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Introduction:

Ideology and representation in American politics

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The role played by personal ideology as opposed to constituent representation in the behavior of elected officials has become an important and controversial issue. It bears most directly on the predictability of politics. That is, can social scientists adequately model political decisions using only some set of measurable constituent interests? Further, if ideology is important, can it be modelled and employed in a positive theory of politics? Finally, if legislators systematically act in their own personal interests and against the interests of their constituencies, what are the normative properties of representative democracy?

The first generation of empirical research (see Kau and Rubin, 1982; Kalt and Zupan, 1984, 1990; Peltzman, 1984; and Dougan and Munger, 1989) divided sharply on the existence and importance of ideological behavior or "shirking" by legislators. The eight papers collected here represent a significant contribution to the second generation of research on this topic. These papers are all pieces of original empirical research. There are no review articles, and there was no attempt to impose a theme on the authors. In fact, several of the papers report conflicting results or make contradictory claims. In what follows, I attempt to both describe the work contained in this issue and to explain the relationship among the papers.

The first three papers are theoretical and empirical critiques of the common methods used to measure legislator-specific ideology or the existence of shirking. Goff and Grier argue that the evidence of shirking behavior offered by previous authors is fully consistent with what would be observed if legislators perfectly represented idiosyncratic constituencies. They show cross-section regressions predicting senator ADA scores fail Chow coefficient stability tests across simple divisions of the sample, and that the residuals of these cross-section regressions or the difference between ADA ratings in a state's senate pair (the most commonly used measures of legislator ideology) do not adversely affect senators' reelection chances. They also show that differences in ADA rankings in a state's senate delegation are positively related to several measures of the heterogeneity of the electorate.

Krehbiel considers the appropriateness of using geographic constituency characteristics as measures of legislator preferences. In addition to the use of these characteristics to predict votes, Krehbiel cites several studies (see his note 4) that use a single constituent characteristic to measure a legislator's prefer-

ences. Krehbiel notes that using a cross-sectional regression of state average constituent characteristics to predict senators' preferences imposes the restrictive condition that demographics drive representation in exactly the same way for every senator of every state, an hypothesis easily rejected by Goff and Grier.

Krehbiel's empirical approach is to measure how much geographic constituency measures could possibly improve predictions of senate voting behavior over a series of coin flipping models. Using various subsets of the Senate roll-call votes in the 101st Congress, he shows that same state senators vote the same way between 61–68 percent of the time, while a simple unfair coin-flipping model predicts match rates of between 50–58%. In other words, perfect knowledge of geographic constituency variables can only at best improve predictions of senate voting by 10%. Krehbiel shows that just using ADA scores does much better on a sample of 31 key votes, chosen by the Congressional Quarterly. Krehbiel concludes by stressing the same distinction between geographic and electoral constituencies that Fenno (1978) and Goff and Grier emphasize, and by arguing against using average constituent variables to measure individual legislator preferences.

Fort, Hallagan, Morong, and Stegner (FHMS hereafter) use Kalt and Zupan's (1984) original model and data as a starting point, and argue for a wider specification of constituency variables. They show that including PAC contributions from relevant industries makes the ADA residual that is significant in the KZ models become insignificant in their expanded model (for the 24 senators up for re-election in the KZ sample). FHMS also note that campaign contributions are at least one set of variables that lets constituency vary across same state senators and argue that what has been often interpreted as ideologically based shirking may well be due to differing electoral constituencies among legislators with similar (or identical) geographical constituencies.

The next two papers take a different approach, using survey and poll data to measure ideology and examine its importance in voter evaluation of presidential candidates and the congressional vote on the flag burning amendment respectively. Besides the use of survey data, Macdonald and Rabinowitz expound their theory of directional voting as an alternative to the more familiar spatial model (see also Rabinowitz and Macdonald, 1989). Stated most simply, directional theory assumes people are either for or against a move from the status quo on any policy and can be arrayed on a continuum measuring the intensity of their preferences, while spatial theory puts people on a continuum of their most preferred policy outcomes. Macdonald and Rabinowitz use data from the National Election Survey to estimate the effect of voters (self-reported) ideology on their evaluation of presidential candidates from 1972–1988. Their results show both the importance of ideology and empirical support for their directional theory.

Lascher, Kelman and Kane (LKK) address the tension between legislators' roles as delegates vs. trustees (see Fenno, 1978), examining factors affecting the vote on the 1990 proposed constitutional amendment to ban flag burning. LKK received responses from 118 Democratic House Members to a survey on the flag burning question, and also use demographic data on all Democratic districts and public opinion polls on the flag burning issue. Among their results, LKK show that both perceived constituent opinion and personal policy views significantly influenced the vote on the amendment.

Wright examines in detail an issue that is briefly addressed by Goff and Grier. He first acknowledges that the fact that residuals from cross-sectional regressions predicting senators' ADA scores can explain senators' votes on particular bills is not sufficient to conclude legislators vote their own ideology. This is basically the observational equivalence point made in Goff and Grier. Wright goes on to argue that if those regression residuals represent anti-constituent behavior, then it should show up in lower vote totals on election day. He compiles a large sample of 221 senators running for re-election from 1964–1984, estimates a series of cross-sectional ADA regressions and uses the residuals in a pooled cross-section time series model explaining incumbent senators percent of the vote. Contrary to Goff and Grier, Wright finds that these residuals do significantly lower the vote for the senator by a substantive amount. There are two major factors that may explain these differing results. First, Wright uses a much longer sample, 1964–84 (221 observations) vs. Goff and Grier's 1978–84 (96 observations) sample. Second, Goff and Grier are able to use *campaign spending by the challenger and the incumbent* as regressors while Wright cannot control for the effects of money on elections in his regressions since data on campaign spending is not available before 1974.

The last two papers are works by scholars with a long and distinguished history of research on ideology. First, Lott and Bronars examine the time-series properties of House members' voting scores from 1975–1990. They undertake a comprehensive and authoritative analysis using a variety of interest-group rankings showing that these ratings are highly correlated over time and that there is no evidence of significant changes in voting record in house members' final terms. Second, Kau and Rubin consider the relationship between constituent and legislator ideology, interest-group money, congressional voting, and congressional election outcomes. They argue that constituent ideology (the district vote for Reagan) significantly affects their chosen congressional votes, and that interest-group money, which they interpret as non-ideological shirking by legislators is also frequently significant. Kau and Rubin call for a more careful consideration of constituent, rather than legislator, ideology as a determinant of congressional voting.

There are three conclusions that can be drawn from this collection. First, the difference between the geographic and electoral constituencies must be taken

seriously when studying ideological behavior. Residuals from cross-state regressions using average demographics to predict voting records are not good measures of ideological shirking. Second, survey data may provide a valuable way to address this problem and get at the ideological positions of both voters and legislators. Third, interest-group ratings of individual congresspersons are extremely stable over time and show little evidence of last period shirking.

Several questions also emerge that are worthy of future work. First, on an empirical level, what is the nature of the relationship between a legislator's voting record, constituency, interest-group monies and electoral success? Second, can a statistical measure of shirking or ideological behavior be derived from a satisfactory theoretical base? This question can be put another way. Is there a theoretically correct, operationally possible method of measuring constituent interest? As a further example of the problem, note that FHMS consider PACs a part of the legislators' constituency but Kau and Rubin view the significance of PAC money as evidence of legislator shirking. Third, on the normative level, can one say that behavior by a legislator that appears to be against the wishes of a sizable portion of the constituency is bad or undesirable? That is, what are the welfare economics of representative government?

Finally, there are many other democracies in the world besides the United States. While U.S political institutions are unique, questions about, and the importance of, accurate modelling of political decisions in representative governments are not. Perhaps some empirical cross-national comparisons could identify political institutions that affect the nature of representation and the existence or extent of independent ideological behavior by legislators.

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