

Gov 1006 Final Project - Milestone 7

Suriya Kandaswamy

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Extension	2
3	Appendix	3
3.1	Figure 1 - Mass Liberalism by State, 1940-2010	3
3.2	Figure 2 - Cross-Sectional Relationship between Mass and Government Policy Liberalism, by Region, Era, and Issue Domain	3
3.3	Table 1 - Cross-sectional and dynamic responsiveness, by issue domain and region.	5
3.4	Table 2 - Effect of mass policy preferences and partisanship on partisan turnover	6
3.5	Table 3 - Partisan selection and adaptation as mechanisms of dynamic responsiveness.	6
3.6	Table 4 - Moderators of dynamic responsiveness	6
	References	7

1 Introduction

The paper *Policy Preferences and Policy Change: Dynamic Responsiveness in the American States, 1936-2014* (Caughey and Warshaw 2018) discusses the predictors of state policy change and pinpoints what factors have the strongest impact on a state's liberalism. In particular, the authors focus on mass political consensus and state policy response to changes in this consensus. They have acquired measures of mass policy preferences through an accumulation of multiple poll responses over time and of state policy liberalism using some defined estimates.¹ Responsiveness is then measured as a relationship between the liberalism of the masses and the liberalism of the policies at each given moment in time. All code can be found in my Github repository.²

Ultimately, the authors of the paper run different types of regressions using mass liberalism (from opinion data) and policy liberalism (using measures as described in Caughey and Warshaw (2016)) as independent variables in addition to other explanatory factors such as whether a state is in the "South" or not, whether it was an election year, and a number of other features in order to determine how mass liberalism impacts policy liberalism. They find that state policies tend to respond to mass opinion in terms of liberalism, both for economic and social issues. They also find that state policies respond more strongly in the social case than in the economic one.

¹These quantified liberalism estimates are estimated following a procedure defined by Caughey and Warshaw (2016)

²All analysis for this paper is available in the Github repository at <https://github.com/sardination/gov1006-final-project>

Interestingly, these correlations may have become more pronounced since the Carter presidency due to an increase in partisan politics shifting towards hyperpartisanism, as individual identify more strongly with a party’s views on both social and economic issues and thus will reflect policy changes that align with these views (Erikson, Wright, and McIver 2006). Some scholars, like Achen and Bartels (2017), have claimed that mass liberalism has little to no effect on policy liberalism, but the results of this paper indicate the true effect is possibly otherwise.

2 Extension

It might be interesting to see whether Democratic control within a state has an effect on the responsiveness of its policy liberalism to mass liberalism. While the paper has examined the effect that Democratic control in a specified year has on policy liberalism itself, it does not examine whether states with more Democratic control, for example, react more to a state’s mass liberalism than states without. The way to do this is to include the interaction between Democratic control and mass liberalism in the formula when trying to explain policy liberalism. This way, any corrections given by Democratic control will contribute to the explanation of policy liberalism, and we can correct for Democratic control as an effect on *responsiveness* rather than just *liberalism*. Ideally, whether a government is under Democratic control or not should not have an effect on its responsiveness in terms of policy liberalism to mass liberalism and we would hope to see a negligible interaction between mass liberalism and Democratic control when trying to explain policy liberalism. It is possible, though, that one party may be more prone to exercising control in state governments in a way that does not reflect the preferences of the people, and this analysis will hopefully be able to expose whether Democratic control dictates how well a government is able to serve the needs of its people.

We include the interaction between mass liberalism and Democratic control in Table 1 by replicating Table 1 from the paper replacing the “South” variable with “DemControl”. We find from column (1) that the cross-sectional relationship of mass liberalism and policy liberalism for social issues of when the legislature is fully Democratic-controlled is nearly one-to-one. The cross-sectional relationship for social issues is significantly large for all types of legislatures, but appears to be stronger for legislatures that are more Democratic. Interestingly, column (5) shows that the cross-sectional relationship of mass liberalism and policy liberalism for economic issues correlates in the opposite direction. When legislatures are completely controlled by non-Democrats, the cross-sectional relationship between mass liberalism and policy liberalism is nearly the same between social and economic issues, but the more Democratic a legislature is, the weaker (albeit still present) the relationship is between mass opinions and actual policy implementation for economic issues.

Dynamic responsiveness accounting for state and year fixed effects, though, is indicated in columns (2) and (6). The implications here are that for states in years where the legislature is completely controlled by non-Democrats, an increase by 1 SD in mass liberalism on social issues is correlated with an increase of 0.31 SD in policy liberalism while a 1 SD increase in mass liberalism on economic issues is similarly correlated with an increase of 0.33 SD in policy liberalism. The responsiveness for both social and economic issues is apparently lower in state-years with more Democratic control in the legislature, as indicated by the negative interaction coefficient for mass liberalism against Democratic control. The responsiveness for social issues in more Democratic legislatures is nearly as high, but the responsiveness for economic issues in more Democratic legislatures is significantly lower, with completely Democratic-controlled legislatures responding to a 1 SD increase in mass liberalism with a 0.1 SD increase in policy liberalism.

As expected, columns (3) and (7) demonstrate that future policy liberalism, without accounting for state fixed effects, is heavily impacted by past policy liberalism for both social and economic issues with mass liberalism and Democratic control having a small, but not nearly as significant impact on responsiveness. When adding state fixed effects back into the models in columns (4) and (8), the impact of previous policy liberalism is still quite significant and mass liberalism and Democratic control less so. This is expected, as policy generally experiences change over time, and a state with liberal policies will evolve in its liberalism regardless of which party may be in power in any given year.

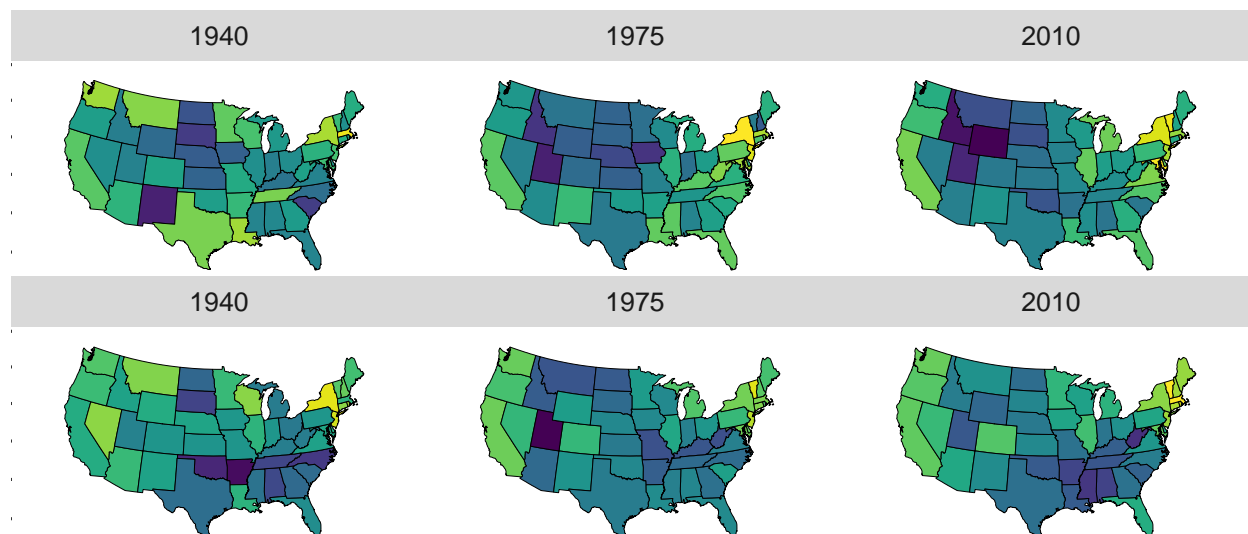
	DV: Domain-Specific Policy Liberalism (t)							
	Social				Economic			
	XS (1)	FE (2)	LDV (3)	DP (4)	XS (5)	FE (6)	LDV (7)	DP (8)
Mass Liberalism $_{t-1}$.779 (.152)	.307 (.083)	.032 (.008)	.032 (.011)	.723 (.141)	.333 (.085)	.019 (.007)	.025 (.011)
Mass Lib $_{t-1} \times$ DemControl $_t$.245 (.196)	-.015 (.104)	.012 (.012)	-.006 (.014)	-. .366 (.175)	-. .233 (.095)	-.013 (.011)	-.021 (.014)
Policy Liberalism $_{t-1}$.974 (.006)	.932 (.014)			.984 (.003)	.913 (.012)
Year \times DemControl FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	3,632	3,632	3,632	3,632	3,632	3,632	3,632	3,632
Adjusted R ²	.490	.794	.974	.974	.264	.816	.971	.972

3 Appendix

Using the replication data and code provided by Caughey and Warshaw (Caughey and Warshaw 2017), all major findings and figures can be replicated and analyzed as follows. Code is modified as needed for the purposes of this assignment and extension. Figures and tables are replicated under sections with the same headers as shown in the paper. While some numbers differ slightly, all results discussed in the paper were replicated.

3.1 Figure 1 - Mass Liberalism by State, 1940-2010

The top half of the figure shows the population's liberalism by state in terms of opinions about economic topics (mass economic liberalism) while the bottom half shows the population's liberalism by state in terms of opinions about social topics (mass social liberalism).

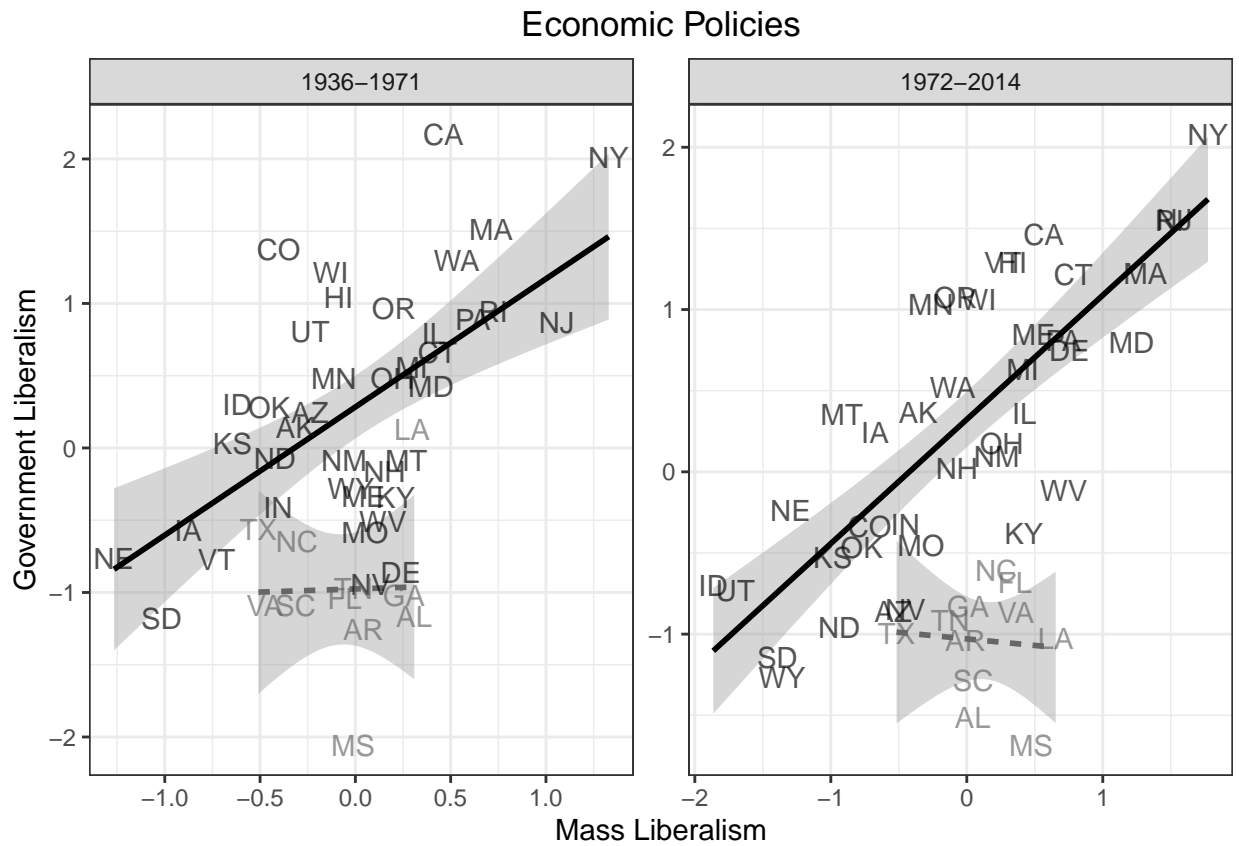


3.2 Figure 2 - Cross-Sectional Relationship between Mass and Government Policy Liberalism, by Region, Era, and Issue Domain

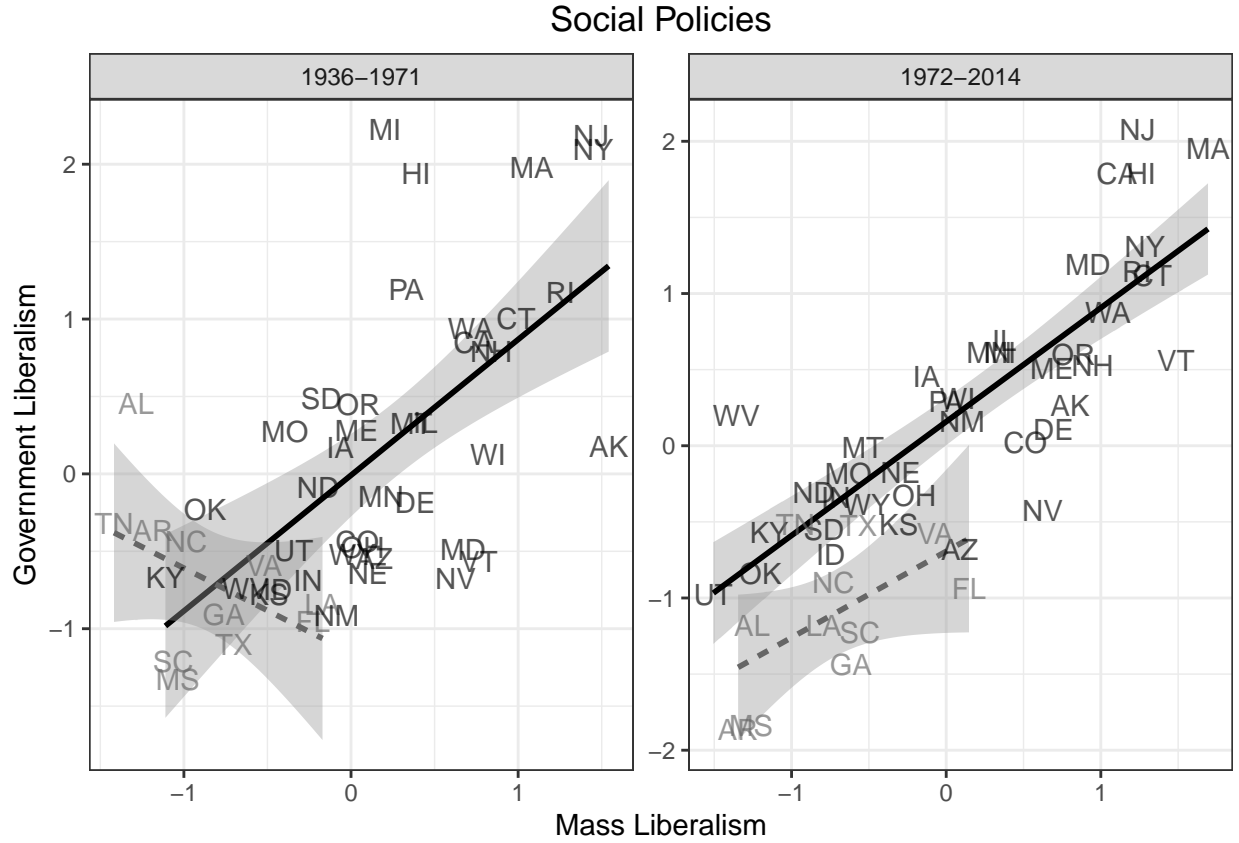
This figure displays the relationship between mass liberal opinion and the liberalism of government policy, both for economic and social issues. It utilizes two models: one for southern states and one for non-southern

states. Each category of states is displayed on the plots with its own line.

```
## `geom_smooth()` using formula 'y ~ x'
```



```
## `geom_smooth()` using formula 'y ~ x'
```



3.3 Table 1 - Cross-sectional and dynamic responsiveness, by issue domain and region.

This table details the linear regression analysis done on explaining policy liberalism in year t given the variables of mass liberalism in the year $t - 1$, whether a state is in the “South” or not, and policy liberalism in the year $t - 1$.

	DV: Domain-Specific Policy Liberalism (t)							
	Social				Economic			
	XS	FE	LDV	DP	XS	FE	LDV	DP
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Mass Liberalism $_{t-1}$.873 (.118)	.292 (.083)	.044 (.008)	.037 (.009)	.640 (.099)	.259 (.063)	.023 (.006)	.014 (.007)
Mass Lib $_{t-1} \times$ South	-.432 (.203)	.273 (.159)	-.027 (.017)	-.013 (.023)	-.690 (.136)	-.284 (.086)	-.016 (.013)	-.008 (.015)
Policy Liberalism $_{t-1}$.971 (.007)	.933 (.014)			.976 (.005)	.931 (.012)
Year \times South FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State FEs	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	3,854	3,854	3,854	3,854	3,854	3,854	3,854	3,854
Adjusted R ²	.543	.801	.973	.973	.543	.794	.971	.971

3.4 Table 2 - Effect of mass policy preferences and partisanship on partisan turnover

This table shows the effect that mass liberalism and partisan control in year $t - 1$ have on partisan control in year t .

	DV: Democratic Control Index (t)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Mass Social Lib $_{t-1}$.050 (.018)		.045 (.017)	.047 (.018)
Mass Econ Lib $_{t-1}$.018 (.014)	.012 (.013)	.014 (.014)
Mass Dem PID $_{t-2}$.003 (.118)
Dem Control $_{t-1}$.652 (.038)	.663 (.036)	.649 (.036)	.633 (.036)
Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	1,688	1,688	1,688	1,436
Adjusted R ²	.710	.708	.710	.704

3.5 Table 3 - Partisan selection and adaptation as mechanisms of dynamic responsiveness.

This table shows the effect that current (year t) partisan control as well as year $t - 1$'s mass liberalism, whether it was an election year, and policy liberalism have on social and economic policy liberalism in year t .

	DV: Domain-Specific Policy Liberalism (t)							
	Social				Economic			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dem Control $_t$.056 (.011)		.050 (.010)		.071 (.011)		.070 (.012)	
Mass Lib $_{t-1}$.034 (.009)	.030 (.009)			.012 (.007)	.011 (.007)	
Mass Lib $_{t-1}$ (No Elec $_{t-1}$)				.037 (.009)				.009 (.008)
Mass Lib $_{t-1}$ (Elec $_{t-1}$)				.031 (.010)				.016 (.009)
Policy Lib $_{t-1}$.943 (.013)	.941 (.014)	.937 (.014)	.941 (.015)	.921 (.013)	.931 (.011)	.919 (.013)	.930 (.011)
Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	3,632	3,854	3,632	3,854	3,632	3,854	3,632	3,854
Adjusted R ²	.973	.973	.974	.973	.971	.971	.972	.971

3.6 Table 4 - Moderators of dynamic responsiveness

This table explains social and economic policy liberalism in year t through several factors (all listed in the table) in year $t - 1$.

	DV: Domain-Specific Policy Liberalism (t)					
	Social			Economic		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Mass Liberalism $_{t-1}$.040 (.009)	.040 (.009)	.041 (.013)	.017 (.007)	.021 (.008)	.022 (.009)
Mass Lib $_{t-1} \times$ Pre-1972	-.035 (.017)	-.020 (.018)	-.014 (.023)	-.020 (.011)	-.022 (.013)	-.018 (.014)
Mass Lib $_{t-1} \times$ South		-.020 (.014)	-.008 (.019)		-.019 (.013)	-.026 (.014)
Mass Lib $_{t-1} \times$ Pre-1972 \times South		-.015 (.035)	-.028 (.040)		.018 (.020)	.023 (.025)
Suffrage Restriction			.014 (.013)			.002 (.015)
Suff Restrict \times Mass Lib $_{t-1}$.001 (.019)			.003 (.015)
Contribution Limits			-.001 (.003)			-.001 (.004)
Contrib Limit \times Mass Lib $_{t-1}$.006 (.005)			.006 (.005)
Citizen Government			-.008 (.017)			-.003 (.016)
Citizen Gov't \times Mass Lib $_{t-1}$.014 (.019)			.016 (.012)
Legislative Days (Logged)			.006 (.009)			-.010 (.006)
Leg Days \times Mass Lib $_{t-1}$.007 (.008)			-.004 (.007)
Policy Liberalism $_{t-1}$.936 (.014)	.934 (.013)	.920 (.016)	.929 (.012)	.926 (.013)	.920 (.016)
Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	3,854	3,854	3,552	3,854	3,854	3,552
Adjusted R ²	.973	.973	.969	.971	.971	.970

References

- Achen, Christopher H, and Larry M Bartels. 2017. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Vol. 4. Princeton University Press.
- Caughey, Devin, and Christopher Warshaw. 2016. "The Dynamics of State Policy Liberalism, 1936–2014." *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (4): 899–913.
- . 2017. "Replication Data for: Policy Preferences and Policy Change: Dynamic Responsiveness in the American States, 1936–2014." Harvard Dataverse. <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/K3QWZW>.
- . 2018. "Policy Preferences and Policy Change: Dynamic Responsiveness in the American States, 1936–2014."
- Erikson, Robert S, Gerald C Wright, and John P McIver. 2006. "Public Opinion in the States: A Quarter Century of Change and Stability." *Public Opinion in State Politics* 229: 238.