

# Milestone 6

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*4/3/2020*

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Mileston 5</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Paper Overview . . . . .	1
1.2	Beautiful Graphic . . . . .	2
<b>2</b>	<b>Mileston 6 Paper Extensions</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Replication Appendix</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1	Table 1 . . . . .	3
3.2	Figure 1 . . . . .	5
3.3	Figure 2 . . . . .	6
3.4	Replication: What I Achieved and What I Did Not . . . . .	6
<b>4</b>	<b>Citations</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>6</b>

This is my pdf document for milestone 6 of Gov 1006 Final Project. Please refer to the Github repository for my entire project.<sup>1</sup> I am replicating Why Friends and Neighbors? Explaining the Electoral Appeal of Local Roots<sup>2</sup> by Rosie Campbell, Philip Cowley, Nick Vivyan, Markus Wagner. They seek to answer how politicians with local roots have greater appeal in elections.

## 1 Mileston 5

### 1.1 Paper Overview

My replication paper will be looking at Rosie Campbell, Philip Cowley, Nick Vivyan, Markus Wagner’s paper, “Why Friends and Neighbors? Explaining the Electoral Appeal of Local Roots” published in The Journal of Politics. The paper studies the phenomon of why local politicians seem to gain more electoral support in elections. Whereas the “friends and neighbors” effect has previously been found to arise when there is a lack of information in regard to policy, only thing voters know is they are local, this articles purpose is to explain the “direct effect of local roots on voter evaluations of a politician” (Campbell et al. 2019). It is the authors belief that voters “use local roots as a low-cost cue for making inferences about a politician’s “behavioral localism” (an elected official acting in the interest of their (Campbell et al. 2019). Their hypothesis is that the power of local roots in decision making for voters is weakened when voters are moer informed about the behavioral localism. The authors use survey experiments of made up candidates running for sets in Parliament in the UK rather than performing an observational study on real elections to isolate the effects of local roots.

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<sup>1</sup>All analysis for this paper is available on my Github Reposotory

<sup>2</sup>Replication Paper

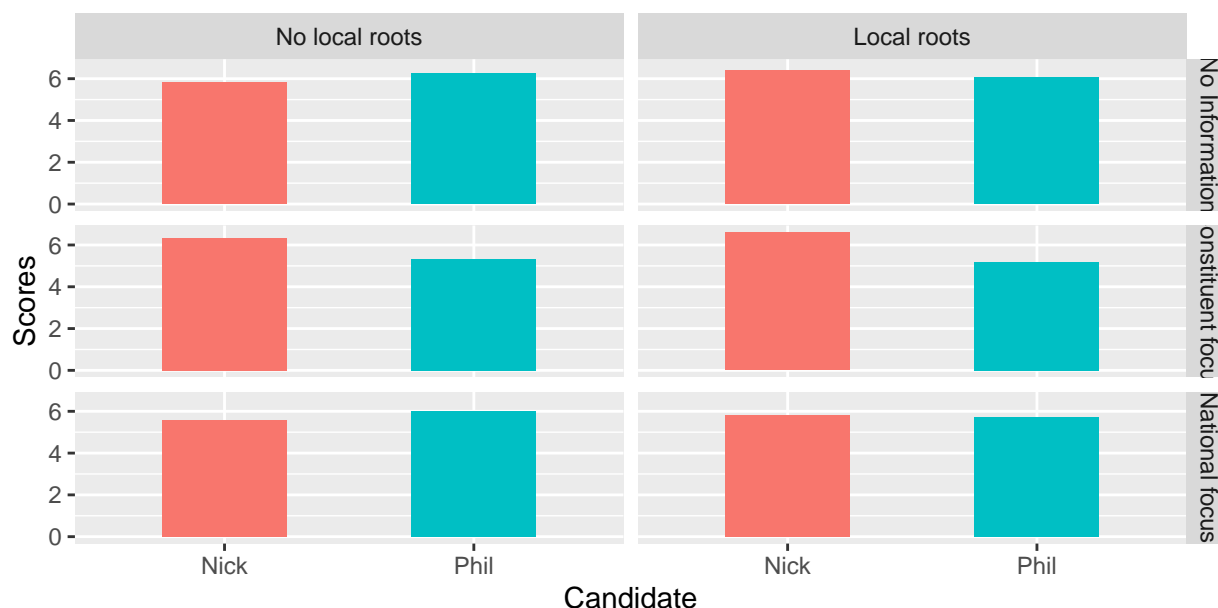
Study 1 used a vignette experiment to more generally test whether the presence of information on behavioral localism impacts the effects of local roots while Study 2 gives people a more wide array of information to test whether having greater knowledge of each candidate eliminates the effects of local roots. Study 1 presented a hypothetical election between two candidates and they tested how varying levels of behavioral localism information interacts with being a local candidate. They modeled this with a least squares regression model and their focus was on the interaction term (being a local candidate and having information). The results were that the presence of behavioral information whether positive or negative does lessen the friends and neighbors effect. However, they found being a local candidate still positively impacts voters and the authors proceeded to study 2. Since study 2 possesses much more and much more varied information on the candidates in question. They analyze the average marginal component effect (AMCE), the probability of why a candidate is being chosen broken down by each individual component of their profile (ex. being local, political party, gender). Even here with so much more information, they found the AMCE for being local was positive and one of the most prominent compared to others.

Thus, voters use local roots as an important factor in candidate selection when there is a lack of any other information. However, what is more interesting is that local roots are still a notable factor even when voters have a wider and more in-depth knowledge of each candidate.

## 1.2 Beautiful Graphic

### Average Candidate Scores Across Various Treatment Groups

Nick Having Local Roots Increases His Average Score Across All Levels of Behavioral Localism



Footnote: Very similar to Figure 1 from 'Why Friends and Neighbors? Explaining the Electoral Appeal of Local Roots'. I use the raw scores instead of Nick minus Phil for my graphic; however the same results can be seen. facets of local root vs. not local roots and the behavioral information are all referring to changes to Nick, not Phil, and these are the differences in treatment groups

## 2 Mileston 6 Paper Extensions

The authors were very thorough in their analysis including a lengthy appendix with a lot of other things that were tested that were not highlighted prominently in the main article. However, I do believe there are a of interesting paths to follow regard to extensions. The authors in their discussion and conclusion provide a

lengthy list of questions and extension that arise from their own analysis. However, most of this does involve trying with trying to explain the local roots effect that was out of the scope of their analysis : " What might account for the local roots effects that we have observed but that are left un-explained by the particular mechanisms considered in this article?" (Campbell et al. 2019). They go on to speak about theories as well as experiments that should be cared out, including questions and frameworks for experiments with real elections to view how their results play out in an actual race. However, they do not mention much at all about the shortcomings of their analysis (not that there is necessarily any, the analysis was very thorough) and all of these proposed extensions are outside the scope of Gov 1006. My extensions will be focused on the data and experiments they used and will consist of subsetting the data to view how their results apply to various subgroups of the population.

For study 1, the authors in one of the appendices performed balance and randomization checks to insure that there is a "distributional balance of four respondent characteristics – gender, age, education and social grade, all measured pretreatment – across the six treatment groups created in the experiment" (Campbell et al. 2019). Since "None of the differences in proportions across treatment groups are bigger than 10% and only a small number are greater than 5%" [campbell\_cowley\_vivyan\_wagner\_2019], I believe this presents an excellent opportunity to dive deeper into if the "friends and neighbors" effect is stronger for one subset of the population than others (ex. males vs. females, older vs. younger). I hypothesis that there may in fact be some interesting differences especially in regard to age. For example, do the younger people in the study, who may not be as engaged in politics or care how they are represented in Parliament, more often vote for the candidate with local roots. Or even on the opposite side of the spectrum, do the elder people in the study who have been engrained in their community and care about their representation vote for the person who will concerned more with the wants and needs of the people than his/her personal political views. I could do a lot more analysis such as this with gender as well and the other personal information included about the people surveyed.

I am unsure about specific extensions for study 2. Following along the same lines of the extensions I proposed for study 1, I can run a logistic regression model to find the probability a person votes for each type of candidate profile using voter information such as gender, age, education level of the voter themselves.

### 3 Replication Appendix

I recreate all the important graphs and tables as specified by Milestone 6.

#### 3.1 Table 1

(also fulfills reproducing a table needed for Milestone 5)

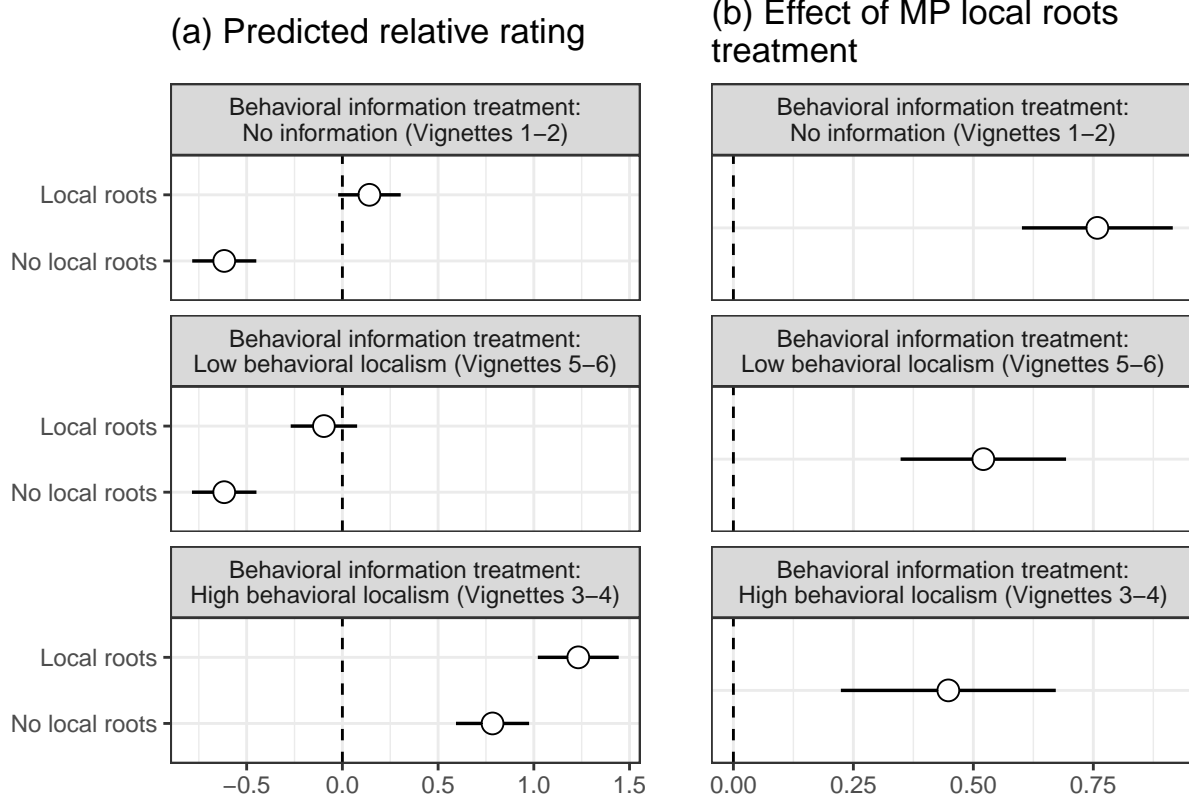
Table 1: Relative Ratings of MP Nick by Local Roots and Behavioral Information Treatments in Study

	Conditioning Effect of Any Behavioral Localism Information		Separate Conditioning Effects for High and Low Behavioral Localism	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Intercept	−0.412*** (0.057)	−0.661*** (0.128)	−0.412*** (0.057)	−0.664*** (0.125)
Local roots	0.755*** (0.080)	0.759*** (0.080)	0.755*** (0.080)	0.758*** (0.080)
Behavioral localism information	0.683*** (0.078)	0.691*** (0.079)		
Behavioral localism: High (vs. no info)			1.395*** (0.098)	1.402*** (0.098)
Behavioral localism: Low (vs. no info)			−0.007 (0.085)	−0.0002 (0.086)
Local roots X Behavioral info.	−0.253** (0.110)	−0.257** (0.110)		
Local roots X High behavioral localism			−0.311** (0.140)	−0.311** (0.139)
Local roots X Low behavioral localism			−0.233* (0.119)	−0.238** (0.119)
Controls for voter characteristics?	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	5,203	5,203	5,203	5,203
R <sup>2</sup>	0.036	0.046	0.107	0.116
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.036	0.044	0.106	0.114

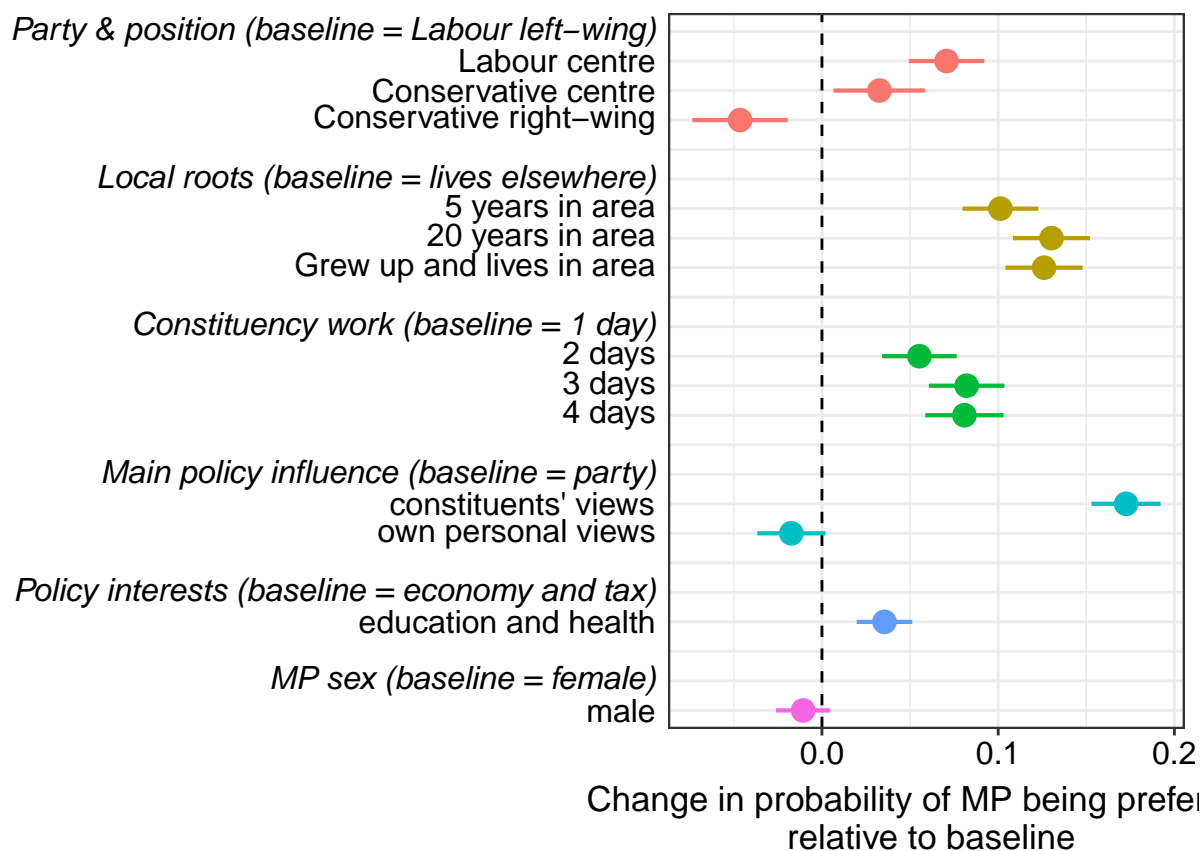
Note. All models estimated via ordinary least squares. Dependent variable is respondent relative rating of MP Nick (the 0–10 rating of Nick minus that of Philip). Robust standard errors in parentheses. N p 5,203.

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

### 3.2 Figure 1



### 3.3 Figure 2



### 3.4 Replication: What I Achieved and What I Did Not

I was able to replicate all the code of the paper. There were some errors based on updating of packages. I had the most difficulty with trying to replicate the stargazer table. The code by itself did not have the note at the bottom nor the column headers. I was not able to replicate the table exactly, however, I was able to figure out how to make it as similar as possible. I did so manipulating the Latex of the stargazer output.

## 4 Citations

The data and code for this replication is from Dataverse (Campbell et al. 2018). I used the stargazer package to replicate tables (Hlavac 2018) and I follow recommendations made by Gary King for replication (Gary King 2000). I use many techniques from the Gov 1006 textbook “Regression and Other Stories” (Andrew Gelman 2019) as well.

## Bibliography

Andrew Gelman, Aki Vehtai, Jennifer Hill. 2019. *Regression and Other Stories*.

Campbell, Rosie, Philip Cowley, Nick Vivyan, and Markus Wagner. 2018. “Why Friends and Neighbors? Explaining the Electoral Appeal of Local Roots.” *Harvard Dataverse*. Harvard Dataverse. <https://dataverse>.

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Gary King, Jason Wittenberg, Michael Tomz. 2000. *Making the Most of Statistical Analyses: Improving Interpretation and Presentation*. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2669316.pdf>.

Hlavac, Marek. 2018. *Well-Formatted Regression and Summary Statistics Tables*. <https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/stargazer/stargazer.pdf>.