

The Coalition Merchants: Testing the Power of Ideas with the Civil Rights Realignment¹

Hans Noel

Robert Wood Johnson Scholar
in Health Policy Research
University of Michigan
109 Observatory Place
M2242 / SPH II
Ann Arbor, MI 48109
734-936-1321 (office)
734-936-5347 (fax)
hansnoel@umich.edu

Abstract: Do ideas matter in party agendas? I test the proposition that the way that ideologies organize issues exerts an influence on the way that party leaders construct coalitions. Over the course of the 20th century, the Democratic and Republican parties have reversed positions on racial issues. This reversal is credited to a variety of factors, chief among them strategic decisions on the part of party leaders competing for votes. Using an original dataset of the opinions expressed by political thinkers in leading magazines and newspapers, I develop a measure of ideological positions parallel to NOMINATE scores for members of Congress. With this measure, I trace the transformation of ideological attitudes toward race. I show that the reversal of the Democrats and Republicans in congressional voting is preceded by a similar reversal, several decades earlier, of liberals and conservatives in the intellectual sphere.

¹ I would like to thank Mike Bailey, Kathleen Bawn, Tim Groseclose, Jeff Grynviski, Rick Hall, Greg Koger, Jeff Lewis, Seth Masket, Andrew Sabl, Eric Schickler and John Zaller for helpful advice on earlier stages of this project. Research support was provided by the UCLA political science department and the Center for the Study of Democratic Politics at Princeton University.

The Coalition Merchants: Testing the Power of Ideas with the Civil Rights Realignment

Abstract: Do ideas matter in party agendas? I test the proposition that the way that ideologies organize issues exerts an influence on the way that party leaders construct coalitions. Over the course of the 20th century, the Democratic and Republican parties have reversed positions on racial issues. This reversal is credited to a variety of factors, chief among them strategic decisions on the part of party leaders competing for votes. Using an original dataset of the opinions expressed by political thinkers in leading magazines and newspapers, I develop a measure of ideological positions parallel to NOMINATE scores for members of Congress. With this measure, I trace the transformation of ideological attitudes toward race. I show that the reversal of the Democrats and Republicans in congressional voting is preceded by a similar reversal, several decades earlier, of liberals and conservatives in the intellectual sphere.

What is the role of ideas in partisan conflict? At some level, ideology would seem to be about ideas. And for many political science questions, ideology would seem to be an important concept. If so, then ideas must be important in some way as well. In this paper, I attempt to distinguish between two possible roles that ideology might play in partisan conflict. In one role, ideology might be used to rationalize partisan coalitions. Party leaders create their coalitions, and ideologies emerge to justify them (e.g., Downs 1957). Alternatively, however, the ideas might come first. Ideologies might organize policy positions across various issues into coalitions that party leaders would be pressured to adopt.

To test these alternatives, I examine the shift in the 1960s and 1970s in the policy positions of the two major parties in the United States on race and racial issues. A century ago, the Republican Party – the party of Lincoln – was more likely to support civil rights, while the Democrats – including in their coalition the solid South – were more likely to oppose. A considerable body of literature has explored how the parties have now reversed in the wake of the civil rights movement. The dominant view is that the parties changed to chase voters. Democrats risked alienating southern whites to go after the growing number of black voters in the north, while Republicans adopted a “southern strategy” of appealing to southern white conservatives.

That dominant view is, then, that the party coalitions came first, and ideological differences on race presumably follow. I argue that ideology changed among intellectuals before they changed among voters or party elites. I argue that this is evidence that ideology drives partisan change. Or, more completely, that ideological changes shape the preferences of political activists, who in turn determine the agendas of political parties. While the temporal pattern does not demonstrate causation, it is an important element of a causal argument. It rules out the alternative – that the parties changed (for strategic reasons) and then intellectuals rationalized their coalition. Rather, the “rationalization,” or perhaps better, the “articulation,” occurred first.

It matters whether party agendas are shaped by ideological debate, or ideological arguments rationalize party platforms. Most directly, this question speaks to the origins and nature of any underlying ideological dimension used in a great variety of political science contexts. It also speaks to the origins of party coalitions and their changes. These questions, in turn, have implications for representation, pandering and leadership.

The paper proceeds in three parts. In section I, I outline a theory of parties and ideology that places ideology in a more central role. Section II covers the background of the realignment¹ on race, as it is detected in congressional voting. Section III develops a measure of ideology for intellectuals, independent of the political opinions of members of Congress. Section IV applies that measure to intellectuals in the decades before and after the racial realignment, to show that ideology changed before politicians did. Section V concludes with discussion of the mechanisms of ideological change and of the linkage between that change and party coalitions.

I: A THEORY OF IDEOLOGY AND PARTY.

The most important work on the influence of ideas in political science has focused individual issues, and especially on foreign policy (e.g., Goldstein 1994; Goldstein and Keohane 1993b). There, the relevance of political parties has been less acute. My claim is that ideas are organized into ideologies, and that those packages influence the coalitions that parties advance. Any test of this claim will need a very clear distinction of parties from ideologies. The two concepts are often blurred in the literature (For exceptions, see Gerring 1998; Hinich and Munger 1994). Making the distinction is not straightforward. Ideology and party are closely related, because political parties take up and advance ideologies, or they can. The first step, then, is to conceptually distinguish ideology from party.

Chiefly, they are the domains of different actors, who have different purposes and dominate different spheres. Parties are dominated by politicians, while ideologies are shaped by activists, political thinkers and other opinion makers. Politicians want to get elected and control government, and that action takes place within the institutions of government. Ideologues want to figure out right and just policies, convince others to agree with them, and then hope to see their policies enacted. They do their work in a less well-defined realm of political discourse. These two missions are distinct, but the lines between the groups pursuing them are not bright. We need concrete definitions to separate them.

¹ There is some debate as to whether this constitutes an according-to-Hoyle realignment, or merely an adjustment. I use the term “realignment” thus loosely, to refer to this change in party positions on racial issues in the latter half of the 20th century.

I define a political party as an organized effort to gain political power (Schattschneider 1942). Parties form a united front, putting aside their differences so that they can capture control of government. They then use government to gain power and influence policy.

Those who form the united front often differ from one another in important ways. All they need have in common is a desire to control government. They might include activists who have strong ideologies. Or they might be a collection of unrelated interest groups. Parties can even be based entirely on patronage.

Some kinds of groups may be easier to unite or manage than others, but parties can be formed in many ways. However the group is formed, the party binds its members' efforts together in the service of their collective goals.

I define ideology as something that provides a shared set of policy preferences. Like a party, an ideology unites many different people, but unlike partisans, ideologues are united, but not a front. They really want the same things. Members of parties expect to agree on little and to be indifferent on a lot of things; adherents to an ideology expect to agree on everything and to be indifferent about little. The shared set of preferences may be logically coherent and derived from first principles, but it need not be. Ideologies are comprehensive: They prescribe policy positions on nearly every issue on which there is any political disagreement, and certainly across all domains of issues. This definition of ideology is consistent with Converse's (1964) notion of a system constrained beliefs,² and is flexible in regards to the origins of that constraint.³ It is also consistent with the broadly accepted model of ideology as a dimension, running between two poles of opposite constraints (Knight 2006). To be politically relevant, an ideology must be shared by a number of politically relevant people. Otherwise, it is just one person's belief system.

This conception might be seen as consistent with "ideas" as "shared beliefs" in the Goldstein and Keohane (1993a, pp. 8-11) framework. Goldstein and Keohane identify three kinds of shared beliefs: First

² Converse avoided the term "ideology," preferring "belief system." This paper does not make that distinction.

³ The current paper is agnostic as to whether ideology is, at its root, about psychological predispositions, material interest, philosophical disagreement, or any other cause.

are “world views,” which “define the universe for possibilities for action,” and are embedded in the symbolism of a culture and deeply affect modes of thought and discourse.” Second are “principled beliefs,” which “specify criteria for distinguishing right from wrong and just from unjust.” They give the examples of “slavery is wrong,” or “abortion is murder,” as principled beliefs. Finally, third are “causal beliefs,” which are beliefs about cause-and-effect. Ideologies, under their framework, are like *bundles* of principled beliefs and, perhaps to a lesser extent, of causal beliefs. Ideologies tie together many different moral criteria and positive understandings into a package. Ideologies approach world views, in that for their adherents, they have much of the same force, but they co-exist with other ideologies, and thus do not have the deep impact that the world view of a culture has.

Following these definitions, parties and ideologies are explicitly parallel.⁴ An ideology identifies a set of political issue positions that are collectively supported by a group of people, and a party identifies as set of people who act collectively to achieve certain goals. If we imagine a matrix of issue choices, with each column an issue and each row an actor (say, a roll call matrix) with some structure, then parties determine the structure through actors who should vote together (if Obama votes for it, so should Kennedy), and ideologies determine structure through issues that should go together (if one supports abortion, one should oppose the Estate Tax). This causes some confusion, since we cannot tell which mechanism is behind the structure. In many respects, ideology and party are observationally equivalent, even though they represent different mechanisms. But this parallelism is also convenient, since it means ideology and party might be compared using similar measures: specifically something like the scaling of issue positions, familiar to users of NOMINATE scores in Congress, and other measures of structure.

The difference between ideology and party lies in their competing causes. Each originates in a different domain.

One is official political activity, the principal domain of parties. Party coalitions are manifest in many places in this domain, but most conveniently in the votes of members of Congress. Most

⁴ This approach is thus slightly different from that of Gerring (1998), who asks whether parties have or do not have an ideology. Under this framework, it is also possible for an ideology to exist without a party. It is consistent, however, with Gerring’s (1997) claim that ideology is, at its core, about constraint.

importantly, they are not generally hidden. So learning what divides the parties is as simple as studying the issues on which known party members vote together and which issues divide them.

The other domain is in the realm of ideas, or the political discourse. This is the principal domain of ideologues. Intellectuals and other writers offer opinions on a range of ideas. When a set of these thinkers agrees on a set of issue positions, they are expressing an ideology. Ideologues work to tie different issues together, developing arguments or even philosophical principles that imply a set of policies. Ideologues are, in this view, political moralists: they want to get to the right, just, best solution.

This conception follows directly from Philip Converse's approach to belief systems. In his "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," Converse attributes the organization of belief systems to the work of a narrow intellectual group, which I would call ideologues:

First, the shaping of belief systems of any range into apparently logical wholes that are credible to large numbers of people is an act of creative synthesis characteristic of only a miniscule proportion of any population. Second, to the extent that multiple idea-elements of a belief system are socially diffused from such creative sources, they tend to be diffused as "packages," which consumers come to see as "natural" wholes, for they are presented in such terms ("If you believe this, then you will also believe that, for it follows in such-and-such ways"). (p. 211)

Thus, to understand ideology, we should look to the pundits, writers and others expressing opinions in political tracts, journals, magazines and editorial pages. The precise dynamics of Converse's "creative synthesis" among these actors has never been thoroughly developed. I argue that these "creative sources" will tend to create "packages" that are compatible with the interests and predispositions of large groups of people. As they work to figure out what they think is right, likeminded intellectuals will develop sets of issues on which a group of them agree. These are ideologies. Ideologues generally do not self-identify as members of one ideology or another; for them labels can be more hindrance than short-cut. But their common positions nonetheless define an ideology.

Thus parties and ideologies represent separate forces. But they do bleed into each other's worlds. Some politicians are more influenced by ideology than by party. And some party figures, even elected officials, take clear ideological positions in political journals. In some periods, there are even well-

identified partisan publications, which can be said to speak for the parties, although with far less discipline and fewer negotiations than a party platform.

Sometimes, these two domains look the same. They do today. When Republicans take positions in the discourse or when they vote in Congress, they are conservative. Likewise Democrats and liberals. Some are moderates, compromising on one or another issue. Some individual issues tend to confound political thinkers and actors. But today, the coalitions in Congress and among intellectuals are rather well defined, and certainly the coalitions we see in each domain are similar.⁵

And so, today, we cannot easily disentangle party and ideological coalitions. But sometimes we can. There are a number of reasons why parties and ideologies might not follow one another. Politicians might avoid ideology, and instead build their parties on patronage, regionalism, the pork-barrel, or some ad hoc coalition just large enough to be a permanent logroll in the legislature, and to capture enough votes to win. And ideologues could eschew political parties and attempt to influence policy in other ways, through education, the popular media, or issue-by-issue persuasion. In these cases, parties and ideologies might easily define different coalitions.

But such a situation is unlikely to remain for long. Parties are the most efficient and direct way to win in politics, and implementing a comprehensive ideological program is best done with a party. If, in some periods, ideologies and parties do not define the same coalitions, how might we come to a world in which they do? I argue that there can be one of two mechanisms.

Partisan rationalization: Coalitions may form for politically expedient reasons — to win votes in elections or logrolls in a legislature — and party organs may afterward craft a message that justifies them. In Schwartz' (1989, p. 11) words: “a majority party will be able to formulate its legislative goals in a pithy program or platform.” Downs (1957, pp. 96-113) likewise conceptualizes ideologies as something created to justify a party's claim to power. Once a party's platform becomes an ideology, party discipline becomes internal.

⁵ There are, of course, some internal schisms today. But they are nothing on the level of the Conservative Coalition at mid-century, or in the period before the Civil War.

In such a case, the needs of partisan coalition building would be foremost in the minds of ideologues. If they are not, party leaders might try to convince them that they should be. But this will work only if ideologues do not attempt to develop arguments independently of political necessity, or that they agree with the coalition built by party leaders. I suspect this pattern is especially likely when ideological thinkers are mostly themselves active politicians, as in the case of early American history. When politicians who have a stake in political outcomes also write ideological arguments, those arguments will justify the decisions they have made or will have to make. More independent intellectuals may be less loyal.

Ideological marketing: Just as partisans may wish to have an ideology to bolster their coalition, ideologues will want party coalitions to accept their ideology. The party coalition might need to draw in more votes than the ideology provides by itself, but if a winning party is going to have an ideology at its kernel, ideologues will want it to be theirs. For this reason, I call ideologues “coalition merchants.” They have created what could be a useful component of a party coalition – ideally, as ideologues see it, the biggest component of the coalition – and they hope to get a party to accept it.

Ideologues can influence parties both directly and indirectly. Directly, they can attempt to persuade elected officials that they are right, and some ideological thinkers even make the jump and run for office themselves. More typically, however, ideologues influence politics by persuading other politically relevant actors, including voters and especially activists. Party leaders need the support of activists (Aldrich 1983; Masket 2004) and bend to the activists’ pressures. These activists can be thought of as the fundamental building blocks of parties (Bawn et al. 2006). What influences them, influences the party.

The ideology, then, shapes the party not by changing the electoral landscape, but by changing the elite landscape. This can make its detection difficult, but it is consistent with the evidence on ideology and mass publics. Voters tend not to be ideological in their thinking, nor in constraint across issues (Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1964). Changes in party positions tend to take a long time to be echoed in voter positions (Adams 1997; Carmines and Stimson 1989). The action takes place among the small group of politically active and aware actors. We do not have good measures of the preferences of ideological activists, although those that we do have tend to show that they are more ideologically extreme than the mass public (e.g., McCloskey et al. 1960; Brady et al. 1999; Carsey et al. 2003).

Thus, ideologies may influence party coalitions indirectly, through the preferences of key partisan actors. But if the new ideological coalition differs from the existing partisan coalition, some partisan actors may resist. For example, in the early 1800s the Whig and Democratic parties resisted the growing slavery-based ideology, because each party had members in both the North and the South, and the party leadership wanted to keep it that way. Acquiescing in the new ideological division would have threatened the intersectional alliance. This is especially interesting for the Whigs, since the new ideology was promising. It could (and for the Republicans, eventually would) end Democratic dominance. But the risk involved was apparently too great.

Whig and Democratic politicians alike also may have resisted the new ideology because of the longstanding connections they had with their own parties. Cotton Whig politicians may have been drawn to the pro-slavery ideology that Democrats eventually defended, but that meant abandoning their allies in the united front that had gotten them elected. Switching to a new party means that lifetime of connections has to be built up from scratch. The same is true of Northern Democrats (and for the decision of Northern Whigs to switch to the Republican Party). Party resisted ideology again in the 1950s and 1960s. Southern Democrats had political connections and loyalties to the Democratic Party, but were ideologically conservative on social issues.

As the Democratic Party became more clearly liberal on the racial and social issues important to those southern Democrats (and their constituents), those southern Democrats had a difficult choice. But so did the leaders of the party. So long as southern Democrats remained Democrats, the party could not completely adopt the new ideology.

Both partisan justification and ideological marketing are possible mechanisms. I suspect that both occur in politics from time to time, but which dominates is an empirical question. Do parties shape ideologies, or do ideologies shape parties? How effectively are such influences resisted? There is theoretical reason to believe that ideologies will be more effective at influencing parties. Parties may resist new ideological alignments, but if the activists who nominate and elect them have embraced the new ideology, party politicians will eventually either succumb or be replaced. A rival notion, however, that ideologies are epiphenomenal, suggests that partisan justification is more common than ideological marketing.

This, then, is an empirical question, and one that is difficult to test. Since parties and ideologies are so often the same, neither will appear to influence the other. To address this problem, we must focus on the cases where the coalitions do change. If ideologies dominate coalition formation, then major changes in party coalitions should be preceded by ideological reshaping into the new coalitions. If ideologies rationalize party coalitions, then the new division should appear first between parties in the political sphere, that is in Congress, and then be articulated later in the ideological sphere.

This, then, is the key empirical question: What moves first? **Figure 1** shows a stylized version of the theory. The black line in each panel of Figure 1 tracks how well an issue is related to the underlying division between the coalitions of the two dominant parties in a two-party system, e.g. the Democrats and Republicans. The gray line tracks how well that same issue is related to the underlying division between the two dominant ideologies, e.g. liberals and conservatives. In the top panel, changes in the party division precede those of ideologues. This is partisan justification. The pattern is reversed in the lower panel. This is ideological marketing.

FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

I move now to test which pattern holds in the transformation of racial politics in the twentieth century.

II. RACIAL POLITICS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Party politics was structured around economic issues in the early part of the 20th century. Anti-monopoly and anti-business language in the Democratic presidential party platforms peaked in the period from 1900 to 1908 (Gerring 1998, pp. 77, 199), and remained high into the 1930s. Initially, however, many economic issues remained cross-cutting. There were progressives in both parties, and the progressive movement was diffuse and affected each party differently in different places. (Sundquist 1983, pp. 170-181) There were also conservatives in both parties.

The economic differences between the parties sharpened with the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal realignment. Tariffs and trusts became less central to the agenda, to be replaced by direct economic intervention in the Keynesian mode. By the mid 1930s, the Democratic Party

was solidly the party of labor, of the working class and of redistribution. The Republicans were the party of business and the wealthy. Thus the New Deal coalition, widely understood as a marriage of southern segregationists and northern economic liberals, continued to unite elements of the old Democratic coalition. The post-Civil War-era Democratic coalition had included the anti-business elements of the country and the anti-reconstruction elements. In John Gerring's telling,⁶ the Democratic Party's agenda did not radically change with the New Deal realignment. He categorizes the period on both sides of Roosevelt's election, from 1896 to 1948, as the "Populist Epoch" in the Democratic Party. The "Universalist Epoch" does not begin until 1952. It is the Republican Party that has a break in 1924, between the "National Epoch" and the "Neoliberal Epoch," both of which are still pro-business orientations. Poole and Rosenthal (1997) argue that the New Deal realignment may have changed who was voting for the parties, but it did little to change how the parties were voting on economic issues in Congress.

During this period of consistent economic conflict between the Democrats and Republicans, another issue is consistently absent: race. Race was not central to ideological or partisan conflict in this period.

After the end of Reconstruction, the parties both kept race largely off the agenda. During Reconstruction, race had been a powerful symbolic issue: Democrats were the party of segregation and the solid South, and Republicans were the party of the reconstruction and the bloody shirt. But the Civil War amendments had taken most slavery issues off the agenda, and few new issues were taken up, especially after the end of Reconstruction. Highly partisan anti-lynching laws were periodically proposed, but the last was in 1921. As late as the 1940s, the Democratic Party's platform offered vague language on race, while the Republican Party took explicitly pro-black positions (Johnson and Porter 1973, pp. 403, 412; Carmines and Stimson 1989).

⁶ As noted above, in Gerring's terminology, these are changes in the "ideology" of the parties. I avoid this usage to make clear that an ideology can exist separately from a party, but I would agree that these agendas do reflect an ideology, which in this case will begin changing.

This is the opposite of the cleavage today. Today, more than 90 percent of the African-American vote goes to the Democratic Party, and the Republican Party is the home to those who oppose affirmative action and defend the Confederate flag.

This reversal in party positions has been thoroughly studied (e.g., Carmines and Stimson 1989; Murphy and Gulliver 1971; Petrocik 1987; Sundquist 1983). The primary explanations are a mix of strategy and coalition politics. After World War II ended, some Democrats realized they could gain votes in the North, especially from African Americans, if they came out in favor of civil rights.

Many Democratic constituencies favored this move, but a Democrat who tried it would surely lose votes in the South. Truman took the risk (James 1997; Sitkoff 1971) in 1948, driving the Dixiecrats to run Strom Thurmond as a rival Democrat against him. Although Truman won the election, he did so without the electoral votes of southern states.

And so the Democratic Party inched away from the civil rights stance taken by Truman. The party's platforms in 1952 and 1956 were similar to those from before Truman (Johnson and Porter 1973; Carmines and Stimson 1989, pp. 31-58), and in 1956, the party first indicated a support for "states rights." Carmines and Stimson show that the national party's campaign positions first began to shift on race in the early 1960s. Nixon and Kennedy both took pro-civil rights positions in 1960 (Scammon and Wattenberg 1971), and in that year, the Democratic Party suddenly made race a central element of the platform. But southern Democrats held back their support from Kennedy, putting unpledged electors on the ballot in Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.

The broad pattern in congressional voting can be seen in **Figure 2**, adapted from Poole and Rosenthal. The figure plots how well civil rights bills fit the first dimension in the House of Representatives from 1861 to 1988. The APRE, or aggregate proportionate reduction in error, measures how much of the error in voting is reduced by the first dimension of the NOMINATE model. That is, if the NOMINATE scores measure the primary division among Members of Congress, the APRE for civil rights bills measures how well those bills are explained by that primary division.

In the immediate post-bellum period, bills on race are largely first-dimensional. These are mostly anti-lynching votes, and the Democrats reliably vote against them, while Republicans vote for them. But there are not many such votes in this period, and there are no lynch law votes between 1921 and 1937. In 1937, well into the period of the New Deal, the issue has ceased to be explained by the first dimension of

conflict. This is the beginning of the conservative coalition in Congress, cross-cutting the primary economic party division on a number of issues, especially race. But beginning in the 1960s, the issue comes back to the first dimension. Now it is the economic conservatives in the Republican Party who are opposed to racial policies (many of which were increasingly redistributive), while economic liberals in the Democratic Party favor those policies.

FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

These accounts do not pay much attention to ideology. The realignment on race is understood in electoral terms. Some voters cared about civil rights, others did not, and the Democratic Party had to find the right pitch to win votes. Some accounts do note the civil rights bona fides of certain actors – did Truman really care about blacks? Did Johnson? This take considers ideology only as it is found in the mind of a single actor.

I argue that the racial realignment was inevitable, not because a coalition of the white working class had to include blacks and could not include white segregationists, but because the liberal ideology that motivated most Democrats was coming to believe that caring about the poor meant caring about blacks.

It did not have to happen that way, of course. There is nothing inherently impractical with a political coalition or an ideology that is pro-working class but not pro-black, or with one that was pro-black but also pro-business. Recall, for instance, that the *Plessy v. Ferguson* test case was orchestrated by both a group of African-American activists *and* the East Louisiana Railway Company, which opposed the additional burden and expense of the Separate Car Act (e.g. Elliott 2006). It was not Walgreen's policy to segregate the lunch-counter in Greensboro, N.C., but the town's (e.g. Chafe 1980). It was a pro-business and pro-black ideological cleavage that launched the Civil War. Pro-business Republicans opposed slavery, while small farmers defended the South's peculiar institution (Foner 1980, 1995 (1970)). And that voting coalition lasted for several decades after Reconstruction.

Ideology and race: But the prevailing ideology did change, if slowly. The economic conflict in Congress reflected ideological debates among intellectuals at the time. How should society think about the poor and working class? One strain, led by Lester Ward and picked up by Herbert Croly, argued that

the government should not be seen as the enemy of the working class, as Democrats in the antebellum period saw it. Rather, the power of government ought to be directed to helping bring about equality that was “The Promise of American Life” (Croly 1909).

Another strain, perhaps exemplified by William Graham Sumner and Herbert Spencer, argued that attempts to use government power to correct income inequality were doomed. Sumner asked “What do Social Classes Owe Each Other?” (1883) and decided that the answer was little, opposing “The Absurd Effort to Make the World Over” (1894) to aid the less well-off. Spencer is credited with coining the term “Social Darwinism,” by which he meant that in an unregulated economy, the most talented and hard-working would succeed, while the lazy would fail. Efforts to intervene in this mechanism would only undermine the incentive to work provided by the economy.

Race was simply not central to this turn-of-the-century debate. Ward and Croly focused on the urban poor, not rural black sharecroppers. Ward, drawing on the state of the art in sociology, held views we’d call racist today (Gossett 1997; Stocking 1994). From our modern vantage point, ideas that justify the redistribution to the white poor also justify concern for the black poor, and many intellectuals might have felt those concerns. But others did not see such a connection. It was not until later that race played a more widespread role in progressive ideology.

III: A MEASURE OF THE IDEOLOGICAL SPACE

Ideal point estimates, such as those referenced above, might be interpreted straightforwardly, as indicators of true preferences. In practice, many scholars do treat NOMINATE scores as measures of ideology. But most recognize that these scores are in some way influenced by strategic behavior, notably party discipline, but also other political influences, such as lobbyists or constituency constraints.

NOMINATE scores do tell us, of course, who votes together, and are thus a good measure of political activity, including party activity. The idea behind such scaling is that we believe there is some dimension that explains people’s votes or issue positions. This conception is explored formally in Hinich and Munger (1994), which treats ideology as a predictive dimension that voters can use to map a candidate or party to specific policy positions. The ends of this dimension might be called liberalism or conservatism. All political actors have a position on this underlying dimension. And we think that, for instance, a member of Congress’ vote on a particular issue is a function of her position on that dimension.

Some issues are strongly related to the ideological dimension, but some are not. If trade preferences are related, for instance, then as a member's score on the latent ideological trait increases from one extreme to the other, she might go from opposing a tariff to favoring one, along the way reaching a point at which she is indifferent on the issue. Another issue, say segregation, might be unrelated. Then, as a person's score increases, it will not predict a change in her attitudes, or it will predict only weakly.

We cannot observe this latent trait, nor can we know a priori how well it will predict votes. What we can do is look at the pattern of the votes and deduce both the trait itself and the parameters that relate each issue to the trait. Scaling does this. In one dimension, the question is just whether or not an issue maps to the measured dimension.

In Congress, this dimension measures the behavior of partisan actors, which, as noted above, is not a pure measure of ideology. It is probably better to think of it as a measure of party, or at least, of the preferences that are related to party coalitions. To detect the role of ideology independent of partisanship, we need a measure divorced from those political concerns. I develop such a measure by looking at political writers — those who express opinions in political magazines, newspapers and journals.

The issue space defined by these opinions is not influenced by the strategic considerations of political actors voting on the floor of Congress, and therefore is presumably a more direct measure of ideology, or at *least* less a measure of party platforms. Indeed, many of the opinions are expressed as frustration with the “compromises” or blind partisan loyalty of elected politicians. Of course, all human behavior is influenced by considerations that make it less than “sincere.” Political pundits no doubt temper their opinions to win friends, influence audiences and keep credibility. However, those constraints are different from those meant to win votes or logroll with other politicians. The constraints of intellectuals are the determinants of ideology, while the constraints of partisan politicians are the determinants of parties.

The key distinction lies in the first ideological dimension. It is common to estimate more than one, in which case the second or higher dimensions explain what cannot be explained by the first dimension. But it is not necessary to estimate the higher dimensions to know which issues are not explained by the first. Anything not explained by the first dimension will be explained by some higher dimension, perhaps the second, perhaps the third, fifth, eighth or 30th. With two primary parties and two

primary ideologies, the first dimension is our best indicator of what separates them. Differences in the ways that issues related to the first dimension demonstrate differences in the primacy of those issues to party and to ideology.

This section will first discuss in detail the collection process and describe the data. It will then describe the models used to estimate the issue space defined by these pundits.

The Data: The data are the recorded positions of pundits in major political publications on the issues of the day. The database includes a variety of actors, such as The New York Times editorial board, periodic correspondents with a publication, and major figures such as Herbert Croly or William Graham Sumner. It includes some elected officials, such as Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt, who also act as intellectuals. It also includes excerpts and summaries of opinions expressed elsewhere, in speeches or books.

This paper analyzes sets of opinions at 20-year intervals from 1910 to 1990. Opinions were drawn from large samples of a number of publications. For monthly and weekly publications, effort was made to collect every article published in each year studied. For daily publications, large samples were taken from each month. Publications were selected for inclusion based on their perceived relevance to politics. Publications studied include *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Harper's Monthly*, *Human Events*, *The International Monthly*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Nation*, *The National Review*, *The New Republic*, *The New York Times*, *The New-Englander*, *The North American Review*, *Scribner's*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post*. Data were collected by the author and a team of undergraduate researchers.⁷ For each opinion article, researchers recorded the author, source and the issue(s) on which an opinion was taken, and what position (for or against) was taken. Articles were coded for all positions taken in them, which in most cases was more than one. Researchers also wrote a detailed abstract of the article. Articles include unsigned editorials for each publication, which are attributed to the "editorial board" of the publication. I reviewed each article code, checking it against the abstract, and in some cases, against the original article.

⁷ With some exceptions, researchers took a course on political ideas in American history. Students applied to take the course, and only students with excellent academic records were admitted.

A subset of articles (more than half) were double-coded to confirm the reliability of each coder. In data analyzed here, only once have two coders concluded that the same article took opposite positions on an issue.

The data analyzed in this paper are from publications in the calendar years of 1910, 1930, 1950, 1970 and 1990, with a few exceptions for journals that began publication shortly after these years. Data from those publications was supplemented by direct searches on the names of all writers to capture articles written shortly before or after each of these years. In the few cases in which a writer is an important figure in American history, biographical information is used to fill in positions on issues not addressed in available sources from a given year. Writers who were not found in the initial sample of articles are not included, even when it is known that they were active in the period. Biographical information is used only when it reflects opinions that were held in and around the year in question.

As should be evident, these data differ in several ways from the data usually used to estimate ideal points of Members of Congress from their recorded votes. I discuss the most important of these differences below.

First, defining the issue is tricky. For Congress, we know that everyone is voting on the same issues even if we don't know exactly what the bill is about. For the pundit data, I need to define the issue from the context. On the one hand, overly general issue definitions can mask significant differences from writer to writer. For instance, an advocate of better treatment for workers might still oppose labor unions as corrupt or ineffective. Opponents of alcohol often stop short of advocating prohibition. On the other hand, overly specific issues degenerate into minutia, where each writer is writing about some very narrow matter unaddressed by others. Effort was made to be as specific as possible while still maintaining a large number of responses on each issue. Similar issues are clumped together in general issue areas (taxes, foreign policy, race, trade) and then broken down further as appropriate. Some adjustments in the definitions of the issue were made as the coding was in process as I and the coders became aware of nuances in policy discussions that were not known to us *ex ante*. Decisions to change an issue from more to less specific were made after careful reading of the abstracts and original articles to be sure they were appropriate. Often, a writer will take a position that is only implicit: Someone who favors an aggressive position in the Cold War is also against Communism in general, although the reverse is not necessarily true.

Relatedly, the framing of the issue is also important. Opinions can be considered in terms of policy prescriptions, groups (or individuals) who are affected, or abstract principles that are invoked. Effort was made to focus on the first two, especially policy. However, pundits are not constrained to propose detailed policy options. Coding of general principles had to be done with care. We are not interested in who supports freedom of speech in the abstract, but in who thinks freedom of speech should apply to offensive art and who thinks it should apply to hate speech. Many writers also take up groups, individuals and 17 programs for praise or reproach. These too are informative. The implied “policy” is just that we should have more people or programs like this, or do what we can to support people or groups like this. Thus, pundits take positions on “issues” such as “The Bricker Amendment,” “blacks,” “The Democratic Party” and “Dwight Eisenhower.”

Second, many pundits address the same issue more than once, and at different times. Usually, they take the same position. In the very few cases when they do not, it is usually because the issue has not been defined in a sufficiently nuanced way. The issue in such cases is redefined. In other cases, a better judgment can be made on the basis of the entire set of articles.

Third, different pundits address different issues. In analyses of legislatures there may be some abstentions, but by and large, every legislator faces and usually votes on the same set of issues. The pundit-by-issue matrix produced by my coding procedure is “missing” just less than 90 percent of the possible observations (that is, compared to a scenario in which every pundit addressed every issue that has been raised in the year). This missingness is misleading, however. It comes largely from the many writers who take on two or three issues, or the many issues that are addressed by only a few writers. It is missing data only from the standpoint of a complete matrix.

We could focus on the editorial boards and a few key writers who all address most of the leading issues. In that case, this project would be akin to the estimation of ideal points of the nine members of the Supreme Court (Martin and Quinn 2002), although with fewer issues. Dropping the remaining cases would leave less “missingness,” but it would also throw away useful information. The major issues are addressed by nearly all of the major writers, but the additional issues and writers help to clarify the relationships. We cannot learn much about those issues or writers, but we can learn something about the underlying dimension, which in turn tells us something about the other issues. Including everything provides more information about the space as a whole. Since the procedure gives confidence bounds for

all parameters, it is easy to know on which issues or for which pundits we do not have enough information to draw inferences.

Following these guidelines, I create a pundit by issue matrix. The data for each year represent almost 3,000 coded opinions. However, many of those are redundant. Such redundancy helps to clarify that the coded opinion is correct, but in the end, it is only one opinion. Still others are on issues on which no other writer is engaged. After eliminating non-informative cases, the matrix for 1910 has 172 issues and 82 writers, with 810 different opinions. There are 155 issues, 97 writers and 1002 opinions in 1930 and 223 issues, 100 writers and 1441 opinions in 1950.

The model: The model is an adaptation of a standard Item-Response Model, as developed by Albert and Chib (1993; See also Baker 1992; Clinton et al. 2000; Treier and Jackman 2002). In this paper, I estimate a one-dimensional model. Higher dimensions could be estimated, but in most years, the data are too sparse to do so with much precision. As noted above, estimating higher dimensions can tell us which issues cluster together on another dimension, but this is unnecessary to know which issues are part of the primary cleavage. The theoretical questions here are all about which issues are part of the primary division between the two parties, the first dimension would be sufficient.

Responses to items – in this case issues in the public debate – are the dependent variable. They are predicted by the latent trait – in this case ideology – and parameters. More formally, each ij^{th} article is a Bernoulli trial with a probability defined by parameters for the j^{th} issue and the latent traits for the i^{th} pundit:

$$y_{ij} \sim F_{\text{Bernoulli}}(\pi_{ij}) \tag{1}$$

where π is a function of the x 's, as follows:

$$\pi_{ij} = f_{\text{logit}}(\beta_j(x_i - \alpha_j)) \tag{2}$$

and where π is the probability of a “1” response, x is a respondent-specific ideology score, and α and β are item-specific parameters.⁸

⁸ All models reported here are estimated in WinBUGS. For a one-dimensional model, identification is straightforward. We can pin down two points to define a line. In fact, any two restrictions on the x 's are sufficient to define one dimension. Rivers (2003) has shown that the required identifying restrictions are $n(n+1)$ independent restrictions for an n -dimensional model. In this case, the model is identified after the

The α and β parameters have a straightforward interpretation. The α parameter is the cutpoint. Those with values of x (ideal points on the ideological dimension) to one side of it are predicted to take one position, opposing those to the other. (In this project, positive ideal points are to the “right,” or conservative.) The β is the discrimination parameter. It measures how well this issue reflects the underlying ideological dimension measured by x . Issues with high values of β define the ideological dimension, while those with low values are off-dimensional. A second, third or higher dimension is needed to explain them.

Issues that are highly related to the dimension will also have the largest explanatory power, or proportionate reduction in error. The PRE is a comparison to a null model, in which everyone takes the majority position. Since not everyone does, there will be some classification error. Using the first dimension to predict the position will reduce that error. The proportion of the error reduced is a measure of fit for each issue. We can also average over that reduction for many issues to see how well the dimension fits a cluster of similar issues (say, all economic policy issues, or all race issues).

To this basic model, I make two adjustments. The first is a hierarchical model for the ideal points, taking advantage of the known relationship between two pundits writing for the same publication. The second is multinomial model, which allows the decision to speak at all, as well the both the pro and con position, to be related independently to the primary dimension.

Model 1: Hierarchical parameters for ideology: Many of the pundits in the dataset address very few issues. However, each pundit is writing for a known publication, and each publication is represented on nearly every issue.

It would be possible to simply treat every article in a given journal as representing the same ideal point, that of the journal’s editorial board.⁹ This would collapse the data down to a smaller number of

MCMC estimation. Each posterior draw is normalized to have mean 0 and standard deviation of 1 (See e.g. Leventusky et al. 2005 for more on this procedure.) Posterior means are reported, based on about 5,000 iterations after at least 25,000-iteration burn-in. Parameters converged very quickly, but I have done many more iterations to ensure that every parameter is properly estimated. Standard diagnostics suggest that the posterior distribution has been explored.

⁹ I have estimated this model, and it does not produce results at odds with those reported here.

almost complete cases, one for each journal. But this is surely inaccurate. Even among ideological fellow travelers there can be disagreement. Some publication editors even take pride in the diversity of opinion presented. On the other hand, we would be ignoring useful information if we didn't account for the relationship between different pundits writing for the same journal. Ideological birds of a feather do tend to flock to the same publications.

A reasonable middle ground is a hierarchical model, in which each pundit's latent trait is a draw from a journal-specific distribution. A hierarchical model does more than address the gaps in the data matrix. Even without these gaps, the model is more efficient by borrowing strength across observations involving pundits writing for the same outlet. That is, we add to the model above these hierarchical parameters:

$$x_i \sim f_N(\mu_k, \sigma_k^2) \tag{3}$$

where μ_k is the k^{th} journal's mean, and σ_k^2 is that journal's variance.¹⁰

Both μ_k and σ_k^2 are parameters to be estimated. This is a reasonable model of the actual process. Editors presumably have ideal points, but they are also willing to accept writing by pundits who deviate from them to some degree. And the editors probably differ in how much deviation they are willing to accept. *The New York Times* consciously wants to include a mix on its editorial page, so we would predict that its variance parameter would be larger. Other publications burnish a particular point of view, and do not publish articles that deviate very much from it. The closer to the editors' preferences, the more likely the writer will choose to submit or work for the editor as well as be accepted or hired.

The model will estimate just how ecumenical each publication is. If the ideal points from the journal appear to be all over the map, the estimated σ_k^2 will be large. On the other hand, an ideologically pure publication will have a smaller σ_k^2 . The model treats the "editorial board" itself as just another pundit in that mix, which has an ideal point of its own, also just drawn from the journal's distribution. The editorial board's ideal point can be very different from the hierarchical parameter. Thus the hierarchical parameter measures the editors in their capacity as gatekeepers, while the editorial board ideal point measures editors (often a different but overlapping set) in their capacity as opinion-holders.

Model 2: Multinomial choice: The first adjustment attempts to glean as much information as possible from the positions taken by the actors. But there is information in the decision to take a position

¹⁰ In Bayesian estimation, priors are defined for the "precision," or inverse of the variance.

itself, as well. The second model includes the hierarchical parameters of the first model, but uses a multinomial link between the ideal points and the choices, to allow for pro, con and abstention to be predicted by ideology.

The assumption is that, in addition to taking a common position on an issue, pundits might reveal their ideology in two other ways. First, they might decline to speak on an issue at all, and second, they might argue with their co-ideologues about it. In the first case, we would expect abstention to be associated with the ideology. In the second, we would expect pro and con to both be associated with the same ideology. A multinomial model allows these possibilities. Alternatively, if both sides are internally debating an issue, or if both sides ignore it, then this issue is not related to the first ideological dimension.

This unordered choice model is just an extension of the model above, again derived from a random utility model. It can be estimated as a multinomial logit, on the assumption that the errors have a type one extreme value distribution (McFadden 1973; Train 1986)¹¹ In that case, the model is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 P(y = 1) &= \frac{e^{\beta_{1,j}x_i + a_{1,j}}}{e^{\beta_{1,j}x_i + a_{1,j}} + e^{\beta_{2,j}x_i + a_{2,j}} + 1} \\
 P(y = 2) &= \frac{e^{\beta_{2,j}x_i + a_{2,j}}}{e^{\beta_{1,j}x_i + a_{1,j}} + e^{\beta_{2,j}x_i + a_{2,j}} + 1} \\
 P(y = 3) &= \frac{1}{e^{\beta_{1,j}x_i + a_{1,j}} + e^{\beta_{2,j}x_i + a_{2,j}} + 1}
 \end{aligned}
 \tag{4}$$

Where $y = 1$ is a “con” response, $y = 2$ is a “pro” response, and $y = 3$ is no response.

Note that the model is identified effectively through setting the parameters for the third response category, or abstention, to be zero: $\beta_3 = \alpha_3 = 0$.

Of course, for some speakers, staying silent might have nothing to do with ideology. Some writers just write more often. The editorial boards of the major publications, for instance, have a more frequent platform. So do regular columnists. I thus estimate a second latent trait, which we might call talkativeness, which affects the relative probability of no response. This modifies the model above to be the following:

¹¹ See also Whitten and Palmer (1996), Merrill and Adams (2001); and Schofield and Sened (2005) for applications in political science.

$$\begin{aligned}
P(y = 1) &= \frac{e^{\beta_{1,j}x_i + a_{1,j}}}{e^{\beta_{1,j}x_i + a_{1,j}} + e^{\beta_{2,j}x_i + a_{2,j}} + e^{z_i}} \\
P(y = 2) &= \frac{e^{\beta_{2,j}x_i + a_{2,j}}}{e^{\beta_{1,j}x_i + a_{1,j}} + e^{\beta_{2,j}x_i + a_{2,j}} + e^{z_i}} \\
P(y = 3) &= \frac{e^{z_i}}{e^{\beta_{1,j}x_i + a_{1,j}} + e^{\beta_{2,j}x_i + a_{2,j}} + e^{z_i}}
\end{aligned}
\tag{5}$$

Now, rather than holding the parameters for non response constant at 0, they vary with i , but not with j . The variable z is a second latent trait, this time related to the decision (not) to speak.¹²

The x 's from the multinomial model have the same interpretation as above. The β 's are also similarly interpreted. Now, each issue has two discrimination parameters: $\beta_{1,j}$ is the associated with the pro position on issue j , while $\beta_{2,j}$ is associated with the con position. Their difference, $\beta_{D,j} = \beta_{2,j} - \beta_{1,j}$, is analogous to the β from the first model,¹³ and can be interpreted in the same manner. Where both parameters are large (in magnitude) and of opposite signs, then β_D , will also be large, and this is the case where the issue is strongly related to the dominant ideological dimension.

However, the individual β 's can now also be interpreted. It is possible for the difference between the parameters to not be very large (or distinguishable from 0), but one of the parameters is large and significantly different from 0 (while the other is small or imprecisely estimated). This is the case where taking one position on the issue is related to ideology, while taking the other position is not. Sometimes, no one will take one side of the issue, either because it is unpopular or because it is the status quo and its advocates do not feel the need to defend it. For instance, before the Civil Rights movement, very few thinkers take pro-segregation positions. Discussing segregation is either unpopular or unnecessary, since there are few serious efforts to end it. This makes understanding the ideological role of civil rights hard, since the issue is not being opposed, even if many people are advocating for it. A number of issues do not have representation on both sides in the sample.

¹² The estimated z 's turn out to be a straightforward function of the total number of times each writer wrote.

¹³ Estimates of β_D are correlated with estimates of β from the first model at .9 or greater across different samples. The estimated x 's from the two models are correlated at .85 or greater.

Both β 's can also be large but of the same sign. In that case, their difference will not be large, but the issue is related to ideology. If both parameters are positive, this means that “conservatives” (those with positive x 's) are more likely to take both the pro and con position. Such an issue is the source of internal conflict. Some partisan issues are like this. For example, few liberals cared whether Dwight Eisenhower was a good candidate for the Republican nomination, but conservatives fought over it.

IV: MEASURING RACE AND IDEOLOGY FROM THE 1910s TO 1950s.

Using Figure 3 as a guide, we can ask how well racial issues map to the ideological space in this period. It turns out to be rather complicated. It also turns out not to mirror the behavior in Congress.

I present results for the 1910, 1930 and 1950 datasets, supplemented with information from the 1970 and 1990 datasets. Table 1 and Figure 3 provides a quick overview of race in ideology from the binary model, which is the relevant comparison for NOMINATE. It includes the APRE for the entire model, as well as for economic issues and racial issues, from 1910 through 1990. In the 1910s, a single dimension does not do a very good job of describing ideological conflict among the pundits, but the first dimension is an economic one. Race, however, is not related. This is true in the 1930s as well, but in the 1950s, the fit of a one-dimensional model has increased greatly. Many more issues are on the first dimension, and notably for the current discussion, racial issues are now as important as economic issues. Beginning in 1950, and continuing in 1970 and 1990, race and economics are on the same dimension.

FIGURE 3 AND TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

But in the 1950s, according to Figure 2, race has just fallen off the primary dimension in Congress. In Congress, race and economics were highly related from the Civil War up until 1921, when pro-business Republicans voted for anti-lynching laws. Among ideologues, the tie between racial sympathy and economic conservatism established in the antebellum period has evaporated by 1910. In the 1910s, race is orthogonal to economics among intellectuals. It largely remains so in 1930. Thus the intellectuals herald both the decoupling of race from ideology (1910 among pundits vs. 1921 to 1937 in Congress) and its new association with the other side (1950 vs. 1970 or later).

Figure 4 combines the information from Figures 2 and 3 to illustrate the test between partisan justification and ideological marketing. The pattern looks like that for ideological marketing. The ideologues move first.

FIGURE 4 ABOUT HERE

This suggests, then, that the ideological dimension among pundits absorbed race before Congress did. If these dimensions measure the coalitions that ideology and party define, respectively, then the ideological coalition led the part coalition. And if we look more closely at the ideology of race in 1910, 1930 and 1950, especially as revealed in the multinomial model, the story becomes still richer.

Ideology in the 1910s: The APRE for all issues in 1910 is not large, as noted above. The intellectual space in 1910 is not highly polarized, nor is it significantly one-dimensional. However, many issues do align with a first, dominant ideological dimension, which is an economic dimension. As noted above, the economic dimension was the primary arena of conflict between the parties, and so it is among the pundits as well.

Figure 5 presents a selection of discrimination parameters from both the binary and multinomial models. The issues include all race issues and a number of other issues of note.¹⁴

FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE

Since the discrimination parameters measure how well the issue is related to the main dimension, issues with large parameters are those that define the dimension. The main issues that do so are economic. Conservatives favor and liberals oppose a central bank, and their positions are reversed on labor unions. Meanwhile, racial issues are not on the primary dimension. There are only three clearly racial issues in 1910: Negro suffrage, racial segregation and attitudes toward blacks as a group.

The multinomial model shows further nuance. On attitudes toward blacks, few conservatives even speak. Liberals are more likely to take both supportive and unsupportive positions toward African Americans. Some conservatives do take positions: For instance, the otherwise somewhat economically

¹⁴ A number of robustness checks on the following results are not reported here. For instance, one might re-estimate the issue space without any race issues and compare that space to the space reported here. One might also use those ideal points to predict race positions. Those predictions ought to be similar to the discrimination parameters estimated here. They are.

conservative (in 1910) publications *The Nation* and *The Christian Science Monitor* defend blacks, and the overtly pro-business *Wall Street Journal* runs some overtly racist editorials.

But most of the talk is on the left. Most people who defend blacks are liberal, but most people who condemn them are also liberal, economically. The editors of Harper's magazine, for instance, a publication that defends socialism and women's suffrage, take a hostile view of blacks. And populist William E. Borah, writing in the *North American Review*, opposes suffrage for blacks while advocating for labor unions and other progressive causes.

If we were to fit a two-dimensional model to the data, this conflict might appear on the second dimension.¹⁵ Or it might be the third or fourth dimension. What is significant, though, is that race appears to be an internal conflict among economic liberals in 1910, but economic conservatives, with a few exceptions, are not interested in the issue.

Part of the story here seems to be a tension within the progressive movement. Its populist elements – perhaps well represented by William Jennings Bryan – were quite racist. But many of its more urban thinkers – perhaps represented by Theodore Roosevelt – were less so. Since Bryan was associated with the Democratic Party, and Roosevelt with the Republican, the racial elements of the conflict within progressivism did not manifest in the party system.

In fact, in 1910, NOMINATE shows¹⁶ that Republicans are more likely to cast racially liberal votes at this time. There was strategic value to Republicans from waving the bloody shirt, and similarly, Democrats were reliably loyal to the South, which many represented.

Thus, race was not a central element of the dominant ideology in 1910, even though it was in Congress. The battle lines drawn by Ward and Sumner in the late 1800s were significant, but race, while being debated, seemed to be an internal struggle among liberals, and one that was probably of low priority. In Congress, Democrats loyally took one side, but if anything, the evidence suggests that the other side might have had a slight edge among liberals.

¹⁵ A two-dimensional model in 1910 is very noisy, but it appears that race probably does not dominate the second dimension.

¹⁶ Bayesian Item-Response Models have similar results to NOMINATE on this question.

Ideology in the 1930s: The ideological dimension in 1930 appears far more one-dimensional, although the APRE for all issues is still not especially large. Still, a great many more issues are related to the main dimension. And again, the dimension is largely economic. **Figure 6** shows another selection of issues.

FIGURE 6 ABOUT HERE

As before, economic issues dominate. Conservatives like railroad corporations and consolidation, trusts, and private utilities. They tolerate Fascism abroad and unemployment, while liberals do not. Conservatives like the London Naval Treaty of 1930, which liberals felt was toothless. Liberals again support government intervention in the economy, workers rights, and government spending programs.

But by and large race remains unimportant for the ideological division. As with 1910, the main racial issues in the binary model are not strongly related to economic issues, which are the dominant elements of ideology. Obviously, in light of the depression, economic issues were incredibly important. In the binary model, attitudes toward segregation and blacks are not strongly related to the ideological dimension. The “attitudes toward blacks” issue does have a significant but not incredibly large relationship with ideology, because the only publication to take an anti-black position is the economically conservative Wall Street Journal. There is a stronger relationship with the “justice system fair to blacks” issue, on whether or not African-Americans are treated fairly by the courts. But this, too, is driven by one negative position, by the then-conservative Washington Post.

So, as with 1910, there is a weak ideological association with anti-black positions and conservatism. But it is based on a small number of articles. A more careful interpretation of the data is that a number of liberal writers are taking up racial issues, arguing that blacks are disadvantaged by our legal system and in society generally. But almost no one is defending the system from these charges.

The multinomial model allows for such one-sided issues. One reason for using the multinomial model, as mentioned above, is that it allows us to disentangle the pro and con side of the issue. Another reason is that it allows us to include issues on which only one side is taken. There are many such issues. Among them are “Civil Rights” and “lynching.” Just as almost no one defends the legal system from the charge of racism in the 1930s, absolutely no one takes a position against Civil Rights for blacks, and no one defends lynching. But the writers who tackle those issues in 1930 are largely economic liberals. A

few of the major economically conservative editorial pages, such as the Wall Street Journal and the Los Angeles Times, do oppose lynching. But none advocates Civil Rights, and far more liberal publications are taking up both issues. It would appear that the battle over race among the progressives has been won. Economically liberal intellectuals are all pro-black by 1930.

This closer inspection of the ideology of 1930 is instructive. Rather than interpret the 1930s as a period when race is not related to the main dimension, what we see is that, for liberal intellectuals, race was becoming an important issue. But these liberals were not yet being opposed by conservatives on race. The issue is not on the agenda.

Compare this to Congress at that time. There were no anti-lynching bills between 1922 and 1934 to estimate the APRE for race in that period. But in 1934, there is one race policy vote, on preventing discrimination within the House of Representatives, and it is not related to the first dimension. A change in 1934 is too close to interpret as following the 1930 pundits, but it certainly follows the 1910 pundits. The issue becomes disconnected from economic issues among the pundits in 1910 and has become an internal conflict among liberal pundits by 1930. In 1934, that separation is just beginning in Congress. The reversal we will see eventually, with Republicans voting against racial issues, has not yet developed. In 1934, the only people opposed to the anti-discrimination law are Southern Democrats. So, in 1921, no change had occurred, but by 1934, Congress is starting to emulate what happened among the pundits in 1910 and 1930.

Ideology in the 1950s: The biggest shock to the ideological space of the pundits follows World War II. The space in 1950 is fundamentally different than in any period before, and the reason is the introduction of writers for the National Review and Human Events. In the first half of the decade, there were many writers on the “right.” But they were not writing for clearly defined conservative journals. When Human Events began publishing in 1944 and the National Review began in 1955, that changed, and the conservative intellectual movement began to coalesce (Nash 1996).. These publications anchor the right in the 1950s, while The Nation and The New Republic anchor the left.

And now, ideology is sharply distinguished between liberals and conservatives, on nearly every issue. The ideological dimension now accounts for a great deal of the variance. The APRE for the entire model is 0.69, a huge leap from the previous period. And in **Figure 7**, almost all issues are strongly related to the main ideological dimension in both the binary model and the multinomial model. The most

important issues include anti-communist foreign policy issues (the cold war, the Bricker Amendment and admitting China the United Nations), domestic economic issues (taxes, Keynesianism, labor unions and price controls) and racial issues (federally enforced desegregation, the fair employment practices act and the civil rights movement).

FIGURE 7 ABOUT HERE

The division in 1950 contrasts sharply with the division in Congress. The period from 1950 through the 1960s. is the lowest point for race being related to the ideological dimension. Economic issues divide Democrats and Republicans, but racial issues cross cut both parties, especially the Democrats. The “conservative coalition” of this period united conservatives of both parties against their co-partisans. Racial issues do not start to be related to the first dimension until the 1970s in Figure 2. Thus, race and economics are both first-dimensional issues in 1990, and today, echoing the cleavage among intellectuals in 1950.

V: CONCLUSION: The analysis here visits one of the most discussed subjects of American history. A great deal has already been said on the subject of the partisan alignment over race. This work draws on the conclusions of that body of work and refined our understanding of a number of key questions.

Development of ideology: In particular, this analysis gives us a richer picture of the dynamics and perhaps origins of ideology. Most theories of ideology simply posit an ideological dimension, which then turns out to be useful theoretically and empirically. But it is not clear why two issues that are not inherently related ought to go together.

What these findings suggest, however, is that there is some intellectual process that brings issues into the ideological agenda. It might be a strategic process of party coalition builders, but then we would expect party leaders to initiate it. Instead, I suspect that progressives had to work out what they thought about race, and then bring it to the agenda.

In 1910, some liberals were anti-black, and some were pro-black. But all progressives at the turn of the century saw themselves as supporting the less-well-off. They worried about the effects of the national economy on political and social equality. These were worries shared by the pro-slavery

Democrats during the Civil War. It was not obvious to many whether principle of equality ought to trump the principle of white supremacy.

Blacks, of course, were not a politically powerful group. If you sought to build a coalition to be minimal winning, blacks should not be included, since they would contribute little to victory. And neither, really, should poor whites, who also were not politically powerful. But while ideology does define a coalition, it does not build that coalition on the basis of voting blocks. It builds it on the beliefs of intellectual thinkers. Such thinkers might, incidentally, represent potential voting blocks, but ideology does not form through explicit bargains among intellectual spokespeople. And so, possibly, the coalitions that these intellectuals form may not represent majorities. The pro-black ideology that emerged on the left was not a majority.

This process of redefining a coalition through debate continued later in the period studied, now on the right as well as the left. Joseph Lowndes (2004) shows that conservative thinkers such as William F. Buckley actively courted southern white writers to contribute to the conservative movement. Lowndes recounts a debate within the pages of the *National Review* in 1957, in which William F. Buckley and L. Brent Bozell argued over how the principles of conservatism should be applied to racial issues. Buckley argued that white southerners were “the advanced race,” and thus should suppress black voting rights if necessary. Bozell objected to the cavalier attitude toward democracy, insisting that conservatives should support the struggle for white supremacy within the public sphere. Bozell’s argument turned, then, a states’ rights position, later developed in Barry Goldwater’s *The Conscience of a Conservative* (for which Bozell was ghostwriter).

The conflict between Buckley and Bozell seems to define a process of ideology formation. Different strands of conservative thought, brought together at the *National Review*, pointed toward a number of issue positions, including smaller government and an opposition to Civil Rights. The arguments that could best unite the various potential coalition members – in this case Bozell’s anti-federalism more than Buckley’s anti-democracy – were the ones that became broadly endorsed.

Likewise, in some ways it is the fights over civil rights that helped teach liberals that they approved of federalism. The New Deal was expanding federal power, and this was justified on the grounds that the federal government was the only one powerful enough to do anything about it. With Civil Rights, there was a new reason to support federal expansion – some states could not be relied upon

to enforce basic rights. Southerners objected to self-righteous northerners swooping in to the south to tell them how to live, but for liberals, segregationist southerners needed to be told how to live, at least on this issue. And the federal government, which they now controlled, was a reasonable tool for this end.

This dynamic was happening on more issues than just race, which has been the focus here. Foreign policy, social issues and a number of others are also coming into alignment in 1950, as is evident from Figure 3. Of course, many of the issues that are important today, such as abortion or stem-cell research, are not on the agenda in 1950, but many of the issues that would dominate the 1970s, including feminism and Vietnam, are already polarizing intellectuals at this time.

This ideologically focused account also casts some doubt on one interpretation of the Civil Rights realignment. Poole and Rosenthal argue (p.111, see also McCarty, Poole and Rosenthal 2006) that racial issues became related to the main dimension largely because, after the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, racial issues were essentially redistributive.¹⁷ The parties didn't change on race so much as racial issues changed. When civil rights themselves were no longer on the agenda, the economic division between the parties reflects what is left of the racial dimension as well.

The data presented here for 1950 are inconsistent with that interpretation. In 1950, more than a decade before the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts, conservatives were conservative on race. And in the decades before that, racial issues were changing their relationship to economic issues. The change preceded political equality for blacks, rather than following it. This does not mean, however, that all conservatives who opposed Civil Rights were racist. They may have had genuine principled reasons. They may have foreseen the economic aspects of much of the Civil Rights movement. And some may have opposed increased federal power for its own sake. But it is clear that conservatives did oppose much of the Civil Rights movement before the Voting Rights Act.

Activist pressure: If this analysis shows an evolution on racial issues among intellectuals, what it does not show is how the ideological ideas made their way to the floor of congress. However, we can fill

¹⁷ It may also be argued that while many post-sixties civil rights issues are redistributive in character, many are not. Affirmative action in college admissions and busing programs for public schools might have a redistributive character, but not an economic one. Racial profiling is not redistributive at all.

in some of the gaps. We have evidence of activists pressuring party leaders to change, and we have evidence of party leaders resisting.

The Democratic Party first began to feel the pressure of the pro-civil rights liberals in 1948, when Harry Truman sided with them on a civil rights plank. In the account above, Truman took this risk because he thought he could win more votes than he would lose. But the calculation may have been less about voters than it was about activists at the convention. Americans for Democratic Action, a group of activists seeking to change their party, pressured Truman to take the position. And they had to pressure him, because Southern Democrats were resisting this change.

There are two key reasons a party might resist an ideology, and both are illustrated by the case of civil rights. First, party leaders have an investment in their existing coalition. Loyalty to the party is one of the things that makes a party work. If the ideological coalition does not include some members of the old party coalition, those members will seek to remain in the party, and many others in the party may also have reason to remain loyal to their formal allies.

For this reason, southern Democrats did not simply hop over to the Republican Party, even though that party's new ideology was becoming increasingly welcoming to them. Southern Democrats who cared more about race than about redistribution to whites – including Southern Democrats who opposed the New Deal and were more hawkish on the Cold War – nevertheless had strong ties to the Democratic Party. Scholars often point to the long-standing ties of Southern white voters to the party (e.g. Carmines and Stimson 1989), but the party leaders also had strong ties. The Democratic Party in the South was a dominant organization, and Dixiecrats had built and maintained it. Why abandon it because Northern Democrats wanted to fix a coalition Southern Democrats didn't think was broken? In 1948, Southern Democrats would not be easily pushed out of the party by the ADA. They stormed out of the Democratic Convention, but they were back in 1952. The third party Southern Democrats formed for the purposes of contesting the presidency in 1948 was tellingly called the States Rights Democratic Party, or Dixiecrat Party, to maintain their connection to the Democratic Party. The Southerners' strategy in 1960 of nominating slates of unpledged electors made an even stronger claim on the Democratic Party. And Strom Thurmond served as a Democrat in the Senate for twelve years after his third party bid in 1948. He did not give up on the Democrats until 1964, when Lyndon Johnson supported the Civil Rights Act and

Barry Goldwater ran for president as a Republican. That is a decade after the ideological switch shown among the pundits in the data above.

What we see, then, is a battle among the activists in the Democratic Party. One group was ideologically comfortable with the new coalition, and advanced it. The other was ideologically comfortable with what would become the Republican ideology, but they were Democrats, and they had ties to other Democrats. They would not leave quietly.

The other reason a party might resist a new ideology is that the new ideology might not be a winner. The strategic explanation of the Civil Rights realignment involved the potential gains to the Democratic Party from appealing to black voters (and white pro-civil rights voters) in the North, offset by potential losses from southern whites. This strategic tradeoff is real (e.g., Sitkoff 1971). And, from the vantage point of 1948, with the largest and most reliable block of Democrats walking out, it was not obvious that it was the right one.

And from the vantage point of 2007, it is also not obvious that it was the right move. When Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act in 1964, he is said to have told an aide “We have lost the South for a 36 generation.” He may have been more right than he thought. The Democratic Party has lost the South for every generation since. It is hard to imagine the world today without a Civil Rights Act, but it was Democratic leadership on that issue that severed the ties of the South to the Democratic Party. Today, the South is solidly Republican, and the party that had such an overwhelming majority in Congress had that majority stripped away. The current balance is much more tenuous. Party strategies in the 1960s — Democrats support of civil rights and the Republican Southern Strategy — are a good part of the reason for the current alignment.

Strategically then, civil rights may have been bad for the Democratic Party. And initially, Democrats held off, even though many liberals wanted to move ahead on civil rights. For instance, Kevin McMahon (2005) argues that Franklin Roosevelt nudged civil rights policy into the courts because he couldn’t do it in Congress, where Southern Democrats would (and eventually did) balk. But Roosevelt and others in the party very much cared about civil rights.

In 1948, Truman felt he could risk it, and he succeeded. Even with the third party challenge, Truman won the election. And yet the southern walkout was a serious threat to the party, so the party took

some time before they moved in a pro-civil rights direction. In 1960, the Democrats' pro-civil rights stand was safe electorally, because Nixon was also pro-civil rights.

For every Democrat who took the risk on civil rights, many today like to point out that at least in part, they did so because they believed in racial equality. While we cannot really know the hearts of most of these politicians, it is likely that Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy and Johnson all believed they were doing the right thing, even if the cost was losing the South. The evidence above casts new light on that interpretation. From a modern standpoint, when liberals and conservatives generally favor basic racial equality, such a compliment merely suggests that like many "great men," they were ahead of their time. But from the point of view of the ideology sketched above for intellectuals in 1950, what it really means is that they were liberals, and like most liberals in 1950, they believed what other liberals believed.

TABLE 1: APRE FOR BINARY MODEL

	1910	1930	1950	1970	1990
APRE all issues	0.15	0.18	0.70	0.77	0.74
APRE race issues	0.15	0.23	0.93	0.81	0.80
APRE economic issues	0.59	0.62	0.91	0.82	0.79

WORKS CITED

- Adams, Greg. 1997. "Abortion: Evidence of an Issue Evolution." *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (3):718-37.
- Albert, James, and Siddhartha Chib. 1993. "Bayesian Analysis of Binary and Polychotomous Response Data." *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 88 (422):669-79.
- Aldrich, John. 1983. "A Downsian Spatial Model with Party Activism." *The American Political Science Review* 77 (4):974-90.
- Baker, Frank. 1992. *Item Response Theory*. New York: Marcel Dekker.
- Bawn, Kathy, Marty Cohen, David Karol, Seth Masket, Hans Noel, and John R. Zaller. 2006. A Theory of Parties. Paper read at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, at Philadelphia, Pa.
- Brady, Henry E., Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Sidney Verba. 1999. "Prospecting for Participants: Rational Expectations and the Recruitment of Political Activists." *American Political Science Review* 93 (1):153-68.
- Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. New York: Wiley.
- Carmines, Edward G., and James A. Stimson. 1989. *Issue Evolution: Race and the Transformation of American Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Carsey, Thomas, John Green, Rick Herrera, and Geoffrey Layman. 2003. The New Party Professionals? An Initial Look at National Convention Delegates in 2000 and Over Time. Paper read at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, at Philadelphia.
- Chafe, William H. 1980. *Civilities and civil rights : Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black struggle for equality*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Clinton, Joshua, Simon Jackman, and Douglas Rivers. 2000. The Statistical Analysis of Legislative Behavior: A Unified Approach. Paper read at 17th Annual Political Methodology Conference, July 19 - 23, 2000, at UCLA.
- Converse, Philip. 1962. "Information Flow and the Stability of Partisan Attitudes." *Public Opinion Quarterly*.
- . 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. D. Apter. New York: Free Press.
- Croly, Herbert. 1909. *The Promise of American Life*. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.
- Elliott, Mark Emory. 2006. *Color-Blind Justice: Albion Tourgee and the Quest for Racial Equality from the Civil War to Plessy v. Ferguson*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Foner, Eric. 1980. *Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- . 1995 (1970). *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gerring, John. 1998. *Party Ideologies in America: 1828-1996*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goldstein, Judith. 1994. *Ideas, Interests, and American Trade Policy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Goldstein, Judith, and Robert Keohane. 1993a. "Ideas and Foreign Policy: An Analytical Framework." In *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*, ed. J. Goldstein and R. Keohane. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- , eds. 1993b. *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Gossett, Thomas F. 1997. *Race: The History of an Idea in America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hinich, Melvin J., and Michael C. Munger. 1994. *Ideology and the Theory of Political Choice*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- James, Scott. 1997. "A Theory of Presidential Commitment and Opportunism."
- Johnson, Donald Bruce, and Kirk H Porter, eds. 1973. *National Party Platforms: 1840-1972*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Knight, Kathleen. 2006. "Transformations of the Concept of Ideology in the Twentieth Century." *American Political Science Review* 100 (4):619-26.
- Levendusky, Matt, Jeremy Pope, and Simon Jackman. 2005. Measuring District Level Preferences with Implications for the Analysis of U.S. Elections. Paper read at Political Methodology, at Tallahassee, Fla.
- Lowndes, Joseph. 2004. The Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism: 1945-1976. Dissertation, Political Science, New School.
- Martin, Andrew D. , and Kevin M. Quinn. 2002. "Dynamic Ideal Point Estimation via Markov Chain Monte Carlo for the U.S. Supreme Court, 1953-1999." *Political Analysis* 10 (2):134-53.
- Masket, Seth. 2004. A Party by Other Means: The Rise of Informal Party Organizations in California. Doctoral Dissertation, Department of Political Science, University of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles.
- McCloskey, Herbert, Paul Hoffman, and Rosemary O'Hara. 1960. "Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers." *American Political Science Review* 54:406-27.
- McFadden, Daniel. 1973. "Conditional Logit Analysis of Qualitative Choice Behavior." In *Frontiers in Econometrics*, ed. P. Zarembka: Academic Press.
- McMahon, Kevin. 2005. *Reconsidering Roosevelt on Race: How the Presidency Paved the Road to Brown*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Merrill, Samuel, III, and James Adams. 2001. "Computing Nash Equilibria in Probabilistic, Multiparty Spatial Models with Non-Policy Components." *Political Analysis* 9 (347-361).

- Murphy, Reg, and Hal Gulliver. 1971. *Southern Strategy*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Nash, George H. 1996. *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945*. Wilmington: Intercollegiate Studies Institute.
- Petrocik, John. 1987. "Realignment: New Party Coalitions and the Nationalization of the South." *Journal of Politics* 49:347-75.
- Poole, Keith, and Howard Rosenthal. 1997. *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rivers, Doug. 2003. Identification of Multidimensional Spatial Voting Models. Paper read at Political Methodology, at Palo Alto, Calif.
- Scammon, Richard M., and Ben J. Wattenberg. 1971. *The Real Majority: An Extraordinary Examination of the American Electorate*. New York: Coward, McCann and Georghegan, Inc.
- Schattschneider, E.E. 1942. *Party Government*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Schofield, Norman, and Itai Sened. 2005. "Multiparty Competition in Israel, 1988-1996." *British Journal of Political Science* 35 (4):635-63.
- Schwartz, Thomas. 1989. "Why Parties?"
- Sitkoff, Harvard. 1971. "Harry Truman and the Election of 1948: The Coming of Age of Civil Rights in American Politics." *Journal of Southern History* 37:597-616.
- Stocking, George W., Jr. 1994. "The Turn-of-the-Century Concept of Race." *Modernism/Modernity* 1 (1):4-16.
- Sumner, William Graham. 1883. *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other*. New York: Harper and Bros.
- . 1894. "The Absurd Effort to Make the World Over." *Forum* 17:92-102.
- Sundquist, James L. 1983. *Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States*. Washington: Brookings Institution.
- Train, Kenneth. 1986. *Qualitative Choice Analysis*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Treier, Shawn, and Simon Jackman. 2002. Beyond Factor Analysis: Modern Tools for Social Measurement. Paper read at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association.
- Whitten, Guy, and Glenn Palmer. 1996. "Heightening Comparativists' Concern for Model Choice: Voting Behavior in Great Britain and the Netherlands." *American Journal of Political Science* 40:231-60.

FIGURE 1: THEORETICALLY EXPECTED PATTERNS

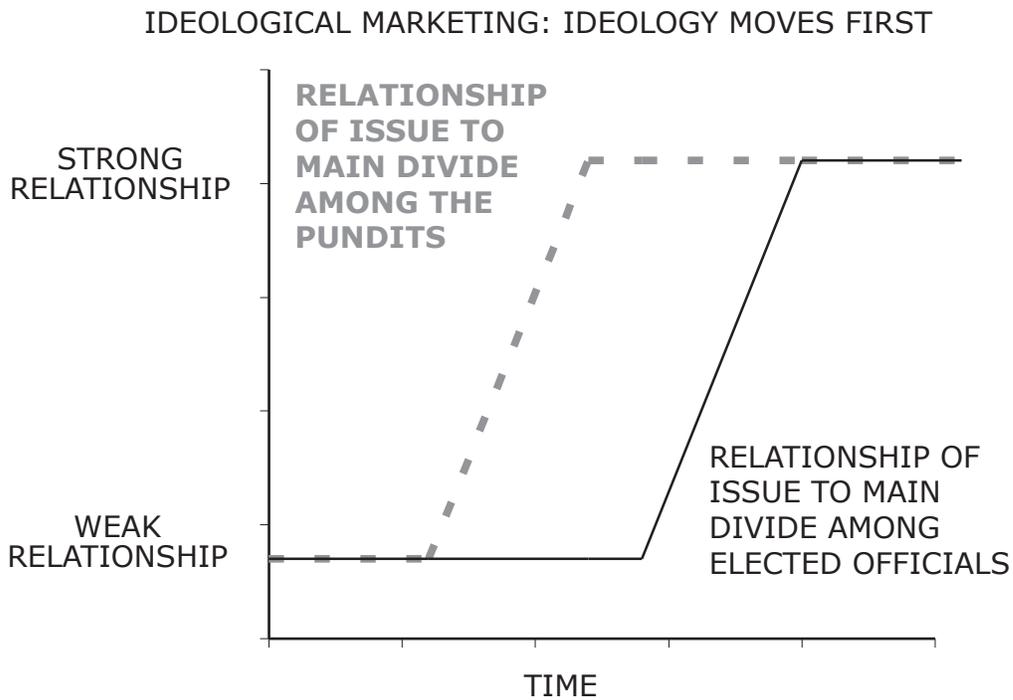
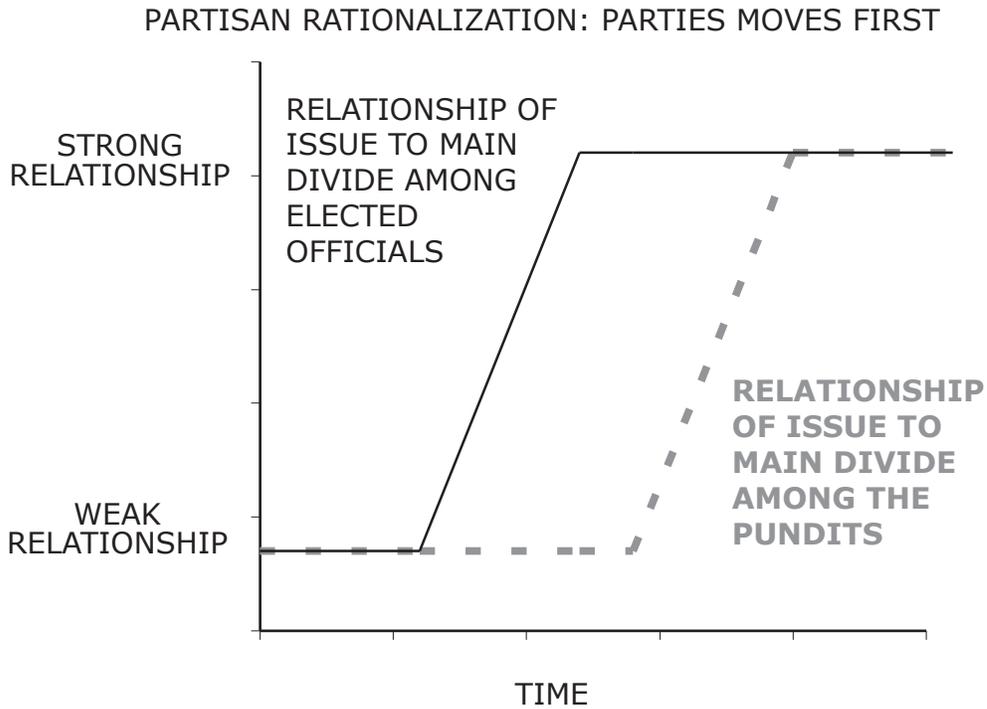
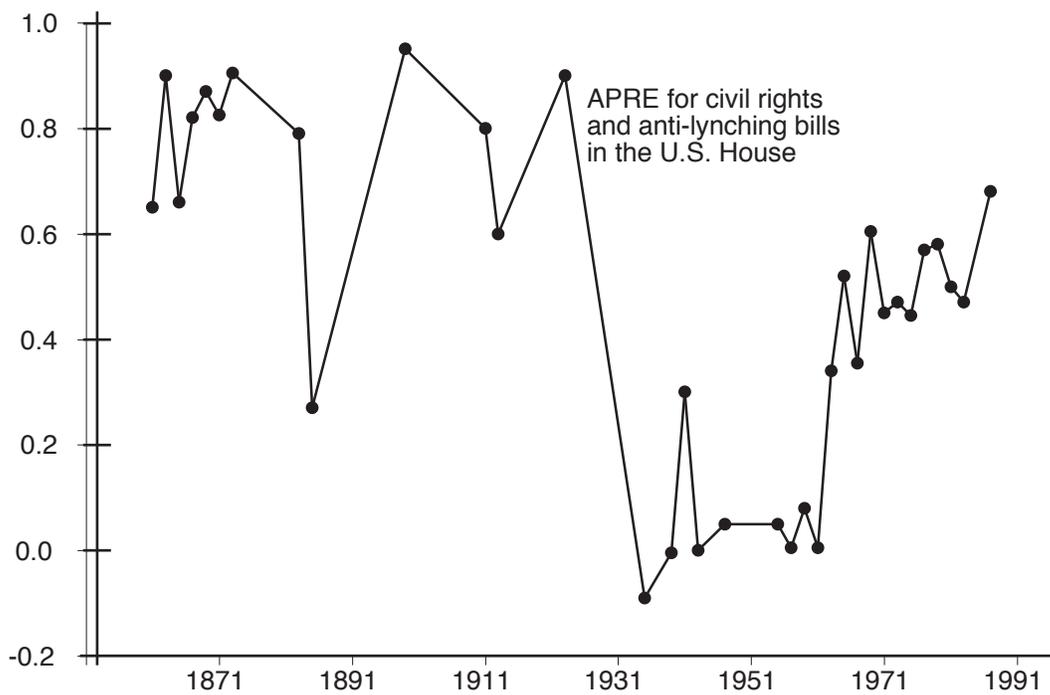


FIGURE 2: RACE ISSUES ON FIRST DIMENSION IN CONGRESS



(Adapted from Poole and Rosenthal (1997) Figure 5.18, p. 110)

FIGURE 3: FIT OF BINARY MODEL 1910-1990

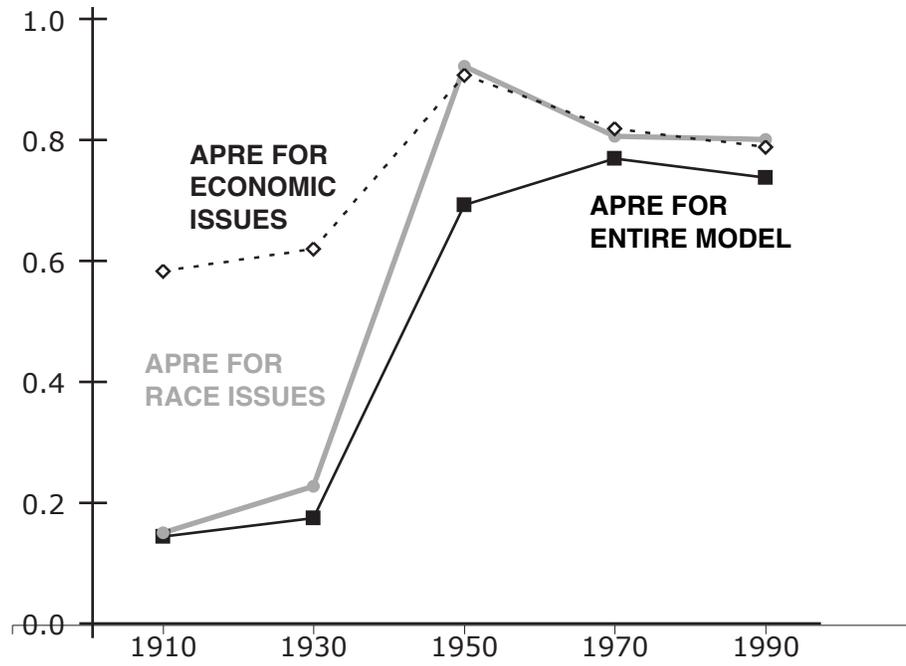


FIGURE 4: PUNDITS VS. CONGRESS 1910-1990

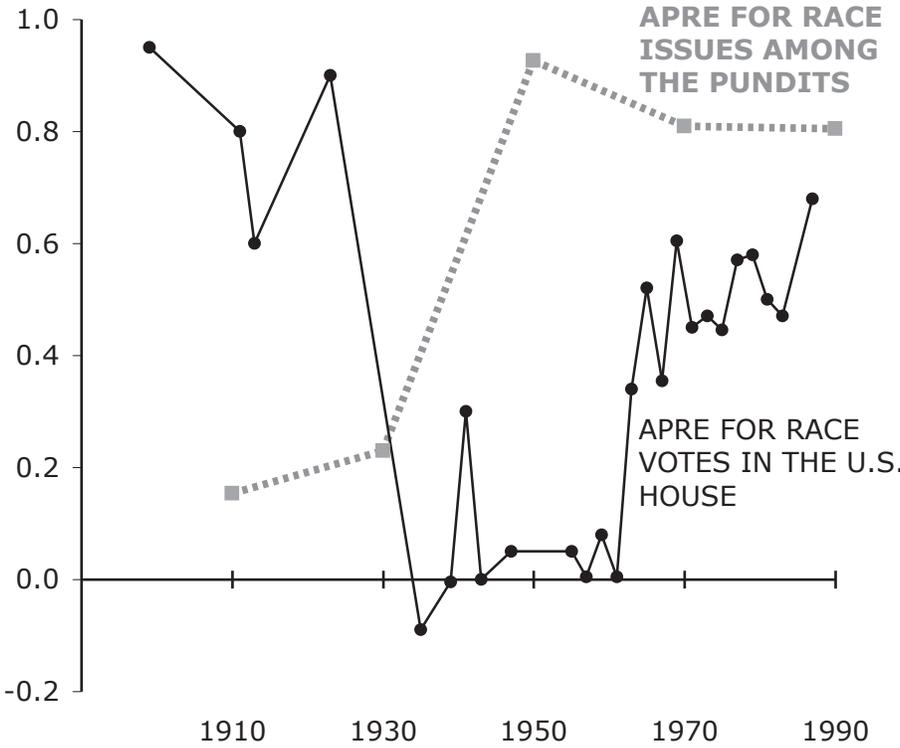


FIGURE 5: SELECT DISCRIMINATION PARAMETERS, 1910

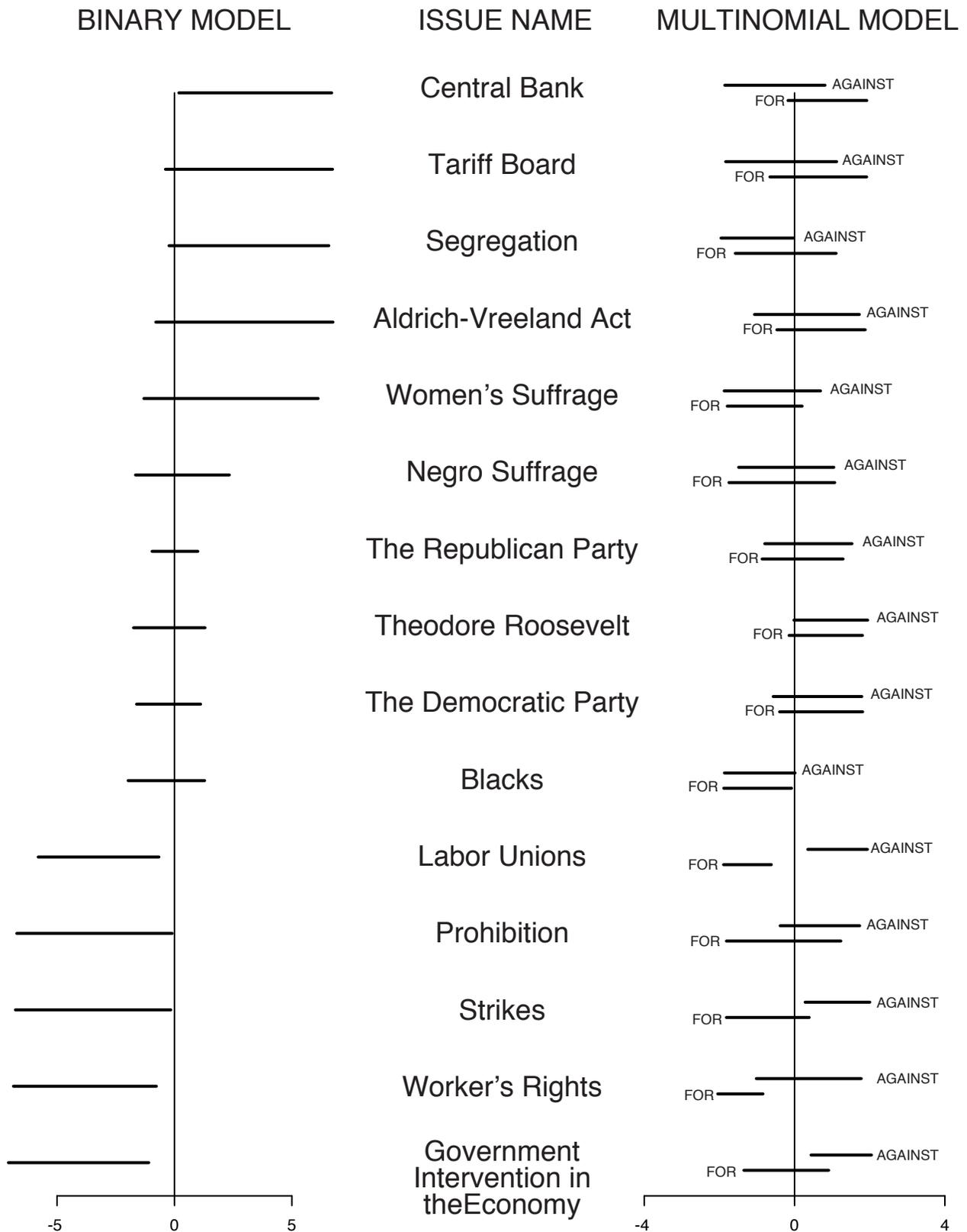


FIGURE 6: SELECT DISCRIMINATION PARAMETERS, 1930

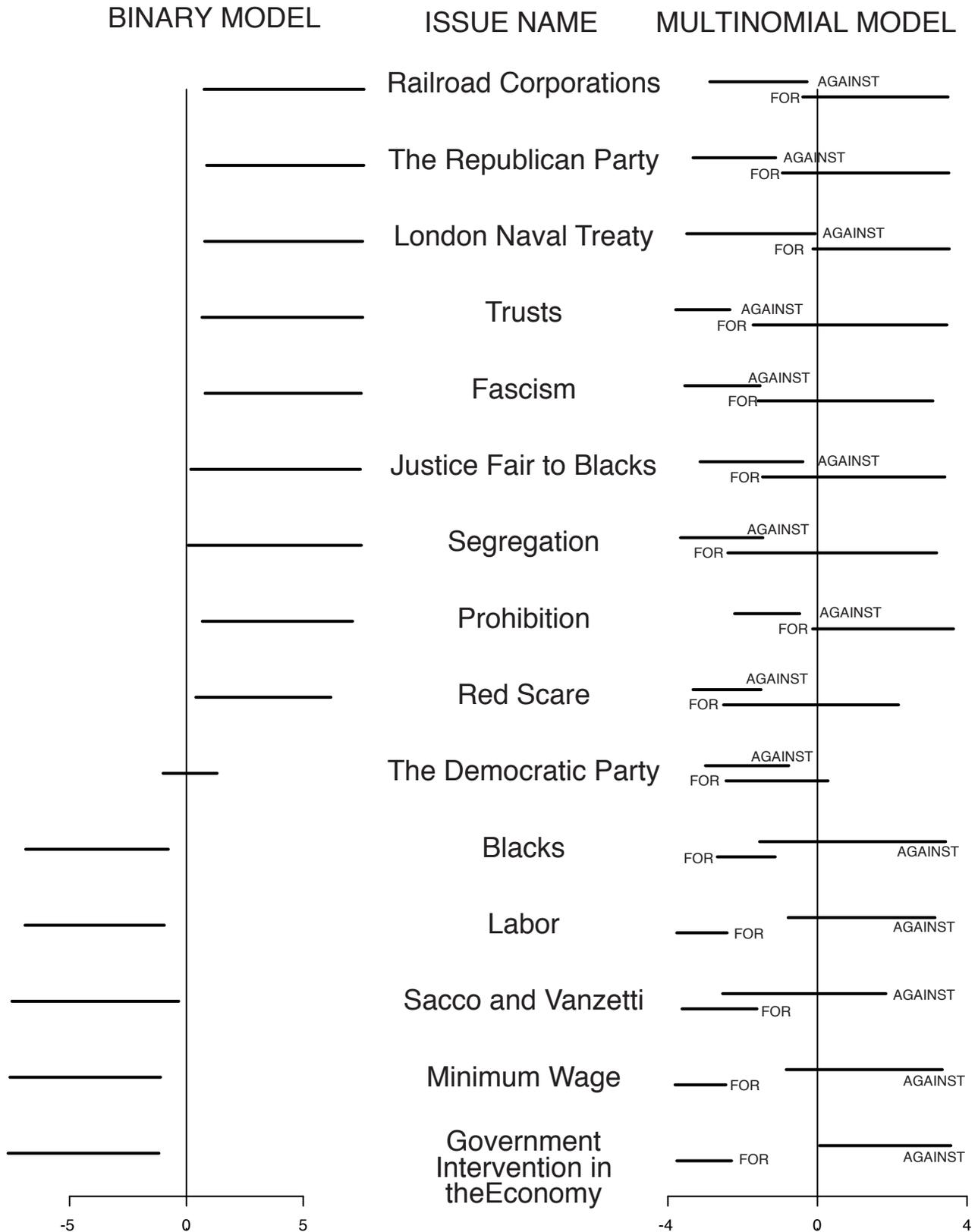


FIGURE 7: SELECT DISCRIMINATION PARAMETERS, 1950

