

Reaction Paper Week 13

The Masket et al. paper uses interviews along with financial records of campaigns to assess political polarization in Nebraska's state legislature and find that the new addition of term limits has created candidates that are more partisan.

The Koger et al. paper looked at the two major political parties in the United States as networks through the lens of lists of names transferring between organizations from 2004 to 2005. This is one of my favorite papers we have read this semester as I thought this was a very new and interesting way to measure the connections between political parties and organizations in a way that addresses the connections between interest groups, citizens who finance political campaigns, and partisan media. Although I wish this study could be conducted over a longer period of time I think it laid amazing foundations for a larger study of this nature and is a clear proof of concept. My one issue with the paper is that I think there is a disconnect between what the goal of the paper is and what the paper actually accomplishes. The paper sets out to look at polarization, but I think that this is simply not a super effective way to measure polarization. I think it works extremely well to measure the connectedness between parties, interest groups, and partisan media, polarization has already been measured in a plethora of ways (many of which we have read papers on already), so I just don't find this specific measure very convincing.