

Reaction Paper Week 12

The Heaney et al. paper looks at a survey of delegates at the 2008 Democratic and Republican national conventions and finds that the co-membership networks of these conventions are extremely polarized by party after accounting for other factors.

The Masket et al. paper looks at political parties using network theory to better understand them, and finds that this is indeed a fruitful way to look at politics which supresses limitations of earlier models. This paper I found to be horribly frustrating as it laid out quite a few interesting ways to look at political parties as networks, but doesn't actually do anything with those ideas. It sets up the interesting idea of combining data on campaign contributions, endorsements, legislative debates, and staff contacts to construct a network of parties—which would be *insanely* interesting—however, the paper does not do that. It simply talks about how you *could* do that. It lays out a few guiding principles for constructing a network and then doesn't actually construct a network.

For being published in 2016 it lays out the ways political parties can be networks worse than other papers, and does not expand on them in any way. Over and over again the paper poses really could research papers that should be written but then doesn't write them. I think this paper could be better if instead of just being a history of networks it actually did something that it set up¹.

¹ GOD THIS PAPER WAS TERRIBLE. It was simply about nothing and added nothing. 0/10 would not read again.