

The Legislative Scholar

The Newsletter of the Legislative Studies Section of the American Political Science Association

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Recognizing Keith Poole

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Welcome to the Fall 2017 issue of *The Legislative Scholar*. Our current issue includes a symposium on the achievements and contributions of Keith Poole, an icon and hero of our Legislative Studies section. It also includes an article from Janet Box-Steffensmeier, Charles Campisano, Matthew Hitt, and Kevin Scott on the Blue Slip Senate Archive, and one on from Wendy Underhill and Tim Storey on the contemporary political issues of state legislatures and redistricting.

In the field of legislative studies, we are fortunate to have a wealth of leading scholars who have shaped the field over the past several decades, and many of these scholars are deserving of recognition for their contributions. Yet we haven't devoted an issue of the newsletter to any other single scholar. The reason we decided to profile Keith's work and contribution in this issue reflects the important theoretical and methodological contributions of his work – in particular, the linking of measures of members' preferences to the underlying spatial model of their behavior – and the broad reach that he's had, in part because he was an early adopter of making data accessible to any researcher.

The idea of devoting an issue of the *Legislative Scholar* to Keith Poole originated as a result of the Conference in his honor organized by the Department of Political Science at the University of Georgia back in May of 2017. There was also a special issue of *Studies in American Political Development* in 2016 which focused on the use of Keith and Howard's signature contribution – NOMINATE – in studies of American political development. These two instances highlight the impact of Keith's contribution to the field, and the ways in which his work has shaped the trajectory of legislative studies and the careers of so many others. In soliciting articles for this issue, we drew on this conference and special issue – inviting participants to share their research and comments on Keith's work – and also invited other scholars who have been mentored by Keith or had their work shaped by him in other ways to participate as well.

Probably if you ask any person in the discipline to tell you the first word that comes to their mind when you mention "Keith Poole", that word would be NOMINATE. This one word conceals, however, a wide range of scholars who have been influenced by Poole's writings and who have taken his theories and methods to the most varied settings. Indeed, one thing you can notice by looking at the contributors in

this issue is the wide variety of scholars who have something to say about Keith and his work: scholars studying Congress, state legislatures, legislatures across the world, inter-branch relations, voting behavior, trade unions, and others.

That is testimony of the lasting and important legacy of Keith Poole's work. The articles in this issue delve into Keith's contributions and also explore how scholars are using these methods and data in their own work. We hope that you enjoy reading the articles that follow as much as we have, and consider sharing them with your graduate students as well.

Laurel and Gisela

REFLECTIONS ON KEITH POOLE'S CAREER

Keith Poole's Remarks at UGA Conference for his 70th Birthday

Keith T. Poole
University of Georgia

I would like to thank my coauthor of 35 years, Howard Rosenthal, and my friend John Maltese for organizing this conference at the University of Georgia in my honor. I would also like to thank all of my friends and coauthors who have come to participate.

I am going to begin at 1981 – the hinge of my career (I am going to look back and then look forward) – when my wife Jan and I went to Pittsburgh for a yearlong Post-Doc in Political Economy at GSIA (now the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie-Mellon University). Looking back from 1981, my first job was at the University of Oregon beginning January 1978. It was a temporary job for two quarters but I figured out later that Bill Mitchell (a friend of Bill Riker) and others knew that the person that I was replacing was not going to return and here was their chance to hire a Rochester Ph.D. In March of 1978 I flew back to Rochester and defended my dissertation.

The teaching load was two courses a quarter and when it was official that the person that I was replacing was not returning I had to start campaigning for the permanent position. Fortunately, I got the tenure track job by a vote – my memory is foggy on this – of about 11-7. My starting salary was \$14,300.00 which at the time looked great to me.

I believe it was early in 1979 that I realized that if I was going to work on Psychometric scaling methods and social choice theory, I needed a much more thorough grounding in Mathematics. I went over to the Math Department and asked if I could be admitted as a Graduate Student because I wanted to get a Master's Degree in Mathematics. They were a bit surprised by this request but I was formally admitted and I started taking math courses for credit on my own time—that is, between the courses I was teaching.

The first course that I took was a yearlong Vector Calculus (what us old people remember as Tensor Calculus) taught in the honors college. Technically that course did not count towards the Master's Degree but I needed a rigorous Vector Calculus course as a base to take more advanced courses. I then took a yearlong sequence of Probability and Statistics, elementary analysis (incredibly hard course), and differential equations.

I am a firm believer that you cannot learn mathematics unless you take the courses for credit so that you do the homework and take the exams. You have to put your ego

on the line and just gut it out. It was a humbling experience. I was a good student but I was never, ever, the best student in class. The best students were teenagers from the local high school!

The math had immediate payoffs. My first “real” publication was “Dimensions of Interest Group Evaluation in the United States Senate” which appeared in *AJPS* in 1981. This paper came out just before Jan and I moved to Pittsburgh for my Political-Economy Post-Doc Fellowship at GSIA.

This article illustrates the talents that I had developed by 1981. I was a fairly skilled programmer – FORTRAN which I learned in 1973 – writing out a loss function and taking the first and second derivatives that I could then translate into FORTRAN. And finally, and most importantly, my geometric imagination. I was always good at geometry and trigonometry and it was not until quite late in life when I discovered that people could not “see” things that I thought were obvious. I have the ability to visualize equations geometrically, to see three dimensional objects and rotate them inside my mind.

This is best illustrated by what I regard as my best solo achievement in the past 39 years – the Legislator Procedure inside Optimal Classification. Imagine a unit hypersphere in two or more dimensions with hundreds or thousands of cutting planes slicing through the hypersphere. Each plane divides the observed binary choices – yea/nay, 0/1 – for a particular roll call or its equivalent. These hyperplanes intersect in myriad ways creating hundreds of thousands or millions of polytopes within the unit hypersphere. Each polytope corresponds to a vector of choices – ynnnnynyny etc. The problem is to search through this hypersphere and find the polytope that best matches the observed vector of choices.

The way I solved this problem was to first draw a two dimensional representation and then ask myself the question “can I shoot a vector (a line if you will) through this hypersphere and find the maximum in correct classification in an efficient way?” I then had the insight that I needed to fix a point along the line and then move a second point along the line using the standard vector formula for a line equation. What I did was figure out what happens when the second point crosses one of the sides of a polytope. I was then able to write down all the possible combinations of projections of the two points. The problem then reduced to a simple application of the “Janice algorithm” that I had created at the University of Oregon in 1979. The Janice algorithm is simple and is linear in the number of points.

I perfected this procedure with the discovery that I could randomly shoot multiple lines at once and then next move each line orthogonally to the best classification polytope on each line. I published Optimal Classification in 2000 in *Political Analysis*. The referred but unpublished Monte Carlo tests show how robust the Legislator Procedure is with practically no decay in accuracy as you increase dimensionality.

In short, this example shows the combination of skills that I had in 1981 when I arrived at Carnegie-Mellon: program-

ming; vector algebra and calculus; and geometry.

I had planned on returning to the University of Oregon in 1982 and I was going to finish my Master's Degree in Mathematics. But that did not happen. Instead one day in the Spring of 1982 I was asked to give a seminar and when I came in to talk there were all these people in the room that I had no idea who they were. I later found out that the person who taught the required Probability and Statistics sequence in the MBA program was denied tenure and was leaving. I must have passed muster because Bob Kaplan offered me a princely sum (at least to Jan and I it was princely) to stay at CMU.

It was around then that Howard said to me that instead of using interest group scores to scale members of Congress why not use the actual roll call votes! He then showed me a paper on the random utility model and together we began working out a scaling model that eventually became NOMINATE. We both concluded that the deterministic utility function had to be Gaussian because the Quadratic utility function was not a realistic model of choice behavior. I had been heavily influenced by working through Riker and Ordeshook's *An Introduction to Positive Political Theory* that was used in Riker's graduate course. Gaussian utility can account for abstention due to alienation whereas Quadratic utility cannot.

While Howard was the Fairchild Scholar at Cal-Tech during 1982-83, I beavered away writing a FORTRAN program after taking all the necessary derivatives. I used the BHHH method to get the conditional standard errors (inverting the full matrix of second derivatives was simply impossible then). I had it working by early 1983 and I was burning through my computer account – KP2A (an amateur radio call sign from the Virgin Islands that I later worked and got a card from), TR19 (Tom Romer's account), and HR06 (Howard's account). A House took all night on a big VAX with millions of page faults (don't ask). In April of 1983 I flew out to Cal-Tech and went over the program with Howard and we settled a few minor issues. Thus, one-dimensional NOMINATE was launched.

Oddly enough our first publication was on Thermometer Scores published in *AJPS* in 1984. Our second paper was also published in 1984 but in *JOP* – “The Polarization of American Politics” where we used analysis of variance on interest group ratings to show the two parties separating in the Senate. Polarization was something that Howard, and later Nolan, analyzed again and again as it steadily got worse and worse until the almost complete breakdown of our current federal governing institutions.

In the 1980s I branched out and wrote what I still regard as one of my best papers – “The relationship between information, ideology, and voting behavior” – with Tom Palfrey. That paper is very sophisticated. It uses a logit model of choice for the 1980 election where there were three candidates – Reagan, Carter, and Anderson. But the model Tom wrote down was that you first calculated the probability of voting and then the conditional probability of voting for the candidates. It also used thermometers (note how often

they pop up during my career) and a measure of the level of information of the respondent based upon how coherent their responses to the seven point scales during that year (the Aldrich-McKelvey scaling method). I later worked out the underlying geometry of the model and concluded that I could estimate it using the roll call procedure from OC.

Almost at the same time, Tom Romer and I began working on Political Action Contributions data and that involved a lot of programming to link together the data released by the FEC with the NOMINATE ideology scores. We published the first paper in *Public Choice* in 1985 and later Tom, Howard, and I published another PAC paper in 1990.

Then one day in 1987 John Londregan pops into my office talking about coups and asking for some help since he was not familiar with political science. The long and short of it was that I read everything I could get my hands on about coups and government upheavals and John put together a really sophisticated dataset and used a simultaneous equation model to estimate the parameters (which all made sense to me). That was published in *World Politics* in 1990. Later we did an even more sophisticated model that resulted in “Does High Income Promote Democracy” and it was published in *World Politics* in 1996. I stared at the results and said to John that we should say in the conclusion that people should not hold their breath waiting for China to democratize! And we were right. My three papers with John have about 1400 citations.

And then there was D-NOMINATE. Howard and I got in on the ground floor of the NSF Supercomputing initiative. We both drove over to Purdue University for a one day training session in using the CYBER205 supercomputer in the fall of 1985. Beginning in early 1986, I drove over to West Lafayette countless times and wrote thousands and thousands of lines of VECTOR FORTRAN code. I first got a two dimensional version of NOMINATE running and then Howard and I designed dynamic NOMINATE where the legislators could move through time. It was hard work and it took about two and a half years to get it all done correctly. Tom Romer gave us an article he had read about how astronomers had produced computer animations of galaxies and since D-NOMINATE was a dynamic model we used equipment at the Pittsburgh Supercomputer Center at the Mellon Institute near CMU to make 30 frames per second animations of the House and the Senate. We used tokens for political parties and colors to denote the type of party – Red for a party of the Left (Jeffersonian Republican, Democrats) and Blue for a party of the Right (Federalists, Whigs, Republicans). By looking at the tapes after they were converted to VHS we were able to uncover “twists” and other anomalies. I would then drive back over to West Lafayette and fix the starting coordinates until we had everything looking sensible.

It took some time to get these results published but the big breakthrough was our 1991 *AJPS* “Patterns of Congressional Voting” paper. About this time Nolan McCarty and I started working together and he wrote W-NOMINATE or multidimensional NOMINATE. This code

is essentially what is now in R. In 1996-98 we developed Dynamic-Weighted NOMINATE which was superior to D-NOMINATE in important ways that I won't try to explain here.

In the 2000s our work just exploded as more and more researchers discovered that the DW-NOMINATE scores could be used to interpret important episodes in American history. NOMINATE and its variants have been around so long now that a new generation of scholars has begun to cite it without fully understanding it. This is where my geometric thinking has come back to haunt me. I ask myself "Why do they not SEE that they are wrong?" But that is the price of getting old. Some day you have to just sit down and hope that younger scholars will actually read and understand.

A few months ago I doubted that I would live long enough to make it to this conference at the University of Georgia organized and attended by many old friends. But the roulette wheel spun and I got lucky. My Oncologist and Rheumatologist (both rocket scientists) figured out a (semi) magic bullet chemotherapy that seems to be working. The fact that I can stand here and speak today is like being resurrected. I had my military funeral planned and a will almost completed but now I may have to wait. Life is good.

Thank you very much for this great honor.

Collaborating with Keith Poole: An Interview with Howard Rosenthal and Nolan McCarty

Julian Dean

Princeton University
with

Howard Rosenthal

New York University

Nolan McCarty

Princeton University

JD: I'd be interested to start by setting the scene: how you got to know Keith. What were your first impressions? How did you start collaborating?

HR: We had this postdoctoral program in political economy at Carnegie Mellon that came about through the efforts of Allan Meltzer (who passed away very recently; we regret that very much). Keith was in our first cohort in 1981-82. He came to us because, shamelessly, the "old boy network" actually functioned quite well, and he was highly recommended by his thesis supervisor Richard McKelvey. He came to Carnegie from Eugene, Oregon.

He was doing this stuff on scaling, which Dick McKelvey had also contributed to. Keith had an office in the basement, and one day I said, "Keith, you're doing all this stuff on

scaling ratings by interest groups, and interest groups just make the ratings out of roll call votes - why don't you want to do the roll call votes directly?" That was the origin of NOMINATE.

We had numerous computing problems over the years because of the size of the database. While addressing the computing problems with NOMINATE, Keith and I used Keith's work on scaling interest groups to do some more policy-related applications. That led to a paper that was written the following year when I was visiting Caltech, titled "*The Polarization of American Politics*," which was published in 1984. The curious thing about that paper was that it already has the title of *Polarized America* in it and was done totally without NOMINATE, which is actually comforting in a way. By the time I came back (Keith came out to California at least once), things were going pretty well with NOMINATE, but even for the database of the size of a single house of the United States House of Representatives (which was 435 members of course, but which might also have 1500 roll calls) we were unable to estimate this without multiple headaches and it taking forever on the largest computers then at Carnegie Mellon. The computing limitations of the early 1980s are laughable today. We learned then that the National Science Foundation had a supercomputing project, which was essential to the development of D-NOMINATE and then DW-NOMINATE. Supercomputers allowed us to look at the entire history of Congressional roll call voting. The first place we got to do this was at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. While I had some love for NOMINATE, I had much less love for eating bad Chinese food in the middle of Indiana. So after one or two trips, all the remaining trips were made by Keith. The work was completed at the John von Neumann center at Princeton, though I was not at Princeton yet when this work was finished. That's the early history.

JD: When you first developed scaling methods in the 1980s, was that a known problem to which you and Keith found a technical solution, or did you have to convince people that scaling of Congress was a valuable lens?

HR: There was an existing literature. There was an important book called *Parliament, Parties, and Society in France* by Duncan MacRae that had won a prize from the American Political Science Association. But these kinds of efforts either used very limited technology or the wrong technology because the basic thrust was to take a method that had been invented for something else, like factor analysis, and just apply it to a dataset. Part of the innovation in NOMINATE was that we said, "in political science we have this thing called the spatial model, let's assume people vote on those terms. Let's drive the estimation by this simple model." The other thing that was a little bit different was that we imposed the Gaussian utility function that we believed in. It means that if you were a moderate, you saw a negligible difference between Rand Paul and Ted Cruz, whereas the alternative method which was the quadratic, would say you would see

more of a difference between Rand Paul and Ted Cruz than between Susan Collins and Rand Paul.

I had read and was very influenced by MacRae's book in the '60s, and I don't know if I would have even bothered to go down to Keith's office if somewhere deep in my mind MacRae's book wasn't sticking there. It might not have been in my conscious, but it was certainly part of my exposure. The other thing that was really important in my exposure was hearing a lecture at Carnegie Mellon a few years before Keith came, by Daniel McFadden on the random utility model, which led to his Nobel Prize in Economics. What we did was graft that model onto roll call scaling. We have deep debts to both Dan McFadden and Duncan MacRae.

On the political economy side, Nolan was a graduate student at Carnegie and took a lot of economics courses. When he was an undergraduate at Chicago, he was a research assistant for Sam Peltzman, so when he got to Carnegie he was already running, but he always had this strong background in economics that most people who go through political science PhD programs don't have. Keith's been much less interested in economics, except when market failure affects the value of his house.

JD: Nolan, how did you go from being a student of Keith's to being a collaborator over a long period of time?

NM: When I got to Carnegie Mellon in 1990, Keith was assigned to be my first year adviser. I went to his office and reminded him that he was supposed to advise me, and he hold me to never wear white after Labor Day, and to never throw away a tie; that was the extent of the advice at that point in time. But Carnegie Mellon was a small place, so formal advising wasn't that important because we all had lots of interaction with the faculty on a regular basis.

Our most direct interaction happened because the program required a first-year summer paper, and I was looking for ideas. I went to bounce a couple of them off of him, one of which involved scaling. He had said something in a seminar about the ability to use Political Action Committee (PAC) contributions to estimate the position of incumbents and challengers. I thought that was an intriguing idea. It wasn't necessarily my first choice for a topic; I had another more theory-oriented topic, but I decided to do both, so we started working on the paper that we ended up publishing in *Political Analysis* on what we would call PAC-NOMINATE. We used scaling techniques to estimate the positions of candidates and interest groups.

Subsequently when we wrote *Polarized America* we knew didn't want to re-do PAC-NOMINATE, so we have a whole chapter on interest groups in which we try to do the scaling without actually using that clunky procedure. Fortunately, because of that Adam Bonica, who was Howard's student at NYU, had a much better way to estimate candidate ideal points and PAC ideal points using contributions. So at least our paper has the value of having stimulated that research agenda that Adam has really perfected. Ours was not a great paper but I'm glad there was a germ of an idea

that has been useful.

HR: Seminal papers don't need to be "great" papers.

NM: The second thing about that project was that it was not an off-the-shelf project; it actually involved doing the computer programming in order to estimate the PAC positions. It wasn't off the shelf because the PAC positions weren't binary choices like a roll-call vote. You could give to the incumbents, you could give to the challenger, or you could not give. Keith and I wanted to directly model all three of those choices, so that involved modifying the NOMINATE program that existed as of 1990.

As a lot of people know, that program as of 1990 was written in FORTRAN that basically only Keith Poole had ever laid eyes on. But that didn't stop Keith from saying, "I'm going to go on vacation to Oregon for a month, I would like you to do all the programming while I'm gone." Of course I didn't know anything about FORTRAN. It was a great sink-or-swim exercise to be just given the program and told to figure it out and do the estimation. Fortunately Keith is probably one of the clearest and most careful programmers I've ever seen, so it actually wasn't as hard as I thought and I learned a lot about FORTRAN in the process. Keith, in the foreword of one of his books (*Spatial Models of Parliamentary Voting*), touts my FORTRAN programming abilities.

The other thing about the PAC project was it also involved for the first time trying to get the NOMINATE program to work on the PC rather than on supercomputers. We did a lot of work to get it to the PC, and at that point Keith decided that it would be great to have a dynamic version of NOMINATE that worked on the PC. D-Nominate, as most people know, was run on the supercomputer cluster, and there was no PC or desktop version of that.

As Keith and I talked about how to do it, Keith had always been dissatisfied with how the two dimensions were equally weighted in D-NOMINATE. He thought that given the nature of voting, the first dimension should be weighted more than the second dimension and that you wanted to adjust for that either with estimation or grid search or something else. That was the origins of DW-NOMINATE. I was involved in helping to do some of the programming and converting D-NOMINATE to DW-NOMINATE and implementing the weighting.

When we did this, Keith and Howard had just finished their book *Congress: A Political Economic History of Roll Call Voting*, which was all based on D-NOMINATE, so there needed to be some kind of publication venue for the new DW-NOMINATE. We did DW-NOMINATE, we played around with a bunch of ideas, and one of the things that we were intrigued by was the observed polarization. Keith and Howard had published a paper using interest group ratings that uncovered polarization back until 1980, but one of the things that was very clear once we did DW-NOMINATE all the way through the '90s (D-NOMINATE stopped in 1988), it was clear that this polarization trend had continued.

HR: The other part of the history was that I found that the more innovative the work, the harder it is to get published. We had a lot of trouble getting anything published, so we decided to write a book. It took us forever to write that book; *Congress* was published in 1997. By the time it was published, I think we and Nolan each started to think seriously about what might be driving polarization. We had already thought about the main liberal-conservative dimension being more about economic redistribution than anything else.

Something else that happened that was cute was in early 1996, when I was on leave. I went to ECARE in Brussels, where I hooked up with a bunch of people that I'm still collaborating with. One of the things that I did while I was there was show the first animation of the NOMINATE scores for American history. That won an Oscar with that crowd. I think partly as a consequence of that, I was asked to give the Walras-Pareto lectures in Lausanne in 1998 or 1999. Part of the deal was that it was to be turned into a book, though I'm a lousy lecturer and it was a lousy set of lectures and I didn't quite know what to do with it.

NM: With those lectures came a book contract with MIT Press as early as 1995. As most people know, *Polarized America* didn't come out until 2006, so there was a long gestation period. In large part we wanted to examine all kinds of different angles as to what were the sources of polarization. We thought income inequality had something to do with it, but the case solely based on the correlation of polarization with the Gini index is not quite satisfying. It took us a while to decide to get earnest about digging into the book manuscript.

HR: At some point we also recognized that polarization might be related to the immigration problem, as well as inequality and the income distribution thing. I wrote an essay for *Social Inequality*, a Russell Sage volume edited by Kathy Neckerman. The essay is pretty much an outline of *Polarized America*.

NM: We thought about what was going on and we noted the apparent correlation with economic inequality, so we were playing around with that idea, and I think we might have presented it internally at Carnegie Mellon. Allan Meltzer, who was a senior colleague there, said that we should write something up for the American Enterprise Institute. So we wrote up a piece on polarization, inequality, and political realignment called *The Realignment of National Politics and the Income Distribution*, which was published by the AEI. That was actually the first publication that used DW-NOMINATE, so sometimes you'll see a citation to the AEI volume as original citation to DW-NOMINATE, because it was the first version.

HR: Since I'm a liberal I'm not usually the guy who gets approached by AEI, but it shows that by 1997 we were already thinking about how polarization related to the

economy.

NM: Perhaps the fact that the *Polarized America* manuscript existed at all is thanks to Jim Alt at Harvard, who for many years ran a series of author-meets-critics book conferences, and he asked if we wanted to do one in December of 2004. As of July 2004 we had almost nothing written, but by December of 2004 we had almost the full manuscript. It helped that I was on sabbatical at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford. Keith had just come off of sabbatical where he had done quite a bit of the computational data collection work, so the three of us were able to co-ordinate to get the manuscript written that year, late 2004. We got feedback from this conference that Jim held for us at Harvard and we had people like John Lapinsky, Bob Erikson, Burt Monroe, and Mo Fiorina. That is the quick history of where *Polarized America* came from.

HR: On the last morning, Mo, Keith, and I left in a cab for Logan as a blizzard was coming in to Boston. That night I was having a Margarita in Cancun while Keith and Mo were beginning prolonged stays in airport hotels at Logan. So Mo paid heavily for his contribution. Jim had four feet of snow at his home in Marblehead. I don't recall what happened to Nolan, but Jim and Mo certainly deserve extra thanks for their contribution.

It was a very good collaboration. Keith has always been more interested in the scaling side than the policy side; that's just what we need. Nolan is terrific at putting everything together (which is why he's the only one of the three of us who has ever been an administrator). That's basically what happened. Of course if you read the preface to *Polarized America*, we were pretty strung out geographically. Keith was still at Carnegie. I had moved to Princeton. Nolan was at the Center for Advanced Study while we were going down the final stretch, but long distance collaborations are pretty easy things to do now: they keep the airlines rich and the Internet is cheap, which is the way you can do these things.

NM: I should mention another project that we worked on along the way from which some of the arguments ended up re-appearing. In 1998 or 1999 Jim Snyder and Tim Groseclose published a paper in which they purported to estimate the effects of party discipline using roll-call votes. We got very interested in trying to understand the pros and cons of their method. The three of us batted a bunch of ideas back and forth and we decided that at least part of the effect that they were estimating was an artifact of the methodology. Our paper in the APSR, *The Hunt for Party Discipline*, was our attempt to diagnose what we thought were the challenges of the methodology. Then, using primarily a new technique that Keith had developed on his own called Optimal Classification, to try and get a very tight empirical estimate of how many votes were switched on the basis of party discipline. I believe Keith's paper on Optimal Classification came out close to the same time, but I think the party

discipline paper really showed the power of his method because we argue in the paper that the parametric NOMINATE methods weren't particularly suited to getting at the problems that arose in the Groseclose-Snyder paper. That was a great collaboration.

Another paper that we worked on came more or less directly out of *Polarized America*. We were routinely confronted in the media (not so much from political science) on the role of gerrymandering in polarization. We dealt with this tangentially in *Polarized America*; we pointed out that most polarization was within similar districts, Democrats being much more liberal than Republicans, holding the district characteristics constant. And we had also shown that the distribution of partisanship across counties wasn't all that different from the distribution across Congressional districts, suggesting that geography played much more of a role than artificial districting. That didn't seem to completely satisfy anyone, so we tried to make those arguments more formal and elaborate, with more elaborating testing: simulations and so forth. It still doesn't seem to have persuaded anyone who wasn't willing to be persuaded initially, but it was also a very gratifying paper to work on with Keith and Howard.

JD: Was polarization a known phenomenon before you had scaling methods like NOMINATE? Or was that an observation that came out of scaling?

NM: Keith and Howard wrote a paper using the early scaling methods called *The Unidimensional Congress*, which argued the basic finding of their research agenda, which was that Congressional voting is structured primarily along one or sometimes two dimensions. That was considered heretical in the 1980s. Distributive theories of Congress were in their heyday, so all theorizing around Congress was based on there being high dimensionality so that members could self-select into committees to represent. Empirical work on Congressional voting using methods that presupposed multidimensionality were finding multidimensionality once they had presupposed it. So the *Unidimensional Congress* paper was not well received; in fact it's never been published. Most of the material appears updated in the Congress book, but it wasn't well accepted.

They did get the polarization paper published, but I think there was a fair amount of push back because that paper also presumed unidimensionality and polarity on the first dimension. So I wouldn't say that it was something that at least early on was widely accepted. Even into the period in which we wrote *Polarized America* there was a fair amount of skepticism. If you look at chapter two of *Polarized America* I think we go through and try to deal with some of the skepticism. There are discussions about whether or not it's an artifact of party discipline; that's where our *Hunt for Party Discipline* paper comes in; whether it's an artifact of changing nature of cutpoints, agenda control, et cetera. All of that skepticism had been there for a long time; I think what's helped allay some of the skepticism, but not all of it,

was that what we started to find began to match up closely with what people observed in the real world. I don't know that we ever won any of the econometric arguments cleanly but I think polarization became harder to dismiss when it started to line up with perceptions of journalists and other observers about what was really going on in Congress.

There are still some debates about the interpretation: Frances Lee has made strong arguments that polarization is not primarily ideological, but is mostly strategic behavior related to signaling and messaging to voters. So I won't say that all skepticism has been resolved, but I think over time there has been much greater acceptance primarily because what we were finding seemed to line up pretty well with what was going on outside of Congress and what people were observing about Congress from the outside.

JD: How did *Polarized America* lead to *Political Bubbles*?

NM: The real follow-on to *Polarized America* was our work on the financial crisis in *Political Bubbles*. When we wrote *Polarized America* people wanted to know how polarization, or the logic that tied it to increasing inequality, might end. We had this long discussion at the end of the book about a financial crisis rooted in real estate might be the trigger that would cause such a re-alignment, depolarization, and economic policy responses to deal with economic inequality. Then we had our financial crisis, and polarization got worse. Inequality went down just mechanically early in the crisis as wealth was destroyed, but came back very strongly afterwards. We wanted to write something explaining why we were wrong in *Polarized America* about why a financial crisis or some other big political event might upset the relationship between polarization and inequality, not linked to a realignment, so we worked on that.

HR: I've always had this feeling that political science, in contrast to economics, was not very much interested in public policy. The Congress people are interested in the implications of rules and seniority: the institutionalists. The people who do quantitative stuff studying roll calls, for example, are more interested in the ideological composition than what it means for policy. Some indication is that among the competing scaling programs to NOMINATE there is something called IDEAL, which is not called MIDPOINT or POLICY-OUTCOME; it's called IDEAL for ideal point.

Regarding the financial crisis, I had been teaching a course called Politics and Finance, which I actually started to teach when I was at Princeton. I had also taught it at Brown and I've taught it at NYU for a long time. That's partly because I've been collaborating over the years with Patrick Bolton, who was with me in Brussels and was in Princeton for a while. He is now at Columbia. We did a bunch of stuff in political economy together.

With the financial crisis I thought that we ought to have something to say that economists aren't saying, and we have this technology to say it in the sense that we have all this roll call stuff from Congress to look at, which is basically

the core of the book. It was for me a natural segue, and the other guys said “OK, let’s do it.”

I think Keith got really interested in it because he was badly hurt by the financial crisis. He took a bath on his house in San Diego, which starts the book. After that he moves to Georgia. The Crisis certainly changed his views of capitalism through personal experience. I actually made out like a bandit in the financial crisis, because I was able to re-finance my mortgage. That’s a story that these things hit different people in different ways.

NM: One of the things that we really wanted to stress was how common people were caught in the middle of a crisis that they had very little role in creating and from whose making they had not benefitted very much. The example of how it impacted one of us was an important part of the story. All of us felt a certain personal urgency to try understand what was happening. If you found yourself in the situation that Keith was in, that would give it a bit of added urgency.

HR: I’ve actually been disappointed in the reception to the book. I had expected it to get as much attention as *Polarized America*, but clearly it has not. I think part of that is that economists are not taking it seriously. Certain economists think this is all market bubbles and nothing else and the government doesn’t have any role to play in this. But that’s that, so what can I say. It was a much quicker book to do than *Polarized America*, though one of the problems was we still took a little too long to do it, so by the time it came out the Crisis people weren’t so interested in the Crisis anymore.

NM: Even more than *Polarized America*, *Political Bubbles* is a political book in the sense of the commitments of the authors. As some people know, Keith and I were longtime libertarian-ish card-carrying Republicans and Howard was a liberal Democrat, and one of the interesting things was that even though the book was about how the financial crisis produced polarization, it did not produce polarization among the authors. We were amazed that we were able to come and work together and come up with arguments that we all agreed with: some that resonate with progressives, some that resonate with libertarians concerned about the excessive influence of corporations on governance, et cetera. It was not only gratifying in the social science sense, but also in the sense that if three people who often disagree on these issues can think about them hard and discuss them long enough they can reach some common ground. That may be the only optimistic thing that was ever related to that particular book, which I think is otherwise quite a depressing read.

HR: What’s interesting about the collaboration is that our political views span the full spectrum. If I had to give myself a NOMINATE score I’d say I’m somewhere between Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton. I don’t know where Keith is now that Donald Trump has taken over the Republican Party, but Nolan would be somewhere between us but

more on the Republican side than the Democratic side. That didn’t faze our collaboration at all because we are scientists and we don’t have alternative realities, so things went pretty well.

Once we wrote *Polarized America*, people like Paul Krugman and the Center for American Progress all of a sudden thought this was a liberal idea. We didn’t think of it this way, but we were adopted by them for a while. I found throughout my career that if anything I do serves somebody’s ideological agenda, that’s their problem.

JD: I’d be interested to learn more about the way you three collaborate. One thing that’s notable is that the three of you have worked together so often over a long period of time. Has it been natural to continue researching with the same people, or has it deliberately been a team effort?

NM: We started collaborating and just kept going. We’ve all worked with other people along the way, but there’s always been a core; the issues with polarization and inequality were always at the center, and as long as we were on that agenda and the offshoots that came out of *Polarized America* it was natural to collaborate together. Some collaborators have it all thought out and planned: “we’re going to write these papers,” but for us it was all sequential inertia. There was never any master plan.

JD: When I read Keith’s work, I get the impression of an autodidact, someone who doesn’t just follow traditional lines of thinking. Was that the approach he brought to your joint work?

NM: I think so. To put it bluntly, Keith didn’t have the world’s most elite educational pedigree. He dropped out of college, got drafted, served in Vietnam, came back, graduated from Portland State University, and somehow ended up at the University of Rochester. He ended up working on things at Rochester that were of his own making; there was some scaling and psychometrics going on at his department but he largely developed it on his own. At lot of the things that he has developed are not outgrowths of things that were already going on in political science. His ability to draw things from computer science or psychometrics and make the application showed not just his ability to pick things up on his own but also his intellectual creativity. The Optimal Classification model that he developed is a truly unique contribution that was not generated by following the political science literature but by being very well read across a variety of technical literatures for which he never had any formal training.

HR: On the other hand, we should not ignore the profound role that Dick McKelvey had on Keith’s career. Dick, in addition, to his seminal theoretical work, had developed the ordinal probit with William Zavoyna and, most importantly for Keith, a scaling method with John Aldrich. Keith’s early work was well rooted in the psychometrics literature. What

is striking about Keith is not so much the autodidact thrust but the fact that he thinks about scaling from a geometric framework that is truly unique.

JD: One book that stands out as different from the rest is Keith's book *Women, Public Opinion, and Politics* from 1985. Is that a research agenda that he started but that didn't continue, or would you put that together with his other work?

NM: If you ask Keith, his answer would be that this was a project that his senior colleague at the University of Oregon was interested in and they collaborated. It was never a central part of his own research agenda; he was always much more interested in scaling and psychometrics, but he ended up working on that and collaborating with Harmon Zeigler. He also has a number of other papers that are outside of his main work. For example, he has these papers with John Londregan on coups and economic development that are very important papers in that literature as well.

HR: Let me just say that this was a good book that might have had more attention if women had been the authors.

NM: I think because Keith stuck with a really big idea for a really long time he has a reputation as being the "hedgehog." (Isaiah Berlin divides scholars into two categories: the foxes who knew lots of things about lots of things, and the hedgehog who knew one big thing.) There's nothing wrong with hedgehogs, but I think people underappreciate how much he knows about so many different things. He's written with John on coups, he probably knows more about railroads than any non-specialist on railroads, and he's incredibly widely read. Some might want to dismiss him purely as a technician or a methodologist, but I think it really underscores his breadth and substantive knowledge. If you look at the entire corpus, it both incorporates statistics and history, and asks big questions. It underscores that he's much more than just a computer programmer – though he is probably the best computer programmer in political science even now in an era in which programming skills are at a premium in the discipline.

JD: Is there anything in your research with Keith that you wish were better understood?

HR: I wish the profession had less concern with statistical correctness, and more of a concern with modeling or engineering, as Keith says. A huge to-do that took place for many years was whether you had the correct standard errors in NOMINATE. Given the amount of data there is, I say, who cares? Thanks to Jeff Lewis the problem has been solved, and I'm glad that it's solved. I recall in our 1991 *Patterns of Congressional Voting* the referees wanted us to do some statistical tests, and we did them, and reported significance levels of 10^{-40} . You can't publish a professional paper without significance tests, but it's a minor point.

Let me say this the other way, that people have taken too much out of this. We showed, much to everybody's surprise, going back to the late '80s, that you can say a lot about Congress by using this one-dimensional liberal-conservative continuum. But that's not all that Congress is about, and what's missing is to say how that translates into policy. What can we say about whether repeal of the Affordable Care Act is going to happen or not? That depends on bargaining and other things that are going on that have yet to be modeled and that may reflect dimensionality or things that we don't observe. The idea that everything can be done in one dimension is overstated.

JD: What do you see as the next steps in the evolution of your research agenda? What is the research frontier?

HR: We're not it! Keith and I have an average age of 74. But what's interesting now is that we have gone in the field from just looking at Congress to now Adam Bonica, who collaborated with us on the second edition of *Polarized America*, who has done this incredible stuff on campaign contributions that has enabled us not just to estimate the ideal points of Congressmen, but of literally millions of other actors making campaign contributions, and link that to state initiatives, to state legislatures, to get a much broader picture of American politics than you could get through the Congress stuff.

We have people like Chris Tausanovich, Chris Warshaw, and Devin Caughey, who are looking at bringing in the mass electorate to this picture and to looking at policies at the state level. There was an ideal point conference at MIT a few years ago and the level was very high and it was a pleasure to sit there and watch all the interesting stuff that's going on.

An important branch of this will be to look at licensed professions in the United States, because who is in these professions is a matter of public record. Adam and I and David Rothman at Columbia Medical School are looking at MDs, because every MD in the United States has a unique ID number, and we can link these MDs to their campaign contribution record. Adam has done the same stuff with Maya Sen from Harvard for lawyers, and you could do it for nurses and who knows who else. Not only can you get the mass public, but here are millions of private individuals who have become transparent to us. On the doctors side, Adam and I and David have this thing on mobility that we're just finishing up in which we show that if a doctor changes jobs they are either going to move within-city or to another city; they are more likely to move if the politics of their zip code does not mesh with their personal zip code. If they do move, they are likely to move to another part of the country that they believe they are politically compatible with. That's interesting evidence on sorting. You can only do this if you could do this big data stuff, with massive data record linkage, and scaling through the campaign contributions. This is stuff that if Keith and I weren't doing NOMINATE in the 1980s, nobody would even think of. I took Adam to Keith's office at UCSD in the mid-naughties. This meeting repre-

sented a turning point from Nolan and Keith's seminal paper on contributions to a flowering of new research.

There are other people doing Twitter and Facebook stuff; I have curmudgeonly qualms about that. I worry about the representativeness of the people (as somebody who does not have a Twitter account or a Facebook account and is delighted to see all the recent media attention that these are not for the best of the world). I know doctors are not representative of the American public, but I know that I have the full sample there. But there is a lot that is going on.

There is the stuff we have done in the last five years with Jeff Lewis (who is the smartest guy in town, and who I take great pride to say I hired as an assistant professor at Princeton). There was also Hayward Alker, who was an MIT professor and a Yale professor, or vice versa, who did a lot on the United Nations, and my student Erik Voeten who is now at Georgetown has a very fine paper applying NOMINATE to the General Assembly vote.

All this stuff is in one dimension, and if you ask where some of the frontier might be, it might be finding better ways to look at high dimensions.

NM: Thanks to Jeff Lewis the DW-NOMINATE research agenda has moved to UCLA. They have a program in place to continue to update and estimate DW-NOMINATE and be a repository for the older data.

I and others continue to study polarization. There is now a second-generation collaboration: Boris Shor, who has been my coauthor on things related to polarization in the states, was Howard's undergraduate RA from Princeton, who then went to Columbia and studied under me at Columbia. There is a multigenerational intellectual story, too, which now encompasses Boris. And although Jeff Lewis was neither Howard's nor Keith's student, he became a big part of the broader research community. There is a set of Keith's students from San Diego who are continuing to work on these things. There is another generation of people like James Lo, who was Jeff Lewis's student at UCLA, who spent a year here at Princeton. I think it is a research agenda that has legs and is continuing. I think it is actually unique.

We had a conference for Keith in Georgia back in May and it was impressive that almost everyone was still moving the cutting edge in political methodology and measurement based on the research agendas that Keith started in the 1980s. It seems like a research agenda that is going to continue strongly for some time.

JD: Is there anything else that you think should be mentioned in a newsletter about Keith?

HR: Keith is not only incredibly smart and incredibly hard working, but he is incredibly generous to scholars around the world with his time. One of his great achievements which neither I nor Nolan participated in was the creation of the Voteview website, which has made the product of our research available very widely. Then with people who try to use this, Keith is extremely responsive. He has a generosity

and unselfishness that is really found in few other people, which has something to do with why this newsletter would do a tribute to him. I'm probably not the only one who is going to say this.

Keith T. Poole – the Philip H. Alston, Jr. Distinguished Professor of Political Science

Jamie L. Carson
University of Georgia

In September 2009, Keith T. Poole agreed to join the Department of Political Science at the University of Georgia as the Philip H. Alston, Jr. Distinguished Professor. Keith received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Rochester in 1978 and had previously taught at the University of Oregon, Carnegie-Mellon University, the University of Houston, and most recently, the University of California at San Diego. As one of the foremost scholars on the study of the U.S. Congress and ideal point estimation, Keith's hire made an enormous splash for a political science department with an emerging reputation for the study of political institutions and methodology. As a 2006 inductee into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Keith is easily one of the most respected and accomplished faculty at the University of Georgia.

Keith pioneered the study of ideal point estimation of Congress over time with his long-time coauthor and friend, Howard Rosenthal. For years, scholars had relied primarily on interest group scores to evaluate legislators' ideology. Unfortunately, such measures utilized a very limited number of votes in Congress, making the ideological scores subject to considerable measurement error. Starting in the early 1980s, Howard and Keith decided to create a new measure of legislative ideology using all non-unanimous roll calls in both chambers of Congress. Although it took considerable time and effort, they eventually came up with D-NOMINATE and then later DW-NOMINATE scores, which allow comparisons to be made over time in legislator ideology. Poole later came up with the idea for Common-Space scores, which allows for the measurement of legislative ideology across chambers. Needless to say, Keith and Howard's work has been widely cited by scholars of legislative politics as well as in a wide variety of other subfields in political science. A recent Google Scholar count shows that the first and second editions of their book on Congress have been cited nearly 4000 times!

Keith is also well-known for his groundbreaking work on polarization in the U.S. Congress. Using DW-NOMINATE scores over time, Keith and Howard (along with Nolan McCarty) have shown that Congress has been steadily polarizing since the late 1970s. Additionally, their measure indi-



Keith Poole



Keith Poole presenting at UGA



Keith Poole, as Jamie Carson puts it, "in his element."



Lawrence Rothenberg, Keith Poole, John Petrocik, and Rod Kiewiet, Robert Lupton and Chris Hare

cates that Congress is more polarized in the current era than at any other time in American history. In their 2016 book on political polarization, Nolan, Keith, and Howard argue that income inequality is largely driving polarization in Congress and that such polarization has now become asymmetric (i.e., Republicans have become more extreme than their Democratic counterparts in Congress). Keith and his colleagues' research has become the gold standard on congressional polarization and is widely cited in the academic community as well as among mainstream media outlets.

Since arriving at UGA, Keith has proven incredibly generous with both his resources and time. Keith announced early on that he wanted to sponsor a regular speaker series that would allow the department to bring in several political scientists each year to interact with the faculty and graduate students. Both the quality and quantity of guest speakers increased starting in Fall 2010 once Keith joined the faculty full-time. Not only has this been invaluable to the graduate students within the program, but it has also facilitated invaluable connections for faculty in the department who have built stronger professional networks as a result of these interactions. Keith has also worked closely with a number of faculty members at UGA, including several who were assistant professors at the time he was hired. He has co-authored articles and books with several faculty and graduate students within the department, mentored both junior and senior professors, and taught a graduate measurement course that has attracted the interest of both faculty and graduate students.

Keith has played an important and significant role in enhancing the profile of the UGA Political Science Department as well. Shortly after arriving at Georgia in 2010, Keith agreed to support a number of professional conferences at the university, including three elections conferences—the most recent of which was held two months after the surprising upset of Hillary Clinton by Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election. Keith also provided financial support for the 2012 Congress and History Conference, a 2013 Conference on the American Founding, and a 2016 Separation of Powers Conference. Shortly after he arrived at UGA, Keith agreed to host the 2014 Political Methodology Meeting at Georgia, which included over 200 methods scholars from around the country. In March 2018, the Political Science Department will be hosting a conference on legislative rules co-organized by Michael Lynch and Anthony Madonna that is financially supported by Keith Poole. The conference will invite academics, members of the media, and practitioners to discuss the critical importance of rules and procedure in affecting legislative outcomes in Congress.

I first met Keith in early 2000 when he gave a talk at Michigan State University while I was still enrolled in graduate school. His talk was one that he has given many times at a large number of institutions on Congress and ideal point estimation, but everyone was genuinely impressed with him and his remarkable research on legislative ideology. I met Keith again a few years later over lunch at the Midwest Political Science Association Meeting in Chicago and continued to be impressed (as well as a little intimidated) by him.

Little did I know at the time that I would one day be lucky enough to become one of his colleagues. Since Keith joined the UGA Political Science Department in 2010, we have become colleagues and good friends. His office is only two doors down from mine on the third floor of Baldwin Hall so he regularly stops by to eat some chocolate out of the candy bowl I keep on my desk and talk about political science or the latest episode of *Game of Thrones*. I feel like I have learned a lot from Keith during the past seven years and I look forward to continuing to interact with him for several more years to come.

The Gold Standard of the Discipline

Marisa Abrajano

University of California, San Diego

It is hard to think of a political scientist who has changed the discipline as much as Keith T. Poole. Along with Howard Rosenthal, their introduction of the NOMINATE (nominal three-step estimation) procedure has revolutionized the way political scientists think about political questions and problems, ranging from legislator behavior to polarization as well as inequality. Moreover, their reach has spread far beyond the confines of US politics, which was their original focus in *Ideology and Congress*. In their subsequent book on inequality and polarization, they have offered important insights on democratic accountability and governance. I can think of few other political scientists whose breadth of contributions across the discipline have been as great as theirs.

It would be simply impossible to discuss the analysis of parliamentary roll call data without mentioning Poole and Rosenthal. These two scholars have developed the leading estimation technique to recover the ideologies of legislators using their recorded votes. Starting with their pioneering work in the 1980s, their proposed estimation technique has fundamentally changed the way scholars have analyzed not just US politics, but legislator behavior worldwide. Over the years, Keith and Howard continued to improve their models of parliamentary voting. They subsequently developed the D-NOMINATE, W-NOMINATE, and DW-NOMINATE procedures to better estimate dynamic multi-dimensional spatial models. Poole also introduced in the 1990s the Optimal Classification (OC), a scaling procedure that performs non-parametric unfolding of roll call data. More recently, they developed a Bayesian (MCMC-based) version of their NOMINATE model (alpha-NOMINATE). A particularly noteworthy contribution has been their willingness to share all the programs and computer software to implement their procedures and place them in the public domain. As such, researchers who study legislatures in Latin America, Europe, and Asia have used their proposed methods to provide new insights on representation and account-

ability. It also goes without saying that their work has influenced dozens of scholars to adopt their techniques to address core political concepts, particularly in the area of democratic theory.

These technical contributions notwithstanding, as a scholar of US politics, I would say that any researcher who wishes to study Congress, representation, and legislatures would consider Poole and Rosenthal's work a must read. Their empirical innovations have helped us to better understand democratic representation, polarization, and the political-economic history of the United States. Indeed, their publications are required reading in virtually every graduate course on American politics as well as at the undergraduate level. As far as scholars who are interested in roll call voting, income redistribution and the realignment of American politics, their reach is also immense. The disciplines of political Science, Economics, Sociology, and Demography have all been affected by Poole and Rosenthal's contributions.

As a further testament to the widespread influence of their work, policymakers, the news media, and political analysts regularly rely on Poole and Rosenthal's research to explain the political ideologies and preferences of both the electorate and our elected officials. For instance, discussions of the growing inequality that face the US often make reference to their work, given the major role that political polarization plays in these rising levels of inequality.

Finally, I would like to comment on a more personal level regarding Keith Poole's scholarship and contributions the discipline. From 2006-2010, I had the privilege of being Keith's colleague. Having no background on scaling technique and estimation, I enrolled in his graduate-level course to learn more about the procedure. Not only did I learn a tremendous amount from him, but we also ended up collaborating on a book chapter that offered a methodological innovation for estimating the ideological preferences of racial/ethnic groups in the US. Keith was not only a great mentor to me, but also to countless graduate students and my colleagues who have turned to him for assistance and advice for over four decades. I was also able to use the scaling techniques to publish work that reassesses the political knowledge levels of the major ethnic/racial groups in the US. Keith is a public goods person in the truest sense, making all of his data, materials, and code publicly available. In short, he sets the gold standard of what we should be doing in the discipline.

Keith Poole: Cherished Friend, Impactful Scholar

Lawrence Rothenberg
University of Rochester

It is a delight to contribute my own views about, and experiences with, Keith Poole and to be given the opportunity to discuss his myriad contributions to the scientific study of politics. I have known Keith for roughly 30 years—having initially met him at a Stanford conference in what I believe was 1987 (he made an indelible impression), and was fortunate enough to deepen my relationship with him a few years later during a postdoctoral fellowship that I spent at what was then known as the Graduate School of Industrial Administration and is now the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University. From that time onward there has rarely been a week that has gone by without us talking one or more times on the phone.¹ Despite never having written together (our mutual interests never quite coinciding temporally to produce a collaboration, although we each proposed projects when the other was too caught up in obligations), not only is Keith a cherished friend but his work has profoundly impacted how I, along with so many in our discipline, conduct research and think about the political world. It is this impact, both specific and broad, which I wish to highlight with the few words allotted to me. I would maintain that Keith's work (with his talented coauthors), while particularly associated with influencing our understanding of the U.S. Congress has also profoundly structured how we study *politics*, be it legislatures more broadly, interest groups, political institutions, and the relationship between voters and candidates. Furthermore, despite Keith not being explicitly in the business of examining formal theoretical models himself, his approach has greatly pushed the empirical and theoretical worlds closer together, as what empiricists can measure is now far closer to what formal scholars focus on. Thus, for someone like me, who has a broad portfolio of interests and approaches, Keith's work has profoundly influenced the studies that I conduct and the ways that I think about the world empirically and theoretically.

As is well-known, after an initial time in the Oregon wilderness, Keith's career began taking off during his years at Carnegie. By the time that I became aware of Keith's work, and coming from Cal Tech and Rochester (my first two appointments), I could see how Keith was building on the pathbreaking scaling research of his mentor, the very much missed Richard McKelvey, but doing so in a truly novel and innovative way (however, it took a while to get used to all the talk of hyperplanes). Thus, for me, as for so many in the discipline, his great contribution in these early years (along with his stellar collaborators, principally first with Howard Rosenthal with assists from Tom Romer and then, a few years later, aided considerably by Nolan McCarty) was generating insights into how we could apply a random utility model to the analysis of seemingly disparate

legislative choices to generate useful, insightful, measures of ideology in a multidimensional space (although, as we know, for Congress those dimensions boiled down to one to two depending on the period being studied). It is hard to transmit to younger colleagues not steeped in all the variants of ideal point estimation, and for whom the Poole-Rosenthal line of research constitutes the conventional wisdom that they are building on, just how radical Keith's and Howard's approach seemed to be at that point. For instance, while many talented and accomplished scholars of the era were expending much energy coming up with important ways of thinking about how the potential for cycling did or did not impact political choice behavior and legislative organization (see, e.g., Shepsle and Weingast 1987, Krehbiel 1990), Keith and his collaborators were demonstrating the presence of stability, particularly within congressional careers, and the mechanisms of systematic change. While, to a degree, Keith and Howard found it hard to "break in" during these earlier years (although the publications in high end journals began coming at a rapid pace), their persistence is a tribute to their convictions that they had a way of analyzing politics that produced great insights into the world in which we live, as was demonstrated with the publication of their seminal first book (Poole and Rosenthal 1997). While much later important work has been accomplished—including but not exclusive to Keith's solo research (e.g., optimal classification analysis; see Poole 2000), work with Howard and Nolan (e.g., their studies of political polarization; see McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2016), and with a variety of later collaborators (e.g., the breakthrough development of alpha- NOMINATE; see Carroll, et al. 2013)—this early analysis laid the critical foundation.

Certainly, Keith, Howard, Nolan, et al. fundamentally changed our view of Congress. They showed that low dimensionality can explain most legislative behavior, that sometimes one dimension is enough and in other instances two are required depending upon how political issues of the day map into legislative choices. They demonstrated that polarization has waned and [especially in recent years] waxed and helped produce explanations for these changes and debunked others. They provided a means to situate the House and Senate chambers, along with the President, in a common space over the whole of U.S. history (allowing scholars, including me, to calculate gridlock intervals, among other things, as a means of assessing key issues of concern, such as the determinants of legislative productivity).

But, to return to the themes of my comments, I would argue that this collective Poole corpus has had two additional effects that are fundamental and broader: (1) it has qualitatively reoriented the way that we think empirically about choice behavior generally, and, as part of this enterprise, (2) it has greatly facilitated the move of empirical work closer to formal theoretical approaches by leading us to measure directly preferences in a way far more consistent with how modelers think about the world than was previously the case. Those studying the presidency (which, to reiterate, Keith et

al. also estimated as part of their estimation), bureaucracies, courts, interest groups, and voters, as well as legislators of all varieties now fret not *whether*, but *how* best to estimate preferences and, ideally, how to find the magical bridges that put them in a common space in a manner analogous to how Poole and Rosenthal combined legislative chambers and multiple Congresses and Presidents.

For me personally (and I apologize for the self-citation), this began with estimating (with Keith's considerable assistance) the ideal points of members of the Interstate Commerce Commission (Rothenberg 1994)—this was, I believe, the first instance of estimating bureaucratic ideal points in political science in this vein (although, shockingly, people's interest in the Commission and the wondrous world of trucking regulation was less than one might think). It has also meant employing other innovative work very much in the Poole-Rosenthal tradition—such as Keith's common space scores (1998) and Bonica's cfscores (2013)—to examine various elements and models of interbranch bargaining over appointments (Chiou and Rothenberg 2014; Hollibaugh and Rothenberg 2017a, b). Recently, in studying the National Labor Relations Board I have used text analysis to estimate commissioner ideal points (Rothenberg and Sweeten 2017); not only was Keith's focus on ideal points an inspiration (there were not enough non-unanimous roll calls, so we had to come up with another way to produce analogous scores) but alternative measures based on the NOMINATE scores of those doing the appointing (Nixon 2004) served as a key basis of comparison to assess whether we "got things right."

More broadly, for the study of American politics the influences of Poole-Rosenthal are almost too innumerable to mention and I will only scratch at the surface here. McCarty, Shor, and others (e.g., Shor and McCarty 2011) have put state legislatures, an obvious extension, in common space. Bonica (2013) built on Keith's Carnegie era work (e.g., Poole and Romer 1985; Poole, Romer, and Rosenthal 1987) to develop ideal points for organized interests. Not only did Nixon (2004) employ the Poole-Rosenthal scores to try and measure bureaucratic ideal points and the Bonica campaign data-driven scores were applied for the same purpose (e.g., Bonica, Chen, and Johnson 2015), but others, such as those involved in the various Surveys on the Future of Government Service, have essentially tried to create roll call vote matrices for bureaucrats that could serve the same purpose as they do for legislators (e.g., Clinton et al. 2012) and, indeed, serve as a bridge. The study of courts, beginning with the Martin-Quinn Bayesian approach (Martin and Quinn 2002) and continuing with a variety of other efforts, some again directly using NOMINATE scores and others relying on the cfscores or other means (e.g., Bonica and Sen 2017), has been in many respects revolutionized as theorists try to think of the correct way of conceptualizing preferences and empiricists work on better measuring them. Students of the presidency have worked hard to build on the Poole-Rosenthal presidential ideal point measures (e.g., Treier 2010) which, in turn, has stimulated thinking about the chief executive as a strategic player with preferences and

objective functions. Those studying voters, particularly with the advent of large scale internet surveys, have focused not only on estimating voter and candidate preferences, sometimes again using roll call votes à la Poole and Rosenthal as questions (for a discussion, see Lewis and Tausanovitch 2015), but in employing, with Keith's urging, the underappreciated Aldrich-McKelvey technique to survey data (e.g., Hare et al. 2015) to help improve the quality of the estimates produced (something I was proud to do in my one foray into this literature; Hollibaugh, Rothenberg, and Rulison 2013).

In summary, being well into my fourth decade in our profession, I have witnessed a sea change in how we conceptualize and investigate American politics, especially regarding political institutions and elections. At the heart of this change has been the work of Poole, Rosenthal, McCarty, and their many talented collaborators. What this work did was *far more* than produce a better measurement technique. Rather, this corpus has changed our view of how *political choices* are made and allowed us to think far more creatively about how we might view strategic political actors in a common space. Although Keith's work has been empirical or involved with developing statistical and psychometric theory, I believe that an underappreciated impact of his work is that it has helped bring formal theoretic and empirical treatments closer together; my own research, for example, often starts with a discussion that theorists have focused on preferences and empiricists on something else (for example, with appointments the focus has been on duration), but *now* we can think of them in tandem (e.g., Hollibaugh and Rothenberg 2017a,b). Probably no scholar in the last 40 years deserves more credit for advancing this tightening of the linkage between theory and data than Keith Poole. It is a pleasure to have known him for virtually my entire career, to teach at his graduate alma mater, and to call him a close friend.

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The Relentless Curiosity of Keith Poole

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Keith Poole is the godfather of modern preference estimation. His work helped political science make huge strides in understanding legislative behavior. And, what's more, there are generations of scholars who probably know more about ham radio, trains and the Vietnam War than they would have if Keith were not such a towering figure in the field.

In paying tribute to his career, it is hard to know where to begin or where to end. I would like to focus on a single attribute: Keith is relentlessly curious. After he unleashed the powers of supercomputers on congressional roll voting with Howard Rosenthal in the 1980s, he could be forgiven if he considered the challenges of understanding the structure of preferences a solved problem. At some level, it was, as

their core insight about the structure of congressional voting has aged well: congressional voting has been mostly one dimensional, with a second dimension occasionally providing meaningful additional explanatory power.

However, the early work that Poole and Rosenthal did brought to the surface additional complexity in the modeling process. And so, they (and Nolan McCarty, Jeff Lewis and others) continued to develop the model. The new refinements did not always change our substantive conclusions about the structure of congressional preferences, but they deepened our understanding of what was – and was not – going on in Congress.

Poole's ongoing work shed light on the implications of functional form in utility models, ranging from early, seemingly klugey Gaussian utility function that took the quadratic loss function familiar in formal utility models and put it in an exponent. It worked – and, actually had different and interesting underlying insights about choice in a legislative environment. Later work by Poole and co-authors used quadratic utility and non-parametric methods.

The point here is not to adjudicate which utility function (or none at all!) is best. Rather, the point is to admire Poole's devotion to the craft of political science. Poole has been engaged with his colleagues and continued to explore the rich intellectual space offered by the challenge of estimating preferences based on voting data.

I hope that the field continues to follow Poole's lead by this emulating his relentless curiosity. At this point, it is hard to deny that there is very strong structure to the voting patterns in Congress and this structure has been quite stable. And yet the input of specific issues into these strong and stable dimensions of policy have been moving. When Romney ran for president, conservatives were proudly anti-Russian; now liberals have become, in some ways, more anti-Russian. In the 1940s, racial conservatives openly advocated racial segregation. In the more recent times, racial conservatives have resisted affirmative action. The Poole and Rosenthal ideology (however measured) might be the consistent across time periods, and yet the content of legislators' policy preferences may have moved dramatically.

I like to think our measures of congressional ideology place members in seats on an airplane. Poole and co-authors have shown that finding where legislators sit on the plane (perhaps liberals in the front and conservatives in the back) has been remarkably predictive of how they vote, no matter the issue content. And yet there is some other aspect of politics that is buffeting the plane to the left and right, up and down in policy space such that conservatives (who "die with their ideological boots on") might be doing something quite different from conservatives in previous or future eras. In the spirit of Keith's curiosity, I hope that we can live up Keith's example and keep exploring the deeply interesting structure of legislative preferences.

Keith Poole, A Mentor

Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey

London School of Economics and Political Science

In celebration of Keith Poole, I will leave others to comment on the use of ideal point estimates and their extensions, and will instead draft a more personal note on how Keith Poole has impacted my research.

Let me begin by drawing a comparison between Keith Poole and someone whose name I suspect most readers will not recognize—William O. Aydelotte. To my mind, Aydelotte is a pioneer of the sort of meticulous attention to roll call voting behaviour (Aydelotte, 1963, Aydelotte, 1972) that Poole later developed into a vast area of political science research. The intersection between Poole and Aydelotte rests in the peculiar case of Britain's Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. My own research on this topic (Schonhardt-Bailey, 2006) led me to draw upon Aydelotte's remarkable—certainly for the period of the 1960s/1970s—dataset on MP votes during the 1841-47 British Parliament (Aydelotte, n.d.). My work in further developing those data led me to contact Poole for assistance in applying NOMINATE to early 19th century British parliamentary voting behaviour. At this point in my story, the details become unimportant as the generosity of Keith Poole in lending his expertise to young and eager academics becomes a familiar one. Through countless emails with him, I managed to transform some rather superficial analysis of the role of ideology, partisanship and constituency interests into a rather nifty (and far more sophisticated) approach to capturing empirically the motivations of British MPs as they embarked upon an unprecedented policy shift to unilateral trade liberalization. Without Poole's help, I'm afraid that my analysis would have been, well, rather rudimentary.

But, our relationship did not end there. Apparently my interest in applying NOMINATE to non-American (and even historical) roll call data coincided with the interests of other comparative scholars. We joined forces in an APSA panel, where a number of other academics were similarly drawing on Poole's approach (and as ever, his unfailing assistance and enthusiasm) to study cases outside the American setting. Such was the beginning of the "internationalization" of NOMINATE (and, shall we say, the rest is history?).

Where things started to become a bit more interesting is at a conference hosted by Poole at UCSD in 2006, where I was invited along with a number of other scholars of the "NOMINATE genre". By that time, my interest had shifted from the outcome of legislative decisions (roll calls) to the process in arriving at these decisions (the role of debates, framing, and rhetoric). Whereas my fellow conference goers were revealing new and wonderful extensions to NOMINATE, I decided to challenge Poole—or at least present a different perspective, in seeking to bridge the speeches of legislators (textual data) with their decisions (votes). Whereas Poole had characterized a key Senate debate on abortion (the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003) as "nearly one-dimensional"

(Poole, 2005) I argued that this was an over-simplification of the decision-making process. Specifically, I argued that

(W)hile we find two fundamental dimensions of verbal conflict in the Senate debates on the PBA Ban Act of 2003, it is Senators' competing interpretations of the meaning of the constitution which seem to map best onto the determinative roll call. In sum, the analysis of voting behaviour may be important for some purposes, but it can sometimes miss the larger political reality. In this case, the reality was that the legislative process was not simply a channel for transforming general liberal-conservative attitudes into a social choice, but rather it served to reveal the primary dimension upon which senators legitimized their votes—namely, whether or not the ban could survive constitutional scrutiny (Schonhardt-Bailey, 2008).

There are two takeaways from this story. The first—which speaks to Keith Poole's calibre as an iconic scholar and mentor—is that his curiosity lent an interest in and respect for my focus on the talk (speeches, debates, text) that comes before voting. The second is perhaps even more important. To my mind, one defining feature of a true scholar and mentor is that he (or she) encourages students to challenge existing approaches and to create new pathways to uncovering truth. Without a doubt, Keith Poole has done this in spades. My thanks to you, Keith!

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Poole on the Hobgoblins of Congressional Minds

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We had the pleasure of presenting a paper at a retrospective conference held in Keith Poole's honor in 2017. Collectively, the conference papers gave a good sense of the many areas in which Keith's work has helped set the scholarly agenda. Here, we'll summarize and situate just one of those areas—concerning the overtime ideological consistency of members of Congress.

In order to study ideological consistency, one needs to assess members' ideological positions at a number of different points in time in a consistent fashion. Prior to Poole and Rosenthal's development of NOMINATE scores, suitable assessments were limited to a few interest-group ratings based on small numbers of roll calls and covering relatively few years. As a consequence, there were no quantitative studies of ideological consistency, or at least none that we recall.

Since Poole and Rosenthal's scores were based on the universe of non-unanimous roll calls, covered the entire history of Congress, and were designed to be inter-temporally comparable, they opened the door to serious study of ideological consistency. Poole walked through the door with his study "Changing Minds? Not in Congress!" published in 2007. As the title suggests, he found that congresspersons exhibited great consistency and tended to "die in their ideological boots."

Subsequent investigations have found some pockets of ideological (and/or partisan) shiftiness. Work by Jenkins and Nokken (2008a,b), for example, has studied how roll call behavior shifts in lame duck sessions. Theriault (2006; 2008) and Bonica (2014) have identified a class of moderate members who have become ideological migrants—moving toward their respective parties' means over the course of their careers. Bonica (2014) shows that such migration becomes more common in the data beginning in the mid-1990s. Although many legislators experienced meaningful ideological change, examples of "ideological conversion" remained rare, consistent with Poole's earlier findings. Migration typically occurred in spurts coinciding with periods of heightened partisan tension, such as the run-up to the Iraq War in 2003 and the passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2010.

In our conference paper, we consider why ideological migration began when it did. Why were congressional moderates ideologically consistent until the mid-1990s (per Poole

2007)? Why did they thereafter begin to vote more often with their respective parties' means (per Theriault 2008 and Bonica 2014a)?

Previous investigations suggest that moderates polarized because the House majority party increasingly manipulated the legislative agenda to highlight votes that divided the parties; and both parties increasingly pressured their moderate members to toe the party line (Theriault 2008). In contrast, we argue that moderates polarized after 1994 mainly because competition for majority status in the House intensified after that date, which focused donors', activists', and leaders' attention on the partisan battle for control of Congress. Politically engaged voters began voting more often to put a particular party in control of the House, rather than to elect a particular candidate. Even less engaged voters began to "vote for a party," because they followed the advice of opinion leaders who had themselves become sharply more concerned with congressional control.

As more voters cast their votes in order to affect which party controlled the House, the penalty incumbents paid for voting with their parties and against their districts necessarily declined. The more party-centered voters became, the more representatives were "freed" to vote with their parties—since voters paid less attention to individual candidates' voting behavior when casting their votes. At the same time, parties had fewer incentives to welcome moderates into the party and keep their more extreme elements in check. A somewhat counterintuitive consequence of heightened competition for majority control of Congress is that ideologically extreme candidates, who would in the past have paid a steep electoral penalty, were able to unseat their more moderate opponents in the general elections. This pattern was on full display in the 2010 congressional midterm elections, as Tea Party challengers defeated their more moderate Democratic opponents in marginal districts across the nation.

Our empirical analysis shows that party-centeredness abruptly and dramatically increased after 1994, with the electoral penalty members paid for being out of step with their constituents correspondingly declining. This shift in the focus of blame (or credit) contributed to an important, albeit complicated, shift from local/personal to national/party representation. The transition to nationalized elections helped set the stage for the historic increase in partisan polarization in the following decades.

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The Influence and Generosity of Keith Poole

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I met Keith toward the end of my time as a Ph.D. student at UCSD. I have learned a great deal from him in the subsequent years during which we have worked together. That, of course, meant appreciating the importance of the latent properties of data in general and the measurement of ideological information in particular. I have since sought to identify the underlying structure behind political behavior and the dimensionality of that structure, in legislative contexts and beyond. I continue to examine these themes throughout my own work and aspire to carry on this tradition.

But more than anything I have sought to internalize Keith's outlook on the discipline and what it should be. In my view, that outlook is characterized foremost by a strong commitment to basic research at the core of Political Science. I believe that part of the reason Keith's mark on the discipline has been so strong is that he has been committed to innovating for reasons of basic science since well before there was a broadly receptive audience for his approaches. As he often points out, the truly widespread recognition of his work came relatively late in his career. So, for some time, Keith plugged away relentlessly on a topic that began at the margins of the discipline. Amongst those efforts were insights that later became central to numerous applications in Political Science.

I see Keith's career-long approach to research as breaking down the tractable political science problems that can be solved with geometric representations of choice and judgment. To do this, he has synthesized ideas from Economics, Psychology, and Political Science. With each piece, Keith has taken the complex layers of human behavior and brought us closer to general models of understanding it, always firmly in the belief that this work was, in fact, science. Indeed, this work – now greatly expanded by others – is the

kind of cumulative scientific knowledge that the discipline aspires to but rarely achieves. The importance of objective truths and science's role in uncovering them is a guiding principle in Keith's academic philosophy.

In addition, although Keith is often categorized as a methodologist, his body of work is really motivated by big questions in politics, especially the foundations of political economy. The substantive relevance of his work became undeniable with seminal applications to the US Congress, especially in his collaborations with Howard Rosenthal and Nolan McCarty. Now, these ideas not only pervade the study of Congress and American politics but have become important to understanding politics in many other settings. Certainly, numerous aspects of modern political science would not exist without his efforts. Moreover, the products of this research agenda are now routinely discussed in popular discourse in as well, especially in the context of recent dysfunction in the US political system.

Finally, Keith has always been dedicated to making science accessible—bringing data and methods to the masses. Besides maintaining the first complete set of roll call voting data on voting in the US Congress, Keith has always provided the discipline with the ability to use the same tools he developed. Often he has spent considerable time directly assisting a wide variety of scholars in the use of methods he developed. I am proud to say that much of our joint work with other collaborators over the last decade has been explicitly about making it easier to use many of the methods and approaches Keith contributed to developing or popularizing.

In short, as a colleague, Keith has been a tremendous influence. His drive, curiosity and keen intuition are astounding and should serve as an inspiration to us all. Yet I have also been extremely privileged to know Keith personally. On this front, I must mention his extreme generosity. So much of his time has been spent teaching and mentoring others, very often without much credit. The great enthusiasm for celebrating his career is as much a testament to him as a person as it is to him as a scholar.

Keith Poole, A Public Goods Provider: An Interview with Rebecca Morton

Nicholas Haas

with

Rebecca B. Morton

New York University

NH: When did you first meet Keith Poole?

RM: I first remember meeting Keith at an annual American Political Science Association conference in New Orleans where I lived and worked at that time. The University of Rochester was having a party for Bill Riker, and I met Keith there.

NH: Do you recall any early impressions you had of his work?

RM: One early memory I have is of presenting a paper at a *Public Choice* meeting. We were studying voter turnout and we had data at the county level across a number of years, which for that time constituted a very large dataset. Keith and Howard Rosenthal were presenting a paper at the same meeting using NOMINATE. I remember thinking that they made our dataset look so small!

Before Keith, we had very naïve measures of ideology and the time horizon for our analyses was severely constrained. To measure the ideology of members of Congress, we would use the presidential vote total in a congressional district, or interest group ratings such as those by Americans for Democratic Action (ADA). With the advent of NOMINATE, all of a sudden we could extend our analyses far beyond the formation of such interest groups, and we could approach the study of Congress more scientifically.

NH: Did Keith's work help to advance your own?

RM: Yes, absolutely. I wrote a paper with Tom Husted and Larry Kenny on constituent errors in assessing their Senators' ideologies. Keith had published a paper with Tom Palfrey that found that more informed voters were more likely to have extreme ideologies. Their findings were very useful to us when we were working on this paper, which used a Bayesian framework to explain the acquisition of knowledge by constituents and their errors in assessment.

We used ADA ratings in that paper that were measured on a different scale than our survey data. The advent of NOMINATE simplified such processes and reduced the likelihood of errors being made.

NH: You overlapped with Keith at the University of Houston for a year. What was it like having Keith as a colleague?

RM: Yes, both Keith and I were hired in the fall of 2000. We had offices right next door to each other. We spent a

lot of time talking about the election that year. I remember Keith as a great colleague and as someone who was a real public goods provider. He had a chaired position from which he was kind enough to contribute money to bring in good speakers for seminars. He was a phenomenal mentor to students.

He went out of his way to help people with their work—that's the kind of person he is. When I was at Houston, I was planning to conduct an experiment on constituent errors. The idea was that we would present student subjects with elected officials with whom they were unfamiliar, for example a congressperson from another state, and would vary which additional information we provided them—for instance, the congressperson's age, gender, and so on. We would then see how the accuracy of their guesses regarding the politician's ideology changed in response to the additional information.

My co-author Kristin Kanthak and I had downloaded the American National Election Study dataset in order to obtain information on members of Congress. Keith offered to take a look and found a number of errors with how members were coded in the dataset that we had downloaded, and he pointed them out to us. I don't know many other scholars who would go to such great lengths to help a colleague. The level of care with which he approached data and coding was very impressive, and it's something that stuck with me.

NH: What do you view as Keith's imprint on the field?

RM: Well, beyond his specific methodological innovations that I've touched on already, I would say that Keith played an important role in the development of the field more generally. He made the study of American politics more quantitative and rigorous; over time, there was less of an emphasis on storytelling and more of a focus on work that was empirically grounded, and he had a lot to do with these positive developments. Although his methods were new and complex, Keith made every effort to be as transparent and clear as possible, and as a result his innovations reached many more scholars than they might have otherwise.

To the extent that polarization is an important and growing topic of interest both to scholars and the general public, and I believe it is, Keith deserves a lot of credit for being one of the early movers on the subject. He has a deep understanding of politics and the study of Congress. Keith was one of the first to recognize that polarization was a real phenomenon and was on the rise. There was a lot of skepticism about polarization at the time; many people were saying that there were no real differences between the Democratic and Republican parties.

You can also see Keith's imprint in the large number of excellent students who learned under his tutelage or who worked closely with him. They continue to extend his work, and with it, the discipline of political science.

Standing on the Shoulders of Keith Poole

David Bateman

Cornell University

John Lapinski

University of Pennsylvania

Keith Poole's positive impact on the study of American politics over the past several decades is indisputable. This is true regardless of whether one considers themselves a supporter or critic (or somewhere in between) of the NOMINATE project. What is remarkable about Poole's career, in our opinion, is the range and breadth of his work. Just in our own areas of research, the NOMINATE project has shed valuable light on questions concerning the dimensionality of American politics, the development of party positions on black civil rights, the measurement and explanation of political polarization, and the impact of southern legislators in national lawmaking during the post-Reconstruction era. We know we not alone in the debt we owe to Poole, whose research has engaged scholars across the subfield and beyond. An equally remarkable fact about Poole is the amount of time and intellectual energy he invested in helping scholars, particularly young scholars, with their work. These two parts of Poole's academic profile make him unique.

Before discussing the substance of our recent article on NOMINATE, we wanted to say something more specific and personal about Poole's extraordinary work in advancing the field of American politics. The senior (and now old) co-author of this note first interacted with Poole as a graduate student at Columbia University over two decades ago. Nolan McCarty, who was co-chair of John Lapinski's dissertation committee, and who has made important contributions to the NOMINATE project in his own right, wrote Poole to ask him send his Fortran code for the NOMINATE algorithm. While McCarty certainly enjoyed a feeling of *schadenfreude* when he gave Lapinski the code, Poole was remarkable in his willingness to answer any and all questions that came up. There were many questions. We are absolutely certain that the help Poole provided to this graduate student was not an isolated case, but an empirical regularity in the discipline and just one indication of his generosity and commitment to open research. (One anecdotal measure: how many people have had lunch with Keith at the Italian Village restaurant in Chicago at the Midwest to ask him questions and for help on a project? Based on our interactions with multiple people in the Congress subfield, we are confident that number is quite large.)

Moreover, Poole's tireless efforts to keep up the Voteview website and respond to email requests is simply beyond the call of duty or the expectations of providing replication material: the website, which was launched in 1995 and is now maintained by Jeffrey Lewis and a team at UCLA, serves not only as an extraordinary data repository of congressional voting and legislators' ideological positions (as well as other measures of legislative behavior), but provided

detailed explanation of the different elements of the NOMINATE project, which we and our students have found to be invaluable. The website has been expanded in recent years, with new features and some striking visuals, but – without minimizing in any way the considerable work put in by Lewis and others – its motivating ethos continues to bear Poole's hallmark generosity and dedication to political science research. And Poole's impact in this regard goes well beyond the academy, as journalists increasingly turn to this data in their reporting. This commitment to data accessibility, to helping young scholars, and to disseminating political science research is part of what makes Poole an invaluable resource to the discipline.

The NOMINATE project has not only been invaluable for scholars across the field of American politics, it has inspired a number of cottage industries that are more specifically concerned with questions of ideology, polarization, and legislative conflict. Perhaps its greatest influence, however, has been in the subfield of Congress studies, where it has radically expanded the types of questions that scholars can answer and our collective ability to empirically evaluate inferences about legislative behavior. It was NOMINATE, after all, that first identified a curious pattern of polarization between the parties in Congress—at a moment when it was widely believed that party was of declining relevance—and which later provided robust empirical support to the suggestion of Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson (2005) that this was asymmetric.¹ It has been through reliance on NOMINATE and its related measures that the claims of political polarization have been empirically established and causally examined.

NOMINATE's influence, however, has not been felt as strongly in the subfield of American political development, a research area that in principle should overlap considerably with the study of Congress and which should benefit from such an exhaustive historical resource. Despite the efforts of Phil Everson, Rick Valelly, Arjun Vishwanath, and Jim Wiseman, who prepared an extremely valuable primer on NOMINATE for students of American political history (2016), NOMINATE remained unfamiliar to and unused by most APD scholars.² As two scholars who have interests simultaneously in Congress and questions of political development, we thought we might be able to provide some insight into why this was the case. But we also hoped we could offer some suggestions for how NOMINATE and related measures might be fruitfully integrated into APD research in ways that built on the strengths of each. This was the basis of our contribution to *Studies in American Political Development*, which we hoped would serve as a bridge between two political science communities that we believe have much to gain from each other.

In the last decade, a growing number of APD scholars have begun paying serious attention to Congress and its development. And yet absent from much of this work was any extensive use of NOMINATE or other variants of ideal points. There seemed to us to be numerous points of synergy between the two – as Poole himself has noted, spatial

“maps are worthless unless the user understands both the spatial theory that the computer program embodies and the politics of the legislature that produced the roll calls” (2005, xvi), and a hallmark of APD work is its attention to how the politics of particular institutions change over time. And yet as we noted in our article, “Ideal Points and American Political Development: Beyond DW-NOMINATE,” there have been eighty-eight articles since 1995 that examine legislative dynamics in Congress, but only ten used any variant of NOMINATE, with many of these being published by the same few authors. For such an important resource, this lack of usage was shocking.

We argued that the most likely reason for its limited adoption was not because of any intractable hostility toward quantitative measures among APD scholars (a characterization that was never quite fair, and is surely outdated today), but because many of NOMINATE’s underlying assumptions cut against the subfield’s understanding of what it meant to study politics in history and foreclosed studying the types of questions that APD scholars found most interesting.

The first set of concerns dealt with the question of whether it is possible to reduce “ideology” to a coordinate along one or two dimensions organized around unchanging quantities of “liberalism” and “conservatism.” While Poole and Rosenthal repeatedly make clear that they do not have a model for mapping issue substance onto the underlying dimensions, the first dimension has commonly been referred to as a “liberalism/conservatism” dimension, concerned with economics and the role of government (the second dimension often drops out altogether, sometimes leading to the false claim that Poole and Rosenthal argue that a single dimension explains American politics). For a subfield that has paid considerable attention to long term patterns of ideological development, whether divided into distinct periods (Gerring 1998) or tracking change across distinct issue areas (Schickler 2017; Smith 1999), or which has explored the ways in which preferences are defined in specific situations (Bensel 2008), NOMINATE’s ambition to reduce ideology to a set of coordinates in a stable space grates with APD understandings of how ideology is constructed and how preferences are formed. Related to this point, DW-NOMINATE’s agnosticism towards policy substance is also at odds with how APD scholars conceptualize the relationship between public policy and political preferences, which tends to emphasize how the development of the former shapes the latter and how individual preferences over policy are likely to vary across distinct issue areas. Another problem for historical research is specific to the DW-NOMINATE scores, which purportedly allow for across time comparisons. While we will not get into the technical aspects of DW-NOMINATE here, most users of these scores understand that the legislator’s ideal points at any given moment is a function of their voting record across their entire careers, with changes in legislators preferences in captured by a linear trend and flattened out over the life of a member’s career. This is the price of making NOMINATE comparable across time. For some research questions this

is a small price. For many APD questions, however, it precludes the use of this measure.

In our joint and separate works on polarization (Clinton, Katznelson, and Lapinski 2016 ; see also Bateman, Clinton, and Lapinski 2017), we have explored how some of the assumptions of DW-NOMINATE lead to misleading conclusions about the level of political conflict. For instance, the DW-NOMINATE measures characterize the New Deal and Fair Deal periods as the start of a very long period low polarization that extends to the early 1980s. Alternative measures, including qualitative historical accounts of the period, suggest that the Fair Deal and New Deal periods were more polarized than DW-NOMINATE suggests. We show there that this is because DW-NOMINATE uses information from later in a member’s career to estimate the member’s linear trend. Consequently, DW-NOMINATE cannot be used to evaluate precisely when a shift in ideal points happens. In the Fair Deal and New Deal example, information from later time periods where polarization was very low is being built into the ideal points from these two earlier periods, thus dampening measured polarization. In other words, the assumptions underlying the bridging mechanism are very consequential not just for measuring individual preference development but for aggregate patterns.

The conclusion drawn from these critiques, however, should not be that NOMINATE and other ideal point measures have nothing to offer. It is, if anything, the exact opposite, that researchers interested in the long term development of polarization should build on NOMINATE’s insights by constructing alternative measures that are attuned the specific concerns of the researcher. This is exactly what Keith Poole has done all along, engineering successive but distinct techniques that each had their own strengths and weaknesses and encouraging researchers to adapt them and apply them as needed to address the specific questions that they have in mind. Poole’s Optimal Classification method, which was a crucial building block for NOMINATE, has become useful in its own right for dealing with perfect voting (Poole 1997; Rosenthal and Voeten 2004). The D- was added to NOMINATE in order to better study questions of historical development. The Common Space scores traded legislator mobility for being able to make comparisons across chambers. More recently, Boris Shor and Nolan McCarty have extended the basic technique to include state legislatures. And *Poole’s Spatial Models of Parliamentary Voting* is replete with examples of ways to modify the basic technique to study particular questions that might be incompatible with some of the assumptions of NOMINATE, and encouragement for scholars to do so.³ If a researcher is interested in studying a question such as whether events like Pearl Harbor, financial crises or 9/11 resulted in distinct patterns of politics in Congress, then DW-NOMINATE might not be the appropriate measure: but it does not follow that the type of approach which NOMINATE embodies cannot be tailored to meet the specific requirements of the researcher.

The second half of our article offered some suggestions by which APD scholars might be able to make minor ad-

justments to NOMINATE or other ideal point techniques to make them more appropriate for their particular lines of research. The first suggestions we made falls under the category of nonlinear movement in legislator positions. We suggested that for many historical scholars it would be attractive for scholars to use an alternative bridging mechanism that would allow for individual members to have more flexibility in their movement over time. One promising approach, introduced by Tim Groseclose, Stephen Levitt and James Snyder, imposes constraints on chamber aggregates and not individuals (1999), and was used to make interest group scores (such as those produced by ADA) comparable across time. But they could also be used with the static, chamber by chamber, W-NOMINATE scores, an approach which we have found useful for two reasons. For one, it produces scores that allow us to detect if members changed their preferences in relation to specific events or experiences. A second advantage is that since the so-called TurboADA scores involve adjusting Congress specific scores rather than estimating scores simultaneously across time, it does not change the rank ordering of members and therefore maintains the information from chamber specific estimates. Of course, nothing is free. The big assumption of TurboADA is that for any subset of members who serve at the same time, without any turnover, the mean ideal point will be the same. This means that while any member can become more or liberal or conservative, there can be no general tendency for the chamber to move in any ideological direction except through member replacement. It is useful, then, for some questions but not others, just as DW-NOMINATE is useful for some but not all questions.

A second idea we introduced in our article dealt with policy issue substance. This is an issue that Poole has been concerned with for some time, and was the genesis of Poole's individual effort to policy codes every roll call in the House and Senate in the original version of *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting*. In our article, we suggested that for some lines of research it is better to side-step the issue of ideology all together and instead look at ideal points that capture legislative preferences for well-defined policy issue areas. Our argument for the value of such scores is simple. These scores provide a more nuanced version of legislator preferences and are easy to interpret. Most APD scholars would accept that members' preferences are fairly stable across a number of different policy issues, but might want to be able to control the degree to which a preferences on a particular policy domain are being tapped without having to rely on an unstable mapping of issues onto the two different NOMINATE dimensions. Empirically, we demonstrate that member's preferences do vary, sometimes significantly by issue area. We also believe that is useful to use TurboADA on issue specific generated ideal points, and we offer some practical suggestions on how to do this. Finally, and most tentatively, we suggested ways to estimate scores at a more fine-grained level than the two-year sitting of Congress, inspired by Adam Bonica's (2014) work in this domain, and to integrate our historical knowledge of pol-

icy substance into the ideal point estimation process itself, something which was pioneered by Michael Bailey (2007) and which we developed in more detail in follow-up work (Bateman, Clinton, and Lapinski 2017).

Whether these suggestions prove helpful or not, either for particular research questions or for the larger ambition of bridging the APD and Congress literatures, they have been inspired by the work and example of Keith Poole. In thinking, then, about a title for our article, we realized that "Standing on the Shoulders of Keith Poole" was, if not exactly the most dignified of mental images (especially for a co-authored piece), certainly the most accurate of description of our work. Poole's original work has launched entire literatures, and without his intellect and tireless work, much of this research would never exist. The Congress subfield, and indeed the entirety of the American Politics field, owe Keith a profound debt and considerable gratitude.

Notes

1. See also <https://voteviewblog.com/2015/06/10/more-on-assyymmetric-polarization-yes-the-republicans-did-it/>
2. The primer had been available on voteview.com before being published in revised form in *Studies in American Political Development*.
3. See for instance Poole's encouragement to subset roll calls to analyze the "microstructure of the spatial map," which we take to be entirely compatible with our own approach to analyzing preferences on specific issues which we discuss below (2005, 185).

Keith Poole and the Legacy of NOMINATE

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My favorite story about Keith Poole happened in a conference panel, in which he was a co-author on two of the four papers. (The other papers used NOMINATE scores, so he had his stamp on them as well).

The panel was, like so many at the time, about detecting partisan influence in Congress. One of the Poole papers used a variation on NOMINATE to detect such influence. The other paper more or less argued that there was no such influence.

So Keith was on both sides of the debate. And someone asked him about it. His response is what we should want from science. He said he and Howard Rosenthal had developed this tool, and they were happy to have people use it, to whatever end. He didn't really care. In the case of these two

papers, he was willing to devote energy to adapting that tool to a new question.

Anyone who knows Keith Poole knows he is not afraid to share his opinion. But he doesn't let that opinion get in the way of helping people do research. It is easy to say that Keith has created a wealth of public goods, from NOMINATE scores themselves to all the data necessary to create and interpret them. But the real contribution is the extent to which he has made cultivating that public good a central part of his career.

The public good of NOMINATE is not just a measure which everyone can use. It's the popularization of the approach with attention to the technical questions underlying it. Work on Optimal Classification and alpha-NOMINATE have been about figuring out the best way to recover an underlying ideological space.

It is up to the rest of us to continue that project. My own work on a small piece of that project provides another example of Poole's helpfulness.

I've been working to find evidence for (and more importantly, establish the scope of) the claim that Poole and Howard Rosenthal make in their book that for much of the 20th century, we should think of the space as defined by a *partisan* dimension that separates Democrats and Republicans and an orthogonal *ideological* dimension that separates liberals and conservatives.¹

This led me to spend a lot of time with the angles of the cutting lines in the NOMINATE space. Fortunately, those quantities can be easily downloaded along with the other trove of resources on the voteview.com website. But I found a discrepancy. When I calculated the angles myself, they were slightly different.

A quick e-mail to Keith, and the error was not only resolved, but the data on the website was updated for everyone.

This, in the end, is the bigger contribution to the discipline. As I say, the job is now ours to move the ball forward, and there are two fronts on which I think progress should be made. First, in better understanding what the NOMINATE summary means, and second, in developing better measures of preferences, ideological or otherwise, from congressional behavior.

On the first, a number of scholars have come have found reason to doubt NOMINATE scores as a direct measure of ideology. Too many other things go into a member's voting decision, and some of them must be systematic. If systematic, they will affect the estimated ideal points.

In a way, NOMINATE is a strange measure. It's as if we took every item in the American National Election Study, performed some sort of factor analysis, and then labeled the first factor "ideology." From that perspective, it's interesting that so much of the variance can be explained by a single dimension in the NOMINATE space. But the reason why might not be best called "ideology." As Poole and Rosenthal (1991) write, that is but one legitimate interpretation: "The fact that there is more than one substantive summary of our results is not troubling. Indeed, the 'economic' versus 're-

gional or social' and the 'liberal-conservative' versus 'party' interpretations both provide insight into the results." More should be done exploring the alternative interpretations.

The second front on which progress should be made is in directly measuring alternative dimensions of preference. On some questions, we don't care about ideology. We care specifically about a foreign policy dimension, a civil liberties dimension, a racial equality dimension, and so forth. It is an important question (one I am myself very interested in) how those dimensions relate to a broader ideological division. But we will better understand this the more we explore individual dimensions.

This feels like a pretty rosy perspective on the future. We have both good tools and good resources cultivated by Keith Poole and his colleagues. Thanks in good part to Keith Poole, we are the opposite of doomed.

Notes

1. The relevant passage is perhaps worth citing at length: "The three-party system of the mid-twentieth century: The period from the late New Deal unto the mid-1970s saw the development of the only genuine three-political-party system in American history. The southern and northern Democrats may have joined together to organize the House and Senate, but as the plots of the 83rd Senate (1953-54) and the 80th House (1947-48) show, they were widely separated on the second dimension. This dimension picked up the conflict over civil rights. The approximate inclination of 45 degrees for the two parties reflects the high degree of conservative-coalition voting (southern Democrats and Republicans vs. northern Democrats) that occurred through this period on a wide variety of non-race related matters.

In the three-party-system period, it is useful to think of a *major-party loyalty dimension as defined by the axis through the space that captures party-line votes*. This dimension can be thought of as ranging from strong loyalty to the Democrats to weak loyalty to either party and to strong loyalty to the Republicans. (In other periods, when party cutting lines are vertical, the horizontal dimension can be thought of as both a party-loyalty dimension and an economic dimension.) An axis *perpendicular to the party-loyalty dimension would then express a liberal/conservative dimension* that is independent of party loyalty. Votes with cutting lines that are on neither the party-loyalty axis nor the independent liberal/conservative axis represent votes in which legislators make a trade-off – instead of voting on their liberal/conservative positions, they maintain some loyalty to their parties. Almost all votes reflect, to some degree, this type of tradeoff." (Poole and Rosenthal 1997, pp. 45-46; Poole and Rosenthal 2007, p. 54-55).

2. The adjustment due to the lesser weight of the second dimension had been applied twice.

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The Last Time Congress Was This Party Polarized: A Cautionary Note on the Use of NOMINATE for Historical Analysis

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It is difficult to overstate Keith Poole's influence on the study of legislative politics. In *Congress: A Political Economic History of Roll Call Voting* (1997) and other publications, Poole and Howard Rosenthal developed a methodology for measuring congressional preferences that has become virtually universal in the study of Congress and other legislatures.

In addition to their seminal work developing the NOMINATE methodology, Poole and Rosenthal also set a new scholarly standard for data and research transparency. Long before the Data Access and Research Transparency movement in political science and even before the existence of most online data repositories, Poole and Rosenthal made it as easy as possible for other scholars to draw upon their roll-call datasets and measures. Their generosity with data has been an enormous asset to scholars and raised the bar for the discipline as a whole.

While recognizing the tremendous value that has been gained from NOMINATE methods and data, here I want to nudge scholars to pay more attention to issue content when using roll-call based measures of congressional preferences. NOMINATE coordinates do not interpret themselves. They can only be understood in the context of the specific debates in Congress at any given time. The importance of issue content is something that Poole and Rosenthal themselves understand well, as is evident from the amount of effort they have devoted to coding roll-call votes by policy area. But it is a point that scholars using NOMINATE have not always observed.

One of the best-known facts revealed by Poole and Rosenthal's research is that the late 19th century was the last time Congress was roughly as party polarized as it is at present. As part of a recent symposium in *Studies in American Political Development* (2016), I investigated what specific issues drove the Gilded Age parties so far apart between 1876 and 1896. I draw upon historical accounts of the issues considered during the era, as well as Poole and Rosenthal's data on the policy content of roll-call votes.

Even though Gilded Age congresses score as equivalently party polarized as the contemporary Congress, historians of the era actually debate whether late 19th-century parties exhibited meaningful national policy differences, at all. Both the Republicans and Democrats of the period took conservative positions on economic issues. Both parties were led in Congress and by presidential candidates who favored hard money. Before the 1896 election, the two parties did not take opposing positions on the gold standard. At the same time, the prevailing sentiment in both parties favored a very limited role for the federal government. Neither of the parties proposed policies to deal with problems arising from rapid industrialization, rising inequality, or the deep depressions of 1873–1879 and 1893–1897. Describing the parties between 1877 and 1879, one historian wrote: "The parties, closely balanced, hesitated to take clear positions on controversial questions" (Garraty 1968, 226). Another historian compared the two parties to "rival stagecoaches splashing one another with mud as they raced along the same road to the same destination" (Cashman 1984, 195). "Above all," as another historian warns, "we must not read into this period of American politics the ideas about conservatism and liberalism and the relationship of the government to the economy that have grown up since the Progressive movement" (DeSantis 1963).

Not all historians of the period characterize the period as devoid of meaningful policy differences between the parties. Bense (2000) reads party differences in this era as centering around questions of economic development, with the Republican Party serving as the "developmental agent" of the industrializing northern "core" against a Democratic Party based in the economic "periphery" of the South and the West. Salisbury (1986) argues that the era's Democratic Party was a stronger proponent of "cultural, political, and economic laissez-faire" than the Republican Party.

But the mere fact that historians can debate whether Gilded Age parties had meaningful policy differences reveals that late-19th century party polarization is far different from that of today. No one today criticizes the parties in Congress for failing to offer different policy programs! But lack of alternative policies was actually a common complaint about late-19th century parties. As James Bryce (1995 [1888]) famously observed during the period: "Neither party has, as a party, any clean-cut principles. . . . Distinctive tenets and policies . . . have all but vanished."

Drawing upon Poole and Rosenthal's data classifying roll-call votes by policy content, I examine the issues on the congressional agenda between 1876 and 1896. The types of

policy questions that clearly distinguish economic liberals and economic conservatives in today's politics hardly appear on the congressional agenda of the Gilded Age. Questions of regulation and redistribution were rarely debated. Regulatory issues would become much more prominent on the national policy agenda during the Progressive Era, but regulation was not a priority for either major party during the Gilded Age. There was also no party conflict over explicitly redistributive social welfare programs, like Social Security or national health insurance, notwithstanding party differences on veterans' pensions. Neither party advocated a role for the federal government in redistributing wealth and income across social classes.

What were these late 19th century congressional parties fighting about? Votes involving patronage, impeachments and disputed elections made up almost a quarter (23%) of recorded votes during the period. This pattern reflects the centrality of patronage to the party organizations of the period. One scholar of the era noted: "The historian who explores the papers of late nineteenth century political figures usually discovers that the largest files are those relating to patronage, often far thicker than those having to do with public policy issues" (Cherny 1997, 14). Votes on contested elections alone were nearly as frequent as votes on the tariff—the most important policy distinction between the parties' national platforms during the period. Roll-call votes on disputed elections were more common than votes on banking and finance, public lands, and currency.

The most important point of policy distinction between the late 19th century parties was over the tariff. The tariff was the source of most federal revenue and the third most frequent issue in congressional roll-call voting according to the Poole-Rosenthal classification scheme. On the basis of party platforms and rhetoric, party differences can be easily summarized: Republicans supported a protective tariff providing a competitive advantage to U.S. products and manufacturing, and the Democratic party supported a tariff "for revenue only." Party positions on the tariff became steadily clearer over time, but the Democrats never embraced a policy of free trade. Instead, the parties battled over competing tariff schedules.

Examining the roll-call votes dealing with tariff questions, one quickly discovers that bills and amendments very rarely dealt with policies of general applicability, such as across-the-board rate reductions or trade reciprocity. Instead, votes dealt with whether to increase or decrease the duty on specific goods—glass, pig iron, cotton, woollens, tin plate, and fence wire, to name a few. The two parties put together competing tariff coalitions, with Democrats favoring overall lower tariffs than Republicans, but with considerable variability across individual goods. The sugar tariff, for example, raised more money than any other single duty, but on that issue Democrats favored far higher tariffs than Republicans. In short, anyone who spends time examining the questions on which roll-call votes of the late nineteenth century were taken will discover that an exceedingly large share of them would run afoul of the 2010 House Republican Con-

ference's ban on earmarks. The congressional agenda of the era was characterized by relentless particularism.

How, then, should one interpret quantitative indicators that identify the Gilded Age between 1876 and 1896 as one of the most starkly party-polarized periods in U.S. history? It is true that the majority of roll-call votes in Congress during that time yielded party blocs of lawmakers on opposite sides. But the Republicans and Democrats of this period were not polarized, if by "polarized" one means that the parties presented clear, strongly divergent positions on national policy questions.

Close examination of the issues being considered in the Congress of this era suggests that scholars should let go of the idea that the level of party conflict in Congress is a reliable indicator of the ideological policy distance between the two parties' positions on national policy. Party polarization on substantive policy issues will undoubtedly result in party conflict. But parties, present and past, can and do come into conflict with one another for many reasons beyond their principled disagreements over national policy. Political parties are fully capable of waging war over spoils and office, even at times when there are few sharply defined party differences on national policy. Because NOMINATE and other related methodologies reflect an underlying structure in roll-call voting that is generated by both party and ideology simultaneously, there is no substitute for close analysis of the actual issues being debated in order to understand the congressional politics of any era.

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Keith Poole and the Evolution of American Political Science

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Thanks to the pioneering work of Keith Poole and his collaborators we have a name for the partisan warfare that powerfully shapes contemporary American politics: political polarization. There was a time when that phrase and concept were not in the air in the way that they are today. I discovered this when I consulted the Chronicle tool of the New York Times, <http://chronicle.nytlabs.com/>, while it was still working. The tool would instantly plot the percentage of stories – by year – that contained a phrase. One morning in 2015 I entered “political polarization” into the tool’s search field, and set the date range from 1970 to 2015, and found that the term “political polarization” took off immediately after 2006. That was the year of publication for the landmark study (first published in 2006, now in its second edition) by Nolan McCarty, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal, *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016).

Countless Americans know, too, that political polarization—America’s separation into red and blue—or conservative and liberal camps—is a matter of degree and that it has evolved. The essential starting point of the growing body of research, writing, and debate about the phenomenon is the recognition that – among party politicians both in Congress and the state legislatures – polarization has steadily, indeed relentlessly widened since the 1970s.

But why are we so certain that their polarization is a matter of degree? The answer is that we have reliable measures of polarization over time—much like measurement of global warming or income inequality over time. We know that at one time there was less of it; today there is a lot more of it.¹

Longitudinal measurement thus lies at the very heart of our contemporary discussion about the fractious state of American democracy. And such measurement comes courtesy of the invention of the NOMINATE algorithm. The inventors are Keith Poole (University of California–San Diego) and Howard Rosenthal (Princeton and New York

University).² Several collaborators—among them Jeffrey Lewis (University of California–Los Angeles), Nolan McCarty (Princeton), Boris Shor (University of Houston),³ and Adam Bonica (Stanford)⁴ — have refined it or been inspired to develop similar scaling methods. As readers of this newsletter know, NOMINATE (nominal three-step estimation) reliably scales legislators by their locations in so-called issue space within each and every Congress. It offers a standard scaling for all members of Congress over two periods: before and after the Civil War. Thanks to NOMINATE, we can generate a wide range of second-order measures—for example, distances between party medians in the two chambers of Congress or number of centrists by chamber—that reveal and track political polarization over time.

To be sure, NOMINATE’s impact on our discipline has critically depended on the tremendous energy and creativity that have gone into getting the word out. Making the various kinds of NOMINATE data available, constantly updating the data, and displaying the data have been central preoccupations of the principals in what might be called the “NOMINATE project.” The critical tools here have been the Voteview websites. As I write, there is a “legacy” site (which will be available through the end of 2017 – you may wish to download data from it now) and there is a new interactive site created and maintained thanks to the UCLA Department of Political Science. Financial assistance from the Madison Initiative of the Hewlett Foundation made that site possible: <https://voteview.com/>. The new interactive site is, not to put too fine a point on it, mind-blowing. It takes you deep into American political history – and in particular into lawmaking activity – in ways that will astonish you.

The Boiling Frog Problem

Through Voteview the findings of the “NOMINATE project” strongly affected political commentary. During the years that it was up the “legacy” site produced now famous and endlessly reproduced plots that depicted the deepening polarization since the early 1970s. Voteview consequently got many people thinking about the health of American democracy.

The steadily widening lines of the Voteview plots suggested a political variant of the boiling frog problem. We know that if you place a frog in a pot of tepid water and turn the heat on low – and then very gradually bring the water to a boil – the frog’s jump reflex will not save it. At some point the frog conks out dead. It couldn’t save itself through its jump reflex because it continuously acclimated itself to the rising temperature. Knowing about polarization and seeing the charts of growing polarization got many political scientists – and journalists and pundits who navigated to the site – to wonder, in effect, if American democracy is like that frog. How long can this last without killing us?

By now it is obvious that the emergence of intense division at the top of the political system has allowed for unprecedented breaking of political norms. A signature of the



Keith Poole having lunch at one of his favorite restaurants in Georgia, The Blue Willow Inn



Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal



Keith Poole with Megumi Naoi, Marisa Abrajano, and Sebastian Saiegh



Keith Poole



Keith Poole on vacation on Catalina Island

current presidency is the lack of penalty for outrageous assertion and lying. Those who call out Trump inevitably come across as merely partisan in the absence of bipartisan condemnation. Trump supporters will also often engage in “whataboutism” – changing the subject to some normative violation by Democrats. The background enabler of this very corrosive game is polarization.⁵

There is a sharp debate about mass polarization to be sure. Some argue that the public is not particularly polarized—and that it is best called a “purple America.”⁶ If so, there is a very serious disconnect between the ideological intensity in Washington and the rest of the country. Either way, the interaction and contrasts between professional politicians’ signaling and position taking and ordinary citizens’ attitudes and views are increasingly disturbing.⁷

Second, polarization has affected the staffing of the federal judiciary—and the Supreme Court itself. In a less polarized time there would be nothing like the remarkable election-year stand-off of 2016 over President Obama’s nomination of Judge Merrick Garland to the seat on the Court vacated by the death of Associate Justice Antonin Scalia. The effectiveness of the administrative state also seems to be at greater risk—as Sarah Binder and Mark Spindel have argued in their study of congressional attacks on the Federal Reserve.⁸

Third, divisions at the top mean that pressing policy problems are piling up without political resolution. As polarization has increased, so has (for example) income inequality—yet policies that might lower income inequality are taken off the table by the impossibility of bipartisan agreement on such remedies as increases in the minimum wage. In fact, it may be that, perversely, polarization favors policies that significantly *increase* income inequality.⁹

Also, major policy reforms (such as Obamacare and the Dodd-Frank Act) face much sharper attack and backlash than they otherwise might. Sen. Mitch McConnell insisted that no Republican support these reforms. Also, the House “repealed” Obamacare so many times that the actual count is still uncertain. Today these policies face unprecedented forms of administrative sabotage in violation of the Take Care Clause.

A growing community of journalists, legal academics, economists, and political scientists are concerned, as well, by polarization’s effects on fiscal policy. Astoundingly, the United States has been brought to the brink of default several times – despite the self-evidence of the cataclysm that would ensue. The now seemingly routine fiscal disorder may all by itself have an independent effect on macroeconomic performance.¹⁰

The Research Agenda

For all of these reasons (and others) our contemporary political polarization is widely (though not universally) regarded as a very serious pathology.¹¹ Yet, oddly enough, as Nolan McCarty and Michael Barber have pointed out, we do not fully understand why polarization emerged when it did, why it did not slow down and instead grew steadily, and

why depolarization seems so unlikely.¹²

Still, political scientists have made progress. So far, widely held assumptions—gerrymandering caused it, the transformation of Southern politics caused it—have been falsified. We know, too, a great deal more than we once did about the role of ideological combat and entrepreneurship.¹³ Likewise we understand a lot more about how change in broadcast media and the arrival of digital media interact with polarization. We strongly suspect, as well, that there are strong connections among our system of campaign finance, weak party control of candidacies, and increased extremism. Think here of the role of the Mercers in backing Roy Moore of Alabama.¹⁴

Frances Lee has also forcefully argued that increased electoral insecurity, narrow presidential electoral victories, and the palpable possibility of turnover in congressional majorities have made it much harder for congressional politicians to resist constant attacks on their partisan opposition, obstruction, and a refusal to compromise.¹⁵ Exhibit A is Mitch McConnell’s vow to make sure that Barack Obama would have only one term in the White House.

We need to sustain the conversation that our discipline is having about political polarization. Political polarization alone will not fully explain the current predicament of American democracy. Nonetheless, we are in our predicament in considerable part because of political polarization. Commentators often point out that our contemporary politics is far more benign than the division that racked the nation just before the Civil War or the divisions that existed after that conflict. Such comparisons set the bar too low, in my opinion. As Thucydides – the first serious student of what deep conflict does to a stable polity – showed, a lot can happen before *that*.¹⁶ And this get us to the final reason we should be grateful for the “NOMINATE project” and for Voteview: they have given us fair warning that explaining, mapping, and understanding political polarization are urgent problems.

Notes

1. For an essential review essay, see Marc Hetherington, “Putting Polarization in Perspective,” *British Journal of Political Science* 39 (Apr. 2009): 413–48.
2. Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal, *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll-Call Voting* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
3. Shor extended the basic algorithm to state legislatures; see Boris Shor and Nolan McCarty, “State Legislative Ideology Data,” Measuring American Legislatures, <http://americanlegislatures.com/>.
4. <http://web.stanford.edu/bonica/data.html>
5. See Brendan Nyhan, “Norms Matter,” *Politico Magazine* September/October 2017 at

<http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/09/05/why-norms-matter-politics-trump-215535>

6. Stephen Ansolabehere, Jonathan Rodden, and James M. Snyder Jr., “Purple America,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 20 (Spring 2006): 97–118.

7. One side says the mass-level change is real; see Alan Abramowitz, *The Disappearing Center: Engaged Citizens, Polarization, and American Democracy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010). See also “Political Polarization in the American Public,” Pew Research Center (June 12, 2014), <http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/12/political-polarization-in-the-american-public/>; Christopher Hare and Keith T. Poole, “How Politically Moderate Are Americans? Less Than It Seems,” *Political Polarization in American Politics*, ed. John Sides and Daniel Hopkins (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 32–40; and David Broockman, “Are Politicians and Activists Reliably ‘More Extreme’ Than Voters? A Skeptical Perspective,” *Political Polarization in American Politics*, ed. John Sides and Daniel Hopkins (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 47–54. Another side says that the change is an elite phenomenon and a symptom of the political irresponsibility of professional party politicians. A clear statement is Michael W. McConnell, “Moderation and Coherence in American Democracy,” *California Law Review* (The Brennan Center Jorde Symposium on Constitutional Law) 99 (Apr. 2011): 373–88. The basic statement is Morris P. Fiorina, with Samuel J. Abrams and Jeremy C. Pope, *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*, 3rd ed. (New York: Longman, 2010.) See also Mark A. Smith, *Secular Faith: How Culture Has Trumped Religion in American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015.) A position that combines elite and mass level analysis and introduces the concept of sorting is Matthew Levendusky, *The Partisan Sort: How Liberals Became Democrats and Conservatives Became Republicans* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009). For a similar finding and very helpful conceptual discussion see Delia Baldassarri and Andrew Gelman, “Partisans Without Constraint: Political Polarization and Trends in American Public Opinion,” *American Journal of Sociology* 114 (Sept. 2008): 408–46, and see, as well, Joseph Bafumi and Robert Y. Shapiro, “A New Partisan Voter,” *Journal of Politics* 71 (Jan. 2009): 1–24, showing that voters have become more issue-aware and partisan. A fourth view is that mistrust—not growing ideological incompatibility—is the key mass-level variable: Marc Hetherington and Thomas J. Rudolph, *Why Washington Won’t Work: Polarization, Political Trust, and the Governing Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015.)

8. Sarah Binder and Mark Spindel, “Independence and Accountability: Congress and the Fed in a Polarized Era,” *Strengthening American Democracy* 123 (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, Apr. 2016).

9. A clear discussion, among others, is Christopher Faricy, *Welfare for the Wealthy: Parties, Social Spending, and Inequality in the United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.)

10. Sarah Binder, *Stalemate: Causes and Consequences of Legislative Gridlock* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution Press, 2003); Sarah Binder, “The Dysfunctional Congress,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 18 (2015): 85–101 (updating findings from *Stalemate*); McCarty et al., *Polarized America*; Nolan McCarty, “The Decline of Regular Order in Congress: Does It Matter?” in *Congress and Policy Making in the 21st Century*, ed. Jeffery A. Jenkins and Eric M. Patashnik (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 162–86; and, Richard Pildes, “Romanticizing Democracy, Political Fragmentation, and the Decline of American Government,” *Yale Law Journal* 124 (December 2014): 806–52.

11. For a very important recent discussion, see the essays in Nathaniel Persily, ed., *Solutions to Political Polarization in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Kelly Williams, “The Brennan Center Jorde Symposium: ‘Ungovernable America? The Causes and Consequences of Polarized Democracy,’” Apr. 22, 2010, <http://www.brennancenter.org/blog/ungovernable-america-jorde-symposium>. See also Thomas Mann and Norman Ornstein, *It’s Even Worse Than It Looks: How the American Constitutional System Collided with the New Politics of Extremism*, rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2016). For examples of work that finds silver linings in polarization or that caution that the pathology of polarization can be overstated, see Abramowitz, *Disappearing Center*; Thomas Keck, *Judicial Politics in Polarized Times* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); and Russell Muirhead, *The Promise of Party in a Polarized Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014). The most sanguine statement is James E. Campbell, *Polarized: Making Sense of a Divided America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.)

12. Michael J. Barber and Nolan McCarty, “Causes and Consequences of Polarization,” *Solutions to Political Polarization in America*, ed. Nathaniel Persily (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 15–58.

13. Hans Noel, *Political Ideologies and Political Parties* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Sam Rosenfeld, *The Polarizers: Postwar Architects of Our Partisan Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017); Barbara Sinclair, *Party Wars: Polarization and the Politics of National Policy Making* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006.)

14. Nolan McCarty, “Reducing Polarization by Making Parties Stronger,” *Solutions to Political Polarization in*

America, ed. Nathaniel Persily (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 136–44; Raymond La Raja and Brian Schaffner, *Campaign Finance and Polarization: When Purists Prevail* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015).

15. Frances E. Lee, *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.)

16. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* trans. Rex Warner; foreword M.I. Finley (Penguin Classics; rev. ed. 1972).

Reflections on Poole's Place: Keith Poole, Howard Rosenthal, and the Study of Congress

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The contributions of Keith Poole both in terms of scholarship and mentorship are hard to overstate. Even for someone such as myself who has never had the privilege of working with or collaborating with Keith, his influence has been both profound and outsized.

My first exposure to the “NOMINATE project” was in David Austen-Smith’s undergraduate class on “Positive Political Theory” at the University of Rochester sitting alongside fellow Yellowjacket Adam Meirowitz. At the time, Keith and Howard Rosenthal had produced a movie they distributed via VHS cassettes of their scalings of the U.S. Congress over time. The dancing ideal points in the movie – rotating and stretching over time as the years ticked by – was captivating; not only because of their apparent potential to quantify and characterize politics over time (as a Rochester undergraduate I was deep into the Kool-Aid!), but also because the images raised interesting questions about what was required to produce and interpret such estimates.

The fact that *NOMINATE: The Movie* was being shown in a class on Positive Political Theory was no accident. Roll call votes had been analyzed for many decades prior to Keith’s work – starting at least in 1924 with work by Rice and the analysis of roll call voting had been enjoying a resurgence starting in the late 1950’s with the advent of data reduction models such as factor analysis and ever increasing computing power. Even so, Keith and Howard’s work was a remarkable and impressive contribution over existing work because NOMINATE’s statistical model was derived directly from a behavioral voting model that assumed each

legislator’s vote was a consequence of considering the utility of voting for and against the proposals under consideration. Deriving a statistical model from a behavioral model of spatial voting was critically important because it provided a bridge between empirical work and the rapidly growing body of formal theoretic work focusing on the US Congress. Unlike other scaling methods that “black-boxed” the model of individual choice, the fact that NOMINATE’s statistical model was consistent with many of the foundational behavioral assumptions being prominently used in deductive theories of elite behavior suggested that the resulting “ideal point” estimates could be directly used to characterize and test the theoretical predictions of such theories.

And used they were. The various flavors of NOMINATE – including: W-NOMINATE which allowed the importance of ideal points for voting behavior to vary but which were not comparable over time; DW-NOMINATE which provided within-institution estimates that could be compared over time; Common Space Scores which allowed comparisons across political institutions; and an Optimal Classification method that black-boxes the behavioral model and attempts to maximize the number of correct classifications – have been regularly used to study the politics of elite actions both across time and around the globe. It is simply impossible to imagine the study of the U.S. Congress and, indeed, the study of elite deliberative bodies in general, in the absence of the work done by Keith and Howard.

The most obvious impact of the NOMINATE project pertains to the claims that Keith and Howard were able to make about the nature of Congressional decision-making. While many aspects of congressional behavior have been illuminated by NOMINATE, perhaps the two most notable claims include: 1) conflict in Congress can be summarized as occurring along a single “left-right” dimension for most of congressional history, and 2) the level of polarization between the parties has varied over time in consequential and impactful ways. Each has launched a robust literature investigating the associated causes and consequences. Moreover, and as a testament to the centrality of his contributions and characterizations, Keith’s insights have even managed to escape the ivory tower; NOMINATE-based characterizations are now routinely invoked by observers and commentators when describing and discussing the nature of contemporary politics in the United States.

While the NOMINATE project is important because of its impact on our understanding of elite conflict in legislatures, a less recognizable, but arguably equally important, effect resulted from Keith and Howard’s supportive encouragement of others working in the area. Keith and Howard epitomized the scientific ideal in that they were committed to getting it right and they were eager to help others push forward (and also push back). Keith made his code and estimates available for all to see and he was willing to answer the ignorant emails sent by a lowly and unknown graduate student who had just eagerly just spent a sizable fraction of their stipend (\$85!) on *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting* and who was initially baffled

by ubiquitous references to K7MOA. In a publishing world where a single negative review could kill an idea or a paper – especially by a scholar as prolific and prominent as Keith – his reactions were (thankfully) more typically an encouraging “Cool!” rather than the easier and more dismissive “Wrong!”

Facilitated by Keith and Howard’s commitment to a robust scientific exploration of the issues and topics they helped pioneer, scholars too numerous to name worked on many issues related to the estimation and interpretation of elite roll call behavior. The task was, and is, immense, for as Keith rightly notes in his 2005 book, “The maps [of ideal points] are useless unless the user understands both the spatial theory that the computer program embodies and the politics of the legislature that produced the roll calls.”

As the literature grew and matured, so too did work pushing scholars to consider the interpretation of the estimates being recovered by the NOMINATE project and NOMINATE-inspired efforts and important work continues. Three issues in particular are worth highlighting.

First, the NOMINATE project provides estimates of the proposals being voted upon, but the identification depends upon the functional form and Keith and Howard were consequently reluctant to make much of the estimated proposal locations. In fact, they went so far as to expressly warn scholars against their usage. The inability to characterize what is being voted upon, however, is unfortunate because our ability to estimate the issues being debated is critically important for understanding the nature of policy change. We certainly care at least as much about the types of politics that are being produced by the political system as we do about characterizing legislators’ ideal points. Encouraging applications have been proposed and applied to specific instances, but broadly applicable means of estimating and interpreting the proposals being voted upon remain elusive. Following Keith and Howard’s initial lead, relying on the connection between theory and estimation is likely essential for providing the leverage needed to recover the alternatives being voted upon.

A second, but relatedly, issue pertains to the fact that the recovered estimates are conditional on the observed data/agenda; insofar as the votes we observe are affected by strategic considerations care it can be difficult to interpret the meaning of a sequence of observed votes if the agenda-setting incentives are not also accounted for. Unfortunately for political scientists (but perhaps fortunately for society), the roll calls we observe are not exogenously chosen so as to precisely reveal the true policy preferences of members. Analyzing roll call votes is more similar to tabulating the results of a public opinion survey whose questions were chosen by (a subset of) the respondents themselves. As a result, important work seeking to better understand why and how elites act on an issue, and how those intentional and strategic decisions impact our ability to interpret the meaning of votes we do observe is ongoing.

Finally, questions about the meaning of the “ideal points” recovered by NOMINATE or NOMINATE-inspired estima-

tors continue. Keith and Howard originally described NOMINATE as reflecting ideology, but their definition of ideology is important – “We use ideology as a shorthand in the sense intended by Converse (1964) ... voting is along ideological lines when positions are predictable across a wide set of issues” (Poole and Rosenthal 1989, p4). Of course, ideological constraint is not the only source of predictability and while many interpret ideal points as measuring policy preferences – perhaps because that is what the underlying behavioral model may seem to suggest – there is nothing inherent in either the behavioral or statistical model to validate this interpretation. Because the statistical model simply seeking the point in the parameter space that maximizes the derived likelihood function, the precise meaning of this point is unclear. This debate is wide-ranging, as it impacts any attempt to interpret the meaning of observable elite behavior.

There is no doubt that the study of the U.S. Congress, and of deliberative bodies in general, has been profoundly and permanently changed by Keith Poole. Through his scholarship and his personality, Keith has helped to define and develop a series of robust and ongoing inquiries into the nature of elite decision-making. His work collecting, analyzing, distributing and interpreting elite voting behavior used a statistical model based on a widely assumed behavioral model of elite voting helped place the systematic study of elites on equal footing with work focusing on the mass public and his work remains central to contemporary attempts to understand the causes and consequences of elite decision-making. Under any reasonable metric – substantively, methodologically, and personally – Poole’s place in the study of the elite decision-making looms large.

Gender Differences in Legislative Behavior: How Keith Poole’s Work Inspired My Research Agenda in Legislative Studies

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Keith Poole is perhaps best known for his work on roll call voting. My research builds on two different strands of scholarship attempting to understand legislative behavior that were inspired by Poole’s work. In particular, scholars seeking to understand women’s legislative behavior employed Poole’s work on roll call voting. Further, Poole’s work on spatial models led scholars to employ similar statistical procedures to analyze different kinds of data (e.g., cosponsorship data, early day motions, legislative speeches) to uncover latent dimensions. In my own research, I draw

on these two lines of scholarship to understand whether female legislators exhibit different legislative behavior than their male colleagues.

I argue that although male and female legislators are likely to display distinct preferences, these differences are difficult to detect using roll call data, which is highly structured by party influences. Instead, we may be more likely to observe gender differences in latent dimensions uncovered from cosponsorship data. As with roll call data, cosponsorship data can be used to recover ideal point estimates. But, unlike roll call data, bill cosponsorship is less structured by party pressures. In this note I evaluate whether gender differences emerge in cosponsorship data. I first introduce a new analysis in which I compare gender differences between men's and women's roll call behavior and cosponsorship behavior using data from the Argentine National Congress. I demonstrate that although there are no systematic gender differences between men's and women's roll call voting, gender differences are evident in cosponsorship behavior. Then, I report results from my 2012 article where I draw on an original dataset that uses cosponsorship data from 18 provincial legislative chambers in Argentina over a 16-year period, to show that statistically significant gender differences exist in the vast majority of the chambers across Argentina. By comparing roll call data and cosponsorship data for the Argentine National Congress, reviewing my published work on the Argentine provinces, and situating it in Poole-inspired scholarship, I elucidate the numerous ways that Poole's work influenced my broader research agenda.

Gender and Legislative Behavior

A long line of scholarship seeks to understand if female legislators display different legislative preferences and behaviors than their male colleagues. As roll call voting became a standard practice for measuring legislative preferences and evaluating legislative behavior (e.g., Poole 2000; 2005; Poole and Rosenthal 1991; 1997; Palfrey and Poole 1987), a number of scholars began using roll call voting to evaluate gender differences. Yet, results from roll call voting analyses are mixed, with some finding differences between men's and women's behavior (Burrell 1994; Clark 1998; Frankovich 1977; Hogan 2008; Welch 1985), and others finding no differences (Vega and Firestone 1995; Barnello 1999; Schwindt-Bayer and Corbetta 2004; Thomas 1989).

Although there is considerable reason to believe that men and women have different legislative preferences, I argue that gender differences are unlikely to emerge in roll call voting. To begin with, roll call data is highly structured by negative agenda control and party discipline. As a result, roll call behavior is highly polarized and exhibits low-dimensionality. Consistent with this observation, low-dimensional spatial models account for voting behavior in a wide-variety of settings, including the U.S. the United Nations, multiple countries across Europe, and all throughout Latin America (Carey 2009; Poole and Rosenthal 2001). It

is thus unlikely that scholars will observe systematic differences in men's and women's voting behavior.

Beyond this, it may be impossible to use roll call analyses to examine gender differences outside of the U.S. Indeed, many chambers do not record votes at all, making it impossible to use roll call analysis. Other chambers only selectively record votes when records are formally requested. For example, Carey (2009) shows that in Latin America, only Nicaragua and Mexico record more than an average of 150 votes per year. On the other extreme Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama, Uruguay, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Venezuela recorded on average fewer than 10 votes per year. This practice results in a biased sample of roll call votes and limits scholars' ability to conduct rigorous analyses across a large number of chambers outside of the U.S.

Moving Beyond Roll Call Data

Given the challenges posed by roll call analysis, scholars began to explore how different types of legislative behavior, such as cosponsorship activity, can be used to examine legislative preferences (e.g., Alemán et al. 2009; Talbert and Potoski 2002). Of particular interests, Alemán et al. (2009) demonstrate that political scientists can measure legislative preferences using cosponsorship data to recover ideal point estimates relatively comparable to those recovered from roll call voting. But, unlike roll call voting, cosponsorship activity is not structured by party discipline or negative agenda control (Talbert and Potoski 2002). As a result, cosponsorship data reveals significantly more intra-party variation than roll call data and may be better suited for exploring more subtle intra-party differences.

Further, whereas ideal point estimates recovered from roll call votes typically result in low dimensionality, cosponsorship analyses result in a higher dimensionality (Alemán et al. 2009; Talbert and Potoski 2002). The first dimension signifies the main cleavage in a chamber (e.g., typically a partisan cleavage). Later dimensions emerge as a product of other salient issue cleavages. Finally, unlike voting records, most chambers keep systematic records of all bills that are introduced along with each of the bill's cosponsors (Barnes 2016). Given these qualities of cosponsorship data, I argue that if men and women exhibit systematically different legislative preferences we may be more likely to observe these differences in their cosponsorship behavior than in their roll call behavior.

Gender Differences: Comparing Roll Call Data with Cosponsorship Data

To demonstrate the utility of cosponsorship data for understanding legislative preferences I use data from the Argentine National Congress to compare men's and women's ideal point estimates recovered from roll call data (from Jones and Hwang 2005) and cosponsorship data (from Alemán et al. 2009). Specifically, I evaluate whether fe-

male legislators' ideal point estimates are located closer to their female colleagues than to their male colleagues. In the roll call analysis, I only compare the first dimension since Jones and Hwang (2005) explain that roll call behavior in the Argentine National Congress is characterized as highly-unidimensional, with no conceivable second dimension. In the cosponsorship analysis I analyze the first two dimensions, because Alemán et al. (2009) explain that cosponsorship behavior in the Argentine Congress is multi-dimensional. Moreover, given that political party influences, constituency characteristics, and district-level factors structure both legislative behavior and the election of women, but are extremely difficult to adequately control for in a statistical model (Poggione 2004; Schwindt-Bayer and Corbetta 2004), I opt to hold these factors constant in my analyses by only comparing legislators from the same political party, who are elected in and serve in the exact same electoral district.

As expected, I do not find any differences between men's and women's roll call votes. Female legislators' ideal point estimates are not significantly closer to their female copartisans than to their male copartisans. Given what we know about roll call data in the Argentine Chamber, this null finding should come as no surprise. Indeed, Jones and Hwang (2005) demonstrate that the Argentine Congress is a unidimensional chamber characterized by a single partisan cleavage. Therefore, if gender differences do exist in legislative behavior, we should not expect to see them emerge in roll call voting as it is highly structured by partisan pressures.

I do, however, find significant differences in cosponsorship behavior. Although there are not significant gender differences in the first dimension, gender differences emerge in the second dimension. Given that Alemán et al. (2009) describe the first dimension as a partisan dimension we should not expect to observe gender differences here. The second dimension, by contrast, uncovers more intra-party heterogeneity. Consistent with previous research suggesting that women bring distinct preferences, priorities, and behaviors to the legislative chamber, women in the Argentine Congress exhibit distinct cosponsorship behavior. As in illustration, the analysis in Table 1 shows that the distance from female legislators' ideal point estimates and their female copartisans is smaller (as depicted by the negative coefficient for the female variable) than their distance from their male copartisans.

Gender Differences in Cosponsorship Data in the Argentine Provinces

To demonstrate the generalizability of this finding across a large number of chambers, I collected an original dataset of bill cosponsorship data from 18 provincial legislative chambers in Argentina over a 16-year period of time. The cosponsorship data are based on an original dataset that I collected by visiting each legislative chamber between August 2009 and May 2010. I use a principal component analysis with singular value decomposition to recover ideal point

estimates from the log-transformed agreement matrix (see Barnes 2012 and Alemán et al. 2009 for more details). As with the National Chamber, cosponsorship behavior in the Argentine provinces is multi-dimensional.

As an illustration, Figure 1 plots the proportion of the variance explained by the first six dimensions for each of the provinces in my sample. It is clear from this figure that the first two dimensions explain most of the variation. Specifically, the first dimension accounts for more of the variance than any other dimension, but (in most provinces) still explains less than half of the total variance. On average the second dimension explains .16 of the overall variance. The third dimension explains less than one-tenth of the overall variance.

Of the two salient dimensions recovered from the cosponsorship data, the first dimension displays clear partisan differences and the second reveals intra-party heterogeneity. Figure 2 provides an example of the distribution of ideal point estimates in the Córdoba Province of Argentina (Barnes 2012). It is clear from the figure that legislators' ideal points are arranged along a partisan dimension (the x-axis), but that considerable intra-party variation emerges in the second dimension (the y-axis).

I replicate the national-level analysis using the first two dimensions uncovered from the provincial cosponsorship data and report these results in Table 2. First, Model 1 in Table 2 indicates that on average, the ideal point estimates of female legislators are closer to the ideal point estimates of their female copartisans than they are to the ideal point estimates of their male copartisans, signifying that on average female legislators' preferences are more similar to their female colleagues than to their male colleagues.

Model 2 in Table 2 reports the results for the analysis of the second dimension. Similar to the 1st dimension, the negative coefficient for female indicates that female legislators' ideal point estimates are closer to their female colleagues than to their male colleagues. Consistent with this finding, gender differences in cosponsorship ideal point estimates are clearly visible along the second dimension in the example plotted in Figure 2. Moreover, the coefficient for female is more than double the size of the coefficient reported in Model 1 demonstrating that gender explains more of the variation in the second dimension than in the first dimension. This finding is not surprising since the second dimension reveals more intra-party variance.

In sum, the subnational-level analysis indicates that gender differences emerge in both the first and second dimensions. Moreover, chamber-level models for each of the 18 legislative chambers in my sample indicate that gender differences are present within political parties in approximately 90% of the legislative chambers in my sample. Together, these analyses support the widespread expectation that gender structures legislative preferences.

Conclusions

Combined, the national-level and subnational-level anal-

Figure 1: Proportion of Variance In Cosponsorship Behavior Explained by First Six Dimensions

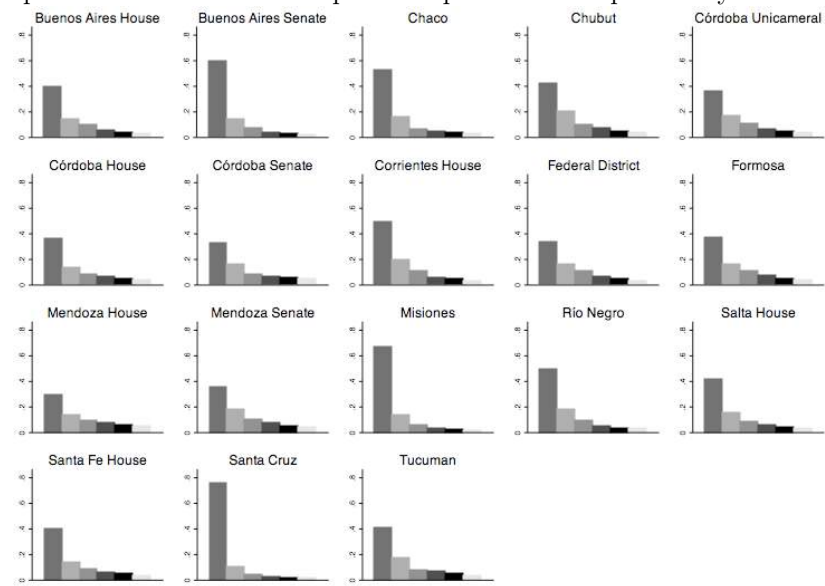


Figure 2: Scatter Plot of Ideal Point Estimates: Example from the Unicameral Chamber of Deputies in Córdoba

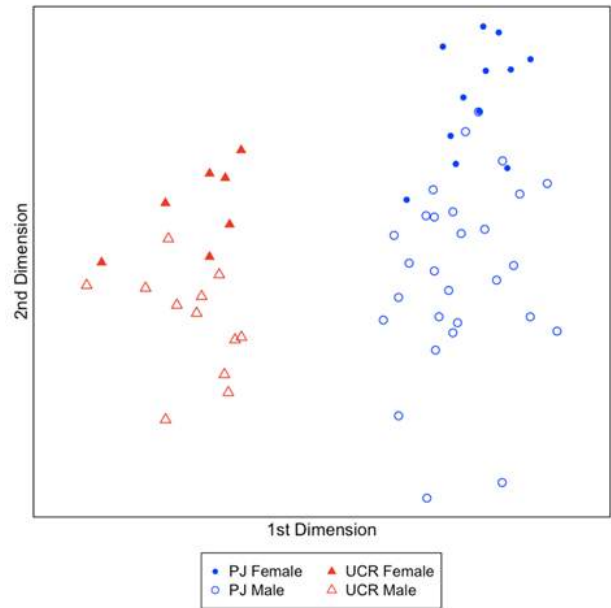


Table 1: Analysis of Female Legislators, Comparing Roll Call data to Cosponsorship Data in the Argentine National Congress

	Roll Call	Cosponsorship 1st Dimension	Cosponsorship 2nd Dimension
	(1)	(2)	x
Female	-0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	-0.05*** (0.01)
% Women	-0.03 (0.47)	-0.30 (0.20)	0.19 (0.21)
GDI	-0.02 (0.45)	0.04 (0.27)	-0.38 (0.32)
GDP	0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)
Constant	0.23 (0.40)	0.29 (0.23)	0.41 (0.27)
<i>St. Dev of the Random Effects Intercepts</i>			
Session-Level	-3.37*** (0.67)	-4.83** (1.77)	-9.66 (180.94)
Legislator-Level	-2.09*** (0.07)	-2.47*** (0.07)	-2.36*** (0.07)
St. Dev. Residual	-1.35*** (0.01)	-1.99*** (0.01)	-1.78*** (0.01)
<i>Legislator Dyads</i>	2866	2866	2866
<i>Sessions</i>	5	5	5

Note: Standard errors in parentheses * $p < .10$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Data from 1993 to 2003. See Barnes (2012) for a detailed discussion of the research design, control variables, and analyses. I employ the same research design here.

Table 2: Analysis of Female Legislators' Cosponsorship Ideal Point Estimates, Argentine Provinces

	Roll Call	Cosponsorship
Female	-0.025*** (0.006)	-0.052*** (0.006)
% Women	0.190 (0.244)	-0.289 (0.235)
GDI	-1.668 (1.627)	-2.146 (1.672)
GDP	0.208 (0.473)	0.329 (0.479)
Constant	1.621 (1.265)	2.182* (1.302)
<i>St. Dev of the Random Effects Intercepts</i>		
Chamber-Level	-2.508*** (0.306)	-2.384*** (0.262)
Session-Level	-1.981*** (0.090)	-2.078*** (0.098)
Legislator-Level	-1.930*** (0.036)	-1.912*** (0.035)
St. Dev. Residual	-1.262*** (0.007)	-1.233*** (0.007)
<i>Chambers</i>	18	18
<i>Sessions</i>	118	118
<i>Legislator Dyads</i>	11512	11512

Note: Standard errors in parentheses * $p < .10$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Data from 1993 to 2003. See Barnes (2012) for a detailed discussion of the research design, control variables, and analyses. I employ the same research design here.

yses from the Argentine chambers demonstrate several important points. First, despite considerable reason to believe men and women may display different legislative preferences, we are unlikely to observe differences using roll call data, as it is highly structured by partisan pressures. Second, whereas roll call data tends to be unidimensional, ideal point estimates recovered from cosponsorship data reveal more intra-party differences. Third, because female legislators—like male legislators—operate within the context of partisan politics we should be less likely to observe gender differences in roll call data and more likely to observe gender differences in cosponsorship data.

It is evident from this note that Keith Poole's research has influenced my work in a number of ways. To begin with, it motivated me to use spatial models to investigate gender differences in legislative preferences. Moreover, Poole's work on roll call voting in the U.S. incited me to collect a new dataset on cosponsorship data for a large number of provincial chambers over a 20-year period (see Barnes 2016). Given the lack of roll call data outside of the U.S. setting, my new dataset will create a number of research opportunities for scholars interested in using ideal point estimates to test legislative theories across a variety of electoral institutions outside the U.S. Whereas previous research has been limited to a small number of chambers, adapting the cosponsorship method to the Argentine provinces increases the sample size (by about 20 legislatures) across a range of legislatures that vary on important factors including electoral formulas, district type, legislative institutions, and the number of relevant parties (see for example Barnes and Jang 2016). Finally, given the widespread gender differences uncovered in cosponsorship behavior I was compelled to ask about why women are more likely to cosponsor with other women and to investigate how their behavior varies across a number of legislative settings. This line of inquiry ultimately motivated my first book, *Gendering Legislative Behavior*.

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Keith Poole, Ideology Scores, and the Study of Congressional Development

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NOMINATE and Congressional Development

It is hard to overstate the impact that Keith Poole's collaboration with Howard Rosenthal has had on the study of congressional history and on the field of American Political Development more generally. Before NOMINATE came on the scene, historically minded congressional scholars, if they were interested in quantitative data at all, were forced to rely on simple measures such as party unity scores to study the historical development of voting patterns, coalition politics, and party cleavages. While such measures have important uses, they are deeply vulnerable to the impact of agenda control. They also do not even aim to measure members' underlying preferences, nor do they allow for the direct analysis of additional dimensions of conflict when cross-cutting issues—such as race and region—become an important part of the roll call record.

Due in part to the limitations of party unity measures, scholars often turned to interest group scorecards as an alternative. As described below, we believe such scorecards can offer critical leverage for understanding important issues in legislative politics. Nonetheless, interest group ratings also have significant limitations. Critics have pointed to problems of comparability over time and to the tendency of interest group raters to choose votes that generate "artificial extremism."¹ More broadly, interest group scores were rare or absent for most of American history. As a result, efforts to put contemporary polarization in historical perspective, or to assess party homogeneity or cleavages over a long time

span, can only get so far when interest group scores are used as measures.

NOMINATE scores, by contrast, are available for every Congress from the start. Since they are calculated based on the entire (contested) roll call record, they provide a rich array of types of votes, largely sidestepping the problems created by the strategic selection of roll calls by interest group raters. By placing legislators and roll calls in a common space, DW-NOMINATE and other variants of the basic NOMINATE procedure have permitted the development of measures of concepts such as partisan homogeneity and polarization that (potentially) "travel" across time, greatly facilitating the analysis and comparison of congressional politics across American history. A wide range of studies have employed NOMINATE-based measures to track these concepts over a long time span and test competing theoretical models. Indeed, it is fair to say that no data source has had a greater impact on the study of legislative politics—both historically and in the contemporary period—than the NOMINATE project.

As Poole and Rosenthal explain, NOMINATE scores provide a statistical summary of legislators' voting behavior. The scores themselves do not have any inherent meaning independent of the theoretical and substantive framework that we use to interpret them. For Poole and Rosenthal, this theoretical framework derives from a formal model of legislative behavior: NOMINATE scores are estimated based on a spatial model of legislators' voting decisions, along with a set of assumptions about voting errors and about change in legislators' preferences over time. By itself, this formal model does not necessarily imbue the resulting scores with ideological meaning, and it is often possible to make use of the scores without giving them an ideological interpretation.²

Nonetheless, the appeal of NOMINATE scores rests in part on their ability to summarize legislators' revealed preferences, and in so doing, to provide a basis for understanding broad trends in partisanship and ideology. Comparing the scores to substantively meaningful benchmarks is a key step in the interpretive process that takes us from the observed NOMINATE score to inferences about a member's ideological orientation. One such benchmark is to see how well members' scores on each dimension predict their votes in particular substantive domains, such as labor policy, regulatory policy, or civil rights. In their landmark book, *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting*, Poole and Rosenthal trace changes in the predictive power of each NOMINATE dimension for a wide range of issues across American history.³ Based on this analysis, Poole and Rosenthal conclude that conflict over economic issues—the role of the government in the economy and battles over redistribution—have generally been central to the first NOMINATE dimension, whereas issues relating to race and region have tended to define the second dimension during eras when a single dimension has proven insufficient, such as the 1930s–70s.

Beyond specific issue areas, the argument that first-dimension NOMINATE scores reflect liberal–conservative



Keith Poole at Mark Owens' dissertation defense (with Keith, Jamie Carson, Mark, Tony Madonna, and Jamie Monogan)



At Chris Hare's (one of Keith's students) dissertation defense — with Ryan Bakker, Keith Poole, Chris, Jamie Carson, and Jamie Monogan



Keith Poole at Jack Collens' dissertation defense (with Ryan Bakker, Jack, Mike Crespino on the screen, Keith, and Jamie Carson)



Keith Poole and Nolan McCarty

ideology in contemporary politics is supported by the finding that the scores are highly correlated with ideological scales that were created precisely to distinguish liberals from conservatives, such as Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) and American Conservative Union (ACU) scores. Given the temporal and methodological limitations of such interest group scores, the case for preferring NOMINATE scores to these measures is strong.

There also was a practical appeal to NOMINATE scores that contributed to their dominant place in legislative studies for decades. Computing NOMINATE estimates originally required the combination of major innovation on the theoretical side—in developing the model underlying the statistical estimation—and the leveraging of (at the time) immense computing power that was beyond the reach of most scholars. Based at Carnegie Mellon, Poole and Rosenthal relied upon supercomputers to come up with ideal point estimates for every legislator in every Congress across U.S. history. This feat commanded the attention of scholars across the field. With such computing power beyond the reach of most, NOMINATE scores were poised to dominate legislative studies for more than a decade. They were the canonical, if not sole, measure for measuring preferences and ideological conflict over time.

In recent years these computational barriers, though still non-trivial, have nevertheless fallen considerably. At the same time, researchers have developed a range of measures based on alternative statistical models and assumptions that can be used to measure member preferences. Examples include Heckman and Snyder's linear-probability approach, Martin and Quinn's and Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers's Bayesian item-response models, and Keith Poole's own method of nonparametric optimal classification.⁴ Further, many of these methods have been implemented with R packages or other publicly available software programs. As a result, applied researchers now have a wide range of choices as they decide how to measure member preferences. They can even tailor their measure to the substantive assumptions that best fit their particular question.

There remain important reasons to rely upon the canonical NOMINATE measures. After decades of use, the scores have been validated and vetted in numerous ways. They are also well-understood (or at least should be well-understood) by consumers. In addition, there is little concern that the researcher has cherry-picked in choosing a particular measurement approach that is tilted toward finding what the researcher seeks to show.

At the same time, there are circumstances in which it makes sense to consider alternative measures. First, at times a researcher wishes to focus on a particular substantive domain or set of votes that is otherwise more limited. In such circumstances, a domain-specific measure may capture features that the one or two-dimensional NOMINATE measure misses. Second, when one is engaged in causal inference, and the dependent variable is a vote or set of votes (for example, in studying responsiveness in the aftermath of an exogenous shock), NOMINATE scores may not be appropriate

since a given member's score will—in some variants of the scores—reflect in part prior (pre-treatment) voting behavior. For example, DW-NOMINATE scores make assumptions about change over time that mean that the score in the current Congress will be affected by prior vote choices.

Given the recent methodological and computational advances described above, we argue that applied researchers need not feel compelled to rely on all-purpose, off-the-shelf scores like the various flavors of NOMINATE scores. Rather, estimating their own ideal-point scores not only is feasible but also can yield substantial methodological gains. We illustrate the possible gains with an example drawn from our recent article in *Studies in American Political Development*: Senate progressives and conservatives in the first half of the 1920s.⁵

Senate Progressives and Conservatives in the Early 1920s

Poole and Rosenthal characterize Senate politics in the 1920s as part of a stable party system that emerged in the 1850s and persisted through the late 1930s, when it was “perturbed” by Southern and non-Southern Democrats’ split over civil rights issues. During this era, the first NOMINATE dimension mainly captures conflict over “the role of government in the economy.”⁶ Second-dimension conflict was generally unimportant but erupted occasionally over an varying set of issues, such as interstate commerce and antitrust in the 66th Senate (1919–20).⁷ Moreover, in addition to being predominantly one-dimensional, according to the NOMINATE scores the 1920s Senate featured relatively high partisan polarization between Democrats and Republicans. Although the first-dimension distance between the two party caucuses declined over the decade, Democratic and Republican senators were about as polarized in the 1920s as they were around 1990, and much more polarized than they were in the 1930s–60s.

This image of an ideologically polarized Senate, however, is difficult to square with other accounts of U.S. politics in the 1920s. Historians of early 20th-century America describe it as “an era of shifting, ideologically fluid, issue-focused coalitions” at most loosely affiliated with one party or the other.⁸ Many of these groups and tendencies could be broadly termed “progressive” and their opponents, “conservative,” and by the century's second decade a distinct progressive ideology, emphasizing government action to regulate and ameliorate the excesses of capitalism, had begun to be articulated by journalists and intellectuals in publications such as *The New Republic*.⁹

Even as progressivism grew in internal coherence, however, its adherents expressed increasing frustration with the major parties as vehicles for their policy goals. Within Congress, conflict between conservatives and “insurgent” forces within both parties was a central, even dominant, feature of the 1920s. Throughout the decade, the reactionary “Old Guard” wing of the majority-party Republicans battled the Farm Bloc, Progressive Bloc, and other dissident groups

of legislators from both parties.

Such ideological divisions rent Democrats as well. Especially in its stronghold in the South, the party was divided between “radicals” such as Thomas Heflin of Alabama and Morris Sheppard of Texas, who were skeptical of concentrated wealth and corporate power, and more conservative, pro-business Southerners, such as Alabama’s Oscar Underwood, and the two wings fought a series of high-profile battles over tax and regulatory policy.¹⁰ Regardless of whether they emphasize the Democratic caucus’s conservatism or progressivism, scholars agree that ideological divisions within the Democratic Party were also an important facet of 1920s politics.

In sum, despite the two parties’ polarization along the first NOMINATE dimension, many of the most salient ideological battles of the 1920s Senate divided the parties internally. It is thus at least questionable to regard first-dimension NOMINATE scores as measures of senators’ positions on the liberal–conservative (or, less anachronistically, progressive–conservative) spectrum. One way to evaluate the validity of such an interpretation is to compare NOMINATE with indices constructed at the time precisely for the purpose of capturing support for a particular ideological program. To do so, we exploit a little-known data source: lists of roll call votes used by progressive organizations to evaluate senators’ support for their program, which have been collected by the historian Erik Olssen.¹¹ Estimating senators’ ideal points based on these “key” roll calls reveals where senators stood on the issues were ideologically meaningful at the time, at least to a certain influential set of political actors.

Here we focus on ideal points estimated using the 75 key votes identified by the Conference for Progressive Political Action (CPPA), an important umbrella organization for progressive and radical groups in the 1920s. The content of these votes was substantively similar to what in the 1930s would come to be called “liberalism”: railroad regulation, protections for labor rights, support for farmer cooperatives, regulation of agricultural processors, a constitutional amendment banning child labor, and higher taxes on corporations, inheritances, excess profits, and high-income individuals. None of the votes concerned tariffs, which was perhaps the most important economic issue separating Democrats and Republicans but which had only an ambiguous relationship to progressivism as an ideology.

To measure senators’ support for the progressive program, we estimate a one-dimensional item-response (IRT) model using only the roll calls identified by the CPPA.¹² Figure 1 provides a scatterplot of first and second-dimension NOMINATE scores and their relationship with CPPA scores. Darker points indicate higher CPPA scores, which have been scaled to range from -1 (least progressive) to +1 (most progressive). To highlight the extremes of the scale, the figure also indicates the six most progressive (hollow diamonds) and least progressive (hollow squares) senators. The extreme low-scorers are all Northeastern “Old Guard” Republicans located in the lower-right quadrant of two-dimensional NOMINATE space. By contrast, the high-

est scorers are split into two clusters. One, comprised of Midwestern Republicans and Farmer-Laborites such as Wisconsin’s La Follete, is located at the top of the second dimension but in the middle on the first. The second cluster, which includes Southern and Western Democrats such as Morris Sheppard of Texas and John Kendrick of Wyoming, is about even with Old Guard Republicans on the second dimension but far to their left on the first dimension.

Thus, while Democrats were typically more progressive than Republicans, with an average CPPA score of 0.37 versus -0.28, the GOP contained both the most and least progressive members of the Senate. Furthermore, first-dimension DW-NOMINATE scores do a much better job of distinguishing conservatives and progressives in the Republican Party than in the Democratic Party—the within-party correlation between first-dimension and (reverse-scored) CPPA scores in the latter is a mere 0.13. As McCarty has shown, together first- and second-dimension DW-NOMINATE scores jointly predict Democrats’ CPPA scores much better, with a multiple correlation of 0.60. It nevertheless remains true that, at least for Democrats, the first NOMINATE dimension in this period does not have the substantive ideological meaning that is typically ascribed to it.

In addition to conforming more closely to contemporaries’ and historians’ views of the ideological leanings of individual senators, the CPPA scores also fit better with many observers’ conviction that the two parties were far from ideologically polarized. Both parties had their progressive and conservative wings, and although the Republicans were by the 1920s considered more conservative overall, the party also contained several of the foremost leaders and organizers of the progressive movement. The ideological overlap between the two parties can easily be seen in Figure 2, which plots the distributions of CPPA scores in the two parties. In stark contrast to the first NOMINATE dimension, which portrays the parties in this period as clearly separated, Figure 2 highlights their ideological overlap. For example, the Democratic senator in the 10th percentile of progressivism of his party is substantially more conservative than the Republican in the 90th percentile for his party. Indeed, the CPPA scores of fully 13% of all senators (9% of Democrats and 16% of Republicans) were closer to the opposing party’s median than to their own party’s, as compared to only 3% of senators (all of them Republicans) that were closer to the opposing party on the first NOMINATE dimension.

In sum, the comparison of NOMINATE and CPPA scores suggests some of the strengths and limitations of our workhorse measure of member ideology. On the one hand, senators’ first-dimension DW-NOMINATE scores are highly correlated with their CPPA scores, suggesting the first NOMINATE dimension does capture conflict between conservatives and progressives in this era. In addition, the second dimension further distinguishes conservatives and progressives within each party. But as direct measures of senators’ ideological orientation, NOMINATE scores on both dimensions leave much to be desired. This is es-

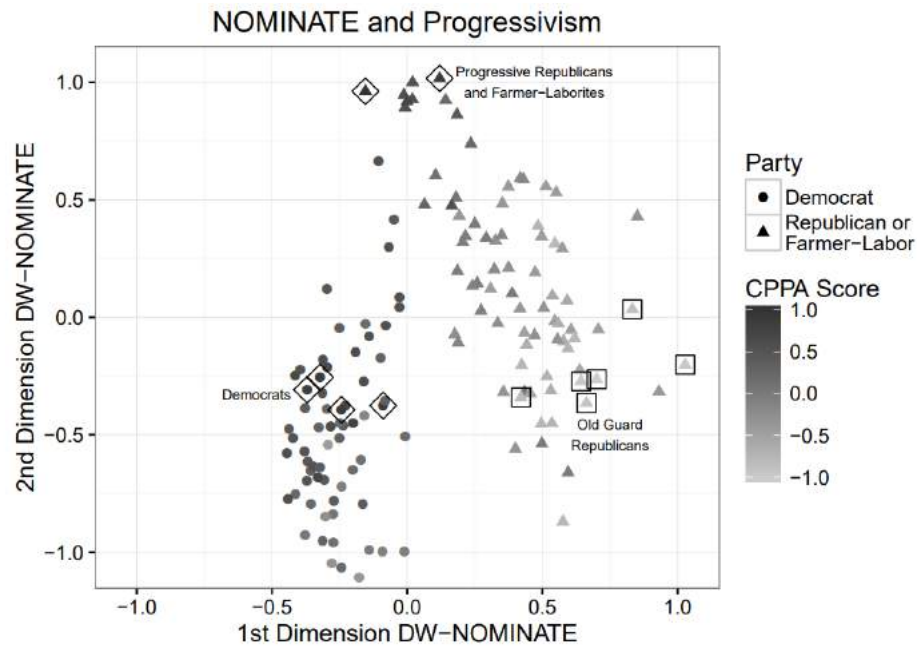


Figure 1: Senate CPPA scores in two-dimensional NOMINATE space, 191924. Hollow diamonds indicate the six most progressive senators (i.e., with the highest CPPA scores), and hollow squares indicate the six least progressive senators.

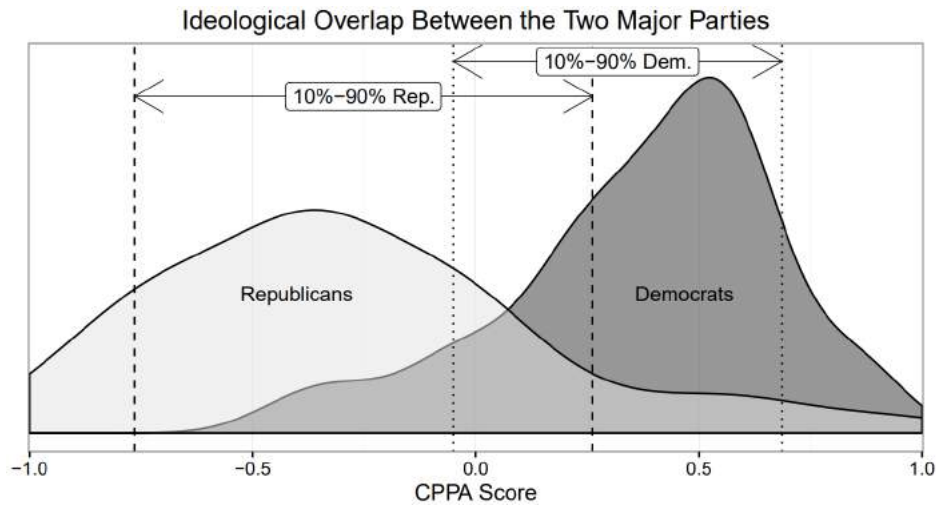


Figure 2: Kernel density plot of CPPA scores in the Democratic and Republican caucuses, 191925. The dashed and dotted lines indicate the 10th-to-90th percentile ranges of the Republican and Democratic distributions, respectively. This plot pools together all senators who served in the 66th through 68th congresses, with the exception of the two Farmer-Labor senators, both of whom had high CPPA scores.

pecially true for Democrats, whose first-dimension NOMINATE scores vary little and are only faintly related to their placement on the progressive–conservative spectrum. First-dimension scores thus convey little more information about Democrats’ ideological orientation than simply knowing their party affiliation. More importantly, using a more direct measure of senators’ progressivism yields a different picture of 1920s politics, one more in line with the accounts of historians and contemporaneous observers. Unlike NOMINATE, which suggests that partisan polarization in the 1920s Senate was nearly as severe as it is today, CPPA scores portray a political world in which the parties had not yet clearly sorted themselves ideologically.

Conclusion

In a thoughtful response to our *Studies* article, Nolan McCarty contends that our critiques of DW-NOMINATE, though valid, are both overstated and of little practical significance to applied researchers, and he notes that many of the problems we identify can be solved with some version of NOMINATE (correctly interpreted). In particular, McCarty argues that using first- and second-dimension scores in conjunction with one another can uncover voting structure that neither alone accounts for; that publicly available variants of NOMINATE, such as those estimated by Nokken and Poole,¹³ relax some of the more problematic assumptions of DW-NOMINATE; and that estimating “bespoke” ideal points is beyond the capabilities (computational and otherwise) of many if not most historically minded scholars.¹⁴

We agree with much of what McCarty says. In particular, we agree that the goal of new ideal-point measures should be to supplement NOMINATE scores, not supplant them. However, we also offer two rejoinders. The first is that ideal-point scores are not merely statistical constructs. Rightly or wrongly, they are imbued with substantive ideological meaning. Indeed, the fact that NOMINATE scores meshed so well with common understandings of left and right (as measured by, for example, interest-group scores) was an important reason for their acceptance as canonical measures. It also provides justification for Poole and Rosenthal’s own description of first-dimension NOMINATE scores as measures of “liberalism–conservatism” that travel throughout U.S. history.¹⁵ Therefore, at a substantive level it matters greatly if, at certain points in history, first-dimension NOMINATE does not map cleanly onto common ideological categories, and it is correspondingly useful to generate alternative measures that do.

Second, we ourselves have spent too much time waiting for the completion of seemingly endless MCMC runs to assert that application-specific ideal points are always feasible to calculate, let alone worth the trouble of constructing. But as innovative recent work by, for example, Bateman, Clinton, and Lapinski¹⁶ illustrates, it is in fact possible, and the payoffs to doing so can be very substantial. More to the point, as computing power continues to increase, the practical barriers to estimating

custom-made ideal points will continue to fall. That applied political scientists can now do on their laptop in hours what took Poole and Rosenthal months on Cray supercomputers should not be considered an insult to the latter. As always, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and it is a tribute to the magnitude of Poole and Rosenthal’s influence that congressional scholars of all stripes take for granted the validity and usefulness of ideal-point estimation.

Notes and References

1. James M. Snyder Jr., “Artificial Extremism in Interest Group Ratings,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 17, no. 3 (1992): 319–345.
2. By *ideology* we mean something more robust than simply a set of political positions that tend empirically to “go together” — what Poole and Rosenthal, following Philip Converse, call “constraint”; Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal, *Ideology and Congress* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2007), 12; Philip E. Converse, “The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics,” in *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David E. Apter (London: Free Press, 1964), 206–261. Rather, we think of ideology as a relatively coherent, if not perfectly consistent, set of general ideas and beliefs from which specific political positions can be derived.
3. Keith T. Poole and Howard Rosenthal, *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting* (New York: Oxford UP, 1997).
4. James J. Heckman and James M. Snyder Jr., “Linear Probability Models of the Demand for Attributes with an Empirical Application to Estimating the Preferences of Legislators,” *RAND Journal of Economics* 28 (1997): S142–89; Andrew D. Martin and Kevin M. Quinn, “Dynamic Ideal Point Estimation via Markov Chain Monte Carlo for the U.S. Supreme Court, 1953–1999,” *Political Analysis* 10, no. 2 (2002): 134–153; Joshua Clinton, Simon Jackman, and Douglas Rivers, “The Statistical Analysis of Roll Call Data,” *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 2 (2004): 355–370; Keith T. Poole, “Nonparametric Unfolding of Binary Choice Data,” *Political Analysis* 8, no. 3 (2000): 211–237.
5. Devin Caughey and Eric Schickler, “Substance and Change in Congressional Ideology: NOMINATE and Its Alternatives,” *Studies in American Political Development* 30 (2016): 128–146.
6. Poole and Rosenthal, *Ideology and Congress*, 42.
7. *Ibid.*, 61.
8. Daniel T. Rodgers, “In Search of Progressivism,” *Reviews in American History* 10, no. 4 (1983): 114.

9. Hans Noel, *Political Ideologies and Political Parties in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 87–9.
10. John D. Hicks, *Republican Ascendancy: 1921–1933* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960); Erik Newland Olssen, “Dissent from Normalcy: Progressives in Congress, 1918–1925” (PhD diss., Duke University, 1970); Robert K. Murray, *The Politics of Normalcy: Governmental Theory and Practice in the Harding-Coolidge Era* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1973).
11. Olssen, “Dissent from Normalcy.”
12. Andrew D. Martin, Kevin M. Quinn, and Jong Hee Park, “MCMCpack: Markov Chain Monte Carlo in R,” *Journal of Statistical Software* 42, no. 9 (2011): 1–21; compare Clinton, Jackman, and Rivers, “The Statistical Analysis of Roll Call Data.”
13. Timothy P. Nokken and Keith T. Poole, “Congressional Party Defection in American History,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (2004): 545–568.
14. Nolan McCarty, “In Defense of DW-NOMINATE,” *Studies in American Political Development* 30, no. 2 (2016): 172 and passim.
15. See, e.g., Poole and Rosenthal, *Ideology and Congress*, 85.
16. David A Bateman, Joshua D. Clinton, and John S. Lapinski, “A House Divided? Roll Calls, Polarization, and Policy Differences in the U.S. House, 1877–2011,” *American Journal of Political Science* 61, no. 3 (2016): 698–714.

CURRENT EVENTS

Redistricting: Coming Right Up

Wendy Underhill
Tim Storey

National Conference on State Legislatures

2018 is around the corner, and so is redistricting.

Ok—that might be a bit of a stretch. Still, it’s a fact that we are much closer to the next round of map-drawing (2021) than we are to the last round (mostly 2011). And it’s a fact

that redistricting is something legislators take *very seriously* while the general public hardly thinks of it at all. State legislators know that the expression, “elections have consequences,” goes double for redistricting. Deciding where boundaries are drawn between districts plays a role in who gets elected, and who gets elected determines the trajectory of public policies.

At this point in the decade-long redistricting cycle, legislators and staff are carefully watching courts to see if the legal rules will be substantially different for the 2020 redistricting cycle than they were for the 2010 cycle. Some reform-minded legislators are proposing bills related to who will draw maps and with what criteria. While others are starting the behind the scenes work like jockeying to see who will sit on and chair redistricting committees and beginning to look at resources like staffing and software options. We’ll look at a fascinating, and potentially revolutionary, pending U.S. Supreme court case plus reform legislation under consideration around the country, but first, politics.

In any Redistricting 101 class, the first lesson taught is that the party that controls the state controls redistricting in most of the nation. Right now, Republicans have majorities in 67 out of the 98 partisan legislative chambers, and Democrats have majorities in just 31 chambers. Those numbers reflect historic GOP dominance of legislatures. The whole story is even worse for Democrats. In two of the Democratic chambers, the New York and Washington senates, Democrats have the numeric majority, but they do not actually control the chambers because small numbers of their members have allied with the Republicans to form GOP-led coalitions. The reverse is true in the Alaska House, where a handful of Republicans are allied with Democrats. Looking at functional control, then, legislative chambers stand at Rs-68, Ds-30. The unicameral Nebraska Legislature is technically elected on a nonpartisan basis although widely considered to be under Republican control. It is a bleak landscape for Democrats with only two major general election dates left before the new lines are drawn.

Prior to the 2016 election, 58 chambers were controlled by Republicans and 40. Republicans were at nearly historic strength in large part due to the 2010 midterm elections, which President Obama referred to as a “shellacking” for his party. Well, to get to today’s current legislative control, an extra coat or two of shellack has been added.

Taking the math up a level, in 32 states Republicans now control both chambers, Democrats hold both chambers in a scant 14 states, leaving a mere three states with divided control in legislatures.

And going up yet one more level to state control, the so-called trifecta, which factors in both legislative chambers and the governorship, 25 states entirely under GOP control, and only seven states controlled by Ds. That makes a total of 32 states, a historic highwater mark for single-party state control.

Legislators and party operatives are aware that the 2018 mid-term elections are up next and very important. However, the real pros are looking ahead to the next “big game”

on the calendar—the 2020 election, the one that sets the table for 2021 redistricting. Mid-term elections in legislatures are very consistently a train wreck for the party in the White House. Since 1900, there have been 29 mid-term election cycles. In 27 of those, the party in the White House lost seats in state legislatures with the average loss being 415 seats. Republicans know that they are fighting head winds going into the 2018 election because they are running with Republican Donald Trump at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

From a redistricting standpoint, that's troubling for Republicans because over 800 state senators will be chosen in 2018 who, because they have four-year terms, will be directly involved in line drawing after the 2020 census. It's also a problem for the GOP because it means that many more Democrats could be running as incumbents in 2020.

While most of next cycle's elected officials who will play a role in redistricting face elections in 2018 and 2020, a handful will be chosen this November in Virginia where the entire House of Delegates is on the ballot as well as the governor. New Jersey also has state legislative elections in 2017, but redistricting of both congressional and state legislative districts in the Garden State is done by a commission,

As for what entity will draw the next maps, it will be mostly as always: legislatures. With knowledge of every bayou and backroad in the state, lawmakers are able to balance the interests of just about all sectors of the geography and all segments of the population. In all but five states (Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, Mississippi and North Carolina), governors are part of the equation too, in that they can veto plans they don't like, just as they can veto any bill.

Still, in 13 states,¹ commissions of some sort are scheduled to draw legislative maps without a vote of the legislature. As for Congressional maps, seven states have commissions.² A number of additional states have backup commissions that come into play if the legislature fails to enact maps, or advisory commissions which submit plans for legislative consideration. Even in states where commissions have primary mapmaking responsibility, the legislature, or at least legislative leaders, often play a key role: they appoint members or can nix some appointments.

Iowa is often referred to as a commission state, but it is really in a category of its own. In the Hawkeye State, legislative staff draw the lines, and legislators vote up or down on the maps. If they vote a plan down, staff tries again. On the third set of maps, legislators can make amendments—but Iowa has been using this system since the 1980 cycle, and so far it has never gotten to that stage.

While the count is now 13 legislative commissions and seven congressional commissions, that is more than in the past. In fact, the number of legislative commissions has increased by one in each of the last three rounds of redistricting. Most recently, in 2015 Ohio created a new commission that requires a measure of bipartisan support for a legislative plan to be adopted. Congressional commissions were adopted for the 2000 (Arizona) and 2010 (California) cy-

cles, but no new ones are yet on tap for 2020.

More changes are possible before 2021. Legislation to create commissions has been introduced in over half the states in 2017. Introductions, of course, by no means imply enactments. So far, only one redistricting reform bill has passed out of its chamber of origin, a Senate bill in Delaware.

Many of the existing commissions were created by way of citizens' initiatives, and some commission advocates see this as the more likely route for adding to the list. Ballot measures for voters to decide in 2018 or even 2020 are under consideration in a handful of states. Whether they can qualify for placement on statewide ballots is TBD.

Besides the creation of commissions, reformers are tackling the criteria used to draw maps. All states must comply with the U.S. constitution and federal law, specifically the Voting Rights Act. Beyond these requirements, state-specific criteria are often listed in states' constitutions, but can be found in statute or chamber rules as well.

Many states use the traditional redistricting principles: compactness, contiguity, preservation of political subdivisions, preservation of communities of interest, preservation of cores of existing districts and either permitting or prohibiting the protection of incumbents.

Because the traditional principles don't preclude partisanship, reformers are looking at adding to their states' list of criteria. Oftentimes proposals for commissions include changes to criteria—but commissions can be created without changing criteria, and criteria can be changed without creating commissions.

Specifically, two new or emerging criteria are 1) competitiveness and 2) prohibiting the use of political data such as voting records. But what, exactly, does "competitiveness" mean and how can it be measured? And what specific political data must be ignored? While the voting record of a community may be off-limits, information about income, buying habits, religion and more can be used to approximate voting patterns.

Attorneys will inevitably debate these new criteria in court, just as they do over traditional principles. In fact, perhaps the biggest players in redistricting this cycle (besides legislators) have been the courts. In most states, at least a cursory challenge to adopted plans was made by one side or the other, and in a handful of states, the battles go on to today: Maryland, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin are still litigating plans drawn using 2010 census data. Indeed, the biggest unknown for the next cycle isn't so much whether states will adopt commissions or change their criteria. It is how the U.S. Supreme Court will rule on partisanship in the context of redistricting.

In a case slated for oral argument on October 3rd, 2017, the Supreme Court will address a potentially groundbreaking theory that seeks to define how much partisanship in redistricting is too much to pass constitutional muster. In late 2016, a three-judge federal district court in Wisconsin found in *Whitford v. Gill* that the Wisconsin General Assembly in 2012 adopted legislative district maps that favored Repub-

licans so much that they violated the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. If the Supreme Court affirms the trial court's finding, it will for the first time set a legal standard to limit partisan map drawing.

"Set a legal standard..." sounds dry, but this is indeed a juicy argument. Some court watchers say that if the Court does set a standard, it could lead to a rash of cases about existing maps in as many as half the states in 2018 and 2019. Others say that the Court is unlikely to adopt the reasoning of the plaintiffs, and besides, even if it does, it's too close to the next cycle to matter.

The outcome of *Whitford* is uncertain. The only thing that is certain is that legislators across the nation are paying extraordinarily close attention to this case—and to how to win elections in 2018 and 2020 so they get to be the ones in office who interpret the Court's decision for their own states in 2021.

Notes

1. The 13 states are: Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Washington.
2. The seven states are: Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, New Jersey and Washington.

DATASET OF INTEREST

Blue Slip Senate Archive

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The United States Senate plays a significant role in the appointment of judges in the federal court system. While the formal role of providing consent to the President's nominees to the federal courts is specified by the Constitution, senators have long played a consultative role through the use of the blue slip. Under the blue slip policy, senators are sent a query asking for their opinion and information on any nominee from their state. The queries were sent on blue paper by

the chair of the Judiciary Committee and thus the nickname, the blue slip.

This project catalogs blue slips available in the National Archives from 1910 to 1960 (<https://blueslips.osu.edu/index.php>). Digital scans of the original blue slips are made available on the project website. We also provide a downloadable coded data set. The project also expands existing databases on lower federal court confirmation (available for nominations from 1977 to 2004 thanks to Wendy L. Martinek at <http://cdp.binghamton.edu/>) to encompass 1891 to 1976. These steps allow comprehensive analyses of the confirmation process and how it has evolved over time, as well as investigations of what factors influence the return of the blue slip.

The website also details how the chairmen of the Judiciary Committee have changed blue slip practices over time. That is, how chairmen have handled negative blue slips has varied throughout the Committee's history. When a negative blue slip is received or an objection is raised by not returning the blue slip, "the chairman may take the following actions on the nominee: (1) stop all committee proceedings; (2) move forward but give added weight to the unfavorable review; or (3) proceed without notice of the negative review" (Sollenberger 2003a, 4). Because the blue slip is an informal rule of the Committee, the chair has a great deal of discretion in the administration the blue slip. Indeed, in our examination of nomination files, we noted some chairmen regularly enforced the seven-day period to return blue slips while others did not. Further, some chairmen followed up if a blue slip was not returned by calling the senator's office.

From 1917 to 1955 a negative blue slip "did not give a Senator an absolute right to block a judicial nomination and prevent committee action... Instead, a Senator's negative assessment of a nominee was meant to express to the committee his views on the nominee so that the chairman would be better prepared to deal with the review of the nomination" (Sollenberger 2003a, 8-9). However, most nominations objected to by a senator received an adverse recommendation from the Judiciary Committee and were later rejected by the full Senate (Sollenberger 2003a). Also during this time, the failure to return the blue slip meant that the senator had "no objection" to the nominee.

This policy changed, however, in 1956 when Senator James O. Eastland became chair of the Committee. During Eastland's tenure, which lasted until 1978, "blue slips were handled as absolute vetoes by Senators" over judicial nominations (Sollenberger 2003a, 9) and non-returned blue slips were also treated as objections to the nomination. Additionally, a negative blue slip (returned or not) no longer meant a nomination would simply be reported adversely out of the Committee. It meant that the Committee would halt all action on the nomination (Sollenberger 2003b).

Since 1978, the variation in blue slip policies has grown. Chairmen have held differing policies on whether a single senator's objection to a nominee may stop the confirmation process or whether both home state senators must ob-

ject (Sollenberger 2003a, Slotnick 2006). Some chairs have treated a non-returned blue slip as equal to a negative blue slip while others have treated it as the senator having "no objection" to the nominee. Further, the stated and practiced blue slip policies of the Judiciary Committee chairs were often different and at times contradictory (Campisano 2009; Sollenberger 2003a, 2011). The [table](#) included as part of the archive charts how the chairs have altered the blue slip throughout its history.

The blue slip data offers an intriguing look into the dynamics among individual senators, committee chairs, and the president. Further, the blue slips, much like the filibuster, give an individual senator dramatic influence that may be wielded in a variety of yet unexplored ways. Finally, the use of blue slips and shifting committee chair blue slip policies offer potential insights into partisan politics and the manipulation of institutional norms and rules to achieve policy goals.

"Advising, Consenting, Delaying, and Expediting: Senator Influences on Presidential Appointments," *Studies in American Political Development* (2016), by Box-Steffensmeier, Campisano, Hitt, and Scott, showed that the blue slip functioned in this era most often to support and expedite nominations, indicating that senators used this device to shape the nominations agenda in this period. Additionally, we analyzed the factors that contributed to an individual senator's decision to support or oppose a nominee, or return a blue slip at all, finding that senators were more likely to return positive blue slips when the Judiciary Committee chair was not a coalition ally. Thus, while blue slips did at times provide an early warning for poor nominees, they more often offered a means by which senators ensured that their desired nominees were confirmed swiftly. The positive role of the blue slip demonstrates that this device protected the individual prerogatives of senators, allowing them a degree of agenda-setting authority with regard to nominees in the weak parties era. Replication data files and code are available on [Dataverse](#).

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Notes

1. Campisano notes that the views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Court of Appeals.

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Kevin Scott is the Unit Chief for Law Enforcement Statistics at the Bureau of Justice Statistics. His research interests cover a wide variety of topics related to the judiciary, including decisionmaking on the federal appeals courts, the nomination and confirmation process of federal judges, and the workload of the federal judiciary. He received his PhD in political science from The Ohio State University.



Tim Storey

Tim Storey is the Director of State Services for the National Conference of State Legislatures in Denver, Colorado. The Division includes several core NCSL programs: fiscal research, the center for legislative strengthening, institutional studies, leaders' services, legislative training, legislative staff support and research and strategic initiatives. He has spent the past 28 years working for and studying legislatures specializing in the areas of elections, redistricting, legislative organization and leadership. During his tenure at NCSL, he has participated in, and led more than two dozen, in-depth studies of legislative operations and structure in over half of the U.S. state legislatures. He has consulted with, and conducting training for, parliaments in South Africa, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Egypt, Algeria and Iraq. Tim staffed NCSL's Redistricting and Elections Committee for over two decades authoring numerous articles and papers on the topics of redistricting and elections. For two decades, he led NCSL's effort, *StateVote*, to collect and analyze state election results. Born and raised in western North Carolina, Tim attended Mars Hill College and received his MA from the University of Colorado.



Wendy Underhill

Wendy Underhill is the director for elections and redistricting at the National Conference of State Legislatures, headquartered in Denver. She has been with NCSL for six years. During the first four years, Ms. Underhill specialized in research and analysis on elections issues, such as online voter registration, voter ID, voting technology, early voting and more. Most recently Ms. Underhill has added redistricting to her portfolio, continuing NCSL's decades-long tradition of providing objective, bipartisan information and analysis on redistricting law and processes. This year she is engaged in redesigning NCSL's Redistricting Law book, also known as "the Red Book." This book is created by NCSL and legislative staff and is considered the book of record on redistricting for legislators across the nation. Previously, Ms. Underhill worked as a policy analyst for the U. S. Senate and the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and in management for various Colorado nonprofits.



Rick Valelly

Rick Valelly is Claude C. Smith '14 Professor of Political Science at Swarthmore College, where he has taught since Fall, 1993 after previously teaching at MIT. He has published scholarly articles in both edited volumes and in the peer-reviewed journals *Annual Review of Political Science*, *Politics & Society*, and *Studies in American Political Development*. He is also author of *American Politics: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2013), *The Two Reconstructions: The Struggle for Black Enfranchisement* (University of Chicago Press, 2004), and *Radicalism in the States: The American Political Economy and the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party* (University of Chicago Press, 1989). He is co-editor (with Suzanne Mettler and Robert Lieberman) of – and a contributor to – the *Oxford Handbook of American Political Development* (Oxford University Press, 2016.) In 2009 he published *Princeton Readings in American Politics*.



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