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## *Who Wins? Party Effects in Legislative Voting*

Political scientists have long attempted to measure and describe the modest and contingent effects of party on the behavior of members of Congress. Recent efforts have extended the debate to the more specific question of whether or not party influences are sufficiently strong to move policy outcomes away from the median position. In this article, we specify four theories of legislative behavior. One is a preference-based, or partyless, theory of behavior. This theory posits that there are no party effects independent of preferences and that equilibrium outcomes are located at the chamber's median. The other theories rely on different conceptions of the foundations of party effects and yield distinctive predictions about the legislators who will support bills on final passage votes. After testing, our conclusion is that strong party influences can be found in final passage voting in the House: the partyless theory receives little support, but a model based on majority party agenda control works well. Legislative outcomes are routinely on the majority party's side of the chamber median.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century (see Lowell 1902), students of politics have sought to identify if and when parties influence legislative behavior. During and subsequent to the behavioral era, this research focused on modeling the effects of party, constituencies, ideology, and other likely influences on the vote decision. Statistical estimates routinely showed party effects on individual behavior. More recently, scholars have confronted the theoretical and empirical problems associated with determining whether or not parties shift policy outcomes away from the outcome preferred by the chamber's median member. Scholars who question the influence of parties claim that party cohesiveness is a by-product of legislators' preferences rather than of party pressure. Taken as a whole, the results in this area are inconclusive.

We take this ambiguity as our departure point to describe different understandings of the roles that parties and preferences play in congressional decision making. After discussing party effects theory with reference to the House of Representatives, we outline four alternative theories of party and preference effects. We then examine the roll-call record for several Congresses to determine the fit of observed behavior to the four models. Finally, we discuss some inferential limits to our empirical tests.

### **Theoretical Perspectives**

#### *Preferenceship*

One theory of congressional decision making posits that legislators hold basic policy preferences when they are sworn into office and that these preferences drive their behavior on the House and Senate floors. This view has a long pedigree. Brady and Cooper (Brady 1988; Cooper and Brady 1981) argued that members' policy preferences, originating in forces external and antecedent to a Congress, determine both the assertiveness of party leaders and policy outcomes. For that reason, these authors argued, leaders' behavioral styles and party success are spuriously related. Both are products of the underlying cohesiveness of party members, which itself is the result of the homogeneity of electoral coalitions. This core argument challenged much of the conventional wisdom about the importance of leaders' personalities and party strategies.

Other scholars have also questioned the juxtaposition of party and preferences derived from other influences (Fiorina 1974; Kingdon 1973; Krehbiel 1993b; Shannon 1968). Kingdon (1973) argued that if parties appear to yield influence over outcomes, then it is because of the high degree of correlation between preferences and partisanship: "Party voting seems to begin with constituency differences . . ." (1973, 135).

The weakness of congressional parties was, at least until the 1980s, considered common knowledge among political scientists. The two books most likely to be present on every congressional scholar's bookshelf (Mayhew 1974; W. Wilson 1885) both suggest that the impact of parties is trivial at best. As Dodd and Oppenheimer wrote, "[P]arties in Congress have been weak, ineffectual organizations" (1977, 41). Likewise, in their influential study of legislative organization, Weingast and Marshall assumed that "parties place no constraints on the behavior of individual members" (1988, 137).

Krehbiel (1991, 1995, 1997; Krehbiel and Wiseman 2001) has presented a number of empirical tests that call into question much of the literature on party effects in Congress. Using studies that document who supports particular bills (1995), when restrictive special rules are granted (1991, 1997), and who receives desirable committee assignments (Krehbiel and Wiseman 2001), Krehbiel argues that partisanship has no independent effect on behavior. Legislative outcomes, according to Krehbiel, “are due, first and foremost, to politicians who straightforwardly and individualistically express their preferences” (1998, 185).

Although Krehbiel’s early work (1991) emphasized the role of the legislative median in shaping outcomes, Brady and Volden (1998) and Krehbiel (1998) have more recently espoused the view that both the median and pivotal players empowered by either the Senate’s rules of debate or the Constitution’s requirements for enacting legislation actually matter. In particular, they maintain that a gridlock region that spans the pivotal players can limit the viable options available to the median legislator, who is empowered in a pure preference model. Although their works primarily focus on the pivotal role of the senator needed to invoke cloture, Brady and Volden theorize that a gridlock region exists in the House too: “There similarly exists a gridlock region for the House. As filibusters are not allowed in the House, this region only stretches from the House median to the House veto pivot” (1998, 19).<sup>1</sup> The constitutional requirement for overriding a veto puts the House veto pivot on the president’s side of the ideological spectrum and one-third of the way in from the most extreme legislator.

### *Partisanship*

Other scholars have challenged the view that congressional parties are entirely derivative of their members’ policy preferences (Aldrich 1995; Aldrich and Rohde 1999; Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2002, 2005; Dion and Huber 1996; Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991; Rohde 1991; Snyder and Groseclose 2000; R. Wilson 1999). In the view of these scholars, policy outcomes rest on the majority party’s side of the chamber median’s ideal point. Two distinct theoretical accounts of partisan effects arise.

One approach, the party cartel model, places electoral motivations at the core of legislative party organization (Cox and McCubbins 1993; Kiewiet and McCubbins 1991). The desire to create and maintain a favorable party reputation is sufficient motivation for legislators to empower party leaders and to support policy outcomes that reflect the preferences of the median member of the majority party, independent

of the distribution of party members' policy preferences. Moreover, since the electoral motivation is considered to be consistently strong over time, party power under the legislative cartel model is in effect "unconditional" or "invariant."

Applications of the cartel model emphasize the importance of controlling the floor agenda in the majority party's pursuit of a favorable party reputation (Cox and McCubbins 2002, 2005). The party's leaders seek to satisfy the membership and avoid open divisions. The party brings legislation to the floor when it can win—that is, when the party is reasonably united by virtue of its preferences. Thus, because the party's leadership is empowered to exercise judicious agenda control, the party need not ask members to vote contrary to their preferences.

A second approach, the conditional party government model, places shared policy preferences at the core of legislative party organization (Aldrich 1995; Aldrich, Berger, and Rohde 2002; Rohde 1991). Proponents of the conditional party government approach argue that legislators form parties to reduce the transaction costs associated with building and maintaining a policy coalition. When intraparty cohesiveness is strong and interparty polarization is high, legislators are more likely to empower their party leaders and the leaders are more likely to become more influential, implicitly, in all facets of policymaking (see Aldrich 1995; Aldrich and Rohde 1997a, 1997b, 1998; Collie and Brady 1985; Cooper and Brady 1981; Cooper, Brady, and Hurley 1977; Froman and Ripley 1965; Huiitt 1961; and Rohde 1991). The procedural tools granted to leaders at times of high party polarization give the leaders influence to generate discipline beyond what could be expected from preferences alone. At such times, the majority party is able to move legislative outcomes away from the preferences of the chamber's median member.

### **Challenges to Separating Preference and Party Effects**

Empirical support for the claim that parties exert minimal influence has primarily derived from multivariate models of the effect of party membership and policy preferences on the behavior of members of the House (Krehbiel 1995, 1996, 1998; Shipan 1992, 1995). Party membership is typically represented by a dummy variable, and preferences are operationalized with interest group ratings or some variant of NOMINATE scores (Poole and Rosenthal 1997). As those who have conducted such tests have noted (Cox and McCubbins 2002; Krehbiel 1993a), efforts to reject a party role using such tests are problematic, for several reasons.

First, party influence over outcomes may be important even when party influence over legislators' vote choices is minimal. The possibility that leaders influence outcomes by manipulating agendas rather than by pressuring legislators means that direct party influence over legislators' decisions on substantive votes (amendments, final passage, conference reports) may be small even though party action may be critical to the outcome. Sinclair, who labeled this influence "structuring vote choices," considers this to be one of leadership's most important tasks (Sinclair 1983, 1989, 1994; also see Bach and Smith 1988). By shaping the alternatives posed to legislators, leaders may affect the outcome without affecting the relationship between legislators' preferences and the choice over those alternatives. Case studies that explore whether a measure of preferences or a party dummy variable better explains individual-level legislative choice implicitly treat the agenda as exogenous. Thus, they cannot test whether or not outcomes in the aggregate are influenced by the exercise of party leaders' agenda powers.

Second, scholars lack good party-free measures of preferences and adequate measures for the long span of time for which many scholars attempt to study party effects. The problems are principally operational. Preferences are an unambiguous theoretical construct, with each member assumed to have fixed preferences over policy choices. But, with a few important exceptions, scholars employ a measure derived from roll-call votes (such as NOMINATE or interest group ratings) as a measure of preferences.<sup>2</sup> Because the behavior being observed is usually a roll-call vote, a roll-call-based measure poses a discriminant validity problem that may stack the deck in favor of finding a preference effect (see Jackson and Kingdon 1992). Indeed, an analysis of the ideological change of party switchers led McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal to acknowledge that NOMINATE scores incorporate party pressure (2001; also see Cox and Poole 2002). Constituent characteristics or elite surveys can be used in lieu of roll-call-based ratings to measure preferences, but such instruments are themselves problematic. According to Krehbiel (1993a), Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart (2001), and others, constituency characteristics are a poor measure of preferences. Although Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart's (2001) innovative use of candidate surveys to establish a "vote-free" preference rating demonstrates that quality non-roll-call measures can be developed, the development of such non-roll-call preference ratings for all members and over time is, for all practical purposes, prohibitively expensive and difficult.<sup>3</sup>

The endogeneity problem led Cox and Poole (2002) to treat NOMINATE scores, which are calculated over all non-unanimous votes

for each Congress, as reflecting average party influence across the votes of a Congress. Cox and Poole took the presence of votes on which party cohesiveness was higher or lower than expected by chance, given the average effect, as a sign of the existence of party influence, interpreting the frequency of such votes as an indication of the extent to which parties actively pressured legislators.

#### Four Stylized Theories of Party and Preference

The recent debate about the importance of party in congressional policymaking involves four distinct theories of party and preference in the House of Representatives. Two of the theories are preference based and two are party based. The theories yield different predictions about who is on the winning side and the location of final outcomes relative to the policy preferences of the chamber's median member. We describe the different predictions in terms of the likelihood of members voting for the winning side on final passage motions, which pit bills against the status quo (SQ).

We illustrate the implications of the four theories in Figure 1. In each case, we assume that legislators vote on all final passage motions, that the policy space is unidimensional, that the median legislator must approve any successful proposal, and that status quo locations are symmetrically distributed around the chamber median.<sup>4</sup> We make these assumptions as simplifying premises for the purposes of analysis, and we explore the realism and consequences of the latter assumption later in the paper. Our assumptions about decision rules, the effect of party, and the location of the policy proposals vary across the four theories. Figures 1A–1D indicate the predicted scatterplots of legislators by their frequency of voting on the winning side and their policy preferences.

The pure preference theory assumes that each legislator votes in favor of the alternative, yea or nay, that yields the outcome closest to that legislator's ideal point. No party influence is present; no party control of the agenda is exercised. The theory predicts that, in a single dimension with simple majority rule, the median voter dictates outcomes. When the median legislator prefers a bill to the SQ, the bill is adopted. In Figure 1A, legislators  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  are just as likely to join the winning side, since they are of equal distance from the chamber's median,  $m$ .<sup>5</sup>

The veto preference theory takes into account that the constitutional requirement that the president sign a bill or that two-thirds of each legislative body support overriding a presidential veto can constrain the impact of preferences. These constitutional provisions create a gridlock region that spans from the member of the House who can

FIGURE 1  
Four Models of Party and Preferences Effects  
on Voting for the Winning Side

Figure 1A  
Model 1. Pure Preference  
[ $|m-X_1| = |m-X_2|$ ]

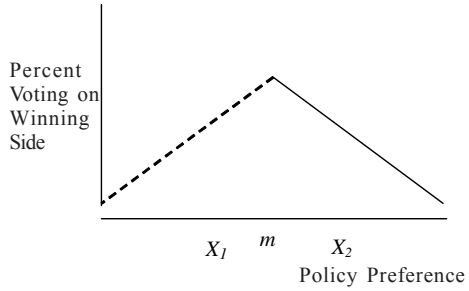


Figure 1B  
Model 2. Veto Preference  
[case of Left President, Right  
Majority]

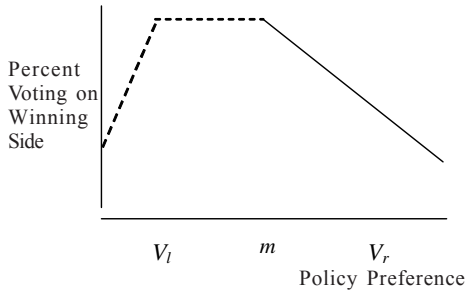


Figure 1C  
Model 3. Party Loyalty  
Inducement

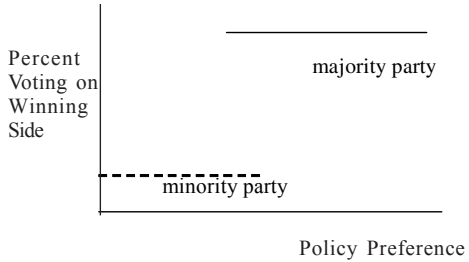
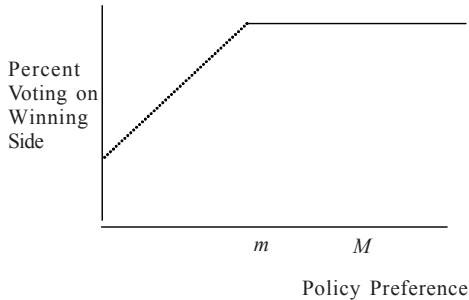


Figure 1D  
Model 4. Majority Party  
Agenda Control  
[Majority party on Right,  
minority party on Left]



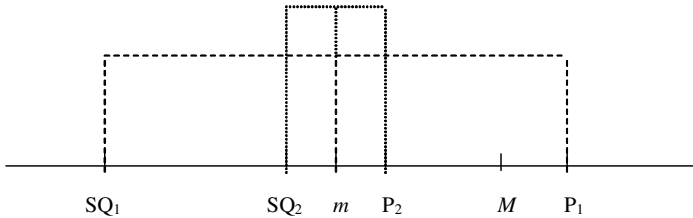
protect a presidential veto to the chamber median. Figure 1B illustrates this scenario for a liberal president. The president with the support of the liberal veto pivot,  $V_p$ , would effectively block any proposal that attempted to move the status quo too far to the right. Hence, every legislator located between this pivot and the chamber median would be confident that outcomes would move the status quo in their desired direction.

In contrast, party theories predict that legislative leaders use either agenda control or inducements to elicit outcomes deviating from the chamber median member's preferred position.<sup>6</sup> The chamber median always supports the final outcome, but the equilibrium outcome in partisan theories is on the majority party's side of the chamber median. This outcome manifests in one of two forms of individual behavior.

The first party theory may be termed the "party loyalty inducement model." This model assumes that party leaders use resources that they control, such as committee assignments and campaign contributions, to induce support from members whose policy preferences are inconsistent with those of the party. Unlike the preference models, the party loyalty inducement model recognizes that a member's vote may depend upon something other than preferences and constitutional provisions for overcoming a presidential veto. This is the implicit theory tested in most previous empirical studies of party and preferences, which employ a dummy to denote membership in either the Republican or Democratic party (for example, Krehbiel 1995; Maltzman 1998; and Shipan 1992, 1995). It is this model of parties that Krehbiel challenges when he claims that what appears to be partisanship is frequently nothing more than preferenceship (1993b). The dummy variable approach serves as a test of the proposition that party dominates preferences when the two considerations are in conflict. The party loyalty inducement model yields all wins for all members of the majority party and few wins for all members of the minority party, as is shown in Figure 1C.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast, a second party model posits agenda control for the majority party's median member. According to the "majority party agenda-control theory," the median member of the majority party controls the floor agenda and thus the nature of the legislation eventually pitted against the status quo (Cox 2001; Cox and McCubbins 2002, 2005; Sinclair 1983, 1989). Agenda control is perfect: The median legislator of the majority party ( $M$ ) brings legislation to a vote on the floor only when the legislation makes that legislator better off and he or she can gain the support of the chamber median ( $m$ ) and so always win (Figure 1D). Thus, any attempt to alter an SQ point between the majority party median and the chamber median would never be considered on the floor. Likewise, the majority party manipulates the amendment agenda

FIGURE 2  
Outcomes Under the Party Agenda Control Model



Note:  $|m - SQ_1| = |m - P_1|$  and  $|m - SQ_2| = |m - P_2|$   
Majority party is on the right in this figure.

so as to restrict the chamber median's ability to move outcomes toward that legislator's preferred point and away from the majority party median's ideal point.<sup>8</sup> Although the majority party median dictates the floor agenda, legislators vote their sincere policy preferences on final passage. For the individual legislator, the frequency of supporting the winning position varies with the side of the chamber median on which he or she resides. If a legislator is located between  $M$  and  $m$ , then the legislator is always on the winning side. If a legislator is located to the left of  $m$ , then winning depends on the location of the status quo and, under the assumption that SQ locations are distributed symmetrically around  $m$ , the legislator's winning rate will decline as his or her distance to the left of  $m$  increases. Thus, this model produces what appear to be asymmetric party effects.<sup>9</sup>

This model assumes that both the chamber median and the majority party median support all proposals that are adopted, but note that the majority party median has exclusive authority to put proposals on the table. From the universe of potential status quo points that can be altered, the majority leadership selects SQ points located on the minority side of the chamber median and proposals on the majority side of the chamber median.<sup>10</sup> As Figure 2 suggests, the extent to which outcomes are on the majority side depends upon the location of the status quo. So long as the proposal is closer to the median than to the status quo, we can expect the chamber median to support the proposal. Thus, in Figure 2, for status quo  $SQ_1$ , the median member ( $m$ ) will support any proposal to the left of  $P_1$  and right of  $SQ_1$ ; for status quo  $SQ_2$ ,  $m$  will support any proposal to the left of  $P_2$  and the right of  $SQ_2$ . If the range of alternatives

that the median finds acceptable includes the majority party median ( $M$ ), then the majority party will put forward a proposal at  $M$ . On the other hand, if  $M$  is unacceptable to the chamber median, then the proposal advocated by the majority party will be at the point  $m$  prefers and closest to  $M$ . For example, in Figure 2, for  $SQ_2$  this point would be  $P_2$ .

### Empirical Tests

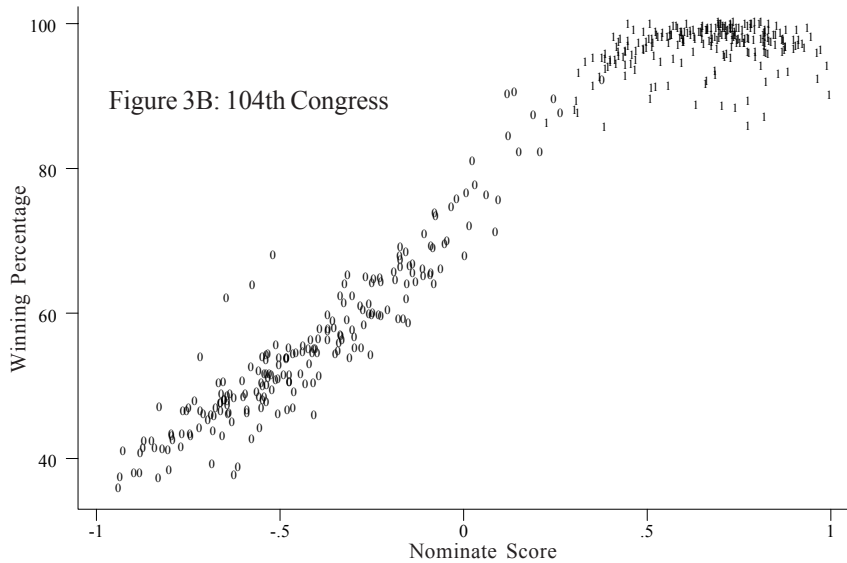
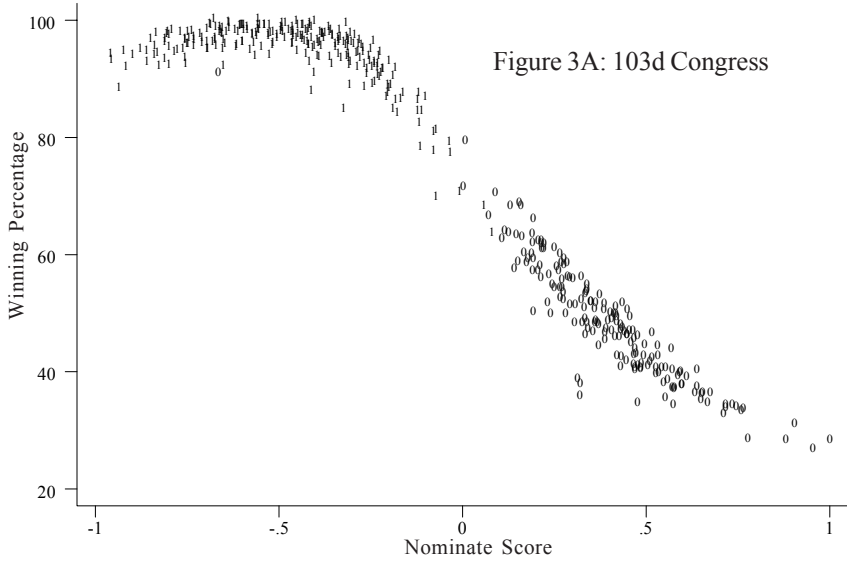
To determine which model best fits legislative outcomes in the House, we calculated the percentage of final passage votes on which each legislator voted with the chamber majority in each of the 96th–105th Congresses (1979–98).<sup>11</sup> The variable measures the rate at which the member voted with the winning position. Figures 3A–3B plot the percentage of the time that each member wins on final floor passage votes (y-axis) against each member's first-dimension NOMINATE score (Poole and Rosenthal 1997) for two selected Congresses.<sup>12</sup> NOMINATE scores surely reflect party influence on individual legislators, along with other sources of influence, so we should interpret our analysis as a search for party effects beyond average party influence on legislators' vote choices.<sup>13</sup>

The consistent pattern in Figure 3 is a high correlation between ideology and winning rates for minority party members and a weak correlation between ideology and winning for majority party members. This asymmetry suggests that a standard two-variable linear model, in which a dummy variable represents party and some scale represents preferences, is misleading.<sup>14</sup> Rather, everyday floor voting indicates that party and preference interact to generate a pattern of voting on the winning side.

Figures 3A and 3B make clear that members of the majority party disproportionately support the winning outcomes. The contrast between the 103d (Figure 3A) and 104th (Figure 3B) Congresses, the former with a Democratic majority and the latter with a Republican majority, assures us that the pattern is a product of majority/minority status and not a by-product of idiosyncratic characteristics of one party or the other. A change in party control produced a mirror-image pattern of support for final passage motions.

We can draw stronger inferences if we pit the four models against one another. By ascertaining which model best accounts for the observed pattern of final passage voting, we can get a clearer understanding of why majority party members disproportionately win on final passage. In the first model (Table 1, data column 1), we included a variable for each member's absolute ideological distance from the chamber median for each Congress. For our ideological measure, we relied upon Poole

FIGURE 3  
Scatterplots of Nominate Score by Winning Percentage,  
103d and 104th Congresses (1993–96)



Key: Liberals to left with Democrats clustered there; conservatives to right with Republicans clustered there. Majority party members denoted by “1”; minority party members denoted by “0.”

and Rosenthal's (1997) NOMINATE scores. If the pure preference model explains outcomes, then this variable should be statistically significant and negative. The closer a legislator is to the chamber median, the more likely that member should be to vote with the majority on final passage.

To test the veto preference theory, we included two interaction terms in our model. One variable is the ideological distance from the chamber median for those legislators not located on the president's side of the ideological spectrum. The other variable measures the ideological distance from the veto override pivotal player for all legislators on the president's side of the ideological spectrum. For the Carter and Clinton administrations, the left region stretches from the legislator who is located one-third of the way in on the left to the most liberal member of the House; the right region includes all members who are more conservative than the chamber median. For the Reagan and Bush administrations, regions are constructed analogously, with the president on the right.

In the third model, we included a dummy variable for membership in the majority party. According to the party loyalty inducement theory, this variable should explain the percentage of the time that a member votes with the majority (winning) position. The relative likelihood of winning depends upon whether or not the legislator belongs to the majority party.

We tested the agenda control model by including one variable that is an interaction between the distance of each member from the chamber median and a dummy for the minority party side of the chamber median, and another variable indicating whether or not a member lies on the majority party's side of the chamber median.<sup>15</sup> If the majority party median dictates outcomes by using its control over the agenda to protect the status quo when the SQ falls on the majority party's side of the chamber median, then this model should account for variation in the likelihood of a legislator being on the winning side on final passage.

The models are defined as follows, with two cases shown for Model 2, depending on whether the president is on the left (2L) or on the right (2R).

$$\text{Model 1: } Y_i = \alpha_1 + \beta_1 |x_i - m| + \varepsilon_i$$

$$\text{Model 2L: } Y_i = \alpha_2 + \beta_2 * (\text{left of } V_l) * |x_i - V_l| + \beta_3 * (\text{right of } m) * |x_i - m| + \varepsilon_i$$

$$\text{Model 2R: } Y_i = \alpha_2 + \beta_2 * (\text{right of } V_r) * |x_i - V_r| + \beta_3 * (\text{left of } m) * |x_i - m| + \varepsilon_i$$

$$\text{Model 3: } Y_i = \alpha_3 + \beta_4 M_i + \varepsilon_i$$

$$\text{Model 4: } Y_i = \alpha_4 + \beta_5 * (\text{minority side of } m) * |x_i - m| + \beta_6 * (\text{majority side of } m) + \varepsilon_i$$

Here,  $x_i$  denotes member ideology,  $m$  is the chamber median,  $V_l$  and  $V_r$  denote the left and right veto pivots, respectively, and  $M_i$  denotes a

majority status dummy. The  $\varepsilon_i$  terms indicate that voting is subject to random error.<sup>16</sup>

To estimate the models, we used weighted least squares with a logit transformation.<sup>17</sup> This strategy is appropriate because these data are grouped data, with a proportion for the dependent variable.<sup>18</sup> Our dependent variable is therefore analogous to the “roll rate” measure of Cox and McCubbins (2004), although we are analyzing win rates at the individual level, not the party level.

To evaluate the competing models, we elected to compare the relative explanatory power of the models using a non-nested hypothesis-testing approach. This approach has two primary advantages. First, the models that we are comparing each imply a non-overlapping set of covariates. Therefore, if we followed the common practice of first outlining the competing models, then including all the independent variables from all the models to allow for a “race among the variables” in a single equation, then our resulting equation would be a hodgepodge with no direct grounding in theory.<sup>19</sup> To match our empirical tests with our models, then, we decided the non-nested tests would be more appropriate. Second, when artificially nested models are estimated using these data, the precise estimation of parameters is hindered by multicollinearity. For the modern Congresses, correlations between party dummies and preference measures (like NOMINATE, Americans for Democratic Action scores, and so on) very commonly exceed .9 (Burden, Caldeira, and Groseclose 2000), making precise estimates problematic at best. The non-nested strategy eliminates this problem.

Once we chose to use a non-nested design, we had to select one of the many non-nested test statistics. We chose the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), which provides a more parsimonious way to compare models than do other non-nested methods and which is a reasonable approximation to the Bayesian model comparison statistic, the Bayes factor (Bartels 1997).<sup>20</sup> When selecting models using the BIC, one’s objective is to minimize the BIC, so the “best” model will be the one with the smallest value of the BIC statistic.

In Table 1, we present Congress-by-Congress results for the four models. The results are clear. In each of the ten Congresses included in our study, the majority party agenda control model does the best job of explaining who wins on final passage. Although the veto preference model has the second-lowest BIC score in six of the Congresses (96th through 99th, 101st, and 103d), the fact that the slope for the region on the House majority party’s side of the chamber median is positive violates our theoretical expectations. In the veto preference model, there is no reason for the House’s most conservative (under right majorities) or

TABLE 1  
Weighted Least Squares Estimates for 96th–105th Houses

Congress	Variables	Preference Models			Party Models		
		(1) Pure Preference	(2) Veto Preference	(3) Party Inducement	(4) Agenda Control		
96th House (1979–80)	distance from chamber median	-2.031 (13.27)*					
	Left of $V_L *  x_i - V_L $		0.962 (5.37)*				
	Right of $m *  x_i - m $ [minority side]		-2.690 (36.15)*				
	majority party status 0/1			1.265 (19.75)*			
	on majority side of chamber median					0.492 (8.51)*	
	minority side * distance from chamber median					-2.318 (25.61)*	
	Constant	2.004 (26.98)*	1.989 (57.85)*		0.611 (14.64)*		1.776 (38.68)*
	Observations	434	434		434		434
	$\bar{R}^2$	0.29	0.81		0.47		0.83
	BIC	-142.28	-708.75		-273.23		-748.01

TABLE 1 (continued)

Congress	Variables	Preference Models		Party Models	
		(1) Pure Preference	(2) Veto Preference	(3) Party Inducement	(4) Agenda Control
97th House (1981-82)	distance from chamber median	-1.666 (11.59)*			
	Left of m * $ x_i - m $ [majority side]		.388 (3.93)*		
	Right of $V_R$ * $ x_i - V_R $		-3.580 (22.93)*		
	majority party status 0/1			0.874 (14.23)*	
	on majority side of chamber median				-0.076 (1.11)
	minority side * distance from chamber median				-2.490 (20.08)*
	Constant	2.114 (30.48)*	1.742 (49.26)*	1.048 (26.87)*	2.130 (36.16)*
	Observations	432	432	432	432
	$\bar{R}^2$	0.24	0.62	0.32	0.68
	BIC	-111.30	-409.03	-160.62	-483.63

TABLE 1 (continued)

Congress	Variables	Preference Models			Party Models	
		(1) Pure Preference	(2) Veto Preference	(3) Party Inducement	(4) Agenda Control	
98th House (1983-84)	distance from chamber median	-2.735 (16.90)*				
	Left of m * $ x_i - m $ [majority side]		1.775 (13.49)*			
	Right of $V_R$ * $ x_i - V_R $		-3.924 (26.05)*			
	majority party status 0/1			1.601 (22.92)*		
	on majority side of chamber median					0.336 (4.93)*
	minority side * distance from chamber median					-2.769 (28.96)*
	Constant	2.510 (28.25)*	1.604 (41.09)*	0.601 (14.63)*	2.190 (39.93)*	
	Observations	431	431	431	431	
	$\bar{R}^2$	0.40	0.76	0.55	0.85	
	BIC	-213.83	-610.46	-338.64	-791.92	

TABLE 1 (continued)

Congress	Variables	Preference Models		Party Models	
		(1) Pure Preference	(2) Veto Preference	(3) Party Inducement	(4) Agenda Control
99th House (1985-86)	distance from chamber median	-2.942 (17.05)*			
	Left of m * $ x_i - m $ [majority side]		2.948 (18.59)*		
	Right of $V_R$ * $ x_i - V_R $		-3.817 (23.54)*		
	majority party status 0/1			1.869 (28.02)*	
	on majority side of chamber median				0.699 (10.93)*
	minority side * distance from chamber median				-2.719 (29.43)*
	Constant	2.392 (26.77)*	1.363 (36.01)*	0.490 (13.77)*	1.959 (38.92)*
	Observations	435	435	435	435
	$\bar{R}^2$	0.40	0.76	0.64	0.88
	BIC	-217.46	-615.62	-443.92	-894.82

TABLE 1 (continued)

Congress	Variables	Preference Models		Party Models	
		(1) Pure Preference	(2) Veto Preference	(3) Party Inducement	(4) Agenda Control
100th House (1987-88)	distance from chamber median	-4.073 (20.64)*			
	Left of m * $ x_i - m $ [majority side]		4.696 (17.18)*		
	Right of $V_R$ * $ x_i - V_R $		-4.350 (21.64)*		
	majority party status 0/1			2.130 (32.50)*	
	on majority side of chamber median				0.889 (12.75)*
	minority side * distance from chamber median				-3.330 (28.19)*
	Constant	2.690 (32.68)*	1.570 (37.89)*	0.680 (21.79)*	2.142 (41.19)*
	Observations	433	433	433	433
	$\bar{R}^2$	0.50	0.73	0.71	0.86
	BIC	-291.59	-550.14	-530.16	-851.47

TABLE 1 (continued)

Congress	Variables	Preference Models		Party Models	
		(1) Pure Preference	(2) Veto Preference	(3) Party Inducement	(4) Agenda Control
101st House (1989-90)	distance from chamber median	-3.135 (22.76)*			
	Left of m * $ x_i - m $ [majority side]		3.205 (16.37)*		
	Right of $V_R$ * $ x_i - V_R $		-3.484 (-24.71)*		
	majority party status 0/1			1.977 (29.94)*	
	on majority side of chamber median				0.789 (13.48)*
	minority side * distance from chamber median				-2.615 (34.17)*
	Constant	2.582 (35.18)*	1.527 (39.66)*	0.588 (17.43)*	2.059 (47.55)*
	Observations	433	433	433	433
	$\bar{R}^2$	0.55	0.75	0.68	0.89
	BIC	-335.70	-587.70	-481.02	-952.28

TABLE 1 (continued)

Congress	Variables	Preference Models		Party Models	
		(1) Pure Preference	(2) Veto Preference	(3) Party Inducement	(4) Agenda Control
102d House (1991-92)	distance from chamber median	-3.216 (26.45)*			
	Left of m * $ x_i - m $ [majority side]		3.252 (15.86)		
	Right of $V_R$ * $ x_i - V_R $		-3.761 (-22.24)		
	majority party status 0/1			2.110 (37.61)*	
	on majority side of chamber median				0.734 (13.03)*
	minority side * distance from chamber median				-2.533 (36.33)*
	Constant	2.576 (36.20)*	1.289 (30.28)*	0.272 (8.83)*	1.923 (43.64)*
	Observations	439	439	439	439
	$\bar{R}^2$	0.62	0.72	0.76	0.91
	BIC	-413.45	-549.28	-627.72	-1,048.27

TABLE 1 (continued)

Congress	Variables	Preference Models		Party Models	
		(1) Pure Preference	(2) Veto Preference	(3) Party Inducement	(4) Agenda Control
103d House (1993-94)	distance from chamber median	-3.645 (24.43)*			
	Left of $V_L *  x_i - V_L $		2.230 (8.16)*		
	Right of $m *  x_i - m $ [minority side]		-3.517 (-47.18)*		
	majority party status 0/1			2.553 (41.16)*	
	on majority side of chamber median				1.296 (22.35)*
	minority side * distance from chamber median				-2.672 (38.27)*
	Constant	2.492 (28.05)*	2.229 (49.93)*	-0.080 (2.65)*	1.656 (37.60)*
	Observations	436	436	436	436
	$\bar{R}^2$	0.58	0.88	0.80	0.94
	BIC	-371.14	-915.19	-687.19	-1,187.33

TABLE 1 (continued)

Congress	Variables	Preference Models		Party Models	
		(1) Pure Preference	(2) Veto Preference	(3) Party Inducement	(4) Agenda Control
104th House (1995-96)	distance from chamber median	-2.869 (29.16)*			
	Left of $V_L *  x_i - V_L $		-2.545 (-16.23)*		
	Right of $m *  x_i - m $ [majority side]		5.997 (22.66)*		
	majority party status 0/1			2.799 (40.70)*	
	on majority side of chamber median				1.408 (20.81)*
	minority side * distance from chamber median				-1.805 (29.68)*
	Constant	2.728 (34.40)*	0.831 (19.39)*	0.190 (7.24)*	1.692 (32.59)*
	Observations	440	440	440	440
	$\bar{R}^2$	0.66	.72	0.79	0.91
	BIC	-468.66	-542.53	-682.45	-1,070.91

TABLE 1 (continued)

Congress	Variables	Preference Models		Party Models	
		(1) Pure Preference	(2) Veto Preference	(3) Party Inducement	(4) Agenda Control
105th House (1997-98)	distance from chamber median	-3.407 (33.55)*			
	Left of $V_L$ * $ x_i - V_i $		-4.319 (-16.03)*		
	Right of m * $ x_i - m $ [majority side]		2.346 (11.81)*		
	majority party status 0/1			1.670 (38.91)*	
	on majority side of chamber median				0.427 (6.98)*
	minority side * distance from chamber median				-2.260 (23.52)*
	Constant	2.454 (47.19)*	1.041 (25.86)*	0.353 (14.69)*	1.631 (29.40)*
	Observations	441	441	441	441
	$\bar{R}^2$	.72	0.59	0.78	0.89
	BIC	-554.44	-375.69	-652.09	-954.59

Note: \* denotes statistically significant at the  $p < .01$  level. The coefficients divided by standard errors are reported in parentheses.

liberal members (under left majorities) to fare better than the more-moderate majority party members. In every Congress, the pure preference model performed the worst.

These findings are important for two reasons. First, our measure of ideology is based upon the complete universe of roll-call votes. Our dependent variable (who wins) is based upon a subset of this universe. But we are not simply “explaining votes with votes.” Roll-call-based measures of preferences like NOMINATE scale legislators along ideological dimensions, typically resulting in a left-right ordering of members. Our dependent variable is who wins on final passage, which is conceptually distinct from a given preference measure. With a dominant alignment of members on a preference measure, winning coalitions could be assembled from the minority side in, from the majority side out, with two ends against the middle, and so on. Our preference measure did not determine a priori the results that we found; there is no predetermined structural relationship between preferences and winning. Therefore, our empirical tests were not stacked in favor of any of the four models.<sup>21</sup> The fact that in none of the ten Congresses did the preference model explain more variance than the majority party agenda-control model raises serious doubts about the extent to which preferences alone can explain floor outcomes on final passage votes. The empirical evidence is highly suggestive of a non-preference-centered explanation of legislative outcomes.

Second, our results suggest that the role of party is more complicated than has previously been understood. Most empirical assessments of the relative influence of party and preferences have used a dummy variable to denote party membership. These models test the party loyalty inducement model. Our results demonstrate that studies are clearly misspecified if they try to discern whether partisanship or preferenceship influences outcomes by pitting an ideological measure against a dummy variable to denote party membership (see Maltzman 1998). The influence of party appears to occur primarily through the majority’s influence over the agenda (Cox 2001; Cox and McCubbins 2004; Sinclair 1995a).

### **Inferential Limits: The Location of Proposals and the Status Quo**

The predictions captured in Figure 1 depend on the assumption that the status quo points are distributed symmetrically around the chamber median. This is a reasonable, but strong assumption. Consider two alternative assumptions: 1) status quos are clustered near the

chamber median on the minority side of the median, predicting results like those of the party loyalty inducement model, but without parties; and 2) status quos are distributed more broadly, but are still skewed toward the minority side, thus predicting results like those of the majority party agenda-control model, but not needing agenda control. Clearly scenario 2 is more of a concern because it fits the empirical evidence. But careful consideration of the logic behind both alternative assumptions reveals that they are not compelling.

Proper inferences about party effects on voting turn on two important characteristics of the strategic context of voting. In the most basic spatial-voting models, a member votes for a proposed bill if that bill is closer to his or her ideal point than to the status quo. Researchers do not, however, have the benefit of systematically observing the locations of the proposal and the status quo.<sup>22</sup> Instead, researchers must draw inferences only after observing whether a member votes for or against a proposal.<sup>23</sup> As we explained earlier, this observation limit casts doubt on inferences regarding whether members vote strictly on the basis of policy preferences or are influenced by party independently.

By relaxing an assumption we made when introducing Figure 1A, we can illustrate the importance of identifying the status quo. Rather than assuming that the status quo locations are symmetrically dispersed around the median, we may consider a case in which status quo points are consistently located near the chamber median on the minority party's side (the right-hand side of the dashed line in Figure 1A) and that all policy proposals are at the chamber median (one epsilon to the right of the status quo). In this situation, we would expect the final outcome to resemble Figure 1C, even if the parties had no inducements to offer their members (as the party loyalty inducement model suggests) and the majority had no influence over the agenda.

This potential outcome inevitably leads us to ask, Could our empirical results stem from the location of the status quo rather than partisan influence? We think not. First, our empirical results do not support the party loyalty inducement model (Figure 1C) we used to illustrate the problems that can arise if the status quo is located near the median on the minority side. Instead, we found the agenda-setting model to be best supported by the data. Whereas we discovered variation in support for the final outcome among members located on the minority party's side of the chamber median, the scenario we just proposed would have led all members of the minority side to oppose final outcomes.

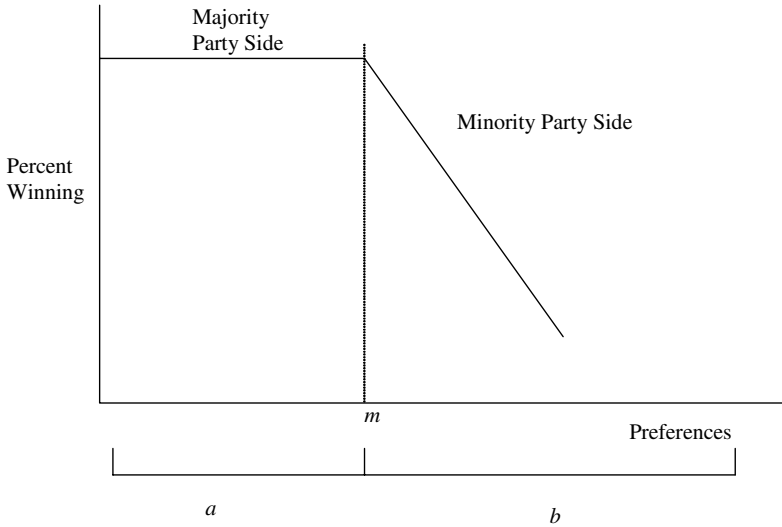
Nevertheless, the status quo rebuttal could be reformulated in such a way as to challenge our conclusion that majority party members

disproportionately win because the majority party manipulates the agenda to protect status quo points that fall on its side of the chamber median. If one were willing to argue that the true status quos were consistently located on the minority party's side of the chamber median, then one might assert that the pattern observed in these ten Congresses reflects the preferences of individual members, rather than the power of the majority. We believe that the status quo rebuttal is, at best, a tortured response. There is no theoretical reason to expect the status quo to be consistently located on the minority's side of the chamber median. Figure 4, based upon the agenda control model, helps to make this point clear.

If one assumes that proposals are offered by the median legislator (location  $m$ ), then what status quo locations are required to generate a pattern of behavior like the one we observe? As we show in Figure 4, to generate the pattern of uniformly high win rates for majority party members and the tailing-off win rates for minority party members, we must have status quo locations predominantly located on the minority side of the spectrum (region b). It is hard to construct a rationale for such a distribution of status quo locations that is both empirically grounded and consistent with the preference model. As our findings (and Figure 3A) make clear, the winning coalitions tended to fall on the Democratic party's side of the ideological spectrum during the 103d Congress (1993–94), in spite of the fact that Democrats had controlled the House for close to 40 years. Why, after a long period of Democratic control, did the status quo naturally fall on the Republican side of the ideological spectrum? It makes sense that during the 104th Congress (1995–96), after Republicans won control of the House, the status quo would be on the Democratic side of the spectrum and the winning coalition would be on the right (this is the pattern in Figure 3B), but it is difficult to believe that during the previous 18 years, the status quo was consistently to the right of the chamber median. In order for the pattern we find over an 18-year period to be the result of the status quo, rather than the majority party's control of the agenda, the status quo would have had to consistently fall on the minority party's side of the ideological spectrum. Of course, the preference theory itself suggests that outcomes will be determined by the median legislator. Presumably, the previous median determines the location of the status quo. Yet for the pattern that we observe to exist, the chamber median would have had to continuously move toward the left from 1979 to 1994.

If the preference theory's implicit assumption about where the status quo should be located is correct and the status quo locations are in, say, the middle third of the spectrum (around location  $m$ ), then the patterns we observe should never emerge. Because majority party

FIGURE 4  
Stylized Relations for Party, Preferences, and Winning



members nearly always support the proposals over the status quo, proposals would have to be centered in the majority party side of the distribution (region a). This scenario is inconsistent with the preference theory's prediction of proposals centered at the chamber median because it would require the median member not to support the winning proposal. Thus, whether we accept the preference theory's account of proposal locations or its account of status quo locations, we must make a claim inconsistent with the theory to account for the observed behavior.

### Discussion

The empirical literature on party and preferences has evolved from studies of voting aggregated over Congresses to studies of discrete legislative episodes. Unfortunately, both types of study suffer weaknesses. Studies conducted at the aggregate level suffer from indirect and perhaps overgeneralized measures of preferences. Studies of individual legislative battles suffer from limited external validity and do not overcome the problems associated with measuring the marginal but critical effects of party activity on legislative outcomes. These difficult trade-offs will continue to limit our ability to evaluate party effects on congressional policymaking.

Here, we have focused on a class of votes—final passage votes—that are sufficiently numerous to avoid problems of external validity and are pitted against the status quo so as to allow inferences about winning and losing. After comparing who votes with the majority in several different Congresses, we can confidently assert that the predictions of the pure preference model are not observed in the voting patterns of the House of Representatives. Outcomes in the House clearly fall on the majority party's side of the chamber median and are consistent with the majority party agenda-control model. Our rejection of the party loyalty inducement model illustrates the need for a complete understanding of when and how parties shape outcomes. This finding also suggests that previous “party versus preference” tests that operationalized party influence with a simple dummy variable misconstrued how party influence manifests.

Discriminating between the party loyalty inducement and agenda-control theories is difficult, but showing the shortcomings of the preference theory as an explanation of House voting behavior is not. The preference theory's predictions for proposal and status quo locations are inconsistent with the observed behavior. When party control changes in the House, the partisan pattern flips immediately, an outcome that cannot be explained by the proposal and status quo implications of the preference theory. And the statistical estimates of preference and party effects consistently favor partisan models in the House.

The finding of strong partisan effects leaves us with an unsettled question: Why congressional parties? Why doesn't the chamber median refuse to support any proposal not located at his or her ideal point? We speculate that there are two reasons.

First, the chamber median may undermine immediate personal policy goals by insisting on policies that are consistent with his or her policy preferences. Because parties already exist and because the majority party has been endowed with scheduling power, the majority party leader may fear the retribution of the caucus and refuse to schedule legislation that the chamber median supports. Thus, a chamber median that holds out for a personally preferred position may end up with the status quo, something worse than if the median went along with the majority party leaders.

Second, if House majority party members allow partisan influences that shift outcomes away from their most preferred outcomes, then we may reasonably infer that purposes beyond policy objectives are at work within congressional parties. Parties may serve their members' electoral purposes, purposes that require strategies beyond those required for policy success alone.<sup>24</sup> Legislators are willing to

sacrifice some potential policy gains in order to realize electoral gains acquired through cooperation with fellow partisans (Cox and McCubbins 1993). In the House, the institutional context gives the majority party the capacity to influence the floor agenda in a way that eases the trade-offs between electoral and policy goals (Sinclair 1983, 1995b).

Our findings in support of the agenda-control model emerge in spite of the fact that we did not limit our analysis to those bills on which amending activity was restricted by a House resolution. Presumably, findings in support of an agenda-control model would be even more robust for a subset of bills that had a formally closed or restrictive rule.

Our analysis here is limited to the House. There are reasons to suspect, however, that the lack of general limits on debate and amendments in the Senate greatly limits the majority party's control of the floor agenda, which in turn keeps the cost of sacrificing for the party quite high. Future work is clearly needed to ascertain whether or not the institutional context and the mixed goals of legislators interact to generate different partisan patterns in the two houses of Congress.

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## NOTES

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1. Krehbiel's theory assumes that a unicameral legislature exists and that "the capacity of politicians to enact policies...is tempered by two supermajoritarian procedures: the executive veto, and the Senate's filibuster" (1998, 22).

2. For a thoughtful review of alternative measures for assessing the ideological proclivities of members, see Burden, Caldeira, and Groseclose 2000. Some scholars rely upon legislator surveys to assess ideological preferences (Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart 2001; Bianco 1994; Erikson and Wright 1996; Kingdon 1973; Miller and Stokes 1963; Smith, Herrera, and Herrera 1990; Wright 1978, 1982; Wright and Berkman 1986).

3. In the Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart (2001) study, for example, only 57% of members responded to the Project Vote Smart survey. Given nonresponse issues, scholars who employ elite interviews or surveys to measure congressional preferences usually limit their analysis to a subset of members for a limited time period. Although the sample Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart used was not randomly selected, the approach appears to be valid for measuring the preferences of those who respond. For the 248 members who responded to the Project Vote Smart survey in either 1996 or 1998 and thus were included in their analysis, the ideology score Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Stewart calculated had a correlation of .94 with NOMINATE ratings. Their appendix demonstrates that, even with an incomplete response rate, it is possible to use survey data to develop “generalizable” conclusions for a specific Congress. Nevertheless, elite surveys do not provide a time series that can be used to test over-time generalizability. Likewise, using newspaper coverage to develop a vote-free measure of House member ideology (Hill, Hanna, and Shafiqat 1997) over a long period of time is costly and potentially problematic because of inconsistency in news coverage (Wooley 2000).

4. We will later discuss our assumption regarding the distribution of status quo points at greater length. For now, note that we do not model the process by which status quos and proposals are taken up under the four theories. Each Congress faces the same set of status quos, but each theory implies that a different set of status quos will be challenged, depending on who the pivotal actors are under the theory.

5. That is,  $|X_1 - m| = |X_2 - m|$ . The pattern in Figure 1A is what one expects if members vote according to their preferences and if the status quo is symmetrically distributed around the chamber median.

6. The agenda control and selective-incentive explanations of party influence are not incompatible with one another. For example, Aldrich and Rohde (1997a, 1998) emphasize both the party-based incentives of disciplined voting in recent Republican Congresses and the agenda control of the majority party leadership in the House. Likewise, Sinclair (1995b) suggests that legislative leaders employ a variety of tools (including selective incentives and agenda manipulation) to ensure desired outcomes. See also Snyder 1992 and Cox 2001 on committee agenda control.

7. Minority party members only win when the minority party takes the same party position as the majority party. In such cases, unanimity results, and everyone wins. Both the cartel and conditional models of party government could produce a symmetric pattern. Although the advocates of the cartel model of party government (Cox and McCubbins 1993) emphasize the collective electoral responsibility of the majority, not the minority, party, presumably the minority party would induce its members to oppose the majority if it felt that a cohesive minority was important for establishing its party reputation. According to the conditional party government model, strong parties are most likely to emerge when the majority and minority parties are cohesive and distinct.

8. The majority party can prevent amendments that it finds objectionable either by employing a restrictive rule or by using its power of recognition to hinder the minority’s capacity to meaningfully amend the bill (Bach and Smith 1989; Sinclair 2002).

9. For asymmetric party effects to appear, the minority party cannot be ideologically cohesive. Since the conditional party government model assumes that the parties are internally homogeneous, such a pattern is more consistent with a cartel

model, in which the majority alone is electorally accountable for what happens. Neither of the party models presented here tests the conditional party government theory, which requires comparisons across Congresses.

10. Outliers will be at the chamber median in the rare event that the status quo is so close to the median that the median finds any proposal not located precisely at his or her most preferred point inferior to the status quo.

11. We limited our analysis to final passage votes because these are the only votes in which the alternative is pitted against the status quo. If one includes amendment or procedural votes, then it is conceivable that members will cast a strategic vote that does not reflect their sincere preferences (Calvert and Fenno 1994). We identified all final passage votes through the 104th Congress using Congressional Quarterly's online *Legi-Slate* legislative tracking system. We identified the 105th final passage votes ourselves. Votes on which a member either abstained or was absent were excluded; paired votes were included.

12. Scatterplots for all ten Congresses are very similar to those shown here and are available from the authors.

13. One might object that the distribution of NOMINATE values is actually inconsistent with all four of the models presented in this article. The majority agenda-control model, for instance, predicts that majority party legislators will vote the same way on almost all final passage votes, while there should be considerable disagreement among members of the minority. Yet there are significant differences in NOMINATE values within *both* political parties. It is important to keep in mind that NOMINATE scores derive from the entire roll-call record, whereas the win rates analyzed in this article only include final passage votes. Different behavioral patterns characterize final passage votes as opposed to roll calls on amendments and other matters (Roberts and Smith 2003). As a result, the distribution of NOMINATE values, in and of itself, does not constitute evidence for or against any of the models in the article.

14. Such a specification allows only the intercepts to differ across parties and cannot account for the different party slopes.

15. To simplify the presentation and discussion, we do not distinguish between majority party members located between the chamber median and the majority party median and those who are more extreme than the majority party median. If the majority party median, in conjunction with the chamber median, regularly opted to support legislation to move status quo locations that were on the extreme end of the majority party's side of the ideological spectrum, then these extreme members of the majority would be less likely to support winning outcomes. We have examined the possibility that the majority party median might try to move such SQ locations, and we found this theory to have no factual basis. Our investigation suggests that status quo points anywhere on the majority party's side of the chamber median are rarely taken up.

16. Including an error term implies that the majority party members and the chamber median need not *always* win, as idiosyncratic factors may lead such members not to vote with the majority coalition on particular final passage votes.

17. We estimated the models using the *glogit* routine in Stata 8.2. For more detail, see the exposition in Greene 1997 (895–96).

18. All our independent variables are fixed across votes for an individual member; none are vote specific. Analyzing these data at the vote level, which would produce an effective sample size of  $N$  (members) \*  $K$  (votes), would exaggerate the amount of

information in the data because member's votes are not independent observations. Furthermore, simply using ordinary least squares (OLS) on proportions data, although common practice, ignores three known pieces of information. First, the dependent variable is bounded by 0 and 1. Second, proportions data are heteroskedastic by definition. If one assumes the proportions variable to be distributed as a binomial variable, then the variance of the errors depends on the term  $p_1(1 - p_1)$ , which varies with  $p_1$ , achieving a maximum at  $p_1 = .5$ . Third, not all members vote the same number of times. Estimating by weighted least squares rather than by OLS prevents the possibility of nonsense predicted probabilities outside the  $[0,1]$  range, directly accounts for the heteroskedasticity in the data, and weights each member by the number of votes the member casts (Greene 1997, 894–96).

19. In essence, this typical practice is equivalent to estimating an “artificial nesting model” without acknowledging that to be the case (Kennedy 1998, 92–93). For a critique of this practice in political science research, see Clarke 2001.

20. Although no single model fit statistic is optimal on all dimensions, the BIC statistic is widely used and has the virtue of penalizing the inclusion of additional parameters. Furthermore, our model comparisons are not affected by our choice of fit statistics; we reach the same conclusion using adjusted  $R^2$  and Akaike's information criterion.

21. Admittedly, the preference and majority party agenda-control models include an independent variable based upon NOMINATE scores. Our decision to rely upon NOMINATE is threefold. First, NOMINATE ratings have been shown to be good proxies for member preferences over a long period of time (Poole and Rosenthal 1997) and have been commonly employed (e.g., Binder 1999; Krehbiel 1998; Wilkerson 1999). Second, as previously noted, alternative measures of preferences (such as member surveys) are highly correlated with NOMINATE. Finally, any endogeneity problem that occurs because final passage votes are included in the NOMINATE ratings biases our results against the party effects we identify.

22. In their work on congressional roll-call voting, Poole and Rosenthal obtain measures of the yea and nay positions on each roll-call vote, but they caution that these estimates are not mathematically identified (1997, 23–24; Londregan 1999).

23. In a few instances, scholars have used votes on bills and amendments arrayed on a dollar metric to estimate ideal points and place them on a substantively meaningful scale. Krehbiel and Rivers (1988) estimated an ordered probit model on minimum wage votes in the Senate to infer senators' ideal points on a dollar scale. Bartels (1991) likewise estimated an ordered probit model on defense appropriations votes in the House to obtain House members' ideal points on defense spending, measured in dollars. This estimation strategy can be useful for policy-specific studies when the votes do not violate the ordered probit assumptions, but it is not practical for votes without substantive metrics or for work at a higher level of aggregation. On the latter point, even if analysis was confined to votes on bills and alternatives with dollar metrics, these votes would not be comparable across policy areas. For the average member, a 20-cent change in the minimum wage could be equivalent to a hundred-million-dollar-change in defense appropriations once the changes are translated into member utility.

24. For a discussion of the multiple goals held by parties and the need for leaders to make policy sacrifices, see Bawn 1998.

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