Here's the Party:
Group Effects and Partisan Advantage

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Introduction

It seems implausible that long-lived institutions, like political parties in the United States, would continue if they have no function. Yet Keith Krehbiel (1993; 1998; 1999) has posed the provocative argument that political parties are excess baggage when explaining decision making in the U.S. Congress. Krehbiel has argued, theoretically, empirically, and eloquently, that political parties are little more than costume jewelry on the dowager of theory -- flashy and pretty, but contributing little to the basic underlying material. As such, Krehbiel has proposed that scholars locate the value of political parties, both theoretically and empirically. By doing so, he has forced scholars who have taken political parties as fundamental political primitives to step back and clarify exactly what it is that parties do.

The response to Krehbiel has been plentiful. An enormous amount of empirical work has been brought to bear on his critique, trying to show that party has an effect independent of pure preference. Some theoretical work has challenged the model by more explicitly incorporating parties (Rohde, 1991; Aldrich, 1994). The theoretical work is interesting, but finds it difficult to accommodate complex relationships between many actors. The empirical work, undertaken by a variety of scholars, yields mixed results. Nonetheless parties are an observable phenomenon and they persist. It has been observed that partisan effects wax and wane over time (see Cooper, Brady and Hurley, 1979; Patterson and Caldeira, 1988; Hurley and Wilson, 1989; Cooper and Young, 1999). The difficulty with pinpointing the effect of party has driven scholars to accept Krehbiel's challenge and to address it in a serious manner.

This research starts with Krehbiel's point that traditional measures of party voting and party unity do not tap a pure partisan effect. The first section elaborates some of the issues and concerns about partisanship and "preferenceship." The second section develops Krehbiel's critique of the party literature and then explores an alternative way of thinking about roll call votes and their analysis. The third section develops a bootstrapping technique by which to compare outcomes under roll call votes. The fourth and fifth sections develop hypotheses and analyze these data. The conclusion returns to the main point, asking whether the evidence developed here is an expression of partisanship removed from pure preference.

The Issues.

The primary challenge presented by Krehbiel is whether partisan foundations are necessary in order to model and explain congressional behavior. Clearly, political parties serve to organize the body, select leaders, enact rules that grant special advantage to those leaders and build re-election resources to generally help fellow partisans (see Smith, 1989; Thorson, 1998). However, with respect to voting, building coalitions and generally constructing policy, Krehbiel stakes out a Madisonian position. Because members will have a variety of preferences over issues, and if Madisonian principles are at work, then differing factions will come together and the resulting coalitions will show no important

partisan bias. Indeed, they will reflect the preferences of the Chamber. Under his models, if partisanship enters into Congressional decision making, it should only reflect the distribution of preference in the body.

Cooper and Young (1997) offer a number of reasons why party voting might be more than just the simple expression of preference. On the one hand they see political parties, particularly as reflected in party voting, as an expression of "the commonalities of principle, view, and interest that unit fellow partisans across their respective constituencies." (p. 247). They view parties as mechanisms that help to shape preferences -- both within constituencies and among members. As important as preference might be, partisans face an important collective action problem. As Cox and McCubbins (1993) argue, and as Cooper and Young (1997) reiterate, the well-being of a party label is key to individual partisan success. Yet providing a unified front, banding together with fellow partisans, may often be costly. Voting to increase revenue (taxes) may fit a party's position, but such a vote may come back to haunt a member from a marginal district. Along many policy dimensions different members may disagree with their party's position precisely because it does not fit their election constituency. Indeed, this is part of Krehbiel's claim -- such members should not vote with party, but rather with their district. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence that this happens -- possibly with some frequency. However, the problem for both Krehbiel and party theorists is that we do not know the underlying preferences of members. Consequently it is difficult to know when members have voted contrary to their preference and responded to the call of party.

This does not mean that scholars have not tried to empirically test Krehbiel's conjectures. Indeed, his own work has invited two main responses: party leadership and committee processes.

On the one hand, there has been considerable work claiming that party leaders have sufficient tools at their disposal to attract support from their partisans. Cox and McCubbins (1993) argue that leaders commonly use those tools to reward party caucus supporters and withhold rewards (rarely sanction) those who do not. A similar point is made by Rohde (1991, p. 79) who points to reported threats by Speaker Jim Wright in keeping tallies of who sided with the party and who failed to do so during the preceding Congress. Aldrich and Rohde (1995, 1997) extend these ideas to the 104th Congress, pointing out that changes in rules significantly augmented leadership powers.

There is an open question as to whether the preferences of members skew the selection of leaders. Posler and Rhodes (1997) provide interesting data indicating that partisan leaders are selected on the basis of providing an anchor to the party. That is party leaders tend to be as partisan, if not moreso, than their fellow partisans. This is reminiscent of Cox and McCubbins' tale of the Chinese barge pullers choosing to hire someone to whip individuals in the group in order to reduce incentives for shirking (1993, p. 90). Here the leaders serve to maintain partisan divisions.

Krehbiel (1995) produces interesting findings over a single piece of legislation (the 1994 "A to Z" discharge petition) to illustrate how well preferences explain "waffling" behavior over a discharge petition. The central result is that member preferences explain member behavior quite well independent of party and partisan pressure. Binder, Lawrence and Maltzman (1999) question the robustness that that finding by producing alternative measures of preference for the same piece of legislation. Instead they find the fingerprints of the leadership all over the bill, leading cosponsors to withhold their signatures to the discharge petition.

However, it may be that the power of Leaders to fully persuade is limited. On this score Groseclose and Snyder (1996) point to the ways in which leaders invest in those members who are most likely to be persuaded. Krehbiel (1998) provides data from cloture votes that tends to support the idea that vote seeking concentrates around the filibuster point in the Senate (see Chapter 5). Such a result is consistent with either his own conjectures concerning pivotal politics or with the leadership vote buying models of Groseclose and Snyder.

An equally rich and lively literature has been spawned with respect to committees. Krehbiel (1990; 1991) suggests that the overall chamber must be very concerned with handing committees any additional advantages. Because committees enjoy an informational advantage by virtue of members developing expertise and by holding quasi-property rights over jurisdictions, it would be silly for the chamber to also appoint people to those committees whose preferences are at variance with the body. Outliers have the potential to distort outcomes. The committee preference data generated analyzed by Krehbiel (1990) appeared to point to few outliers and considerable consistency in committee preferences.

A number of scholars have challenged Krehbiel's findings. Hall and Grofman (1990) provide evidence of at least one committee that appears to be a clear preference outlier and argue why some types of committees might end up looking very different than the Chamber. Londregan and Snyder (1994) rexamine the findings applying new measures and techniques. In turn they discover substantial numbers of committee outliers. Groseclose (1994), on the other hand, runs a number of different simulations of the committee selection process and is unable to reject the claim that committee choices resemble that of random selection. There is mixed support for a preference outlier model, but that support is weak.

In general the data are mixed concerning the effects of party. While imaginative empirical tests have been devised that point to the existence of a partisan effect that extends beyond preferences, there are equally interesting findings rebutting these effects. The discussion below turns away from looking at leadership powers or committee assignment processes and returns to roll call votes. While recorded roll calls are only blunt instruments, they do constitute an observable expression of member preferences conditional on ordered agendas and limited choices.

The Core of Krehbiel's Argument.

Krehbiel's original challenge appeared in "Where's the Party?" (1993) in which he reasonably asked why theories that include partisanship are necessary if a simpler, more parsimonious, model could do equally well. For Krehbiel a "preferenceship" model of the U.S. Congress provides adequate theoretical and empirical leverage and does so parsimoniously. As he puts it

> The crucial question has to do with individual legislators' policy preferences. In casting apparently partisan votes, do individual legislators vote with fellow party members *in spite of their disagreement* about the policy in question, or do they vote with fellow party members *because of their agreement* about the policy in question? (1993, p. 238)

Disentangling party and preference is problematic but this is what Krehbiel requires. It is not enough to state that the two are confounded. If preferences alone do well in predicting behavior, then partisanship, even if correlated with behavior, is extraneous -- especially for models of legislative process. The key is to determine whether party has an effect independent of preferences. Given the blunt instruments available to empiricists, this has proven difficult to sort. For instance, using roll call votes and relying on aggregate measures of party voting can be misleading. Krehbiel (1999) provides several examples in which high levels of party voting occur solely as a function of the distribution of preference.[1] With respect to party voting scores, he concludes:

> As conventionally defined, party voting occurs even when *all* legislators ignore *completely* their partisan identities. Furthermore, party-voting measures are fundamentally incapable of distinguishing between utterly partisan roll-call voting behavior and utterly non-partisan roll-call-voting behavior. (1999, p. 43).

Krehbiel's argument is based on a series of examples in which the distribution of preferences (correlated with party) is manipulated in order to show how party voting scores are responsive to relative distributions. Figure 1a below illustrates a distinct (and simple) distribution of preference. The larger block on the left is a simple representation of the density of members affiliated with Party A and their positions on a single dimension (that dimension can be anything and I assign it no meaning). The smaller block on the right constitutes the members of Party B. Suppose two policies are considered, x and y, and suppose further that all voters have single-peaked preferences over the dimension. If a vote were held, x would win because a majority prefers x to y (this can be verified using spatial theory and the eyeball method). At the same time it is easy to see that Party A is in the majority and everyone in that party would vote in its favor. The minority party, B, would vote for y and it would lose. The line represented by z constitutes a cutpoint splitting the voters into two groups. This example, taken directly from Krehbiel (1999), illustrates that perfect party voting can be achieved even if members are only voting their strict preferences.

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[1] A number of scholars continue to challenge Krehbiel's assertions concerning roll call votes. Interesting and imaginative work continues by Cooper and Young (1999).

<Figures 1a,b About Here>

Krehbiel makes the point that party voting will occur even in the distribution given by Figure 1b. Here again the choice is between x and y and the cutpoint z has moved over into the Party B distribution. In this vote an oversized coalition will form, with everyone in Party A preferring x as well as some members of Party B (this is given by the shaded area on the figure). Again there is a high degree of party voting. As Krehbiel makes clear, whenever a cutpoint exists between partisan medians a party vote will occur (1999, p. 41). It is also important to note that under this vote the median (of the oversized coalition) will shift to the right and away from the majority party median. This median is given by med_V on the figure.

Krehbiel's argument is quite right for each single vote (and obviously for the ways in which party voting is then aggregated). At the same time Krehbiel points to the idea that a cutpoint can wander anywhere between the partisan medians -- the location of a cutpoint is dependent on the alternatives that are proposed. Suppose many votes are taken and the cutpoint is randomly drawn from some location between the two partisan medians. On any particular vote the resulting median voter (in the example on Figure 1b given by med_v) will shift to reflect an oversized coalition. The resulting distribution of median voters, for many randomly drawn cutpoints, will be normally distributed and centered around z on Figure 1a.

The idea that policies going to floor might be randomly distributed does not seem plausible. Krehbiel (1998) advances a theory of pivotal politics predicting the circumstances under which policies will shift. Others, such as Rohde (1991, 1994), Aldrich (1995) and Cooper and Young (1999), contend that party plays an important role in fixing the agenda. The partisan structuring of the agenda will vary over time and will vary with the size of the party's majority. This partisan structuring of an agenda can generate a powerful hold over the policy agenda. The extent of this power has been formally demonstrated by Dion and Huber (1997) who point to the U.S. House Rules Committee as a central mechanism for producing skewed results (although this view is challenged in turn by Krehbiel, 1997).

Snyder and Groseclose (1997) directly focus on roll call votes as a method to determine when party is exerting pressure on members. Taking a subset of votes, "lopsided" votes in which the outcome is obvious, they derive a scale of underlying preferences with which they can then estimate an unobserved effect of exerted party pressure on close votes. Their reasoning is quite sensible. Party leaders, with limited resources, will not waste time or energy on lopsided votes. As such those votes ought to be an expression of pure preference. Only when votes are very close is it likely that leaders enter the fray and exert pressure on members to change their mind. Their findings support this conjecture. In both the House and the Senate close votes and votes that are viewed as "landmark" votes tend to show independent partisan effects.

I use the intuition behind Figures 1a,b to take a different approach to analyzing roll call votes. Suppose that there is a distribution of policy votes occurring over time. If the status quo varies across an assortment of votes, then there ought to be some distributional pattern to the resulting medians of the votes. These distributions ought to reflect majority preference in the chamber. On the other hand, if party leaders, coupled with the partisan design and enforcement of rules, contribute to structuring the policy agenda, then the distribution of median outcomes should look quite different. Party politics will skew what is considered by the membership. The discussion that follows focuses on patterns of medians voters across many different Congresses. Taking a page from Krehbiel

> At the most basic level, if parties are empirically significant, then politics should be significantly different with parties from what it is without them. For instance, a partisan legislature should be organized somewhat differently from a non-partisan one; its decision-making processes should be different; and its final policy choices should be different. (Krehbiel, 1993, p. 240).

The analysis detailed below points out that policy choices are markedly different from what might be expected under a non-partisan arena, even taking into account differences in preferences. This can either be due to members voting against their self-interest in order to go along with the party or because party leadership has successfully structured the agenda. Whichever underlying cause is true cannot be tested with these data. However, the resulting phenomenon remains.

Research Design.

This project has two components. The first is a straightforward analysis of data taken from the Roll Calls of the U.S. House of Representatives (ICPSR #9822). The second component of research takes each vote and simulates voting outcomes based on those members of Congress who voted on the legislation. All of the analysis choosing medians over votes and the various simulations was generated from a program written by the author.[2]

This study covers the period 1879 to 1997 (the 46th through the 105th Congresses) and relies on roll call votes. All roll calls were taken from the ICPSR.[3] Data were arrayed by Member of Congress and each member's recorded roll call vote. Coupled with these data are the recovered D-nominate scores generated by Keith Poole and Howard

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[2] The program was written in the C-programming language and is available from the author upon request. The initial analysis was conducted on Macintosh PPC 7500's running at 180 mhz. On average each vote took a little over two seconds of processing time.

[3] Roll call votes for the 103rd through the 105th Congresses were taken from Keith Poole's website located at http://k7moa.gsia.cmu.edu/dwnl.htm.

Rosenthal (see Poole and Rosenthal, 1997).[4] Only the first dimension results are used. These are treated as a rough proxy for ideology and play an integral part in the analysis that follows. The data are organized by Congress, include a unique ID for each member, a first dimension measure of ideology taken from Poole and Rosenthal and a complete record of how (and whether) the member voted on a particular piece of legislation.[5] For the analysis that follows, all votes are included. In order to prevent any biasing toward partisan effects, so-called "hurrah" votes are included in this analysis (see Collie, 1983 for a discussion of such votes and their meaning over time).

The first component of analysis was straightforward (and tedious). Each vote in a Congress was examined. Individuals voting aye or nay (including "paired votes") were included in the analysis of the bill. A majority was determined (whether the vote was aye or nay) and the majority members were sorted on the basis of their D-nominate score. The median D-nominate score was then recorded and saved. The assumption in this analysis is that this a good proxy for the median voter's position – albeit a very general and rough proxy of preference. In short a median was recorded for each roll call in every Congress.

The second component of the analysis used the member positions from each vote and then simulated 500 votes under four distinct conditions. This meant 2000 simulations for each vote. As is noted below the outcome from each simulated vote is a median and a median of the medians was calculated and stored for each of the 500 simulated votes.

The first simulated condition (MWC-U) ignores information about either the percentage of members voting one way or another on the roll call and ignores the proximity of voters over the D-nominate dimension. All members voting on the roll call were included. Members were randomly assigned (with p=.5) to voting aye or nay. Those voting "aye" were sorted according to their D-nominate score and the median of the simple majority of those voting was then calculated. For example, suppose on the vote a total of 301 members voted (and they voted 201 aye and 100 nay). In the simulation those 301 members would be selected and half randomly assigned to voting "aye." Those voting "aye" would be sorted by their D-nominate score and the median under simple majority rule would be selected (here the D-nominate score of the 76th member randomly assigned to vote "aye"). In a sense this condition is quite weak – it assumes that coalitions are only minimum winning and that the D-nominate scores are

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[4] The D-nominate data are only available for the 46th through 99th Congresses. The W-nominate scores were used for the 100th through 105th Congresses. These data are available at http://k7moa.gsia.cmu.edu/dwnl.htm. While it would be nice to use the W-nominate scores – which provide for consistency across time and across chambers, for purposes of this paper, only within Congress comparisons are necessary. As such the D-nominate scores suffice.

[5] In order to ensuring a mapping between the Poole and Rosenthal data and the ICPSR rolls calls, the Poole and Rosenthal corrections were included. These are publicly available at http://k7moa.gsia.cmu.edu/dwnl.htm

irrelevant to the decision. In effect, this condition treats voting as unrelated to ideology. Therefore it constitutes a weak model of unconstrained voting.

The second simulated condition (OWC-U) mimics the first. Again votes are treated as unrelated to the underlying ideological dimension assumed by the Poole-Rosenthal D-nominate data. However, under this condition "aye" votes are randomly chosen in proportion to the winning coalition of the vote. For example, if 75 percent of the members voted "nay" and 301 members actually cast votes, then a total of 226 members were randomly selected. Again they were sorted according to their D-nominate scores and the median was selected. This was done 500 times for each vote and the median of these medians was selected and stored.

The third simulation focuses on minimum winning coalitions (MWC-C). However, now instead of randomly selecting members, a median position is randomly chosen on the D-nominate space. However it assumes that a connected coalition of individuals votes together on the policy. Therefore there is a lower and upper bound on the position of that median. For instance, if 301 members voted on the roll call, then the median selected would have to be greater than the 75^{th} member or less than the 226^{th} member as ordered along the D-nominate first dimension. This way of thinking about voting is not that different than thinking about cut points splitting members into majority and minority coalitions that vary as a function of the position of the proposed policy and the status quo. This is equivalent to the process described with Figure 1b above. The only constraint under this simulation is that a minimum winning coalition of connected members can be assembled around the median.

The fourth simulation (OWC-C) is similar to the third. In this case the size of the winning coalition matches that of the original vote. A randomly generated median is again used. The median is derived from the size of the original majority coalition voting aye or nay. This median assumes that members are “connected” with one another in the ideological space. This process now constrains the median to the lower and upper bounds that are sufficient to cover the size of the original coalition. In this simulation, as with the others, 500 unique medians were selected and the median of these medians was stored and is used in the analysis reported below.

The resulting data set includes the true median from the vote, and four medians representing various simulated conditions. The aim behind these medians of medians is to provide a bootstrap method for estimating distributions for each of the simulations. In turn these are compared with the observed distribution.

The first process, a minimum winning coalition with coalition members drawn at random (MWC-U) is a very simple-minded process. It assumes that the coalition process is unrelated to the underlying D-nominate dimension. If there are many dimensions to various policy votes, and those dimensions are unrelated to the first dimension D-nominate score, then this simulation should partly reflect that fact. The second simulation process (OWC-U) substitutes oversized winning coalitions, but makes the same assumption about the way in which members are drawn. Neither process is

reasonable and each is unrelated to anyone's theoretical models. However, they provide a useful baseline for analyzing the observed data.

The third and fourth processes are more closely related to the models that Krehbiel has in mind and are certainly linked to standard one-dimensional spatial models. The third simulation process (MWC-C) assumes that minimum winning coalitions form and that members are connected. The location of new policies and the status quo are endogenously determined (here through a stochastic process). As Krehbiel (1998) and many others have observed, minimum winning coalitions are rare and oversized coalitions are much more common. The final simulation process (OWC-C) reflects this point. The actual size of the voting coalitions are used to generate a connected coalition in this simulation.

The bulk of the analysis deals with comparisons between the observed medians and the simulated medians. Two types of two-sample tests are used in this analysis: t-tests and Wilcoxon tests. Most of the discussion focuses on the size and directionality of the sign for t- and z-statistics. The t-statistics are from t-tests based on the mean values of the medians from comparisons of the grouping of observed medians and the simulated medians. The z-statistics are based on the ranked sums of the median positions from the different groupings under a non-parametric Wilcoxon test.

Londregan and Snyder (1994) caution using t-tests when comparing distributions. In general they warn of four problems with two-sample tests (like t-tests or Wilcoxon, nonparametric tests) when comparing means and medians using D-nominate scores or ADA scores. Their concerns, however, are focused on detecting outlier committees. If a median committee position is compared with the median floor position, it is difficult to find instances when the two differ -- in part because of the differences in sample sizes and in large part because the two samples are not independent. With respect to this latter problem, members on the committee are also members of the chamber. This violates basic assumptions about testing between two samples, and as they note, leads to greater problems with making Type II errors.

The analysis conducted here does not have that problem. Instead the observed median is compared with a median derived from a bootstrap method. The bootstrap is designed to yield distributional properties that are associated with each specific vote. As such the bootstrapped data creates an independent sample that is then used to compare with the actual distribution. With this I can compare the observed sample and the simulated sample and ask whether the medians come from the same distribution.

I am cautious about which test statistic to apply in this case. The simulation method used here selects the median of all medians for each simulated vote. This collapses the variance around the simulated median. To account for the larger variance in the observed population of medians, a Cochran correction is used to adjust the degrees of freedom for the t-test. The Wilcoxon test makes no assumption about the underlying distributions of the population nor the simulation. Both tests are used in order to be certain about the robustness of the inferences drawn about differences in the medians.

Hypotheses.

The hypotheses are straightforward. Under the null hypothesis, there should be no difference between the observed medians and the simulated medians. The four simulation processes should have a similar measure of central tendency and they should be the same as that obtained from the true population of medians. The null hypothesis is that there is no difference.

The alternative hypothesis predicts that the observed medians are drawn from a different distribution than the simulated medians. The simulated medians ignore partisanship when generating voting coalitions. Moreover the appropriate test is a one-tailed test in which the true distribution of medians is to the left or right of the simulated distributions, depending on the party in power. Given the way in which the D-Nominate data are organized, negative values reflect more liberal voting and throughout the period treated here is correlated with the Democratic party. Consequently, if there is a partisan effect under a Democratic majority, then the median of votes should be shifted to the left. Even if the overall distribution of the chamber moves to the left, this should be accounted for in the simulations. However, regardless of the simulation, the distributions should be different. By contrast, more conservative D-Nominate scores are positively scored and these are correlated with the Republican Party. Under Republican partisan control the distribution of observed medians should be shifted to the right and should be consistently different from the simulated medians.

> H_o: No Partisan Difference. There is no difference between the observed population of votes and the simulated votes.
>
> H_D: Democratic Partisan Difference. There is a difference between the observed population of votes and the simulated votes. Under Democratic majorities, the observed medians should lie to the left of the simulated values and test statistics should be negative.
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> H_R: Republican Partisan Difference. There is a difference between the observed population of votes and the simulated votes. Under Republican majorities, the observed medians should lie to the right of the simulated values and test statistics should be positive.

These hypotheses are consistent with what Krehbiel (1998) calls for in his discussion of party-oriented theories confronting changes in party control. He asks what should scholars expect? "Taking the party-oriented theories at face value, the answer is clear. Policy shifts should always be directionally consistent with the majority part in Congress, and the magnitude of such shifts should be proportional to the strength (in the sense of discipline) of the majority party." (1999, p. 198). So, in key periods, such as the 55th (1897) Congress, the 73rd (1933) Congress or the 104th (1994) Congress, the shifts in voting should be noticeable and abrupt from one party to the next. Moreover, the shifts

should be in the direction of the majority party. All that is meant in this paper by policies are roll call votes. These constitute the best proxy for what members intend.

Analysis.

In order to give some sense of how the analysis proceeds, Figures 2 and 3 present results for the 103rd and 104th Congresses. These are Congresses with which political scientists have some passing familiarity and represent a shift from Democratic (103rd) to Republican (104th) control.

Figure 2 has two components. The topmost panel constitutes the distribution of Poole-Rosenthal first dimension W-Nominate scores for the 103rd Congress. That distribution is clearly bimodal, with Democrats to the left and Republicans to the right. The lines cutting through the distributions constitute the median party positions. Clearly this distribution is highly reminiscent of Figure 1a in which the parties are separated from one another and in which there is little overlap. The bottom panel produces the distribution of observed medians from all votes in the 103rd Congress. Overlaying that distribution (but rescaled to fit the figure) is the distribution of the OWC-C simulated medians.[6] Several points are obvious from this figure. First the distribution of median votes is heavily skewed toward the left, reflecting the Democratic majority. There is a clustering of medians lying to the right, mapping into the Republican distribution. In general this reflects votes in which the Democrats lost due to a handful of Democrats siding with Republicans. Second, the simulated distribution of votes is shifted to the Democratic majority, reflecting the preference-based effect that should arise in the simulation. Third, the median of the simulated distribution is to the right of the observed median of the distribution of votes. In short, the median of the observed votes is skewed toward the left, and those skewed votes occur much more frequently then would be expected under a process by which members would simply vote according to their preferences.

<Figure 2 About Here>

Figure 3 reproduces the same phenomenon, but this time for the 104th Congress. Between the 103rd and 104th Congresses the control over the House of Representatives switched between the parties. As Krehbiel argues, there should be a major shift over policies because of a marked change in who now serves as a pivotal voter (indeed there are many new pivots across many votes). Again the top panel points to a marked change in the distribution of members. Republicans now have control and their members are bunched up to the right. Democrats are distributed to the left on this ideological dimension, although they clearly have greater variance. The bottom panel indicates a

[6] The distribution of simulated medians maps directly onto the Poole-Rosenthal dimension 1. The vertical scale, however, is markedly different. Even so, the shape of the simulated distribution makes the point. The other simulated distributions have similar shapes and almost identical medians for this Congress.

remarkable shift in the distribution of median votes (compare this with Figure 2). Again the simulated distribution of medians is superimposed on the figure. The median of this distribution is well to the left of the overall median for observed votes. Again it appears that strong partisanship rather than preference is driving these voting outcomes.

<Figure 3 About Here>

It may simply be that these Congresses have been selected because they are peculiar in the annals of American politics. Table 1 presents the t- and z-statistics for all Congresses from the 46th through the 105th. In each instance the observed distribution of median votes is compared with each simulation. For each Congress the first row are t-tests comparing the mean of the observed medians to the mean of the simulated medians. This is a standard two-sample t-test. The second row are the resulting z-statistics from a Wilcoxon ranked sums test. This non-parametric test rank orders the data from both samples and then compares the sums of the ranks.

<Table 1 About Here>

Under the tests performed here a positive sign for the t-statistic means that the mean of the observed medians is less than the mean of the simulated medians. Generally, then, when Democrats are in control the alternative hypothesis is that the sign will be positive and the t-statistic will be significant. For the Wilcoxon test, if the distribution of ranked values is smaller for the observed medians (e.g., lying to the left of the simulated medians) then the sign should be negative. For both the t-test and Wilcoxon tests I expect the opposite to be true when the Republicans are in control. In the rightmost column I indicate whether the null hypothesis -- that there is no difference between the observed and simulated votes -- can be rejected. As noted above a one-tailed test is used for theoretical reasons. If the null can be rejected for all four comparisons, then a YES is marked in that column. If only 2 of 4 tests reject the null, then the test is counted as MIXED.

Overall the null hypothesis can be rejected in 34 of 60 Congresses using a t-test, while the null can be rejected in 48 of 60 Congresses using the Wilcoxon test. In these instances the sign is in the predicted direction under the appropriate alternative hypothesis and normally statistical significance is not in doubt. There are several patterns that arise from these data. The means are different and in proper direction for only 10 of 20 Congresses in which Republicans held control. However, when, comparing the ranked order of medians, in 19 of 20 instances the null hypothesis can be rejected. Similarly with the Democrats in 24 of 40 cases the null can be rejected under a t-test. However, in 29 of 40 Congresses the null is rejected using a Wilcoxon test.[7] While these tests are quite simple, these results are clear. For much of this period the null hypothesis is hardly supported.

[7] If "hurrah" votes are excluded, then the null is rejected for even more Congresses. The effect of these hurrah votes is to pull the median (and the mean) toward the center of the first dimension. This only reflects the pull of the Chamber median.

For the Democrats many of the failures to reject the null hypothesis occur in the early Congresses for this series. Interestingly, in the 1950's and 1960's, a nadir of partisanship under traditional measures, there are consistent, statistically significant effects that demonstrate partisanship. Not so surprising is the magnitude of differences and strength of the tests in the 102nd through 105th Congresses -- a time in which "conditional party" politics is at its peak.

To better illustrate this phenomenon, Figure 4 plots the difference between the median of the OWC-C simulation and the median for the observed votes.[8] Values that are negative are in the direction of Democrats and values that are positive are in the direction of Republicans. Figure 4 plots these differences by Congress separately for Democrats and Republicans.

<Figures 4, 5 About Here>

With the exception of two early Democratic Congresses, the differences in medians point in the appropriate direction. The difference waxes and wanes over time, but still shows a clear pattern in which the median voter is more closely aligned with the majority party then would be expected under a purely preference-based model.

To gain a little better sense of the structure of observed medians, the distributions for each are plotted in the Appendix. The Appendix plots versions of Figures 2 and 3 for each Congress. What is excluded is an overlay of the simulated medians and the overall distribution of member D-nominate values. Generally these figures indicate routine shifts toward the majority party as parties trade control over Congress.

Generally these results show that for three-quarters of the Congresses since 1881 there is a systematic bias toward the majority's ideological position. This bias is beyond what might be expected under a pure preference model. Each simulation run over each vote was designed to account for various aspects of a pure preference model -- from a naïve, minimum winning coalition model with no constraints over ideological proximity, to a relatively sophisticated cutpoint model with oversized, connected coalitions. Of course, it is foolhardy to think that members vote solely on the basis of party or on the basis of their (Poole-Rosenthal) ideology. However, this cut on the data proves to be interesting and informative concerning observable biases in behavioral data.

[8] Across almost all cases there is little difference among the medians of the various simulations. The fourth simulation, which assumes a randomly drawn median and a coalition that is the same size as that under the original vote, seems the most reasonable to plot as it is the process that is most similar to that which Krehbiel has in mind.

Conclusion.

It is little surprise that nominally independent agents might coalesce around focal point when in a legislature. Social psychologists have long noted the power of social groups to build "other-regarding" preferences (Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Brewer, 1979). In-group and out-group effects can yield extremely powerful effects for group dynamics. As Fearon and Laitin (1996) demonstrate, ethnicity can produce important ties that bind individuals together, and this in turn can result in spirals of ethnic conflict. Likewise, Lichbach (1995) points to instances when individually rational strategies are overwhelmed by collectively rational behaviors.

While such papers raise the possibility (and indeed model the possibility) that groups can cohere independent of individual preferences, these models do not answer the question of the origin of cohesive groups. Although they provide a way of understanding the question of "Where's the Party?" they do not address "Why Party?" Aldrich (1995), of course, spends a great deal of time trying to disentangle the source of party and points to the mass electorate as a foundation for party allegiance among Members of Congress. Recently Bawn (1999) has offered a model of ideological commitment that generates long-term coalition partners, even when such coalitions are unstable. Her result depends on repeated interactions among agents and points to ways in which ideology can serve as a basis for organizing stable coalitions. As she readily acknowledges, ideology need not be the only basis for organizing coalitions. Party allegiance also can provide the glue that binds actors together to yield stable coalitions.

As such, a theoretical literature is developing that incorporates, in a reasonably parsimonious way, the stability and importance of groups for binding together members and overcoming individually rational incentives to stray from the group. It is unlikely that these models capture all that matters for building and sustaining coalitions. Certainly in the U.S. House it is much more likely that arguments like those made by Cooper, Brady and Hurley (1979), Rohde (1991), Sinclair (1995) and Aldrich (1995) matter a great deal. Party provides an organizational basis for the Chamber. Party Leaders, acting as agents of the party, gain agenda setting tools that allow them to fix the set of alternatives that come to the floor. Much of what finally appears on the floor has already been well sifted and what remains to be voted on reflects a clear bias on the part of the leadership. That leadership bias is in favor of the majority party.

Clearly, the ability of the majority party to skew outcomes is limited by the size of the majority and the homogeneity of its interests. On this point Krehbiel is correct when asking whether party is sufficient and pointing to the importance of preferences when thinking about coalitions of voters. In settings in which there is substantial homogeneity in preferences between two groups and those groups are split, then it is little surprise that partisanship should dominate. However, the findings here show that a partisan bias occurs even in periods in which the two parties are not widely separated from one another and in which party unity is low.

What remains to be done is to investigate whether these data provide any new insight into the impact of party strength over policy choices. This joins the call proposed by Cooper and Young (1999) in recognizing that party is important and then disentangling the circumstances under which it diminishes. This is not a new call -- but rather a continuing refrain extending from Cooper, Brady and Hurley (1979) through Rohde (1991).

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Table 1
Test Statistics by Congress for the Difference Between the Observed Distribution of Medians and the Simulated Medians

Congress	*Majority*	*MWC-U*	*OWC-U*	*MWC-C*	*OWC-C*	*Reject?*
46	DEM	-6.41	-6.50	-5.49	-5.48	NO
		-4.34	-4.25	-5.04	-5.11	YES
47	REP	-.85	-1.14	.45	.36	NO
		9.45	9.27	8.19	8.24	YES
48	DEM	-6.62	-6.72	-6.07	-6.09	NO
		-1.30	-1.19	-2.03	-2.02	MIXED
49	DEM	-8.40	-8.52	-7.75	-7.77	NO
		0.32	0.42	-.28	-.29	NO
50	DEM	-6.62	-6.72	-6.08	-6.09	NO
		5.88	5.87	5.12	5.16	NO
51	REP	-7.07	-7.51	-5.67	-5.74	YES
		19.82	19.67	19.15	19.08	YES
52	DEM	-0.07	-0.11	0.83	0.87	NO
		-1.54	-1.57	-2.40	-2.39	MIXED
53	DEM	0.46	0.46	1.06	1.08	NO
		-6.61	-6.86	-7.59	-7.73	YES
54	REP	1.65	1.68	2.03	2.06	NO
		6.37	6.41	5.84	5.85	YES
55	REP	-1.48	-1.94	-0.89	-0.74	NO
		11.05	11.10	10.70	10.68	YES
56	REP	-2.43	-2.92	-1.66	-1.70	YES
		9.62	9.68	9.28	9.31	YES
57	REP	-0.80	-0.84	-0.27	-0.10	NO
		10.52	10.51	9.98	9.96	YES
58	REP	-0.76	-0.86	-0.62	-0.44	NO
		7.65	7.72	7.48	7.46	YES
59	REP	0.96	0.93	1.20	1.20	NO
		8.40	8.47	7.87	7.93	NO
60	REP	-3.50	-3.66	-2.60	-2.67	YES
		11.88	12.02	10.63	10.81	YES
61	REP	1.01	0.91	1.62	1.70	NO
		3.14	3.22	2.88	2.82	YES
62	DEM	-0.96	-1.07	-0.47	-0.56	NO
		-7.64	-7.50	-8.16	-8.13	YES
63	DEM	1.49	1.44	2.25	2.31	MIXED
		-6.63	-6.57	-7.39	-7.44	YES
64	DEM	-2.12	-2.33	-1.28	-1.66	NO
		-2.60	-2.44	-3.11	-2.97	YES

65	DEM	-0.58	-1.06	1.68	1.38	NO
		-2.50	-2.31	-3.68	-3.53	YES
66	REP	-1.99	-2.24	-0.94	-0.96	NO
		9.00	9.35	7.60	7.58	YES
67	REP	-5.37	-5.55	-4.65	-4.66	YES
		12.80	13.04	11.77	11.80	YES
68	REP	-3.04	-3.35	-1.89	-2.18	YES
		2.64	2.81	1.82	1.96	YES
69	REP	-3.24	-3.56	-2.58	-2.44	YES
		6.78	6.89	6.15	6.30	YES
70	REP	-0.84	-1.28	0.05	0.36	NO
		0.99	1.120	0.60	0.53	NO
71	REP	-0.56	-0.73	-0.27	-0.18	NO
		6.07	6.18	5.67	5.64	YES
72	DEM	-1.01	-1.43	-0.41	-0.56	NO
		-2.37	-2.12	-2.62	-2.63	YES
73	DEM	11.28	11.01	11.53	11.65	YES
		-11.41	-11.22	-11.51	-11.63	YES
74	DEM	6.47	6.30	7.02	7.03	YES
		-11.23	-10.98	-11.84	-11.92	YES
75	DEM	4.43	4.23	4.94	4.93	YES
		-7.56	-7.48	-7.78	-7.77	YES
76	DEM	-3.54	-3.66	-3.29	-3.28	NO
		-4.80	-4.62	-5.04	-5.09	YES
77	DEM	-2.61	-2.74	-2.23	-2.29	NO
		-1.55	-1.23	-2.19	-2.24	YES
78	DEM	-4.90	-5.36	-3.78	-3.97	NO
		5.39	5.63	4.80	4.85	NO
79	DEM	-1.39	-1.68	-0.61	-0.55	NO
		-1.70	-1.53	-2.18	-2.18	MIXED
80	REP	-4.78	-5.14	-4.39	-4.14	YES
		7.33	7.61	6.86	6.72	YES
81	DEM	3.68	3.38	4.33	4.24	YES
		-7.43	-7.12	-7.94	-7.96	YES
82	DEM	-0.20	-0.43	0.34	0.32	NO
		0.54	0.75	-.19	-.12	NO
83	REP	-2.36	-2.51	-2.03	-2.05	YES
		4.69	5.01	3.92	3.81	YES
84	DEM	5.79	5.50	6.18	6.28	YES
		-4.94	-4.54	-5.62	-5.66	YES
85	DEM	6.42	6.11	6.75	6.78	YES
		-5.24	-4.86	-5.77	-5.97	YES
86	DEM	6.86	6.60	7.48	7.54	YES
		-7.23	-7.04	-7.97	-7.96	YES
87	DEM	11.78	11.56	12.23	12.31	YES

		-8.77	-8.41	-9.70	-9.89	YES
88	DEM	10.63	10.30	11.17	11.36	YES
		-8.02	-7.69	-8.74	-8.97	YES
89	DEM	9.16	8.70	10.34	10.67	YES
		-9.42	-9.05	-10.65	-10.77	YES
90	DEM	9.13	8.77	10.07	10.07	YES
		-3.44	-2.91	-5.35	-5.23	YES
91	DEM	6.16	5.95	7.39	7.27	YES
		-1.15	-.87	-3.03	-2.80	MIXED
92	DEM	4.03	3.59	5.04	5.19	YES
		-.24	0.44	-2.00	-2.19	MIXED
93	DEM	12.43	11.83	13.55	13.74	YES
		-9.24	-8.25	-11.03	-11.39	YES
94	DEM	7.84	7.33	9.25	9.17	YES
		-12.86	-11.82	-15.09	-15.31	YES
95	DEM	6.74	6.29	9.15	8.83	YES
		-9.54	-8.30	-13.11	-13.17	YES
96	DEM	7.43	7.00	8.62	8.52	YES
		-7.90	-6.80	-10.37	-10.46	YES
97	DEM	4.04	3.53	5.14	5.24	YES
		-2.11	-1.15	-4.54	-4.68	MIXED
98	DEM	8.89	8.44	9.77	9.83	YES
		-13.60	-12.49	-15.65	-15.87	YES
99	DEM	12.36	11.92	13.57	13.45	YES
		-16.52	-15.72	-18.20	-18.24	YES
100	DEM	14.49	14.04	16.04	16.01	YES
		-18.75	-17.85	-20.99	-21.28	YES
101	DEM	11.43	11.06	12.61	12.82	YES
		-17.09	-16.48	-19.16	-19.56	YES
102	DEM	8.48	8.22	8.89	8.87	YES
		-17.39	-16.48	-19.16	-19.21	YES
103	DEM	5.58	5.24	6.21	6.19	YES
		-17.30	-16.18	-19.05	-19.29	YES
104	REP	-11.31	-11.80	-10.49	-10.53	YES
		28.21	28.88	26.07	26.36	YES
105	REP	-5.00	-5.61	-3.87	-3.75	YES
		19.18	20.63	15.89	15.83	YES

Figure 1
Sample Distributions of Partisans and Votes

Figure 1a

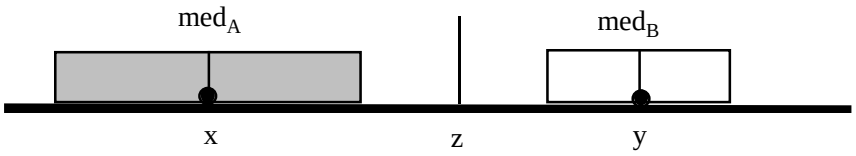


Figure 1b

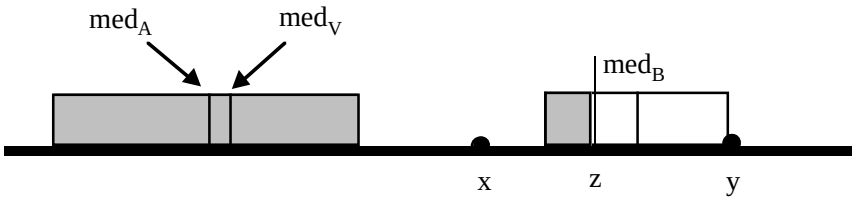


Figure 2
Distributions of Preferences and Medians for the 103rd Congress

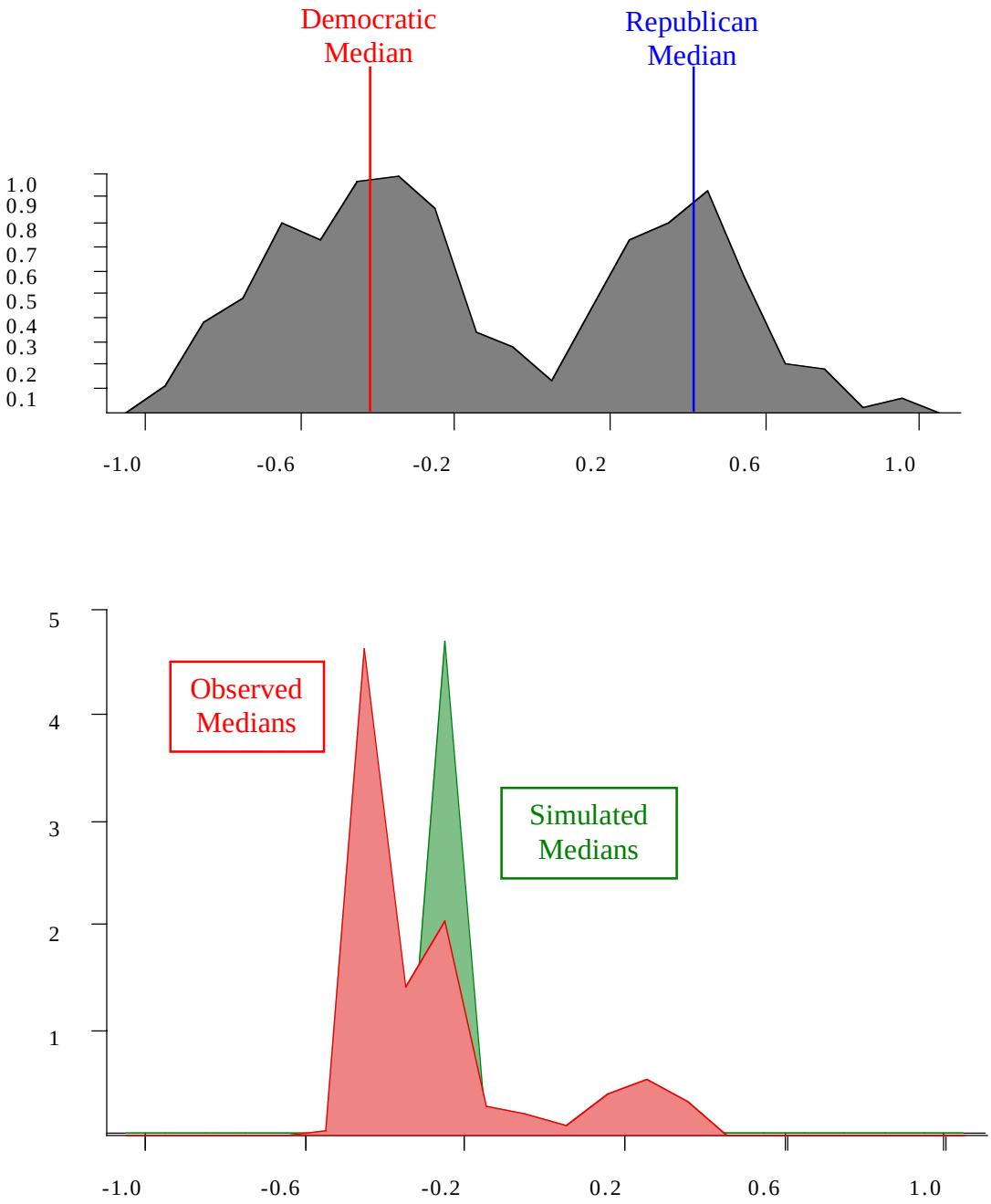
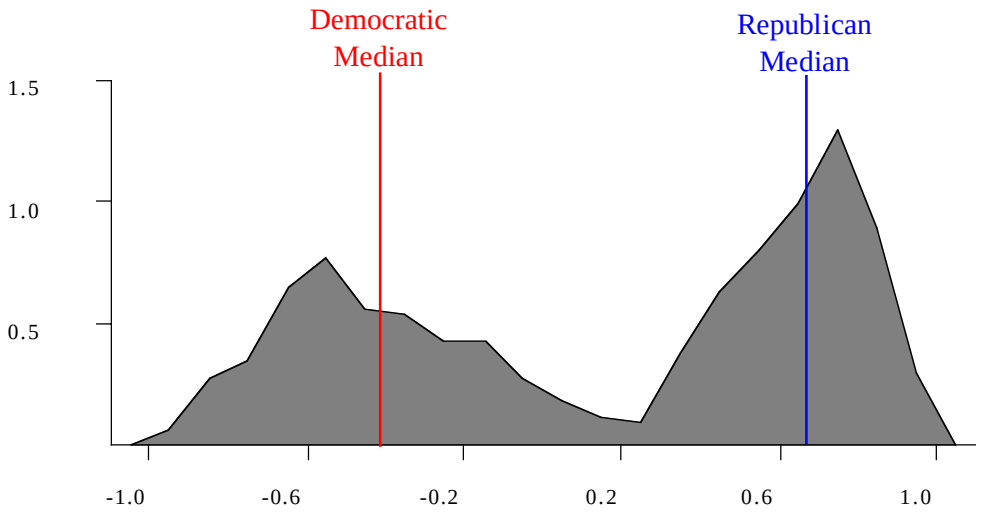


Figure 3
Distributions of Preferences and Medians for the 104th Congress



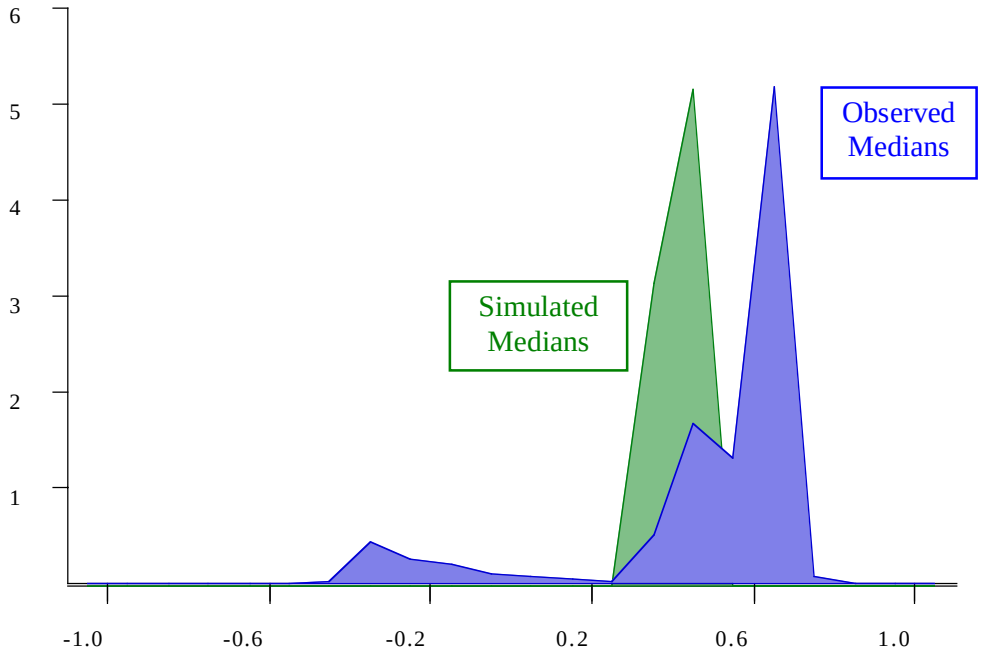
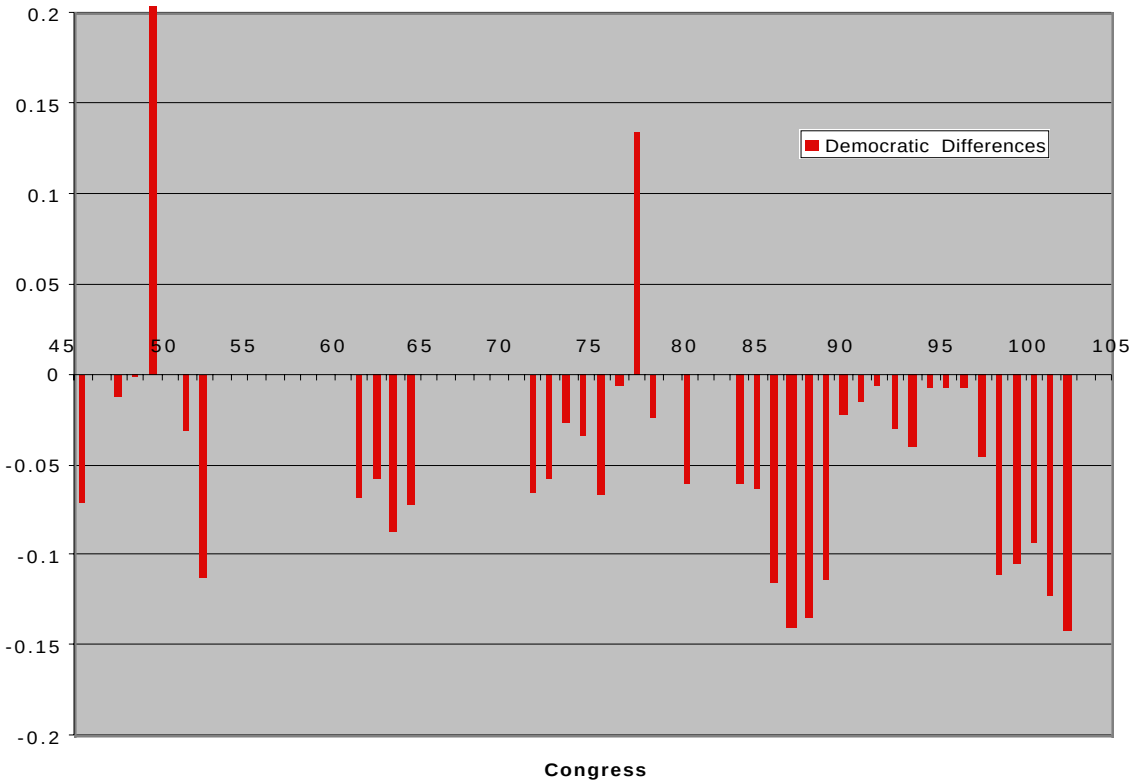
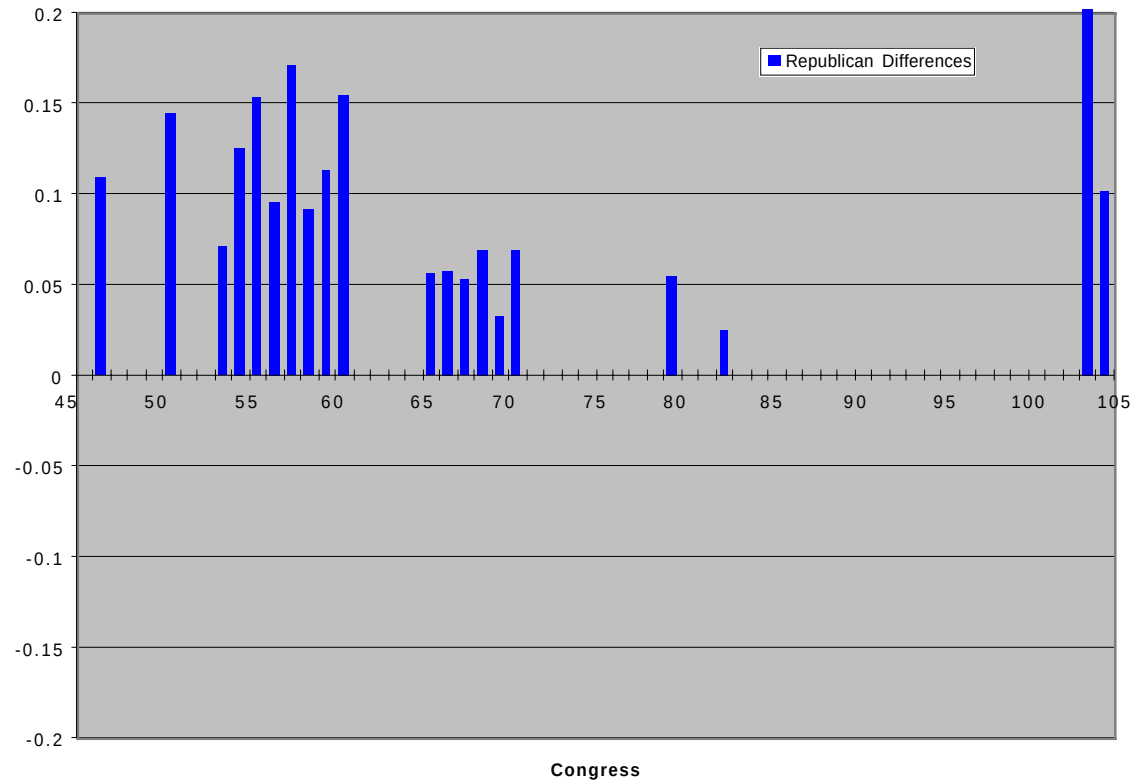


Figure 4
Differences Between the Observed and Simulated Medians by Party





Appendix

This appendix plots the distribution of median votes by Congress. The medians were calculated from the ICPSR Roll Call Votes (ICPSR #9822). The horizontal axis reflects the Poole-Rosenthal D-nominate values on a Congress by Congress basis (see Poole and Rosenthal, 1997). The vertical axis represents the percentage per .1 unit change on the horizontal axis.

Each plot is labeled by the Congress and the Party holding a majority.

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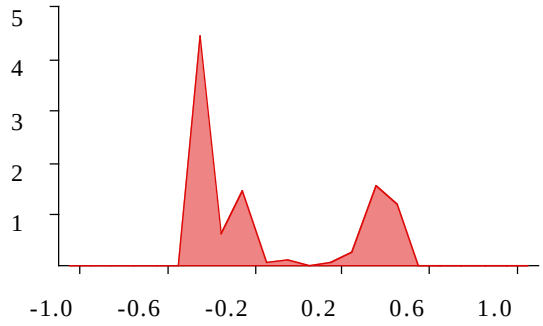
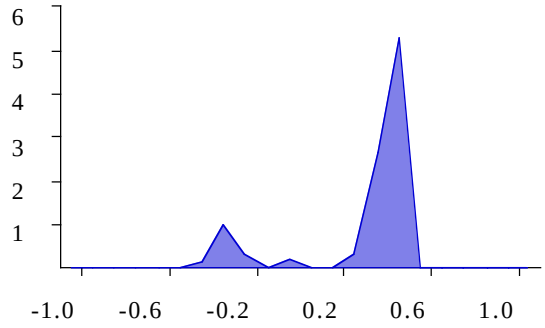
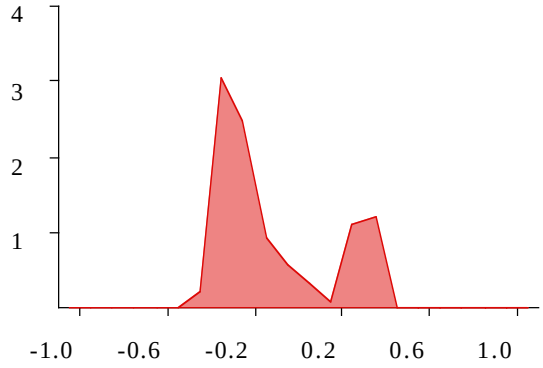


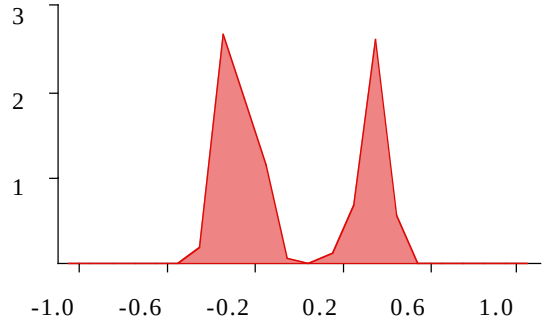
47th Congress -- Republican



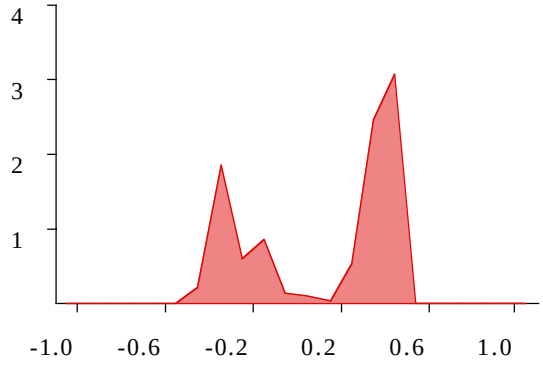
48th Congress-- Democrat



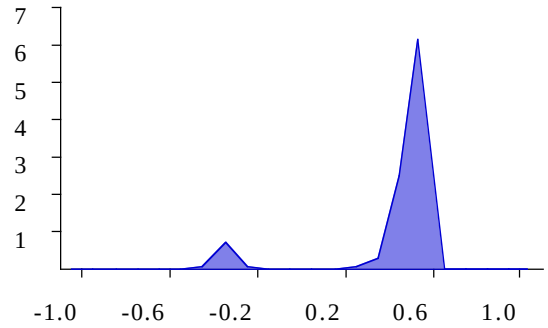
49th Congress -- Republican



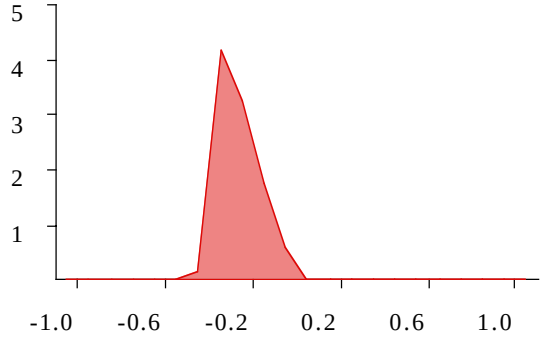
50th Congress -- Democrat



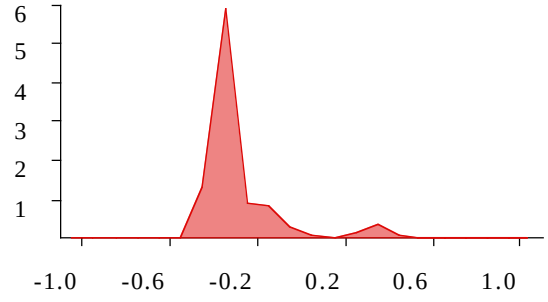
51st Congress -- Republican



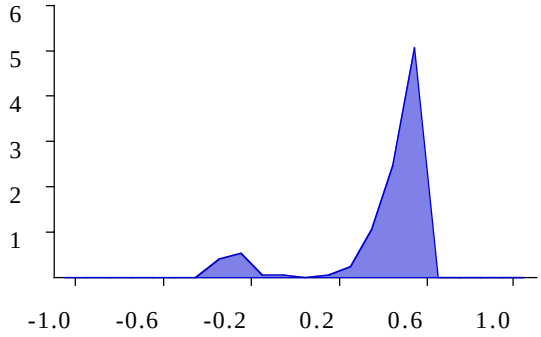
52nd Congress -- Democrat



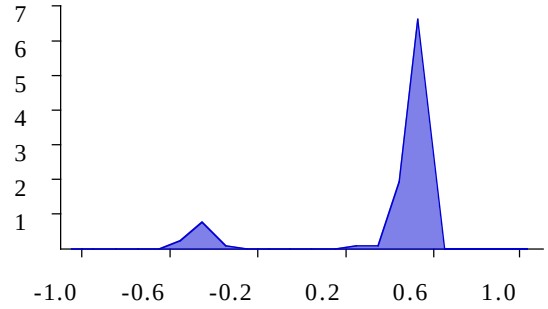
53rd Congress -- Republican



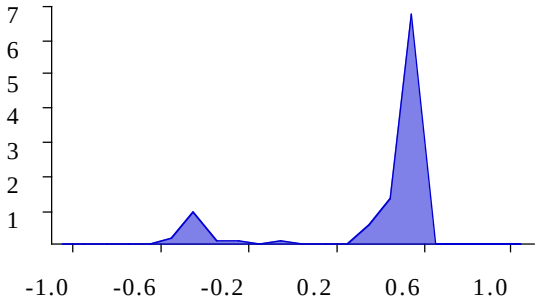
54th Congress -- Republican



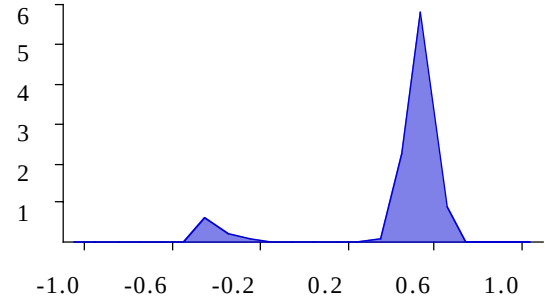
55th Congress -- Republican



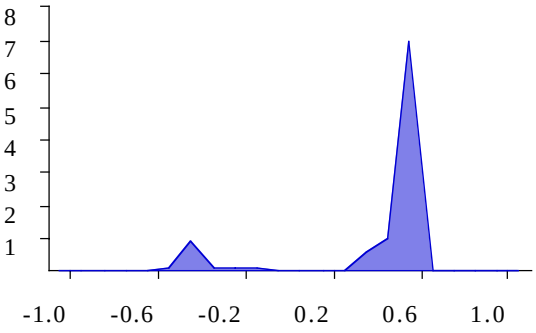
56th Congress -- Republican



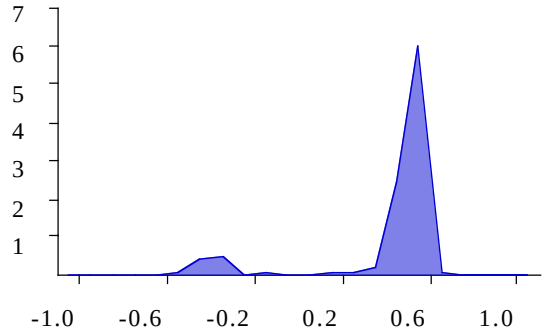
57th Congress -- Republican



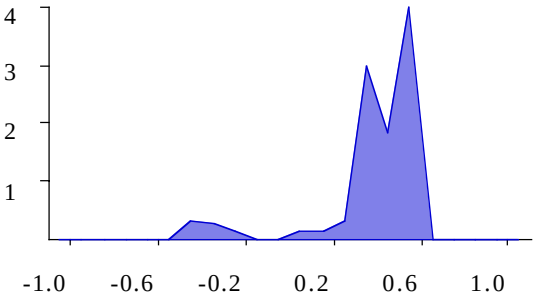
58th Congress -- Republican



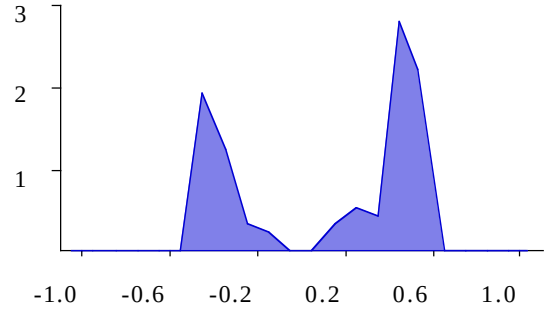
59th Congress -- Republican



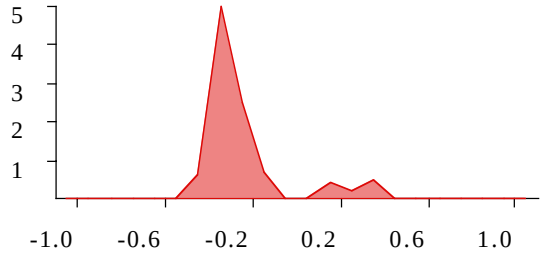
60th Congress -- Republican



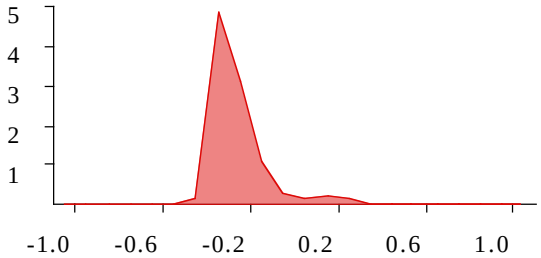
61st Congress -- Republican



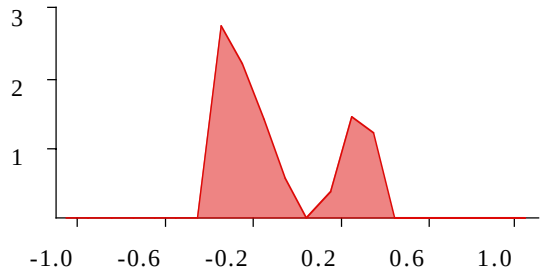
62nd Congress -- Democrat



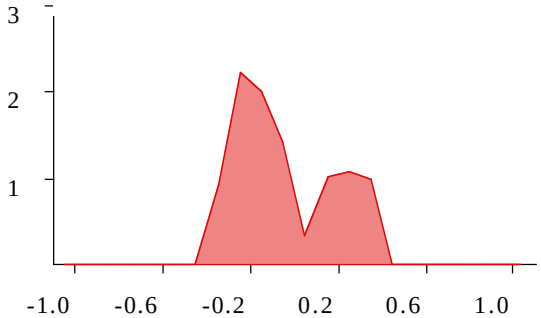
63rd Congress -- Democrat



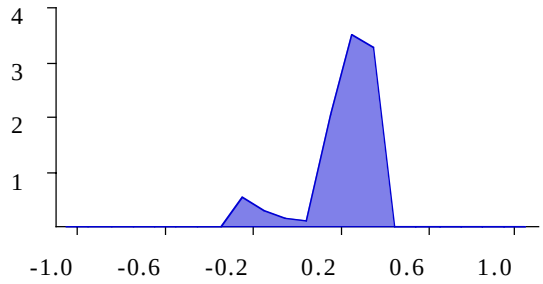
64th Congress -- Democrat



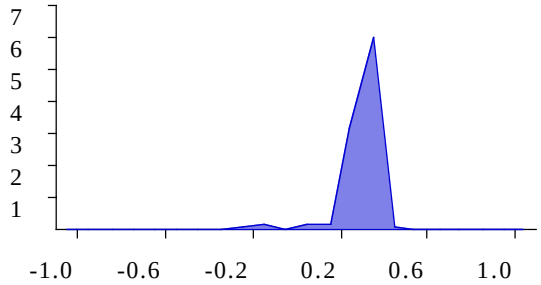
65th Congress -- Democrat



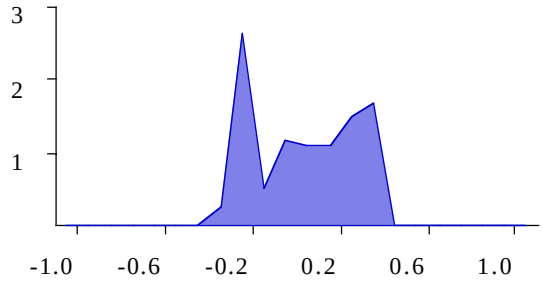
66th Congress -- Republican



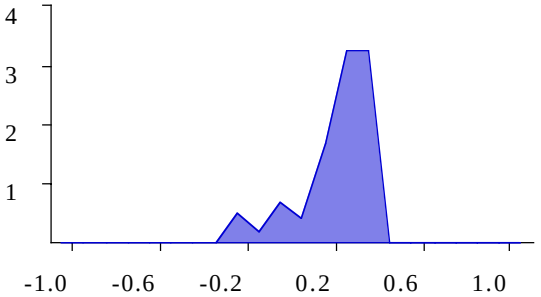
67th Congress -- Republican



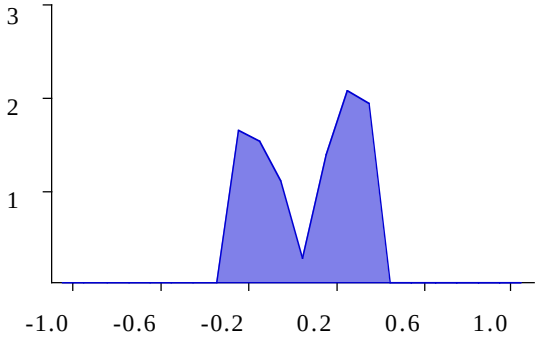
68th Congress -- Republican



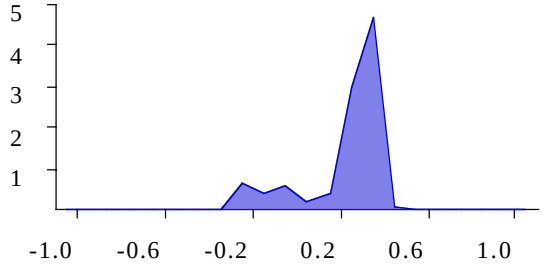
69th Congress -- Republican



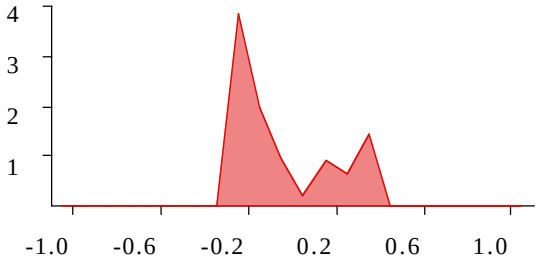
70th Congress -- Republican



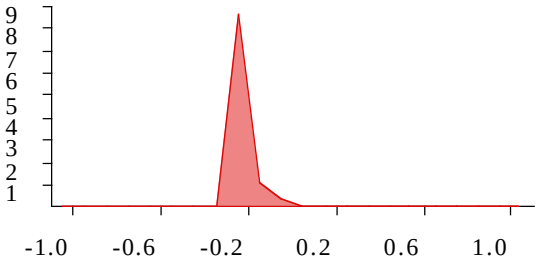
71st Congress -- Republican



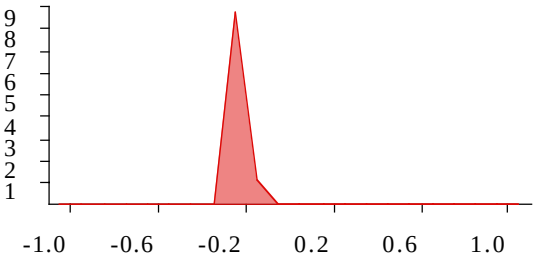
72nd Congress -- Democrat



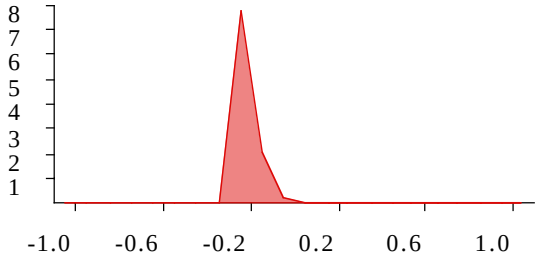
73rd Congress -- Democrat



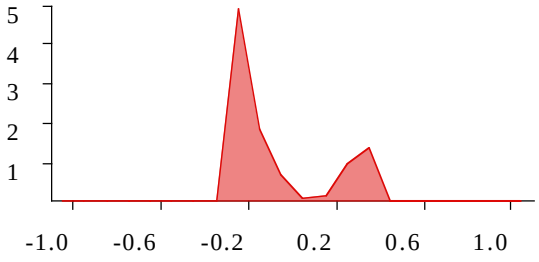
74th Congress -- Democrat



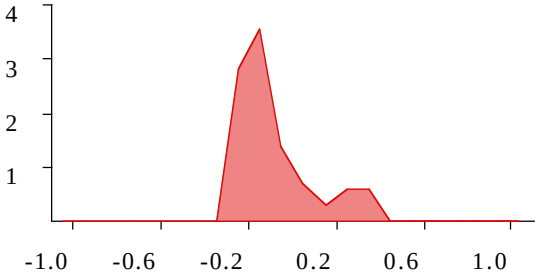
75th Congress -- Democrat



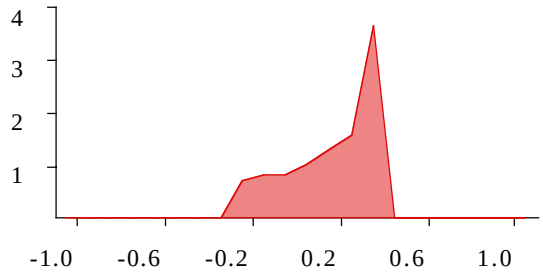
76th Congress -- Democrat



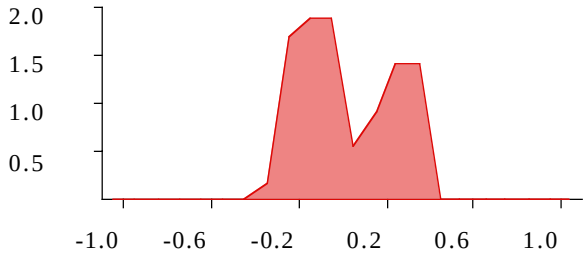
77th Congress -- Democrat



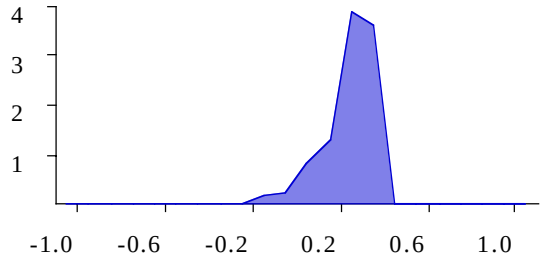
78th Congress -- Democrat



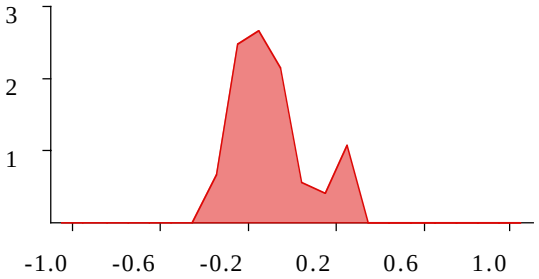
79th Congress -- Democrat



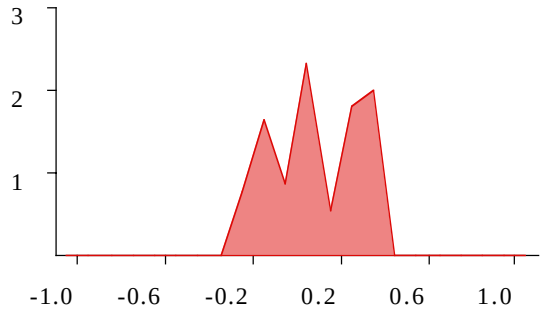
80th Congress -- Republican



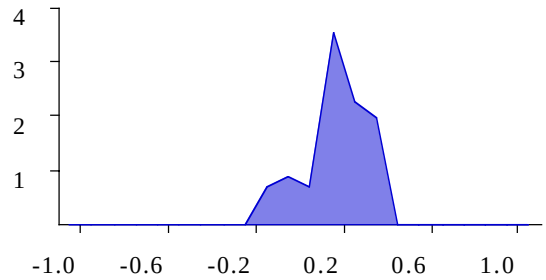
81st Congress -- Democrat



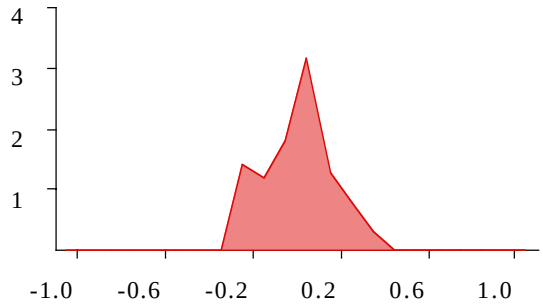
82nd Congress -- Democrat



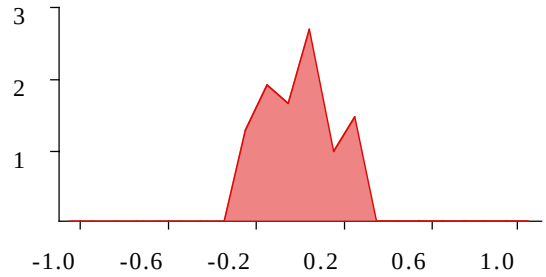
83rd Congress -- Republican



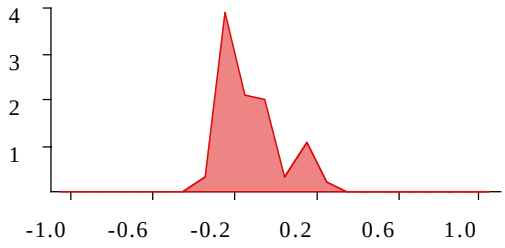
84th Congress -- Democrat



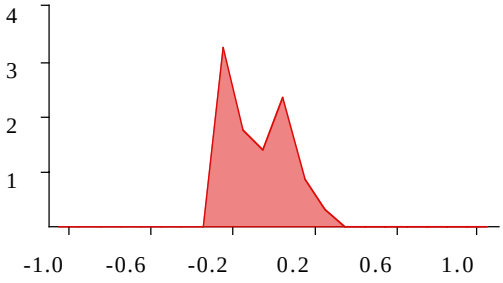
85th Congress -- Democrat



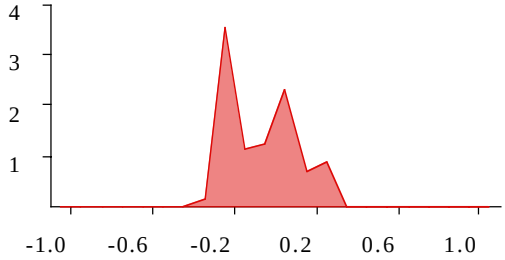
86th Congress -- Democrat



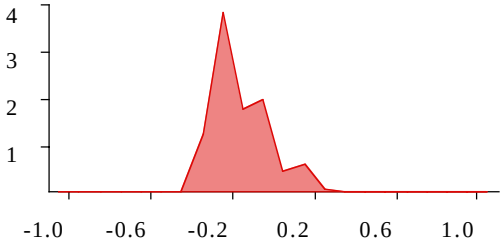
87th Congress -- Democrat



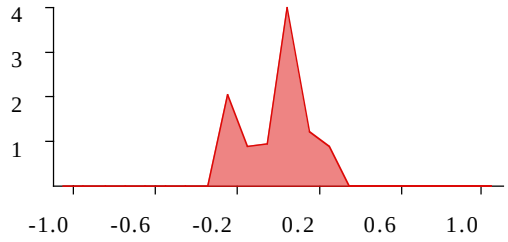
88th Congress -- Democrat



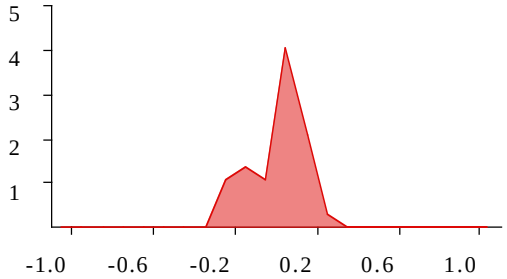
89th Congress -- Democrat



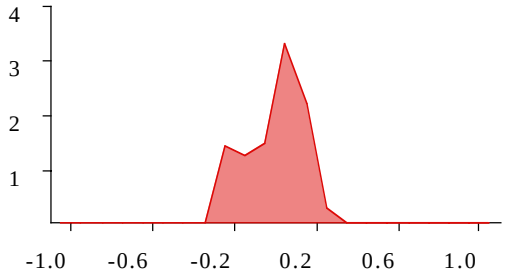
90th Congress -- Democrat



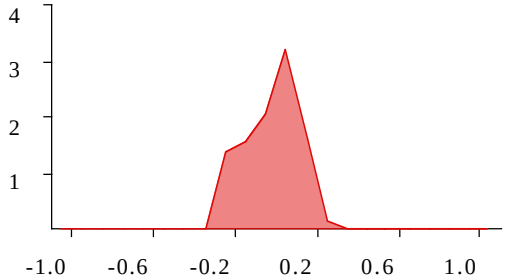
91st Congress -- Democrat



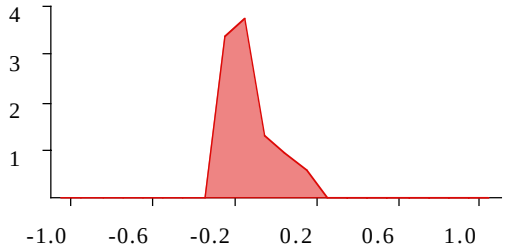
92nd Congress -- Democrat



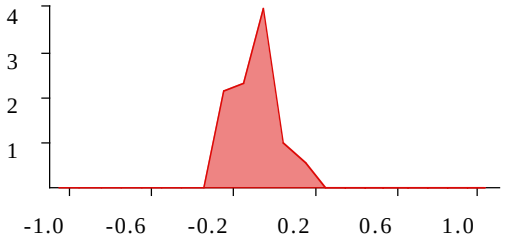
93rd Congress -- Democrat



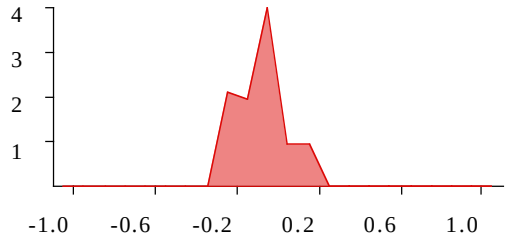
94th Congress -- Democrat



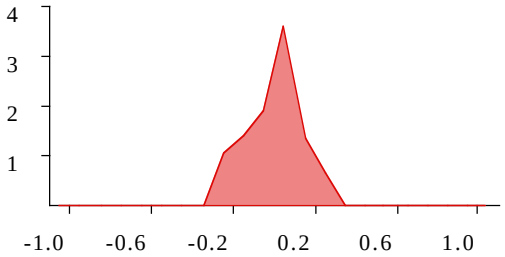
95th Congress -- Democrat



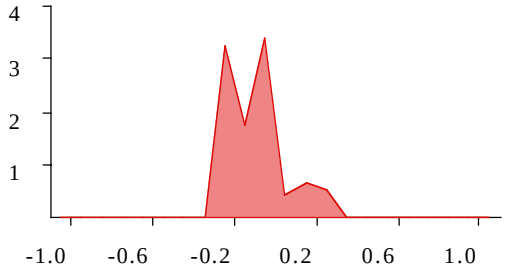
96th Congress -- Democrat



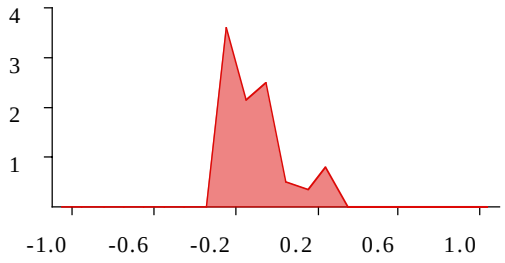
97h Congress -- Democrat



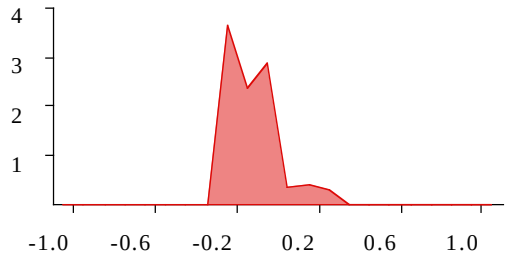
98th Congress -- Democrat



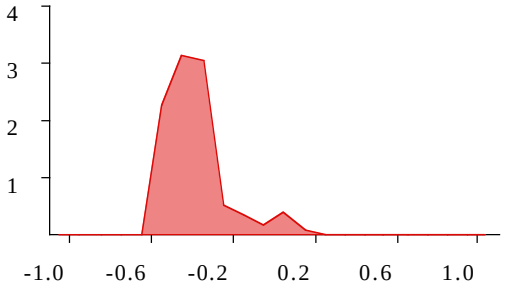
99h Congress -- Democrat



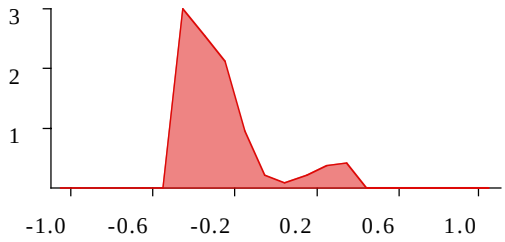
100th Congress -- Democrat



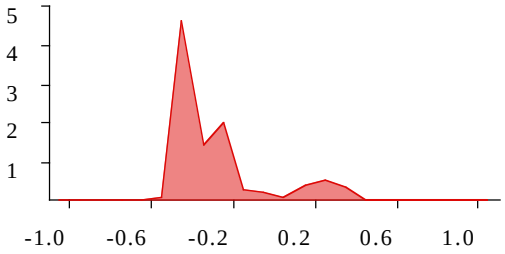
101st Congress -- Democrat



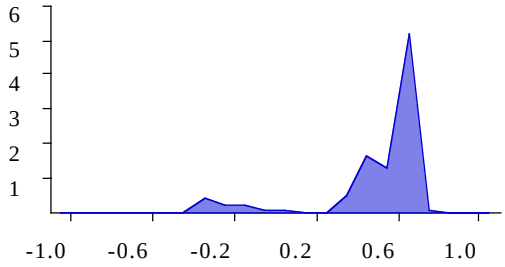
102nd Congress -- Democrat



103rd Congress -- Democrat



104th Congress -- Republican



105th Congress -- Republican