

Political Parties and Congressional Leadership

17.251/252

Fall 2004

Lecture Organization

- Natural history of political parties in the U.S.
- Why do parties exist?
 - What explains varying levels of party cohesion
 - When are leaders “strong” and when are they “weak”?

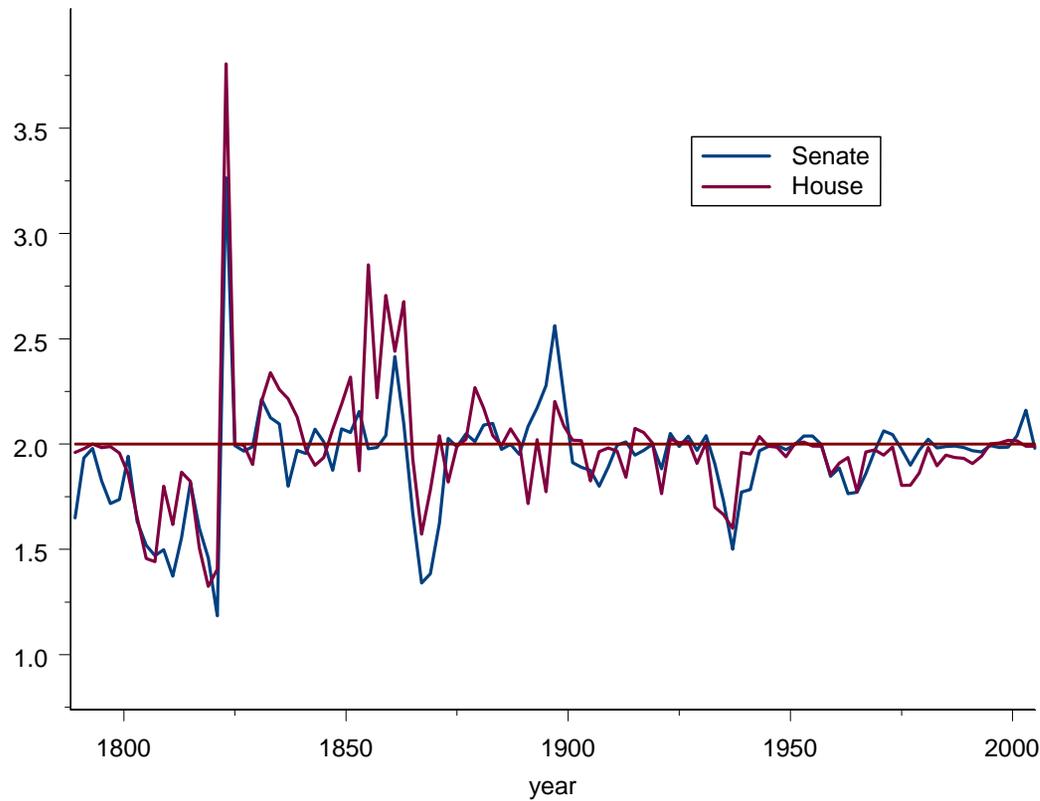
Interesting (and Important) Historical Aside

- Party membership originally arose in the chamber and spread to the electoral arena
- Now, party membership arises in the electoral arena and spreads to the institution

Natural History of Political Parties

Period	Party of the “right”	Party of the “left”
1789—1823 (1 st —17 th Cong.)	Federalists	Republicans
1823—1837 (18 th —24 th Cong.)	Multifactionalism based on old party labels & new individual alliances	
1837—1857 (25 th —34 th Cong.)	Whigs	Democrats
1857—present (35 th —108 th Cong.)	Republicans	Democrats

Effective number of parties



108/9th Cong:

Senate

48/44D

51/55R

1/1I

House

205/200D

227/231R

1/1 I

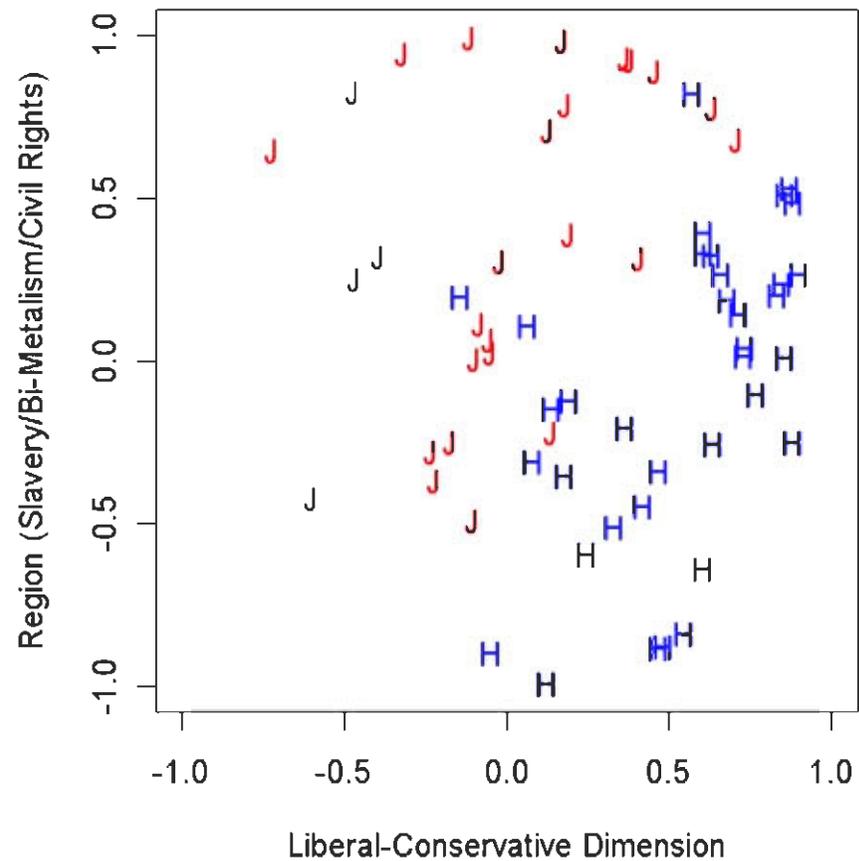
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Parties Change in Their
Cohesiveness

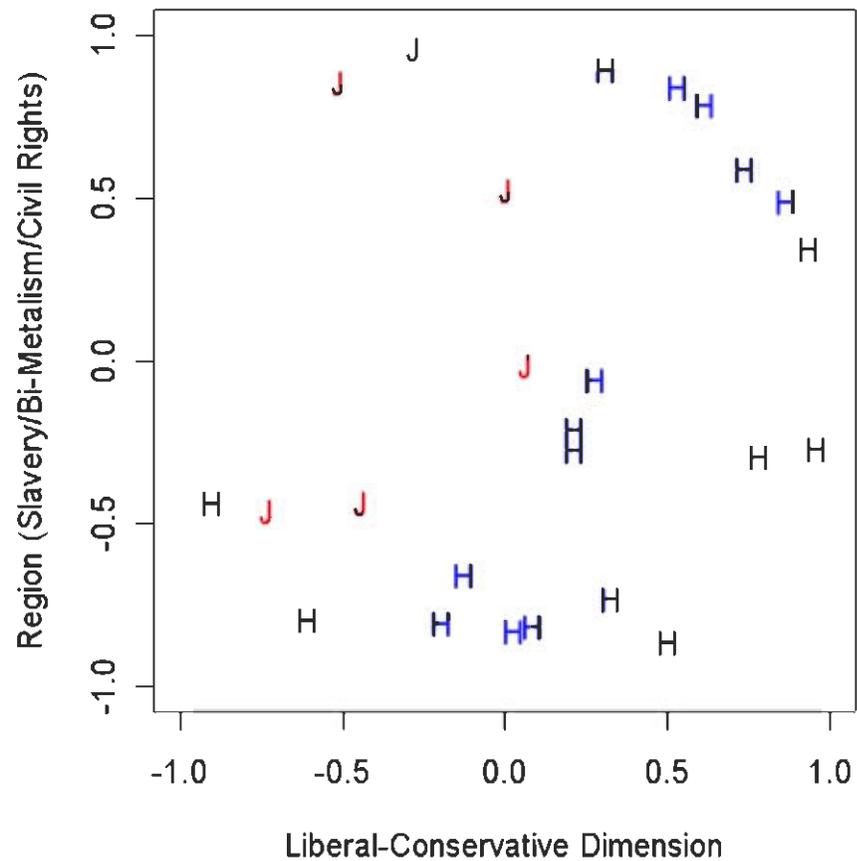
Congress

The text 'The Move' is rendered in a 3D, blocky font with a light gray color and a dark gray shadow, tilted diagonally from the top right towards the bottom left. It overlaps with the word 'Congress'.

House 1
1789-1790



Senate 1
1789-1790



Current Organization of Congress

- Party responsibilities
 - Scheduling business
 - Distributing leadership among and within committees
 - Promoting attendance and spreading information
 - Facilitate bargaining
- Resources that parties possess
 - Knowledge of rules
 - Access to tangible benefits

Some notes about historical development

- Party control
 - Until roughly the Civil War, parties don't "organize" the chambers
 - After the Civil War, they do (first the House, then the Senate)
 - Even so, party control of committees is a 20th century phenomenon
- Over time formal party positions have proliferated and institutionalized
 - Institutionalization mostly a 20th century phenomenon

Current Org Chart

Position	House	Senate
Constitutional head	Speaker	V.P./ President <i>pro tempore</i>
Floor leader	Majority/ minority leader	Majority/ minority leader
Whip	Majority/ minority whip	Majority/ minority whip
Caucus	Chair, v.chair, secy.	Chair, secy.
Policy committees		
Committees on committees		
Campaign committees		

House

Position	Rep	Dem
Constitutional head	Speaker Dennis Hastert (IL)	
Floor leader	Maj. Leader Tom Delay (TX)	Min. Leader Nancy Pelosi (CA)
Whip	Maj. Whip Roy Blunt (MO) Chief Deputy Whip Roy Blunt (MO)	Min. Whip Steny Hoyer (MD) Chief Deputy Whips John Lewis (GA), Joseph Crowley (NY), Ron Kind (WI), Ed Pastor (AZ), Max Sandlin (TX), Janice Schawkowsky (IL), Maxine Waters (GA)
Caucus	Chairman: Deborah Pryce (OH) Vice ch: Jack Kingston (GA)	Chairman: Robert Menendez (NJ) Vice ch: Jim Clyburn (SC)
Committees on committees	Steering Committee Chair: Speaker	Steering Committee Chair: Minority leader
Campaign committees	Nat. Rep. Campaign Comm. Chair: Thomas Reynolds (NY)	Dem. Cong'l Campaign Comm. Chair: Robert Matsui (CA) (?)

Senate

Position	Rep	Dem
Constitutional head	Vice President: Dick Cheney President <i>pro tempore</i>: Ted Stevens (AK)	
Floor leader	Maj./min. Leader Bill Frist (TN)	Min./maj. leader Tom Daschle (SD) To be Harry Reid (NV)
Whip	Asst. Maj./Min. leader Mitch McConnell (KY)	Asst. min./maj. leader: Harry Reid (NV) To be
Caucus	Conf. chair: Rick Santorum (PA) Vice chair: Kay Bailey Hutchison (TX)	Chair: Dem. Leader Secretary: Barbara Mikulski (MD)
Policy committees	Chair: John Kyle (AZ)	Chair: Bryon Dorgan (ND)
Committees on committees	Steering Committee ch:	Steering & Coord. Comm. Ch: Hillary Clinton (NY)
Campaign committees	NRSC Ch: George Allen (VA)	DSCC Ch: Jon Corzine (NJ) To be Charles Schumer (NY)

Note some things about historical development

- Regional/ideological balancing
- Emergence of career ladder

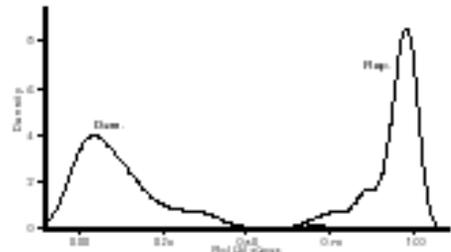
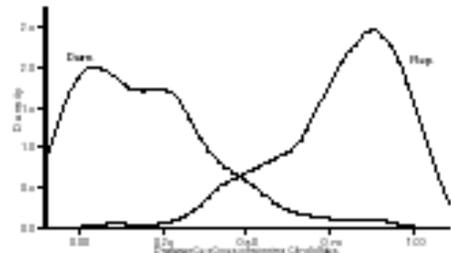
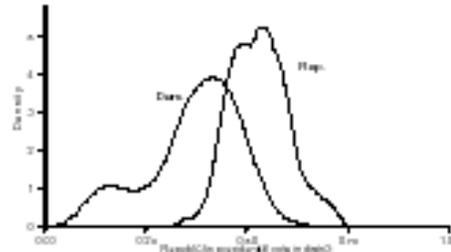
Why Do Parties Exist?

- Anomalous position of parties in spatial models of legislatures
 - The chamber median should rule. Party is just a label
 - Who governs? Do leaders “boss” followers (common view) or do followers terrorize leaders?

Some perspectives on this question

- Rohde: Conditional party government
- Krehbiel: Where's the party?
 - MIT3: Rules and distinguishing policy
- Calvert: Parties coordinate
- Aldrich, Cox, and McCubbins: Parties help members get elected

Evidence that Parties Push Members Apart



Source: Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart (2001)

Rohde & “Conditional Party Government”

- Observation: parties more prevalent
- Claim: “strong” parties don’t “boss”
- Democratic party
 - Greater heterogeneity over time
 - Greater “power” given party organs
 - This reform was “conditional party government” (pp. 31—34): greater power if agreement
- Republican party
 - Defensive to Democratic resurgence
 - Events since 1991 only confirm the point