Authors:** Markus Prior

3. **Year:** 2007

4. **Journal:** *Post-Broadcast Democracy: How Media Choice Increases Inequality in Political Involvement and Polarizes Elections*

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** The title of this book sums up its contents-a rare feat, indeed! Markus Prior, an assistant professor at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School, contends that **the nature of American democracy has changed because a changing media environment makes entertainment continuously available**. The majority of the public no longer receives its news and entertainment from a small number of network broadcasts. Instead, there are literally countless sources of news, dispensed by a broad array of channels. Citizens can satiate their unique information tastes by sampling a rich menu of very diverse news and entertainment offerings. Their choices determine what they will learn or fail to learn and, in turn, their political views and level of involvement. **The fragmentation of audiences leads to polarized elections because news junkies attend to political news while less interested citizens flock to entertainment. General elections then become more like current primaries where partisan zealots dominate because political centrists tend to be absent.**

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) **"Conditional Political Learning Model"** predicts that people who are devoted to consuming various forms of entertainment will ignore most offerings of information, irrespective of how rich and varied these offerings have become. People's behavior changes only in times of major crises, as shown during the military interventions in Iraq in 1991 and 2003 and the aftermath of the terrorist strike on U.S. soil on 9/11. By contrast, people motivated and able to seek out political information will always prioritize attending to political information over attending to entertainment
- (b) **Does greater media choice increase total news consumption and, correspondingly, voter turnout? Does it enhance selective perception because it is easier to avoid stories featuring views that clash with one's own preferences? The answer is "No" to both questions.** There is little evidence of a substantial increase in total consumption of news, although the mix of sources supplying it has changed. There is also little evidence that audiences shun opposing points of view. In fact, many political junkies relish knowing what the opposition is advocating. But, **whereas in earlier stages of media development large numbers of people consumed a small amount of news, today fewer people consume greater amounts.** That change does not bode well for the health of democracy because people who avoid news frequently abandon political participation. Their views then are underrepresented in the political dialogue. In turn, that means that their interests are underrepresented in the nation's political life.

Agenda Setting and the Blogosphere: An Analysis of the Relationship Between Mainstream Media and Political Blogs

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Wallsten2007}

2. **Authors:** Kevin Wallsten

3. **Year:** 2007

4. **Journal:** Review of Policy Research

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** This paper asks: what is the relationship between the mainstream media and blog agendas? To be more precise, this paper tracks media coverage and blog discussion of 35 issues during the 2004 presidential campaign to test the hypothesis that the mainstream media agenda exerts a substantial impact on the blog agenda against the increasingly popular hypothesis that the blog agenda exerts a strong influence on the mainstream media agenda. Using a computer-assisted,

quantitative content analysis of ten randomly selected A-list political blogs and 50 randomly selected, less popular political blogs over the five-month period from July 1 to November 30, 2004, **the author finds that on the vast majority of issues there was a complex, bidirectional relationship between mainstream media coverage and blog discussion rather than a unidirectional media or blog agenda-setting effect.** (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Wallsten uses an ARIMA model. Not convinced by his findings, should have been using NetInf
- (b) “First, on a significant number of issues, there is no relationship at all between media coverage and blog discussion. To be more precise, eleven issues in the A-list blog sample showed no significant relationship between media coverage and blog discussion at any lag period, and ten issues in the less popular blog sample showed no significant relationship between media coverage and blog discussion at any lag period. ” (p. 579)
- (c) **“The measure of mainstream media coverage used here –the New York Times– may be a poor measure of the media agenda and, as a result, the conclusions of this analysis could be misleading.”** (p. 581)

Improving Media Effects Research through Better Measurement of News Exposure

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Prior2009}

2. Authors: Marcus Prior

3. Year: 2009

4. Journal: The Journal of Politics

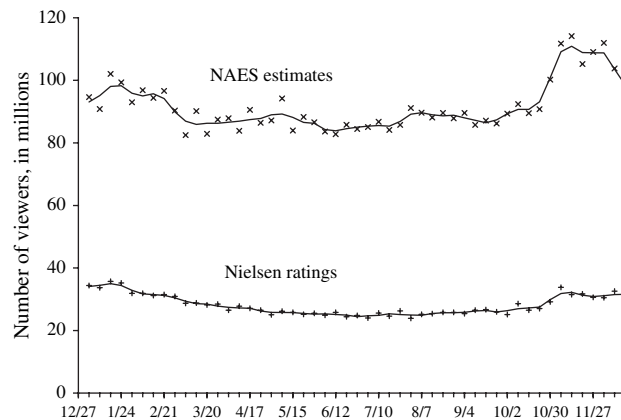
5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Survey research is necessary to understand media effects, but seriously impeded by considerable overreporting of news exposure, the extent of which differs across respondents. Consequently, apparent media effects may arise not because of differences in exposure, but because of differences in the accuracy of reporting exposure. Drawing on experiments embedded in two representative surveys, this study examines why many people overstate their exposure to television news. **Analysis indicates that overreporting results from unrealistic demands on respondents’ memory, not their motivation to misrepresent or provide superficial answers. Satisficing and social desirability bias do not explain overreporting. Instead, imperfect recall coupled with the use of flawed inference rules causes inflated self- reports. To lower reports of news exposure and improve the validity of conclusions about media effects, researchers should help respondents with the estimation by providing population frequencies and encouraging comparison with others.**

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Surveys overstate how many people watch the news (p. 2)

FIGURE 1 Comparing Nielsen Ratings and Survey Estimates of the Nightly Network News Audience



- (b) “A simple explanation of overreporting thus centers on lack of effort. According to my satisficing hypothesis, overreporting occurs due to **satisficing** (Krosnick 1991) when respondents are not motivated enough to search their memory thoroughly for instances of news exposure or to come up with a valid inference rule.” (p. 895)
- (c) “According to the **flawed estimation hypothesis**, respondents use inappropriate estimation strategies to infer their news exposure based on limited recall of relevant episodes.” (p. 896)

Week 12: Campaigns and Political Advertising: Turnout, Learning, Persuasion, and Emotion

Summary of the Debate

Contrary to the existing wisdom in political science that candidates should avoid wedge issues so as not to polarize their bases, [Hillygus and Shields \(2008\)](#) find that candidates do use wedge issues to win over cross-pressured partisans from the other party, and that due to the advent of micro-targeting, this strategy seems to work. They also find that persuadable voters – cross-pressured partisans – are not unsophisticated but rather some of the most well informed voters, contradicting previous findings. Through the use of emotional cuing experiments, [Brader \(2006\)](#) find that political ads can change the way citizens get involved and make choices simply by using images and music to evoke emotions. They find that the emotional state of a voter can increase their susceptibility to persuasion (Fear appeals) or increase their propensity to turnout (enthusiasm appeal). [Finkel \(1993\)](#) reexamines the minimal effects hypothesis and argues that the results of his analysis support an “**activation**” model of campaign effects in recent elections: rather than simply reinforcing individuals’ preexisting vote intentions, the campaigns served mainly to activate existing political predispositions and make them electorally relevant. Overall he does not find a large effect of campaigns. [Freedman et al. \(2004\)](#) argue that campaign advertising does have an effect, contrary to the minimal effects model. They show that exposure to campaign advertising produces citizens who are more interested in the election, have more to say about the candidates, are more familiar with who is running, and ultimately are more likely to vote based on their survey responses. However, the effect is still small and I am not convinced by their study. In a study of advertising in the 2000 presidential election, [Krasno and Green \(2008\)](#) find essentially no effect of campaign advertising on voter turnout. [Franz et al. \(2008\)](#) mount a methodological critique of [Krasno and Green \(2008\)](#) and show that when their models are re-estimated, significant effects of advertising emerge, even though they are small. [Gerber et al. \(2011a\)](#) present results of a randomized experiment using \$2 million in real

money to advertise in a Texas gubernatorial race. Their results indicate that televised ads have strong but short-lived effects on voting preferences and argue that the ephemeral nature of these effects is more consistent with psychological models of priming than with models of on-line processing. [Lavine et al. \(2012\)](#) introduce the distinction between ambivalent and univalent partisans, where ambivalent partisans are defined as those that disagree with their party on something. They make the normative claim that ambivalents are better for democracy because they hold parties accountable vs. univalents who do not. This finding is generally backed up in an analysis of who switches party loyalties.

The Persuadable Voter: Wedge Issues in Presidential Campaigns (Chapters 1,2,4, and 6)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{hillygus2008persuadable}
\cite{Owen2009a} (review)

2. Authors: Sunshine Hillygus, Todd Shields

3. Year: 2008

4. Journal: The Persuadable Voter: Wedge Issues in Presidential Campaigns

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** In this carefully argued and well-researched work, the authors challenge a number of prevailing assumptions about candidate tactics and voter attitudes and behavior. Conventional wisdom among social scientists and political practitioners dictates that rational candidates avoid wedge issues and take positions near the center of the policy spectrum to prevent alienating their base supporters. Hillygus and Shields demonstrate that presidential candidates have made controversial issues, such as abortion, stem cell research, gun control, gay marriage, the environment, and immigration prominent elements of their electoral strategies. They argue that candidates can use wedge issues to appeal to persuadable voters, people whose strong feelings about a particular policy shape their voting preferences. While some persuadable voters are political independents, more often they are cross pressured partisans who disagree sharply with their party nominee's issue stance. Republican presidential candidates, for example, have reached out to Democratic voters for whom the prolife position on abortion trumps their partisan loyalties. Democratic candidates may be able to attract Republican voters who strongly favor gay marriage. While the percentage of persuadable voters who actually cross party lines in an election may be relatively small, Hillygus and Shields find that there were enough partisan defectors to influence the outcome of 10 of the last 14 presidential elections. [Owen \(2009\)](#)

7. Main Findings:

(a) hey debunk the myth that persuadable voters are poorly informed, lack partisan attachments, and are devoid of policy attitudes. Instead they find that cross-pressured partisans have well-developed views and that they use campaign information when attempting to reconcile competing issue/candidate considerations.

(b)

Campaigning for Hearts and Minds (Selected Chapters)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{brader2006campaigning}

2. **Authors:** Ted Brader
3. **Year:** 2006
4. **Journal:** Campaigning for Hearts and Minds
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** Politicians routinely appeal to the emotions of voters, a practice critics claim subverts the rational decision making on which democratic processes properly rest. But we know little about how emotional appeals actually influence voting behavior. This study demonstrates, for the first time, that **political ads can change the way citizens get involved and make choices simply by using images and music to evoke emotions**. Prior research suggests voters behave differently in different emotional states but has not established whether politicians can use campaigns to manipulate emotions and thereby cause changes in political behavior. **This article uses two experiments conducted during an actual election to show that: (1) cueing enthusiasm motivates participation and activates existing loyalties; and (2) cueing fear stimulates vigilance, increases reliance on contemporary evaluations, and facilitates persuasion.** These results suggest campaigns achieve their goals in part by appealing to emotions, and emotional appeals can promote democratically desirable behavior. (abstract)
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) “ **Enthusiasm appeals**—featuring content and imagery associated with success and good times—should increase the desire to participate and reinforce the salience of prior beliefs in candidate choice. **Fear appeals**— featuring content and imagery associated with threat— should motivate a search for information, decrease the salience of prior beliefs, and encourage reconsideration of choices on the basis of contemporary evaluations.” (p. 391)
 - (b) “Subjects for this study were adult residents of Massachusetts, who in the summer of 1998 were faced with a Democratic primary race for governor. That race featured Scott Harshbarger, the incumbent attorney general, and Patricia McGovern, a former state senator. In all, **286 subjects from 11 communities participated over the course of 10 weeks** leading up to the election.... All subjects saw the same pre-recorded local news program, into which one of several campaign ads had been inserted. After viewing the first half of a 30-minute broadcast (i.e., the portion focusing on ”hard news”), subjects answered a series of open-ended questions about the program. The posttest went on to ask for their views on news content, issue concerns, opinions of public figures, inclinations to participate in politics, and attitudes regarding the upcoming elections. There was no mention of campaign ads until a manipulation check following the posttest. At the end, subjects were debriefed and received a small fee for their participation..” (p. 391)
 - (c) “The study uses three sets of nonverbal cues to manipulate emotionality. Neutral cues consist of relatively nonevocative images of local communities and government buildings, with no music. The same neutral cues form the backdrop for the baseline ads in each experiment (i.e., paired with a positive or negative script). A set of reassuring cues—uplifting music and warm, colorful images of children—is paired with a positive script to create an ad appealing to enthusiasm. A set of threatening cues—tense, discordant music and grainy, black-and-white pictures of violence and drug use—are added to a negative script to create an ad appealing to fear.” (p. 392)

Reexamining the 'Minimal Effects' Model in Recent Presidential Campaigns

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Finkel1993}

2. **Authors:** Steven E. Finkel

3. **Year:** 1993

4. **Journal:** JOP

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Although much recent work suggests that contemporary presidential campaigns have more powerful electoral effects than were seen in previous decades, there has been little research that examines the actual effect of recent campaigns on individual vote choice. Using the 1980 NES panel study, **I show that the overwhelming majority of individual votes can be accounted for from attitudes such as party identification and presidential approval that are measured before the political conventions, and that changes in orientations during the campaign had limited effects on individual vote choice and negligible consequences for the electoral outcome.** Moreover, models derived from the 1980 panel data can predict with a great deal of accuracy the aggregate outcomes of the 1984 and 1988 presidential contests. **I argue that the results support an "activation" model of campaign effects in recent elections: rather than simply reinforcing individuals' preexisting vote intentions, the campaigns served mainly to activate existing political predispositions and make them electorally relevant. At the same time, the results show that campaigns have the potential to exert larger electoral effects, but in recent elections they have not done so.** (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) "For these voters, **"what the campaign did ... was not to form new opinions but to raise old opinions over the threshold of awareness and decision. . . . Political campaigns are important primarily because they activate latent predispositions"** (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1944, 74, emphasis in the original)" (p. 4)
- (b) "(1) a simple activation model, which predicted individual votes on the basis of race and precampaign party identification and evaluations of incumbent performance, accounted for over 80% of all votes in the 1980 election... (2) changes in political attitudes did take place during the campaign, but the magnitude of the changes were not large enough to alter many individuals' vote prediction... (3) I examined the extent to which individuals' stated preconvention preferences were reinforced during the 1980 contest and found extremely high rates of stability, as in earlier panel studies. However, I also found much larger rates of conversion among individuals whose initial preferences were incongruent with their predispositions, and hypothesized that this incongruity is the key to understanding cross-election differences in the overall amount of campaign-period changes in preference." (p. 17-18)

Campaign Advertising and Democratic Citizenship

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Freedman2004}

2. **Authors:** Paul Freedman, Michael M. Franz, Kenneth Goldstein

3. **Year:** 2004

4. **Journal:** AJPS

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Concern about the state of American democracy is a staple of political science and popular commentary. Critics warn that levels of citizen participation and political knowledge are disturbingly low and that seemingly ubiquitous political advertising is contributing to the problem. We argue that political advertising is rife with both informational and emotional content and actually contributes to a more informed, more engaged, and more participatory citizenry. With detailed advertising data from the 2000 election, we show that exposure to campaign advertising produces citizens who are more interested in the election, have more to say about the candidates, are more familiar with who is running, and ultimately are more likely to vote. Importantly, these effects are concentrated among those citizens who need it most: those with the lowest pre-existing levels of political information. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “To test these hypotheses, we use Campaign Media Analysis Group (CMAG) data from the 2000 election, made available by the University of Wisconsin Advertising Project, to construct an estimate of campaign ad expo? sure. These data provide a comprehensive record of every ad broadcast on the national broadcast and cable television networks, and more importantly for the study of political advertising (which is bought primarily at the local market level), in each of the nation’s top 75 media markets. ” (p. 726)
- (b) “As Table 2 indicates, 10 shows drew about 64% of campaign advertising during the 2000 general election season. Almost half (44%) of all political advertising in 2000 was aired on local news. Morning news shows attracted another 11% of ads, and two game shows, Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy! each hosted 2% of general election political spots in 2000. In all, only 14 shows drew more than 1% of political advertising. ”(p. 728)
- (c) “For our hypothetical average respondent, the probability of being in the ”very interested” category before the election is almost five points higher at the highest level ad exposure (.226) than when exposure is a standard deviation below the mean (.181).” (p. 731)

Do Televised Presidential Ads Increase Voter Turnout? Evidence from a Natural Experiment

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Krasno2008}

2. Authors: Krasno and Green

3. Year: 2008

4. Journal: JOP

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** The geographic idiosyncrasies of states and media markets set the stage for a natural experiment in which residents of a given state may be exposed to widely varying quantities of presidential television advertising. We use this natural experiment to estimate the effects of TV ads on voter turnout. **Analysis of voting rates in media markets reveals that the volume of advertising purchased by the presidential campaigns during the final weeks of the 2000 election had negligible effects on voter turnout. Classifying presidential advertisements according to whether their tone is positive or negative, we find no evidence to suggest that attack ads promote or diminish turnout. Our findings stand in sharp contrast with recent survey-based studies that report strong turnout effects.** (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a)
- (b)

Understanding the Effect of Political Advertising on Voter Turnout: A Response to Krasno and Green

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Franz2008}

2. **Authors:** Franz, Freedman, Goldstein, and Ridout

3. **Year:** 2008

4. **Journal:** JOP

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Krasno and Green have argued that political advertising has no impact on voter turnout. We remain unconvinced by their evidence, given concerns about how they measure the advertising environment, how they measure advertising tone, their choice of modeling techniques and the generalizability of their findings. These differences aside, we strongly agree that political advertising does little to undermine voter participation. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “In sum, when one reestimates the models using total ads instead of only presidential ads – which we believe is a more theoretically sound approach – the effect of advertising on turnout becomes positive and statistically significant across several different model specifications. That”(p. 264)
- (b) “Substantively, based on not only this exchange, but on the work of others as well, we believe there is one clear conclusion to be drawn about political advertising and turnout: Advertising can and sometimes does have a positive effect on voter turnout, but by no means is that effect large, universal, or consistent across election years. On the other hand, there is very little evidence that advertising, whatever its other effects, has any negative effect on voter participation in America.” (p. 267)
- (c) As for Krasno and Greens fixed-effects model, the sheer number of additional parameters that must be added to the statistical model potentially strains the analysis. Krasno and Green include 36 additional dummy variables to a model with only 128 observations, leaving them roughly three observations for each estimated parameter. As a result, collinearity among the independent variables is quite high” (p. 265)

How Large and Long-Lasting are the Persuasive Effects of Televised Campaign Ads? Results from a Randomized Field Experiment

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Gerber2011a}

2. **Authors:** Alan S. Gerber, James G. Gimpel, Donald P. Green, Daron R. Shaw

3. **Year:** 2011

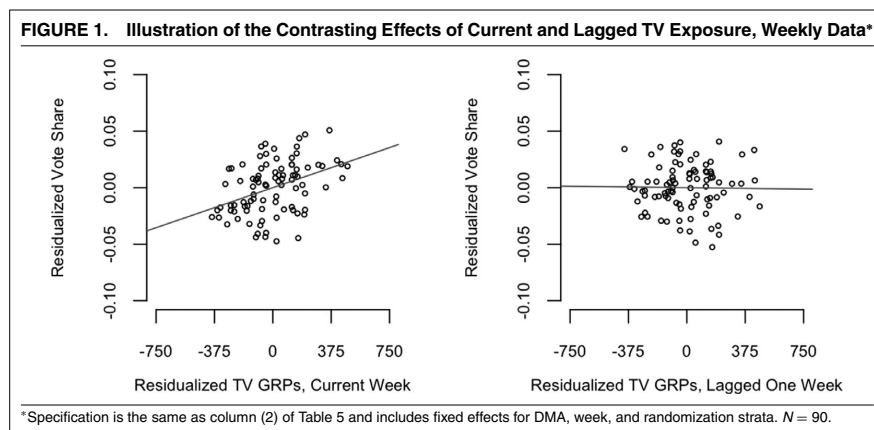
4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** We report the results of the first large-scale experiment involving paid political advertising. During the opening months of a 2006 gubernatorial campaign, approximately \$2 million of television and radio advertising on behalf of the incumbent candidate was deployed experimentally. In each experimental media market, the launch date and volume of television advertising were randomly assigned. In order to gauge movement in public opinion, a tracking poll conducted brief telephone interviews with approximately 1,000 registered voters each day and a brief follow-up one month after the conclusion of the television campaign. Results indicate that televised ads have strong but short-lived effects on voting preferences. The ephemeral nature of these effects is more consistent with psychological models of priming than with models of on-line processing (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “Our analysis focuses on the 2006 reelection campaign of Texas governor Rick Perry. Aside from its receptiveness to experimental evaluation, the Perry campaign started off much like other big-state reelection campaigns.
- (b) “Of these 20 media markets, the campaign was willing to allow experiments in 18, regarding the other two (Houston and DallasFortWorth) as too politically important to leave to chance. In light of the heterogeneity of the DMAs, we matched them as closely as possible based on demographic and socioeconomic attributes and then randomly assigned members of each stratum into an ordering that indicated the start date of the broadcast television campaign. See onlineAppendixC for a list of these matches. Within each weekly rollout bracket, we randomly assigned the quantity of weekly GRPs to be purchased: 250, 500, or 1,000. The roll-out dates were then given to the campaigns television media buyer, who arranged to purchase the quantity of broadcast TV ads that we specified for each DMA each week. Given the small number of DMAs, the power of the experiment derives from the over-time changes in advertising within DMAs, and the analysis presented below focuses on the within-subjects design. ” (p. 139)
- (c) Quick decay of advertising effects (p. 146)



The Ambivalent Partisan: How Critical Loyalty Promotes Democracy (selected chapters)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{lavine2012ambivalent}
\cite{Groenendyk2013} (review)

2. **Authors:** Howard Lavine et al.
3. **Year:** 2012
4. **Journal:** The Ambivalent Partisan: How Critical Loyalty Promotes Democracy (book)
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** Though party identification is widely regarded as the most powerful predictor of vote choice, there is surprisingly little agreement regarding the normative implications of this empirical phenomenon. Some argue citizens follow party cues to help minimize the effort involved in rationally selecting candidates, while others argue citizens follow party cues because their affective attachments to parties motivate blind loyalty. The Ambivalent Partisan by Lavine, Johnston, and Steenbergen moves beyond this dichotomy by cleverly integrating competing models of partisanship and highlighting critical differences in their normative implications. [Groenendyk \(2013\)](#)
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Chapter 1 sets up the distinction between the **ambivalent** partisan and **univalent** partisan utilized throughout the book. Univalent partisans are defined as those whose evaluations of parties are consonant with their party identity. Ambivalent partisans are defined as those whose evaluations of parties conflict with their party identity, either because they acknowledge disliking things about their own party or liking things about the other party. The authors theorize that this inconsistency between evaluations and identity causes partisans to lose confidence in the heuristic value of party cues.... **As a result, ambivalent partisans embody good citizenship, approaching politics with an open mind and more carefully considering the information presented to them. Conversely, univalent partisans fail to hold parties accountable by consistently toeing the party line regardless of the information at hand**
 - (b) They find that, within this subset of the electorate, ambivalent partisans are far more likely than univalent partisans to have changed their party identities to reflect their disagreement. In doing so, they help to shift the debate away from the question of whether individuals change their party identities to reflect disagreement and move the debate toward the more pertinent question of who changes their party identity to reflect disagreements and under what conditions. The

797U Representation (UMASS)

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Two Books Brian Asked Us To Read

The Legislative Branch

1. **Authors:** Paul J. Quirk and Sarah A. Binder (Editors)
2. **Year:** 2005
3. **Journal:** Edited Volume
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:**
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) “The path to a healthy democracy, in the American context, leads through a robust Congress.” (p. XX)
 - (b) There are three critical questions that all of the articles in this volume focus on:
 - i. **How do congressional institutions develop?** How do the rules of the game change over time and why?
 - ii. **How do congressional institutions affect performance?**
 - A. **Constitutional Stability:** How well is congress following the constitution and its powers under the constitution relative to other branches?
 - B. **Democratic Values:** Is congress procedurally fair? Are elections fair and are representatives held accountable?
 - C. **Policymaking:** How good is congress at making policy and does it do so fairly?
 - D. **Adaptation and Reform:** Has congress changed effectively to meet new needs?
 - iii. **Do feasible strategies for reform exist?** Who has capability and incentive to adopt reforms?

Party Polarization

1. **Cite Key:**

`\cite{Schaffner2011}`
2. **Authors:** Brian Schaffner
3. **Year:** 2011
4. **Journal:** The Oxford Handbook of the American Congress
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:**
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) As a preface – there are two schools of thought on the role of party influence in shaping legislative outcomes:
 - i. [Krehbiel \(1993\)](#) (“Where’s the Party”) questions the importance of parties.
 - ii. [Cox and McCubbins \(1993\)](#) (“Legislative Leviathan, Party Government in the House”) and [Aldrich and Rohde \(2000a\)](#) (“The consequences of party organization in the House: The role of the majority and minority parties in conditional party government.”) argue that parties are actually quite important and strong.

(b) **Potential explanations** for polarization in congress:

i. **External Causes**

- A. One of the simplest explanations for increasing polarization in congress is the realignment from the democratic party holding lots of seats in the south (and more conservative views) to the republican party holding those seats, thus increasing the ideological gap between parties (Rohde, 1991; Roberts and Smith, 2003)
- B. Americans have become more consistent in their partisan ideology Hetherington (2001)
- C. Fiorina et al. (2005) dispute that polarization is happening in the electorate although they concede that partisan sorting has occurred. (see p. 533 in Schaffner).
- D. **Summary:** electorate has become more ideologically consistent and partisan sorting has taken place. There was also the southern realignment and redistricting, all of which has made party activists more important (don't want to get primaried!) and ultimately leads Schaffner (2011) to conclude that it accounts for a large part of the polarization in congress.

ii. **Internal Causes:**

- A. Roberts and Smith (2003) point out that Committee of the Whole (starting in 1971) votes force members of the House to take a public stand on polarizing issues which changed the composition of recorded roll-call votes and they argue this accounts for a large portion of increased recorded partisanship in House in 70-80s.
 - B. Theriault (2008) also points out that procedural votes now make up a larger proportion of total votes, and these tend to be more on party lines, exacerbating the potential for polarization.
- iii. Schaffner (2011) comes down in favor of the explanation put forth in Theriault (2008) which is that increasingly polarized constituencies lead polarization in congress which was exacerbated by institutional changes that lead party leaders to be more powerful and thus more polarized.

(c) **Potential Effects:**

- i. Gridlock and effects on the policy making process.
- ii. Effects on Policy debate.
- iii. Effects on how people get represented in Congress.
- iv. Effects on how congress is seen by the people.

Party Leadership

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Strahan2011}

2. **Authors:** Randall Strahan

3. **Year:** 2011

4. **Journal:** The Oxford Handbook of the American Congress

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:**

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) Thees theories use a principal agent framework:

- (b) [Rohde \(1991\)](#) introduces **Conditional Party Government**: this theory posits that the party leadership in the house will be powerful and important when there is:
 - i. A lot of conflict between the majority party and minority party.
 - ii. When the preferences of members of the majority party are particularly homogeneous.
- (c) [Sinclair \(1990, 1998\)](#) argue that legislators want to gain a higher post in the legislature and thus will devote lots of energy to it which makes them want to serve the members of their party.
- (d) [Cox and McCubbins \(2005\)](#) point out that a large part of the power of party leaders comes in keeping things off the agenda – *negative power*
- (e) [Krehbiel \(1991\)](#) proposed a theoretical argument for why parties are of little importance in explaining major organizational features of the House as well as whether congress fails or is successful in passing laws [Krehbiel \(1998\)](#). This argument basically says parties are not important. (see also [Krehbiel \(1993\)](#)) (1999, p. 839) points out that “parties may be important, but it does not follow that omission of parties from theories is important”.
- (f) In a direct rebuttal to Krehbiel, [Aldrich and Rohde \(2000b\)](#) provide evidence of party leaders making members vote differently than their individual preferences.

Week 2: Theories of Representation

Political Representation

1. **Cite Key:** \cite{Dovi2011}
2. **Authors:** Suzanne Dovi
3. **Year:** 2011
4. **Journal:** The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
5. **Keywords:** Political Representation, theories of representation, how do we judge representatives
6. **Summary:** Dovi provides an overview of the theoretical contributions on representation. She discusses a number of different conceptions of what a representative should be, how they should be held accountable and how we should think about the relationship between representatives and their constituents. She brings up the work of a number of authors who have problematized the principal-agent conception of the relationship between representatives and their constituents and also points out that we need to broaden our conception of representation beyond elected officials to include non-governmental organizations.
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) The author defines political representation as follows:

political representation is the activity of making citizens’ voices, opinions, and perspectives present in the public policy making processes. Political representation occurs when political actors speak, advocate, symbolize, and act on the behalf of others in the political arena. In short, political representation is a kind of political assistance.
 - (b) **Delegate vs. Trustee** representations:

Delegate conceptions of representation require representatives to follow their constituent’s preferences, while trustee conceptions require representatives to follow their own judgment about the proper course of action. Any adequate theory of representation must grapple with these contradictory demands.
 - (c) [Pitkin \(1967\)](#) Four views of representation:

- i. **Formalistic Representation:** The institutional arrangements that precede and initiate representation. Formal representation has two dimensions: authorization and accountability.
 - ii. **Symbolic Representation:** The ways that a representative "stands for" the represented that is, the meaning that a representative has for those being represented.
 - iii. **Descriptive Representation:** The extent to which a representative resembles those being represented.
 - iv. **Substantive Representation:** The activity of representatives – that is, the actions taken on the behalf of, in the interest of, as an agent of, and as a substitute for the represented.
- (d) Identifies three major problems raised by the literature on representation:
- i. The first problem is the proper institutional design for representative institutions within democratic polities.
 - ii. ways in which democratic citizens can be marginalized by representative institutions
 - iii. the relationship between representation and democracy

The Concept of Representation in Contemporary Democratic Theory

1. **Cite Key:** \cite{Urbinati2008}
2. **Authors:** Nadia Urbinati, Mark E. Warren
3. **Year:** 2008
4. **Journal:** Annual Review of Political Science
5. **Keywords:** democracy, representative democracy, constituency, elections, accountability, deliberation
6. **Summary:** This article provides an extensive review of the literature on democratic theory and its conception of representation. The authors argue that we will need new forms of representation whether it be self-authorized or citizen representatives to work with more traditional, geographically defined conceptions of and mechanisms for representation.
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Nonelectoral forms of representation are becoming increasingly important
 - (b) The authors point out that many theorists would call democracy a set of arrangements such that all affected by the collective decisions have an opportunity to influence the outcome. More specifically: Individuals are morally and legally equal and individuals are equally capable of autonomy with respect to citizenship, or conscious self-determination.
 - (c) The authors argue that we need to rethink constituency as no longer just people in a particular geographic parcel (as the literature has suggested) but instead as defined by race, gender, class, environment etc.
 - (d) single member plurality (where one person represents a region or state) vs. proportional representation (where a several people represent a region in proportion to the votes. Most democratic theorists argue in favor of proportional representation due to greater inclusiveness and fairness. There may be a trade off between inclusiveness and accountability in these two systems.

Rethinking Representation

1. **Cite Key:** \cite{Mansbridge2003}
2. **Authors:** Jane Mansbridge

3. **Year:** 2003
4. **Journal:** American Political Science Review
5. **Keywords:** Promissory, Anticipatory, Gyroscopic and Surrogate representation, democratic theory.
6. **Summary:** Mansbridge introduces four ways of thinking about or conceptualizing representation. She argues that these are useful for thinking about how well a political system meets democratic norms as they each suppose their own normative criteria. She points out that only the promissory form of representation provides a traditional form of accountability for representatives. Mansbridge argues that the different forms of representation can be mixed and are in real life and that they come into conflict with each other as well.

7. Main Findings:

(a) Mansbridge offers four different forms of representation:

- i. **Promissory representation:** The traditional conception of representation where representatives make promises to their constituents during a campaign for office and then either keep those promises or fail to keep them. Thus we can judge a representative by how they kept their promises.
- ii. **Anticipatory representation:** Representatives try to do what they think their constituents will like when it comes time for the next election.
- iii. **Gyroscopic representation:** representatives look to their common sense and own experiences and try to act the best they can based on their own morals and ideas. This is sort of like electing the person over electing the agenda. Constituents only have power over the system and not over decisions of their representatives directly.
- iv. **Surrogate representation:** This happens when a legislator acts on behalf of people or groups outside of the group that they were elected to represent. The only people who have power over surrogate representatives are those who give them direct support such as interest groups.

(b) Here is her diagram:

| TABLE 1. Forms of Representation | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| | Promissory | Anticipatory | Gyroscopic | Surrogate |
| Focus | Authorizing election | Reelection and preceding term | Authorizing election | Composition of legislature |
| Direction of voter power | Over the representative (forward looking) | Over the representative ("backward" looking) | Over the system | None for voters; only for contributors |
| Normative criteria | Keeping promises | Quality of rep/ constituent deliberation during term | Quality of deliberation during authorizing election Ease of selection, maintenance, and removal | 1. Representation of conflicting interests in proportion to numbers in population 2. Significant representation of important perspectives |
| Traditional accountability | Yes | No | No | No |

"Introduction" and "Elections and Representation"

1. **Cite Key:** \cite{Przeworski1999}
2. **Authors:** Bernard Manin, Adam Przeworski, and Susan C. Stokes

3. **Year:** 1999
4. **Journal:** Democracy, Accountability and Representation (edited volume)
5. **Keywords:** Mandate vs. Accountability in elections
6. **Summary:** The authors argue that from an accountability perspective, we can see the politician polity relationship as a principal agent relationship where voters have imperfect information which thus allows politicians to extract rents. I think it is interesting that the authors point out that having term limits or having politicians believe that they will only get to serve one term incentivizes them to extract maximal rents. So there is a tension between wanting to shorten terms and wanting politicians to not extract rents.
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) **The Mandate Conception of Representation:** mandate-representation occurs if the public is well educated in the campaign process and if the elected government pursues the mandate and pursuing the mandate is in the best interest of the electorate.

Interests of politicians coincide with those of voters. Citizens and governments have identical interests if governments want in their self-interest to bring about states of the world that are most desired by citizens. (p. 31)
 - (b) The authors discuss when deviating from the mandate given might be in the best interest of the electorate:

To summarize: under some conditions, incumbents may either pursue policies that enhance that welfare of voters by deviating from the mandate or they may adhere to the mandate even if they think that implementing it is not best for voters. And if implementing the mandate is not the best the government can do, then the threat of punishing incumbents who deviate from it is not credible. Voters may not like governments that betray promises, but they will not punish politicians who made them sufficiently better. (p. 37-38)
 - (c) Furthermore the authors point out that it is important that governments not be forced to stick to their mandates:

We choose policies that represent our interests or candidates who represent us as persons, but we want governments to be able to govern. As a result, while we would prefer governments to stick to their promises, democracy contains no institutional mechanisms that insure that our choices would be respected. (p. 40)
 - (d) **The Accountability Conception of Representation:** accountability representation happens only when “voters vote to retain the incumbent only when the incumbent acts in their best interest, and the incumbent chooses policies necessary to get reelected.” (p. 40)
 - (e) Because voters do not have perfect information about the relative causes of outcomes (policy vs. exogenous conditions) they have to adopt one of the following postures:
 1. They can extrapolate the present experience into the future. This is the “normal” posture, insofar as this is what models of retrospective voting normally assume.
 2. They can assume an “intertemporal” posture (Przeworski 1996), expecting that the worse things have gotten, the better they augur for the future.
 3. They can assume an “exonerating” posture, attributing the decline of their welfare to bad conditions, rather than to anything the government did.
 - (f) There can be more than one use for a vote than either of the extremes posed by these two conceptions:

In a pure accountability model, voters use the vote only for one purpose, which is to sanction the incumbent, and the entire information available to voters is revealed by the performance of the incumbent. In a pure mandate model, voters compare promises candidates make about the future, and use the vote only to choose the better candidate. (p. 44)

- (g) “it seems that majoritarian institutions generate governments that are farther from voters in policy space but more accountable.” (p. 47)

Week 3: The Capacity of the Electorate

Summary of the Debate

In general, the bulk of evidence seems to come down on the side of voters not being well informed as a group. They also seem to be manipulable and to often make decisions that are not in their best interests. There is a debate as to whether highly partisan or more moderate voters are better informed. There is also a vigorous debate as to how well voters do in aggregate with some saying they do alright and others saying they do not do well. See also sections 2.4, 2.6, 2.7 , and 5.2 for the article on nonseparable preferences.

The debate over the competence of voters has three stages in its evolution. Prior to the work of [Converse \(1962\)](#), political scientists generally thought that the public was well informed and that it behaved like invested elites. However, [Converse \(1962\)](#) provocatively argued that voters are not sophisticated and do not make very consistent positions. This view was disputed by authors like [Lupia \(1994\)](#) who argued that heuristics can let uninformed voters do about as well as informed voters, especially in national elections. [Lau and Redlawsk \(1997\)](#) try to estimate the proportion of people who actually vote correctly in presidential elections and find this to be about 75%. While many political scientists saw heuristics as a way to save the uninformed voter from making bad decisions, [Kuklinski and Quirk \(2000\)](#) point out that cognitive biases mean that heuristics do not necessarily mean we will do better as voters. [Druckman \(2001\)](#) points out the importance of framing effects in elections but offers some comfort that political party cues can prevent some of the worst choice switching due to reframing. Finally, [Tomz and Van Houweling \(2009\)](#) experimentally demonstrates that candidate ambiguity can improve election performance because people have optimistic biases in their perception of ambiguity, meaning information may not matter anyway.

Summary from Memo

I was particularly taken with the [Lau and Redlawsk \(1997\)](#) article on voting correctly but I would like to expand upon their experimental design a bit. I think that while the authors did a good job in many aspects of their experimental design, particularly in how they replicate the information overload process of a real election campaign, I feel that there are several important flaws in their experimental design:

1. They do not provide a strong incentive for subjects to pick what they think is the best candidate in the limited information elicitation. This may not be such a big problem with bias as there is arguably no incentive to not pick your favorite candidate, but there are problems with not making the importance of the decision highly salient. It may just be that people are not really paying attention during the initial stage and then when they are told that the last part of the experiment is “very important” they actually focus on the task and give their reasoned choice. If this is the case then we cannot say why people change their decisions.
2. The authors correctly point out that there are possible confounds with asking a person if they would change their vote: 1. Wanting to reinforce that one had made the right decision in the first round (a

pride argument), 2. Post decision dissonance reduction and 3. fatigue. Theoretically, these all point towards people not rejecting their previous vote choice, thus biasing their result that 75% of people do not switch upward. This alone is problematic but more importantly they omit any discussion of **experimenter demand effects**. Based on their description of the final full information part of their elicitation where they ask subjects if they would have switched their votes, one could argue that the authors go too far in the direction of encouraging people to switch. One might argue that people switch because they think that is what the experimenter wants them to do. This makes interpretation of their results even more challenging as we do not know whether results are biased up or down.

3. The third problem is with endogenous belief formation. If people do not usually engage with politics very much, they may not have very strongly ingrained political preferences or they might not be familiar with all aspects of the questionnaire they are given at the beginning of the study. I think it would have been appropriate given that people were shown a lot of mock political information to give them a second survey identical to the initial survey after they completed the main part of the study to see if their beliefs or attitudes change. This is another source of potential bias.
4. It is also problematic that the authors do not describe the other study that subjects participated in between when they took part in the limited information vote and the full information vote. How can the reader be sure this did not bias the full information elicitation?

I have some thoughts on possible revisions that could strengthen a study like this:

1. Using a within-between design may have given them more traction in determining the degree of confirmation bias (wanting to vote the same to confirm your previous choice) in their study. Give one group a within subjects treatment as the authors did, another just the limited information treatment and a third group only the full information treatment. If the appropriate matching procedures are used, this would give the experimenters a clean measure of confirmation bias.
2. The authors could have considered a treatment where they incentivize subjects to make the “right” choice. They could provide information about a fictitious person the subject was voting for and pay them based on how well they represented that person’s interests based on congruence between candidate choice and described preferences. This would give a measure of how good subjects are at simple political optimization.

The Nature of Mass Belief Systems in Mass Publics.

1. **Cite Key:** \cite{converse1962nature}
2. **Authors:** Philip E. Converse
3. **Year:** 1964
4. **Journal:** Ideology and Discontent (book)
5. **Keywords:** belief system, information, ideology
6. **Summary:** This is a foundational work in which converse essentially argues that ordinary people are not sophisticated voters and do not really have much of any idea what is going on and do not think things through. He argues that this lack of ideological constraint causes people to vote largely on non-political factors. He also introduces a hierarchy of levels of conceptualization and places the use of a ideological yardstick at the top of this hierarchy. He also introduces the idea of there being 8 different issue publics that are not hierarchically associated with eachother.
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Belief system is a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint o functional interdependence (p. 3)

- (b) Idea-elements within a belief system vary in their degree of *centrality*.
- (c) Belief systems can have a different ranges. they can be narrow and focused or broad and encompassing.
- (d) Converse argues that historically, studies have assumed that because people can think things through logically, they will not insist on decreased taxes, increased spending an a balanced budget, for example. These studies also attribute this sort of deliberative thinking to elites like senators and the rich (for which it may be a bit more true), but then also attribute it to ordinary people which Converse thinks is fallacious.
- (e) sources of constrain on belief systems: Logical, psychological, social (path dependency based on history and the way ideas get diffused as tending to be in neat packages)
- (f) Consequences of declining information for beliefs systems as we go from elites to common people:
 - i. There will be more clustering of narrower, less consistent belief systems.
 - ii. Ideas will be more concrete and less abstract.
 - iii. limited horizons and myopia.
- (g) people tend to use ideology as a yardstick of liberal-conservative
- (h) Levels of conceptualization (from highest to least)
 - i. Ideologue - people who used liberal-conservative as an abstract yardstick.
 - ii. Near-Ideologue - people who mentioned ideology but did not rely on it centrally
 - iii. Group Interest - people who evaluate parites based on the percieved benefits they provide to their group
 - iv. Nature of the times - sort of residual category
 - v. no issue content - view of politics did not have anything to do with policies
- (i) Converse finds that Liberal-Conservative is most often conflated with spend-save.
- (j) The higher up the conceptualization scale a person is, the more likely they are to get questions about classifying stereotypical beliefs correct.
- (k) Converse find strong evidence for opinion leadership within a family where wives follow husband's opinions when it comes to politics.
- (l) looking at party identification over time, Converse finds that political party identification is much more central in people's belief systems than the policies parties represent over time. That is to say that people will keep their party identification even if their views change on underlying issues.
- (m) Converse identifies eight different "issue publics" from his survey. He finds that these do not fall into a sort of hierarchical structure where everyone cares about some issue and then progressively fewer of the same people care about more abstract issues or something like that. Instead he finds that people care about their issue and this has no baring on whether they care about other issues.
- (n) argues that democratic party is more unitary and less fractured than republican party.
- (o) The punch line seems to be that complicated belief systems associated with different parties ideologies are important predictors of behavior for elites but not for the uneducated.

Shortcuts versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Lupia1994}

2. **Authors:** Arthur Lupia

3. **Year:** 1994

4. **Journal:** APSR

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Lupia argues that there are some widely available information shortcuts that allow relatively uninformed voters to emulate well informed voters. Lupia conducts a survey in California regarding a referendum on a very complex proposed reform to insurance law.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) There is encyclopedic knowledge (facts) and there are shortcuts like what people know about insurance company preferences (making more money) allowing them to make decisions like more well informed voters by knowing that because insurance companies did not want the rate cap, they should vote for the rate cap.
- (b) "Voters in mass elections are notorious for their apparent lack of information about relevant political matters. While some scholars argue that an electorate of well-informed voters is necessary for the production of responsive electoral outcomes, others argue that apparently ignorant voters will suffice because they can adapt their behavior to the complexity of electoral choice. To evaluate the validity of these arguments, I develop and analyze a survey of California voters who faced five complicated insurance reform ballot initiatives. I find that access to a particular class of widely available information shortcuts allowed badly informed voters to emulate the behavior of relatively well informed voters. This finding is suggestive of the conditions under which voters who lack encyclopedic information about the content of electoral debates can nevertheless use information shortcuts to vote as though they were well informed" (Abstract)

Voting Correctly.

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Lau1997}

2. **Authors:** Richard R. Lau, David P. Redlawsk

3. **Year:** 1997

4. **Journal:** APSR

5. **Keywords:** experiment, voting correctly, optimization

6. **Summary:** The authors designed an experiment to overwhelm subjects with information about candidates in a simulated election so that they had to be selective with the information they chose to intake. Sample taken in 1994, from New Jersey, ~ 300 people not currently attending college. Paid \$ 20 for showing up. Elicitation was: general political survey, mock 1996 election vote, mock computerized campaign with too much information and vote. Then subjects determined whether their vote was in-fact correct. This worked by the experimenter coming out and saying that the subject had not really received all of the information and to make them feel comfortable switching their vote if they actually felt it was what they would have done. The authors also had a second method for calculating whether a vote was correct give the information they saw based on a complicated scoring mechanism where voters make a weighted average of favor ability of candidate based on their beliefs and then pick the candidate with the highest score.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) The authors define a correct voting decision as one that would have been made if the voter were operating under the condition of full information.
- (b) 75% of people vote correctly in presidential elections
- (c) they bring up three problems with the self determination of whether your vote was wrong. self-presentation (not wanting to appear as being wrong) , avoiding post decision dissonance, fatigue. WHAT ABOUT EXPERIMENTER DEMAND?
- (d) This experiment has a major problem with experimenter demand. How do we know that they did not just think they were supposed to switch. We also tend to see a very strong bias toward going with what you did in the previous round so we cannot say which is more likely. We could go with a more abstract situation where there just really was a payoff dominant choice and see how many people chose it.
- (e) Application to american presidential races: three hypotheses:
 - i. More correct decisions when there are fewer candidates. (statistical support)
 - ii. More correct decisions when candidates are easily distinguishable. (statistical support)
 - iii. More equal distribution of candidate resources leads to more correct decisions. (qualitative support)

Reconsidering the Rational Public: Cognition, Heuristics, and Mass Opinion.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Kuklinski2000}

2. **Authors:** James H. Kuklinski, Paul J. Quirk

3. **Year:** 2000

4. **Journal:** Elements of Reason (book)

5. **Keywords:** heuristics, biases, cognitive science, aggregate rationality

6. **Summary:** The authors interrogate two widely held positions in political science that the public is generally rational in their voting decisions in aggregate and that to the degree that people use heuristics, these tend to help them make the right choices. The authors argue that we need to take a cognitive science approach which finds that people make systematic biases in their judgments and that we should not expect that people get it right in aggregate.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Two hypotheses: (1) the public use heuristics to make good judgments; (2) the public are rational in aggregate.
- (b) Some heuristics:
 - i. Political party
 - ii. likeability
 - iii. assuming president controls the economy
- (c) But the authors argue that these are not of much value because people miss apply them.
- (d) There is a difference between well informed and relatively well informed.
- (e) Six findings on human cognition:

- i. much of human cognitive capacity is hard wired.
- ii. We evolved to survive as hunter gatherers and this makes some modern tasks more challenging.
- iii. our mind is modular and applies domain specific reasoning.
- iv. central vs. peripheral processing are quite different in the strategies our brain uses to make calculations.
- v. emotional systems make crude over-generalizations that affect our reasoning.
- vi. we subconsciously generate systematically false beliefs to support things like group cohesion
- (f) Implications for mass politics:
 - i. We should not presume that human cognition is well adapted to political thinking.
 - ii. We should expect systematic biases in heuristic judgments.
 - iii. We should not expect a great deal of ordinary citizen's judgments.
- (g) Some common stereotypes are : policy stereotypes, overconfidence, resistance to correction, biased interpretations of messages, over-response to policy positions,

The Implications of Framing Effects for Citizen Competence.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Druckman2001}

2. Authors: James N. Druckman

3. Year: 2001

4. Journal: Political Behavior

5. Keywords: Framing effects, citizen competence

6. Summary: The authors argue that framing effects do have an effect on citizen voting but this effect is not uniform nor is it necessarily as strong or as bad as we might think. He complicates our understanding of framing in politics and offers several theoretical refinements along with an experiment where he shows that party cuing can prevent preference reversal in Kahneman and Tversky's classic experiment on equivalency framing.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) There have been a number of different definitions of framing in behavioral political science research.
- (b) Frames in communication: words images and styles used by a speaker.
- (c) Frames in thought: how people understand a situation.
- (d) equivalency framing effect - presenting the same situation in two different ways. people killed vs. people saved.
- (e) emphasis framing effect - speaker can lead people to focus on a particular subset of information.
- (f) citizen competence - preference invariance, preferences not the product of elite manipulation.
- (g) The authors find that when Kahneman and Tversky's classic experiment on equivalency framing effects where they show that people switch on choosing between policies that save lives (or reduce the number of people that die) is put in a political party context, people no longer switch, suggesting that political party cues help deal with framing effects by enforcing consistency.
- (h) "In short, framing effects are remarkably complex. Sometimes they work and other times they do not, and, despite common practice, it is just as important to document cases of failed framing effects as successful framing effects. Sometimes framing effects serve as evidence of incompetence and other times they do not (p. 246)."

The Electoral Implications of Candidate Ambiguity.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Tomz2009}

2. Authors: Michael Tomz, Robert Van Houweling

3. Year: 2009

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Candidates often make ambiguous statements about the policies they intend to pursue. In theory, ambiguity affects how voters make choices and who wins elections. In practice, measurement and endogeneity problems have impeded empirical research about the consequences of ambiguity. We conducted survey experiments that overcame these obstacles by manipulating a common form of ambiguity: the imprecision of candidate positions. Our data show that, on average, **ambiguity does not repel and may, in fact, attract voters**. In nonpartisan settings, voters who have neutral or positive attitudes toward risk, or who feel uncertain about their own policy preferences, tend to embrace ambiguity. **In partisan settings, voters respond even more positively to ambiguity; they optimistically perceive the locations of ambiguous candidates from their own party without pessimistically perceiving the locations of vague candidates from the opposition.** We further find, through analysis of two additional new data sets, that candidates often take – and voters frequently perceive – ambiguous positions like the ones in our experiments. The pervasive use of ambiguity in campaigns fits with our experimental finding that **ambiguity can be a winning strategy, especially in partisan elections.** (Abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) When voters are risk averse they prefer the precise candidate to the ambiguous one because they know what they are getting.
- (b) Expected utility with a bit of risk loving and imprecise or subjective probabilities can lead voters to prefer the ambiguous candidate.

Week 4: Realities of Structural Inequalities

Summary of the Debate

Prior to the works we read, it was generally assumed that because poor people are mostly democrats and they mostly do not vote, if they did, democrats would always win. [Highton and Wolfinger \(2001\)](#) find that non-voters are only barely majority poor and their heterogeneity makes voters actually reasonably representative of them. However, [Hajnal and Trounstein \(2005\)](#) find that where low turnout really matters (and affects the poor) is in local elections as opposed to national ones. [Rosenstone and Hansen \(1993b\)](#) track the changes and general decline in political participation over the last 50 years and find that reduced efforts to mobilize voters is the largest contributor to this decline. Turning to interest groups, [Schlozman \(1984\)](#) finds that these tend to overwhelmingly represent wealthy business interests, suggesting another form of bias in representation. However, [Barakso et al. \(2011\)](#) counter this finding to some extent with their finding that the presence of human capital in an area is much more predictive of the number of political interest groups in an area than the average income in that area, suggesting participation is still important in interest groups vs. money.

Summary from Memo

The two main points I took away from the readings this week were:

1. Participation is skewed to under-represent some poor or marginalized groups in local elections but this bias largely goes away in national elections.
2. Interest groups are skewed towards representing the rich, but geographic representation by interest groups is more linked to social capital in a geographic region than money.

This brought into clear focus for me the challenge for representation when laws require implementation. One interesting question this brings up for me is: what portion of the battle is getting officials elected? How strong is the influence of interest groups relative to voters given that policy making happens for long periods of time between when people vote? I thought it was interesting how all of the articles we read this week seemed to find descriptive representation important. But money in politics seems to make this an irrelevant point if policy wording is bought.

There are several interesting research questions that come to mind based off of these readings. In particular, I was left with several questions by the Barakso et al. (2011) piece.

1. How would the picture change if we were to interact the number of interest groups and revenue per capita? I am curious as to the degree to which money and social capital reinforce each-other. Perhaps weighting each group's contribution to the number of groups in an area by its relative revenue might get at this. We would expect that those areas with lots of interest groups per capita would also have high revenue per capita but I would still be interested to explore this.
2. I am also interested in whether interest groups of a particular kind or category are more likely to be politically involved. This might suggest a weighting scheme for measuring their political impact.
3. Just because an interest group is located in a particular place does not necessitate that it represent the citizens of that place, or that it be limited to getting support from that area (the gun rights group near New Town comes to mind) . It would be interesting to get a better sense of the distribution of geographical reach of these organizations and of their relative size in number of active members.

I am also curious about the prospects for using natural experiments or randomized-controlled experiments to measure the relative determinants of voter turnout.

1. It seems that studying local elections is really the way to go here because it is the only realistic way to get the kind of variation and exogenous shocks one needs for a natural experiment. I wonder if one could use changes in voting procedures or the creation of additional polling stations as an exogenous shock reducing the costs to voting. Then one could take advantage of the natural variation in efforts on the part of politicians to increase mobilization as a way of separating out the two effects. Panagopolis and Bowers (2012) have a nice working paper on this.
2. Facebook friends/likes and twitter followers might be an interesting proxy mobilization as it represents a conscious effort on the part of voters to engage with a politician or their campaign.

The Political Implications of Higher Turnout.

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Highton2001}

2. **Authors:** Benjamin Highton, Raymond E. Wolfinger
3. **Year:** 2001

4. **Journal:** British Journal of Political Science

5. **Keywords:** Turnout, non-voters, National Election Survey

6. **Summary:** The authors explore the question of whether higher turnout would affect election outcomes. They engage with a literature that says because poor people are mostly democrats and they mostly do not vote, if they did, democrats would always win. This speaks in favor of compulsory voting. However, the author's study shows this is not the case. They find that non-voters are only barely majority poor and their heterogeneity makes voters actually reasonably representative of them. There is a slight democrat leaning though.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) Voters are over-represented in the National Elections Survey (70 percent of respondents vote vs 50 percent of whole population) by about 20%. This makes inference from the NES problematic. However, this discrepancy is in part due to people who say they vote but do not, and this correlates with evidence. Thus the differences we see should be an upper bound on differences. If we correct for this, we see vote shares changing by less than 10 percent. This is still a lot though!
- (b) "we could find few signs that non-voters suffered more than other Americans from undeveloped class consciousness." (p. 188)
- (c) "The more commonly mentioned groups of non-voters are smaller. People without a high school diploma, the poor and minorities each comprise between 24 and 30 per cent of the non-voters.³⁹ Only when these three groups are combined does one find a majority of putatively liberal nonvoters. And even in this case, they represent a bare majority, somewhat smaller than the number of non-voters who are either residentially mobile or young. Thus the notion that non-voting is concentrated among a single group or a set of related groups is incorrect." (p. 192)
- (d) "The explanation for the modest changes may be found in the characteristics of non-voters. To be sure, the poor, less educated and minorities are overrepresented among non-voters. But the young and the transient are even more numerous. By themselves, none of these groups constitutes even a majority of non-voters. Combined, they barely do so. What our findings have demonstrated is that the 'party of non-voters' is heterogeneous. Taken as a whole, non-voters appear well represented by those who vote." (p. 192)

Where Turnout Matters: The Consequences of Uneven Turnout in City Politics.

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Hajnal2005}

2. **Authors:** Zoltan Hajnal, Jessica Trounstone

3. **Year:** 2005

4. **Journal:** Journal of Politics

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:**

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) “By focusing on city elections we find that lower turnout leads to substantial reductions in the representation of Latinos and Asian Americans on city councils and in the mayors office. For African Americans district elections and off-cycle local elections are more important barriers to representation.” (p. 515)
- (b) fewer than 10% of adults vote in local elections
- (c) “As detailed in Tingstons (1937) law of dispersion, the chances of skew are inversely proportional to overall electoral participation” (p. 517)
- (d) “in the case of mayoral elections, we run a series of simulations focusing on how uneven turnout affects outcomes in the most recent mayoral elections in the nations 10 largest cities” (p. 519)
- (e) “Moving from at-large to district elections and moving the dates of local elections to coincide with national contests could substantially reduce black underrepresentation at the local level” (p. 531)

Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America (Chapters 2 and 8)

1. Cite Key:

`\cite{Rosenstone1993a}`

2. **Authors:** Steven J. Rosenstone, John Mark Hansen

3. **Year:** 2002

4. **Journal:** Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America. (book)

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Why people turn out, and why turnout has declined over time.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) The benefits will never exceed the costs for most people. Thus, two paradoxes: rational non-participation and rational ignorance. Moreover, a model based only on personal-level variables can't explain why participation peaked in the 1960s, dipped in the 1970s, then rose again in the 1980s—even while education, income, and so on rose steadily; thus, they don't explain participation.
- (b) The authors attempt to explain the decline in turnout between the 1960s and 1980s:
 - i. Mobilization is the major cause: Less effort at mobilization: explains 54% of decline.
 - ii. Voting age drops to 18: explains 17% of the decline in turnout
 - iii. Weakened social involvement: explains 9% of decline
 - iv. Declining feelings of political efficacy: explains 9% of decline
 - v. Weakened attachment to parties/candidates: explains 11% of decline

What Accent the Heavenly Chorus? Political Equality and the American Pressure System.

1. Cite Key:

`\cite{Schlozman1984}`

2. **Authors:** Kay Schlozman

3. **Year:** 1984
4. **Journal:** Journal of Politics
5. **Keywords:** Interest Groups, Bias, Representation
6. **Summary:** It is difficult to theorize what genuine fair representation by interest groups would look like but whatever the case, businesses are over-represented and thus there is not fair representation by interest groups.
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) "Although much has been made of the arrival in Washington of many new citizens groups over the past two decades, **business interests are overrepresented among organized interests there in terms of the number of interest organizations and the structure of interest representation. This overrepresentation takes place at the expense of the representation of the interests of broad publics and the poor.** Further, in spite of the emergence over the past two decades of many organizations representing the interests of the previously underrepresented, the **bias in the pressure system towards the interests of business and the well-off seems to have become more pronounced.** Although there are complicated formal problems in attempting to harmonize the principle of political equality with the representation of interests by organizations and, therefore, in specifying what an unbiased pressure system would look like, it is clear that an unbiased pressure system would be quite different from what presently obtains." (abstract)
 - (b) "One way the principle of equality among individuals may be reconciled with collective representation is to specify that "the resources of all organizations [be] effectively regulated so that they are proportional to the number of member" (p. 1009)
 - (c) "a very large share of the civil rights and social welfare organizations and of the groups representing women, the elderly, and the handicapped are new, having been established since 1960. Although their numbers have grown substantially, there are, however, still so few of them compared with other kinds of organizations that they do not form a more significant component in the pressure system." (p. 1025)

Assessing the Importance of Financial and Human Capital for Interest Group Sector Strength across American Communities.

1. **Cite Key:**
`\cite{Barakso2011}`
2. **Authors:** Maryann Barakso, Jessica Gerrity, Brian F. Schaffner
3. **Year:** 2011
4. **Journal:** British Journal of Political Science
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** The literature has argued that interest groups are increasingly moving towards donating members and away from physically participating members. If this is the case, then is the composition of communities represented by interest groups increasingly affluent?
7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) “This widespread macro-level analysis of the interest group sector indicates that human capital is more important than financial capital for the strength of a community’s interest group sector. Financially disadvantaged communities may still enjoy the benefits of a strong interest group sector provided they have a citizenry equipped with time to donate.” (p. 557)
- (b) Lowry finds that education one potential source of human capital is a consistent and important predictor of the number of groups in a state. (p. 558)
- (c) The authors define communities as 195 media markets as opposed to previous studies that go by state, thus disaggregating.
- (d) “Our findings indicate that human capital plays a far more important role than financial capital in affecting the strength of a community’s interest group sector” (p. 559)
- (e) Benefits of interest groups: “Among the noteworthy contributions of interest groups is their **capacity to represent diverse interests by mobilizing and informing citizens, thereby strengthening democracies. Voluntary associations may engender trust among citizens, reinforcing social and community ties.** To some extent, groups may enhance democracy because they stimulate individuals to participate in other organizations and civic activities. **Strong associational systems may also promote more responsive and efficient governments**” (p. 560)
- (f) “Contributions of patrons or donors are nonetheless unlikely to sustain groups alone; typically, groups also rely on other sources of income, including their ability to cultivate new donors and retain existing ones. In fact, for many interest groups, public donations constitute a substantial proportion of their budget” (p. 562)
- (g) “our dependent variables are the number of non-profit organizations per 1,000 citizens in each community and the gross per capita revenues of these organizations” (p. 564)
- (h) The authors look at both interest group income per-capita and interest groups per capita. They find that when including social capital and economic variables in their models, social capital explains more of the variation in both media market and county level models.
- (i) Could you have tried an composite index of number of organizations times the a weighted amount of their income. could also do some sort of rank test for the concordance in ordering between the two implied orderings.

Week 5: Small N Observational Studies of Dyadic Representation

Summary of the Debate

[Fenno \(1977\)](#) provides what is considered to be the ultimate observational study of members of congress. He follows a bunch of members of the house around and finds that they tend to serve four **nested constituencies** of varying importance. He also introduces the idea that (following Goffman’s presentation of self) that MCs have to choose a **home style** or how they present themselves to their constituents. [Jacobs and Shapiro \(2000\)](#) challenge the previously held view that politicians simply make policy directly influenced by the polls as the literature had argued because they are increasingly shaping the messages that the public gets through the use of **Crafted Talk**.

Summary from Memo

One of the central threads in the readings this week was an exploration of how and to what extent politicians and interest group leaders are responsive to their constituents. The discussion in Jacobs and Shapiro (2000) brings up a number of points which I think are particularly germane to the design of studies of media coverage of politics. One set of questions would focus on how the media shape

coverage of politics, another would look for consistent patterns in the way particular politicians and parties communicate to the media about their policies and positions as a test of Jacobs and Shapiro's argument about *Crafted Talk*, and a third would look at the time dynamics of media coverage to explore the degree to which implied responsiveness in media coverage diverges from actual policy responsiveness.

On the first set of questions, the most obvious route to go in looking at this would be to explore the variations in framing and topical content across hosted shows. I would expect that different television show hosts apply their own lenses and filters to what they expose the public to and how they do this. Thus we should see different levels of emphasis on different issues from different hosts. It would be interesting to see the extent to which demographic and ideological factors affect coverage and even to place news pundits on a sort of DW-Nominate scale or space. Taking a step further out in scope, the next step would be to see if we can identify coherent narratives at the station or network levels. Common sense would suggest that we ought to see a very coherent topical structure in news organizations like Fox News but perhaps a less coherent topical structure in more "fair and balanced" news channels like C-SPAN or PBS? I have been working with topic-coherence metrics that measure the fit of topic models and it seems like training a model on a corpus of transcripts from each station and comparing the coherence scores across these models would be a good way to begin to get at this.

The second set of questions would be a bit more difficult to get empirical traction on in the television transcript setting. One would need to identify the instances where a particular politician or their staff were speaking to the media and try to follow a coherent narrative across time which presents major data coding challenges. I think the much more exciting route would be to build or get access to a database of press releases put out by members of congress since the 1940's or 1950's. If we had access to that kind of data we could follow the topical coherence of these press releases for particular politicians and aggregated over parties as well as between the official party press releases and individual politicians and see if we saw a decline in this coherence for the beginning of the data set until the 1970's and then a reversal towards more coherence. This would then give us the ability to correlate this with the measures of government policy responsiveness to median public opinion discussed in Jacobs and Shapiro over time. We could use major political events like the Monica Lewinski scandal, 9/11 and 2008 financial crisis as exogenous shocks to see whether we get a temporary divergence in coherence and responsiveness as people are distracted by these big stories as a way to test the idea that there is a strategic element to *Crafted Talk*.

The third set of questions would require looking at the implied agreement between public opinion and policies in media relative to the best results from polling we can get. This idea is motivated out of an idea that ideologically motivated news organizations have a motivation to make the public think that the public thinks they are being listened to or not listened to depending on who is in power. For example it would be interesting to look at the degree of implied agreement between public opinion and policy on Fox News when there is a republican president versus when there is a democratic president. One would expect that they would overstate agreement in their coverage when there is a Republican president and understate it when there is a democratic president. I think we could get traction on this by using a fine grained topic model or even text regression or latent semantic indexing an correlating public opinion mentions or topics with positive/negative and agreement/disagreement topics over time.

Understanding Political Science Research: The Challenge of Inference (Chapter 4)

1. Cite Key:

`\cite{Barakso2013}`

2. Authors: Barakso, Sabet, Schaffner

3. Year: 2013-2014

4. **Journal:** Understanding Political Science Research: The Challenge of Inference (book)
5. **Keywords:** Research, qualitative and quantitative analysis, inference
6. **Summary:** The authors lay out an undergraduate text introducing research methods and sort of modes of doing good research.
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Book deals with descriptive and causal inference.
 - (b) Characteristics of a good research question:
 - i. A good Research Question is non-normative and answerable.
 - ii. A good research question generates some implications for understanding real world problems.
 - iii. Addresses a debate in the literature.
 - iv. Not too broad or narrow.
 - (c) Characteristics of good theory:
 - i. Good theory concretely specifies concepts it invokes.
 - ii. Good theory is Falsifiable.
 - iii. Testable hypotheses because it has observable implications.
 - (d) Goals of the literature review:
 - i. Expanded discussion of your research question.
 - ii. Delineate key discussion and debates in the literature that are germane to your question.
 - iii. Play your own work against the current theories and results. This is the hole in the literature and this is why I can do better.
 - (e) **Conceptualization** is the process of defining variables of interest.
 - (f) **Social desirability bias:** survey respondents will give you the response they think is socially acceptable rather than their true opinion.
 - (g) A common mistake in surveys is a **double-barreled question** , or a question that really ask about two things which is problematic because you cannot know which part your respondent is answering.
 - (h) “Because different researchers conduct the scoring for different countries, it is almost impossible to ensure that all the researchers are using the same criteria in their evaluations, a problem known as **inter-coder reliability**.” (p. 94)
 - (i) “**Systematic sampling error** typically results from **coverage bias** or **non-response bias**. Coverage bias occurs when the **sampling frame** , or the group from which the sample is actually drawn, is somehow different from the population.” (p. 98)
 - (j) “interview data can be complemented with other pieces of data perhaps newspaper articles or citizen complaints filed at an oversight agency. In short, the qualitative researcher is able to use several pieces of information to arrive at an inference, a process often referred to as **triangulation** .” (p. 107)

Congressmen in Their Constituencies: An Exploration.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Fenno1977}

2. Authors: Richard Fenno

3. **Year:** 1977
4. **Journal:** APSR
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** This is an ethnographic or observational study of how congressmen see their constituencies. Policy preferences are not the only way that constituents and representatives relate, they engage on multiple other planes as well.
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) “What does an elected representative see when he or she sees a constituency? And, as a natural follow-up, what consequences do these perceptions have for her behavior? The key problem is that of perception. And the key assumption is that the constituency a representative reacts to is the constituency he or she sees. The corollary assumption is that the rest of us cannot understand the representative-constituency relationship until we can see the constituency through the eyes of the representative.”(p. 883)
 - (b) Fenno followed a total of about 15 members of the house of representatives on one to several trips to their home districts to observe what they did and saw.
 - (c) Fenno argues we should see how congressmen see their constituencies as a series of concentric circles with the geographic district as the outer circle.
 - (d) Inside the **geographic constituency** the representative sees his **re-election constituency**.
 - (e) The **Primary constituency** is the strongest group of supporters.
 - (f) The **personal constituency** is the closest circle of people the congressman knows personally.
 - (g) Congressman has to decide how much resources and time to devote to their home district. This is part of what Fenno terms the **Home Style**:
 - (h) When it comes to allocation of resources, we tend to see that junior senators tend to devote more of their time and resources to being in their district.
 - (i) There are also several mode of presentation of self that senators can undertake.
 - i. **Person to Person style:**
 - ii. **Issue Oriented style:**
 - iii. Presentation of self seems to be explainable by three factors: **contextual, personal, strategic**.
 - (j) Another part of the home style is how they explain what they have been doing in Washington. They tend to explain themselves and criticize the institution so they can abdicate responsibility for its performance.

Politicians Don't Pander: Political Manipulation and the Loss of Democratic Responsiveness (Parts I and IV)

1. **Cite Key:**
`\cite{Jacobs2000a}`
2. **Authors:** Lawrence R. Jacobs, Robert Y. Shapiro
3. **Year:** 2000
4. **Journal:** Politicians Don't Pander: Political Manipulation and the Loss of Democratic Responsiveness (book)

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** The authors argue that politicians do not simply make policy directly influenced by the polls as the literature had argued because they are increasingly shaping the messages that the public gets. They show that many previous studies have assumed that being too responsive to centrist public opinion so would be bad for democracy. But the authors actually argue that it is good for democracy.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Members of congress try to balance their policy and reelection goals in the policies they introduce.
- (b) They are uncertain of how their policies will be viewed by their constituents.
- (c) **Median voter theory** says officials and candidates will try to appeal to the median voter with their policies so they can get elected. This leads to a centrist policy regime. The most important constituency under this theory are moderates.
- (d) There was an increase in responsiveness until the 1970s and then a decline since then, why is this?
- (e) **The Party vote model:** politicians most important constituency is their hard line supporters.
- (f) **The strategic shirking account:** politicians want to pursue policy goals but only do so when they think they can get away with it without getting punished.
- (g) **Strong responsiveness models** suggest that politicians perceive a high reward to adhering to centrist public opinion while **policy-oriented models** suggest that politicians find the most benefit in pursuing their policies while trying to mitigate electoral risks.
- (h) Two limitations to these theories are that they assume that these dynamics are fixed and do not change over time (which they actually have). Second they assume that politicians do not influence how the media and public see their policies.
- (i) Politicians use **Crafted Talk** to frame their policies in a positive light in the media which if done well can let them get away with not actually responding to their constituents. In other words, politicians are increasingly manipulating opinion.
- (j) Five major changes in political and institutional conditions since the 1970's changed politicians incentives to respond to centrist opinion: partisan polarization, institutional individualization, incumbency bias, interest group proliferation, divisive interbranch relations.
- (k) The big thesis of this book is about the strategy of controlling media coverage. Media will want to exaggerate policy differences and there is sort of a cycle of amplified importance of media, especially when media does not actually report on the policies but instead on the strategy.
- (l) We need to fix the media as part of a strategy to promote responsiveness to public opinion. It is a good thing and could lead to transcending party lines.

Civic engagement and voluntary associations: Reconsidering the role of the governance structures of advocacy groups.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Barakso2005}

2. Authors: Maryann Barasko

3. Year: 2005

4. **Journal:** Polity

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:**

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) NOW = National Organization for Women
- (b) “Founded in 1966 and claiming over 250,000 contributing members and over 500 chapters, NOW is one of the most prominent interest groups in the United States; it is also the largest feminist organization. NOW’s political significance and longevity suggest that it is an appropriate and worthwhile case for any analysis of civic engagement in America.” (p. 317)
- (c) Research incorporates Information from about 30 years of national meeting programs and minutes, 6 years of being an observer at the conferences, 20 structured, stratified interviews.
- (d) “The greater the potential influence of group members on the formation of policy and priorities, the more likely they are to become actively involved in the group.” (p. 321) How do we know this is true?
- (e) “The fact that NOW’s political action committee (NOW/PAC) still endorses only those candidates approved by the state and local organizations is a more recent example of NOW’s attention to its grassroots members.” (p. 323)
- (f) NOW holds very frequent elections including for a president every four years.
- (g) Barasko argues that the excruciatingly democratic process and focus on flatness has probably hurt women’s groups in the past. Can a group be too democratic.
- (h) “Even when they encounter resistance from national leaders, rank-and-file members can exert demonstrable influence on the organization. The process favors activists who exhibit persistence, who are willing and able to mobilize others, and who are adept enough to form strategic alliances.” (p. 328)
- (i) “Abjuring contributions that might compromise its independence from governmental or other entities (as directed by its guiding principles), NOW relies heavily on membership dues and donations. Approximately two-thirds of its income is derived from membership dues.” (p. 329) and rebate 14% of money back to subunits.
- (j) “Civic skills are ”the participatory or ’democratic’-type activities which [organizations] give their members the opportunity to perform, and which are supposed to increase the likelihood of these same members participating in the political process”.” (p. 330)
- (k) “Pamela Paxton notes that the quality of citizen participation, rather than the sheer number of political acts, should concern scholars interested in the relationship between civic engagement and democracy.” (p. 331)

Week 6: Large N Observational Studies of Dyadic Representation

Summary of the Debate

Miller and Stokes (1963a) present the reigning model of how voters think about policy representation. They also find that representatives respond differentially to their constituents on different issues. Particularly, the authors find that Civil Rights occupies a special place of getting particularly strong mandate representation. Achen (1978) makes a methodological critique of Miller and Stokes and finds that candidates who were not elected actually represented their constituents better than those who were and

that the people are equally well represented on all issues. [Ansolabehere and Jones \(2010\)](#) make a further contribution to resolving the methodological debate by asking survey respondents how they would have voted on bills and how they thought their representatives voted. They find that the American electorate responds strongly to substantive representation. [Wright and Schaffner \(2002\)](#) provide strong evidence from a comparison of state legislatures that the presence of parties is key to representation and accountability. [Clinton \(2006\)](#) contributes further to research on the role of parties (in an analysis of roll call votes in the 106th House), finding that representatives are not completely responsive to the district mean voter and that only majority party Republicans are especially responsive to the preferences of same-party constituents. Finally, [Hall and Wayman \(1990\)](#) provide findings against a long-held belief by scholars that money does not influence legislator behavior as they show that money is key in agenda setting, not roll-call votes.

Summary from Memo

This week, the articles we read all made some effort to measure representation. This brought to mind the four kinds of representation discussed in [Mansbridge \(2003\)](#) as well as the four different ways an elected official can be representative of their constituents discussed by [Pitkin \(1967\)](#). Efforts to measure representation and draw some conclusions for the health of democracy hinge critically on the author's definition of what it means for citizens to be represented.

[Miller and Stokes \(1963a\)](#) take a view the representation is either Promissory or Anticipatory, and use voting records and preference elicitation for congressmen and their constituents as a measure of representation. They also seem to implicitly argue that people are represented descriptively by their congressman as they are looking at the degree to which the preferences of the constituents and officials match up as a measure of representation. [Achen \(1978\)](#) again takes a view of representation as being descriptive because the measures he uses compare a sort of ideology and preferences index for elected officials and their constituents and how close they are. This study explicitly measures promissory representation with the representativeness score he calculates and again takes a general stance the representation means that an elected official is like their constituents and does what they are told by their constituents. [Hall and Wayman \(1990\)](#) dive into the realm of surrogate representation but to the degree that they are interested in how well congressmen represent special interests, they are interested in the substantive representation these groups receive. [Clinton \(2006\)](#) follows suit with a descriptive-promisory view of representation that measures how well constituent preferences are reflected in representative voting. [Ansolabehere and Jones \(2010\)](#) conceptualize representation both as promissory and substantive which is reflected in their measurement of constituent beliefs about how their representative voted on key pieces of legislation and find that constituents do hold their representatives accountable on these grounds.

The common thread we find in all of these studies is the idea that representation is descriptive and/or substantive. A representative is measured to be representing their constituents to the degree that their views match up to their constituents views and they vote the way their constituents would want them to vote, especially on key pieces of legislation. Furthermore, my reading is that these authors also implicitly assume that constituents elect their representatives based on the promises they make and thus that we can judge representation based on how well these promises (both about how the representative will vote and what they will stand for) are kept.

I would argue that while descriptive/substantive representation by way of following election promises is probably the most measurable (by similarity of representative and constituent preferences) conception of representation, it is not the only one, and perhaps not even the metric we ought to be using. At the risk of taking a very elitist view of the goal of representation, I would make the case for at least the consideration of gyroscopic representation as the goal, and the departure in metrics of representation this view requires. When I think about the core of ideal democracy, I think about deliberation by engaged and informed citizens who try to come to the best collective outcomes for society. As the practice of direct participation by all citizens becomes impractical due to the size of the group and attendant complexities that arise in its governance, a group of representatives that constitute the "best that society has to offer"

comes to mind as what a democracy should aspire to have do the work of governing.

Of course, who “the best” representatives are is the central issues and is highly contested. But if we look to be represented by our best, and only focus on what makes a representative the most dedicated, competent, and aware of the needs of the people and let them work out how to best govern, it is an open question as to who would do the best job. I think that looking at metrics of how well the citizens of a country are living overall, and how actions by their representatives change their quality of life might be a valuable alternative to looking at how well representatives do what we want and feel how we feel. This measure of representation, how well our representatives are able to improve our lives, is clearly fraught with problems in measurement, but to the degree that it provides an alternative measure to the seemingly unquestioned metrics of representation we have now, I think it is worth considering.

Understanding Political Science Research: The Challenge of Inference : (Chapters 5-6)

1. **Authors:** Barakso, Sabet, and Schaffner
2. **Year:** 2013
3. **Journal:** Understanding Political Science Research: The Challenge of Inference. (book)
4. **Keywords:**
5. **Summary:** Descriptive Inference and Experiments
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Conceptualization - choosing your variables to fit with theory - operationalizing a concept.
 - (b) Level of analysis - the scale of your data.
 - (c) **Social desirability bias** – that is, the tendency of survey respondents to give a socially desirable response rather than an honest one when asked sensitive questions.
 - (d) Predictable error (bias) is worse than unpredictable error.
 - (e) There are several additional ways that a survey question could invite **unpredictable error**. Questions that are too long, too hard to understand, or too ambiguous might invite multiple interpretations. A common mistake in surveys is a **double-barreled question** , or a question that really ask about two things.
 - (f) Because different researchers conduct the scoring for different countries, it is almost impossible to ensure that all the researchers are using the same criteria in their evaluations, a problem known as **inter-coder reliability**.
 - (g) **Coverage bias** occurs when the **sampling frame** , or the group from which the sample is actually drawn, is somehow different from the population
 - (h) **Non-response bias** occurs when we cannot collect data from every observation selected into our sample. In public opinion surveys, this happens because many individuals who have been selected choose not to participate.
 - (i) In short, the qualitative researcher is able to use several pieces of information to arrive at an inference, a process often referred to as **triangulation** .
 - (j) **Nominal-level data** can be divided into different categories, but these categories cannot be placed in an order and the differences between them cannot be described with a precise number.
 - (k) An experiment is generally defined by the researcher’s control over what is called the **data-generating process** .

- (l) This control provides the experiment with a great deal of **internal validity** . In the laboratory, each subject tends to operate in the same environment with the only differences being those that the researcher controls. However, laboratory experiments tend to be criticized for their lack of **external validity**.
- (m) A second threat to external validity in laboratory experiments is the nature of the subjects being studied in the experiments. Political scientists often rely on **convenience samples** for their studies, and most typically these convenience samples are made up of their own students.
- (n) **Survey experiments** were initially conceived as a way of understanding what researchers mostly considered to be a nuisance for public opinion polling; namely, that those being polled tended to express different opinions depending on how a question was worded or what else had been asked earlier in the survey.
- (o) Until recently, **field experiments** had been used sparingly by political scientists. Yet, in many ways, they represent an ideal research design for demonstrating causal relationships with high levels of internal and external validity.
- (p) **Natural experiments** differ from experiments in that the researcher actually does not have control over assignment of the independent variable. However, good natural experiments can be analyzed as if they are experiments because some exogenous, approximately random process creates variation in the independent variable in a way that is unlikely to be correlated with any other rival explanations.
- (q) We might have omitted an important explanatory variable and biased our conclusion: hence the term omitted **variable bias** .
- (r) **Robust** findings mean that statistical analyses consistently reveal the same relationship between the independent and dependent variables regardless of what control variables are included in the analysis, or, in the terminology of many social scientists, how the model is specified.
- (s) A **cross-tabulation** merely divides the sample into those who were urged to vote and those who were not. Then, it compares the percentage of those who were contacted and voted with the percentage of those who were not contacted but voted anyway.
- (t) There is, however, another major challenge to inference in large-n studies: **reverse-causality** . Above we hypothesized that democratic regimes would have lower levels of corruption than authoritarian regimes. In other words, regime type affects corruption. But couldn't the reverse also be true? So we use fixed effects or SEM.
- (u) If country is the unit of analysis, rather than look at differences between countries, **fixed-effects estimations** look at differences within countries over time.

Constituency Influence in Congress.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Miller1963}

2. Authors: Warren E. Miller, Donald E. Stokes

3. Year: 1963

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: While it had been a commonly held belief that members of the house of representatives are highly responsive to their constituents, there had been no study to see if there were differences in responsiveness on different issues and what was driving this responsiveness.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Interviewed congressmen and constituents in their districts from a probability sample of 116 districts.
- (b) Looked at how constituents preferences comported with congressmen's preferences in the areas of social welfare, foreign policy and civil rights.
- (c) Two ways for constituents to influence their representative: pick someone like them who will do what they want naturally. The other is for the congressman to follow constituent view so they can get re-elected.
- (d) The constituency must take the policy views of candidates into account when choosing a representative, otherwise their views cannot be expressed.
- (e) **Finding 1:** Congressmen do vote strongly based on a combination of their own preferences and their perceptions of their constituents preferences.
- (f) **Finding 2:** Congressmen have little information about their constituents actual preferences and constituents have little information about their congressmen's preferences.
- (g) **Finding 3:** Congressmen behave sort of like instructed delegates and sort of like a responsible person that shares the views of the constituency and tries to do their best. This is **mandate-gyroscopic** mix.
- (h) **Finding 4:** Congressmen act most as if they had a mandate on the issue of civil rights.
- (i) **Finding 5:** On the issue of social welfare, congressmen seem to follow the responsible party model where they tend to vote the party line and their constituents know they will. On Foreign affairs they just follow the president and nobody cares.

Measuring Representation.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Achen1978}

2. Authors: Christopher H. Achen

3. Year: 1978

4. Journal: AJPS

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Achen looks at the Miller Stokes data and goes beyond correlation to measure representation. He finds that candidates who were not elected actually represented their constituents better than those who were and that the people are equally well represented on all issues and civil rights does not have a special place.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **"The statistical study of representation has depended primarily on correlational measures, which have small theoretical content and large potential for mischief. In their place, this article proposed three measures of representativeness, each of which can be given a substantive interpretation."** (p. 497)
- (b) **" , A liberal version of representation has been made the implicit normative standard. Constituents' preferences are taken as fixed; the single legislator is regarded as a representative of his district as a whole; and his views are compared to the opinions (and only the opinions) of his constituents. Other doctrines of representation have been largely ignored."** (p. 477)

- (c) “within this framework, **empirical researchers have considered representativeness issue by issue**. They have asked, not whether Congress was representative generally (in a liberal sense), but whether it was representative on social welfare issues or on foreign policy.” (p.477)
- (d) Three Measures of representation: proximity, centrism, and responsiveness.
 - i. Operationalized as follows: “the behavior of the representative ideally becomes a function of the mean constituent preferences.” (p. 480) Which we can use in a simple bi-variate regression.
 - ii. **Proximity**: “When a very conservative Congressman serves a moderate constituency, one may occasionally hear it said that the man is “not very representative of his district.” The implicit definition of representativeness draws on notions of ideological distance. The good representative resembles his constituents; by some measure, he is “close” to them.” (p. 481)
 - iii. “If a representative set out to minimize his proximity to his constituents, he could do no better than to choose the mean position among them. The mean minimizes the average squared difference from a set of opinions; and the average squared difference is our definition of proximity. A representative who espouses the average opinion of his constituents will have a proximity score equal to the within-constituency variance; it is not possible to do better. Hence the efficiency or centrality of the representative can be measured by the difference between his proximity and the constituency opinion variance. We call this difference the **centrism score**.” (p. 487)
 - iv. “The definition of **representativeness** used here derives from liberal doctrines of popular sovereignty: what the people decide must influence the outcome. Conservative districts should have legislators with right-wing views; liberal districts should be represented by left-wingers. If the representative system adapts to citizen preferences, representativeness is improved.” (p. 490)
- (e) If we buy the model assumptions that we can actually measure the mean constituent opinion then:“(the three measures) exhaust what the sample tells us about the relationship of representative opinion to the constituency mean. More precisely, they constitute a set of marginally sufficient statistics for the parameters of interest.” (p. 496).

Buying Time: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Hall1990}

2. Authors: Richard Hall, Frank Wayman.

3. Year: 1990

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: We develop a view of the member-donor relationship that questions the theoretical underpinnings of the vote-buying hypothesis itself and suggests two alternative claims: (1) **the effects of group expenditures are more likely to appear in committee than on the floor**; and (2) **the behavior most likely to be affected is members’ legislative involvement, not their votes**. In order to test this account, we specify a model of committee participation and estimate it using data from three House committees. In contrast to the substantial literature on contributions and roll calls, **our analysis provides solid support for the importance of moneyed interests in**

the legislative process. We also find evidence that **members are more responsive to organized business interests within their districts than to unorganized voters even when voters have strong preferences and the issue at stake is salient.** Such findings suggest several important implications for our understanding of political money, interest groups, and the representativeness of legislative deliberations.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) If the principal value of contributions lies in their potential to affect floor roll calls, however, a second puzzle appears. **One would expect to find contribution strategies that favor the swing legislators in anticipated floor battles, since these are the cases where the marginal utility in votes purchased per dollar spent is likely to be greatest** (Denzau and Munger 1986). Money allocated to almost certain supporters (or almost certain opponents) should be counted as irrational behavior, evidence of scarce resources wasted. In fact, however, **the evidence suggests that such “missallocations” systematically occur**” (p. 800)
- (b) So if PACs are buying the legislator’s time and effort then : “Such strategies should take the form of inducing sympathetic members to get actively involved in a variety of activities that directly affect the shape of committee legislation: authoring or blocking a legislative vehicle; negotiating compromises behind the scenes, especially at the staff level; offering friendly amendments or actively opposing unfriendly ones; lobbying colleagues; planning strategy; and last and sometimes least, showing up to vote in favor of the interest group’s position.” (p. 802)
- (c) This can explain why we see PACs contributing so heavily to members who were likely to support them anyway, as it is a way to get them motivated to do the behind the scenes work.
- (d) “The **summary measure of participation** that we use for the purposes of this exploration is a simple scale score derived from a factor analysis of six activities: attendance; voting participation; speaking; offering amendments during committee markups; role in authoring the legislative vehicle or an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and negotiating behind the scenes at either the member or the staff level.” (p. 807)
- (e) Money does matter in agenda setting and all of the behind the scenes stuff that goes into shaping the piece of legislation before it ever gets to a vote. Money given to bill opponents is meant to shut them up, not necessarily expected to keep them from voting against.

Representation in Congress: Constituents and Roll Calls in the 106th House.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Clinton2006}

2. Authors: Joshua Clinton

3. Year: 2006

4. Journal: JOP

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: “This paper examines the extent to which constituency and subconstituency preferences are reflected in roll-call voting in the 106th House. Aggregating 100,814 randomly selected respondents to measure subconstituency preferences provides an unprecedented ability to measure subconstituency preferences in the House. Looking at the relationship over all votes, “key votes,” and on individual votes confirms that representatives are not completely responsive to the district mean

voter, that only majority party Republicans are especially responsive to the preferences of same-party constituents, and that same-party constituency preferences cannot entirely account for systematic differences in Republican and Democratic voting behavior.” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) This study looks at the extent to which members of the house vote the preferences of the subconstituency consisting of constituents who self-identify with the incumbent’s party.
- (b) “To measure the preferences of the geographic constituency I use the mean ideology of every respondent in a congressional district” (p. 400)
- (c) “That legislators in different parties with identical measures of geographic constituency preferences vote differently implies that geographic constituency preferences alone cannot explain voting behavior.” (p. 401)
- (d) “Majority-party Republicans are more responsive to the preferences of the same-party constituency than responsiveness to the geographic constituency would suggest and Democrats are more responsive to the preferences of non- Democrats” (p. 406)
- (e) “a necessary condition for legislative party pressure is satisfied – party-correlated differences in roll-call behavior persist controlling for same-party constituency preferences” (p. 406)

The Influence of Party: Evidence from the State Legislatures.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Wright2002}

2. Authors: Gerald Wright, Brian F. Schaffner

3. Year: 2002

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “Where parties are not active in the legislature... the clear structure found in partisan politics disappears. This works to sever the connection between voters and their elected representatives and, with it, the likelihood of electoral accountability that is essential for the health of liberal democracy.” (abstract)
- (b) **Paper compares partisan state senate in Kansas with non-partisan state senate in Nebraska**
- (c) “Our analysis provides strong evidence that the parties, in vying for electoral advantage, adopt positions on new issues to bring in new voters and, thus, package these with their existing issue stands. This provides a political connection among issues, which works its way into our general ideological way of looking at politics. Without parties, there would be no need to bundle these diverse issues, and legislators, activists, and the media would be much less likely to see any obvious connections among them. **Our argument, in short, is that parties produce the ideological low-dimensional space as a by-product of their efforts to win office.**” (p. 377)
- (d) **“nonpartisan elections effectively break the policy linkage between citizens and their representatives in the statehouse.”** (p. 377)

Constituents Responses to Congressional Roll Call Voting.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Ansolabehere2010a}

2. Authors: Stephen Ansolabehere, Philip Edward Jones

3. Year: 2010

4. Journal: AJPS

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

7. Main Findings:

- (a) "Do citizens hold their representatives accountable for policy decisions, as commonly assumed in theories of legislative politics? Previous research has failed to yield clear evidence on this question for two reasons: measurement error arising from noncomparable indicators of legislators' and constituents' preferences and potential simultaneity between constituents' beliefs about and approval of their representatives. Two new national surveys address the measurement problem directly by asking respondents how they would vote and how they think their representatives voted on key roll-call votes. Using the actual votes, we can, in turn, construct instrumental variables that correct for simultaneity. **We find that the American electorate responds strongly to substantive representation. (1) Nearly all respondents have preferences over important bills before Congress. (2) Most constituents hold beliefs about their legislators' roll-call votes that reflect both the legislators' actual behavior and the parties' policy reputations. (3) Constituents use those beliefs to hold their legislators accountable.**" (Abstract)
- (b) "The reigning model of how voters think about policy representation, originally presented by [Miller and Stokes \(1963a\)](#), points to a solution. In words, the model goes as follows. Actual roll-call votes and party identifications affect constituents perceptions of legislative behavior on public policy. Those perceptions as well as party in turn affect assessments of the legislator's performance, affect toward the legislator, and vote choice. Simultaneity presents the further possibility that assessments of the legislator and affect toward the legislator shape constituents' perceptions of legislative behavior." (p. 594)

Week 7: Observational Studies of System-Level Representation

Summary of the Debate

Page and Shapiro [Page and Shapiro \(1983\)](#) find that policy tends to respond in the direction of changes in public opinion. [Wlezien \(2004\)](#) finds that government is more responsive on issues that are more important to citizens (more salient) than those that are less salient. [Stimson et al. \(1995a\)](#) find that government responds to public opinion and that different branches respond in different ways, seemingly as the founding fathers had intended it. [La and Schaffner \(2013\)](#) find almost no effect of lifting corporate election spending bans on outcomes, suggesting money matters little for who wins. [CanesWrone and Shotts \(2004\)](#) find that presidents are more responsive to public opinion the closer they are to re-election and that significantly above and below average popularity presidents are less responsive than average popularity presidents. [Rigby and Wright \(2013\)](#) provide the only negative finding which is that poor people's opinions only affect policy promises in elections when they line up with those of the rich but rich people's opinions do all of the time.

Summary from Memo

Our readings for the week tend to paint a rather positive picture of politician's responsiveness to public opinion. The broad finding is that with the exception of poor people examined as their own group, politicians pay attention to what the people want and unlimited corporate spending does not have a huge effect on election outcomes.

Page and Shapiro (1983) find that policy tends to respond in the direction of changes in public opinion. Wlezien (2004) finds that government is more responsive on issues that are more important to citizens. Stimson et al. (1995a) find that government responds to public opinion and that different branches respond in different ways, seemingly as the founding fathers had intended it. La and Schaffner (2013) find almost no effect of lifting corporate election spending bans on outcomes, suggesting money matters little for who wins. CanesWrone and Shotts (2004) find that presidents are more responsive to public opinion the closer they are to re-election and that significantly above and below average popularity presidents are less responsive than average popularity presidents. Rigby and Wright (2013) provide the only negative finding which is that poor people's opinions do not affect policy promises in elections but rich people's opinions do. I would like to interrogate correlation between policy and public opinion as a measure of government responsiveness. I agree that it is probably the best metric of how well mass sentiment is reflected in government and not a bad place to start, but I think it has a number of major problems.

There are three major problems with the public opinion - policy linkage as a dependent variable that immediately come to mind. The first, which has been touched on in a number of articles we read is the endogeneity problem when looking at opinion and policy at a macro scale. I think it is reasonably fair to talk about opinion on one specific and novel policy having a causal effect on later legislation and to get at this by using a time series approach. However, I think that looking at the body of policy as a whole, it is impossible to disentangle its effects on opinion. I do not think it is much of a stretch to argue that politicians push policies that shape and constrain the bounds of public opinion to say nothing of their attempts to frame policies as doing something that they actually do not (e.g. the Republican framing of the Affordable Care Act).

The second problem concerns the information that citizens have and the questions opinion polls ask. If citizens do not have accurate information and their information is systematically biased towards supporting the policy goals that government wanted to pursue anyway then in some sense polls are just telling us what we want to hear. Citizens may also have a fundamentally different understanding of what a policy does than lawmakers do, and if this difference is not accounted for we may take a polling result signaling agreement to mean that the public and government want the same things when the public just does not realize they are not getting what they want. Moreover, if opinion polls do not ask about an issue then the public is essentially silenced on an issue, so the choices of polling questions may play a large roll in the expression of public opinion.

The third problem is that what really matters may not be talked about at all, and thus citizens may have no opinions about it to begin with. Recent leaks about otherwise secret NSA surveillance programs and the low levels of media coverage on fights over corporate control and ownership of things like genetically modified crops and seeds or net-neutrality highlight the possibility that many very important policies do not enter in public opinion to begin with. I think this is where the real influence of corporate money will be felt years down the road, in deliberately hidden policies and technical language buried in their provisions that gives them more control and access than votes could possibly afford them.

This is not to say I am totally pessimistic about the representation of the public will in policy, but that I think we need to be careful in jumping to any rosy conclusions about its state in politics today.

Effects of Public Opinion on Policy.

1. Cite Key:

\citet{Page1983}

2. **Authors:** Benjamin I. Page, Robert Y. Shapiro

3. **Year:** 1983

4. **Journal:** APSR

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Page and Shapiro find considerable congruence between changes in public opinion and policies over time and conclude that changes in opinion affect policies more than changes in policies affect opinions.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) They use temporal ordering of changes to try and get at the causality direction. They find that opinion change mostly precedes policy change.
- (b) The authors find that when policy does change along with opinion, it tends to change in a congruent direction 2/3 of the time. However, in their analysis they only consider cases where policy actually changed which introduces selection bias into their results. What if they had considered all cases where policy changed to see if there was a response in opinion change?

Table 1. Congruence Between Opinion and Policy, 1935-1979

| | Total cases | | Cases with policy change | |
|--|-------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| | % | N | % | N |
| Congruent change in opinion and policy | 43 | (153) | 66 | (153) |
| Noncongruent change in policy | 22 | (78) | 34 | (78) |
| No change in policy | 33 | (120) | | |
| Uncertain | 2 | (6) | | |
| | 100 | (357) | 100 | (231) |

Note: Each case is an instance in which public policy preferences changed significantly, according to repeated administration of identical survey items.

- (c) The correlation between opinion changes and policy changes tends to be higher when the public opinion shift is larger, more stable, or more salient.
- (d) They only measure the direction of policy change, not its magnitude and it is unclear exactly what is meant by a policy change.
- (e) It is very hard to rule out reverse causality:

Table 8. Movement of Opinion Before Policy

| | Proportion of Cases | |
|---|---------------------|------|
| | % | N |
| Opinion movement before policy | 48 | (22) |
| Earlier policy movement cannot be ruled out | 52 | (24) |

Note. Entries are based on cases with intervening (T1a) opinion measurements before T2, in which opinion had already changed significantly. Opinion moved before policy if policy between T1 and T1a did not change or moved contrary to the opinion change.

- (f) The overall conclusion is that opinion affects policy, even though there are a bunch of things including reverse causality and elite capture that affect opinion. I can buy it.

Patterns of Representation: Dynamics of Public Preferences and Policy

1. Cite Key:

\citet{Wlezien2004}

2. Authors: Christopher Wlezien

3. Year: 2004

4. Journal: JOP

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: “At the heart of the article is a simple conjecture: representation varies across domains, and the pattern is symmetrical to the pattern of public responsiveness to budgetary policy itself. Analysis of the relationships between opinion and policy over time in the different spending domains supports the conjecture. The patterns fit quite nicely with what we know about the influence of different issues on voting behavior in American national elections. Based on this analysis, then, it appears that politicians’ responsiveness to public preferences reflects the public importance of different policy domains.” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “if there is responsiveness, changes in policy (P) will be positively associated with levels of the public’s relative preference (R), other things being equal.” (p. 2)
- (b) There are two models: one that assumes that people only care about the overall policy basket of government and the other that says that people only care about individual domains of policy. This paper provides an empirical test of these two theories.
- (c) “Here we see that **preferences for spending in the various “social” categories, specifically, big cities, education, health, welfare, and even the environment, move together over time. Preferences for defense spending move in a quite opposite direction and largely mirror preferences for social spending. That is, preferences for social and defense spending tend to move in the same liberal-conservative direction.** This is potentially quite telling for our analysis. Indeed, **the pattern implies a certain “global” movement of opinion that may drive politicians’ behavior in various policy domains.** The movement is not entirely global, however. As is clear in Table 1, preferences for spending on crime, foreign aid, and space share little in common with preferences for defense and social spending.” (p. 6)
- (d) “That there are specific components is easy to overlook given the dominant structure, but of obvious importance given our investigation: It is possible that policy responsiveness in each of the domains is specific. The point is not that politicians should or do respond to preferences in every domain, but that the underlying structure of preferences” (p. 7)
- (e) “Following the theoretical models outlined above, **the dependent variables used in the analyses represent the first differences of real dollar-valued appropriations (in billions of 1987 dollars) for each of the nine spending categories.** Recall that these changes in appropriations are expected to be positively related to the **levels** of net support for spending, which capture the public’s relative preferences. Politicians are expected to respond currently. In the budgetary context, this means that change in appropriations for fiscal year t follows the level of net support in year t - 1, when regular appropriations decisions – the bulk of appropriations decisions for fiscal year t are made. **In effect, building on traditional budgetary theory, the mostly incremental change in appropriations represents a function of public opinion.**” This is essentially an implicit assumption in the econometric model.
- (f) Republicans spend more than democrats on defense, given public opinion.

Dynamic representation

1. Cite Key:

\citet{Stimson1995}

2. Authors: James A. Stimson, Michael B. MacKuen, Robert S. Erikson

3. Year: 1995

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

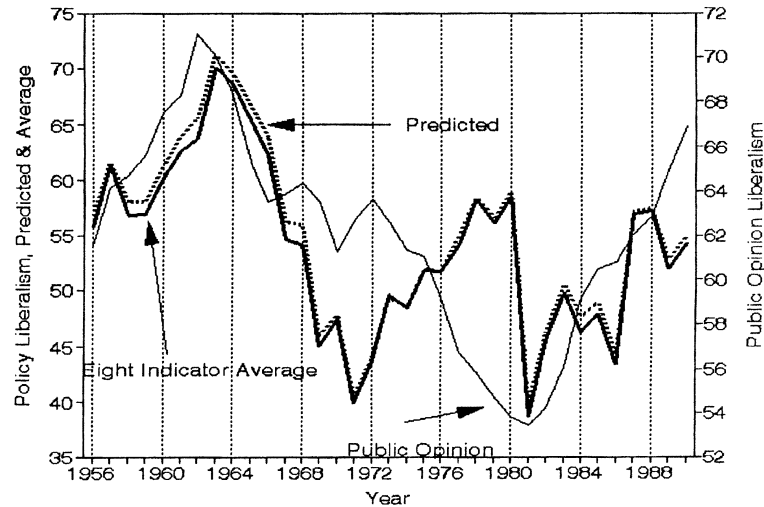
6. Summary: “If public opinion changes and then public policy responds, this is dynamic representation. Public opinion is the global policy preference of the American electorate. Policy is a diverse set of acts of elected and unelected officials. **Two mechanisms of policy responsiveness are (1) elections change the government’s political composition, which is then reflected in new policy and (2) policymakers calculate future (mainly electoral) implications of current public views and act accordingly (rational anticipation).** We develop multiple indicators of policy activity for the House, Senate, presidency, and Supreme Court, then model policy liberalism as a joint function of the two mechanisms. **For each institution separately, and also in a global analysis of ”government as a whole,” we find that policy responds dynamically to public opinion change.** This responsiveness varies by institution, both in level and in mechanism, as would be expected from constitutional design” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “people really do not have preferences for policy in particular domains. Instead, they have preferences “over the general contours of government activity” (Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson 1994), what Stimson (1991) refers to as “mood.”” (from Wlezien, 2004, p. 4)
- (b) **“Elected politicians, we believe, sense the mood of the moment, assess its trend, and anticipate its consequence for future elections.** Changes in opinion, correctly perceived, will lead politicians to revise their beliefs about future election opportunities and hazards. Revised beliefs imply also revised expedient positions. Such strategic adjustment will have two effects: (1) it will dampen turnover, the conventional path of electoral influence; and (2) it will drive policy through rational anticipation. ” (p. 545)
- (c) “A Granger analysis of opinion and a summary average of six policy making indicators (two each from the presidency, House, and Senate) shows that **opinion Granger-causes policy-making.** ” (p. 546)
- (d) **“We regard the ideological tone (liberalism as it is eventually to be measured) of policy making as a latent cause of the observed policy indicators.”** (p. 546)
- (e) “The **DYMIMIC** specification involves a dynamic factor analysis modeled simultaneously with a more standard regression like structural model. It postulates a single-factor explanation of the covariance of the dependent indicators. The latent dependent variable problem is inherently nonlinear. Maximum likelihood is an appealing estimation strategy for such problems. (but the errors are not independent so)... we turn to the **Kalman filter** as a device for the application of maximum likelihood to this otherwise intractable problem”. (p. 547)
- (f) Uses **domestic policy mood** (a calculated index) as its independent variable.

FIGURE 5

Global Public Opinion and Global Public Policy: Predicted and Actual Policy



- (g) Supreme court responds the least to public opinion. Senate responds mostly through replacement of Senators with more liberal (conservative) ones based on overall public leaning. House of Reps. seems to take a more rational anticipation model to keep their jobs.

The conditional nature of presidential responsiveness to public opinion

1. Cite Key:

\citet{CanesWrone2004}

2. Authors: Brandice Canes-Wrone, Kenneth W. Shotts

3. Year: 2004

4. Journal: AJPS

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: “How does public opinion affect presidential policy making? We address this issue by testing a diverse set of hypotheses with data concerning a set of individual policies across time. In particular, the data revolve around presidential budgetary proposals on a set of major policy issues for which there are recurring surveys on citizens’ preferences over spending. **The analysis suggests that presidents are more responsive to mass opinion on issues that are familiar to citizens in their every day lives.** Also, for reelection-seeking presidents, responsiveness is shown to depend upon two key political factors. First, **presidents are more responsive to public opinion when the next election is imminent.** Second, **the effect of presidential popularity is nonmonotonic; presidents with average approval ratings are most likely to adopt policy positions congruent with public opinion, whereas presidents with approval ratings that are significantly above or below average have the greatest propensity to take unpopular positions.**” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “The data focus on presidents’ proposals and public opinion for a set of eleven budgetary issues on which annual legislative negotiations occurred during calendar years 1972-1999. In particular, we have annual observations on the president’s proposed budgetary authority and

the previous year's enacted budgetary authority for each issue." (p .691) This is compared to public opinion surveys on whether people think the country is spending the right amount on each of these issues, too little or too much.

- (b) "voters care more about policy outcomes than initial policy choices once the outcomes become known. Since voters are unlikely to observe the outcome of a policy choice made shortly before an election, the president is more likely to cater to current opinion as the next election approaches. " (p. 693)
- (c) **Electoral Proximity Hypothesis:** Policy congruence between presidential positions and public opinion is more likely the sooner is the next election.
- (d) **Monotonic Popularity Hypothesis:** The likelihood of the president choosing a popular policy decreases as the president's approval increases.
- (e) **Canes-Wrone, Herron, and Shotts (2001) Hypothesis:**
 - i. When the next election is distant, the likelihood that the president chooses a popular policy is unrelated to his public approval.
 - ii. When the next election is soon and the president's popularity is below average, the likelihood of the president choosing a popular policy increases as the president's approval increases.
 - iii. When the next election is soon and the president's popularity is above average, the likelihood of the president choosing a popular policy decreases as the president's approval increases.
- (f) **"Policy Congruence.** As described above in the section on patterns of responsiveness, this variable equals one when the president's budgetary proposal on a given issue is in the direction preferred by the mass public and zero otherwise. " (p. 697)
- (g) "the results indicate that the president's ideology significantly influences his likelihood of choosing a popular policy in the first half but not the second half of the term. " (p. 701)

Political Parties and Representation of the Poor in the American States

1. Cite Key:

\citet{Rigby2013}

2. Authors: Elizabeth Rigby, Gerald C. Wright.

3. Year: 2013

4. Journal: AJPS

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Poor people do not have any influence over party campaign promises and only get their way when their views happen to coincide with richer citizens in their state. This is worse on economic issues than social issues.

7. Main Findings:

(a) Hypotheses about differential responsiveness:

- i. "Both political parties will endorse policy preferences more closely aligned with their higher-income constituents; preferences of low-income citizens will be underrepresented". (p. 554)
- ii. "Democratic and Republican parties will make distinct social policy appeals based on the opportunities provided by the cross-cutting opinion structure – with Democratic parties aligning most closely with the wealthy and Republican parties with the middle-income group." (p. 555) Because Democrats can appeal to wealthy voters who hold liberal views on issues like gun control, gay rights etc.

- iii. “Where and when income inequality is higher, parties will exhibit greater differential responsiveness toward their income-third constituents.” (p. 555)
- (b) **DATA:** “We combine new data on state parties’ ideological positioning with estimates of income-group opinion for 47 states, excluding Nebraska because of its nonpartisan legislature and both Alaska and Hawaii due to their exclusion from the survey data used to estimate mass opinion and behavior.” (p. 556)
- (c) Parties seem to be more responsive on social issues as they become more liberal as the state becomes more liberal but they are less responsive on economic issues where picking the party is a much better bet than assuming that the rep. will vote with state opinion.
- (d) **“on economic policy issues, this distinction (alignment vs. influence) was unnecessary since neither party even aligned with the preferences of their low-income constituents. More responsiveness to the poor was identified on social policy issues – with both parties aligned with their social policy preferences. Yet, once we accounted for the social policy preferences of those in the top two-thirds of the income distribution, we found no independent influence of the social policy preferences of the poor. As a result, the representation of low-income citizens only occurs when their preferences happen to concur with the preferences of their economic betters. When their preferences diverge, those preferences seem to be left off of the active agenda – even this early in the policy making process.”** (p. 563)

The Effects of Campaign Finance Spending Bans on Electoral Outcomes: Evidence From the States about the Potential Impact of Citizens United v. FEC.

1. Cite Key:

\citet{La2013}

2. Authors: Raymond La Raja, Brian F. Schaffner.

3. Year: 2013

4. Journal: Electoral Studies

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: “the study focuses on whether such bans generate electoral outcomes that are notably different from an electoral system that lacks such bans. **We look to two key electoral dynamics that such bans might influence: the partisan balance of power and the success of incumbents.** Using historical data on regulations in 49 American states between 1968 and 2009 we test alternative models for evaluating the impact of corporate spending bans put in place during this period. **The results indicate that spending bans appear to have limited effects on election outcomes.** ” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **INDEPENDENT VARIABLES:** “To examine whether corporate spending bans influence electoral outcomes, we analyze the effects that these bans have had in the American states. For this analysis, we collected data on campaign finance laws for each state beginning in 1968 and running through the 2008 election cycle. The dates for when a state passed laws banning corporate or union spending came from the National Conference of State Legislatures.” (p. 4)

- (b) **DEPENDENT VARIABLES:** “We focus on four dependent variables that we expect to be influenced by the existence of a corporate spending and the share of legislative seats won by Republicans in a particular election, the share of the total vote in state legislative races that was won by Republicans, the share of incumbents who won campaigns for re-election, and the share of the total legislative vote won by incumbents.” (p. 4)
- (c) **“Overall, there is little in the way of consistent evidence that spending bans produce any partisan bias in election outcomes for state legislature.** In the rare instances where there was a statistically distinguishable effect (Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin), it was in favor of the Republican Party.” (p. 7)
- (d) “Overall, the results from our models indicate that corporate spending bans have little effect on who wins elections (at least when the “who” is defined by incumbency or partisanship). Republicans did not fare worse in elections following the implementation of a corporate spending ban, the corollary of course being that they did not perform better when such a ban did not exist. Likewise, incumbent reelection rates did not decrease when a corporate spending ban was enacted.” (p. 9)
- (e) **Possible explanations for non-effect:**
 - i. There is a diminishing marginal return to campaign contributions so if candidates can raise enough from grass-roots sources then the extra corporate money should not matter much.
 - ii. Interest groups adapt in the presence of campaign finance reform laws and find other ways to spend their money and get influence.
 - iii. Both sides may spend more, thus neutralizing the effects of more money.

Week 8: Experimental Studies of Representation

Summary of the Debate

[Ansolabehere et al. \(2000\)](#) find that a large fraction of the incumbency advantage owes to the personal vote, as opposed to challenger quality, and that this personal vote is largest in the areas where they are the most vulnerable. [Ansolabehere et al. \(2013\)](#) confirm these findings in a matching study of redistricting. They find that incumbent members of Congress succeed at higher rates because they are able to “win over” some of the constituents in their district who affiliate with the opposite party, not because they over-achieve among co-partisans or independents. In a related vein, [Butler et al. \(2012\)](#) find strong evidence that both state and federal legislative offices are more responsive to service requests than they are to policy requests. In an experimental study conducted in Benin [Wantchekon \(2003\)](#) also confirm that clientelism promises are more effective than policy promises in a presidential election. In another experimental study conducted in Indonesia, [Olken \(2010\)](#) find that direct democracy improves citizen satisfaction and feelings of legitimacy about the political process over representative democracy, even though the outcomes remain largely unchanged. Finally, in a methodologically questionable randomized field experimental study, [Bergan \(2009\)](#) finds that citizen email lobbying is effective in the NH state legislature.

Summary from Memo

This week, our readings broadly dealt with the personal connections and engagement between constituents and their representatives. The methodological focus for the week was on randomized-controlled experiments. In many ways, these seem like the goose that lays golden eggs for studies of constituent - representative interaction. I felt that the studies we read this week largely demonstrated the great utility

of the randomized-controlled experimental approach and produced very persuasive finds. However, the central challenge in these studies is getting the randomization (and potentially matching) right, and there were a few studies that left the door open on this point. I think it is good to think through the recipe for a good randomized-controlled experiment, especially in the context of my own future work.

[Ansolabehere et al. \(2000\)](#), [Butler et al. \(2012\)](#), and [Ansolabehere et al. \(2013\)](#) all focus on trying to parse out the role of the personal vote and its determinants in contributing to the observed incumbency advantage. They make use of either decennial redistricting or a letter writing experiment in the case of Butler. I thought it was interesting but totally unsurprising that legislators are much more responsive on service requests, and receive more support from their constituents because of their service than policy related interactions. The result that representatives do not want to talk about their policy preferences is not surprising in light of [Tomz and Van Houweling \(2009\)](#), but I think that deliberate policy ambiguity is probably not the main driver of the preference for providing service. It seems to me there are several reasons why service would be more important which I discuss below.

I think one of the biggest challenges a representative faces is how to convince anyone that what they do matters at all. By and large, their work of governing happens out of sight and out of mind for the average voter, and many of the most important pieces of legislation they work on (in terms of their long term effects on their constituents lives) or influence they have is not easy to demonstrate over the period of an election cycle. Getting back to my discussion of secrecy from last week, if a representative works on a defense intelligence committee, they may have a profound effect on the safety and freedom of their constituents, but will never get credit for this in the ballot box. Moreover, any real push they make, or critical vote they cast to get a well recognized and salient piece of legislation through will have its significance watered down by the news cycle and participation of a large group of other legislators in getting the bill passed (in most cases).

The role of service is then to put a face on what a representative is doing in Washington. I think service is probably the only way for most representatives to bring anything tangible to the table. This makes a lot of sense when we consider the finding of [Ansolabehere et al. \(2013\)](#) that incumbents win over people from the opposite party. This does raise a troubling normative question though. If favors to individuals or communities which are very salient are the main thing and representative needs to do to maximize their re-election chances given their party, how much to policies actually matter? If you are a Democrat and you get the Democrat vote and focus on stealing some of the republican vote through favors and that is mainly what seems to matter then the accountability concept of representation falls apart ([Przeworski et al., 1999](#)). Perhaps this is not the most important check on representation as a mandate is really more important, but its weakness is still cause for concern. Overall, I get why service matters, but I am somewhat agnostic as to the ramifications this has for representation and concerned that it is taking citizens away from a focus on policy and what “really matters”.

Understanding Political Science Research: The Challenge of Inference (Chapter 4)

1. **Authors:** Barakso, Sabet, Schaffner
2. **Year:** 2013-2014
3. **Journal:** Understanding Political Science Research: The Challenge of Inference (book)
4. **Keywords:** Research, qualitative and quantitative analysis, inference
5. **Summary:** The authors lay out an undergraduate text introducing research methods and sort of modes of doing good research.
6. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) Book deals with descriptive and causal inference.

- (b) Characteristics of a good research question:
 - i. A good Research Question is non-normative and answerable.
 - ii. A good research question generates some implications for understanding real world problems.
 - iii. Addresses a debate in the literature.
 - iv. Not too broad or narrow.
- (c) Characteristics of good theory:
 - i. Good theory concretely specifies concepts it invokes.
 - ii. Good theory is Falsifiable.
 - iii. Testable hypotheses because it has observable implications.
- (d) Goals of the literature review:
 - i. Expanded discussion of your research question.
 - ii. Delineate key discussion and debates in the literature that are germane to your question.
 - iii. Play your own work against the current theories and results. This is the hole in the literature and this is why I can do better.
- (e) **Conceptualization** is the process of defining variables of interest.
- (f) **Social desirability bias:** survey respondents will give you the response they think is socially acceptable rather than their true opinion.
- (g) A common mistake in surveys is a **double-barreled question** , or a question that really ask about two things which is problematic because you cannot know which part your respondent is answering.
- (h) “Because different researchers conduct the scoring for different countries, it is almost impossible to ensure that all the researchers are using the same criteria in their evaluations, a problem known as **inter-coder reliability**.” (p. 94)
- (i) “**Systematic sampling error** typically results from **coverage bias or non-response bias**. Coverage bias occurs when the **sampling frame** , or the group from which the sample is actually drawn, is somehow different from the population.” (p. 98)
- (j) “interview data can be complemented with other pieces of data perhaps newspaper articles or citizen complaints filed at an oversight agency. In short, the qualitative researcher is able to use several pieces of information to arrive at an inference, a process often referred to as **triangulation** .” (p. 107)

Old voters, new voters, and the personal vote: Using redistricting to measure the incumbency advantage

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Ansolabehere2000}

2. **Authors:** Stephen Ansolabehere, James M. Snyder Jr, Charles Stewart III

3. **Year:** 2000

4. **Journal:** AJPS

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** “We provide new estimates of the size of the personal vote in U.S. House elections from 1872 to 1990. We take advantage of the **”natural experiment”** that attends **decennial redistricting**: every ten years, most incumbents are given new districts that contain a combination of old and new territory. By contrasting an incumbent’s vote in the new part of the district with his or her vote in the old part of the district, we can estimate the magnitude of the personal vote-the vote that the incumbent receives because he or she represented the voters in the past. Our estimates confirm prior work that shows that **a large fraction of the incumbency advantage owes to the personal vote, as opposed to challenger quality**. Unlike past research, we are able to estimate the relationship between district partisanship and the personal vote. We find a significant interaction which shows that **incumbents develop larger personal votes in areas where they are electorally most vulnerable.**” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **Incumbency advantage:** 1-3 points in the 40’s and 50’s. It grew to 7- 10 points in the 80’s and 90’s.
- (b) Three posited explanations for the advantage in the literature.
 - i. **home style** - they bring back benefits to their constituents and get the chance to do good things for them. This in turn gets them the reward of more votes. Sort of like a home field advantage.
 - ii. **Candidate quality** -incumbents are the best candidates running which is why they won their seat to begin with. So they just stay in office because they are really good.
 - iii. Incumbency may be a **voting cue**- a heuristic that voters use if party is becoming less important.
- (c) “The **personal vote** results from the ways that legislators serve their constituents – providing voters via casework and bringing home the federal spending, acquiring a detailed knowledge of voters’ tastes, building a local base of volunteer election workers, and so on.” (p. 18)
- (d) “We study the period 1872-1988, across the whole U.S., using the county level data. In addition, we study the period 1972-1992 in three states-Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Jersey using the more detailed town-level data.” (p. 18)
- (e) The authors point out we need to treat incumbency not just as a linear effect (using a dummy variable) but as an interaction with the strength of party, as they are likely to dampen each other.
- (f) “Presidential vote is one of several variables commonly used to measure normal vote in the congressional voting and representation literature. Because the same presidential candidates are on the ballot in every state, the presidential vote measures the strength of support for the competing parties, at least as they are represented by the presidential candidates....Presidential vote in any year may also reflect short term effects, such as economic fluctuations and favorite sons. To smooth over these idiosyncratic movements, **we calculate the normal vote as average share of the two-party presidential vote within six different periods:** 1872-1894, 1896-1930, 1932-1960, 1962-1972, and 1974-1996. The periods used here allow the ideological locations and electoral support of the parties to shift over time. ” (p. 22)
- (g) “Third, there is a clear and significant negative interaction between incumbency advantages and party strength. Where incumbents are least safe, they develop the strongest personal votes... The presence of such an interaction suggests that incumbents in marginal districts or in the **”wrong”** districts work especially hard to establish a personal vote”.(p. 30)
- (h) “The combination of a strong personal vote and low levels of responsiveness suggests that the voters-especially those in moderate districts-have difficulty disciplining their representative” (p. 31)

Redistricting and the Office Holder Effect: Individual-Level Evidence on the Magnitude and Nature of the Personal Vote

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Ansolabehere2013}

2. **Authors:** Stephen Ansolabehere, Stephen Pettigrew, and Brian F. Schaffner

3. **Year:** Working Paper

4. **Journal:**

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Improves on Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart (2000) by using by exploiting the redistricting of 2010 to 2012 and a unique large-sample panel study conducted as part of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “We analyze individual-level panel survey data of 19,000 respondents interviewed in 2010 and 2012 and find that the individual level data confirm earlier estimates of the magnitude of the office-holder advantage. We further offer a test of the role of information (or knowledge), pork, constituent service, and partisanship as mechanisms.” (p. 2)
- (b) “For the CCES, YouGov constructed a sampling frame of U.S. citizens from the American Community Survey and then drew a stratified random sample of individuals from this frame. For each member of the target sample, YouGov then selected one or more matching members from their pool of opt-in respondents. This is called the matched sample. Matching was accomplished using a variety of demographic variables available from the ACS, as well as political data such as partisanship, registration status, and religion... After matching, the matched cases were then weighted to the sampling frame using propensity scores.
- (c) “the table reveals impressive balance between individuals who were moved to new districts and those who remained in their old districts”. (p. 7)
- (d) “because of the close balance on each trait except one, in the analyses that follow, we treat the redistricting treatment as-if random while taking care to account for each individual’s support for the incumbent candidate in 2010.” (p. 9)
- (e) “Overall, the findings in this section **provide strong evidence for a 5-6 point personal vote advantage in individual-level voting behavior**” (p. 12)
- (f) **Mechanisms of Personal Vote advantage:**
 - i. “One possibility is that incumbents benefit from being a known quantity – that is, incumbents tend to over-perform because voters know more about them and their accomplishments” (p. 12)
 - ii. “voters are disproportionately moved into districts where the party of the incumbent is opposite of the party of the voter” (p. 12)
 - iii. “incumbents benefit from the pork they bring to the district and their efforts at constituent service” (p. 12)
 - iv. “**our findings seem to undermine the notion that incumbents benefit simply because they are better known.** Voters who stayed in the same districts gave incumbents a larger advantage than voters who were moved to new districts even when controlling for the ability of voters to rate those incumbents on a series of questions.” (p. 25)

- v. First, **partisanship is an important factor**. After controlling for these party effects, **constituent service seems to be the driving factor in the personal vote**.
- vi. **“Incumbent members of Congress succeed at higher rates because they are able to “win over” some of the constituents in their district who affiliate with the opposite party, not because they over-achieve among co-partisans or independents”**. (p. 26)

A Field Experiment on Legislators Home Style: Service versus Policy

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Butler2012}

2. **Authors:** Daniel M. Butler, Christopher Karpowitz, and Jeremy C. Pope

3. **Year:** 2012

4. **Journal:** JOP

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** “We conducted a field experiment involving roughly 1,000 letters sent by actual individuals to nearly 500 different legislative offices in order to test whether legislative offices prioritize service over policy in their home style. **We find strong evidence that both state and federal legislative offices are more responsive to service requests than they are to policy requests**. This pattern is consistent with the desire of legislators to gain leeway with their constituents in order to pursue their own policy goals. We also find that at the federal level Democrats prioritize service over policy more than Republicans and at the state level legislators who won by larger margins are more likely to prioritize service over policy. Finally, our results suggest that the decision to prioritize service occurs in how the office is structured. Among other things this suggests that legislators may be microtargeting less than is often supposed.” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) The authors point out that there are two competing hypotheses, one that service is more important and one that policy is more important. They test these two by conducting a letter writing campaign.
- (b) The experimental treatment randomized over a policy and service request on immigration and recruited 200 BYU students to write the letters to their home town congressmen.
- (c) “The specific breakdown by legislative office is as follows: US Senate Offices 250 letters (24%), U.S. House Offices 222 letters (21%), State Senate Offices 223 letters (22%), and State House Offices 341 letters (33%). In sending these letters, we took several steps to help avoid detection of our experiment. First, we used the following limits on the number of letters that any given legislator was sent: U.S. Senator 12-letter limit; U.S. House Member 8-letter limit; State Legislator 2-letter limit. Figure 1 gives the distribution of the number of letters received by each office in the sample. The vast majority of the legislators in the study (88%) received either one or two letters.” (p. 479)
- (d) **The authors find that letter writers were much more likely to receive a letter in response if they contacted their representative about service.**
- (e) The authors also argue that the privileging of service over policy is not an attempt to micro-target, but more due to the way offices are set up and letter responding interns do not need to get permission to respond to a service request.
- (f) The authors argue this is int line with the theory that legislators use their home style to get leeway on policy.

Clientelism and voting behavior: Evidence from a field experiment in Benin

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Wantchekon2003}

2. Authors: Leonard Wantchekon

3. Year: 2003

4. Journal: World Politics

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: The authors conduct a field experiment where they manipulate the campaign message received in different villages from being one where favors are offered (like building a new local university or giving jobs to residents) to one where policy goals or the bad policy goals of the other candidates are talked about more frequently.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) They conduct their experiments in Benin in the 2001 presidential elections with the full participation of the parties.
- (b) They only look at districts where the vote is not really in question (so that the parties would go along) and randomize between villages in those district.
- (c) “To ensure that those who were assigned to clientelism were not exposed to public policy and vice versa, sixteen of the twenty selected villages were at least twenty-five miles apart with seven to ten villages separating them. The remaining four were approximately five miles apart, separated by two to five villages. **The risk of contagion between the two treatment groups was thereby minimized so that the two treatments remained mutually exclusive and uncorrelated.**” (p. 407)
- (d) “The empirical results show that clientelism works for all types of candidates but particularly well for regional and incumbent candidates. The results indicate that women voters have stronger preference for public goods than do men and that younger and older voters have similar policy preferences. I argue that credibility of clientelist appeals and accessibility of clientelist goods greatly influence voting behavior. ” (p. 421)

Direct democracy and local public goods: Evidence from a field experiment in Indonesia

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Olken2010}

2. Authors: Benjamin A. Olken

3. Year: 2010

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** “This article presents an experiment in which 49 Indonesian villages were randomly assigned to choose development projects through either representative-based meetings or direct election-based plebiscites. Plebiscites resulted in dramatically higher satisfaction among villagers, increased knowledge about the project, greater perceived benefits, and higher reported willingness to contribute. Changing the political mechanism had much smaller effects on the actual projects selected, with some evidence that plebiscites resulted in projects chosen by women being located in poorer areas. The results suggest that direct participation in political decision making can substantially increase satisfaction and legitimacy.” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “This study takes place in 49 Indonesian villages from three subdistricts located in different parts of rural Indonesia.... One subdistrict is in East Java, a heavily Muslim area that is one of the most densely populated rural areas in the world. A second subdistrict is in North Sumatra, an area with much smaller villages and a large Christian population. A third subdistrict is in Southeast Sulawesi, in a poorer, more remote area with substantial ethnic heterogeneity, even within villages.” (p. 244)
- (b) “The results reported here come from field work conducted between September 2005 and January 2006. The key intervention studied is a change in the decision-making mechanism: instead of following the meeting-based process described previously, some villages were randomly allocated to choose their projects via a direct election-based plebiscite. The idea behind the plebiscite was that it would move the political process from a potentially elite-dominated meeting to a more participatory process that might be less subject to elite capture.” (p. 246-247)
- (c) “The villages in this study participate in the Kecamatan (Subdistrict) Development Program or KDP, which is a national Indonesian government program funded through a loan from the World Bank. KDP began in 1998 and, at the time of the study, financed projects in approximately 15,000 villages throughout Indonesia each year.” (p. 246)
- (d) “Each village selected two projects: a general project, chosen by all villagers, and a women’s project, chosen exclusively by the women in the village. These experimental interventions affected only the final choice of which would be selected – the process of setting the agenda, in which each hamlet in the village nominated one general project and one women’s project through a series of hamlet-level meetings, was unchanged across the experimental treatments. The experiment found different results for the two projects considered. **For the general project, the plebiscite process resulted in substantially higher villager satisfaction with the political process, even though it had limited impacts on the actual projects selected. For the women’s project, not only did women’s satisfaction increase, but also the plebiscite process resulted in women’s projects that were more likely to be located in poorer hamlets of the village.**” (p. 265)
- (e) “The main interpretation of the results is that the process matters. The fact that the increases in satisfaction match the increases in participation and the fact that these results are unaffected by controlling flexibly for the project chosen, lend support to this view..

Does grassroots lobbying work? A field experiment measuring the effects of an e-mail lobbying campaign on legislative behavior

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Bergan2009}

2. Authors: Daniel E. Bergan

3. **Year:** 2009

4. **Journal:** American Politics Research

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** “There are few reliable estimates of the effect of grassroots lobbying on legislative behavior. The analysis in this article circumvents methodological problems that plague existing studies by randomly assigning legislators to be contacted by a grassroots e-mail lobbying campaign. The experiment was conducted in the context of a grassroots lobbying campaign through cooperation with a coalition of groups lobbying a state legislature. The results show that grassroots lobbying by e-mail has a substantial influence on legislative voting behavior. The article concludes with a number of possible extensions of the study’s design to other forms of lobbying and other problems in political science. ” (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) This study is about lobbying over an workplace smoking ban in New Hampshire. There was a website where people could go to send their representative an email from a form. “Although there is a standard text for e-mails sent to legislators, activists had the option of adding a personal message to their legislators. There were 756 e-mails sent to legislators during the course of the campaign that lasted from February 26 until March 21”. (p. 332)
- (b) “As of 2002, in New Hampshire’s lower chamber, there are 103 districts represented from between 1 and 13 legislators. The median district is represented by 3 legislators. Stratifying the legislators by district and party and randomly assigning members of each stratum to treatment and control ensures that the party composition and constituencies of the treatment and control groups are similar. The multimember legislature allowed matching on district, which is important in a study of constituent contacts on policy as there are no systematic differences between the treatment and control groups other than whether the legislator was exposed to grass- roots lobbying contacts.” (p. 333)

Week 9: Gender and Representation

Summary of the Debate

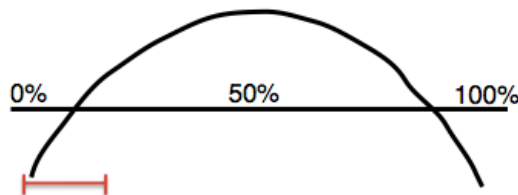
Mansbridge (1999) provides a theoretical foundation for the week and argues that whether descriptive representation is good or bad is context dependent. One of its best qualities is that it can provide legitimacy to a group as people see members of the group in power. Barakso (2007) challenges the notion that descriptive representation by women increases the democratic inclusiveness of government with her finding that there is more variation in the degree of democraticness of women’s organizations than was previously thought. Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2008) show a link between the descriptive representation of women and a society’s confidence in the legitimacy of its democratic government. Gerrity et al. (2007) find that female legislators who replace men in the same district introduce more women’s issues bills in Congress. Anzia and Berry (2011b) argue that in the face of discrimination, only the most capable women will run for office. This argument is backed up by findings that congresswomen secure roughly 9% more spending from federal discretionary programs than congressmen. Women also sponsor and cosponsor significantly more bills than their male counterparts. Finally, MacDonald and O’Brien (2010) finds more support for the claim that descriptive representation of women increases their representation on women’s issues but also finds a critical mass effect based on the number of female legislators.

Summary from Memo

The articles we read this week focus on gender and representation. The central questions in this vein are how the descriptive representation of women affects the democratic quality of government and outcomes for women? Mansbridge (1999) provides the theoretical foundation for the week, arguing that while there are a number of potential problems with descriptive representation, its effects can be positive on the whole for women and for democracy. This claim is backed up with empirical evidence in the rest of our readings for the week that falls into two categories. Gerrity et al. (2007) and Anzia and Berry (2011a) both provide empirical evidence that women legislators are better for their districts and better for women more generally. Schwindt-Bayer, Mishler (2008) go further (with a really nice paper) by showing a link between the descriptive representation of women a society's confidence in the legitimacy of its democratic government. Barakso (2007) provides a more qualified view of the normative effects of women holding elected office by demonstrating that organizations formed by women tend to be less democratic than previously thought.

What I found particularly interesting was the positive observed effect on the perceived legitimacy of a democracy of more women holding office (Schwindt-Bayer, Mishler 2008). At first glance this seems to be a relatively obvious finding: if the governing body is more descriptively representative of the people, then we should expect that the people will place greater legitimacy in that body because they can use simple heuristics like what the representatives look like to feel that the representatives are “like them” or “normal”. I agree that descriptive representation should be associated with the legitimacy of a government but I also feel that this understanding should not go unquestioned (which I am guessing it largely has). The question for me is: what can descriptive representation mask?

Perhaps I am overly cynical, but I worry about the representation of women in elected office as a distraction from, or a substitute for, policies which actually improve the lives of everyday women citizens. I think that the legitimizing role of underrepresented groups in politics critically hinges on the relative proportion of members of that group in elected office. My theory is that there are diminishing marginal gains to legitimacy as more people in an underrepresented group enter office¹ so that when there are only a few representatives from an underrepresented group in office, the legitimizing effect can be overstated (see diagram below).



In the diagram above the x-axis is the proportion of women in elected office and the y axis is the perceived legitimacy of the government. If the graphical representation is true to life, then my argument is that at low levels of representation by women, society may overstate the legitimizing power of electing a few more women to public office and this could potentially serve as a sort of “opiate of the masses”, making people think things are getting better when policy may be lagging behind. I think it is genuinely important that a society do its best to have its leaders reflect the population, but I worry that this reflection may be false one when it comes to policy.

The question becomes what we ought to do if this process is at play in politics? I think that the obvious implication for those interested in gender equality is to not take the election of a few women to public office as a reason to relax, but recognize that the period of transition from no women to some women in elected office poses the greatest risk to the movements behind this change becoming complacent and ultimately, institutionally marginalized

¹So there is a strong immediate increase with the first representatives from an underrepresented group in office that then loses momentum

Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent 'Yes'

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Mansbridge1999}

2. Authors: Jane Mansbridge

3. Year: 1999

4. Journal: JOP

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Disadvantaged groups gain advantages from descriptive representation in at least four contexts. **In contexts of group mistrust and uncrystallized interests, the better communication and experiential knowledge of descriptive representatives enhances their substantive representation of the group's interests by improving the quality of deliberation.** In contexts of historical political subordination and low de facto legitimacy, descriptive representation helps create a social meaning of "ability to rule" and increases the attachment to the polity of members of the group. When the implementation of descriptive representation involves some costs in other values, paying those costs makes most sense in these specific historical contexts. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Four different functions of descriptive representation for disadvantaged groups:
 - i. (1) adequate communication in contexts of mistrust, and (2) innovative thinking in contexts of uncrystallized, not fully articulated, interests-descriptive representation enhances the substantive representation of interests by improving the quality of deliberation.
 - ii. (1) creating a social meaning of "ability to rule" for members of a group in historical contexts where that ability has been seriously questioned, and (2) increasing the polity's de facto legitimacy in contexts of past discrimination descriptive representation promotes goods unrelated to substantive representation. (p. 628)
- (b) There have been a number of arguments against descriptive representation by normative theorists mostly with the idea that it often doesn't mean anything and at worst can mean that we get lower quality representation for the sake of its being representative.
- (c) "If **microcosmic representation**, achievable only by lottery or another form of representative selection, were to replace elected representative assemblies, one cost would indeed lie in the strong likelihood that choosing the members of a ruling assembly at random from the population would produce legislators with less ability, expertise, and possibly commitment to the public good than would choosing those legislators through election." (p. 631)
- (d) In the far more frequent "**selective**" form of descriptive representation, institutional design gives selected groups greater descriptive representation than they would achieve in existing electoral systems in order to bring the proportions of those groups in the legislature closer to their percentages in the population. **Selective forms of descriptive representation are necessary, if at all, only when some form of adverse selection operates within an existing system to reduce the proportions of certain groups below what they would achieve by chance.** (p. 632)
- (e) Descriptive representation is good for **deliberation** to the degree that it brings in viewpoints of all groups in society.

- (f) descriptive representation can also give democracy legitimacy by **aggregating** all of the view-points in society.
- (g) **“The greatest cost in selective descriptive representation is that of strengthening tendencies toward ”essentialism,” that is, the assumption that members of certain groups have an essential identity that all members of that group share and of which no others can partake”** (p. 637)
- (h) **“Another potential cost of selective descriptive representation, related to that of essentialism, involves the way **developing institutions that encourage citizens to see themselves as members of a subgroup may erode the ties of unity across a nation, a political party, or a political movement**”** (p. 639)
- (i) Two other benefits outside of substantive representation:
 - i. Having minorities in government may give them more legitimacy by having them be seen as fit to rule: “the presence or absence in the ruling assembly (and other ruling bodies, such as the executive and judiciary) of a proportional number of individuals carrying the group’s ascriptive characteristics shapes the social meaning of those characteristics in a way that affects most bearers of those characteristics in the polity.” (p. 649)
 - ii. **“A second benefit to descriptive representation comes in the increased empirical (or sociological, or *de facto*) legitimacy of the polity. Seeing proportional numbers of members of their group exercising the responsibility of ruling with full status in the legislature can enhance de facto legitimacy by making citizens, and particularly members of historically underrepresented groups, feel as if they themselves were present in the deliberations.”** (p. 650)
 - iii. **“This paper represents a plea for moving beyond a dichotomous approach to descriptive representation. It argues that descriptive representation is not always necessary, but rather that the best approach to descriptive representation is contextual, asking when the benefits of such representation might be most likely to exceed the costs/.”** (p. 654)

Is there a ‘woman’s way’ of governing? Assessing the organizational structures of womens membership associations

1. Cite Key:

\citet{Barakso2007}

2. Authors: Maryann Barakso

3. Year: 2007

4. Journal: Politics and Gender

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: To what extent do womens organizations share a common commitment to organizational participatory democracy? **Research suggests that women appear more likely than men to prefer democratic decision-making processes**, yet these studies generally compare womens and mens behavior in organizations that are not only numerically dominated by men but that were also initially formed by men. I examine the electoral and policymaking rules of 37 membership-based womens associations in order to determine the extent to which the bylaws of womens groups exhibit the high levels of democracy predicted by the theoretical and empirical literature. **I find that levels of democracy in womens associations vary more than research on womens governance would**

suggest. I then explore factors that influence the observed variation in womens groups. **I find that the extent to which a womens group relies on membership dues, the year it was founded, and, to a lesser extent, its size affect how democratically it is structured.** I conclude by considering the implications of these findings for the representation of womens diverse political and economic interests. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “Irrespective of how they explain the origin of gender differences, a substantial literature in a variety of fields, including psychology, business administration, sociology, and political science, finds that women are more likely than men to encourage cooperative behavior, are more concerned with achieving consensus, and are more likely to seek out others’ opinions than men”. (p. 203)
- (b) “Of the 37 organizations, 11 originated before 1960 and 26 formed later. The oldest group in the sample is the American Association of University Women, which was founded in 1881. On the other hand, Women in Technology is more than a century younger, having been founded in 1994. Membership size also ranged widely, from 300 members in Executive Women in Government to 500,000 in the National Organization for Women. Finally, there was also considerable variation in the types of groups sampled – eight of the organizations were classified as multi-issue and political groups, five were ethnic organizations, and 24 were occupationally based.” (p. 205)
- (c) “Theoretically, groups for whom membership dues comprise a greater percentage of their yearly revenue are more likely to provide significant avenues for member input on organizational policy” (p. 213)

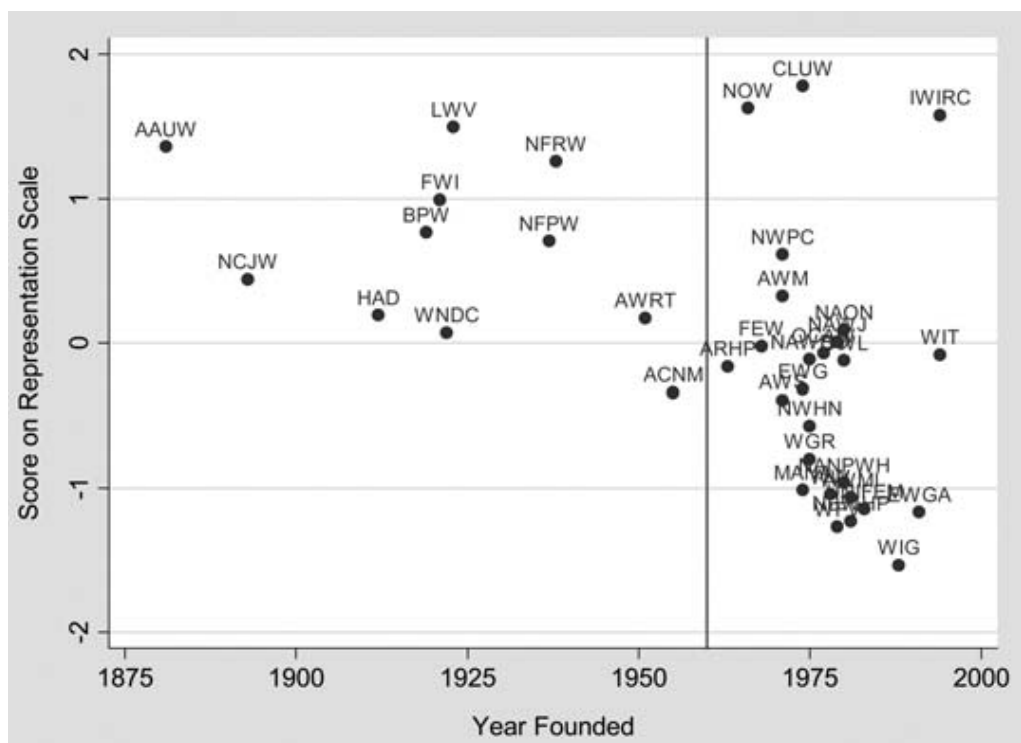


FIGURE 2. Groups on democratic governance index by year founded.

Table 3. Ordinary least squares estimation of factors influencing opportunities for participation

| <i>Independent Variable</i> | <i>Coefficient</i> | <i>Robust Std. Error</i> | <i>P-value</i> |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Founded after 1960 | −.644 | .230 | .010 |
| Size of organization (in 1,000s) | .003 | .001 | .003 |
| Percentage of revenue from dues | .010 | .005 | .082 |
| Feminist organization | −.034 | .374 | .917 |
| Intercept | .061 | .374 | .871 |

N = 36, R-square = .39.

- (d) “The exigencies of choosing institutions that best ensure the survival and success of the organization may override gender-based differences in leadership style. Perhaps the most striking evidence of this reality is that **despite the theoretical reasons that feminist organizations might be particularly inclined to adopt highly participatory bylaws, I find no evidence that this is the case.**” (p. 221)

An Integrated Model of Women’s Representation

1. Cite Key:

\citet{Schwindt-Bayer2008}

2. Authors: Leslie A. Schwindt-Bayer, William Mishler

3. Year: 2005

4. Journal: JOP

5. Keywords:

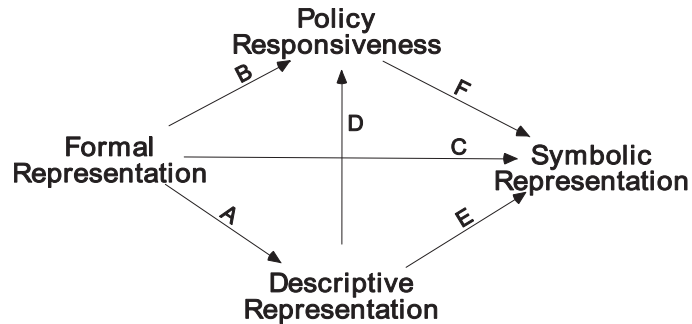
6. Summary: The concept of representation, as developed in Hanna Pitkin’s seminal work, is a complex structure, whose multiple dimensions are hypothesized to be closely interconnected. Most empirical work, however, ignores the integrated character of representation and examines its several dimensions in isolation. The picture of representation that results is not so much incorrect as incomplete. This research tests an integrated model of representation linking formal, descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation. Data on the representation of women in 31 democracies confirms the interconnections among the several dimensions of representation. **The structure of electoral systems exerts powerful influences on both women’s descriptive representation and symbolic representation.** Descriptive representation, in turn, increases legislatures’ responsiveness to women’s policy concerns and enhances perceptions of legitimacy. **The effects of substantive representation, however, are much less than theory anticipates.** (abstract

7. Main Findings:

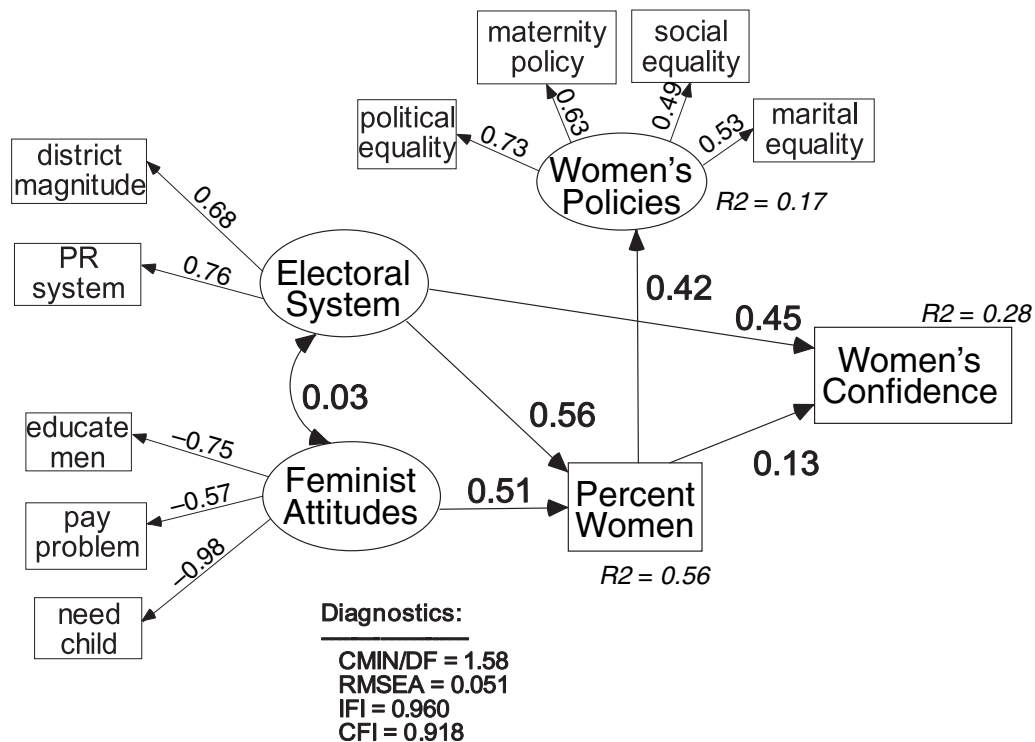
- (a) “Hanna Pitkins (1967) seminal treatment identifies four distinct, but interconnected meanings or dimensions of representation including: **formal representation**, referring to the institutional rules and procedures through which representatives are chosen; **descriptive representation**, referring to the compositional similarity between representatives and the represented; **substantive representation or responsiveness**, referring to the congruence between representatives’ actions and the interests of the represented; and **symbolic representation**, referring to the representeds feelings of being fairly and effectively represented.” (p. 407)

- (b) Previous research suggests that countries with electoral systems that elect more total representatives will elect more women because the number of votes necessary to get a seat decreases and makes room for minority parties and women.

An Integrated Model of Political Representation



Reduced Form Structural Equation Model of Women's Representation



- (c) “higher levels of descriptive representation increase legislatures’ responsiveness to women’s policy concerns and enhance perceptions of legitimacy.” (p. 424)
- (d) “the effects of descriptive representation on policy responsiveness and symbolic representation are nonlinear and accelerate as the percentage of women in the legislature increases”. (p. 424)

Women and Representation: A Different View of the District?

1. Cite Key:

\citet{Gerrity2007}

2. Authors: Jessica C. Gerrity, Tracy Osborn, Jeanette Morehouse Mendez

3. **Year:** 2007
4. **Journal:** Politics and Gender
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** In this article we measure the impact of gender on women's legislative behavior by utilizing a unique research design. We compare whether women and men of the same political party represent the same congressional district differently with respect to women's issues. Using bill sponsorship and floor remarks during the 104th to 107th sessions of the U.S. House of Representatives as measures of legislative behavior, we find that female legislators who replace men in the same district introduce more women's issues bills in Congress. Although our conclusion that women legislators represent women's issues more frequently in the House supports existing research, our results do so in a new and more effective way by controlling for the competing explanations of party identification and district opinion as factors determining a legislator's behavior. (abstract)
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a)
 - (b)

The Jackie (and Jill) Robinson Effect: Why Do Congresswomen Outperform Congressmen?

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Anzia2011a}
2. **Authors:** Sarah F. Anzia, Christopher R. Berry
3. **Year:** 2011
4. **Journal:** AJPS
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:**
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) will succeed If voters are biased against female candidates, only the most talented, hardest working female candidates in the electoral process. Furthermore, if women perceive there to be sex discrimination in the electoral process, or if they underestimate their qualifications for office, then only the most qualified, politically ambitious females will emerge as candidates. We argue that when either or both forms of sex-based selection are present, the women who are elected to office will perform better, on average, than their male counterparts. We test this central implication of our theory by studying the relative success of men and women in delivering federal spending to their districts and in sponsoring legislation. Analyzing changes within districts over time, we find that congresswomen secure roughly 9% more spending from federal discretionary programs than congressmen. Women also sponsor and cosponsor significantly more bills than their male counterparts. (abstract)
 - (b)

Quasi-Experimental Design, Constituency, and Advancing Womens Interests: Reexamining the Influence of Gender on Substantive Representation

1. Cite Key:

\cite{MacDonald2010}

2. Authors: Jason A. MacDonald, Erin E. OBrien

3. Year: 2011

4. Journal: Political Research Quarterly

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Research investigating whether female legislators provide more effective substantive representation on womens issues than their male colleagues faces a significant methodological hurdle. Models used to estimate the effect of gender on representation inevitably omit constituency variables that affect the character of legislators decisions and are also correlated with gender, potentially biasing the estimates of the effect of gender. Employing a quasi-experimental research design as an alternative strategy, the authors remove this hurdle and estimate the influence of gender on representation free from this potential bias. **The authors find that gender does affect representation and observe critical mass effects.** (abstract)
- (b) To identify the pairs of femalemale members serving in identical districts in consecutive congressional sessions, we identified every woman who served in the U.S. House during the 1970s (1973-1982), 1980s (1983- 1992), and 1990s (1993-2002) rounds of redistricting. We then identified the members serving immediately prior to and after these female representatives. When the member preceding/succeeding them was a man, we classified the two members as a pair for inclusion in our sample. (p. 475)

Week 10: Representation of Racial/Ethnic Minorities

Summary of the Debate

Using a novel measure of representation, [Hajnal \(2009\)](#) find that across the range of American elections, African Americans are consistently more likely than other groups to end up voting for a losing candidate, although house elections are an exception. Using data from the National Black Election Survey [Tate \(2001\)](#) finds that black voters tend to feel better represented and have more faith in government when they are represented by a black representative in the House. In a cross-national study [Banducci et al. \(2004\)](#) find that in both the US and New Zealand descriptive representation matters: it increases knowledge about and contact with representatives in the U.S. and leads to more positive evaluations of governmental responsiveness and increased electoral participation in New Zealand. In an experimental email study, [Butler and Broockman \(2011\)](#) find that putatively black requests receive fewer replies from white representatives, even when signaling party affiliation. This trend is reversed for black legislators. [Broockman \(2013\)](#) conducted a field experiment emailing representatives from a black alias asking for

help getting unemployment benefits and varying whether the requester was from the same district. The results show that black legislators were more intrinsically motivated to help the requester, even when they found out they were not from their district. Finally, [Nteta \(2012\)](#) finds that African Americans tend to support restrictive immigration policies, and that class membership alongside subjective and objective measures of self-interest influence these policy stances. This is a departure from previous findings that did not show self interest mattering in black views on immigration.

Who Loses in American Democracy? A Count of Votes Demonstrates the Limited Representation of African Americans

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Hajnal2009}

2. Authors: Zoltan Hajnal

3. Year: 2009

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Critics have long feared that America's winner-take-all electoral system would undermine the interests of minorities. Unfortunately, few available tests broadly assess how well minorities fare in a democracy. To gauge winners and losers in the American case, I introduce a new measure of representation. For any election, I count up how many voters from each demographic group vote for a candidate that loses. After comparing this new measure to its alternatives, I use data from the entire series of Voter News Service exit polls and a sample of mayoral elections to determine which kinds of voters end up losers. **I find that across the range of American elections, African Americans are consistently more likely than other groups to end up losers**, raising questions about equity in American democracy. **The one exception to the pattern of black failure – congressional House elections – suggests ways to better incorporate minority interests.** (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) "When we seek to gauge how well a minority group is represented, **we generally turn to one of two measures: (1) descriptive representation or (2) substantive representation.** For descriptive representation we count the number of elected officials by group to establish whether a given group has representation on par with its numbers. For substantive representation we assess policy outcomes to try to ascertain whether they are in line with minority interests" (p. 37)
- (b) "To supplement these existing measures and to help gauge how well minorities are represented in American democracy, I introduce a new measure that identifies winners and losers in the electoral process... **For each election, I simply count how many voters from different demographic groups end up voting for a candidate who eventually wins and how many voters from different demographic groups end up voting for a candidate who eventually loses...** After the tabulations are complete, I compare the proportion of winners and losers across a range of key demographic characteristics that regularly divide the electorate. " (p. 41)
- (c) "Counting winners and losers does, however, have some limitations. The chief concern is likely to be that it is not a direct assessment of policy outcomes. **Electoral outcomes may or may not translate into substantive policy outcomes. A related problem is that even when a candidate who personifies minority interests is voted into office and tries to represent minority interests, she may be blocked by a more numerous legislative voting bloc that favors majority interests.**" (p. 42)

- (d) “White voters, as one would expect, are in many ways the most privileged voters in American democracy. When election results have been posted, their preferences are much more likely to triumph than to be defeated. African American voters stand at the other end of the spectrum. **The black community is, in fact, the only community that was consistently more likely to end up on the losing side of democracy**”. (p. 54)

The Political Representation of Blacks in Congress: Does Race Matter?

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Tate2001}

2. **Authors:** Katherine Tate

3. **Year:** 2001

4. **Journal:** LSQ

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Congressional scholars generally take the position that members of Congress don't have to descriptively mirror their constituents in order to be responsive. Yet ample scholarship has shown that legislators work very hard at identifying with their constituents, at conveying the impression that they are alike in interests and opinions. Matching the race of the House member to their constituents' ratings in the 1996 National Black Election Study, **I find that blacks consistently express higher levels of satisfaction with their representation in Washington when that representative is black, even controlling for other characteristics of the legislators, such as political party.** This study underscores the value of descriptive representation in the black community and highlights the need for additional empirically based studies of political representation.(abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) **Black attitudes toward their representatives are likely to be affected by the following legislator attributes: 1. Political party 2. Race 3. Ideology, roll-call votes or key votes 4. Legislative record, specifically roll-call votes and bill sponsorship 5. Committee work, including the number of committees, chairmanship, or type of committee service 6. Legislative position, such as seniority and party leadership 7. Staff size 8. Campaign activity, such as margin of victory and campaign expenditure**” (p. 630)
- (b) DATA: “The 1996 National Black Election Study is modeled after the 1984 NBES and the 1996 American National Election Studies... It is a national random digit-dial telephone survey of African Americans during the 1996 presidential election. It contains both pre- and post-election components. A total of 1,216 respondents completed interviews during the pre-election component, 854 of whom were re-interviewed for the post-election component.” (p. 631)
- (c) Results suggest that Black voters like Black representatives better:

The Effect of Descriptive Representation on the Member's Approval
and Thermometer Ratings by Blacks
(OLS Estimates)

| Independent Variable | Member's Approval Rating (1-5) | | Member's Thermometer Rating (1-100) | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------|--|------|
| | b | SE | b | SE |
| Intercept | 2.464** | .372 | 36.83** | 5.99 |
| Member's race (Black) | .422** | .135 | 14.63** | 2.22 |
| Party match | .793** | .135 | 12.68** | 2.14 |
| Party leader | -.088 | .131 | -4.76* | 2.11 |
| Committee chair | -.239 | .428 | -8.37 | 7.16 |
| Years of seniority | -.000 | .007 | .04 | .12 |
| Number of home staff | .038 | .025 | .18 | .41 |
| Number of bills law | .088 | .052 | 1.93* | .89 |
| Campaign spending | .141 | .082 | -2.69* | 1.30 |
| Respondent's residency | .000 | .002 | .02 | .03 |
| Respondent's age | .008* | .004 | .19* | .06 |
| Respondent's education | .055 | .035 | .74 | .57 |
| Respondent's gender (male) | -.128 | .114 | .705 | 1.86 |
| N | 663 | | 778 | |
| R-squared | .15 | | .21 | |

Source: 1996 National Black Election Study and compiled by author.

*statistically significant at .05.

**statistically significant at .01

Minority Representation, Empowerment, and Participation

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Banducci2004}

2. Authors: Susan A. Banducci, Todd Donovan, Jeffrey A. Karp

3. Year: 2004

4. Journal: JOP

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: "According to the minority empowerment thesis, minority representation strengthens representational links, fosters more positive attitudes toward government, and encourages political participation. We examine this theory from a cross-national perspective, making use of surveys that sampled minorities in the United States and New Zealand. Both countries incorporate structures into their electoral systems that make it possible for minority groups to elect representatives of their choice. **We find that in both countries descriptive representation matters: it increases knowledge about and contact with representatives in the U.S. and leads to more positive evaluations of governmental responsiveness and increased electoral participation in New Zealand.** These findings have broad implications for debates about minority representation". (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

(a) This paper compares Maori and Black citizens in New Zealand and the USA. In New Zealand

- (b) “We have shown that minority representation increases the likelihood that minority citizens will vote in those places where minorities hold office (see the bivariate results in the United States and the multivariate results in New Zealand)”
- (c) “**As Tate (1991) suggest, once minority representation is achieved interest and, thus, turnout decline.** At the same time, it is also reasonable to expect that minority citizens affected by descriptive representation may become socialized into the habit of voting more frequently, particularly if their attitudes about governmental responsiveness become more positive. In the United States, the more recent majority-minority districts may have worked to spark interest in the election and turnout”. (p. 553)

Do Politicians Racially Discriminate against Constituents? A Field Experiment on State Legislators

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Butler2011}

2. **Authors:** Daniel M. Butler, David E. Broockman

3. **Year:** 2011

4. **Journal:** AJPS

5. **Keywords:**

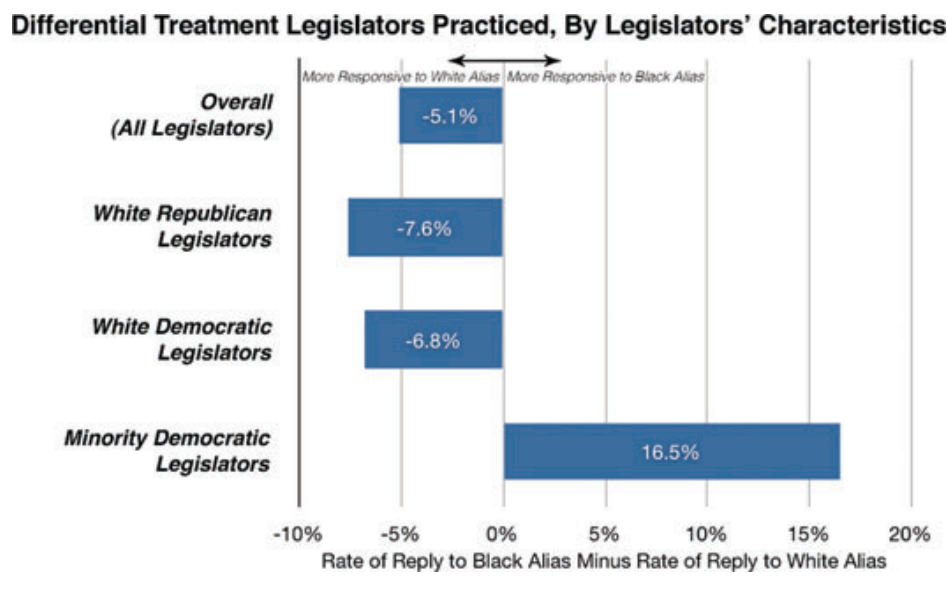
6. **Summary:** We use a field experiment to investigate whether race affects how responsive state legislators are to requests for help with registering to vote. In an email sent to each legislator, we randomized whether a putatively black or white alias was used and whether the email signaled the sender's partisan preference. Overall, **we find that putatively black requests receive fewer replies.** We explore two potential explanations for this discrimination: strategic partisan behavior and the legislators' own race. **We find that the putatively black alias continues to be differentially treated even when the emails signal partisanship, indicating that strategic considerations cannot completely explain the observed differential treatment.** Further analysis reveals that white legislators of both parties exhibit similar levels of discrimination against the black alias. Minority legislators do the opposite, responding more frequently to the black alias. Implications for the study of race and politics in the United States are discussed.” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “ **Republican legislators receiving an email from someone with a putatively black name would probably infer that he or she is more likely to vote for the Democratic candidate.** ...This is one form of what economists refer to as “**statistical discrimination**,” since it is based on rational expectations given overall statistical trends (see Altonji and Blank 1999). Statistical discrimination stands in contrast to what economists term “**taste-based discrimination**,” which is based on factors like racial prejudice that are not readily explicable by rational choice (e.g., Becker 1957)” (p. 465)
- (b) **Experimental Treatment:** The authors sent an email asking for help registering to vote. “We signaled the race of the email sender by randomizing whether the email was signed by and sent from an email account with the name **Jake Mueller** or the name **DeShawn Jackson**. We also manipulated the text in order to signal the partisan preference of the email sender.” (p. 466)
- (c) “Our sample includes state legislators in 44 U.S. states with valid email addresses that were available online through state legislative websites in September 2008.” (p. 467)

(d) “ Just over half of the state legislators responded to our emails: we received 2,747 responses to the 4,859 emails that were successfully sent (a 56.5% response rate). However, the putatively white and black aliases did not enjoy similar rates of reply... **Among the emails that did not signal partisanship, legislators responded to 60.5% of the emails sent from the Jake alias but only 55.3% of those from the DeShawn alias, a statistically significant difference of 5.1 percentage points ($p=0.04$).**” (p. 468)

FIGURE 1 Heterogeneous Levels of Differential Treatment among Subgroups of Legislators



Black Politicians Are More Intrinsically Motivated to Advance Blacks' Interests: A Field Experiment Manipulating Political Incentives

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Broockman2013}

2. Authors: David E. Broockman

3. Year: 2013

4. Journal: AJPS

5. Keywords:

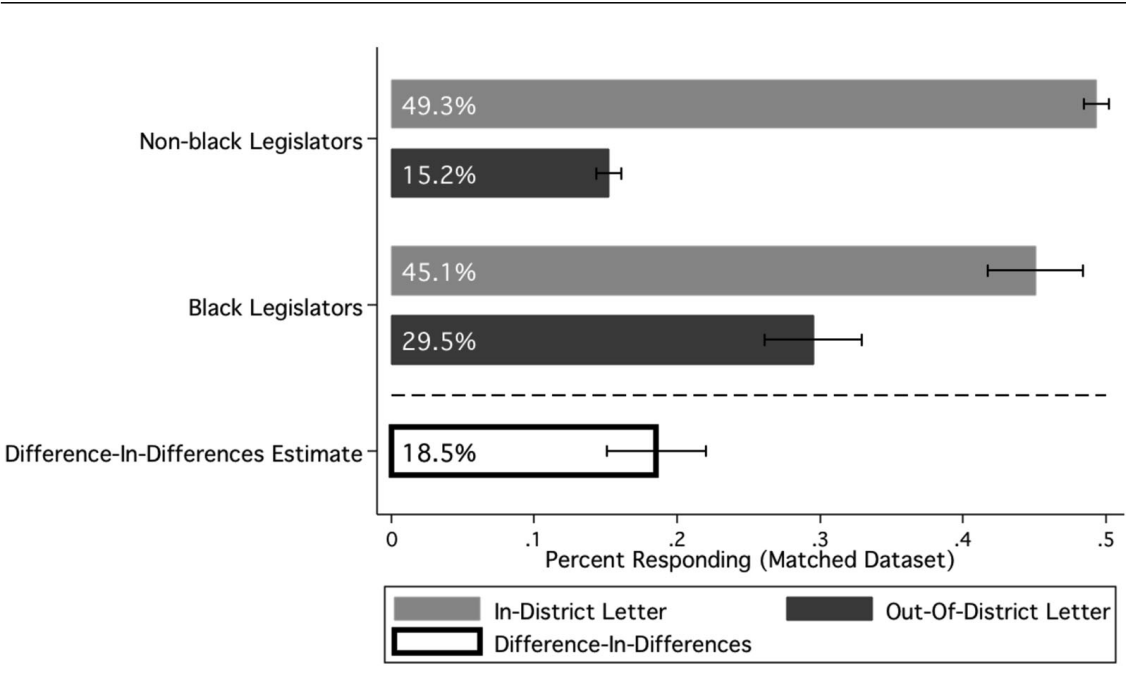
6. **Summary:** Why are politicians more likely to advance the interests of those of their race? I present a field experiment demonstrating that black politicians are more intrinsically motivated to advance blacks' interests than are their counterparts. Guided by elite interviews, I emailed 6,928 U.S. state legislators from a putatively black alias asking for help signing up for state unemployment benefits. Crucially, I varied the legislators' political incentive to respond by randomizing whether the sender purported to live within or far from each legislator's district. While nonblack legislators were markedly less likely to respond when their political incentives to do so were diminished, black legislators typically continued to respond even when doing so promised little political reward. Black legislators thus appear substantially more intrinsically motivated to advance blacks'

interests. As political decision making is often difficult for voters to observe, intrinsically motivated descriptive representatives play a crucial role in advancing minorities’ political interests.” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Her findings suggest that black representative are more intrinsically motivated to serve blacks because they will respond to requests for help even if the respondent is not in the legislator’s district and thus could not vote for them.

FIGURE 1 Rates of Reply by Treatment Group and Legislators’ Race (Matched Dataset)



(b)

United We Stand? African Americans, Self-Interest, and Immigration Reform

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Nteta2012}

2. Authors: Tatishe Nteta

3. Year: 2103

4. Journal: American Politics Research

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Alongside the growth of the immigrant population has been a corresponding backlash by citizens who increasingly support restrictive immigration policies aimed at undocumented immigrants. Much of what we know about this back-lash is based on data from White Americans. Are African Americans among the growing segment of anti-immigrant supporters? Employing data from the 2006 Pew Center “Americas Immigration Quandary Survey,” I uncover that African Americans support restrictive immigration policies, and that class membership alongside subjective and

objective measures of self-interest influence these policy stances. These findings challenge prior assertions that self-interest does little to account for American public opinion, demonstrating that on the issue of immigration reform that self-interest matters for African Americans. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a)
- (b)

Week 11: Economic Inequality and Representation I

Summary of the Debate

Bartels (2010) merges a behavioral and institutionalist approach to understanding the role that income inequality has on representation. He finds that in general, because of cognitive biases we tend to base our voting on how the economy is doing, but only the most recent past. Since he shows that presidents have their strongest effects on the economy in their second year this benefits republicans and hurts democrats as their policies are generally better for the economy. Worse still, he finds that the poorest Americans "fail to recognize the implications of their own values for their views about crucial issues" (p. 161)

Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{bartels2010unequal}

2. Authors: Bartels, Larry M

3. Year: 2010

4. Journal: Book

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

7. Main Findings:

- (a) <http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2009/03/18/poq.nfp007.full>
 - i. The overall inquiry is motivated in Chapter 1 by the observation that purely economic models have **"remarkable difficulty even in explaining why the numerous poor in democratic political systems do not expropriate the unnumerous wealthy"** (p. 26). Bartels frames his analysis of rising economic inequality in terms of two factors: **biases in the ways that citizens translate their values and interests into policy opinions, and the ways the political system enables parties, interest groups, and individual leaders to respond selectively or not at all to those opinions.** Throughout his empirical analyses Bartels pays careful attention to the ways that political psychology and political processes interact to condition policy making. Too often scholars of political behavior and political institutions live in very separate intellectual worlds; this book is an excellent model for scholars in each who seek to build bridges between them.

- ii. After documenting in the striking increases in economic inequality over the past three decades in the first chapter, Chapter 2 begins with the eye-popping finding of enormous differences in the growth of income inequality under Democratic and Republican administrations. Since World War II, under Democratic presidents income inequality has narrowed slightly, whereas under Republican presidents it has widened appreciably. This is visible in the raw income growth rates; with the sort of sophisticated and careful empirical analysis we would expect from Bartels, he demonstrates that this partisan effect holds up against a very wide range of alternative explanations and is robust across a range of model specifications. Chapter 2 then documents relatively briefly the characteristically different approaches to the economy taken by Democratic and Republican presidents, and shows that macroeconomic indicators differ in ways that make sense given those policies. **In short, compared to Republicans, Democrats preside over substantially lower unemployment and higher GNP growth, and marginally higher inflation. Moreover, presidents policies have their strongest effects during presidents second year in office, just after the first-year honeymoon; this fact further buttresses the argument that presidents have some power over the macroeconomy.**
- iii. This raises the obvious question of why Republicans have won the presidency repeatedly despite policies that are inferior for the large majority of the electorate. In Chapter 3, **Bartels rejects a popular explanation that voters –in particular, lower-class whites – increasingly vote on noneconomic, cultural grounds.** His analyses show that while so-called cultural issues may have grown somewhat more important over the past several decades, economic issues have played a larger role over the entire period. While this chapter does not fully explore the role of cultural and racial issues in party identification and voting, it does demonstrate convincingly that we cannot understand Republican electoral success simply as a product of their skill at distracting low-income whites with crafty values-based campaign rhetoric.
- iv. In Chapter 4, Bartels argues that voters do react to the economy, but that they do so almost completely in terms of the most immediate past. Given the finding that macroeconomic differences are at their greatest in the second year of a president's administration, this myopia means that Democratic presidents do not get full credit – and Republican presidents are not held fully responsible – for much of the effect of their economic policies on income growth and inequality. **This advantage for Republicans is compounded by the finding that voters across the income scale seemingly react most powerfully to income growth of the rich, regardless of their own income.**
- v. The normative troubles raised by these finding are sharpened by Chapter 5, which demonstrates that on the whole **Americans do seem to care about economic inequality and are relatively sympathetic toward the poor. Voters often fail to connect these values with politics, however, due to a lack of information and attention and – most troubling – due to substantial partisan-based rationalization and misperception.** The least-informed Americans seem to "fail to recognize the implications of their own values for their views about crucial issues" (p. 161), while the understanding of the very facts of economic inequality by the better informed are driven by their political ideology.
- vi. Combining detailed accounts of policy making in Washington with analyses of opinion data, in Chapters 6 through 8 Bartels traces three cases of economic policy making: the Bush tax cuts of 2001 and 2003; the repeal of the estate tax in 2001; and the 2007 increase in the minimum wage. These studies paint a distressing portrait of the American public's grasp of economic and tax issues. To cite but one example, widespread support for the 2001 tax cuts was based largely on what Bartels dubs "un-enlightened self interest." **On this measure, which tilted tax benefits heavily toward the rich, middle- and low-income voters based their opinion on their feeling about their own tax burdens and ignored**

their feelings about the tax burdens of the rich. These case studies also show the ways that motivated ideological and interest groups can thwart broad patterns of public support for policy change.

- vii. The systemic effects of these dynamics are summarized with an analysis in Chapter 9 of US Senators responsiveness to their constituents. In short, Senators respond substantially to the rich, somewhat to the middle-income, and not at all to the poor. In addition, the effect of Senator party substantially outweighs the effect of constituency opinion, further underlining the limited constraints opinion places on leaders. While these results are not entirely shocking, and while this analysis falls short of a comprehensive look at democratic responsiveness, it does give a clear summary answer to Dahl's famous question, and highlights the importance of disaggregating studies of democratic accountability that consider the "public." **Clearly Senators – and the political system as a whole – respond to multiple publics, and one strikingly important line of cleavage is income.**
- viii. A narrow reading of Unequal Democracy would place it centrally in the large literature that argues, with apology to V. O. Key, that the voters are fools. To be sure, Bartels demonstrates that voters often lack the information they need or are too confused about the implications of what they do know to make reasonable decisions. The book goes beyond this point in two ways, however, which make clear that solutions must move beyond more-or-less pious calls for greater voter attention. First, **he demonstrates that partisan misperception and rationalization color the effects of political information in ways that undermining its ability to produce objectively "better" opinion.** And second, by marrying his analyses of political behavior with specific cases of policy making, Bartels demonstrates in detail the latitude that public opinion allows political elites and the pathways by which they can shape and make use of what citizens do know. This book makes clear that voters foolishness is a joint product of individual voter psychology and the operation of political institutions and the elites that inhabit them. More broadly, **Bartels argues forcefully that far from being inevitable consequences of economic development, broad patterns of changing economic inequality in the past half-century have important political roots.** Like Dahl, Bartels gives us a wide-ranging framework for thinking about the ways that citizens interact with the political system, and in so doing maps an agenda for the next generation of research on American democracy in action.

(b)

Week 12: Economic Inequality and Representation II

Summary of the Debate

The readings in this chapter are largely a response to Bartels. There has been some research that also finds inequality: In an analysis of 20 years of survey data on citizens [Gilens \(2005\)](#) finds that actual policy outcomes strongly reflect the preferences of the most affluent but bear virtually no relationship to the preferences of poor or middle-income Americans. [Rhodes and Schaffner \(2013\)](#) also find evidence that members of congress are much more responsive to rich than poor constituents, but also find that this is more centered on republicans and that democrats actually respond to poor and rich mostly equally. However, there are also some studies that do not find the same inequality including [Wlezien and Soroka \(2011\)](#). In this compendium, the authors generally do not find major differences in the representation of the poor and rich. [Ellis \(2013\)](#) complicates the picture a bit further with his results that show poorer citizens are better represented relative to the rich in Congressional districts that are electorally competitive,

have low median incomes, have relatively equal distributions of incomes, have a significant organized labor presence, and are represented by Democrats

Inequality and democratic responsiveness

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Gilens2005a}

2. **Authors:** Martin Gilens

3. **Year:** 2005

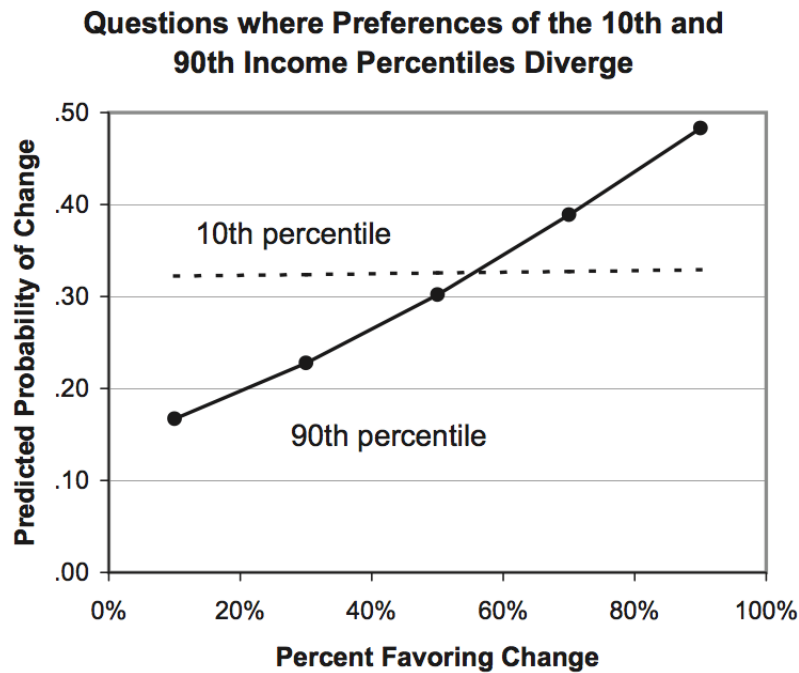
4. **Journal:** Public Opinion Quarterly

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** By allowing voters to choose among candidates with competing policy orientations and by providing incentives for incumbents to shape policy in the direction the public desires, elections are thought to provide the foundation that links government policy to the preferences of the governed. In this article I examine the extent to which the preference/ policy link is biased toward the preferences of high-income Americans. Using an original data set of almost two thousand survey questions on proposed policy changes between 1981 and 2002, **I find a moderately strong relationship between what the public wants and what the government does, albeit with a strong bias toward the status quo. But I also find that when Americans with different income levels differ in their policy preferences, actual policy outcomes strongly reflect the preferences of the most affluent but bear virtually no relationship to the preferences of poor or middle-income Americans.** The vast discrepancy I find in government responsiveness to citizens with different incomes stands in stark contrast to the ideal of political equality that Americans hold dear. Although perfect political equality is an unrealistic goal, representational biases of this magnitude call into question the very democratic character of our society. (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) “My data set consists of **1,935 survey questions asked of national samples of the U.S. population between 1981 and 2002.** Each survey question asks whether respondents support or oppose some proposed change in U.S. government policy: raising the minimum wage, sending U.S. troops to Haiti, requiring employers to provide health insurance, allowing gays to serve in the military, and so on. The survey question is the unit of analysis in the data set, with variables indicating the proportion of respondents answering “favor,” “oppose,” or “don’t know” within each category of income, education, race, sex, age, partisan identification, ideological self-placement, and region, as well as a code indicating whether the proposed policy change occurred or not. ” (p. 781-782)
- (b) The key effects seem to show up when class differences in preferences appear.



- (c) Gilens identifies campaign contributions and the ability to influence others as potential reasons for greater government responsiveness to wealthy citizens. However he does not take into account the possibility of class self interest or that poor voters may not know they are not getting representation.

Who Gets Represented? (Chapters 8, 10, 12)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Wlezien2011}

2. Authors: Peter K. Enns, Christopher Wlezien

3. Year: 2011

4. Journal: Who Gets Represented?

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **Erikson and Bhatti Chapter:** In his new book *Unequal Democracy*, Larry Bartels finds that rich constituents are substantially better represented by the legislators in the US Senate than their poorer counterparts. In fact, the poorest third of the population is not represented at all. While we do not find evidence directly contradictory this result, we add some complications. First, we solve a methodological problem caused by the fact that the weights used in the existing literature render the results scale variant. Second, we replicate Bartels findings in two recent datasets with larger sample sizes and hence less measurement error. We cannot find statistical evidence of differential representation. A contributing reason is that ideological preferences among different income strata of state electorates are almost impossible to separate statistically
- (b) **Wlezein and Soroka Chapter :** This paper explores inequality in policy representation over time within the US. The analyses focus on a set of spending domains of recurring political

importance, about which we have similar questions and to which US governments have tended to be quite responsive to public preferences (Wlezien 1996, 2004). We are interested in seeing whether policymakers are more responsive to the preferences of some groups within society than others, particularly those reflecting differences in income, education and party identification. **Our previous research has shown that spending preferences across these subgroups, especially income levels, are surprisingly similar at particular points in time and move together over time** (Soroka and Wlezien 2008). Here we develop these findings. We show that, while they do move together over time, preferences across groups do also vary independently. Then we assess the underlying structure of preferences and reveal a high level of “thermostatic” public responsiveness to policy across all subgroups. **Finally, we turn to representation, and this analysis demonstrates that the preferences of different groups have essentially the same impact on spending. Although there are some differences, especially across education levels, the overall story is one of striking equality. The results suggest that concerns about the inequalities in the representation of different income groups may be overstated.**

Economic Inequality and Representation in the U.S. House: A New Approach Using Population-Level Data

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Rhodes2013}

2. Authors: Jesse H. Rhodes, Brian F. Schaffner

3. Year: 2013

4. Journal: Working Paper

5. Keywords:

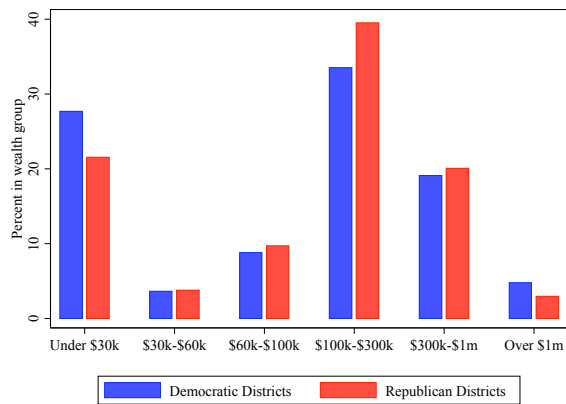
6. **Summary:** “In this paper, we focus on the relationship between economic inequality and political representation in the U.S. House of Representatives, examining how well individual legislators represent constituents of different wealth levels within their districts. Overall, we find that members of Congress are much more responsive to the wealthy than to their poor constituents. However, **when we estimate separate models for Democratic and Republican representatives, these findings largely disappear for Democrats, and become especially stark for Republicans.** We also evaluate several hypotheses about mechanisms linking wealth and representation, including claims that the wealthy receive disproportionate representation due to (1) higher registration rates, (2) more extensive participation in elections, and (3) greater propensity to make political donations. **We find that campaign donations, but not voter registration or participation in primary or general elections, may help explain the disproportionate influence of the wealthy among Republican representatives.**” (p. 2)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “Reviewing the divergent views about the relationship between economic inequality and political representation, Stimson (2011) declared acerbically that “between the two positions it is hard to imagine that objective research could produce such discrepant conclusions.”... **We believe that a principal reason for the divergent findings of recent studies is the way in which the reliance on survey data has limited the scope of inquiry on this topic. For the purposes of studying the relationship between economic inequality and political representation, existing survey datasets suffer from two serious problems: (1) small samples that include few, if any, truly wealthy Americans; and (2) coarse measures that fail to distinguish between the truly wealthy and the merely well-to-do** (Page (2009)).

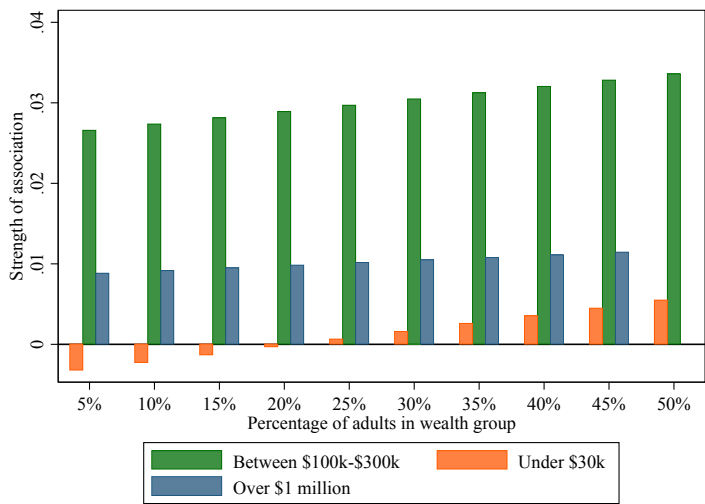
(b) The authors use NOMINATE and National Journal measures of ideology of representatives. Below is a chart of income by political party district leaning:

Figure 6: The Distribution of Wealth in Districts Represented by Democrats and Republicans



- (c) “At the extreme, we estimate that millionaires receive about twice as much representation when they comprise about 5% of the district’s population than the poorest wealth group does when it makes up 50% of the district” (p. 37)
- (d) Interesting that the 100-300k group is highest correlation.

Figure 7: Strength of association between ideology of different wealth groups and members’ NOMINATE scores depending on the size of that group in the district



Note: Bars based on combining coefficients for each wealth group from the first model in Table 2.

Social Contexts and Economic Biases in Representation

- 1. Cite Key:
`\cite{Ellis2013}`
- 2. Authors: Christopher Reid Ellis
- 3. Year: 2013
- 4. Journal: JOP

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** “This article explores the role of political context in shaping economic biases in representation – the degree to which wealthy citizens’ views are more strongly represented than poorer citizens’ views in the choices of policymakers. **I develop a general model that explains why poorer citizens will be better represented relative to the rich in certain political contexts than others, arguing that the relative representation of the poor will be stronger in contexts that make the views of the poor relevant and accessible to policymakers.** I then derive several specific hypotheses that flow from this model and test these hypotheses through a study of the dyadic relationships between citizens and their representatives in the U.S. Congress. **The results show that poorer citizens are better represented relative to the rich in Congressional districts that are electorally competitive, have low median incomes, have relatively equal distributions of incomes, have a significant organized labor presence, and are represented by Democrats.**” (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **Contextual Factors Affecting Unequal Representation:** Income inequality (+), median income (-) , electoral competitiveness (-) , labor union strength (-) , party affiliation (dem -).
- (b) “To test these expectations, I develop two measures of dyadic representation that seek to measure how well the preferences of citizens are represented in the roll- call votes of their Congress members. Both measures are derived from the roll-call votes of members of the 110th House and mass opinion data from the 2008 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES).” (p. 777)
- (c) Main findings on factors affecting representation gap

TABLE 2 **Modeling Rich-Poor Gaps in District-Level Representation**

| | Ideological Distance Gap | Key Vote Gap |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Republican MC | -2.96* (-0.22) | 14.03* (0.55) |
| District Median Income | -0.78* (-0.16) | 0.64* (0.06) |
| District Inequality | -21.61* (-0.11) | 3.22 (0.01) |
| District Competitiveness | 0.11* (-0.14) | -0.24* (0.17) |
| District Unionization | 1.99 (-0.03) | -13.22* (-0.11) |
| Constant | 15.30* | 92.98 |
| R ² | 0.09 | 0.36 |
| N | 435 | 435 |

Note: Table entries are OLS regression coefficients. Standardized coefficients are in parentheses. * $p < .05$

791T Institutions (UMASS)

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Week 1: Approaches and Major Developments in American Politics

Summary of the Debate

March and Olsen (1984) Ostrom (1998) Olson (1965) King et al. (1994) Katznelson (1992) Fenno (1978) Pierson (2000)

Summary from Memo

Our introduction to institutions brings with it several perspectives on what constitutes an institution and how we ought to study and understand the role that these institutions play in politics. [Katznelson \(1992\)](#) argues that “the state” is an institution that is worthy of study and that shapes and constrains the behavior of elites, voters and political groups. On the other hand, [Ostrom \(1998\)](#) presents what I would argue is an equally important institution in politics – shared norms or a sort of “social fabric”. The trio of trust, reputation and reciprocity form their own set of constraints and self correcting behavior without any central coordinating mechanism. I feel that each of these institutional perspectives is important, but incomplete without the other, and both should stand being contrasted with the individual-centric approach employed by much of the rest of the discipline. What follows is an attempt to situate these two perspectives in conversation with each other and understand why we need both.

I was lucky enough to meet Elinor Ostrom when she came to UMass to give a lecture a few years ago and one of the points I distinctly remember coming up in conversation was how community norms and decentralized governance mechanisms could function like the “state without the state”. In arguably her most famous work, *Governing the Commons*, [Ostrom \(1990\)](#) does qualify this assertion by arguing for example the presence of a low cost system of courts and the general monopoly on legitimate violence by the state are often beneficial if not even necessary to the success of many of the decentralized institutions for collective action she studied. In the article we read for this week Ostrom offers a powerful critique of strict rational-choice utility-maximizing models of collective action drawn from (Walrasian) microeconomics. To my understanding, she is substituting the discipline of rigid, selfish utility maximization for the softer discipline of collective norms and morals in governing group solutions to collective action problems. If we think about the situations she describes through a game-theoretic lens, we can say that this way of thinking about collective action problems changes both the payoffs and the structure of the game. Thus we can think about social norms as both an institution and operating within an institution.

The problem with placing micro-level social norms at the center of an institutional explanation of political behavior is that we may forget to look up. I find two aspects of [Katznelson \(1992\)](#) very persuasive: the importance of history in understanding why we are where we are today; and the role of the state as an institution. Quoting [Skowronek \(1982\)](#), Katznelson draws attention to the state as a constraining institution that sets the rules by which politics is played out:

A “sense of the state” pervades contemporary American politics. It is the sense of organization of coercive power operating beyond our immediate control and intruding into all aspects of our lives. We have labeled this organization an administrative state, a bureaucratic state, a capitalist state, a regulatory state, a welfare state... (p. 3)

While Skowronek is quick to point out that this sense of state is overlooked in American political culture, I think that seeing the state as an overarching institution is important to understand the bounds on how citizens solve political problems. If we think about the modern budget process and how to get past partisan gridlock in congress, it is only natural to do so using a constrained set of options. In some alternate universe we can imagine the majority party simply changing the laws to bring in several hundred new Senators and members of the house, all elected from districts where they have overwhelming majority party support, or simply locking up some of the minority party so they cannot come to vote against the

majority party budget. These ideas are laughable because the system of checks and balances that constitutes the state makes such maneuvers next to impossible, so much so that we do not even consider them when thinking of a solution to budget rancor.

The point I take away from Katznelson is that the current arrangement of power in the United States is sticky – it resists change – because it is built on a history that leads political actors to be entrenched, and narrows the scope of possibility for what we think is possible. I think this fits very nicely with the notion of institution brought in by Ostrom in that there are both top-down and bottom-up institutions interlocking with each other in modern American politics, and these institutions both have a history that cements them in our society. If political behavior emphasizes the optimizing decisions of individuals, I imagine institutions will frame the game and lead us to question the meaning of rationality in politics.

The new institutionalism: organizational factors in political life

1. Cite Key:

\cite{March1984}

2. Authors: James G. March, Johan P. Olsen

3. Year: 1984

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Extensive empirical evidence and theoretical developments in multiple disciplines stimulate a need to expand the range of rational choice models to be used as a foundation for the study of social dilemmas and collective action. After an introduction to the problem of overcoming social dilemmas through collective action, the remainder of this article is divided into six sections. The first briefly reviews the theoretical predictions of currently accepted rational choice theory related to social dilemmas. The second section summarizes the challenges to the sole reliance on a complete model of rationality presented by extensive experimental research. In the third section, I discuss two major empirical findings that begin to show how **individuals achieve results that are "better than rational" by building conditions where reciprocity, reputation, and trust can help to overcome the strong temptations of short-run self-interest**. The fourth section raises the possibility of developing second-generation models of rationality, the fifth section develops an initial theoretical scenario, and the final section concludes by examining the implications of placing reciprocity, reputation, and trust at the core of an empirically tested, behavioral theory of collective action. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

(a) Theoretical Styles of Contemporary Political Science (from page 735)

- i. **contextual**, inclined to see politics as an integral part of society, less inclined to differentiate the polity from the rest of society
- ii. **reductionist**, inclined to see political phenomena as the aggregate consequences of individual behavior, less inclined to ascribe the outcomes of politics to organizational structures and rules of appropriate behavior
- iii. **utilitarian**, inclined to see action as the product of calculated self-interest, less inclined to see political actors as responding to obligations and duties
- iv. **functionalist**, inclined to see history as an efficient mechanism for reaching uniquely appropriate equilibria, less concerned with the possibilities for maladaptation and non-uniqueness in historical development

- v. **instrumentalist**, inclined to define decision making and the allocation of resources as the central concerns of political life, less attentive to the ways in which political life is organized around the development of meaning through symbols, rituals, and ceremonies.

(b)

A Behavioral Approach to the Rational Choice Theory of Collective Action: Presidential Address, American Political Science Association, 1997

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Ostrom1998}

2. Authors: Elinor Ostrom

3. Year: 1998

4. Journal: APSR

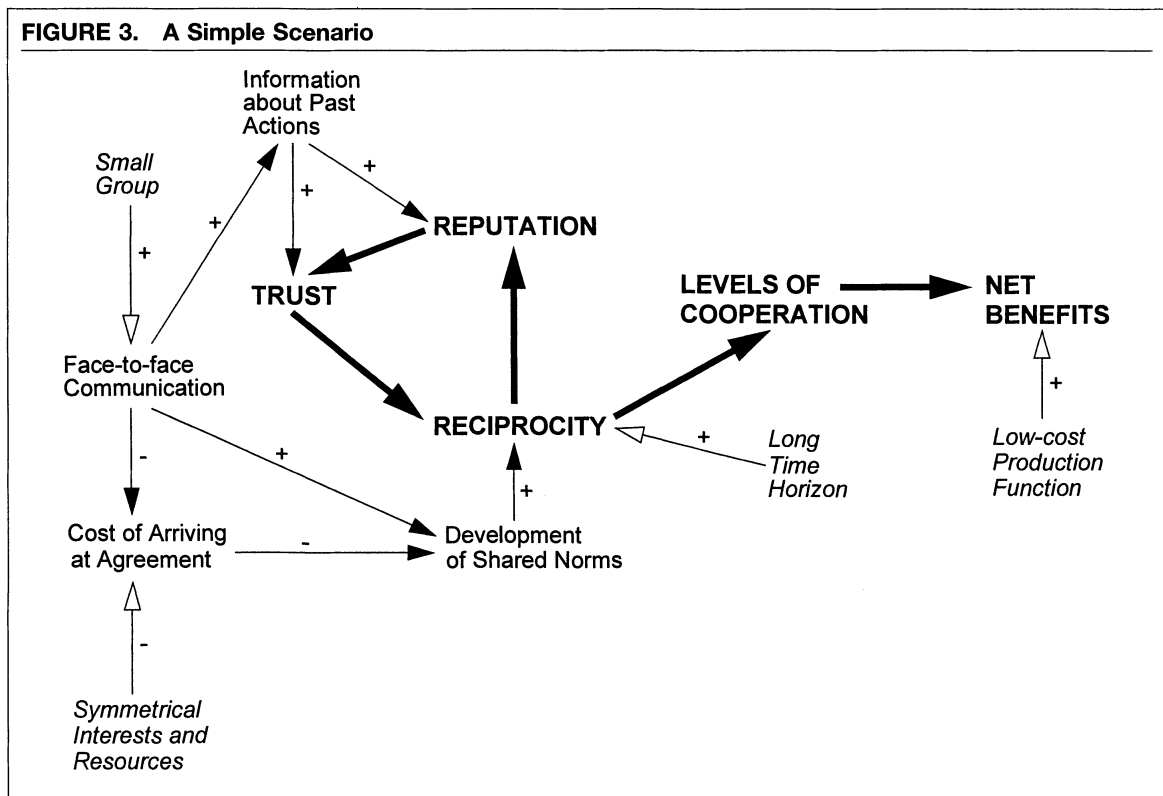
5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Contemporary theories of politics tend to portray politics as a reflection of society, political phenomena as the aggregate consequences of individual behavior, action as the result of choices based on calculated self-interest, history as efficient in reaching unique and appropriate outcomes, and decision making and the allocation of resources as the central foci of political life. Some recent theoretical thought in political science, however, blends elements of these theoretical styles into an older concern with institutions. This new institutionalism emphasizes the relative autonomy of political institutions, possibilities for inefficiency in history, and the importance of symbolic action to an understanding of politics. Such ideas have a reasonable empirical basis, but they are not characterized by powerful theoretical forms. Some directions for theoretical research may, however, be identified in institutionalist conceptions of political order. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) "Yet, the theory of collective action is the central subject of political science. It is the core of the justification for the state. Collective-action" (p. 1)
- (b) Social dilemmas are called by many names, including the public-good or collective-good problem, shirking, the free-rider problem, moral hazard, the credible commitment dilemma, generalized social exchange, the tragedy of the commons, and exchanges of threats and violent confrontations. The prisoners' dilemma has become the best-known social dilemma in contemporary scholarship. Among the types of individuals who are posited to face these kinds of situations are politicians, international negotiators, legislators, managers, workers etc. (p. 1-2)
- (c) "behavior in social dilemmas is affected by many structural variables, including size of group, heterogeneity of participants, their dependence on the benefits received, their discount rates, the type and predictability of transformation processes involved, the nesting of organizational levels, monitoring techniques, and the information available to participants" (p. 2)
- (d) **"To generate predictions other than noncooperation, theorists using standard rational choice theory have found it necessary to assume real uncertainty about the duration of a situation or to assume that some players are "irrational" in their willingness to reciprocate co- operation with cooperation.** To assume that if some players irrationally choose reciprocity, then others can rationally choose reciprocity is a convoluted explanation – to say the least – of the growing evidence that reciprocity is a core norm used by many individuals in social dilemma situations." (p. 4)

(e) Three key dynamics: Trust, Reputation, Reciprocity



Logic of Collective Action (Pages 1-65)

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Olson1965}

2. **Authors:** Mancur Olson

3. **Year:** 1965

4. **Journal:** Logic of Collective Action (book)

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Olson introduced the idea of a social dilemma and a public good where everybody wants the public good but wants somebody else to pay for it. Thus things like taxes have to be mandatory. The larger the group, the harder it will be for them to coordinate. Thus we should only expect small close-knit groups to be able to work for the common good without some sort of coercive coordinating mechanism. (not totally true cause we can have a correlated equilibrium that is a bit better than Nash)

7. **Main Findings:**

(a) Three kinds of groups:

- i. **Privileged groups** (members of this group would gain more from a public good than it would cost them to provide it unilaterally);
- ii. **Latent groups** (any member of this group could withhold his contribution to the public good without causing a noticeable reduction in its supply);
- iii. **Intermediate groups** (if any member of this group withholds his contribution, it will cause a noticeable decrease in supply of the good, or a noticeable rise in cost to other contributors).

- (b) As group size increases, provision of the common good becomes less optimal. You can only have optimal provision of the common good if the marginal costs are shared in "exactly the same proportion as the additional benefits" (30).
- (c) Hypotheses:
 - i. If there is a PRIVILEGED group, the good will always be provided.
 - ii. If there is an INTERMEDIATE group, the good might be provided.
 - iii. If there is only a LATENT group, the good won't be provided without coercion or selective incentives.
 - iv. Small stakeholders will tend to exploit big stakeholders (i.e. make them pay a larger share) Why large groups have problems
- (d) **Exclusive vs inclusive** goods: With exclusive common goods, the supply is limited. Think of a cartel; each firm wants to increase output (to increase its profits), but if all firms do this, the profits disappear (as the price falls). The supply of profits is limited, so it is an exclusive good. With inclusive goods, however, supply is not limited. Whether more members are welcome depends on whether the good is exclusive or inclusive. Firms prefer to have few competitors because goods are exclusive; unions prefer to maximize membership because its goods are inclusive, and having more members spreads the costs around more.

Designing Social Inquiry - Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research (Chapters 1-3)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{King1994a}

2. **Authors:** Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, Sidney Verba

3. **Year:** 1994

4. **Journal:** Designing Social Inquiry - Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** This book develops a methodology for conducting principled inference in qualitative research.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) "The lessons of these efforts should be clear: neither quantitative nor qualitative research is superior to the other, regardless of the research problem being addressed. Since many subjects of interest to social scientists cannot be meaningfully formulated in ways that permit statistical testing of hypotheses with quantitative data, we do not wish to encourage the exclusive use of quantitative techniques. We are not trying to get all social scientists out of the library and into the computer center, or to replace idiosyncratic conversations with structured inter- views. Rather, we argue that nonstatistical research will produce more reliable results if researchers pay attention to the rules of scientific inference rules that are sometimes more clearly stated in the style of quantitative research. Precisely defined statistical methods that under- gird quantitative research represent abstract formal models applicable to all kinds of research, even that for which variables cannot be measured quantitatively. The very abstract, and even unrealistic, nature of statistical models is what makes the rules of inference shine through so clearly." (p. 6)
- (b) Defining Scientific research in the Social Sciences:
 - i. The goal is Inference

- ii. The procedures are public
- iii. The conclusions are uncertain
- iv. The content is the method
- (c) Components of research design: (1) research question, (2) theory, (3) data, (4) use of the data
- (d) “The scholar who searches for additional implications of a hypothesis is pursuing **one of the most important achievements of all social science: explaining as much as possible with as little as possible**. Good social science seeks to increase the significance of what is explained relative to the information used in the explanation. If we can accurately explain what at first appears to be a complicated effect with a single causal variable or a few variables, the **leverage** we have over a problem is very high.” (p. 29)
- (e) “There are several fundamental aspects of scientific description. One is that it involves inference: part of the descriptive task is to infer information about unobserved facts from the facts we have observed. Another aspect involves distinguishing between that which is systematic about the observed facts and that which is nonsystematic.” (p. 34)
- (f) “Some scholars push the role of interpretation even further, going so far as to suggest that it is a wholly different paradigm of inquiry for the social sciences, not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning (Geertz 1973:5). In our view, however, science and interpretation are not fundamentally different endeavors aimed at divergent goals. Both rely on preparing careful descriptions, gaining deep understandings of the world, asking good questions, formulating falsifiable hypotheses on the basis of more general theories, and collecting the evidence needed to evaluate those hypotheses. ” (p. 37)
- (g) Requirements for estimating causal effects:
 - i. Unit homogeneity (because we cannot re-run history)
 - ii. Conditional Independence
- (h) Rules for constructing causal theories:
 - i. Falsifiable
 - ii. Internally consistent
 - iii. Select dependent variables carefully
 - iv. Maximize concreteness
 - v. State Theories in as Encompassing Ways as Feasible

The State to the Rescue? Political Science and History Reconnect

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Katznelson1992}

2. Authors: Ira Katznelson

3. Year: 1992

4. Journal: Social Research

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: This article traces the revival of the use of and focus on history in the study of American politics. It also talks about the bringing back in of a focus on the state, as opposed to groups and behavior within the state. In other words the state is the institution in which all of this stuff functions. “the field of **American Political Development**, and the larger state- centered tendency of which it is a part, matured in self-conscious rejection of the limitations of the group- and interest-centered studies of politics that took these very issues for granted” (p. 737).

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “a growing number of scholars in political science began to reverse their field’s flight from history to write about the American state in works of large scope under the badge of American Political Development (APD). ... aptly summarized as a **“revival of scholarship on American institutions and the related turn by political scientists to history”** (p. 720)
- (b) **“A ”sense of the state” pervades contemporary American politics. It is the sense of organization of coercive power operating beyond our immediate control and intruding into all aspects of our lives.** We have labeled this organization an administrative state, a bureaucratic state, a capitalist state, a regulatory state, a welfare state, but we have yet to consider the grand historical irony that lingers behind these labels. After all, it is the absence of a sense of the state that has been the great hallmark of American political culture” (p. 723)
- (c) “Nettl sought to render the state a ”variable in social science . . . for purposes of rigorous comparative analysis” in four dimensions: **as a unit of international relations; as a sector possessing autonomy, potentially capable of independent action; as an ensemble of institutions that pursue goals and carry out tasks; and as what he called a sociocultural object which can be viewed and understood in widely disparate ways.** He suggested that each of these component elements can be arrayed separately on measurable ranges of more or less stateness to produce distinctive configurations for different times and places.” (p. 730)

Home Style: House Members and their Districts (Appendix. Notes on Method (249-295))

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Fenno1964}

2. **Authors:** Richard F. Fenno

3. **Year:** 1964

4. **Journal:** Home Style: House Members and their Districts

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:**

7. Main Findings:

- (a)
- (b)

Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Pierson2000}

2. **Authors:** Paul Pierson

3. **Year:** 2000

4. **Journal:** APSR

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** It is increasingly common for social scientists to describe political processes as “**path dependent**. ” The concept, however, is often employed without careful elaboration. This article conceptualizes path dependence as a social process grounded in a dynamic of “increasing returns.” Reviewing recent literature in economics and suggesting extensions to the world of politics, the article demonstrates that increasing returns processes are likely to be prevalent, and that good analytical foundations exist for exploring their causes and consequences. The investigation of increasing returns can provide a more rigorous framework for developing some of the key claims of recent scholarship in historical institutionalism: **Specific patterns of timing and sequence matter; a wide range of social outcomes may be possible; large consequences may result from relatively small or contingent events; particular courses of action, once introduced, can be almost impossible to reverse; and consequently, political development is punctuated by critical moments or junctures that shape the basic contours of social life.** (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a)
- (b)

Week 3: Theories of Power

Summary of the Debate

Bachrach and Baratz (1962) argues that power is not only manifest in the ability to get things done, but in the ability to keep things from happening. Beard (2012) makes the argument that the framing of the constitution and its content was not simply laid out based on what the founders though would be the best principles, but shaped by their own economic interests. The key finding of Dahl (1961) is that power is not concentrated solely in the hands of the mayor, but is dispersed among a plurality of subgroups that each hold sway in different areas. This brings up the idea that we must first look to see if there is power at all, and then see where it is distributed. Schattschneider (1975) counters that “The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent”. He argues that the pressure system is heavily skewed and does not give everyone equal voice.

Summary from Memo

A theory of political power that does not explicitly examine its operation at both institutional and relational levels will provide an incomplete account of its operation and miss a key component in explaining its dynamics over time. I found the two faces of (political) power proposed by Bachrach and Baratz (1962) to be far more complete than “sociological” conceptions of power as reputation and the pluralistic conception that focuses primarily on key decisions offered by Dahl (1961). However, while the theory proposed by Bachrach and Baratz rightly places its focus on power at an institutional and group level, it does not place enough of a focus on power operating at a relational level. I argue that adopting a theory of power that gives institutions and relations equal standing allows us to reconcile many different conceptions of power in the same framework for understanding its effects.

To place my argument in context it will be useful to describe the sense in which the two faces of power suggested by Bachrach and Baratz (and by extension Dahl) can be seen as operating at an institutional level. Bachrach and Baratz (1962, p. 952) argue that we should begin our analysis of power “by investigating the particular “mobilization of bias” in the institution under scrutiny”. They argue (correctly) that we need to look for historically accumulated institutional bias that constrains the scale at which changes can be made, how they can be made and who gets to make them. They also point out that it is important not only to understand bias in the process of change, but also bias towards the status quo, preserving exiting power structures. This face of power is expressly bound up in the institution, above

and beyond immediate relationships between individuals or groups and can be seen as the rules by which the game of politics is played. Bachrach and Baratz suggest that this institutional bias evolves over time and is the product of efforts to secure power by dominant groups, but they do not explicitly examine the relationships and alliances that give rise to these institutional biases and rules.

Two Faces of Power

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Bachrach1962}

2. Authors: Bachrach and Baratz

3. Year: 1962

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. Summary:

“Our argument is cast within the frame of our central thesis: that there are two faces of power, neither of which the sociologists see and only one of which the political scientists see.” (p. 947) The problem with their approach is that it seems to only examine power in a decision making process and not in a process where people set the norms and not groups. Also this seems to ignore preferential attachment and structural power in groups and other unconscious social processes that pretext who is heard and who gets their way in groups.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “the pluralists concentrate their attention, not upon the sources of power, but its exercise. **Power to them means “participation in decision-making” and call be analyzed only after “careful examination of a series of concrete decisions.”** As a result, the pluralist researcher is uninterested in the reputedly powerful...can a sound concept of power be predicated on the assumption that power is totally embodied and fully reflected in “concrete decisions” or in activity bearing directly upon their making? ” (p. 918)
- (b) “**to the extent that a person or group-consciously or unconsciously creates or reinforces barriers to the public airing of policy conflicts, that person or group has power**”. (p. 949)
- (c) “We have contended in this paper that a fresh approach to the study of power is called for, an approach based upon a recognition of the two faces of power. Under this approach the researcher would begin-not, as does **the sociologist who asks, “Who rules?”** nor as does the pluralist who asks, “**Does anyone have power?**” -but by investigating the particular “**mobilization of bias**” in the institution under scrutiny. Then, **having analyzed the dominant values, the myths and the established political procedures and rules of the game, he would make a careful inquiry into which persons or groups, if any, gain from the existing bias and which, if any, are handicapped by it.** Next, he would investigate the dynamics of nondecision-making; that is, he would examine the extent to which and the manner in which the status quo oriented persons and groups influence those community values and those political institutions (as, e.g., the unanimity “rule” of New York City’s Board of Estimate) **which tend to limit the scope of actual decision-making to “safe” issues.** Finally, using his knowledge of the restrictive face of power as a foundation for analysis and as a standard for distinguishing between “key” and “routine” political decisions, the researcher would, after the manner of the pluralists, analyze participation in decision-making of concrete issues. We reject in advance as unimpressive the possible criticism that this approach to the study of power is likely to prove fruitless because it goes beyond an investigation of what is objectively measurable. In reacting against the subjective aspects of the sociological model of power, the pluralists have, we

believe, made the mistake of discarding “unmeasurable elements” as unreal. It is ironical that, by so doing, they have exposed themselves to the same fundamental criticism they have so forcefully leveled against the elitists: their approach to and assumptions about power predetermine their findings and conclusions.” (p. 952)

- (d) Quoting Schattschneider: “All forms of political organization have a bias in favor of the exploitation of some kinds of conflict and the suppression of others because organization is the mobilization of bias. Some issues are organized into politics while others are organized out” (p. 949)

An Economics Interpretation of the Constitution

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{beard2012economic}

2. **Authors:** Charles Beard

3. **Year:** 1913

4. **Journal:** The Enduring Debate

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Beard essentially makes the argument that the framing of the constitution and its content was not simply laid out based on what the founders thought would be the best principles, but shaped by their own economic interests. For example, the constitution guarantee that the country would pay its debts benefited Washington and others who had financed the revolution. He points out a massive conflict of interest and sort of insinuates that economic interests were a main driving force behind the adoption of the constitution. He also notes that the vote to adopt the constitution only involved about 1/6th of adult males and only those with land.

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) A lot of people were disenfranchised including women, anyone who did not own property and slaves.
- (b) The sacred place of private property in the constitution was secured strategically despite even though there were many landed farmers who did not want to see it have such a prominent place (because it kept the ruling elite in power)

Who Governs? (Selection)

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Dahl1961}

\cite{D'Antonio1963a} (review

2. **Authors:** Robert Dahl

3. **Year:** 1961

4. **Journal:** Who Governs?

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** This book examines the community power structure in New Haven, Connecticut in the 1950's. The key finding is that power is not concentrated solely in the hands of the mayor, but is dispersed among a plurality of subgroups that each hold sway in different areas. This brings up the idea that we must first look to see if there is power at all, and then see where it is distributed.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) The book traces the transition in city government power from the patricians to entrepreneurs to the ex-plebes.
- (b) The book takes a historical approach
- (c) "In the political system of today, inequalities in political resources remain, but they tend to be *noncumulative*. The political system of Hew Haven is one, then, of *dispersed inequalities*." (p. 85)
- (d) The following quotes are from a 1963 review by D'Antonio: **D'Antonio, W. V. . (1963). Who Governs? : Democracy and Power in an American City (Review). The American Catholic Sociological Review, 24(1), 6265. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3708503>**
 - i. **"Are inequalities in resources of influence "cumulative or noncumulative?" How are important political decisions actually made? What kinds of people have the greatest influence on decisions? Are different kinds of decisions all made by the same people? From what strata of the community are the leaders drawn? Do leaders from a ruling elite, a loose coalition, or competing factions? How important is voting as a political resource? Is the American democratic creed operative?"** (p. 62)
 - ii. The theme of pluralism is further strengthened by a careful analysis of three major contemporary issues: (1)party nominations; (2)urban redevelopment; and (3)public education and the schools. **Dahl finds that on any single issue only a small number of persons are actually involved as decision-makers. But there is little overlap among decision-makers from one issue area to the next.** (p. 63)
 - iii. In the section on patterns of influence, Dahl discusses three: (p. 64)
 - A. **petty sovereignties:** in which issues arise in a more or less haphazard manner, almost anyone may become influential for a time, and the leading public officials are not very effective because they have no effective overall organization or plan. They become involved in petty battles which do little to add to their own power and influence, but can easily detract from it.
 - B. **The Executive Centered Coalition** arises as the result of skillful leadership. It arises to meet broad scale issues such as urban redevelopment.
 - C. **Rival sovereignties** are best exemplified by the competitive two party system in which neither party is able to maintain control of local government for an extended period of time.
 - iv. **"Dahl confines himself to issue-areas within the political system itself. Sociologists have used a broader canvas, focusing on any issue of community wide importance, whether or not it comes under the direct control of the political system. When one considers Dahl's statement that politics is seen as only a side show the sociologist's approach may be more fruitful in the long run insofar as it attempts to find the "main show" and relate it to the side show. It may also be that there is more pluralism to the side show than to the main show."** (p. 65)

The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America (Selection)

1. Cite Key:

\cite{schattschneider1975semi}

2. **Authors:** E.E. Schattschneider

3. **Year:** 1975

4. **Journal:** The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Schattschneider criticizes group theory for trying to explain too much and assuming that government merely ratifies the existing balance of power among groups. The outcome of a controversy is often determined by the success or failure of efforts to enlarge its scope and that the conflicts among private groups are taken into the legislative arena by those groups seeking to alter the power balance. Pressure groups fail to represent the lower income groups. The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent. A vigorously competitive party system offers the semi-sovereign people their best chance for a role in the decision-making process, while one party politics tends to vest political power in the hands of those people who already have economic power. 40% of adult citizens do not vote. They will vote only if they perceive clearer differences between parties. [\(LINK\)](#)

7. **Main Findings:**

(a) Class Notes:

- i. **Agenda setting** is the supreme instrument of power. Once the agenda has been set, the game is over.
- ii. Charles Block: why the ruling class does not rule.

(b) Some quotes:

- i. **"The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent."** (p. 35)
- ii. In *The Semisovereign People*, Schattschneider argued the scope of the pressure system is really quite small: The "range of organized, identifiable, known groups is amazingly narrow; there is nothing remotely universal about it" and the "business or upper-class bias of the pressure system shows up everywhere." He says the "notion that the pressure system is automatically representative of the whole community is a myth" and, instead, the "system is skewed, loaded and unbalanced in favor of a fraction of a minority." (p. 30-36)
- iii. "The role of people in the political system is determined largely by the conflict system, for it is conflict that involves the people in politics and the nature of conflict determines the nature of public involvement."
- iv. "Democracy is a competitive political system in which competing leaders and organizations define the alternatives of public policy in such a way that the public can participate in the decision-making process."

(c) A vigorously competitive party system, as opposed to competing interest groups, offers the semi-sovereign people their best chance for a role in the decision-making process. Conflict is key. The outcome of every conflict is determined by the extent to which the audience becomes involved in it (scope). The scope of conflict is an aspect of the scale of political organization and the extent of political competition. Pressure groups are small-scale organizations while political parties are large-scale organizations. Hence, the outcome of the political game depends on the scale on which it is played. [\(LINK\)](#)

Week 4: Congressional Organization and American Political Development

Summary of the Debate

In an analysis of the development of rural free delivery by the post office, [Kernell and McDonald \(1999\)](#) show how as politicians came to foresee a greater electoral payoff indirect services to their districts than in subsidy of local party organizations, these increasingly self-reliant politicians in Congress transformed the American bureaucracy from patronage to service. [Polsby \(1970\)](#) traces how the House became more institutionalized over time, including better delineated committees and the strict use of seniority for appointments. [Weingast and Marshall \(1988\)](#) introduce a formal model of congress and derive a number of reasons why Legislatures, Like Firms, Are Not Organized as Markets. [Shepsle and Weingast \(1987a\)](#) examine the sources of committee power and argue that proposal and gate-keeping (through the conference procedure) power make committees very powerful. However the ex post veto power is most important because it makes the chamber react strategically to the committee members. [Martorano \(2006\)](#) examine several theories for the presence of committees in congress and find the most support for the theory that the role of standing committees is to serve the parent chamber by providing specialization and expertise, making the legislative process more efficient and therefore reducing uncertainty regarding legislative outcomes.

Summary from Memo

Increasing partisanship and the rise of increasingly radical factions within the Republican party (such as the Tea Party) challenge a pluralistic view of power in congress with a strong committee system. The authors we read this week focus on committees as a seat of power in congress because of their ability to act as agenda setters and gate-keepers ([Shepsle and Weingast, 1987b](#)) and because they serve as an institution that can reinforce social norms such as reciprocity ([Weingast and Marshall, 1988](#)). The common thread in all of the readings is that committees – an institutional arrangement – change the rules of the game by which politics is conducted and introduce a stickiness in the policy making process in addition to diffusing political power. This paints a picture of congress as a relatively pluralistic ([Dahl, 1961](#)), democratic institution with many individuals and groups exercising tangible power in particular areas but not in others.

The role of committees in promoting the diffusion of power was eloquently demonstrated by the authors we read for this week, both in theory and empirically, but their analysis was relatively silent on the strength and importance of pressures towards centralized power. The phenomenon of moderate Republican congressmen “getting primaried” for not being radical enough has received a lot of press lately and is even the subject of a new academic book ([Boatright, 2013](#)). If getting primaried is a legitimate threat, then the resulting compression in the possible policy space for each party (towards more radical, partisan policies) works against the dispersion of power created by a committee system and is also likely to shift the balance of power between the chamber as a whole and committees. This conjecture is formulated on the premise that radical faction leaders will be spread across many different committees and thus will be likely to offer floor amendments. If the moderate members of a committee oppose these amendments, then they are more likely to become targets for primary challenge.

Congress and America’s Political Development: The Transformation of the Post Office from Patronage to Service

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Kernell1999}

2. **Authors:** Samuel Kernell and Michael P. McDonald

3. **Year:** 1999

4. **Journal:** AJPS

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Students of American political development portray the transformation of the bureaucracy from patronage to service as the handiwork of progressive presidents. In this article we explore Congress' programmatic contribution to the transformation of the bureaucracy. Specifically, we examine the development of rural free delivery (RFD) during the 1890's. The early administrative history of RFD and a statistical analysis of initial route allocations identify a strong partisan and electoral rationale for the Republican Congress's decision to dismantle patronage Fourth class post offices and replace them with RFD routes. Freshmen Republican members who faced difficult campaigns in 1900 were the most successful in gathering routes while their Democratic counterparts were the least so. We conclude that the emergence of careerist congressmen looking for opportunities to serve constituents provided an important impetus in the historic reorientation of national policy from patronage to service. (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) Before rural free delivery, there were approximately 200-250 4th class postmasters that were totally allocated by the member of the house currently in office. There was roughly 80% turnover because these were purely political appointments. The post master would forward complaints and overly campaign for their patron representative. It made them about \$1000 a year but also brought more business to their stores. However, people really liked having mail delivered to their house so the electoral incentives eventually outweighed the benefits.
- (b) The evidence presented is a regression showing that when the republicans were in control of the presidency they allocated a huge number of new RFD routes to their most electorally vulnerable districts to try and sure them up. Democrats got way less.
- (c) **"Populism may have provided the proximate stimulus RFD** in the late for 1890s. But a more enduring (and generalizable) cause can be found in the emerging needs of the new breed of officeholding politicians who entered Congress at century's end and who increasingly sought to remain (Polsby 1968; Kernell 1977). **As they came to foresee a greater electoral payoff indirect services to their districts than in subsidy of local party organizations, these increasingly self-reliant politicians in Congress transformed the American bureaucracy from patronage to service."** (p. 809-810)

The Institutionalization of the U . S . House of Representatives

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Polsby1970}

2. **Authors:** Nelson W. Polsby

3. **Year:** 1968

4. **Journal:** APSR

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Polsby examines the ways in which the U.S. House of representatives became more institutionalized over the course of its development and how this contributed to its more effective functioning. It is interesting to trace the development of the chamber from one that was mostly under control of the president to one that asserted its own power and then moved from appointing committee positions mostly politically to a seniority based system.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **For the purposes of this study, let us say that an institutionalized organization has three major characteristics:** 1) **it is relatively well- bounded, that is to say, differentiated from its environment.** Its members are easily identifiable, it is relatively difficult to become a member, and its leaders are recruited principally from within the organization. 2) **The organization is relatively complex, that is, its functions are internally separated on some regular and explicit basis, its parts are not wholly interchangeable, and for at least some important purposes, its parts are interdependent.** There is a division of labor in which roles are specified, and there are widely shared expectations about the performance of roles. There are regularized patterns of recruitment to roles, and of movement from role to role. 3) **Finally, the organization tends to use universalistic rather than particularistic criteria, and automatic rather than discretionary methods for conducting its internal business.** Precedents and rules are followed; merit systems replace favoritism and nepotism; and impersonal codes supplant personal preferences as prescriptions for behavior. (p. 145)
- (b) **“the ”streamlining,” as it was called, of 1946 can hardly be said to have reduced the internal differentiation of the House. On the contrary, by explicitly delineating the legislative jurisdictions of the committees, by consolidating committees with parallel and overlapping functions, by assigning committees exclusive oversight responsibilities over agencies of the executive branch, and by providing committees with expanded staff aid, the 1946 re-organization contributed to, rather than detracted from, the reliance of the House upon committees in the conduct of its business.”** (p. 153)
- (c) **“Not much, for example, is known about the causes of institutionalization. The best theoretical guess in the literature is probably Durkheim’s: ”The division of labor varies in direct ratio with the volume and density of societies, and, if it progresses in a continuous manner in the course of social development, it is because societies become regularly denser and generally more voluminous.”** (p. 164)
- (d) **“ In conclusion, these findings suggest that in-creasing hierarchical structure is not a necessary feature of the institutionalization process. Organizations other than bureaucracies, it seems clear, also are capable of having natural histories which increase their viability in the modern world without forcing them into uniformly centralized patterns of authority”** (p. 168).

The Industrial Organization of Congress; or, Why Legislatures, Like Firms, Are Not Organized as Markets

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Weingast1988}

2. **Authors:** Barry R. Weingast and William J. Marshall

3. **Year:** 1988

4. **Journal:** Journal of Political Economy

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** This paper provides a theory of legislative institutions that parallels the theory of the firm and the theory of contractual institutions. Like market institutions, legislative institutions reflect two key components: the goals or preferences of individuals (here, representatives seeking reelection) and the relevant transactions costs. We present three conclusions. First, we show how the legislative institutions enforce bargains among legislators. Second, we explain why, given the peculiar form of bargaining problems found in legislatures, specific forms of nonmarket exchange prove superior to market exchange. Third, our approach shows how the committee system limits the types of coalitions that may form on a particular issue. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Three Assumptions underlying model:
 - i. Congressmen represent the (politically responsive) interests located within their districts.
 - ii. Parties place no constraints on the behavior of individual representation.
 - iii. Majority rule is a binding constraint.
- (b) **“Repeat play alone is insufficient to prevent the breakdown of cooperation under certain circumstances. Legislators therefore have an incentive to devise institutions that reduce the circumstances in which breakdown occurs. In this sense, legislative rules are not substitutes for reputation building and trigger strategies commonly used in repeat play. Rather, rules complement the use of these strategies and, in particular, prevent the breakdown of cooperation at precisely the circumstances under which these other strategies fail.”** (p. 142)
- (c) The legislative committee system is defined by the following three conditions: (p. 143)
 - i. Committees are composed of a number of seats or positions, each held by an individual legislator. Committees possess the following properties: (a) associated with each committee is a specific subset of policy issues over which it has jurisdiction (e.g., commerce, energy, banking, or agriculture); (b) within their jurisdiction, committees possess the monopoly right to bring alternatives to the *status quo* up for a vote before the legislature; and (c) committee proposals must command a majority of votes against the status quo to become public policy.
 - ii. **There exists a property rights system over committee seats called the “seniority system.”** It has the following characteristics: (a) a committee member holds his position as long as he chooses to remain on the committee; subject to his reelection, he cannot be forced to give it up; (b) leadership positions within the committee (e.g., chairmanship) are allocated by seniority, that is, the length of continuous service on the committee; (c) rights to committee positions cannot be sold or traded to others.
 - iii. Whenever a member leaves a committee (e.g., by transfer, death, or defeat), his seat becomes vacant. **There is a bidding mechanism whereby vacant seats are assigned to other congressmen.**
- (d) Since committees have jurisdiction over their particular policy area, they can enforce bargains between different groups because if the other group tries to introduce legislation to undermine the bargain, it has to go through their committee and they can kill it.
- (e) “Under a market exchange mechanism, small changes in political circumstances would lead to a small change in the optimal set of bargains and coalitions. But under the committee system, small changes in circumstances do not automatically lead to changes in policy.” (p. 147)
- (f) **“Instead of trading votes, legislators in the committee system institutionalize an exchange of influence over the relevant rights. Instead of bidding for votes, legislators bid for seats on committees associated with rights to policy areas valuable for their reelection. In contrast to policy choice under a market for votes, legislative bargains institutionalized**

through the committee system are significantly less plagued by problems of ex post enforceability” (p. 148)

The Institutional Foundations of Committee Power

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Shepsle1987}

2. **Authors:** Kenneth A. Shepsle and Barry R. Weingast

3. **Year:** 1987

4. **Journal:** APSR

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Legislative committees have fascinated scholars and reformers for more than a century. All acknowledge the central strategic position of committees in legislatures. The consensus, however, centers on empirical regularities and stylized facts, not on explanations. We seek to explain why committees are powerful. We formulate an institutionally rich rational-choice model of legislative politics in which the sequence of the legislative process is given special prominence. **Committees, as agenda setters in their respective jurisdictions, are able to enforce many of their policy wishes not only because they originate bills but also because they get a second chance after their chamber has worked its will.** This occurs at the conference stage in which the two chambers of a bicameral legislature resolve differences between versions of a bill. A theory of conference politics is offered and some evidence from recent Congresses is provided. (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) “The ex post veto, we assert, is sufficient to make gatekeeping and proposal power effective, even though their effectiveness appears to most observers to be the product of nothing more than informal reciprocity arrangements.” (p. 89)
- (b) Proposal and gate-keeping power make committees very powerful. however the ex post veto power is most important because it makes the chamber react strategically to the committee members.

Balancing Power: Committee System Autonomy and Legislative Organization

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Martorano2006}

2. **Authors:** Martorano, Nancy

3. **Year:** 2006

4. **Journal:** Legislative Studies Quarterly

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** The most recent explanations for the existence of committee systems in legislative chambers have posited that committees are the agents of one of three very different principal actors: (1) individual members (distributive theory), (2) the full chamber (informational theory), or (3) the major political party (partisan theory). In addition to defining and operationalizing the

concept of institutional committee system autonomy, I put forth and test several hypotheses linking these three explanations to committee system autonomy. In the end, **the results show empirical support for the informational theory over the distributive and partisan theories.** (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) For adherents to the **distributive theory** (Shepsle 1979; Shepsle and Weingast 1981), standing committees exist to aid individual members in attaining their reelection goals by providing the major route for securing specialized benefits for the members' constituencies. Under the **informational theory** (Krehbiel 1991), the role of standing committees is to serve the parent chamber by providing specialization and expertise, making the legislative process more efficient and therefore reducing uncertainty regarding legislative outcomes. Finally, for the **partisan theory** (Cox and McCubbins 1993), the committee system is used as a tool to secure continued majority status and further the political agenda of the chamber's majority party.

(b)

Week 5: Congress and the Electoral Connection

Summary of the Debate

[Mayhew \(1974\)](#) argues that MCs devote the vast majority of their efforts to getting reelected – that they behave as if this were their only task – and that parties do not really matter. I had been a commonly held belief that members of the house of representatives are highly responsive to their constituents, however [Miller and Stokes \(1963a\)](#) show that this is not necessarily the case and that representation across domains is highly uneven. [Fenno \(1977\)](#) argues that representatives see their districts as a set of nested constituencies and that they develop a "home style" as a way of presenting themselves to their constituents.

Summary from Memo

This week we turn our focus to the ever important link (or lack thereof) between constituents and their representatives. [Miller and Stokes \(1963a\)](#) made us ask the question "are representatives responsive, how, and to whom?", while [Mayhew \(1974\)](#) boldly argued that an undercurrent of simply wanting to keep their job can best explain why representatives do what they do. Finally, [Fenno \(1977\)](#) takes us on a journey inside the lives of members of congress in a bid to give us an answer to Miller and Stokes question straight from the representatives themselves.

[Miller and Stokes \(1963a\)](#) set out to question the conventional, relatively unquestioned, wisdom that members of congress are responsive to their constituents. To do this, they conducted a large scale survey of the policy preferences of 116 members of the house of representatives and their constituents in the areas of social welfare, foreign policy and civil rights. They find that congressmen do vote based on a combination of their own preferences and their perceptions of their constituents preferences, but that neither congressmen nor constituents have much of an idea what the preferences of the other are. They also find that congressmen behave very much as if they had a mandate from their constituents on civil rights issues, but that they just vote the party line on social welfare issues and with the president on foreign affairs issues (as there was no real interest on the part of representatives or constituents at the time). These findings suggest that responsiveness is uneven across issue areas and likely changing across time, painting a much more complicated picture of the constituent-representative relationship. It also suggests that having good information and communications between constituents and representatives is

vital meeting the ideal of highly responsive representatives laid out in the constitution.

Mayhew (1974) makes one simple argument in his book: that members of congress act as if they are solely and rationally interested in getting reelected. This book served as a theoretical broadside aimed at the doctrine of responsible party government which puts party at the center of its explanation of the actions of individual members of congress. Instead, Mayhew focused on individual congressmen and voters, showing that their connection through an MC's bid for reelection is vitally important. Mayhew also points out a major accountability problem in American politics that members of congress need to take popular positions, but they do not necessarily need to follow through on them. This draws an important distinction between position taking and credit claiming as not necessarily going together.

Fenno (1977) provides us with one of the most detailed and rich ethnographic studies of how congressmen see and present themselves to their constituencies. Fenno finds that policy preferences are not the only way that constituents and representatives relate, but that they engage on multiple other levels as well. To conduct this study, Fenno followed a total of about 15 members of the house of representatives on one to several trips to their home districts to observe what they did and saw. His first major argument is that congressmen see their constituencies as a series of concentric or nested constituencies or circles with the geographic district as the outer circle. Inside this circle lies the re-election constituency that will potentially vote for the representative when they go up for reelection. Closer and more important is the primary voter constituency and finally the personal constituency. The idea is that members of congress pay more attention to constituencies that are closer to them. The second major contribution Fenno makes is his theory that members of congress have a "home style". He argues that they will try to present themselves in a particular way to different constituencies and there are several different ways that they tend to present themselves including a person to person style that is meant to paint them as very approachable and down to earth or an issue oriented style that focuses more on something that is particularly important to their constituents. He finds a common set of explanatory factors for a particular MC's presentation style in that it is contextually based (changing depending on the situation), personal to the MC and usually very strategic. The combination of these two theoretical constructs gives us a considerable amount of leverage in understanding why MC's do what they do.

Congress: The Electoral Connection

Cite Key:

\cite{Mayhew1974}

- You have to get elected to represent your constituents!
- Representation is complicated and uneven.
- **Information asymmetries** between constituents and representatives.
- Representatives behave **strategically**.
- **Misaligned incentives** introduce **collective action problems** in congress.
- There is a **principal-agent** problem for representatives and constituents.
- **Image is everything**.

A Chronology

1. Downs – *Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957)
 - Parties are the main actors in politics – “cohesive point-source teams”
2. Miller and Stokes – *Constituency Influence in Congress* (1963)

- MCs are not as highly or evenly responsive to constituents as we thought.

3. Mayhew – *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (1974)

- MCs devote the vast majority of their efforts to getting reelected. Parties do not really matter.

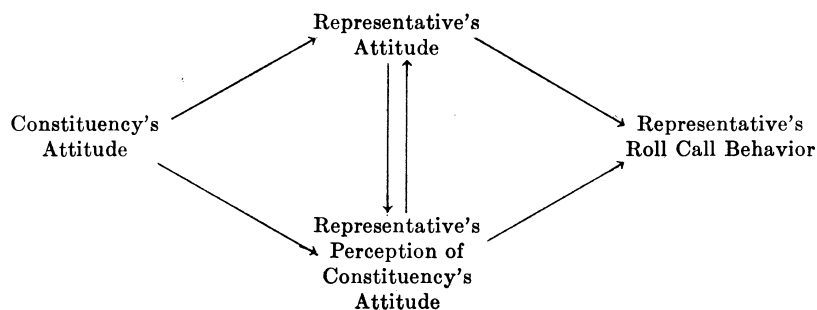
4. Fenno – *U.S. House members in their constituencies: An exploration* (1977)

- MCs see their districts as nested and increasingly important sub-constituencies. They take great care in how they present themselves – their “home style”.

Constituency Influence in Congress - Miller and Stokes

- Do constituents actually exercise control over their representatives?
- Two avenues to constituent control: **Anticipatory, Gyroscopic.**
- Interviewed MCs and constituents in 116 districts about preferences on:
 - **Civil rights** – MCs behave as if they had a mandate.
 - **Social Welfare** – MCs appear to vote party line.
 - **Foreign Policy** – follow the president, nobody cares.
- A mix of representation styles appears to best explain MC roll-call voting.

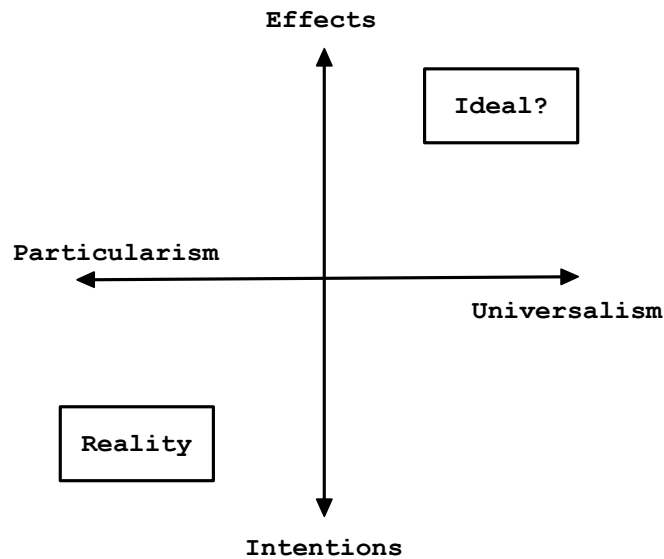
Constituent Attitudes and Roll Call Voting



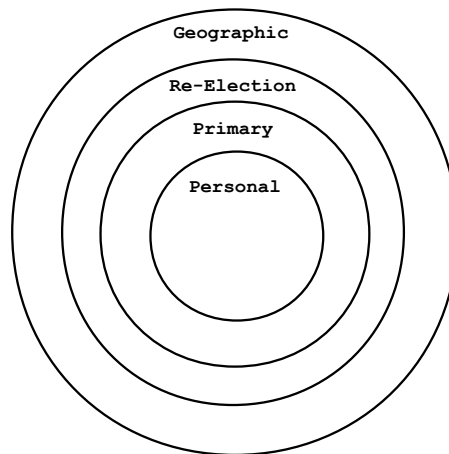
Congress: The Electoral Connection - Mayhew

- Political Parties are not very important.
- Three kinds of electorally useful activity:
 - **Advertising** – get your name out but with no content.
 - **Credit Claiming** – making an argument that you caused something good to happen.
 - **Position Taking** – Saying things your constituents will like to hear.
- Congress as an institution:
 - Is well structured to help MCs get reelected.
 - Committees facilitate credit claiming and position taking.
 - Introduces a collective action problem.
 - Who will do the unglamorous work of governing?

New dimensions for evaluation of MCs



U.S. House members in their constituencies: An exploration “...what does an elected representative see when he or she sees a constituency? And, as a natural follow-up, what consequences do these perceptions have for his or her behavior?”



Trust and Home Style

- Fenno draws on Goffman’s *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*.
- How to gain **trust** → **political support**.
 - **qualification, identification, empathy.**
- Must decide how to allocate *time* and *staff*.
- MCs have a “home style” – how they present themselves:
 - **Person to Person** –face-to-face, mixing and mingling.
 - **Issue Oriented** – accessible, communicative, anti-politician. Projects, issues for the district.

Presentation of Self

- Three factors explain presentation of self:
 - **Contextual** – how do I fit in my district? What worked in the past?

* **Heterogeneous** vs. **homogeneous** districts.

- **Personal** – inclinations and talents.
- **Strategic** – how to allocate time for maximum effect.

- Explaining Washington Activity
 - Explanations do not change with audience.
 - Different and better than other representatives – down-talking the institution.

Synthesis

- Getting elected must be top priority.
- **Information is everything** – both to constituents and to representatives.
- MCs want to make their constituents happy.
 - Does not mean they will do what constituents would have done.
- Congress as an institution:
 - Committees align incentives.
 - Shield for inaction – somebody else's fault.

Open Questions

- **Catch-22?**
 - Election and representation incompatible?
- Have things changed over time?
 - Parties seem to be more important now than when Mayhew was writing.
 - What about information costs?
- Mansbridge (2003) – four kinds of representation:
 - **Promissory, Anticipatory, Gyroscopic, Surrogate**
 - Which of these should work best?
- Is constituency control a good thing?
- What should constituents want to control?

Constituency Influence in Congress.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Miller1963a}

2. Authors: Warren E. Miller, Donald E. Stokes

3. Year: 1963

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: While it had been a commonly held belief that members of the house of representatives are highly responsive to their constituents, there had been no study to see if there were differences in responsiveness on different issues and what was driving this responsiveness.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Interviewed congressmen and constituents in their districts from a probability sample of 116 districts.
- (b) Looked at how constituents preferences comported with congressmen's preferences in the areas of social welfare, foreign policy and civil rights.
- (c) Two ways for constituents to influence their representative: pick someone like them who will do what they want naturally. The other is for the congressman to follow constituent view so they can get re-elected.
- (d) the constituency must take the policy views of candidates into account when choosing a representative, otherwise their views cannot be expressed.
- (e) **Finding 1:** Congressmen do vote strongly based on a combination of their own preferences and their perceptions of their constituents preferences.
- (f) **Finding 2:** Congressmen have little information about their constituents actual preferences and constituents have little information about their congressmen's preferences.
- (g) **Finding 3:** Congressmen behave sort of like instructed delegates and sort of like a responsible person that shares the views of the constituency and tries to do their best. This is **mandate-gyroscopic** mix.
- (h) **Finding 4:** Congressmen act most as if they had a mandate on the issue of civil rights.
- (i) **Finding 5:** On the issue of social welfare, congressmen seem to follow the responsible party model where they tend to vote the party line and their constituents know they will. On Foreign affairs they just follow the president and nobody cares.

Congressmen in Their Constituencies: An Exploration.

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Fenno1977}

2. Authors: Richard Fenno

3. Year: 1977

4. Journal: APSR

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: This is an ethnographic or observational study of how congressmen see their constituencies. Policy preferences are not the only way that constituents and representatives relate, they engage on multiple other planes as well.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) "What does an elected representative see when he or she sees a constituency? And, as a natural follow-up, what consequences do these perceptions have for her behavior? The key problem is that of perception. And the key assumption is that the constituency a representative reacts to is the constituency he or she sees. The corollary assumption is that the rest of us cannot understand the representative-constituency relationship until we can see the constituency through the eyes of the representative."(p. 883)
- (b) Fenno followed a total of about 15 members of the house of representatives on one to several trips to their home districts to observe what they did and saw.

- (c) Fenno argues we should see how congressmen see their constituencies as a series of concentric circles with the geographic district as the outer circle.
- (d) Inside the **geographic constituency** the representative sees his **re-election constituency**.
- (e) The **Primary constituency** is the strongest group of supporters.
- (f) The **personal constituency** is the closest circle of people the congressman knows personally.
- (g) Congressman has to decide how much resources and time to devote to their home district. This is part of what Fenno terms the **Home Style**:
- (h) When it comes to allocation of resources, we tend to see that junior senators tend to devote more of their time and resources to being in their district.
- (i) There are also several mode of presentation of self that senators can undertake.
 - i. **Person to Person style**:
 - ii. **Issue Oriented style**:
 - iii. Presentation of self seems to be explainable by three factors: **contextual, personal, strategic**.
- (j) Another part of the home style is how they explain what they have been doing in Washington. They tend to explain themselves and criticize the institution so they can abdicate responsibility for its performance.

Week 6: Parties in Congress

Summary of the Debate

Using data on legislators who switched parties over the last 50 years, [McCarty et al. \(2002\)](#) argue that the effect of party discipline is not in pulling individuals into line on individual votes but on their overall ideal points. This points to a smaller effect of party than previous studies had suggested. [Krehbiel \(1993\)](#) [Rohde \(1991\)](#)

Summary from Memo

One of the biggest problems I have with the empirical analysis in this literature is that it seems to tend to boil down to measuring congressional voting records to make an inference about the effect of some latent variable on...congressional voting records. This makes it very difficult to disentangle the explanatory variables from that which they are supposed to predict. To remedy this situation, I would start with two questions:

1. Where is the best place to look for the effects of party influence?
2. What is the best way to measure party influence on legislators?

In answering the first question, [Hall and Wayman \(1990\)](#) remind us that looking at votes may not be an appropriate place to find the influence of party. My expectation is that political parties should demonstrate the most power in agenda setting, and in homogenizing the ideas that are put forward by their members to begin with. The problem is that MCs are both influenced by the party and constitute the party simultaneously. It is also hard to come up with a good control group for measuring party influence because there are very few legislators who are not aligned with a major party.

The Hunt for Party Discipline in Congress

1. Cite Key:

\cite{McCarty2002}

2. **Authors:** McCarty, Nolan; Poole, Keith T.; Rosenthal, Howard
3. **Year:** 2002
4. **Journal:** APSR
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** The authors “analyze party discipline in the House of Representatives between 1947 and 1998. **The effects of party pressures can be represented in a spatial model by allowing each party to have its own cutting line on roll call votes. Adding a second cutting line makes, at best, a marginal improvement over the standard single-line model. Analysis of legislators who switch parties shows, however, that party discipline is manifest in the location of the legislator’s ideal point.** In contrast to our approach, we find that the Snyder-Groseclose method of estimating the influence of party discipline is biased toward exaggerating party effects.” (Abstract)
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a) The authors are arguing against the Snyder-Groseclose method where really lopsided (greater than 65-35) are used to estimate “real” ideal points for all MCs, and then they use these to estimate the pull of party on close votes. The idea is that on lopsided votes, party will have relatively little incentive to exercise sway over votes, but in close calls, we should expect to see moderates pulled to more extreme positions by the party leadership
 - (b) the authors point out the problem with this technique in that:

“In general, with perfect spatial voting, a first stage based only on lopsided votes will produce identical preference estimates for all members in the interval between the 35th and 65th percentiles. The second stage will produce a spurious party effect so long as party and ideology are correlated within this interval.” (p. 675)
 - (c) Instead, the authors argue that we should look for the effects of party on ideal points, not roll call voting. They look at the case of all legislators who have switched parties over a 50 year period.

When legislators switch from Republican to Democrat, they should have a lower rank. The reverse should hold for Democrat to Republican switchers. There were 19 legislators who both switched parties and remained in the same chamber in the period of our analysis. They are listed in Table 4. In 18 of 19 cases the rank changed as expected. The exception is Strom Thurmond, whose slightly more moderate position as a Republican reflects his more moderate views on race relations in the past 20 years. A simple sign test is overwhelmingly significant. **Induced ideal points respond to party affiliation.** (p. 685)
 - (d) They conclude that:

We do not conclude, however, that party is irrelevant. Voting behavior changes fairly dramatically when members change parties. Party discipline, we conclude, is manifest in the location of the legislator’s ideal point in the standard spatial model. It is not a strategic variable manipulated by party whips from one roll call to another but a part of a legislator’s overall environment that forms her induced preferences. The “discipline” that leads a legislator to choose a spatial location may result as much from external pressures of campaign donors and primary voters as from the internal pressures of the congressional party. (p. 686)

Where’s the Party?

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Krehbiel1993}

2. **Authors:** Krehbiel, Keith

3. **Year:** 1993

4. **Journal:** British journal of Political Science

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Political parties are prominent in legislative politics and legislative research. Using data from the 99th Congress, **this article assesses the degree to which significant party behaviour - defined and operationalized as behaviour that is independent of preferences - occurs in two key stages of legislative organization: the formation of standing committees and the appointment of conferees.** Four hypotheses are developed and tested. **When controlling for preferences and other hypothesized effects, positive and significant party effects are rare.** A discussion addresses some criticisms of this unorthodox approach and attempts to reconcile some differences between these and previous findings. (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) “it is one thing to proclaim party as the ‘chief and most pervasive influence in Congress’ with reference to correlates of so-called partisan behaviour, but quite another to establish that party is a significant and independent cause of such behaviour.” (p. 237)
- (b) “In casting apparently partisan votes, do individual legislators vote with fellow party members *in spite of their disagreement* about the policy in question, or do they vote with fellow party members *because of their agreement* about the policy in question?” (p. 238)
- (c) **“A uniquely clear and strong definition of significant party behaviour would be: behaviour that is consistent with known party policy objectives but that is contrary to personal preferences.** Such behaviour takes place, for instance, when voters in the shaded regions in Figure 1b vote for their party’s positions even though their personal preferences dictate otherwise. While clear, this strong definition of significant party behaviour is not as empirically tractable as its somewhat weaker analogue, which this study employs. **Specifically, significant party behaviour is behaviour that is consistent with known party policy objectives but that is independent of personal preferences.**” (p. 240)
- (d) **“Increasing homogeneity of majority-party preferences and increasingly sharp differences across parties are precisely what make Figure 1a different from Figure 1b. And Figure 1a - towards which the contemporary Congress has evidently progressed - is precisely the configuration of preferences that makes it impossible to discriminate between a simple and parsimonious preference-based theory and a more complex and elaborate preference-and- party theory. In short, Rohde chooses to label as partisanship that which could just as easily (albeit more awkwardly) be labelled preferenceship.”** (p. 262)

Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House (Pages 1-52, 175-205)

1. **Cite Key:**

\cite{Rohde1991a}

2. **Authors:** David Rhode

3. **Year:** 1991

4. **Journal:** Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** The argument in the book is that: “The reforms in the House in the early 1970s and the growth of partisanship in the 1980s are systematically related. Both were the result of important electoral changes, specifically the realignment of democratic constituencies in the South that led to increased intraparty homogeneity. The reforms of the 1970s were proposed by liberal Democrats frustrated by the inability to pass legislation favored by a majority of the rank and file. The reforms created incentives for party leaders to push legislation that reflected the interests of a majority of House Democrats. Following the reforms, further changes in the electorate brought coalitions of representatives that were more similar within parties and more different between them. Both the rules and the intraparty homogeneity brought about by elections set the conditions for strong party government. **This book lays out the theory of conditional party government, whereby intraparty homogeneity and interparty heterogeneity determine the extent of partisanship in the House of Representatives.**” ([source](#))

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **Conditional Party Government:** this theory posits that the party leadership in the house will be powerful and important when there is:
- A lot of conflict between the majority party and minority party.
 - When the preferences of members of the majority party are particularly homogeneous.
- (b) “This book challenges claims by Mayhew and others that parties do not matter in the U.S. context. The book traces its theoretical heritage to the earliest analyses (Wilson, 1885) of political parties and committees in Congress. Instead of choosing sides in a debate (committee or parties), Rohde puts his and other arguments about how Congress is organized into their historical contexts. During the periods in which Wilson and others wrote (the 1880s, 1950s), committee government prevails. During other periods (particularly the postreform era), the “textbook” view of Congress is less applicable. Rohde draws on past research on partisanship in Congress, especially Brady, Cooper and Hurley (1979), Brady and Ettling (1984) and Collie and Brady (1985). He also incorporates the findings of more recent scholarship on parties and leaders by Sinclair (1978, 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1989), Smith (1989), Smith and Deering (1984), and Smith and Ray (1983). **Rohde argues that there are three necessary and sufficient conditions for a strong party leadership in the House: (1) a homogeneous party membership, (2) enhanced sources of institutional leverage at the hands of the leader, and (3) a leader willing to use his powers.**”([source](#))
- (c) “While in an earlier era, it may have been possible for scholars accurately to assert that political parties were of little theoretical importance in explaining political behavior and legislative results in the House, it is certainly not true now. Parties are consequential in shaping members’ preferences, the character of the issues on the agenda, the nature of legislative alternatives, and ultimate political outcomes, and they will remain important as long as the underlying forces that created this partisan resurgence persist” (p. 192)

Week 7: The Presidency

Summary of the Debate

[Ragsdale and III \(1997\)](#) [Wildavsky \(1966\)](#) [Fleisher et al. \(2000\)](#) [King \(1993\)](#)

Summary from Memo

Why does a president have power? In our readings for this week, we are exposed to a number of possible explanations for, and potential consequences of, presidential actions. [Ragsdale and III \(1997\)](#) remind

us that all of these cross pressures on presidential behavior happen in an increasingly institutionalized setting where “bureaucratic inertia” can dampen the will of the president. Is the president extraordinarily influential, do they wield some sort of magical sway, or is their ability to influence policy outcomes simply well institutionalized enough that they have to be given a say?

The title question motivating this inquiry suggests that the degree of “power” wielded by a president may derive from one of two sources:

1. **The Seat of Power:** A president enjoys power because they are given certain rights and resources that simply allow them to exercise their will. They are endowed with authority.
2. **A Privileged Position:** In their interactions with others, a president enjoys a more central position and access to more a better information, along with a deeper network of allies that gives them the upper hand in negotiations.

Of course the reality is almost certain to be a mix of both position and authority. However, making the distinction is important, especially in light of the suggestion by King (1993) that it is important to examine component actions of presidents as the unit of analysis in order to overcome the $n = 1$ problem.

The Institutionalization of the American Presidency, 1924-92

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Ragsdale1997}

2. Authors: Ragsdale, L., & III, John J. Theis

3. Year: 1997

4. Journal: AJPS

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Theory: The institutionalization of the presidency involves the process by which the office as an organization attains stability and value as an end in itself. Stability denotes that the entity cannot be easily altered or eliminated, while value involves the entity acquiring a distinctive identity. **More specifically, the presidency becomes institutionalized when it attains high levels of four features: autonomy (the independence of the presidency from other units), adaptability (the longevity of units in the presidency), complexity (the differentiation of subunits and staff in the office), and coherence (the manageable volume of work).** Institutionalization results from an interplay between individual interests within the organization and aspects of the environment. **Hypotheses:** Government activity, congressional action, and individual presidents’ efforts affect the degree of institutionalization across the dimensions of autonomy, adaptability, complexity, and coherence.

Methods: From 1924 to 1992, several descriptive indicators of the four dimensions of institutionalization are analyzed, including expenditures, duration of organizational units, employees, and workload. A multivariate model is then estimated for the Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, and White House Office using ordinary least squares.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **“The presidency emerged as an institution in the 1970s.** In estimating the impact of government activity, congressional action, and individual presidents on various indicators of institutionalization, national government activity-measured by social welfare expenditures and defense expenditures-has the greatest impact. The effect of congressional activity is more limited. The indicators for differences among individual presidents have little effect.” (abstract)

- (b) “We define institutionalization as the process by which an organization ”acquires value and stability” as an end in itself (Huntington 1968, 12). Selznick (1957, 17) states that ”’to institutionalize’ is to infuse with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand.” As an organization achieves stability and value, it becomes an institution. Stability denotes that the organization is no longer a mechanistic entity, easily altered or eliminated. Instead, as an organization institutionalizes, it survives various inter- nal and environmental challenges and achieves self-maintenance-it exists in the future because it has existed in the past. Value denotes ”the prizing of the [organization] for its own sake” (Selznick 1957, 17).¹ As an organization institutionalizes, it acquires a distinctive identity, a way of acting, and tasks it acts upon, which are all deemed to be important in and of themselves.” (p. 1282)
- (c) “This suggests that presidents have a more limited impact on institutionalization than has the environment. Presidents’ management efforts modestly affect institutionalization, but this effect is not as great as the individual-president perspective noted at the outset of the paper would indicate. Presidents do affect internal institutionalization; their roles as managers direct staff size and workload. Yet, the impact of an administration change on complexity and coherence is less than that of the other factors.” (p. 1311)

The Two Presidencies

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Wildavsky1966}

2. Authors: Wildavsky, A.

3. Year: 1966

4. Journal: Society

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: The United States has one president, but it has two presidencies; one presidency is for domestic affairs, and the other is concerned with defense and foreign policy. Since World War II, Presidents have had much greater success in controlling the nation’s defense and foreign policies than in dominating its domestic policies. (p. 23).

“In the realm of foreign policy there has not been a single major issue on which presidents, when they were serious and determined, have failed.... Serious setbacks to the president in controlling foreign pol- icy are extraordinary and unusual” (famous quote, p. 23)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) How does president have more control in foreign affairs? More treaties since WW 2 and with the cold war, everything in this arena moves faster and has more popular support.
 - i. **“The Power to Act:** Their formal powers to commit resources in foreign affairs and defense are vast. Particularly important is their power as Commander-in-Chief to move troops. Faced with situations like the invasion of South Korea or the emplacement of missiles in Cuba, fast action is required. Presidents possess both the formal power to act and the knowledge that elites and the general public expect them to act. Once they have committed American forces, it is difficult for Congress or anyone else to alter the course of events”. (p.25)
- (b) **Competitors for Control of Policy**

- i. **“The Public.** The general public is much more dependent on Presidents in foreign affairs than in domestic matters. While many people know about the impact of social security and Medicare, few know about politics in Malawi. So it is not surprising that people expect the President to act in foreign affairs and reward him with their confidence.” (p. 25)
 - ii. **“Special Interest Groups.** Opinions are easier to gauge in domestic affairs because, for one thing, there is a stable structure of interest groups that covers virtually all matters of concern. The farm, labor, business, conservation, veterans, civil rights, and other interest groups provide cues when a proposed policy affects them. ” (p. 26)
 - iii. **“The Congress.** Congressmen also exercise power in foreign affairs. Yet they are ordinarily not serious competitors with the President because they follow a self-denying ordinance. They do not think it is their job to determine the nation’s defense policies.” (p. 26)
 - iv. **“The Military.** The outstanding feature of the military’s participation in making defense policy is their amazing weakness. Whether the policy decisions involve the size of the armed forces, the choice of weapons systems, the total defense budget, or its division into components, the military have not prevailed.” (p. 27)
 - v. **“The State Department.** Modern Presidents expect the State Department to carry out their policies. John E Kennedy felt that State was “in some particular sense “his” department.” (p. 29)
- (c) **“ In foreign affairs we may be approaching the stage where knowledge is power. There is a tremendous receptivity to good ideas in Washington.”** (p. 31)

The Demise of the Two Presidencies

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Fleisher2000}

2. **Authors:** Fleisher, R., Bond, J. R., Krutz, G. S., & Hanna, S

3. **Year:** 2000

4. **Journal:** American Politics Research

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Presidential-congressional relations scholars have long debated whether the president is more successful on foreign policy than on domestic policy (Wildavsky, 1966). The debate has focused on differential success rates between foreign and domestic policy and whether the gap has narrowed over time. This focus, however, neglects an important dimension of Wildavskys argument. Wildavsky also argued that presidents should dominate Congress in foreign policy. **Hence, the thesis predicts high levels of success on foreign policy as well as differences between foreign and domestic policy.** Looking at the trends in success on foreign and domestic votes, **we observe that whereas the difference between foreign and domestic success rates shows up consistently for minority presidents, the absolute level of support on foreign and defense issues has declined since the second Reagan administration. Analysis of opposition party base behavior reveals that foreign policy voting has become considerably more partisan.** (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) “Much of the subsequent debate on the two-presidencies thesis has focused on whether the gap between foreign and domestic success has diminished over time.” (p. 4)

- (b) “When we analyze changes in the two- presidencies phenomenon over time, therefore, we need to look at absolute levels of success as well as the relative success on foreign and defense issues. **Even if success on foreign policy remains higher than on domestic policy, a decline in the absolute level of foreign policy success would indicate a significant change in the two-presidencies phenomenon.**” (p. 6)
- (c) Data:
- i. The basic database consists of all conflictual roll calls in the House and Senate on which the president expressed a position from 1953 through 1996 (n = 2,886 in the House and 3,325 in the Senate). A conflictual roll call is defined as one on which fewer than 80% vote in agreement with the president’s position. (p. 8)
 - ii. We define unified behavior as more than 75% of the members of a faction voting together... Although 75% is an arbitrary cut point, it has the intuitive appeal of being midway between the limiting conditions of majority voting blocs and perfectly unified voting blocs. (p. 10)
- (d) **We find that the level of success for minority party presidents on foreign and defense votes has declined to such low levels that it leads us to question the continued utility of trying to explain presidential- congressional relations across the policy areas in terms of a two- presidencies model.** Furthermore, our results call into question any lingering notions of bipartisanship on foreign policy. Although the behavior of the opposition party and its leader continues to be some-what less partisan on foreign policy than on domestic policy, behavior on foreign and defense issues since the second Reagan administration has become highly partisan.

The Methodology of Presidential Research

1. Cite Key:

\cite{King1993}

2. Authors: King, Gary

3. Year: 1993

4. Journal: Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: King takes as his goal the application of a well formed methodological look at small N presidential research.

“My given task was to analyze the literature ably reviewed by these authors and re- port what political methodology might have to say about presidency research. I focus in this chapter on the traditional presidency literature, emphasizing research on the president and the office. For the most part, I do not consider research on presidential selection, election, and voting behavior, which has been much more similar to other fields in American politics.” (p. 381)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) I argue here that the division between “**rigor and relevance**” made numerous times in these papers and in the literature is of limited value and that qualitative research can be as rigorous as quantitative research. (p. 388)
- (b) I discuss the explicit goal of the literature reviewed in every first-round presidency paper: **increasing the richness of description and inclusiveness of theoretical perspectives. I take the position that this is not a productive direction for future research on the American presidency.** Instead, we need much less inclusive and more specific theoretical concepts: a few very precise or even incorrect theories would serve the discipline much better. (p. 388)

- (c) **I argue that the famous $n = 1$ problem of presidency research is not at all specific to this literature and is indeed a perfectly general statement of the problem of causal inference.** I also demonstrate in this section that the common practice of using the president as the unit of analysis is very unlikely to yield reliable inferences. Although this problem is widely recognized in the presidency literature, its solution is not self-consciously understood even though much research does get around the problem. (p. 388)
- (d) In my view, the signal problem with qualitative research on the presidency is its failure to appropriately judge the uncertainty of our inferences... **The point is not that reliable inferences are impossible in qualitative research; rather, one should always report a reasonable estimate of the degree of certainty we have in each of our inferences.** (p. 390)
- (e) **“it is difficult to find much of anything in the literature these papers review that one could disagree with, even in principle.** Indeed, from one perspective, the big problem in this literature is **its goal: everyone seems to be searching for richer theories, more detailed contextual description, and more all-inclusive theoretical concepts.** This goal is precisely what we need for some purposes but exactly the opposite for others.” (p. 395)
- (f) There is a causal inference problem because there is only one president so we cannot identify a causal effect by having two presidents exist at identical times but be different in some small way.
- (g) The president as a unit of analysis is a bad idea. To have enough statistical power to estimate a significant effect based on presidents as the unit of analysis, we would need to wait for a couple hundred more presidents to serve or have a huge difference in effects.
- (h) The solution is to expand the number of observations used by taking advantage of things like between state variation or looking at individual decisions.

Week 9: The Judiciary

Summary of the Debate

Spaeth and Segal (2001) Epstein and Knight (1997) Mishler and Sheehan (1993) Caldeira and Wright (1988)

Summary from Memo

Caldeira and Wright (1988) paint a picture of the Certiorari process as one of sifting through a whole bunch of unimportant cases to find one's that are important, interesting and offer a chance to (possibly) advance one's ideological agenda. Yet the process of case selection also carries with it a substantial risk, if we are to believe Spaeth and Segal (1999, p. 288) that Justices are rarely swayed by precedent over their ideological preferences. While a Justice may feel that the legal merits of a case require that the law be interpreted in a way that advances their agenda, if there is another interpretation held by Justices on the other side of the ideological spectrum (and they happen to be in the majority) then hearing the case could potentially result in an outcome that is worse than the status quo, from the Justice's perspective.

Majority Rule or Minority Will: Adherence to Precedent on the U.S. Supreme Court (Chapters 1 and 9)

1. Cite Key:

`\cite{spaeth2001majority}`

2. Authors: Spaeth and Segal

3. **Year:** 1999
4. **Journal:** Majority Rule or Minority Will: Adherence to Precedent on the U.S. Supreme Court
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:**
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a)
 - (b)

The Choices Justices Make (Selection)

1. **Cite Key:**

`\cite{epstein1997choices}`
2. **Authors:** Epstein and Jack Knight
3. **Year:** 1997
4. **Journal:** The Choices Justices Make
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:**
7. **Main Findings:**
 - (a)
 - (b)

The Supreme Court as a Countermajoritarian Institution? The impact of Public Opinion on Supreme Court Decisions

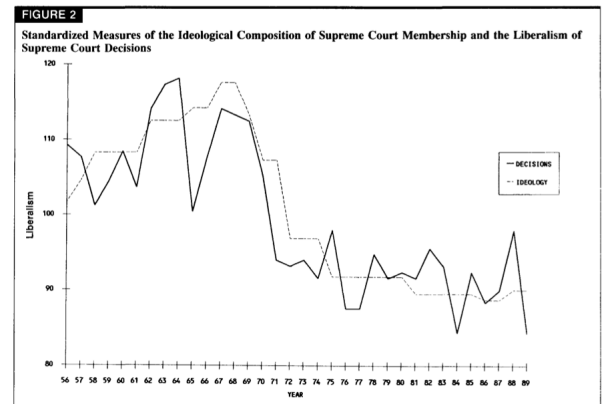
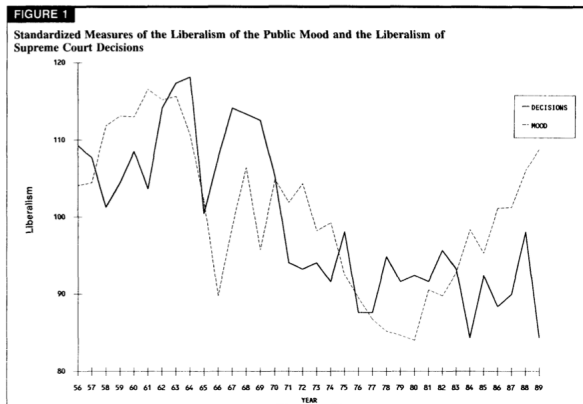
1. **Cite Key:**

`\cite{Mishler1993}`
2. **Authors:** Mishler and Sheehan
3. **Year:** 1993
4. **Journal:** APSR
5. **Keywords:**
6. **Summary:** Although normative questions about the role of the Supreme Court as a countermajoritarian institution have long excited controversy in democratic theory, empirical questions about how far the Court acts contrary to majoritarian opinion have received less attention. **Time series analyses for the period 1956-89 indicate the existence of a reciprocal and positive relationship between long-term trends in aggregate public opinion and the Court's collective decisions.** The Court's ideological composition changes in response to previous shifts in the partisan and ideological orientation of the president and Congress. The Court also responds to public opinion at the margins even in the absence of membership change. Since 1981, the relationship has vanished or turned negative in direction. The Court's ideological balance has been upset by an unbroken

string of conservative-to-moderate appointments, thereby undermining the dynamics that promote judicial responsiveness and raising questions about the majoritarianism of the contemporary and future Court. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) "Another limitation of existing opinion studies identified by Barnum is that the questions asked in public opinion polls frequently do not correspond very closely with the specific issues in the cases with which they are matched". (p. 88)
- (b) Some descriptive plots:



- (c) Regression Results:

| TABLE 2 | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| The Impact of Public Opinion on Supreme Court Decisions, 1956–1989 | | | | |
| | MODELS | | | |
| | A ^a | B ^a | C ^b | D ^b |
| Intercept | –24.3 (30.7) | –1.98 (28.2) | –46.6* (23.9) | –11.95 (25.42) |
| Public Mood _{t–5} ^c | .77** (.30) | .49* (.27) | 1.08** (.22) | .66** (.26) |
| Court Membership _{t–1} ^d | — | 2.78** (.79) | — | 1.76** (.70) |
| Democratic President _{t–1} ^e | — | — | 5.41* (3.03) | 5.52* (2.89) |
| Democratic President's Popularity _{t–3} ^f | — | — | –.31** (.12) | –.15 (.12) |
| Conservative Coalition _{t–4} ^g | — | — | –.86** (.34) | –.53 (.27) |
| Reagan Intercept ^h | 140.9* (73.7) | 90.3 (59.0) | 161.3** (50.2) | 114.2* (48.8) |
| Reagan × Mood _{t–5} | –1.59* (.81) | –.94 (.56) | –1.78** (.55) | –1.22* (.54) |
| AR(1) | –.52 (.18) | –.15 (.09) | — | — |
| R ² (reg) ⁱ | .35 | .71 | .80 | .85 |
| R ² (tot) ^j | .68 | .78 | | |
| Durbin-Watson | 1.86 (ns) | 1.92 (ns) | 2.03 (ns) | 2.19 (ns) |
| Ljung Box Q (df = 12) | 10.6 (ns) | 10.9 (ns) | 11.8 (ns) | 11.6 (ns) |

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses. N = 34.
^aMaximum Likelihood Estimates.
^bOrdinary Least Squares Estimates.
^cIndex of the liberalism of public opinion on domestic policy concerns.
^dSum of liberalism scores of Supreme Court justices at time of initial appointments.
^eDummy variable scored 1 if a Democrat is president, 0 otherwise.
^fPartisan-controlled index of presidential approval (see n. 18).
^gPercentage of roll call votes in which a majority of Republicans and southern Democrats opposed and defeated a majority of northern Democrats in House of Representatives.
^hDummy variable coded 1 for years 1981 through 1989 and 0 otherwise.
ⁱVariance explained by model excluding autoregressive parameter.
^jVariance explained by model including autoregressive parameter.
*P ≤ .05 (one-tailed test).
**P ≤ .01 (one-tailed test).

Organized Interest and Agenda Setting in the U.S. Supreme Court

1. Cite Key:

2. **Authors:** Caldeira and Wright

3. **Year:** 1988

4. **Journal:** APSR

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Participation as amicus curiae has long been an important tactic of organized interests in litigation before the U.S. Supreme Court. We analyze amicus curiae briefs filed before the decision on certiorari and assess their impact on the Court's selection of a plenary docket. We hypothesize that one or more briefs advocating or opposing certiorari increase the likelihood of its being granted. We test this hypothesis using data from the United States Reports and Briefs and Records of the United States Supreme Court for the 1982 term. The statistical analysis demonstrates that the presence of amicus curiae briefs filed prior to the decision on certiorari significantly and positively increases the chances of the justices' binding of a case over for full treatment – even after we take into account the full array of variables other scholars have hypothesized or shown to be substantial influences on the decision to grant or deny. (abstract)

7. **Main Findings:**

- (a) “Theoretically, we propose that justices of the U.S. Supreme Court are motivated by ideological preferences for public policy and that they pursue their policy goals by deciding cases with maximum potential impact on political, social, or economic policy”. (p. 1111)
- (b) **“our theory assumes that the potential significance of a case is proportional to the demand for adjudication among affected parties and that the amount of amicus curiae participation reflects the demand for adjudication.** We propose that amicus curiae participation by organized interests provides information, or signals – otherwise largely unavailable – about the political, social, and economic significance of cases on the Supreme Court's paid docket and that justices make inferences about the potential impact of their decisions by observing the extent of amicus activity”. (p. 1112)
- (c) “At least one brief was filed in 148 of the 1,906 petitions (108 cases with briefs in support only, 29 cases with briefs in opposition only, and 11 with briefs both for and against), and the Court granted certiorari in 54, or 36%, of these cases. In contrast, when no one filed an amicus brief on a petition, the Court granted only 5% of the cases”.... “Our data, like those in other studies, demonstrate a substantial connection between a positive decision on certiorari on the one hand and the presence of the United States as a petitioner or of real conflict or ideological outcome in the lower court on the other”. (p. 1116)
- (d) Regression Results:

Table 1. Probit Coefficients for Certiorari Model

| Variable | Coefficient | t-Statistic |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| Intercept | -2.14 | -14.96 |
| Solicitor general | 2.16 | 8.62 |
| Disagreement among lower courts | .29 | 2.26 |
| Alleged conflicts | .28 | 3.58 |
| Actual conflicts | 1.44 | 10.49 |
| Issue area | .09 | .63 |
| Ideological direction in court below | -.71 | -5.16 |
| One amicus curiae brief in support of certiorari | .81 | 3.94 |
| Two or three amicus curiae briefs in support of certiorari | 1.42 | 5.01 |
| More than three amicus curiae briefs in support of certiorari | 1.74 | 5.21 |
| One or more amicus curiae briefs in opposition to certiorari | .36 | 2.02 |

Note: N = 1,771 (141 grants, 1,630 denials); -2 log likelihood ratio = 1970.1; pseudo R-squared = .80.

797AA Methods (UMASS)

Overview of Course and Relevant Concepts

Butler and Nickerson (2011) Beck (1975) Lacy (2001) Hammond and Fraser (1984) Achen (1977)
Gerber and Green (2000b) Brambor et al. (2006) Greenland et al. (1999)

Relevant American Politics Readings

Can Learning Constituency Opinion Affect How Legislators Vote? Results from a Field Experiment

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Butler2011a}

2. Authors: Daniel M. Butler and David W. Nickerson

3. Year: 2011

4. Journal: Quarterly Journal of Political Science

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** When legislators are uninformed about public opinion, does learning constituents opinion affect how legislators vote? We conducted a fully randomized field experiment to answer this question. We surveyed 10,690 New Mexicans about the Governors spending proposals for a special summer session held in the summer of 2008. District-specific survey results were then shared with a randomly selected half of the legislature. The legislators receiving their district-specific survey results were much more likely to vote in line with constituent opinion than those who did not. **Our results suggest that legislators want to be more responsive to public opinion than they are in their natural state and can be if given solid information about constituent beliefs.** (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) the empirical study of the relationship between elected representatives and constituents is central to political science and has a long history in the discipline (e.g., Miller and Stokes, 1963; Kuklinski, 1978; Arnold, 1990; Bartels, 1991; Stimson et al., 1995; Wlezien, 1995, 2004; Gilens, 2005; Clinton, 2006; Kousser et al., 2007; Peress, 2008; Guisinger, 2009; Matsusaka, 2010). **The majority of these studies conclude that legislators are responsive to public opinion because they find a positive correlation between measures of public opinion/preferences and how legislators vote.**

While legislator responsiveness to public opinion is one data generation process that would lead to this observed relationship, many other causal mechanisms and/or routes to achieving representation could account for the observed correlation between public opinion and legislators actions. For example, elections affect the ideological leanings of representatives by causing turnover in who holds office across districts and over time (e.g., Brady and Sinclair, 1984; Rhode, 1991; Poole and Rosenthal, 1997; Poole, 2007). **If liberal districts elect liberal candidates, conservative districts conservative candidates, and out of step-incumbents are voted out of office, then a positive correlation would exist between district opinion and the behavior of the elected officials even if those officials were not at all responsive to their constituents opinion. In other words, the observed correlation may simply be the result of the replacement rather than the conversion of current legislators.** (p. 56)

- (b) **the general partisan/ideological orientation of the district, as measured by the presidential vote share, predicts only 15 percent of the observed variation in the support for the governors proposal across districts. Thus, the treatment provides legislators with new information that could not be simply inferred from the general partisan/ideological leaning of their district. (p. 63)**
- (c) It is possible that this state of ignorance applies only to recently arising issues, but there is reason to believe that it also applies to more established issues. **Miller and Stokes (1963) found that legislators were responsive to what they thought public opinion was on the issues, but often did not know their constituents preferences across a broad range of issues. Our findings provide further evidence that informing legislators makes them better delegates of their constituents preferences (p. 72)**

A note on the probability of a tied election

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Beck1975a}

2. Authors: Nathaniel Beck

3. Year: 1975

4. Journal: Public Choice

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: Many rational theories of voter turnout (e.g., W. Riker and P. Ordeshook) depend crucially on the probability of an election ending in a tie. Yet while everyone seems to agree that this probability is small, surprisingly there are few if any published estimates of it. In this note we calculate the probability of a tied election for two special cases.

7. Main Findings:

(a)

- (b) Some values for the probability of a tie are given in Table 2. In this special case, the probability of a tie exceeds the probability of a tie under the assumptions of Part I (single population, $B(n, .50)$). Again, the results are quite "knife-edged." The two-subpopulation case is considerably more realistic than the single-population case. Thus, **if a voter makes some special but not absurd assumptions about the electorate, then he might reasonably believe that the probability of a tie is non-zero. (p. 79)**

A Theory of Nonseparable Preferences in Survey Responses

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Lacy2001}

2. Authors: Dean Lacy

3. Year: 2001

4. Journal: AJPS

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** A person has nonseparable preferences when her preferences for the outcome of one issue or set of issues depend on the outcome of other issues. A model of individual-level responses to issue questions in public opinion surveys implies that when people have nonseparable preferences, their responses will change depending on the order of questions. An individual's responses may also vary over time as her perception of the status quo changes. A telephone survey of a random sample of residents of Franklin County, Ohio, reveals that **much of the public has nonseparable preferences on a wide range of issues**. Results from a survey experiment confirm that aggregate-level question-order effects occur on issues for which people have nonseparable preferences, and order effects do not occur on issues for which most people have separable preferences. At the individual level, people with nonseparable preferences display greater response instability across question orders than people with separable preferences, and a respondent's level of political information has little impact on response instability (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Since Converse's "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics" (1964), students of public opinion have argued that most people lack well-defined or stable opinions on important political issues. Converse concluded "large portions of an electorate simply do not have meaningful beliefs, even on issues that have formed the basis for intense political controversy among elites for substantial periods of time" (1964, 245).
- (b) The model also predicts the very phenomenon-unstable survey responses-that researchers evince to dismiss the assumption that people have fixed and well-formed preferences. **If a model that assumes people have fixed preferences is able to generate the result that has been so often declared as evidence undermining the assumption of fixed preferences, then response instability cannot prove or even suggest that respondents lack fixed preferences.**
- (c) By introducing new survey instruments to detect nonseparable preferences, **I find that large segments of the public have nonseparable preferences on many important issues of public policy. Such preferences reveal a previously unrecorded level of sophistication and complexity in public opinion. Instead of adopting the well-established though not well-tested belief that the world is too complex for survey respondents to have stable or well-formed preferences, we should instead provide survey respondents with new ways to express the complexity of their preferences.**

Judging Presidential Performance on House and Senate Roll Calls

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Hammond1984}

2. **Authors:** Thomas H. Hammond and Jane M. Fraser

3. **Year:** 1984

4. **Journal:** Polity

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** How successful should we expect presidents to be in their relationships with the House and Senate? An answer to this question is central to making informed judgments about their effectiveness. Professors Hammond and Fraser show how quantitative and circumstance-sensitive standards for judging presidential performance can be developed. Applying these standards to presidents from Eisenhower to Carter, they suggest that the reputations of some of these presidents would bear reconsideration.

7. Main Findings:

- (a) we will develop three somewhat different baseline models of what would happen by chance to presidential requests in the House and Senate. Each model requires the assumption that each congressman votes on a presidential request by flipping an unbiased ($p = .5$) coin. We are not asserting that this is how congressmen actually vote, or that coin flipping is in any sense a reasonable representation of how they vote. We want to see what would happen if congressmen voted in this fashion, for that tells us what would happen (p. 626)
- (b)

Measuring Representation: Perils of the Correlation Co-efficient

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Achen1977}

2. **Authors:** Christopher H. Achen

3. **Year:** 1977

4. **Journal:** AJPS

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Most empirical research on representation has used correlational measures. The larger the correlation between representatives' and constituents' views, the stronger the bonds between them are thought to be. Unfortunately, correlations incorporate not only the strength of a relationship, but also the diversity of the sampled constituencies. When constituencies are very different from each other on an issue dimension, large correlations will result even when voters are not particularly sensitive to that dimension. **Large correlations can occur when representatives are distant from their constituents; small correlations can happen when they are near. Correlations should be abandoned in the study of representation.**

7. Main Findings:

- (a) **Miller and Stokes assessed the "representativeness" of the 1958 American House of Representatives on three issue dimensions-social welfare, foreign policy, and civil rights. Using correlation coefficients, they found that in expressed policy preferences and in roll-call voting, Congressmen better reflected mean constituency opinion in civil rights matters than in social welfare or foreign policy (Miller and Stokes, 1966, p. 359).'** Miller and Stokes also reported that winners of Congressional elections were more representative than losers on the social welfare dimension (Miller and Stokes, 1966; Miller, 1964).
- (b) **When used to study representation, correlations mix together the strength of the representative-to-constituent connection with the diversity of the constituencies. In the Miller-Stokes data, the district heterogeneity is so much larger for civil rights than for the other two dimensions that a larger correlation for that dimensions is almost inevitable. In fact, the pattern of the Miller-Stokes correlations can be produced from a system of random selection of representatives within districts. The larger correlation for civil rights, then, does not imply that constituency opinions about race influence Congressmen more than any other issue dimension. Correlations are simply incomparable across different variables**

The Effect of a Nonpartisan Get-Out- the-Vote Drive: An Experimental Study of Leafletting

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Gerber2000a}

2. Authors: Gerber, A. S. and Green, D. P

3. Year: 2000

4. Journal: JOP

5. Keywords:

6. Summary: A field experiment assessed the effects of a nonpartisan voter mobilization drive. On the weekend before the 1998 general election, voters in the treatment group received an 8" x 11" card on which was printed a nonpartisan encouragement to vote. **This treatment had no effect on the turnout rates of registered Republicans and Democrats, but it increased the turnout of those voters unaffiliated with a major party by approximately 7%.** We find that the treatment was particularly effective at increasing voting among those unaffiliated voters who voted in 1996 (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

- (a) Recent scholarship has attempted to isolate the key factors behind lower turnout. One influential account is that of [Rosenstone and Hansen \(1993a\)](#), who argue that a large part of the decline can be traced to a decrease in the mobilization efforts of candidates and political parties. Their statistical analysis suggests that over half of the decline in voting since the 1960's can be attributed to reduced voter mobilization.
- (b) The basic finding of this paper is that even a modest stimulus can lead to sizable increase in the turnout rate of unaffiliated voters. In this section, we first consider what might account for the findings and then turn to the implications of our research. The main result of our experiment is that while there was no effect on the turnout levels of registered Democrats and Republicans, a small experimental stimulus raised turnout among unaffiliated voters by more than 7%. Several factors might account for why there were different effects for partisan and nonpartisan voters. **The most likely explanation is that partisans received adequate encouragement to vote from either their political parties or fellow partisans, while the unaffiliated do not receive nearly as much attention.**

Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Brambor2006}

2. Authors: Brambor, T., Clark, W. R., & Golder, M.

3. Year: 2006

4. Journal: Political Analysis

5. Keywords:

6. **Summary:** Multiplicative interaction models are common in the quantitative political science literature. This is so for good reason. Institutional arguments frequently imply that the relationship between political inputs and outcomes varies depending on the institutional context. Models of strategic interaction typically produce conditional hypotheses as well. Although conditional hypotheses are ubiquitous in political science and multiplicative interaction models have been found to capture their intuition quite well, a survey of the top three political science journals from 1998 to 2002 suggests that the execution of these models is often flawed and inferential errors are common. We believe that considerable progress in our understanding of the political world can occur if scholars follow the simple checklist of dos and don'ts for using multiplicative interaction models presented in this article. Only 10% of the articles in our survey followed the checklist. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

(a) When we are calculating standard errors for interaction effects we need the following formula:

$$\hat{\sigma}_{\frac{\partial Y}{\partial X}} = \sqrt{\text{var}(\hat{\beta}_1) + Z^2 \text{var}(\hat{\beta}_3) + 2Z \text{cov}(\hat{\beta}_1, \hat{\beta}_3)} \quad (5.1)$$

Most analyses forget to do this which can change their substantive findings.

Causal Diagrams for Epidemiologic Research

1. Cite Key:

\cite{Greenland1999}

2. **Authors:** Greenland, S., Pearl, J., & Robins, J. M.

3. **Year:** 1999

4. **Journal:** Epidemiology

5. **Keywords:**

6. **Summary:** Causal diagrams have a long history of informal use and, more recently, have undergone formal development for applications in expert systems and robotics. We provide an introduction to these developments and their use in epidemiologic research. Causal diagrams can provide a starting point for identifying variables that must be measured and controlled to obtain unconfounded effect estimates. They also provide a method for critical evaluation of traditional epidemiologic criteria for confounding. In particular, they reveal certain heretofore unnoticed shortcomings of those criteria when used in considering multiple potential confounders. We show how to modify the traditional criteria to correct those shortcomings. (abstract)

7. Main Findings:

(a) It is good to have the cite for this one to talk about causality.

(b)

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