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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Government Domination, Consensus or Chaos?

**A Study of Party Discipline and Agenda Control in National
Legislatures**

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

in

Political Science

by

Adriana Prata

Committee in Charge:

**Professor Mathew D. McCubbins, Chair
Professor Andrea Colleen Campbell-Francis
Professor Gary W. Cox
Professor Stephen M. Haggard
Professor Akos Rona-Tas
Professor Kaare Strøm**

2006

**The Dissertation of Adriana Prata is approved,
and it is acceptable in quality and form for
publication on microfilm:**

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2006

Dedication

For my husband, Andy, whose love and support made this project possible.

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Second, I must thank Andrea Campbell-Francis, whose trust in my abilities helped me become a better researcher and person. Andrea treated me as her peer rather than her student, and because of my desire to never disappoint her, I rose to new standards. Our long hours of conversations and her support will never be forgotten.

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Professional Appointments

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Teaching Appointments

2003-2006. Graduate Teaching Assistant, American Political Parties; Introduction to Public Policy; Political Science Department, University of California, San Diego

2002-2003. Distance Learning Political Science Instructor, Comparative Politics Online Course, University of Illinois at Urbana.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Government Domination, Consensus or Chaos?

A Study of Party Discipline and Agenda Control in National Legislatures

by

Adriana Prata

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, San Diego, 2006

Professor Mathew McCubbins, Chair

There are three exhaustive and mutually exclusive models that characterize legislatures: the government (or majority party) dominated, the consensual, and the chaotic model. Each model provides a different answer to the following question: does the government control the policymaking process in national legislatures? These three models are implicit in the political science literature but are rarely made explicit.

In government dominated legislatures the governing party monopolizes lawmaking. In consensual legislatures policy outcomes are the result of bargaining and compromise between the legislative majority (or government) and parties in the opposition. In chaotic legislatures, no party has the ability to bring order to the process.

When the government alone has “blocking power” (typically through control of the plenary agenda), I view the legislature as government or majority party dominated. Government or majority monopolization of the agenda is referred to as the cartel agenda model by Cox and McCubbins (1991, 2005). If, however, blocking power is shared by government and opposition parties, I will show that consensus results. When blocking

powers are absent, a disciplined majority party will still be able to dominate law making; thus, I will show that discipline can substitute blocking power (and vice-versa). By contrast, when blocking power and discipline are both absent, chaos reigns.

My goal is to formulate explicit models for each of these three legislative models, derive testable predictions from each, with emphasis on predictions about legislative output that differentiates each model. I will then analyze large data sets on legislative voting for several countries in order to discriminate among those three models in each case. I emphasize three major empirical findings.

First, legislative data from most contemporary democratic legislatures is consistent with the government or majority party dominated model - even data from legislative assemblies that are most often described as consensual, such as the German Bundestag, or universalistic, such as the United States House of Representatives.

Second, despite the commonly held belief that responsible party government cannot exist without disciplined or cohesive parties, legislative data suggests that governments in countries with undisciplined parties (such as Italy or the United States) exercise responsible party government through blocking (agenda) power.

Third, I use the models to analyze how legislatures change and evolve. Divided government provides opposition parties greater access to blocking power and therefore, legislatures that are consistent with the government dominated model during periods of unified party control are consistent with the consensual model during divided government. I will also show that legislative voting data is consistent with the chaos model throughout the early stages of democratic legislatures but, by the time the legislature is institutionalized, the data evidences a government dominated or consensual model. It is at this point that responsible party government emerges.

I. Introduction: Government Dominance, Consensus and Chaos in Democratic Legislatures

A. Research Question and Argument

Is responsible party government present in democratic legislatures? Do government¹ political parties have the institutional ability to control the legislative policymaking process and hence take responsibility for legislative output? Further, how is responsible party government exercised by political parties? Finding answers to these questions is essential in order to understand *if* and *how* democracy works.

Responsible party government is present when political parties govern effectively by controlling the policymaking process. They are responsible for legislative output and the electorate can then hold them responsible. Thus, this question is essential to understanding if democracy works: do governments in democratic countries manage to control legislative outcomes? Do governments share such control with opposition parties? Or are government and opposition parties incapable of controlling the legislative process?

¹ In parliamentary systems, “government,” implies the coalition of political parties that control the executive. These parties often hold a legislative majority as well (however minority governments are a frequent exception where the coalition of political parties that hold the executive do not hold an explicit majority in the legislature). In systems where there is a separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches (i.e. presidential systems), the “government” is defined as the legislative majority in the chamber (such as the majority party in the United States House) and may be different from the party in control of the executive branch or of the other chamber (during divided government).

There are three models of legislative organization, each of which provides a different answer to the above question: the government (or majority party) dominated model, the consensus model, and the chaos model². The first two models feature responsible party government; in the third model, responsible party government is absent. These models are often implicit in the political science literature but are rarely made explicit.

The first form of these three models of legislative organization depends on whether government and opposition political parties have blocking power that allows them to control the policymaking process. In the government (or majority party) dominance model, the majority or governing parties control the legislative process by monopolizing blocking power. In the consensual model, government and opposition parties (or majority and minority parties) share blocking power. In the chaotic model, blocking power is absent, political parties are weak, and, as a result, responsible government is absent.

The scenario in which opposition parties have blocking power but the government does not is excluded from consideration, since no such model of minority dominance exists in the real world. The 3 models yielded by this combination of government and opposition blocking powers are presented in table I.1. below.

² I borrowed these analogies from Cox, Heller and McCubbins (2005), who classify legislative assemblies as falling in these three core categories; and from Niland and Turner (1985), who envision management-labor relationships as either controlled by management, driven by consensus between management and labor, or simply unorganized or chaotic.

Table I.1. Government Dominance, Chaos and Consensus as a Function of Government and Opposition Blocking Power

	Government Blocking Power	No Government Blocking Power
Opposition Blocking Power	Consensus	-
No Opposition Blocking Power	Government Dominance	Chaos

Another question arises from this analysis: what exactly is legislative blocking power and how does it work? Legislative blocking power, which is also known as agenda control, refers to the ability of political actors (such as political parties, committees, leadership bodies or individual legislative leaders) to influence outcomes by controlling the process of scheduling legislation on the plenary calendar. Agenda control is made up of negative agenda power or gatekeeping – the power to prevent unwanted legislation from being placed on the plenary agenda - and positive agenda power – which is the power to schedule proposals for a plenary vote.³

The importance of blocking power arises from congressional studies focusing on the debated role of political parties in the United States House of Representatives. Recent evidence (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 1994, 2002, 2005) proves the existence of responsible party government in the House, and, furthermore, demonstrates that American

³ There is a third aspect of agenda control that I will not discuss here: control of the reversion. Governments, especially those with decree powers, may be able to reset the reversionary outcome prior to legislative consideration of an issue. This changes the basis of comparison for legislative proposals and can thus shape votes and voting outcomes.

parties derive their strength and deliver on their legislative goals by controlling the legislative agenda. There are few studies of blocking power, especially outside the congressional literature (Amorim Neto, Cox and McCubbins 2003; Campbell, Cox and McCubbins 2002; Chandler, Cox and McCubbins 2006; Cox, Heller and McCubbins 2005; Cox, Masuyama and McCubbins 2000; Cox and McCubbins 1993, 1994, 2002, 2005; Döring *et al* 1995; Lawrence, Maltzman and Smith 2006).

How does legislative blocking power work? Legislative parties specialize in controlling the agenda, rather than in disciplining the votes of their members. They organize as *procedural cartels* (Chandler, Cox and McCubbins 2006; Cox, Heller and McCubbins 2005; Cox and McCubbins 1991, 2005) whereby the party attaches special agenda-setting powers to certain offices (such as committee chairmanships or regulatory parliamentary bodies). They then assign these key positions to their own members. In so doing, the majority or governing party cartelizes control over the agenda within its own membership.

The government uses the agenda-setting positions held by its own party members to dominate the policymaking process. They manage the agenda by blocking unwanted bills from being scheduled for plenary consideration and by scheduling their own desired policies at favorable times and under beneficial circumstances. Again, these two aspects of agenda control are referred to as negative power and positive or proposal power.

A powerful alternative to blocking power, commonly found in legislatures featuring proportional representation electoral systems, is discipline or cohesion⁴. When

⁴ In what follows, I do not attempt to make a distinction between voting discipline and cohesion. Discipline may exist because party members delegate to leaders in order to

blocking power is absent, discipline can help political parties control the legislative process. Discipline can thus substitute blocking power, although it can also exist alongside it.

Discipline is a potent tool for the government or majority party, however it is less useful for opposition parties. For typical disciplined governments that hold a majority of legislative seats, the government simply outnumbers the opposition, and most legislative decisions require a simple majority of votes. Whether the opposition is disciplined may prove important if government discipline breaks down, which may happen when occasional disagreements arise within the governing coalition.

However, even when the government does not hold a majority of seats (i.e. a minority government is in place), or government discipline breaks down due to coalition disagreements, discipline is still not very helpful for opposition parties. This results because the opposition is not a unitary actor, like the governmental coalition. Rather, the

solve collective action problems, because the institutional setup endows party leaders with disciplinary tools, or because ideological resemblance and common policy preferences lead to the formation of cohesive party fractions. Whether discipline or cohesion is the reason why coalitions of governmental parties vote together will not matter for my purposes, since I do not attempt to provide an explanation for the source of this voting behavior. Hence I refer to “discipline” throughout the project, while implying either discipline or cohesion.

typical opposition is most often made up of a number of distinctive parties that do not necessarily vote together.

Discipline can thus substitute for blocking power, in which case the legislature is of the government dominance type where the government relies on discipline to control the legislative process. If discipline also exists in addition to blocking power, the legislature is again of the government dominance type, where the government uses both blocking power and discipline to control the legislative process. If discipline is absent, and blocking power is also absent, the legislature will be chaotic.

Most comparative political research suggests that discipline or cohesion is the major institutional mechanism leading to responsible party government. Discipline is regarded as the main tool that helps governmental coalitions achieve control of the legislative process. This is the core idea of the Westminster model of democracy: a strong unitary executive, backed by a legislative majority, superintending the legislative process (Lijphart 1999). It is common to assume that governments who reign over the legislative process display very strong unitary political parties (APSA 1950).

If discipline is not present in a legislative assembly, it is generally assumed that the government does not manage the legislative process. As put by Bowler, Farrell and Katz (1999a, p. 3), for most scholars of parliamentary politics, “*the maintenance of a cohesive voting bloc inside a legislative body is... simply the necessary condition for the existence of responsible party government.*” Whereas discipline (or cohesion) is indeed very important, it is not the only way for the government to dominate the legislative process. Blocking power substitutes for discipline and helps governments dominate the legislative process. To understand this, consider three cases.

First, parties may not be well disciplined. Party leaders that lack tools to discipline their members will have limited influence on the voting behavior of legislators. Electoral systems that encourage a focus on individual reputation, intra-party competition and the personal vote may fall in this category (Ames 1995; Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina 1987; Carey 2005; Carey and Shugart 1995; Mainwaring 1991). Blocking power is an alternative path by which governments can exercise their dominion over the legislature.

Second, during minority governments, when the ruling party or coalition does not have a majority of seats in the chamber, discipline is not sufficient to ensure that government legislative proposals pass. Unless the minority government has negotiated an agreement with one or more opposition parties to secure a cohesive legislative majority, legislative proposals will not gather enough votes to pass, even in the presence of strong discipline. Thus, minority governments need blocking power in order to achieve dominion over the legislative process.

Third, even when discipline is present and the government holds a majority of seats in the chamber, simply passing a bill in the chamber may not be sufficient for the bill to become law. Under many constitutions, a bill faces additional hurdles, such as an upper chamber or a presidential veto, in order to become law. Under conditions of divided government, party discipline alone may not ensure that a bill becomes a law. Again, blocking power during divided government could help the government dominate the legislative process.

B. Broader Implications

Responsible party government is at the heart of any well-functioning democracy. Political parties in democratic countries are elected to legislative office by voters in order to implement specific policies. The assumption commonly made is that political parties,

once elected, will have the institutional ability to implement their campaign promises. This assumption is violated when parties do not master the legislative process. In that scenario, elections are futile since weak political parties will be unable to turn voter preferences into effective policies due to their inability to effectively manage the bureaucracy.

However, responsible party government may be achieved through several means and countries differ in their choice of political institutions. Each country's choice of democratic institutions and rules of legislative procedure is aimed at certain policy outcomes. Some countries, for example, seek to conserve minority rights and secure their representation by endowing opposition parties with the veto and other power sharing guarantees. Such arrangements have been termed consociationalism by Lijphart (1977, 1984, 1999). Other countries, by contrast, have a majoritarian institutional design wherein majorities rule without many obstructions and choose institutions that grant few powers and privileges to opposition parties (Lijphart 1977, 1984, 1999).

Being able to observe whether data from democratic legislatures is consistent with the government dominance, consensual or chaotic model is then equivalent to being able to judge whether the individual design of a democratic system fulfills its intended purposes. If democratic institutions are designed to ensure that minorities participate in policymaking, do we observe the opposition effectively sharing control of the legislative process with the government in the legislature? Identifying empirically if opposition parties have such institutional powers thus allows us to answer some central questions concerning the efficacy of democratic government.

Being able to observe changes across time in the type of a legislature also provides further insights for three major fields of political research: the analyses of democratization

and institutionalization of new legislative assemblies, of divided government, and of minority governments. I turn now to discuss how empirical observations about the type of a legislature shed light on these three topics of legislative research.

Responsible Party Government in New Democracies

Observing legislative data over time during the institutionalization of new legislative assemblies allows us to judge the timing and success of democratic processes. Legislative data may be consistent with the chaotic model in the early beginning of an assembly, when political parties are weak, splinter, or become disorganized. However, as the assembly institutionalizes and political actors learn the rules of the democratic system, voting data should become increasingly consistent with a responsible party government model, whether consensually or government dominated, featuring parties in firm control of the legislative process. If we observe a legislature for long enough, we may be able to determine its evolution and the origins of parliamentary majority rule.

Studies of party discipline in older democracies, such as Britain (Cox 1987), or in new democracies, such as those in Eastern and Central Europe (Agh 1999) and Latin America (Mainwaring and Linan 1997), do suggest that it takes time, perhaps decades, for parties to become disciplined and strongly institutionalized. Whereas in older democracies the move to maturity or consolidation may have been longer, new democracies of the second, third, and fourth waves, may develop more quickly or, conversely, may not be allowed the time necessary to develop the preconditions for responsible party government before events overtake them.

A core concern in comparative politics has been whether new democracies will develop fully institutionalized democratic systems. It has become a challenge in the democratic consolidation literature to define conceptually and determine empirically when

a democracy has indeed consolidated (Gunther, Diamondouros and Puhle 1995; Linz and Stepan 1996; O'Donnell 1996; Schedler 1998). Being able to observe the change from weak parties and a chaotic legislature to responsible party government could provide an important tool for cross-national analysis of the timing of institutionalization of legislatures in new democracies.

Divided Government

There is controversy within the literature on American politics about the consequences of divided government. Some authors argue that divided government decreases legislative productivity (Binder 1999; Cameron 2000; Coleman 1999; Sundquist 1988) and affects the substantive content of legislation (Cox and McCubbins 1991) whereas others find no such relationship (Howell *et al* 2000; Krehbiel 1998; Mayhew 1991).

Observing how the institutional powers of government and opposition parties change during instances of divided government allows us to understand this effect on the opposition's ability to influence the legislative process. We should observe an increase in opposition institutional powers (blocking power) during divided government, as opposed to periods of unified government. Thus, legislation roll call data from democratic legislatures should be more consistent with the consensus model during divided government, but more consistent with the government dominance model during unified government.

Minority Governments

Studying the use of governmental blocking power inside legislatures provides important insights for the study of minority governments. Minority governments were proven to be stable, successful policymakers despite traditional wisdom to the contrary

(Strøm 1990). But discipline may not be of much use for those genuine minority governments that do not benefit from the informal support of opposition parties. In these cases, we may see minority governments switching to a greater reliance on blocking power instead of reliance on voting discipline.

Indeed, previous studies do show that during minority governments, the use of governmental blocking power may increase. Huber (1992) analyzes two restrictive legislative procedures in the French Parliament that the government uses in order to control the legislative agenda – namely the vote package and the guillotine. He finds that the probability that the government resorts to these procedures increases during periods of minority government.

Last but not least, most government coalition studies focus on cabinet formation and stability (Baron 1991; Budge, Laver and Strøm 1994; Diermeier and Stevenson 1999; Dodd 1976; Grofman 1989; King *et al* 1990; Laver and Schofield 1990; Laver and Shepsle 1990; Lupia and Strøm 1995; Schofield 1992; Strøm 1985; Strøm *et al* 1988; Warwick 1979; Warwick and Easton 1992). Little emphasis has been placed on the role of governmental coalitions in legislative policymaking (Martin and Vanberg 2005) and on the actual mechanisms used by government and opposition political parties in order to manage the policymaking process. The new focus I recommend here will open up the black box of legislative policymaking, allowing us to understand *if* responsible party government is present and *how* it is exercised.

C. Research Design

The three models of legislative organization - government dominance, consensus and chaos - are implicit in the political science literature but rarely made explicit. Two of the models - the government dominance model in which the government relies on

blocking power, and the chaos model - are made explicit by Cox and McCubbins (1991, 2005), and are known as the “cartel agenda model” and the “floor agenda model”. There is no systematic attempt in the literature, however, to develop models for all 3 legislative types that provide mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive characterizations of legislatures.

My goal is to carefully construct these three models, changing assumptions about the nature of blocking power and discipline. I will then thoroughly derive predictions about the type of legislative output that we should observe for each model. Each yields unique predictions about legislative output. Using these unique predictions, I then analyze legislative data from contemporary democratic assemblies.

I use roll call voting data from modern legislatures to, in each case, refute some of the models and highlight consistency with another. I also use the models to analyze data from periods of divided government and early democracies. Next, I test them to check if data from modern legislatures is more consistent with the consensus model during divided government, and more consistent with the government dominance model during unified government. I also analyze if roll call data are more consistent with the chaos model during the early existence of a legislature but more consistent with a responsible government model (whether government dominance or consensus) by the time the assembly is fully institutionalized.

D. Roadmap

I start Chapter II by laying out my theoretical framework. I discuss how the three models that characterize legislatures are addressed in the existing literature. I also discuss the institutional powers of legislative political parties: discipline and blocking power.

In Chapter III, I formulate sequential spatial-models for each of the three types of legislative assemblies. In these models, I capture the presence or absence of blocking power or, alternatively, the presence or absence of discipline. From these models I will generate refutable implications about the effects of blocking power and voting discipline on legislative roll call voting.

These different predictions will then be used in chapter IV to analyze legislative output data from various assemblies in order to refute some models and show consistency with others. First, I discuss general issues concerning the empirical application of the models to specific case studies, and present the data employed in my analysis. Next, I provide an empirical analysis of eight national legislative chambers: the United States House of Representatives and Senate, the Italian Chamber of Deputies, the German Bundestag, the United Kingdom House of Commons, the Swedish Riksdag, the Maltese House of Representatives, and the Czech Chamber of Deputies.

I find that the chaos model can be rejected for all eight modern legislative chambers under consideration. Thus, responsible party government is present in all modern legislative chambers I study. Moreover, the consensus model can be rejected for seven of the eight chambers – the United States Senate being the exception. In conclusion, with the exception of the United States Senate, where roll call data are consistent with a consensual legislative model, the other seven legislatures fit the government (or majority dominated) model.

Data from the United Kingdom House of Commons, the German Bundestag and the Swedish Riksdag are consistent with the government dominance model where the governing parties both control the plenary agenda and discipline their members. Data from the United States House of Representatives and the Italian Chamber of Deputies is

consistent with the government (or majority) dominance model where the government has blocking power, but discipline is absent. By contrast, data from the Maltese House of Representatives is consistent with a government dominance model where discipline is present. Legislative output from the Czech Chamber of Deputies suggests a “weak” type of government dominance model similar to the United States House and Italian Chamber of Deputies, with the government controlling the plenary agenda, but featuring undisciplined parties.

I also investigate, using data from the United States House of Representatives and Senate, if legislative output is more consistent with the consensual model during divided government but consistent with the government dominance model during unified government. For these purposes, I analyze periods of divided government in Congress, and show that the House and the Senate are more consensual during divided government, when the minority party gains more access to blocking power. Moreover, I investigate if legislative data are consistent with the chaos model in early democracies but with a responsible party government model in contemporary times by analyzing the evolution of the United States Senate from 1877 to 1997.

In chapter IV, I also search for qualitative evidence that supports these findings. In particular, I analyze rules of legislative procedure in order to find specific evidence of blocking power used by government and opposition parties in assemblies where these mechanisms are presupposed by the data. I find qualitative evidence of shared government - opposition blocking power in the United States Senate, as well as evidence of government blocking power in the Italian Chamber of Deputies, United States House of Representatives, United Kingdom House of Commons, German Bundestag and Czech Chamber of Deputies.

In the concluding chapter, I analyze the significance of these empirical findings and suggest future research directions. In particular, I discuss an additional empirical prediction that can be derived from the models (regarding policy moves), and I emphasize the models' applicability to research linking institutional design and policy outcomes.

II. Discipline and Blocking Power in Government Dominated, Consensual and Chaotic Legislatures

- *Government Dominance*: “If the government majority and the legislative majority (meaning the legislators acting cohesively to pass bills) are identical, as they usually are in parliamentary systems, this majority is ‘the single producer of political decisions. This majority coalition is analogous to the single firm in a natural monopoly’ (Crain, Holcombe and Tollison 1979:54)”

Döring 1995

- *Consensus*: “So far as the agenda is concerned, the rights of the minority cover substantial matters...the agenda would be set by consensus...the floor leaders’ agreement on the agenda is, in turn, pre-figured by a decision-making process of the parliamentary party groups.”

Loewenberg 2003, describing the German Bundestag

- *Chaos*: “What we have learned is simply this: Disequilibrium...is the characteristic feature of politics...there are no fundamental equilibria to predict...what prevents purely random embodiments of tastes is the fact that decisions are customarily made within the framework of known rules, which are what we commonly call institutions”.

Riker 1980

A. Government Dominated, Consensual and Chaotic Legislatures

In government (or majority) party dominated legislatures, the government single-handedly controls the legislative process. The government can do this by monopolizing blocking power, relying on discipline, or both. In consensual legislatures, the government and the opposition share blocking powers, and discipline may or may not exist. In chaotic legislatures, neither the government nor the opposition master blocking power, and discipline is also absent.

All democratic legislatures can be characterized as one of these three ideal types: government dominated, consensual or chaotic. Most democratic legislatures, especially in established democracies, will be controlled by the governing party. Government dominated legislatures are of the type found in majoritarian democracies (Lijphart 1977, 1984, 1999). Opposition parties in these countries have a weak voice in the policymaking process.

The consensual legislature, where government and opposition share blocking powers, is likely to be found in countries with diverse populations where the institutional design empowers minority representation. Consensual legislatures often endow opposition parties with guarantees that ensure that minorities will effectively contribute to the legislative process. For instance agenda setting bodies in the parliament, such as councils and committees that set the rules of procedure and decide the agenda for the plenum, may be required to make decisions with more than a simple majority.

Consensual legislatures are also more likely during instances of divided government. When the opposition controls the second chamber in a bicameral legislature or the executive branch in a presidential system, it gains bargaining power. Thus the government will include the opposition in the agenda setting process, often by consulting

with opposition party leaders on the nature and content of bills. In many world legislatures, it has been noted that divided government leads to more consensual politics, such as in Germany (Patzelt 2004) or that it alters policy content, such as in the United States House of Representatives (Cox and McCubbins 1991).

Chaotic legislatures arise when neither the government nor opposition parties control the legislative process. Chaotic legislatures are often found in newly formed or highly unstable democratic legislatures. Political parties are weak and play no role in controlling the policymaking process in such assemblies. The major distinction between consensual and chaotic legislatures is the presence of partisan forces. While the legislative process in consensual legislatures is controlled jointly by government and opposition political parties, any coalitions that may form in chaotic legislatures are non-partisan.

The chaotic legislature assumes that discipline is absent, and neither the government nor the opposition has blocking power. Rather, chaotic assemblies are made up of equal legislators, and legislative outcomes are decided through majority vote where the preference of the median voter constitutes the emerging equilibrium.

These three idealized types of legislatures are implicit in the political science literature, yet they have been never explicitly modeled. Consider a few examples.

The United States Senate has been characterized as a consensual assembly. Traditional knowledge about the Senate suggests that parties are much weaker than in the House, individualism is more the rule (Binder 1997; Krehbiel 1998), and Senate leadership is partisan yet collegial (Patterson 1989). Certain rules and procedures make exclusive exercise of blocking power by the majority party difficult. Senators are allowed to bypass the committee system, place bills on the calendar and make non-germane

amendments. Additionally, the majority and minority leaders jointly decide the order of items that will be placed on the agenda. Overall, the dominant impression is that the Senate works as a collegial, consensual assembly.

Another example of a consensually described assembly is the German Bundestag. The Bundestag is often described as a “working parliament” in which party factions collaborate closely in committees (Saalfeld 1997) and the agenda is set in the Council of Elders (the main agenda setting leadership body) by consensus agreements among government and opposition political parties (Loewenberg 2003; Slagter and Loewenberg 2005).

Some legislative organization theories of the United States House of Representatives also emphasize vote trades and bargaining among individual legislators (Fiorina 1977; Mayhew 1974; Weingast 1979), committee logrolls (Gilligan and Krehbiel 1990; Weingast and Marshall 1988) as well as universal floor coalitions (Collie 1988), all of which suggest a model of the House as a consensual chamber.

Two of the models that characterize legislatures based on the presence or absence of blocking power have been explicitly formulated in the political science literature. Cox and McCubbins (1993, 2005) have developed the cartel model for the United States House of Representatives as a majority party dominated legislature where the government relies on blocking power. They contrast their model to one previously described by Krehbiel (1991, 1998), which characterizes a chaotic legislature where government and opposition parties are weak, with no discipline or blocking power.

Chaos models of legislative assemblies have been formalized through spatial analogies, the most common being the Black-Downs model. According to this model, we can order policy choices and legislators’ preferences on a left-right continuum. The

preference point on each dimension of the median voter will emerge as the stable equilibrium, when using simple majority rule and assuming single peaked preferences. In the simplest form, if voters choose a point along a line closest to the preference or ideal point, then by majority rule the outcome that shall be reached will correspond to the ideal point of the median voter (Downs 1957).

Another model is the minimum winning coalition model by Riker (1962). In this model, assemblies are plagued by perpetually changing minimum winning coalitions. Thus, instead of a stable governmental coalition in constant control of the legislative process, a new coalition forms for each legislative issue and each vote. There is no blocking or agenda power in such models.

Chaotic legislatures are likely in the early years of a democratic assembly or in developing third or fourth wave democracies. It takes time for political parties in a new democratic system to learn how to use and apply the tools available to them – discipline and blocking power. Many new democracies face long years of instability, displaying weak political parties with little control of the legislative process.

Even legislatures in established democracies have been identified as chaotic. For example, the highly unstable nature of Italian governments and the lack of discipline of their parties (Di Palma 1976; Mershon 1996, 1999, 2002) led some theorists to picture the Italian legislature as chaotic. Additionally, Smith (1989) and Krehbiel (1991, 1998) depict the House of Representatives as a chaotic legislative assembly where, in the absence of party discipline or cohesion, individual legislators decide legislative outcomes without partisan voting constraints.

B. Understanding Blocking Power and Discipline

Discipline and blocking power are the institutional paths towards responsible party government. When political parties cannot or do not employ at least one of these institutional mechanisms, the legislature and its policymaking process are chaotic. It is only when the government (or majority party) enjoys both or either of these institutional mechanisms that responsible party government emerges, in the form of a government dominated assembly (when the opposition has no blocking power) or consensual assembly (when the opposition has blocking power).

B.1. Blocking Power

Blocking is a powerful tool that both government and opposition parties can use in order to influence the legislative process. While in some legislatures the governing political parties alone dominate the agenda, others allow oppositions to share this control mechanism.

Blocking powers in most world legislatures are controlled by political parties. As noted by Cox, "... modern democratic legislatures and modern democratic political parties are unthinkable without one another." (2005, p. 11). Parties organize inside legislative assemblies according to the rules of each chamber. Party organizations assume agenda setting offices either because legislative rules allocate specific shares of these offices to party organizations, or because the assembly itself votes to elect leaders at the beginning of each new legislative mandate (Cox 2005).

When political parties dominate the agenda, they form *procedural cartels* (Chandler, Cox and McCubbins 2006; Cox, Heller and McCubbins 2005; Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2002, 2005) and allocate key agenda posts to members of the cartel. For instance, the cartel in the United States House of Representatives is the majority party

(Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2002, 2004, 2005) whereas in parliamentary systems, it is the government itself. In either institutional setting, the cartel controls the assembly's leadership posts, or chairmanships of agenda setting bodies such as committees, which ensures the cartel's domination over the agenda. Allocating key positions to its members, the majority party secures both positive and negative agenda powers (Chandler, Cox and McCubbins 2006; Laver and Shepsle 1996; Tsebelis 2002).

Managing access to plenary time is an important aspect of blocking power (Cox 1987, 2005; Cox and McCubbins 1993, 1994, 2002, 2005; Döring 1995; Laver and Shepsle 1994). Plenary time is costly, and only a subset of bills ever reach the floor for consideration. Many legislatures have procedural rules that provide for unequal access to plenary time. Members with blocking power can schedule proposals for a floor vote at will, while those without such privilege have diminished ability to both make and delay proposals. Whereas voting powers are equal for all members of an assembly, access to plenary time is not (Cox 1987, 2005; Cox and McCubbins 2005).

In many legislatures, certain offices and leadership positions are endowed with "special agenda setting powers". These blocking powers include the ability to determine which bills are put on the calendar and under which procedures they will be discussed (Cox 2005, Cox and McCubbins 2005). Committees are prime examples of agenda setting or blocking power offices (Mattson and Strøm 1995). For instance, the Rules Committee in the United States House of Representatives has the ability to set the rules of debate on all bills. Since the majority party controls a majority of seats on this committee, it can exercise blocking power through this mechanism. Other examples of committees with special agenda setting powers include conference committees that confine legislative

options by making take-it-or-leave-it offers to the plenum (Cox 2005, Tsebelis and Money 1997).

Another office with special blocking powers is the president of the chamber. Chamber presidents have important agenda setting prerogatives, such as managing the schedule for the plenum, or referring bills to committees of their choosing. Chamber presidents are frequently “party assets” (Jenny and Müller 1995) because they are elected by chamber majorities often identical to governing party coalitions. Thus, chamber presidents are often government agenda setting actors.

In all democratic legislatures there exists an agenda setting body, such as a chairperson, committee or council, that decides which bills are included on the agenda, at least for those bills with a budgetary consequence. Depending on a country’s rules of procedure, this agenda setting body may have complete discretion over what does and does not make it for a vote in the plenary session. Having control of a sufficient number of positions in such agenda setting councils endows the political parties with the control of a substantial amount of blocking power over scheduling the plenary agenda.

Blocking power can be exercised at various stages in the life of a bill. As just discussed, it is often exercised at the legislative scheduling stage, when political parties seek to introduce their proposals to parliament and schedule them for plenary consideration. In many countries the Constitution and/or rules of legislative procedure prohibit all opposition agenda proposals by allowing the government alone to introduce major bills such as the budget bill. Without a doubt, being in control of the legislative scheduling process grants significant influence over the policymaking process (Copic and Katz 2006).

Blocking power can also be exercised after a bill has been introduced to parliament. First, during consideration in committee, opportunities arise for legislative delay. Dilatory tactics in committee are important tools that both government and opposition parties can use in order to obstruct unwanted legislation (Aninat and Londregan 2006). Second, rules of legislative procedure may allocate time slots for government and opposition parties in ways that often strongly reduce the probability that opposition parties will have sufficient time to debate and submit to a vote all their proposals (what Cox and McCubbins (2006) call a “time ghetto”).

B.2. Empirical Examples of Blocking Power

I will now present a few empirical examples of government blocking power. In the United Kingdom House of Commons, the government has firm control of the agenda. The rules of procedure allocate little time for the opposition to discuss and submit its bills to a vote. The time allotted to the opposition constitutes about 10% of the overall time for debates. While the opposition can select the topic for debate on twenty “Opposition Days” each year, this is not nearly enough time for important bills to make it through the legislative process. By contrast, the government controls about 170 days a year.⁵

Moreover, the government enjoys additional rules of legislative procedure that it uses to increase its blocking power outside the plenary. When a bill is referred to committee, the government can limit the time it will be considered or set deadlines for when it must be reported. These tactics colloquially known as the “guillotine,” ultimately force the bill out of the committee. The government may resort to the guillotine when the

⁵ Rule 14 of the Standing Orders of the United Kingdom House of Commons.

opposition attempts to delay a bill in committee by making numerous amendments and prolonging the debate.

In the German Bundestag, the agenda setting body is the Council of Elders. The Council is comprised of deputies from all political parties represented in the chamber, according to the principle of proportional representation. The Council establishes the agenda for the upcoming year in advance, as well as for each week, and the agenda is considered approved by the plenum automatically when the first item of the day is voted on.⁶

Additionally, a Bundestag majority can motion to remove any item from the agenda. This means that even if an opposition bill is scheduled, the government can remove it from the agenda by a simple majority vote. The threat of this floor override acts to increase the government's blocking power in the Council. Moreover, if the Council of Elders does not reach an agreement on speaking times and speaking order for the agenda, the Bundestag government majority is empowered to make such a decision.⁷

The Italian Chamber of Deputies also exhibits some government blocking power. The agenda setting council in this legislative assembly is the Conference of Group Chairpersons which is comprised proportionally of deputies from all political parties represented in the chamber. This council sets the agenda by $\frac{3}{4}$ majority rule; if the $\frac{3}{4}$ majority rule fails, the President draws the agenda but he must include proposals from all political parties and allocate time proportional to group size.⁸

⁶ Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure of the German Bundestag.

⁷ Rule 35 of the Rules of Procedure of the German Bundestag.

⁸ Rule 23 of the Rules of Procedure of the Italian Chamber of Deputies.

The government can therefore always block unwanted opposition proposals because it obviously holds more than $\frac{1}{4}$ seats, whereas Italian opposition parties, which are usually numerous, small and divided, have a lesser chance to veto government proposals. Moreover, if the $\frac{3}{4}$ majority rule fails, the time allocated to opposition proposals is very small, because the opposition receives only $\frac{1}{5}$ of allotments on the agenda, after time for important government bills such as budget and finance bills has been subtracted.

Similarly, opposition parties are also blocked from adding agenda items directly to the schedule from the floor. Although a group of 30 deputies (or just one or more chairpersons representing such group) may propose an item at the beginning of debate, this motion requires an affirmative $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the chamber for approval.⁹ It is therefore impossible for opposition political parties to propose new bills without government approval.

In the Czech Chamber of Deputies, the government has significant blocking ability through the powers granted to the Chairperson. The Chairperson is elected by majority vote of the chamber and is thus patently a member of the government. The Organizing Committee, which is the committee that sets the agenda, only makes recommendations to the Chairperson regarding which items should be included on the agenda. Ultimately, it is the Chairperson's prerogative to decide the agenda, which is then approved by a chamber majority.¹⁰

⁹ Rule 27 of the Rules of Procedure of the Italian Chamber of Deputies.

¹⁰ Rules 46 and 88 of the Rules of Procedure of the Czech Chamber of Deputies.

Moreover, although opposition members are allowed to bring their proposals to the floor during regular parliamentary debate time¹¹, they can only propose bills on the same topic of matters presently on the floor. In addition, they are subject to a rule specifying that proposals will be voted on by the chamber in the order of the number of members supporting the proposal.¹² Evidently, government proposals will always receive recognition first because they have the highest number of members supporting them.

I will consider now a few instances where the opposition shares blocking power with the government. Under some rules of procedure, the opposition may be able to force bills out of committee, surpassing one significant hurdle of government agenda control. In the German Bundestag, after ten weeks of sittings from the date of committee referral, a parliamentary group or 5% of Bundestag members can request the committee to submit a report to the Bundestag and demand that the report is placed on the agenda for consideration.¹³

In the Italian Chamber of Deputies, bills can also be recalled from committees and referred back to the chamber before they come to a final vote in the committee. Discharge petitions are granted at the request of the government, one-tenth of members of the chamber or one fifth of committee members.¹⁴ This endows the opposition with a

¹¹ Rules 58 and 63 of the Rules of Procedure of the Czech Chamber of Deputies.

¹² Rule 63, paragraph 4, and rule 72, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure of the Czech Chamber of Deputies.

¹³ Rule 62 of the Rules of Procedure of the German Bundestag.

¹⁴ Article 72 in the Constitution and Rule 92 of the Rules of Procedure of the Italian Chamber of Deputies.

powerful agenda tool: opposition parties can request bills to be brought to the floor and placed on the agenda for a vote.¹⁵

Thus, there are numerous ways that government and opposition political parties can exercise blocking power, particularly through the introduction and scheduling processes. I provide more detailed qualitative evidence of government and blocking power from contemporary democratic legislative chambers in Chapter IV.

B.3. Discipline

Discipline is a powerful substitute to blocking power, found particularly in countries with proportional representation electoral systems. Where disciplined parties exist, and the governmental coalition parties jointly hold a majority of seats in the chamber, the government controls the legislative process by disciplining its members' votes. Discipline can also exist in addition to blocking power. As will be shown in chapter IV, data from certain contemporary democratic legislatures (such as the German Bundestag) are consistent with the presence of both discipline and blocking power.

The role of discipline in parliamentary democracies has long been emphasized in the literature on elections, governmental coalition building and parliamentary organization (Von Beyme 1985; Bowler, Farrell, and Katz 1999a,b; Collie 1985; Daamgard 1995; Diermeier and Feddersen 1996,1998; Epstein 1964; Huber 1996; Laver and Shepsle 1999; Loewenberg and Patterson 1979; Strøm 1995; Tsebelis 1995). Particularly disciplined parties have been identified in countries such as the United Kingdom (Beer 1990; Whitley and Seyd 1999), Norway (Rasch 1999), Germany (Patzelt 1997) and Spain (de Dios 1999).

¹⁵ Rule 72 of the Rules of Procedure of the Italian Chamber of Deputies.

In addition to the study of discipline in parliamentary research, the importance of cohesion in the United States House of Representatives has been strongly emphasized by Rohde (1991) and Aldrich and Rohde (2001). These authors argue that the strength of the majority party in Congress is dependent on the homogeneity of preferences of party members; party members delegate more authority to party leaders and the majority party is more cohesive.

Discipline is an important, and sometimes crucial, component of responsible party government. Political parties belonging to the governmental coalition vote cohesively in order to pass desired legislative proposals and reject unwanted ones. Since most policy decisions require a simple majority of votes, a government that holds a majority of seats will be able to effectively pass or reject policy proposals as long as its members are disciplined.

It is important to note that discipline is not as powerful a tool for opposition parties. Since opposition parties only hold a minority of seats altogether and do not typically form voting coalitions, discipline alone will do little to help oppositions influence the legislative process.

To understand how governing or majority parties use party discipline, consider the typical legislative process that turns a bill into law. This process has three main stages. First, a bill is proposed and introduced in a legislative chamber. Although few legislatures impose restrictions on introduction itself, the bill must be officially scheduled on the calendar in order to be considered by the plenary agenda. In most legislatures, the bill must face the additional hurdle of committee consideration – meaning that a legislative committee must discuss the bill and make recommendations on its passage before it can be scheduled.

The second and third stages of the legislative process take place on the floor. At the second stage, the bill is open to amendment. Changes to the bill are proposed by both government and opposition parties, and the legislature as a whole votes on whether to accept or reject these proposed changes. In the third stage, a final vote takes place wherein the legislature chooses between accepting the bill as amended or rejecting it in favor of the initial status quo of the policy.

Discipline is used by the government at the second and third stages of the process. The government can use its majority of seats, and thus its majority of votes, to decide which amendments will be accepted or rejected, and which bills will become law. Blocking power, by contrast, works mostly at the first stage of the legislative process, when a bill is introduced to the legislature. At this initial stage, parties holding agenda setting powers will block unwanted bills from being proposed and/or scheduled for the consideration of the legislature (negative agenda power), and will propose and schedule desired bills on the legislative calendar (positive agenda power). Moreover, agenda setters can also use their influence in committees in order to delay or rush proposals for plenary consideration.

Most theories of comparative politics emphasize discipline as a requirement for responsible party government. Many are skeptical of the ability of governments to effectively manage the policymaking process when parliamentary politics lack disciplined parties. One fundamental assertion of my project is that in the absence of discipline or cohesion, a government can still be in full control of the legislative process and thus does not presuppose a chaotic legislature. To the contrary, blocking power is a powerful alternative to discipline, and responsible party government does exist in the absence of cohesive legislative voting blocs.

III. Modeling Government Dominance, Consensus and Chaos

In this chapter I develop sequential spatial models for the three idealized types of legislatures: those characterized by government dominance, those where policy choice is made by consensus between government and opposition parties, and those where chaos reigns. I derive unique testable predictions from each of these models that will allow me to analyze legislative output from democratic legislatures, refute certain models and show that the roll call data are consistent with a particular model.

These sequential spatial games are constructed by applying the logic of backwards induction. I infer the different equilibria at each stage in the life of a bill by changing assumptions about the nature of blocking power and discipline. The three models of legislative organization generate different predictions about patterns of roll call voting data. I will examine the data in each country to see which of these models, if any, match the results garnered in each of these different legislatures.

A. Building the Models: Core Assumptions

As presented in table I.1, all possible combinations of government and opposition blocking power yield 3 different models that can characterize legislatures in the real world. In government (or majority) dominated legislatures, the government alone masters blocking power; in the consensual legislature, the government and the opposition share blocking powers, and in the chaotic legislature model, neither government nor opposition parties have blocking power.

I first develop these three models by varying assumptions about the presence of government and opposition blocking power. I then modify the models by introducing discipline. Three modified models result when we introduce discipline: two government dominance models when discipline exists in addition to government blocking power, or

substitutes blocking power; and a consensus model emerges when the government shares blocking power with the opposition.

These six models rely on several common assumptions. First, I assume a typical governing party that holds a majority of seats in the legislative chamber. A model for minority governments would differ substantially since the presence of discipline would not help such governments pass or reject legislation requiring a simple majority of votes.¹⁶

Second, I assume that the sequence of legislative actions follows the typical path found in most world legislatures: first, the bill is introduced to parliament; second, it is amended by the chamber; and third, the chamber takes a final vote on whether to accept the bill as amended or reject it.

Third, I assume a uni-dimensional space for each policy issue. Reducing the policy space to one-dimensional, left-right representations is common in the political science literature (Budge *et al* 1994, 2001; Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005; Downs 1957; Poole 2005; Poole and Rosenthal 1997; Robertson 1976). The models' assumptions and predictions hold for any policy issue.

Using this single dimension, legislators and parties are ranked from left to right according to their ideal points on an issue. F is the median legislator of the chamber¹⁷ (the median voter in Downsian theory), M is the median legislator of the governing

¹⁶ However many minority governments are backed by additional opposition parties through informal agreements. Under these circumstances, they may qualify as majority governments under these models.

¹⁷ The floor median F is always a member of the government, because the government has more than 50% of the seats.

coalition, and m is the median legislator of the opposition. If the opposition is not a unitary actor, there are m_1, m_2, \dots, m_n opposition medians for n opposition parties.¹⁸ I will derive the models presuming the median of the governing coalition, M , is to the left of the floor median voter F ; that is, I assume a left wing government. Assuming a right wing government would yield the same predictions, since it is merely a mirror reflection in the uni-dimensional policy space.

Fourth, I assume that the legislative process occurs under open rules and that amending is costless. Because amending is costless, the pivotal voter in the chamber will always successfully amend the bill to his or her ideal point. In the presence of discipline, the government controls the pivotal voter, and all bills will be amended to M (except for bills already proposing M , of course). In the absence of discipline, the floor median is the pivotal voter and will amend all bills to F (Downs 1957; Riker 1962; for the application to sequential voting in legislatures see Cox and McCubbins 2005).

It follows from my fourth assumption that the final vote in the chamber will be a choice to accept or reject M (in the presence of discipline), or to accept or reject F (in the absence of discipline). This choice is between the proposal as amended (M or F) and the status quo (SQ) of the policy.

As commonly assumed in uni-dimensional policy models, actors have Euclidean preferences, meaning that they will prefer the policy that is closer to their own ideal point. The ideal point of the governing coalition is M (which is the location of the government median), and the ideal point of the opposition is m (which is the location of the opposition

¹⁸ For purposes of simplicity, I will use “ m ” in the models to refer to all opposition parties, while implying more than one party; predictions are the same for all opposition parties.

median). This assumption means that actors vote sincerely – they will always vote for the policy that is closer to their ideal point¹⁹.

Fifth, in accordance with Cox and McCubbins (1993, 2005), I assume that actors with blocking power (both government and opposition) will stop unwanted bills from placement on the agenda and schedule desired bills. Such agenda decisions are made by comparing the policy location of the expected outcome to the location of the SQ. If an agenda setting actor prefers the expected outcome to the SQ, the bill will be scheduled on the agenda. In contrast, if the agenda setter prefers the SQ to the expected outcome, he or she will use its blocking power to stop the bill from being scheduled.

Accordingly, when actors (government or opposition) have blocking powers, they propose bills whose expected outcome is preferred to SQ. More specifically, these actors will propose their own ideal point on the policy: the government will propose M, and the opposition will propose m. In the absence of blocking power, however, each actor will bring a proposal to the floor that would simply move policy from SQ to a new point on the policy in question that is preferred to SQ.

Sixth, I assume that only one bill can be brought to the floor during the same legislative session on each issue. This is a common rule in most legislatures. Seventh, I assume that when multiple actors put forth proposals, the legislature operates under a random recognition rule regarding which actor will be selected to make the proposal to the plenary (Baron and Ferejohn 1987). The random recognition rule applies when there is no blocking power at all, or when blocking power is shared between government and

¹⁹ Actors can sometimes vote strategically, in which case they will vote for a point that may not be the closest to their ideal point.

opposition. Under these circumstances, both the government and opposition can make proposals.

All the empirical predictions derived from the sequential spatial models rely on classifying legislative output outcomes as wins and losses for the competing parties. A political party wins when the party votes in favor of a proposal and the proposal passes (a success), or when the party votes against a proposal and the proposal fails (a rejection). A political party loses when the party votes against a proposal and the proposal passes (a roll), or when the party votes in favor of a proposal and the proposal fails (a disappointment)²⁰. Using this system of classification, every roll call fits into one of the following four categories: successes, rejections, rolls and disappointments, as presented in table III.1. These four categories characterize all votes (be it amendments or final passages), and they are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive.

Table III.1. Successes, Rejections, Rolls and Disappointments

	Outcome = Pass	Outcome = Fail
Vote = Yes	Success	Disappointment
Vote = No	Roll	Rejection

The success rate is the proportion of successes out of the total number of votes, the rejection rate is the proportion of rejections out of the total number of votes, and so on:

²⁰ These measures, in particular the measure of a roll, have been coined and used elsewhere (Amorim Neto, Cox, and McCubbins 2003; Chandler, Cox and McCubbins 2005; Cox, Campbell and McCubbins 2002; Cox, Heller and McCubbins 2005; Cox, Masuyama and McCubbins 2000; Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005; Lawrence, Maltzman and Smith 2006).

Success Rate = successes/total number of votes

Rejection rate = rejections/total number of votes

Roll rate = rolls/total number of votes

Disappointment rate = disappointment/total number of votes

Consequently:

Success rate + roll rate + disappointment rate + rejection rate = 100%

These concepts drive precise empirical predictions for each of the six sequential spatial models.

B. Legislative Politics in Government Dominated, Consensus and Chaotic Legislatures

There are three possible models based on whether government and opposition parties have blocking power, as presented in table I.1: one in which the government has the monopoly of blocking power, a second in which government and opposition share blocking powers, and a third in which there is no blocking power. The first is governing (or majority) party dominated, the second is consensual and the third is chaotic. The first and third models are explained at length by Cox and McCubbins (1993, 2005) and are known as the “cartel agenda model” and “floor agenda model.” A comparative view of the assumptions and predictions for each legislative stage of all three models is presented in table III.2a²¹.

²¹ For each stage of the legislative process, assumptions or predictions that are identical for all three models are aggregated for columns 2-4 in a single row.

Table III.2a. Legislative Politics in Government Dominated, Consensus and Chaos Assemblies

	Government Blocking Power	Government - Opposition Shared Blocking Power	No Blocking Power
Proposal Rule	Government proposals only	Random Recognition Rule	Random Recognition Rule
Government Proposals	M for $SQ < 2M-F$ & $SQ > F$	M for $SQ < 2M-F$ & $SQ > F$	M for $SQ < 2M-F$ & $SQ > F$
Blockout Zones	Government blockout zone (2M-F, F)	Government blockout zone (2M-F, F) Opposition blockout zone (F, 2m-F)	-
Opposition Proposals	-	m for $SQ < F$ & $SQ > 2m-F$	m for $SQ < F$ & $SQ > 2m-F$
Amending Stage	M → F	M → F m → F	M → F m → F
Amending Outcomes for the Government	<i>No Successes Rolls</i>	<i>Successes Rolls</i>	<i>Successes Rolls</i>
Amending Outcomes for the Opposition	<i>Successes</i>	<i>Successes Rolls</i>	<i>Successes Rolls</i>
Final Passage Choice	F v SQ		
Final Passage Outcomes for the Government	<i>Successes No rolls</i>	<i>Successes No rolls</i>	<i>Successes Rolls</i>
Final Passage Outcomes for the Opposition	<i>Successes Rolls</i>	<i>Successes No Rolls</i>	<i>Successes Rolls</i>
Expected Outcome	F		
Idealized Legislature Type	Government Dominance	Consensus	Chaos

I now turn to discuss each of the three models.

B.1. Government Dominance

A first model assumes government blocking power. This model is the famous “procedural cartel model” that Cox and McCubbins (2005) developed for the United States House of Representatives. All the predictions for this model are summarized in the second column of table III.2a, under the heading “Government Blocking Power”. The graphical representation of the proposal, amending, and final passage stages is pictured in figures III.1a-b.

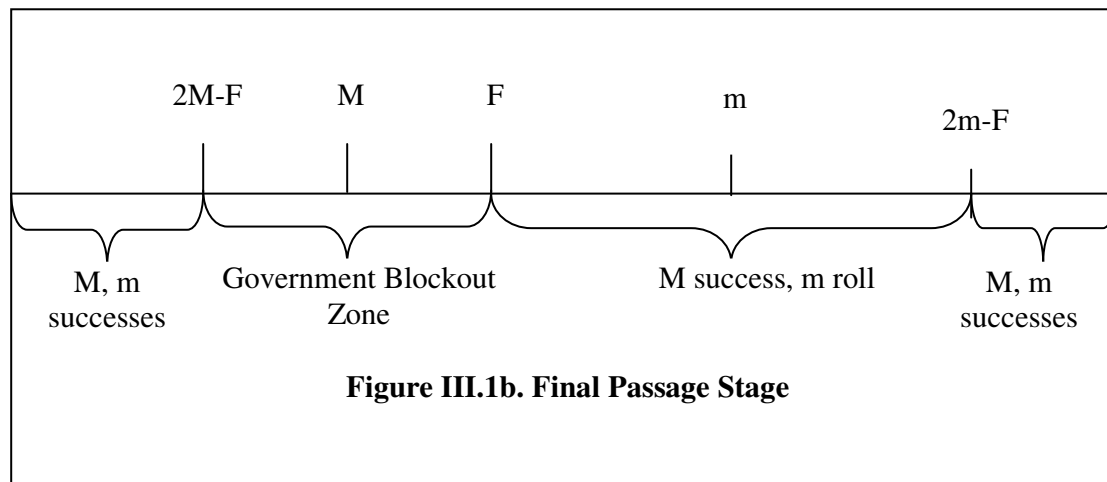
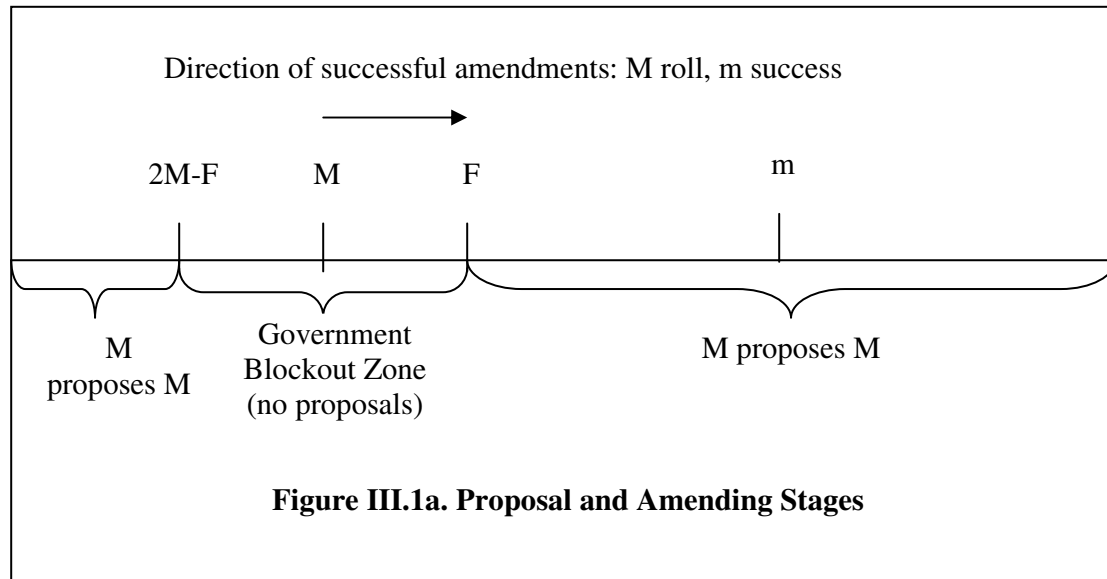
Symbols

M = The median of the governmental coalition

m = The median of the opposition

F = Floor median

2M-F = Government's median indifference point with respect to the floor median F



Figures III.1a-b. Government Dominance

The floor's median legislator is the pivotal voter and will amend all proposals to F. As such, the expected outcome is F, and the final passage choice will always be between F and SQ (table III.2a indicates that the expected outcome is F). Given the expected outcome F, we can infer through backwards induction what happens at final passage, amendment and proposal stages, knowing that the government has the monopoly of blocking power.

Anticipating F as the final outcome, the government will only make proposals for policies with SQ that are not preferred to F. Consequently, the government will propose its ideal point M for all $SQ < 2M - F$ and $SQ > F$ (figure III.1a). The area between $2M - F$ and F is blocked – the government will never make proposals for policies with SQ in this area.

At final passage, members of the government will favor F, since they only made proposals for those policies with SQ points that are not preferred to F. The proposal F will pass, meaning that the government will register successes, and it will never be rolled (figure III.1b). The opposition will vote for F and register a success when $SQ < F$ and $SQ > 2m - F$, and it will vote against F and register a roll when $F < SQ < 2m - F$ (figure III.1b).

At the amending stage, the median floor legislator amends all government proposals M to F, thus the government should register a significant number of rolls and no successes. The opposition, however, prefers F to M, so it should register a significant number of successes (figure III.1a).

The assumptions and predictions for this model are summarized in column 2 of table III.2a, in sequential (chronological) order:

- **Proposal:** the government proposes M for all $SQ < 2M - F$ & $SQ > F$;
- **Amending:** the floor median amends all government proposals M to F, so there should be rolls and no successes for the government, but successes for the opposition;

- **Final Passage:** the choice is between F and SQ, and the government should register successes, with no rolls, whereas the opposition should register both successes and rolls;
- **Outcome:** A governing (or majority) party dominated legislature.

B.2. Consensus

A second model assumes shared government - opposition blocking power. All the predictions for this model are summarized in the second column of table III.2a, under the heading “Government - Opposition Shared Blocking Power”. The graphical representation of the proposal, amending, and final passage stages is pictured in figures III.2.a-b.

Symbols

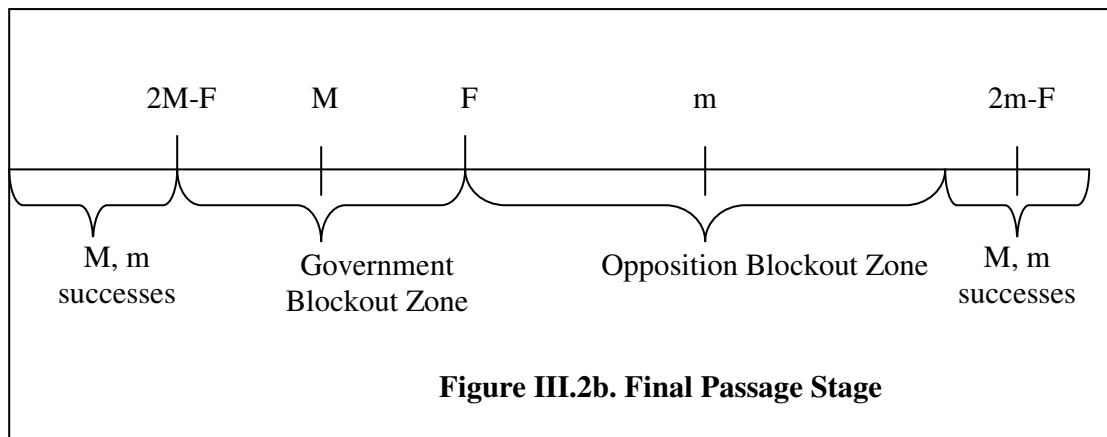
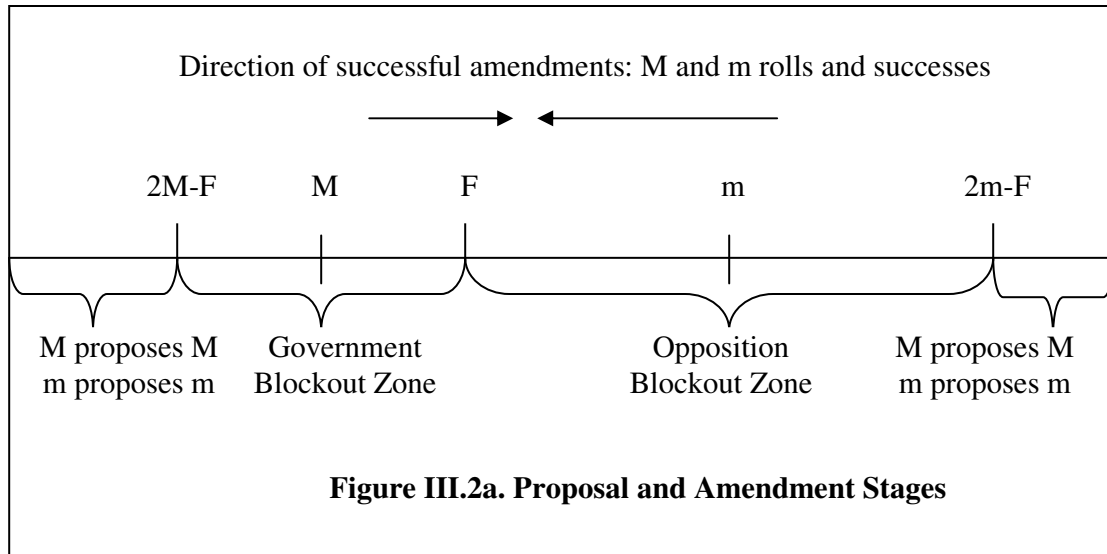
M = The median of the governmental coalition

m = The median of the opposition

F = Floor median

2m-F = Opposition parties' median indifference point with respect to the floor median F

2M-F = Government's median indifference point with respect to the floor median F



Figures III.2a-b. Consensus

The floor's median legislator is the pivotal voter and will amend all proposals to F. Thus the expected outcome is F, and the final passage choice will always be between F and SQ (table III.2a indicates that the expected outcome is F). Given the expected outcome F, we can infer through backwards induction what happens at final passage, amendment and proposal stages, knowing that government and opposition share blocking power.

Anticipating the final outcome of F, the government will only make proposals for policies with SQ that are not preferred to F. Consequently, the government will propose M for all $SQ < 2M - F$ and $SQ > F$ (figure III.2a). The area between $2M - F$ and F is blocked – the government will never make proposals for policies with SQ in this area. The opposition, which also has blocking power in this model, will propose m for all policies with SQ that are not preferred to F, that is, $SQ < F$ and $SQ > 2m - F$, and it will block all SQ where $F < SQ < 2m - F$ (figure III.2a).

At final passage, all members of the government and opposition will vote in favor of F, since they only made proposals for those policies with SQ that are not preferred to F, and they blocked all other SQ. The proposal F will pass, meaning that both government and opposition will register successes, and they will never be rolled (figure III.2b).

At the amending stage, the median floor legislator amends all government and opposition proposals M and m to F, thus both the government and the opposition should register a significant number of rolls and successes (figure III.2a). When m is amended to F, the opposition is rolled and the government registers a success (the government prefers F to m); when M is amended to F, the government is rolled and the opposition registers a success (the opposition prefers F to M).

The assumptions and predictions for this model are summarized in column 3 of table III.2a, in sequential (chronological) order:

- **Proposal:** the government proposes M for all $SQ < 2M - F \text{ \& } SQ > F$; the opposition proposes m for all $SQ < F \text{ \& } SQ > 2m - F$ (random recognition rule applies);
- **Amending:** the floor median amends all government and opposition proposals M and m to F , so there should be rolls and successes for both government and opposition;
- **Final Passage:** the choice is between F and SQ , and both government and opposition should register successes and no rolls;
- **Outcome:** A consensual legislature.

B.3. Chaotic Legislatures

A third model of legislative organization assumes no blocking power. This model is Cox and McCubbins's (2005) "floor agenda model" that formalizes the view of the United States House of Representatives proposed by Krehbiel (1991, 1998). All the predictions for this model are summarized in the fourth column of table III.2a, under the heading "No Blocking Power". The graphical representation of the proposal, amending, and final passage stages is pictured in figures III.3a-b.

Symbols

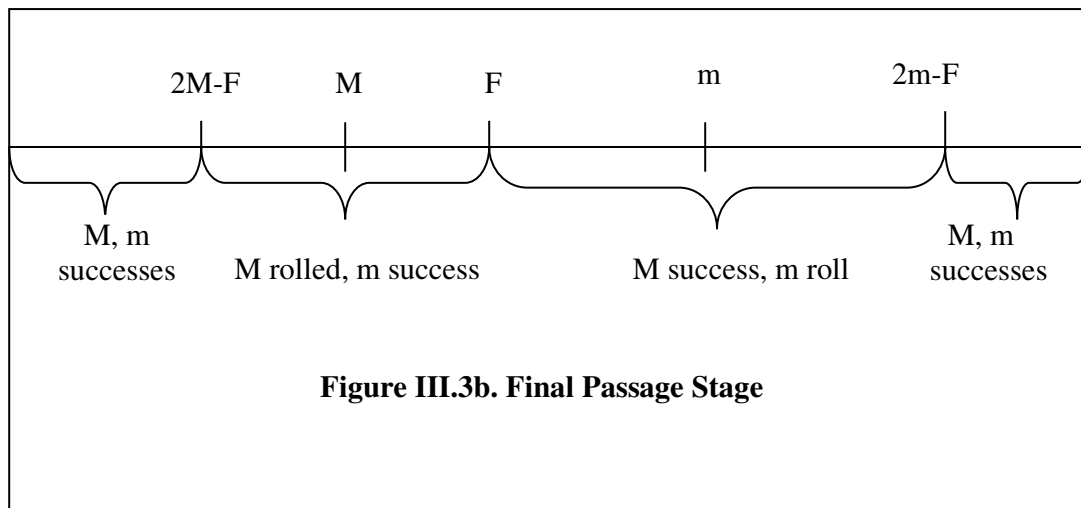
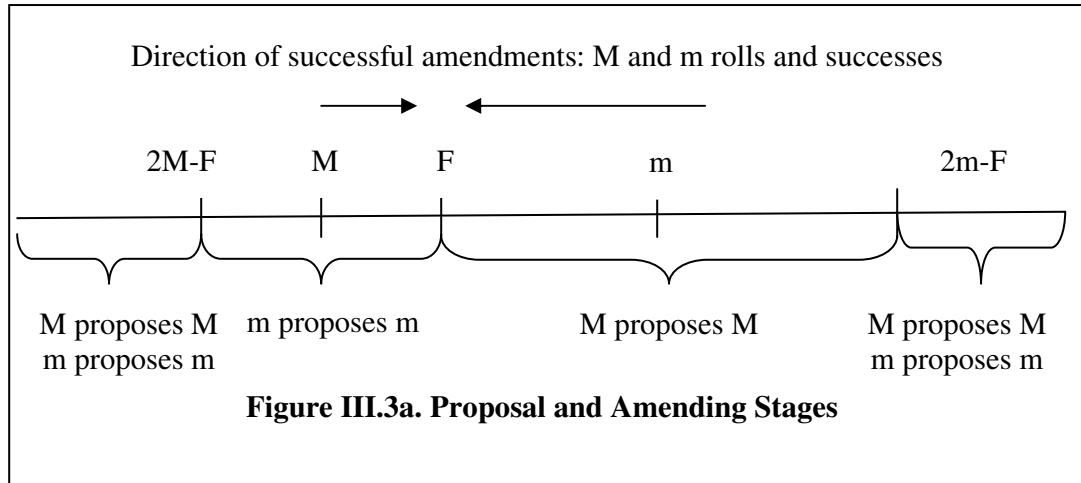
M = The median of the governmental coalition

m = The median of the opposition

F = Floor median

2m-F = Opposition parties' median indifference point with respect to the floor median F

2M-F = Government's median indifference point with respect to the floor median F



Figures III.3a-b. Chaos

The floor's median legislator is the pivotal voter and will amend all proposals to F. Thus the expected outcome is F, and the final passage choice will always be between F and SQ (table III.2a indicates that the expected outcome is F). Given the expected outcome F, we can infer through backwards induction what happens at final passage, amendment and proposal stages, knowing that neither government nor opposition has blocking power.

Anticipating the final outcome of F, the government will only make proposals for policies with SQ that are not preferred to F. Consequently, the government will propose M for all $SQ < 2M - F$ and $SQ > F$ (figure III.3a). The opposition will propose m for all policies with SQ that are not preferred to F, that is, $SQ < F$ and $SQ > 2m - F$ (figure III.3a). However, there are no government or opposition blockout areas in the absence of blocking power, which means that all SQ possible will be brought to the floor.

At final passage, members of the government will vote for F when $SQ < 2M - F$ and $SQ > F$, and register a success. They will vote against F when $2M - F < SQ < F$, and will register a roll. Members of the opposition will vote for F when $SQ < F$ and $SQ > 2m - F$, and will register a success. They will vote against F when $F < SQ < 2m - F$, and will register a roll (figure III.3b).

At the amending stage, the median floor legislator amends all government and opposition proposals M and m to F, thus both the government and the opposition should register a significant number of rolls and successes (figure III.3.a). When m is amended to F, the opposition is rolled and the government registers a success (the government prefers F to m); when M is amended to F, the government is rolled and the opposition registers a success (the opposition prefers F to M).

The assumptions and predictions for this model are summarized in column 4 of table III.2a, in sequential (chronological) order:

- **Proposal:** the government proposes M for all $SQ < 2M - F \text{ \& } SQ > F$; the opposition proposes m for all $SQ < F \text{ \& } SQ > 2m - F$ (random recognition rule applies);
- **Amending:** the floor median amends all government and opposition proposals M and m to F , so there should be rolls and successes for both government and opposition;
- **Final Passage:** the choice is between F and SQ , so both government and opposition should register successes and rolls;
- **Outcome:** A chaotic legislature.

C. Legislative Politics with Disciplined Parties

Three additional models of legislative politics emerge when we introduce discipline, depending on whether discipline co-exists with blocking power, or it substitutes blocking power. If discipline exists in addition to government blocking power, a government dominated legislature is in place. If discipline co-exists with shared government-opposition blocking power, a consensual legislature is in place. When discipline substitutes blocking power, a government dominated legislature is again in place. A comparative view of the assumptions and predictions for each legislative stage of these three discipline models is presented in table III.2b, columns 2-4.²²

²² For each stage of the legislative process, assumptions or predictions that are identical for all three discipline models are aggregated for columns 2-4 in a single row.

Table III.2b. Legislative Politics with Disciplined Parties

	Government Blocking Power	Government - Opposition Blocking Power	No Blocking Power
Proposal Rule	Government proposals only	Random Recognition Rule	Random Recognition Rule
Government Proposals	M for $SQ \neq M$		
Opposition Proposals	-	m for $SQ < M$ & $SQ > 2m - M$	m for $SQ < M$ & $SQ > 2m - M$
Blockout Zones	-	Opposition blockout zone (M, $2m - M$)	-
Amending Stage	-	$m \rightarrow M$	$m \rightarrow M$
Amending Outcomes for the Government	<i>No successes No rolls No disappointments</i>	<i>Successes No rolls No disappointments</i>	<i>Successes No rolls No disappointments</i>
Amending Outcomes for the Opposition	-	<i>Rolls</i>	<i>Rolls</i>
Final Passage Choice	M v SQ		
Final Passage Outcomes for the Government	<i>Successes No rolls No disappointments</i>		
Final Passage Outcomes for the Opposition	<i>Successes Rolls</i>	<i>Successes No Rolls</i>	<i>Successes Rolls</i>
Expected Outcome	M		
Idealized Legislature Type	Government Dominance	Consensus	Government Dominance

I now turn to discuss each of these three discipline models.

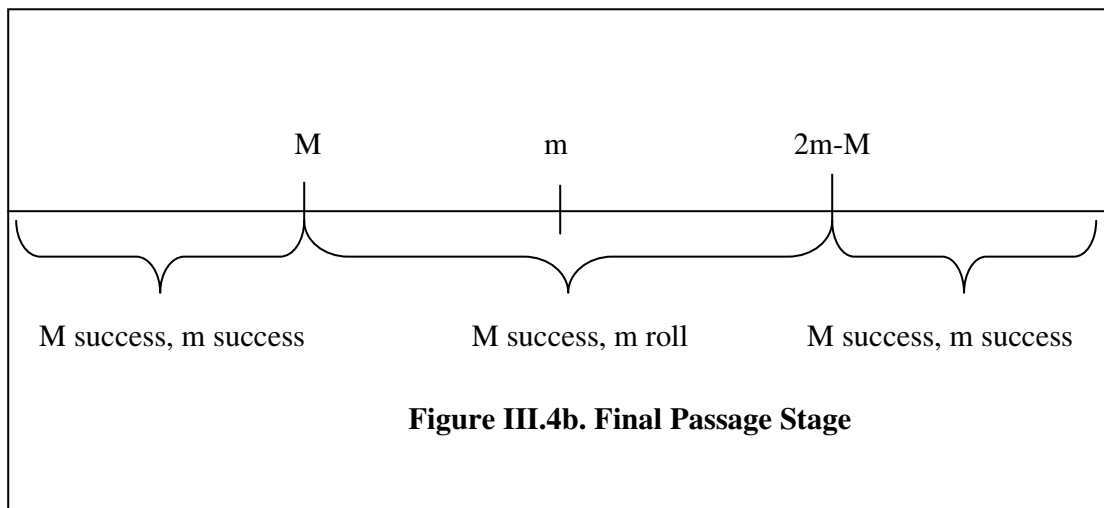
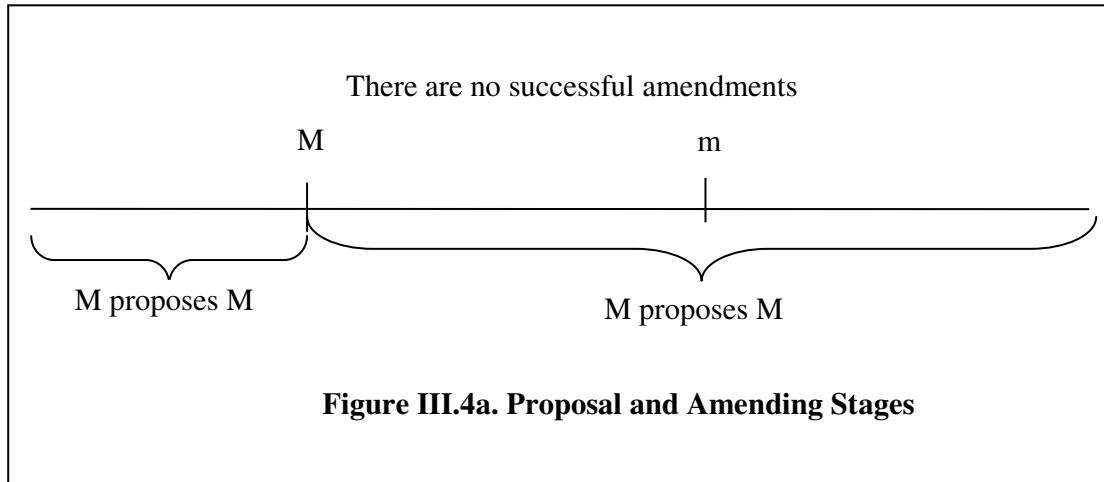
C.1. Government Dominance: Government Blocking Power and Disciplined Parties

When disciplined parties exist in addition to government blocking power, a government dominance model is in place. All the predictions for this model are summarized in the second column of table III.2b, under the heading “Government Blocking Power”. The graphical representation of the proposal, amending, and final passage stages is pictured in figures III.4a-b.

Symbols

M = The median of the governmental coalition

m = The median of the opposition



Figures III.4a-b. Government Dominance: Government Blocking Power and Disciplined Parties

In the presence of discipline, the government controls the pivotal voter. Thus, the choice at final passage will be between M and SQ and the expected outcome is M (see table III.2b). Given the expected outcome M , and knowing that the government has a monopoly on blocking power, we can infer through backwards induction what happens at final passage, amendment and proposal stages.

At final passage, the members of the government will vote for M and use discipline to pass the proposal. This means that the members of government will register successes, and will never be rolled or disappointed (figure III.4b). Anticipating that M will pass, the government, the unique proposer, will propose M for all SQ other than M (figure III.4a). The opposition will vote in favor of M and register a success when $SQ < M$ and $SQ > 2m - M$. It will vote against M when $M < SQ < 2m - M$, and register a roll (figure III.4b).

At amending stage, members of the government have no need to amend their own proposals M . As a result, they should not register any successes²³, but will also never be rolled or disappointed in the presence of discipline. The opposition may futilely attempt to amend government proposals as a position-taking action, and will register disappointments. Use of this strategy depends on the benefits derived by the

²³ The predictions in this model ignore amendments related to minor issues such as phrasing, word choices, etc., that may be adopted by the common agreement of government and opposition parties. Although such amendments are frequent in real world politics (and lead to both government and opposition registering a significant number of successes) they do not follow directly from the model.

opposition, and does not directly follow from the model. In regards to successful amendments, we should see none (figure III.4a).

The assumptions and predictions for this model are summarized in column 2 of table III.2b, in sequential (chronological) order:

- **Proposal:** there exist government proposals only; the government proposes M for all $SQ \neq M$;
- **Amending:** there should be no successes, rolls or disappointments for the government²⁴;
- **Final Passage:** the choice is between M and SQ, so the government should register successes, with no rolls or disappointments, whereas the opposition should register both successes and rolls;
- **Outcome:** Governing (or majority) party dominated legislature.

C.2. Consensus: Government - Opposition Shared Blocking Power and

Disciplined Parties

When introducing discipline to the legislative model that assumes both government and opposition blocking powers, a consensus model emerges. All predictions derived from this model are summarized in the third column of table III.2b, under the heading “Government - Opposition Shared Blocking Power”. The graphical representation of the proposal, amending, and final passage stages is pictured in figures III.5a-b.

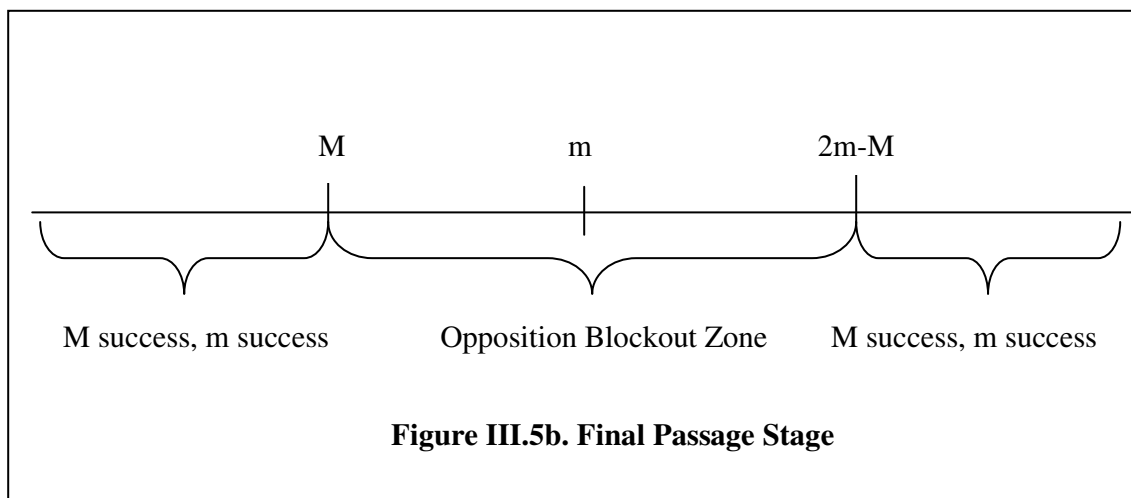
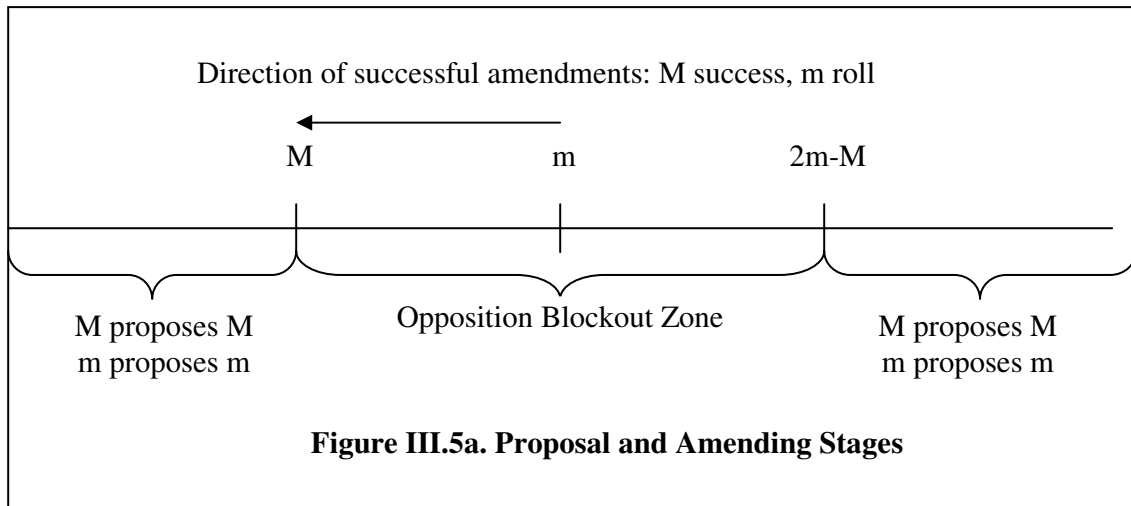
²⁴ Because there are no successful amendments by the pivotal voter in this model, we have no predictions for the opposition on amendments.

Symbols

M = The median of the governmental coalition

m = The median of the opposition

$2m-M$ = Opposition parties' median indifference point with respect to government median M



Figures III.5a-b. Consensus: Government - Opposition Shared Blocking Power and Disciplined Parties

In the presence of discipline, the government controls the pivotal voter. Thus the expected outcome is M, and the final passage choice will always be between M and SQ (table III.2b indicates that the expected outcome is M). Given the expected outcome M, we can infer through backwards induction what happens at final passage, amendment and proposal stages, knowing that government and opposition share blocking powers.

At final passage, the members of the government will vote for M and use discipline to pass the proposal. This means that the government will register successes, and will never be rolled or disappointed (figure III.5b). Anticipating that M will pass, the government will propose M for all SQ other than M. The opposition, anticipating the expected outcome M, and having access to blocking power, will block all SQ points that are preferred to M, that is, $M < SQ < 2m - M$, and propose m for all other SQ, that is $SQ < M$ and $SQ > 2m - M$ (figure III.5a). Thus, at final passage, members of the opposition will register successes and no rolls because the opposition has already blocked all policies with SQ points where it prefers SQ to M (figure III.5b).

At amending stage, the government amends all opposition proposals m to M (figure III.5a), thus the government should register a significant number of successes and the opposition should register a significant number of rolls. Again, in the presence of discipline, the government is neither rolled nor disappointed.

The assumptions and predictions for this model are summarized in column 3 of table III.2b, in sequential (chronological) order:

- **Proposal:** the government proposes M for all $SQ \neq M$; the opposition proposes m for all $SQ < M$ & $SQ > 2m - M$ and blocks all other SQ (random recognition rule applies);
- **Amending:** the government amends all opposition proposals m to M, so there should be successes, with no rolls and no disappointments for the government, and there should be rolls for the opposition;

- **Final Passage:** the choice is between M and SQ, and the government should register successes, with no rolls or disappointments, whereas the opposition should register successes and no rolls;
- **Outcome:** A consensual legislature.

C.3 Government Dominance: Discipline substitutes Blocking Power

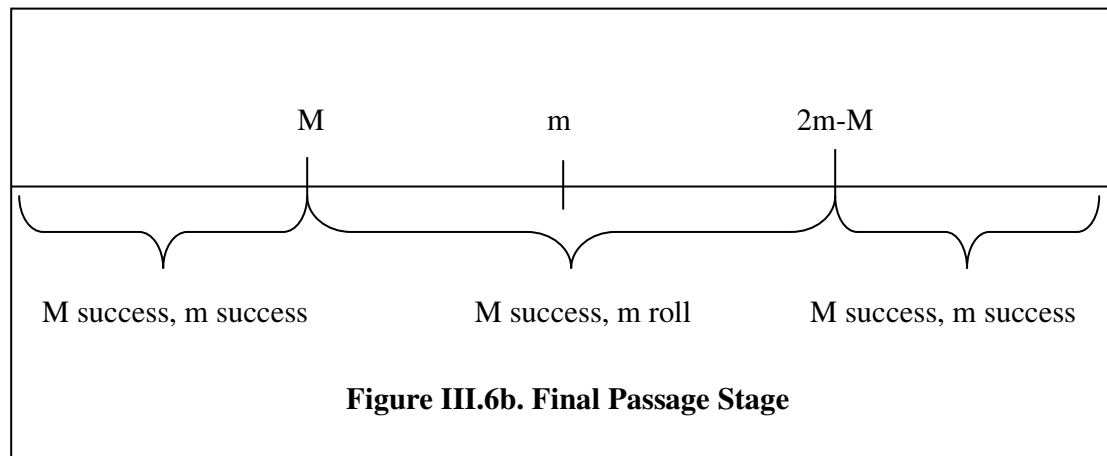
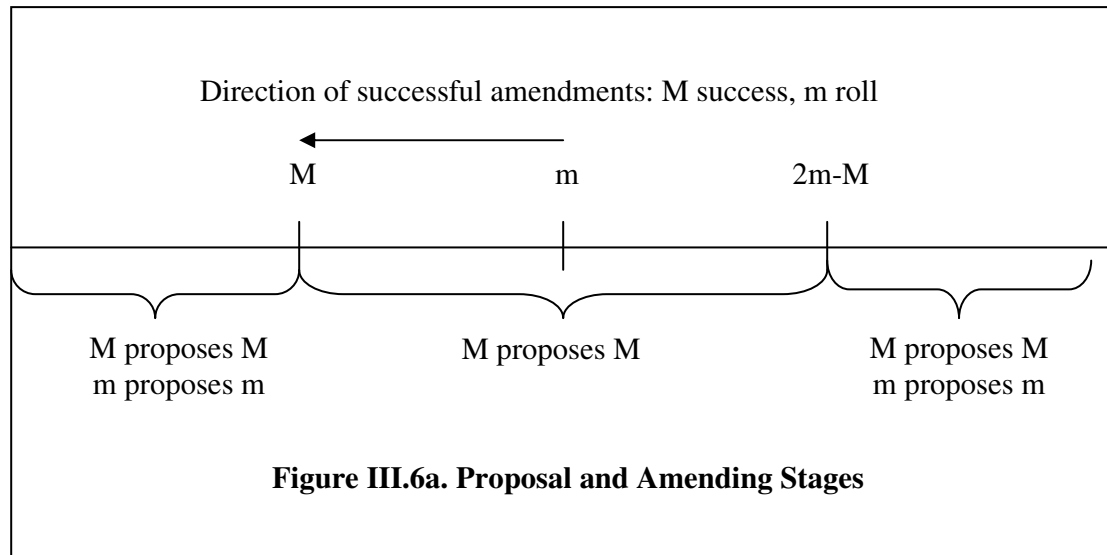
When blocking power is absent in the legislature, discipline can substitute it, and the assembly will be of the government dominance type. The predictions for this model are summarized in the fourth column of table III.2b, under the heading “No Blocking Power”. The graphical representations of the proposal, amending, and final passage stages are in figures III.6a-b.

Symbols

M = The median of the governmental coalition

m = The median of the opposition

$2m-M$ = Opposition parties' median indifference point with respect to government median M



Figures III.6a-b. Government Dominance: Discipline substitutes Blocking Power

In the presence of discipline, the government controls the pivotal voter. Thus the expected outcome is M , and the final passage choice is between M and SQ (see table III.2b). Given the expected outcome M , we can infer through backwards induction what happens at final passage, amendment and proposal stages, knowing that neither government nor opposition has blocking power.

At final passage, members of the government will vote in favor of M and use discipline to pass the proposal. This means that the government will register successes and will never be rolled or disappointed (figure III.6b). Anticipating that M will pass, the government will propose M for all SQ other than M (figure III.6a). The opposition, anticipating the expected outcome M , will only make proposals for those policies with SQ points that are preferred to M , that is, $SQ < M$ and $SQ > 2m - M$ (figure III.6a). At final passage stage, the opposition will vote for M and register a success when $SQ < M$ and $SQ > 2m - M$. It will vote against M and register a roll when $M < SQ < 2m - M$ (figure III.6b).

At amending stage, the government amends all opposition proposals m to M (figure III.6a). As such, the government should register a significant number of successes and the opposition should register a significant number of rolls. Again, in the presence of discipline, the government is neither rolled nor disappointed.

The assumptions and predictions for this model are summarized in column 4 of table III.2b, in sequential (chronological) order:

- **Proposal:** the government proposes M for all $SQ \neq M$, and the opposition proposes m for all $SQ < M$ & $SQ > 2m - M$ (random recognition rule applies);
- **Amending:** the government amends all opposition proposals m to M , so there should be successes, with no rolls and no disappointments for the government, and rolls for the opposition;
- **Final Passage:** the choice is between M and SQ , and the government should register successes, with no rolls or disappointments, whereas the opposition should register both successes and rolls;
- **Outcome:** A government (or majority) party dominated legislature.

D. Summarizing Predictions

The predictions of these six models (summarized in tables III.2a-b) yield different patterns of legislative output for amendments and final passages. By examining roll call votes of different legislatures and matching the observed patterns to the models' predictions, we can analyze if the data are consistent or not with one of the three idealized types: governing (or majority) party dominated, consensual, and chaotic. From this, we can then investigate if data are consistent with the presence of the two institutional powers (blocking power and discipline) of both government and opposition parties.

For example, if we observe a zero roll rate for the opposition party on final passage votes, then the data are consistent with the model of a consensual legislature. In contrast, if we observe a positive roll rate for the opposition (significantly different from 0) on final passage votes, then data are consistent with either governing (or majority) party dominated or chaotic legislative models. This classification can be further dissected by looking at the roll rate for the government on final passage. If we observe a significant, positive roll rate for the government, legislative data are consistent with the chaotic model. Otherwise, if this rate is not different from zero, data are consistent with the government (or majority party) dominated model. A simple decision tree for investigating

if data are consistent with each of the three idealized types of a legislative assembly is presented in figure III.7.

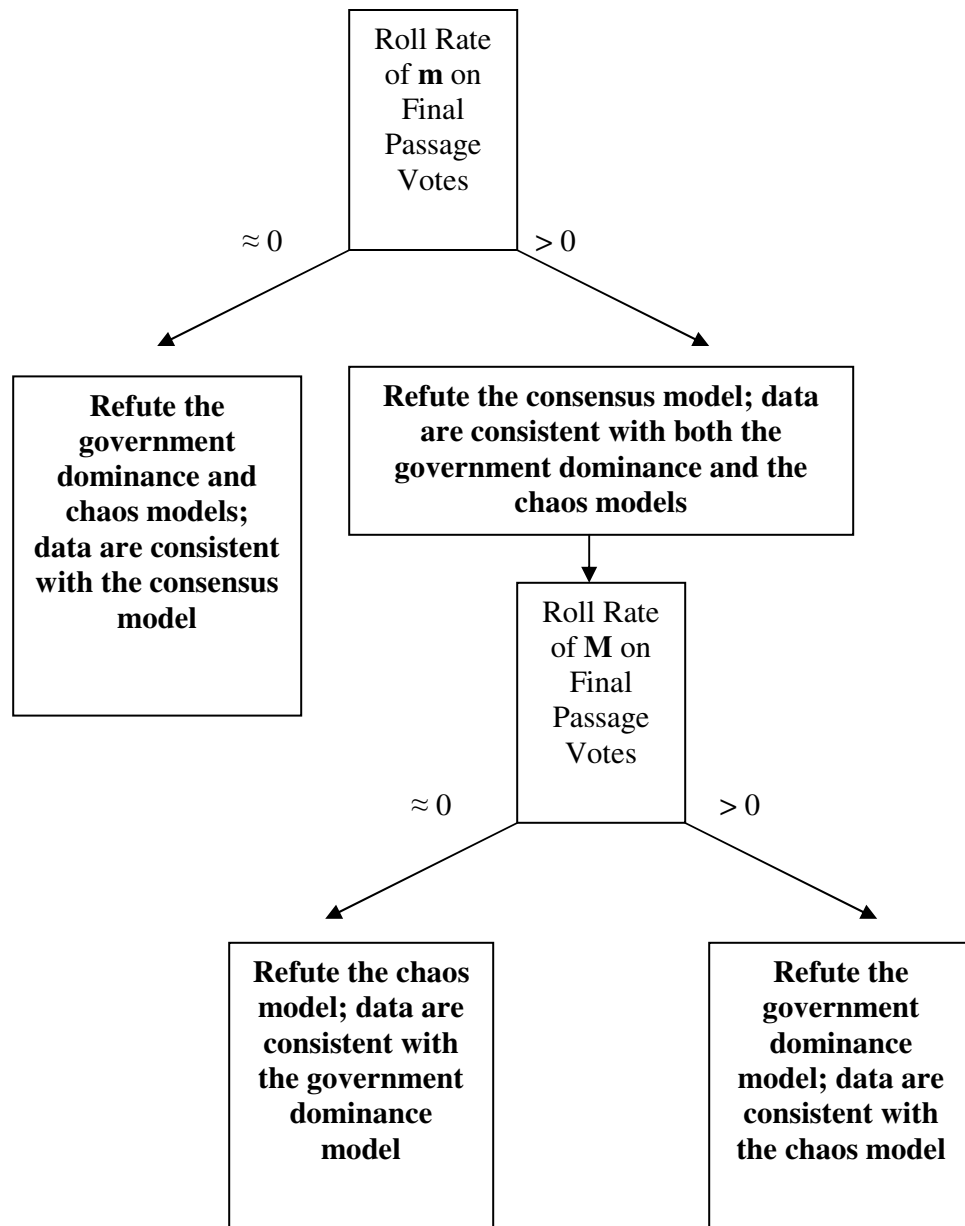


Figure III.7. Decision Tree for Inferring the Idealized Characterization of a Legislative Assembly
 (M=Government, m=opposition)

Once we are able to refute two of the models and show that data are consistent with a particular model, we can then further investigate if data are consistent with the presence of blocking power and discipline by examining the pattern of roll calls for plenary votes on amendments.

Assume we refuted the chaos and consensus models, and identified that data are consistent with the governing (or majority) party dominated legislature. If the government has a positive amendment roll rate then data are inconsistent with the presence of disciplined (or cohesive) parties, indicating that the low government roll rate on final passage is achieved through blocking power.²⁵ By contrast, if the government has an amendment roll rate that is not significantly different from 0, but in the meantime has a positive amendment success rate, data are consistent with disciplined governing parties but inconsistent with the presence of government blocking power (the governing party is able to hold together and win amendment votes, so it is not rolled on amendments, but it is unable to keep amendments from making it on the agenda).

Finally, if both the government's amendment roll rate and its success rate on amendment votes are not significantly different from 0, then the data are consistent with the presence of both discipline and government blocking power (the government is able to keep amendments off the agenda, so both its amendment roll rate and success rate are zero). The decision tree for inferring government powers in the government dominated assemblies is presented in figure III.8.

²⁵ In this model, we should also see a significant number of successes on amendments for the opposition.

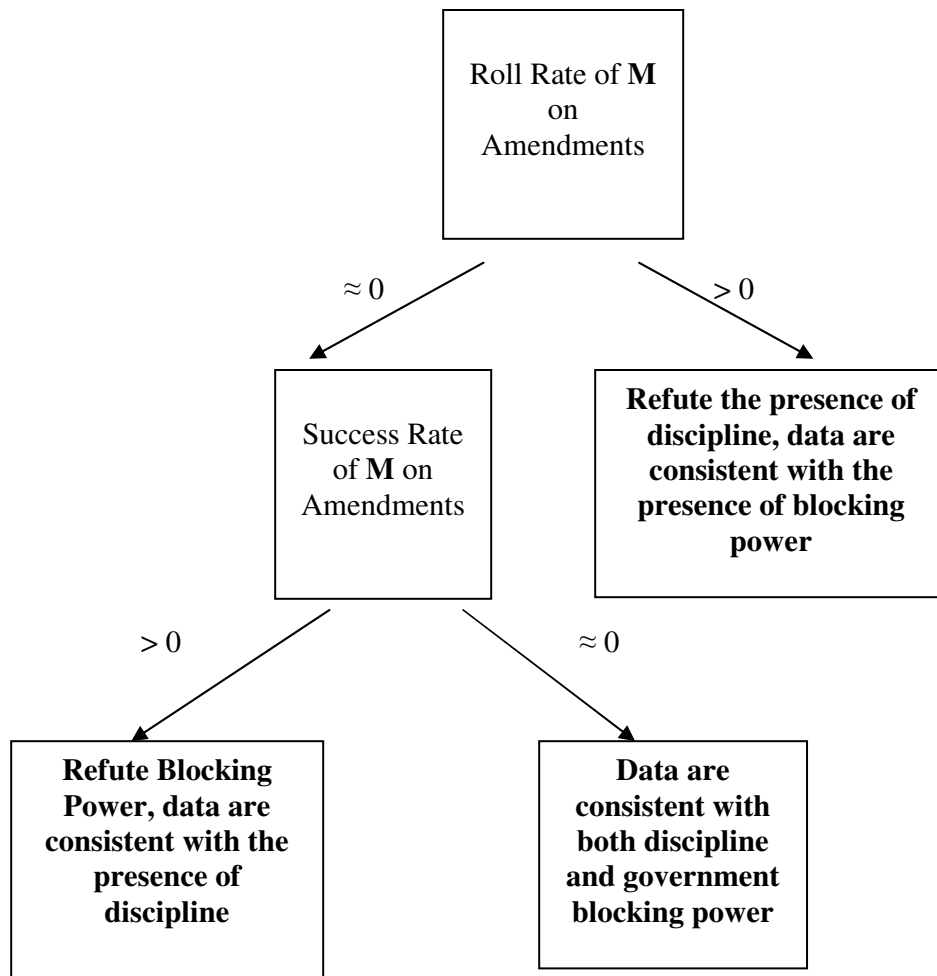


Figure III.8. Decision Tree for Characterizing the Powers of the Governing (or Majority) Party in a Government Dominated Assembly (M=Government)

Next, how do we distinguish if discipline is present in a consensual legislature? In both models, shared government-opposition blocking power exists, thus we need to identify if data are consistent with the presence of discipline. To answer this question, we once again look at the government's roll rate on amendments. If the government has a

positive amendment roll rate, then data are consistent with a consensual model without disciplined parties (if discipline existed, the government's roll rate on amendments would be zero). By contrast, if the government is never rolled on amendments, data are consistent with a consensual model with disciplined parties. This decision tree is presented in figure III.9.

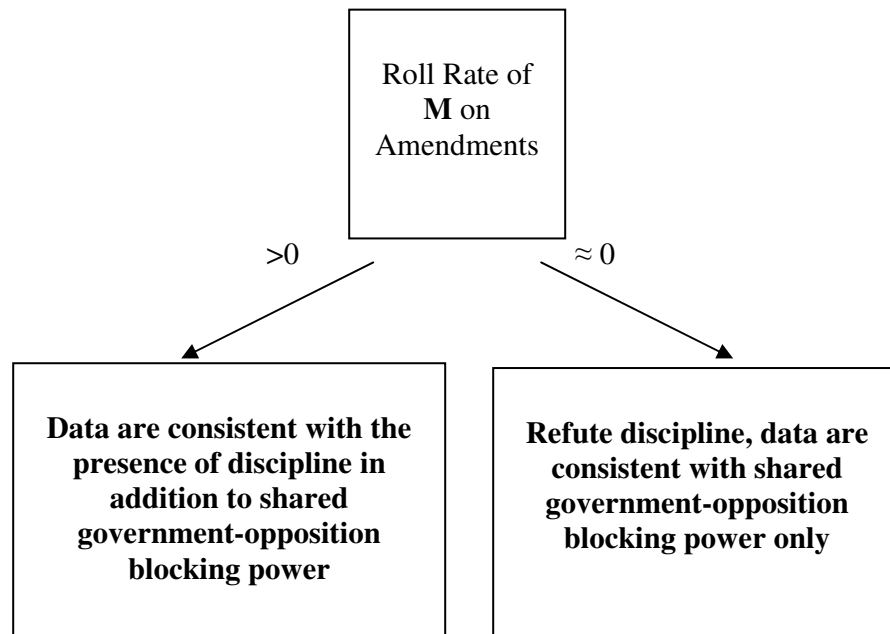


Figure III.9. Decision Tree for Characterizing the Powers of the Governing (or Majority) Party in Consensual Assemblies
(M=Government)

By now it should be clear how sequential games help us make distinctions between models that would otherwise be plagued by observational equivalence²⁶. For example, since all three government (or majority) party dominated models are observationally equivalent at final passage stage (each registering successes and no rolls),

²⁶ For more on observational equivalence issues, see Bates *et al* (1998).

we must identify the unique equilibria among them at the amending state. The same holds true for the two consensual models.

The stage is now set for empirical testing. Based on predictions derived from these sequential spatial models, we can now proceed to analyze legislative output data in any given assembly. The analysis will enable us to refute certain models and investigate if data are consistent with a particular model and the presence of the two institutional powers: blocking power and discipline.

IV. Government Dominance, Consensus and Chaos in Democratic Legislative Assemblies: Empirical Evidence

In this chapter, I analyze the legislative output of a number of national legislative chambers: the United States House of Representatives and Senate, the Italian Chamber of Deputies, the German Bundestag, the United Kingdom House of Commons, the Swedish Riksdag, the Maltese House of Representatives, and the Czech Chamber of Deputies. I also search for qualitative evidence of blocking power in democratic legislatures where data are consistent with its presence, by identifying rules of legislative procedure that provide specific agenda setting powers to political parties.

This qualitative investigation relies on a thorough examination of the rules and regulation of legislative procedure in each chamber. I seek to trace how the government exercises blocking power by identifying the rules that allow government parties to influence how and which bills are scheduled on the legislative calendar.

These rules are generally found in the country's Constitution and in the rules of procedure for each legislative chamber. Constitutions usually indicate who can introduce bills to parliament. The rules of procedure provide detailed regulations regarding the entire process by which a bill becomes law; they indicate who decides which bills will be scheduled on the plenary agenda, who decides which committees will consider the bill and report on it, and who decides the time allocation for plenary debates. They also provide guidelines for how such agenda decisions should be made, and establish the prerogatives of each legislative actor involved in the policymaking process.

The most comprehensive assessment of blocking power using this qualitative method of analysis is by Döring *et al* (1995). Döring (1995) rank orders countries from 1

to 7 based on qualitative assessments of the degree of government control over the plenary agenda. For instance, the United Kingdom and Ireland (rank 1) were categorized as parliaments where the government alone determines the plenary agenda. In contrast, the Netherlands (rank 7) was categorized on the opposite end of the spectrum with the chamber as a whole determining the plenary agenda.

I start by analyzing data from contemporary legislatures and, based on the findings, I show which model the data are consistent with. I then search for qualitative evidence of blocking power in legislatures where data are consistent with its presence.

The eight case studies selected for analysis include a large variation of legislative assemblies that were described in the existing literature as fitting one or more of the three idealized models. The German Bundestag has been traditionally considered a consensus legislature. The two chambers of Congress have both been described as chaotic by some, yet they have been characterized as universalistic, consensual, and even majority dominated by others. The Italian parliament has been described as chaotic. The British House of Commons and the Swedish Riksdag are described as government dominated legislative assemblies. Little has been written about Malta's House of Representatives and the Czech Chamber of Deputies; the first is a small legislative assembly with strong partisan divides, and the second a new democratic assembly.

I find that with the exception of the United States Senate, for which data suggest a consensual legislative model, data from all of these chambers are consistent with the government (or majority) party dominance model. Data from the Swedish Riksdag, the German Bundestag and the British House of Commons are consistent with governments that have both blocking power and discipline. Data from the United States House of

Representatives and the Italian Chamber of Deputies are consistent with government (or majority) parties that hold blocking power but lack discipline.

Data suggests the presence of strong discipline in the Maltese House of Representatives, but incomplete data does not allow inference as to whether the government also has blocking power. Finally, data from the Czech Chamber of Deputies are consistent with a “weakly” government dominated legislature with no discipline, but where government parties have some degree of blocking power.

I further analyze how the powers of government and opposition parties change during periods of divided government and during the course of institutionalization of new democracies. To study divided government, I analyze the United States House of Representatives and Senate; to examine the institutionalization of a legislative chamber, I analyze the United States Senate between 1877 and 1997. I find that data are more consistent with the consensus model during divided government, both for the United States House and Senate (this finding is particularly strong when examining nomination roll call votes in the Senate). I also show that data from the Senate are consistent with a chaotic assembly with weak political parties in 1877 but by 1997, a consensual legislature with responsible party government had emerged.

A. Hypotheses

I now proceed to formulate specific hypotheses based on the predictions summarized in the previous chapter. The purpose is to differentially characterize each legislature (i.e., to identify it as government dominated, consensual or chaotic) and to evaluate the powers (discipline and agenda control) of governments and oppositions in these assemblies. Second, I describe the roll call voting data employed in the analysis. Third, I test the hypotheses for eight legislative chambers.

Six hypotheses can be stated, based on predictions derived in the previous chapter. Each of these six hypotheses allow us to infer whether data are consistent with a government-dominated, consensus and chaos legislatures, as well as with the presence of blocking power and discipline. They are summarized below in table IV.1.

Table IV.1. Hypotheses

	If	Then:	And:
H1	Opposition Roll Rate on Final Passages>0 Government Roll Rate on Final Passages=0 Government Roll Rate on Amendments=0 Government Success Rate on Amendments=0	We can refute the chaos and consensus model; data are consistent with the government dominance model	Data are consistent with the presence of government blocking power and discipline
H2	Government and Opposition Roll Rates on Final Passages=0 Government Roll Rate on Amendments=0	We can refute the chaos and government dominance model; data are consistent with the consensus model	Data are consistent with the presence of shared government-opposition blocking power and discipline
H3	Opposition Roll Rate on Final Passages>0 Government Roll Rate on Final Passages=0 Government Roll Rate on Amendments=0 Government Success Rate on Amendments>0	We can refute the chaos and consensus model; data are consistent with the government dominance model	Data are consistent with the presence of discipline but inconsistent with the presence of blocking power
H4	Opposition Roll Rate on Final Passages>0 Government Roll Rate on Final Passages=0 Government Roll Rate on Amendments>0	We can refute the chaos and consensus model; data are consistent with the government dominance model	Data are consistent with the presence of government blocking power but inconsistent with the presence of discipline
H5	Government and Opposition Roll Rates on Final Passages=0 Government Roll Rate on Amendments>0	We can refute the chaos and government dominance model; data are consistent with the consensus model	Data are consistent with the presence of shared government-opposition blocking power but inconsistent with the presence of discipline
H6	Government and Opposition Roll Rates on Final Passages>0	We can refute the consensus and government dominance model; data are consistent with the chaos model	Data are inconsistent with the presence of blocking power or discipline

B. The Data: Roll Call Votes

The datasets that I will use to test these hypotheses contain recorded roll call votes. Roll call votes are recorded in numerous world legislatures, at the request of a particular number of individual representatives or party group. It is often the case that parties request recorded votes in order to emphasize and make public their difference of opinion on an issue. Thus, these votes often pertain to the most debated policy areas.

Rules for recording votes differ from one country to another and from one legislative chamber to another. For instance, in the United States House of Representatives, a vote is recorded at the request of a single representative, as long as the request is backed by an additional 25 representatives. In Germany, a parliamentary group or at least 5% of the members of the Bundestag can request a recorded vote.

These requirements make it easy for opposition parties – even small ones – to demand that a vote is recorded. Recording votes has been welcomed in legislatures around the world, since it exposes how individual representatives and parties vote on particular issues of concern to their constituents.

Recorded votes usually indicate how individual representatives voted (whether they voted in favor of the proposal, against the proposal, abstained or were absent)²⁷. Additional information may be recorded, such as the voting outcome (whether the vote passed or failed), the vote type (whether the vote was taken on a bill, an amendment, a nomination, a procedural issue, etc.), or the policy area of the vote in the case of

²⁷ In some cases, such as the Danish Folketing (not included in the present study), the records indicate party positions instead of indicating the position of each individual representative.

legislation. The availability of such information depends on the recording rules of each chamber. Some records, such as the United States Congressional Records or the German Bundestag Parliamentary Records, are very detailed and include the entire debate preceding each vote while others offer far less detail.

For my purposes, I include legislative chambers for which the following roll call information was available to collect, or could be inferred from existing data: 1) information on how members of the major government and opposition political parties voted; 2) information about the vote type, distinguishing amendments from final passages; and 3) information regarding the vote outcome, namely whether the vote passed or failed. Using this information, we can classify every vote as a success, rejection, roll or disappointment for each government and opposition political party as described in chapter III.

In order for a vote to be categorized as a success, rejection, roll or disappointment, we need to identify a clear party position (in favor or against the proposal), and the vote outcome (the vote passed or failed). A success is a vote where the party was in favor of the proposal and the proposal passed; a rejection is a vote where the party position was against the proposal and the proposal failed; a roll is a vote where the party was against the proposal and the proposal passed, and a disappointment is a vote where the party was in favor of the proposal and the proposal failed.²⁸

²⁸ Coding the position of each party depended on the meaning of abstentions in each legislative chamber. If the rules of procedure require a majority of all those present for the proposal to pass, then abstentions were analogous to nay votes. If however the rules

C. Empirical Tests

C.1. The German Bundestag

In the case of the German Bundestag, I will show that legislative output data are consistent with a government dominated legislature in which the government has both blocking power and party discipline. The results from this data analysis disprove traditional wisdom that the German parliament is a consensual legislature (Loewenberg 2003; Loewenberg and Slagter 2005; Saalfeld 1997) and confirms recent findings that the government alone controls the agenda through its blocking power (Chandler, Cox and McCubbins 2006).

Finding strong discipline in the Bundestag was not unexpected. Despite the mixed electoral system that encourages personal voting, it is generally agreed that German parties have strong influences on the voting behavior of their members (Loewenberg 2003). Formal votes in the Bundestag are often preceded by informal agreements meant to ensure cohesive voting (Patzelt 1997).

Evidence that the government alone has blocking power, is contrary to expectations based on previous findings and traditional wisdom. The German Bundestag is often described as a consensual legislature in which government and opposition share blocking powers. To the contrary, I find that the opposition does not share blocking powers with the government.

Döring *et al* (1995) noted the consensual decision-making processes occurring in agenda setting leadership bodies in Germany. The Council of Elders, the body that sets

simply required more “yes” votes than more “no” votes so that a proposal would pass, then abstentions were not taken into account when coding party positions.

the agenda for the plenary in the Bundestag, is known to make decisions that require the input and participation of all government and opposition parties. The nature of consensual decision-making in the German Bundestag is described by Saalfeld (1997), who finds that committee work is highly consensual, and by Loewenberg (2003) and Loewenberg and Slagter (2005), who find that there exists a long tradition of compromise in the Bundestag rules of procedure.

But new evidence suggests that the Bundestag is far from a consensual assembly. Chandler, Cox and McCubbins (2006) find that government roll rates on final passages are not significantly different from 0, whereas opposition roll rates are significantly higher. The data are thus inconsistent with a consensual assembly where blocking power is shared, and consistent with a government dominance model. In a consensual legislature, we would expect the opposition to never be rolled on final passage votes. Yet, as I will show, German opposition parties are rolled on an average of 7 out of 10 final passage votes.

To show that data from the Bundestag are consistent with a government dominated legislature where discipline is present and the government has blocking power, I must show that Hypothesis H1 holds, namely:

- The opposition parties' roll rate on final passages is significantly higher than 0;
- The government parties' roll rate on final passages is not significantly different from 0;
- The government's roll and success rates on amendments are not significantly different from 0.

The German Bundestag analysis is based on 215 amendments and 249 final passage votes. The final passage votes include final passages of bills, treaties and committee recommendations. These votes cover 5 German legislative periods, known as "Wahlperiodes", each comprising four years from one legislative election to the next. The

data covers legislative periods 10 through 14 (1983 to 2002). The data was collected using the German publication *Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages*, *Stenographische Berichte*, a parliamentary publication similar to the United States Congressional Records.

There are five political parties in the legislature during this period: the Christian Democratic Union (CDU/CSU), the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Green Party (GRN), and the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS).²⁹ The PDS (the former communists from East Germany) entered the Bundestag starting with the 12th *Wahlperiode* only, following the unification of Western and Eastern Germany.

In order to classify each vote as a success, rejection, roll or disappointment, I first coded the position of each party on each vote. Since the voting rule in the Bundestag asserts that a passing bill must have a majority of votes, I coded the position of the party as “favorable” when more party members voted yes than members voting no and more party members voted yes than members abstaining; I coded the position of the party as “no” if there were more members of the party voting no than members voting yes or abstaining. All other instances were categorized as non-identified vote positions. Thus, the baseline number of votes used for analysis during a specific *Wahlperiode* slightly varies from one party to another, depending on the number of votes for which a party position could be identified.

²⁹ A complete list of the names of government and opposition political parties for the eight chambers included in the analysis is provided in Appendix A.

Using this party position variable, I coded a vote as a success for a party if the position of the party was yes and the vote passed, a rejection if the position of the party was no and the vote failed, a roll if the position of the party was no and the vote passed, and a disappointment if the position of the party was yes and the vote failed. Next, I calculated for each party and each legislative period the success, rejection, roll and disappointment rates, where each rate is the number of successes, rejections, rolls or disappointments divided by the total number of votes. I present the results in table IV.2.

Table IV.2. Results for the German Bundestag, 1983-2002

	Government Parties' Mean Rates (10 observations)	Opposition Parties' Mean Rates (13 observations)	Confirmed Core Predictions
Amendments (215 votes)	.02 success rate (.009) .98 rejection rate (.009) 0 roll rate (0) 0 disappointment rate (0)	.01 success rate (.007) .18 rejection rate (.05) .02 roll rate (.008) .79 disappointment rate (.05)	Government parties' success rate is (practically) zero. Government parties' roll rate is zero***
Final Passage Votes (249 votes)	.87 success rate (.03) .11 rejection rate (.03) .02 roll rate (.006) 0 disappointment rate (0)	.16 success rate (.04) .04 rejection rate (.01) .71 roll rate (.04) .09 disappointment rate (.02)	Opposition parties' roll rate is significantly higher than 0*** Government parties' roll rate is (practically) 0.

Standard Errors in parentheses; *** indicates $p < .01$

The rates presented in table IV.2 are the mean rates for amendments and final passages for 10 government parties and 13 opposition parties between 1983 and 2002. First, the mean roll rate for the 13 opposition parties is 0.71, with a standard error of .04. This mean roll rate is significantly higher than 0 at the .001 significance level. The 95% confidence interval for the true mean of opposition roll rates is between .61 and .81. On average, opposition parties will be rolled on no less than 6 and no more than 8 out of 10 final passage votes. Thus, we can refute the consensus model for the Bundestag. Contrary to the literature, we can exclude Germany as a consensual legislature, since opposition parties would not be rolled on final passages under this classification.

Second, the government parties' roll rates on final passages are approximately zero. The mean roll rate for the 10 government parties is .02, with a standard error of .006. Because of the small number of observations and extremely small variance around the mean, the mean roll rate is actually statistically different from 0, but in practice, this rate is zero in almost every *Wahlperiode*. On final passages, the mean roll rate of government parties of .02 is significantly lower than the mean roll rate of opposition parties of .71 at the .001 significance level. This significant difference between final passage roll rates suggests that we can refute the chaos model for German Bundestag.

Thus, data from the German Bundestag are consistent with the government dominance model. I now turn to analyze what the data suggest about the institutional mechanisms that the government uses in order to control the legislative process. Consider the government parties' mean roll rate on amendments. This rate is precisely 0: the government is never rolled on amendments. If the government lacked discipline, we would expect it to be rolled on amendments. However, the Bundestag government parties are never rolled, which means that the data are consistent with the presence of discipline.

Does the government in the Bundestag have blocking power? In the presence of blocking power, the only bills to make it to the plenary are those proposed by or otherwise favorable to the government. As such, the government parties' success rate on amendments should be 0 because the government does not need to amend its own proposals. Indeed, there are very few successes on amendments in the German Bundestag – the success rate of the government is .02, which again is significantly higher than 0 statistically, but in reality is very close to 0 (in fact, it is 0 for most legislative periods). This low rate is suggestive of the government's substantial exercise of blocking power.

Thus, data are consistent with a government that has the monopoly of blocking power and discipline in the German Bundestag. The presence of discipline is also suggested by the additional observation that the government is never disappointed on any votes, whether amendments or final passages. Note that by comparison, opposition disappointment rates are .79 for amendments, and .09 on final passages – both significantly higher than the government’s mean disappointment rate of 0 at the .001 level.

The legislative output data are inconsistent with the consensual characterization of the German Bundestag. German opposition parties have some of the highest final passage roll rates from all the assemblies under analyzed: in no other assembly, with the exception of the Maltese House of Representatives, do opposition parties see defeat as often as in the Bundestag. 7 out of every 10 final passage votes are defeats for the German opposition; 7 out of 10 votes are policy decisions that the government passes against the will of opposition parties. Data are consistent with the presence of strong governmental blocking power and voting discipline. But how does the government manage to control the agenda in the Bundestag? I now turn to an in-depth investigation of rules of legislative procedure in the Bundestag in search of evidence of government blocking power.

The Council of Elders establishes the agenda for the upcoming year in advance, as well as for each week. The agenda is then considered approved by the Bundestag automatically when the first item of the agenda is called (rule 20).

Rule 20 (excerpts): “The date and agenda of each sitting of the Bundestag shall be agreed in the Council of Elders, unless the Bundestag has already taken a decision thereon or the President determines them on his own authority pursuant to Rule 21, paragraph (1). The agenda shall be communicated ... If no objection is raised, it shall be deemed to have been adopted when the first item is called. After the opening of a plenary sitting any Member of the Bundestag may, before the first item on the agenda is called, move an amendment to the agenda, provided his motion was

submitted to the President by 18.00 hours on the previous day at the latest.”

The agenda approved by the Council is always subject to further approval and change by a majority in the Bundestag. As put by Schick and Zeh (1999, p. 26), “all the agreements reached in the Council of Elders are really no more than proposals which the plenary can accept or reject.” Thus, opposition parties have a strong incentive to not place items on the agenda that the government dislikes.

Should the Council of Elders fail to reach an agreement on the agenda, the President of the chamber alone has the power to determine its content, again subject to the approval of a Bundestag majority (rule 21) - which the government commands. Thus, acting to further the interests of the government coalition, the President can freely decide to reject any opposition bills opposed by the government.

Rule 21: “The President shall on his own authority determine the date and agenda of a sitting if the Bundestag empowers him to do so or is unable, for a reason other than the lack of a quorum, to take a decision.”

Other items can be added to the agenda unless a parliamentary group or 5% of the chamber’s members object to it (rule 20). Therefore opposition parties cannot add items to the agenda established by the Council unless the government (as well as all other opposition parties) agrees to the addition. Moreover, the Bundestag can also vote to remove an item off the agenda (rule 20), which means that even if an opposition bill is scheduled on the agenda, the Bundestag can remove it by majority vote. This simple threat may be sufficient for opposition parties to refrain from placing on the agenda items that the government disapproves of. The opposition is more likely to successfully pass legislation if the proposed bill is not opposed by the government and will not be removed from the agenda by floor vote in the Bundestag.

Rule 20, paragraph 1 (excerpt): “After the agenda has been adopted other items may be discussed only if no objection is raised by a parliamentary group or five per cent of the Members of the Bundestag present or if these Rules of Procedure permit discussion of matters not included in the agenda. The Bundestag may at any time remove an item from the agenda unless these Rules of Procedure provide otherwise.”

Nowhere do the rules allow opportunities for opposition parties to block government bills. The government blocking power, in combination with the existence of disciplined parties, contributes to the characterization of the Bundestag as a government dominated legislature – with no resemblance whatsoever to a consensual policymaking process between government and opposition parties.

C.2. The United States House of Representatives

In my analysis of the United States House of Representatives, I will show that the observed legislative output is consistent with a government (here, majority party) dominated legislature where the majority party holds blocking power and discipline is absent. This finding is consistent with existing empirical evidence that the majority party controls the legislative agenda, and that American political parties are not disciplined or cohesive.

The role of political parties in the legislative organization of the United States House of Representatives has long been debated. Some scholars view the House as a legislative assembly where parties exert little or no substantial influence on the voting behavior of their members (Gilligan and Krehbiel 1989, 1990; Krehbiel 1991, 1993, 1998; Mayhew 1974, 1991; Shepsle and Weingast 1984; Weingast and Marshall 1988).

“When controlling for preferences and other hypothesized effects, positive and significant party effects are rare.”

Krehbiel 1993 (about the United States House of Representatives)

However, powerful evidence shows that the majority party controls the legislative agenda. Most recorded votes in House committees divide strictly on party lines (Parker and Parker 1985) and voting patterns are partisan (Brady, Cooper and Hurley 1979). Poole and Rosenthal's (1997) and Poole's (2005) roll call analyses show that roll call votes and legislator ideal points are divided along party lines. Lawrence, Maltzman, and Smith (2006) find that majority party members are significantly more likely than minority party members to win on floor votes.

The most extensive analysis of majority party blocking power in the United States House belongs to Cox and McCubbins (1993, 1994, 2002, 2005). The evidence provided by the authors is overwhelming: the majority party specializes in controlling the agenda rather than controlling the votes of their members; the majority party almost never gets rolled on final passage votes, whereas minority party roll rates are significant. This previous research strongly suggests that the United States House of Representatives fits well with the government dominance model where the majority party relies on blocking power and not discipline. In order to show this, I must prove hypothesis H4, namely:

- The minority party roll rate on final passages should be significantly higher than 0;
- The majority party roll rate on final passages should not be significantly different from 0;
- The majority party roll rate on amendments should be significantly higher than 0.

I analyzed 5,743 final passage votes and 5,444 amendments from Congresses 83 through 105. The dataset³⁰ covers the years 1953 through 1999. I selected final passage

³⁰ The data are provided by David Rohde and the Political Institutions and Public Choice Program at Michigan State University. The dataset can be downloaded at:

<http://www.msu.edu/~pipc/pipcdata.htm>.

votes that include bills, conference reports and joint resolutions; and amendments that include straight amendments, amendments to amendments, substitutes and amendments to substitutes. During the period covered by the dataset, the Republican Party is in majority during Congresses 83, 104 and 105, and the Democrat Party is in majority during Congresses 84 through 103.

Again, I inferred the position of the party on each vote. The party position was coded “yes” if a majority of the party voted yes, “no” if a majority of the party voted no, and non-identifiable if the party was split. Based on this variable and outcome of the vote (whether the proposal passed or failed), I categorized each vote as a success, a rejection, a roll or a disappointment. Rates for each of these vote classifications were then calculated for each party during each Congress. The results are presented in table IV.3.

Table IV.3. Results for the United States House of Representatives, 1953-1999

	Majority Party's Mean Rates (23 observations)	Minority Party's Mean Rates (23 observations)	Confirmed Core Predictions
Amendments (5,444 votes)	.33 success rate (.02) .40 rejection rate (.04) .18 roll rate (.02) .09 disappointment rate (.02)	.36 success rate (.03) .22 rejection rate (.02) .15 roll rate (.02) .27 disappointment rate (.02)	Majority party's roll rate is significantly higher than 0***
Final Passage Votes (5,743 votes)	.94 success rate (.005) .02 rejection rate (.002) .02 roll rate (.002) .02 disappointment rate (.002)	.72 success rate (.02) .04 rejection rate (.003) .24 roll rate (.02) 0 disappointment rate (0)	Minority party's roll rate is significantly higher than 0*** Majority party's roll rate is (practically) 0.

Standard Errors in parentheses; *** indicates $p < .01$

First, note that on final passages, the minority party's mean roll rate across the 23 Congresses is .24, whereas the majority party's mean roll rate is .02. The minority roll rate is significantly higher than 0 at the .001 level, whereas the majority party's mean roll rate is significantly lower than the minority roll rate at the .001 level, and, in practice, very close to zero. This means that we can refute the chaos and consensus models. Already, we can conclude that data from the United States House of Representatives fit well with the government (here, majority party) dominance model.

Note, however, that the minority party final passage roll rate is much smaller than that of opposition parties in the German Bundestag (.24 versus .71), and the minority success rate on final passages is much higher for the United States House (.72) than for

Bundestag opposition parties (.16). If we could think of the government dominated-consensus distinction as a continuum rather than a dichotomous distinction, then Germany is more toward the government dominated end of the spectrum and the United States is somewhere closer towards consensualism. Indeed, there is an extensive literature that concludes there is a significant amount of universalistic voting in the House (Collie 1988; Weingast 1979).

Next, note that the mean amendment roll rate of the majority party is .18. This rate is significantly higher than 0 at the .001 level. At the same time, this roll rate is not significantly different from the roll rate on amendments of the minority party, which is .15. Had there been discipline in the United States House, the majority party should have never been rolled on amendments. Thus, the data suggests that the House fits well the model of a majority party dominated legislature, where discipline is absent, and the majority party monopolizes agenda control by exercising blocking power.

The sources of majority party blocking power in the House have been discussed at length by Cox and McCubbins (1993, 1994, 2002, 2005). I will therefore present only a short summary of how blocking power operates in the House, and refer the reader to the more in-depth analysis of these authors for a more detailed explanation.

The majority party in the House controls key leadership positions endowed with agenda setting powers. The Speaker, always a majority party member, schedules the business of the House, acting in concert with the Rules' Committee. Starting in 1975, the Speaker appoints a majority of the members of the Rules' Committee, thus stacking the committee with loyal majority party members.

The Rules Committee, which is majority party dominated, attaches "special rules" to legislation, regulating the consideration of bills as well as the conditions under which

the bill will be debated and amended. The Rules' Committee can prescribe closed rules for a bill, which means that either no amendments will be allowed on the floor, or will otherwise severely limit the type of amendments that will be allowed.

By attaching special rules to important legislation, the majority party avoids certain types of amendments that could be offered and passed against its will during consideration by the floor. The lack of party discipline or cohesion is thus compensated by the ability of the majority to limit opportunities for the opposition to change legislation by amending it during floor debates.

C.3. The Italian Chamber of Deputies

For the Italian Chamber of Deputies, I will show that legislative output is consistent with the model of a government dominated legislature wherein the government controls the legislative process through blocking power but discipline is absent. This finding is contrary to the traditional portrayal of Italian politics as unstable and chaotic.

The picture of Italian politics is one of weak governments, whose grasp on legislative policymaking is frequently hampered by the lack of discipline and the high number of political parties. Italian politics is famous for frequent changes of governments, short-lived cabinets, clientelism and patronage (Cioffi-Revilla 1984; Heller and Mershon 2005; Mershon 1996, 1999, 2002; Newell 2000; Partridge 1998).

Thus, the government, in the absence of discipline, controls the legislative process through management of the agenda. In this respect, the Italian chamber highly resembles the United States House of Representatives. Thus, I must show, just as I did for the United States House (hypothesis H4), that:

- The opposition parties' roll rate on final passages should be significantly higher than 0;

- The government parties' roll rate on final passages should not be significantly different from 0;
- The government parties' roll rate on amendments should be significantly higher than 0.

I analyzed 193 amendments and 1,111 final passages votes between 1991 and 1999³¹. Because Italy has frequent changes of governments, the analysis and computation of rates are broken down by government instead of legislative period. There are 7 governments during this period. However, because the Dini Government (January 17, 1995 through January 11, 1996) is a nonpartisan government of independents and it is impossible to distinguish between the government and opposition, I exclude it from the analysis. Included in the analysis are observations for all parties for which there are 10 or more amendments and 10 or more final passage votes that could be categorized as a success, a rejection, a roll or a disappointment.³²

The coding rules for party positions in Italy take into account that abstentions might in fact be nay votes. A party's position is coded "yes" if the number of members voting yes is greater than the total number of members voting no or abstaining (absences excluded). Similarly, a party's position is coded "no" if the total number of members voting no or abstaining is greater than the number of members voting yes (absences excluded). If a majority abstains, the position is coded as non-identifiable.

³¹ The data was collected and provided by Heller (Heller and Mershon 2005, Cox, Heller and McCubbins 2005).

³² A complete list with the names of all government and opposition political parties from each government is provided in Appendix A.

If the position of the party cannot be determined using this simple majority rule, then it is impossible to decisively conclude that the party had a position on the vote. Even if yes was the modal choice (meaning the number of yes votes was greater than either the number of nays or abstentions), the coding is inconclusive because it relies on a subjective interpretation of abstentions. For instance, if abstentions are equivalent to nays, the party's position would be "no" (since the number of yes would be smaller than the sum of nays and abstentions). However, if we ignore abstentions, the party's position would be coded "yes" (because the number of yes votes would exceed the number of nays). Thus, if voting yes is merely the modal choice of party members, I code the party position as non-identifiable. Likewise, I also coded the party position as non-identifiable if abstaining or voting no was the modal, but not majority, choice of party members.³³

Next, I created the measures for successes, rejections, rolls and disappointments for amendments and final passages for government and opposition parties, using the same simple rules described in the previous analyses. I aggregated the data by mean rates for all opposition parties and mean rates for all government parties. The analysis excludes mixed parliamentary groups, since these are not party groups, but groups including members from many different parties as well as independent (non-partisan) deputies.

Table IV.4 presents the mean rates for all government and opposition political parties during these six governments. There are 25 government political parties and 38 opposition political parties during this period.

³³ Cox, Heller and McCubbins (2005) analyzed final passage roll rates during this period treating abstentions in two different ways: coding abstentions as no votes, and excluding abstentions from the analysis; results were similar regardless of how we treat abstentions.

Table IV.4. Results for the Italian Chamber of Deputies, 1991-1999

	Government Parties' Mean Rates (25 observations)	Opposition Parties' Mean Rates (38 observations)	Confirmed Core Predictions
Amendments (193 votes)	.54 success rate (.03) .18 rejection rate (.02) .26 roll rate (.02) .02 disappointment rate (.005)	.69 success rate (.01) .11 rejection rate (.01) .11 roll rate (.01) .09 disappointment rate (.01)	Government parties' roll rate is significantly higher than 0***
Final Passage Votes (1,111 votes)	.99 success rate (.004) 0 rejection rate (0) 0 roll rate (0) .01 disappointment rate (.001)	.75 success rate (.02) .01 rejection rate (.003) .24 roll rate (.02) 0 disappointment rate (0)	Opposition parties' roll rate is significantly higher than 0*** Government parties' roll rate is 0***

Standard Errors in parentheses; *** indicates $p < .01$

First, consider the roll rates for the government and opposition on final passage votes. The final passage roll rate of opposition parties is .24. Incidentally, this is identical to the roll rate of the United States House of Representatives' minority party. This roll rate is significantly higher than 0 at the .001 level. The final passage roll rate of governmental parties is precisely 0. This means we can reject the chaos and consensus models, and state that data from the Italian chamber are consistent with a government dominance legislative model.

Second, consider the amendment roll rates for the government and opposition parties. The amendment roll rate of the government parties is .26. This rate is higher than 0 at the .001 significance level. Furthermore, this rate is even significantly higher than the roll rate on amendments of opposition parties (.11), at the .001 level. Thus, data are inconsistent with the presence of discipline but consistent with the presence of blocking power.

These results challenge previous findings concerning Italian politics. In the past, the ability of Italian governments to control the policymaking process has been questioned due to the instability of cabinets and the lack of disciplined parties. Yet, according to roll call data, we see that Italian governments are big winners – on final passages, their success rate is .99, and they are never rolled. This chamber fits well with the model of a government dominated legislative assembly.

The roll rate on amendments, however, suggests that the government does not hold power to discipline its members: 26% of all amendments are government rolls. This inconsistency between final passage and amendment roll rates suggests that the government has blocking powers that prevent unwanted bills (would-be rolls) from making it to the floor. Again, this challenges previous descriptions of Italy as a country with weak government control of the agenda (Döring 1995).

Moreover, the Italian case is a great illustration for a major assertion of this project: that in the absence of discipline in parliamentary democracies, the government can still be in full control of the legislative process through blocking power. Responsible party government exists in the absence of a cohesive voting block, and legislative blocking power is the key for its existence.

How do Italian governments manage to exercise legislative blocking power? The agenda setting council in the Italian Chamber of Deputies is the Conference of Group Chairpersons (CGC), chaired by the Chamber President. All parliamentary groups are represented in the CGC according to the principle of proportional representation. This council sets the agenda by $\frac{3}{4}$ majority rule. If the $\frac{3}{4}$ majority rule fails, the President draws the agenda but must include proposals from all parliamentary groups and allocate time proportional to group size. This majority rule ensures that no opposition proposal can be placed on the agenda without government agreement. Thus the government has strong blocking power in the CGC.

Rule 23 (excerpt): “The programme of business shall be adopted if approved by the Chairpersons of the Groups representing an overall membership which is equal to at least three-quarters of the members of the Chamber...”

Moreover, assuming that an opposition party controls $\frac{1}{4}$ of seats and it successfully defeats a government item from being placed on the agenda, the resulting proportional allocation of agenda time will substantially limit opposition party proposals. Specifically, when the CGC cannot agree on an agenda, the opposition parties only receive a fifth of the overall subjects to be covered on the agenda. Moreover, this quota is subject to limitations that give priority to government items such as government budget and finance bills, ratification treaties and other government legislation. Thus the default share of time that the opposition receives on the agenda, should the $\frac{3}{4}$ majority decision fail in the CGC, is very limited.

Rule 24 (excerpts):
 Paragraph 3: “If the majority ... is not obtained in the Conference of Group Chairpersons, the order of business shall be drawn up by the President of the Chamber ... opposition Groups ... are guaranteed a fifth of the subjects to be covered, or of the overall time available ...”

Paragraph 4: “Government Finance and Budget bills, bills related to the package of budget adjustment measures, ... the Community bill and any mandatory items other than bills confirming decree-laws, shall be ... entered in the agenda without regard to the criteria set out in paragraphs 2 and 3. For the calculation of the subject and time quotas ... account shall not be taken of: the consideration of the measures described in the previous sentence and of bills authorizing the ratification of international treaties, bills initiated by citizens, interpellations and parliamentary questions, and the consideration of the proposals formulated by the Committee on Elections under Rule 17 and of the deliberations pursuant to articles 68 and 96 of the Constitution.”

Once the CGC has approved the agenda, other items can be added in the beginning of a debate if a group consisting of at least 30 deputies (or one or more chairpersons representing such group) proposes an item, and the chamber approves its inclusion on the agenda with a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote (rule 27). Therefore it is impossible for private members or opposition groups at the floor stage to propose new items without government approval.

Rule 27 (excerpt): “... In the House, a decision ... shall be required to debate or decide on items not included in the agenda. A majority of three quarters of the voters must be obtained. The proposal in question may be submitted by thirty deputies or one or more Chairpersons of Groups which, separately or jointly, account for the same number of deputies...”

Thus, Italian governmental coalitions enjoy blocking power because the rules of procedure 1) make it difficult for opposition parties to block government proposals in the agenda setting council, 2) allow limited time for opposition bills, and 3) impede the opposition from adding anything to the plenary agenda that the government disapproves of. The outcome of government blocking power is responsible party government, whose existence had long been questioned in Italian politics.

C.4. The United Kingdom House of Commons

British politics is known for disciplined party voting and powerful governments.

My finding that the House of Commons data are consistent with the government dominance model featuring both strong government blocking power and discipline is therefore not surprising. To show this, I must investigate if Hypothesis H1 holds:

- The opposition parties' roll rate on final passages is significantly higher than 0;
- The government parties' roll rate on final passages is not significantly different from 0;
- The government's roll and success rates on amendments are not significantly different from 0.

In order to analyze the United Kingdom House of Commons, I collected a sample of 186 votes from the 2001-2005 legislative period based on random sampling. This number represents 15% of the total number of 1,246 votes recorded during these 4 years. By reading the description of each vote from the parliamentary records, I distinguished amendments from final passages. I identified 63 final passage votes, 81 amendments and 39 procedural votes.³⁴ I then coded all votes as successes, rejections, rolls or disappointments using the roll call dataset provided by Firth and Spirling (2003). I have produced results for the government party, and the two most important opposition parties.

This analysis includes procedural votes in order to better illustrate the relationship between discipline and blocking power. Procedural votes deal with various measures of legislative procedure, such as committee referral, adjourning the debate, deciding timelines for bill debates, introducing new items for consideration, delaying consideration of other items, etc. When government parties are disciplined, floor procedural votes can be used to achieve blocking power.

³⁴ Three votes were not clearly identifiable because of vague parliamentary language.

For instance, by proposing and voting on a motion to send a bill to a specific committee, on a motion to limit committee debate, or on a motion to limit the type of amendments that can be made to a bill, the government exercises blocking power. This use of discipline is different from how discipline is used during voting on amendments and final passages; here discipline is used as a tool to achieve blocking power, instead of an alternative to blocking power.

I now turn to the empirical findings. For the entire period of analysis, the Labor Party is in government. The two main opposition parties are the Conservatives (the major opposition party) and the Liberals. Because of the small number of observations, tests of statistical significance were not feasible, but results are suggestive of strong discipline and government agenda control. Table IV.5 presents results by party by vote type.

Table IV.5. Results for United Kingdom House of Commons, 2001-2005

	Labor Party (government)	Conservative Party (major opposition party)	Liberal Party (minor opposition party)
Final Passage Votes (63 votes)	.73 success rate .27 rejection rate 0 roll rate 0 disappointment rate	.07 success rate .02 rejection rate .65 roll rate .26 disappointment rate	.16 success rate .03 rejection rate .56 roll rate .25 disappointment rate
Amendments (81 votes)	.31 success rate .68 rejection rate 0 roll rate .01 disappointment rate	.01 success rate .09 rejection rate .30 roll rate .60 disappointment rate	.06 success rate .16 rejection rate .25 roll rate .53 disappointment rate
Procedural votes (39 votes)	.79 success rate .18 rejection rate 0 roll rate .03 disappointment rate	.05 success rate .03 rejection rate .76 roll rate .16 disappointment rate	.29 success rate .08 rejection rate .50 roll rate .13 disappointment rate

Consider the opposition parties' roll rates on final passage votes – .65 for the major opposition party, and .56 for the smaller opposition party. In comparison, the roll rate for the party in government is zero. Together, these numbers suggest that we can refute the chaos and consensus models; data are consistent with a government dominance

legislative model. Next, note the zero roll rate of the government party on amendments: clearly, data are consistent with the notion that British parties are very disciplined. The large majority of amendment votes are disciplined rejections by the government of the opposition's attempts to amend bills.

The success rate of the government on amendments (.31) is higher than the expected rate of zero. This is similar to the success rate on amendments of the majority party in the United States House of Representatives (.33 success rate). It may be the case that the majority party allows its members to offer and enact amendments in order to set up credit claiming opportunities.

Moreover, results on procedural votes confirm the use of discipline by the majority party in order to exercise blocking power. Of the procedural roll call votes analyzed in my sample, 79% are motions supported by the government. By contrast, the major opposition party is successful on only 5% of procedural motions, and is rolled 76% of the time. These results suggest that the government party effectively makes agenda setting decisions using its disciplined majority to pass procedural motions against the wishes of the opposition.

Thus, data from the United Kingdom House of Commons are inconsistent with a chaos or consensus model but fit well with the government dominance legislative model where the government party relies both on discipline and blocking power. The House of Commons analysis also illustrates that in the presence of discipline, the government can achieve blocking power through discipline, by using procedural votes in order to set the agenda as it pleases. But how exactly does the government exercise blocking power?

In the House of Commons, the process by which bills are considered, amended and approved is regulated by the standing orders of "public business". Public bills

considered under this category are both government and opposition bills. Although the opposition is allowed to place bills on the agenda, the time allocated to opposition parties for introduction and debate of their bills is so limited that few opposition bills will successfully become law at the end of the legislative process.

Opposition parties can propose and debate their bills during the 20 days known as “Opposition Days” – as opposed to approximately 170 days for government business. At all other times, government business takes precedence at every sitting (rule 14 of the standing orders). This unproportional allocation of time severely limits the ability of opposition parties to have their proposals considered by the floor; rather, they must decide on a limited number of bills to propose. Moreover, they must make sure those bills are not opposed by the government, whose discipline will ensure no bill will pass against its will.

Rule 14 of the Standing Orders for Public Business (excerpt):
“Save as provided in this order, government business shall have precedence at every sitting...Twenty days shall be allotted in each session for proceedings on opposition business, seventeen of which shall be at the disposal of the Leader of the Opposition and three of which shall be at the disposal of the leader of the second largest opposition party...”

In addition to time allocation, the government also enjoys the benefit of a few agenda tools, colloquially known as the “guillotine.” The government can use guillotine procedures in order to regulate the time a bill spends in the committee and to require a committee report by a certain date, thus making sure that the bill is not delayed by opposition parties in the committee.

The strong version of the guillotine is officially called an “Allocation of Time Order” (rule 83). This order is a motion that can be moved by the minister in charge of the bill to regulate proceedings in the committee. When such order is approved, the

Speaker appoints seven members from the committee to form a business sub-committee with the task of writing a resolution on the timetable for considering the bill. This resolution is then submitted to a committee vote without amendment or debate. This procedure helps the government achieve control of the time a bill will spend in committee.

Rule 83: “If a motion be made by a Minister of the Crown providing for an allocation of time to any proceedings on a bill the Speaker shall, not more than three hours after the commencement of the proceedings on such a motion, put any question necessary to dispose of those proceedings.”

A lighter version of the Allocation of Time Order is the “Programme Order.” This motion similarly regulates committee proceedings, but allows the committee itself to change the deadline for reporting a bill to the floor. Also, the committee resolution concerning the timetable is amendable and debatable, and the standing committee can also make recommendations on the programming of the report stage and third reading of the bill.

Another rule that empowers the government with blocking power is rule 32 of the standing orders for public business. According to this rule, the Speaker, who is a government member, has the power to select the amendments that will be submitted to a vote during floor debate. The Speaker can also refuse to submit to a vote a dilatory motion that opposition parties could propose in order to delay the discussion of a bill (rule 35).

Rule 32, paragraph 1: “In respect of any motion or any bill under consideration on report or any Lords amendment to a bill, the Speaker shall have power to select the amendments, new clauses or new schedules to be proposed thereto”

Rule 35, paragraph 1: “If the Speaker, or the chairman, shall be of opinion that a dilatory motion is an abuse of the rules of the House, he may forthwith put the question thereupon from the chair, or he may decline to propose the question thereupon to the House or the committee.”

In sum, the limited time allocated to opposition parties for consideration of their bills, the government's special powers to regulate debate and reporting timelines in committees, and the special powers of the Speaker to block amendments and motions from being considered by the plenary are powerful blocking power tools for the majority party in the House of Commons.

C.5. The Czech Chamber of Deputies

The Czech Republic is a relatively new democracy. Czechoslovakia parted with communism in 1989, and soon split into two independent republics – the Czech and Slovak Republics – in 1993. The Czech legislature is thus a recently born democratic institution. The data I collected is from the Chamber of Deputies, which has 200 members elected for a 4-year period through a proportional representation electoral system.

The period under scrutiny includes three legislative periods for which data was available to collect³⁵. The first period comprises 255 votes from the last month of legislative activity (December 1997). The majority government consists of three parties: the Civic Democratic Party (ODS), the Christian Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party Coalition (KDU-CSL) and the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA). This government resigned³⁶ and was followed by an interim nonpartisan government led by a

³⁵ The source of the data is the publication "*Parlamentni zpravodaj*" (Prague, IDEU), available in the United States only at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign library. Some of the issues of the parliamentary records from this period were absent from the collection, thus there are some gaps in the data.

³⁶ The resignation was due to numerous scandals inside the governmental coalition, related to party financing and the worsening of the economic situation.

presidential appointee, Tosovsky, which was in place for 6 months, until the elections of June 1998. There are 1,256 recorded votes available during this temporary government.

The third period, following the elections of June 1998, was led by a minority government formed by Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD). This government was supported by a procedural agreement with ODS that lasted until 2002. From this period, I collected 2,966 votes recorded from 1998 to 2001. Although this third government is a minority government formed by CSSD alone, its procedural contract with the second largest party (ODS) leads us to expect that this government will behave as a majority government that has agenda power.

Results are presented for all 3 governments in table IV.6. Although I was able to distinguish final passage votes from other types of votes, language barriers and the large number of recorded votes prevented a systematic identification of amendment roll calls. Thus, the analysis is broken down by final passages vs. other types of votes, where the latter category includes amendments (as well as procedural motions and all other types of votes). For the Tosovsky non-partisan government it is not possible to distinguish between government and opposition parties, but the data provides a baseline for evaluating the performance of partisan governments.

Table IV.6. Results for the Czech Republic Chamber of Deputies, 1997-2001

Majority Government (data from December 1997)		
	Government Parties Rates (3 observations)	Opposition Parties Mean Rates (3 observations)
Final Passage Votes (7 votes)	.67 success rate .14 rejection rate .19 roll rate 0 disappointment rate	.53 success rate 0 rejection rate .33 roll rate .14 disappointment rate
All Other Votes, Including Amendments (248 votes)	.38 success rate .46 rejection rate .10 roll rate .06 disappointment rate	.31 success rate .25 rejection rate .17 roll rate .27 disappointment rate
Nonpartisan Government (data from January to June 1998)		
	All Parties (7 observations)	
Final Passage Votes (28 votes)	.72 success rate 0 rejection rate .28 roll rate 0 disappointment rate	
All Other Votes, Including Amendments (1,228 votes)	.41 success rate .31 rejection rate .17 roll rate .11 disappointment rate	
Minority Government (data from July 1997 to November 2001)		
	Government Parties Rates (1 observation)	Opposition Parties Mean Rates (4 observations)
Final Passage Votes (110 votes)	.94 success rate .01 rejection rate .04 roll rate .01 disappointment rate	.76 success rate .01 rejection rate .22 roll rate .01 disappointment rate
All Other Votes, Including Amendments (2,856 votes)	.44 success rate .41 rejection rate .09 roll rate .06 disappointment rate	.42 success rate .32 rejection rate .10 roll rate .15 disappointment rate

The above data results suggest that the government in the Czech Chamber of Deputies is not yet as strong as governing (or majority) parties in established democracies.

The evidence suggests that government parties exercise some degree of blocking power, but that parties are not disciplined. Overall, the Czech Chamber appears to be a weakly government-dominated assembly.

Government party roll rates during the last month of the majority government formed by ODA, ODS and KDU-CSL are .19, compared to .33 mean roll rate for the opposition parties. Because the data are taken from the last month of activity of a government that resigned due to disagreements inside the coalition, this roll rate is probably higher than a typical rate. Moreover, there were only 7 final passages recorded during this period. Thus actual government party final passage roll rates during this period may in fact be smaller than .19.

During the CSSD minority government, an analysis of 110 final passage votes shows a government party roll rate of only .04, compared to the .22 mean opposition roll rate. In general, final passage roll rates during the two partisan governments (.19 and .04) are much smaller than the mean final passage roll rate of parties during the non-partisan government (.28). This suggests that being in government enables parties to better control the legislative process, thus we can refute the chaos model of organization.

A comparison of government and opposition final passage roll rates during the two partisan governments shows smaller government party roll rates than opposition roll rates, although government party roll rates are much higher than those in typical government (or majority) dominated legislatures. This evidence suggests that we can also refute the consensus model.

The roll rate on all other votes, including amendments, suggests a lack of discipline in the Czech chamber. Government party roll rates average .10 during the majority government, and .09 during the minority government; also, government

disappointment rates are .06 during both governments. These numbers indicate that even when government parties have a majority of seats, they are unable to use discipline to avoid rolls and disappointments. However, the relatively small .04 roll rate of the minority government party on final passage votes suggests a weakly government dominated legislature where the party in government exercises some degree of blocking power. But is there evidence in the rules of procedure that the government exercises blocking power?

The agenda scheduling body in the Czech Chamber of Deputies is known as the “Organizing Committee.” It is chaired by the Chairperson of the Chamber (elected in the beginning of each new legislature by the chamber) and composed of deputies from all parliamentary groups, according to the principle of proportional representation (rule 46, paragraph 1).

The Organizing Committee *recommends* to the Chairperson which proposals to include on the agenda (rule 46, paragraph 4). The Chairperson thus has discretion over which committee recommendations he will accept or reject. The Organizing Committee has an advisory role only and there are no provisions in the rules stipulating that the Organizing Committee may decide by vote (such as in the Italian Chamber of Deputies or in the German Bundestag) what items the agenda should include.

Rule 46, paragraph 4 (excerpts): “The Organizing Committee organizes and coordinates the work of the bodies of the Chamber of Deputies... it shall primarily be responsible for... making recommendations to the Chairperson of the Chamber of Deputies regarding the inclusion of draft acts and international agreements requiring the approval of Parliament, legal measures of the Senate and other proposals on the draft agenda of meetings of the Chamber of Deputies and to propose to which committee or committees these should be assigned...”

The provisions in rule 46 are reiterated by rule 88, paragraph 2. These provisions indicate that that the Chairperson shall take into consideration the recommendations of the Organizing Committee, but that ultimately he alone has the power to decide what to include on the agenda. The discretionary authority conferred by the rules to the Chairperson is exceptional, as the Chairperson's decision concerning the agenda is not tied to a formal approval of the Organizing Committee.

Rule 88, paragraph 2: "The Chairperson of the Chamber of Deputies shall take into consideration the recommendation of the Organizing Committee and shall decide on including the draft act on the draft agenda of the next earliest meeting of the Chamber of Deputies."

Changes to the agenda may be proposed by parliamentary groups, committees and individual deputies, but all such motions must be approved by the majority vote in the chamber (Rule 54, paragraph 5). Therefore the only agenda setters are the Chairperson, a representative of the government, and the chamber majority (the coalition of governmental parties).

Rule 54, paragraph 5: "Committees, Deputies' clubs and Deputies may propose changes of or additions to the agenda. The Chamber of Deputies shall decide on agendas and proposals for changes or additions to them by voting without parliamentary debate."

Further blocking powers are bestowed to the government in the Chamber of Deputies through a recognition rule that gives priority to government proposals. During parliamentary debates, any deputy can submit proposals for bills, referral to committees, adjournment, rejection of bills, amendments, etc. (rule 58, paragraph 1), as long as the proposal is related to the topic of debate.

Rule 58, paragraph 1 (excerpt): "After the reporting person has spoken, the acting Chairperson shall start the parliamentary debate ... During the general parliamentary debate, proposals for adjournment, proposals for turning down (matters), proposals for referring (matters) to another body of the Chamber of Deputies and proposals for different bills

may be submitted. During the detailed parliamentary debate, proposals for adjournment, proposals for turning down (matters), proposals for referring (matters) to another body of the Chamber of Deputies, proposals for different bills, amending proposals, contingent proposals, supplemental proposals and conditional proposals may be submitted (§ 63, par. 1).”

In this manner, the opposition can propose alternative bills directly to the plenum (in practice, they are substitute bills for the bill under consideration). However, in the presence of multiple alternative bills on the same topic, proposals are considered by the chamber in the order determined by how many deputies support each proposal (rule 72, paragraph 2). Consequently, this recognition rule gives priority to government proposals, since government parties have most seats, most votes, and thus most deputies that support the proposal.

Rule 72, paragraph 2: “In the event that several proposals which address the same issue have been submitted and when this has been done only for reasons of the number (of proposals), for reasons of time, persons or place, then it shall first be determined how many Deputies support individual proposals and then the proposals shall be voted on. The voting will take place in the order of the number of supporting votes (which was determined).”

Thus, there is evidence in the rules of procedure of the Czech Chamber of Deputies that the government has a certain degree of blocking power, because the Chairperson, a government representative, has the ultimate authority to make agenda setting decisions, and government proposals are recognized first under the special multiple proposal recognition rule.

C.6. The Swedish Riksdag

The Swedish Parliament is a unicameral legislature, currently comprised of 349 members and 7 political parties. Swedish parties are known for their discipline and

deviations from the party lines are uncommon. The dataset³⁷ covers one year of votes between 2004 and 2005. This legislative period features a Social Democrat minority government supported by the Left (former Communist) and Green parties. As a result of benefiting from the support of the informal partners, this minority government acts as a majority government.

Because of data limitations³⁸, distinguishing between amendments and final passage votes was not feasible for the Swedish case. However, even if the type of vote is inconclusive, we can still analyze if legislative data are consistent with the government dominated, consensual, or chaotic model. Moreover, as I will show, we can make additional inferences about the powers of government and opposition parties based on incomplete data.

A total of 127 votes were analyzed for this period. Although tests of statistical significance were not possible due to the small number of observations, the numbers are convincingly consistent with the model of a government dominated legislature with disciplined parties. Table IV.7 presents government and opposition mean rates for all votes. The two political parties (Left and Green parties) that supported the minority government are analyzed separately. These parties cannot be classified as government parties because they only support the government on certain issues. However, they are not typical opposition parties either, because they obtain concessions from the government

³⁷ I would like to thank Ingvar Mattson for providing the dataset.

³⁸ The dataset contains no description of the votes, and there are no known accessible sources that would allow the collection of vote type information.

party in exchange for their support. As such, their rates will show more successes and fewer rolls than those of typical opposition parties.

Table IV.7. Results for the Swedish Riksdag, 2004-2005

	Government Party (1 observation)	Opposition Parties (4 observations)	Support Parties (2 observations)
All Votes (127 votes)	.97 success rate 0 rejection rate 0 roll rate .03 disappointment rate	.52 success rate .03 rejection rate .45 roll rate 0 disappointment rate	.78 success rate .02 rejection rate .18 roll rate .02 disappointment rate

These results show a 0 roll rate for the government, and a typical opposition roll rate of .45. In contrast, the two parties supporting the government have a smaller average roll rate of .18. Clearly, we can reject the chaos and consensus models; the data are once again consistent with a government-dominated legislature – because the government is never rolled and almost half the votes are passed against the wish of the opposition parties. Moreover, the fact that the government’s zero roll rate is based on all votes, including amendments, means that data are consistent with the presence of disciplined parties in the legislature.

It may be possible to state that data are consistent with the presence of government blocking power through analysis of the government’s disappointment rate. For the period under scrutiny, the minority government did not gather sufficient support from its partners (namely the Green party) on 4 occasions. As such, the government’s disappointment rate was .03. As I will explain next, this finding is consistent with the government having blocking power.

A small government disappointment rate, in combination with a zero roll rate, could be indicative of blocking power for minority governments. This follows from the logical consequences of positive and negative agenda power. If a minority government has negative agenda control, it blocks unwanted bills from being scheduled and we see no rolls. If a minority government has positive agenda control, it schedules desired bills on the agenda, but, lacking a majority of votes itself, may be occasionally disappointed if unable to gather support from informal partners. This is exactly what the Riksdag data look like: no government rolls and a small government disappointment rate. Had the government had no blocking powers whatsoever, we should have noticed some rolls, and not just disappointments, given the occasional lack of support from the Green Party.

This logic shows that even when data are incomplete (i.e. it is not feasible to code vote types), there may be sufficient evidence to investigate the type of a legislature and the powers of government and opposition parties. Although this analysis of the Riksdag does not differentiate between vote types, it is still possible to conclude that the Swedish legislative data are inconsistent with a chaos or consensus model, and consistent with a government dominance model where the government most likely has blocking power, and discipline is present.

C.7. Malta's House of Representatives

The House of Representatives of Malta is a small chamber (with 65 members only) featuring two political parties that have dominated the country's politics since 1964, when Malta became an independent republic. The divide between the two parties (the Nationalist and the Labor parties) is deep and the margin of victory for the majority party is always very small.

The Maltese House is known for perfect party discipline. The deep polarization between the two parties precludes deviations from party voting. This unwavering discipline occurs in spite of the single transferable vote electoral system that is generally considered to encourage deviations from party lines as individual candidates seek to distinguish themselves. Moreover, despite the proportional representation system, Malta has a two-party system; the two parties have equal support in the electorate and elections are very competitive. No third party ever wins enough votes to gain representation in the House.

I collected 4 years of data using parliamentary records between 1998 and 2002 (9th legislature)³⁹. Again due to language barriers, it was not feasible to distinguish between vote types. However, as expected, data are consistent with the government (or majority) dominated model where parties are disciplined. Results are presented in table IV.8 and are based on a total of 357 votes.

Table IV.8. Results for Malta's House of Representatives, 1998-2002

	National Party (in government)	Labor Party (in opposition)
All Votes (357 votes)	.72 success rate .28 rejection rate 0 roll rate 0 disappointment rate	0 success rate 0 rejection rate .72 roll rate .28 disappointment rate

³⁹ I would like to thank Stephen Thompson for the research assistance he provided collecting Maltese roll call data.

With the exception of one unanimous vote that was a success for both parties (though still not enough for the Labor Party to accomplish a 1% success rate), all government successes are opposition rolls, and all government rejections are opposition disappointments. Every single vote polarizes the two parties and the government party always wins. If we think of rolls and disappointments as defeats, and successes and rejections as wins, the government's win rate is 100% and the opposition's defeat rate is 100%. Clearly, we can reject both the chaos and consensus model, and confidently state that Malta's House of Representatives is the perfect government dominated legislature, with some of the most disciplined political parties in the world. Under these circumstances, whether or not the government has blocking power cannot be investigated without identifying and analyzing amendments. If blocking power is present, its existence is hidden by the fact that the government never loses, due to perfect discipline.

C.8. The United States Senate

In the case of the United States Senate, the data suggests a consensual legislature where the government (the majority party) shares blocking power with the opposition (minority party) and discipline is absent. The majority party enjoys a slight advantage in its capacity to exercise blocking power because its leaders play a central role in scheduling legislation. Despite this advantage, the majority's powers are consistently constrained by the minority's ability to delay, block and obstruct legislation.

Traditional wisdom suggests that political parties in the Senate are not as strong as in the House (Binder 1997; Krehbiel 1998). However, recent research shows that partisan organization and blocking power remain important in the Senate (Campbell 2002; Cox, McCubbins and Campbell 2002). These authors have already shown that the roll rate of the majority party in the Senate is significantly smaller than the minority party's roll rate.

This new line of research suggests that parties are more powerful agents in the Senate than traditionally considered.

I will show that Senate data are consistent with the model of a consensual legislature with shared government - opposition blocking power and no discipline. The data will prove hypothesis H5, namely:

- Both majority and minority parties' roll rates on final passages should be 0;
- The majority party's roll rate on amendments should be significantly higher than 0.

In order to analyze the United States Senate, I identified all amendments and final passages from 1967 to 1997 by reading the vote description of each roll call during this period. I identified 5,285 regular amendments (excluding sub-amendments or amendments to treaties) and 1,448 final passages of bills (excluding treaties or resolutions). Results are presented in table IV.9.

Table IV.9. Results for the United States Senate, 1967-1997

	Majority Party's Mean Rates (15 observations)	Minority Party's Mean Rates (15 observations)	Confirmed Core Predictions
Amendments (5,285 votes)	.43 success rate (.03) .43 rejection rate (.03) .06 roll rate (.003) .08 disappointment rate (.007)	.39 success rate (.03) .29 rejection rate (.11) .11 roll rate (.006) .21 disappointment rate (.02)	Majority party's roll rate (.06) is significantly higher than 0***
Final Passage Votes (1,448 votes)	.98 success rate (.003) .01 rejection rate (.002) .01 roll rate (.003) 0 disappointment rate (0)	.89 success rate (.02) .01 rejection rate (.002) .10 roll rate (.02) 0 disappointment rate (0)	Minority party's roll rate is significantly higher than 0 but much smaller than in typical government dominated legislatures. Majority party's roll rate is (practically) close to 0.

Standard Errors in parentheses; *** indicates $p < .01$

The .01 roll rate on final passages for the majority party is similar to the roll rate of government parties in other government dominated legislatures, and suggests we can refute the chaos model. However, the small roll rate of the minority party, of only .10, is ultimately indicative of a consensual assembly. Given that the minority party roll rate is significantly higher than the roll rate of the majority party, we can infer a slight blocking power advantage for the majority party. This rate, however, is small in practice when compared to final passage roll rate in typical government dominated legislatures such as the German Bundestag or the United Kingdom House of Commons. Even compared to

the roll rate of the minority party in the United States House of Representatives (.24), the .10 roll rate of the Senate minority party suggests a consensual rather than a majority dominated assembly. Thus, we can reject the government dominance model for the Senate and state that data are consistent with the consensus model.

Next, observing amendments, we notice that the majority roll rate on amendments is .06. It is not a surprising finding that political parties in the United States Senate lack discipline or cohesion. Rather, data from the contemporary Senate are consistent with a consensual assembly model, where the two parties share blocking powers and jointly control the legislative process, but discipline or cohesion is absent.

Thus, data suggest that the Senate features shared government - opposition blocking power. There is a weak advantage in favor of the majority party as the majority leader enjoys informal powers to schedule legislation. Despite this agenda prerogative in favor of the majority, the Senate is a consensual assembly due to procedural rules that offer multiple opportunities for the minority party to obstruct majority initiatives. In fact, the United States Senate is the most consensual assembly of all the legislatures under scrutiny in this project. In no other assembly are final passage opposition roll rates as low as .10.

Rules of legislative procedure empower the Senate minority party in many ways. Individual senators can offer an unlimited number of amendments, including non-germane amendments; any individual senator can hold the floor for an undefined period of time unless the Senate invokes cloture; and many legislative decisions require super-majorities or unanimous consent agreements, making it easy for any senator to block or delay legislation (Sinclair 1989, 2000).

The majority party enjoys more blocking power than the opposition based on informal practices rather than strict rules of procedure. Most significantly, the majority leader has substantial powers to schedule legislation. For instance, consider the ability of any senator to bypass the committee system: according to the rules of procedure, any senator can request that a bill be put directly on the calendar instead of being referred to committee. Although this rule is applicable to all members, the majority leader has an effective veto over this process since he is in charge of the agenda (Sinclair 2000). Moreover, Senate precedent also plays an important role in the majority party's ability to exercise blocking power on the floor. As established in precedent, the majority leader is recognized first when multiple senators are looking for floor recognition (Sinclair 2000).

Nonetheless, the general rule is that majority and minority party leaders work together to achieve consensus on what to include on the agenda. Senate leadership is partisan and collegial (Patterson 1989). The majority leader always seeks the agreement of the minority when scheduling legislation, particularly because when legislation gets to the floor any senator can speak indefinitely unless agreed otherwise by a minimum of 60 senators – a number that often requires the agreement of the minority party.

Most legislation scheduled on the floor is brought by unanimous consent agreements (UCAs), an increasing trend since the 1950's (Smith and Flathman 1989). UCAs can limit debate time and regulate the type of amendments offered on specific proposals. Although similar in this respect to special rules in the House of Representatives, unlike special rules, UCAs are not majority party agenda tools. Rather, they are tools of shared blocking power that rely on agreement between majority and minority party leaders.

Any senator can block a UCA by informing their party leadership and placing a “hold” on the agreement. This is an informal practice based on the threat that if unwanted legislation reaches the floor, the senator can filibuster. Therefore, majority and minority party leaders seek agreement from their own party members and will check with each other before scheduling legislation on the calendar, usually through such broad UCAs.

The minority party has other blocking power tools as well. Because non-germane amendments are permitted, minority party members can introduce new legislation in the form of amendments. UCAs sometimes ban non-germane amendments, but again they require the prior consent of both the majority and minority party. Thus the majority party leadership cannot keep minority legislation from the floor through scheduling.

Moreover, minority party members can obstruct legislation by using prolonged debates, known as filibusters. Filibusters can only be ended by a cloture motion, but getting a cloture motion approved requires a majority of three-fifths of all Senate members (60 votes). Thus the minority party can threaten to delay legislation for an indefinite period of time.

Overall, policymaking in the Senate is consensual, and the majority and minority parties share blocking power. The nature of the US Senate is deeply rooted in the legislative rules of procedure that allow both political parties to veto each other, enforcing the need for broad agreements.

D. Discipline and Blocking Power during Divided Government and Democratic Institutionalization

In this section I investigate how the ability of government (or majority) parties to dominate the legislature changes over time during periods of divided government, and how parties acquire their abilities during the course of democratic institutionalization.

The quantitative data analyzed in the previous section mostly characterized legislative assemblies in contemporary established democracies. It was therefore not surprising to find that data from all these assemblies suggested the presence of responsible party government, in the form of government (or majority) party dominated or consensual legislatures.

However, historical data from the early beginning of a legislature to present should show an evolution from weak parties to responsible party government – from a chaotic legislature to one that is consensual or government dominated. Moreover, legislative data should be different between divided and unified governments. Data from periods of divided government should be more consistent with shared government – opposition blocking power – that is, we should see more consensual legislatures during these periods.

D.1. Hypotheses

During divided government, the opposition gains additional access to blocking power. External branches of the government (i.e. the presidency or the other legislative chamber in a bicameral assembly) may prevent bills from making it through the entire legislative process. Thus, as the blocking power of opposition parties increases during divided government, we should see a legislature changing from one dominated by the majority party to a more consensual assembly. More specifically, we should see final passage opposition roll rates decreasing substantially during divided government. This leads us to hypothesis H7:

Hypothesis H7: The opposition parties' roll rate on final passage votes should be significantly smaller during divided government than during unified government.

Evidence confirming this hypothesis has already been provided by Chandler, Cox and McCubbins (2006) for the German Bundestag. These authors found that the final passage roll rate of opposition parties in the Bundestag decreases by 15% during divided government periods.

D.2. Divided Government: the United States House of Representatives and Senate

To analyze how divided government affects the legislature and the powers of its parties, I investigate the contemporary House and Senate of the United States Congress. My object is to test hypothesis H7, namely that the opposition parties' roll rate on final passage should be significantly smaller during divided government than during unified government.

Unified government is defined as periods when the majority party controls a majority of seats in both Houses and the Presidency. Divided government is when the minority party in one chamber controls the presidency, a majority in the other chamber, or both.

Table IV.10. presents results for the contemporary House of Representatives, contrasting mean rates for government and opposition parties between 1953 and 1999. The analysis includes 5,743 final passage votes from 8 unified government and 15 divided government congresses.

**Table IV.10. Results for the United States House, 1953-1999:
Unified vs. Divided Government**

	Unified Government (8 observations)	Divided Government (15 observations)
Majority Party Mean Rates	<p>.95 success rate</p> <p>.01 rejection rate</p> <p><u>.01 roll rate</u></p> <p>.03 disappointment rate</p>	<p>.93 success rate</p> <p>.02 rejection rate</p> <p><u>.02 roll rate</u></p> <p>.03 disappointment rate</p>
Minority Party Mean Rates	<p>.71 success rate</p> <p>.03 rejection rate</p> <p><u>.26 roll rate</u></p> <p>0 disappointment rate</p>	<p>.73 success rate</p> <p>.04 rejection rate</p> <p><u>.22 roll rate</u></p> <p>.01 disappointment rate</p>

Two changes in mean rates are noticeable in the comparison between unified and divided governments. First, confirming hypothesis H7, there is a decrease in roll rates for opposition parties during divided government, from .26 to .22. Although this decrease is not statistically significant, it is in the expected direction, suggesting that opposition parties have more access to blocking power during divided government and thus legislative data are more consistent with the consensus model.

Second, the roll rate of the government increases from .01 during unified government to .02 during divided government. This finding suggests that the blocking power of the majority party is weakened during divided government: a small number of bills that the majority party dislikes are put on the agenda, and, in the absence of discipline, are passed against the wishes of the majority party.

Table IV.11 presents results for the contemporary Senate, comparing periods of unified and divided government for government and opposition parties. During Congresses 90-104, there are 11 Congresses with divided government and 4 with unified government. A total of 1,448 final passage votes were used for the analysis.

**Table IV.11. Results for the United States Senate, 1967-1997:
Unified vs. Divided Government**

	Unified Government (4 observations)	Divided Government (11 observations)
Majority Party Mean Rates	<p>.99 success rate</p> <p>.005 rejection rate</p> <p><u>0 roll rate</u></p> <p>.005 disappointment rate</p>	<p>.98 success rate</p> <p>.005 rejection rate</p> <p><u>.01 roll rate</u></p> <p>.005 disappointment rate</p>
Minority Party Mean Rates	<p>.86 success rate</p> <p>.01 rejection rate</p> <p><u>.13 roll rate</u></p> <p>0 disappointment rate</p>	<p>.89 success rate</p> <p>.01 rejection rate</p> <p><u>.10 roll rate</u></p> <p>0 disappointment rate</p>

The difference in government roll rates between unified and divided periods of the House resembles that of the Senate. The opposition final passage roll rate decreases, as expected, during divided government from .13 to .10. Moreover, ALL of the few government rolls between 1967 and 1997 occurred during divided government periods.

Although these changes are again not statistically significant due to the small number of observations and large variance in opposition roll rates, they are in the expected direction.

The Senate data allow for an additional test of votes on nominations. Senate confirmations of presidential appointments are often regarded as some of the most partisan debates in Congress. Although roll calls on nominations are not straightforward votes on policy (such as bills), they are indeed analogous to policy choices.

Courts (both the Supreme Court as well as ordinary courts) interpret the meaning and application of congressional policy. Interpreting the law is thus equivalent to making policy (Epstein and Knight 1998; Landis and Posner 1975; Segal and Spaeth 1993). Therefore, when nominating judges, each political party seeks to appoint individuals with policy views that are as close as possible to the party's own policy preferences, leading to hot partisan debates on nominations.

If the minority party has increased blocking power during periods of divided government, this should be reflected on votes taken on nominations – that is, the nominations roll rate of the minority party should decrease during divided government. Such evidence has already been provided by Campbell (2002), who analyzed majority and minority roll rates on Senate bills and nominations, and found significant differences in the expected direction.

With this in mind, I analyzed 259 nomination votes between 1967 and 1997. Results are presented in table IV.12.

**Table IV.12. Results for the United States Senate Nomination Votes, 1967-1997:
Unified vs. Divided Government**

	Unified Government (4 observations)	Divided Government (11 observations)
Majority Party Mean Rates	.99 success rate 0 rejection rate <u>.01 roll rate</u> 0 disappointment rate	.85 success rate .02 rejection rate <u>.13 roll rate</u> 0 disappointment rate
Minority Party Mean Rates	.67 success rate 0 rejection rate <u>.33 roll rate</u> 0 disappointment rate	.91 success rate 0 rejection rate <u>.07 roll rate</u> .02 disappointment rate

As expected, there is a dramatic decrease in opposition roll rates in nominations from periods of unified government (.33) to periods of divided government (.07). Moreover, the majority party's roll rate increases from .01 during unified government to .13 during divided government. Despite the small number of observations, the mean roll rate of the opposition party during divided government is significantly smaller than the mean roll rate of the opposition during unified government at the .001 level, confirming hypothesis H7. The mean roll rate of the majority party during divided government is also significantly higher than the roll rate of the majority party during unified government, at the .05 level.

Overall, these tests offer convincing evidence that during divided government, data are more consistent with the consensus model featuring increased opposition access

to blocking power. Divided government has a direct effect on policymaking, by increasing the opposition's blocking powers.

D.3. Democratic Institutionalization: the United States Senate

The United States Senate is an excellent case study of the evolution of a chaotic to a consensual assembly. Since data for the United States Senate are available from 1877, we can graph trends in final passage roll rates across time and observe changes in the powers of government and opposition parties during the institutionalization of the assembly. Figure IV.1 shows the final passage roll rates of both majority and minority Senate parties from 1877 to 1997. The analysis is based on 2,597 final passage votes recorded in this period.

Note how large the roll rates of both political parties are in the early life of Congress. This is typical of a chaotic assembly. However, the roll rate of the majority party is always lower than the roll rate of the minority – a reflection of the advantage of holding a majority in the Senate. Over time, both majority and minority party roll rates decrease, approaching zero by the time the assembly is well institutionalized. This evolution is a typical transition from a chaotic to a consensual legislative assembly – from an assembly with weak political parties to one governed through responsible party government.

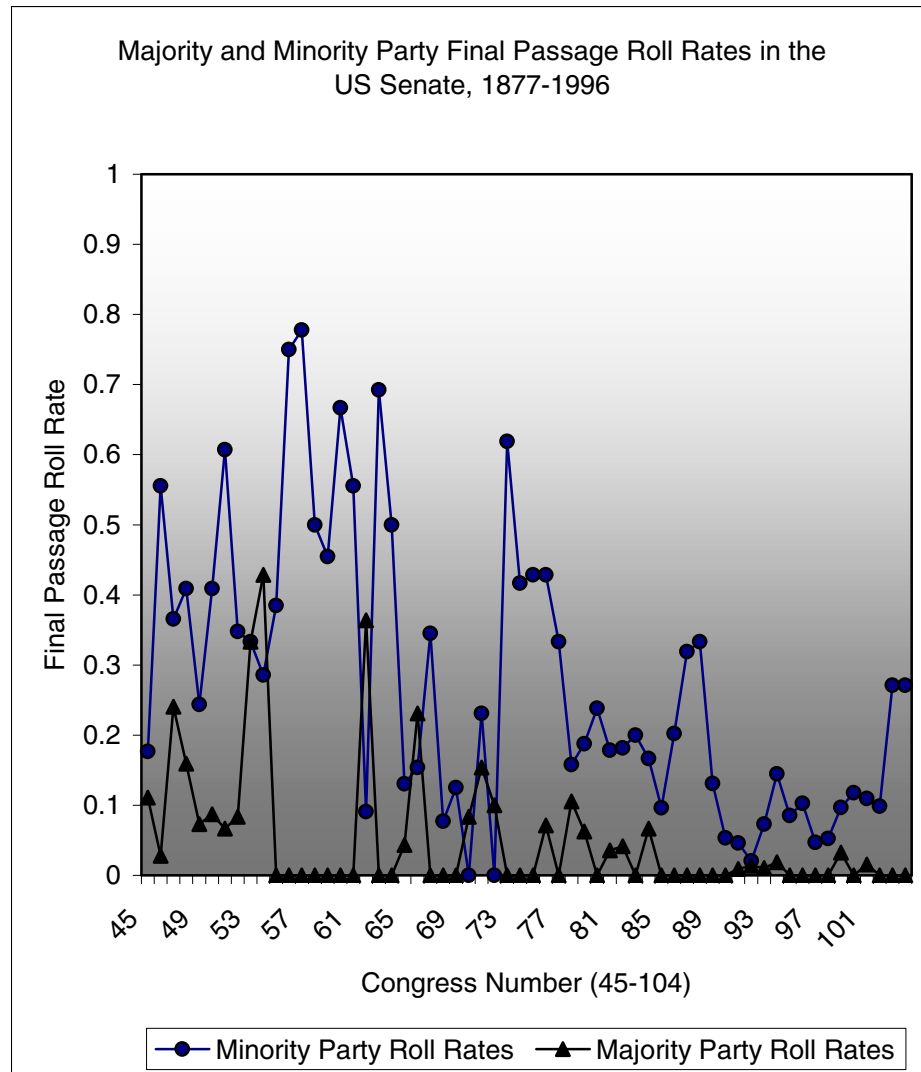


Figure IV.1. Final Passage Roll Rates for Majority and Minority Parties in the United States Senate: 1877-1997

V. Conclusions and Directions for Future Research

In this project, I developed and empirically tested three exhaustive and mutually exclusive models of legislative organization: the government dominance, consensus, and chaos models. Two of the models feature responsible party government in the form of a government or majority party dominated legislature (where the government has the monopoly of blocking power), or in the form of a consensus legislature (where government and opposition parties share blocking power). Chaotic legislatures, where blocking power is absent, can be observed in the early beginning of an assembly, such as the United States Senate at the end of the 19th century.

An important alternative to blocking power is party discipline. I introduced discipline in these models to reflect that discipline can substitute or co-exist with blocking power in the government dominance model, and that discipline can co-exist with shared government – opposition blocking power in the consensus model.

Using unique predictions derived from these six different models, I then analyzed empirical legislative output data and found that we can reject the chaos model of legislative organization for all modern democratic assemblies analyzed in the project. Most cotemporary legislative chambers fit well with the government (or majority) party dominated model of legislative organization.

Data from the German Bundestag, the United Kingdom House of Commons and the Swedish Riksdag are consistent with the government dominance model wherein party discipline exists in addition to government blocking power. However, government dominated legislatures with responsible party government also exist in the absence of discipline. In the United States House of Representatives and the Italian Chamber of Deputies, for example, data suggest that the governments have power to dominate the

agenda, but cannot discipline their own members. Similarly, data from the Czech Republic Chamber of Deputies are consistent with a weakly government dominated chamber wherein the government parties exercise some degree of blocking power but discipline is absent. The existence of government control in the absence of discipline indicates that blocking power is a potent institutional tool.

The only modern legislative chamber for which the government dominance model could be rejected is the United States Senate. The contemporary United States Senate data are consistent with the consensus model where majority and minority party leaders exercise shared blocking power and discipline is absent.

Consensual chambers also arise during periods of divided government, when the opposition becomes more powerful and has increased access to blocking power. Legislative output data confirmed that this holds true in the United States House and Senate. The evidence was particularly strong when examining one of the most controversial areas of partisan debate - nomination votes in the Senate.

Empirical tests for the Senate also confirmed that early data are consistent with the chaos model, whereas data from contemporary times, when the chamber is fully institutionalized, suggest that responsible party government is in place in the form of a consensus model. Thus, the data indicate that legislatures naturally evolve from chaos to responsible party government models (in the form of a government dominance or consensus model).

In sum, empirical tests have suggested that:

- We can reject the chaos model for all modern democratic legislatures studied;

- We can reject the consensus model for all modern legislatures studied except for the Senate;
- Legislative output data are consistent with the government dominance model for most modern democratic legislatures studied;
- Voting discipline can substitute for blocking power (or co-exist with blocking power);
- Divided government leads to more consensual legislatures;
- Democratic legislatures naturally evolve from chaotic to responsible party government assemblies.

The formal models developed in chapter III have greater potential than utilized in the present study. Additional empirical predictions can be derived from these models that will allow further testing. Consider, for example, policy moves, which is a concept coined and most recently used by Chandler, Cox and McCubbins (2006); Cox and McCubbins (2005); and Cox, Heller and McCubbins (2005).

Policy moves are votes that passed (so that policy was changed) and generated conflict between government and opposition (they were not unanimous votes). Thus, policy moves are successes and rolls together, minus votes that were successes for both government and opposition. This leaves us with all votes that changed policy where government and opposition disagreed.

We can classify each policy move as toward the government (where the position of the government was in favor of the vote); or toward the opposition (where the position of the opposition party was in favor of the vote). Because these votes are conflicting, a policy move toward the government is at the same time a success for the government and

a roll for the opposition; and a policy move toward the opposition is at the same time a success for the opposition and a roll for the government.

By separating these conflicting policy moves, we obtain an additional prediction from our models. For example, in a government (or majority) party dominated legislature, we expect all votes to be policy moves toward the government. For a left government, policy will move leftward, and for a right government, policy will move rightward, always rolling the opposition parties. Chandler, Cox and McCubbins (2006) show that in the German Bundestag, between 1980 and 2002, 99% of the policy moves are toward the government, and 1% toward the opposition. Moreover, all the policy moves away from the government and toward the opposition took place during divided government – when we expect the Bundestag to become more consensual and the policy moves to no longer be all toward the government and away from the opposition.

Additionally, these models can be further developed by incorporating assumptions such as costs associated with amending or instituting closed rules. At present the models are basic and constitute a starting point subject to further refinement. Because they make basic assumptions about the legislative process and generalize across a large number of empirical cases, observations concerning legislative output do not perfectly fit the model's predictions. By incorporating refined assumptions, the models will yield predictions that will closer match observed output. For instance, an additional model should be developed for minority governments that do not hold a majority of seats.

Now that we are able to use legislative data to assess if government and opposition political parties exercise discipline and blocking power in national legislatures, how can we use this knowledge? I have so far emphasized that being able to identify these institutional mechanisms allows us to evaluate the presence of responsible party

government. Additionally, these mechanisms are crucial to an analysis of opposition parties.

For instance, using the models and measures of legislative output described in the project, we can assess the influence of opposition parties on the policymaking process. Whether minority preferences are materialized through policy decisions in a country with a diverse population is a major concern in political science. Are oppositions actively involved in the policy process, or do they constantly get defeated? As shown by legislative output data, opposition parties in the German Bundestag, Maltese House of Representatives or the British House of Commons have some of the highest defeat rates, thus they have little power over the policymaking process. By contrast, opposition parties in the United States Senate or even the United States House and the Italian Chamber of Deputies have smaller defeat rates and higher winning rates, thus they are in a better institutional position to exercise real influence in policymaking.

Examining legislative output data during unified and divided government allows us to measure the increase of opposition influence on the policymaking process during divided government. Thus, we have a quantifiable means to estimate the effects of divided government on the opposition's ability to affect the content of legislation.

Tracing how a legislature and the institutional powers of government and opposition parties evolve across time, also provides a measure of democratic institutionalization. As we saw in the case of the United States Senate, legislatures evolve naturally from chaotic assemblies to those featuring responsible party government. Analyzing legislative output data across time allows us to assess if and when responsible party government has come into place in a newly born legislature.

Finally, once we have evidence suggesting that discipline and blocking power are present, we can investigate the cross-national variation in institutional design that leads to the presence (or absence) of these mechanisms. What kind of electoral systems and legislative institutions lead to disciplined parties? What kind of rules of legislative procedure and institutional design lead to government blocking power or shared government – opposition blocking power?

The ability to use legislative data to analyze the presence of discipline and blocking power in national legislatures provides new opportunities to answer major research questions in multiple areas of political science. It allows us to estimate the presence of responsible party government, the influence of opposition parties on policymaking, the effects of divided government on policymaking, and the degree and timing of institutionalization of new democratic legislatures. It also allows us to initiate a systematic cross-national analysis of the variation in political institutions that explains the presence of discipline and blocking power.

Appendix A: List of Political Parties Included in the Analysis, by Country and Legislative Period

1. German Bundestag, 1983-2002

Wahlperiode (legislative period)	Government Political Parties	Opposition Political Parties
10 (1983-1987)	CDU FDP	SPD GRN
11 (1987-1990)	CDU FDP	SPD GRN
12 (1991-1994)	CDU FDP	SPD GRN PDS
13(1994-1998)	CDU FDP	SPD GRN PDS
14(1998-2002)	SPD GRN	CDU FDP PDS

Party acronyms:

CDU = Christian Democratic Union

FDP = Free Democratic Party

SPD = Social Democratic Party

GRN = Green Party

PDS = Party of Democratic Socialism

2. The United States House of Representatives, 1953-1999

Congress Number (Legislative Period)	Party in Government (Majority Party)	Party in Opposition (Minority Party)
83 (1953-1955) 104-105 (1995-1999)	Republican Party	Democratic Party
84-103 (1955-1995)	Democratic Party	Republican Party

3. Italian Chamber of Deputies, 1991-1999

Government Name	Government Parties	Opposition Parties
Andreotti VII (April 12, 1991 through April 24, 1992)	PSI, PLI, PSDI, DC	PRI, M-SVP, MSI-DN, FE, VERDE, SI, DP-COM, GC-PDS
Amato I (June 28, 1992 through April 22, 1993)	PSI, PLI, PSDI, DC	PRI, M-SVP, LEGA-N, PDS, MSI-DN, RC, RETE, VERDI, FE
Ciampi (April 28, 1993 through April 16, 1994)	PSI, PLI, PSDI, DC	PRI, M-SVP, LEGA-N, PDS, MSI-DN, RC, RETE, VERDI, FE
Berlusconi I (May 10, 1994 through December 22, 1994)	LEGA-N, CCD, F-ITA, AN-MSI	PPI, PROG-F, RC-PRO
Prodi (May 17, 1996 through October 9, 1998)	DS-U, PD-U, RIN-IT	CCD, F-ITA, RC-PRO, AN, LEGA-P, UDR
D'Alema I (October 21, 1998 through December 18, 1999)	DS-U, PD-U, RIN-IT, UDR, COMUN, DEM-U	F-ITA, AN, LEGA-P

Party acronyms

DC = Christian Democrats

PSI = Socialist Party

PRI = Republican Party

PSDI = Social Democrats

PLI = Liberal Party

M-SVP = South Tirol Party

LEGA-N = The Northern League

PDS = Left Democrat Party

MSI-DN = Italian Social Movement/National Right

RC = Communist Reformers/Refounding Party

RETE = The Network

VERDI = Greens
FE = European Federalists (Radicals)
CCD = Christian Democratic Center
VERDE = Federation of the Greens
SI = Independent Left (elected on PCI party lists)
GC-PDS = The Left Democrat/Communist Group
PPI = Popular Party
F-ITA = Forza Italia – “Go, Italy”
AN-MSI = National Alliance/Social Movement
PROG-F = Progressive Alliance Federation
RC-PRO = Communist Reformers - Progressives
AN = National Alliance (reformed Neo Fascists)
DS-U = Left Democrats - Olive Tree
PD-U = Popular Democrats - Olive Tree
RIN-IT = Italian Renewal Party
LEGA-P = The Northern League Padania
UDR = Democratic Union of the Republic
COMUN = Communists
DEM-U = Democrats - Olive Tree

4. The United Kingdom House of Commons, 2001-2005

Party in Government: Labor Party

Parties in Opposition: Conservative Party and Liberal Party

5. The Czech Chamber of Deputies, 1997-2001

Government (Legislative Period)	Government Parties	Opposition Parties
December 1997	ODS, ODA, KDU-CSL	SPRRSC, KSCM, CSSD
January – June 1998 (non-partisan government)	ODS, ODA, KDU-CSL, SPRRSC, KSCM, CSSD, US	
July 1998 - 2001	CSSD	KSCM, KDU-CSL, ODS, US

Party acronyms:

ODS = Civic Democratic Party

ODA = Civic Democratic Alliance

KDU-CSL = Christian Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party Coalition

SPRRSC = Republican Party

KSCM = Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia

CSSD = Czech Social Democratic Party

US = Freedom Union

6. The Swedish Riksdag, 2004-2005

Party in Government: Social Democrat Party

Parties in Opposition: Center Party, Liberal Party, Christian Democratic Party, Moderate (Coalition) Party

Support Parties (informal government partners): Left Party, Green Party

7. Malta's House of Representatives, 1998-2002

Party in government: National Party

Party in opposition: Labor Party

8. The United States Senate, 1877-1997

Congress Number (Legislative Period)	Party in Government (Majority Party)	Party in Opposition (Minority Party)
45 (1877-1879) 47-52 (1881-1893) 54-62 (1895-1913) 66-72 (1919-1933) 80 (1947-1949) 83 (1953-1955) 97-99 (1981-1987) 104 (1995-1997)	Republican Party	Democratic Party
46 (1879-1881) 53 (1893-1895) 63-65 (1913-1919) 73-79 (1933-1947) 81-82 (1949-1953) 84-96 (1955-1981) 100-103 (1987-1995)	Democratic Party	Republican Party

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