Representation without Parties: Reconsidering the One-Party South

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Abstract

The one-party South is considered the canonical example of democracy's impossibility in the absence of partisan competition. I argue that this view conflates the effects of disfranchisement and one-partyism. Despite the lack of partisan competition, Democratic primaries induced a "selectoral connection" between Southern members of Congress and the (white) eligible electorate. Using survey and roll-call data from the 1930s–50s, I show that Southern whites were collectively well represented in Congress. Southern MCs' transformation from New Dealers to centrists mirrored analogous shifts in the white public. Cross-sectionally, Southern senators were just as responsive to their electorates' economic policy preferences as non-Southern senators. Data on income differences across electorates indicate that Southern representives were responsive too, though less so than senators. In addition to illuminating a pivotal period in American political, these findings suggest that partisan competition is not necessary for effective representation.

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1 Introduction

"The political parties created democracy," E. E. Schattschneider famously declared, "and. . . modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties" 1942, 1. Few theses are more widely accepted in political science than Schattschneider's claim that democracy requires partisan competition. In this view, elections alone are insufficient for genuine representation. Only parties, the logic goes, can provide the structure and coherence needed for voters to make informed choices between competing candidates and to hold incumbents accountable for their performance in office (see, e.g., American Political Science Association 1950; Aldrich 1995; Lipset 1996; Katz 2006; Aldrich and Griffin 2010).

Since the 1949 publication of V. O. Key's *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, the one-party South has been taken to exemplify the impossibility of democracy without partisan competition. Key portrayed a regional politics marked by flamboyant personalities and "friends-and-neighbors" alignments rather than policy-based competition and collective responsibility. Key attributed these pathologies to the lack of partisan alternative to the regionally hegemonic Democratic Party, concluding that factional competition within Democratic primary elections was a poor substitute for partisan competition. These conditions, he argued, stunted representation even of the (all-white) eligible electorate and exacerbated the regime's bias towards the "haves" over the "have-nots" (Key 1949).

In this paper, I propose an important revision of Key's portrait of Southern politics, and by extension of the conventional wisdom regarding the necessity of parties for democratic representation. Focusing on congressional politics between 1930 and 1962, I argue that Democratic primaries in the one-party South created a qualified but real "selectoral connection" between voters and politicians.[1] Unlike general elections, primary elections for House and Senate nominations were often vigorously contested in the South, and the threat of competition induced candidates to cater to the potential electorate. Thus, despite an almost total absence of partisan competition, Southern members of Congress (MCs) did represent the subset of their constituents permitted to participate politically. Moreover, while this subset excluded many whites as well as nearly all blacks, it extended well beyond the socioeconomic elite usually considered to have controlled Southern politics (cf. Quadagno 1988; Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder 1993; Domhoff 1996; Alston and Ferrie 1999; Manza 2000).

1. Like Key (1949) and most other works on Southern politics, I define the South as the eleven former Confederate states, though I occasionally expand the definition to include Oklahoma and Kentucky.

To support this thesis, I first present evidence that congressional primaries were competitive enough to induce an electoral connection qualitatively similar to that outside the South.[2] I then show that on economic issues, where Southern whites exhibited the most diversity and change over time, Southern MCs were broadly in step with their constituents. Southern MCs' aggregate shift from New Dealers to economic centrists between the 1930s and 1950s mirrored similar trends in the Southern public's support for liberal policies. Cross-sectionally, Southern senators and representatives were responsive to differences in the liberalism of their (white) state publics, and at least in the Senate, responsiveness was as strong in the South as in the non-South. Finally, I show that Southern MCs were also responsive to the economic interests of their electorate, as measured by median voter income, though more so in the Senate than the House.

Taken together, these findings suggest an alternative perspective on the one-party South. They highlight the region's internal diversity and points of connection with mainstream American politics rather than its status as an "authoritarian" regime counterposed against the "democratic" non-South (cf. Gibson 2012; Mickey 2014). Explaining the behavior of Southern MCs in terms of their electoral incentives also offers an explanation for their internal diversity as well as their well-known and highly consequential shift to the right over this period (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder 1993). At the same time, the evidence helps to clarify what exactly was non-democratic about the one-party South, downplaying the importance of unipartyism in favor of the more fundamental effects of restrictions on political participation. This in turn refines our understanding of the relationship between parties and democracy, indicating that under certain conditions, effective representation may not require partisan competition.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. I begin with an overview of the role of parties in democratic theory. I then survey the politics of the one-party South, with an emphasis on competition within the hegemonic Democratic Party. The next section examines the collective and dyadic relationships between the economic liberalism of Southern Democrats in Congress and the economic policy preferences of Southern whites. This is followed by an analysis of Southern MCs' responsiveness to income differences in their electorates. The final section discusses the implications for democratic theory and American political development.

2. Notably, Mayhew's *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (1974) makes little distinction between South and non-South and his analysis.

2 Parties and Democracy

Political scientists have long argued that without political parties, democracy is "unthinkable" (Schattschneider 1942), or at least "unworkable" (Aldrich 1995). Some works go beyond mere empirical correlation to assert that "partisan competition is a necessary precondition for democracy," at least on a large scale (Aldrich and Griffin 2010, 595). Notwithstanding the prevalence of nonpartisan local elections (Shaffner, Streb, and Wright 2001) and the absence of parties in many pre-modern democracies and even a few contemporary ones (Anckar and Anckar 2000), the general consensus is that "modern democracy is party democracy" (Katz 1980, 1).[3]

Parties serve several functions conducive to democracy. First, almost by definition, parties promote political competition, which Dahl (1971) identifies along with political participation as one of the two "dimensions" of democracy. Strictly speaking, effective representation does not require that elections be competitive in equilibrium.[4] But without at least the threat of competition, voters cannot influence the identity of elected officials or hold them accountable for their actions in office.[5] "In the absence of the right to oppose," writes Dahl, "the right to 'participate' is stripped of a very large part of [its] significance" (1971, 5).

Competition itself, however, may mean little unless opposing candidates offer clear choices to voters. This, too, is encouraged by parties, at least potentially. By persuading ambitious politicians to affiliate under a single "brand," successful parties radically simplify the information costs of voting (Downs 1957; Aldrich 1995). Without the clarity and continuity provided by party brands, voters have difficulty distinguishing and trusting the platforms of different candidates. When this is the case, voters' choices will bear little connection to their political preferences (or, more

3. For further expressions of this view, see American Political Science Association (1950), Lipset (1996), and Katz (2006).

4. For example, in Besley and Coate's (1997) "citizen-candidate" model of representative democracy, the policy outcome in an equilibrium in which only a single candidate runs for office is always the ideal point of the median voter (given a one-dimensional policy space). In fact, in their model one-candidate equilibria are more representative of the median voter than two-candidate equilibria, which produce polarized candidates.

5. At the end of his analysis of a principal-agent model of elections, Ferejohn (1986, 23) stresses that voters' ability to exercise electoral accountability hinges on the assumption that challengers and incumbents cannot collude. He suggests that one-party regimes such as the American South be viewed as "mechanisms that control entry of politicians" and thus permit incumbents to engage in just such a form of collusion. At the opposite extreme are pulverized candidate-centered regimes like 1990s Peru, where the absence of strong parties inhibited resistance to President Fujimori's dictatorial tendencies (Levitsky and Cameron 2003).

likely, they will simply not vote).[6]

Finally, in addition to the prospective choice just mentioned, parties also facilitate retrospective accountability of incumbent officeholders. Accountability requires that voters be able to attribute responsibility for policy outcomes and punish those responsible for poor outcomes by removing them from office (Przeworski, Stokes, and Manin 1999). When government policies are the product of many officials' decisions, however, attributions of responsibility become very difficult. The challenge of accountability is further magnified in the case of constituency-based legislatures, where voters in a given district can only punish their representative. For these reasons, many scholars have concluded that retrospective accountability requires responsible party government (e.g., Key 1949; American Political Science Association 1950; Fiorina 1980).

These three beneficial effects of parties—electoral competition, clear alternatives, and collective responsibility—are theoretically and empirically separable, both from each other and from the concept of party itself. The existence of party competition, for example, does not guarantee that candidates will offer clear or divergent policy platforms.[7] Nor does the absence of party labels deprive voters of all knowledge of candidates' positions, especially in local contexts where personal acquaintance with candidates is more likely. Media and campaign communications also convey information, as do alternative cues such as candidates' incumbency status, ethnicity, or hometown (Squire and Smith 1988; Shaffner, Streb, and Wright 2001). Indeed, there is evidence that even in one-party authoritarian regimes elections promote accountability and policy congruence between officials and voters (e.g., Manion 1996, 2014). The relative importance of the different aspects of party competition is difficult to determine due to their empirical co-occurrence.

Much of what we know about politics without parties is based on the quite common situation of one-party regions embedded within a nationally competitive party system. In such settings, any electoral contestation that exists takes place in primaries conducted by the subnationally dominant party or else in nonpartisan elections.[8] Most treatments of such regimes have either considered subnational gov-

6. Shaffner, Streb, and Wright (2001) show that in nonpartisan state and local elections, turnout is lower, and voters rely heavily on alternative cues, such as candidates' incumbency status, gender, or ethnicity (see also Squire and Smith 1988).

7. The lack of clear divergence in the policy platforms of the two parties was one of the main complaints of the 1950 American Political Science Association report on parties.

8. Subnational one-party dominance is not exclusively, or even primarily, the consequence of authoritarian restrictions on political competition. In many regimes with vigorous party competition at the national level, subnational governments are nonetheless dominated by one party, sometimes to the point where all political competition takes place within the locally dominant party. This was

ernance in isolation from higher levels of politics (e.g., Key 1949; Shaffner, Streb, and Wright 2001) or else examined authoritarian enclaves where mainstream electoral opposition is effectively prohibited by regime rulers (e.g., Gibson 2012).[9] Less well studied is the interaction of national two-party politics and within-party or nonpartisan competition at the subnational level. An advantage of such an analysis is the possibility of disentangling the effects of partisan competition per se from the systemic effects of parties on the structure of political competition.

3 The Selectoral Connection in the One-Party South

As noted above, the one-party South has long been seen as exemplifying the necessity of parties for democracy (see, e.g., Aldrich 2011, 25–6, 310–12). In fact, Key's (1949) classic analysis of Southern politics offered among the earliest and most influential statements of this view (see especially chapter 14). That the one-party South should figure so prominently in the literature on parties and democracy is somewhat ironic given that the lack of party competition was hardly the only undemocratic feature of Southern politics. Most conspicuously, for the first two-thirds of the 20th century, legal and extralegal suffrage restrictions disenfranchised nearly all Southern blacks as well as many whites. In light of these and other restrictions, scholars such as Gibson (2012) and Mickey (2014) have argued that the one-party South should be considered a set of authoritarian regimes qualitatively different from (though intimately connected to) the democratic national polity.[10]

While compelling in many respects, this authoritarianism–democracy dichotomy has the disadvantage of suggesting that the one-party South has little to tell us about the role of parties in democratic politics.[11] For my purposes, a continuous

true of the United States for long stretches of its history, not only in the South but also in several states in New England and the upper Midwest (Ranney and Kendall 1954; Bryan 1974).

9. As befits its subtitle "In State and Nation," Key's *Southern Politics* does emphasize that national political considerations underpinned one-party unity in the South, and it also devotes several chapters to Southern Democrats' role in national politics. Yet otherwise it gives relatively little attention to the linkages between state and national politics, and its arguments about the pathologies of one-party politics are made almost exclusively with reference to "the running of state governments" (Key 1949, 298).

10. Mickey (2008, 148–9) observes that the one-party South depended on several other authoritarian institutions in addition to restrictions on competition and suffrage, including legislative malapportionment, racial segregation, constricted civil society, and physical violence.

11. One advantage of thinking of the one-party South as an authoritarian regime is that it emphasizes the fact that the oppression of blacks in the South was not merely an "exception" to democracy, but a fundamental flaw that rendered the regime undemocratic by definition. A second

conceptualization of democracy is more appropriate.[12] Particularly useful are Dahl's two "dimensions" of democracy, competition and participation.[13] These dimensions, which can vary independently, provide a useful framework for characterizing diversity within the one-party South as well as generalizing to more democratic regimes.

The South's one-party regimes, which were consolidated around 1900 and dismantled in the 1960s, exhibited restrictions on both dimensions of democracy. Southern states imposed a variety of barriers to suffrage, including literacy tests, poll taxes, and onerous registration requirements, disenfranchising many citizens of both races (Alt 1994). By contrast, the so-called "white primary" had asymmetric racial effects, allowing white citizens to participate in the selection of Democratic nominees while at the same time legally excluding blacks from the only elections that mattered.

Until the Supreme Court struck it down in 1944, the white primary was arguably the South's "most powerful legal tool for preserving one-party rule" (Mickey 2008, 152). The fact that it allowed white Democrats to safely divide in the primary before uniting in the general election was crucial to its effectiveness, as it diminished the risk that whites dissatisfied with the Democratic nominee would defect in the general election, where they could potentially ally with blacks (Kousser 1984). In addition to providing a forum for electoral competition within the one-party system, Democratic primaries also forced politicians to cultivate a popular following rather than simply courting party leaders. Since even restricted Southern electorates extended well beyond the economic elite, Democratic primaries thus "provide[d] a mechanism through which the interests of low-income whites could be pressed" (Sanders 1999, 153).

Notwithstanding this potential, most scholars since Key have emphasized the ways that uncompetitive elections, "issueless" politics, and obsession with racial

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is it imports insights from the comparative literature on subnational authoritarianism, such as subnational regime leaders' obsession with *boundary control*: "maximizing incumbent influence over local politics and depriving oppositions of access to national allies and resources" (Gibson 2005, 108).

12. For continuous conceptualizations of democracy, see Dahl (1971), (Bollen 1980), and Coppedge and Reinicke (1990). See Collier and Adcock (1999) on the benefits of choosing a conceptualization of democracy to fit the theory and analytic objectives of the research project at hand.

13. Dahl (1971, 8) defines a *polyarchy* as a "relatively (but incompletely) democratized regime," characterized by a high degree of both competition and participation. A *hegemony*, by contrast, falls on the low end of both dimensions of democracy. Comparing the South to Athens' slave-based democracy, Dahl argues that the one-party South had "two political systems, one superimposed on the other: a more or less competitive polyarchy in which most whites were included and a hegemonic system to which Negroes were subject and to which southern whites were overwhelmingly allegiant" (1971, 93–4). The one-party South exhibited restrictions on both inclusiveness and contestation, a dual failing nicely captured by Huntington's (1970) notion of an "exclusionary one-party system."

supremacy largely prevented the representation of the interests of the "have nots," even those able to vote (Black and Black 1987, 5–8).[14] As one review puts it, the Souths "shriveled, conservative electorate" stymied mass political mobilization, and the lack of electoral competition gave Southern politicians "few incentives to respond to whatever popular pressures did emerge" (Manza 2000, 309). Even works that acknowledge liberal or reformist impulses among Southern politicians tend to attribute them to the preferences of Southern elites disadvantaged by regional biases in the national political economy (e.g., Bensel 1984; Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder 1993; Domhoff and Webber 2011).

While sometimes a useful simplification, the dominant practice of treating Southern politicians as ciphers for a conservative economic elite is hard to reconcile with what else we know about Southern politics. Specifically, it does not take adequate account of the substantial scope for popular participation in Democratic primaries; the frequency and intensity with which those primaries were contested; and the ideological variation among Southern voters and politicians. Below, I elaborate upon each of these considerations in turn.

3.1 Participation

First, as noted above, the electorate in the one-party South included a substantial proportion of the white population, many of whom could hardly be termed "haves."[15] In presidential elections between 1932 and 1948, turnout in the South averaged about 25% of the voting-age population; in 1952–60, the figure was almost 40%.[16] Turnout in House and Senate primaries was somewhat lower, averaging 17–23% in years before

14. For example, Domhoff and Webber (2011, 59) write:

> Complete planter dominance through the Democratic Party was solidified by the "white primary" system introduced early in the twentieth century. This system maintained one-party white dominance while at the same time providing a semblance of political choice and electoral competition, thereby allowing the dominant planter class to continue to process its allegiance to democratic principles. In effect, inter-party competition was replaced by intra-party competition among the decreasing percentage of whites that still had the right to vote.... With all due allowance for the populist-oriented stem-winders within the Democratic Party,... this was the party of the Southern white rich, at whose core stood the plantation capitalists.

15. In this period, the South was much poorer than the rest of the nation, with a per-capita income a little more than half as large (Schulman 1994, 3).

16. Calculated from county-level demographic data from the U.S. Census and electoral data from Leip (2013). McDonald and Popkin (2001, 969, Table 3) report that Southern VAP turnout rose to a peak of 50% in 1968 and then remained roughly constant though 2000.

1945 and 24–27% afterwards.[17]

Since primary turnout depended on election-specific conditions, presidential turnout is a better (though probably still conservative) measure of the size of the eligible primary electorate, especially since the overwhelming majority of Southern voters continued to identify and register as Democrats even as Republican presidential voting increased in the 1950s. The eligible electorate is a more relevant quantity than the actual number of voters because politicians tend to act in light of the anticipated response of potentially mobilizable constituencies (Arnold 1990).

On this point, it is important to emphasize the qualitative differences between suffrage limitations for blacks and those for whites, especially but not only before the abolition of the white primary in 1944. For blacks, suffrage barriers were nearly insuperable throughout most of this period. Even when they managed to register, blacks were often intimidated from actually voting—especially in areas where blacks formed a substantial portion of the population. As a consequence, black voters remained a small fraction of the Southern electorate and, outside of a few pockets, were a minor presence in Southern politics through the early 1960s (Bartley 1995, 172). White turnout, depressed by apathy (Ewing 1953, 3–4) and free-riding (Alt 1994, 359) as well as by suffrage restrictions, was inherently more elastic, and given sufficient motivation and mobilization, many whites could overcome barriers to voting.

3.2 Competition

General elections in the one-party South tended to be sleepy affairs in which the Democratic nominee cruised to victory. Even as Republicans made inroads at the presidential level in the 1950s, competing for lower-level offices in the South far more daunting, given that the party totally lacked experienced candidates or an institutional base in the region (Black and Black 2002).[18] Notwithstanding Republican takeovers of a few isolated congressional districts, over three-quarters of Democratic House candidates between 1950 and 1960 won office with more than 80% of the vote. Through the 1960 election, Democrats continued to compose well over 90% of Southern House members and 100% of Southern senators.

17. Calculated from data provided by James Snyder on behalf of his collaborators (Ansolabehere et al. 2010)

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

To a substantial degree, primary elections in the South compensated for the lack of competition in general elections (Ansolabehere et al. 2010). Between 1932 and 1952, about half of all Democratic House and Senate primaries were contested. Although the proportion dropped below 40% after 1952, primaries remained at least as important as general elections as sites of political competition. Over 30% of Southern members of Congress prevailed in at least two contested primaries in their career (including their first). Even Sam Rayburn of Texas, the powerful and long-serving Speaker of the House, rarely saw an election year pass without a primary challenge (Hardeman and Bacon 1987).

Primary opposition was not just perfunctory. About 19% of contested congressional primaries were decided by a margin less than 10 percentage points, and 36% were decided by less than 20 points.[19] Incumbents running for reelection were defeated in 7% of all Southern primaries in the 1930s, 3.5% in the 1940s, and 2% in the 1950s—incumbent defeat rates comparable to many contemporary House elections (Ansolabehere et al. 2010, 197).

Was this competition meaningful? Key and others have emphasized that in the absence of party labels, Southern primary campaigns often revolved around other salient characteristics of the candidates, such as geographic ties or a flamboyant personality. Nevertheless, as Key himself notes, Southern primaries were not completely chaotic either, nor was the structure of political competition the same in every Southern state. Geographic or personalistic factions sometimes mapped onto class or economic cleavages, most often pitting the poorer, whiter upcountry against plantation areas. Moreover, voters seem to have had enough information to coordinate on few viable candidates, especially in information-rich contexts, such at the local level or when an incumbent was running for reelection (Grynaviski 2004).

The historical record is replete with examples of Southern MCs unseated by opponents who mobilized new voting constituencies or, more commonly, took advantage of shifting public mood. In 1948, for example, CIO-backed Henderson Lanham mobilized newly unionized textile workers and unseated anti-labor Georgia congressman Malcom Tarver (Brattain 1997).[20] In the early to mid-1930s, a period of liberal ascendency, a number of anti–New Deal incumbents were defeated by more liberal

19. When elections that were uncontested or for which data are missing are included in the denominator, the percentages fall to 8% and 17%, respectively. As a point of comparison, in the 35 years after the 1974 publication of David Mayhew's famous "vanishing marginals" article, about 15% of non-Southern House elections were decided by less than 10 points.

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

challengers.[21] When the public swung to the right, conservative challengers took advantage of the opportunity to sweep Southern liberals out of office.[22] Other incumbents preemptively retired in anticipation of electoral defeat, an indication that the threat of competition can be as effective as its realization.[23]

In short, primary competition was far from universal, but it was common enough to pose a genuine threat to Southern MCs, and competition did not have to be observed to be effective. Further, while candidates typically (though not always) ran individualized campaigns rather than affiliating with a coherent faction, the conduct and outcomes of primary campaigns was not simply random. Rather, they often reflected shifts in public mood or the mobilization of new constituencies.

3.3 Ideological Variation

As the preceding discussion of competition suggests, Southern Democrats were ideologically diverse on economic matters, as one would expect of a party that "encompasse[d] all shades of political attitude" on issues other than white supremacy (Key 1949, 360). The familiar epithet "Southern bloc," with its suggestion of preference unanimity and coordinated action, really only applies to civil rights and, perhaps, to labor issues.[24] On questions of social welfare and economic regulation, Southern

21. In 1934, for example, Senator Hubert Stephens of Mississippi, a lukewarm supporter of the early New Deal, tried in vain to tie himself to Roosevelt but was defeated for renomination by the populist Theodore Bilbo—the sort of challenge on the left that kept otherwise wary Southerners loyal to FDR (Morgan 1985, 64; Swain 2001). One senator who did not heed the signs of this defeat was Oklahoma's Senator Thomas Gore, a long-time incumbent and one of the most outspoken opponents of the New Deal, who was overwhelmingly defeated in the 1936 Democratic primary in (Patterson 1967, 22–4; Dangerfield and Flynn 1936).

22. 1938, for example, brought the defeats of such liberal representatives as Maury Maverick of Texas and Norman Hamilton of Virginia (Weiss 1971; Sweeney 1999).

23. (Coode 1971, 19) describes Georgia Representative Bryant Castellow's decision to retire in 1936 as follows:

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

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

24. On the Southern caucus's coordinated response to civil rights initiatives, see Finley (2008) and Bloch Rubin (2014). Key (1949, ch. 16–17) argues that civil rights was the only area where Southern

MCs ranged from arch-conservatives like Virginia senator Harry Byrd to fervent New Dealers like Lister Hill of Alabama.

Southern MCs also exhibited substantial ideological evolution over this period. Through the mid-1930s, Southern Democrats were just as overwhelmingly supportive of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal as their non-Southern counterparts. Beginning in the 75th Congress (1937–38), however, Southern Democrats began allying with Republicans in a "conservative coalition" to block or roll back liberal advances (Patterson 1966, 1967; Polsby 2004). By the mid-1940s, Southerners had reached a pivotal middle position in Congress, giving them veto power over both liberal and conservative initiatives, a position they maintained into the 1960s (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder 1993; Katznelson and Mulroy 2012).

Both the internal diversity of Southern MCs and their evolution over time are evident in their first-dimension NOMINATE scores (Poole and Rosenthal 2007). For our purposes, however, these scores have certain disadvantages.[25] I therefore employ an alternative ideal-point model, the dynamic Bayesian item-response (IRT) model developed by (Martin and Quinn 2002), which allows ideal points to change much more flexibility between congresses. Using the `MCMCdynamicIRT1d` function from the R package `MCMCpack` (Martin, Quinn, and Park 2011), I estimated this model using congressional roll calls related to the issues of social welfare and economic regulation at the heart of New Deal liberalism.[26] The result is a one-dimensional summary of the economic liberalism of senators and House members in each congress between the 72nd (1931–32) and the 87th (1961–62).

Figure 1 plots the density of estimated ideal points for three groups of House members: Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Republicans. As this figure indicates, the hundred or so Southern Democrats in the House exhibited substan-

MCs where unified, a point disputed by Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder (1993) and Farhang and Katznelson (2005), who emphasize Southerners' almost equally solid opposition to unions as well (after 1945).

25. NOMINATE scores are derived from a two-dimensional ideal-point model of roll-call voting. The first dimension is typically interpreted a picking up conflict between the parties, which in this period revolved mainly around New Deal economic issues. Nevertheless, because it is based on all roll calls, first-dimension NOMINATE scores are not an ideal measure of economic liberalism. A second issue with the most widely used version of the NOMINATE model, DW-NOMINATE, is that it constrains ideal points to change linearly through time, which is not appropriate during periods of ideological flux like the 1930s–40s.

26. Specifically, only roll calls classified in the "Government Management" and "Social Welfare" issue categories developed by Clausen (1973; see Poole and Rosenthal 1998, 2001) were used to estimate legislator ideal points. Roll calls relating to agriculture, civil liberties, and foreign and defense policy, as well as unclassifiable or unidentifiable votes, were excluded from the dataset. The computation time was extremely long—four months in the case of the House of Representatives!

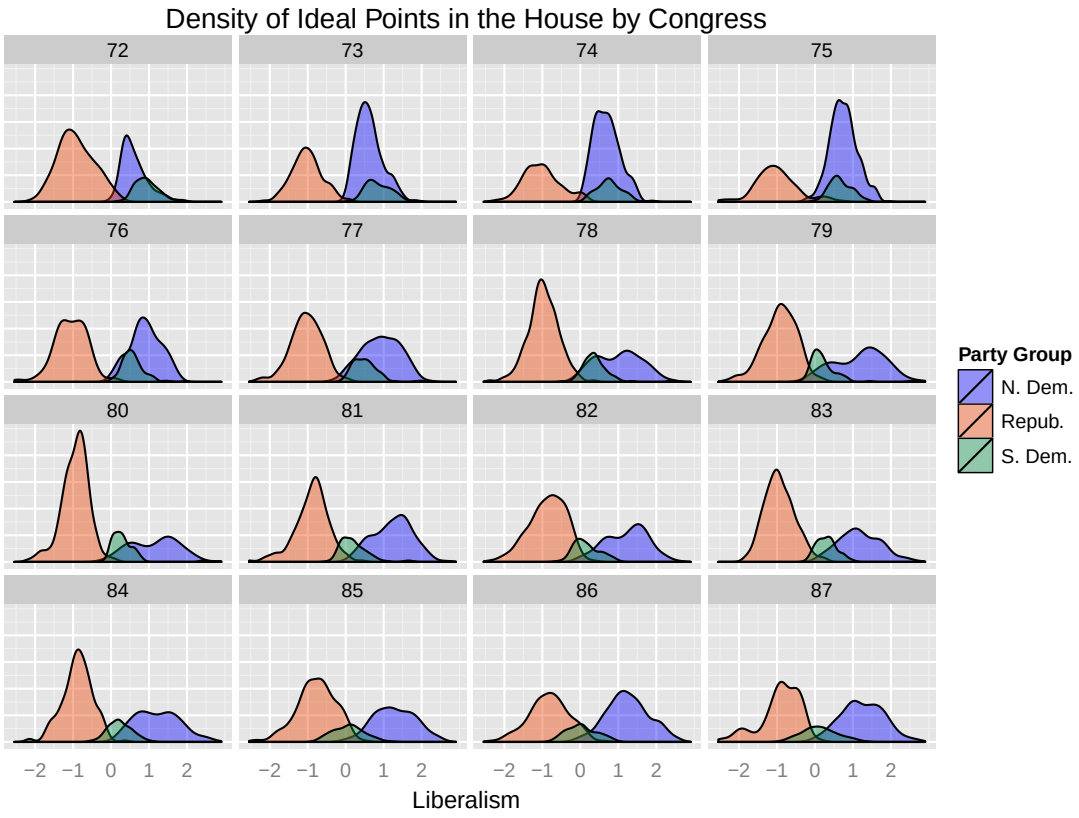

Figure 1: Density of IRT ideal points among Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives between the 72nd (1931–32) and 87th (1961–62) congresses. Densities have been normalized to be proportional to group size.

tial ideological evolution. In the early 1930s, the Southern Democrats were about as liberal as the non-Southern Democrats, but by the 79th Congress (1945–46) they had reached a position midway between the two parties, where they remained through the early 1960s. Southern House members were also ideologically diverse, and their diversity was particularly consequential because the distribution of Southern ideal points usually determined the location of the House median.[27]

In summary, this section has presented evidence for three claims. First, the Southern electorate, while limited by undemocratic restrictions on suffrage, was large enough to give whites outside the economic elite an important voice in Southern politics. Second, competition in Democratic primaries was frequent and coherent enough to induce an electoral connection between Southern MCs and the eligible electorate. Third, Southern MCs were in fact ideologically diverse and exhibited substantial ideological evolution over time. In other words, there is variation among Southern MCs to account for, and responsiveness to electoral incentives provides one plausible explanation for this variation.

4 Statistical Evidence for Representation

Democratic primaries appear to have created a selectoral connection between Southern MCs and the eligible electorate, but did this connection result in meaningful representation? That is, did MCs act in the interests of their voting constituents, in a manner responsive to their expressed preferences (Pitkin 1967, 209)? This section explores this question from several angles, beginning with an examination of public preferences towards New Deal liberalism.

4.1 New Deal Liberalism in the Public

Evaluating the representativeness of Southern MCs first requires measures of the preferences of their constituents. To construct such measures, we rely on commercial public-opinion polls fielded between 1936 and 1952.[28] In these years, George Gallup,

27. The ideal-point distributions in the Senate are qualitatively similar, except that Southern Democrats were a bit more ideologically diverse than in the House and began their shift to the right somewhat later.

28. Only recently have these data become easily accessible to researchers, thanks to a team led by Adam Berinsky, Eric Schickler, and Jasjeet Sekhon, who cleaned, standardized, and weighted the poll samples. This work was funded by two grants from National Science Foundation, Political Science Program: SES-0550431 (Berinsky and Schickler, "Collaborative Research: The American Mass Public in the 1930s and 1940s," 2006–2010) and SES-1155143 (Berinsky, Schickler, and

Elmo Roper, and other pollsters fielded hundreds of polls that collectively surveyed over one million Americans. These polls included hundreds of policy-related questions, most of them on the issues of economic regulation and social welfare raised by the New Deal and Fair Deal.[29] These polls thus provide the raw material for a measure of public support for New Deal liberalism analogous to the ideal-point estimates for MCs presented earlier.

Despite this wealth of information on public opinion, constructing a mass-level measure of New Deal liberalism presents three challenges. First, because respondents were selected using quota sampling rather than probability sampling, the poll samples are not representative of the American public (Berinsky 2006). Second, though the poll samples are comparatively large (2,000–3,000 respondents), they are still not large enough for reliable estimation of subnational opinion below the regional level. Third, because each poll rarely included more than a couple of policy questions, ideal-point techniques such as IRT models cannot be applied to individual respondents.

Previous works have dealt with these problems by weighting each poll to match regional population targets, which alleviates the sampling bias, and then analyzing the weighted poll-specific question marginals (e.g., Berinsky 2009; Schickler and Caughey 2011). An alternative approach, better suited to our purposes, is the Bayesian group-level IRT model developed by Caughey and Warshaw (2013). In essence, their model estimates the average (latent) liberalism in groups defined by geographic or demographic characteristics, alleviating the problem of sparse subsamples by smoothing the group estimates with a dynamic hierarchical model. The resulting group estimates can then be weighted in proportion to their composition of the population.[30] This approach thus uses information from many question responses spread across many polls to derive estimates of the aggregate distribution of liberalism.

We use the Caughey-Warshaw model to estimate mass-level liberalism in each year between 1936 and 1952. Like the congressional IRT estimates, the mass-level estimates are based only on policy questions related to New Deal liberalism, which

Sekhon, "Collaborative Research: The American Mass Public in the Early Cold War Years," 2012–2014). For further details on the project and the data, see Berinsky (2006) and Berinsky et al. (2011).

29. The abundance of left–right domestic-policy questions from the 1936–52 period stands in sharp contrast to the dearth of such questions included in surveys conducted between 1952 and the early 1960s (Erskine 1964). It is difficult to say whether pollsters' declining interest in questions separating liberals and conservatives is more a cause or a consequence of the relatively consensual, non-polarized politics of the 1950s.

30. In addition, the group-level question marginals used to estimate the model can also be weighted. This framework's combination of hierarchical smoothing and post-estimation weighting is similar to the multilevel regression and poststratification method described by Gelman and Little (1997) and Park, Gelman, and Bafumi (2004).

still yields over 450 distinct question series. Figure 2 plots the yearly hierarchical coefficient estimates from a model that defines groups by the variables *Farm*, *Phone Owner*, *Professional*, *Urban*, and the interaction of *Southern* and *Black*.[31] As this figure illustrates, New Deal liberalism is negatively associated with indicators of socioeconomic status, with residence in rural agricultural areas, and with being white. Regional patterns are not readily apparent in this graph, but they become clearer when we examine the weighted group estimates.

In our analysis of representation, we rely on estimates of liberalism in two sets of population groups.[32] The first set of groups is defined by the interaction of the variables *South*, *Black*, and *Presidential Vote* (Democratic, Republican, and Other/Did Not Vote). These estimates are presented in Figure 7 in the Supplementary Appendix. The second set of groups is defined by the interaction of *State* and *Black*. We use the $State \times Black$ estimates to derive the average liberalism in the electorate of each state. In the non-South, this entails weighting race-specific group estimates according to the racial composition of the states' citizens. In the South, we define the electorate as the white public, dropping Southern blacks from the analysis.[33] Together with the ideal-point estimates discussed in Section 3.3, these estimates of mass-level liberalism form the empirical basis for the analysis of representation that follows.

31. Note that these are the structural coefficients from a model predicting group liberalism, not the estimates of mean group liberalism themselves. Within each group, respondents have been weighted to be balanced between men and women, the former being overrepresented in the samples.

32. For both sets of estimates, we weight the raw survey responses to adjust for class and gender biases in the samples. The population targets for these variables were derived from census and other data using the interpolation method described in Caughey and Wang (2014).

33. Southern blacks were severely undersampled—or not sampled at all—in the early polls, most of which sought to make their samples representative of voters, not of the American public at large. Although many polls include a question on retrospective presidential vote, we do not use this variable to define the voting population because (1) voting is highly overreported and (2) this definition would preclude us from weighting the model estimates since the demographic characteristics of voters is not known. That said, there appears to have been very little difference in liberalsim between Southern whites who reported having voted for the Democratic presidential candidate and non-voting Southern whites. However, presidential Republicans, who made up an increasing proportion of the Southern whites after 1948, were substantially more conservative (this contrasts with Shafer and Johnston's claim that Republican vote choice was unrelated to social welfare attitudes in the 1950s; Shafer and Johnston 2006, 28–9). The conservative impact of rising Republican shares was counterbalanced by the fact that Republicans were less likely to participate in Democratic primaries and by the contemporaneous enfranchisement of a modest number of (more liberal) Southern blacks. In short, the ideological difference between the white public and the Democratic primary electorate were probably minimal, especially in the years 1937–52.

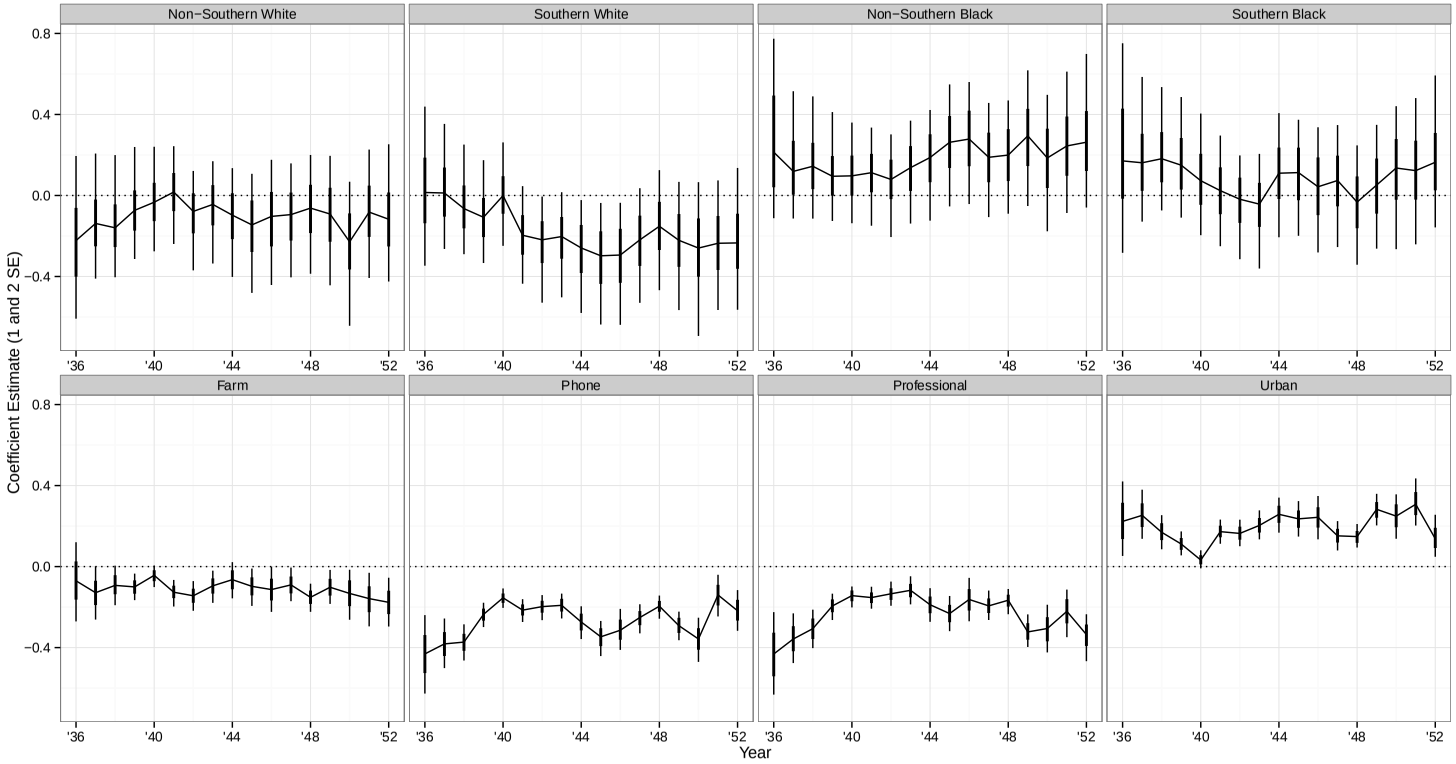

Figure 2: Hierarchical predictors of group liberalism. The top row plots the estimated intercepts of the four mutually exclusive *South* × *Race* groups. The bottom row plots the coefficients for four demographic predictors. As a point of comparison, the standard deviation of liberalism across all respondents is estimated to be 0.78.

4.2 Collective Representation

We begin with an examination of Southern senators' and representatives' collective representation of the Southern white public.[34] In the aggregate, were Southern MCs' roll-call records on economic issues congruent with the expressed preferences of Southern whites? Since the congressional and mass-level estimates of liberalism are not on the same scale, we cannot directly measure their spatial proximity or congruence (Achen 1978; Matsusaka 2001).[35] We can still learn a great deal, however, by comparing relative positions of different groups of citizens and legislators.

Figure 3 compares trends in liberalism among Northern Democrats, Southern Democrats, and Republicans in three venues: the white public, the U.S. House, and the U.S. Senate.[36] Both at the mass level and in Congress, Southern Democrats began the 1937–52 period as enthusiastic New Dealers, almost as much so as Northern Democrats. By the mid-1940s, Southern Democrats in all three venues had moved to a moderate position about halfway between Northern Democrats and Northern Republicans.[37]

The similarities across the three venues suggest that Southern MCs were broadly in step with the Southern white public. Moreover, there is little evidence that the Southern whites simply followed the changing views of their congressional representatives (cf. Lenz 2012). Indeed, the Southern white public's shift to the ideological center in 1937–42 clearly preceded the corresponding shift among Southern senators. Thus, while we cannot rule out the possibility that both shifts were driven by some third factor, such as the changing views of the Southern elite, these figures provide suggestive evidence of dynamic representation on the part of Southern MCs (Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson 1995).

34. The term *collective representation* is taken from Weissberg (1978). Our usage differs slightly from his in that he applies it to Congress as an institution, whereas we apply it to a collectivity (Southern Democrats) within that institution.

35. For example, Achen's analysis of House members' proximity to their constituents relies on the assumption that the Guttman issue scales for representatives and citizens have the same scale once they have been standardized (see Achen 1978, 485).

36. We define partisanship in terms of retrospective presidential vote since this is the most frequently available indicator. Although blacks could vote in the North, they are excluded for consistency's sake from the mass-level estimates in the North as well as the South. Including Northern blacks in the analysis slightly increases the relative conservatism of Southern white Democrats. The same is true if Southern white Republicans are included in the analysis.

37. Another notable feature of this graph is the partisan convergence in the early war years and renewed polarization after the war. This pattern may be the result of wartime bipartisanship, which temporarily muted partisan divisions over the New Deal. It should also be noted that since partisanship is defined in terms of retrospective presidential vote, the composition of partisan groups changes after each election.

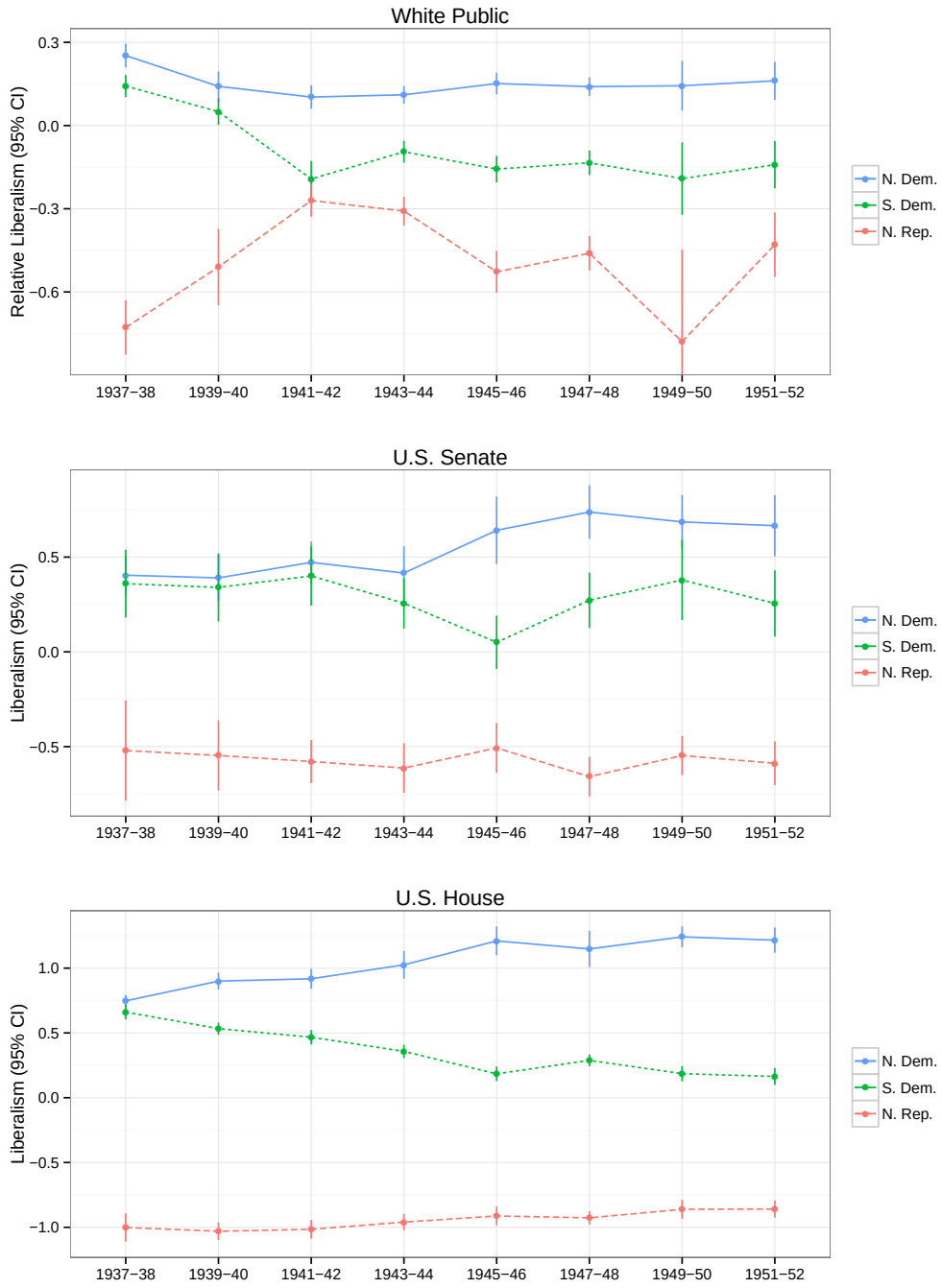

Figure 3: Trends in the economic liberalism of the white public (top), U.S. Senate (middle), and U.S. House (bottom), by region and party, 1937–52.

4.3 Responsiveness to Economic Policy Preferences

Southern MCs appear to have been broadly in step with the Southern white public, but were they responsive to ideological differences between their electorates? Was responsiveness greater in the non-South, and did it differ between the House and Senate? These questions present something of a hard test for my argument because responsiveness is a hallmark of competition between polarized parties—even to the point of "leapfrog representation" (Bafumi and Herron 2010). In other words, it is possible that Southern MCs were collectively congruent with their electorates without being individually responsive to them.

The evidence, however, suggests otherwise. Consider Figure 4, which plots the relationship between the average liberalism of state publics and Senate delegations in the 75th (1937–38) through 82nd (1951–52) congresses. The estimates for Southern publics include only white citizens, which still represents an expansive definition of the Southern electorate.[38] Nevertheless, the relationship between Southern publics and their senators is clearly positive in every congress except the 77th (1941–42), a moment of ideological flux in Southern opinion.

Moreover, there are no obvious differences senatorial responsiveness between the South and non-South. In both Congress and the public, the ideological range across states is smaller in the South than the non-South, but the regression slopes in the two regions are approximately parallel. Indeed, the biggest regional difference is that by 1939–40, Southern senators look anomalously *liberal* relative to their state publics, who began to cluster at the conservative end of states. The Senate delegation of Louisiana, for example, is nearly a standard deviation more liberal than states with a similarly conservative mass public, such as Iowa or South Dakota.[39]

38. Including blacks in the Southern public barely alters the results, perhaps because there are too few black respondents in the data for precise estimation of black opinion. Including all whites in the "public" is an expansive definition of the Southern potential electorate because most Southern whites did not vote (to a lesser degree, this is also true of the non-South).

39. "The rest of the world," observes Carleton (1951, 226),

> insists on comparing the South with the records of Northern Democrats, largely from the industrial sections of the East and West coasts, and not with the farm belt. People outside the South forget that in a period of conservatism in the agricultural sections the one-party South responds by electing conservative Democrats while the farm belt responds by electing reactionary Republicans. But Republicans are expected to be conservative and no one is surprised at the farm belt, but Democrats are expected to be liberal and when Southern Democrats are not liberal this fact is made cause for comment.... And yet... the voting records of the South in Congress [are] more liberal than those of the farm belt.

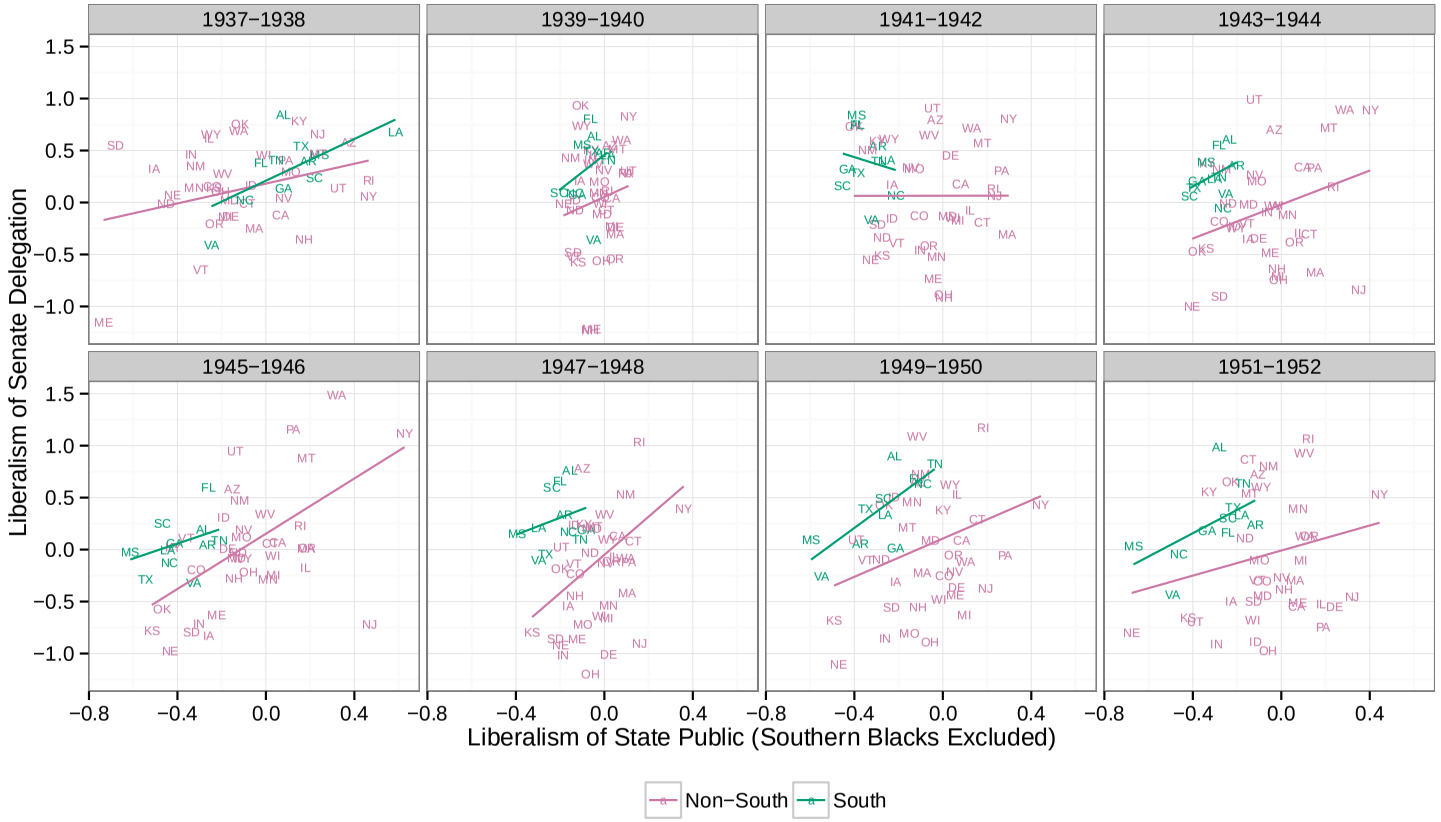

Figure 4: Senatorial responsiveness to mass preferences, by region and congressional term. The x-axis plots the estimated mean economic liberalism in the state public, averaged over the two years in each congressional term. The y-axis indicates the mean economic liberalism of the state Senate delegation. The opinion estimates for Southern states do not include black citizens. Regression lines are weighted by the precision of the opinion estimates.

Figure 5 replicates the same analysis but for state delegations to the U.S. House of Representatives. Since public liberalism must be estimated at the state level, the match between House members and their constituencies is not perfect, especially in the South, where congressional districts were highly unequal in population. Still, in most years, Southern states with more liberal white publics tended to have more liberal House delegations. The relationship between public and House liberalism, however, appears to have been stronger and more consistent in the non-South.

Formal statistical analysis confirms these visual patterns. Table 1 presents the results of a model of responsiveness in congresses between 1936 and 1952.[40] The model includes separate congress-chamber-region intercepts and a three-way interaction between *Non-South*, *Senate*, and *Citizen Liberalism*, clustering standard errors by state. The analysis has low power because there are just eleven Southern states, but there is robust evidence of responsiveness in the one-party South in both the House (represented by the main effect of *Citizen Liberalism*) and the Senate (the main effect plus its interaction with *Senate*).[41]

There is also suggestive evidence of differences between the House and Senate. First, Southern senators are estimated to be more responsive than Southern representatives, though the difference is not statistically significant.[42] Second, as indicated by the estimate for *Non-South* $\times$ *Citizen Liberalism*, responsiveness among House members appears to have been stronger outside the South ($p = 0.08$). In the Senate, however, there is no evidence that responsiveness differed across regions—in fact, the point estimate for the slope difference between regions is almost exactly 0.

In short, Southern states where the white population was more supportive of

40. This analysis entails two kinds of averaging. First, within each congress, we average the estimated liberalism of senators in each state (and do the same for representatives). This yields the variable *MC Liberalism*. Second, we estimate each state's average liberalism over the course of each congress by averaging the state's estimated mean liberalism across the two years in that congress. This yields the variable *Citizen Liberalism*. We calculate the standard error of the derived averages under the assumption of independent measurement error across units (this will overestimate measurement error if the errors are positively correlated, as they probably are). The public opinion estimates for the 74th Congress are derived from a handful of polls conducted in the last months of 1936, and as a result the opinion estimates for this congress are fairly imprecise. To account for measurement error in the analysis, we create 100 "overimputed" datasets using the standard errors around the liberalism estimates. We estimate the model on each of the 100 datasets and combine inferences about model parameters using standard multiple-imputation formulas (Blackwell, Honaker, and King 2012; Honaker, King, and Blackwell 2011).

41. The estimated responsiveness slope for Southern senators is 0.57, with a standard error of 0.29.

42. Strictly speaking, the ideal-point estimates are not comparable across chambers. However, ideal points in both chambers have a roughly standard normal distribution. The standard deviation of the liberalism of state delegations is a bit larger in the House (0.6 versus 0.5 in the Senate).

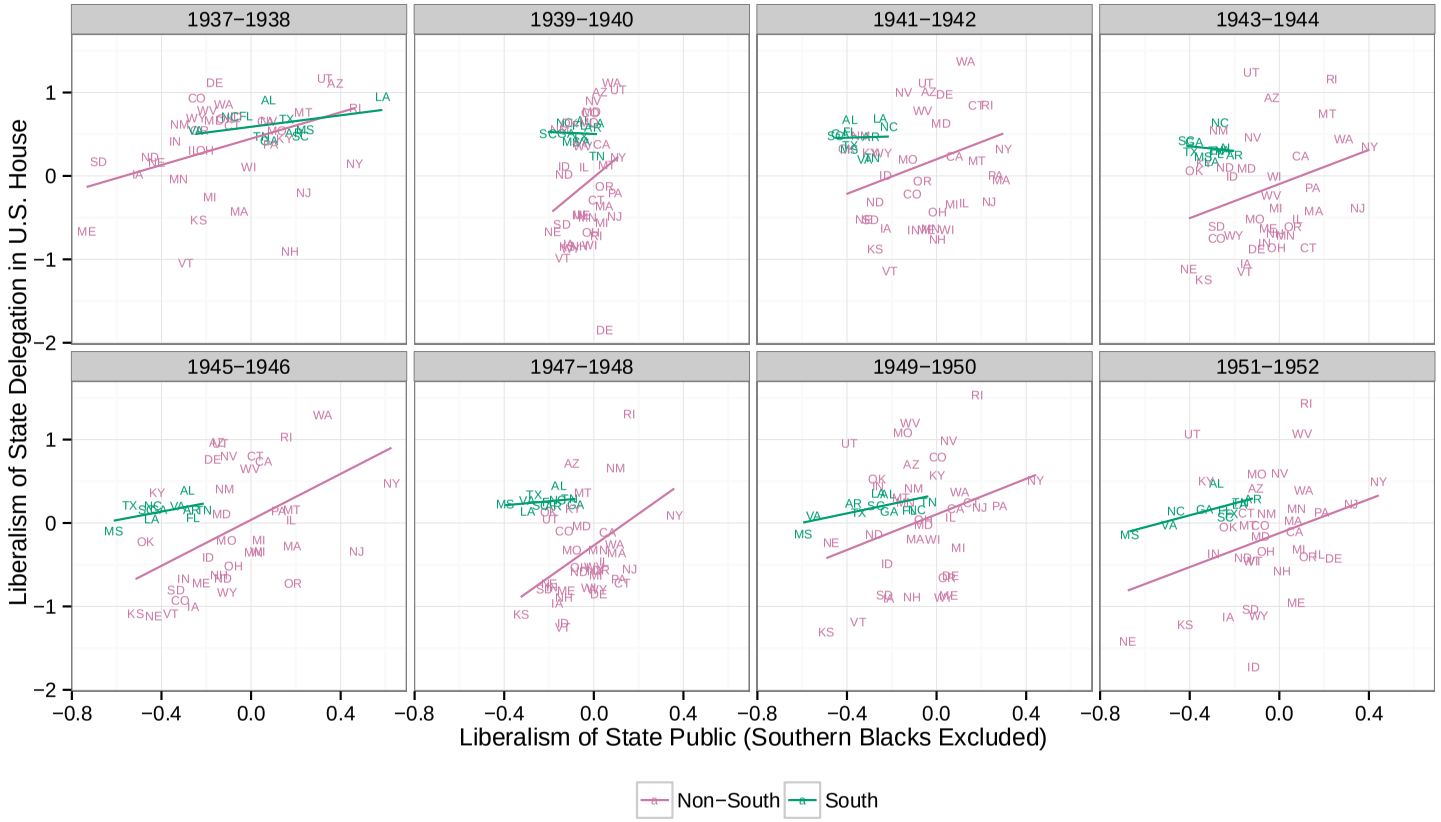

Figure 5: House responsiveness to mass preferences, by region and congressional term. The x-axis plots the estimated mean economic liberalism in the state public, averaged over the two years in each congressional term. The y-axis indicates the mean economic liberalism of the state House delegation. The opinion estimates for Southern states do not include black citizens. Regression lines are weighted by the precision of the opinion estimates.

Table 1: Congressional responsiveness to *Citizen Liberalism* by chamber and region, 1936–52. *Citizen Liberalism* and *MC Liberalism* are averaged across years within congresses. The estimates for Southern state publics exclude black citizens. The model includes fixed effects for congress-chamber-region (estimates not shown). Standard errors are clustered by state. Measurement error is addressed using "overimputation" (Blackwell, Honaker, and King 2012).

	Dependent variable:
	MC Liberalism
Citizen Liberalism (House)	0.27**
	(0.11)
Senate × Citizen Liberalism	0.30
	(0.33)
Non-South × Citizen Liberalism	0.43*
	(0.25)
Non-South × Senate × Citizen Liberalism	−0.44
	(0.36)
States	48
Congresses	9
Observations	864
R^2	0.23
Adjusted R^2	0.19

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

New Deal liberalism tended to be represented by more liberal House and Senate delegations. The evidence thus suggests that Southern MCs were not only collectively in line with the Southern white public, but also responsive to within-region differences in white preferences. To the extent that Southern Democrats were out-of-step with their constituents, they appear to have been more liberal than the white public, at least relative to the non-South. We should not make too much of this "liberal bias," which is almost certainly explained by the pull of party loyalty on the South's overwhelmingly Democratic congressional delegation. But it is worth noting that this bias is inconsistent with Key's (1949) claim that the one-party system benefitted the conservative "haves" over the more liberal "have-nots."

This analysis of responsiveness to mass policy preferences has also revealed suggestive evidence of differences between the House and Senate. Given that public opinion must be measured at the level of states rather than districts, however, it is difficult to know how to interpret heterogeneity across chambers. To further explore this question, we take advantage of data we do have at the district level: the distribution of household income. In addition to permitting a more direct analysis of responsiveness in the House, using income as a proxy for citizens' economic interests helps rule out the possibility that citizens' preferences are derived from the behavior of their representatives rather than the other way around.

4.4 Responsiveness to Economic Interests

All else equal, policies that make the distribution of economic resources more equal tend to benefit poorer citizens more than richer ones. Consequently, if income is all that voters care about and politicians respond to the median voter, electorates whose median income is high relative to the average should select representatives who are less supportive of redistributive policies.(Meltzer and Richard 1981; Roemer 1999; Londregan 2006). The expectations provided by a median-voter model of redistribution thus provide a way to evaluate responsiveness without having to measure citizens' preferences directly.[43]

43. Many empirical studies have found little cross-sectional correlation between the extent of redistribution and income inequality. See, for example, Lindert (2004) on the "Robin Hood paradox," and Lupu and Pontusson (2011) on the importance of income "skew." There is substantial evidence, however, for the median-voter model's comparative statics. Husted and Kenny (1997) find that the elimination of suffrage restrictions in U.S. states led to higher turnout, a poorer median voter, and higher state spending on social welfare. Fowler (2013) finds similar results in an examination of compulsory voting in Australian provinces. In the study most relevant to the one-party South, Fleck (2002) analyzes voting patterns on the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act, using general-election voter turnout as a proxy for the political influence of low-wage workers. Fleck finds that representatives

On the whole, the New Deal was strongly redistributive, at least by the standards of American politics. New Deal policies contributed to the decline in economic inequality in the middle of the 20th century, and conflict over these policies helped realign political cleavages along more class-based lines (Oestreicher 1998; Sundquist 1983). Indeed, Figure 2 indicates that upper-class survey respondents (phone owners and professionals) were in fact less supportive of New Deal liberalism. Since our measure of *MC Liberalism* is based on the issue complex at the core of the New Deal, it provides a reasonable indicator of senators' and representatives' support for economic redistribution.

Of course, New Deal liberalism was not simply about class. It also involved the use of federal resources to aid underdeveloped areas of the country and, increasingly, conflict over urban–rural divisions and the autonomy of the South's racial political economy(Garson 1974; Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder 1993; Schwartz 1993; Badger 2007).[44] It is thus important to account for ruralness and the intensity commitment to white supremacy in our evaluation of the responsiveness of Southern MCs to the economic interests of their constituents.

There were three basic sources of variation in median income across Southern electorates. Most obviously, some areas of the South, particularly those with whiter and more urban population, were wealthier and more developed. Secondly, constituencies differed in their degree of income equality; a constituency with relatively high per-capita income might still have relatively low median income if income was concentrated at the very top. Thirdly, the size of the electorate relative to the population differed across constituencies. Holding constant the income of the population, the median voter was richer where turnout was lower due to the strong class bias in Southern turnout. Our measure of median income in the electorate must take into account these three sources of variation.

Yearly data on the income distribution in congressional districts is not directly available, and we must use a fairly complicated procedure to estimate it (see Appendix A). In brief, the procedure is to, first, use county-level census data to impute the yearly proportions of households in each year with income below two thresholds: $1.3 \times$ national per-capita income (NPCI) and $3.3 \times$ NPCI.[45] Second, the analogous constituency-level proportions are derived by aggregating counties into congressional

from congressional districts where electoral turnout in 1932 was higher were more likely to support the FLSA.

44. Compare with Lee and Roemer (2006) on the effects of "policy bundling" between racial and economic policies.

45. It is appropriate to normalize income by the national average because we are examining congressional representation, and thus the community within which income may be redistributed is the nation, not the constituency.

districts or states. These proportions pin down the entire income distribution under the apparently reasonable assumption that income was log-normally distributed within constituencies. Finally, the constituency-level income distribution is used to estimate median household income (relative to the nation) in various definitions of the electorate. Since we have collected data on the county composition of congressional districts in the South only, we confine our analysis to Southern states.

In 1930, the South was substantially poorer than the rest of the nation; the median household income in the typical congressional district was around 1.2 NPCI.[46] By 1960 some areas, such as Dallas, Texas and Arlington, Virginia, had converged with the rest of the nation, achieving median household incomes of over 2 NPCI.[47] Most of the South, however, became only a little more prosperous relative to the nation during these years. Throughout this period, the poorest areas of the South tended to be rural and often highly African American—districts like Mississippi's 3rd, a black-belt district where the median household income was 0.7 NPCI in 1940.[48] The districts with the poorest *electorates*, however, were rural white districts such as Arkansas's 2nd, where the population was poor but largely enfranchised.[49]

We consider four alternative definitions of the (potential) electorate in Southern constituencies. The most restrictive definition is the set of voters who participated in the most recent Democratic congressional primary in the state or district. This requires dropping uncontested primaries from the analysis. A slightly broader definition is the set of voters who participated in the most recent presidential general election. A still more expansive definition of the electorate is the white public. Finally, the maximal definition includes all residents of a state or district. Although none of these definitions is perfect, the best is probably the white population, which is less endogenous than the active electorate but captures the potential electorate more accurately than the total population.[50]

We estimate the electorate's median relative income in constituency d and election

46. Unless income is very unequally distributed, per-capita income will be lower than median household income because its denominator is the total number of residents, which is greater than the number of households.

47. Arlington's congressional district, VA-10, was captured by the Republican Party as soon as it was created in 1952.

48. As it happens, MS-3 was represented in the 1950s by Frank Smith, who was actually quite liberal on economic issues and moderate (for Mississippi) on racial ones (Badger 2007).

49. AR-2 was represented by Wilbur Mills, longtime chair of Ways and Means and architect of Medicare and Medicaid (Zelizer 1998).

50. Among other things, primary turnout is directly influenced by the quality of congressional representation, not least because it can be measured only when primaries are contested. Presidential turnout avoids this problem but is affected by the competitiveness of presidential elections, which in this era was correlated with a higher Republican share (and thus a more conservative electorate).

year t using the formula

$$m_{dt} = \exp\left[1 - \Phi\left(\frac{0.5 \times e_{dt} - \hat{\mu}_{dt}^{\log}}{\hat{\sigma}_{dt}^{\log}}\right)\right], \tag{1}$$

where e_{dt} is the size of the electorate as a proportion of the voting-age population, and $\hat{\mu}_{dt}^{\log}$ and $\hat{\sigma}_{dt}^{\log}$ are, respectively, the estimated mean and standard deviation of log relative income (assumed normally distributed).[51] To evaluate responsiveness to median voter income, we estimate several models of the following general form:

$$\bar{y}_{dt} = \beta_1 m_{dt} + \beta_2 (m_{dt} \times Senate_d) + f(Year_t, Senate_d, \boldsymbol{x}_{dt}) + \xi_{s[d]} + \epsilon_{dt}, \tag{2}$$

where $\bar{y}_{dt}$ denotes the average liberalism of MCs representing constituency d in the congress elected in year t, $\boldsymbol{x}_{dt}$ is a vector of constituency-specific time-varying covariates, and $\xi_{s[d]}$ is an (optional) fixed effect for the constituency's state. The quantities of interest are β_1 (responsiveness in the House), β_2 (the difference in responsiveness by chamber), and $\beta_1 + \beta_2$ (responsiveness in the Senate). We highlight the results from four specifications:

1. **Year FEs:** Fixed effects for chamber-year; no constituency controls
2. **Linear:** Fixed effects for chamber-year;
   controls for % *Black*, % *Rural*, and % *Black* × % *Rural*
3. **Splines:** Restricted cubic spline in *Year*, separately by chamber;
   three-way interaction between splines in *Year*, % *Black*, and % *Rural*[52]
4. **State FEs:** Same specification as Splines but with fixed effects for *State*

The combination of four definitions of the electorate (Primary Voters, Presidential Voters, All Whites, and All Citizens) and four model specifications (Year FEs, Linear, Splines, and State FEs) yields sixteen sets of results. Figure 6 presents the estimated responsiveness of Southern senators ($\beta_1 + \beta_2$) and House members (β_1) as well as the difference between chambers (β_2). The standard errors for all of these coefficients

51. This formula also assumes that every member of the electorate (however defined) has higher income than every non-voter. Notwithstanding the strong class bias in Southern turnout, this assumption is unlikely to hold perfectly. However, unless the class bias in turnout (conditional on the overall level of turnout) varies across constituencies, differences in m_{dt} will be monotonically related to differences in true median voter income.

52. Splines permit flexible non-linear specifications that economize on degrees of freedom (Harrell 2001, 20–4).

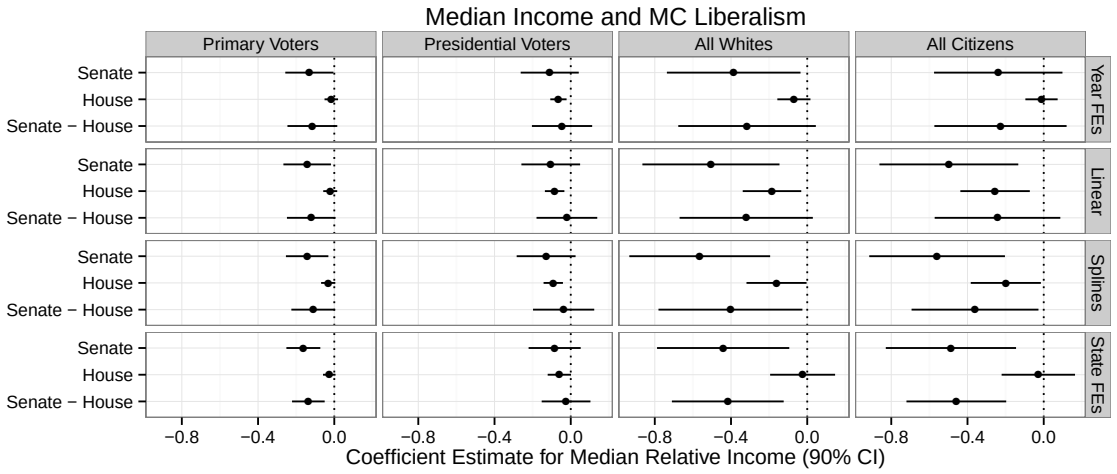

Figure 6:

are clustered by member of Congress.[53] To account for uncertainty in the income imputation, 10 multiply imputed datasets were created and inferences combined across them.

Qualitatively, all the specifications tell a similar story. Income generally predicts congressional conservatism in both chambers, with the slope estimates smaller but more precise for primary and presidential voters.[54] The magnitude of the point estimates ranges between 0.01 and 0.56. Substantively, the largest estimates imply that the decrease in *MC Liberalism* associated with a 1-NPCI increase in voters' median household income is approximately equal to the standard deviation of *MC Liberalism* within the Southern caucus.[55]

Though the slope differences between chambers are not not always significant, responsiveness again appears to have been stronger in the Senate than the House.[56] This impression is reinforced by the fact that in the specification with state fixed

53. More specifically, the clusters consists of each unique combination of members representing a given constituency at the same time. For example, each pair of senators who represented the same state at the same time is assigned a unique ID.

54. The greater variability of the estimates for whites and citizens maybe due to the "sluggishness" of these variables and their collinearity with demographic controls.

55. *MC Liberalism* has approximately unit-variance in each chamber. Among Southern Democrats, its standard deviation was 0.56 in the House and 0.42 in the Senate.

56. This is probably not a consequence of different ideal-point scales across chambers, since *MC Liberalism* is actually more variable in the House than the in Senate (where it is usually averaged across two senators).

effects (bottom row), which account for persistent differences between states, the House coefficient is reduced to insignificance in all cases. Only when we consider the presidential electorate is responsiveness approximately equal across chambers.

5 Conclusion

In this paper, I have presented a view of Southern politics quite at odds with the conventional wisdom. In essence, I have argued that MCs from the one-party South can be analyzed using the same framework that political scientists use to explain congressional politics more generally. Like politicians elsewhere in the country, the behavior of Southern MCs is largely, though by no means exclusively, attributable to their electoral incentives (Mayhew 1974a; cf. Fenno 1973). Moreover, the potential electorate was inclusive enough that Southern MCs responded not only to elite preferences, but to the preferences of middle- and low-income whites as well.

My thesis would seem to be at odds with the increasingly common practice of labeling the one-party South an "authoritarian regime" (Farhang and Katznelson 2005; Gibson 2012; Mickey 2014). This is true insofar as authoritarianism is considered to preclude formal opportunities for popular participation and political contestation.[57] However, if authoritarianism is conceptualized as encompassing a wide variety of regimes that fall short of democratic standards, then my argument is perfectly compatible with a view of the one-party South as an authoritarian regime. Without a doubt, Southern states fell far short of democratic standards, most importantly in their exclusion of African Americans from political citizenship.

Yet an important premise of my argument is that the political exclusion of Southern blacks was qualitatively different from suffrage limitations on whites. Though pruning "unworthy" whites from the electorate was certainly a goal of many turn-of-the-century disenfranchisers—as it was for contemporaneous proponents of literacy tests and other suffrage qualifications in the North—this goal was never fully achieved, in part due to the appeal of a countervailing ideology of "herrenvolk democracy" for whites. Put simply, even poor whites were considered part of the political community in a way that blacks were not.[58] Thus, notwithstanding the very real barriers to lower-class political participation, with respect to whites the one-party South lay somewhere on the continuum between autocracy and democracy (and exhibited substantial internal variation on this continuum).

57. Mickey (2014) carefully avoids such a definition. Indeed, disagreement and contestation within the one-party system are central to his account of the South's "transition to democracy."

58. Even politicians who sought black votes could not afford to do so publicly, and so rather did so through emissaries to the black community.

Distinguishing the effects of political exclusion from those of restricted competition is essential to understanding the implications of the one-party South for democratic theory. As the evidence in this paper indicates, lack of partisan competition does not seem to have prevented Southern MCs from responding to the preferences of the eligible electorate.[59] In fact, contrary to the conventional conclusion that lack of party competition biased representation in favor of the "haves," Southern MCs were actually more liberal than one would expect given the economic policy preferences of their constituents.

Despite the strength of the evidence for responsiveness, the case for representation without parties must be carefully qualified. Southern MCs did not face regular partisan competition, but neither did they act in a totally party-less environment. Indeed, the fact that congressional roll-call voting was highly structured by partisanship compensated for some of the limitations of completely nonpartisan politics. Southern MCs could not avoid taking clear stances on high-profile, ideologically defined decisions, for which they could (with the aid of challengers) be held accountable by the electorate. By contrast, state politics in the South, the focus of Key's brief against one-partyism, was more insulated from the effects of the national two-party system.

On a final note, let us consider the implications of these findings for our understanding of American political development. As Ira Katznelson has argued most forcefully, Southern MCs pivotal position in national politics gave them outsized role in shaping the welfare state and political economy of the United States (Katznelson 2005, 2013; see also Quadagno 1994; Lieberman 1998; Brown 1999; Alston and Ferrie 1999). By and large, these accounts have treated Southern MCs as representing the Southern elite. They attribute Southern Democrats' turn against organized labor in the 1930s and 1940s, for example, to planters and other Southern employers' concern that unions threatened the region's racial system and labor-repressive political economy (Katznelson, Geiger, and Kryder 1993; Farhang and Katznelson 2005). As

59. This study has not considered representation on civil rights issues, on which Southern whites were much less divided and were much more clearly national outliers than on economic issues. But the basic argument applies at least as strongly in this domain. Dahl (1971, 93–4) rightly notes that "southern whites were overwhelmingly allegiant" to the South's system of racial oppression. In a 1942 poll, for example, only 2% of Southern whites reported supporting racially integrated schools, compared to 42% of non-Southern whites (Schuman et al. 1997, 109). White opposition to civil rights was so overwhelming that Southern MCs almost never deviated from white supremacist orthodoxy (though see Werner 2009). Thus, Miller and Stokes (1963, 55) observe, "the electorate's sanctions" on civil rights issues were "potential rather than actual.... Nevertheless, the fact of constituency influence, backed by potential sanctions at the polls, [was] real enough." They cite as an example Dale Alford's write-in primary victory over Rep. Brooks Hays (D-AR) after the latter tried to help defuse the 1956 crisis over school integration in Little Rock.

Schickler and Caughey (2011) observe, however, this explanation ignores the potential impact of the contemporaneous anti-labor turn of public opinion in the South (as well as in the non-South).

My findings in this paper suggest that a fuller account of Southern MCs' role in American political development must be rooted in their electoral incentives and, in turn, in the political preferences and behavior of the white public. From this perspective, the reason that Southern MCs were pivotal in Congress was that the Southern white public was torn between the benefits and dangers of New Deal liberalism. Such a framework still leaves ample room for economic elites in the one-party South to have exercised disproportionate influence, as indeed they appear to exercise in the contemporary United States (Bartels 2008; Gilens and Page, forthcoming). But by reducing the distance between between the "authoritarian" South and the "democratic" non-South, it enhances our understanding of both.

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A Estimation and Imputation of Income

The analysis of Southern MCs' responsiveness to the economic interests of their electorates relies on several proxies for the median income in the electorate. This section describes how these proxies were estimated and multiply imputed.

Like all demographic characteristics of congressional districts in the dataset for the paper, districts' estimated income distribution must be derived from data at the county level. Before 1962, all but a handful of Southern congressional districts were composed of whole counties.[60] Based on information contained in Martis et al. (1982), I assigned each county in the 17-state South to its House district in each congressional election 1930–62. Using this mapping, it is possible to calculate the district-level value of any quantity that is a function of data available at the county level. For example, to calculate the proportion of district residents who are white, I take the weighted average of the proportion white in the counties that composed the district, where the weights are given by the number of residents of each county.

The calculation of the districts' income distribution is not so straightforward, for several reasons. First, county-level income data are not available before 1950, when the U.S. Census began collecting county-level data on median household income (which is missing for some counties) as well as on the proportions of households with yearly income below $2,000 and $5,000. Second, estimating the income of the median voter requires the whole income distribution, not just a single statistic such as the mean. We deal with these problems with a combination of multiple imputation and assumptions about the shape of the income distribution.

Let's start with 1950, when income data are observed. We can derive each district's proportions of household with income below $2,000 and $5,000 by taking a weighted average of the corresponding quantities for counties in that district.[61] Since we ultimately care not about absolute income but income relative to the national average, it is helpful to divide $2,000 and $5,000 by nation per capita income in 1950, which was $1,516.[62] Let $p^{1.3}_{c,1950}$ and $p^{3.3}_{c,1950}$ respectively denote the proportion of county c's households with relative income below 1.3 ($\$2,000/\$1,516$) and 3.3 ($\$5,000/\$1,516$) in 1950. Denote the analogous district-level quantities as $p^{1.3}_{d,1950}$ and $p^{3.3}_{d,1950}$, which are population-weighted averages of the counties that compose district d. Together, $p^{1.3}_{d,1950}$ and $p^{3.3}_{d,1950}$ provide information on how rich district d is

60. In the 13-state South, the exceptions are districts in New Orleans, Houston, and Miami. Split counties were more common in the non-South.

61. Strictly speaking the counties should be weighted by their number of households, but I instead use number of residents, which is almost exactly proportional to the number of households.

62. We divide by per capita national income rather than per household because only the former is available in every year.

as well as how unequal it is.

The distribution of income is usually considered to be log-normal (i.e., the natural log of income is normally distributed), a regularity known as "Gibrat's law." Assuming Gibrat's law held within Southern congressional districts, $p^{1.3}_{d,1950}$ and $p^{3.3}_{d,1950}$ are sufficient to pin down the entire income distribution.[63] Specifically, the mean of (normally distributed) log relative income in district d is

$$\mu^{\log}_{d,1950} = \frac{\log(1.3) \times \Phi(p^{3.3}_{d,1950}) - \log(3.3) \times \Phi(p^{1.3}_{d,1950})}{\Phi(p^{3.3}_{d,1950}) - \Phi(p^{1.3}_{d,1950})}, \tag{3}$$

and its standard deviation is

$$\sigma^{\log}_{d,1950} = \frac{\log(3.3) - \log(1.3)}{\Phi(p^{3.3}_{d,1950}) - \Phi(p^{1.3}_{d,1950})}, \tag{4}$$

where Φ indicates the standard normal CDF.

Given $\hat{\mu}^{\log}_{d,1950}$ and $\hat{\sigma}^{\log}_{d,1950}$ and the assumption that log relative income is normally distributed within districts, we can derive the median income in any subset of the income distribution. To estimate the median log income the electorate, we must assume that everyone in the electorate has a higher income than everyone outside the electorate—i.e., the class bias is extreme as possible, given the size of the electorate. Under this assumption, the median log income (=log median income) in the electorate is

$$\log(m_{d,1950}) = 1 - \Phi\left(\frac{0.5 \times e_{d,1950} - \hat{\mu}^{\log}_{d,1950}}{\hat{\sigma}^{\log}_{d,1950}}\right), \tag{5}$$

where $m_{d,1950}$ is 1950 median income in d's electorate and $e_{d,1950}$ is the size the 1950 electorate as a proportion of the population.

To estimate median voter income in years other than 1950, we must (multiply) impute the county-level quantities $p^{1.3}_{c,1950}$ and $p^{3.3}_{c,1950}$. This requires county-level data on quantities that are strong predictors of county-level income in 1950 and are available in the 1930, 1940, and 1960 censuses as well. The following variables fit these criteria:

- *Population*
- *Proportion Urban*
- *Proportion White*

63. Battistin, Blundell, and Lewbel (2009) provide evidence that Gibrat's law is approximately true in the United States, and almost exactly so for the top 75% of the income distribution.

- *State Per Capita Income*
- *Proportion Enrolled in School* (among 14–17 year olds)

Since we wish to predict relative income, these variables must be demeaned within years so as to eliminate over-time changes common to all units.

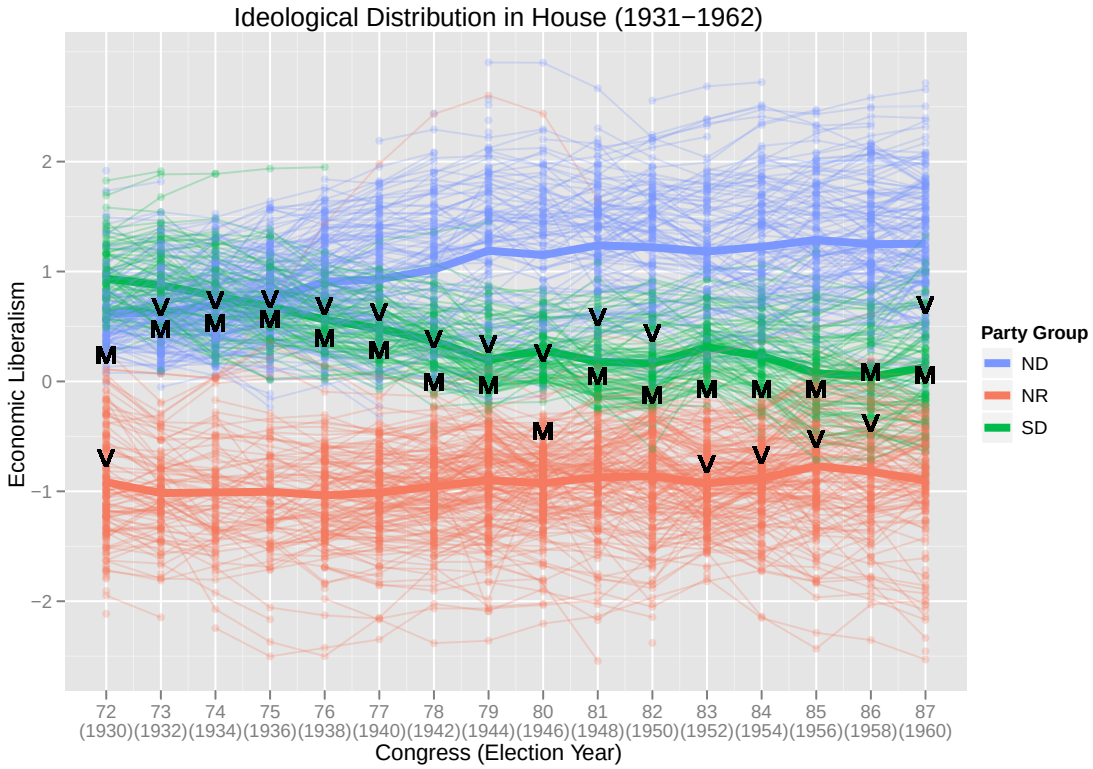
The imputation model specification (with demeaned variables marked with an asterisk),

$$\begin{aligned} p^x_{ct} \sim \mathrm{N}(&\mathit{Population}^*_{ct} + \mathit{Proportion\ Urban}^*_{ct} + (\mathit{Proportion\ Urban}^*_{ct})^2 \\ &+ \mathit{Proportion\ White}^*_{ct} + (\mathit{Proportion\ White}^*_{ct})^2 \\ &+ \mathit{Proportion\ Urban}^*_{ct} \times \mathit{Proportion\ White}^*_{ct} \\ &+ \mathit{State\ Per\ Capita\ Income}^*_{ct} + \log(\mathit{State\ Per\ Capita\ Income}^*_{ct}) \\ &+ \mathit{Proportion\ Enrolled\ in\ School}^*_{ct}),\ x \in \{1.3,\ 3.3\} \end{aligned} \tag{6}$$

explains 69% of the variance of $p^{1.3}_{c,1950}$ and 51% of the variance of $p^{3.3}_{c,1950}$. To reflect our belief that a county's relative income distribution is stable over time, we add an informative Gaussian prior for p^x_{ct} centered on county c's value of $p^x_{c,1950}$. The standard deviation of the prior, $0.02 \times \sqrt{|1950 - t|}$, implies a belief that the typical yearly change in p^x_{ct} was 0.02.

The imputation model was estimated using the `R` package `Amelia` (Honaker, King, and Blackwell 2011). Ten imputed county-level datasets were created for $t \in \{1930,\ 1940,\ 1960\}$. In each imputed dataset, values of $p^{1.3}_{ct}$ and $p^{3.3}_{ct}$ for non-census years were linearly interpolated from the census estimates. The estimates for each year and each imputed dataset were used to calculate the district-level income distribution using the same method described above. This yielded ten imputed district-level datasets with estimates of $\mu^{\log}_{dt}$, $\sigma^{\log}_{dt}$, and m_{dt}.

B Supplementary Figures


Ideological Distribution in House (1931−1962)
Economic Liberalism
2
1
0
−1
−2
72 (1930)
73 (1932)
74 (1934)
75 (1936)
76 (1938)
77 (1940)
78 (1942)
79 (1944)
80 (1946)
81 (1948)
82 (1950)
83 (1952)
84 (1954)
85 (1956)
86 (1958)
87 (1960)
Congress (Election Year)
Party Group
ND
NR
SD

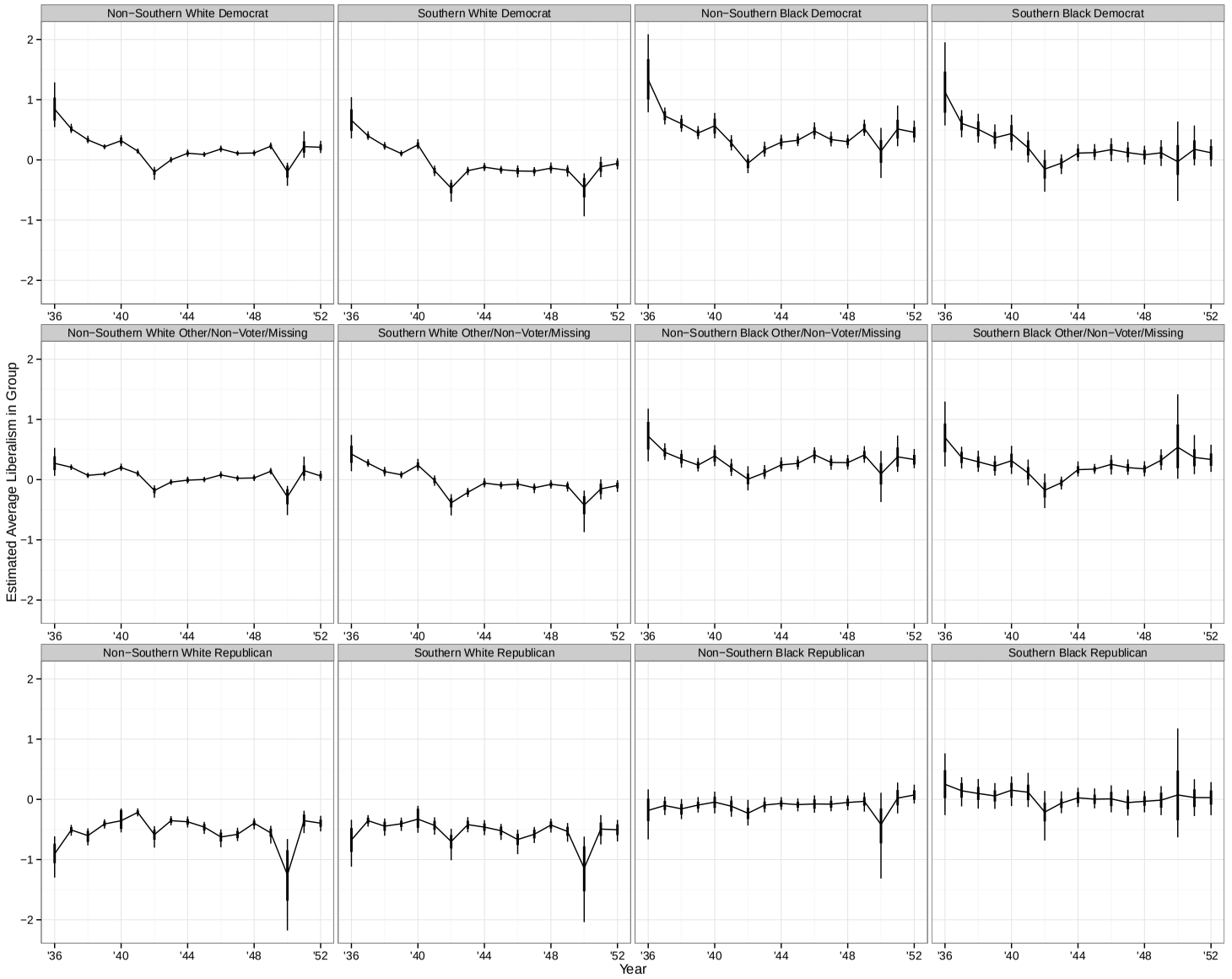


Figure 7: Liberalism of different voter types, by race and region

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