

American Comprehensive Exam Notes

*Hao Wang
Arizona State University*

July 09, 2017

Contents

1	POS 530 American Politics	2
1.1	Week 1 Introduction	2
1.2	Week 2 Congress	3
1.3	Week 3	6
1.4	Week 4 Congress	9
1.5	Public Opinion	18
1.6	On Political Reasoning and Public Opinion	19

1 POS 530 American Politics

1.1 Week 1 Introduction

1.1.1 [Gilens \(2012\)](#) : Affluence and Influence (Book)

Cite Key Gilens2012

Author Martin Gilens

Year 2012

Summary

the association between government policy and public preferences could tell us something important about the responsiveness of our government to the public and the extent to which political influence is reserved for the affluent. Two questions: 1. under which conditions government is responsible 2. Who is among the governed that government respond to.

The author starts with the discussion of democracy and the citizen-government linkages. While Converse argue that American voters do not have coherent ideology and lacks political understandings, there are several ways that citizens can approach politics without sophisticated knowledge: 1. through cue-taking of the more-knowledgeable citizens. 2. Although democratic participation requires some minimal knowledge, citizens only need to be knowledgeable on some issues, not all of them.

Main Findings

Policy preference is measured by the actual policy outcomes. The main interest is the association between the policy outcomes and the degree of support expressed by the public/ or a subgroup.

Comparing education and income classes, policy congruence is more salient with the increasing levels of incomes; Interest group is interrelated with income classes. But income is still dominant factor: on economic and tax domain, interest group is closely related with rich people, on social welfare, interest group is evenly distributed across income classes. On gun control and environment, interest group is running against public wishes.

1.1.2 [Bartels \(2008\)](#) Unequal Democracy

Cite Key: Bartels2008

Author: Larry Bartels

Year: 2008

Summary

The major question of this book is to discuss political equality of a democracy. Economic growth, inequality and political accountability. How to explain the success of the Republican parties if Democrat party helps middle classes so dramatically over the past years? Increasing economic inequality has become a political issue.

Findings

1. Partisan divisions, under R's control, the real income growth for lower and middle income classes has consistently lagged well behind D's administration, also lagged well behind the income growth rates of the rich. Lower unemployment rates under D, but almost identical inflation rates, according to Hibbs 1987
2. Class divisions: Democrats lose support from the middle class and high-income class. However, the general public is not becoming more conservative. Working classes do not value cultural issues more either. (probably race? a US-them division?); Nor did the religious practice a deciding factor.
3. How Rep. can win elections: voters are myopic and only focus on election year performance; 2. Election year income growth for affluent voters is much more consequential, even for low and middle income voters 3. voters are swayed by the balance of campaign spending between incumbents and challengers.

1.2 Week 2 Congress

1.2.1 Sin (2014) Separation of Powers and Legislative Organization

Cite Key Sin2014

Author Gisela Sin

Year 2014

Summary

The goal is to explain the house rule changes in the Congress. The House majority has to anticipate the actions of Senate and the president, as predetermined by the constitution. Also, the House includes fractions of different goals and interests. Intraparty groups are important for the changes of the House rules as well.

Gephardt rule abolishment (Rep)

Constitutional Constraints: any bills requires approval of both House and Senate as well as the president, or a supermajority of both House and Senate.

Intraparty conflicts: conservative Rep. and progressive Rep.

Constitutional Theory of Legislative Organization. Environment: by the Constitution, there are three players in determining the policy outcomes: House, Senate and the president.

Two stages of game: the power-sharing game and the legislative game. In the power-sharing game, house fractions choose rules and procedures that distribute power among themselves. In the legislative game, there are two steps, the bicameral agreement stage and the constitutional stage (require all agreements from House, Senate and the President).

Findings

1. House rules changes as the set of constitutional actors changes. Even holding every House member's ideal point constant, a shift in the ideal point of the Senate or the president can change the constitutional set and the available policy choices of the House.
2. Constitutional set changes predict. Not the change of House median, the party homogeneity, the party polarization, party capacity nor the majority party size.
3. Centralization happens when the nonspeaker group now get closer to the speaker group, or has ally in Senate/president. Decentralization happens when the Senate and president closer to the speaker fraction/ or when House minority controls both Senate and the president.

1.2.2 **Schickler (2001): Disjointed Pluralism: Institutional Innovation and the Development of the US Congress**

Cite Key Schickler2001

Author Eric Schickler

Year 2011

Summary

What explains the institutional changes in Congress? Members have different interests, and different interests are effective at different time periods.

Pluralism: different coalitions promoting a wide range of collective interests drive processes of change. reelection interest, bolster the capacity, power and prestige of the chamber of Congress as a whole, interest of accessing to the institutional power bases, party-based interest, and policy-based interest.

Disjointed: the dynamics of institutional development derive from the interactions and tensions among competing coalitions promoting several different interests.

Predictions: 1. Electoral interests will matter more as member careerism increases (Mayhew 1974). 2. Congressional capacity and power will be more salient following episodes in which the president has gained influence at Congress's expense (Dodd 1977; Sundquist 1981). 3. Members' interest in institutional power bases will generate pressure for decentralization following an influx of junior members that substantially alters the seniority distribution (Dodd 1986; Diermeier 1995). 4. Majority party interests will be particularly important when the majority party is internally unified and has policy preferences that are

sharply different from those of the minority (Rohde 1991). 5. Policy-based interests will generate pressure for institutional changes when electoral shocks and other exogenous factors substantially shift the location of the median voter on the floor (Krehbiel 1998; Schickler 2000).

DV: Institutional changes, include leadership instruments, the committee system, and rules and procedures.

Findings

1890 - 1910: the longest successful era of party government in congressional history, multiple collective interests shaped institutional development. Majority party interest, minority party interest, and concerns about congressional capacity also shaped House rules in 1891-95. 1909-1910 reforms even brought a cross-party coalitions for minority Democrats and insurgent Republicans that was united by a confluence of ideological, partisan, and power base concerns.

1919 - 1932: the House majority party was once again more successful than the Senate majority in promoting interests. GOP majority, the institutional changes initiated by Republicans were at least partly intended to improve the GOP's effectiveness. Cross-party coalitions rooted in ideological and sectoral interests also shaped institutional changes during this period, particularly in the Senate. Even in the House, cross-party coalitions enjoyed notable victories in 1924 and in 1931. In both cases, ideological concerns interacted with members' personal power interests to promote reforms that loosened majority leaders' agenda control.

1937 - 1952: majority party interest receded further in importance. The main collective interests were defending Congress from presidential aggrandizement and promoting the cross-party conservative coalition. e.g.: the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, which is due to the congressional-presidential rivalry.

In the 1970s-1980s, party interests returned to prominence, but they interacted with junior members' power base interests and with a renewed concern that Congress had lost too much ground to the executive branch. The result was an array of institutional changes that augmented majority party influence and helped coordinate spending decisions, but also facilitated entrepreneurship by junior members.

1.2.3 Palsby (1968) The Institutionalization of the U.S. House

Citekey Palsby1968

Author Nelson Palsby

Year 1968

Summary

Institution: 1. it is relatively well-bounded, different from its environment. 2. The organization is relatively complex, its functions are internally separate on some regular and explicit

basis. 3. 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.

Findings 1. Harder to enter: increased years of members and speakers. 2. Increased complexity: in the growth in the autonomy and importance of committees, in the growth of specialized agencies of party leadership, and in the general increase in the provision of various emoluments and auxiliary aids to members in the form of office space, salaries, allowances, staff aid and committee staffs. 3. A seniority system is always used.

1.2.4 Hibbing (1991) Contours of the Modern Congressional Career

Citekey Hibbing1991

Author John Hibbing

Year 1991

Summary Study changes in four areas: the electoral career, the formal position career, the legislative activity career, and the constituency activity career. Changes are standardized. Senior members are more active in raising issues, but pay less attention to constituencies.

Conclusion: Post-war congressional career electoral support improves; positions within the institution expand to improve; legislative activity, specialization, and efficiency increase; and attention to district affairs diminishes. Specially, representatives used to do much better electorally as senior members than they were junior members, but now electoral performance is quite similar. Senior members used to acquire quality formal positions only after several terms of service, but now these positions are frequently obtained early in a career. Senior members used to do substantially less constituency service works, but now these differences are slight. Overall, the distinctiveness of particular career stages is much less than it used to be.

1.3 Week 3

1.3.1 Brooks (2013) He Runs She Runs

Citekey Brooks2013

Author Deborah Jordan Brooks

Year 2013

Summary

Feminism, women and politics, performance of female politicians etc., are becoming increasingly important in modern democracies. Being systematically discriminated until

20th century, women's political voices are still weaker than males. Unlike Scandinavian countries where female MPs constitute a fairly large percentage (around 30 to 40%) in the parliaments, there are only about 20 percent females in the Congress. Outside the political arena, females' salaries are significantly lower than males, and there are few female business leaders. Media commentators and journalists keep reminding us that these facts reflect the longstanding gender stereotypes in the United States: females are regarded inferior to males, with respect to politics, female politicians are harder to achieve political success.

This conventional wisdom becomes the core question of Brooks' book. Gender stereotypes are so prevalently perceived in the public that it is not systematically examined in academia. Confirmation bias states that people tend to find evidence to support their intuition, which helps explain why few scholars asking the question: does gender stereotypes harm female politicians in the same as common females? This book however addresses this issue directly using experimental designs, which are considered more rigorous than non-experimental designs and easier to ensure internal validity.

Two confronting theories are examined in chapter 2. Double Standards Theory holds that female candidates will suffer from the descriptive stereotypes as being women; and they have to balance the potential conflicting identities as being women while acting as leaders; voters have higher standards for female politicians due to the prevailing gender discrimination. In other words, Double Standards Theory reflects the conventional wisdom. The author's argument leans towards the second theory: Leaders-Not-Ladies. This theory holds that being a political leader, female politicians do not suffer from the common gender stereotypes that common females will have. 'Female politicians will be evaluated by voters as 'politician' rather than female' (p. 29). Characteristics on 'good leadership' will outperform 'good femininity'. On the other hand, Brooks argues that female politicians have more information available to voters; and when voter receive more relevant information, stereotypical judgment goes down (p.41).

Brooks tests the two hypotheses with experimental methods. Fictional candidates are used rather than the actual political figures. Brooks argues that using fictional roles helps to isolate other confounding characteristics of that candidate which may interact with gender (p.47). On the other hand, experiments provide stronger control over the amount of information that voters will receive. Samples are drawn from YoGov subsample, as the author demonstrates that YoGov is more representative than commonly used student samples. Dependent variables are three questions: overall likeness; competence as a Senator; competence as the President ten years from now.

The core idea of the experimental design is to examine if voters form different opinions on the two fictional politicians with the same amount of information except for the gender difference. In the six experiments, respondents are required to read the articles with the same content of the candidates other than the gender. These articles are manipulated across 6 different dimensions: political experience (chapter 4), crying, anger, empathy, and knowledge gaffes (chapters 5 - 7). Analysis is done with ANOVA, which is common in experimental designs (although not widely used in political science). ANOVA outperforms regression in the way that less assumptions are employed and beta coefficients need not to

be constant.

The results support her argument of the Leaders-Not-Ladies. Overall, there is no statistically significant differences between male and female candidates. Instead, female candidates receive positive stereotypes in some aspects like being affirmative; and female politicians are in general regarded more intelligent when both candidates are inexperienced. Female candidates are not penalized particularly for being inexperienced; crying and showing anger; lack of empathy; and for knowledge gaffes. Overall, the results are consistent across different dimensions: female candidates do not suffer from gender stereotypes.

The experimental designs in this study dramatically enhance the interval validity. Not only in terms of causal inference, but the linkage between theory and experimentation as well. Brooks discusses the key concept of stereotypes in the beginning: 'stereotypes allow people to quickly and efficiently - if not always accurately make assumptions about the likely characteristics and behaviors of people' (p.~17). Although she does not emphasize a lot about its theoretical implications, all the later experimentations are based on this very concept. Stereotypes are not necessarily undesirable, people use stereotypes everyday and in most conditions they are useful. For instance, hardcore partisans can vote efficiently on partisan lines even without looking at candidates' proposals. Without enough information and the intention to absorb the information, stereotypes reduce decision-making costs.

Then the experimental design in the book becomes extremely useful in controlling the amount of information voters receive. Regarding stereotype as a mechanism of efficient opinion formation without sufficient information, there is enough reason to believe that, female politicians who have more exposed information to the public than a common unknown female, may suffer less from gender stereotype.

Also related to this question, since the information shared by voters will increase with the running campaign, it will be interesting to see if the gender stereotype will diminish when voters know more about the female candidates (or maybe it will be strengthened as perception bias exist before the information processing mechanism, so opinions will skew further with more information). These hypotheses cannot be tested in a one-time design which is performed in this book, but will be available with a panel-tracing survey or multiple experiments with increasing information.

Other than the strength of the book, there are a few points which makes the arguments weaker. The non-significant findings of gender stereotypes are very robust in different settings (with respect to emotion, experience, empathy, knowledge gaffe), but I am not sure about the effect of gender stimuli. Brooks did mention that about 85% respondents recognize the different names settings correctly, but does this mean the names trigger potential gender stereotypes effectively?

The other potential flaw comes from the leaders-not-ladies argument. Brooks argues that voters may have different subtypes for female politician as they are playing the leadership position instead of common females. However, on the other hand we see female politicians emphasizing their gender identity in the United States as well as in other countries. According to Hanna Pitkin's representation argument, female politicians

have the descriptive representation value of being females, and thus should be expected to interact and communicate with females a lot more. These suggest that albeit voters may regard female politicians differently from the typical gender stereotype, female politicians are still connected with women. Future may focus on the interaction between female politicians as a subtype and the general gender stereotypes.

Putting electoral contexts into her study, with the absence of partisanship, the experimental designs suffer somewhat from external validity. Partisanship is playing important roles in politics. Some comparative studies show that with stricter partisan disciplines, female MPs are marginalized and cannot form cross-party alliance on women's issues (e.g. Ayata and Tutuncu 2008, Lovenduski 2001). On the other hand, female candidates from Democrats and Republicans seem to have different winning probabilities. Empirical statistics shows more Democratic females in the Congress. Party ID and winning odds for female politicians are worth analyzing in the future.

Overall, this study uses simulated experimental design to examine the conventional wisdom that female politicians suffer from gender stereotypes. The non-significant results are robust in different experimental settings. The solid evidence from the book strongly challenges conventional wisdom. Also, this study shows how experimental design can help figure out the causal mechanism of opinion formation.

1.4 Week 4 Congress

1.4.1 Burden, Jones and Kang (2014) Sore Loser Laws and Congressional Polarization

Author Barry C. Burden and Bradley M. Jones and Michael S. Kang

Year 2014

Summary Sore loser law can explain the broadening ideology gaps. It is a constant effect that contribute an additional amount of polarization on top of more general trends.

Sore loser law: a candidate who fails to win a party primary cannot appear on the general election ballots as either an independent candidate or nominee of another party.

How: 1. by removing any subsequent reentry options for candidates, they place greater pressure on primary candidates to cater to the polarized preferences of party bases. 2. by preventing moderate candidates rejected by the party base from getting elected as sore losers.

Case: 2010 McCain Arizona Senate election: moving to right; 2006 Connecticut reelection, without sore loser law, Lieberman won based on his moderate positions.

Findings

Number of states with sore loser laws increased. Polarizing effects of sore loser laws using three sources: congressional candidate surveys, congressional roll-call records, and state

legislative measures based on both survey and roll calls. Coding sore loser law as the dummy variable, it is significant.

1.4.2 Druckman, Kifer and Parkin (2009) Campaign Communications in U.S. Congressional Elections

Author James N. Druckman and Martin J. Kifer and Michael Parkin

Year 2009

Summary Data is from candidate websites in the three election circles. Key idea is to identify the different campaign strategy adopted by incumbents and challengers. Their predictions: 1. challengers will employ significantly more negative rhetoric and provide more opportunities for voters to engage with campaign 2. challengers will put more emphasis on issues, personal features and party affiliations to distract voters from the incumbency to alternative criteria. 3. Incumbents will emphasize more on experience in public office, familiarity, and providing district or state benefits.

Findings Predictions confirmed. Also challengers are more opt to take risky actions.

1.4.3 Branton, Cassese and Jones (2012) Race, Ethnicity, and U.S. House Incumbent Evaluations

Author Regina P. Branton and Erin C. Cassese and Bradford S. Jones

Year 2012

Summary Consider evaluations of U.S. house incumbents under conditions of racial/ethnic congruence and incongruence. whether different racial groups have ordered preferences among nondescriptive alternatives.

Descriptive representation: representative possesses an essential attribute linking her to a group whose members also possess that attribute.

Findings No evidence of race-based judgment among African Americans, while Latinos and Whites demonstrates preferences based on race and ethnicity.

There is a “black-brown divide”: competition for political economic resources among minority groups has contributed to intergroup animosities. Black and latinos do not support each other in this study. African American MCs are not the “next best choice” for Latinos.

1.4.4 Krehbiel (2000) Party Discipline and Partisanship

Author Keith Krehbriel

Year 2000

Journal AJPS

Summary This article discuss different measurements of partisanship. Current measurement is roll-call vote-based measurement. The author propose a new measurement considering both the preferences of each individual MCs and partisanship. Parties and individual level preferences are considered as exogenous variables, will be considered both in the behavioral stage.

A spatial cutpoint model: including parties, leadership positions, and minority/majority median voter positions.

Party-voting score is defined as the percenage of all roll calls in a Congress in which at least a majority of one party votes against at least a majority of the other party.

Still confused????

1.4.5 Krehbiel (1993) Where's the Party

Author Keith Krehbiel

Year 1993

Journal BJPS

Summary

This article tries to find significant partisan behaviors in the U.S. congress. Question: how to define a significant partisan behavior: legialators of that party vote according to partisan lines in spite of personal disagreement. Test with data from the 99th Congress. Testing significant partisan behaviors independent of personal preferences with the formation of standing committee and the appointment of conferees. Partisan effects are rare. To sum, partisan influences in Congress diminishes.

1.4.6 Krehbiel (1999) Paradoxes of Parties in Congress

Author Keith Krehbiel

Year 1999

Journal Legislative Studies Quarterly

Summary

This article introduces several paradoxes of parties in the congress. 1. Partisan strength: with introparty heterogeneity, partisan strength is not strong. Parties are said to be strong exactly when, viewed through a simple spatial model, they are superfluous. 2. Theories of lawmaking that differ greatly in their party assumptions are often observationally equivalent at the level of predicted outcomes. 3. Party voting occurs even when all legislators ignore completely their partisan identities. Futhermore, party-voting measures

are fundamentally incapable of distinguishing between utterly partisan roll-call voting behavior and utterly non-partisan roll-call voting.

1.4.7 Hager and Talbert (2000) Party Influence on Voting in the House

Author Gregory L. Hager and Jeffery C. Talbert

Year 2000

Journal LSQ

Summary

Using roll-call data from the House from the 1950s to 1990s, isolating the effects of parties, including members who switch parties. Regression analysis shows that party influence on voting has varied, but there is an effect, even controlling for ideology. DVs are different levels of party-important votes in Congress. Party shows an effect. On switchers, results show that voting behavior did change after members switched parties.

1.4.8 Cooper and Brady (1981) Leadership Style

Author Joseph Cooper and David W. Brady

Year 1981

Journal APSR

Summary

A change of leadership style in House. A switch from a hierarchical style to a bargaining pattern. They argue that it is the institutional context of the House that determine the leadership power and style. Style and effectiveness are contingent or situational, the impact of leadership style is conditioned on party strength. When strength is high, more hierarchical style, when strength is low, more bargaining style.

Findings A strong correlation between the percentage vote sharing of parties and the centralized leadership style. Leadership style is more determined by institutional context rather than personal traits.

1.4.9 Binder, Lawrence and Maltzman (1999) Uncovering the Hidden Effect of Party

Author Sarah A. Binder and Eric D. Lawrence and Forrest Maltzman

Year 1999

Journal JOP

Summary Reexamining the 1994 'A to Z' discharge petition campaign in the U.S. House of Representatives. a case in which preferences rather than partisanship are said to provide the superior account of legislative behavior. Using the same spatial model which Krehbiel 1995 used, they found significant partisan effect.

Findings

Separating individuals' policy preferences from the partisan labels, they found clear divergence of partisan effects. E.G. NTU (National Taxpayer Union) score, Concord Coalition score, NOMINATE score...

1.4.10 Snyder and Groseclose (2000) Estimating Party Influence of Roll-Call Voting

Author James Snyder and Tim Groseclose

Year 2000

Journal AJPS

Summary Differentiate partisan votings into substantive voting and procedural votings, over the post-war period, party influence in the House occurs especially often on key procedural votes: the rule on a bill, motions to cut off debate, and motions to recommit. In terms of substantive issues, party influence appears most frequently on budget resolutions, tax policy, social security, social welfare policy, and national debt limit, while it is relatively rare on moral and religious issues and civil rights, and entirely absent on issues such as gun controls. On some issues, such as agriculture, public works, and nuclear energy, party influence has varied dramatically over the period (1871 - 1998).

Definition of a partisan influence: direct pressure applied by the party leader or caucus, including rewards and punishments.

Findings Evidence from two stage regressions based on monte carlo simulations. Party pressure is very high in close and very close roll-calls. No major difference between the House and Senate votings.

1.4.11 Cox and McCubbins (1993) Legislative Leviathan

Author Gary Cox and Matthew McCubbins

Year 1993

Summary This book addresses the role of parties and legislative committees, and the relations between them. Parties in the House, especially the majority parties, are a species of legislative cartel. These cartels seize the power, theoretically resident in the House, to make rules governing the structure and process of legislation. Possession of this rule-making power leads to two main consequences. First, the legislative process in general - and the committee system in particular - is stacked in favor of majority-party interests.

Second, because members of the majority party have all the structural advantages, the key players in most legislative deals are members of the majority party and the majority party's central agreements are facilitated by cartel rules and policed by the cartel's leadership. (p.2)

Conditional party government (Rohde 1991): 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.

House committee is not autonomous. It also depends on institutional contexts.

Majority party has the power to set legislative agenda. Majority party caucus adds another layer of structure and process onto the committee structure studied by Sheplse-Weignast and Weingast-Marshall. The majority party in the House achieves stable policy outcomes by binding members to support a specific structure of agenda power represented by the speaker, the committee chairpersons, and the Rules Committees, a structure which then leads to committees choosing policies that, on average, benefit majority party members more than minority party members.

1.4.12 Cox and McCubbins (1994) Bonding, Structure, and the Stability of Political Parties: Party Government in the House

Author Gary Cox and Mathew McCubbins

Year 1994

Journal LSQ

Summary The inability of rational choice theory in explaining political parties: the ultimate political rewards are shared by the democratic process of the state. Thus party institutions can be unstable coalition. How to explain the stability of the party system? stability is enforced by extra-legislative organization and bond posting. If a subset of legislators were all bonded by membership in a valuable extralegislative group, such as a political party, and if the cost of giving up the bond were expected to exceed most realistically imaginable benefits from defection, then legislators' choices over structure and hence policy might therewith be stabilized.

Key structural matters: the election of speakers, the design and staffing of the committee system. Caucus members must obey the caucus rules, which include key votes on speaker election, agenda setting rules. Violation will cause an automatic expulsion from the caucus.

1.4.13 Shepsle and Weingast (1984) Political Solutions to Market Problems

Author Kenneth Shepsle and Barry Weingast

Year 1984

Journal APSR

Summary A cost-benefit analysis of the legislative political market. The geographic basis of representation encourages a truncated form of cost-benefit analysis in which the geographic calculation of policy looms large in the politician's calculus.

Didn't understand this article.

1.4.14 Krehbiel (1995) Cosponsors and Wafflers from A to Z

Author Keith Krehbiel

Year 1995

Journal AJPS

Summary Theory: A pre-voting, nonpartisan adaptation of Snyder(1991) 'vote-buying' and Groseclose(1995) 'favor-trading' theories implies that significant cosponsorship and discharge-petition behavior will be concentrated in the middle of the ideological spectrum, independent of legislators' partisan affiliations.

Hypotheses: Bill cosponsorship should be a primarily preference-based phenomenon. Waffling – defined as bill cosponsorship but refusal to sign a discharge petition for the bill – should be negatively associated with preference extremity and unaffected, at the margin, by majority party membership.

Findings: based on the 103rd House of the A to Z spending plan, results consistent with the Snyder/Groseclose hypothesis, cosponsorship and waffling are explained primarily by preferences, somewhat by membership and money committees, and only slightly by partisanship.

1.4.15 Schiller (1995) Senators as political entrepreneurs

Author Wendy J. Schiller

Year 1995

Journal AJPS

Summary

Using regression analysis and interviews with Senate legislative staffs, results show that a senator's use of bill sponsorship is a function of institutional and political variables including seniority, proximity of reelection, size of state economy, staff size, committee membership and committee positions. This suggests that Senate is not a place that lacks structure and predictability.

DV is number of bills introduced, positive relations: size of state economy, staff, ideology, number of committee assignment, chair of committee, number of Senators' subcommittee chairs, member of finance committee. Negative: member of foreign relations committee. If differentiating between committee bills and noncommittee bills. Committee bills related to variables like chairmanship, subcommittee chairmanship, and membership on finance or Appropriations Committees exert influence over bills introduced to committees but not to outside committee. Committee bills are influenced by seniority, size of economy, staff, ideology, number of committee assignments, party committee membership etc.

1.4.16 **Sinclair (1992)** The Emergence of Strong Leadership in the 1980s House of Representatives

Author Barbara Sinclair

Year 1992

Summary Compared with the post-World War II leadership style, the 1980s style is more involved in and more decisive in organizing the party and chamber, setting the House agenda, and affecting legislative outcomes. The study finds that, both over time and cross sectionally, the likelihood of leadership involvement is greatest when the members most need help and when the costs of the leadership's providing such help are lowest for majority party members and for the leadership itself and that leadership involvement does increase the probability of legislative success.

1.4.17 **Patterson and Caldeira (1988)** Party Voting in the United States Congress

Author Samuel Patterson and Gregory Caldeira

Year 1988

Journal BJPS

Summary Partisan polarization in the House of Representatives responds very sharply to shifts in the magnitude of external party conflict. Party voting in the Senate, by contrast, does not increase with a widening of partisan cleavages in the external environment. The authors believe that it is the staggered terms of senators insulated them from electoral change in the short run and introduces considerable lags into the relationship between the debate within the party-in-government and the current set of controversies in the

party-in-the-electorate. Overall, party voting is much more powerful in the House rather than the Senate.

1.4.18 Krehbiel (1990) Congressional Committee Preference Outliers

Author Keith Krehbiel

Year 1990

Journal APSR

Summary The question is whether the standing committee is more extreme than the legislative as a whole. Data is from the 96th to 99th Congress. Measure is interest group ratings of members. Three types of preference outliers in the committee: 1. a classical homogenous high-demand outlier, a committee whose members have a common desire for high levels of benefits from policies within their committee's jurisdiction. e.g. representatives from farming districts dominate agriculture committees and oversee the provision of benefits to their farm constituents. 2. A bipolar outlier: a committee that has significant factions of members on both sides of its policy spectrum. 3. An intense or high-salience outlier is a committee whose members share a uniquely high level of intrinsic interest in the committee, perhaps because its policy domain is highly salient to members' constituents. Results show no significant differences between the standing committee and the legislative as a whole.

1.4.19 Jackson and Kingdon (1992) Ideology, Interest Groups and Legislative Votes

Author John Jackson and John Kingdon

Year 1992

Journal AJPS

Summary The importance of ideology in the government decision making. What explains the legislative decision making? local constituents' economic interest of the legislators' ideological preferences? They criticize the studies that support to show that legislative decisions are the expressions of the personal ideological orientation of the members. They pointed out that the measurement of the ideological preferences, the ADA score, is flawed and lead to an overestimation of statistical results. (ADA: Americans for Democratic Action, an interest group). Using these scores in explaining voting behaviors is a tautology. It is explaining votes with votes. The problem is that, the interest group score, the explanatory variable, and the votes being modeled, the dependent variable, are almost certain to be tapping the same or related dimensions.

1.4.20 **Snyder (1992)** Committee-Power, Structure-Induced Equilibria, and Roll Call Votes

Author James M. Snyder

Year 1992

Journal AJPS

Summary Concept: structure-induced equilibrium model: equilibria in the model are thus a function not only of legislators' preferences but also of the gatekeeping and monopoly proposal powers possessed by committees. Discussions based on formal model: 1. if some committees are 'preference outliers' relative to the legislature as a whole— that is, if the median ideal point of the committee members is different from the median ideal point of the whole legislatur – the roll-call data are likely to be artificially unidimensional. It is because members will select roll calls on purpose. 2. The unidimensional bias generally persists even as the dimensionality of the policy space becomes large 3. Even if committees are preference outliers, it may be impossible to discover this fact by looking at only roll call votes. That is, the roll call data may indicate that committees are 'representative samples' even if they are not.

1.5 Public Opinion

1.5.1 **Bafumi and Herron (2010)** Leapfrog Representation and Extremism

Author Joseph Bafumi and Michael Herron

Year 2010

Journal APSR

Summary

The research question is the congruence between voters and preferences of the U.S. legislators. Using an Internet-based, national opinion survey in conjunction with legislator voting records from 109th and 110th Congresses, we show that members of Congress are more extreme than their constituents. We also show that when a congressional legislator is replaced by a new member of the opposite party, one relative extremist is replaced by an opposing extremist (leapfrog representation). We see evidence of leapfrog representation in states and House districts in the aggregate as well: the median member of the 109th House was too conservative compared to the median American voter, yet the median member of the 110th Congress was way too liberal compared to the public. The Senate appears to be a more moderate institution whose median member does not move as abruptly as that of the House.

1.6 On Political Reasoning and Public Opinion

Question Do citizens have stable political reasoning? No: Zaller, Zaller and Feldman, Converse Yes: Page and Sahpiro, in a collective sense, public opinion is stable and meaningful, individual level errors will be mitigated by the large number theorem. Depends on measures: Achen 1975

Zaller's two models: 1. the political awareness-political predisposition model: predisposition is a readiness systematically to respond positively or negatively to a class of issue-objects. In this usage, attitudes are the preferences that respondents express about particular courses of public actions, whereas predispositions refer to underlying consistencies in response to political choices: opinions about an issue like job programs for blacks are attitudes, ideological sets are examples of predispositions. Political awareness functions as the intermediate channel. 2. The consideration model of attitude construction; predisposition → considerations ↔ situational cues → attitudes. Considerations are any reason that might induce an individual to decide a political issue one way or the other. The process is through ambivalence deduction. In this model, the situational and dispositional factors are at odds (long-term and short-term causes).

Sniderman, Tetlock and Elms: the situational factor and predispositional factor can be additive, rather than mutually exclusive. The flaw of the stop-and-thinking design of Zaller: it is different from an attitude on a position and the reasons for taking that position.

1.6.1 Chong and Druckman (2010) Dynamic Public Opinion

Author Dennis Chong and James Druckman

Year 2010

Journal APSR

Summary

Study the effect of competing messages during campaign. It showed by experiments that competing messages received at the same time will neutralize each other. However, if received at different time points. Most individuals will give disproportionate weights to the most recent messages.

Framing effect: (Druckman 2001, political behavior): when a communication changes people's attitudes toward an object by changing the relative weights they give to competing considerations about the object.

Online and memory-based approach: When processed online, individuals routinely integrate the various considerations contained in the message into an overall issue evaluation. Individuals then store all the summary evaluation in the memory. Possibly forgetting the original considerations that contributed to the tally. When asked subsequently for their attitude toward the issue, individuals retrieve and report their overall online tally rather

than reconstruct and evaluate the specific pieces of information that comprise this summary (Druckmand Lupia 2000). Individuals who use memory-based model, in contrast, store considerations about the issue in memory without necessarily forming an overall judgment, and subsequently, retrieve and evaluate accessible considerations when asked their opinions about this issue.

1.6.2 Zaller and Feldman (1992) A Simple Theory of the Survey Response

Author John Zaller and Stanley Feldman

Year 1981

Journal AJPS

Summary Questions: does the survey research reveals stable and true preferences rather than 'making up' answers?

People have many different, and inconsistent opinions in their minds, when asked, they call to mind a sample of these ideas, including an oversample of ideas made salient by the questionnaire and other recent events, and use them to choose among the options offered. But their choices do not, in most cases, reflect anything that can be described as true attitudes; rather, they reflect the thoughts that are most accessible in memory at the moment of response.

Three axioms;

1. Ambivalence. "Most people possess opposing considerations on most issues, that is, considerations that might lead them to decide the issue either way." (585)
2. Response. "Individuals answer survey questions by averaging across the considerations that happen to be salient at the moment of response, where salience is determined by the accessibility axiom."
3. Accessibility: "The accessibility of any given consideration depends on a stochastic sampling process, where considerations that have been recently thought about are somewhat more likely to be sampled." (586)

Method: The authors administered two types of survey, asking similar questions as in earlier studies. Instead of simply asking the closed-ended response items, though, respondents were asked either to "stop-and-think" (before answering) or reflect (after answering), telling the surveyor what thoughts crossed their mind when thinking about the question. Each thought ("consideration") was coded (number of considerations, number of considerations in each direction, number of explicit expressions of ambivalence, etc.).

1.6.3 Zaller (1992) The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion

Author John Zaller

Year 1992

Summary

Opinion is a matter of information and predisposition. Political awareness, political predispositions are the important intervening variables. The model: 1. Reception axiom: the greater a 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. 2. Resistance axiom: people tend to resist argument that are inconsistent with their political predispositions, but they do so only to the extent that they possess the contentual information necessary to perceive a relationship between the message and their predispositions (through cueing message). 3. 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. 4. Response axiom: individuals answer survey questions by averaging across considerations that are immediately salient or accessible to them.

In General

Zaller begins by rejecting the view that individuals possess a "true attitude" or single opinion on an issue ("most of what gets measured as public opinion does not exist except in the presence of a pollster" page 265) and instead proposes a model of how individuals construct opinions in response to the particular stimuli that confront them. Zaller's model is constructed from four basic premises:

Individuals differ substantially in their attention to politics and therefore their exposure to elite sources of political information. People react critically to political communication only to the extent that they are knowledgeable about political affairs. People rarely have fixed attitudes on specific issues; rather they construct preference statements on the fly as they confront each issue raised. In constructing these statements, people make the greatest use of ideas that are the most immediately salient to them. Usually these are the ideas that have recently been called to mind or thought about since it takes less time to retrieve these or related considerations from memory and bring them to the top of the head for use. "Considerations": The 'Receive-Accept-Sample' (RAS) Model

For Zaller, the public forms "considerations" in response to elite discourse (political communications) in the mass media. Often, this discourse consists of multiple, frequently conflicting streams of persuasive messages. In general, the greater an individual's level of political awareness, the more likely she is to receive these messages. Also, the greater a person's level of awareness, the more likely she is to be able, under certain circumstances, to resist (or accept) information that is inconsistent with her basic values or partisanship. If internalized, political considerations become reasons for taking one side rather than the other on a political issue.

When asked their opinions in surveys, people will support or oppose a given policy depending on the mix of positive or negative considerations sampled from the top of the person's mind at the moment of answering a question. Zaller formalizes this in the following manner: $\text{Prob}(\text{Liberal response}) = L/(L+C)$, where L and C refer to the number of liberal and conservative considerations available in the person's mind. The balance between these considerations depends on society-level variables (such as the intensity and

balance of elite discourse) as well as individual-level variables (such as person's political awareness and values).

RAS and Political Awareness

More aware persons will be exposed to more political communications (they 'receive' more), but will be more selective in deciding which communications to internalize as considerations (they 'accept' less). Thus politically aware citizens will tend to fill their minds with large numbers of considerations, and these considerations will tend to be relatively more consistent with one another and with the citizen's predispositions. Less aware citizens will internalize ('receive') fewer considerations and will be less consistent in rejecting ('accepting') them. As a result, more aware people will be more likely to be able to state opinions, and more likely to state opinions that are ideologically consistent with their predispositions.

RAS and Attitude Change: Campaigns and Persuasion

Attitude change (understood as the a change in people's long term response probabilities) results from a change in the mix of ideas to which people are exposed. Changes in the flow of political communication cause attitude change not by producing a sudden conversion experience but by producing gradual changes in the balance of considerations that are present in people's minds and available for answering survey questions.

As has already been indicated, the effects political campaigns (or any elite discourse) vary depending on the relative intensity of the opposing messages and individual's prior stores of partisan information. The least aware are most susceptible to influence in situations in which the information flow is very intense, as in presidential elections (because they 'receive' lots of information but 'accept' almost everything). Moderately aware persons are most susceptible in situations in which messages are moderately intense and partisan orientations activated as in contested House elections, presidential popularity and the later stages of Vietnam. The most aware people are most open to influence when there is little partisan or ideological basis for resistance to persuasion, as in the early stages of a primary campaign, or when there is little access to countervailing information, as in the early stages of the Vietnam War.

Final Comments

According to Zaller, the effects of values and awareness (knowledge) on political attitudes (opinions) are not automatic but depend on elite cues for motivation.

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.

Key Definitions

Consideration: Any reason that might induce an individual to decide a political issue one

way or another. Political awareness: An individual's reception and comprehension of communications from the political environment. According to Zaller, political awareness is best measured by simple tests of neutral factual information since factual information is critical for intellectual engagement with politics. Political predispositions: Stable, individual-level traits that regulate the acceptance or non-acceptance of the political communication the person receives. Predispositions are the critical intervening variable between the communications people encounter in the mass media, on the one side, and their statements of political preference, on the other (since they determine the 'accept' part of the RAS model). Values: General and enduring standards that hold a more central position than attitudes in individuals' belief systems.

References

- Bafumi, Joseph and Michael Herron. 2010. "Leapfrog Representation and Extremism: A Study of American Voters and Their Members in Congress." *American Political Science Review* 104(3):519 – 542.
- Bartels, Larry M. 2008. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Binder, Sarah A., Eric D. Lawrence and Forrest Maltzman. 1999. "Uncovering the Hidden Effect of Party." *The Journal of Politics* 61(3):815 – 831.
- Branton, Regina P., Erin C. Cassese and Bradford S. Jones. 2012. "Race, Ethnicity and U.S. House Incumbent Evaluations." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 37(4):465 – 489.
- Brooks, Deborah Jordan. 2013. *He Runs, She Runs: Why Gender Stereotypes Do Not Harm Women Candidates*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Burden, Barry C., Bradley M. Jones and Michael S. Kang. 2014. "Sore Loser Laws and Congressional Polarization." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 39(3):299 – 325.
- Chong, Dennis and James N. Druckman. 2010. "Dynamic Public Opinion: Communication Effects over Time." *American Political Science Review* 104(4):663 – 680.
- Cooper, Joseph and David W. Brady. 1981. "Institutional Context and Leadership Style: The House from Cannon to Rayburn." *American Political Science Review* 75(2):411 – 425.
- Cox, Gary W. and Matthew D. McCubbins. 1993. *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Cox, Gary W. and Matthew D. McCubbins. 1994. "Bonding, Structure, and the Stability of Political Parties: Party Government in the House." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 19(2):215 – 231.

- Druckman, James N., Martin J. Kifer and Michael Parkin. 2009. "Campaign Communication in U.S. Congressional Elections." *American Political Science Review* 103(3):343 – 366.
- Gilens, Martin. 2012. *Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hager, Gregory L. and Jeffery C. Talbert. 2000. "Look for the Party Label: Party Influence on Voting in the House." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 25(1):75 – 99.
- Hibbing, John R. 1991. "Contours of the Modern Congressional Career." *The American Political Science Review* 85(2):405–428.
- Jackson, John E. and John W. Kingdon. 1992. "Ideology, Interest Scores, and Legislative Votes." *American Journal of Political Science* 36(3):805 – 823.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1990. "Are Congressional Committees Composed of Preference Outliers." *American Political Science Review* 84(1):149 – 163.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1993. "Where's the Party." *British Journal of Political Science* 23(2):235 – 266.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1995. "Cosponsors and Wafflers from A to Z." *American Journal of Political Science* 39(4):906 – 923.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1999. "Paradoxes of Parties in Congress." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 24(1):31 – 64.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 2000. "Party Discipline and Measures of Partisanship." *American Journal of Political Science* 44(2):212 – 227.
- Patterson, Samuel C. and Gregory A. Caldeira. 1988. "Party Voting in the United States Congress." *British Journal of Political Science* 18(1):111 – 131.
- Polsby, Nelson. 1968. "The Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives." *American Political Science Review* 62(1):144 – 168.
- Schickler, Eric. 2001. *Disjointed Pluralism: Institutional Innovation and the Development of the U.S. Congress*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Schiller, Wendy J. 1995. "Senators as Political Entrepreneurs: Using Bill Sponsorship to Shape Legislative Agendas." *American Journal of Political Science* 39(1):186 – 203.
- Shepsle, Kenneth A. and Barry R. Weingast. 1984. "Political Solutions to Market Problems." *American Political Science Review* 78(2):417 – 434S.
- Sin, Gisela. 2014. *Separation of Powers and Legislative Organization*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sinclair, Barbara. 1992. "The Emergence of Strong Leadership in the 1980s House of Representatives." *The Journal of Politics* 54(3):657 – 684.

- Snyder, James M. 1992. "Committee Power, Structure-induced Equilibria, and Roll-Call Votes." *American Journal of Political Science* 36(1):1 – 30.
- Snyder, James M. and Tim Groseclose. 2000. "Estimating Party Influence in Congressional Roll-Call Voting." *American Journal of Political Science* 44(2):193 – 211.
- Zaller, John R. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Zaller, John and Stanley Feldman. 1992. "A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions versus Revealing Preferences." *American Journal of Political Science* 36(3):579 – 616.