7
Sophisticated Voting and Agenda Manipulation

In this chapter, we examine the evidence that indicates whether there is strategic or sophisticated voting in Congress. A basic premise of this book is that on each roll call, legislators vote as if they were choosing sincerely between a Yea outcome and a Nay outcome. That is, those who prefer the policies associated with the Yea outcome actually vote Yea, while those who prefer the policies associated with the Nay outcome vote Nay. Preference is determined by the legislator's Euclidean distance to the alternatives and by random disturbances (see chapter 2).

The alternative to sincere voting is strategic or sophisticated voting. We need to consider two types of strategic behavior: vote trades and sophisticated voting on agendas. Vote trades occur when one actor says to another, "Let's make a deal." The deal might be a logroll, of the type explored in chapter 6, where votes on one issue (such as agricultural price supports) are traded for votes on another (food stamps). Another possible deal is represented by a White House phone call with an implicit promise that the legislator will acquire chips that can be cashed in in the future. Still another would be the trading of a vote in response to campaign contributions, endorsements, or threats. A wide range of interest groups, from the National Rifle Association (NRA) to the America-Israel Political Action Committee, are alleged to be particularly successful in manufacturing trades. Nevertheless, the traders are likely to be legislators close to the "sincere" cutting line on an issue because the votes of these people, who are nearly indifferent on the issue, represent the cheapest votes. The most liberal members of Congress are unlikely to succumb to NRA threats to work against their reelection; the most conservative don't need to be pushed. Similarly, as we argued in chapter 2, logrolls are likely to take place between spatially adjacent actors. Vote trades involving actors close to sincere cutting lines largely preserve spatial voting. Such trades will not significantly influence the estimation of legislators' ideal points. Of course, the estimated cutting-line and outcome locations can, depending on the extent of trading, differ substantially from those produced by sincere behavior.

Strategic behavior also arises when there is a series of votes on the agenda for a specific bill. Strategic voters look ahead to future votes. When future votes are considered, a self-interested voter may vote against his or her immediate preferences. The calculation is basically that a vote for one's first choice today may be wasted if it means an empty cupboard tomorrow. Instead, one votes for one's second choice, recognizing that half a loaf is better than no loaf. Sophisticated behavior with respect to agendas, unlike logrolls, does not require implicit or explicit trades among legislators.

Strategic calculations make sense only if one anticipates a sequence of votes. In chapter 2, we indicated that the spatial model would still apply if there was a finite, binary agenda and both the agenda and voter preferences were known in advance. Voters would simply replace the ostensible alternatives with sophisticated equivalents and continue to vote along spatial lines. Such sophisticated voting would not bias our estimation of the legislator coordinates. The outcome coordinates estimated would be those of the sophisticated equivalents rather than the true mappings of the alternatives.

In this chapter, we first look for sophisticated voting using a one-dimensional model. We argue that truly sincere voting should almost always be observed, largely because the framers of bills should be able to anticipate how to draft their legislation to command a majority. Consistent with this hypothesis, our search of the literature on strategic voting found very few bothersome needles in our haystack of the 37,000 roll calls in the first 100 Congresses. In the few instances where the literature points to sophisticated voting, we find that the predictions of the complete-information model—with preferences and agenda known in advance—are disconfirmed, indicating that some voters vote in a sophisticated fashion while others continue to vote sincerely.

The presence of a mixture of voting types suggests that the basic one-dimensional voting model with a single midpoint might be improved on by a two-point model in which extremists on both ends vote one way and moderates vote the other. This so-called both-ends-against-the-middle voting might also arise because extremists are position-taking or expressing alienation. For example, Jesse Helms voted against a moderating Republican amendment to the minimum-wage bill in 1990, thereby expressing his opposition to a minimum wage of any form. In this chapter we show, however, that a two-point model cannot improve vote classifications beyond the amount expected from the random-error process assumed by D-NOMINATE.

When there is a mixture of sincere and sophisticated types, agenda manipulation is possible. There are in fact a few dramatic examples of successful killer amendments. These all involve race and are the final topic of this chapter.

Saving Amendments, Killer Amendments, and One-Dimensional Voting

The basic framework for the analysis of strategic voting can be developed by the simple voting tree shown in figure 7.1. In this tree, B stands for a bill, A stands for an amendment, and Q stands for the status quo. The first vote involves the amendment and the bill, with the winner being put against the status quo. Suppose that the unamended bill, B, would lose to the status quo, whereas the amended bill, A, would defeat it. That is, A > Q and Q > B, where the use of the bold face > in A > Q means A is preferred to Q by a majority. If A, B, and Q are one-dimensional—that is, they lie on a line through the basic space—A > Q and Q > B implies that A > B. Therefore, if everyone voted sincerely, the amendment would pass and then defeat the status quo—the amended bill would indeed be the winner.

To fix matters, let Q be a minimum wage of $3.35, let B be a minimum wage of $4.75, and let A be a minimum wage of $4.25. Sincere voting would have only liberals who preferred $4.75 to $4.25 voting against the amendment and only conservatives who preferred $3.35 to $4.25 voting against the amended bill. (To denote the

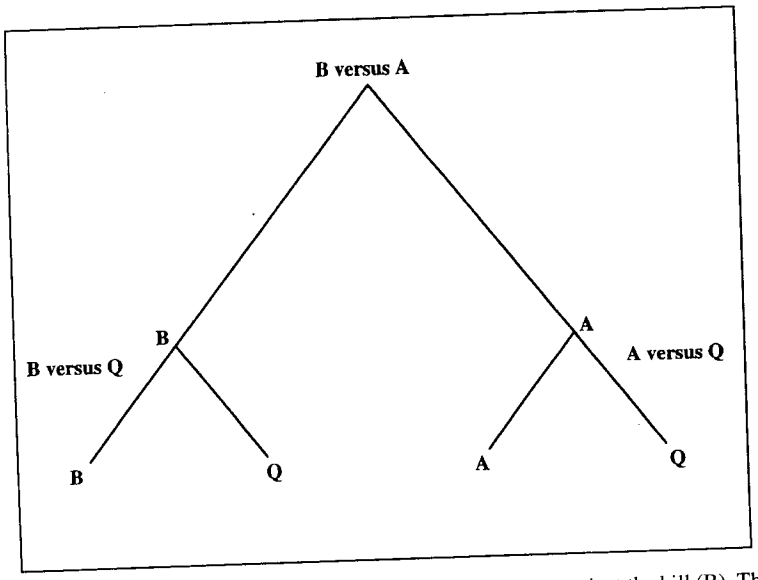


Figure 7.1. A simple agenda tree. An amendment (A) is voted on against the bill (B). The winner of this vote is then voted on against the status quo (Q).

preference of an individual, we use the nonbold face >.) As figure 7.2 illustrates, we can have only four voter types with one dimension. Assume there were 20 voters with preferences of B > A > Q (that is, B was preferred to A and A preferred to Q); 20 with A > B > Q; 20 with A > Q > B; and 40 with Q > A > B. These are consistent with A > Q (by a vote of 60 to 40) and Q > B (by a vote of 60 to 40). If the Q > A > B types, the most conservative members, saw all other types voting sincerely, they could vote for the $4.75 wage on the initial vote. This would win, combining 20 B > A > Q votes and 40 Q > A > B votes. Then, on the final vote, Q would defeat B. Clearly, sophisticated behavior would pay for the conservatives.

Sophisticated behavior by conservatives poses a dilemma for legislators with a preference ordering of B > A > Q. If they vote for the bill on the first vote and they win, then they lose to the status quo. They are faced with a choice of either compromising their principles or "going down in flames." If they do choose to compromise and look ahead, they will realize, as explained in chapter 2, that the initial vote is really a vote between A and Q, the sophisticated equivalent of B. When all voters vote on the basis of the sophisticated equivalents, A wins the initial vote 60 to 40 and the final vote 60 to 40.

Three related observations are pertinent to this situation. First, A plays the role of a saving amendment, introduced when it is clear that the original bill will be defeated. Second, on the initial vote, liberals and conservatives flip-flop when they vote in a sophisticated fashion. Liberals vote for the lower wage, $4.25; conservatives vote for the higher wage, $4.75. Third, on a saving-amendment agenda, the initial vote and the final vote should be identical. In our example, there should be two 60-to-40 votes,

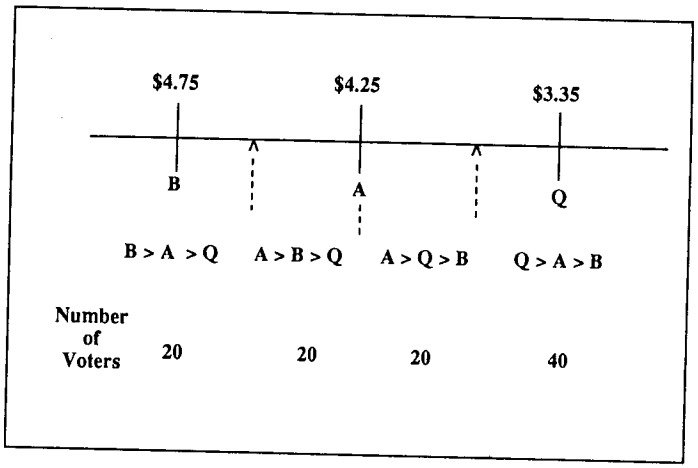


Figure 7.2. The minimum-wage example. The bill (B) with a high wage of $4.75 is at the liberal end of the continuum. The amendment (A) has a more moderate proposal of $4.25. The status quo (Q) is $3.35. In one dimension, there are only four types of strict preferences. The number of voters of each type is shown under the type.

We argue that one should only rarely observe saving amendments, the reason being that the managers of bills should draft a bill that can win. One would expect few proposals with the property Q > B. Much more often, one should see agendas where B > Q.

If B > Q, there might be amendments where A > B. Hence, in one dimension, A > Q. Such amendments would occur in cases where the bill managers report a bill that can defeat the status quo but where opponents can come up with a measure that is more appealing to the median voter in the chamber. In this case, the sophisticated equivalents on the initial vote are simply the ostensible alternatives, A and B. The initial vote will be a sincere vote between A and B; and the second vote, a sincere vote between A and Q. Or, alternatively, one could see proposals where B > A > Q. In this case, the opposition is proposing amendments as a matter of position-taking. But again, the initial choice will be a sincere vote between A and B. A good illustration of this situation is provided by the Erlenborn amendment on the minimum wage, shown in figure 6.4.

An even more hopeless position-taking amendment would have the characteristic B > Q > A. In this case, the initial vote will be a sophisticated vote between B and Q, and the second vote will be a sincere vote between B and Q. Consequently, if voters are sophisticated, the initial and final vote should have identical cutting lines. So if bill managers exercise care in making proposals, one should find only sincere voting, unless some legislators prefer to engage in position-taking and to "go down in flames."

Empirical tests do not reject the proposition that most voting is sincere. In chapter 6, we summarized the Romer and Rosenthal (1985) study of Senate voting on amendments to the bill concerning the minimum size that opened a firm to inspection by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Poole and Rosenthal (1991b) study of amendment voting on minimum wages. Such amendments provide a direct test of sincere voting because the amendments are altering a quantitative parameter of

a bill. With sincere voting, as the firm size is made smaller, the pro-OSHA vote should decrease, and as the minimum-wage level is made higher, the pro-minimum-wage vote should decrease. In both cases, the evidence was consistent with sincere voting. Ladha (1991, 1994), using a model derived from NOMINATE, carefully studied all amendment voting in the 95th Congress through the 98th, for which, as with minimum wages or OSHA inspections, an a priori quantitative ordering could be given to the alternatives. Almost all cases he studied supported sincere voting.

Three important exceptions that illustrate sophisticated voting have been identified by Enelow and Koehler (1980) and Enelow (1981). How do these well-known examples—the Common Situs Picketing Bill in 1974, the Panama Canal Treaty ratification in 1978, and Title IV of the 1966 Civil Rights Act—appear in the D-NOMINATE estimation?

Consider the Common Situs Picketing Bill, which was discussed in chapter 2. The situation was exactly as diagrammed in figure 7.1. The key vote was on the Sarasin amendment, which was designed to weaken the original bill—which most members believed would be defeated. The Sarasin amendment passed by a vote of 246 to 177, but then the amended bill lost 205 to 217.[1] Figure 7.3 shows the two votes.

The spatial model accounts very well for the two votes. The *PRE* for the Sarasin amendment was 0.74, and for the final-passage vote, the *PRE* was 0.75. Note that the two cutting lines are almost parallel, and that the representatives that represent voting errors tend to be clustered near the cutting lines. The Sarasin amendment was drafted to gain support among southern Democrats and Republicans. This objective was achieved—the cutting line passed through the southern Democrats and liberal Republicans. The party splits on the amendment vote were northern Democrats, 184 to 10; southern Democrats, 33 to 52; and Republicans, 29 to 115. In contrast, the splits on the final-passage vote were northern Democrats, 171 to 23; southern Democrats, 20 to 65; and Republicans, 14 to 129.

The voting patterns shown in figure 7.3 are consistent with sophisticated voting (on each vote) by both the extremes—the liberals and conservatives; and with sincere voting by the moderates—the group between the two cutting lines. For the moderates to be voting sincerely, their preferences would have to be the same as those of their more conservative brethren to the right of the Sarasin cutting line—namely, a preference ordering of Q > A > B. On the Sarasin amendment vote, the liberals and conservatives vote for the sophisticated equivalents (A versus Q), whereas the moderates vote sincerely on A versus B. On the final passage, the moderates now vote for Q. This behavior is consistent with the fact that the cutting lines are not identical. Indeed, since the status quo won the final vote, the Sarasin amendment was not a saving amendment, with A > Q.

Enelow and Koehler (1980, p. 406) note that the defeat of the amended bill "surprised both supporters and opponents of the bill alike." Suppose, however, as Enelow and Koehler claim (p. 407), that the amendment did not seriously weaken the bill—that is, A was almost as liberal as B. It is then possible that voters recognized that Q > A. In this case, because Q always wins in the final vote regardless of whether it faces A or B, voters can vote either way on the initial vote. Note, however, regardless of whether Q > A or A > Q, if all parties are certain that Q > B, liberals cannot be worse off by voting for A on the initial vote, and conservatives cannot be worse off by voting for B. Therefore, they can be expected to be sophisticated voters.

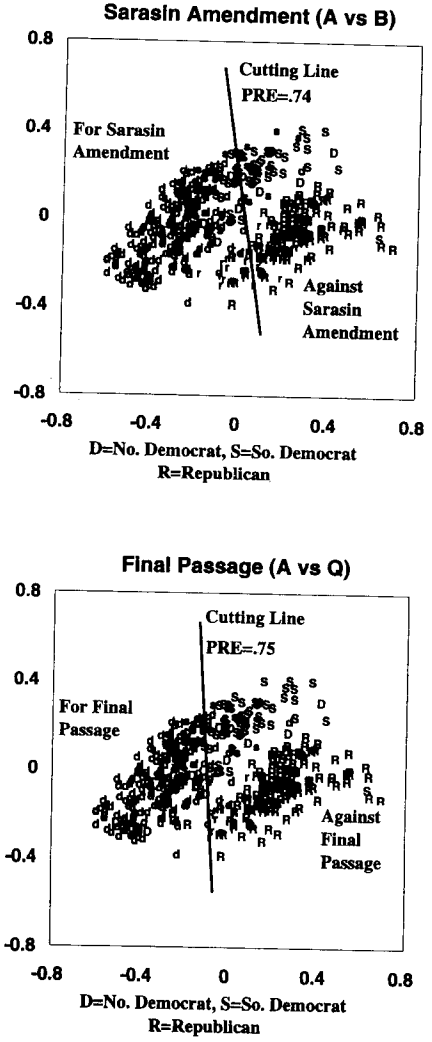


Figure 7.3. House voting on the Sarasin amendment and on passage of the Common Situs Picketing Bill. Those voting with a majority of the Democrats are shown in lowercase letters. (VOTEVIEW numbers 82 and 83; March 23, 1977.)

Among those representatives with preferences Q > A > B, those with relatively moderate D-NOMINATE scores appear, as we argued earlier, not to have followed their more conservative brethren and instead to have voted sincerely. The end result is nonetheless a vote along spatial lines, although the cutting line on the initial vote has neither the interpretation of being generated by sincere voting nor the interpretation of being generated by sophisticated equivalents. Instead, the cutting line reflects both types of behavior. Ironically, the final outcome would have been exactly the same if all voters had voted sincerely.

An amendment whose purpose is exactly opposite to that of a saving amendment is known as a killer amendment. A killer amendment is designed to sink a bill (so that Q > A) that would defeat the status quo were it not amended (so that B > Q). Since B > Q and Q > A, in one dimension, B > A. Even with sincere voting, the killer amendment would fail. Sophisticated voters will treat the initial A-versus-B vote as a Q-versus-B vote, implying that B would defeat A on the first vote. Hence, in one-dimensional voting killer amendments must always fail!

Enelow and Koehler (1980) discuss several amendments offered by conservatives as killer amendments to the Panama Canal Treaties of 1978.[2] Although the intent of the conservatives was directly opposite to that of the saving Sarasin amendment favored by liberals, the voting patterns were similar. The amendments were of the "motherhood and apple pie" variety. For example, one concerned a cemetery in the Canal Zone where U.S. citizens were buried. The strategy of the conservatives was very simple: propose something that it is embarrassing to vote against; then the amended bill also passes. But if any of the "motherhood and apple pie" amendments passed, the amended treaty would require a renegotiation with Panama. A renegotiation would be preferred by the conservatives because, at a minimum, it would force a delay in the implementation of the main treaty provisions.

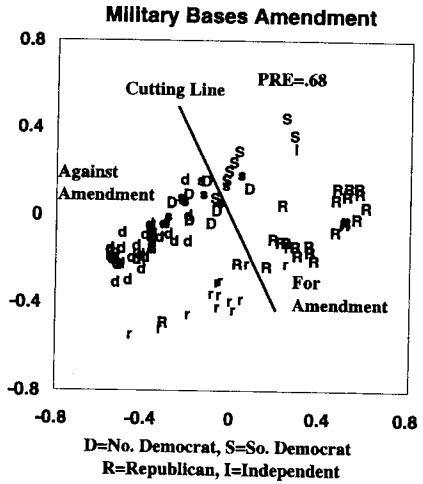
Placing "motherhood and apple pie" in our basic ideological space is somewhat problematical because, when voted on sincerely, such proposals might attract unanimous support. Because voters voted strategically, however, the actual voting behavior on the Panama Canal Treaty amendments fits into a one-dimensional framework.

Figure 7.4 shows one of these amendments along with the final-passage vote on the Panama Canal Neutrality Treaty. The amendment concerned the right of the United States to maintain military bases in the Canal Zone if the United States were at war. It was offered by Senator James Allen (D-AL), and then Senator Frank Church (D-ID) made a motion to table it. The motion to table passed by a vote of 57 to 38 on March 1, 1978, and the neutrality treaty was later passed by a vote of 68 to 32 on March 16, 1978.[3]

Both votes fit the spatial model well. The *PRE* for the Church motion was 0.68, and the *PRE* on the final passage was 0.59. The two cutting lines are close to being parallel, indicating unidimensional voting on the issue; and the overall pattern is very similar to that shown in figure 7.3 for the Common Situs Picketing Bill, but the interpretation of it is quite different.

Any vote for the Allen killer amendment can be interpreted as a sincere vote, since the amendment was of the "motherhood and apple pie" variety. But such a vote was also in accord with the strategic interests of conservatives who voted for the amendment (that is, against the Church motion to table) but against the treaty. Liberals who voted against the amendment but for the treaty were, in voting against "motherhood and apple pie," acting strategically, accepting an embarrassing vote in return for preserving the treaty.

The interesting case concerns the moderates in between the two cutting lines who voted both for the amendment and for the treaty. Although one could see them as being sincere voters, they may well also have been strategic ones. They wanted the treaty and may have been willing if necessary, "to take the fall" on the amendment, but they could presume that liberals wanted the treaty even more than they did. Moreover, there were enough liberals to defeat the amendment, leaving the moderates free



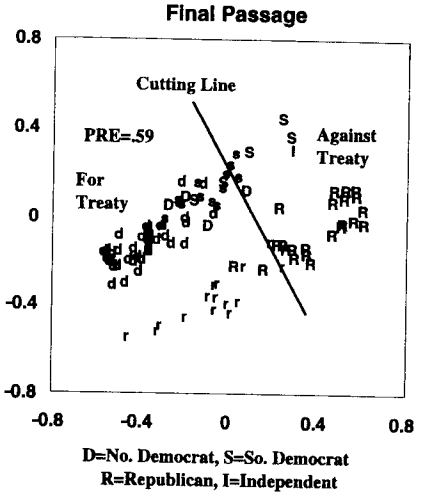
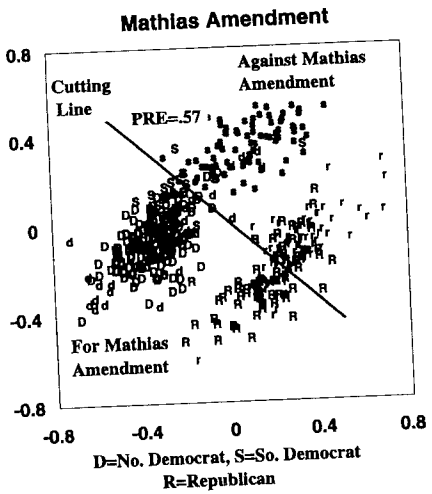


Figure 7.4. Senate voting on the Church motion to table military-bases amendment and on passage of the Panama Canal Neutrality Treaty. Those voting with a majority of the Democrats are shown in lowercase letters. (VOTEVIEW numbers 673 and 702; March 1 and March 16, 1978.)

Enelow (1981) shows another interesting case where, unlike the Common Situs Picketing Bill, there was a successful saving amendment. The case is Title IV, the open-housing provision of the 1966 Civil Rights Bill. Title IV was aimed at prohibiting discrimination in the sale, rental, or financing of housing. Representative Charles Mathias (R-MD)[4]—who supported Title IV—offered a saving amendment to weaken Title IV enough for it to survive an attempt to delete it from the bill. Figure 7.5 shows



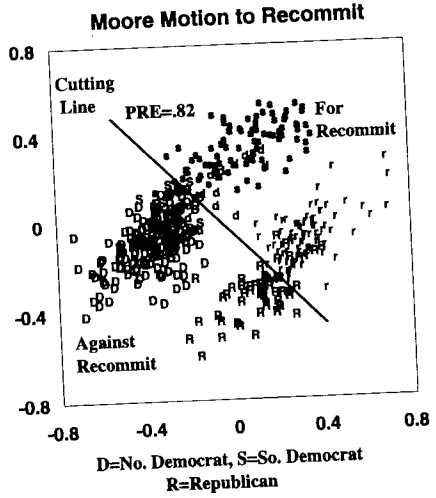


Figure 7.5. House voting on the Mathias amendment to Title IV, the open-housing provision of 1966 Civil Rights Bill, the Moore motion to recommit, and passage. (VOTEVIEW numbers 289, 292, and 293, respectively; August 9, 1966.) Those voting with a majority of the Democrats are shown in uppercase letters.

the three critical votes in the sequence: the Mathias amendment, which passed by a vote of 237 to 176; the motion by Representative Arch Moore (R-WV) to recommit the bill with instructions to delete Title IV, which failed on a vote of 190 to 222; and the final-passage vote of 259 to 157.[5] The expectation of Mathias was that the original bill, B, would lose to the motion to recommit, R, but that the amended bill, A, would

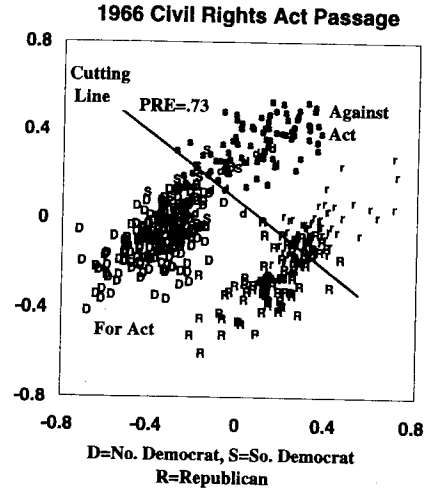


Figure 7.5. (*continued*)

Two things stand out in figure 7.5. The three cutting lines are roughly parallel, again suggesting a single active dimension, but the fit of the spatial model is poor for the Mathias amendment. On the Moore motion and on the final-passage vote, the spatial model performs very well in that the errors are quite close to the cutting line. Not so for the Mathias amendment—the *PRE*s were 0.57, 0.82, and 0.73, respectively.[6]

The expected-utility theory of sophisticated voting developed by Enelow (1981) predicts that the only groups that may split their votes on a saving amendment are the extreme liberals and/or conservatives. Even if it means an eventual defeat for the bill, some of the extremist legislators may not be able to bring themselves to compromise their principles. In short, the two-outcome spatial model we fit to the roll calls may not work well for this type of roll call.

The Mathias amendment is an example. Note that a number of liberal Democrats quite distant from the cutting line voted against the amendment (the lowercase "d"s in the lower left quadrant). In contrast to the Sarasin and Allen amendments, where strategic voting led to a spatial, cutting-line pattern of voting, voting of the Mathias-amendment-vote type would, if pervasive, run counter to the basic premise of this book. Consequently, it is important to check whether "both ends against the middle" voting is prevalent.

Both-Ends-against-the-Middle Voting

The both-ends-against-the-middle type of voting on the Mathias amendment does not appear to occur very often. Among the examples of sophisticated voting that we found in the literature—more of which we discuss below—it is in fact the only one that shows this pattern. In addition, in chapter 3, we showed that the voting error from D-NOMINATE closely matches the theoretical-error distribution—especially on roll calls with at least 20 percent on the minority side.

To get a better measure of how frequently two-ends-against-the-middle voting occurs, we performed a simple experiment using a version of the optimal-classification method we described in chapter 2. Recall that the first step is to begin with an arbitrary ordering of the legislators. The optimal cutting point is found by making a simple search of the midpoints between adjacent legislators. These roll call midpoints are then fixed, the optimal point for each legislator is found, and so on.

Here, we perform the same experiment, only now each roll call is represented by *two* cutting points. We now search *all pairs* of cutting points to find the optimal classifying pair. This allows for the two-ends-against-the-middle Y-N-Y (Yea-Nay-Yea) and N-Y-N patterns. It also allows for the simple Y-N and N-Y patterns, where the two cutting points are the same. These roll call midpoint pairs are then fixed, the optimal point for each legislator is found, and so on.

Because the one-point model is a subset of the two-point model, the latter is guaranteed to do better. Accordingly, we show the classification gain provided by the sophisticated two-point model over the one-point model for the House of Representatives in figure 7.6. Given our results in chapter 3, it is not surprising that the two-point model does not have much punch—for 65 Houses, it added 1 percent or less to the classifications; and for 86 Houses, it added 1.5 percent or less.

To see whether an increase of 1 percent is a meaningful result, we performed a Monte Carlo analysis by applying the two-point classification procedure to artificial data created from legislator and roll call coordinates from D-NOMINATE. We introduced errors into the individual utility functions at roughly the level encountered in the actual roll call data. The two-point model always showed an increase of about 1

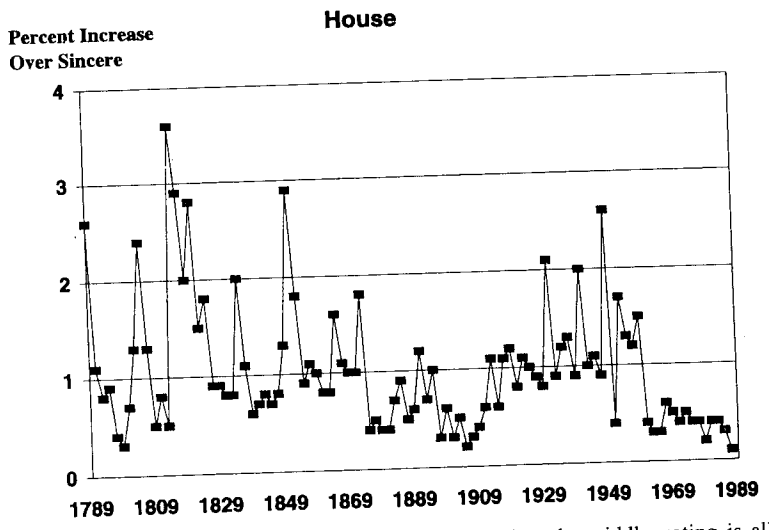


Figure 7.6. Increase in classification when both-ends-against-the-middle voting is allowed (1789–1988). Optimal classifications with two cutting points on each roll call are compared to standard optimal classification with one cutting point. Allowing for both-ends-against-the-middle voting does very little to improve classification, particularly after the late 1950s.

percent over the one-point model. In short, two-ends-against-the-middle voting is undeniably occurring, but it clearly has a low-level effect.

Killer Amendments in Two Dimensions

Until this point, we have considered strategic voting in the context of unidimensional issues. In the unidimensional case, the distinction between sincere and sophisticated voting has limited policy relevance. With a truly saving amendment, a majority should prefer the amendment to the bill, and a majority should prefer the amended bill to the status quo; so the amended bill should win even with sincere voting. If there were a truly unidimensional killer amendment (in contrast to the "motherhood and apple pie" amendment), the amendment should never pass in one dimension. If the original bill is liberal in relation to the status quo, for example, the killer amendment needs to be even more liberal. In this case, a sincere majority would prefer the original bill.

Possibilities are quite different in two dimensions. Reconsider figure 2.6. There are now, in contrast to the four voting types in one dimension, six possible types of strict preferences. If there were 32 A > B > Q types, 2 A > Q > B types, 2 B > A > Q, 31 B > Q > A, 31 Q > A > B, and 2 Q > B > A, we would have Q > A by a 64-to-36 vote; B > Q by 65 to 35; and A > B by 65 to 35. That is, we would have a voting cycle in which there would be no one alternative that defeated all others under majority voting. In particular, it is possible to have B > Q and A > B but Q > A. Sincere voting would lead to the amendment's killing the bill.

In contrast, voting on sophisticated equivalents would lead to the recognition that the initial vote is truly one between B and Q; so B would win. Therefore, if voters vote strategically, killer amendments won't work in either one or two dimensions. If voters are sincere, the amendments might well succeed, but only in two or more dimensions. Not surprisingly, therefore, the interesting cases of killer amendments in the literature all involve two dimensions. Given that (in chapter 3) we identified race as the second dimension in those periods of American history where a second dimension was most important, it is also not surprising that the examples all involve race.

A killer amendment discussed by both Enelow (1981) and Riker (1982) was the Powell amendment. The amendment was offered by Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. (D-NY) to the 1956 School Aid Bill. The amendment "barred federal funds from going to states that had failed to comply with the decisions of the Supreme Court" (Enelow, 1981, p. 1080) and therefore would have denied aid to segregated schools. The amendment passed by a vote of 225 to 192 (northern Democrats voted 77 to 42; southern Democrats, 0 to 104; and Republicans, 148 to 46) on July 5, 1956, and the amended bill then failed by a vote of 194 to 224 (ND 116-3; SD 3-102; R 75-119) on that same day.[7] Note that, as an African-American, Powell himself may have been more interested in position-taking than in strategic legislative activity. Presumably, Powell wanted both school aid and desegregation. His actions suggest that he preferred position-taking on desegregation to a half-loaf consisting of school aid.

The Powell amendment transformed the debate from one over the level of school aid to one over both school aid and school desegregation. The status quo, Q—no school aid and segregated schools in the South (in spite of the 1954 *Brown* v. *Board of*

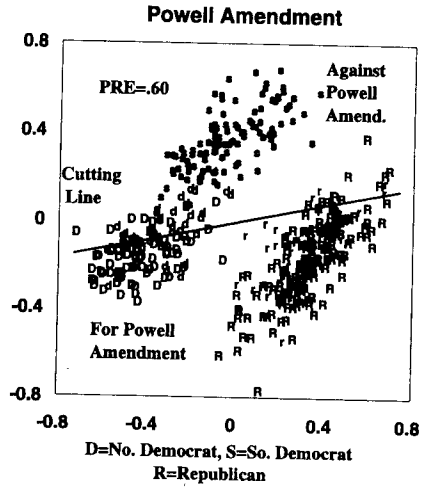
Education ruling)—would appear to be near the conservative pole on both dimensions. The unamended bill, B, had a combination of school aid and (implicitly) the status quo, segregation. That is, the bill was relatively liberal on one dimension and conservative on the other. The amended bill, A, was liberal on both dimensions. So if the Powell amendment were attached to the School Aid Bill, then southern Democrats would vote clearly vote for segregation, the status quo, while many Republicans would vote for the status quo of no school aid. According to our issue analyses in chapters 4 and 5, segregation, the status quo, would be near the top of the second dimension with the southern Democrats, and the status quo of no school aid would be on the right side of the first dimension with the conservative Republicans. The status quo was thus a conservative position on both dimensions.

Figure 7.7 shows the two votes. The *PRE*s were 0.60 and 0.71, respectively. The southern Democrats voted almost unanimously against both motions and were clearly sincere voters on both. The southern Democrats were probably a mix of the orderings of B > Q > A and Q > B > A because, no doubt, some southern representatives would have liked the school aid if there were no strings attached (Riker, 1982, p. 154). The Powell amendment split the northern Democrats, with the liberals voting for the amendment and the moderates voting, along with the southern Democrats, against the amendment. The ordering of northern Democratic liberals was clearly A > B > Q, and that of the northern Democratic moderates was probably B > A > Q, so both groups were voting sincerely on both motions. In addition, the Democratic party fits the spatial model very well.

Not so for the Republicans—the cutting line for the Powell amendment produces the prediction that almost all the Republicans will vote for the amendment. This occurs because 96 Republicans voted for the Powell amendment but against final passage—indeed, they were Y-N voters. These Y-N voters were clearly voting in a sophisticated fashion if their preference ordering was Q > B > A, and sincerely if their ordering was Q > A > B (Riker, 1982, p. 155). Most of these Y-N voters were moderates and conservatives. Of the 96 Y-N voters, 79 were above the cutting line on the final-passage vote and 17 were below the cutting line. These 17 below the cutting line represent errors, according to the spatial model, but they are quite close to the cutting line, and they are adjacent to the Y-Y voters, all of whom were liberals. These 17 Y-N voters could have had the ordering Q > A > B because the liberal Republican Y-Y voters they were next to were undoubtedly sincere voters with the ordering A > B > Q or A > Q > B. This would be consistent with the liberal Republicans, continuing in the nineteenth-century civil-rights tradition of their party. If some were more fiscally conservative than the others, then it is plausible that they would have had the ordering A > Q > B. Nevertheless, the bulk of the 79 Y-N Republicans above the cutting line were clearly sophisticated voters.

In sum, the preference orderings, from top to bottom, for the Republicans were in all likelihood Q > B > A, Q > A > B, A > Q > B, and A > B > Q; and for the Democrats, Q > B > A, B > Q > A, B > A > Q, and A > B > Q. Overall, everyone voted sincerely except the conservative Republicans, who were split—most voted sophisticatedly, while a minority voted sincerely. Note that these preference orderings *require* the presence of two dimensions; no one-dimensional ordering can produce them.

Riker (1982) cites the Powell amendment as an example of a voting cycle produced [illegible] because northern Democrats voted sincerely and Republicans voted sophisticatedly. Even though the status quo, Q, prevailed, as Riker shows, it was probably the case that B > Q. For figure 7.7, without the Powell amendment, the cutting line on passage probably would have been higher on the second dimension. Only 15 of the more moderate southern Democrats near the cutting line would have been needed to pass the School Aid Bill



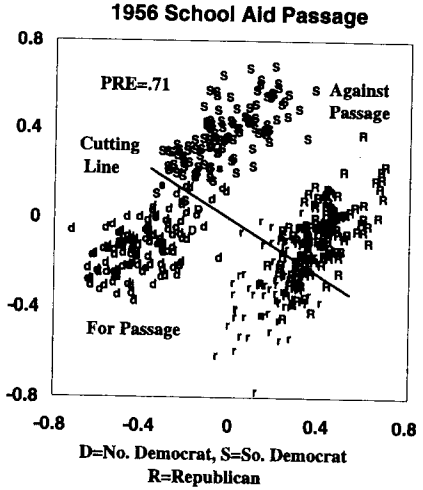


Figure 7.7. House votes on the Powell amendment and on passage of the 1956 school aid bill. (VOTEVIEW numbers 122 and 124; July 5, 1956.) Those voting with a majority of the Republicans are shown in uppercase letters. The Powell amendment operated as a killer amendment since 96 Republicans voted for the desegregation provisions of the amendment but voted against passage.

Riker (1982) cites two other examples of cycles—the Wilmot Proviso, and the DePew amendment to the constitutional amendment for the popular election of senators. In 1846, President Polk, a Democrat, wanted a quick victory in the war with Mexico. Intending to bribe the Mexican military commanders, he asked Congress to appropriate $2 million for that purpose. Polk should have gotten the $2 million without much difficulty, because the Democrats had firm control of the 29th Congress. In the House, the division was 142 Democrats, 79 Whigs, 6 American party members, and 1 vacancy. In the Senate, the division was 34 Democrats, 22 Whigs, and 2 vacancies. Unfortunately for Polk, Representative David Wilmot (D-PA) offered an amendment—which became known as the Wilmot Proviso—that prohibited slavery in any territories taken from Mexico. This amendment was passed by the House on a series of votes on August 8, 1846. The amended bill later died in the Senate.

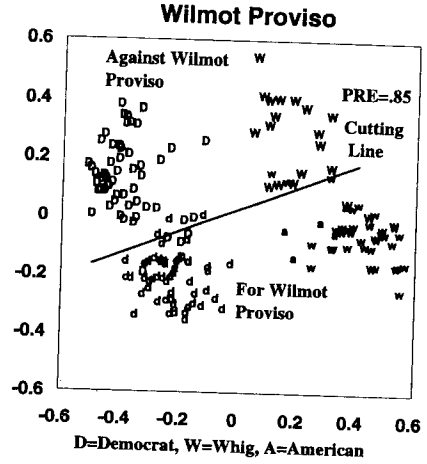
As we discussed in detail in chapter 5, slavery, by this time, had emerged as a second dimension that divided both the Whigs and the Democrats. Consequently, just as was the case for the Powell amendment 110 years later, the status quo had two aspects. One involved providing no appropriation for the bribe; and the other meant, at a minimum, leaving the slavery question in the territories taken from Mexico as an open issue to be decided at a later date. Given the unified control of the government by the Democrats, the bill to provide funds for bribery would undoubtedly have passed in the absence of the Wilmot Proviso (Riker, 1982, p. 225).

The critical vote analyzed by Riker was on a procedural motion that would have killed the Proviso, so a Nay vote is for the Proviso. In the vote, shown in figure 7.8, the procedural motion failed by a vote of 79 to 93 (northern Democrats, 13 to 51; southern Democrats, 47 to 0; northern Whigs, 5 to 35; southern Whigs, 14 to 2; American party 0 to 5).[8] The vote was almost purely a sectional one. It was very representative of literally hundreds of other roll calls that were taken, through this period, on a variety of slavery-related issues. (Compare figures 7.8 and 5.6.) The *PRE* on this roll call was 0.85.

Because the House was rushing toward an adjournment, and a filibuster in the Senate prevented a final vote, the only pairing observed was A versus B and A > B by 93 to 79. As we noted above, clearly B > Q because of unified control by the Democrats. Riker (1982, p. 227) argues that the southern Democrats and the southern Whigs would certainly have voted for Q over A, and because most of the northern Whigs opposed the war, they would also have probably voted for Q. Hence, Q probably would have gotten the 47 southern Democrats and 14 southern Whigs who voted against the Wilmot Proviso, along with the 35 northern Whigs who voted for the Proviso. This yields a total of 96 votes, so that Q > A.

In effect, a unified Whig party, plus the southern Democrats, would have defeated the bill as amended by the Wilmot Proviso. This would be consistent with a cutting line in figure 7.8 that passed through the Democrats, as it does for the Wilmot Proviso vote, but at a sharper downward angle so as to include all or most of the northern Whigs. Sincere position-taking on slavery by northern Democrats would have led to the defeat of Polk's proposal.

The other example of a voting cycle discussed by Riker involves the DePew amendment to the constitutional amendment to permit the direct election of senators (which became the 17th Amendment). The DePew amendment is yet another example



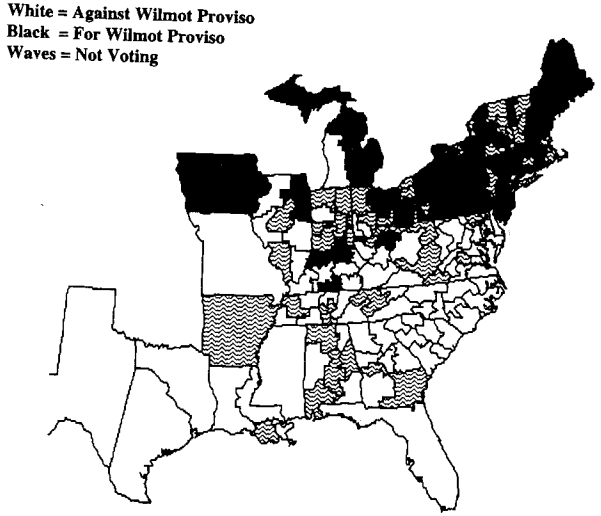


Figure 7.8. House voting on the Wilmot Proviso. (VOTEVIEW number 456; August 8, 1846.) Those voting with a majority of northerners are shown in lowercase letters. The sectional nature of the vote is shown on the map. Only two slave-state representatives from the border state of Kentucky supported the proviso.

amendment to a bill, created a voting situation with a two-dimensional status quo. In this situation, it had the interesting effect of derailing a bill that, unamended, had more than a two-thirds backing in the Senate. DePew's clever maneuver had the effect of creating a voting cycle.

Riker (1982, p. 195) estimates that at least 64 of 86 senators (or 88, after Oklahoma was admitted to the Union in November 1907) supported the constitutional amendment. Even with the two-thirds requirement for constitutional amendments, clearly

> Q. The DePew amendment was offered by Senator Chauncey DePew (R-NY) as a evice to derail the amendment. The southerners interpreted the DePew amendment giving the federal government the authority "to send the army into the South to register blacks and enforce their voting rights" (Riker, 1982, p. 194). During the lame-uck session of the 61st Congress in early 1911, the constitutional amendment eached the floor of the Senate. Opponents offered the Sutherland amendment, the egative equivalent of the DePew amendment, to strike language from the constitu-onal amendment that guaranteed white supremacy in the South.[9] Hence, a vote for ne Sutherland amendment was equivalent to voting for the DePew amendment. The utherland amendment passed by a vote of 50 to 37 on February 24, 1911 (NDs, 0 to ; SDs, 1 to 22; Rs, 49 to 8), and the constitutional amendment, as changed by the utherland amendment, failed by a vote of 54 to 33 on February 28, 1911, because a wo-thirds vote was required (NDs, 7 to 0; SDs, 14 to 9; Rs, 33 to 24).[10]

Figure 7.9 shows the DePew-Sutherland amendment, along with the final-passage ote. The *PRE*s were 0.92 and 0.41, respectively. The DePew-Sutherland amendment was opposed by all the Democrats and a few progressive Republicans and supported by most of the Republican party. The constitutional amendment was then opposed by many (but not all) southern Democrats and northeastern Republicans.

The recorded votes tell us that A > B and, because of the two-thirds requirement, Q > A. But the unaltered constitutional amendment clearly had a two-thirds support in the Senate, so that B > Q. DePew's clever maneuver was first used in 1902 during a committee's consideration of the amendment and had the effect of preventing the amendment from reaching the floor for a vote (Riker, 1982, p. 193). Since it was clear that from then on DePew (or someone else) would offer his amendment, it had the effect of delaying the passage of the 17th Amendment for nine years because Republicans were united in their support of voting rights for blacks. It was finally passed by the 62nd Senate on June 12, 1911, after the Democrats had made enough gains in the 1910 elections to defeat the Sutherland amendment. The amendment was sent to the states in 1912 and ratified by 36 of the 48 states on May 31, 1913.

The three successful killer amendments found by Riker are the only ones mentioned in the literature. We suspect that the reason they are not more common is that potentially successful killer amendments are derailed either by strategic voting or by the introduction of subsequent saving amendments by bill managers.

An example of a saving amendment introduced by a bill manager occurred in the voting on the Reagan Interstate Commerce Bill in the 48th Congress. The Reagan bill eventually passed in the House but the Senate did not act.[11] During the House debate on interstate commerce, James O'Hara, an African-American Republican member from North Carolina, moved to eliminate racial segregation in passenger rail service. As with the Powell amendment in the twentieth century (discussed earlier), the O'Hara amendment passed with the support of northern Democrats and Republicans. The O'Hara amendment was modified, however, by a saving amendment that banned discrimination but held that "separate but equal" seating was nondiscriminatory. The language allowed just enough northern Democrats to switch from position-taking to strategic voting, so that the amendment to the amendment passed by a bare 8-vote majority. As a consequence, the Interstate Commerce Bill was not killed, as it would have been if it had been turned into a race issue for southern rep-

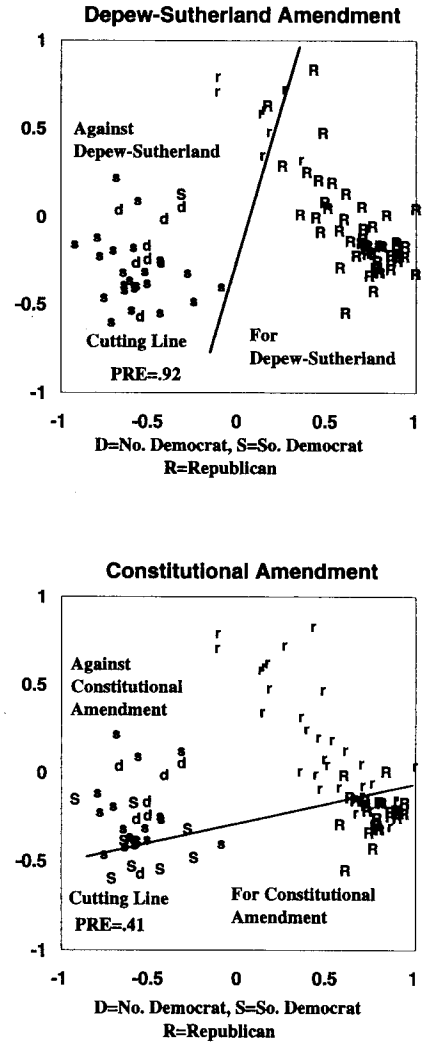


Figure 7.9. Senate voting on the Depew-Sutherland amendment and on passage of the constitutional amendment for popular election of senators. (VOTEVIEW numbers 244 and 248, respectively; February 24 and February 28, 1911.) Those voting with a majority of the Republicans are shown in uppercase letters. Republicans voted for the amendment, which concerned blacks' voting rights in the South, and against passage. Southern Democrats voted overwhelmingly against passage.

This example shows that the supporters of killer amendments try to take advantage of the unwillingness of some of a bill's supporters to compromise their principles and vote strategically. At the same time, supporters can be clever in finding alternative language that circumvents the strategy of their opponents. In any event, there are relatively few observations of voting cycles in Congress.

Summary

Our analysis suggests that sophisticated voting is not pervasive in Congress. We found some saving and killer amendments that could be analyzed as essentially one-dimensional. Our examination of these amendments disclosed only one example, the Mathias amendment, where voting strayed from a one-dimensional spatial pattern and became a case of both ends against the middle. Such voting is rare, however, as disclosed by our analysis of the two-point model.

Voting is sophisticated in another fashion, as illustrated by William Riker's examples: the Wilmot Proviso, the DePew amendment, and the Powell amendment. The examples are separated by approximately 60 years, but each involves the same maneuver: the introduction of an amendment that taps into the second great organizing dimension of American politics—race; and the destabilization of the winning coalition along the primary dimension of voting. The Wilmot Proviso split the Democratic party, which was a winning coalition that controlled the entire government in 1846. The DePew amendment caused a split between the Democratic party and progressive Republicans, thereby reducing the winning coalition to below a two-thirds size. Finally, the Powell amendment split the Democratic party internally in a rerun of 1846 and defeated the School Aid Bill, which had majority support. These three examples suggest that strategic manipulation of the agenda can have important effects when some legislators feel bound to engage in position-taking, sincere voting. But, as the interstate commerce example showed, additional manipulation can short-circuit manipulative strategies. On balance, strategic behavior appears to be a destabilizing force only very rarely. We thus continue to find that the spatial model is a reasonable summary of roll call voting behavior.

8
Roll Call Voting and Interest-Group Ratings

We will now extend our analysis of legislative behavior to incorporate the role of interest groups. We have previously established that there is a polarized distribution of legislator preferences. This polarization has been increasing since the 1960s. Polarization, when coupled with party discipline and majority rule, results in relatively extreme swings in policy outcomes. Policy outcomes are rarely close to the ideal point of the median legislator in one dimension or close to the center of the space in two dimensions. And in chapter 6, we presented very strong evidence indicating that legislators could not be viewed as representing middle-of-the-road interests in their constituencies. It is interest groups that may well direct the polarization process.

The potentially polarizing role of interest groups is evident in the research of Kirkpatrick (1976) and of McCloskey et al. (1960). They found that convention delegates and political activists had extreme opinions relative to those of the mass public. This finding is quite consistent with the theory of rational abstention. According to this theory, active political participation, in the form of time and money spent in promoting group causes, is far more costly than simply voting. Theoretically, of course, moderates should be the ones who do not participate, since they have less to lose from a disliked extreme outcome than do extremists.[1] If activism, of which interest groups are one form, implies extremism, and if politicians are responsive to activists, polarization will result. Since the beginning of the Clinton administration, there has been substantial anecdotal evidence to support this view. The president, by responding to elements of his support coalition, drew substantial flak over his policies concerning gays in the military, health care, and Haiti. Senator Bob Dole, in his quest for the Republican nomination in 1996, initially ran toward the Right, not the center. The new Republican majorities in Congress have kowtowed to the National Rifle Association.

Attempts by politicians to take a moderate position often come under attack from interest groups at both ends of the spectrum on an issue. Consider the problems of California governor Pete Wilson, a former senator, in dealing with the abortion issue:

> Press aide Dan Schnur said . . . Wilson had long opposed federal funding for abortion, . . . [but]Wilson does support state tax spending on abortion because a 1981 California Supreme Court ruling guaranteed poor women access to abortion through Medi-Cal. . . . Wilson's comments sparked a negative reaction from both sides of the abortion debate. Proponents of abortion rights and their foes characterized the governor's remarks as waffling. . . . Susan Culman, national chairwoman of the Republican Coalition for Choice,