**Title**
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**Publication Date**
2012

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

**Congress, Public Opinion, and Representation in the One-Party South, 1930s–1960s**

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

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Fall 2012

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## Abstract

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This dissertation examines the extent, causes, and consequences of ideological diversity in the one-party South between the 1930s and early 1960s, both at the mass level and among the South's representatives in Congress. Southern members of Congress, often characterized as a monolithic bloc responsive only to a narrow regional elite, were in fact ideologically diverse on economic issues, as Chapter 2 demonstrates using a random-walk Bayesian IRT model to chart Southerners' ideological evolution over time. Moreover, due to their centrist position in Congress after the mid-1940s, the exact distribution of their preferences often determined the set of feasible policy outcomes. As such, Southern MCs were pivotal to both the consolidation of the New Deal and its limitations.

As an alternative to the common "elite dominance" model of Southern politics, I advance a "contingent responsiveness" model, which holds that intraparty competition in Democratic primaries created a real, though imperfect, electoral connection between Southern members of Congress and their (white) electorates. The strength of this electoral connection varied across Southern states and districts, as did the representativeness of Southern electorates with respect to the population. Chapter 3 shows that some constituency characteristics, such as lack of urbanization, the size of the black population, and relative affluence, seem to have affected the ideological positions of Southern MCs by making the white population more conservative across the board, though their effects change over time. The Tennessee Valley Authority, by contrast, exerted a general liberalizing effect on the areas it affected. Other factors, investigated in Chapter 4, changed Southern MCs' electoral incentives by altering the balance of power in the electorate. In particular, constituencies where the eligible electorate was larger and thus the median voter was poorer were much more likely to be represented by members of Congress who supported the redistributive policies of New Deal liberalism. This relationship appears to have been stronger where there was greater competition in Democratic primaries, suggesting that the electoral connection in the one-party South was moderated by the degree of political contestation as well as the scope of participation.

Chapter 5 evaluates the quality of representation in the one-party South, with a focus on issues related to labor unions, where Southern preferences shifted most dramatically and

consequentially. I find that in the aggregate, the Southern MCs' positions of economic issues were broadly in line with the stated preferences of the Southern white public. Moreover, Southerners' anti-labor turn in congressional politics closely tracked the changing opinions of their white constituents. Dyadic representation on labor issues was not very strong one-party South, but neither was it obviously weaker than in the two-party North. Given that Southern politics was undoubtedly biased towards elite preferences, the aggregate congruence between Southern MCs and white opinion suggests that countervailing pressures, such as party loyalty and upward ambition, pulled many MCs to the left of their electorates.

Representation did differ qualitatively between North and South in two respects. Most obviously, due to their disenfranchisement and exclusion from mainstream politics, black Southerners were denied the representation that whites were seemingly granted. Second, one-party politics meant that the translation of ideological shifts among voters into electoral and policy outcomes was more incremental than it was in the polarized two-party North, which exhibited the sort of "leapfrog representation" evident in contemporary politics. Due to Southerners' pivotal position in congressional politics, the incremental nature of ideological change in the Southern caucus offered a sort of surrogate representation to the national median voter, with important consequences for the policymaking between the liberal breakthroughs of the New Deal and the Great Society. In addition to illuminating an important period in American political development, this dissertation also highlights the value of differentiating among putatively authoritarian regimes, whose varying location on the continuum from autocracy to democracy has important consequences for the nature of politics and policymaking.

To my parents (the “real” doctors) and to Sara (one project ends. . . )

# Contents

## Acknowledgments

Foremost on my long list of debts is that I owe to Eric Schickler. I could not have asked for a better dissertation adviser in terms of expertise, overlapping interests, kindness, attention, and wisdom. Eric helped me transform my vague sense that there was still something more to be said about the much-tilled ground of Southern politics into a concrete, manageable, and now completed(!) project. So much of what I am, intellectually and professionally, I owe to him. One of the reasons my committee is so large is that I have also benefitted from the mentorship of so many other professors at Berkeley. Laura Stoker did more than anyone else to guide my transition from historian to social scientist, to instill me with a knowledge and (dare I say it!) a love of statistics, and to teach me how to teach others. From Jasjeet Sekhon I learned how to conduct research I can believe in, which he taught me in the classroom and, more importantly, in collaboration. I will always appreciate the faith Jas showed in me when he suggested we write a paper together. I have been unusually lucky in my outside member, Sean Farhang, whose own work is foundational to this project, and whose practical and unvarnished advice I have been privileged to receive. Kevin Quinn I added last to my committee, after realizing that I was stopping by his office for advice on an almost weekly basis. Kevin was amazingly generous and patient in introducing me to Bayesian statistics, IRT models particularly, and his influence on this dissertation is obvious.

My intellectual obligations extend backwards in time as well as beyond Berkeley. My grandfather Winslow Caughey was an early patron of my love of books, and he later told me that part of him always wanted to be a political scientist, rather than the real scientist that he was. In high school, Tim Jones helped develop my love of analytical history. At Yale, David Mayhew first turned me on to American politics generally and Southern politics specifically, and I believe it was he who first recommended that I read V.O. Key. I have continued to receive advice and encouragement from him over the years, and I have treasured every opportunity I had to witness his extraordinary mind in operation. The mark of Tony Badger, my supervisor at Clare College, Cambridge, is all over this dissertation (check the bibliography), and it was under his direction that this project germinated. I owe a great intellectual debt to Robert Mickey, for both stimulating me to think in new and refreshing ways about Southern politics and for being incomparably generous with his time, advice, and archival materials. What is more, Rob's example helped convince me that I could write my dissertation about Southern politics and still get a good job! Rick Valelly has also been wonderfully supportive. Ira Katznelson, another obvious influence on my thinking, has been generous with his advice as well as his data. For the latter, I am also grateful to James Snyder, Stephen Ansolabehere, John Mark Hansen, and Shigeo Hirano, whose data on Southern primaries were essential to Chapter 4. And how can I thank Adam Berinsky, who not only brought me on board to work on the early poll data but also helped convince MIT to hire me and has continued to be an incredible mentor since I arrive there?

For sundry debts, I am also grateful to: Paul Pierson, Rob Van Houweling, Nelson Polsby, and David Karol, whose classes shaped understanding of political science; Jack

Citrin, who welcomed me into the IGS community and, along with Terri Bimes, helped fund my various research endeavors; Henry Brady, for the training and financial support of the IGERT program; Gabe Lenz, for his advice on the job market; John Henderson, Sara Chatfield, and Peter Ryan, with and from whom I learned about American politics; Allan Dafoe, for coauthorship and intellectual companionship; Danny Hidalgo, who is nearly as fascinated by Southern politics as I am; Erin Hartman, Adrienne Hosek, Chloe Thurston, and Abby Wood, who helped keep me on track and with whom I shared the dank glory of the carrels; Kristi Govella, for listening patiently to me over coffee at MO; Peter Hanson, for proving that nice guys finish (their dissertations) first; Mark Huberty, for the Berkeley political science computing cluster; Alex Theodoridis, for letting me occasionally beat him at basketball; and Chris Warshaw, for being my new-professor buddy even though I'm not actually a professor yet. I also want to acknowledge my new colleague David Singer for reminding me how important acknowledgements are.

My debts to my family—Mom, Dad, Robert, Ben, and Willa—are manifold and profound. Thank you for being so supportive, and for being the kind of family I look forward to spending time with, though that happens all too frequently. I am also deeply grateful to Hanusia McNamee and Magen Solomon, professors both, who kept the pressure on me to finish my PhD. And finally, Sara Newland: you are the core of my life, and nothing I have accomplished would be possible, or even worth doing, without you in it. I am so proud and honored to be associated with you, and so grateful that you have decided to share your life with me.

# Chapter 1

# Introduction

Situating the South in American political development requires confronting a series of anomalies. Most obviously, there is the South's anomalous position within the national polity, first as slave society in a free-labor nation, and later, after abolition, as a labor-repressive and substantially undemocratic regime organized around the subjugation, exclusion, and exploitation of African Americans. For most of U.S. history, the South was the geographic manifestation of Myrdal's "American Dilemma": the uneasy coexistence of democratic principles at one level and racist practices at another. This tension was not resolved until after the civil and voting rights revolutions of the 1960s, which dissolved—at least at a formal level—the political and legal barriers separating the South from the rest of the nation.

Other anomalies spring to mind as well. At the state level, Southern Democratic parties were among the main institutional bulwarks of white supremacy. They were affiliated at the national level, however, with a non-Southern party that, especially after the 1920s, was based on a coalition of ethnic and religious minorities and, eventually, African Americans. This irony intensified in the 1930s, when Southern members of Congress—representatives of primarily agricultural constituencies in which many of the poorest members of society were disfranchised—provided vital and largely enthusiastic support for pathbreaking expansions of the national government's role in regulating the economy, investing in development and infrastructure, and managing social risk.

Southern ardor for New-Deal–style policies dimmed beginning in the late 1930s, with Southern members of Congress (MCs) becoming markedly more conservative on economic issues. But with the exception of presidential elections, the South remained an overwhelmingly one-party region through the early 1960s, and during this period Southern Democrats proved pivotal to both the limiting and the entrenchment of the New Deal order. Despite their persistent partisan uniformity, Southern Democrats remained ideologically diverse. Moreover, notwithstanding its lack of partisan competition, the South exhibited a substantial degree of electoral contestation, in the form of intra-party Democratic primaries.

In light of these somewhat discordant facts, what are we to make of the one-party South and its role in American political development? There is certainly no dearth of literature on

this subject, and yet our understanding of it is curiously incomplete. Much of the problem stems from the lack of connection between scholarship on the South's role in national politics and Southern politics "on the ground"—that is, within the South itself. Works in the first mold tend to stress the distinctiveness of the South as well as its unity, particularly white Southerners' overriding obsession with the preservation of white supremacy. Works in the second vein give more emphasis to the diverse and contested nature of Southern politics, often highlighting popular forces that, successfully or not, challenged the dominant order. Rare is the work that bridges these two levels of Southern politics and analyzes how forces at each level affect the other. Particularly neglected is the representational relationship between Southern members of Congress and their constituents, which is so central to scholarship on American politics more generally (e.g., Mayhew, 1974).

The topic of this dissertation is precisely this neglected aspect of Southern politics, the linkages between the mass, meso, and elite levels of Southern politics, focusing on the period between the 1930s and the early 1960s. This time period was chosen for several reasons. Modern public opinion surveys are available from the mid-1930s onward, beginning with the polls of commercial pollsters like George Gallup, followed in the late 1940s by the first academic surveys. Though not unproblematic, public opinion surveys provide indispensable data on the attitudes and preferences of ordinary Southerners, which are both normatively and descriptively important. This study ends in the early 1960s, just before the collapse of the one-party regime in place in the South since the turn of the century and its replacement with fully democratized, two-party politics.

In addition to these practical considerations, the decades 1930s–1960s are of particular historical interest. The period opened with the South sweeping into national power along with the Democratic Party, which it had dominated during its long years in the minority. After playing a key role in the passage of the New Deal, in the late 1930s many Southern members of Congress began to ally with conservative Republicans to limit or roll back their creation. For the next two decades, Southern MCs were arguably at their most influential, holding the balance of power between Democrats and Republicans on economic issues. At the same time, the Southern one-party regime came under increasing attack from challenges from within and without, often abetted by their partisan allies in the North. In short, while the one-party South remained largely intact in this period, the 1930s–1960s were still a period of unusual tumult and change, as well as the time when the South's pivotal role in national affairs was at its zenith.

The remainder of this introductory chapter is organized as follows. After a note on defining the South, I survey the literature on Southern politics and the South's place in American political development. I highlight the limitations of the existing scholarship as well as its insights, on which I base my own contribution. I then clarify the puzzles that this work addresses, followed by an elaboration of my argument. The chapter closes with an overview of the remainder of the dissertation.

## 1.1 Defining the South

As Springer (2011) argues, there is no single authoritative definition of "the South," and alternative definitions of the region can lead to different substantive conclusions. It is therefore essential to choose a definition based on clear and justifiable criteria and evaluate the results' sensitivity to alternative definitions. On one hand, "Southernness" can be thought of as a continuous variable that differs across individuals as well as geographic entities. Gastil's (1971) widely used index of state Southernness, for example, is based on the proportion of the state's initial settlers who emigrated from core Southern states. Price (1957) creates a similar index based on a Guttman scale of states' political and legal characteristics. Using on survey data from the 1990s, Reed (1999) arrays states by the percentage of their residents who identify their communities as being "in the South," with majorities in thirteen states classifying themselves as Southern. The percentage was highest in Alabama, South Carolina, Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, and Tennessee (97+), followed by North Carolina, Arkansas, and Florida (low 90s), Texas and Virginia (low 80s), Kentucky (79), and Oklahoma (69).

Although Southern culture or subjective identification as Southern may vary continuously, states are discrete entities, and there are several natural dividing lines that could be used to separate the cluster of Southern states from the rest of the nation. Perhaps the most obvious options is to classify the South as the 11 states that seceded in 1860–61 to form the Confederacy: Virginia, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. According to Bullock and Gaddie (2009, p. 6), this is "the accepted standard in the subfield of southern politics," and it is the one adopted by such works as *The Oxford Handbook of Southern Politics* (Bullock and Rozell, 2012), V. O. Key's *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (1984[1949]), and Robert Mickey's *Paths Out of Dixie* (2013). In addition to having seceded, these states are distinctive for their "consistency of attachment to the Democratic party nationally" in the decades after Reconstruction (Key, 1984[1949], p. 10). Indeed, at the time when Key was writing, all of these states were one-party regimes almost totally lacking in partisan competition. They also shared a legacy of slavery and a Jim Crow system that segregated and disfranchised blacks, but in this they were not unique.

Other scholars, particularly historians (Bartley, 1995; Grantham, 1988; Woodward, 1951) but also political scientists like Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993), have employed a expanded 13-state definition of the South that includes Oklahoma, which gained statehood only in 1907, and Kentucky. (The Confederate flag had 13 stars to represent these additional states.) During the Civil War, Oklahoma (then Indian Territory) sided with the Confederacy, and although Kentucky did not secede, twice as many Kentuckians fought for the South as for the North (in Merton Coulter's memorable phrase, Kentucky "waited until after the war was over to secede from the Union"; Coulter, 1966, p. 439). In these states, the Republicans were a decided minority but occasionally enjoyed statewide success. Nevertheless, Democratic dominance was such that Democratic primaries were the primary forum of political competition in much of each state. Both Oklahoma and Kentucky practiced

slavery before abolition but had smaller black populations than the rest of the Confederacy. Legal segregation was mandated in both states as well, but in Kentucky blacks were not disenfranchised and were core supporters of the Republican Party.

Farhang and Katznelson (2005) make the case for an expansive 17-state definition of the South, one that includes the Border states of Delaware, Maryland, Missouri, and West Virginia in addition to the 13 states already mentioned (see also Katznelson and Mulroy, 2012). This definition includes all states that mandated racial segregation in education at the time of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), though not Arizona, New Mexico, or Kansas (where *Brown* originated), which permitted localities to segregate schools. These states, Farhang and Katznelson (2005, p. 1) argue, "constituted a distinct racial and political order."

The virtue of the 17-state definition of the South is that it distinguishes the region on the basis of an objective criterion that is separate from the phenomenon these works attempt to explain (roll call behavior in Congress). Its major drawback is that it lumps together quite disparate political regimes. First, despite their similar commitment to racial segregation, blacks faced low barriers to voting in the Border states, and thus blacks' place in the political order was much more similar to the North (where racism was by no means absent) than to the South. Relatedly, and more directly relevant to the purposes of this dissertation, the Border states were not one-party regimes—at least, not so one-party as to foster the sort of factionalized, issueless, "no-party" politics that Key (1984[1949]) describes in the rest of the South.

The three definitions discussed here do not exhaust the possibilities, but they do represent the primary alternatives used in the literature on Southern politics. While each has its advantages, the 11- and 13-state definitions are better suited to the present study than the maximalist 17-state one. Throughout this dissertation, the results based on the first two definitions will be highlighted, and those based on the latter will be mentioned only where relevant. In general, the major substantive conclusions of this study do not depend on the definition used. As for terminology, the term *Northern* will be used as a synonym for *non-Southern*, relative to the definition the South then being employed.

## 1.2 The One-Party South

### 1.2.1 Origins

The one-party South was consolidated over a twenty-year period centered on the turn of the 20th century, following several decades of extraordinary political upheaval and contestation. The withdrawal of federal troops from the South in 1877 had left the newly won political rights of Southern blacks in a precarious position, along with the fortunes of Southern Republican parties, which depended on black votes. Outside of upland areas that had resisted secession, the Republican Party held little appeal to Southern whites, who associated it with the twin evils of occupation and black political power. But the economic conservatism of

the "Bourbon" leaders of the postwar Democratic Party led many whites, especially poorer farmers, to embrace dissident third-party movements. This tendency culminated in the "Populist Revolt" of the 1890s, which pitted white dissenters—often in pragmatic alliance with the remaining black Republicans—against the conservative Democratic establishment (Webb, 2007; Woodward, 1951).

Through a combination of fraud, violence, and appeals to white solidarity, Southern Democrats beat back the Populist Revolt. In the wake the revolt's defeat, Democratic leaders took the opportunity to consolidate their "redemption" of Southern politics with a series of legal and constitutional changes designed to destroy the political base of their opponents. Beginning with Mississippi in 1890 and ending with Oklahoma in 1907, the Southern states instituted suffrage requirements (poll taxes, literacy tests, and so on) and other informal barriers that radically restricted the electorate, excluding many poor whites as well as blacks. The coalitions behind these reforms differed across states, with some Populist leaders supporting the disfranchisement of blacks as a "solution" to the race problem, but these new orders were primarily a project of conservative Democrats seeking to cement their political supremacy (Kousser, 1974; Perman, 2001). As a consequence of the new political order, the Democratic Party established a hegemonic position in nearly the entire South, with both partisan competition and voter participation falling precipitously in general elections. The South's alignment with the Democratic Party occurred around the same time that the Republican Party became dominant in many previously competitive areas of the non-South.

Roughly contemporaneously with these disenfranchising reforms, all Southern states adopted the direct primary as a means of nominating candidates for office, predating most of the country in so doing (Link, 1989, pp. 75–76). Proponents of the direct primary viewed it as a means of settling conflicts within the Democratic Party, thus preventing splits among whites in the general election (Kousser, 1984). Moreover, Democratic primaries were legally able to exclude blacks outright, since until the 1930s the 15th Amendment was interpreted as regulating only general elections. Given the post-1900 hegemony of the Democratic Party, the "white primary" was arguably the South's "most powerful legal tool for preserving one-party rule" until it was invalidated in 1944 by the Supreme Court's decision in *Smith v. Allwright* (Mickey, 2008, p. 152).

Although the main purposes of the white primary were to exclude blacks and prevent splits among white Democrats, it had the additional effect of forcing politicians to cultivate a popular following rather than simply cultivating local party elites (Black and Black, 1987, pp. 5–6). To a large degree, the adoption of the direct primary compensated for the decline in interparty competition in the South, providing "an outlet for competition in polities that lacked the basis for two-party contestation" (Ansolabehere et al., 2010, p. 195). Often the distinction between primary contenders was merely a "stylistic" one, pitting a flamboyant demagogue against a respectable conservative, but divisions on the basis of geography or economic interest were also common (Grantham, 1988, p. 29). While only a fraction of the

citizenry voted in Democratic primaries,[1] the poverty of the South was such that economically disadvantaged individuals made up a substantial portion of the electorate. Democratic primaries thus provided a partial counterweight to the antidemocratic features of the one-party South, opening up at least the possibility of responsiveness to a broader swath of the population.

### 1.2.2 Southern Politics, 1930s–1960s

As Key (1984[1949], p. 1) observes, "Of books about the South there is no end," yet Key's *Southern Politics in State and Nation* dominates its field like no other work. Published near the midpoint of the period considered in this dissertation, *Southern Politics* presented an interpretation of the one-party South that remains largely intact today. The foundation of Key's analysis is his claim that "in its grand outlines the politics of the South revolves around the position of the Negro" (1984[1949], p. 5). By the same token, the one-party South was largely the creation of those most invested in white supremacy, the white plantation owners of the South's "Black Belt."

In Key's view, white Southerners' obsession with the subjugation and exclusion of Southern blacks fundamentally warped the region's politics. It substituted artificial and largely symbolic (at least for whites) conflict over race for "real" issues related to economic interests. The one-party system was in effect a "no-party" system, in which such political competition as there was largely revolved around personalistic, localized, and transient factionalism rather than coherent ideological or policy differences. Key concluded that the incoherence of the one-party system, in conjunction with the disfranchisement of much of the population, served the interests of the "haves" over the "have-nots," white as well as black (see also Woodward, 1951).

As much as he stressed the pathologies of the one-party system, Key also resisted the notion of Southern politics as homogenous or uncontested. His state-by-state profiles revealed considerable heterogeneity in the region, from the patrician machine politics of Virginia's Byrd Organization, to the atomized factionalism of Florida, to the stable Long/anti-Long bifactionalism of Louisiana. Key also emphasized that on non-racial issues, Southern Democratic parties were ideologically diverse, "encompass[ing] all shades of political attitude" (1984[1949], p. 360). In the end, Key expressed hope that certain trends in Southern politics, such as increasing urbanization, would lead to a breakdown of the one-party system and ultimately to the release of the "latent liberalism" of the region.

In certain respects, Southern politics exhibited substantial continuity between the 1930s and 1940s—the decades on which Key focused—and the early 1960s. Notwithstanding *Smith v. Allwright*, formal and informal suffrage barriers remained high throughout this period, and indeed new barriers were erected to compensate for the loss of the white primary.[2] Whites

[1] Bartley and Graham (1975, p. 16) report that in the 1920s, about a fifth of the voting age population voted in a typical gubernatorial primary in the South (Bartley and Graham, 1975, p. 16)

[2] Conservatives in Alabama, for example, reacted to the invalidation of the white primary by pushing

continued to dominate Southern electorates, constituting at least 89% of registered voters—and a greater percentage of actual voters—through the 1960 elections (Stanley, 1987, p. 154).[3] The upper-class bias in the electorate remained markedly greater in the South than in the North (Key, 1961, p. 105). Moreover, the Democratic Party retained the loyalty of the vast majority of white Southerners. In 1952, 80% of whites in the former Confederacy identified as Democrats, compared to 13% who identified as Republicans. The Democratic edge in party identification slipped somewhat by the early 1960s but remained an overwhelming 60% to 25% advantage (American National Election Studies, 2011).

Democrats also continued their hegemony in congressional, state, and local politics in the South—what Black and Black (2002) call "the Democratic Juggernaut." Between 1932 and 1965, Republican candidates won 7.2% of U.S. House races in the former Confederacy, 1.5% of U.S. Senate races, and no governorships (Stanley and Niemi, 2009), with most of the Republican victories in the House confined to a few anomalous districts in the Appalachian highlands. Democrats continued to compose well over 90% of Southern House members until the 1962 elections. Only in 1961 was the first post-Reconstruction Republican from the former Confederacy, John Tower of Texas, elected to the U.S. Senate. The vast majority of Democratic congressional candidates continued to face at most token opposition in the general election, and although competition in Democratic primaries declined somewhat over this period, primaries remained the main site of electoral contestation in the South (Ansolabehere et al., 2010, p. 197).

Despite these important aspects of continuity, the South also experienced major social, economic, and political changes between the 1930s and 1960s. Though the one-party South was never a completely stable system,[4] the pace of change accelerated in the 1930s. The shock of the Great Depression weakened many Southerners' resistance to outside intervention, at least temporarily. "[S]o desperately did the region require relief," writes Schulman (1994, p. 14), "that the southern people and the very leaders who had long championed the 'state's rights' tradition, demanded federal action in the thirties." Together with the realignment of the Northern urban working class into the Democratic Party, the economic need of the agrarian South created the conditions for an incipient "red–green alliance for a full-

successfully for the passage the Boswell Amendment to the state constitution, with the explicit purpose of preventing black voting. The amendment, which was invalidated in 1949, required that prospective voters be able to "understand and explain" the U.S. Constitution, which in practice gave wide latitude to local registrars to exclude those whom they saw fit (Barnard, 1974, pp. 59–62)

[3]By way of comparison, whites constituted about 72% of the population of the former Confederacy in 1940 and 77% in 1960.

[4]The legal underpinnings of white supremacy were never entirely secure, even during periods when there was little enthusiasm at the national level for enforcing civil rights. In 1915, for example, the Supreme Court struck down the "grandfather clause" of Oklahoma (and, by extension, of several other Southern states) as contrary to the 15th Amendment. In 1932, the Court's decision in *Nixon v. Condon* invalidated an early, more explicit form of the white primary (Klarman, 2004, pp. 98–170). White Southerners soon found ways to circumvent these rulings; the point is that Jim Crow, like institutional orders more generally, required ongoing institutional maintenance and adjustment to be sustained (cf. Mahoney and Thelen, 2010).

employment welfare state in return for farm price subsidies" (Esping-Andersen, 2006[1990], p. 171).

Through at least the mid-1930s, President Roosevelt and his policies were immensely popular in the South. With a few exceptions, Southern conservatives suspicious of the New Deal swallowed their objections (Tindall, 1967, p. 390; Patterson, 1967, pp. 5–24). "[W]hatever their doubts about federal power and federal spending," Badger (2007c, p. 60) observes, Southern politicians "were acutely aware that their constituents were desperate for the jobs, credit, and rising farm income that the New Deal relief and recovery programs brought them." Officeholders who did not adjust to their constituents' preferences risked defeat at the polls (Garson, 1974, p. 3).[5]

Some federal programs created by the New Deal, especially those that incorporated blacks, undermined traditional patterns of dependence in the South (Biles, 1994, p. 155; Schulman, 1994, p. 47; Sullivan, 1996, p. 3; Badger, 2007a, p. 41). In other respects, however, the New Deal reinforced the South's traditional power structures, and most scholars agree that the main effect of the New Deal was to promote the economic development, modernization, and integration of the region, without much short-term impact on its political structure (Smith, 1988, p. 127; Badger, 2007a; Wright, 2010). The political effects of the Second World War were more profound. Wartime industrialization pulled rural Southerners off the land and into factories in the North and urban South, strengthening labor unions in the region and accelerating the mechanization of its agriculture (Schulman, 1994, p. 80; Wright, 1986; Alston and Ferrie, 1999). Important, if incremental, expansion voting rights also took place during the war, in the form of *Smith v. Allright* and relaxed suffrage requirements for soldiers (Mayhew, 2005, pp. 478–9). Aided by these developments, returning white veterans staged "GI revolts" that upended local politics in many parts of the South (Brooks, 2004).

The war also radicalized many black veterans, spurring civil rights activism in the South and leading to increases in the number of black registered voters (Parker, 2009). Between 1940 and 1947, the percentage of blacks registered to vote grew from 3% to 12% and to 25% by 1956 (Keyssar, 2000, p. 249; Alt, 1994, p. 374). This, along with increases in white registration, expanded the Southern electorate after the war and created opportunities for liberal politicians to appeal successfully to a biracial coalition of lower-income Southerners (Badger, 1999b; Bartley and Graham, 1975; Sullivan, 1996). Still, African Americans remained a small fraction of the Southern electorate and, outside of a few pockets, were a minor presence in Southern politics through the early 1960s (Bartley, 1995, p. 172).

[5]Southern conservatives whose opposition to the New Deal led to their defeat in the Democratic primary include Sen. Hubert Stephens of Mississippi in 1934 (Swain, 2001) and Sen. Thomas Gore of Oklahoma in 1936 (Dangerfield and Flynn, 1936). Morgan (1985, p. 64) cites Theodore Bilbo's 1934 defeat of Sen. Stephens as an example of the sort of challenge on the left that kept otherwise wary Southerners loyal to FDR through mid-1930s. Other conservatives, such as Rep. Bryant Castellow of Georgia, chose to retire in the face of electoral challenges (Coode, 1971). Even the conservative Byrd Organization, with its tight control over Virginia politics, was forced, in light of public opinion, to acquiesce to a pro–New Deal candidate for governor in 1936 (Sweeney, 1999).

In sum, the New Deal and Second World War wrought important changes in a political system that, if not completely fixed, had been relatively stable in the preceding decades. On one hand, the expansion of federal effects to aid and reform the South, in conjunction with modest enlargement of the electorate, created potential constituencies for economic liberalism. A "new generation" of issue-oriented Southern politicians, with the encouragement of Roosevelt and other national Democrats, sought to mobilize lower-class electoral coalitions, often including the few black voters, around national policies to develop the South: federal aid for infrastructure and education, regional development initiatives like the Tennessee Valley Authority, and even policies like minimum wage regulation that sought to restructure the low-wage Southern economy. (Badger, 2007c; Schulman, 1994).[6]

On the other hand, as the economic emergency receded and economic liberalism became increasingly associated with the interests of cities, organized labor, and Northern blacks, some Southerners' ardor for the New Deal cooled considerably. Disillusionment with the New Deal first took hold among Southern business interests and die-hard economic conservatives, who initially made little headway against Roosevelt's overwhelming popularity in the region.[7] Opposition to the New Deal was originally motivated primarily by economic concerns, but over the course of the 1940s economic and racial issues became increasingly—though never completely—"melded" (Carlton and Coclanis, 1997; Feldman, 2009; Garson, 1974).[8] This linkage is well illustrated by the virulent backlash against the CIO's biracial unionization drives in the South, which threatened both Jim Crow and the quiescent, low-wage basis of the region's economy (Farhang and Katznelson, 2005; Lichtenstein, 1989). Except on the question of unions, however, in the 1930s and 1940s the South was the region where public opinion towards the New Deal was most favorable, and most scholars argue that through the

[6]These included such subsequently prominent figures as Alabama's John Sparkman (elected to the House in 1937 and the Senate in 1946, and nominated for vice president in 1952), Tennessee's Estes Kefauver (House in 1939, Senate in 1948, vice-presidential nominee in 1956), and Texas's Lyndon Johnson (House in 1937, Senate in 1948, vice-presidential nominee in 1960).

[7]In a 1936 letter to Roosevelt campaign manager Jim Farley, North Carolina senator Josiah Bailey—soon-to-be author of a "conservative manifesto" against the New Deal—reported: "The masses of the people are very strong [for FDR], and while he has lost support with a limited number of business men, he has gained very greatly with the smaller business man, the farmers, clerks, and general run of the voters" (Tindall, 1967, p. 390).

[8]An initial sign of Southern racial concerns was their reaction to the prominence of blacks at the 1936 Democratic National Convention. On top of the more flamboyant antics of demagogues like Senator "Cotton Ed" Smith, who dramatically stormed out of the convention hall, more sober observers also expressed foreboding. After the 1936 election, John Temple Graves, a moderate New Dealer and one of the most influential journalists in the South, wrote presciently: "Pre-election surveys showed that the negro shifted on November 3 from the party of Abraham Lincoln and emancipation to the party of Franklin Roosevelt and relief. But at what price, and for how long? If the negro is to have a national balance of power and his vote is to be bid for by both parties with political and other favors, the South must anticipate a forcing of its race problem" (quoted in Logan, 1940, p. 11). Nevertheless, as Garson (1974, p. 13) emphasizes, until the 1940s the "hallmark" of Southern opponents of the New Deal was "conservatism, not southernism. They argued in economic and constitutional, not sectional [i.e., racial], terms."

1950s southern opinion on economic issues was not conservative relative to the rest of the nation (Breaux and Shaffer, 2012; Key, 1961; Ladd and Hadley, 1975; but see Hero, 1965, pp. 365–76).

As a number of studies have emphasized, Southern liberalism experienced something of a high point in the early postwar years (Badger, 1999b; Bartley, 1995; Sullivan, 1996). Even the conservative triumph of the 1948 Dixiecrat revolt came to be viewed as an ineffective failure, and in its aftermath "loyalists" recaptured control of most state Democratic parties in the South (Frederickson, 2001).[9] The postwar liberal moment in Southern politics, however, was cut short in the mid-1950s by a combination of Cold War anti-leftism (Bartley, 1995; Bell, 2003) and white backlash against *Brown v. Board* (Klarman, 1994) and black direct action on civil rights (Badger, 2005). The latter developments would ultimately pave the way to the dismantlement of the Jim Crow South in the 1960s, but their main medium-term impact was to supplant the incipient politics of class with one dominated by the issue of race (Bartley and Graham, 1975; Simon, 2000).

For the remainder of the 1950s, conservatives—particularly racial conservatives in state-level politics—were ascendent, but they largely remained within the Democratic Party. The glaring exception was Republicans' newfound success at the presidential level in the 1950s. Buoyed by Eisenhower's personal popularity, the Republicans made advances across the South in 1952 and 1956, especially among better-off suburbanites but in some areas of the Black Belt as well. Nixon did almost as well as Ike in 1960. Republican success was made possible by the Democratic Party's embrace of civil rights; "once the Democrats ceased to be the guardians of white supremacy, Southerners were liberated to vote as they did elsewhere in the country" (Leuchtenburg, 2005, 530–1, fn. 27; see also Strong, 1963 and Shafer and Johnston, 2006).[11]

While important, the South's competitiveness in presidential politics beginning 1948 was not entirely new; nor did it fundamentally undermine the one-party system.[12] As they had in previous elections, Southern whites could defect from the Democratic presidential ticket while remaining absolutely committed to one-party Democratic rule at the state and local

[9]The 1948 "Dixiecrat revolt" was accomplished mainly by expropriating the Democratic label.[10] An important difference between the Dixiecrat revolt and previous "bolts" is that the former was centered among whites in the Black Belt, the group most committed to one-party rule at the state level (Frederickson, 2001, pp. 5, 194).

[11]Republican and Democratic presidential candidates were roughly indistinguishable on civil rights between 1948 and 1960, with a clear difference only appearing in the 1964 contest between Johnson and Goldwater (Carmines and Stimson, 1989). With respect to congressional politics and core constituencies, however, the Democratic Party in the North was probably more liberal on race than the Republican Party by the 1940s (Feinstein and Schickler, 2008; Schickler, Pearson, and Feinstein, 2010).

[12]It is important to remember that the "Solid South" was never completely so, and that the national Democratic resurgence of the 1930s rolled back major Republican advances in the South in the preceding decade. In 1920, Warren Harding carried Oklahoma and Tennessee. In 1928, Herbert Hoover captured Florida, Texas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia and came close in several others (e.g., 48.5% in Alabama).

level. From the Republican perspective, competing for lower-level offices in the South far more daunting, given that the party totally lacked experienced candidates or an institutional base in the region (Black and Black, 2002; cf. Valelly, 2004). Notwithstanding Republican takeovers of a few isolated districts, over three-quarters of Democratic House candidates between 1950 and 1960 won office with more than 80% of the vote. Nearly three-fifths were completely unopposed in the general election.[13] In short, Republicans' presidential inroads left the one-party system mostly intact at lower levels of government, and although competition in Democratic congressional primaries declined in the 1950s, as sites of ideological contestation they remained at least as important as general elections (Ansolabehere et al., 2010, p. 201).

### 1.2.3 The South in National Politics, 1930–1960s

Like state-level Southern politics, the South's role in national politics exhibited both continuity and change between the 1930s and 1960s. In the 1930s, having dominated the Democratic Party throughout its long years in the political wilderness, Southerners found themselves in the novel position of "a minority faction in a majority party" (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993, p. 284). The dramatic fluctuations in the Democratic Party's fortunes over the next three decades barely touched the Solid South, which, until 1962, sent 92–95 Democrats to Congress year in and year out. In a congressional system organized around seniority, long-serving Southerners continued to compose a disproportionate fraction of the Democratic Party's leadership.

Due to party loyalty, the sense of economic emergency, and their constituents' demands, Southern MCs gave overwhelming support to the New Deal through the mid-1930s.[14] Though Southerners had relatively little influence in the New Deal bureaucracy, they used their power in Congress to structure programs in ways that protected local autonomy and reduced their threat to Jim Crow (Frederickson, 2001; Katznelson, 2005; Lieberman, 1998; Quadagno, 1988).[15] Beginning in the late 1930s and accelerating in the 1940s, however, Southern Democrats could increasingly be found voting with conservative Republicans to oppose or roll back liberal advances. For the next two decades, this "conservative coalition" would be a dominant force in congressional politics and would persist in some form through the end of the twentieth century (Patterson, 1967; Polsby, 2004; Wilkerson and Pump, 2011). Nevertheless, as Key (1984[1949]) emphasized and other studies (e.g., Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993) have confirmed, Southern MCs remained ideologically diverse.

Southerners' growing conservatism was the product of a combination of economic and

[13]Data compiled by author.

[14]In fact, some of the more radical left-wing challenges to Roosevelt emanated from Southerners like Alabama's Hugo Black, Louisiana's Huey Long, and Texas's Maury Maverick.

[15]The racial interpretation of the design of policies like Social Security has been trenchantly criticized by Davies and Derthick (1997) and Zelizer (2000b), who make a convincing case for the non-racial motivations for many features of institutional design others attribute solely to Southern racism.

racial concerns. Some Southern conservatives, like conservatives elsewhere, opposed the New Deal from the beginning for disregarding such orthodox economic principles as balanced budgets, low taxes, limited government, and private enterprise (Moore, 1965; Tindall, 1967, pp. 624–5). Less dogmatic Southerners supported the early New Deal as a necessary response to the economic emergency but, like many Western progressives, soured on its increasingly statist, urban, union-centered orientation (Badger, 2007a, p. 41; Badger, 2002, p. 275).[16] Among many Southern MCs, however, enthusiasm for the New Deal liberalism remained strong until they came to see it as a threat to the racial system of the South. As Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993) observe, Southern MCs were forced to balance their desire for federal aid and the requirements of maintaining a national majority against the potential threat federal programs posed to Jim Crow.

Racial concerns were particularly important in the area of labor legislation. As many works[17] observe, the Southern economic elite was deeply committed to maintaining a "low-wage, racially segmented labor force" that was legally and economically insulated from the rest of the nation (Weir, 1988, p. 159). This racial political economy was threatened by wages and hours regulation and especially by organized labor, whose presence in the South greatly increased in the late 1930s and 1940s (Schulman, 1994, p. 80).

On one hand, labor unions increased the wages and bargaining power of workers, making them unpopular with employers as well as with farmers, both in the South and in the rest of the country (Saloutos, 1948; cf. Carleton, 1951; Seltzer, 1995). But labor unions were uniquely threatening in the South due to their increasingly forceful advocacy of racial integration and civil rights—especially among unions affiliated with the CIO (Lichtenstein, 1989, p. 135). In a region where all but a tiny fraction of the white population supported segregation (Schuman et al., 1997, p. 109), CIO unions' support for civil rights was highly unpopular except among blacks.[18] For these reasons, labor legislation was among the earliest and most consistent areas of collaboration between Southerners and Republicans in Congress (Sinclair, 1982; Brady and Bullock, 1980; Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993; Schickler and Pearson, 2009).

Farhang and Katznelson (2005) argue that Southern MCs' pivotal position on labor issues imbued their turn against the New Deal labor regime with momentous long-term consequences. While Southerners' evolving position on labor was particularly consequential, they were pivotal in other policy areas as well. Much of the literature on the Southern "veto"

[16]As Sen. James Byrnes (D-SC), previously a loyal New Dealer, explained during the 75th Congress (1937–38): "As a member of the United States Senate, I voted for every recovery measure. If today the same conditions existed, I would vote... for the same appropriations. *But the same conditions do not exist.* The recovery program of this administration has accomplished its purpose. The emergency has passed" (quoted in Robertson, 1994, p. 248).

[17]See, for example, Garson (1974), Wright (1986), Weir (1988), Quadagno (1988), Lichtenstein (1989), Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993), Schulman (1994), Alston and Ferrie (1999), Fleck (2002) and Farhang and Katznelson (2005).

[18]By contrast, the more racial conservative American Federation of Labor remained largely "respectable" in the eyes of Southern whites (Biles, 1994, p. 101).

emphasizes Southerners' conservative role in blocking or rolling back liberal policies, turning Congress into the "special obstacle" to liberal ambitions between the late 1930s and early 1960s (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993; Patterson, 1996, p. 138).[19]

The symmetric nature of Southern Democrats' pivotality—that is, their power over the success or failure of both liberal and conservative initiatives—is often downplayed by the "glass half-empty" narrative of the 1940s (Orren and Skowronek, 1998, p. 697). Yet it is equally true that Southern Democrats were also pivotal to the consolidating a politically sustainable New Deal order that, though it fell short of progressive ambitions, was still a transformative achievement."The most likely practical alternatives" to the consolidation of the New Deal order in the 1940s and 1950s, argues Plotke (1996, p. 191), was not social democracy but rather "involved major political shifts well to the right" (cf. Katznelson, 1989).[20] Southerners' continued, though qualified, participation in the New Deal coalition frustrated the ambitions of conservative Republicans like Ohio Senator Robert Taft, who held a "zealously sincere desire to dismantle the New Deal" (Patterson, 1972, p. 314). Although the 1950s were not without important policy developments (Mayhew, 2013), the presence of a large group of moderate Southerners in Congress acted as ideological ballast, dampening policy swings to either the left or the right until the Democratic ascendence of the mid-1960s.

### 1.2.4 Linkages Between Levels of Southern Politics

Key (1984[1949]) is relatively unusual for analyzing Southern politics in both "state" and "nation"; most works have studied either one or the other in isolation. On one hand, studies of Southern politics "on the ground" depict a one-party political system skewed towards the better-off, in which the shadow of race loomed large but which sometimes featured vigorous, if chaotic, intraparty competition over economics and other issues. On the other hand, scholars of Southerners in Congress portray a group united on civil rights but diverse otherwise, whose migration to the center of the ideological spectrum put them in a pivotal position on the economic issues that divided the two parties. Yet few works—not even Key's *Southern Politics*—offer a sustained account of the linkages between the levels of politics in South. Understanding these linkages is important both empirically, for identifying the sources of diversity and change in Southern politics, and theoretically, for situating the South in theoretical and comparative context.

Most accounts adopt what might be called an *elite dominance* view of Southern politics, which holds that members of Congress and other officeholders in the South acted on behalf of "the interests of its economic and political elites": plantation owners and other low-wage employers (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993, p. 284). As one literature review summa-

[19]For similar perspectives, see Black and Black (2002); Brown (1999); DiSalvo (2010); Patterson (1967); Polsby (2004); Sundquist (1968); Weir (1988); and Katznelson and Mulroy (2012)

[20]For arguments in line with Plotke's perspective, see the work of Julian Zelizer (1998; 2000; 2000) and Alan Jacobs (2010) on the role of "activist fiscal conservatives" like Wilbur Mills in areas like tax policy and Social Security. See also Hamby (1972, 1973) on Truman and the "vital center."

rizes, the South's "shriveled, conservative electorate" stymied mass political mobilization, and the lack of electoral competition gave Southern politicians "few incentives to respond to whatever popular pressures did emerge" (Manza, 2000, p. 309). Southern MCs' support for racially and economically conservative policies thus "reflected the interests, values, and prejudices of the most influential white southerners" (Black and Black, 2002, pp. 40–1).[21]

The close preference congruence between Southern MCs and the regional elite is presumed, usually implicitly, to be the result of two mechanisms. The first mechanism is that elite control of Southern politics generally, and of Democratic nominations specifically, engendered a close agency relationship between elites and office-holders. Any politician who did not serve elite interests would be denied reelection or, more likely, never elected in the first place. A second mechanism, not entirely compatible with the first, grants that lack of competition in the South resulted in a weak electoral connection, but holds that such a connection was unnecessary due to the "very close mapping of personal and voting constituency preferences in the South"—presumably because Southern politicians were themselves drawn from the regional elite (Farhang and Katznelson, 2005, 9, fn. 38).[22] In terms of an agency model of representation (Fearon, 1999), the first mechanism achieves preference congruence largely by punishing "poor performance," whereas the second consists of selection of "good types" (through control over the pool of candidates).

Other works, particularly historical and state-level accounts, adopt a view of Southern politics that allows for responsiveness to a broader swath of the Southern population than the elite dominance perspective. Grantham (1988, p. 55), for example, argues that given the prevailing values of individualism and limited government, the political leaders of the one-party South "were reasonably faithful mirrors of their white constituents." While not all works in this vein would fully embrace Grantham's claim, they hold in common a view that most Southern politicians were not merely ciphers for a narrow economic elite. As Black and Black (1987, p. 6) observe, "even the shrunken electorates of the early twentieth century probably contained more have-littles and have-nots than middle-class whites," and at certain times and places candidates in Democratic primaries found it advantageous to appeal beyond the uppermost stratum of Southern society.

Consistent with this view, historical accounts of individual politicians and states are replete with references to members of Congress responding to the demands of their (white) constituents, sometimes pulling them to the ideological left and other times to the right.[23]

[21] Other works that adopt more-or-less this perspective include Bensel (1984), Quadagno (1994), Lieberman (1998), Alston and Ferrie (1999), and Brown (1999).

[22] A particularly strong and direct statement of this view is given by Domhoff (1996, pp. 3–4), who stresses "the immediate, direct, and continuous role of large plantation owners in effecting federal policy through the Democratic party and Congress. . . . [T]he planters were often in Congress, *representing themselves* [emphasis added]." The prototypical example would be the wealthy and arch-conservative Sen. Harry Byrd of Virginia, whose opposition to such policies as minimum wage regulation was attributed to his desire to keep as low as possible the wages of the workers on his apple orchards.

[23] For a few examples, see Hall (1946) on William Fulbright (AR), Syvertsen (1982) on Earle Clements (KY), Hamilton (1987) on Lister Hill (AL), Norrell (1991) on Luther Patrick and other representatives from

Further circumstantial evidence of an electoral connection is given by the substantial degree of participation and contestation in Southern Democratic primaries, which resulted in incumbent defeat rates not too different from many recent election years (Ansolabehere et al., 2010). We might term this alternative to elite dominance the *contingent responsiveness* perspective because it holds out the possibility of responsiveness to non-elite preferences, but just whose preferences were responded to was contingent upon on the scope and character of electoral politics.

These two perspectives, elite dominance and contingent responsiveness, suggest different explanations for the ideological diversity of Southern MCs and their evolution over time. Works in the elite dominance vein often focus on the influence of the South in national politics, an analytical perspective that downplays Southerners' internal heterogeneity.[24] It seems reasonable to conclude, however, that elite dominance implies that ideological differences among Southern MCs stem from preference divergence within the Southern elite—between, say, black-belt plantation owners and urban factory owners.[25] By this logic, Southern constituencies elected representatives of different ideological persuasions either because the relative power of elite factions differed across localities, or because of idiosyncratic variation in the personal preferences of (elite) Southern MCs.

By the same token, the explanation for Southern MCs' ideological evolution suggested by an elite dominance perspective is that the preferences of the Southern elite changed over time. This is a dominant explanation for Southern MCs' turn against the New Deal in the late 1930s: the Southern elite, devastated by the Depression, embraced economic regulation and aid, only to turn against the New Deal once the initial emergency receded and its potential dangers to Jim Crow had become clear. Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993) and Farhang and Katznelson (2005) offer more sophisticated versions of this account, arguing that the relative weight that Southern elites and MCs placed on competing goals (party loyalty, aid to the South, white supremacy) changed over time. The argument of Alston and Ferrie (1999) is similar: Southern MCs softened their opposition to social welfare programs and civil rights in the 1960s because they no longer undermined the paternalistic plantation system.

Contingent responsiveness, while still allowing for disproportionate elite influence, attributes ideological variation and evolution among Southern MCs in part to differences and changes in the preferences of Southern electorates. This view rests on the premise that that Democratic primaries created a real, if highly imperfect, electoral connection between Southern MCs and the voting public (cf. Mayhew, 1974). In this view, economically conservative

Birmingham (AL) Maney (1997) on Hale Boggs (LA), Zelizer (1998) on Wilbur Mills (AR), Sweeney (1999) on the Byrd Organization in Virginia, Badger (2007a,c) on Southern MCs in the early New Deal, and Markley (2008) on the Alabama congressional delegation.

[24]Even works that acknowledge Southern diversity, such as Katznelson and Mulroy (2012), treat Southern MCs as a coherent "unit of action" for purposes of their analysis.

[25]Divisions between black-belt whites committed to "massive resistance" and business-oriented elites willing to accommodate token integration to preserve social order are a prominent part of the accounts of the South's reaction to *Brown v. Board* (e.g., Badger, 2005).

Southern MCs are likely to have represented electorates that were more conservative, whether because the public as a whole was more conservative or because more constituents who would benefit from liberal policies were excluded from participation. Similarly, contingent responsiveness implies that Southerners' ideological evolution was influenced by ideological shifts among the Southern white public, not simply among the Southern elite.

### 1.2.5 The South in Theoretical and Comparative Context

Tempting as it is to treat Southern politics as *sui generis* (see Shafer and Johnston, 2006 for a critique), a number of works have attempted to situate the one-party South in broader theoretical, historical, and comparative context. One natural reference point for the one-party South is South Africa, which has been described as a *Herrenvolk democracy*: "democratic for the master race but tyrannical for the subordinate groups" (Van den Berghe, 1967, p. 19; cf. Vickery, 1974). Using a similar formulation, Dahl (1971, pp. 93–4) compares the South to Athens' slave-based democracy, arguing that the South had "two political systems, one superimposed on the other: a more or less competitive polyarchy in which most whites were included and a hegemonic system to which Negroes were subject and to which southern whites were overwhelmingly allegiant."[26] From this perspective, the exclusion and subjugation of black Southerners coexisted with—or perhaps even furthered—relative political equality among whites.[27]

Other scholars, most notably Robert Mickey, have described the South as an "authoritarian" regime, a descriptor that has gained currency among other recent works on Southern politics (e.g., Farhang and Katznelson, 2005, p. 1). Building the work of Edward Gibson, Mickey (2008) classifies the one-party South as a set of "authoritarian enclaves" and the civil rights revolution of the 1940s–70s as a case of democratic transition. There are several advantages to conceiving of the one-party South as an authoritarian enclave. First, it imports insights from the comparative literature on subnational authoritarianism, such as subnational regime leaders' obsession with *boundary control*: "maximizing incumbent influence over local politics and depriving oppositions of access to national allies and resources" (Gibson, 2005, p. 108).

A second advantage of thinking of the one-party South as an authoritarian regime is that it emphasizes the fact that the oppression of blacks in the South was not merely an "exception" to democracy, but a fundamental flaw that rendered the regime undemocratic by definition.[28] Further, doing so highlights the ways in which subjugation of blacks undermined

[26]Dahl (1971, p. 8) defines a *polyarchy* as a "relatively (but incompletely) democratized regime," characterized by a high degree of both contestation and participation. A *hegemony*, by contrast, falls on the low end of both dimensions of polyarchy.

[27]For a similar argument, see Edmund Morgan's discussion of the "American paradox" of "slavery and freedom," which concludes: "The rights of Englishmen were preserved by destroying the rights of Africans" (1972, p. 24).

[28]Juan Linz, canonical definer of an *authoritarian regime*, recognized that South Africa and other "racial

democracy for whites as well (e.g., Key, 1984[1949]; Woodward, 1951). As Linz (1975, p. 328) observes, *Herrenvolk* democracy

> is not only an authoritarian rule over the nonwhites but inevitably leads to increasingly authoritarian rule over those whites who question the policy of the majority and increasing limitations and infringements of the civil liberties and political expression of the dissidents.

It should be emphasized, however, that to describe the one-party South as authoritarian is not to say that its leaders were wholly unresponsive to popular preferences. Authoritarianism is a diffuse category, and authoritarian regimes vary widely in the size of their "selectorates"[29] and in their degree of adherence to democratic procedures (see, e.g., Levitsky and Way, 2002 on "competitive authoritarianism"). The South's authoritarian enclaves' embeddedness in a national democratic regime constrained regime leaders in their degree of political repression and deviation from democratic procedure (Sartori, 1976, pp. 82–4).[30] Moreover, studies such as Manion (1996) show that even highly imperfect elections can promote policy congruence between the electorate and officials.

For the remainder of this dissertation, I largely refrain from using the term *authoritarian* to describe the one-party South. This is not because I necessarily disagree with the label, but rather because it dichotomously groups together the South's one-party regimes on the basis of their non-democratic characteristics. My objective in this work is different: to understand the causes and consequences of the diversity within the one-party South. For this purpose, I prefer Samuel Huntington's notion of an *exclusionary one-party system* or regime. In such regimes, which typically arise in racially or ethnically "bifurcated" societies like the American South but also Liberia and South Africa, regime leaders

> accept the bifurcation of the society and use the party as a means of mobilizing support from their constituency while at the same time suppressing or restricting political activity by the subordinate social force. In effect, the party maintains its monopoly over political participation by limiting the scope of political participation (Huntington, 1970, p. 15).

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democracies" exhibit many of the attributes of democracy, but he classified them as authoritarian by virtue of their exclusion of the subordinate racial group (Linz, 1975, p. 326).

[29]Bueno de Mesquita et al. (1999, p. 793) define the *selectorate* as "the subset [of citizens in a regime] that participates in the selection of the political leadership." Because not all members of the selectorate necessarily have equal power, it is perhaps more relevant to focus on the *winning coalition*: the subset of the selectorate "whose support is required to keep the incumbent in office."

[30]The 15th Amendment, for example, while largely an empty letter, did preclude the outright legal disfranchisement of blacks on the basis of race alone. Although, through the 1930s, non-Southerners evinced little interest in protecting the rights of Southern blacks, extreme repression of Southern whites or widespread disorder might have provoked national intervention, as Southerners feared in the case of lynching, for example. Huntington (1970, p. 18) observes that even national authoritarian regimes depend for their survival on a sympathetic or indifferent international environment that does not challenge the legitimacy of the system.

In addition to side-stepping the authoritarian label, an advantage of Huntington's term is that it evokes the two dimensions of democratization identified by Dahl (1971): *participation* and *contestation*. The adjective *exclusionary* corresponds to the South's restrictions on "the proportion of the population entitled to participate on a more or less equal plane in controlling and contesting the conduct of the government," and *one-party* refers to the limitations on "the extent of permissible opposition public contestation, or political competition" (Dahl, 1971, p. 4). The South's exclusionary one-party regimes fell short of democratic standards on both dimensions, but they also varied substantially within themselves with respect to each.

## 1.3 Motivation and Argument

Many works on the South in national politics seek to answer some version of the question, "Why were the political representatives of the South so conservative?" Whether posed broadly (e.g., Key, 1961) or in terms of a specific policy area (e.g., Friedman, 2000, on labor issues), the answer usually comes down to a combination of two factors. The first is that while the Southern public as a whole was moderate-to-liberal, suffrage limitations and one-party rule biased the eligible electorate, political elite, and organized interests towards economic conservatism (Boynton, 1965; Key, 1961, 1984[1949]; Manza, 2000). The second part of the answer is that obsession with defending white supremacy, especially among the region's plantation elite, rendered the region hostile to an economically activist federal government that might threaten its system of racial oppression (Katznelson, 2005; Lieberman, 1998; Quadagno, 1994).

These answers are compelling, but the question they answer is somewhat misleading. For one, it rests on the dubious premise that Southern Democrats—at least in Congress—were in fact conservative on issues of economics (as opposed to race). As Carleton (1951) observes, impression may be partly driven by the tendency to compare Southern Democrats with their partisan counterparts in the North rather than, say, representatives from the agricultural Midwest. Evidence on congressional roll-call voting indicates that on the economic issues that divided the two parties, Southern members of Congress were, after the 1930s, a middle force in American politics (Poole, 2007). This suggests that perhaps the question above should be inverted: "Given the conservative biases in the active electorate and organized interests in the South, why were Southern Democrats in Congress so moderate?"

Second, the original question ignores much of what is interesting about Southern Democrats: their ideological variation, both cross-sectional and over time. Southern members of Congress were cross-pressured by the contrary pulls of racism and economic and partisan interest, as Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993) emphasize, but different Southerners at different times resolved these trade-offs in different ways. The result was ideological diversity among Southern MCs, which is sometimes acknowledged but rarely analyzed in itself. Yet Southerners' diversity and their evolution over time were highly consequential, precisely because

Southerners, "holding the balance of power between the two great parties," were so often the pivotal players in Congress (Ewing, 1953, p. 106; Katznelson and Mulroy, 2012).

The focus of this dissertation is economic policy—the issues of social welfare and economic regulation that constituted the core of the New Deal agenda. For the remainder of the dissertation, the terms *left* and *liberal*, along with their opposites *right* and *conservative*, will be used in reference to basic ideological cleavage established by the New Deal, which persisted with some modification into the 1960s. The reasons for this focus on economic ideology are two-fold. First, economic policy preferences differed substantially among both ordinary Southerners and their representatives in Congress (Breaux and Shaffer, 2012). The same cannot be said of white Southerners' attitudes towards civil rights and racial integration, which were overwhelmingly conservative. Second, because of the South's pivotal position on economic issues, diversity within the South and changes Southerners' preferences over time were highly consequential, often determining the set of feasible policy outcomes at the national level.

The analysis in this dissertation is principally confined to white Southerners. Although breaches like *Smith v. Allwright* portended major change over the longer term, in practice Southern electorates remained overwhelmingly white through the entire period covered herein. Moreover, the disenfranchisement of African Americans was, arguably, qualitatively different from the suffrage limitations on Southern whites. The former posed a clear and almost completely impermeable barrier to suffrage, all the more so in areas where blacks actually composed a substantial portion of the population.[31]

Suffrage restrictions for whites, such as poll taxes, generally raised the costs of participation by a fixed amount. In combination with lack of competition and consequent voter apathy (Ewing, 1953), the higher costs of participating led to low turnout among whites, especially among those for whom the costs were most burdensome. But electoral participation among whites was inherently more elastic, and given sufficient motivation and mobilization, these suffrage barriers could be overcome.[32] In realistic terms, the *potential* electorate was much larger for whites than for blacks, giving politicians incentives to respond to the latent preferences of whites in a way that they did not have to for blacks (cf. Arnold, 1990).

To analyze the linkage between ideological variation at the mass level and in Congress, I build upon the contingent responsiveness perspective described in Section 1.2.4. My analysis presumes that, notwithstanding the South's exclusionary one-party regime, Democratic primaries created the potential for an electoral connection between representatives and their selectorates, which, while often small, extended beyond a narrow economic elite. Understanding ideological variation among Southern Democrats thus requires examination of the

[31]In 1947, 26% of voting-age blacks were registered to vote in Tennessee, where they constituted 16% of the state population. In Mississippi, where 45% of the population was black, fewer than 1% of African Americans were registered (Alt, 1994, p. 374).

[32]That the white electorate was more elastic is illustrated by the fact that white voter registration in the South expanded over the 1950s in tandem with black registration, despite greater legal shocks to black suffrage restrictions (Stanley, 1987, p. 154).

same forces that motivate other members of Congress: the desire to achieve reelection as well as achieve institutional power and further personal policy goals (Fenno, 1973; Mayhew, 1974).

Following this logic, I argue that ideological variation among Southern MCs can be attributed in large part to differences in the preferences of selectorates. Selectorate preferences varied both because geographic constituencies have different interests, and because the size and representativeness of the selectorate with respect to the population varied across constituencies. Selectorates relatively favorable to New Dealish economic policy, as well as relatively unconcerned with threats to the South's racial autonomy, were likely to elect liberal members of Congress. The strength of the electoral connection depended on the extent and character of political competition. Where the connection was relatively weak, as it often was, Southern MCs enjoyed the "slack" to pursue other goals, such as party loyalty, ambition for higher office, and conceptions of good public policy (see Werner, 2009, on Southern racial liberals).

Although electoral slack allowed many Southern MCs to express idiosyncratic variation, in aggregate terms the electoral connection induced them to respond to the preferences of the potential electorate. In fact, in this dissertation I find a surprising degree of correspondence between Southern white public opinion on economic issues and the ideological positions of Southern MCs. As in Congress, Southern whites began the period more liberal than the rest of the country on economic issues, but by the mid-1940s occupied the middle of the ideological spectrum. The main exception among economic issues was labor policy, on which the South's conservative reaction was more dramatic in Congress and in public opinion. In short, Southern MCs were in the aggregate roughly in line with the economic preferences of their white constituents and seem also to have responded accordingly to changes in public opinion. Though it hardly exculpates the exclusionary and undemocratic features of the one-party South, it does indicate that it possessed a surprising capacity to represent the preferences of the eligible electorate.

My findings not only prompt a reconsideration of the South's one-party regime, but they also help elucidate a crucial period in American political development. Contrary to elite-focused accounts, I show that Southern MCs' marked and highly consequential rightward turn after the New Deal was precisely in line with and arguably attributable to shifts in Southern public opinion. I also demostate that demographic, economic, and political features of Southern constituencies do a great deal to account for Southern MCs' persistent ideological diversity over the period in question. These constituency characteristics changed the electoral incentives of Southern MCs, either by influencing constituency opinion in the aggregate or changing the political balance of power. Southern MCs' economic moderation and responsiveness to public opinion had important effects on the national political system, dampening partisan swings and encouraging incremental policymaking. The ironic result was that congressional policymaking represented the national median voter in a way that the polarization and "leapfrog representation" of the contemporary Congress does not.

## 1.4 Plan of the Dissertation

The dissertation is organized as follows. Chapter 2 presents a detailed investigation of Southern members of Congress, using a dynamic ideal-point model to chart their ideological diversity and evolution and document their pivotal position in national policymaking. Chapter 3 explores the sources of Southern MCs' ideological diversity, focusing on the demographic and economic characteristics of their constituencies. It also presents strong evidence that the Tennessee Valley Authority, exemplar of federal efforts at regional development, created a constituency for economic liberalism in the areas it affected. Chapter 4 examines the electoral connection in the one-party South, finding that Southern constituencies where the scope of participation was greater were represented by more liberal MCs, but that the strength of this effect was moderated by the extent of political contestation. Using public opinion data from the 1930s and 1940s, Chapter 5 argues that the ideological positions Southern MCs were roughly in line with their white constituents', in terms of both their aggregate position in national politics and their evolution over time. This is interpreted as evidence of a surprising degree of representation. Chapter 6 concludes with a brief discussion of the implications of my findings for our understanding of the one-party South and its role in American political development.

# Chapter 2

# Southerners in the U.S. Congress, 1930–1962

This chapter traces the ideological evolution of Southern members of Congress (MCs) between the early 1930s and the early 1960s, focusing on the core concerns of economic liberalism: social welfare and government regulation of the economy. A Bayesian dynamic item response theory (IRT) model is used to model MCs' evolving ideological positions. The IRT model reveals that in the early New Deal, Southern Democrats in Congress were at least as economically liberal on average as their Northern counterparts, but by the mid-1940s they had become an ideologically moderate force between Northern Democrats on the left and Republicans on the right. As Southerners moved to the ideological middle, they became increasingly pivotal to the passage of liberal as well as conservative policies. In the House, this transformation occurred gradually but definitively, whereas in the Senate it was both more rapid and more uneven. Changes in the ideological composition of the Southern delegation in Congress were driven by the adaptation of continuing members as well as by replacement. The growing liberalism of Northern Democrats contributed to the gap between the sectional wings of the party. Amid these changes, Southern MCs remained ideologically diverse, especially in the Senate.

## 2.1 Literature and Historical Background

Between 1900 and 1950, Republicans won only 80 of 2,565 House races in the former Confederacy. All but seven of these victories occurred in six anomalous districts in Texas and the Appalachian highlands. Republicans made a few inroads in the 1950s, but Democrats continued to compose well over 90% of Southern House members until the 1962 elections. Only in 1961 was the first post-Reconstruction Republican from the former Confederacy, John

Tower of Texas, elected to the U.S. Senate.[1] The vast majority of Democratic congressional candidates continued to face at most token opposition in the general election, and although competition in Democratic primaries declined somewhat over this period, they remained the main site of electoral contestation in the South (Ansolabehere et al., 2010, p. 197). Intra-party competition notwithstanding, the electoral security of Southern members gave them "a permanent majority among the most senior House and Senate Democrats" and, consequentially, a disproportionate share of party and committee leadership positions (Black and Black, 2002, pp. 40, 49–50, 90).

Many scholars, however, particularly those focused on the South's place in national politics, have been more impressed by the changes that occurred over these years rather than continuity. The period began with a major transition, as Southern Democrats, who had dominated their party during its long time in the political wilderness, now found themselves "a minority faction in a majority party" (Grantham, 1988, p. 25; Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993, p. 284). The Democrats' national majority enhanced Southerners' power in Congress, but at the same time the initiative in national policymaking passed to the executive branch, over which Southerners exercised much less influence than they had in previous Democratic administrations. Due to party loyalty, the sense of economic emergency, and their constituents' enthusiasm for Roosevelt and the New Deal, Southern members of Congress gave overwhelming support to the president's proposals through the mid-1930s. In fact, some of the more radical left-wing challenges to Roosevelt's leadership emanated from Southerners like Alabama's Hugo Black, Louisiana's Huey Long, and Texas's Maury Maverick. Most Southern MCs who were uncomfortable with the New Deal's threat to states' rights and fiscal conservatism either swallowed their objections or, like senators Thomas Gore of Oklahoma and Hubert Stephens of Mississippi, found themselves voted out of office for insufficient fealty to the New Deal (Tindall, 1967, p. 390; Schulman, 1994, pp. 14–15; Patterson, 1967, pp. 5, 13, 22–24; Dangerfield and Flynn, 1936; Williams, 1969, pp. 7–8; Swain, 2001).[2] In his 1936 reelection, Roosevelt himself garnered overwhelming majorities in the South, including an astounding 98.6% of the vote in South Carolina (Mississippi lagged only a point behind).

Even as Roosevelt was being reelected, however, enthusiasm for the New Deal began to wane in some corners of the white South. The incorporation of Northern blacks and a newly empowered labor movement into the Democratic coalition prompted widespread unease among the Southern elite, as did Roosevelt's "court-packing" plan and other attempts to expand federal and executive power (Logan, 1940; Leuchtenburg, 1995, p. 139). In 1938, Roosevelt attempted to reorient the party along more liberal lines by opposing the nomination of conservative Democrats, mostly Southerners like senators Walter George of Georgia and "Cotton Ed" Smith of South Carolina (Dunn, 2010). Smith notoriously stormed out of

[1]Between 1932 and 1965, Republicans won 16% of state presidential elections in the former Confederacy, 7.2% of U.S. House races, 1.5% of U.S. Senate races, and 0% of governorships (Stanley and Niemi, 2009).

[2]Senator Stephens's 1934 defeat at the hands of the populist Theodore Bilbo is a prime example of the sort of challenge on the left that kept otherwise wary Southerners loyal to FDR through mid-1930s (Morgan, 1985, p. 64).

the 1936 Democratic national convention when a black clergyman delivered the invocation, and expressions of sectional tension only increased at subsequent conventions (Reiter, 2001, p. 109). At Roosevelt's behest, the 1940 convention dumped Vice President John Garner of Texas in favor of the more liberal Henry Wallace of Iowa. In 1944, at the insistence of Southern delegates, Harry Truman replaced Wallace as FDR's running mate. Despite this concession to the South, uninstructed Democratic presidential delegates appeared on the ballot in Texas and Mississippi that November. Southern disaffection culminated in full-scale revolt in the 1948 presidential election, when the Dixiecrats carried four Deep South states (Sitkoff, 1971, p. 604; Frederickson, 2001). Eisenhower completed the break-up of the Solid South at the presidential level by winning four Southern states in 1952 and five in 1956.

Despite the Democrats' declining fortunes in Southern presidential elections, there was only limited evidence of partisan realignment in congressional elections. The absence of partisan change, however, belied major ideological shifts. Scholars have primarily examined these changes through the frame of the so-called "conservative coalition" (CC) between Republicans and Southern Democrats. The coalition originated in the 75th Congress (1937–38), when Southern Democrats broke ranks with the administration and Northern Democrats over such issues as the court-packing plan, the 1937 Housing Act, a failed 1937 resolution to investigate a wave of sit-down strikes, and the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act.[3] Most scholars have found that the prominence of the CC increased rapidly in the early 1940s and then plateaued.[4] Some accounts attribute the rise of this ideological alignment mostly (Reiter, 2001, p. 129) or almost entirely (Poole and Rosenthal, 2007, p. 79) to replacement, whereas other studies stress the ideological adaptation of continuing legislators (e.g., Sinclair, 1982, p. 59). The late 1930s to the late 1950s were the CC's heyday, after which it was undermined by political changes inside and outside Congress (Polsby, 2004, pp. 7–10). The CC nevertheless remained a salient feature of congressional politics until the end of the twentieth century (Wilkerson and Pump, 2011, pp. 624–27).

Scholars have long debated the basis, extent, and importance of the CC and of Southern congressional conservatism generally. In the first major empirical analysis of the subject,

[3]On the formation of the CC, see Patterson (1966, 1967); for specific episodes, see McMahon (2004, p. 74), Sinclair (1982, pp. 30–31), Schickler and Pearson (2009, p. 467), and Forsythe (1939). According to Finley (2003, p. 8), the 75th Congress also marked the first time the Southern caucus in the Senate formally organized to combat the growing threat of anti-lynching bills and other civil rights legislation.

[4]Key (1984[1949], p. 367) reports a marked uptick in CC activity beginning in 1940, the year after Patterson's 1967 study ends. Brady and Bullock (1980, p. 551) find that conservative coalition activity increased yearly between 1937 and 1944 and stabilized thereafter. Using data from Democratic conventions as well as from Congress, Reiter (2001) dates the regional split to between 1939 and 1944. Sinclair (1982, pp. 20–53) uses 1939 as the break point between the voting alignment of the Depression-era New Deal and that which prevailed through the end of the Truman administration. By contrast, Poole and Rosenthal (2007, p. 83) report that congressional Southerners' ideological transformation took place more gradually. They find that Southern Democrats first became more conservative than Northern Democrats on the "first dimension" of congressional voting in the early 1940s and "continue[d] to move steadily to the Right until the mid-to-late 1960s."

V. O. Key concluded that Southern solidarity in Congress between 1933 and 1945 was limited to racial issues. On other issues, Southern MCs were ideologically diverse, as "would be expected from a southern Democratic party that encompasses all shades of political attitude" (1984[1949], p. 360). Key argued that the extent of Southern–Republican collusion had been exaggerated, but that when the two groups did ally it was usually on the basis of shared agrarian interests. Key's emphasis on the economic and political interests of rural and agricultural areas as the explanation for Southern MCs' economic conservatism and cross-party cooperation with Republicans has since been echoed by many other works. Other scholars, however, have placed greater emphasis on Southern white racism and the undemocratic political institutions of the South.[5]

Regardless of their motivations, Southern MCs did cooperate with Republicans on a number of farm-related issues, especially after 1943 (Brady and Bullock, 1980, p. 551, Schickler and Pearson, 2009, pp. 468–69), but most of the issues on which the CC first appeared and remained most prominent were not specifically agricultural. Civil rights and civil liberties emerged as an area of Southern–Republican cooperation in the 75th Congress (1937–38) and reappeared episodically thereafter.[6] This anti–civil rights coalition, however, was the consequence of the evolving positions of the two parties in the North rather than change in the South, and through the 1960s Republicans cooperated as much with Northern Democrats on civil rights as with Southerners (Brady and Bullock, 1980; Finley, 2008; Jenkins, Peck, and Weaver, 2010; Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993; Schickler, Pearson, and Feinstein, 2010).

The other area where sustained Southern–Republican cooperation emerged especially early is labor policy (Brady and Bullock, 1980, p. 551; Schickler and Pearson, 2009, pp. 468–69). Labor issues have been given particular emphasis by Ira Katznelson and his collaborators. In their view, the "Southern veto" on labor issues was the most important barrier to the development of social democracy in the United States (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993; Farhang and Katznelson, 2005; see also Orren and Skowronek, 1998). At the same

[5]The participants in this debate are many, and the differences between them are usually ones of emphasis or degree, making it difficult to cleanly separate them into alternative camps. Roughly speaking, works that emphasize the agrarian, economic basis for Southern conservatism include Saloutos (1948), Mayhew (1966), Patterson (1967), Sinclair (1982), Seltzer (1995), and Davies and Derthick (1997), with Carleton (1951) noting that Southern MCs were not conservative compared to farm-state Republicans. Another variety of economic argument attributes the growing conservatism of the South to its increasing prosperity (e.g., Brady and Bullock, 1980; Shafer and Johnston, 2006). White racism and opposition to civil rights, especially among Southern elites, have been stressed by scholars like Quadagno (1988, 1994), Lichtenstein (1989), Lieberman (1998), and Katznelson (2005), whereas works like Key (1961), Boynton (1965), and Fleck (2002) emphasize the generic upper-class bias in the Southern political system. Still other accounts, such as Bensel (1984, 2011), Weir (1988), Schulman (1994), and Alston and Ferrie (1999), have stressed the interdependence of the racial, economic, and political systems of the South and the interests of Southern elites in maintaining the racial political economy (see also the "authoritarian enclave" work of Gibson, 2005 and Mickey, 2008).

[6]Finley (2008, p. 50) argues that the 1937–38 fight over the Gavagan anti-lynching bill, which Senate Republicans helped Southern Democrats kill, marked the creation of a "conservative coalition born [sic] of political necessity" (quoted approvingly in Jenkins, Peck, and Weaver, 2010, p. 86).

time, these authors have also emphasized the uniqueness of labor issues, describing them and civil rights as the only policy areas where the roll-call records of Northern and Southern Democrats diverged in the 1933–50 period. Apart from labor and civil rights, they claim, the sectional wings of the Democratic Party were "virtually indistinguishable" through 1950 (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993, p. 288). This conclusion is not shared by the many observers, then and since, who have blamed Southern opposition for the failure of New Deal and Fair Deal proposals in other areas as well: welfare, national health insurance, federal aid to education, full-employment policies, and so on (Brown, 1999; Patterson, 1967; Sundquist, 1968; Weir, 1988). In this alternative view, Congress became the "special obstacle" to liberal initiatives of all kinds because Southerners' conservative coalition with Republicans constituted its "real majority" (Patterson, 1996, p. 138; Polsby, 2004, p. 7).

While each of these conflicting characterizations contains a good deal of truth, neither is entirely satisfying. On one hand, there is abundant evidence that growing Southern conservatism extended beyond labor and civil rights to encompass broad swaths of the evolving progressive agenda (Garson, 1974). Expansions of federal regulatory and planning power, to which Republicans objected for economic reasons, many hitherto New Dealish Southerners began to oppose for their threat to white supremacy (Katznelson, 1989, pp. 193–94). As a result, many a Southern politician found it increasingly difficult to be a "Jim Crow New Dealer": supportive of progressive economic policies while safeguarding states rights and white supremacy.[7]

At the same time, it is also difficult to accept the notion that the CC was the "real majority" in Congress. Although majority-party control was unusually weak in this period (Rohde, 1991, pp. 5–7) and relatively conservative Southerners occupied important positions of influence,[8], the CC lacked the formal organization and procedural tools of a true majority party (Brady and Bullock, 1980; Wilkerson and Pump, 2011). The coalition was in fact severely hampered by partisan divisions (Patterson, 1966; Patterson, 1967, pp. 327–8). As Brady and Bullock (1980, p. 559) stress, "the basis for the CC [was] issue agreement among conservatives," not organizational capacity, and its power stemmed primarily from the fact that the median voter in Congress was usually sympathetic to its aims. The perceived power of the CC has been magnified by the scholarly focus on the failure of liberal and social-

[7]The Charleston *News & Courier* used this derisive epithet to describe South Carolina Senator Olin Johnston during his 1944 primary campaign, which was based on strong support for both liberal economic policies and states-rights white supremacy (Leemhuis, 1986, p. 60).

[8]Chief among conservatives' institutional tools was control of the House Rules Committee, which arguably negated it as an effective source of majority-party control (Schickler, 2001; but see Cox and McCubbins, 2005). While Rules did push a number of conservative initiatives in this period (Schickler and Pearson, 2009), the CC's power was still primarily negative (Brady and Bullock, 1980; Polsby, 2004). The role played by CC leaders like Rules Chairman Howard Smith (D-VA) was primarily one of informal coordination, and they exercised little direct influence over Southerners' votes except on issues where they lacked strong preferences on way or another, when they could sway thirty or forty members (Clapp, 1963, p. 363). The exception to this lack of coordination seems to have been the Southern bloc in the Senate's relatively formal organization in opposition to civil rights measures (Caro, 2002; Finley, 2008).

democratic policy ambitions in this period rather on the successful defense and consolidation of the New Deal order, to which Southern support was also crucial.[9]

Part of the difficulty of adjudicating these various claims stems from problems of measurement. Locating the basis of the CC in policy preferences naturally suggests a spatial model of congressional voting, and indeed the notion of a liberal–conservative ideological continuum is implicit in the CC's very name. The measures used by nearly all previous studies, however, are not well grounded in a spatial logic. The classic indicator of the conservative coalition, institutionalized by *Congressional Quarterly* in 1958, is a majority of Republicans voting with a majority of Southern Democrats against a majority of Northern Democrats (see, e.g., Key, 1984[1949], p. 355; Brady and Bullock, 1980; Wilkerson and Pump, 2011). This measure has several problems. First, because it dichotomizes on the basis of an arbitrary threshold, it lacks sensitivity, failing to distinguish between obvious CC or non-CC votes and those on the border (see Schickler and Pearson, 2009, for examples). Unless each group of legislators is entirely homogenous (which some analyses do seem to assume, especially with regard to Southern Democrats), the traditional CC measure therefore throws away much information.

A second problem is that the CC measure's average value in a given congress depends on the distribution of midpoint locations (viz. the point of indifference between two alternative policy proposals) in that congress. For example, if midpoints tend to be liberal (say, because status quos are moderate and most policy proposals are liberal) and the median Southern Democrat is midway between the medians of the other two groups, then the CC measure will suggest that Southerners are closer ideologically to Republicans. Other measures, such as the cohesion and likeness scores used by Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993) and others, also depend on the distribution of midpoints (see Krehbiel, 2000, pp. 218–20).[10]

Given the limitations of traditional CC measures, this chapter uses an alternative approach, based on a spatial model of legislators' policy preferences, to examine Southern Democrats' evolving behavior of this period. This approach is motivated and described in the following section.

## 2.2 A Dynamic Ideal Point Model of Congress

This section motivates and develops a measurement strategy for charting Southerners' ideological evolution relative to Congress as a whole. The strategy is based on a random utility model of spatial voting. In such models, both legislator preferences ("ideal points") and

[9]Examples of works emphasizing liberal failures and lost opportunities in the wake of the New Deal, see Lichtenstein (1989), Brinkley (1995), and Farhang and Katznelson (2005). Among the works that stress (to varying degrees) liberals' positive achievements in the 1940s and 1950s, see Neustadt (1954), Hamby (1972, 1973), Plotke (1996), Zelizer (1998), and Jacobs (2010). See Orren and Skowronek (1998) for a useful discussion of the literature on the 1940s.

[10]Percentage support for liberal or administration proposals (e.g., Brown, 1999, p. 107) is another measure with these same drawbacks.

government policies are represented as points in Euclidean space ($\mathbb{R}^d$, where $d$ is the number of dimensions). A legislator's vote on a given proposed policy ("bill") is determined by her ideological proximity to the bill relative to the current policy ("status quo"), plus a stochastic utility shock.

Random utility models have several advantages over the alternatives, such as likeness scores and the traditional CC measure, that predominate in this literature. First, random utility models measure policy preferences rather than voting alignments, which depend on both midpoint locations as well as legislator ideology. Traditional CC measures impose a prior structure on Congress, grouping legislators together in a way that conflates ideology, section, and party (Bensel, 2011, p. 772) and that precludes comparison within and across groups on the same measure. By contrast, spatial measures are defined at the level of individual legislators rather than groups of legislators, allowing structure to emerge from the measure rather being imposed *a priori*. Perhaps most importantly, random utility models are designed for statistical inference of unobserved quantities (legislator ideal points) and allow for characterization of the uncertainty associated with the measure. Absent a stochastic measurement model, there is no coherent way to characterize the uncertainty of alternative measures, which are simply summaries of observed voting alignments.

The best-known approach to estimating spatial roll-call models is the Nominal Three-Step Estimation (NOMINATE) procedure developed by Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal (1985; 2007). Among the many insights generated by the NOMINATE research program is the finding that with the exception of periods of unusual political instability (e.g., immediately preceding the Civil War), roll call voting in Congress can be modeled effectively using at most two spatial dimensions (contra Clausen, 1973). Throughout most of American history, the first spatial dimension captures conflict between the major parties, usually over redistribution and government interference in the economy, and the second dimension captures conflict within the parties, most often sectional conflict between North and South over such issues as race and civil rights (Poole and Rosenthal, 2007, p. 70).

More recently, alternatives to NOMINATE have been developed, the most prominent of which are Bayesian item-response theory (IRT) models (Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers, 2004; Jackman, 2001; Martin and Quinn, 2002). Though NOMINATE and IRT approaches differ in terms of loss function (Gaussian vs. quadratic), error distribution (extreme-value vs. normal), and statistical epistemology and estimation (conditional maximum likelihood vs. Bayesian Markov chain Monte Carlo [MCMC]), they yield very similar estimates in practice (Carroll et al., 2009a). Bayesian IRT methods, however, do have certain advantages, including the ease of calculating quantities of interest from MCMC output and the flexibility of Bayesian approaches (Clinton and Jackman, 2009).

The task of estimating dynamic models, especially ones that allow for non-linear change over time, showcases the flexibility of the Bayesian IRT approach. A dynamic version of the NOMINATE procedure, dynamic weighted (DW) NOMINATE, allows legislator ideal points

to change as a polynomial function in time (for details, see Carroll et al., 2009b).[11] Poole and Rosenthal find that simple linear trend provides the best model of change over time, and the DW-NOMINATE scores available for public download are based on a linear dynamic model.[12] The degree of ideological stability in Congress, however, has itself changed over time. For most of U.S. history, and especially since the 1880s, spatial movement in Congress has been quite modest. The major 20th-century exception to the rule of ideological stability, however, occurred in the late 1930s and early 1940s—precisely the years of interest in this study (Poole and Rosenthal, 2007, pp. 29–34, 96–97). A linear time trend, or even a polynomial one, is not well suited to detecting rapid or non-monotonic ideological change. This is especially true for long-serving legislators (as many Southerners were), for the model apportions any ideological change evenly over their entire career.[13]

Thus, while this chapter also refers to DW-NOMINATE scores, most of the empirical findings are based instead on the Bayesian dynamic one-dimensional IRT model developed by Martin and Quinn (2002) and implemented in the R package `MCMCpack` (Martin, Quinn, and Park, 2011). In addition to permitting easy calculation of statistics quantities and their uncertainty, this model has the advantage of being designed specifically to estimate assess ideological change over time. Martin and Quinn (2007) and Ho and Quinn (2010) have applied this model to the Supreme Court, but to my knowledge, this is the first application of a dynamic IRT model to the U.S. Congress.

A spatial voting model with quadratic utility function and normal errors is mathematically equivalent to a two-parameter probit IRT model (Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers, 2004,

[11] DW-NOMINATE also differs from earlier versions of NOMINATE in its use of normal model for the error term and its incorporation of salience weights for different dimension (Carroll et al., 2009b, p. 263).

[12] Keith Poole confirmed this in a personal communication with the author on January 13, 2012.

[13] For example, consider the career of Sen. Theodore Bilbo, a populist demagogue who represented Mississippi between 1935 and 1947. According to his first-dimension DW-NOMINATE score, Bilbo began his career as the 17th-most liberal senator but moved linearly (as the model requires) to the right over his six full congresses in the Senate, ending his career as the 53rd most liberal senator. The linear movement implied by DW-NOMINATE, however, does not conform to his biographer's description of his career. According to Morgan (1985, pp. 3–4), Bilbo entered the Senate as a typically solid Southern supporter of Roosevelt, but unlike other Southerners, "As the New Deal moved towards welfare liberalism after 1935, Bilbo's enthusiasm waxed rather than waned." Bilbo was a strong supporter of the Wagner Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the Farm Security Administration. Beginning in the early 1940s, however, Bilbo embraced a flamboyant brand of racial demagoguery and became much more hostile to the New Deal (Morgan, 1985, pp. 247–50). Unlike DW-NOMINATE, a dynamic IRT model portrays Bilbo's non-linear ideological movement quite accurately. According to the IRT model, Bilbo became significantly *more* liberal in the late 1930s, both in absolute and relative terms. The IRT model estimates him to have been the 17th-most liberal senator in the 74th Congress, the 21st-most in the 75th, and the 9th-most liberal member of Congress in the 76th and 77th. After 1942, however, Bilbo is estimated to have become substantially more conservative—the 21st-most liberal in the 78th Congress and the 56th-most in the 79th. Thus, although the DW-NOMINATE and IRT models essentially agree on the starting and ending points of Bilbo's career, they convey very different pictures of his ideological trajectory over time.

p. 356). A static one-dimensional version of this model can be written as

$$P(y_{ij} = 1) = \mathbf{\Phi}(\beta_j \theta_i - \alpha_j) \tag{2.1}$$

where $y_{ij}$ indicates a "yea" vote by legislator $i$ on bill $j$, $\mathbf{\Phi}$ is the standard normal CDF, $\theta_i$ represents $i$'s ideal point, $\beta_j$ is the "discrimination" of bill $j$, and $\alpha_j$ is the "difficulty" (i.e., unpopularity) of the bill. By multiplying paramaters' priors by their likelihoods with respect to the observed votes, we obtain the Bayesian posterior distributions of legislator ideal points $\boldsymbol{\theta}$ and the bill difficulty and discrimination parameters $\boldsymbol{\alpha}$ and $\boldsymbol{\beta}$.

The static IRT model assumes that legislator ideal points are constant over time. To loosen this assumption, one could, for example, allow the ideal points to change linearly over time, which would be the IRT equivalent of DW-NOMINATE. Alternatively, separate models could be estimated in each time period (e.g., each congress), implying a belief that legislators' ideal points are independent across periods. A more plausible and yet still flexible approach is to model each legislator's ideal point in period $t$ as a random walk from her ideal point in period $t-1$. This approach, which is that taken by Martin and Quinn (2002), uses the ideal point posteriors in each period as priors for the next. More formally, the ideal point of legislator $i$ in congress $t$ is modeled as

$$\theta_{i,t} \sim \mathcal{N}(\theta_{i,t-1},\ \tau^2_{\theta_{i,t}}) \tag{2.2}$$

where the evolution variance $\tau^2_{\theta_{i,t}}$ is provided by the analyst, as is the prior for ideal points in the first period.

In addition to allowing for a flexible yet plausible degree of ideological evolution in each period, this model also produces estimates that are comparable over time, given certain assumptions. One key assumption for comparing estimates over time is that for every legislator $i$ and period $t$, the expected value of $\theta_{i,t}$ is $\theta_{i,t-1}$. For example, if no legislators retired between periods and all moved a constant amount to the right, the model would not detect any ideological change among legislators. More subtly, if a large bloc of legislators became more conservative while all others remained constant, the estimated movement of the bloc would be biased toward zero and that of the constant legislators biased away from zero. In other words, the model does not account for aggregate ideological movement, and the ideological change of individual legislators is only identified up to the assumption that each legislator is no more likely to move left of her previous ideal point than right of it.

Another key feature of the model used in this chapter is that it is one-dimensional, meaning that in each period $t$ legislator $i$'s ideal point $\theta_{i,t}$ takes on a single scalar value. Given that the period under study is one in which a second spatial dimension was unusually prominent (though still much less so than the first dimension; see Poole and Rosenthal, 2007, p. 39), the choice of a one-dimensional model requires some explanation. An advantage of a one-dimensional model is that it collapses a myriad of individual pieces of information into single indicator of legislators' positions on the left–right ideological continuum. Only roll calls related to issues of social welfare and economic regulation—the issues historically most

closely related to first-dimension conflict between the parties—were used to calculate the ideal points.[14] To evaluate the distinctiveness of roll calls related to organized labor, ideal points were estimated twice in each chamber, once including labor votes and once excluding them. In addition to fitting with the substantive concerns of the study (Southerners' evolving positions on New Deal liberalism), the exclusion of more explicitly sectional issues like civil rights enhances the plausibility the unidimensional model. Aside from differences in polarity and scale, resulting ideal point estimates are similar in interpretation to first-dimension DW-NOMINATE estimates.

The estimation was carried out in statistical program `R` using the `MCMCdynamicIRT1d` function from the package `MCMCpack` (Martin, Quinn, and Park, 2011). Legislator $i$'s observed vote on bill $j$ in Congress $t$ was modeled as a function of unobserved utility

$$z_{i,j,t} = \beta_{j,t}\theta_{i,t} - \alpha_{j,t} + \epsilon_{i,j,t} \tag{2.3}$$

where $\epsilon_{i,j,t}$ follows an i.i.d. standard normal distribution (hence the probit specification). A vague $\mathcal{N}(0, 10)$ prior was specified for the bill difficulty ($\alpha$) and discrimination ($\beta$) parameters, as well as for legislators' initial ideal points $\theta$. The evolution variance ($\tau^2$) of the ideal point random walk was set to 0.1. This value of $\tau^2$ implies a "typical" ideological shift between congresses of around $\sqrt{0.1} \approx 0.32$, about a third the standard deviation of the observation model (Equation 2.3), with ideal-point changes larger than 1 being very rare. The model is identified by the proper priors on the bill parameters and by constraining the ideal points of legislators with extreme DW-NOMINATE scores to be either positive (extreme liberals) or negative (extreme conservatives). The starting values of the bill parameters were set to 0. Democrats' ideal points were started at 1, Republicans' at $-1$, and independents' at 0. After 1,000 burn-in simulations were run and discarded, a further 50,000 iterations were run, of which every tenth was saved for a total of 5,000 MCMC samples. Standard MCMC diagnostics (see Jackman, 2009, pp. 252–55) indicated that the chain had reached a stationary distribution and auto-correlation was not unduly severe, indicating that it approximates a random sample from the posterior distribution.

## 2.3 Southern MCs' Ideological Evolution

Let us first examine the aggregate ideological evolution of Southern Democrats in the House and Senate relative to Northern Democrats and Republicans. The ideal points in each chamber were estimated separately, so strictly speaking the ideological metrics are not comparable in an absolute sense across chambers. It is unlikely, however, that the two metrics differ very

[14] Specifically, only roll calls classified in the "Government Management" and "Social Welfare" issue categories developed by Clausen (1973; see Poole and Rosenthal, 1998, 2001) were used to estimate legislator ideal points. Roll calls relating to agriculture, civil liberties, and foreign and defense policy, as well as unclassifiable or unidentifiable votes, were excluded from the dataset.

greatly,[15] and in any case the most important patterns involve the relative positions of groups of legislators. Except where otherwise noted, all of the statistical inferences in this chapter are derived from the relevant quantity's posterior distribution in the IRT model. For example, to evaluate whether the median Southern MC was more conservative than the median Northern MC, one first determines the Southern and Northern medians in each simulation and then calculates the proportion of simulations in which the Northern median is greater (more liberal) than the Southern median. Since the IRT model is Bayesian, this proportion can be interpreted as the estimated probability that the median Southerner was more conservative (given the data, model, and priors).

For each congress between the 72nd (1931–32) and the 87th (1961–62), the top panel of Figure 2.1 plots the ideal point estimates of U.S. House members, along with the mean ideal points of Southern Democrats, Northern Democrats, and Republicans. The bottom panel of Figure 2.1 plots the same information for U.S. senators. As these figures reveal, the broad ideological trends over this period were the similar in the U.S. House and Senate. In both chambers, Northern and Southern Democrats differed little in their roll-call voting on economic issues through the mid-1930s. By the early 1940s, however, the average Southern Democrat in both houses had clearly become more economically conservative than the average Northern Democrat. Contrary to what the label "conservative coalition" would suggest, however, Southern Democrats did not converge ideologically with Republicans. Rather, they occupied an ideologically moderate position between Northern Democrats and Northern Republicans, their average position usually being less conservative than the chamber median. Over these same years, as Southern Democrats became more conservative, Northern Democrats moved in the opposite direction, though less dramatically so. The ideological position of Republican MCs, on the other hand, remained roughly constant throughout the period.

Though broadly similar, the trends in the House and Senate differed in their particulars. In the House, Southern Democrats became steadily more conservative in every congress between 1931 and 1945. Their ideological movement largely ceased after the 79th Congress, and through the rest of the period they remained roughly equidistant between Northern Democrats and Northern Republicans. The patterns in the Senate are more nuanced. Northern and Southern Democrats tracked each other quite closely through the 77th Congress (1941–43), after which Southern senators became sharply more conservative. In the 80th and 81st Congresses, however, Southern senators temporarily reversed course. In 1949–50,

[15]Some accounts characterize the House as somewhat more conservative than the Senate in this period (e.g., Polsby, 2004). Conversely, Poole (2007, pp. 440–41) presents evidence that between the late 1940s and late 1950s, the mean and median ideal point in the House was slightly more liberal than in the Senate, and that after 1958 the Senate became more liberal than the House. But the difference between the chambers in any one congress is small compared to over-time changes in the chamber means and medians. The Poole (2007) estimates are based on the assumption of ideological stasis among members who moved between chambers. For other approaches to the problem of bridging across chambers, see Poole (1998), Bailey (2007), Asmussen and Jo (2011), and Shor, Berry, and McCarty (2011).

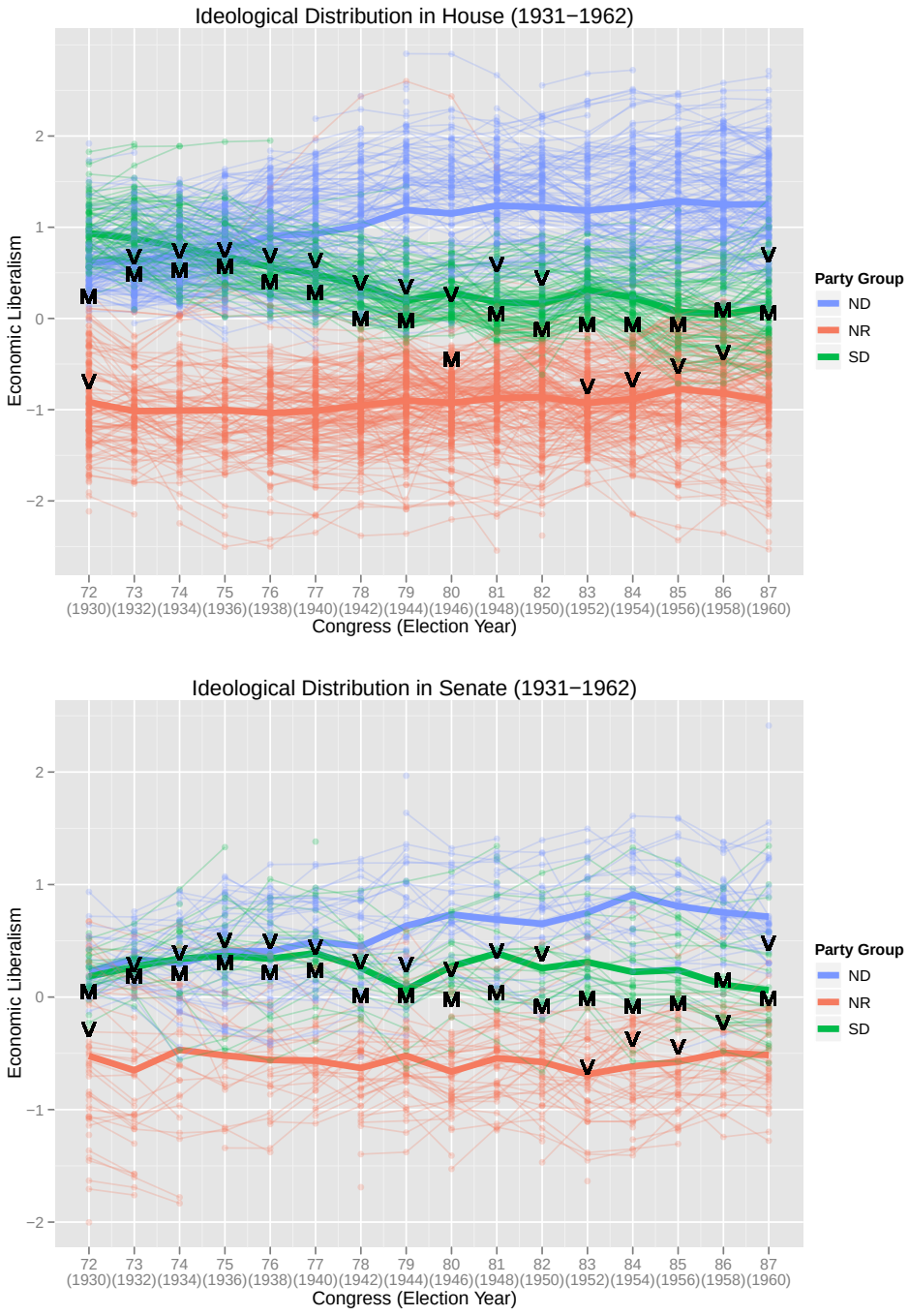



Figure 2.1: Ideological evolution in the U.S. House (top) and Senate (bottom). The thick colored lines represent the mean ideal point in each group. $M$ indicates the location of the House median, and $V$ the location of the veto pivot (liberal side during Democratic administrations, conservative side during Republican administrations).

they were about as liberal on average as they had been in the 1930s, though they remained more conservative than Northern Democrats, who had become steadily more liberal since the 1930s. The shift in agenda control occasioned by the Republican takeover of the 80th Congress may have contributed to the Southern reversal, but since it continued in the Democratic 81st Congress, Republican party control probably isn't the whole story. The gap between the party's sectional wings, which had first opened in the 77th Congress, persisted through the rest of the 1940s and then widened again in the 1950s as Southern senators drifted back in a more conservative direction.

Let us examine the data more closely, beginning with the House of Representatives. For the first three congresses of the 1930s—the last under Hoover and the first two under Roosevelt—the average Southern Democrat in the House was actually more liberal on economic issues than the average Northern Democrat (see Figure 2.2, top panel). During these years, Democrats and Republicans remained quite polarized from one another. Even in Roosevelt's first term, however, Southern Democrats in the House were already beginning their conservative migration. The average Southern House member first became more economically conservative than the average Northern Democrat in the 75th Congress (1937–38), the congress to which the origin of conservative coalition is usually dated. There is no evidence of an abrupt ideological shift among Southern Democrats, in the 75th Congress or any other. Rather, Southern Democrats in the House continued to become more conservative in roughly linear fashion through the 79th Congress (1945–46).[16] Because Northern Democrats were becoming more liberal on average while Republicans remained stable, the distance between Southern and Northern Democrats increased more quickly than the Southern–Republican gap narrowed.

Substantively, the average differences between the two wings of the Democratic Party in the House remained modest throughout the 1930s—smaller than the standard deviation of ideal points within each wing. When, in the 79th Congress, House Southerners stopped becoming more conservative, their average position was almost exactly midway between the Northern Democratic and Republican means, about 1 unit away from each (recall that standard deviation of the observation model [Equation 2.3], and thus of the ideal points in Congress, is also 1). Aside from a second, smaller conservative shift in the 84th and 85th Congresses (1955–58),[17] which brought Southern Democrats slightly closer to Republicans than to Northern Democrats, the average ideological position of Southern House members remained essentially stable between the end of World War II and the eve of the Great Society (contra Poole and Rosenthal, 2007, p. 83). In every congress except the 86th (1959–60), which

[16]Patterson (1996, p. 139) observes that Republicans and Southern Democrats "returned to Capitol Hill in September 1945 in an uncooperative mood. . . tired of aggressive [liberal] presidential leadership."

[17]These were the first congresses after the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision and the rise of civil rights protests in the South. Bartley and Graham (1975), Gilliam (1975), Klarman (1994), Badger (1999b, 2005), Garrow (2004), and others have located a conservative reaction—on race but also economics—in state-level Southern politics in response to these events, which seems to have been manifested in less extreme form in Congress.

saw an influx of liberal Northern Democrats after the 1958 elections, a majority of Southern Democrats in the House were more liberal than the House median.[18]

The patterns in the Senate are somewhat more complicated than in the House. This may be partly due to the Senate's greater sensitivity to the idiosyncrasies of individual members and the fact that only a third of senators are up for reelection each year. But it may also be indicative of systematic differences in the political forces affecting Southern senators and representatives. Compared to House members, Southern senators' move to the Right occurred later and more quickly, and it partially reversed between late 1940s and mid-1950s. Aside from the 73rd Congress (1933–35), when Southerners were slightly more conservative, the average positions of Northern and Southern Democrats in the Senate were not statistically distinguishable until the 76th Congress (1939–41; see Figure 2.2, bottom panel).[19] Interestingly, the average gap between Southern and Republican senators—which throughout this period was substantially smaller than the corresponding gap in the House—actually widened slightly between the early 1930s and early 1940s.[20]

In contrast to the House, where Southerners' ideological migration was apportioned about equally over seven congresses, Southern senators moved slowly until the mid-1940s. Most of their ideological movement relative to the two other groups occurred in a single congress, the 79th (1945–46), when they were almost exactly equidistant between Northern Democrats and Republicans. Thus, despite differences in timing, Southern Democrats in the House and Senate reached the middle of the ideological spectrum at the same time. Unlike in the House, however, Southerners in the Senate reversed their ideological trajectory in the second half of the 1940s.[21] It was not until the end of the 1950s that the average Southern senator again occupied an ideological position equidistant from the Republican and Northern Democratic averages. A majority of Southern senators were more liberal than the chamber median until

[18]If (a) the median Southern Democrat is more liberal than the chamber median (as was the case in all these congresses except the 86th), (b) all Republicans are more conservative than the median Southern Democrat, and (c) there is perfect spatial voting, then every conservative-coalition vote will necessarily be victorious. If, however, we alter condition (a) to make the median Southern Democrat more conservative than the House median, then CC votes will no longer be guaranteed to win. This helps illustrate how misleading it can be to measure the "effectiveness" of the CC based on the percentage of CC votes that the CC won (e.g., Moore, 1967). It also helps explain Brady and Bullock's finding that the CC won almost every roll call on which it appeared in between 1939 and 1956 (1980, p. 557).

[19]This is a period when several of anti–New Deal Southern senators were defeated for reelection and several marked liberals entered the chamber. Defeated conservatives include Mississippi's Hubert Stephens in 1934 (Swain, 2009) and Oklahoma's Thomas Gore in 1936 (Dangerfield and Flynn, 1936). Entering New Dealers include Alabama's Lister Hill and Florida's Claude Pepper, both of whom won special elections in 1938 (Leuchtenburg, 1963, p. 266).

[20]Many progressive Western Republicans, who constituted a substantial bloc in the Senate, began to abandon their previous support for the increasingly bureaucratic and urban-oriented New Deal in 1936 (Badger, 2002, p. 275).

[21]This shift coincided with a liberal opening in the South in the immediate postwar years, which saw the entry into the Senate of such liberal senators as John Sparkman (AL, elected in 1946), Estes Kefauver (TN, elected in 1948), and Frank Porter Graham (NC, appointed in 1949).

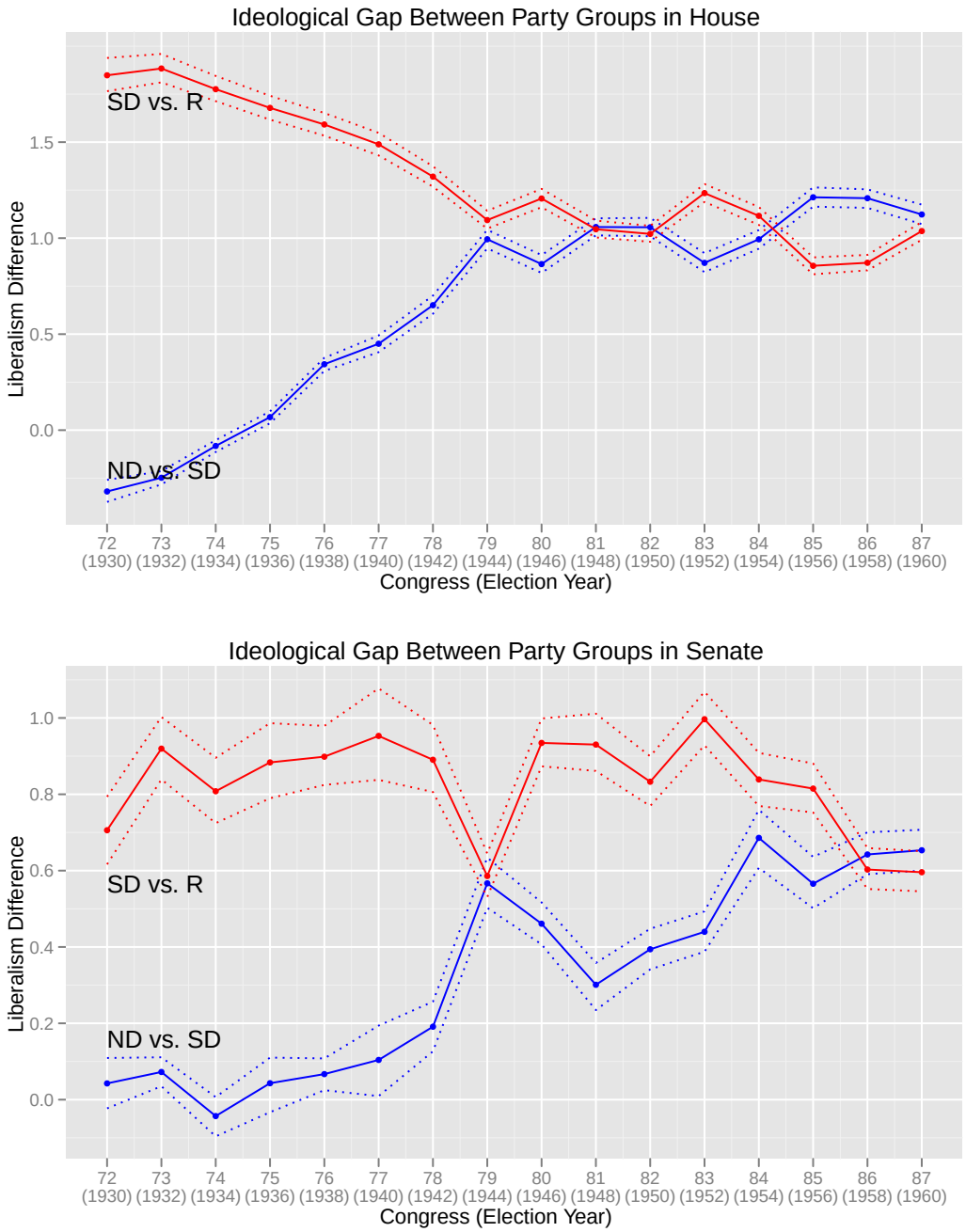



Figure 2.2: Differences between the average liberalism of Northern Democrats and Southern Democrats (blue) and Southern Democrats and Northern Republicans (red), in the House (top) and in the Senate (bottom). Dotted lines indicate 90% Bayesian credible intervals.

the 86th Congress (1959–60), when, as in the House, a large number of liberal Northern Democrats entered the Senate.

To summarize: Until the late 1930s, Southern Democrats were at least as liberal on economic issues as Northern Democrats. By the mid-1940s, Southern Democrats in both chambers had reached an ideological position halfway between Northern Democrats and Republicans. Southerners' conservative migration occurred gradually in the House and later but more rapidly in the Senate. Between the 79th (1945–46) and 87th (1961–62) Congresses, Southern members of the House remained ideologically stable, whereas in the late 1940s the Southern caucus in the Senate experienced a temporary liberalization before moving back to the middle of the ideological spectrum in the early 1950s.

## 2.4 Replacement Versus Adaptation

Perhaps the dominant view among political scientists is that members of Congress, in the words of Poole and Rosenthal (2007, p. 28), "die with their ideological boots on" rather than evolving in response to changing constituent preferences. If individual members of Congress are indeed ideologically static, then ideological change in Congress must be the result primarily of membership turnover rather than adaptation among continuing members (Poole and Rosenthal, 2007, p. 72; see also Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart, 2001; Lee, Moretti, and Butler, 2004). Some have sought to qualify this view with the argument that MCs rationally anticipate the negative consequences of being out of step with their constituencies (Canes-Wrone, Brady, and Cogan, 2002) and thus do in fact engage in substantial ideological adaptation as well (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson, 2002, pp. 304–21). Yet even those who argue that ideological adaptation is important accept replacement as the primary mechanism of ideological change. One of the consequences of the predominance of replacement is the exaggeration of ideological swings in Congress, "overshooting" or "leapfrogging" the median voter (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson, 2002, p. 373; Bafumi and Herron, 2010).

This debate over the relative importance of replacement and adaptation, however, is predicated on stable two-party politics, a context in which replacement is likely to be especially important. The need to cater to primary electorates and party-affiliated interest groups, as well as to conform to divergent partisan pressures in Congress, counterbalances candidates' incentives to converge to the median voter. To the extent that the median primary voter is more ideologically stable than the median of the general electorate, party constituencies may also give politicians less of an incentive to respond to changes in the median voter (Bawn et al., 2012; Grofman, 2004; Rohde, 1991; Schlozman, 2011).

Politicians in the one-party South, by contrast, needed to cater only to the Democratic primary electorate. Since general elections were uncompetitive and nearly all eligible voters participated in the Democratic primary, Southern members of Congress had only one median voter to satisfy.[22] Although candidates were supported by different coalitions of voters,

[22]Setting aside the barriers to ideological voting in the personalistic and "issueless" politics engendered

the fluid and personalized nature of Southern politics lowered the costs to constructing a new coalition in response to changes in the ideological winds. Moreover, since Southern Democrats were all from the same party, once elected to Congress they all faced party pressure pushing in the same direction instead of the centrifugal forces that members of different parties faced.

As a consequence, it is reasonable to expect that adaptation was a more important mechanism behind the ideological changes among Southern MCs documented in Section 2.3 than was typical of the two-party North. Previous evidence on this particular point is mixed. Sinclair (1982, p. 79) argues that because entering Southern Democrats were more liberal than veterans, replacement did not cause Southern House members conservative shift between 1939 and 1952. Reiter (2001), by contrast, finds replacement to be the paramount mechanism of ideological change, especially in the Senate. (Poole and Rosenthal, 2007, p. 79) place even greater stress upon replacement. None of these works, however, subject these claims to formal statistical tests.

In order to evaluate adaptation as a mechanism of ideological change, several formal definitions are required. First, define the *average ideological change* between congresses $t-1$ and $t$ for a group $g$ of legislators as

$$\bar{\Delta}_{g,t} = N_{g,t}^{-1} \sum_{i}^{N_{g,t}} \theta_{i,t} - N_{g,t-1}^{-1} \sum_{j}^{N_{g,t-1}} \theta_{j,t-1} \tag{2.4}$$

where $N_{g,t}$ is the number of legislators in group $g$ in congress $t$ and $\theta_{i,t}$ is the ideal point of legislator $i$ in congress $t$. The *average adaptation* ($\bar{A}_{g,t}$) is analogously defined among the subset of "continuing" legislators in group $g$ who voted in both congress $t$ and $t-1$. Finally, define the *average replacement* ($\bar{R}_{g,t}$) as the difference between the mean ideal point among group members who voted in congress $t$ but not $t-1$ ("enterers") and the average among members who voted in $t-1$ but not $t$ ("exiters"). For any group $g$ and pair of congresses $t$ and $t-1$, "continuers," "enterers" (in congress $t$), and "exiters" (in congress $t-1$) form exhaustive and mutually exclusive subsets of legislators. The total *average ideological change* between congresses is equal to the weighted mean of *average adaptation* and *average replacement*, where the weights are determined by the relative proportions of continuers in each Congress.[23]

As noted in Section 2.2, estimating ideological change over time is a difficult problem. A dynamic ideal point model is better suited to estimating non-linear change than alternatives like DW-NOMINATE, but comparing ideal-point estimates across time is still quite tricky,

by the South's one-party system Key (1984[1949]).

[23]Formally, let $\bar{\theta}_{g,t}$ and $\bar{\theta}_{g,t-1}$ indicate the average ideal point of legislators in group $g$ and congress $t$ and $t-1$, respectively. Let $\bar{\theta}^{C}_{g,t}$ and $\bar{\theta}^{C}_{g,t-1}$ represent the analogous quantities for continuing group members who served in both congresses, and $\bar{\theta}^{C'}_{g,t}$ and $\bar{\theta}^{C'}_{g,t-1}$ for non-continuers (enters in $t$ and exiters in $t-1$). Let $p^{C}_{g,t}$ indicate the proportion of members in congress $t$ who voted in the previous congress, and $p^{C}_{g,t-1}$ the proportion of members in congress $t-1$ who voted in the subsequent congress. The average ideological

for two reasons. First, the $\mathcal{N}(0, 10)$ prior for the ideal point of new members of Congress "pulls" the ideal point posteriors towards the middle of the idealogical spectrum, though only slightly due to the prior's diffuseness. More importantly, because this prior is so diffuse relative to evolution model (a standard deviation of 3.2 compared to 0.32), the ideal points of continuing members are "stickier" than those of new members. This is likely to exaggerate the extent of ideological change due to replacement compared to adaptation, though probably only to a small degree. To extent that such exaggeration exists, however, it creates a bias against my argument that adaptation was an important mechanism of ideological change in the South.

Second, as noted earlier, ideal points are comparable across congresses only under the assumption that legislators evolve according to a normally distributed random walk with a variance of 0.1 and an expectation equal to the legislator's ideal point in the previous congress. This model constrains aggregate ideological adaptation among all members to be very close to 0. It cannot detect aggregate ideological movement on the part of all members of Congress,[24] and it will attribute unilateral movement by a subset of continuing legislators to both that subset and (in the opposite direction) to other continuers.

Given the difficulties outlined above, replacement and adaption among Southern MCs are best understood in relative terms. One revealing comparison is the relative importance of replacement and adaption in the non-South as compared to the South. The top row of Figure 2.3 plots average replacement among non-Southern members of the House and Senate in each congress. In most congresses, the magnitude of non-Southern ideological change due to replacement was quite large. Only in the 77th and (in the Senate) the 85th Congresses was average replacement among non-Southerners statistically indistinguishable from 0. Their average adaptation, on the other hand, never exceeded 0.1 in absolute value (Figure 2.3, bottom row). Clearly, in the non-South replacement dominated adaptation as a driver of ideological change during these years.[25] In the South, however, replacement

change between congresses $t-1$ and $t$ is

$$\begin{aligned}
\bar{\Delta}_{g,t} &= \bar{\theta}_{g,t} - \bar{\theta}_{g,t-1} \\
&= (p^C_{g,t} \times \bar{\theta}^C_{g,t} + [1 - p^C_{g,t}] \times \bar{\theta}^{C'}_{g,t}) - (p^C_{g,t-1} \times \bar{\theta}^C_{g,t-1} + [1 - p^C_{g,t-1}] \times \bar{\theta}^{C'}_{g,t-1}) \\
&\approx p^C_g(\bar{\theta}^C_{g,t} - \bar{\theta}^C_{g,t-1}) + (1 - p^C_g)(\bar{\theta}^{C'}_{g,t} - \bar{\theta}^{C'}_{g,t-1}) \\
&= p^C_g \bar{A}_{g,t} + (1 - p^C_g)\bar{R}_{g,t} \qquad (2.5)
\end{aligned}$$

where the approximate equality in the third line is exact if the number of legislators in group $g$ is constant between congresses, implying $p^C_{g,t} = p^C_{g,t-1} = p^C_g$. Since the number of Southern Democrats in Congress is quite stable over these period, the approximation is quite accurate for this group of legislators.

[24]Other approaches, such as the policy measures Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson (2002) employ, may be better suited to this purpose.

[25]There is an obvious correspondence between ideological shifts due to replacement and partisan electoral swings. Congresses in which incoming non-Southerners were more liberal (e.g., 1932, 1948, 1958) coincided with large Democratic membership gains, whereas conservative swings followed pro-Republican elections (1938, 1942, 1946, 1950, 1960). As Figure 2.1 shows, these partisan swings caused corresponding (though

was a far less important mechanism of ideological change, and adaptation loomed larger in relative terms (see Figure 2.4).[26] Average replacement among Southern Democrats was slightly larger in magnitude than average adaptation, but in many congresses the difference between the two mechanisms was not statistically distinguishable from 0 (see Figure 2.5).[27]

What were the relative contributions of replacement and adaptation to the conservative migration of Southern Democrats that occurred between the 1930s and mid-1940s (see Section 2.3)? One way to answer this question is to compare the magnitude of average replacement and average adaptation, as in Figure 2.5. This figure indicates that in most congresses between the 73rd and the 79th, ideological replacement was greater in magnitude than adaptation. The 76th House is an interesting exception, given that historical accounts have generally emphasized the electoral defeats of Roosevelt-endorsed pro–New Deal candidates in the 1938 primaries (Dunn, 2010). These liberal defeats notwithstanding, incoming Southern Democrats in the 76th House were not significantly more conservative than those they replaced, in contrast to continuing House Southerners, who clearly moved to the right relative to the previous congress (Figure 2.4, left panels).[28] Still, average replacement among Southerners was generally larger than their average adaptation in the congresses during which their ideological migration took place.

Another perspective, perhaps more revealing, is provided by weighting adaptation and replacement by the proportion of Southern Democrats subject to each mechanism.[29] An ap-

more muted) changes in the ideological location of the House and Senate medians and veto pivots.

[26]Ideological replacement tends to be much less precisely estimated due to the dearth of turnover in the South (no new Southern Democratic senators were elected in 1958 or 1960, so the 86th and 87th Congresses are not included in the plots).

[27]It is not surprising that incoming MCs in the South tended to be more ideologically similar to their predecessors than in the two-party non-South, where new MCs often succeeded a member of the opposite party. If we compare Southern Democrats separately with Northern Democrats and with Republicans, regional differences in ideological replacement vanish. In most congresses, the absolute magnitude of ideological change due to replacement among Southern Democrats was not statistically different from that among Northern Democrats or Republicans. In the House, the estimated magnitude of ideological change due to replacement ($|\hat{\bar{R}}|$) among Southern Democrats was significantly different from that among Northern Democrats in the 76th ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.07$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{ND} = 0.44$), 79th ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.16$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{ND} = 0.42$), and 81st ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.10$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{ND} = 0.56$) Congresses, and from Republican replacement in the 81st ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.10$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{GOP} = 0.23$), 85th ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.04$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{GOP} = 0.47$), and 86th ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.36$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{GOP} = -0.09$) Congresses. In the Senate, the magnitude of Southern Democratic replacement differed significantly from that among Northern Democrats in the 74th ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = 0.53$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{ND} = -0.07$), 75th ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.03$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{ND} = 0.49$), 79th ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.12$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{ND} = 0.51$), 81st ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = 0.65$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{ND} = 0.15$), 82nd ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.94$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{ND} = -0.12$), and 84th ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = 0.11$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{ND} = 0.68$) Congresses, and from Republican replacement in the 81st ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = 0.65$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{GOP} = 0.31$), 82nd ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.94$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{GOP} = 0.31$), and 83rd ($\hat{\bar{R}}_{SD} = -0.11$, $\hat{\bar{R}}_{GOP} = -0.31$) Congresses.

[28]The posterior probability that (rightward) adaptation was larger than replacement in the 76th House is 87%.

[29]To see why such a perspective is useful, consider the following scenario. Suppose that between two congresses, the occupant of a only single Southern House seat changed, while all of the hundred-odd other Southern representatives remained in office in both congresses. Suppose further that the average ideological

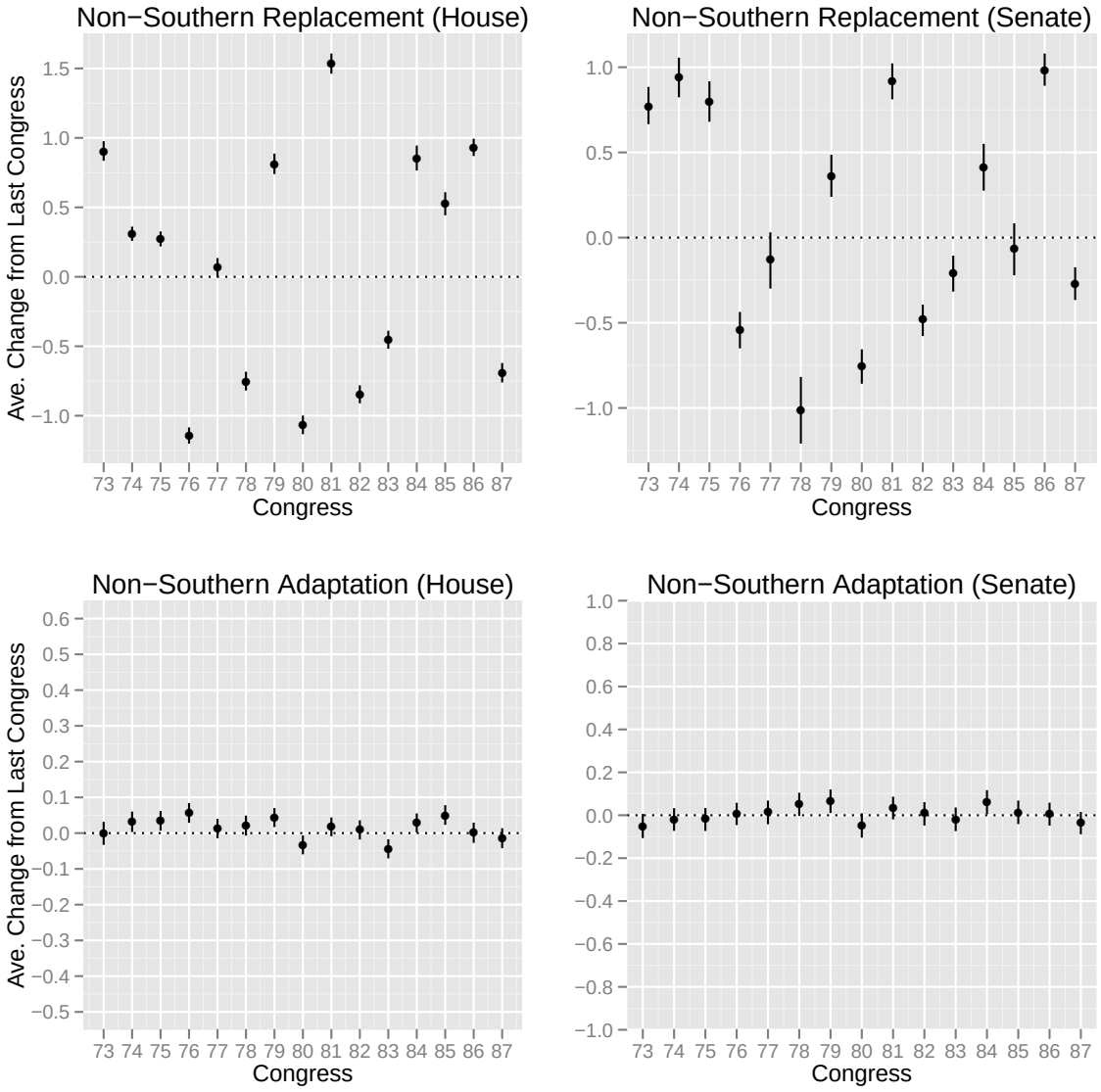



Figure 2.3: Ideological replacement (top panels) and adaptation (bottom panels) among non-Southerners in the House (left) and Senate (right). Replacement is defined as the difference between the average ideal point among entering members in congress $t$ and exiting members in congress $t-1$. Points indicate the median of the posterior distribution, and lines represent 90% credible intervals.

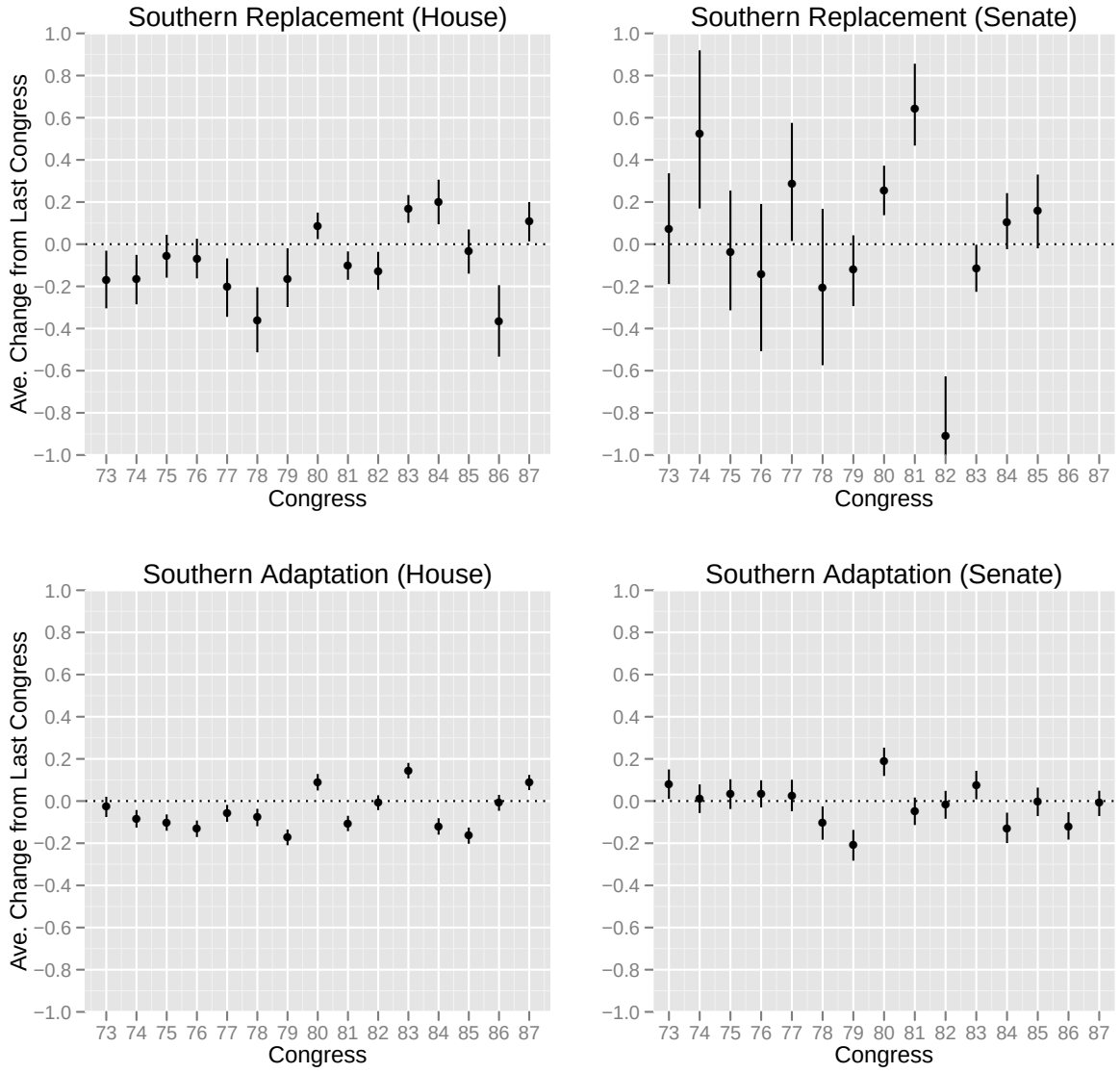



Figure 2.4: Ideological replacement (top panels) and adaptation (bottom panels) among Southern Democrats in the House (left) and Senate (right). Points indicate the median posterior estimate, with 90% credible intervals. No new Southerners entered the Senate in the 86th or 87th Congresses, so Southern replacement in these congresses is not defined.

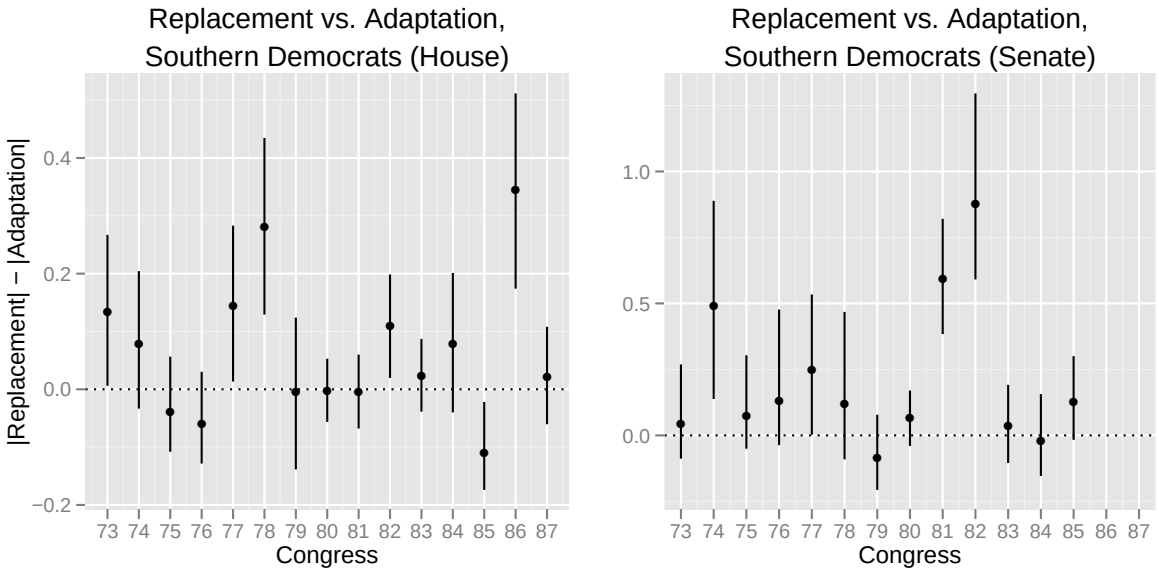



Figure 2.5: Estimated difference between the absolute values of average replacement and average adaption among Southern Democrats in the House (left) and Senate (right). Points indicate the posterior mean and lines the 90% credible interval. No new Southerners entered the Senate in the 86th or 87th Congresses, so replacement in these congresses is not defined.

proximate formula for the proportional contribution of adaptation to the average ideological change among Southern Democrats is $p^C_{SD,t} \times \bar{A}_{SD,t}/\bar{\Delta}_{SD,t}$, where for Southern Democrats in congress $t$, $p^C_{SD,t}$ is the proportion of members continuing from the previous congress, $\bar{A}_{SD,t}$ is the average adaptation, and $\bar{\Delta}_{SD,t}$ is the average ideological change (for details, see footnote 23). This formula is only useful if replacement and adaptation reinforce each other (that is, push in the same direction), which in the House they do in almost every congress.[30] In the Senate, the direction of replacement and adaptation coincided only about half the time, but they did do so in the two congresses (the 78th and 79th) over which Southern senators' conservative shift primarily took place. In each of these congresses, about 85% of the total ideological change among Southern senators was attributable to adaptation rather than

replacement in the one seat that turned over was $-1$, but the average adaptation in the hundred continuing seats was $-0.1$. Would it not be correct to conclude that adaptation contributed more than replacement to the aggregate ideological movement of Southern Democrats?

[30]Among House Southerners, replacement and adaptation had the same sign (i.e., more liberal or more conservative) in every congress except the 85th (1955–56). The divergence between the ideological direction of replacement and adaptation in this Congress is possibly attributable to the timing of the Supreme Court's *Brown* decision. Though the decision was handed down on May 17, 1954, before most Southern primaries, the conservative political reaction in the South took until the following year to really emerge. Thus, the 1954 primaries, in which such liberals as Alabama Governor "Big Jim" Folsom were elected, were shaped by (liberalizing) trends that had dramatically reversed by the following year.

replacement.[31] In the House, where Southern Democrats' conservative migration occurred gradually over seven congresses between 1931 and 1945, the contribution of adaptation averaged 70% (ranging from 34% in the 73rd Congress to 89% in the 75th).[32] Thus, while replacement was a slightly stronger force for ideological change among Southerners, adaptation was ultimately more important because it affected many more MCs.

To summarize: consistent with the conventional scholarly view, replacement was far and away the most important mechanism of ideological change among non-Southern members of Congress in this period. Among Southern Democrats, however, this was not the case. Average differences between entering members and those they replaced were only marginally larger than changes among continuing members. Further, if average adaptation is weighted by the proportion of Southern Democrats continuing from the previous congress, it becomes clear that adaptation, not replacement, was the primary driver of the South's conservative migration in Congress. This finding contradicts the prevailing view of ideological change in Congress and suggests that Southern members of Congress responded differently to changing political conditions than did non-Southern members. In the North, conservative swings in the electorate resulted in the replacement of liberal Democrats with conservative Republicans, whereas in the South ideological change occurred more incrementally, through the adaptation of incumbents or their replacement with by successors who were less ideologically distant than a cross-partisan would be.

## 2.5 Diversity: The South Was a "They," Not an "It"

The phrases "Southern bloc" and "Southern caucus," often paired with the adjectives "conservative" or "reactionary," appear with great frequency in both scholarly and non-scholarly accounts of Southerners in Congress (e.g., Hofstadter, 1949). Less nuanced accounts employ these terms to portray Southerners as a single political actor in Congress, whereas more careful works reiterate V. O. Key's judgement that on issues besides civil rights, Southern MCs were ideologically diverse. Even those in the second camp, however, are apt to emphasize the unity of the Southern caucus. In his classic journalistic account of the U.S. Senate, Theodore White writes:

> Though [this] sectional group is on some issues thoroughly divided, having its right and left wings on tax policy, housing and the like, there is in it at the last analysis a oneness found nowhere else in politics.... A Byrd of Virginia may look with troubled eyes upon the economic heresies of a Sparkman of Alabama,

[31] 91% of Southern senators who voted in the 78th Congress were continuers (i.e., voted in the 77th as well). In the 79th, 79% were continuers.

[32] In the 73rd Congress, adaptation contributed 34% of ideological change (76% of Southern Democrats in the House were continuers); 73% in the 74th (84% continuers), 89% in the 75th (82% continuers), 87% in the 76th (77% continuers), 65% in the 77th (87% continuers), 56% in the 78th (85% continuers), and 88% in the 79th (87% continuers).

> and a Sparkman may somberly return the gaze at what he thinks is the aura of parsimony rising about the seat of the senior Senator from Virginia. Nevertheless, when all is said and done, all are in the same clan, in a way that goes deeper than political ideas and even political conviction (1957, p. 74).

In the same vein, Katznelson and Mulroy (2012), characterize Southern Democrats in this era as a "quasi-party," a coherent "unit of action" on par with Republicans and Northern Democrats in national politics (see also Farhang and Katznelson, 2005; Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993).

Treating groups of individuals in Congress—or in any institutional setting—as unitary actors can yield a substantial analytic payoff. But it can also be misleading.[33] It implies that Southern Democrats were either unified in their preferences or possessed organizational mechanisms for collective action, both of which are empirically dubious. As both White and Katznelson et al. acknowledge and this section will demonstrate empirically, Southern MCs displayed diverse preferences on economic issues. Even at their peak of ideological distinctiveness, the distribution of Southern ideal points overlapped considerably with Republicans and Northern Democrats (who overlapped very little with each other). To borrow a phrase from Shepsle (1992), the South was a "they," not an "it."[34]

Given that Southerners had diverse economic policy preferences, what would justify treating them as a single actor? One would be if the decisions of the Southern caucus—as, say, determined by the caucus median—were binding on its members. Formal models of the endogenous formation of legislative factions depend critically on the assumption of such a commitment mechanism (Eguia, 2010). Such devices were crucial to the effectiveness of earlier factional grouping in Congress. Progressive House Republicans in the early 20th century, for example, repeatedly failed in their attempts to challenge Speaker Joseph Cannon due to his use of institutional prerogatives to block Progressive initiatives and pick off marginal members. Only after they finally developed the formal organization necessary to coordinate their activities and prevent defection did the Progressive insurgency enjoy any success (Bloch Rubin, 2012).

On issues other than civil rights, the Southern caucus conspicuously lacked formal organization or disciplinary tools. This is not to say that individual Southerners, such as House Rules Chairman Howard Smith (D-VA) or Senator Richard Russell (D-GA), did not influence

[33]For a classic comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of this kind of analytic simplification, see Allison's "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis" (1969).

[34]To be fair, the analogy to Shepsle (1992) is not perfect since his argument rests on Arrow's (1963[1951]) famous theorem that majority-rule voting need not produce coherent or collectively optimal decisions except under particular conditions. Among these those conditions, however, are single-peaked, unidimensional spatial preferences, which are assumed by the model used in the present analysis. Under these conditions, a unique structure-induced equilibrium does result: the outcome preferred by the median voter (Shepsle and Weingast, 1995, p. 24). But even so, reducing the preference of Southern Democrats to their median only makes sense if there were some sort of mechanism for binding Southerners to vote with their caucus median on the chamber floor.

their fellow Southerners and occupy positions of institutional power. Rather, their influence on economic issues was generally episodic and limited. They were, according to Jackson (1974, pp. 77–78), primarily "spokesmen rather than cue-givers."[35] Even in the area of civil rights, where the Southern MCs had very similar policy preferences and engaged in extensive organization since in the late 1930s, the caucus could not prevent defection from caucus decisions. In 1957, for example, the Southern caucus decided unanimously not to filibuster the watered-down Civil Rights Act of that year, but they could do little more than fume when Sen. Strom Thurmond (D-SC) broke the agreement and filibustered anyway (Finley, 2003, pp. 215–17).

The purpose of this section is not to dispute the claim that Southern Democrats were a "coherent cluster" in Congress (Katznelson and Mulroy, 2012). Rather, it is to allow Southerners' ideological distinctiveness, as well as their internal diversity, to emerge from the data using a spatial IRT model blind to potential groupings of MCs. The drawbacks inherent in likeness, cohesion, and conservative-coalition are thus avoided (see Section 2.2). The model assumes that legislators' decisions are independent, meaning that they do not depend on the closeness of the vote or the votes of their co-partisans (Krehbiel, 1991, 1993, 1998).[36] To the extent that it exists, Southern voting cohesion—like that of the conservative coalition (Brady and Bullock, 1980)—is presumed to be due to similarity of their policy preferences, not their internal organizational structure.

Figures 2.6 (House) and 2.7 (Senate) plot the density of estimated ideal points among Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Republicans, providing a clearer sense of the ideological diversity within the three groups than can be seen in Figure 2.1 (density plots of first-dimension DW-NOMINATE scores look similar; see Figures A.1 and A.2 in Appendix A). Some interesting differences between the House and Senate emerge from these figures. Especially after the 72nd Congress, the distributions of Republicans and Northern Democrats in the House barely overlapped, exhibiting nearly the degree of partisan polarization we observe in the contemporary Congress. Before the 1940s, the same was true of Republicans and Southern Democrats: although Southern Democrats became more conservative on average than Northern Democrats in the 75th Congress (1937–38; see Section 2.3), their ideological distribution did not begin to overlap substantially with Republicans' until the 78th or 79th Congress. Another pattern in the House data, apparent in Figure 2.1 as well, is that election years with large partisan turnover (which was almost entirely confined to the North) did not substantially alter the shape of the distribution of ideal points, only the number of legislators in each group. The 80th Congress, for example, saw a large influx

[35]Clapp (1963, p. 363) claims that on issues where Southern preferences were week, Smith could sway about a third of Southern members to his side. Jackson (1974, pp. 77–78, 83–84) finds little evidence that Russell or other informal cue-givers influenced the votes of Southern senators in the 1961–63 period.

[36]Independence across legislators is represented in the assumption of i.i.d. errors in Equation 2.3. An alternative would be to allow for dependence among the votes of members of the same party or regional group, or dependence on the closeness of the vote. See Snyder and Groseclose (2000, 2001) and McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal (2001) for different approaches to this problem.

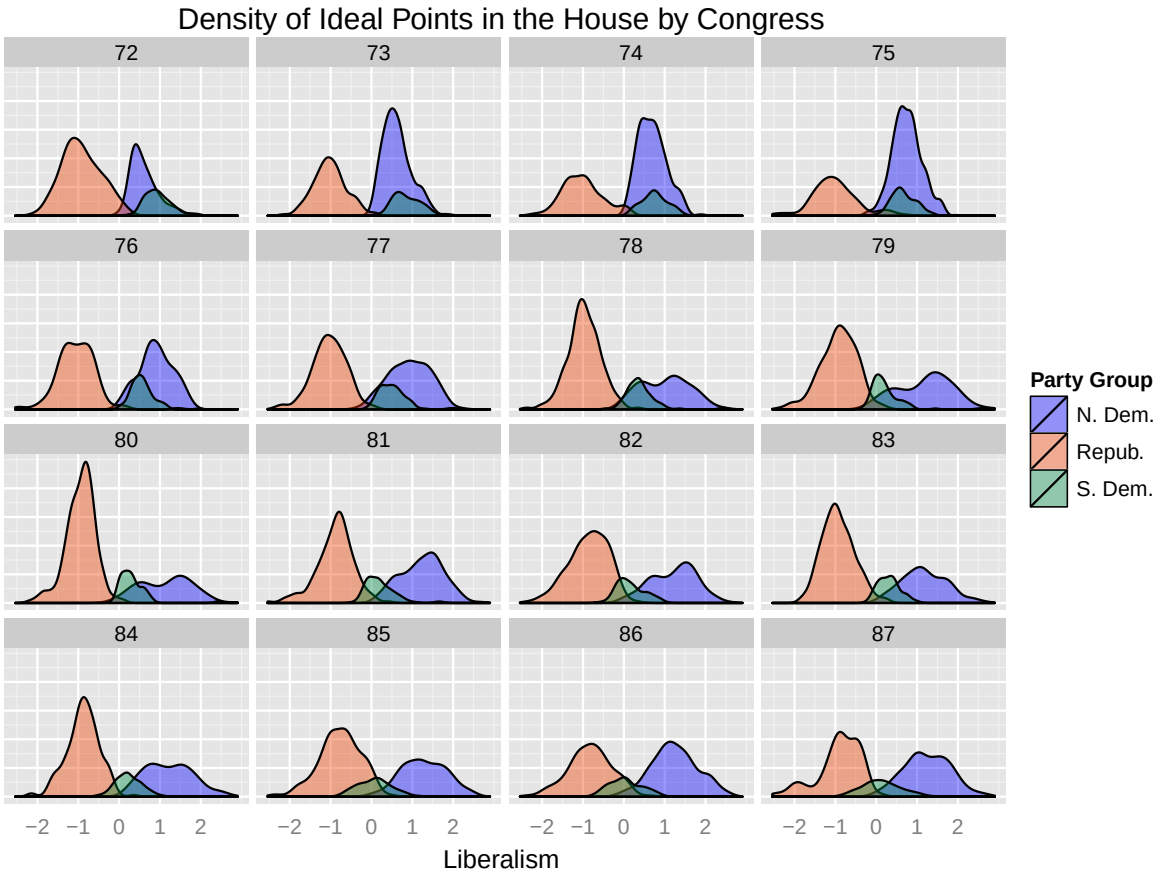



Figure 2.6: Density of ideal points among Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Republicans in the House. Densities have been normalized to be proportional to group size.

of Republicans following the 1946 elections, which decimated Northern Democrats. Though the relative proportions of Northern Democrats and Republicans changed, their distributions did not.

For the most part, changes in the House occurred gradually. The distribution of Southern ideal points, while remaining relatively compact, moved slowly towards the middle of the ideological spectrum. The distribution of Northern Democrats, initially as compact as that of Southern Democrats, widened out as the number of strong liberals increased. The patterns of intra-group heterogeneity are presented more directly in Figure 2.8, which plots the standard deviation of ideal points in each group over time. The standard deviation of Republican ideal points, like their mean, remained basically constant over this entire period. In the first half of the 1930s, both Northern and Southern Democrats were more homogenous than Republicans. The ideological diversity of Northern Democrats, however, increased rapidly beginning in the

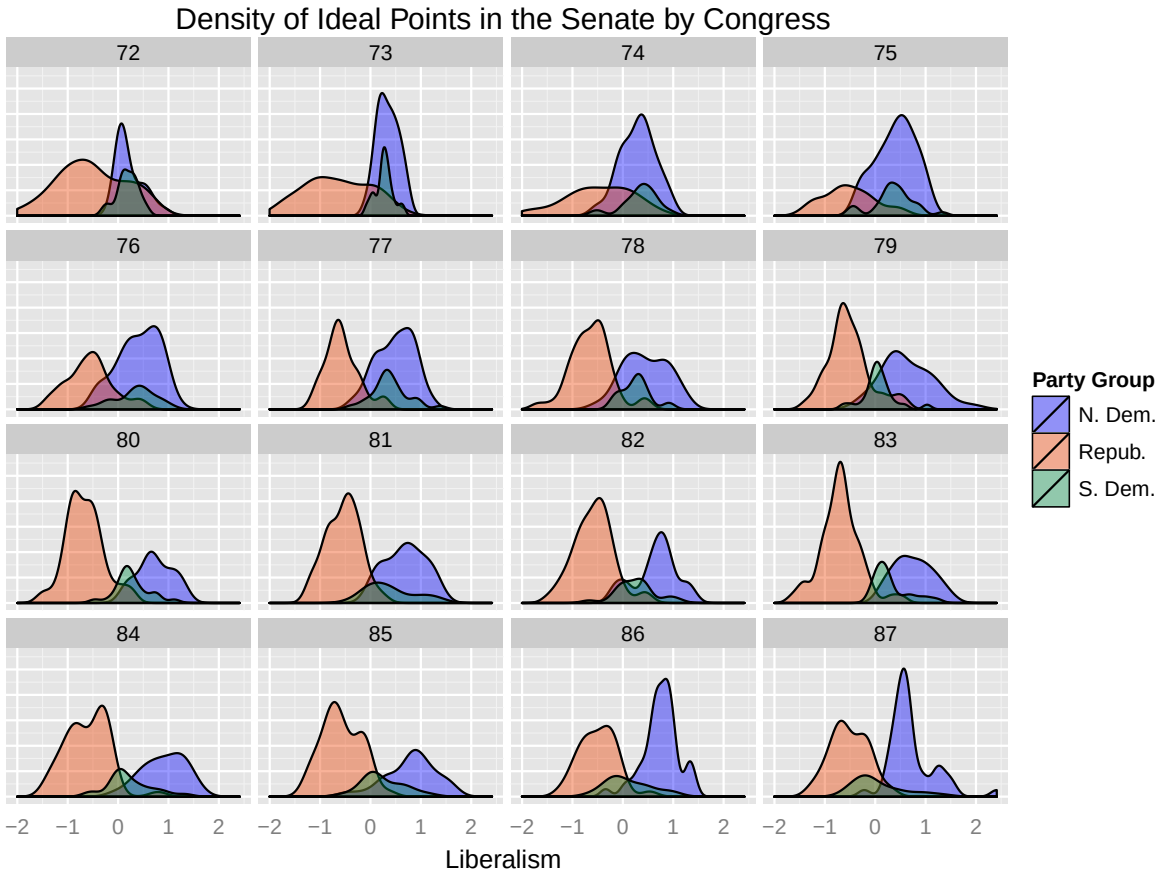



Figure 2.7: Density of ideal points among Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Republicans in the Senate. Densities have been normalized to be proportional to group size.

76th Congress (1939–40), peaking in the 79th and 80th Congresses (1945–48) before falling to a level just above that of Republicans.[37]

Ideological patterns in the Senate substantially diverge from those in the House (see Figure 2.7). For one thing, there is much more ideological overlap across groups than in the House. This is partially a consequence of the large contingent of liberal and moderate Republican senators, who despite Western progressives' declining enthusiasm for the New Deal remained a force in the Senate throughout the period. There was also a substantial, though dwindling, contingent of conservative Northern Democrats in the Senate.[38] As a

[37]The standard deviations of Northern and Southern Democratic ideal points were statistically indistinguishable though the mid-1930s, but after the 75th Congress (1937–38) the posterior probability that Northern Democrats were more diverse was essentially 100%.

[38]The ranks of conservative Democratic senators included Royal Copeland (D-NY), Peter Gerry (D-RI), and Edward Burke (D-NE) (Patterson, 1966, p. 759).

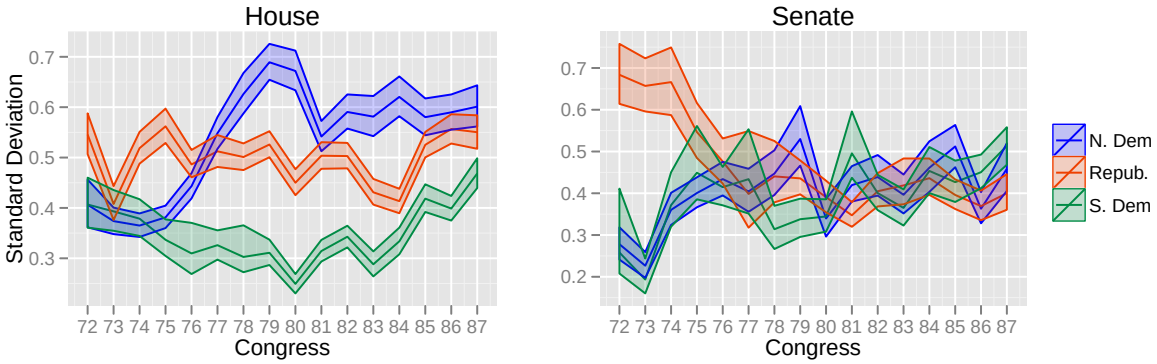



Figure 2.8: Ideological diversity within party groups in the House (top) and Senate (bottom).

result, Republicans and Northern Democrats were less polarized in the Senate than in the House. But Southerners were more diverse in the Senate as well, as the bottom panel of Figure 2.8 shows. In the early 1930s, Republican senators were much more heterogeneous than either group of Democrats, but over the decade Republican diversity decreased while that of Northern and Southern Democrats increased in tandem.[39] After 1940, the standard deviations of all three groups in the Senate were approximately equal.

The findings here—that Southern Democrats were about as diverse as Northern Democrats in the Senate and markedly less diverse in the House—conflict with Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder's claim that in the 1933–50 period, Southerners were "significantly less united than the non-southern Democrats in all areas but civil rights" (1993, p. 291).[40] The discrepancy between the two findings is probably the result of several factors. One is that the cohesion measure used by Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993) will understate the ideological unity of centrist groups of legislators (like Southern Democrats) if midpoints are clustered near the middle of the ideological spectrum, as they are likely to be. Southerners split more frequently on this measure because roll call midpoints often fell in the midst of the caucus. For their part, ideal-point estimates, especially of extremists, are sensitive to parametric assumptions, such as whether legislators' spatial utility functions are quadratic or Gaussian

[39]The standard deviations of Northern and Southern Democratic ideal points in the Senate are statistically indistinguishable in most Congresses. The posterior probability that Southerners were more diverse peaks in the 75th Congress at 88% and again in the 81st (98%), 86th (100%), and 87th (93%) Congresses. The probability that Southerners were less diverse is greatest in the 73rd (87%), 78th (100%), 79th (100%), 82nd (87%), and 85th (99%) Congresses. No obvious temporal trends are apparent.

[40]The picture in the House alters somewhat when a 17-state definition of the South (favored by Farhang and Katznelson, 2005) is used instead of the 11-state one. Under the alternative definition, which includes Border states, Southern diversity increased fairly steadily over the course of the 1940s and 1950s, reaching a level comprable to the other two groups by the end of the period (see Figure A.3 in the Appendix). The results based the 13-state definition (Confederacy plus Kentucky and Oklahoma) used by Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993) are substantially the same as those based on the 11-state definition.

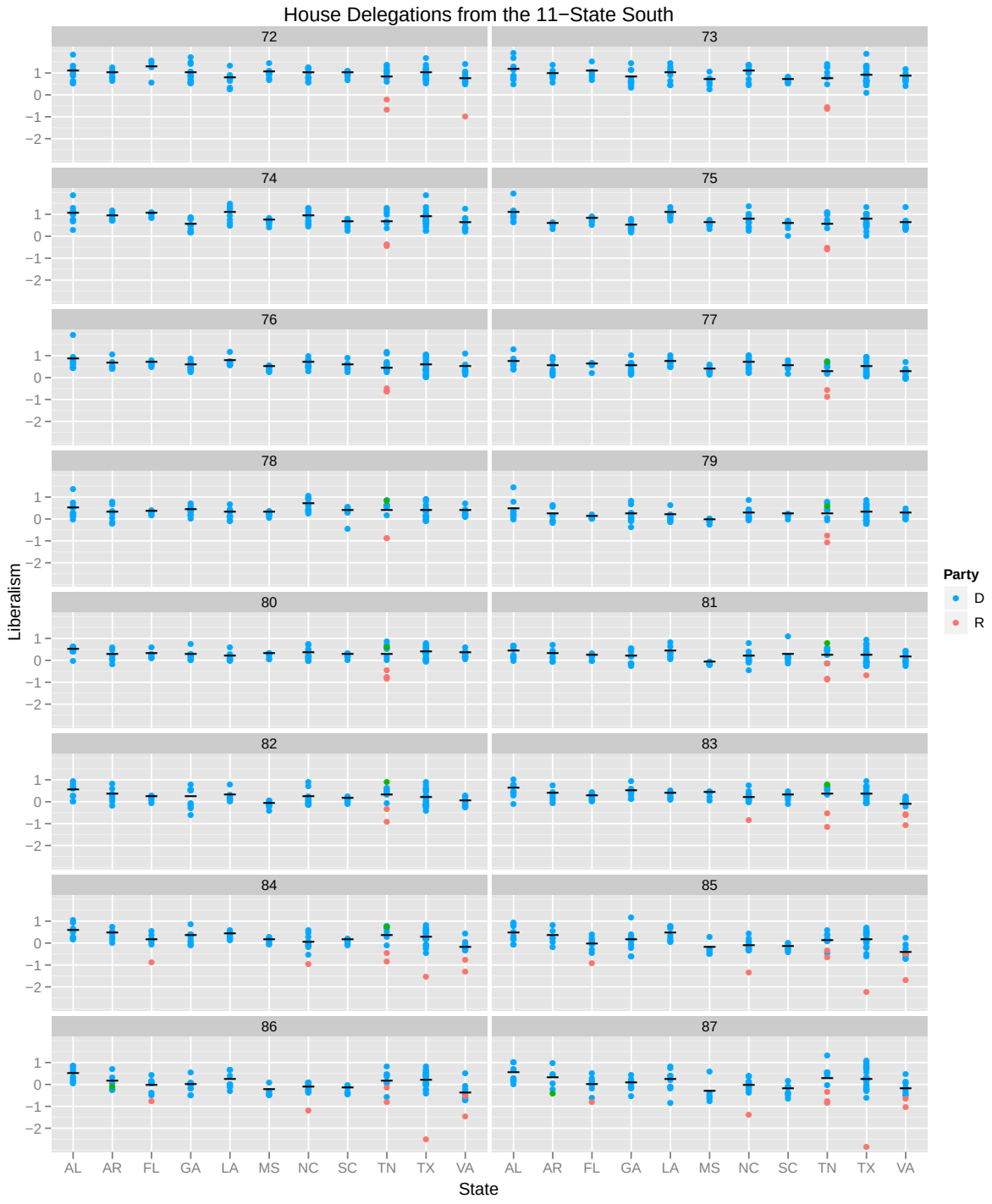



Figure 2.9: Ideological diversity of House delegations from the 11-state South. Dots indicate the ideal points of individual MCs, bars the mean within each delegation (including Republicans).

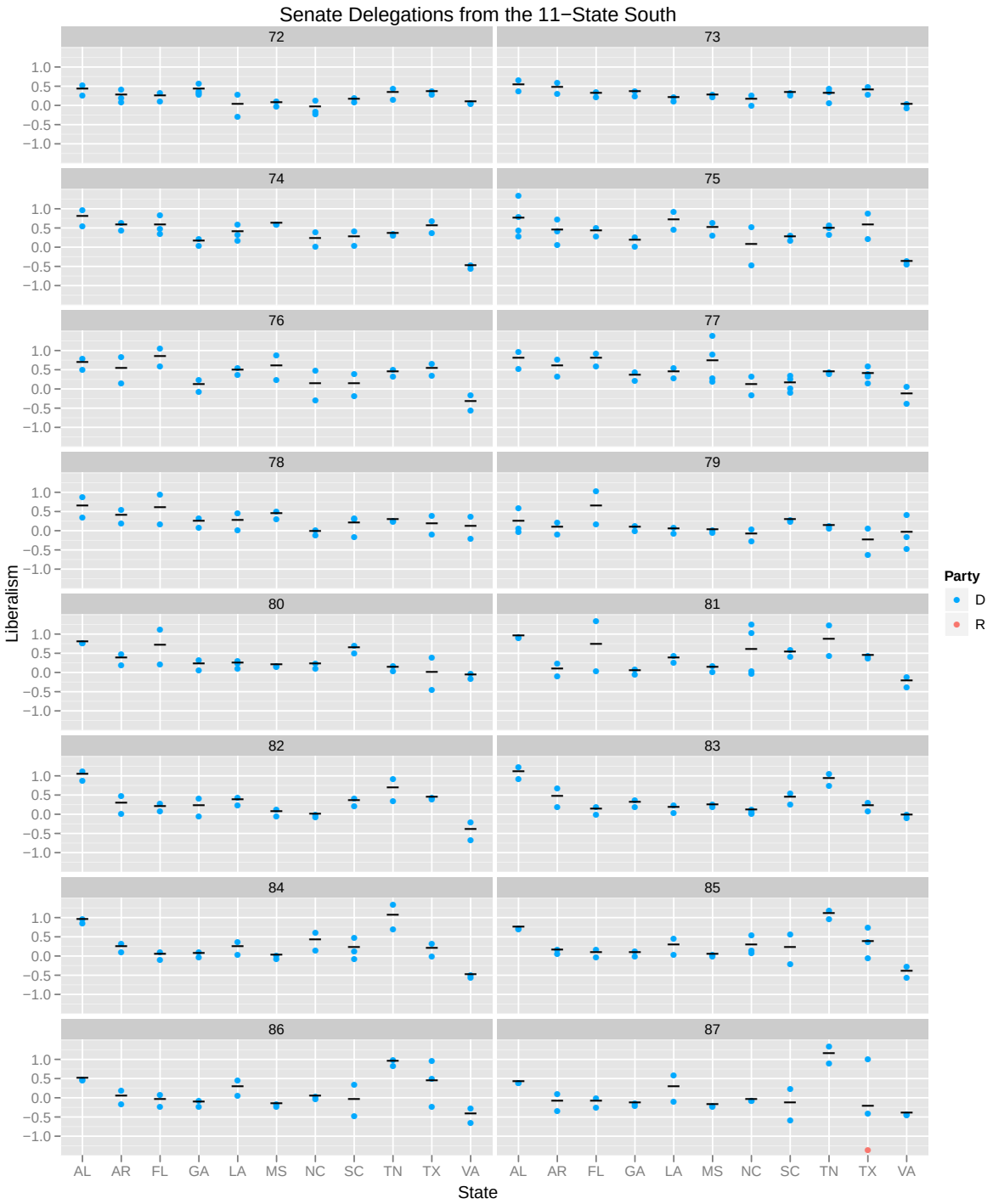



Figure 2.10: Ideological diversity of Senate delegations from the 11-state South. Dots indicate the ideal points of individual MCs, bars the mean within each delegation (including Republicans).

Figure 2.11: Map of IRT ideal-point estimates of House members from the 13-state South, in the 74th (top), 80th (middle), and 86th (bottom) Congresses. Color scales differ across maps. Gray represents either (a) districts represented by a Republican (e.g., districts in eastern Tennessee and Kentucky); (b) districts whose representative did not cast enough roll-call votes, typically because they were Speaker of the House (Byrns [TN] in the 74th and Rayburn [TX] in the 86th); or (c) counties split between two districts (Orleans Parish, Louisiana and Harris County, Texas).

(Carroll et al., 2009a, p. 564). Such sensitivity to assumptions is an inevitable consequence of mapping dichotomous data to a latent ideological continuum.[41]

Other possible sources of discrepancy include the issue areas examined by Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993) and the fact that they pool together House and Senate roll calls. These discrepancies notwithstanding, two conclusions seem clear. First, based on a spatial measure that is not sensitive to the distribution of midpoints, there is no evidence that Southern MCs were more heterogeneous than Northern Democrats. In fact, the evidence for the House suggests the opposite. On the other hand, there is also little evidence for the common presumption that Southern Democrats were an ideologically monolithic bloc. Southern Democrats were ideologically diverse, if not quite as diverse as Northern Democrats. Figure 2.11 maps the ideological diversity of Southern Democrats in the House for the 74th (1935–36), 80th (1947–48), and 86th (1959–60) Congresses.

Figures 2.9 and 2.10, which plot the distribution of House and Senate ideal points in each Southern state, offer another perspective on the internal diversity of the Southern caucus. The predictors of ideological variation among Southern MCs will be examined in detail in later chapters, but for now it is worth examining the state-level variation within the South. One fairly obvious pattern to note in the is that, with only a couple exceptions, Southern Republicans were more conservative than even the most conservative Southern Democrats. The substance of Southern Republican conservatism was well summarized by Senator John Tower (R-TX)—the only red dot in Figure 2.10—who after his 1961 election declared, "I am against federal aid to education, medical care for the aged, higher taxes, foreign aid both economic and military, and wasteful domestic spending" (Black and Black, 2002, p. 90).

In addition to being clearly distinguishable from Southern Republicans, Southern Democrats from different states also differed from each other, though to a varying degree over time. One way to measure how much ideological variation occurred across states as opposed to within

[41] One way to reduce dependence on parametric assumptions is to analyze the ranks of estimated ideal points. In the House, the standard deviation of the ranks of Northern Democrats was nearly always significantly greater than of Southern Democrats. The main exception was the 85th Congress (1957–58), when the ranks of Southerners were clearly more diverse. In the Senate, the pattern is muddier. In terms of ranks, Southern senators tended to be more diverse after 1947, whereas before then Northern Democrats tended to be as or more diverse than Southerners. Comparisons based on ranks can be misleading because the rank of each ideal point depends on the location of other ideal points. A group whose ideological distribution overlaps greatly with other groups, as Southern Democrats' did, will have a larger standard deviation of ranks because its members' ideal points are more likely to be intermixed with the ideal points of other groups.

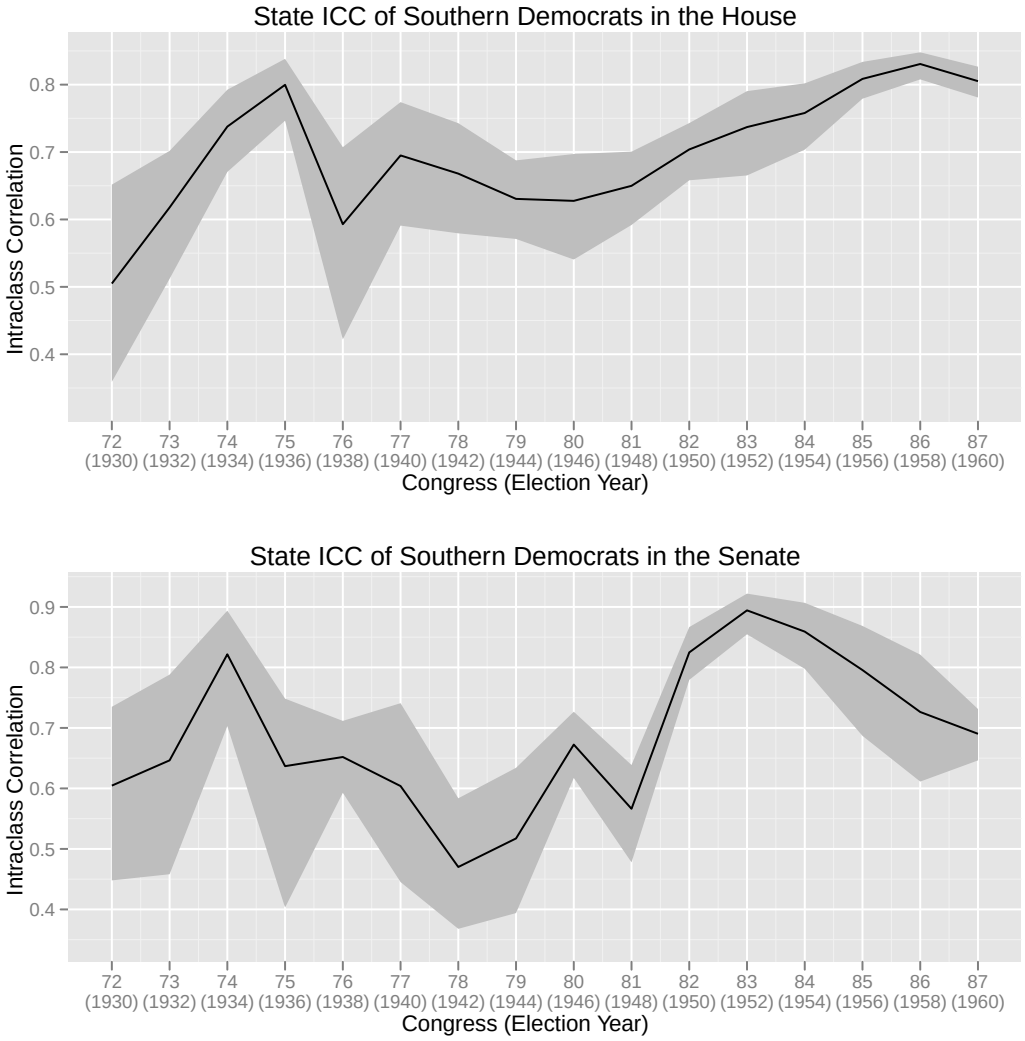



Figure 2.12: Intraclass correlations with respect to state among Southern Democrats in the House (top) and Senate (bottom). The black line indicates the median of the posterior distribution; the shaded region indicates the 90% credible interval around the estimate.

them is the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) of ideal points with respect to states.[42] In essence, the ICC measures the proportion of the ideological variance in the Southern Democratic caucus "explained" by state differences—that is, the degree to which Southern MCs were ideologically similar to other MCs from their same state, relative to the overall variation in the caucus. As Figure 2.12 illustrates, the ICC of Southern Democratic state delegations fluctuated over time, and the trends in the House and Senate were similar though not identical. In both chambers, the ICC was relatively low at the beginning of the period, with state differences capturing about 50% to 60% of the ideological variance. Within-state similarity peaked in the mid-to-late 1930s, then declined before rising to a new peak in the 1950s (early '50s in the Senate, late '50s in the House). Despite the fact that senators from same state shared the same geographic constituency while House members do not, there is little evidence that the ICC was higher in the Senate than the House.[43]

Figure 2.13 corroborates many of the trends in the ICC. This figure plots, for each chamber, the estimated rank of the mean ideal point in each Democratic state delegation in the South, along with the 90% credible interval around the estimated rank (more liberal state delegations are ranked higher). Generally speaking, when the ICC is relatively low, the rankings of states is uncertain. The rankings are generally more precise in later congresses, when the ICC is also higher. Many states fluctuate in rank over time, but some patterns can be discerned. The Virginia House and (especially) Senate delegations are consistently among the most conservative in the South. Mississippi and South Carolina also tend to be relatively conservative, especially in the House. The Alabama delegations are always among the most liberal, often vying with Tennessee for the top spot. Louisiana is an intriguing case due to wide swings the ideological rankings of its House and Senate delegations. Between the 77th and 78th Congresses, for example, the Louisiana House delegation switched from tied for most liberal to tied for most conservative. Louisiana made the opposite switch between the 80th and 81st Congresses.[44]

[42]The ICC varies from 0 to 1 and measures the degree to which scores vary between groups (in this case, states) rather than within them. There are a variety of ways to calculate the ICC. Here the simplest formula is used, the sample variance of group means divided by the sum of the between-group variance and the within-group (residual) variance: $\text{ICC} = s_b^2/(s_b^2 + s_w^2)$. This formula is equivalent to $\text{ICC} = F/(F+1)$, where the $F$-statistic is the ratio of the between-group and within-group variances.

[43]This may reflect senators' ability to construct different personalized electoral coalitions in the same state. Grantham (1988, pp. 130–32) notes that even ideologically similar senators, such as Eastland and Stennis in Mississippi and Hill and Sparkman in Alabama, had distinct reelection constituencies.

[44]The fluctuations in Louisiana's ideological rankings may be partly due to its distinctive bifactionalism, though the ranking switches don't always map onto changes in the fortunes of the Long and anti-Long factions.

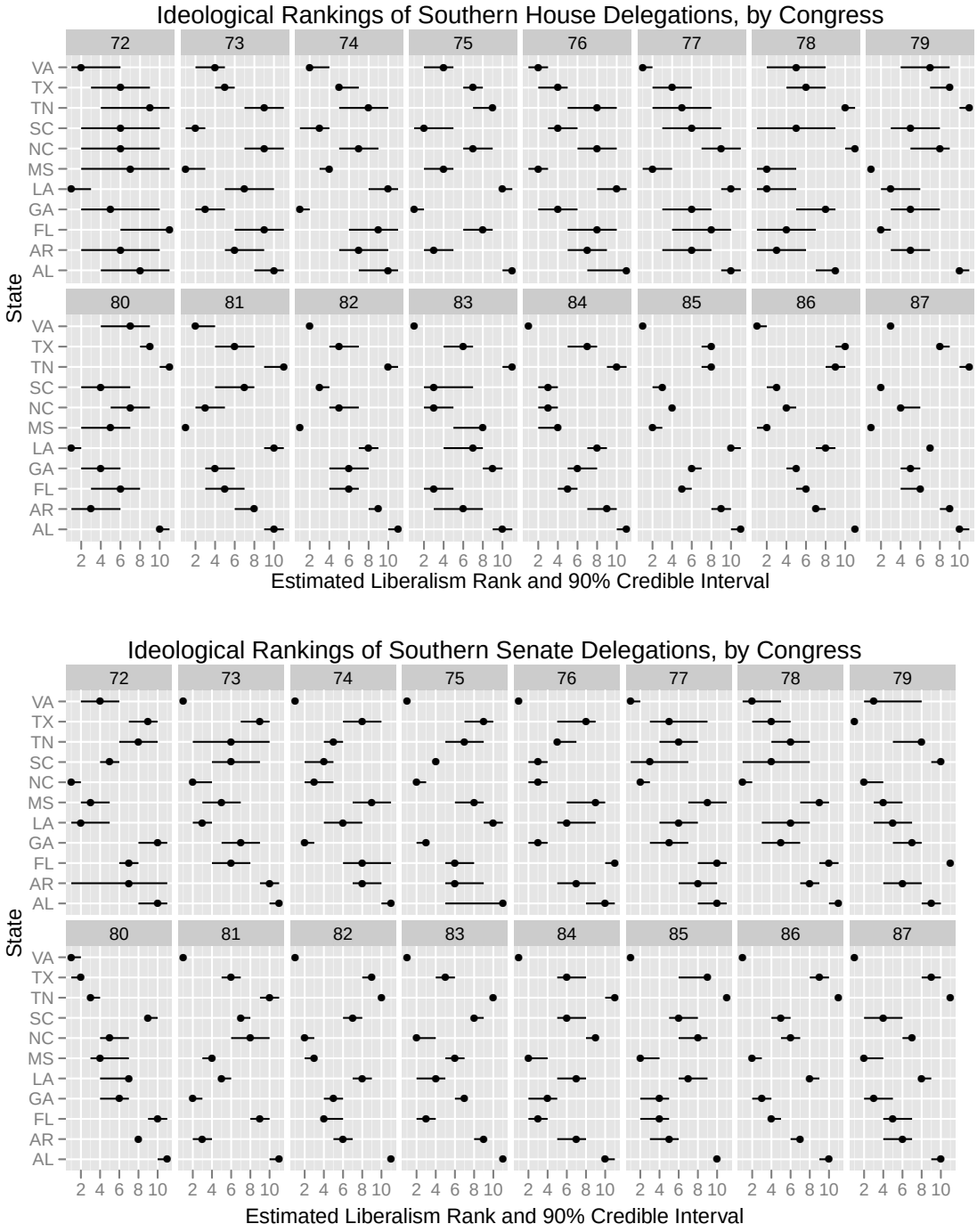



Figure 2.13: Rankings of the mean ideal point in Democratic House (top) and Senate (bottom) delegations in the 11-state South, by Congress. The median of the posterior distribution of ranks is plotted, along with the 90% credible interval. Higher ranks are more liberal.

## 2.6 The Pivotal South

A number of recent works have noted Southern Democrats' "pivotal" position in Congress during this period, especially between the late 1930s and early 1950s (e.g., Brown, 1999; DiSalvo, 2010; Farhang and Katznelson, 2005). The emphasis in these works has been that Southern support was a necessary condition for the passage of liberal initiatives, thus giving Southern Democrats a "veto" over such initiatives (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993) As DiSalvo summarizes: "When southerners and nonsouthern Democrats both approved measures they became law; when southerners dissented, they failed or were rewritten with Republicans" (2010, p. 42). Thus these accounts portray Southern support as a sufficient as well as necessary condition for liberal initiatives. Southern Democrats were in an analogous position with regard to conservative proposals, such as tax cuts, social security retrenchment, and labor law revisions (Brown, 1999, pp. 114–29; Farhang and Katznelson, 2005). Of course, this dynamic held only on policy areas in which Northern Democrats and Republicans held opposing preferences and Southerners fell somewhere in between, as was the case with issues of social welfare and economic regulation. Southerners were not pivotal on other issues, most notably civil rights, on which Western Democrats or Midwestern Republicans usually held the balance of power (Caro, 2002; Farhang, 2009).

The theme of the pivotal South has been explored most fully by Katznelson and Mulroy (2012), who describe Southern members of Congress as a "structurally pivotal bloc" in the 1930s and 1940s. Consistent with other accounts in this vein, as well as with their own characterization of Southern Democrats as a coherent "unit of action," Katznelson and Mulroy (2012) apply the notion of pivotality to Southerners as a group. This is a departure from classic accounts of pivotality, such as Shapley and Shubik (1954), which define it as a characteristic of an individual voter.[45] Notwithstanding their different level of analysis, Katznelson and Mulroy's measure of pivotality—which designates a group as pivotal on a given roll call if its votes (cast as a bloc) are necessary and sufficient for a measure to pass—is essentially the same as that developed by Shapley and Shubik (1954).[46] Based on this

[45]Indeed, one of the primary advantages of a pivot-based model is its "analytically parsimonious focus on three legislative pivotal actors" rather than groups of legislators (Krehbiel, 1996, p. 13).

[46]Katznelson and Mulroy (2012, p. 608) classify Southern Democrats as pivotal on a given roll call if and only if (a) the number of Northern Democratic and Republican "yea" votes were not sufficient to pass the proposal, and (b) the number of additional votes needed for passage was smaller than the number of Southern Democrats. On such roll calls, unanimous Southern support would have passed the bill, and unanimous Southern opposition would have blocked it. Although Katznelson and Mulroy (2012) do not note this, their measure is logically equivalent to Shapley and Shubik's classic definition of a pivotal voter as the member of a sequential coalition whose vote is the last needed for the measure to pass (1954, p. 788). The stipulation that the coalition be sequential is substantively meaningful. For example, if coalitions form in ideological order, with the most "enthusiastic" voting first, then the pivotal voter will be an ideological moderate—the median, in the case of a majority vote (Shapley and Shubik, 1954, pp. 791–2). Katznelson and Mulroy's measure thus implicitly assumes that Northern Democrats and Republicans are ideologically extreme (thus most "enthusiastic") and Southerners are moderate. If the groups' ideological positions were different on some issue—say, if Southern Democrats are enthusiastic supporters of agricultural subsidies,

measure, they find that Southern MCs possessed "the capacity to influence the outcome on a majority of the roll calls" in this period and "to block over 80% of those votes on which non-southern Democrats and Republicans had achieved a winning majority" (Katznelson and Mulroy, 2012, p. 608). As with Katznelson's other scholarship, his work with Mulroy emphasizes the centrality of labor issues in Southerners' shift "from a structural to an actual pivot" (p. 614). They also find, however, that the issues on which Southerners exercised their pivotality by voting with Republicans soon extended to regulatory and economic policy more broadly.

In this section, I explore the question of Southern Democrats' pivotal position in Congress from a different perspective, using an individual-level definition of pivotality like Shapley and Shubik (1954) and Krehbiel (1998) rather than a group-level one like Katznelson and Mulroy (2012). I focus on two kinds of pivotal legislators: the median (50th-percentile member) and the veto pivot (67th-percentile member on the president's side of the median). In contrast to Krehbiel (1998), I focus less on the filibuster pivot, for two reasons. First, the threshold for invoking cloture at the time was the same as to override a presidential veto (two-thirds), so in the case of conservative (liberal) proposals under liberal (conservative) presidents, the filibuster and veto pivots were identical. Second, lawmaking in the Senate was substantially more majoritarian in this period than it is in the contemporary Congress, in which filibustering is nearly costless and 60 votes are nearly always required for passage (Mayhew, 2003; Wawro and Schickler, 2006). Thus, except on issues where preferences were intense, such as civil rights, in practice the Senate median was usually pivotal during the years under examination here.

The primary interest of this section is the identity of the pivotal voters in the House and Senate in each congress. This is a question for which MCMC techniques are well suited. One of the main advantages of a Bayesian approach is the ease of forming inferences over any function of the model parameters, even ones without a simple theoretical sampling distribution, such as the median. For example, to estimate the probability that the median member of the House was a Southern Democrat, one simply identifies the median legislator in each MCMC sample and calculates the proportion of samples in which the median was a Southern Democrat (see Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers, 2004, pp. 359–61). Another advantage of this technique is that it permits easy calculation and reporting of the uncertainty of the inferences.

Figure 2.14 plots the posterior probability that the median legislator in the House (above) and Senate (below) was a Southern Democrat, Northern Democrat, Republican, or Independent. As this figure shows, Southern Democrats' move to the middle of the ideological spectrum (see Section 2.3) caused a corresponding increase in their probability of being the median in each chamber. Before the mid-1940s, the median member of both chambers was

Republicans are mostly opposed, and Northern Democrats are relatively indifferent—then the pivotality formula might label Southern Democrats as pivotal when substantively they were not. Thus, Katznelson and Mulroy's pivotality measure presumes the same sort of ideological ordering of legislators that spatial models do.

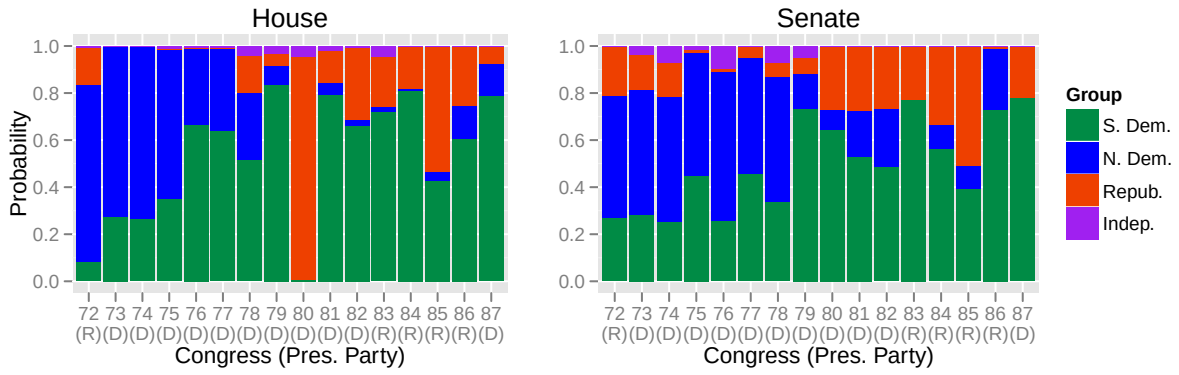



Figure 2.14: Probability that the median legislator on economic issues is a member of different groups, in the House (top) and the Senate (bottom).

almost certainly a Democrat, either Northern or Southern. After that point, the median was most likely a Southern Democrat, but almost certainly *not* a Northern Democrat. Of course, the identity of the median is a product of the composition of the chamber as well as the relative positions of different groups. Accordingly, the Republican-controlled 80th House stands out as a clear exception, as the median was a Republican with near certainty. In the Senate, however, the 80th Congress doesn't stand out at all, with a Southern Democrat most likely remaining the median. The Senate also differs from the House in the abruptness of the increase in Southerners' probability of being the median, reflecting their later and more rapid conservative turn in that chamber.

Over time, the chamber median was increasingly likely to be a Southern Democrat, but what kind of Southern Democrat? Figure 2.15 provides one perspective on this question. It plots the percentage of Southern Democrats estimated to be more liberal than the chamber medians and veto pivots. The percentage for the median indicates the proportion of Southern votes needed for majority passage of a liberal proposal; conservative proposals required 100% minus that percentage.[47] In the House, the proportion of Southern Democrats left of the median fell from nearly 100% to around 60% over the first four congresses in this period. After the 75th (1937–38), however, an interesting reversal began, and the proportion climbed back up, hitting 100% again in the 80th Congress. This reversal occurred because the influx of Republicans in these congresses moved the location of the House median more quickly to the right than Southern Democrats were moving (see Figure 2.1). The percentage of Southern Democrats left of the median dipped to new lows in the 81st and 86th Congresses, both of which saw a large number of conservative Northern Republicans replaced by liberal Democrats. The patterns in the Senate are similar to the House, though they tend to be

[47]Under the assumption of perfect spatial voting under majority rules, the percentages in Figure 2.15 perfectly separate conservative from liberal victories at a given vote threshold (e.g., majority or two-thirds).

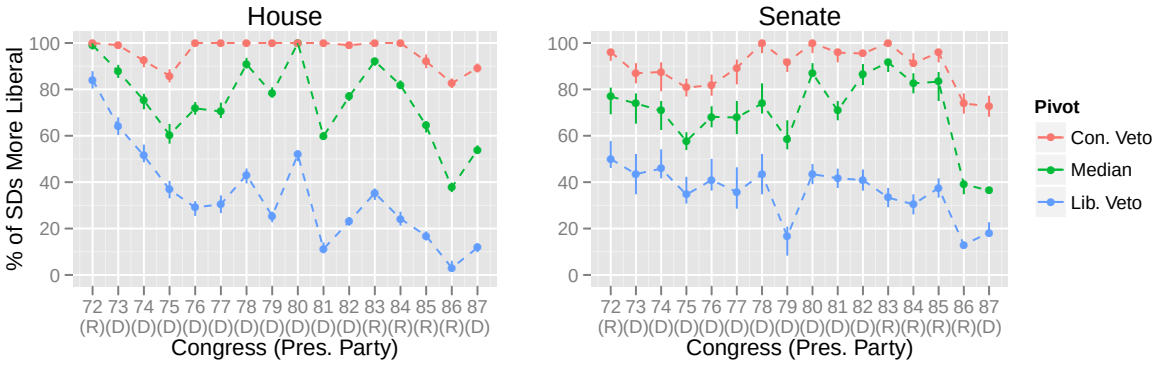



Figure 2.15: Percent of Southern Democrats more liberal than the median and veto pivots in the House (left) and Senate (right). Points indicate posterior median estimate, with vertical lines for the 90% credible intervals. The conservative (liberal) veto pivot is the one on the conservative (liberal) side of the median, i.e., the legislator whose support was required to override the veto of a conservative (liberal) president.

more muted except for the 86th Congress. One transformation evident only in the House is that by the end of this period, nearly all Southern representatives fell in the middle third of the chamber, between the liberal and conservative veto pivots.

The changes across congresses had implications for the kind of Southern Democrat whose approval was needed to pass or defeat legislative proposals. When the median was a Southern Democrat and most other Southern Democrats were to his left, the pivotal member of Congress was quite a conservative Southerner. For example, in the 79th House the median was probably a Southern Democrat in the 80th percentile of conservatism in the caucus—someone like Rules Chair and conservative coalition leader Howard Smith of Virginia (84th most liberal out of the 111 Southern Democrats who voted in that congress) or the anti-Long Louisianan Edward Hébert (89th of 111). By contrast, in congresses like the 86th, when the median was around the 40th percentile of conservatism in the Southern caucus, the pivotal member was someone like Mississippi's Frank Smith (41st of 101), a New Dealish "TVA liberal," or Alabama's George Huddleston, Jr. (34th), who represented union-heavy Birmingham (Badger, 2007c, pp. 63–4; Norrell, 1991). On the whole, the former situation was more common than the latter, so the median was usually a Southerner at the conservative end of the caucus (or an ideologically similar non-Southerner).

If congressional politics were perfectly majoritarian, the House and Senate medians would be the only pivotal players on proposed policy moves, whether in a conservative or a liberal direction. With supermajority requirements to override a veto or invoke cloture, this is no longer true (see Krehbiel, 1998). If the president is liberal (conservative), then passage of a conservative (liberal) policy change requires the support of the member in the 67th percentile of liberalism (conservatism). Figure 2.16 helps illustrate the consequences of supermajority

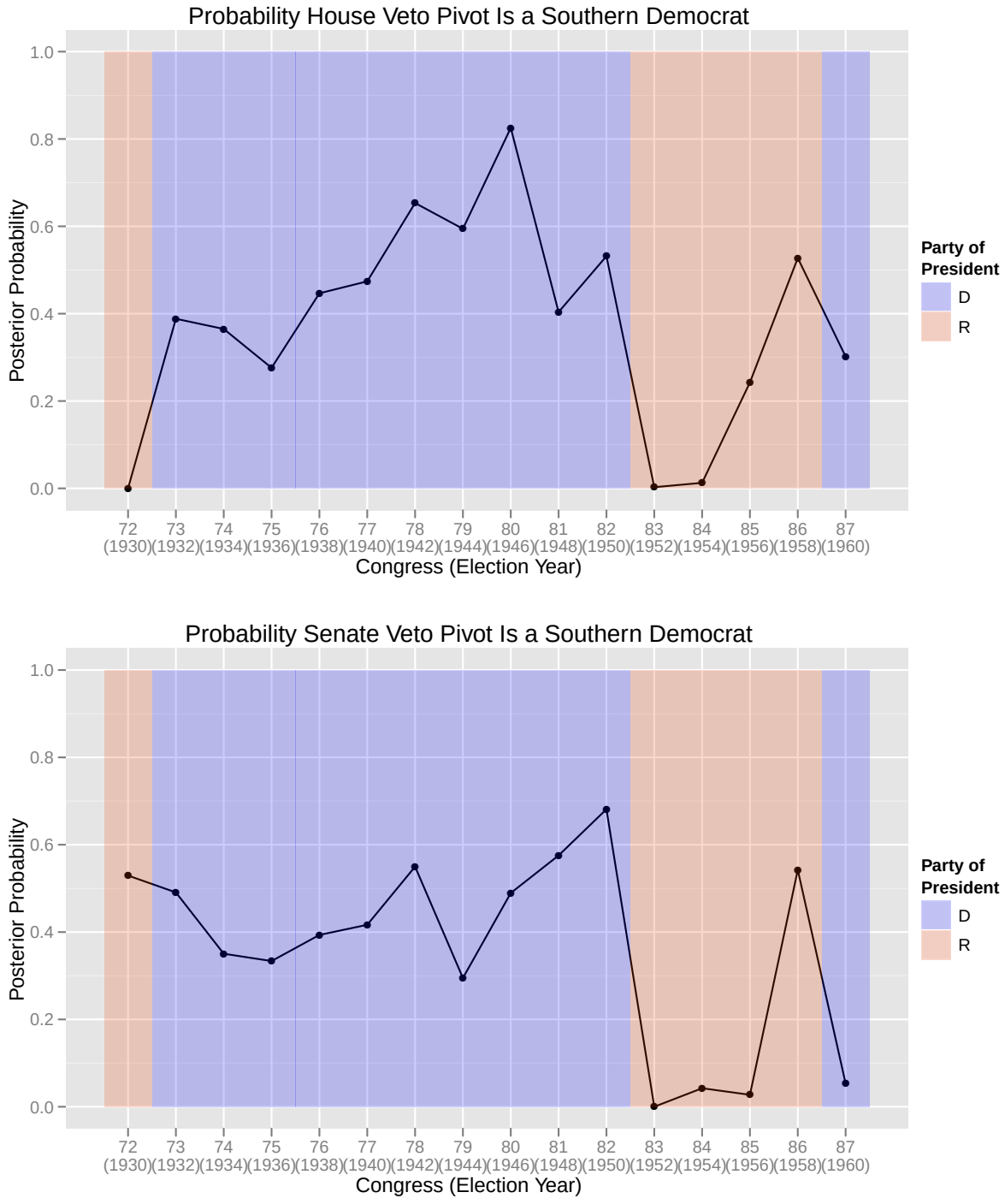



Figure 2.16: Probability that the veto pivot on the president's side is a Southern Democrat, in the House (top) and the Senate (bottom).

requirements for Southerners' pivotality. It plots the probability that the veto pivot in each chamber was a Southern Democrat, indicating the party of the president with colored shading.

In the 72nd Congress, the last of the Republican Hoover administration, the House veto pivot—that is, the member in the 67th percentile of conservatism—was almost surely not a Southern Democrat. In the 72nd Senate, however, the probability that a Southerner was the veto pivot is about 50%. Apart from this early divergence, the patterns in the two chambers track each other fairly well. In the early years of the Democratic Roosevelt administration, the probability of a Southern veto pivot was middling, but it increased over time, especially in the House. As a result, conservative proposals during the Democratic administrations of Roosevelt and his successor Truman increasingly depended on the support of Southern Democrats. With the election of the Republican Eisenhower in 1952, the veto pivot switched from the liberal to the conservative side. From the 83rd to the 85th Congress, the probability that a Southern Democrat was the 67-percentile of conservatism was very low, though it rose to about half in the wake of the 1958 Democratic landslide. With Kennedy's inauguration in 1961, the ideological valence of the veto pivot flipped again and its probability of being a Southerner dropped, especially in the Senate.

In short, the identity of the pivotal voters in Congress fluctuated fairly dramatically over this period, as did the position of the Southern caucus relative to that voter. The position of the pivotal voter depended on the direction of the proposed policy change and the ideological cast of the president. As a result, the pivotality of the South varied across time and by the ideological content of the legislative proposal at hand.

Consider proposals to move economic policy in a liberal direction. In the Hoover administration, the probability that the pivotal voter (the conservative veto pivot) on such initiatives was Southern was essentially zero in the House but around 50% in the Senate. Even in the Senate, however, all but a couple of Southern senators were more liberal than the veto pivot (see Figure 2.15). During the Roosevelt administration, the probability that the pivotal voter on liberal proposals (now the median) was Southern increased from below 30% to a peak of above 70% in the 79th Congress. Aside from the 80th House, in which any liberal proposals required Republican support, in the Truman administration the pivotal voter remained most likely Southern, with the rest of the probability assigned to a Republican or Border-state Democrat. After Eisenhower entered office, however, liberal initiatives again required supermajority support, and the South was almost certainly not pivotal to liberal ambitions in the early to mid-1950s. By the 86th Congress, the last under Eisenhower, the probability of Southern pivotality had increased to around 50%, but still at least three-quarters of Southern Democrats were more liberal than the veto pivot. In Kennedy's first congress (87th), when liberal initiatives again required only majority support, the median in both chambers was probably a Southern Democrat in the ideological center of the Southern caucus.

Due to the asymmetric effects of the presidential veto, the South's pivotality on conservative policy proposals exhibit quite different patterns. Low in the Hoover administration, the

probability that a Southerner was pivotal to the passage of conservative initiatives jumped when Roosevelt took office. It continued to climb through the wartime congresses and the Republican-controlled 80th, which bristled with conservative initiatives on labor, taxes, price controls, and other issues (Mason, 2012, p. 116; Jacobs, 1997). In these congresses, the veto pivot was located in the second quartile of liberalism within the Southern caucus, meaning that moving policy in a conservative direction required the support of 50–75% of Southern Democrats, assuming perfect spatial voting on this dimension. The War Labor Disputes (1943) and Taft-Hartley (1947) Acts, two successful conservative attacks on the New Deal labor regime, each received around 90% of Southern votes, enough to override the vetoes of Democratic presidents. In the early Eisenhower years, when the medians in both chambers were probably conservative Southern Democrats, Republicans required the defection of only a small fraction of the Southern caucus to pass conservative initiatives. The required fraction increased over the 1950s, and by the Kennedy administration conservative proposals needed the support of nearly all Southern Democrats and some Northern ones to pass.

In summary, the degree to which the South was pivotal in Congress varied over time and according to the party of the president and the ideological direction of the proposed policy change. It also depends on how one applies an originally individual-level attribute to a group, one that rarely cast its votes as a bloc except on the issue of civil rights. One possible measure of the South's pivotality is the probability that the pivotal voter was a Southern Democrat. For liberal bills, this probability was greatest in 79th, 81st, 82nd, and 86th, and 87th Congresses; it was lowest in the Republican 80th Congress and the early Eisenhower congresses (83rd–85th). For conservative initiatives, the probability peaked in the 80th Congress and was generally above 50% between the early 1940s and mid-1950s; it was low in the 1930s, especially in the Senate. Another option is to define the South as pivotal to the extent that the pivotal voter was located near the ideological center of the Southern caucus, which then held the balance of power. According to this definition, the South's pivotality on liberal initiatives peaked in the 75th, 79th (Senate only), 81st (House only), and 87th congresses. On conservative initiatives, the South's pivotality peaked in the House in the 75th and 80th Congresses; in the Senate, it was high through all the Roosevelt and Truman congresses except the 79th.

Based on where these two measures coincide, the South was most clearly pivotal to liberal proposals in the 87th Congress, and most clearly so to conservative ones in the 80th. These were also two congresses in which Southern Democrats were on average equidistant from Republicans and Northern Democrats in both chambers (Figure 2.2). Southern Democrats' pivotality to Kennedy's New Frontier agenda was well understood at the time. Despite the fact that the election of a Democratic president lowered the legislative threshold for liberal initiatives, Kennedy himself expected that conservative Democrats would block most major liberal proposals (Patterson, 1996, p. 465).[48] Liberal bills had a hard time even getting to the

[48]One reason that Kennedy pursued civil rights initiatives through executive action rather than through Congress is his need for Southern support. "If we drive Sparkman, Hill and other moderate Southerners

House floor, but this was because the Southern Democrats who were the pivotal committee members stood in for their fellow Southerners in the chamber. The lack of support for liberal initiatives in committee thus "accurately reflected the makeup of the House itself" (Sundquist, 1968, pp. 476–7).[49] The story in the 87th Senate was similar. Not until after Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963 did the dam break for liberal legislation (see Caro, 2012).

Policy change, however, can occur in a conservative as well as liberal direction, as the 80th Congress demonstrates. Returning to the congressional majority for the first time since the Hoover administration, Republicans were led by conservatives like Sen. Robert Taft, "who stood solidly on the right" on most major issues and exhibited a "zealously sincere desire to dismantle the New Deal" (Patterson, 1996, p. 147; Patterson, 1972, p. 314). Republican leaders sought to continue the retrenchment of the New Deal that had already begun, with Southern aid, in the preceding congresses (Amenta and Skocpol, 1988, p. 111). Their major priorities were cutting taxes and "rebalancing" union regulation in favor of business, two issues where public opinion was especially favorable to them (Mason, 2012, p. 116). In order to pass over a Truman veto, conservative initiatives in both areas required the support of Southern Democrats—at least half of Southern Democrats in the House and over 80% of Southern senators, assuming perfect spatial voting (see Figure 2.15).

As will be explored in more detail in the follow section, neither issue mapped perfectly onto established ideological lines. Southern Democrats divided on tax reduction, and its eventual passage after three failed attempts owed as much to Northern Democrats' weakness for election-year tax cuts as it did to Southern defections (Brown, 1999, pp. 113–21). As for labor legislation, Farhang and Katznelson (2005) show that by the 1940s the issue had become infused with racial as well as economic concerns, turning many Southerners into especially bitter foes of unions. The Taft-Hartley Act passed with the support of three-quarters of Southern representatives and nearly all Southern senators (Schulman, 1994, p. 81). The crucial test came in the Senate vote to override Truman's veto. Despite John Sparkman's last-minute switch to join his Alabama colleague Lister Hill in opposition, the override succeeded with nearly 90% of Southern votes, a few more than the minimum needed (Southwick, 1984, p. 639). Thus it seems that for these congresses, the notion of the pivotal South is well

to the wall with a lot of civil rights demands that can't pass anyway," Kennedy asked an aide, "then what happens to the Negro on minimum wages, housing and the rest?" (quoted in Grantham, 1988, p. 153).

[49]The pivotality of Wilbur Mills, who as chairman of Ways and Means refused to let a bill out of on the floor unless he knew it would pass, has often been noted (Jacobs, 2010; Zelizer, 1998). According to Sundquist, "Mills was representative not just of the second district of Arkansas but of his region" (1968, p. 477). He further observes that the two committees crucial to the Kennedy program, Ways and Means and Rules, were if anything more liberal than the House as a whole. Sundquist's impression is confirmed by the estimated ideal points of Mills and of the median member of the Rules committee, Texas's Homer Thornberry, who as the 24th and 9th most liberal Southern Democrats were well to the left of the House median. (Two other Southerners on Rules, James Trimble (D-AR) and Carl Elliott (D-AL), were slightly more liberal than Thornberry. William Colmer (D-MS) and Chairman Howard Smith (D-VA) were substantially more conservative than the median.)

justified by the historical evidence.

## 2.7 Economic Ideology and Labor Issues

Until now, the analyses in this chapter have lumped all economic issues together. This is consistent with the one-dimensional IRT model's assumption that a single latent dimension governs variation in vote probabilities on all bill types. Recall that under this model, a legislator $i$'s utility to voting "yea" ($z_{i,j,t}$) on roll call $j$ is a joint function of the legislator's scalar ideal point ($\theta_{i,t}$) and the difficulty ($\alpha_{j,t}$) and discrimination ($\beta_{j,t}$) of the proposal, plus an i.i.d. random shock ($\epsilon_{i,j,t}$):

$$z_{i,j,t} = \beta_{j,t}\theta_{i,t} - \alpha_{j,t} + \epsilon_{i,j,t} \tag{2.6}$$

This model does allow for certain kinds of heterogeneity across issues. For example, difficulty parameters might be smaller in some issue areas than others, which would be interpreted as evidence that proposals in this area tend to be particularly popular. The model also permits the discrimination of bills to vary across issue area. Some bills may nearly perfectly distinguish economic liberals and conservatives, which we would observe as a voting alignment in which almost every legislator who votes for a bill is more liberal (or conservative) than those who vote against it. Other bills might distinguish liberals and conservatives hardly at all, resulting in voting patterns that look essentially random, conditional on the overall support for the bill.

If, however, voting "errors" (votes contrary to the model's prediction) are not random, but rather have some pattern to them, then a unidimensional IRT model is less appropriate. For example, opposite-party legislators' with similar ideal points may vote differently on close or important votes because party discipline is exerted on these votes (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal, 2001; Snyder and Groseclose, 2000, 2001). Or, more relevant here, legislators may evaluate policies on two dimensions, one reflecting roll calls' partisan/economic content and the other their regional/racial implications (Poole and Rosenthal, 2007). The reason that this chapter has analyzed only roll calls related to social welfare and economic regulation (excluding, for example, civil rights bills) is to limit this latter possibility.

One of the most important developments in this period is that many white Southerners came to view the New Deal state and its supporting coalition as a potential threat to the racial political economy of the South. Although in many respects a boon to Southern elites, the New Deal also undermined local dependency relations and incorporated and empowered constituencies—especially labor unions and their liberal allies, but to some degree African Americans as well—committed to fundamental reform of the region's social, economic, and political institutions (Alston and Ferrie, 1999; Biles, 1994; Sullivan, 1996; Tindall, 1967). Southern MCs had to balance their constituents' desire for federal aid—not only agricultural subsidies but also funding for roads, electricity, water, housing, telephones, hospitals, schools, and libraries, as well as social welfare payments for their relatively poor region—against the

danger of federal power and interference in their region (Badger, 2007c; Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993; Katznelson and Mulroy, 2012; Schulman, 1994).[50]

Southerners' concern for regional autonomy—for "states rights"—was nothing new, having shaped their response to many policies in the past (e.g., Bensel, 1984). Nor did Southern MCs fully reject New Deal programs aimed at developing their region. Many remained "committed spenders," especially if policies were federally funded but locally administered (Brown, 1999, p. 107; Katznelson, 2005).[51] Nevertheless, the massive expansion of federal power spurred by the New Deal, however carefully crafted to respect Southern sensibilities, contained unprecedented dangers for the region's social and economic system. This disruptive trend intensified during the Second World War, which brought tight labor markets, increased assertiveness of labor unions and African Americans, and pervasive federal intervention in the economy (Badger, 2007a; Farhang and Katznelson, 2005; Katznelson, 2005; Wright, 2010).

Southerners' balancing act between federal funds and federal control played out across many policy areas, from hospital and education aid to relief and social welfare programs. Katznelson and his collaborators, however, have particularly emphasized issues related to unions and labor regulation. As Farhang and Katznelson (2005) note, in the 1930s Southern MCs largely supported pro-labor legislation. In the kind of logrolling essential to party coalitions, Southerners' traded support in a matter of intense concern to their non-Southern coalition partners in exchange for support on the matters most important to them, such as agricultural subsidies.

Yet Southern enthusiasm for labor regulation in the early New Deal should not be overstated. In contrast to the Wilson Administration, when Southerners had been among the leading sponsors of labor laws like the Clayton and Adamson Acts,[52] during the Roosevelt administration labor's main congressional allies represented states in the North and West. Southern and Border Democrats like Sen. Pat Harrison (D-MS) and Sen. Millard Tydings (D-MD) proposed anti-union amendments to the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act and the 1935 National Labor Relations Act (Dubofsky, 1994, pp. 110–28).[53] Even on the National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act, which only three Southern senators opposed on final passage,

[50]Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993) emphasize Southern MCs' awareness of this tradeoff, whereas Schulman (1994, p. 110) states that in their zeal for federal aid, Southern conservatives failed to "appreciate the potential connections between funds and control."

[51]Such strategic packaging of liberal programs was a necessary formula for Southern support. The fragile coalitions behind liberal initiatives were highly vulnerable to amendments, like Harlem Rep. Adam Clayton Powell's perennial antisegregation riders to aid-to-education bills, which were supported by conservative Republicans eager to kill the bill while simultaneously demonstrating their bona fides on civil rights (Schulman, 1994; Sundquist, 1968).

[52]The main thrust of the Clayton Act in particular was to *remove* unions from federal regulation, a purpose that dovetailed with traditional Southern anti-statism better than the much more bureaucratic proposals by New Deal liberals.

[53]One exception was a 1935 bill sponsored by Sen. James Byrnes (D-SC) that would ban the transportation of professional strikebreakers across state lines.

Southern support was hardly enthusiastic.[54] The remarks of Rep. Eugene Cox (D-GA) of the Rules Committee, though perhaps more extreme than most Southerners' views at the time, are indicative of their ambivalence towards the Wagner Act:

> I recognize, of course, that the bill raises an issue that must at some time be fought out, and I think it may as well be now as any other time. I have not, therefore, opposed the reporting of the rule by the Rules Committee, and do not and will not oppose the adoption of the rule by the House.... [B]ut it must be apparent to everyone who has read it that it carries upon its face the most terrible threat—and I speak deliberately and advisedly—to our dual form of government that has thus far arisen.... It is not what appears upon the face of the bill that disturbs me, it is the intent and purpose carried by the measure which the language used is intended to conceal.... It is intended by this measure through the use of the commerce clause of the Constitution to sap and undermine that great document to the extent of ultimately striking down and destroying completely all State sovereignty....[55]

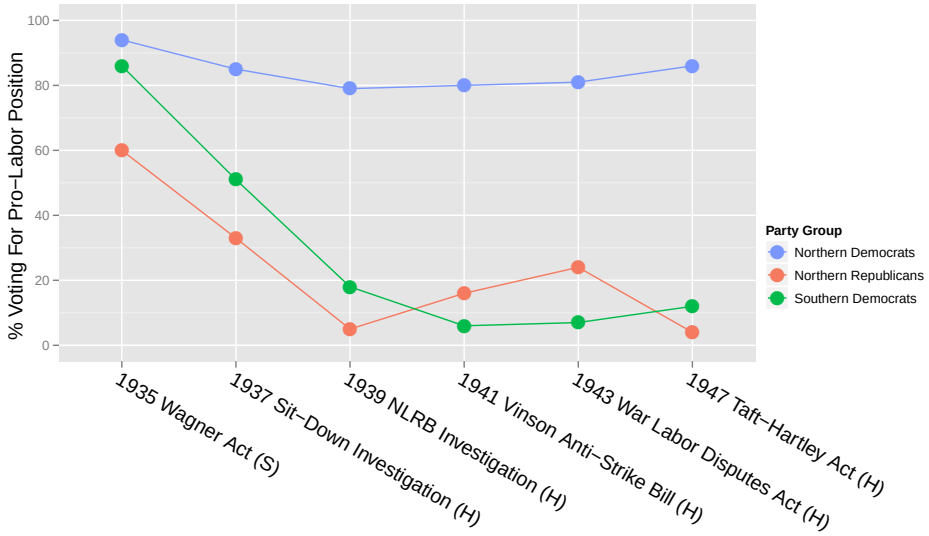
Cox's words, spoken on the floor of the House in 1935, would in the coming years be reflected in Southerners' votes on other labor-related legislation, dividing them from their Northern colleagues. Southerners' rightward turn on important labor votes is illustrated in Figure 2.17. Farhang and Katznelson (2005) attribute this shift not to Southerners' changing economic preferences per se, but rather to a change in the "axis of preferences" they used to evaluate labor issues. "In the 1930s," they argue, "union and labor market issues were arrayed primarily on the ideology-party dimension, while, in the 1940s, southern Democrats came to understand labor questions mainly as issues that concerned the durability of Jim Crow" (2005, p. 2). In their view, Southern Democrats' conservative turn on labor issues stands out both because it happened earlier than on other issues and because it had far-reaching consequences for the U.S. political economy (Farhang and Katznelson, 2005; Katznelson, 2005; Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993; Katznelson and Mulroy, 2012).

The quantitative evidence for this interpretation is derived primarily from likeness scores and similar measures. As explained earlier, among the drawbacks of these kinds of measures is that the "likeness" of groups of legislators depends not only on their ideological proximity but also on the distribution of bill midpoints. For example, suppose Southern Democrats

[54]Harry Byrd (D-VA) and Josiah Bailey (D-NC) voted against the bill, and Carter Glass (D-VA) was paired against it. In addition, three Southern senators—Richard Russell (D-GA), Robert Reynolds (D-NC), and Ellison Smith (D-SC)—did not cast a vote. The final-passage vote in the House was not recorded. According to Biles (1994, p. 87), "Senators Joe Robinson of Arkansas and Pat Harrison of Mississippi and congressmen Howard Smith of Virginia and Eugene Cox of Georgia worked in Congress to limit the NLRB's authority, but like their fellow southerners, they voted for the bill in its final, unsatisfactory form." Many Southern MCs thought NLRB would be struck down as unconstitutional and were surprised when it was upheld by the Supreme Court.

[55]National Labor Relations Board (1985, p. 3103)

Figure 2.17: Percentage of different groups in Congress voting pro-labor on key roll calls. Note that the 1937 and 1939 investigations were not included in the data used to estimate the IRT model because they are not classified as Government Management or Social Welfare roll calls by Poole and Rosenthal (2001).




are located exactly midway between Northern Democrats and Republicans on the ideological spectrum. If conservative alternatives are more popular than liberal ones, so that bill midpoints tend to fall between Northern and Southern Democrats, then likeness scores will portray Southern Democrats as being more similar to Republicans.

The politics of labor issues exhibited just such a dynamic beginning in the late 1930s, when pro-union policies became markedly less popular. Incidents such as the 1936–37 sit-down strikes at General Motors, abetted by overwhelmingly unfavorable news coverage, helped spark an anti-labor reaction in the general public. Congressional conservatives both encouraged this reaction through hearings and investigations and sought to take advantage of it by rolling back the New Deal labor regime (Schickler and Caughey, 2011). In order to pass over a Democratic presidential veto (or be too popular to veto), however, anti-labor initiatives needed to attract supermajority support in Congress. In spatial terms, the midpoints of successful anti-labor bills needed to be left of the liberal veto pivot and thus left of most Southern MCs after the early 1930s (see Figure 2.15). As a result, labor midpoints increasingly tended to be located between the Northern and Southern Democratic caucuses, which would exaggerate the likeness of Republicans and Southern Democrats without any change in the dimensionality of labor policy.

Given the limitations of likeness scores, an IRT model offers an appealing alternative for examining the distinctiveness of labor policy relative to other economic issues. An IRT model is better suited to investigate this question than likeness indices and even DW-NOMINATE

Figure 2.18: *Top*: Midpoint estimates (trimmed to the central 90% of the data). *Middle*: Percent voting in favor of the conservative position. *Bottom*: Difficulty parameter estimates (multiplied by the sign of the discrimination estimate). In all six figures, color distinguishes labor and non-labor roll calls. Bars indicate the congress-specific average in each category of roll call. The smooth and its 95% confidence interval were calculated using the `loess` function with a "span" of 0.5.

scores, whose linear constraint on ideological movement is inappropriate for this period of rapid nonlinear change. Ideally, a two-dimensional dynamic IRT model would be estimated, but the software to do so is not readily available at this time. A one-dimensional model is still informative, however, especially if close attention is paid to patterns in voting errors, which reveal the influence of factors other than the primary latent dimension.

Before turning to the results of the IRT model, a brief discussion of issue classification is warranted. When works on this subject speak of "labor" issues, it is not always clear whether they mean labor unions specifically or regulation of labor markets more generally. In the case of the South, the two meanings are frequently conflated because Southerners' antipathy towards organized labor was driven largely by its challenge to the region's isolated, low-wage labor market (though CIO unions' support for civil rights was an important factor as well). The analyses that follow are based on two different definitions of labor bills: *union*, which includes only bills related to labor unions and will be emphasized, and *all labor*, which includes bills related to employment and workplace regulation as well as union bills. These categories, derived from the codes provided by Poole and Rosenthal (1998, 2001), are unfortunately far from perfect, occasionally coding the same bill (for example, the Fair Labor Standards Act) as labor in one chamber and non-labor in the other. Future versions of this analysis will instead employ the Katznelson-Lapinski issue classification scheme (Katznelson and Lapinski, 2006; Lapinski, 2008), as soon as it is publicly available.

### 2.7.1 Bill Midpoints and Difficulty Parameters

To demonstrate more clearly why likeness scores might be misleading, we begin with an examination of bill midpoints and difficulty parameters. In an IRT model, the midpoint $m_j$ of bill $j$ is equal to the ratio of its difficulty and discrimination parameters: $m_j = \alpha_j/\beta_j$. Being the ratio of two mean-zero normal variables, the prior distribution of midpoints in this model is Cauchy (DasGupta, 2011, pp. 327–8). Partly as a result of this, the posterior distribution of midpoints in this parameterization is very heavy-tailed (Clinton and Jackman, 2009, pp. 601–2), so the MCMC simulations used to calculate the posterior means of bill midpoints have been trimmed of their extreme 0.05 quantiles.

Averaged over this entire time period, midpoints on union bills in the Senate were marginally more liberal than non-union bills. In the House, the average difference was negligible.[56] More interesting, however, is how the location of labor midpoints changed over

[56]Using the trimmed simulations and controlling for fixed effects for congress, Senate union midpoints are

time. The top row of Figure 2.18 plots the estimated average locations of bill midpoints by congress, distinguishing between union and non-union bills. The frequency of labor roll calls varied substantially over time, peaking in the mid-to-late 1940s and again in the late 1950s.[57] Because union roll calls are sparsely and unevenly distributed, loess lines have been fit to the data to highlight trends in the data. The shaded 95%-confidence interval around the loess line gives a rough indication of whether the difference between union and non-union midpoints at a given point in time is statistically significant.

For our purposes, the most important trend is that labor midpoints in the House became more liberal on average between the mid-1930s and mid-1940s, hitting a local peak in the 79th and 80th Congresses (1945–48). Labor midpoints in the Senate were more stable over time than in the House, but they too became slightly more liberal after the early 1930s. By the mid-1940s, labor midpoints in both chambers were more liberal on average than non-labor midpoints—that is, more likely to divide Southern and Northern Democrats than Southern Democrats and Republicans. This suggests that relative to other areas, the liberal position on union-related bills became less popular between the 1930s and 1940s.

Additional evidence for this conclusion is provided by an examination of two other measures: the percentage of legislators supporting the conservative position on union and non-union roll calls (middle row of Figure 2.18) and the estimated difficulty parameters of union and non-union bills (bottom row).[58] The percentage conservative, which is a function of the distribution of ideal points as well as of midpoint locations, displayed the same temporal pattern as midpoints but in exaggerated form. The fluctuations in the data make it difficult to fit a convincing trend line, but it is clear that support for the conservative position on union bills increased significantly in both chambers between the late 1930s and mid-1940s, swamping the much weaker changes in non-union bills. Difficulty parameters, which represent proposals' unpopularity conditional on their discrimination and the distribution of ideal points, display the same temporal patterns as midpoints and percent voting conservative. This suggests that the increasing unpopularity of pro-union votes was not simply a consequence of changes in the partisan composition of Congress or in the degree to which union votes discriminated on the basis of economic policy preferences.

Taken together, the evidence indicates that between the late 1930s and mid-1940s, the liberal position on union-related bills became less popular, both in absolute terms and relative

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estimated to be around 0.13 more liberal on the ideal-point scale. In the House, the estimated difference is essentially 0. In both houses, the average midpoints of all labor bills (that is, including employment and workplace bills) are more conservative than for union bills alone.

[57] Recall that only roll calls in Clausen categories 1 (Government Management) and 2 (Social Welfare) are included. Labor roll calls outside of these categories do not appear in the data. For example, the 1932 Norris-LaGuardia Act, which among other things deprived federal courts of the power to issue injunctions against peaceful strikes, is classified in Clausen category 4 (Civil Liberties).

[58] For ease of analysis, the discrimination estimates have been multiplied by the sign of the discrimination estimate, giving them the interpretation of the unpopularity of the liberal position on the roll call. On average over this period, labor difficulty parameters in the House were significantly higher than non-labor ones; in the Senate, these is no consistent difference.

to other economic bills. This is consistent with Schickler and Caughey (2011), who show that the conservative public backlash against the New Deal labor regime beginning in the late 1930s was more severe than for other aspects of the New Deal. Congress's growing conservatism on union issues was reflected in increasingly liberal midpoints on union-related bills. As the midpoints of union bills moved left, they increasingly separated Northern and Southern Democrats, exaggerating the differences in their voting behavior relative to other economic issues. The increasingly "likeness" of Southern and Republican voting patterns may thus reflect the decreasing popularity of pro-labor positions (relative to liberal position on other economic issues) rather than the changing "dimensionality" of union issues.

### 2.7.2 The Dimensionality of Labor Issues

The results of the previous section highlight the drawbacks of likeness scores for comparing the dimensionality of different issue areas, since likeness is a function of "difficulty" as well as dimensionality. A better approach is to directly compare the dimensionality of union-related and other economic issues by examining the IRT discrimination parameters, which are estimated conditional on the difficulty of the roll call.

Previous work on congressional politics suggests that voting alignments on economic issues did indeed shift in the 1930s and 1940s, with labor issues playing a special role in the transformation. Based on a factor analysis of roll call voting, Sinclair (1982) argues that the stable voting alignment on social welfare issues in place in place since 1925 broke down in the 75th Congress (1937–38) over the 1937 Housing Act and the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act. Beginning in this Congress, labor issues exhibited voting alignments distinct from social welfare issues. By the mid 1940s, however, labor's distinctiveness disappeared among Democrats, as "the voting alignment prevalent on labor issues... came... to characterize voting on all social welfare issues" (Sinclair, 1982, p. 55).

Poole and Rosenthal (2007, pp. 137–9) too find that the dimensionality of economic roll calls, especially on labor issues, changed in the late 1930s. Using a two-dimensional DW-NOMINATE model with a linear time trend, they show that between 1900 and the mid-1930s, social welfare roll calls were almost entirely first-dimension (partisan) votes. This is true for labor-related votes too, though there were very few labor roll calls after the mid-1920s. When labor roll calls reappeared in the 75th Congress (1937–38), they loaded a second (North–South) dimension as well. The explanatory power of the second dimension peaks in 1941–42 and declines until 1947–48 (the 80th Congress), after which "labor votes become almost entirely first-dimension votes." According to Poole and Rosenthal (2007), the importance of the second dimension for social welfare roll calls also rose in the late 1930s, though not as much as for labor issues. It then fell briefly in the mid-1940s before settling at a level similar to labor votes through the mid-1950s.

In sum, Sinclair (1982) and Poole and Rosenthal (2007) both suggest that a second, regional/racial dimension came to play a heightened role in economic roll calls in the late 1930s. The change in alignment appears to have begun first with labor issues, leading to

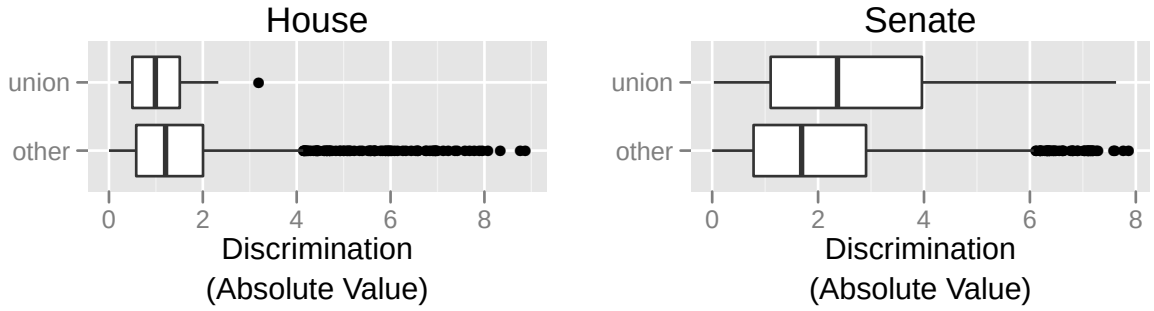



Figure 2.19: Boxplots of the discrimination of roll calls, comparing union-related and other economic bills, 1931–62.

temporarily distinct voting dynamics. By the mid-1940s, however, all roll calls related to economic policy, including labor, again loaded onto a single ideological dimension.

This section examines the question of dimensionality more closely, using the bill discrimination estimates from the dynamic IRT model. The IRT model has two main advantages over DW-NOMINATE for this purpose. The first is that MCMC simulation of the posterior probabilities makes it easy to calculate the posterior distribution of any quantity, such as the difference in the median discrimination of labor and non-labor roll calls. The second advantage is that the IRT model better suited to modeling nonlinear ideological change over time. This is especially useful for examining the 1930s and 1940s, when both ideal points and the dimensionality of issues were changing rapidly, and thus a flexible dynamic model is better able to distinguish the two types of changes. The limitation of the IRT model is that it is one-dimensional. Our interest, however, is not whether a one-, two-, or multi-dimensional model best characterizes roll call alignments. Rather, we wish to know whether labor roll calls discriminated on the main dimension of congressional voting to a greater or less degree than other economic issues.

The boxplots in Figure 2.19 show the distribution of discrimination parameters for union and other economic roll calls, aggregated across the 1931–62 period. The larger the absolute magnitude of a vote's discrimination, the better it distinguishes between conservatives and liberals. (The absolute value of the discrimination parameters is plotted because their sign merely indicates whether "yea" or "nay" was the liberal position on the roll call.) In the House, the discrimination of union-related roll calls was somewhat lower than other economic roll calls. In the Senate, where the discrimination of economic bills was higher overall than in the House, union roll calls actually discriminated more strongly than other economic bills.[59] So considering the period as a whole, there is mixed evidence that labor issues were

[59]The difference between union and other economic bills in the House is significant at $\alpha = .05$ according to a Wilcoxon rank sum test or, after having been transformed to symmetry, a regression with fixed effects for Congress. The difference in the Senate is highly significant under any test.

off-dimensional relative to other economic bills.

To examine trends over time, it is helpful first to transform the highly skewed distribution of discrimination estimates using a Box-Cox (1964) power transformation to symmetry.[60] The resulting distribution, which is roughly standard normal, is amenable to summarization using mean-based statistics, such as regression or loess. Means in the transformed distribution correspond to medians in the untransformed (absolute value) distribution (Fitzmaurice, Lipsitz, and Parzen, 2007).[61] Since the original scale of the discrimination parameters has no inherent meaning, little is lost with respect to interpretability by transforming the data.

In both chambers, the discrimination of union-related roll calls increased over the 1931–62 period. Based on a linear trend, union bills in the House are estimated to have discriminated significantly less than other economic bills in the first half of the period, but by the end of the period the two types of bills were indistinguishable. In the Senate, the discrimination of union bills was about the same as non-union bills in the early part of the period but significantly higher towards the end. Although the discrimination of economic roll calls was generally higher in the Senate, in neither chamber did the discrimination of non-union bills change much over time.

The top row Figure 2.20 plots the distribution of union and other economic discrimination parameters across time, again with loess lines to highlight nonlinear trends in the data. In the House, union-related roll calls were scarce before the 75th Congress, but their discrimination appears to have steadily increased between the mid-1930s and the late 1940s, peaking in the 80th Congress. In the Senate, a similar increase occurred between the 77th and 80th Congresses (1941–48). Aside from the mid-1930s and early 1950s, when there were few union bills anyway, the patterns in the discrimination of union bills in the two chambers are quite similar, apart from the higher mean in the Senate.

This picture changes somewhat if we compare all labor-related roll calls (union, workplace, and employment) with other economic bills (Figure 2.20, bottom row). In the Senate, the discrimination of labor bills is still markedly higher than other bills, with a decided upward trend over time. By contrast, in the House labor bills are essentially indistinguishable from other economic bills, and there is no linear trend. Based on the loess lines in Figure 2.20, it appears that the discrimination of all labor issues decreased between the early and late 1930s, then increased to a local peak in the late 1940s.

The patterns discussed in this section can be made more concrete through a closer examination of major labor-related roll calls. Consider Figures 2.21–2.24, which plot legislators' predicted probability of casting a liberal vote on a given roll call against their estimated ideal point in that Congress. Each member's actual vote is plotted as well, with Northern Republicans, Northern Democrats, and Southern Democrats distinguished by color. The

[60] The function `powerTransform` in the `R` package **car** was used to select the value of $\lambda$ such that the residuals from a regression of $\hat{\beta}$ on indicators for congress and labor vote best approximate normality. The `bcPower` function was used to actually transform the data (Fox and Weisberg, 2011, pp. 303–9).

[61] This is because the mean and median of a symmetric distribution are identical and Box-Cox transformations are order (thus median) preserving.

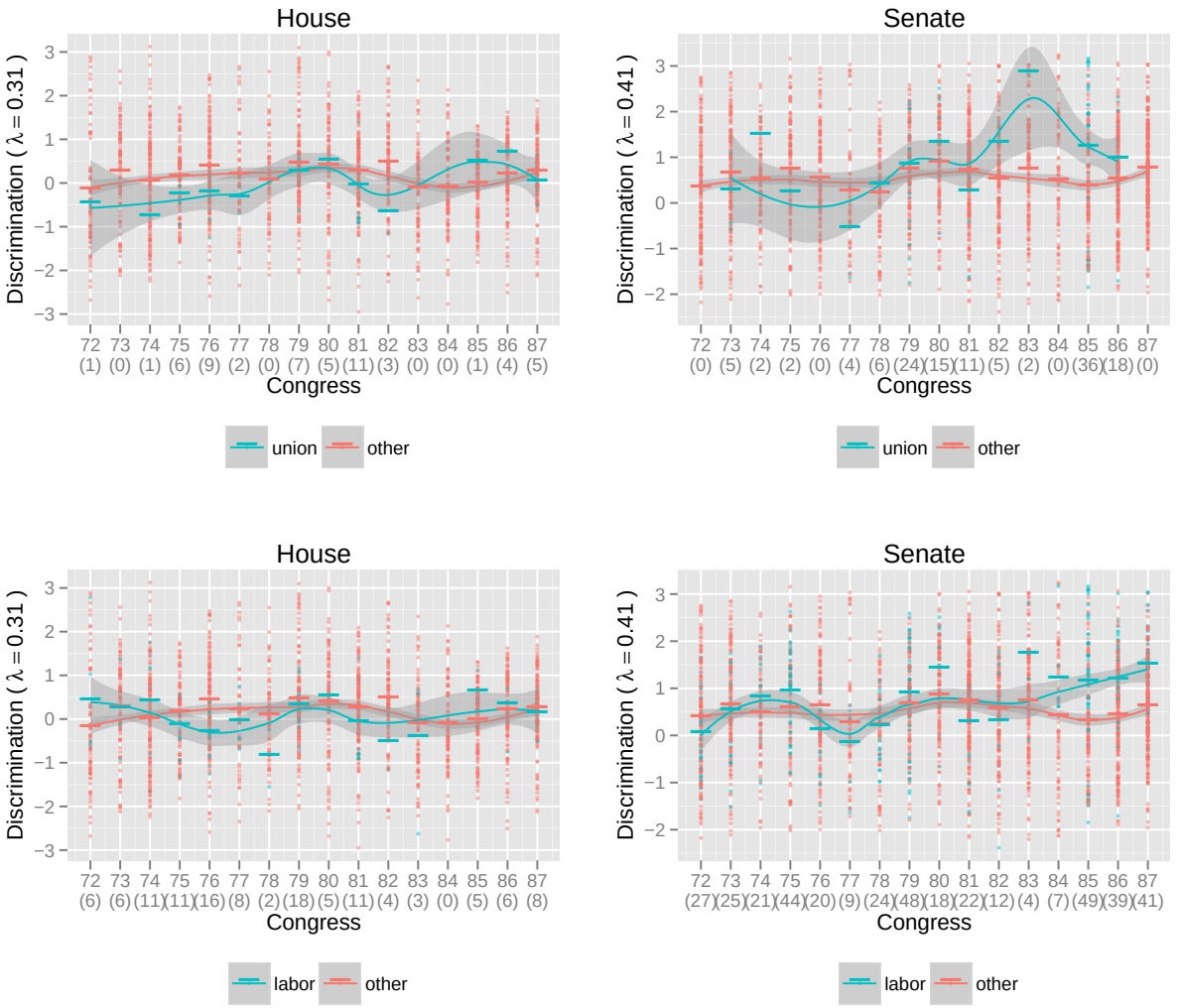
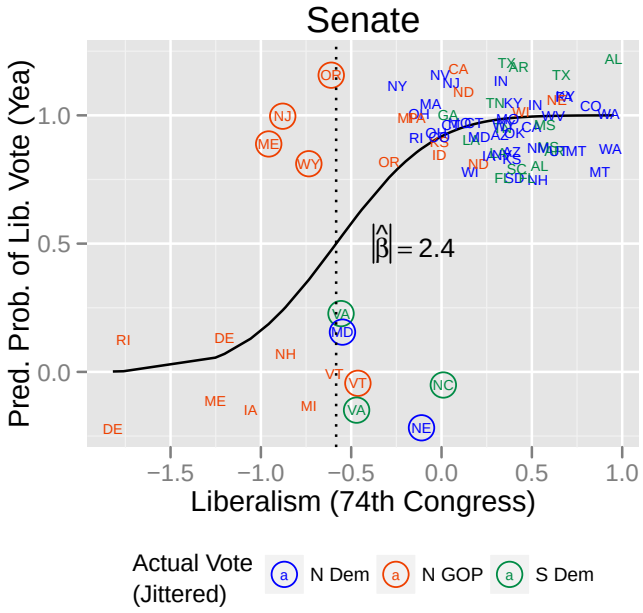



Figure 2.20: Distributions of bill discrimination parameters in the House (left) and Senate (right), by congress. In the top row, union-related bills are indicated in blue; in the bottom row, blue indicates all labor-related bills. The discrimination paramaters have been transformed by first taking their absolute values and then applying a Box-Cox (1964) power transformation to symmetry with power $\lambda$. Bars indicate congress-specific averages of the transformed discrimination parameters. Loess lines and 95% confidence intervals for each category of bills are also plotted. The number of union/labor roll calls is given below the congress number.

Figure 2.21: Predicted and actual Senate votes on final passage of the Wagner Act (1935). Circles indicate voting "errors" (yea voters with less than 0.5 predicted probability and nay voters with greater than 0.5). The dotted line indicates the estimated midpoint of the bill.




vertical dotted line is the estimated midpoint for the roll call—that is, the point on the ideological spectrum at which a legislator is predicted to be indifferent between voting *yea* and *nay*. Circles indicate voting "errors": legislators predicted to take the conservative position who ended up voting liberally (upper left quadrant), and legislators predicted to vote liberally who actually voted conservatively (upper left quadrant). The estimated discrimination parameter $\hat{\beta}$ is also indicated.

Figure 2.21, for example, plots senators' predicted and actual votes on the 1935 Wagner Act (the vote in the House was not recorded). Three Southern senators voted against the bill, all three of whom would have been predicted to vote for it on the basis of their estimated ideal point (three Southerners also abstained, probably for lack of enthusiasm). There were three additional *nay* errors, two of them Democrats, as well as four Republicans who unexpectedly voted in favor. Thus the one-dimensional dynamic IRT model correctly classifies 72 of 82 votes (88%) on the Wagner Act. The estimated discrimination of this roll call ($\hat{\beta} = 2.4$) is higher than the typical economic roll call (see Figure 2.19). This is consistent with Farhang and Katznelson's claim that in the early New Deal, labor policy was largely a matter of party loyalty and economic ideology. In contrast to labor votes in subsequent congresses, the midpoint location on the Wagner Act was relatively conservative, separating Southern Democrats from most Republicans.

Southern support for New Deal labor regulation eroded substantially in the very next congress, the 75th (1937–38), which saw the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act after a long fight to dislodge it from the House Rules Committee. As Figure 2.22 shows, the voting patterns on the FLSA differed substantially between the House and Senate. Consistent with Sinclair (1982), Farhang and Katznelson (2005), and Poole and Rosenthal (2007), the breakdown of partisan voting alignment is obvious in the House of Representatives, where the roll call's discrimination was a weak $\hat{\beta} = 0.61$. There are clear patterns to the voting errors on this bill. Southern Democrats' support (43%) was far below that of Northern Democrats (98%), despite their relatively similar ideological distributions in the 75th Congress (see Figure 2.6), and even below that of Republicans (59%).[62] This regional alignment, which split both parties, is also evident in the two-dimensional D-NOMINATE model, which estimates the distance on the second dimension to have been much greater than the first dimension on this roll call.

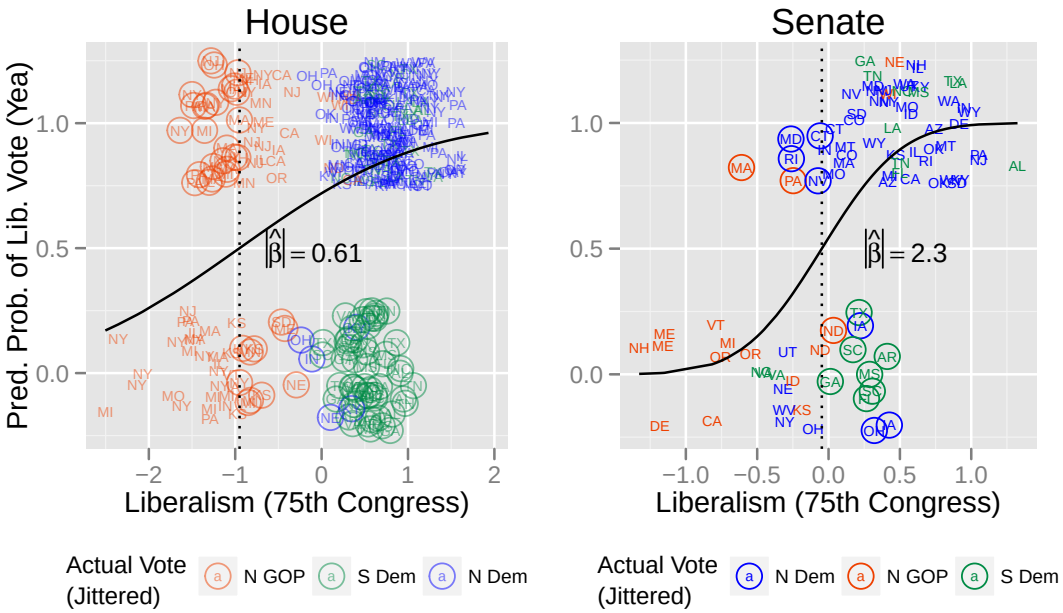
The Senate voting alignments on the FLSA were very different from those in the House. Unlike the House, the vote in the Senate is well explained by economic ideology, though regional patterns in the voting errors are still apparent. In fact, the Senate's FLSA vote looks very similar to its vote on the Wagner Act three years earlier, at least in terms of the dimensionality of the vote. The estimated discrimination is almost identical ($\hat{\beta} = 2.3$ vs. $\hat{\beta} = 2.4$). The main difference between the Senate votes on the two labor acts is the overall level of support, which was much higher on the Wagner Act (83%) than on the FLSA (66%). This popularity difference is reflected in the FLSA's more conservative midpoint, which was located in the midst of the Democratic caucus.

The voting alignments on the FLSA suggest that the dimensionality of high-profile labor votes changed earlier in the House than in the Senate, where they remained primarily partisan/ideological through the late 1930s. The alignments on the 1946 Case Anti-Strike Bill, an important precursor to the Taft-Hartley Act that was killed by a Truman veto, indicate that ideological voting eventually broke down in the Senate as well. It is worth noting, however, that no Southern senator voted for the bill who was not predicted to do so.[63] Rather, Southern senators' overwhelming opposition was consistent with their general

[62]The coalitional dynamics surrounding the FLSA were unusual not only for the opposition of hitherto liberal Southerners, but also for ambivalence of the AFL and for the support the bill received from conservative Republicans from New England, whose industries benefitted from regional equalization of wages (House Republican Leader Joseph Martin of Massachusetts voted for the bill on final passage). It was widely believed that the special-election victories of Sen. Claude Pepper (D-FL) and Sen. Lister Hill (D-AL), both strong supporters of the FLSA, in the midst of the legislative battle over the bill are what finally dislodged it from the House Rules (Douglas and Hackman, 1938; Forsythe, 1939). There is a lively debate over the relative importance of economic versus racial and political factors in Southern MCs' opposition to the Act (Fleck, 2002, 2004; Seltzer, 1995, 2004), though given the deep intertwining of these factors in the region, attempting to separate their effects may be a fundamentally misguided enterprise.

[63]The nay votes of such conservative senators as Price Daniels (D-TX) and Robert Taft (R-OH) may be indicative of non-sincere voting on the bill, as these legislators almost certainly preferred the Case bill to the status quo, but voted against it because it was not anti-labor enough.

Figure 2.22: Predicted and actual votes on final passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938)




ideological position, which was much more conservative in 1946 than it had been in 1938.

As Figure 2.24 shows, the successful vote to override Truman's veto of Taft-Hartley—the most decisive moment in rolling back the New Deal labor regime—was highly ideological, especially in the Senate. Although Southern Democrats were somewhat more likely than other groups to make an anti-labor "error," relatively few Southern Democrats voted contrary to prediction. Most Southerners' estimated ideal points are solidly more conservative than the estimated midpoint. The most glaring errors are nay votes by otherwise conservative Republicans, who presumably represented strong union constituencies.

The most important difference between the Taft-Hartley roll call and the votes on the Wagner Act and FLSA is not the dimensionality of the vote. In fact, Taft-Hartley actually discriminated better between economic liberals and conservatives than the earlier bills. The real differences are two-fold. First, as its more liberal midpoint suggests, the "difficulty" (unpopularity) of the liberal (pro-labor) position on Taft-Hartley was substantially greater than on the earlier bills. Second, by 1947 Southern Democrats had become much more conservative—on *all* economic issues, not just labor policy. Given the increased unpopularity of union-friendly policies between the mid-1930s and mid-1940s, it is not surprising that increasingly conservative Southern Democrats would be found more often voting with Republicans on these issues.

Taken as a whole, these findings suggest that the claim that Southern Democrats' anti-labor turn was the result of changes in their "axis of preferences" requires some qualification.

Figure 2.23: Predicted and actual votes on final passage of the Case Anti-Strike Bill (1946)

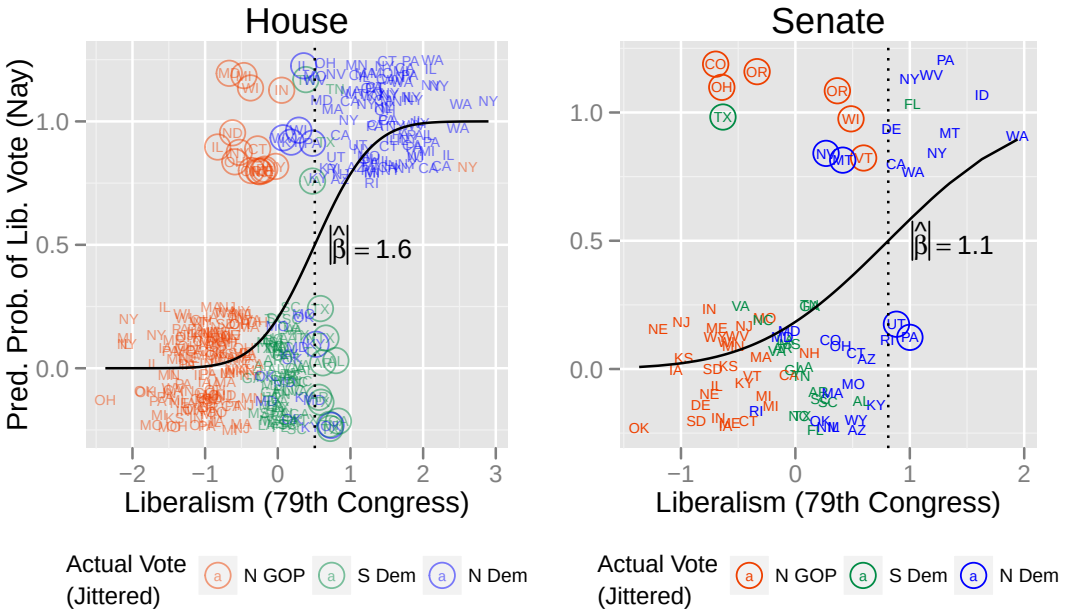
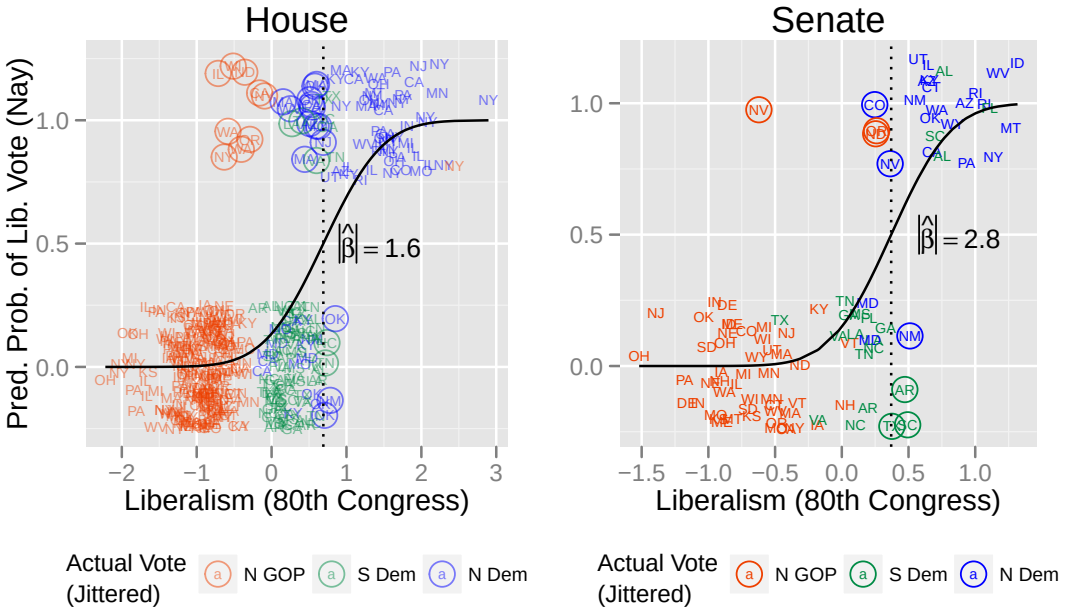



Figure 2.24: Predicted and actual votes to override Truman's veto of Taft-Hartley (1947)



It is true that the discrimination of labor roll calls hit a low point in the 76th to 78th congresses (1939–44), especially when all labor bills are considered (see Figure 2.20). In these years, the average labor-related bill was less likely to distinguish economic liberals and conservatives than other roll calls related to social welare and economic management. Further, much of the off-dimensional voting that occurred in these years was the result of anti-labor defections by Southern Democrats, a pattern first apparent in the 1938 vote on the FLSA (Figure 2.22). Although there was a general anti-labor turn in this period, the Southern reaction was particularly severe due to the threat that labor unions posed to the regions' labor-repressive racial system.

The 1939–44 period saw the stalling of the New Deal agenda, on labor issues and otherwise, and a run of anti-labor initiatives in Congress, but anti-labor conservatives could point to few statutory victories in these years due to Democratic control of the presidency. Their real breakthrough occurred in 1947 with Taft-Hartley, after the Republican takeover of Congress. By that point, labor issues, especially ones directly related to unions, discriminated between liberals and conservatives at least as well as other economic issues. Taft-Hartley itself was a highly ideological vote, especially in the Senate. Yes, Southern Democrats voted overwhelmingly to reverse the labor regime they had voted to construct, but this was right in line with their more-conservative position on economic issues generally.

Does this refute the claim that Southern MCs turned against the New Deal labor regime because they came to view it as a potential threat to their racial system? No, because this very same concern animated their increasing conservatism on economic issues generally. Just as labor unions threatened the South's political and economic autonomy, so too federally funded schools and housing projects, price controls, national health insurance, and other liberal ambitions. Growing Southern conservatism may have been apparent slightly earlier on labor issues, but they were merely a leading indicator for Southerners' more general shift to the right. By the late 1940s, labor votes like Taft-Hartley were well predicted by Southerners' overall roll-call record on economic issues. This challenges the Farhang-Katznelson thesis only to the extent that they emphasize the uniqueness of labor issues.

## 2.8 Conclusion

In summary, the evidence from a dynamic ideal-point model confirms that Southern Democrats in Congress were ideologically diverse on issues related to New Deal liberalism, and in the House became increasingly so after the 80th Congress. Beginning the 1930s no less liberal than their partisan counterparts from the North, by the mid-1940s Southern Democrats had moved to the middle of the ideological spectrum, where they remained into the early 1960s. Southerners' ideological migration was gradual in the House of Representatives and occurred later but more rapidly in the Senate. In contrast to the two-party North, where ideological change occurred overwhelmingly through electoral turnover, the Southern caucus evolved through the adaptation of continuing members as well as through replacement. Southerners'

position in the political center rendered them pivotal to the passage of much legislation, though their pivotality depended on the structural context and ideological direction of the proposed policy change. Moreover, Southern Democrats' pivotality operated at the level of individual members, not as a unified bloc. Labor policy appears to have been a leading indicator of the changing "dimensionality" of Southerners' preferences on New Deal issues generally, which soon came to reflect concerns about the racial autonomy of the South as well as considerations of economic interest and party loyalty.

# Chapter 3

# Sources of Ideological Diversity in the South

Having documented the ideological diversity and evolution of Southern members of Congress in Chapter 2, I now turn to an investigation of the sources of these differences. The general perspective adopted is that of contingent responsiveness: Democratic primaries created an electoral connection between Southern MCs and the eligible electorate, inducing responsiveness to their preferences. Selectorate preferences varied across constituencies both because districts have divergent aggregate characteristics and interests (e.g., Bensel, 1984) and because the relative influence of different social groups varied across constituencies (Fleck, 2002, pp. 26–7). Further, the strength of the electoral connection between MCs and constituents was moderated by character of political competition.

This chapter focuses on the demographic and structural characteristics of Southern electoral constituencies, leaving explicitly political factors for the following chapter. In brief, I find that most factors that have been proposed as forces for economic liberalism or conservatism in the South have weak and inconsistent associations with the estimated ideal points of Southern MCs. To the extent that strong associations are found, they tend to change dramatically over time. A major exception to this pattern is the liberalizing effect of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), a massive federal effort at regional economic development that seems to have created a constituency for New Deal liberalism in the areas it effected.

## 3.1 Potential Sources of Ideological Diversity

Why were some Southern MCs unabashed fiscal conservatives and others fervent New Deal liberals? Although there has been little systematic investigation of this question, different works have put forward various factors to explain ideological diversity within the white South. One prominent theme is the importance of racial context in explaining white political attitudes. In this view, whites in plantation areas with large (non-voting) black populations—the

so-called "Black Belt"—were the most committed to white supremacy, for the practical reason that their political and economic power depended on the exclusion and subordination of blacks (Alston and Ferrie, 1999; Key, 1984[1949]; Wright, 1986). In the upcountry areas of the South less suited to plantation agriculture, where blacks were less numerous, whites' direct interest in black subordination was less overwhelming. Whites in these areas also tended to be poorer than Black-Belt whites.[1]

In sum, whites in the Black Belt had a double motivation to be wary of New Deal-style liberalism: they were more concerned about the threat to the South's racial autonomy, and they tended to be wealthier than other whites, at least in rural areas. Consistent with these motivations, state-level politics in the South often displayed a Black Belt vs. upcountry cleavage that had frequently had economic overtones (Nixon, 1946; Bartley, 1995, p. 24). Upcountry areas produced such economic populists as Mississippis Theodore Bilbo, Alabamas James Folsom, and South Carolina's Olin Johnston (Carleton, 1951; Gilliam, 1975; Leemhuis, 1986; Morgan, 1985). The Black Belt was also the locus of such conservative projects as the 1948 Dixiecrat Revolt (Frederickson, 2001; Hubbs, 1997; Key, 1984[1949]). In Texas, where the Black Belt vs. upcountry distinction is less appropriate, counties with large minority populations still gave more support to conservative candidates in statewide races (Todd and Ellis, 1974, p. 730).

There is little doubt that the representatives of the Black Belt were the most opposed to civil rights for blacks (Caughey, 2008; Werner, 2009). On economic issues, however, the evidence is less clear. Key (1984[1949], pp. 380–1) claims that the plantation-vs.- upcountry cleavage was much less important in congressional politics than it was in state politics. Mayhew (1966), however, finds that between 1947 and 1962, Southern Democrats from heavily black districts were less loyal to their party on economic as well as racial issues.

Key (1984[1949]) puts more emphasis on urbanization than racial context as a force for economic liberalism in congressional politics (see Ch. 17). This view comports with much of the scholarship on the conservative coalition, which stresses the rural, agricultural basis of Southern opposition to the increasingly urban-oriented New Deal (Amenta and Skocpol, 1988; Badger, 2002; Berard, 2001; Patterson, 1967), as well as with urban representatives' apparently greater openness to racial liberalism (Badger, 1999a; Werner, 2009). Mayhew (1966), however, finds little evidence that Southerners from city districts voted distinctively, and Reiter (2001) disputes the claim that the urban–rural cleavage was responsible for Northern and Southern Democrats' ideological estrangement.

The poverty of the South relative to the nation gave the region a strong interest in federal action to aid and develop the region (Grantham, 1988; Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993; Schulman, 1994; Tindall, 1967). As Jason Smith has argued, public works and infras-

[1]This is not to deny that white supremacy held a psychological attraction to poorer Southern whites with seemingly less direct interest in black subordination. Indeed, some of the more violent manifestations of Southern bigotry, such as the 1920s incarnation of the Ku Klux Klan, emanated from upcountry areas and had little support among plantation whites, who viewed it as a threat to their labor force (Alston and Ferrie, 1999; Rogers et al., 1994; Webb, 2004).

tructure projects to promote economic development were perhaps "the New Deal's central enterprise" (2006, p. 15). As the South converged economically with the rest of the nation (Bishop, Formby, and Thistle, 1992), the benefits it received from such policies declined, and so too did its aggregate interest in New Deal liberalism more generally (Bartley, 1995; Shafer and Johnston, 2006). While typically used to explain changes in Southern preferences towards economic liberalism, differences in economic need is also a potential explanation for cross-sectional variation in economic preferences within the South. By this logic, poor and underdeveloped areas of the South would be more likely to support New Dealish economic policies like rural electrification and aid to education than wealthier (usually urban) areas. This thesis has not been investigated in detail, but is implicit in many analyses of Southern politics. The relationship between (say) a district's median income and the conservatism of its representative, however, is substantially complicated by the fact that economic development may have countervailing political effects, such as increasing the proportion of the population who can afford to pay poll taxes or diminishing the social and economic control of local elites (on the latter, see Salamon and Van Evera, 1973).

Finally, many scholars have pointed out that the New Deal itself fostered a constituency for economic liberalism in the South. Just as Social Security created its own constituency among the elderly and relief spending realign the allegiance of Northern machines (Campbell, 2003; Sundquist, 1983), so too did the "infrastructure politics" and other forms of federal aid create opportunities for Southern liberalism (Badger, 2007c).[2] The political opportunities created by the New Deal were spread across the South (as the early career of Lyndon Johnson attests), but "[n]o government agency so strongly inspired southern demand for federal economic intervention as did the Tennessee Valley Authority" (Schulman, 1994, p. 35). Commentators at the time and since observed that the areas covered by this ambitious regional development project formed the base for liberals in state-level politics (e.g., Fontenay, 1980; Gilliam, 1975) and tended to elect to Congress what Sen. John Sparkman (D-AL) called "TVA liberals" (Badger, 2007a, p. 40). In contrast to the other factors examined here, the TVA constituted a well-defined intervention on a subset of the South, making it much more amenable to credible causal inference. Nevertheless, the thesis of TVA liberalism has not been rigorously evaluated, either in a descriptive sense (were TVA representatives more liberal?) or in a causal one (did the TVA cause more liberal representation?).

In short, existing scholarship suggests that conservative Southern MCs tended to represented constituencies that were less white, less urban, wealthier, and less dependent on federal aid. This chapter will examine each of these four factors. Since it is likely that their political implications were not constant over time, particular attention will be paid to how their effects changed over time. Most of the findings have only suggestive causal implications,

[2]In the 1930s, the federal government replaced Northern philanthropies as the primary patron of Southern liberalism, giving them "spheres of independence from local and state politics" (Tindall, 1967, p. 633; see also Sullivan, 1996). The developments were actively encouraged by Roosevelt and other national party leaders, who cultivated the "new generation" of Southern liberals with government appointments, endorsements, and partisan leadership roles in an attempt to realign the party along more liberal lines.

but the examination of the TVA allows for more definitive causal inferences.

## 3.2 Data and Descriptive Statistics

Fortunately, before the 89th Congress nearly all congressional districts in the 17-state South consisted of whole counties.[3] The exceptions are the counties that contain Miami (FL), New Orleans (LA), Baltimore (MD), Kansas City (MO), St. Louis (MO), and Houston (TX), all of which were divided between one or more districts in at least one congress during this period. As a result, census characteristics for all but a few districts can be constructed from county-level census data (Haines and ICPSR, 2010). Data on other variables, such as phone ownership and TVA exposure, can also be constructed at the county level.

The key independent variables were constructed thusly. For each county, in each decennial census between 1930 and 1960, the following variables were recorded: total population, number of white inhabitants, and number of inhabitants living in urban places.[4] The county-level values for a given year were linearly interpolated based on the nearest decennial censuses, with the exception of 1962, which was based on the 1960 census alone. Certain variables, particularly those proxying the economic status of county, are only available in specific years. The 1930 census collected data on the number of families in county that reported owning a radio. The number of residential telephones in each county in 1940 is calculable based on reports published by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T, 1940). Data for 1950 on median family income, percent with yearly family income less than $2,000, and percent with yearly family income greater than $5,000 are available from the 1952 County Data Book (Haines and ICPSR, 2010).

Counties were matched to districts based on the district descriptions in Martis et alia's *Historical Atlas of United States Congressional Districts* (1982) and checked against the county-level congressional electoral data compiled by Clubb, Flanigan, and Zingale (2006). District-level *White Percent* and *Urban Percent* were calculated by totaling the (interpolated) white and urban inhabitants in all counties in the district and dividing by the sum of (interpolated) county populations in the district. District *Percent with Radio in 1930* and *Phones Per Capita in 1940* were calculated analogously except no interpolation was done. District *Percent with Income Over $2,000 in 1950* and *Percent with Income Over $5,000 in 1950* were computed by taking the weighted average of county-level percentages, with weights proportional to 1950 county populations.

The calculation of *Median Income in 1950* was more complicated. Unlike variables expressed as totals or means, the (weighted) mean of county median incomes does not necessarily equal the district median income. To obtain a more accurate figure, the following

[3]This practice was ended by the 1962 Supreme Court case *Baker v. Carr*, which mandated that legislative districts be approximately equal in population.

[4]Beginning in 1910, the U.S. Census defined an urban place to include "cities and other incorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more" (Truesdell, 1949, p. 6).

Figure 3.1: Characteristics of Southern U.S. House districts in the 80th Congress (1947–48): *White Percent* (top left), *Urban Percent* (top right), *Median Household Income* (bottom left), and *Year Entered TVA* (bottom right). Gray indicates districts for which data are missing or, in the case of *Year Entered TVA*, districts that were never a part of the TVA.

formula was used for each district $i$ with $J$ counties:

$$\exp[\sum_{j=1}^{J} \log(MedianIncome_{ij}) \times Population_{ij}/Population_{i}] \tag{3.1}$$

Equation 3.1 basically amounts to exponentiating the weighted mean of logged household income. If the distribution of logged family income is symmetric, then Equation 3.1 exactly equals median income. The intuition behind this is that in a symmetric distribution, the mean and median are equal. Thus, under symmetry, $\log[\text{median}(x)] = \text{median}[\log(x)] = \text{mean}[\log(x)]$, so $\log(\textit{Median Income in 1950})$ can be calculated for districts like any other county-level variable expressed as a mean. Exponentiating the results transforms *Median Income in 1950* back to its original unlogged scale. Even if the population distribution of $\log(\textit{Median Income in 1950})$ is not exactly symmetric, it is almost certainly more symmetric than the unlogged distribution.

The final variable of importance is district exposure to the TVA, which is designed to test whether the TVA—and, by implication, other New Deal programs—created a constituency for liberalism in the South. A district was coded as being "exposed" to the TVA if any municipality or cooperative within its borders purchased electrical power from the TVA. Whether and when a district was exposed was determined by using various TVA publications to match power purchasers to counties and then matching counties to districts.[5] The analyses that follow employ a dichotomous coding of *TVA* indicating whether any county in the district was ever covered by the TVA service area.

Figure 3.1 plots the distribution of the four key independent variables across congressional districts during the 80th Congress (1947–48). District *White Percent* (top-left) ranges from a low of 25% to over 90%. By far the least-white district is MS-3, which covers the northern part of the Mississippi Delta and forms the "buckle" on the crescent-shaped Black Belt stretching from southern Virginia to eastern Texas. The top-right plot illustrates the variation in urbanization across the South. Most districts are less than a third urban, but such urban brights spots as Dallas, Memphis, Nashville, Birmingham, Atlanta, and Miami are clearly visible.

The household *Median Income in 1950* in each district is plotted in the bottom right. Data on this variable are missing from several districts in western Texas, presumably due

[5]The following sources were used to match determine the TVA service area: Tennessee Valley Authority (1940), Tennessee Valley Authority: Office of Power (1956), and Tennessee Valley Authority (2012). I also relied on the websites of various cooperative utilities and state cooperative associations. I am grateful for the assistance of Carl Thomas Kitchens in pointing me towards these sources.

to the very small populations of many counties in that area. Since district-level *Percent with Income Over $2,000 in 1950* is very highly correlated (0.986) with *Median Income in 1950* and has more complete data, it is used in the regression analyses below instead of *Median Income in 1950*. One pattern that clearly stands out in the income data is that urban districts tend to have higher median incomes.

Finally, the bottom-right plot demarcates the TVA service area, with color indicating the first year that any part of the district started receiving TVA power. The first district to do so was Alabama's 8th district, which contains Muscle Shoals, the site of the original TVA dam. The last district joined in 1945. The service area continued to expand (though not into new districts) until 1952, and in 1959 Congress forbade any future expansions (Kitchens, 2012, p. 10).[6]

## 3.3 Bivariate Analysis

For each congress, Figures 3.2 through 3.4 plot the bivariate relationship between *MC Conservatism* and measures of racial composition, urbanization, and economic status of each constituency. *MC Conservatism* is defined as the average of the IRT ideal-point estimates of all members who represented the seat in a given congres—typically but not always one member per term in the House and two in the Senate. The sample includes only constituencies in the 13-state South all of whose representatives in Congress were Democrats. For each observation, the value of one or more other variables is indicated by the color. To highlight the chamber-specific relationship in each year, a linear best-fit line is plotted separately for the House and Senate. The linear trend was fit using outlier-robust M-estimation in the R function `rlm` (Venables and Ripley, 2002), as called by `geom_smooth` (Wickham, 2009).

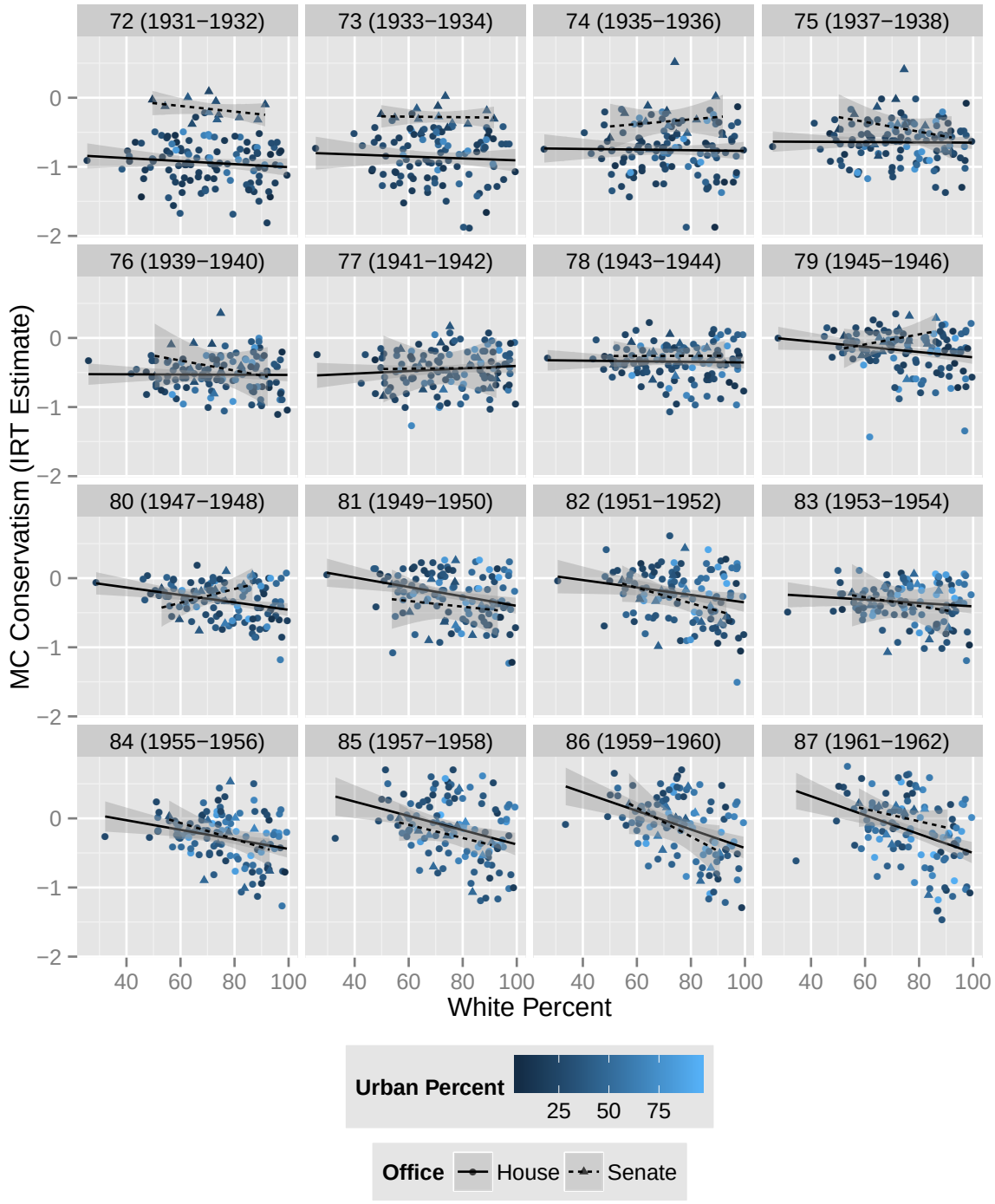
Consider first the relationship between *White Percent* and *MC Conservatism*, plotted in Figure 3.2. In both the House and the Senate, the relationship is quite flat through the mid-1940s but noticeably negative thereafter. The main difference between the two chambers is that at the beginning of the period, Southern senators are markedly more conservative on average than Southern House members.[7] The pattern may be the result of the usual liberalism displayed by Southern Democrats on economic issues in the early 1930s (see Figure 2.1).

As noted earlier, the one conspicuous outlier in the data is Mississippi's 3rd District, which had a far larger black population than any other district. This district is also anomalous because it was represented between 1951 and 1962 by Rep. Frank Smith, whose economic

[6]The date that a county entered the TVA was coded as the earliest date that any municipality or cooperative *currently* providing power within the county first received TVA power. Since the service areas of individual cooperatives changed (usually expanded) over time, some districts might not have received TVA power until sometime after the date they are assigned.

[7]Interestingly, this pattern is not apparent if DW-NOMINATE scores are used instead of IRT estimates. Otherwise, DW-NOMINATE scores and IRT estimates yield similar results, though the IRT estimates have slightly more congress-to-congress variation.

Figure 3.2: ***White Percent***: Relationship between the white percentage in a constituency and the average economic conservatism its members of Congress. Chamber indicated by shape and line type, and *Urban Percent* by color. Linear trend fit by M-estimation.



and racial views were unusually liberal and became increasingly so over time. Smith was a protégé of Mississippi Senator John Stennis and a leader of the small "loyalist" (anti-Dixiecrat) faction in Mississippi politics (Weeks, 1974, p. 26; Frederickson, 2001, p. 178). The fact that the heart of the Mississippi Delta—"the most Southern place on Earth" in the words of James Cobb (1992)—would elect and reelect a liberal like Smith is a testament first to Smith's skill in concealing his true views during his initial campaign (see Mitchell, 2001, ch. 6), and secondly to the potential importance of one individual's idiosyncratic views. One reason that the multivariate analyses below include random effects for MC is to account for such idiosyncratic variation.

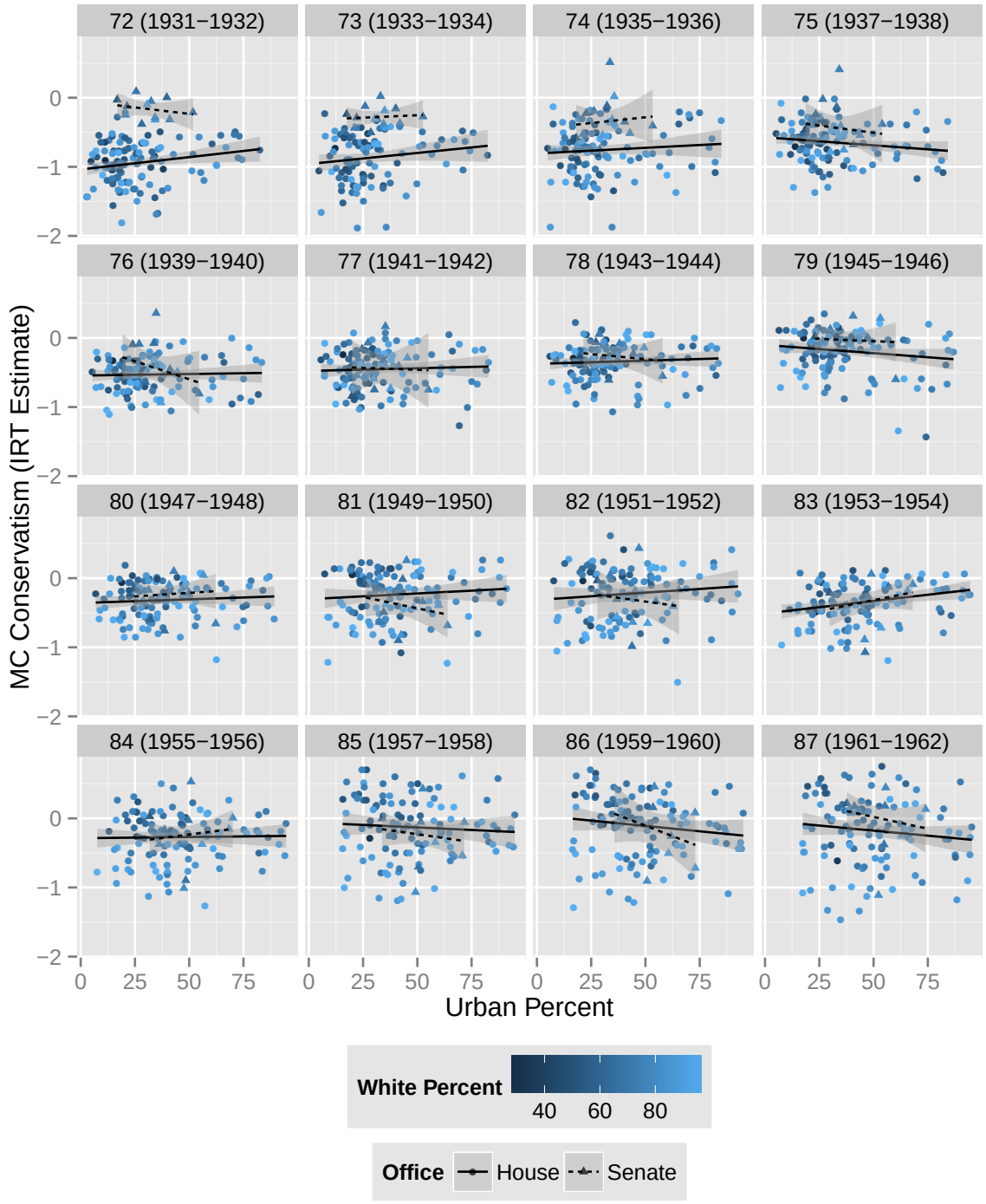
Returning to the graph, the weak relationship between *White Percent* and *MC Conservatism* before the mid-1940s supports Key's claim that the Black Belt vs. upcountry cleavage was relatively unimportant in congressional politics at time he was writing. The relationship was solidly negative, however, in the time period considered by Mayhew (1966). The temporal heterogeneity in the relationship helps reconcile these works' conflicting views regarding the impact of racial context on congressional conservatism. The increasingly negative relationship between *White Percent* and *MC Conservatism* over time is consistent with the thesis that New Deal liberalism's potential threats to regional autonomy were felt particularly keenly in the Black Belt. Although all Southern MCs became more conservative over time, the movement among those with many (non-voting) black constituents was much greater than among those in overwhelmingly white districts.[8] This relationship does not seem to be much confounded by *Urban Percent*, which has only a weak correlation with *White Percent* (0.16).

Compared to *White Percent*, *Urban Percent* has a fairly weak relationship with *MC Conservatism*, though it too seems to become more negative over time, at least in the House. In the early 1930s, the slope is slightly positive, but it is slightly negative at the end of the period. There is some sample selection bias related to urbanism. The few districts that cut across county lines and thus are missing census data are highly urban, and by the end of the period the representatives from these districts are slightly more liberal than the average Southerner. On the other hand, by the 1950s a few urban districts start dropping out of the sample because they flip to the Republicans, which might create the opposite sort of bias. The net bias is probably minimal. Overall, the graphs suggest that contrary to the suppositions of Key (1984[1949]), Alston and Ferrie (1999), and others, urbanism is not consistently associated with greater liberalism, at least not when comparing constituencies at a single point in time.

As noted above, we lack a measure of county economic development that is consistent across years. Instead, we have several measures: *Percent with Radio in 1930*, *Phones Per Capita in 1940*, *Median Family Income in 1950*, *Percent with Income Over $2,000 in 1950*, and *Percent with Income Over $5,000 in 1950*. The measures are correlated, but not perfectly

[8]This same pattern is evident using first-dimension DW-NOMINATE scores, which are designed to be explicitly purged of off-dimensional (i.e., sectional/racial) ideological cleavages.

Figure 3.3: ***Urban Percent***: Relationship between the white percentage in a constituency and the average economic conservatism its members of Congress. Chamber indicated by shape and line type, and *White Percent* by color. Linear trend fit by M-estimation.



so.[9] Thus a natural option is to use these multiple indicators to estimate a single latent measure of *Relative Development*, which was done in R using the factor analysis function `MCMCmixfactanal` (Quinn, 2004). The resulting latent variable is relative in the sense that it captures a constituency's level of economic development compared to other constituencies. Like the measures on which it is based, it is constant over time. The latent factor is most strongly related to the 1950 income measures and least so with *Phones Per Capita in 1940*, with which it correlates at 0.75.[10]

Figure 3.4 plots the relationship between latent *Relative Development* and *MC Conservatism*. Again, the relationship is generally weak, possibly becoming more negative with time but not monotonically.[11] A negative relationship, even a weak one, is contrary to logic that the poorest and least developed parts of South had the strongest interest in federal aid. This anomaly is perhaps explained by the most striking pattern in Figure 3.4, which is *Relative Development*'s strong correlations with *Urban Percent* (0.72) and *White Percent* (0.41). The whiter and more urban parts of the South (the lighter dots in Figure 3.4) also tended strongly to be the better developed. Since both of these variables are theorized to cause greater liberalism, their correlation with *Relative Development* may mask the latter's positive association with *MC Conservatism*. With such considerations in mind, we now turn to a multivariate analysis of the factors associated with *MC Conservatism*.

## 3.4 Multivariate Analysis

This section attempts the parcel out the independent relationships between the three main demographic factors and *MC Conservatism*. In the absence of a well-defined manipulation or intervention, let alone an exogenous one, the conditional associations should not be interpreted as causal parameters (Holland, 1986). But they still shed useful light on the plausibility of alternative theories. The analyses pay particular attention to how relationships change over time, as such temporal heterogeneity has important theoretical implications.

In the multivariate analysis, it is important to account for structure of dependence among observations. The most obvious form of such dependence is that the same members of Congress appear in multiple years of the data set. As suggested by the story of Rep. Frank Smith, the ideological idiosyncrasies of a particular representative are likely to persist over time rather than be independent in each year. Further, since Southerners' position in na-

[9] The imperfect correlation is probably due both to change in counties' relative prosperity over time and to the fact that the different indicators measure different parts of the income distribution. In the typical Southern constituency, the median family income was near $2,000, and the 90th percentile was around $5,000.

[10] The correlations remain very stable even if only one 1950 variable is used as an indicator.

[11] The relationship between *Relative Development* and DW-NOMINATE score is more consistently negative over time, but again very weakly so. If *Phones Per Capita in 1940* is used instead of the latent factor, the negative slope at the end of the period is more noticeable, but it is unlikely that this difference is meaningful since *Phones Per Capita* was measured more distantly in time from where the difference is apparent.

Figure 3.4: ***Relative Development***: Relationship between the (latent) level of relative economic development of a constituency and the average economic conservatism of its members of Congress. Chamber is indicated by shape and line type, and $(UrbanPercent \times WhitePercent)^{\frac{1}{2}}$ by color. Linear trend fit by M-estimation.

tional politics changed over time and so did the characteristics of districts (most became more urban, for example), we would want to control for aggregate change over time so as to eliminate the contribution of this over-time covariance. Another potentially important source of dependence is among representatives of the same state, who share such unobserved characteristics as state suffrage laws and factional alignments. Finally, one would want to account for differences between the House and Senate, allowing both for mean differences across chambers and potentially for different relationships.

The above requirements can be accommodated through a hierarchical model with random intercepts to account for mean dependence within MCs, states, years, and congressional chambers (Gelman and Hill, 2006). For MCs, a factor variable was created to indicate each unique combination of representatives/senators to occupy a particular constituency. When more than one MC represented a given constituency—a situation that describes all Senate constituencies as well as multimember House seats and cases where one member replaced another mid-congress—the combination was given its own intercept.[12] Similar indicators were created for congressional chamber and for the combination of state and year. Each of these random intercepts is modeled as a mean-zero normal distribution with variance estimated from the data.

Table 3.1 reports estimates from a random-effects regression of *MC Conservatism* on *Urban Proportion*, *White Proportion*, and *Relative Development*, each of which is allowed to change linearly over time. IRT estimates are used for the dependent variable, but the results are very similar if DW-NOMINATE scores are used instead.[13] The year variable has been centered at 1945 (the midpoint of the period), so the main effects are interpretable as the estimates for that year. The first thing to note in this table is that the conditional relationships of the variables are more robust than once the correlations among them have been accounted for. The relationships visible in Figures 3.2 and 3.3 are more clearly present here. In the case of *Relative Development*, the conditional relationship is the opposite of the bivariate one: a relatively poor constituency is predicted to have significantly more liberal representation in Congress than a relatively developed one with similar urban and white percentages of the population.

To give a sense of the substantive size of the relationships: a one-standard-deviation difference in *Urban Percent* in 1945 is associated with a conservatism decrease of $-0.04$ on the ideal-point scale. The analogous semistandardized effect sizes (Stavig, 1977) for *White Percent* and *Relative Development* are $-0.05$ and $+0.06$, respectively. As a point of comparison, in most years the standard deviation of MC ideal points in the 13-state South

[12]For example, the Alabama Senate pair of Lister Hill and John Bankhead has its own random intercept, distinct from that of the pair Lister Hill and John Sparkman, who succeeded Bankhead. Recall that *MC Conservatism* is the average of the estimated ideal points all representatives of a constituency in a given congress.

[13]The main difference is that the state-year variation is lower in the DW-NOMINATE model, which makes sense since this measure allows for less year-to-year ideological variation than IRT estimates. In addition, there are no systematic differences across chambers of Congress.

Table 3.1: Random-effects regression of *MC Conservatism* on *Urban Proportion*, *White Proportion*, and *Relative Development*, 1930–1960, 13-state South. Percentages have been converted to proportions to aid presentation.

| Fixed Effects | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Estimate | Std. Error | t value |
| (Intercept) | −0.35 | 0.13 | −2.76 |
| Urban Proportion (1945) | −0.20 | 0.11 | −1.78 |
| White Proportion (1945) | −0.31 | 0.10 | −3.11 |
| Relative Development (1945) | 1.35 | 0.52 | 2.59 |
| Urban Proportion × Year | −0.05 | 0.01 | −7.04 |
| White Proportion × Year | −0.02 | 0.01 | −3.37 |
| Relative Development × Year | 0.23 | 0.03 | 8.69 |
| Random Effects | | | |
| | Name | Groups | Std.Dev. |
| | MC | 465 | 0.28 |
| | State-Year | 208 | 0.15 |
| | Chamber | 2 | 0.11 |
| | Residual | | 0.17 |
| Observations deleted due to missingness: 145 | | | |
| Usable $N$: 1,972 | | | |

was between 0.3 and 0.5.

As indicated by the coefficients on the interactions with *Year*, the size and even direction of these associations changed greatly over time. Consider the coefficients as estimated in 1932. In that year, *White Percent* is estimated to be essentially unrelated to *MC Conservatism*. The coefficients on *Urban Percent* and *Relative Development* are statistically significant but with the opposite sign from 1945. In fact, until around 1940 the point estimate of *Urban Percent* is positive and that of *Relative Development* is negative. Thus, only in the second half of the period were whiter and more urban districts definitively more liberal and wealthier districts more conservative. By 1958, the semistandardized effects are substantially larger than in 1945: −0.16 for *Urban Percent*, −0.09 for *White Percent*, and −0.20 for *Relative Development*.

The fixed effects in the model explain a good deal of the ideological variation among Southern MCs, and most of the remaining variance is explained by the random intercepts. The standard deviation of MC-specific random intercepts, 0.28, is nearly as large as the standard deviation of ideal points, suggesting that members differed in important ways not captured by their constituency characteristics, state, or (since they are all Democrats) party affiliation. The state-year random effects also vary substantially. When random effects of *State* and *Year* are entered separately in the model, the standard deviation of *Year* is about

three times larger than of *State*, but there is still important variation across states.[14] As Table 3.4 shows, given their demographics, Kentucky and Virginia are clear outliers at the left and right ends of the ideological spectrum, respectively. Alabama, Tennessee, and Oklahoma were also relatively liberal, and South Carolina and Mississippi were quite conservative. Southern senators were estimated to be somewhat more conservative on average than Southern House members, but this difference is only present in the 1930s (see Figure 3.2).

Table 3.2: Estimated random effects for *State*

| KY | AL | TN | OK | AR | FL | LA | GA | TX | NC | SC | MS | VA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| −0.27 | −0.17 | −0.15 | −0.12 | −0.02 | 0.03 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.06 | 0.07 | 0.12 | 0.13 | 0.25 |

It is interesting to ask how these same demographic variables are related to presidential vote. Studies of American politics (e.g., Canes-Wrone, Brady, and Cogan, 2002) commonly use presidential vote as a proxy for the ideological composition of the electorate. This assumption, however, is not plausible for the South during most of the period under consideration, for through the 1950s class status and preferences on social welfare both had little relationship to presidential vote choice (Shafer and Johnston, 2006, pp. 26–29). In the 1950s, presidential Republicanism was greatest in its traditional Appalachian strongholds (many of which are not included in these data because they were represented by Republicans in Congress) but also made major inroads among more prosperous metropolitan whites and even in some areas of the Black Belt (Bartley, 1995, p. 102). By the 1960 election, presidential vote arguably provides a reasonable, though by not means perfect, indicator of the ideological preferences of the electorate (Mayhew, 1966, p. 117).

Given the same specification as Table 3.1 but with *Republican Presidential Percentage*[15] as the dependent variable, the results differ in important respects. In the 1930s, *Urban Percent* and especially *White Percent* were both strongly related to presidential Republicanism, which comports with the traditional view of the Black Belt as the stronghold of the one-partyism. *Relative Development*, on the other hand, has a negative relationship with Republicanism in the 1930s. These patterns are the opposite of those for *MC Conservatism*. The interactions with time, however, are qualitatively similar. By the 1950s, *Relative Development* had switch to a very strong positive relationship with Republican presidential vote.

[14] Under a specification with separate random effects for *State* and *Year*, the coefficients' interactions with time are qualitatively similar—negative for *White Percent* and *Urban Percent*, conservative for *Relative Development*—but the main effects do not switch signs until later in the period. Given that states probably exhibited different trajectories over time, I believe that the results from the specification with a state-year interaction are more trustworthy. If state random effects are dropped entirely from the analysis, the results are essentially the same as the state-year specification.

[15] This variable is defined as the population-weighted average of the county-level vote for the Republican candidate, as a percentage of the total presidential vote cast in that election. In presidential election years, the presidential vote in that year is used; in off-years, the presidential vote two years later is used.

*White Percent*'s is smaller but still robust, while *Urban Percent*'s essentially zero.

Presidential vote will receive further consideration in Chapter 4, but for now it should be noted that presidential vote seem to have been driven by a combination of "old" and "new" factors. Classic features of Southern politics, such as Black Belt commitment to Democratic loyalty, are strongly present in the early part of the period, but even by the end they have not been overtaken by more purely ideological considerations. By the end of the period, however, constituencies that were both highly white (thus less committed to one-party rule) and relatively prosperous (thus benefitting less from economic liberalism) had little reason not to cast their presidential vote for a Republican, even if they continued to elect Democrats to Congress.

The multivariate analyses sheds important light on the sources of ideological variation among Southern members of Congress. Consistent with the political cleavages that often emerged at the state level in Southern politics, Southern Democrats who represented rural districts with large black populations were likely to be particularly conservative. All else equal, conservatism was also greater in the wealthier parts of the South, which benefited least from the federal aid that New Deal–style policies promised.

These patterns are apparent, however, only after 1940, which is indicative of the changing meaning of economic liberalism. Over time, "southerners came to see racial concerns as embedded within a range of New Deal proposals" (Katznelson and Mulroy, 2012, p. 615), and the evidence here indicates that the reaction against New Deal liberalism was most severe in the areas where whites had the greatest interest in white supremacy. Similarly, as the New Deal and its supporting coalition took on a more urban cast, representatives of the rural South—which in the 1930s had been more liberal than average—moved markedly to the right, and by the 1950s were distinctly more conservative than urban Southern MCs. Finally, as the South as a whole developed economically, support for economic liberalism became increasingly concentrated among the poorer parts of the region. These areas overlapped substantially with the conservative Black Belt, so their stronger support for economic liberalism appears only if *White Percent* and *Urban Percent* are held constant.

## 3.5 The Tennessee Valley Authority

The relationships identified in the previous section are suggestive of the forces that pushed Southern MCs in different ideological directions in this period. This section is more ambitious, in the sense that it attempts to demonstrate that the TVA had a causal effect on the ideological complexion of the area it affected. To do so, I first provide a more detailed overview of the history and activities of the TVA and then explain the mechanisms by which it might have strengthened the political constituency for liberalism in its region. I then turn to the evidence for its effects, as provided by matching and difference-in-difference designs.

### 3.5.1 Background on the TVA

The Tennessee Valley Authority was a project initially championed by progressives outside of the South, most notably Republican Senator George Norris of Nebraska. The idea for the project grew out of the debate over whether the half-built Wilson Dam at Muscle Shoals, Alabama, construction on which had been initiated during the First World War, should be turned over to private interests or managed by the government. In 1933, after years of stalemate on the issue, Norris's proposal that the dam be used for public purposes was taken up by Franklin Roosevelt, who pushed through the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority (Kennedy, 1999, pp. 147–8). A government corporation, the TVA was to implement "an integrated programme of regional development" focused on dams to control flooding and generate power, but extending also to health and education initiatives, fertilizer production, navigation, and resource management (Ekbladh, 2010, p. 51). This ambitious effort at developing the Tennessee Valley, among the poorest areas in the nation, was one of the New Deal's many innovative responses to the emergency of the Depression (Rogers et al., 1994, p. 486; Brinkley, 1995).

Though spearheaded by Northern progressives, the TVA quickly gained the support of most Southerners (aside from private power interests, who opposed it bitterly). The Authority's enabling act was supported by such Southern conservatives as Sen. Carter Glass (D-VA), and the TVA was one of the few early New Deal agencies supported by Southern governors and state legislators (Patterson, 1967, pp. 18–21; Schulman, 1994, p. 36). The disruptions caused by the early TVA and fears about local autonomy generated some skepticism among Valley residents, but by 1940 had widespread support in the region (Wengert, 1967, p. 71).[16] The political success of the TVA was due in large part to its success in convincing not only lower-class Southerners, who benefitted from jobs and higher wages in addition to the TVA's other benefits (Marshall, 1967, p. 118), but also local elites to buy into the project. Selznick (1949) famously argued that the TVA's effort to coopt local elites led a perversion of its ideology of "grassroots democracy" in favor of elite interests. Others, however, have responded that the TVA influenced local elites as much as the other way around (e.g., Wengert, 1967).

Although some economic studies (e.g., Kitchens, 2012) dispute the long-run effects of the TVA, most observers at the time and since considered its impact on the lives and material status of Valley residents to be transformative. It also had important political effects. The TVA "inspired southern demand for federal economic intervention" more than any other New Deal program (Schulman, 1994, p. 35). Residents in TVA areas directly experienced the benefits of government aid, which ranged from subsidized electricity to navigable rivers.[17]

[16]Some of the earliest legal clients of Carl Elliott, later a liberal congressman from Alabama and strong backer of the TVA, were "small farmers and landowners who stood to lose much or all of their land to the rerouted streams and lakes being formed by the dams" constructed by the TVA (Elliott and D'Orso, 1992, p. 70). Local autonomy was also an initial concern: "Many of TVA's early opponents," asserts Ray (1949, p. 922), "expressed fear that a regional authority would before long undermine and destroy the state and local governments in the Valley."

[17]FDR, asked about the political philosophy behind the TVA, responded, "It's neither fish nor fowl, but

Kline and Moretti estimate that "at the [TVA's] peak in 1950, the annual federal subsidy to the region amounted to 625 for the typical household (roughly 10% of household income)" (2011, p. 2). Due in part to Republican opposition in Congress, these transfers effectively ended after 1959.

The concrete material benefits of the TVA provided liberals with a powerful rhetorical weapon to counter conservatives' warnings about the dangers of federal interference.[18] The high-profile polarization between the public-power TVA and its private-power adversaries also helped sharpen ideological differences between candidates, which were otherwise hard to discern in the one-party system.[19] In addition, notwithstanding the critique of Selznick (1949), the TVA's ideology of participatory democracy may have helped politically mobilize a previously apathetic citizenry (Ray, 1949, p. 932).

The TVA region became an important geographic base of liberalism in the states it affected. Liberal candidates whose core of "friends-and-neighbors" support (Key, 1984[1949], pp. 37–41) lay elsewhere added TVA areas to their existing political coalition (see, e.g., Hamilton, 1987, p. 86, on Lister Hill's 1938 election to the Senate). As the rest of the South became increasingly estranged from the national Democratic Party, the TVA region remained largely loyal to the party (Frederickson, 2001, p. 226; Rogers et al., 1994, p. 486). TVA areas also spawned a new generation self-described "TVA liberals" like Alabama's John Sparkman, Tennessee's Estes Kefauver, and Kentucky's Earle Clements.[20]

The political influence of the TVA took some time to filter up to Congress, in part because many conservative Southern MCs largely accommodated themselves to the TVA without changing their overall voting patterns.[21] But over time, especially after 1940, TVA liberals began to make their way into Congress, sometimes by defeating opponents of the TVA (e.g., Albert Gore, Sr.'s unseating of Sen. Kenneth McKellar in 1952).[22] The TVA's liberalizing effect on congressional representation in its area came to be widely accepted (e.g., Badger, 2007c; Mayhew, 1966; Ray, 1949). One Republican House member, commenting on fortunes of the conservative coalition, observed:

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whatever it is, it will taste awfully good to the people of the Tennessee Valley" (Kennedy, 1999, p. 148).

[18] In 1962, facing an unexpectedly strong challenge from a conservative Republican, liberal Alabama Senator Lister Hill argued that "the Republicans did not put TVA in Alabama," conveniently overlooking the leading role of the Republican George Norris (Young, 1978, p. 162).

[19] In 1944 and 1954, respectively, Alabama Senators Lister Hill and John Sparkman, both strong defenders of the TVA, received strong primary challenges from Birmingham-based conservatives whose opposition to the TVA helped clarify their ideological positions, making these contests an unusually clear ideological choice (Gilliam, 1975, pp. 75–6; Hamilton, 1987, pp. 113–28).

[20] It was John Sparkman, a native of North Alabama, who described himself as a "TVA liberal" (Badger, 2007c, p. 64). Future Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver first became involved in politics in the early 1930s when he was appointed to a planning commission in Chattanooga working mainly on TVA issues (Fontenay, 1980, p. 61). On Earl Clements, who hailed from southwestern Kentucky, see Syvertsen (1982).

[21] A good example is Rep. John Rankin, who represented TVA-affected northeastern Mississippi and was otherwise very conservative (Fontenay, 1980, pp. 107–08).

[22] McKellar, an ally of Boss Crump of Memphis, did not so much oppose the TVA on principle as desire to control it for his own ends.

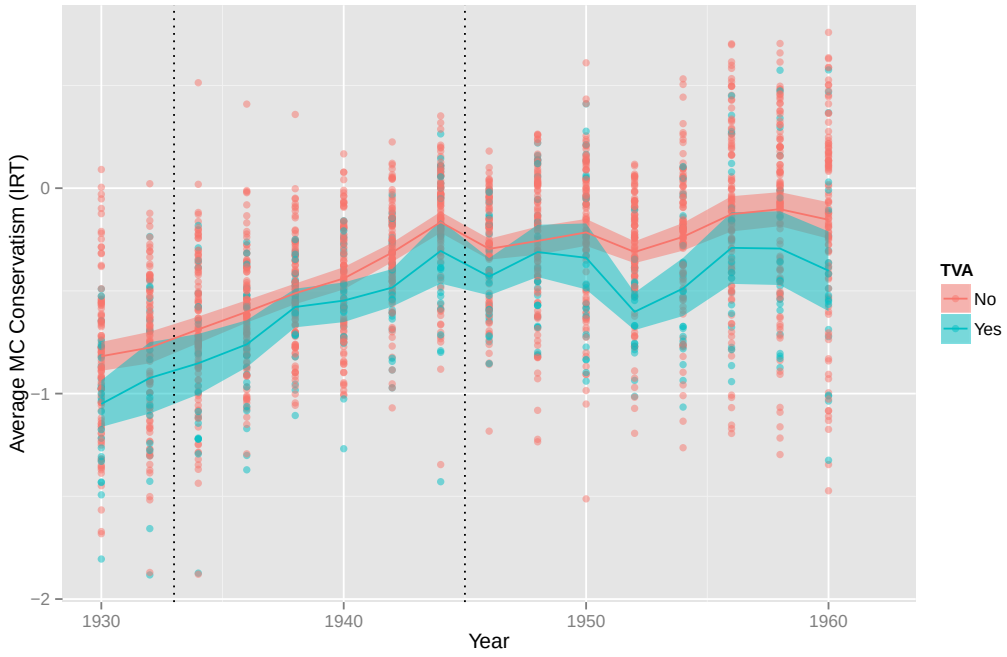



Figure 3.5: *MC Conservatism* of TVA and non-TVA constituencies in the 13-state South. The shaded regions indicate the 95% credible interval of the estimate in each year (i.e., not smoothing over time). Vertical dotted lines indicate the period between the initiation of the TVA in 1933 and the end of its expansion across districts in 1945.

> There are a group of Southerners I call TVA Southerners. Those in the TVA area don't vote with their Southern colleagues; they vote with the Northern Democrats. They are pretty liberal all the way (Clapp, 1963, p. 363).

### 3.5.2 Difference-in-Difference Design

Notwithstanding the conventional wisdom that "TVA Southerners" were more liberal, it is not at all clear that the TVA *caused* these ideological differences. Part of the difficulty is that the TVA region was distinctive *ex ante*; indeed, one of the criteria for inclusion in the TVA power service region was that an area be relatively rural and underdeveloped (Kline and Moretti, 2011, p. 6). The TVA region was also somewhat whiter than the rest of the South. As the previous analyses showed, these characteristics have political implications that might be the true cause of the differences between TVA and non-TVA congressmen.

Figure 3.5 compares the *MC Conservatism* of TVA and non-TVA constituencies in the 13-state South, providing a rough first cut at the problem. The shaded regions indicate the 95% credible intervals in each year, with no smoothing done across years. MCs who represented part of the TVA service region did tend to be less conservative than non-TVA

MCs, usually significantly so, but this was true before as well as after the TVA's initiation.

One step towards addressing these problems is a difference-in-difference specification of the following general form (Angrist and Pischke, 2009, p. 233):

$$Y_{ijt} = \alpha + \gamma\, TVA_{jt} + \lambda Post + \delta(TVA_{jt} \times Post) + \mathbf{X}'_{jt}\beta + \epsilon_{ijt} \tag{3.2}$$

where $i$ indexes the MC, $j$ the constituency (district/state), and $t$ the congress. $TVA_{jt}$ is a dummy variable indicating whether any county in constituency $j$ is or will ever be part of the TVA service area,[23] and *Post* is a dummy equal to 1 in congresses that occurred the TVA "treatment" has been implemented. The interaction $TVA_{jt} \times Post$ indicates TVA districts after the implementation of the TVA, whose coefficient $\delta$ is the causal parameter of interest. The matrix $\mathbf{X}_{jt}$ represents (potentially time-varying) constituency-level covariates, such as *Urban Percent*. Group-level random effects for *MC*, *State-Year*, and *Chamber* are not shown but probably should be included as well.

The key identifying assumptions of Equation 3.2 are that, conditional on the time-varying covariates, the average difference between TVA and non-TVA MCs is (except for the effect of treatment) invariant over time, and that the difference between the pre- and post-treatment period is invariant across TVA and non-TVA MCs. This rules out, for example, differential time trends between TVA and non-TVA MCs. The plausibility of these assumptions is not easy to evaluate, but the non-linearities in the treatment groups' trajectories over time (see Figure 3.5) suggest that caution is in order. Another important assumption is that the time-varying covariates are not themselves affected by the treatment. This assumption is least palatable for *Relative Development*, which is based on 1950 income measures that are in a sense part of the treatment of interest.

Table 3.3: Difference-in-difference estimate of the effect the TVA on *MC Conservatism*.

| | Estimate | Std. Error | t value |
|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | −0.30 | 0.12 | −2.54 |
| TVA | −0.14 | 0.04 | −3.88 |
| Post-1950 | −0.12 | 0.04 | −3.11 |
| TVA × Post-1950 | −0.06 | 0.04 | −1.55 |
| Urban Proportion (1945) | −0.17 | 0.11 | −1.49 |
| White Proportion (1945) | −0.20 | 0.10 | −1.99 |
| Relative Development (1945) | 0.98 | 0.52 | 1.87 |
| Urban Proportion × Year | −0.05 | 0.01 | −7.26 |
| White Proportion × Year | −0.01 | 0.01 | −2.29 |
| Relative Development × Year | 0.23 | 0.03 | 8.99 |
| (Random effects for *MC*, *State-Year*, and *Chamber* not reported.) | | | |

[23] $TVA_{jt}$ is indexed by t because the borders of congressional districts change over time.

Bearing these caveats in mind, consider Table 3.5.2, which reports the results of a difference-in-difference specification similar to that reported in Table 3.1. This specification defines the "post" treatment period as beginning after 1950, and the TVA × Post-1950 interaction is marginally significant. This, however, is the most favorable definition of the post-treatment period. No other year between 1933 and 1955 yields a negative estimated treatment effect on *MC Conservatism*. Although there is evidence that the TVA's effects on congressional representation were some been somewhat delayed (see above), there is little *a priori* reason to expect them to be manifest after 1950 only.

The same basic results emerge if *Percent with Radio in 1930* is substituted for *Relative Development*, if only *Urban Percent* and *White Percent* are included, or if no controls at all are included. In years before 1945, the coefficient on TVA × Post-1950 tends to have the wrong (i.e., positive) sign. TVA MCs, however, are always estimated to be significantly less conservative than non-TVA MCs in the pre-treatment period. The results are also quite similar, though slightly stronger, if *Republican Presidential Percentage* is the dependent variable. In short, the difference-in-difference analysis provides solid evidence that the TVA region was politically distinct, but it suggests that this distinctiveness largely predated the implementation of the TVA.

### 3.5.3 Matching

The difference-in-difference analysis leaves much to be desired due to its assumption of parallel trends over time, and also to the linear model's extrapolation across potentially dissimilar units and years (Ho et al., 2007). For these reasons, a matching design holds considerable appeal. The logic of this design is as follows. First, measure the demographic, economic, and electoral characteristics of counties in the years 1928–32, immediately before the establishment of the TVA. Second, for each biennium between 1930 and 1960, calculate the same variables for congressional districts by aggregating the pre-treatment characteristics of counties up to the district level.[24] Then, again for each biennium, match treated districts (i.e., districts in which any county is or will be part of the TVA service area) with control districts on the basis of pre-treatment covariates and compare their outcomes, possibly adjusting for residual imbalance with a regression model. Note the congress-specific comparisons obviate the need to model how the effect of covariates changes over time (e.g., with a multiplicative interaction with *Year*).

One advantage of this design is that it offers natural opportunities for placebo tests—that is, tests of effects known to be zero the maintained assumptions (Rosenbaum, 2010, pp. 121–3). In this case, the placebo outcomes are the differences in *MC Conservatism* and *Republican Presidential Percentage* before the TVA had a chance to go into effect. Further,

[24]For example, to calculate the pre-treatment variables for Arkansas's 2nd District in 1950, determine the 1928–32 characteristics of the counties that composed the district *in 1950* and aggregate them to the district level by averaging the pre-treatment county values, weighted by their populations *in 1930*. State constituencies are not used in this analysis due to the difficulty of finding good matches.

we should also expect the effects of the TVA to cumulate over time as more areas in the service region were affected for a longer period. This design thus offers the opportunity for finer-grained analysis of the presumed causal effect. One thing to note is that since district lines change over time, so will the matched pairs, even though the covariates are fixed over time at the county level. In addition, because more data are missing on some covariates than others, the sample of districts depends on the covariate set used.

Three sets of covariates were used to match, in various combinations:

- **Demographic:**
  - *Population in 1930*
  - *Area in 1930*
  - *Population Density in 1930*
  - *White Percent in 1930*
  - *Urban Percent in 1930*
  - *Radio Percent in 1930*
  - *White Percent in 1930 × Urban Percent in 1930*
  - *White Percent in 1930 × Radio Percent in 1930*
  - *Urban Percent in 1930 × Radio Percent in 1930*
- **Economic:**
  - *Manufacturing Workers*
  - *Manufacturing Wagers Per Worker*
  - *Manufacturing Output Per Capita*
  - *Crop Value Per Capita*
  - *Land Value Per Capita*
- **Electoral:**
  - *Democratic Presidential Percentage in 1928*[25]
  - *Democratic Presidential Percentage in 1932*
  - *Presidential Turnout in 1928*
  - *Presidential Turnout in 1932*

[25]Voting patterns in the 1928 and 1932 presidential elections differed considerably in the South, both in level (the Democratic nominee Al Smith performed considerably worse against Hoover in 1928 than Roosevelt did in 1932) and in distribution (Smith did especially badly outside the Black Belt, which remained loyal to him despite his being urban, Catholic, and anti-Prohibition).

- *Democratic Congressional Percentage in 1930*
- *Congressional Turnout in 1930*
- *MC Conservatism in 1930* (IRT)

Both one-to-one and one-to-two matching were conducted, all with replacement, using the `Matching` package in R (Sekhon, 2011). The loss function used was "qqmean.max": the maximum of the mean standardized difference in the eQQ plot for each variable. Select covariate balance statistics are provided in Appendix B. Given the relatively small universe of districts, perfect balance could not always obtained, so regression adjustment was used to compensate for residual covariate imbalance. Given the small matched sample sizes, asymptotics may be a poor guide to finite-sample properties, and so exact Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were used as well.[26]

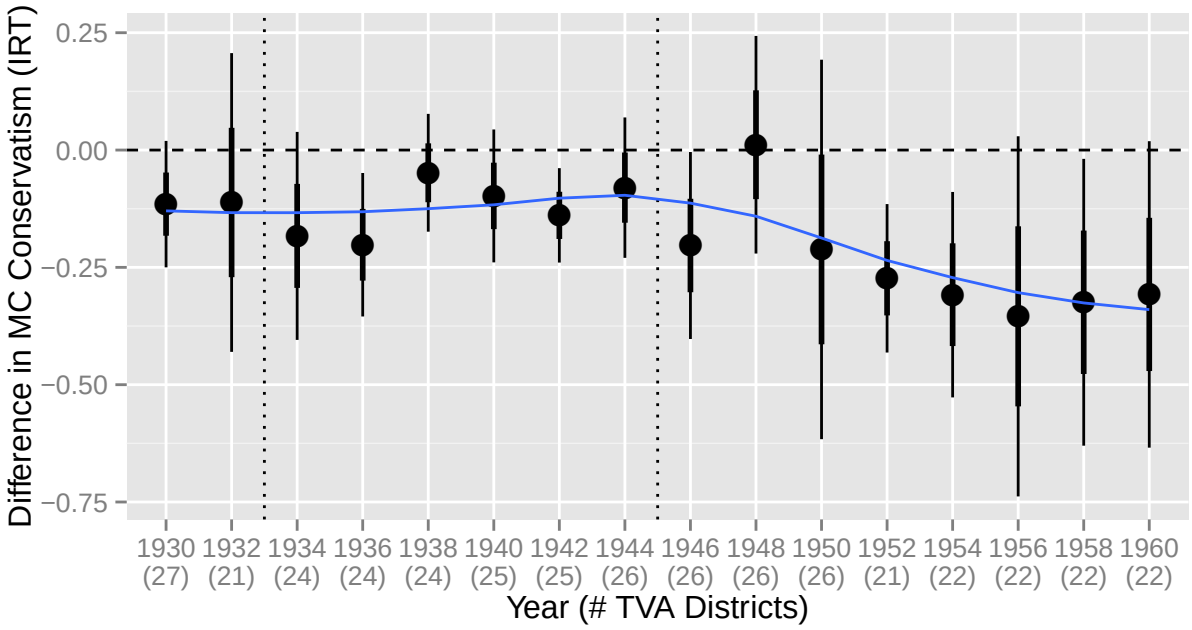
The biennial results of the one-to-two matching estimation are summarized in Figures 3.6, 3.7, and 3.8, each of which is based on a different set of matching covariates. The average differences between TVA and matched non-TVA districts were examined on outcome variables: *MC Conservatism* and *Presidential Republican Percentage*. *MC Conservatism* was measured in the two years following the election year indicated (i.e., 1931–32 for election year 1930). For presidential election years, *Presidential Republican Percentage* is based on the county-level results for that election, and for midterm years it is based on the results two years later. The frequentist confidence intervals around the regression-adjusted ATT estimates represent $\pm 1$ (thick line) and $\pm 2$ (thin line) Abadie-Imbens standard errors (Abadie and Imbens, 2006). The vertical dotted lines indicate the years 1933, when the TVA was authorized, and 1945, when the last congressional district was added to the TVA power service area. The cleanest comparison is between the pre-1933 and the post-1945 periods.

The results in Figure 3.6 are based on matching on 1930 demographics only (although *Radio Percent in 1930* proxies for economic development). The advantage of this covariate set is that the covariate data are most complete, and thus the greatest number of treated and control districts are available (as many as 27 in 1930). The disadvantage of matching on demographics alone is that the outcome variables differ between the groups in the pre-treatment period, though not quite significantly. Thus, matching on demographics does not pass the placebo test with flying colors.

Consistent with the difference-in-difference results, a clear effect on *MC Conservatism* is really only apparent in Figure 3.6 after 1950. With the bare exception of 1956, For *Republican Presidential Percentage*, the matching and DiD results diverge in that with matching the difference appears earlier, but it is definitely stronger after 1945. A similar pattern can be discerned in the top panel of Figure 3.9, which plots exact signed-rank $p$-values from

[26]The tests were conducted using the `wilcox_test` function from the R package `coin` (Hothorn et al., 2008). Since the $p$-values for these tests must be estimated using Monte Carlo sampling, they are technically approximate, not exact. However, given the number of Monte Carlo simulations used (100,000), the approximate $p$-values are very close to the exact values.

Figure 3.6: **Demographic Covariates:** Yearly comparisons of *MC Conservatism* (top) and *Republican Presidential Percentage* in TVA and non-TVA districts, matched one-to-two on the basis of 1930 demographic characteristics. Line ranges around point estimates indicate ±1 and ±2 Abadie-Imbens (2006) standard errors. The number of treated observations is printed below the year. Smooth fit by loess.



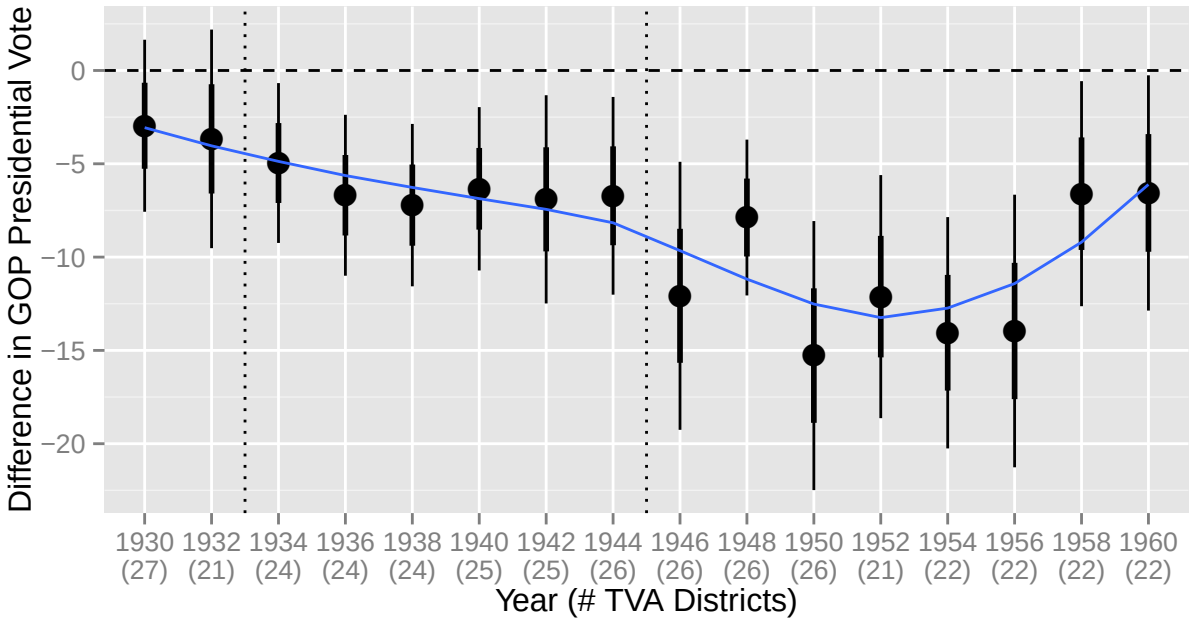



Figure 3.7: **Demographic and Economic Covariates:** Yearly comparisons of *MC Conservatism* (top) and *Republican Presidential Percentage* in TVA and non-TVA districts, matched one-to-two on the basis of 1930 demographic and economic characteristics. Line ranges around point estimates indicate ±1 and ±2 Abadie-Imbens (2006) standard errors. The number of treated observations is printed below the year. Smooth fit by loess.

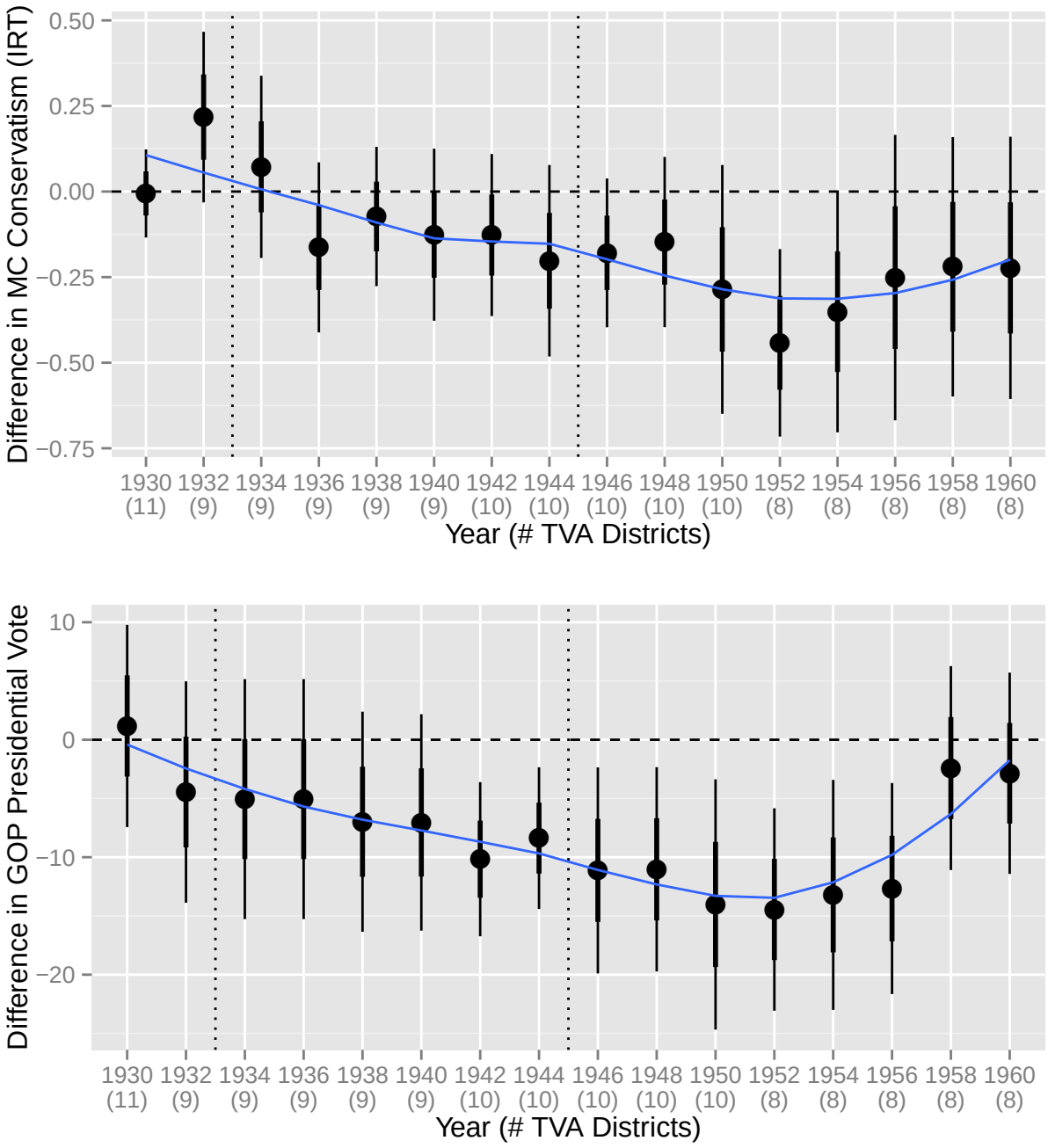
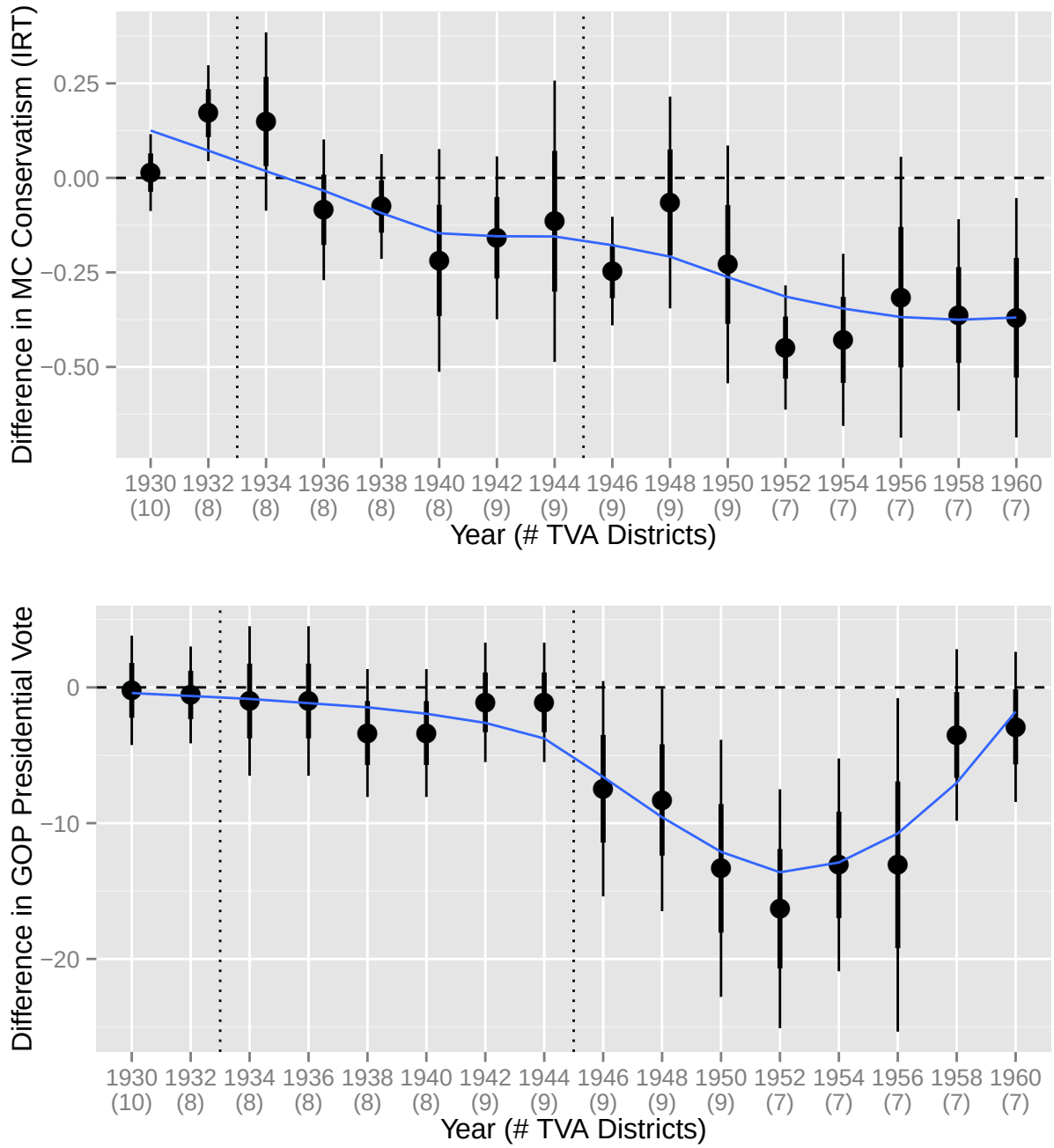


Figure 3.8: **Demographic, Economic, and Electoral Covariates:** Yearly comparisons of *MC Conservatism* (top) and *Republican Presidential Percentage* in TVA and non-TVA districts, matched one-to-two on the basis of 1930 demographic, economic, and electoral characteristics. Line ranges around point estimates indicate ±1 and ±2 Abadie-Imbens (2006) standard errors. The number of treated observations is printed below the year. Smooth fit by loess.



outcome and placebo tests of *MC Conservatism* and *Republican Presidential Percentage*. (Note that these tests do not adjust for residual imbalance.) As in Figure 3.6, the outcome differences appear earlier in presidential vote than in congressional roll calls. In addition, although the lagged placebo tests are (after 1934) less significant than the contemporaneous outcome tests, they are sometimes marginally significant, again suggesting that conditioning on demographics alone is not sufficient.

Figure 3.7 and the middle panel of Figure 3.9, which report the results of matching on demographic and economic covariates, provide more reassurance that the treatment–control differences are indeed causal. (Note that the sample sizes in these figures are substantially smaller.) Conditioning on districts' demographic and economic characteristics in 1930 is sufficient to pass placebo tests for both *MC Conservatism* and *Republican Presidential Vote* with flying colors. The placebo test results are only a little less compelling in Figure 3.9, at least for the 1928/1932 presidential vote among districts matched in the 1940s.[27] On the other hand, the outcome differences for *MC Conservatism* are, with the exception of 1952 and 1954, relatively small and not statistically significant, though they are fairly stable across time. Still, considering the placebo tests and outcome differences together, these figures provide solid evidence that the TVA had a liberalizing causal effect on the electorate, especially with regard to presidential vote in the 1950s.

Finally, consider the results of matching districts on demographic, economic, and electoral characteristics. Because pre-treatment differences are included in the matching and adjustment models, this analysis is, in a sense, a nonparametric difference-in-difference design. The benefit of including electoral covariates is clear from Figure 3.8 and the bottom panel of 3.9, which show pre-treatment outcome differences to be almost entirely absent. This disadvantage, of course, is that these pre-treatment balance tests cannot be considered true placebo tests, since the matches were chosen in order to minimize these differences. They therefore provide little information about unobserved confounding.

The overall pattern conveyed by this final analysis is similar to the other matching analyses: strong evidence of the liberalizing effect of the TVA, which appeared first and more dramatically in presidential vote is also evident in congressional roll-call voting. The effect appears to peak in the early 1950s, when federal transfers to the region also peaked, and to largely dissipate by 1960, about the time the TVA stopped receiving federal subsidies. The effect sizes are not small. In the 1950s, the ideological gap between TVA and non-TVA MCs was approximately equal to the standard deviation of ideal points among Southern Democrats in Congress. In presidential elections during that same decade, the Republican candidate received 10–20 percentage points less support in TVA areas than in comparable non-TVA areas of the South. An analogous estimation of the effect on the size of the general-

[27]The discrepancies between figures are possible because the placebo test in Figure 3.7 compares the 1930 outcomes of districts as constituted in 1930 that have been matched on 1930 characteristics, whereas the yearly placebo tests in Figure 3.9 compares the 1930 outcomes of districts *as constituted in each year* that have been matched on 1930 characteristics. Because district lines change over time, the quality of matches and thus the results of placebo tests may differ over time as well.

election electorate relative to the population yields little evidence that the TVA expanded the scope of participation and may even have decreased turnout.[28]

## 3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has examined associations between various demographic and economic characteristics and two district-level political outcomes: congressional ideal points and presidential vote. It found support for the expectation that whiter, more urban, and less developed areas of the South were represented by more liberal members of Congress, though this relationship appears only after around 1940. These variables' relationships with presidential vote were different: whiter, richer, and more-urban areas gave greater support to Republican presidential candidates, although these relationship too evolved over time.

These divergent results confirm the notion that in this period, presidential and congressional politics remained largely separate domains that operated according to different logics (Black and Black, 2002; Shafer and Johnston, 2006). The congressional results offer support for the argument that the Southern reaction against New Deal liberalism was most acute among whites who lived in areas with large black populations and were presumably most committed to white supremacy (Mayhew, 1966; cf. Farhang and Katznelson, 2005). In presidential politics, however, Black Belt whites often preferred to dissent through the vehicle of state Democratic parties (e.g., by nominating Democratic electors not pledged to the national presidential nominee) rather than undermine local one-partyism by supporting a Republican.

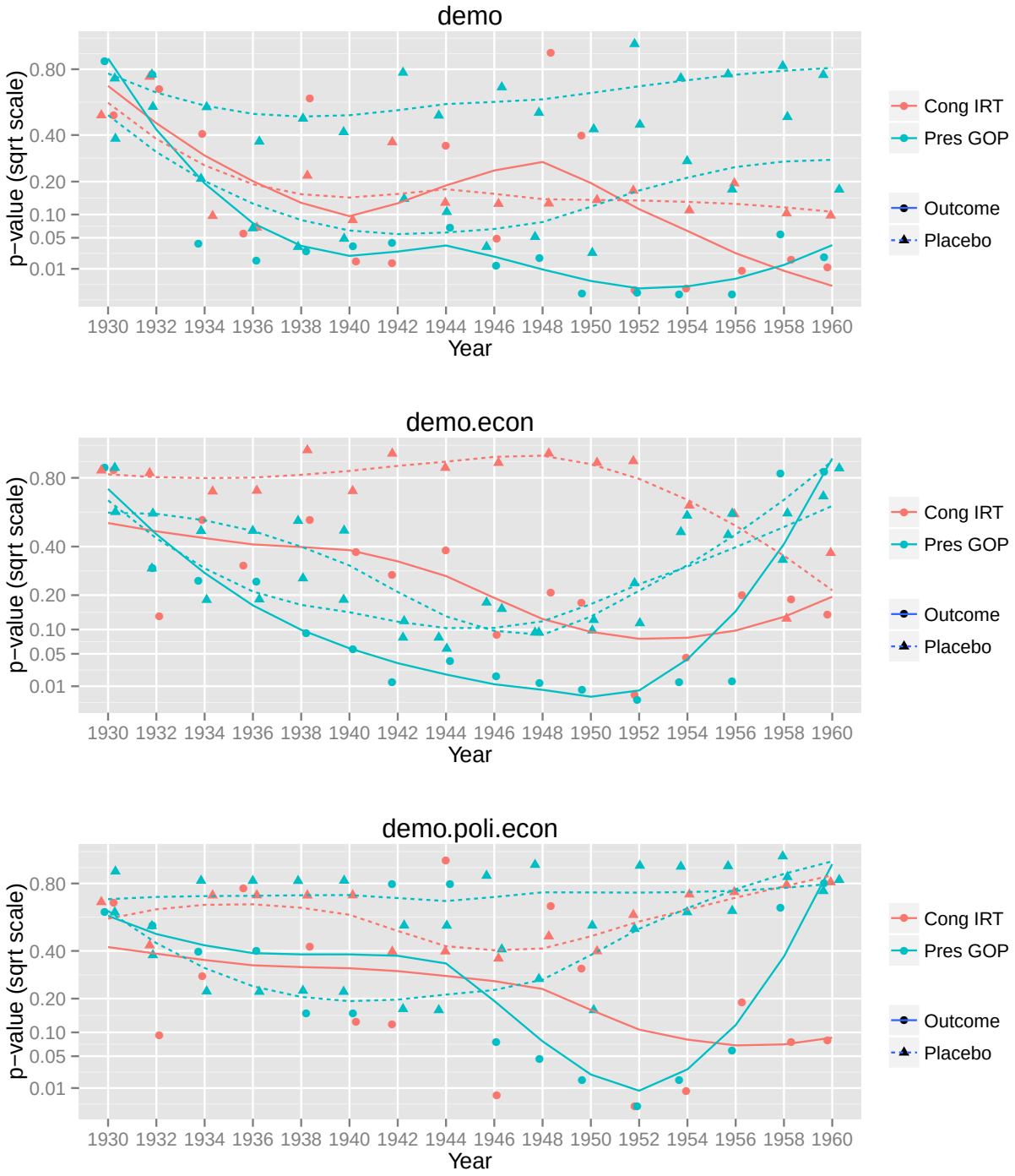
Due to temporal heterogeneity in these correlations and the difficulty of distinguishing the independent contribution of each variable, inferences regarding them must necessarily be tentative. The analysis of the TVA, however, offers more of a basis for causal inference. Though the parametric difference-in-difference estimates are fairly fragile, the matching estimates are quite robust and in most cases pass fairly stringent placebo tests. TVA areas appear to have been more liberal even before the program was implemented, but exposure to its benefits had a further liberalizing effect on the areas it affected. This effect is evident in both congressional representation and presidential vote, especially in the 1950s. The fact that there is little evidence that the TVA increased voter turnout, however, suggests that it changed the preferences of the existing electorate rather than changing the composition of the electorate.

The effects of the TVA may well be underestimated, for two reasons. First, many areas not within the TVA power service area still benefitted from the Authority's other programs, such as subsidized fertilizer production.[29] Second, less ambitious plans for public power in

[28]This may have been the result of the pro-Democratic effect of the TVA, which rendered general elections even less competitive than the rest of the South.

[29]The prospect of cheap fertilizer was apparently what made Senator "Cotton Ed" Smith of non-TVA South Carolina, a frequent opponent of FDR, into an enthusiastic backer of the TVA (Wengert, 1967, p. 64).

Figure 3.9: **Exact Placebo and Outcome Tests**: Exact $p$-values from Wilcoxon's signed rank test, plotted on the square-root scale. Triangles and dotted loess lines indicate placebo outcomes (Cong IRT in 1930, GOP Pres in 1928 and 1932); circles and solid loess lines indicate outcome tests.



the Tennessee Valley had been mooted for some time, and the anticipation of its benefits may have exerted a liberalizing effect on the region before 1933. These two biases would exaggerate the relative liberalism of TVA areas in the pre-treatment period while attenuating it after the TVA's implementation.

Another question to consider is why the effects were strongest in the 1950s but dissipated at least partially by 1960. One possibility already suggested is that the liberalizing effect of the TVA waxed with the flow of fiscal resources to the service region, which crested around 1950 and tapered to nothing by 1960. The fact that the disappearance of the is most obvious in terms of presidential vote may reflect the particularities of presidential elections in the 1950s. The Democratic vice-presidential nominees in both 1952 (John Sparkman of Alabama) and 1956 (Estes Kefauver of Tennessee) both hailed from core TVA areas and were closely associated with the program. By contrast, the Southern moderate on the Democratic ticket in 1960, Lyndon Johnson, though a supporter of public power, had no particular base in the Valley.[30] On the other hand, the reason that prominent Southern moderates like Sparkman and Kefauver were available to be nominated was partly a consequence of the TVA, so we should not conclude that TVA region's aversion to presidential Republicanism was merely an accident of particular nominees.

One common thread that unites the results in this chapter is that ideological differences among MCs from different kinds of districts seems to have grown over time. These increasing ideological distinctions are consistent with several patterns noted in Chapter 2, most notably the increasing ideological diversity of Southern MCs over time (Figure 2.8) and the increasing explanatory power of state constituencies (Figures 2.12 and 2.13). It also comports with the historical literature, which highlights the post–New Deal emergence of issue-oriented liberal politicians in the South (Badger, 2007c) as well as of conservatives reacting against New Deal liberalism. By clarifying ideological conflict within the party, these changes may have may it easier for electorates to select representatives that matched their ideological preferences. The following chapter explores this electoral connection in greater detail.

[30]Of the seven states in the 13-state South not carried by Kennedy-Johnson, five were TVA states.

# Chapter 4

# The Electoral Connection in the One-Party South

The preceding chapter examined the relationship between the aggregate characteristics of constituencies and political outputs like congressional roll-call voting and presidential vote. To a substantial degree, the influence of each of the factors considered was likely to have been consistent across all members of the political community.[1] Residents of Southern cities, rich and poor, benefitted more from urban-oriented liberal initiatives like housing subsidies than did rural Southerners.[2] Residents of relatively underdeveloped parts of the South benefitted across the board from federal aid and programs like the TVA that promised to modernize the region. So too, arguably, did fear of federal undermining of white supremacy loom especially large among among all black-belt whites, not merely the planation elite. Certainly, whites within a given community differed in their policy preferences, but one would expect the variables investigated in Chapter 3 to affect all whites similarly. As a result, they are not very helpful for distinguishing between elite dominance and contingent responsiveness.

As (Fleck, 2002) observes in his study of Southern voting patterns on the Fair Labor Standards Act, the direction of constituency pressure on MCs depends not only on their district's aggregate characteristics (e.g., low-wage vs. high-wage manufacturing), but also on the relative influence of different groups within the district (e.g., workers vs. business). The focus of this chapter is on the political factors that affected the relative influence of different segments of the white community, as well as the processes by which MCs were made to

[1] In this respect, the previous chapter takes a similar approach to that of Bensel's (1984) work on sectionalism.

[2] In the 1940s, the South's increasingly overcrowded cities created a great need for low-income public housing (Brown, 1999, p. 125). Aside from public housing, however, most postwar housing programs, such as mortgage aid and slum clearance, did not primarily benefit the poor (Orlebeke, 2000). As a result, middle-of-the road Southern Democrats with an urban constituency, such as Charleston, South Carolina's Burnet Maybank, found reason to support it, at least until the threat of federally mandated integration became too great (Hunt, 2005).

attend to their constituents.

In short, this chapter is about the scope and operation of the electoral connection in the one-party South. After establishing the historical plausibility of this electoral connection, I turn to an examination of Dahl's two dimensions of democracy, participation and contestation. Building on Meltzer and Richard's (1981) well-known argument about the median voter's preference for redistribution, I show that where the potential electorate was larger, Southern MCs were more liberal. Further, this relationship was moderated by the degree of competition in Democratic primaries, evidence of the contingent nature of the electoral connection in the one-party South.

## 4.1 Historical Evidence for the Electoral Connection

As Mayhew (1974) famously observed, the desire of members of Congress to be reelected creates an "electoral connection" between them and their constituents. Members may have other motivations as well, such as power within the institution or personal conceptions of good policy (Fenno, 1973), but reelection is the goal whose achievement is necessary to almost all others. This, at least, is the prevailing portrait of Congress in the post-WWII era and, indeed, throughout much of American history (Carson and Jenkins, 2011).

Yet there are theoretical reasons to doubt that the electoral connection operated very strongly in the one-party South. Schattschneider (1942, p. 1) argues that "democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties," and so does Aldrich (2011, p. 15), who asserts that "democracy fails when there is but one party." One reason for this, emphasized by Key (1984[1949]), is that one-party politics is really "no-party" politics, resulting in chaotic, largely issueless competition that inhibits even those who can participate from holding officeholders accountable. Another perspective, offered by Ferejohn (1986, pp. 22–3), is that the control of candidate entry enabled by one-party politics allows incumbents and challengers to "collude," again preventing the electorate from exerting control over politicians.

While few would argue that one-party politics makes it easy to hold politicians accountable, it is too strong to claim that the electoral competition is completely severed in such situations. To say so in the context of the one-party South is perhaps to blame one pathology—lack of partisan competition—for ills that are better attributed to other causes, such as disenfranchisement. At times and places in American history, one-party politics has coexisted with high levels of participation and no obvious deficit of accountability (Ranney and Kendall, 1954; see, for example, Bryan, 1974 on Vermont).

According to data collected by Ansolabehere et al., 60–70% of Democratic primaries were contested in the 1930s–40s and over 40% in the 1950s. Even Rep. Sam Rayburn of Texas, the powerful and long-serving Speaker of the House, rarely saw an election year pass without a primary challenge from the right. About 7% of Southern incumbents were denied renomination in the 1930s, though this fell to 2–3% in the 1940s–1950s (Ansolabehere et al., 2010, p. 197). In some cases, incumbents were simply caught napping and "out-

organized" by a more energetic challenger, as was apparently the case with Earle Clements 1944 defeat of Kentucky Representative Beverly Vincent (Syvertsen, 1982, pp. 133–47)[3] and Carl Elliott's 1948 defeat of Representative Carter Manasco of Alabama (Elliott and D'Orso, 1992). In other cases, as with CIO-backed Henderson Lanham's unseating of anti-labor Georgia Representative Malcom Tarver in 1946, incumbent defeats were the result of the mobilization of new constituencies (in this case, unionized textile workers; Brattain, 1997).[4]

Often, defeats of Southern incumbents corresponded to ideological shifts in national public sentiment. In the non-South, rightward shifts in public opinion resulted in the replacement of liberal Democrats with conservative Republicans, but the "one-party South respond[ed] by electing conservative Democrats" (Carleton, 1951, p. 226).[5] In the early to mid-1930s, when Democrats were doing well nationally, a number of anti–New Deal incumbents were defeated by more liberal challengers. In 1934, for example, Senator Hubert Stephens of Mississippi, a lukewarm supporter of the early New Deal, tried in vain to tie himself to Roosevelt but was defeated for renomination by the populist Theodore Bilbo—the sort of challenge on the left that kept otherwise wary Southerners loyal to FDR (Morgan, 1985, p. 64; Swain, 2001). One senator who did not heed the signs of this defeat was Oklahoma's Senator Thomas Gore, a long-time incumbent and one of the most outspoken opponents of the New Deal, who was overwhelmingly defeated in the 1936 Democratic primary in (Patterson, 1967, pp. 22–4; Dangerfield and Flynn, 1936).

Some Southern liberals who swept in one year were swept out again when the tides swung back to the right, as happened to one-term Virginia representative Norman Hamilton in 1938 (Sweeney, 1999). This was also the year of FDR's failed attempt to "purge" conservative Democrats from the party (Dunn, 2010). Although often interpreted as a sign of the limitations of Roosevelt's power to transform Southern politics, liberals were swimming against national public opinion that year as well, as reflected by Northern Democrats large loss of congressional seats.[6] Other New Dealers denied renomination in the conservative year of 1938 include San Antonio's Rep. Maury Maverick, a leader of the "liberal bloc" in Congress

[3]Technically, Vincent withdrew just before the primary in the face of Clements's strong challenge.

[4]Brattain (1997, p. 96) writes, "For all its limits, the South's one-party system proved flexible enough to allow [textile union] members to use it as a vehicle to express their class as well as their white racial interests." See also Albert Rains's 1944 defeat of Alabama Representative Joseph Starnes with the aid of union and CIO-PAC support (Norrell, 1991, p. 228; Rosenfarb, 1944).

[5]The full text of Carleton's observation is marked by a tone of slight exasperation: "People outside the South forget that in a period of conservatism in the agricultural sections the one-party South responds by electing conservative Democrats while the farm belt responds by electing reactionary Republicans. But Republicans are expected to be conservative and no one is surprised at the farm belt, but Democrats are expected to be liberal and when Southern Democrats are not liberal this fact is made cause for comment."

[6]A few Southern Democrats even faced real Republican challengers in 1938. Representative Clifford Woodrum, a moderate progressive whose Virginia district include a fair number of Republicans, was reelected by a surprising slim margin in 1938. Woodrum responded to his near defeat by tacking to the right, becoming a leader of the "Economy Bloc" in Congress (Sargent, 1981, 1985).

who was barely denied renomination after losing the support of his better-off constituents and even the AFL (Weiss, 1971). 1950, another poor year for Democrats nationally, saw the primary defeats of two prominent Southern liberal senators, Florida's Claude Pepper and North Carolina's Frank Graham, on the basis of doubts about their commitment to anti-communism and white supremacy (Frederickson, 2001, p. 9; Bell, 2003).

The electoral connection can exert its influence both directly, through replacement, and through indirectly, though anticipation of electoral sanction (Przeworski, Stokes, and Manin, 1999; Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson, 1995; see also Section 2.4). One potential form of anticipation is strategic retirement in the face of a strong challenge (for evidence of strategic retirement in contemporary elections, see Stone et al., 2009). Coode (1971, p. 19) describes Georgia Representative Bryant Castellow's decision to retire in 1936 as follows:

> [T]ired of public office, weary of facing a campaign against a serious contender he had defeated by only 2,000 votes two years before, apparently having lost whatever earlier enthusiasm his voting record suggest that the had for the New Deal, and unable to stop the march of the new order, Castellow declined to run for re-election.

Pro-labor North Carolina Representative John Folger made the same decision after squeaking out renomination in 1946. Taking his near-defeat as a sign of increased conservatism in his district, Folger retired and was succeeded by his more conservative challenger from two years previous (Christian, 1976).

Perhaps a more pervasive form of anticipation is the tendency of incumbents to alter their voting patterns in response to changes in public sentiment. Such calculations undoubtedly help account for many Southern conservatives' support for the early New Deal despite their personal reservations (Patterson, 1966; Tindall, 1967), as well as for Southern MCs' general shift to the right between the mid-1930s and mid-1940s. Southern liberals, sensing their increasing vulnerability, "carefully tempered their enthusiasm for the the New Deal in deference to their constituents" (Badger, 2007a, p. 41). As Section 2.4 showed, adaptation among continuing members was a more important cause of congressional ideological change in the South than in the North, where replacement of members of one party with another was the dominant source of change.

Like members of Congress in the rest of the country, MCs from the one-party South used various means to track the shifting winds of public opinion in their constituencies. One way was through letters from constituents, who wrote to their representatives express their policy views and towards whom Southern MCs gave great attention, if not perfect responsiveness.[7]

[7]Markley (2008) uses evidence from constituent letters to the Alabama congressional delegation to help explain their divergent positions on health care in the 1935–1965 period. He shows that some representatives agreed with the (largely conservative) opinions of their constituents, but others, personally more liberal, "had to weight his own beliefs on the issue against the public's expresses desires" (Markley, 2008, p. 87). See also Maney (1997) on the violent constituency reaction to Rep. Hale Boggs (D-LA) pro-labor votes in Congress.

Incumbent in Washington also relied on allied political operatives and newspaper editors to keep them apprised of sentiment back home.

Southern MCs also received valuable information from campaigns, not only through the issues raised by challengers (Sulkin, 2005) but also through their interaction with constituents. As Fenno (2000) illustrates in his account of Rep. Jack Flynt's (D-GA) "Old South" homestyle, campaigning in traditional Southern politics took place through elite intermediaries, though ambitious rising politicians increasingly found ways to bypass these elite intermediaries (Badger, 1999b, 2007c; Black and Black, 1987). Nevertheless, one theme highlighted by Fenno's account and confirmed by many others is that the representational relationship with blacks, even those who could vote, was fundamentally different from that with whites. Even those who sought black votes could not afford to do so publicly, and so rather did so through emissaries to the black community. Even non-voting whites were seen as a part of the political community in a way that blacks were not.

### 4.1.1 An Illustrative Example

The career of Rep. Luther Patrick, who represented Alabama's Jefferson County in the late 1930s and 1940s, helps to illustrate how both turnover and anticipation operated to create an electoral connection in the one-party South. Jefferson County was dominated by the city of Birmingham, the steel capital of the South due to its proximity to iron and coal mines. Birmingham was the headquarters of the so-called (by its opponents) "Big Mule" faction in state politics, which represented conservative business interests and often allied with black-belt planters (Key, 1984[1949], ch. 3; Hubbs, 1997). Since the 1920s, the Big Mules had been opposed in Birmingham politics by a rival working-class faction of approximately equal strength, which had control over federal and state patronage in the city and which was allied with the Ku Klux Klan as well as with labor unions. The New Deal clarified the ideological differences between these factions, with the Big Mules (like many representatives of Southern industry) largely opposed to the New Deal and the working-class faction supporting it enthusiastically (Norrell, 1991, p. 211).

Under the labor regime established by the New Deal (first the NRA and then the Wagner Act), Birmingham experienced huge growth in CIO unionization among black and white workers, and in 1937 it was the site of organized labor's "greatest breakthrough in the South," the unionization of US Steel subsidiary Tennessee Coal and Iron (Marshall, 1967, pp. 182–8; Biles, 1994, p. 88; Draper, 1996). Labor leaders attempted to mobilize their members politically, with some success,[8] but in 1940 still only about 5,000 of the 30,000 or more white CIO members in Jefferson County actually voted. There were approximately 60,000 registered voters in the county, about half of whom might vote in a high-turnout

My own examination of the constituency letters from the files of senators Lister Hill (D-AL), John Sparkman (D-AL), and John Stennis (D-MS) reveals a similar level of interaction with constituents.

[8]Some union locals even borrowed money to pay the poll taxes of their members (Norrell, 1991, p. 204).

Democratic primary, so labor's electoral clout was not insubstantial (Norrell, 1991, pp. 207–09).[9]

In 1936, with the backing of labor unions and the working-class faction, the young attorney Luther Patrick decided to challenge the long-time incumbent, Rep. George Huddleston, Sr., who had been a friend of labor earlier in his career but had lost CIO support by opposing too much of the New Deal. Riding Roosevelt's popularity, Luther ran second to Huddleston in the first primary but defeated him in the runoff (Rogers et al., 1994, p. 494; Norrell, 1991, p. 221). Once in office, Rep. Patrick become an ardent supporter of Roosevelt's program and amassed a moderately pro-labor voting record (Nixon, 1946, p. 125). For example, Patrick broke with much of the Southern delegation to vote in favor of the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act. Yet Patrick was also sensitive to the conservative turn in public opinion, especially on the subject of labor unions. In 1937, for example, he voted for a House resolution to investigate the recent and highly unpopular wave of sit-down strikes.[10]

Like other pro-labor representatives, Patrick felt increasingly cross-pressured between his dependence on union support and the public's anti-union mood.[11] This tension came to a head in 1941, when Patrick was faced with the Vinson anti-strike bill. The original version of the bill, which banned strikes in war industries, was made even harsher by Howard Smith's amendment to ban the union and closed shops as well. Speaking on the floor of Congress, Patrick acknowledged that "everybody knows that Mr. and Mrs. America wants legislation to curb strikes," but he implored the House to reject the conservative substitute (*Congressional Record*). Despite Patrick's "nay" vote, the Smith amendment passed, and on final passage Patrick voted for the bill. In a letter explaining his vote to a dismayed Birmingham labor leader, Patrick explained, "surely you must have seen that America was fed up on strikes. . . and was going to see some legislation through" (Norrell, 1991, pp. 222–3). Patrick's vote for anti-strike legislation, however, could not save him in 1942, when he was defeated by John P. Newsom, an anti-labor businessman backed by the Big Mule faction. With the help of the newly formed CIO-PAC, Patrick regained his seat in 1944, only to lose

[9]Primary turnout calculated from the data collected by Ansolabehere et al. Turnout in congressional general elections was much lower in Jefferson County.

[10]See Schickler and Caughey (2011) on the negative public reaction to the sit-down strikes, especially in the South.

[11]Louisiana Rep. Hale Boggs, an ally of New Orleans labor groups, voted against the original, more extreme version of 1947 Taft-Hartley Act, but after receiving surprisingly virulent reaction from constituents and key supporters he voted for the more moderate final version of the bill and also to override Truman's veto (Maney, 1997, p. 232). Earle Clements, who represented a rural Kentucky where about 20% of voters were unionized miners but where the "dominant agrarian interests were often antagonistic toward unions," engaged in similar straddling over wartime anti-strike legislation, though he voted against Taft-Hartley (Syvertsen, 1982, pp. 183–8). The CIO-backed Henderson Lanham, the only Georgia representative to vote against Taft-Hartley, later proved reluctant to push for its repeal. "Given the torrent of opinion emanating from other [non-labor] interests in [Lanham's] Seventh District and the nation, Lanham's position was perhaps unavoidable," argues Brattain (1997). On the other hand, unionized constituents also pulled Southern MCs to the left, as happened to Arkansas Representative Wilbur Mills when Little Rock was added to his district, leaving him "cross-pressured" on issues like health care (Zelizer, 1998, p. 135).

it for good to another Big Mule candidate, Laurie Battle, in the conservative wave of 1946 (Norrell, 1991, pp. 228–30).

Luther Patrick's story brings out several themes in Southern politics more generally. First, it demonstrates that issue-based political competition was at least possible within the one-party system. Second, it shows that electoral shifts followed in sensible fashion from shifts in public mood, and that mass opinion within the South often paralleled national opinion, moving left in 1936 and right in 1946, for example (cf. Page and Shapiro, 1992). Third, it shows that politicians and officeholders responded in ways familiar to us from national politics, anticipating the possibility of electoral sanction, modified their roll-call voting in light of the public mood ("rational anticipation," in the phrase of Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson, 1995). Fourth, it highlights that suffrage was limited but not completely fixed in the one-party South, and that the extent of electoral participation could have as important an impact on electoral outcomes as shifts in public opinion.

## 4.2 The Median Voter, Redistribution, and the Two Dimensions of Democracy

A long line of scholarship, extending back to Tocqueville but expressed formally by Meltzer and Richard (1981), argues that the electorate's preferences for redistributive policies depends on the income of the median voter relative to total income (see, e.g., McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal, 2006). Under this framework, demand for a more active government funded by higher taxes—the policies at the heart of New Deal liberalism—should increase as the median voter becomes poorer relative to the population as a whole.

Notwithstanding its simplifying assumptions (e.g., unidimensional policy preferences determined by relative income), the model's predictions have been supported by a number of empirical studies. Husted and Kenny (1997) find that the elimination of suffrage restrictions in U.S. states led to higher turnout, a poorer median voter, and higher state spending on social welfare. Fowler (Forthcoming 2013) finds similar results in an examination of compulsory voting in Australian provinces.[12] The study most relevant to the one-party South, Fleck's (2002) examination of voting patterns on the Fair Labor Standards Act, finds that representatives from congressional districts where electoral turnout in 1932[13] was higher were more likely to support the Act and also to move farther in a conservative direction over the course of the 1930s.[14] Fleck interprets turnout as a proxy "for weak-representation of

[12] A larger, poorer electorate will not necessarily benefit economically left-wing parties electorally (e.g., Berlinski and Dewan, 2011), in part because newly enfranchised voters may support conservative parties for non-economic reasons, but also because candidates from all parties may change their positions in anticipation of the preferences of the new median.

[13] As measured by the larger of turnout in the 1932 Democratic gubernatorial primary or the general-election for president

[14] As measured by change in D-NOMINATE scores between the 71st and 76th congresses.

low-wage workers" (2002, p. 49).

In short, the theoretical and empirical scholarship suggests that all else equal, Southern constituencies where the electorate was larger, the median voter was likely to be favorable towards the sorts of economically redistributive policies propounded by New Deal liberalism. This expectation comports with the view that attributes the conservatism of the South's politics to its "shriveled, conservative electorate" (Manza, 2000, p. 309). But it diverges from this view insofar as its focus is not the dichotomy of democratic North vs. undemocratic South, but rather on the variations within the one-party South on the continuum from autocracy to democracy (cf. Jackman and Treier, 2008).

As Dahl (1971) points out, however, the scope of participation is only one dimension of democracy. Political participation may be extensive, even universal, but unless it is coupled with competitive and binding elections, public officials have little incentive to cater to the electorate's preferences.[15] Where the second dimension of democracy, political contestation, is low, officials may be afforded substantial electoral "slack" to pursue goals beyond reelection (Kalt and Zupan, 1990). Following on the conclusions of Key (1984[1949]), most treatments of Southern politics have concluded that the slack created by the one-party system made Southern officials even more conservative than their shrunken electorates, both because disorganized politics favored the status quo interests of the "haves" and because Southern politicians themselves were personally conservative. Certainly there is much evidence for the personal conservatism of Southern MCs, not least because they themselves were often members of the conservative regional elite.

Yet there were also political forces that pulled Southern officials to the left. For one thing, many Southern politicians appear to have been—or at least presented themselves to Northern audiences as—personally more liberal than their constituents, especially but not exclusively on the subject of race. Whether due to educational or life experiences outside the South,[16] religious convictions,[17] or personal connections,[18] Southern officials sometimes took advantage of electoral slack to express more liberal preferences than their electorates dictated (Werner, 2009).[19] Southern officials also had more practical reasons to lean to the

[15]Bueno de Mesquita et al. (1999, p. 793) characterize this phenomenon, common in certain communist regimes, as a situation in which the "selectorate" is large but the "winning coalition" is still very small.

[16]Two of many examples are Arkansas Senator William Fulbright's background as a Rhodes scholar and Rep. Frank Smith's experiences on integrated bases during World War II. Compare with Shafer and Johnston's distinction between "local" and "cosmopolitan" Southern Democrats (2006, pp. 147–54).

[17]This was apparently North Carolina Representative Charles Deane's reason for refusing to sign the anti–civil rights "Southern Manifesto" in 1956.

[18]Norrell (1991, p. 230) speculates that the reason state-level antilabor legislation made little headway in Alabama in the late 1940s was the personal intervention of "William Beck, the Speaker of the Alabama House, who came from De Kalb County, which had no unions, in the northern Alabama hill country. Apparently out of loyalty to his two brothers, who were CIO members in Gadsden, Beck bottled up in committees bills that outlawed picketing, dues check-offs, strikes against utilities, and collective bargaining for public employees."

[19]The experience of Alabama Senator Hugo Black, who transitioned from Ku Klux Klan member to civil rights supporter after he was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1937, is a classic example (see Hamilton, 1985

left, most notably loyalty to the national Democratic Party. The leftward pull of party loyalty was stronger for members of Congress than for local and state officials, both because of the formers' strong desire to maintain a national majority (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993) and because they were more vulnerable to patronage denial and other forms of punishment by the national party.[20] Party loyalists could be rewarded with plums like key committee posts or leadership positions,[21] and Southerners with national ambitions felt constrained to cater to a more national constituency.[22]

In summary, the historical evidence indicates that despite the disorganized structure of the one-party system, primary electorates held incumbents accountable and that election outcomes often reflected ideological tides in public opinion, suggesting that the electoral connection was indeed operative in the South. The pull of the electoral connection, however, varied within the one-party South in at least two ways. First, the scope of participation was greater in some constituencies than others. Under the Meltzer-Richard model, we would expect larger Southern electorates with a poorer median voter to be more supportive of economically liberal policies. The strength of the electoral connection depended upon a second factor, the degree of political contestation, which ranged from machine-controlled Virginia to bifactional Louisiana to atomized Florida (Key, 1984[1949]; Mayhew, 1986; Turner, 1953). Where primary elections were relatively uncompetitive, incumbents would be expected to have greater slack vis-à-vis their constituents, leading to less responsiveness to constituency preferences relative to other factors.

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on the divergent paths of Black and his successor in the Senate, Lister Hill). Alabama Senator John Sparkman explicitly referenced Black's conversion in his attempt to convince the African American activist Lyman Johnson to support the 1952 Democratic ticket, on which Sparkman was the vice-presidential nominee.

> Lyman, I'll do my best to defend myself.... I love being a senator. Now, how did I get to be a senator? I was elected by the voters of Alabama. And who votes in Alabama? Most Alabama voters are white, and most of them don't want Negroes to vote or have other citizenship rights. If I were to campaign in Alabama on a platform that is opposite to the thinking of most Alabama voters, I'd never get elected. So long as I'm in Alabama and so long as I want to be in the Senate, I've got to do what the white voters in Alabama say for me to do. As long as I'm at the mercy of the present voters in Alabama and as long as I want to be a senator, I've got to run on a white supremacy platform.... But help me get out of Alabama, and I'll be another Hugo Black. Leave me in Alabama, and I can't do any good (Hall, 1988, p. 174).

[20]This is one reason why very few Southern members of Congress openly supported the Dixiecrat Revolt (Frederickson, 2001). On patronage politics, see Roosevelt's battles against Huey Long (Badger, 2007b) and Truman's efforts to corral Southern support for the repeal of Taft-Hartley (Pomper, 1961).

[21]See, for example, Hamilton (1987, p. 146) on Lister Hill (D-AL) resignation as Senate Majority Whip in 1946 after concluding that he could not reconcile his role as "the president's man" with the demands of his constituents. See also Maney (1997) on future House Majority Leader Hale Boggs (D-LA), and Polsby (2004) and Silveri (1992) on the appointment of Carl Elliott (D-AL) to the House Rules Committee.

[22]See Badger (1999a) for a number of examples. Others include Lyndon Johnson (Caro, 2002), John Sparkman (Southwick, 1984), and Estes Kefauver (Fontenay, 1980).

## 4.3 Participation

The first empirical part of this chapter examines the relationship in the one-party South between the scope political participation and the roll-call voting records of members of Congress. Political participation is conceptualized narrowly, as the size of the potential Democratic primary electorate in a given constituency (cf. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995; on biases in other forms of political voice in the one-party South, see Boynton, 1965). The potential electorate is the concept of interest because MCs act in light of the anticipated response of potentially mobilized constituencies (Arnold, 1990).

Of course, the potential electorate is not directly measurable, but it can be proxied for in two ways. The first proxy is actual turnout in Democratic congressional primaries, data on which were kindly made available to me by James Snyder on behalf of his collaborators, Stephen Ansolabehere, John Mark Hansen, and Shigeo Hirano.[23] The downsides of this measure are that much of the data, especially on uncontested nominations, are missing, and furthermore both the values and the pattern of missingness may be endogenous to the outcome of interest. For these reasons, constituency-level turnout in presidential general elections is used as an alternative measure.[24]

Turnout in contested Democratic primaries in the one-party South ranged from less than 5% of the population to nearly 30%, and to almost 40% as a proportion of the white population. Contrary to the familiar pattern in general elections, primary turnout tended to be slightly higher in midterm election years. Turnout increased over time, but unevenly so. Between 1932 and 1940, around 11–12% of the population voted in Southern primary elections. Turnout dropped by 2–3 percentage points in the war years of 1942 and 1944, when many Southern soldiers faced high barriers to voting. It recovered robustly in 1946 to an average of 12% and increased again in 1948 to 16%, remaining at about that level through the remainder of the period (two exceptions were 1952 and 1956, when turnout averaged 14%). The postwar bump in turnout coincided with WWII veterans' return to their home constituencies, where many became politically active (Brooks, 2004), as well as modest increases in black participation following the Supreme Court's 1944 invalidation of the "white primary" (Keyssar, 2000, p. 249; Mickey, 2008).

Figure 4.1 plots the conservatism of Southern Democratic MCs by the turnout in the

[23] In a recent article (Hirano et al., 2010), these scholars examine, *inter alia*, the relationship between primary turnout and partisan polarization in Congress between 1948 and 2006. On the logic that smaller primary electorates are more ideologically extreme (Democrats more liberal, Republicans more conservative), they test the hypothesis of a negative relationship between turnout and senatorial extremism, finding little support. Note, however, that the logic underlying the party polarization hypothesis is likely to be reversed in the one-party South, where lower turnout implies more a conservative primary electorate, pushing Democratic MCs to the center rather than towards the liberal extreme. This dynamic may help to explain their null results.

[24] The correlation between these measures is a modest 0.4 (0.3 across state means). The divergence between the measures seems to be driven by differences in state competitiveness in general elections, which makes it important to account for the presidential vote division as well as correlation within state-years.

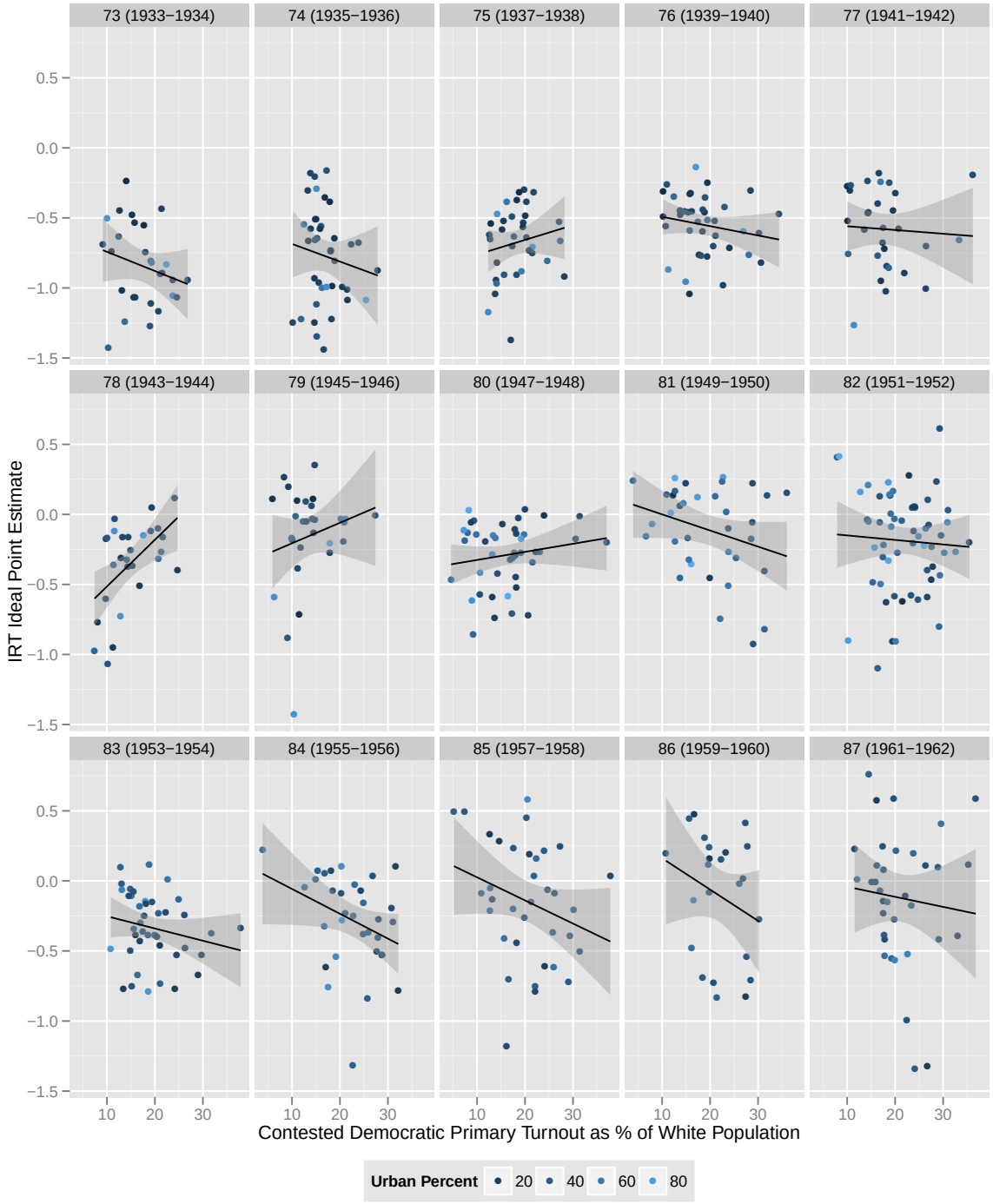



Figure 4.1: Relationship between *MC Conservatism* and *White Primary Turnout* in each election year, among contested elections only. Dot color indicates *Urban Percent*.

primary in which they were nominated, using data from contested primaries only. *MC Conservatism* is measured with IRT ideal-point estimates, but the statistical results in this chapter are qualitatively similar if DW-NOMINATE scores are used instead. In this figure, turnout is calculated as a percentage of the white population, to account for the fact that the potential electorate was larger in whiter constituencies (which also tended to elect less conservative MCs). Turnout also tended to be lower in urban areas of the South (Key, 1984[1949], pp. 510–11), a pattern especially visible in the middle row of Figure 4.1. As this figure shows, the relationship between *MC Conservatism* and *White Primary Turnout* fluctuated by congress and was often positive until the late 1940s, after which it was consistently and solidly negative.

Table 4.1: **Primary Turnout**: Random-effects regression of *MC Conservatism* on *Primary Turnout*, *Democratic Congressional Percentage*, and demographic and economic controls, which are interacted with *Year* (see Chapter 3). Only contested elections are used to estimate the model.

| | Estimate | Std. Error | t value |
|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 0.08 | 0.22 | 0.35 |
| Primary Turnout Proportion | −0.73 | 0.37 | −1.99 |
| Dem. Proportion in General (1945) | −0.00 | 0.11 | −0.03 |
| TVA | −0.03 | 0.05 | −0.63 |
| Post-1950 | −0.24 | 0.06 | −4.04 |
| TVA × Post-1950 | −0.14 | 0.07 | −1.95 |
| Urban Proportion (1945) | 0.08 | 0.20 | 0.42 |
| White Proportion (1945) | −0.23 | 0.17 | −1.34 |
| Relative Development (1945) | −0.61 | 0.90 | −0.67 |
| Dem. Proportion in General × Year | 0.03 | 0.01 | 3.75 |
| Urban Proportion × Year | −0.03 | 0.02 | −1.76 |
| White Proportion × Year | −0.01 | 0.01 | −1.02 |
| Relative Development × Year | 0.11 | 0.06 | 1.82 |
| (Random effects for *MC*, *State-Year*, and *Chamber* are not reported.) | | | |
| 540 complete cases; 108 cases deleted due to missingness | | | |

The basic pattern in Figure 4.1 is replicated in Table 4.3, which summarizes the results of a random-effects regression of *MC Conservatism* on *Primary Turnout*, adjusting for *Democratic Congressional Percentage* and demographic and economic controls, which are interacted with *Year*. Again, uncontested primaries are dropped, leaving only 648 observations, of which 540 are not missing other data. Since *White Percent* is included in the model, *Primary Turnout* is calculated as a percentage of the total voting-age population, white and

non-white.[25] The multivariate analysis confirms the negative relationship between *Primary Turnout* and *MC Conservatism*. *Primary Turnout* has a substantial but insignificant negative interaction with *Year*, indicating that over time *Primary Turnout* strengthened as a negative predictor. The relationships for the demographic and economic controls are similar to those reported in Table 3.1 in Chapter 3, despite the much smaller sample.

The negative relationship between *Primary Turnout* and *MC Conservatism* is consistent with the expectation that larger potential primary electorates pulled Southern Democrats to the left on economic issues. The evidence is not entirely satisfying due to the possibility that it is a spurious consequence of endogeneity. It is possible, for example, that the presence of a conservative candidate—especially a conservative incumbent—in a race might depress primary turnout. Alternatively, the probability of a contested primary could be related to the size of the primary electorate in a way that confounds the association between *MC Conservatism* and *Primary Turnout*.

One way to address these endogeneity concerns is to use turnout in presidential general elections as a proxy for the eligible congressional primary electorate. In presidential elections, the same candidates appear on the ballot in every constituency,[26] and general-election turnout is unlikely to have been driven by (mostly uncompetitive) down-ballot races. *Presidential Turnout* is thus provides a measure of the size of the eligible primary electorate, purged of factors specific to the primary race itself. Another advantage is that missing data on presidential turnout are much less prevalent.

One question is whether to define *Presidential Turnout* in terms of the total votes cast or the total cast for the Democratic presidential candidate. results reported in this section are based on the former definition, on the logic that many Southerners who voted Republican at the presidential level voted in Democratic congressional primaries. Controlling for *Republican Presidential Margin* and *Third Party Presidential Percentage* helps ensure that *Presidential Turnout* captures only the variation in the size of the electorate, not the relative support for each of the candidates. The qualitative results are similar if *Democratic Presidential Turnout* is used instead instead. For midterm years, *Presidential Turnout* is calculated on the basis of the most recent previous presidential general election (four years previous for presidential years, two years previous for midterms).

Figure 4.2 plots the relationship between *MC Conservatism* and general-election *Presidential Turnout*. The color of the points indicates the *Republican Presidential Margin* of victory or defeat as a percentage of the vote for the top two candidates in the constituency. The general shift over time from dark blue to light blue provides a visual illustration of the presidency-level partisan realignment of the South from solidly Democratic to competitive. The increasing voter participation rate in the South is also apparent in the figure. Setting

[25]Dropping the control for *White Percent* modestly strengthens the estimated effects of both primary and general-election turnout.

[26]Since candidates had to meet state-specific requirements to appear on the ballot in each state, it is not strictly true that the candidates in each constituency were always the same. Even major-party candidates occasionally failed to make the ballot in some states, as happened to Truman in Alabama in 1948.

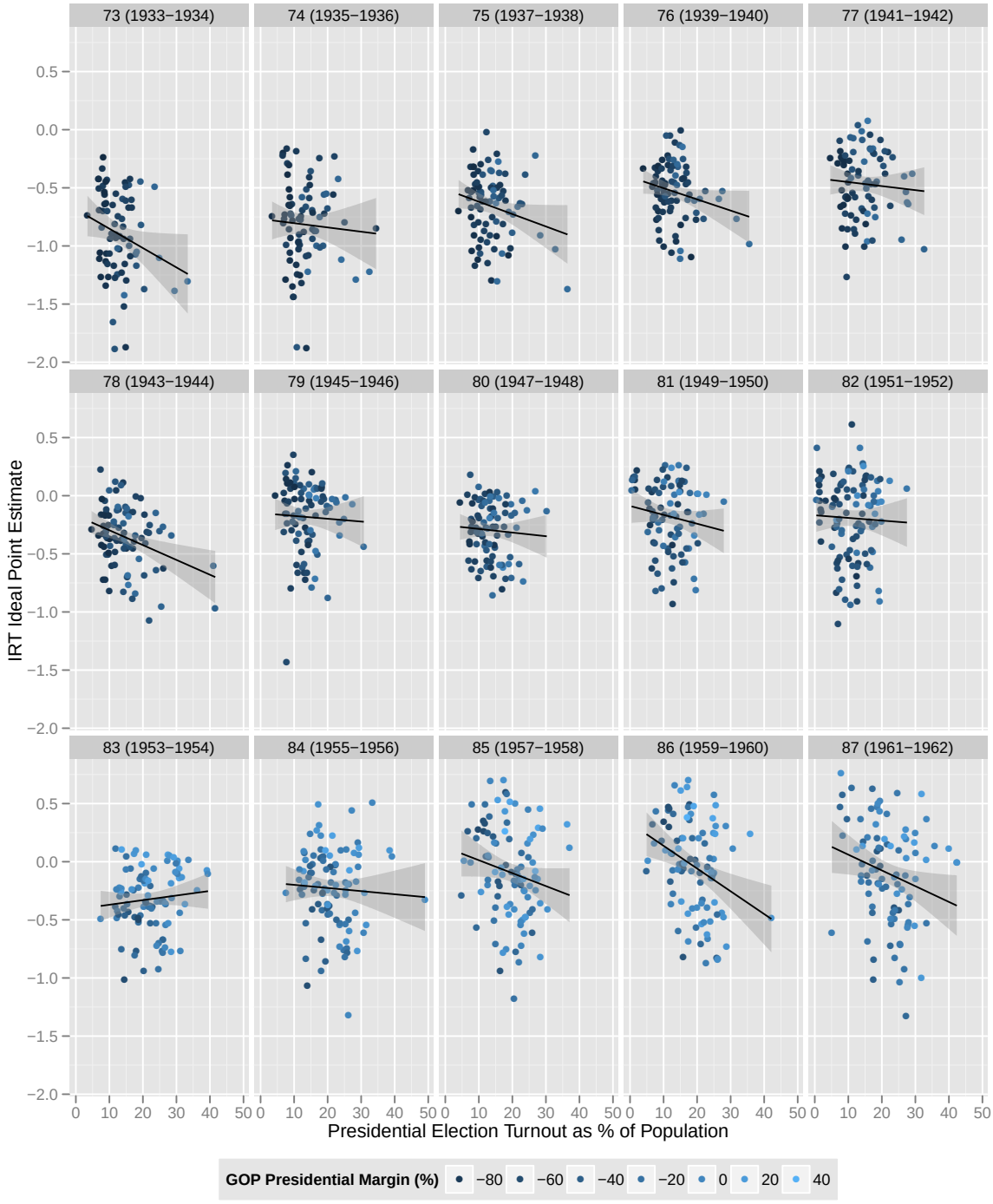



Figure 4.2: The relationship between *MC Conservatism* and general-election *Presidential Turnout*. Color indicates the *Republican Presidential Margin* in the constituency.

aside the anomalous four-candidate 1948 election, there was a marked difference between average turnout in elections before WWII (13–15%) and after (19–22%). By contrast, the votes the Democratic presidential candidate received as a percent of the population were essentially flat over the entire time period.

Controlling for *Year* and *Office* fixed effects, the average relationship between *MC Conservatism* and *Presidential Turnout* over this period is solidly negative and quite precisely estimated due to the larger number of valid observations. The magnitude of the relationship changes little as a linear function of time and is modestly fortified by the addition of *State* fixed effects. The relationship is roughly the same in midterm and on-year elections. In a specification analogous to that reported in Table 4.3 but with *Presidential Turnout* is substituted for *Primary Turnout*, *Presidential Turnout* is a substantially stronger predictor of *MC Conservatism* than *Primary Turnout*.

The coefficient for *Democratic Presidential Turnout* is even larger than for total *Presidential Turnout*. In a bivariate specification, this could reflect either the size of the eligible electorate or the support for the Democratic presidential candidate (which in turn may reflect the ideological orientation of the electorate). Controlling for the partisanship of the electorate by including *Presidential Turnout* and/or *Republican Presidential Margin*, however, if anything strengthens the relationship. Moreover, *Presidential Turnout* and *Republican Presidential Margin* are insignificant in these specifications. In other words, conditional on *Democratic Presidential Turnout* as well as *Year* and *Office*, neither *Presidential Turnout* nor *Republican Presidential Margin* significantly predicts *MC Conservatism*.

To summarize, conservative Southern Democratic members of Congress tended to represent constituencies where *Primary Turnout* and especially *Presidential Turnout* were lower, even accounting for *MC*, *State-Year*, and *Chamber* random effects. In the case of *Primary Turnout*, the relationship is only present in contested seats and is less robust. *Presidential Turnout*, which is available in many more cases and is arguably a less-biased proxy for the eligible electorate, is consistently a strong negative predictor of *MC Conservatism*. When added to the model as well, *Urban Percent* and *White Percent*—the former positively correlated with turnout and the latter negatively—continue to be negatively associated with *MC Conservatism*. The *Republican Presidential Margin* in the constituency is positively associated with *MC Conservatism*. *Presidential Turnout* and most other coefficients in the model increase in magnitude over time.

These empirical patterns are consistent with the claim that, even within the South's one-party regime, the extent of political participation influenced the policy representation provided by Southern members of Congress. As a median voter theory of economic redistribution might suggest, constituencies where the selectorate constituted a smaller—and presumably richer—proportion of the population were more likely to be represented by MCs with an economically conservative voting record. Though the evidence is supportive of a causal inference, it hardly provides iron-clad justification for one. Among the potential threats to such an inference is the possibility that constituencies with a more conservative political culture have formal or informal institutions that restrict political participation

more tightly. These same constituencies are likely to be represented by conservative members of Congress. The robustness of *Primary Turnout* and especially *Presidential Turnout* to controls mitigates this concern (*Percentage White* proxies for racial threat; *Percentage Urban* and *Republican Presidential Margin*, for district ideology; *State* for statewide suffrage regulations) but does not eliminate it.

In recognition of this, an attempt was made to use rainfall on primary election day as an instrumental variable for *Primary Turnout* (see Hansford and Gomez, 2010, for an application to presidential general elections). Based on the data gathered so far, however, primary day rainfall does not appear to have a strong enough first-stage effect on primary turnout to be used as an instrument.[27] Though unfortunate from the perspective of causal inference, the apparent absence of a depressive effect on turnout is still informative. It suggests that there were few "marginal" participants in Southern politics. Perhaps because the barriers to voter registration (in the form of literacy tests, poll taxes, and the like) were so high, those who had succeeded in surmounting those barriers were highly politically motivated and unlikely to be dissuaded by a small increase in the costs of voting, such as getting to the polls on a rainy day.

## 4.4 Contestation

The previous section provided evidence for the liberalizing effect of one dimension of democracy, participation, which varies somewhat independently of the other dimension, contestation (Dahl, 1971, p. 4). Whereas participation defines who is allowed to participate equally in the political process, contestation is the extent of public opposition to and competition with incumbent officeholders. In the absence of political competition, officials have little incentive to attend to voters, whatever their preferences. Thus, although participation and contestation may vary separately, their effects interact. The effect of a more conservative electorate on officials' actions will be greater when there is more competition to hold incumbents accountable. By the same token, if the electorate is liberal relative to the other goals and forces that motivate an official, greater contestation will have a liberalizing effect on representation, but the opposite is true if the electorate is relative conservative. One of the advantages of presidential turnout is that it is equally available for contested and non-contested primaries, and thus is better suited for examining the interaction between participation and contestation.

As is the case with participation, the extent of intraparty contestation varied substantially within the one-party South. Electoral competition can be measured in a variety of ways. The main indicator used in the analysis here is simply whether the Democratic primary in question was a *Contested Primary*, that is, whether there was more than one candidate running. Secondarily, four other measures are also investigated, following Ansolabehere et al. (2010):

[27] I am grateful to Sara Newland for doing the laborious work of collecting and organizing these data.

- *Number of Candidates*: the number of candidates running
- *Incumbent Defeat*: whether the incumbent (if running) was denied renomination
- *Non-Incumbent Percent*: the total percentage of the vote in the first primary garnered by the candidates other than the incumbent (if running)
- *Under 60%*: whether no candidate in the first primary won more than 60% of the vote

Across all measures, competition was relatively low in Virginia and Texas and high in Florida and Louisiana. The lack of contestation in Virginia, where the "Byrd Organization" exercised greater control over state politics than any other machine in the South, is not surprising. The uncompetitiveness of Texas primaries is perhaps more so, especially given Key's (1984[1949]) judgement that relatively coherent competition over the "politics of economics" was emerging in the state (see also Todd and Ellis, 1974). The competitiveness of Florida and Louisiana politics probably had very different roots. The personalized and atomized factions of Florida politics epitomized what Key (1984[1949]) called the principle of "every man for himself." By contrast, Louisiana politics was dominated by bifactional competition between Longite and anti-Longite slates of candidates (Mayhew, 1986, pp. 104–09).

From the perspective of the electorate's capacity to hold its representatives accountable, the probability that incumbents are denied representation may be particularly important. On this measure, North Carolina (6.3% incumbent defeats) and Tennessee (6.8%) join Florida (7.4%) and Louisiana (8.1%) among the more competitive states. Mississippi, despite its relatively high rate of contested primaries (57%), has a very low *Incumbent Defeat* rate (0.9%), edging out Texas (1.3%), Alabama (2.3%), and Virginia (2.3%) for lowest in the South. The order of states on *Non-Incumbent Percent* is quite different, with Virginia moving to the top and Tennessee to near the bottom. This ranking, however, is misleading, because only contested primaries are included in the analysis. If uncontested incumbent renominations are assigned the value of 0%, then Virginia (3.7%), Texas (8.5%), and South Carolina (10.0%) round out the bottom ranks in average *Non-Incumbent Percent* and Louisiana (24.3%), Florida (20.9%), Mississippi (18.2%), and Tennessee (18.2%) the top.

Across a variety of specifications and measures, Southern primary competition is positively associated with *MC Conservatism*. In other words, Democratic primaries in which there were more candidates, the incumbent lost or was seriously challenged, or the winner received less than 60% of the vote tended to result in the election of more conservative Southern MCs. Interestingly, when an incumbent was running for reelection, their estimated ideal point does not predict any of these measures of primary competition, suggesting that contestation was not strongly related to the incumbent's ideology.

These results suggest that while greater participation led to more liberal representation, contestation led to greater conservatism. One reason this might be so is that in most Southern constituencies, the median voter exerted a rightward pull on Democratic MCs. Lack of competition might have given Southern MCs more slack to pursue goals beyond reelection,

which may often have pulled them in a liberal direction, away from their median voter. Conversely, fear of a strong primary challenge might have dissuaded Southern Democrats who, out of personal conviction, party loyalty, or political ambition, would have otherwise supported the national party line.

| | Estimate | Std. Error | t value |
|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | −0.21 | 0.14 | −1.57 |
| Presidential Turnout Proportion | −0.73 | 0.17 | −4.22 |
| Democratic Presidential Margin | 0.06 | 0.04 | 1.39 |
| Third-Party Presidential Proportion | −0.32 | 0.12 | −2.69 |
| Contested Primary | −0.00 | 0.01 | −0.02 |
| Presidential Turnout × Contested \| Turnout = 35% | −0.15 | 0.09 | −1.57 |
| TVA | −0.07 | 0.04 | −1.94 |
| Post-1950 | −0.15 | 0.04 | −3.35 |
| TVA × Post-1950 | −0.15 | 0.05 | −3.20 |
| Urban Proportion (1945) | −0.34 | 0.13 | −2.54 |
| White Proportion (1945) | −0.09 | 0.14 | −0.69 |
| Relative Development (1945) | 1.35 | 0.63 | 2.14 |
| Urban Proportion × Year | −0.06 | 0.01 | −6.83 |
| White Proportion × Year | −0.01 | 0.01 | −1.48 |
| Relative Development × Year | 0.27 | 0.03 | 8.55 |
| Democratic Presidential Margin × Year | −0.00 | 0.00 | −0.40 |
| Third-Party Presidential Proportion × Year | 0.06 | 0.01 | 5.37 |
| (Random effects for *MC*, *State-Year*, and *Chamber* are not reported.) | | | |
| 1,307 complete cases; 812 cases deleted due to missingness | | | |

The effect of contestation, however, is likely to have depended on the extent of participation. In larger and presumably more liberal electorates, the pull of the median voter might have been to the left, rather than to the right. By the same token, the effect of the scope of participation probably depended on contestation, with larger electorates leading to more liberal representation only under conditions of political competition. This hypothesis of mutual dependence can be operationalized as an interaction effect between *Contested Primary* and *Presidential Turnout*.

As Table 4.4 reports, the estimated effects of *Contested Primary* and *Presidential Turnout* depend on the level of the other variable (the interaction coefficient has a one-sided $p$-value of 0.06). If *Presidential Turnout* is centered at 35%, near its mean, *Contested Primary* has no relationship with *MC Conservatism*. In very low-turnout constituencies, however, the main effect of contestation is estimated to be quite positive and marginally statistically significant. The opposite is true in high-turnout constituencies. The negative interaction between *Presidential Turnout* and *Contested Primary* also implies that the relationship

between turnout and liberal roll-call voting was stronger among MCs nominated in contested primaries. In sum, it appears that the effects of *Contested Primary* and *Presidential Turnout* were moderated by each other, primary competition pulling MCs to the right where turnout was low and to the left where it was high.

The results reported in Figure 4.3 show that these main results are robust to a variety of different modeling choices. The figure plots coefficient estimates from a Bayesian regression model, with missing data imputed rather than listwise deleted.[28] The specification is also somewhat different, mainly in its inclusion of separate controls for different parts of the income distribution, but the results are similar.[29] *Presidential Turnout*, which in this specification is measured as a proportion of the whole population and centered around its mean of 20%, has a strong and highly significant relationship with *MC Conservatism*. Since this specification codes *Uncontested* primaries as 1, rather than *Contested* primaries as above, the main effect of *Presidential Turnout* is the estimate for a contested primary. The estimated interaction between contestation and turnout is solidly significant.

One discrepancy between the results of the results in Table 4.4 and Figure 4.3 is that the main effect of *Uncontested Primary* is negative (liberalizing) for most of the empirical range of presidential turnout. The Bayesian results imply that Southern electorates were almost never large enough for primary competition to pull MCs to the left, relative to other forces. Whether contestation had a net positive or negative effect on *MC Conservatism*, however, is less important than its interaction with participation. Across the various models, turnout has a consistently negative association with *MC Conservatism*, and the relationship is stronger among MCs nominated in contested Democratic primaries.

## 4.5 Conclusion

The results here strongly confirm the expectations generated by a median-voter model of demand for redistribution. In Southern constituencies where the potential electorate was larger, and thus the decisive voter poorer, members of Congress tended to be more supportive of liberal economic policies. A standard-deviation difference in *Presidential Turnout* of the VAP ($\approx 0.14$) is associated with a IRT ideal-point difference of 0.12, about a third of

[28]The model was estimated in the statistical program JAGS using the R package `rjags` (Plummer, 2011). Most of the missing values are census data, and the bulk of the observations missing census data are urban House districts in Houston, Miami, and New Orleans whose boundaries cut across county lines. This is problematic because these urban districts were represented by such unusually liberal Southern Democrats as Albert Thomas, Dante Fascell, and Hale Boggs. As part of the Bayesian estimation process, the missing values of *Urban Percent* in these districts were modeled as a function of *Year*, *White Percent*, and an indicator for a *City* constituency.

[29]The fact that *Percent with Income over $5000* is a highly positive predictor of *MC Conservatism* (controlling for other parts of the income distribution) suggests that it is the top of the income distribution—Southerners with high incomes not only relative to their communities but relative to the nation—that was a particular cause of *MC Conservatism*.

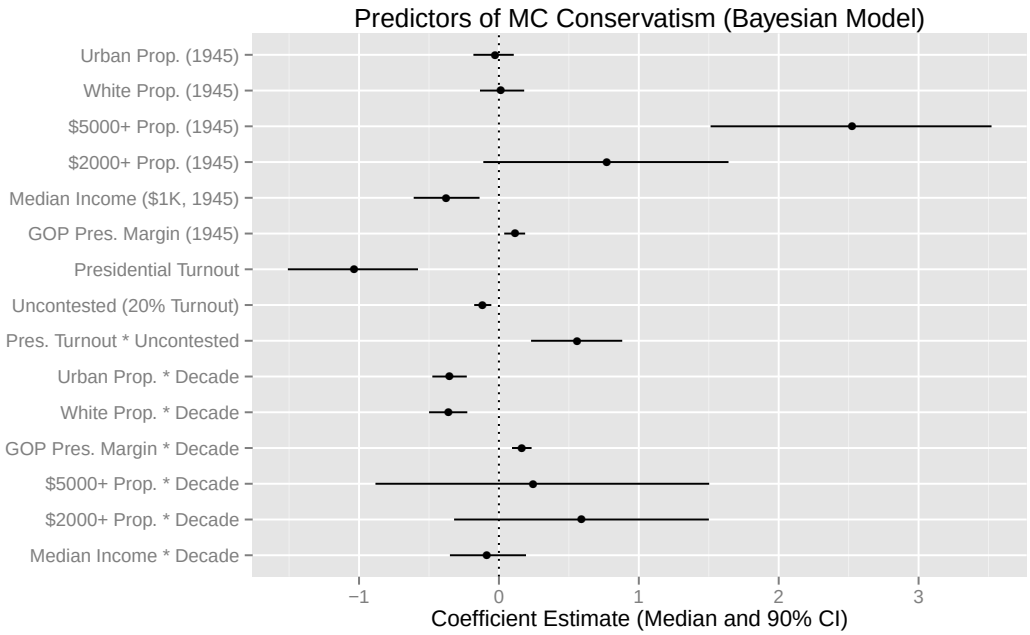



Figure 4.3: Bayesian imputation model.

the standard deviation of Southern ideal points in a typical Congress. This relationship is robust across almost any possible specification, including controls for the income distribution in the constituency and other controls. There is also evidence, though less robust, of an important interaction between participation and contestation: the liberalizing effect of wider participation was greater in constituencies with more competition, even though competition itself seems to have had a conservative effect in all but the highest-turnout constituencies.

More generally, the findings of this chapter are provide compelling evidence for the contingent responsiveness view of the one-party South and against elite dominance. If Southern MCs were responsive only to elite interests, then the size of the potential electorate would make little difference. Southern MCs might still have differed across constituencies, but this would be due to variation in elite preferences, not those of the median voter. It is worth noting that the relationships between *MC Conservatism* and various demographic, economic, and political factors identified in Chapter 3 largely persist conditional on turnout. This suggests that the mechanism for the liberalizing effect of factors like the TVA was not that they raised political participation—mobilizing new constituencies, for example—but rather that such factors shifted the preferences of the electorate as a whole in relatively uniform fashion. This latter mechanism is consistent with both contingent responsiveness and elite dominance.

On the whole, there is substantial evidence that on the margin, Southern MCs responded to the economic interests of the median voter in their constituency. This marginal respon-

siveness by no means precludes Southern MCs from putting more weight on the interests of constituents who were relatively rich, even compared to an electorate already skewed towards the haves.[30] Nor does is say much about whether the median voter, let alone the median Southerner, was well-represented in an absolute sense. We turn to these questions in the final chapter, which examines the relationship between members of Congress and public opinion.

[30]Even in contemporary American politics, the voices of citizens with greater resources or engagement are amplified relative to others (Bartels, 2008; Gilens, 2005; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995).

# Chapter 5

# Public Opinion and Representation

Chapters 3 and 4 provide evidence that Southern members of Congress responded on the margin to the preferences of the potential electorate in their constituencies. This chapter explores the connection between popular preferences and congressional representation in greater detail, using evidence from public opinion polls.[1] Focusing again on economic policy, particularly attitudes towards labor unions, it investigates representation in the South from three perspectives: *collective* (Southerners' aggregate ideological position relative to the nation); *dynamic* (responsiveness to changes in public opinion); and *dyadic* (the cross-sectional congruence of citizens and legislators).

Based on these data, I find compelling evidence that in the aggregate, the voting records of Southern MCs, on economic issues generally and labor policy specifically, were broadly representative of the stated preferences of their white constituents. I also find evidence for dynamic representation—that is, responsiveness on the part of office-holders to changes in the preferences of their constituents over time (Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson, 1995). The evidence for dyadic representation is weaker, though not obviously more so in the South than in the North. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of these results for regional and national politics.

## 5.1 Perspectives on Representation in the South

Hanna Pitkin, synthesizing the diverse perpectives on representation, defines it as "acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them" (1967, p. 209). Representation can be evaluated based on a number of criteria, including descriptive congruence and symbolic activity, but our focus here is *policy* representation, which involves office-holders'

[1]The public opinion work in this chapter, especially that related to regional and partisan trends on labor and other New Deal issues, draws on joint work with Eric Schickler (Schickler and Caughey, 2011) as well as on Schickler and Adam Berinsky's project to clean, recode, and weight public opinion polls from the 1930s and 1940s (Berinsky, 2006; Berinsky et al., 2011).

responsiveness to their constituents with respect to broad issues of public policy (Pitkin, 1967, p. 60; Eulau and Karps, 1977). Empirically, policy representation can be evaluated from a variety of perspective, of which three will be used in this chapter: dyadic, collective, and dynamic.

Probably the most common measure of representation, exemplified by Miller and Stokes's classic 1963 article, is the cross-sectional association between constituency opinion and the policy actions of representatives, which is known as *dyadic* policy representation (see also Achen, 1977; Clinton, 2006; Bartels, 2008). A second approach is to evaluate how well constituents are represented in the aggregate, which I will call *collective* representation following Weissberg (1978). While some studies of collective representation (e.g., Gilens, 2005) examine the political system as a whole, one can also evaluate the how well a particular group of office-holders (e.g., Southern members of Congress) collectively represent their constituents. The third conception of representation used in this chapter is *dynamic* representation: the degree to which office-holders "respond to—meaning act as a consequence of—changes in public sentiment" (Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson, 1995, p. 543). Whereas dyadic and collective representation are measured cross-sectionally at a given point in time, dynamic representation is concerned with whether shifts in popular preferences over time cause public officials to alter their positions or actions on public policies. These three approaches should be interpreted as different empirical indicators of the same underlying concept of representation, each with their own strengths and weaknesses.

As discussed in the introductory chapter, scholars differ as to where to place the South on the continuum between autocracy and democracy. While all nearly accept that the disenfranchisement of African Americans disqualified the one-party South from fully democratic status, some describe it as a Herrenvolk democracy for whites and others as a fully authoritarian regime. As Dahl (1971, p. 1) notes, the defining feature of democracy is "the continuing responsiveness of the government to the preferences of its citizens, considered as political equals." The one-party South's position on the autocracy–democracy scale is therefore partly an empirical question, which can be addressed by evaluating the quality of representation in the South using the three methods described above.

For many scholars, the great puzzle of Southern politics is its economic conservatism. "The vast majority of southerners have been poor," laments Norrell (1991, p. 201), "and their economic interests have surely belonged with liberal or radical political movements." Why, then, have "political movements among the lower classes... failed to overcome the South's political conservatism"? The answer given is typically twofold: first, the divisive and distracting effects of race and white racism; and, second, the effects of the South's exclusionary one-party regime, which biased politics towards the economic interests of the haves over the have-nots (Key, 1984[1949]; Woodward, 1951).

While usually offered together, these two answers are, in a sense, based on two different understandings of representation, one of which stresses interests and the other, preferences. To blame the distracting effects of race is in effect to consider the racism of Southern whites, or at least the extreme weight that they placed on the racial hierarchy, to be an essentially

false preference that did not represent their true interests.[2] The second argument, however, takes white Southerners' preferences largely as given, and claims that Southern politics is not reflective even of the Southerners' stated preferences. Key's expresses this view in *Public Opinion and American Democracy*:

> Though the South is often assumed to be conservative on matters of domestic economic policy, its appearance of conservatism results from imperfect representation of its views rather than from a peculiar mass opinion.... In fact, southern opinion on this matters...closely resembles that of the rest of the country.... How can the similarity in opinions between the South and the rest of the country be reconciled with the conservative outlook of many southern Senators and Representatives? (Key, 1961, pp. 102–03, 105)

In this view, the puzzle of Southern politics is not merely that racism distorted white Southerners' economic preferences, but that Southern members of Congress were even more conservative than their constituents, who were moderate or even liberal relative to the nation (see also Ladd and Hadley, 1975 and Breaux and Shaffer, 2012 on Southern public opinion and Boynton, 1965 on Southern MCs' conservatism relative to their constituents). Similarly, Sinclair (1982, p. 81) argues that Southern MCs' rightward swing must be attributable to elite dynamics rather than "a response to constituency opinion change" because "there were no significant regional attitude differences on domestic issues during those years."

The factual basis for this argument, however, can be disputed in two respects. Earl and Merle Black, for example, assert that "conservatism occupies an exalted ideological position in the South," and evidence from public opinion polls "reveals a region in which conservatism flourishes and liberalism withers" (Black and Black, 1987, p. 213; see also Hero, 1965, pp. 373–76). From this perspective, the conservatism of the South's representatives in Congress is merely a reflection of the conservatism of the Southern public. As noted above, however, whether the Southern public was in fact particularly conservative is disputed.

A second possible critique is that on economic issues, Southern Democrats were not in fact conservative. They are perceived as such because "the rest of the world, with party labels in mind, insists on comparing the South with the records of Northern Democrats" rather than, say, conservative Republicans from the Midwestern farm belt (Carleton, 1951, p. 226). Compared to Congress as a whole Southern Democrats were, as Chapter 2 shows, right in the middle of the ideological continuum. If the latter critique holds, then a new puzzle emerges: In light of the one-party system's conservative biases, why were Southern

[2]One could also characterize white racism as an illegitimate preference on the basis that preference for the subjugation of other are inherently not worthy of representation, but this is not generally the argument made, especially by white Southern liberals, academic or not. Rather, their perspective is based on the claim that obsession with white supremacy is not in the interests of whites themselves. This view obviously bears close relation to Marx and Engels's notion of "false consciousness," particularly in its manifestation as false attribution of blame. Indeed, Marx himself used the competition between whites and blacks in the South as an analogy for the debilitating ethnic divisions in the British working class (see Jost, 1995, pp. 409–11).

MCs as moderate as they were? These are, in part, empirical questions, and the following sections examine the evidence on Southern public opinion and its relationship with Southern members of Congress.

## 5.2 Public Opinion

This section introduces the data and methods used to estimate public opinion in the 1936–45 period. This period is examined because the rapid change in Southerners Democrats' relative ideological position in Congress offers a rare opportunity to compare relative change at the elite and mass levels. National, regional, and state public opinion on economic issues will be examined a high level of generality, pooling hundreds of poll questions together, as well as through the lens of a single important subdomain: labor policy. In the following section, the public opinion results will be compared with patterns in Congress.

### 5.2.1 Public Opinion Polls, 1936–1945

The first national public opinion surveys were conducted in the mid-1930s, and by 1945 the four major polling organizations[3] had conducted approximately 450 such surveys. These polls, which queried respondents on a wide range of political topics, offer a treasure trove of information on mass opinion during this period (see Berinsky et al., 2011, for an overview). With a few exceptions, however, political scientists have tended to ignore these data, rarely considering public opinion surveys conducted before the 1950s. The reasons are two-fold. First, the original data files are not in good shape, due to miscodings, nonexistent codebooks, and other problems. Thus they cannot be easily analyzed by scholars.

Second, the respondents in these early polls were not selected using modern probability sampling techniques. Rather, the pollsters used using quota-controlled sampling methods, which require interviewers to interview a set number of people in each demographic category. AIPO interviewers, for example, were given "hard" quotas for gender and "soft" quotas for age, economic class, and occupation (Berinsky, 2006, p. 505). These practices introduced two potential sources of bias. In many of the polls, the quota targets given to interviewers were not designed to match characteristics of the population. Gallup, for example, used quotas that he thought would best predict election outcomes, and thus severely undersampled women, blacks, and Southerners. Even in polls based on quotas representative of the American public, however, respondents within each quota category were not necessarily representative of that category as a whole. In fact, a comparison of the sample and population distributions of non-quota auxiliary variables, such as education level and phone ownership,

[3]Hadley Cantril's Office of Public Opinion Research (OPOR); George Gallup's American Institute of Public Opinion (AIPO); the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), and the polling firm of Elmo Roper.

indicates a substantial class bias within quota categories (within categories, respondents tend to be of higher class standing than their counterparts in the population).

Since 2006, Adam Berinsky and Eric Schickler have led a team of researchers, of which I have been part, to rehabilitate these early polls and develop new techniques for analyzing them. In addition to correcting the errors in the data and putting the data files in usable form, a major component of this project has been to collect population data on auxiliary variables present in the poll samples as well. These targets can then be used to construct observation weights that ameliorate the bias caused by non-representative quota-controlled samples (Bethlehem, 2002; Deville, 1991). Several works have made use of the corrected data, including Berinsky (2009) and Schickler and Caughey (2011). An initial round of corrected polls from 1936–1945, along with their associated weights, were released to the public in May 2011, but work on extending the poll time series and improving the methods used to analyze them is ongoing (Berinsky et al., 2011).

### 5.2.2 Data and Methods

The public opinion data examined in this paper are drawn from a dataset of all all questions concerning economic policy, government–business relations, domestic spending, and social welfare policy asked in polls between 1936 and 1945.[4] These data are examined in the aggregate to provide an overall picture of changing national, partisan, and regional opinion towards New Deal liberalism. In addition, the subset of these questions related to labor unions are examined. Finally, two specific question series with constant wording over time are isolated to more precisely gauge opinion dynamics over time. The first of these is the Favor Unions question series, asked the question "Are you in favor of labor unions?" in ten Gallup/AIPO polls conducted between 1937 and 1943.[5] The second question series, Union Shop, asked respondents whether they supported the requirement that any non-union employees in a union workplace become members of the union after being hired.[6]

The polls have been recoded so as to provide standardized information on respondents'

[4]For more details on this set of polls, see Schickler and Caughey (2011).

[5]The polls were conducted on the following dates: May 1937, October 1938, August 1939, November 1939, early May 1940, late May 1940, May 1941, October 1941, and May 1943.

[6]This question was asked on six occasions using the following wordings:
"Are you in favor of the so-called 'union shop'—that is, requiring every worker in a factory or mine to join the union?" (May 1939)
"Are you in favor of the Union Shop—that is, requiring every worker in a company to join a union after he is hired?" (October 1941, July 1945)
"Do you think there should or should not be a law passed which: Requires every worker in a plant to belong to a union if the majority votes to have a union?" (October 1943)
"Do you think a person who joins a union should have to continue to belong to that union in order to hold his job?" (April 1944)
"Do you favor or oppose 'maintenance of membership'—that is, requiring a person who joins a union to continue to belong to that union in order to hold his job?" (April 1944)

race, gender, occupation, place of residence, and, where available, phone ownership and educational status. These characteristics can then be checked against the population. The sample sizes of the constituent polls are large, usually around 3,000 respondents, but in their raw form the samples are not representative of the American population. The polls used in the Favor Unions series, for example, are about 65% male, and over 16% of the sample has a professional occupation, compared to 9% of the general public. Farmers are somewhat overrepresented and urban-dwellers are underrepresented. Phone ownership is similarly inflated.[7] Southern whites are substantially underrepresented, and Southern blacks are severely so, comprising fewer than 1% of respondents (218 total) compared to the 6% of Americans overall who were black and lived in the South. As noted above, some of these distortions are the result of unrepresentative quota targets, whereas others are due to non-random selection within quota categories. Such discrepancies will cause bias in inferences about population totals if Americans' attitudes towards labor unions were correlated with their probability of being included in the poll sample.

To compensate for the bias caused by unrepresentative samples, calibration weighting is used, sometimes in conjunction with multilevel modeling. Weighting adjustments have become a standard method for ameliorating nonresponse and other kinds of sample-selection bias. While eliminating all such bias may be impossible, bias tends to be reduced to the extent that the auxiliary variable predict the outcome variable (e.g., favorability towards labor unions), the probability of response, or both (Bethlehem, Cobben, and Schouten, 2011, Ch. 8). Many common forms of weighting, including poststratification and raking, can be subsumed under a more general framework called calibration estimation. Calibration entails finding the set of weights that satisfy a set of constraints (e.g., that the weighted distributions of auxiliary variables in the sample equal their population distributions) while deviating as little as possible from a set of reference weights (typically the Horvitz–Thompson inclusion weights, e.g., $1/n$ in a simple random sample; see Deville and Särndal, 1992; Särndal, 2007). If the weighting model is correct, then a weighted average of the outcome in the sample provides an unbiased estimate of the mean in the population.

For the analyses of regional and partisan opinion across many polls (e.g., Figure 5.3), the raw poll data were weighted to match the population on the best set of auxiliary variables available in each poll (e.g., if education was available, use it; if not, use phone). This method works well for estimating regional and partisan opinion, but not for estimating state opinion. As Gelman and Carlin (2002) discuss, however, a simple weighted average may not be optimal if the number of observations in each cell is too small, leading to unstable weights and thus unstable point estimates. In the extreme, if the sample happens to contain no observations in a given cell, that cell cannot be used to construct the overall estimate unless cells are collapsed or fewer auxiliary variables are used. An alternative strategy is to use a probability model, often a hierarchical model with random effects for demographic and geographic categories, to "smooth" the cell estimates.

[7] Educational attainment of respondents is not available in these polls.

One such approach is the multilevel modeling and poststratification (MRP) method developed by Gelman and others. This method, which has been shown to be effective at increasing the precision of public opinion estimates derived from national polls for subsets of the population, such as states (Kastellec, Lax, and Phillips, 2010; Lax and Phillips, 2009; Park, Gelman, and Bafumi, 2006). An important property of multilevel models is that the random effects for each demographic category are "shrunk" towards the rest of the data in inverse proportion to the informativeness of the data in the category. For example, if there are few observations in a given state, the estimated intercept for that state will be shrunk towards the national mean and away from the observed mean in the state.[8]

To estimate state-level opinion on the Favor Unions and Union Shop question series, a modified version of MRP is used to simultaneously adjust for the unrepresentativeness of quota-controlled samples and increase the precision of opinion estimates in subsets of the data. Like MRP, the analysis proceeds in two steps. The first step hews closely to the MRP template: a multilevel logistic regression model of the outcome variable and weighting variable, plus fixed effects for state-level variables. The second step is to obtain an overall estimate for the population of interest (e.g., the American public) based on a weighted average of the model-based fitted estimates of opinion in every demographic cell.[9] The strategy used in this chapter departs from MRP, however, in the method used to calculate the weights. MRP relies on poststratification weights, which assigns to all observations in each cell a weight proportional to the ratio of the cell's percentage in the population to its percentage in the sample. Although poststratification has the advantage of relying on minimal assumptions beyond that the data are missing-at-random (Groves et al., 2009, p. 352), it is not feasible unless the joint (as opposed to marginal) distributions of all the weighting variables are known in the population.

In the case of early opinion polls, the joint distributions of certain auxiliary variables—*Farmer*, *Black*, *Female*, *Professional*, and *Age*, by *State*—can be determined from the public use 1% sample of 1940 census (Ruggles et al., 2004). State-level data on the variable *Urban*, however, must be obtained separately from Bureau of the Census population bulletins, and only its joint distribution with *Female* and *Black* is available.[10] Finally, population data on *Phone* ownership by state can be estimated from AT&T corporate records in conjunction with census data on households. In order to make use of all this information, weights must be calculated using raking, also known as iterative proportional fitting. The R function `rake` (Lumley, 2010, 2011), which iteratively poststatifies on the joint distributions until the weights converge, was used to calculate weights that match all the known population targets:

[8]The resulting "empirical Bayes" estimate of the group-level random intercept is the best linear unbiased predictor of the true effect over repeated realizations of the group- and individual-level errors (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal, 2008, p. 82).

[9]A "cell" refers to a particular combination of the levels of the weighting variables. If the weighting variables were *Black*, *Female*, and *State*, for example, then "white–male–California" would be a cell. In this example there would be $2 \times 2 \times 50 = 200$ cells total.

[10]Following the U.S. Census, "urban" is defined as a locality with at least 2,500 residents.

- *State* by *Farmer* by *Black* by *Female* by *Professional* by *Age*
- *State* by *Phone*
- *State* by *Urban*.

The number of cells was reduced by removing the combination $Farm = 1$ and $Urban = 1$, which is minuscule in the population. Note, however, that the number of cells is still substantially larger than the number of poll respondents used to estimate them. This precludes the estimation of random intercepts for each cell. Instead, opinion in each cell is modeled as an additive function of the intercepts for each variable.

Respondents' favorability towards labor unions or the union shop $y_i \in \{0, 1\}$ is modeled as a linear combination of their state of residence ($State_i$), their age category ($Age_i$), the poll form in which they were interviewed ($Poll_i$),[11] whether they live in an urban area ($Urban_i$), whether they are a farmer ($Farm_i$), their gender ($Female_i$), whether they report owning a phone ($Phone_i$), and whether they are a professional ($Professional_i$). In the following equation, $i$ indexes the individual, and $s$, $j$, $k$, $l$, $m$, $n$, $o$, $p$, and $q$ index the levels of *State*, *Age*, *Poll*, *Urban*, *Farm*, *Female*, *Phone*, *Professional*, and *Black*respectively:

$$\text{logit}(\Pr\{y_i = 1\}) = \beta^0 + \alpha^{St.}_{s[i]} + \alpha^{Age}_{j[i]} + \alpha^{Poll}_{k[i]} + \alpha^{Urban}_{l[i]} + \alpha^{Farm}_{m[i]} + \alpha^{Fem.}_{n[i]} + \alpha^{Phone}_{o[i]} + \alpha^{Prof.}_{p[i]} + \alpha^{Black}_{q[i]} \tag{5.1}$$

Each random intercept is modeled as a random draw from a normal distribution with variance estimated from the data. Each distribution is mean-zero except for that of the state-specific intercepts, which are modeled as a function of the state's proportion of union members in 1939 (Troy, 1957): $\alpha^{State}_{s[i]} \sim N(\gamma_1 + \gamma_2 \times Unionized_s, \sigma^2_{State})$. Later in the chapter, Model 5.1 is modified to allow for region-specific differences by poll form. The estimation was done through Bayesian MCMC simulation in JAGS using the R package `rjags` (Plummer, 2011). Depending on the model, at least 30,000 to 300,000 simulations were run and thinned at an interval ranging from 5 to 30, as needed to achieve a satisfactory sample from the posterior distribution.

The demographic predictors differ substantially in their ability to explain the variance in labor attitudes. There is large variation by *Form* (sd = 0.24 on the logit scale), and within polls phone owners, who constitute about two-fifths of the American public, are generally but not always substantially less favorable towards unions. Differences by occupation are much smaller, and the class breakdown runs the opposite direction: professionals are slightly more supportive of unions, all else equal. The variation by gender is quite large, with male respondents expressing much more support for labor unions than females. Favorability towards unions is positively associated with urban residence and negatively with farming, with small-town non-farmers falling in the middle. This rural–urban cleavage conforms with

[11] Some polls split their samples and asked different questions to each subsample, and for these polls *Poll-Form* indicates which question form the respondent was given

the observations of Mayhew (1966), Patterson (1967), and others regarding the rural basis of opposition to an increasingly urban-oriented New Deal liberalism.

Perhaps surprisingly, after controlling for the other variables in the model there is essentially no variation by race.[12] Although the number of blacks in the sample, 984, is not particularly small, the lack of independent variation by race should be treated with some caution given the generally liberal orientations of blacks in this period (Schickler and Caughey, 2010, pp. 52–58). Nevertheless, given the racism of many unions at the time, it is quite plausible that blacks were ambivalent about organized labor specifically.

Even after accounting for demographic variables, substantial variation by state remains. Not surprisingly, *State Proportion Union* is a strong predictor of average opinion towards labor unions in the state, but there is substantial residual variation by state. Louisiana, for example, has much more favorable labor attitudes than would otherwise be expected given its demographics. By contrast, Michigan, despite its strong union presence, has a large negative state-level intercept, which may be the result of its being ground zero for labor conflict in this period.

Estimates of opinion towards labor unions in each state were calculated as follows. A matrix of all possible combination of the levels of the independent variables (discarding redundant or impossible combinations) was created. By taking the inverse logit of the linear combination of the relevant coefficients, an estimate of the opinion in each demographic category (e.g., an urban, professional, white, female, middle-aged, non-farmer from Maine with a phone interviewed in Form T of AIPO Poll 195) was obtained. Then a set of weights for this matrix was calculated such that the weighted matrix matched the population profile within each state (each poll form was given equal weight). The weighted mean of the demographic estimates in each state provides an estimate of overall opinion in the state.

The uncertainty of the estimates was estimated by replicating the weighting and cell estimation process for each of the several thousand runs of the MCMC sampler. It should be emphasized that the estimates are conditional on the model, which also reduces the sampling variability of the estimates (and hence the confidence intervals). On the whole, however, the ranking of states is similar regardless of whether the model-based estimates or the unweighted means are used. The unweighted state means tend to be a little higher but the two are highly correlated. The biggest outliers are Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oregon, and Montana, all of which have higher raw means than model-based estimates.

[12]If *Favors Labor* rather than *Not Opposed to Labor* is used as the outcome variable, blacks are estimated to be slightly less supportive of unions, all else equal. The difference in the results between the two response variables can be attributed to blacks' greater likelihood of responding "Don't know" to questions (see Schickler and Caughey, 2010, pp. 54–55).

## 5.3 Representation

Having outlined the methods used to analyze the poll data, we now turn to a comparison of estimated public opinion and patterns in Congress. Figure 5.3 aggregates hundreds of poll questions related to New Deal liberalism (economic policy, government–business relations, domestic spending, and social welfare policy). Because they follow a somewhat different pattern and are thus examined separately, questions related to labor unions are not included in Figure 5.3. The figure distinguishes between three groups: Northern Democrats (defined as FDR voters), Northern Republicans (supporters of Landon in 1936, Willkie in 1940, or Dewey in 1944), and Southern whites, almost all of whom were Democrats.[13] Each dot in the figure represents the different between the level of support in the group and the overall level of support.[14] Southern blacks are not included in this analysis, for practical as well as theoretical reasons. Practically, Southern blacks were so underrepresented in polls from this period that accurate estimates of their opinions are almost impossible to obtain. On theoretical level, Southern blacks were almost completely disenfranchised before 1944, so there is little reason to expect Southern MCs to have been responsive to their preferences.

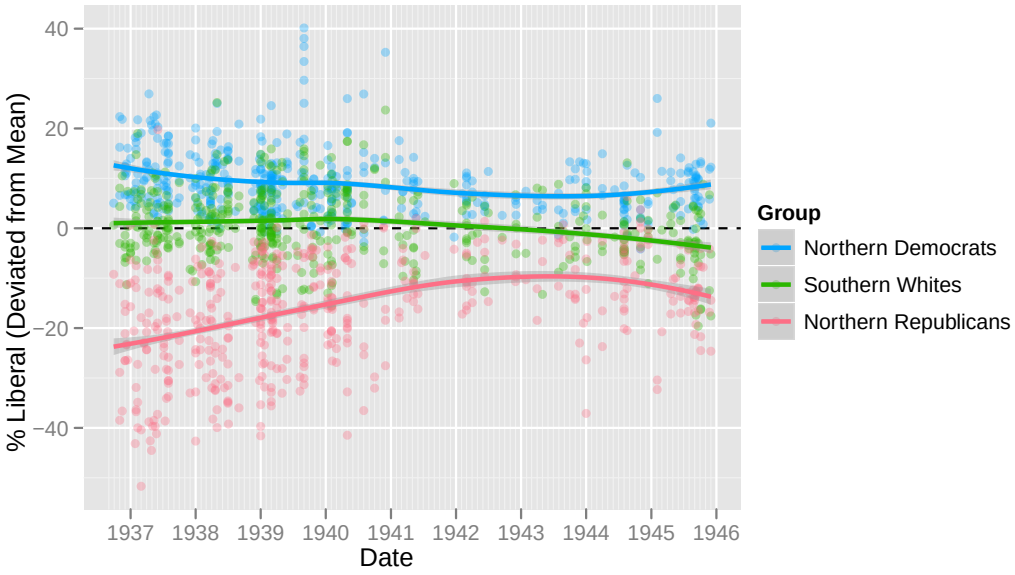
Several basic patterns emerge from these data. First, as we would expect, Democrats and Republicans in the North expressed quite divergent opinions on issues related to the New Deal, especially in the late 1930s, when the gap between the two groups on the average question was around 30 percentage points. The differences between Northern partisans did diminish over time, even on comparable question series, though this could be an artifact of floor effects among Republicans on issues like government ownership of industry, on which support fell across the board. Like the rest of the population, however, Republicans were quite supportive of some New Deal policies, such as Social Security (see Schickler and Caughey, 2011, p. 183).

A second pattern obvious from Figure 5.3 is that Southern whites, despite being nearly all FDR voters, typically gave about as much support for the liberal position as the population as a whole, becoming only slightly more conservative in relative terms over the course of the period. In the immediate wake of the 1936 FDR landslide, when Democrats predominated and thus overall opinion was closer to the Democratic average, Southern whites' position near the average put them closer to Northern Democrats than to Northern Republicans. The increase in Northern Republican voters after 1940 brought overall support in the population close to the midpoint between the parties, and thus Southern whites occupied a position about halfway between Northern partisans. Overall, the dominant impression conveyed by this figure is that between 1936 and 1945, Southern whites were neither particularly liberal

[13]The estimates for each poll were calculated by weighting the raw data based on the best auxiliary variables available in that poll. Only questions with a clear liberal position were included. Respondents who answered "don't know" or who were otherwise missing were dropped from this analysis

[14]For example, if 60% of Northern Democrats express support for the liberal position on government ownership of the railroads and the level of support in the population is 50%, this would be represented on the plot as a blue dot at 10%.

Figure 5.1: **Public Opinion on Non-Labor New Deal Issues, 1936–1945**
Comparison Northern Democrats, Northern Republicans, and Southern whites. The figure plots the difference between each group's support for the liberal position on a question and the overall level of support in the sample, smoothed with loess.

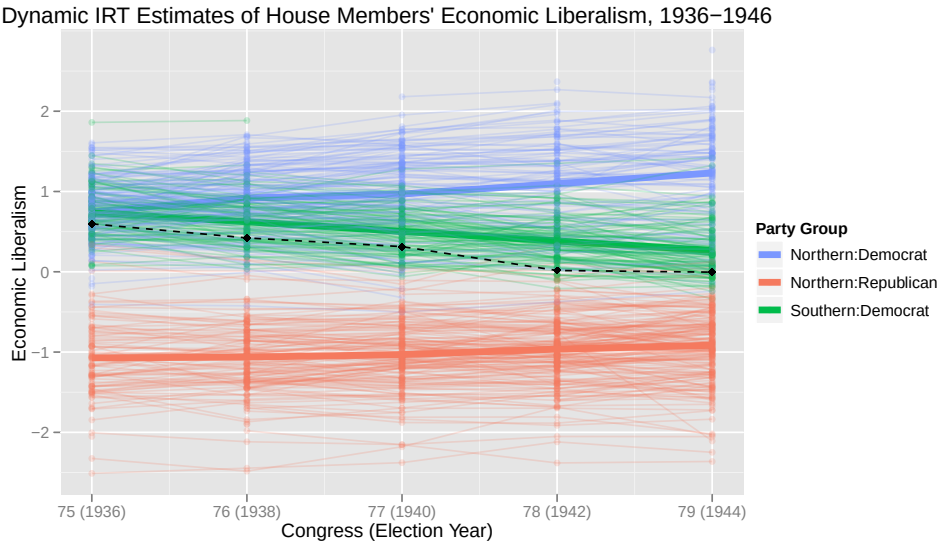



nor particularly conservative on economic issues, but rather closely tracked average opinion in the nation as a whole.

The aggregate patterns in public opinion on economic issues are remarkably similar to those in Congress during the same period. Figure 5.3 plots House members' ideal point estimates from Chapter 2 for 75th (1937–38) through 79th (1945–46) Congresses. As they did at the mass level, Southerners in Congress moved rightward relative to the nation as whole between 1936 and 1945. Southern Democrats began the period close to their fellow partisans in the North and ended up midway between Northern Democrats and Republicans. Like public opinion, Congress as a whole became more economically conservative over this period, as is shown by the dotted black line in Figure 5.3, which indicates the median. The ideological shift in Congress was driven partly by the replacement of liberal Northern Democrats with conservative Republicans, particularly in 1938 and 1942. But it was also assisted by the increasing conservatism of Southern Democrats, who migrated steadily to the right. The mean position of Southern MCs, represented by the thick green line, remained somewhat more liberal than the House median. This contrasts with the pattern in public opinion, where Southern whites were slightly more conservative than average.

In collective terms, Southerners in Congress closely reflected the attitudes of their white constituents. Of course, this comparison can only be made in terms of Southerners' position relative to Congress or the nation as a whole. In the absence of bridging questions to put

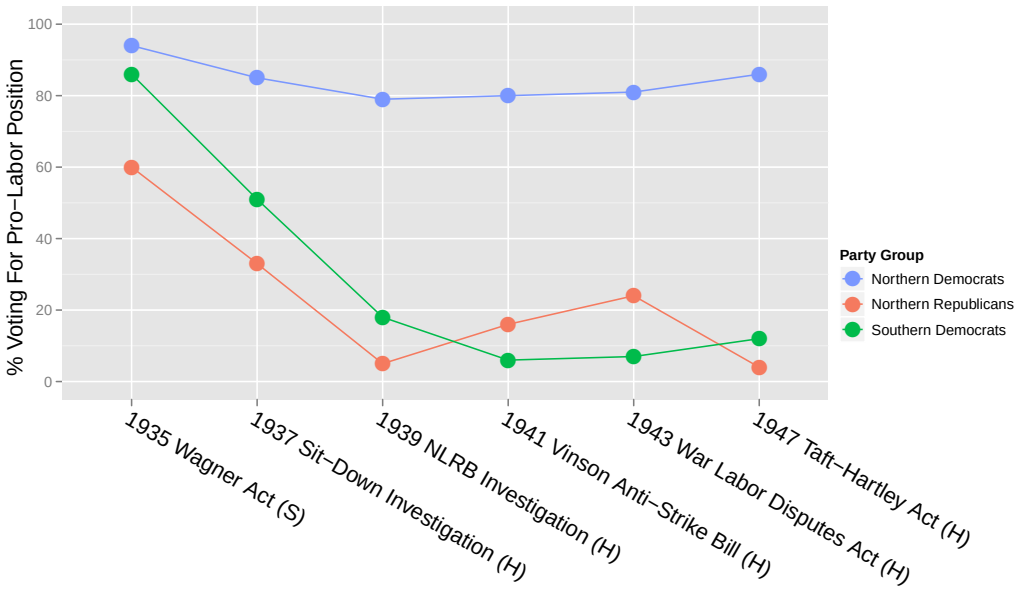
Figure 5.2: **Congressional ideal points on New Deal Issues, 1936–1946**
Ideal points of Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Northern Republicans, 75th to 79th Congresses. The black points and dotted line indicate the median ideal point in each congress.




citizens and legislators on the same scale (Bafumi and Herron, 2010; Jessee, 2009), it is not possible to evaluate Southern MCs' absolute proximity to their constituents (Achen, 1978). Nevertheless, to the extent that congressional representation exhibited a conservative bias on economic issues, it does not seem to differ greatly across regions. If anything, Southern MCs were slightly more liberal than the Southern white public in relative terms. Collectively, Southern MCs appear to have accurately reflected the relative position of their white constituents on issues related to New Deal liberalism. Moreover, because Southern whites closely approximated average opinion nationally, Southern MCs offered a sort of surrogate representation (Mansbridge, 2003) to the median voter in the nation, the implications of which are explored in the conclusion of this chapter.

For a more refined perspective, let us turn to an examination of labor issues, which are distinct from New Deal liberalism generally in several respects. Although the labor regime of the New Deal was one of its core achievements, labor policy was also one of the first and most consequential areas where the New Deal coalition in Congress broke down and was supplanted by the conservative coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993; Schickler and Pearson, 2009). An important reason for this that Southern MCs came to the New Deal labor regime as a threat to their regional racial order as well as an issue of economic ideology and party loyalty (Farhang and Katznelson, 2005), though this conflation of racial and class cleavages soon emerged in other areas as well (Chapter 2; see also Katznelson and Mulroy, 2012). Labor issues are also distinctive because between 1936 and 1945, national public opinion on the issue changed dramatically,

Figure 5.3: **Key Labor Votes in Congress**
Percentage of Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Northern Republicans voting pro-labor on key roll calls between 1935 and 1947.

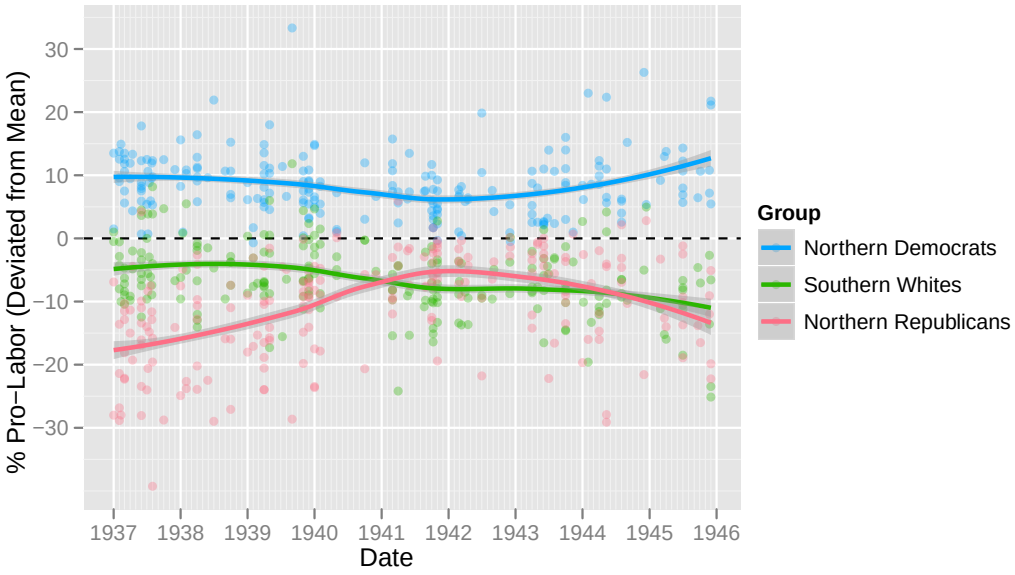



and so did policymaking in Congress (Schickler and Caughey, 2011). More importantly, the relative positions of different groups in the public and in Congress changed, providing the opportunity to evaluate dynamics representation.

Figure 5.3, which is reproduced from Chapter 2, plots the support for the pro-labor position on key roll calls among Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Northern Republicans. The period covered by the figure, 1935–47, roughly corresponds to the period covered by the public opinion data. As Chapter 2 discusses, Southern Democrats offered overwhelming (though hardly enthusiastic) support for the 1935 Wagner Act, which, along with the 1933 NIRA and the 1938 FLSA, "provided the most hospitable climate ever fashioned in American history for trade unions" (Farhang and Katznelson, 2005, p. 2). Southern congressional support for the New Deal labor regime quickly cooled, and many Southern MCs joined with conservative Republicans to support investigations that undermined public support for the regime and eventually legislation to "rebalance" relative power of labor and business in the latter's favor. By the 1940s, Southern Democrats were at least as supportive of anti-labor measures as Republicans. As Chapter 2 argues, Southern MCs' dramatic rightward shift on labor issues was only partly due to the changing dimensionality of labor votes. It was also driven by Southerners' growing conservatism on economic issues generally, as well as the growing unpopularity of pro-labor positions, which exerted the middle of the ideological continuum where Southerners were increasingly located.

How does the evolution of voting alignments in Congress compare with developments in

Figure 5.4: **Public Opinion Towards Labor Unions, 1936–1945**
Comparison Northern Democrats, Northern Republicans, and Southern whites. The figure plots the difference between each group's support for the liberal position on a question and the overall level of support in the sample, smoothed with loess.

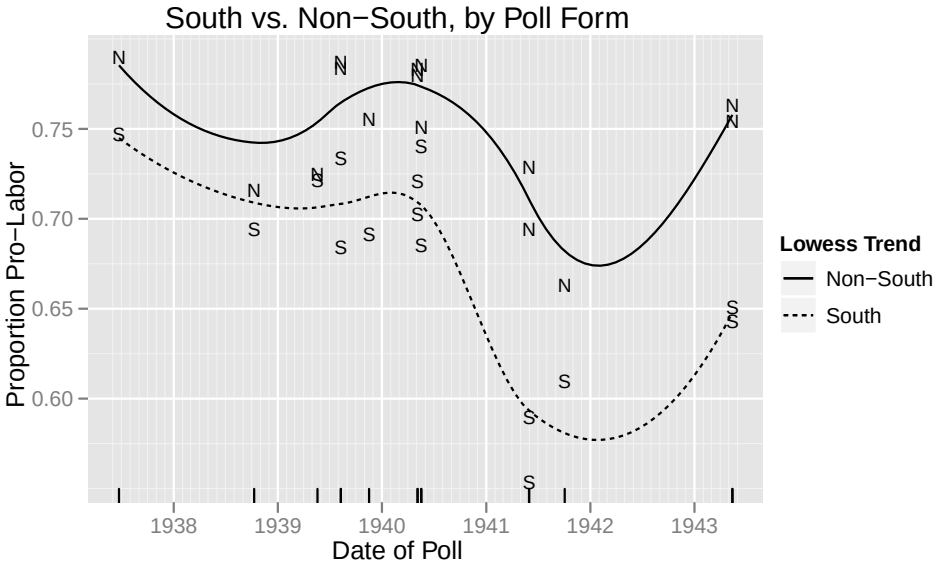



public opinion? Figure 5.3 plots attitudes related to labor unions, again with the average in each group deviated from the percentage pro-labor overall. Again, the congruence between patterns in the public and in Congress is striking. At both levels, Southerners began the period as moderates on labor issues, contrasting with their liberal stance on economics more generally. By the 1940s, Southerners had converged with Republicans in their hostility towards organized labor.[15] The "Southern Imposition" on labor identified by Katznelson as his coauthors thus appears to have its basis in Southern public opinion. The difference between labor-related and non-labor New Deal issues is that on the former, Southerners began as moderates and ended up conservatives, whereas on New Deal issues generally they evolved from liberals to moderates. In short, the Southern white public's relative position on both labor and non-labor economic issues was mirrored quite accurately by its representatives in Congress, suggesting a substantial degree of collective representation for white Southerners, as well as dynamic representation of their changing preferences.

For better evidence on how support for labor unions changed in absolute terms over time, we turn to evidence from question series that are comparable over time. The most consistent and complete of these is the Favor Unions series. This series should be interpreted

[15]The apparent liberalization of Republicans is primarily an artifact of changes in the overall level of support for pro-labor positions, which resulted from both the growing unpopularity of unions and changes in the mix of labor questions asked by polls.

Figure 5.5: **"Are You in Favor of Labor Unions?"**
Estimated favorability towards labor unions in the South and non-South, by poll form.




as gauging respondents' basic affect towards labor unions, and given the high overall level support, answer "no" probably indicates a fairly high level of hostility towards unions. As Figure 5.5 shows, Americans' favorability towards labor unions declined between 1937 and 1943, most precipitously between 1940 and 1941, though a partial recovery is suggested at the end of the period.[16] The decline is particularly evident in the South, which is about 10 percentage points less supportive than the non-South after 1941, more than double its gaps in the 1937 and 1938 polls and highly statistically significant, given the poll sample sizes.

The same pattern emerges when favorability towards unions is estimated at the state level. To allow for changes over time, the model in Equation 5.1 was modified to allow for region-specific time trends.[17] Figure 5.6 plots the estimated opinion towards labor unions in each state, with state labels at the posterior median and surrounded by 90% posterior credible intervals. In 1937, national support is estimated to be at 75%, with state point estimates ranging from 67% in South Dakota to 81% in California. At this point, Southern states do not look very distinctive. A few, like Florida, Texas, and Louisiana, are more pro-labor than the national average, while others, like the Carolinas, are substantially less supportive. The clearest geographic pattern is that rural states, except those in the labor-

[16]In the next poll that asked a labor favorability question, conducted in February 1946, the overall level of support is similar to the May 1943 poll.

[17]States were divided into four regions: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. The South was defined as the former Confederacy plus Kentucky and Oklahoma. The regional time trends were linear on the logit scale. The model was estimated in JAGS, with "Don't Knows" treated as missing data, which was imputed as part of the estimation process.

friendly West, tended to be opposed to unions.

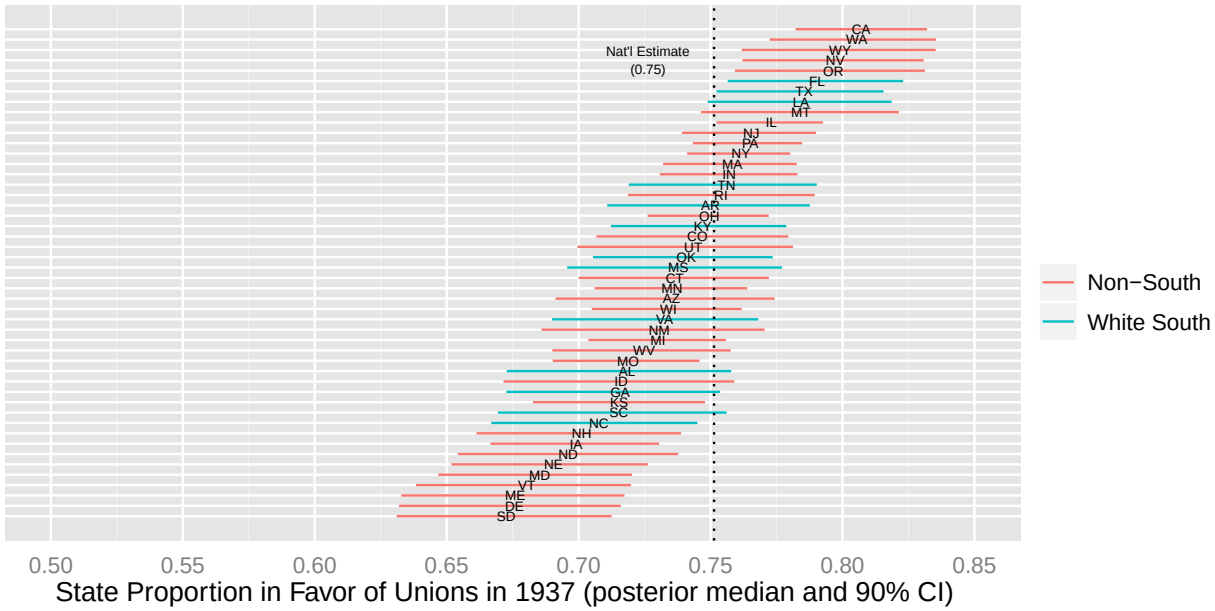
Between 1937 and 1943, the nation as a whole had become about 4 percentage points less favorable towards labor, but the most striking change is in the distribution of opinion across states. First, the variation across states increased markedly in six years. By 1943, the state estimates ranged from 55% in North Carolina to 79% in New Jersey, a range of 24 points as compared to 14 points in 1943. Second, whereas there were no clear regional differences in 1937, by 1943 the white South was a clear outlier in its (lack of) favorability towards unions. The South now dominates the bottom ranks of states in terms of support for labor. In most Southern states, favorability towards labor dropped fifteen percentage points. By contrast, states in the Northeast barely moved at all.

Comparing the opinion estimates across different states within the South, the main pattern that emerges is the distinction between the Deep South (Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina) and the rest of the region (Bullock and Rozell, 2012, p. 8), with the latter being more favorably disposed towards labor unions, though still substantially less so than the national average. The fact that over 40% of white respondents in every Deep South state expressed opposition to the very existence of labor unions suggests that intensity of opposition to labor unions was related to the perceived threat they posed to white supremacy, which was particularly salient in these highly black states. Upon first glance, however, opinion variation across Southern states does not seem to map very well onto pro-labor representation in Congress—Alabama and South Carolina, where labor unions were very unpopular, were represented by the pro-labor senators Lister Hill, John Sparkman, and Olin Johnston—an impression that will be evaluated more fully below.

Whereas the Favor Unions question series asked respondents' for their general attitude towards unions, the Union Shop series queried them about their stance on a concrete policy. The union shop and the related wartime policy of "maintenance of membership," while very important to labor unions, were also unpopular. As Figure 5.7 demonstrates, national support for the union shop remained around 30% between 1939 and 1945. Nevertheless, as was the case with general favorability towards unions, the order of states changed substantially over time. Due to the smaller poll sample sizes and perhaps to variation in question wording across time, the state estimates are not as precise, and the South does not emerge as quite a clear an anti-labor outlier. Still, with the exception of the very imprecisely estimated Arkansas, the point estimates for all Southern states are all below the national average, and in most less than 20% of the population supports the union shop.

As a final perspective on representation, let us examine the dyadic congruence between Southern state publics and their representatives in Congress on several high-profile labor votes. Figure 5.8 plots the linear relationship between estimated state favorability towards unions and the proportion of its delegation that cast a pro-labor vote on the 1935 Wagner Act, the 1937 proposal to investigate the sit-down strikes, and the 1943 War Labor Disputes Act. These plots provide a rough indication of dyadic representation, or what Achen refers to as *responsiveness*: the difference in representatives' actions associated with a one-unit difference in the opinion of the represented (1978, pp. 490–4). For each vote the slope among

Figure 5.6: **State Favorability Towards Labor Unions**
Estimated state-level proportion in favor of labor unions, in 1937 (top) and 1943 (bottom). The vertical dotted line indicates the national estimate in each year.



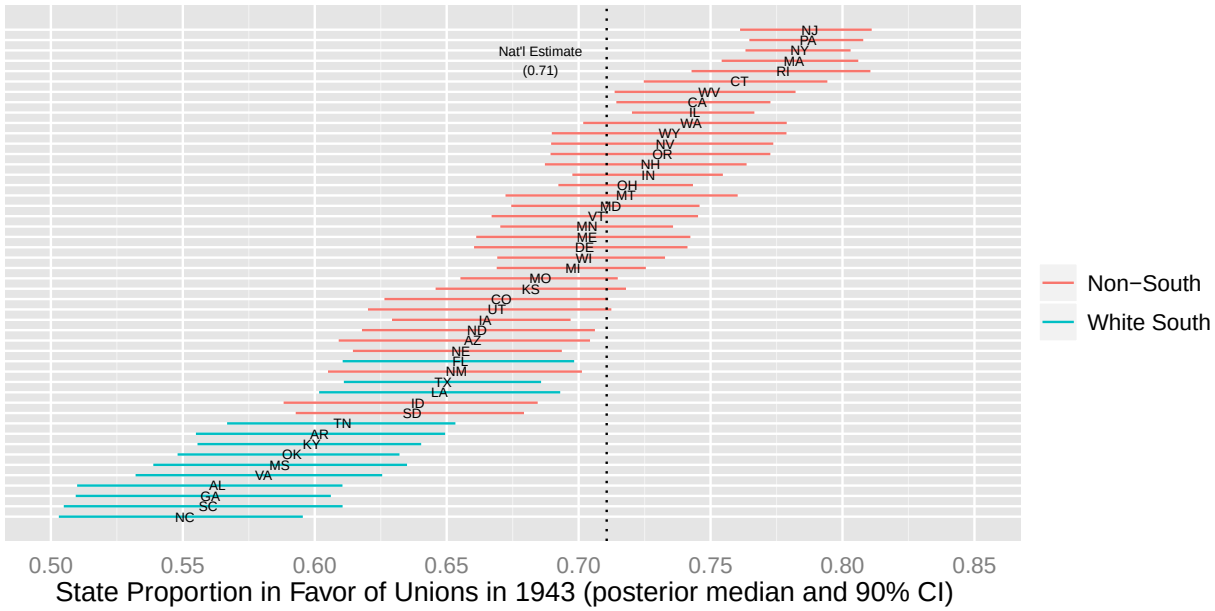
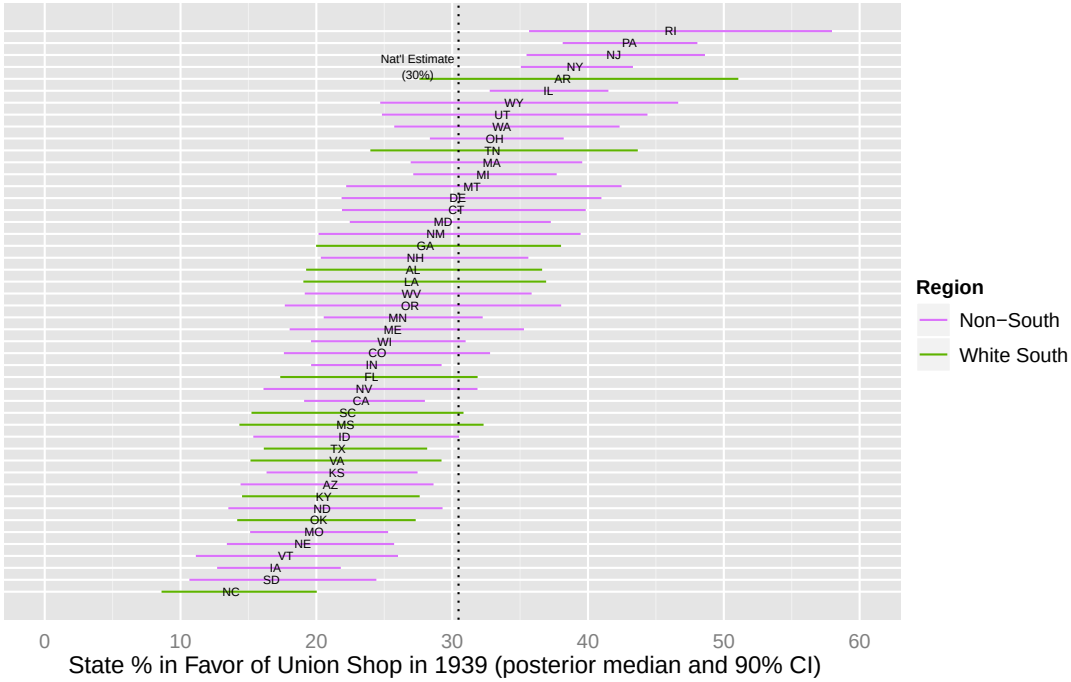
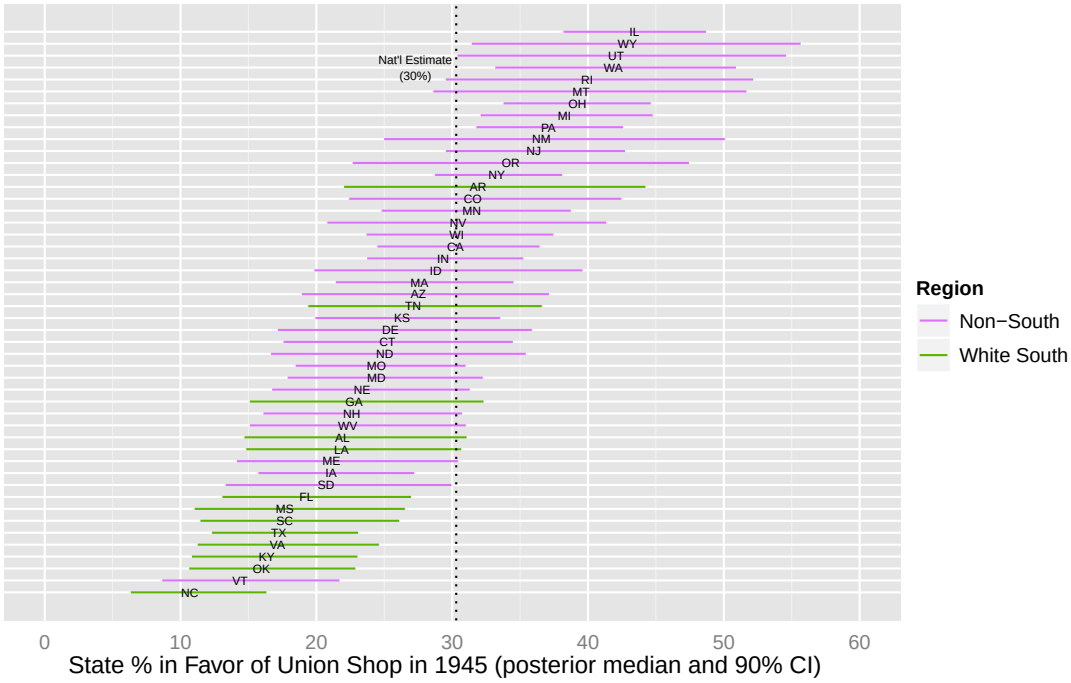



Figure 5.7: **State Support for the Union Shop**
Estimated state-level support for the union shop, in 1939 (top) and 1945 (bottom). The vertical dotted line indicates the national estimate in each year.



all representatives is modestly positive, indicating that senators and House members from states more favorable towards labor unions were more likely to cast pro-labor votes, though hardly guaranteed to do so.

The key point, however, is that Northern members of Congress were not obviously more responsive to their constituents' opinions than Southerners were. The War Labor Disputes Act, which which was sponsored by the Southerners Rep. Howard Smith of Virginia and Sen. Tom Connally of Texas, is a possible exception. In addition to restricting war-time strike activity, the Act also attempted to limit the political influence of organized labor. By this point, Southern states were clustered at the low end of labor favorability, and the lack of overlap between the regions makes it hazardous to compare the regional slopes. That said, the relationship nationally is stronger than in the South, where regardless of state opinion every state except Kentucky voted overwhelmingly for the Act.

It should be emphasized that in both the North and the South, the public overwhelmingly opposed wartime strikes and viewed labor unions as being too powerful (Schickler and Caughey, 2011). The difference is that in the North, many representatives were cross-pressured between popular sentiment on one hand, and the organizational and financial support they received from labor unions on the other. Few Southern representatives were torn on labor bills in this way, though the experience of those that were suggests it was a very difficult choice. A labor union constituency, even if small, could push Southern MCs to support pro-labor positions even if they were unpopular with a majority of their constituents—but they sometimes paid for it at the polls, as the experience of Luther Patrick indicates. This willingness to cater to core constituencies that are relatively unpopular with the public, even to the point of risking electoral defeat, is one of the distinguishing features of partisan politics. In this respect, a labor constituency could induce Southern MCs to act more like partisans, but most were free to follow the shifting winds of constituency opinion.

## 5.4 Interpretation and Implications

This chapter has presented evidence that on economic issues generally, Southerners in Congress came to occupy the middle ground between the two parties, bringing them collectively in line with their white constituents. Further, the anti-labor turn of Southern members of Congress broadly reflected changing white opinion in the region. Just like their constituents, Southern MCs moved from being moderates on labor issues to being at least as conservative as Northern Republicans. In other words, the ultimate cause the "Southern Imposition" on labor issues is more likely to have been changes in white preferences at the mass level, rather than changes in the strategic calculations of Southern elites and their representative in Congress (cf. Farhang and Katznelson, 2005).

These findings are strongly suggestive of dynamic representation in the South. The evidence for dyadic congruence is more mixed, but the Southern states do not stand out as obviously different from Northern states. It is worth underscoring how surprising these

Figure 5.8: **Dyadic:** State labor favorability and pro-labor congressional votes on the Wagner Act (top), Sit-Down Strike Investigation (middle), and War Labor Disputes Act (bottom).

findings are in light of the conventional wisdom on Southern politics. It is suggests that intra-party competition, imperfect though it was, did create a real electoral connection between representatives and the white electorate. It also suggests that the one-party South was, with respect to whites, closer to an effective polyarchy than a naive interpretation of the "authoritarian" label would imply.[18]

There are, of course, limitations to the evidence presented here. For one, it largely ignores the opinions of African Americans in the South, though it is worth noting because blacks comprised less than a quarter of the region's population, including them in the analysis doesn't not radically change the statistical results. Nevertheless, it should be reemphasized that the representational relationship for blacks, *even the few who could vote*, was fundamentally compromised, and their near-total exclusion from political participation disqualifies the one-party South from any minimum procedural definition of democracy.

Secondly, the public's stated preferences are accepted at face value, without an attempt to adjudicate whether they were expressions of the true interests of the public. Certainly, Southern whites would not have been so hostile to organized labor have more of them belonged to unions, which faced high political and structural barriers to organization in the region (Friedman, 2000; Marshall, 1967). Further, the evidence does not rule out the possibility that public conservatism in the South was the consequence of lower-class Southerners' following the cue of elite opinion (e.g., Hero, 1965, p. 373). While these criticisms are valid, one could apply them with nearly equal force to American politics more generally, which has long been criticized for the disproportionate elite influence or even dominance (Bartels, 2008; Gilens, 2005; Mills, 1956; Schattschneider, 1960; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995).

Notwithstanding the representational deficits of American democracy, it is not really plausible to assert that representation operated equally well in the North and the one-party South, even for whites. How then to explain the evidence that Southern MCs were roughly in step with regional opinion on economic issues, evolved similarly over time to their constituents, and exhibited a level of dyadic representation similar to the North? One potential explanation relates to Southern Democrats' embeddedness in a national party system that both empowered and constrained them. On one hand, white Southerners' participation in the New Deal coalition brought them substantial material benefits and, at least for a time, minimal direct threat to regional autonomy, in part because New Deal policies had to be constructed in such a way that would gain Southern support (Badger, 2007a; Brown, 1999; Katznelson, 2005; Lieberman, 1998; Wright, 2010). On the other, Southern MCs' power to bring home federal aid while guarding against federal incursion depended in large part on maintaining a national majority, particularly in Congress (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993). Southern loyalty to the Democratic Party was not merely a function of psychological or institutional barriers to partisan change (Black and Black, 2002; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler, 2002; Patterson, 1965), but also of practical and ongoing incentives to remain

[18]Mickey (2008) employs the authoritarian label but is well aware of the complexities and range of types that this label subsumes.

loyal. As Chapter 4 argues, Southern politicians, particularly those in Congress or with national political ambitions, were often cross-pressured to the left relative to their electoral incentives. Thus, one possible answer to the question, "Why weren't Southern members of Congress more conservative?" is that the one-party system provided reasonably accurate representation of white preferences, and the conservative bias that was surely present was largely counteracted by the liberal bias of party loyalty.

Even if competition within the one-party system induced a fair degree of responsiveness to the white public's preferences, it is clear that the representation it provided was different in kind from that in the two-party North. One of the consequences of two-party politics is that unless parties converge on the median voter, which is unlikely both theoretically and empirically (Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart, 2001; Berger, Munger, and Potthoff, 2000; Lee, Moretti, and Butler, 2004), is alternation between extremists of different parties. Even if electoral outcomes follow swings in opinion, polarized parties exaggerate the ideological tides, "overshooting" or "leapfrogging" the median voter (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson, 2002, p. 373; Bafumi and Herron, 2010). Chapter 2 argues that adaptation was a more important source of ideological change in the South because of the lack of anchoring groups to inhibit responsiveness to public opinion (Bawn et al., 2012; Schlozman, 2011). But even replacement in the South resulted in less extreme ideological changes than in the North because the range of ideological variation among Southern Democrats was less than between the parties in the North. Southern MCs were both freer to respond to changes in public mood and more incremental in doing so.

Further, by occupying the broad middle ground on economic policy, Southern MCs provided a sort of unintentional surrogate representation for the median voter in the national electorate. The result was often frustration for liberals seeking to take advantage of large partisan majorities to move the nation in a social-democratic direction (in the 81st Congress, for example; see Burns, 1963; Sundquist, 1968). But it also provided a context for the consolidation and incremental maintenance of a New Deal regime that, if it fell short of liberal ambitions, was still far more liberal than conservatives desired (Hamby, 1973; Jacobs, 2010; Plotke, 1996).[19] Indeed, the fact that Southern Democrats, like the median voter nationally, expressed little interest in a wholesale rollback of the New Deal helped contributed to the "modern Republicanism" and accommodation to the New Deal order (Mason, 2012, pp. 156–57). Of course, these victories for liberals were paid for, at least implicitly, with deference to the racial order of the South, an accommodation that came under increasing pressure over time but did not completely unravel until the Second Reconstruction of the 1960s. In short, the dynamics of representation in the one-party South had important consequences, not only for the region, but also for the political and policy dynamics of the nation as a whole.

[19]See also Mayhew (2013) on the important policy developments of the "long 1950s."

# Chapter 6

# Conclusion

This dissertation is not an apologia for the one-party South. It is, rather, an attempt to understand the South in terms that are universal rather than particular, while still respecting the region's diversity and distinctiveness. It shares the same goals as other recent work on Southern politics, such as Shafer and Johnston (2006) and Mickey (2008, 2013), who seek in very different ways to situate the South in broader context. In common with the scholarship of Ira Katznelson and his colleagues, it has also aimed to provide new perspectives on the role of the one-party South in national politics and its influence on American political development. Where it departs from these works is its conceptualization of Southern politics and the linkages between ordinary citizens and their political representatives.

My argument has taken as its starting point the categorization of the one-party South as a set of exclusionary one-party regimes (Huntington, 1970). These regimes were constructed in order to exclude certain segments of the population—mainly African Americans but also many whites who might oppose the one-party project—from the political sphere. As Key (1984[1949]) emphasized, the absence of parties transformed and in many ways stifled the representation of even those who could participate, but these regimes also contained meaningful avenues of intraparty competition, in the form of Democratic primaries. Primaries provided forums for the contestation and adjudication of differing interests within the white community, and they created at least the potential for an electoral connection between representatives and their constituents like that in the two-party North (Mayhew, 1974).

An important premise of my argument is that the one-party South was not a monolith but rather internally diverse, and that this diversity had important consequences. At the mass level, even the eligible electorate differed with respect to their preferences and interests. In Congress, Southerners ranged from arch-conservatives committed to laissez-faire principles to enthusiastic proponents of the regulatory, developmental, and social-welfare possibilities of an activist federal government, and their preferences evolved over time. Although almost universally committed to white supremacy, as were their white constituents, Southern MCs weighed the trade-off between regional racial autonomy and the benefits of activist government in different ways (cf. Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder, 1993). The decisions they came

to about this tradeoff were largely attributable to the preferences of their electorates, which were affected factors that influenced the preferences of all constituents, such as the TVA, as well as factors that governed the balance of political power in the constituency, such as the size of the electorate. Moreover, the strength of the electoral connection depended on the character of local political competition.

In short, ideological variation among the South's political representatives is traceable in large part to variation in preferences and political institutions across Southern constituencies, to which they were linked by a contingent electoral connection. This perspective, which I have referred to as *contingent responsiveness*, stands in contrast to the conventional model of one-party South, especially with regard to its role in national politics, as being dominated by the interests of a narrow elite. For certain purposes, the elite dominance perspective is a useful model, but it neglects important features of Southern and national politics. It both underplays and fails to explain the diversity of the Southern caucus in Congress. It is also hard to square with the evidence presented in Chapter 5 that Southern MCs were broadly in line with the preferences of their white constituents.

There are a number of analytic payoffs to understanding Southern MCs as an ideologically diverse group responsive to their white constituents via a contingent electoral connection. The first is that it helps explain why the South's transition to full democracy did not lead to a release of the "latent liberalism" of the region, as Key hoped. Second, this perspective offers an alternative and ultimately more satisfying explanation for Southern MCs rapid and consequential turn to the right between the mid-1930s and mid-1940s than one grounded in elite preferences alone. Third, it provides an account for the ideological diversity of Southern MCs, which is often ignored and almost never explained (Mayhew, 1966 being an exception). This diversity was important because the exact distribution of Southern preferences so often determined the set of feasible policy outcomes between the New Deal and the Great Society. More generally, it highlights the value of differentiating within broad categories like "authoritarianism," which often conceal large and consequential political variation.

Fourth, modeling Southern MCs as reelection-seekers responding to and anticipating constituency opinion highlights the important role of ideological adaptation. In conjunction with the lack of partisan turnover in the South and Southerners' pivotal position in Congress, Southern MCs' responsiveness to ideological tides highlights the incremental nature of policymaking in this era. While this frustrated progressives' social-democratic ambitions, it also limited the opportunities for major conservative retrenchment—with the conspicuous exception of labor policy, the area in which the rightward turn in Southern opinion was most dramatic. Southerners therefore played a key role in the incremental institutional reforms essential to the political consolidation and maintenance of the New Deal order (Jacobs, 2010; Zelizer, 1998, 2000a; cf. Hacker, 2004; Mahoney and Thelen, 2010), as well as in the unusually bipartisan, consensual, and development-oriented policymaking of the "long 1950s" (Mayhew, 2013). Finally, the ironic implication of Southerners' position in the middle of the national political spectrum is that they provided the national median voter with the sort of surrogate representation on economic issues that they lack in today's age of leapfrog repre-

sentation, congressional polarization, and policy gridlock (Bafumi and Herron, 2010; Brady and Volden, 2006; Krehbiel, 1996; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal, 2006).

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# Appendix A

# Additional Figures

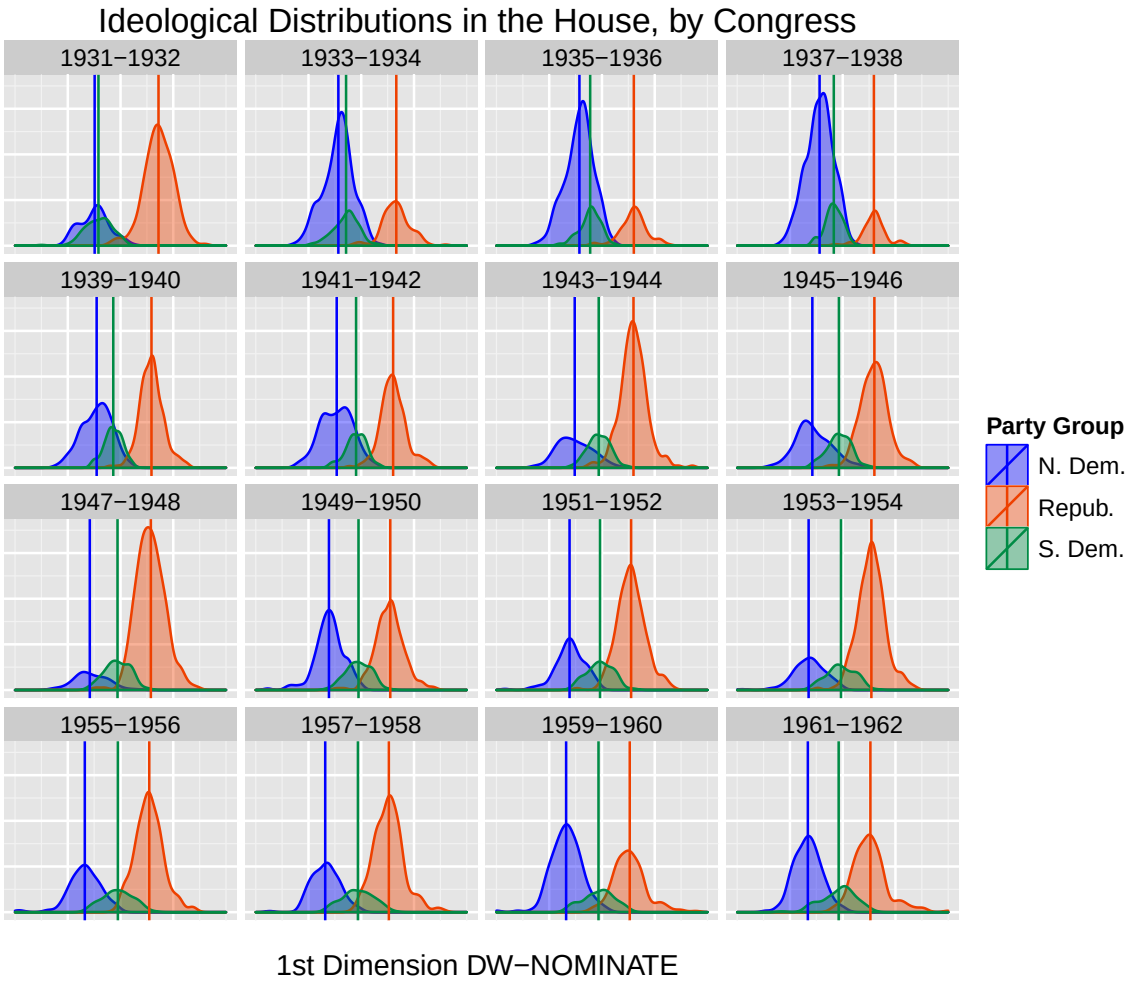


Figure A.1: Density plots of first-dimension DW-NOMINATE scores in the House among Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Republicans, from the 72nd (1931–32) to 87th (1961–62) Congress. Colored vertical lines indicate the mean score in each group.

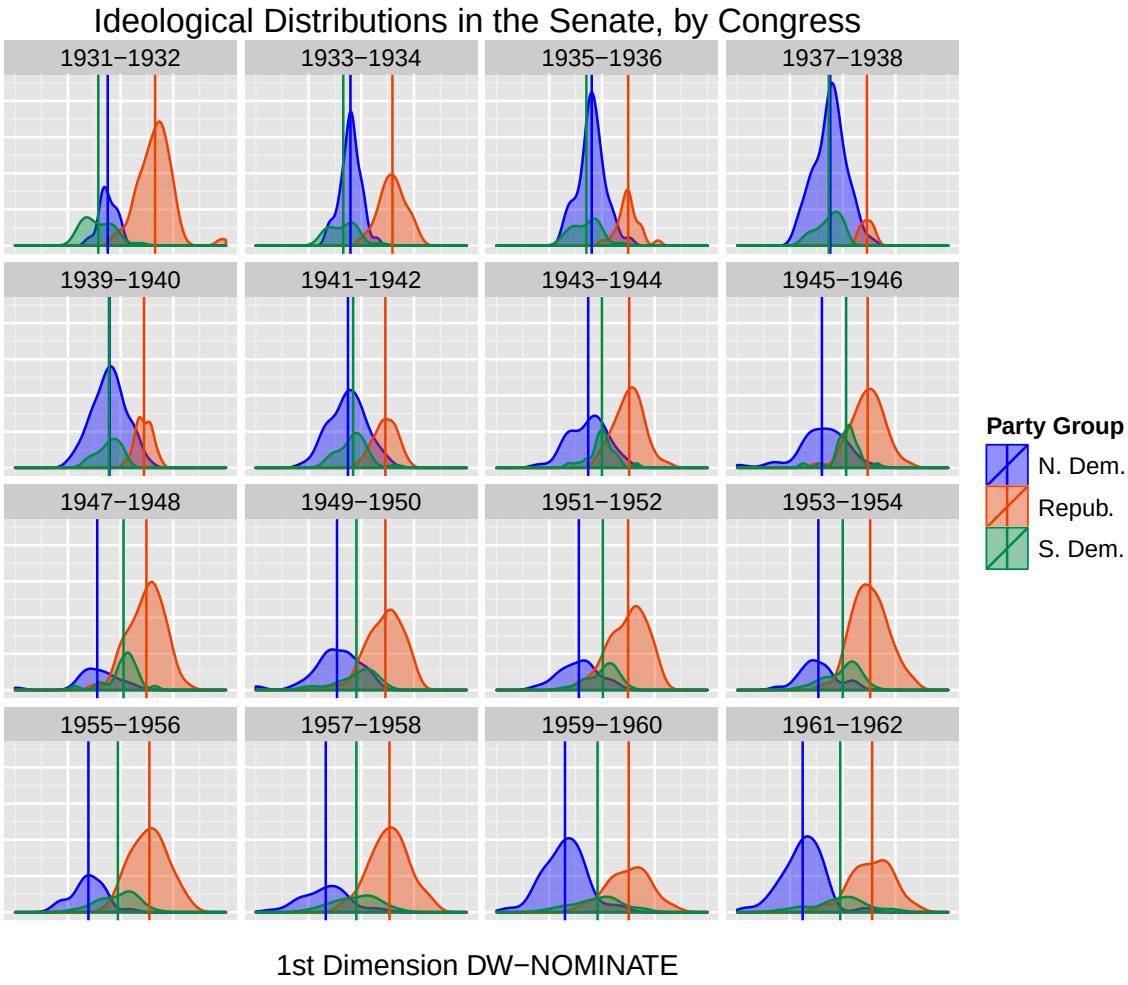


Figure A.2: Density plots of first-dimension DW-NOMINATE scores in the Senate among Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Republicans, from the 72nd (1931–32) to 87th (1961–62) Congress. Colored vertical lines indicate the mean score in each group.

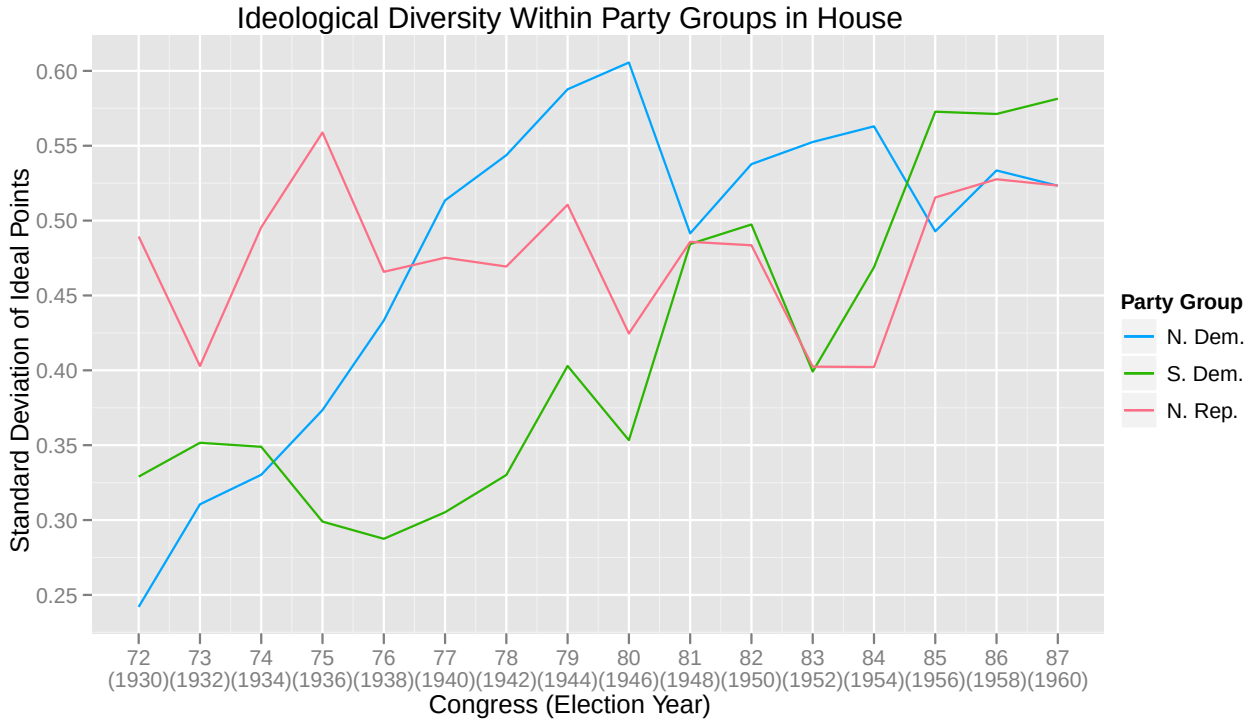


Figure A.3: Ideological diversity within party groups in the House, using a 17-state definition of the South that includes the 11 states of the former Confederacy plus Oklahoma, Kentucky, Delaware, Missouri, Maryland, and West Virginia.

# Appendix B

# Additional Tables

Table B.1: Variable(s) with smallest post-matching $p$-values for yearly 1-to-2 matchings of TVA districts to non-TVA districts on the basis of demographic and/or electoral characteristics. The treated sample size differs across matched sets due to the deletion of missing data.

| | Min. Variable | Min. $p$ | Treated $N$ |
|---|---|---|---|
| demo matching.1.to.2 1930 1 | Area30 | 0.08 | 27 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1932 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.02 | 21 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1934 1 | Pop30 | 0.09 | 24 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1936 1 | Pop30 | 0.09 | 24 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1938 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.07 | 24 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1940 1 | Pop30 | 0.08 | 25 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1942 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.08 | 25 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1944 1 | WhitePct30 | 0.15 | 26 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1946 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.02 | 26 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1948 1 | PresDemNext.NA | 0.11 | 26 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1948 2 | PresRepNext.NA | 0.11 | 26 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1950 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.11 | 26 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1952 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.03 | 21 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1954 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.03 | 22 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1956 1 | WhitePct30 | 0.05 | 22 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1958 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.02 | 22 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1960 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.01 | 22 |
| demo matching.1.to.2 1962 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.19 | 16 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1930 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.04 | 21 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1932 1 | DemPres32 | 0.03 | 19 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1934 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.02 | 19 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1936 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.02 | 20 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1938 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.09 | 20 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1940 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.05 | 20 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1942 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.00 | 21 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1944 1 | CongTO30 | 0.02 | 21 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1946 1 | CongTO30 | 0.01 | 21 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1948 1 | CongTO30 | 0.02 | 21 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1950 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.02 | 21 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1952 1 | PopDens30 | 0.01 | 16 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1954 1 | PopDens30 | 0.02 | 17 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1956 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.02 | 17 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1958 1 | PopDens30 | 0.01 | 17 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1960 1 | PopDens30 | 0.01 | 17 |
| demo.poli matching.1.to.2 1962 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.00 | 13 |

Table B.2: Variable(s) with smallest post-matching $p$-values for yearly 1-to-2 matchings of TVA districts to non-TVA districts on the basis of demographic, economic, and/or electoral characteristics. The treated sample size differs across matched sets due to the deletion of missing data.

| | Min. Variable | Min. $p$ | Treated $N$ |
|---|---|---|---|
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1930 1 | White30XRadio30 | 0.05 | 11 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1932 1 | White30XRadio30 | 0.06 | 9 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1934 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.37 | 9 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1936 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.37 | 9 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1938 1 | LandValuePerCaptia | 0.30 | 9 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1940 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.37 | 9 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1942 1 | LandValuePerCaptia | 0.12 | 10 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1944 1 | LandValuePerCaptia | 0.13 | 10 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1946 1 | LandValuePerCaptia | 0.10 | 10 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1948 1 | PopDens30 | 0.11 | 10 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1950 1 | PopDens30 | 0.16 | 10 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1952 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.05 | 8 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1954 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.03 | 8 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1956 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.11 | 8 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1958 1 | Pop30 | 0.11 | 8 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1960 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.05 | 8 |
| demo.econ matching.1.to.2 1962 1 | WhitePct30 | 0.07 | 6 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1930 1 | DemCong30 | 0.20 | 10 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1932 1 | DemPres28 | 0.24 | 8 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1934 1 | DemPres28 | 0.23 | 8 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1936 1 | DemPres28 | 0.23 | 8 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1938 1 | DemPres28 | 0.23 | 8 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1940 1 | DemPres28 | 0.23 | 8 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1942 1 | MfgOutputPerCapita | 0.19 | 9 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1944 1 | MfgOutputPerCapita | 0.19 | 9 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1946 1 | LandValuePerCaptia | 0.10 | 9 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1948 1 | LandValuePerCaptia | 0.10 | 9 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1950 1 | MfgOutputPerCapita | 0.19 | 9 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1952 1 | Urban30XRadio30 | 0.21 | 7 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1954 1 | MfgOutputPerCapita | 0.17 | 7 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1956 1 | MfgOutputPerCapita | 0.15 | 7 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1958 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.16 | 7 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1960 1 | UrbanPct30 | 0.09 | 7 |
| demo.poli.econ matching.1.to.2 1962 1 | MfgWagesPerWorker | 0.02 | 5 |