

Parties in the Electorate: Helping Citizens Make Political Decisions at a Trade-off

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July 11, 2017



Agenda

- 1 The Clearer Cue of Partisanship
- 2 More Partisan Voters
- 3 Other Heuristics & Partisanship

PARTISAN OFFICES

STRAIGHT PARTY VOTING

To vote for all candidates from a single party mark the arrow next to the party name.



Not all parties have nominated candidates for all offices. Marking a straight party vote does not include votes for nonpartisan offices or judges.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY	←	←
REPUBLICAN PARTY	←	←
IOWA GREEN PARTY	←	←
LIBERTARIAN PARTY	←	←

- Opening Question: How do political parties solve the collective action problem for voters?

Parties Solving Collective Action in the Electorate

Political Parties and Problems of Collective Action

Arena:	Collective Action Problems	Parties Help Solve by:
Electorate	Free riding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rational abstention • Rational ignorance 	Branding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus of collective responsibility • Heuristic; party id. Mobilization

Levendusky: *Benefits* of Elite Polarization

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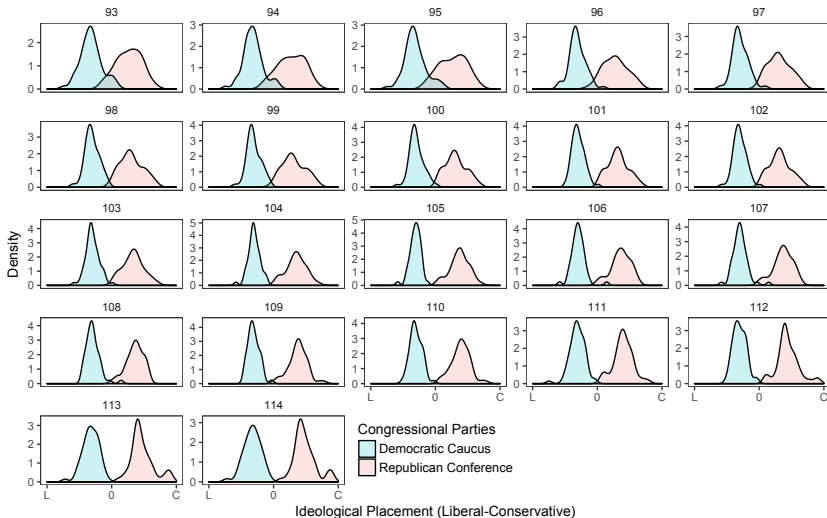
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- ▶ Largely centered on racial issues & economic redistribution

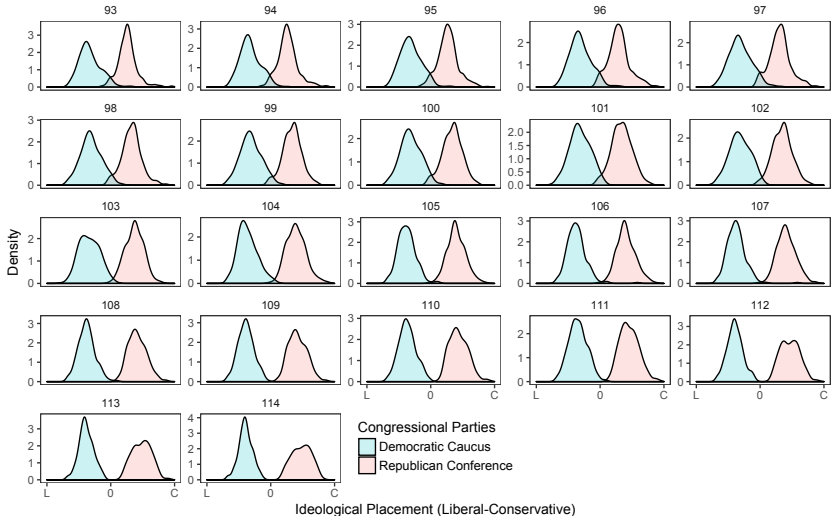
Evidence of Elite Polarization: U.S. House

Distribution of U.S. Senators by Ideological Placement by Congress, 1974-2016



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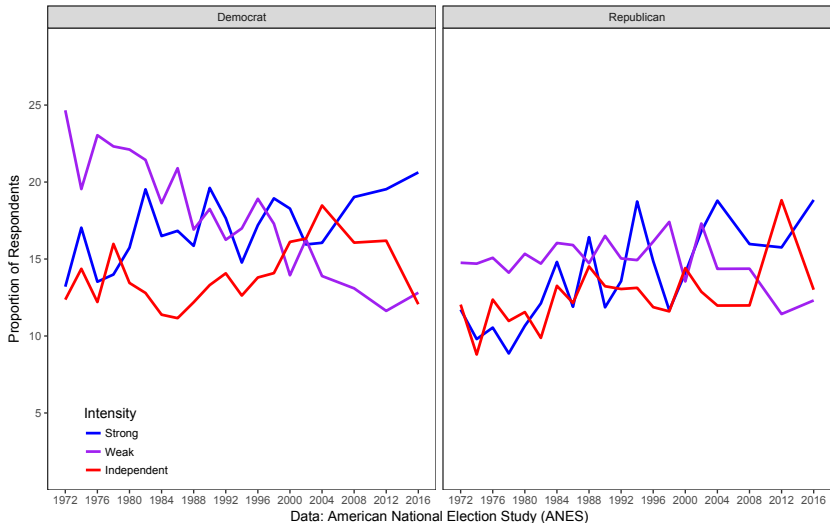
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- ▶ Can you think of a cost of this “benefit” of elite polarization?

More Partisan & *Consistent* Voters

- ▶ What sort of picture does Bafumi & Shapiro paint of the American voter in the 1950's & 1960's?
- ▶ Again, inconsistent voters & weak partisan ties, why?
- ▶ They contend due to bipartisan agreement on “on an enlarged American welfare state compared to the pre-New Deal era and a Cold War consensus in foreign policy.”
- ▶ Why would this weaken partisan attachment by voters?
- ▶ What do they contend happened to the American voter since the 1960's?
- ▶ Greater partisan attachment & anchoring on left-right continuum on economic, social, & religious issues

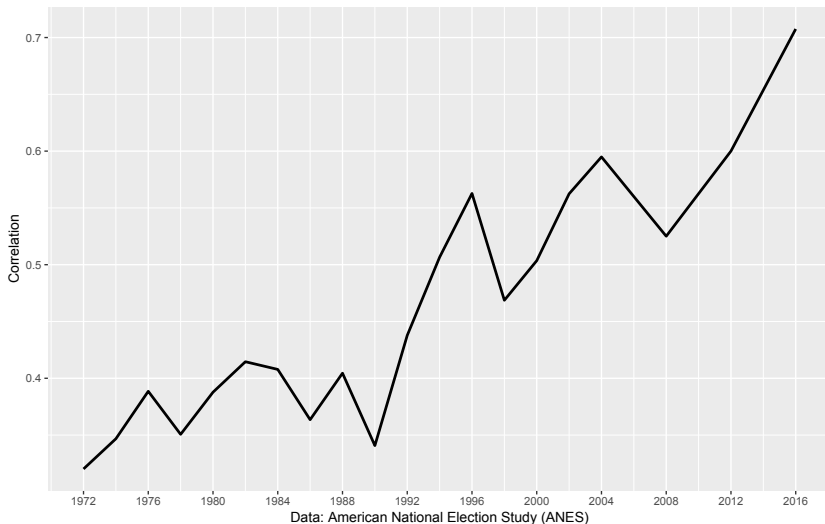
Resurgent Partisanship: Replicating Bafumi & Shapiro

Intensity of Partisan Preferences in the American Electorate, 1972-2016



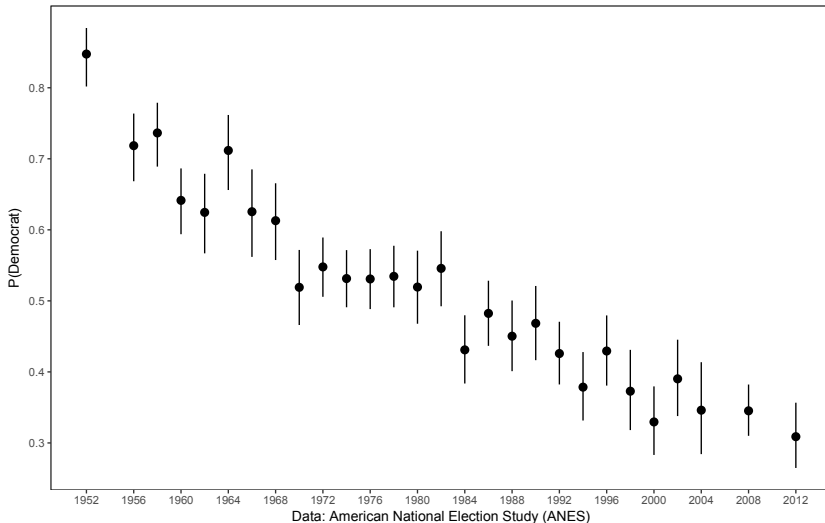
Greater Congruence with Ideological Preferences

Correlation between Partisanship & Ideological Preferences, 1972-2016

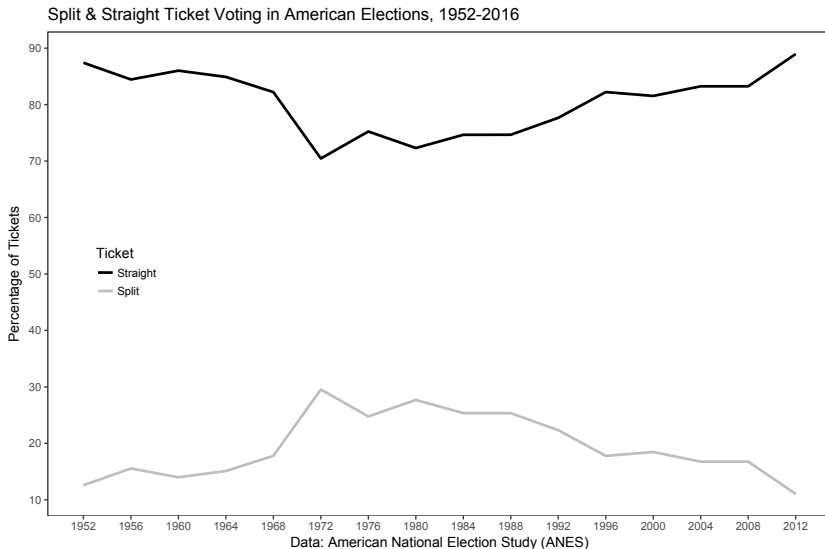


Decline of the Southern Democratic Wing

Probability of Identifying as a Democrat among Southern White Voters, 1952-2016

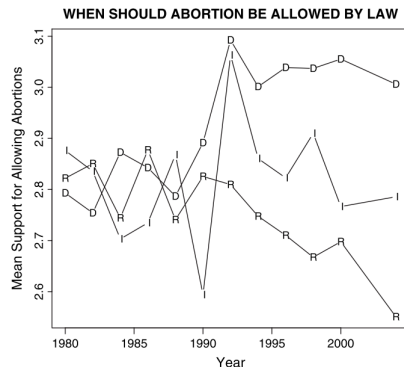
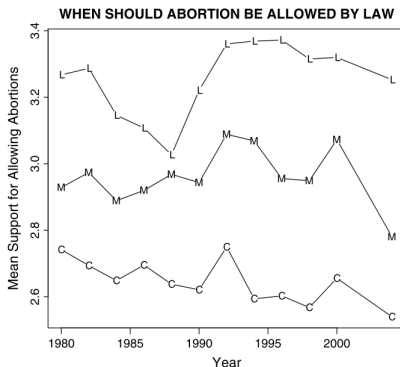


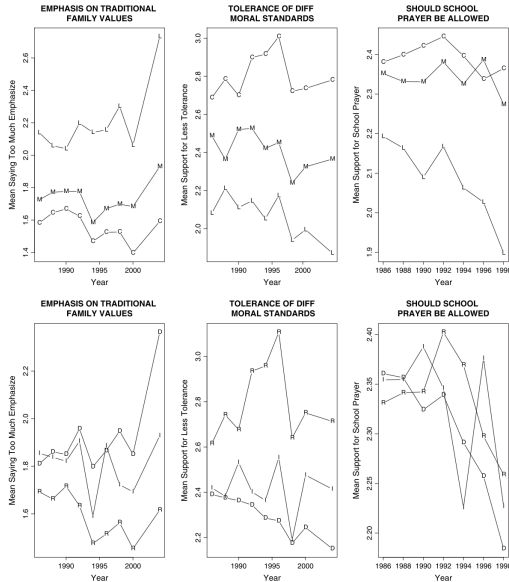
Decline of Split Ticket Voting



Greater Emphasis on Left-Right Spectrum

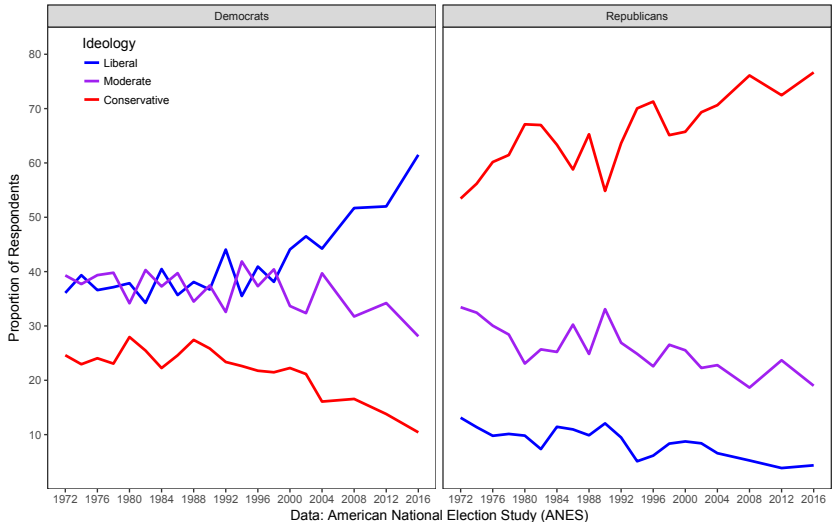
FIGURE 8 Mean position of conservatives/moderate/liberals and Republicans/Independents/Democrats on whether abortion should be legal. Source: NES Cumulative File.





Greater Ideological Consistency in Both Parties

Ideological Preferences by Voter Self-Reported Partisan Affiliation, 1972-2016



Strong Relationship between Vote-Choice & Ideology/Party

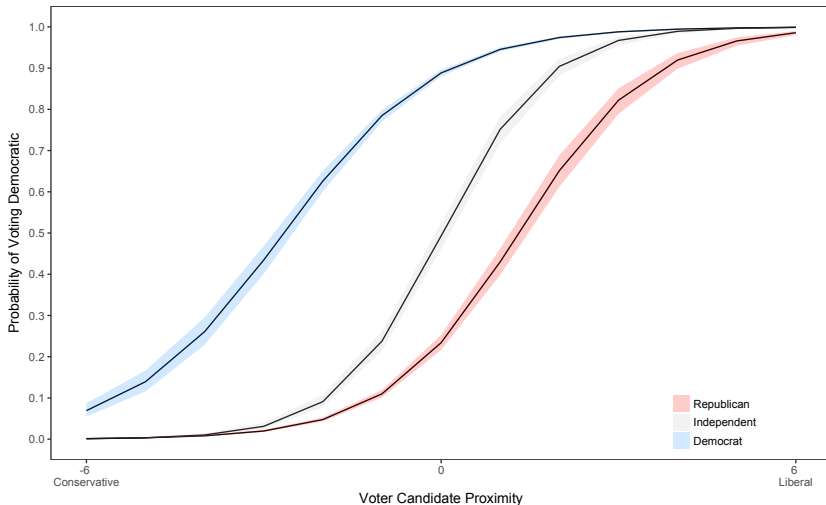
Percent Voting for Obama by Ideology & Party, 2012

<i>Partisanship</i>	<i>Ideology</i>			
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	DK
Democrat	97.2%	87.6%	83.7%	92.2%
Independent	70.5%	63.0%	23.2%	30.6%
Republican	26.1%	14.6%	4.5%	17.4%

Data: 2012 American National Election Study

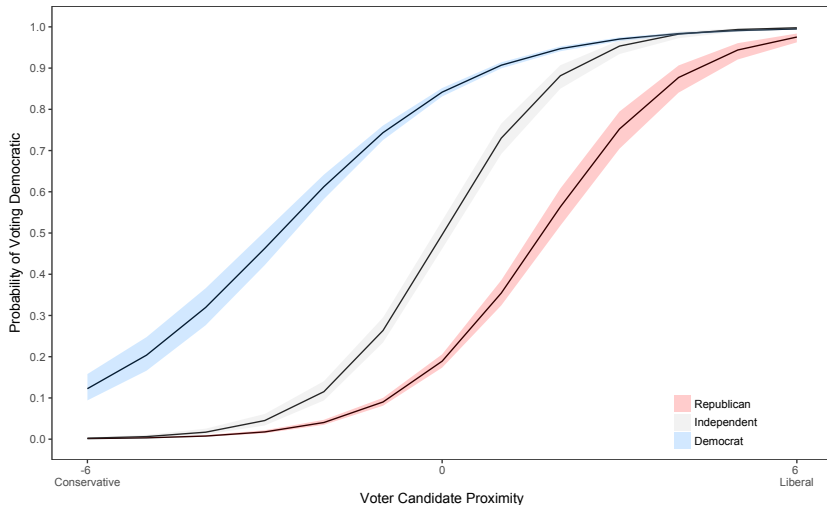
Party ID & Proximity Voting in Presidential Elections

Probability of Voting Democratic by Ideological Proximity & Partisanship,
2016 Presidential Election (CCES)



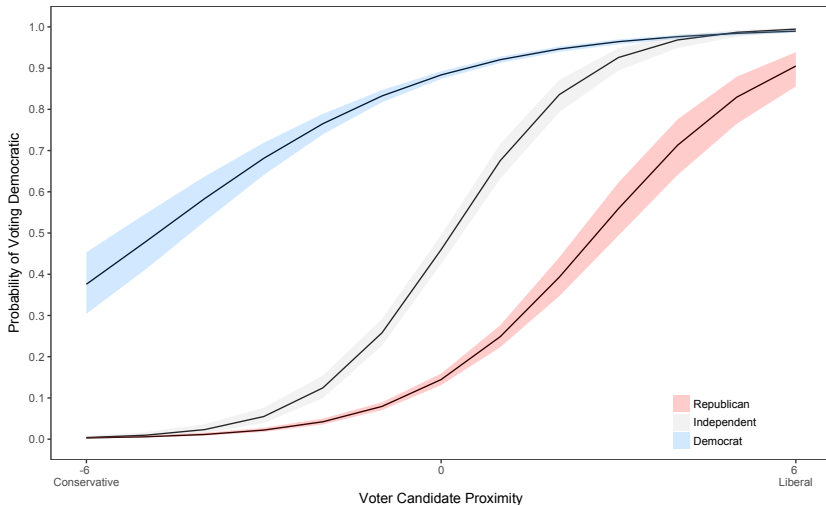
Party ID & Proximity Voting in Senate Elections

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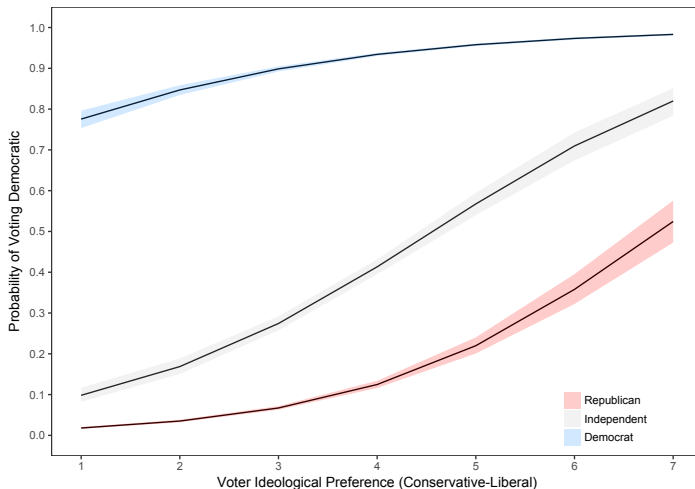
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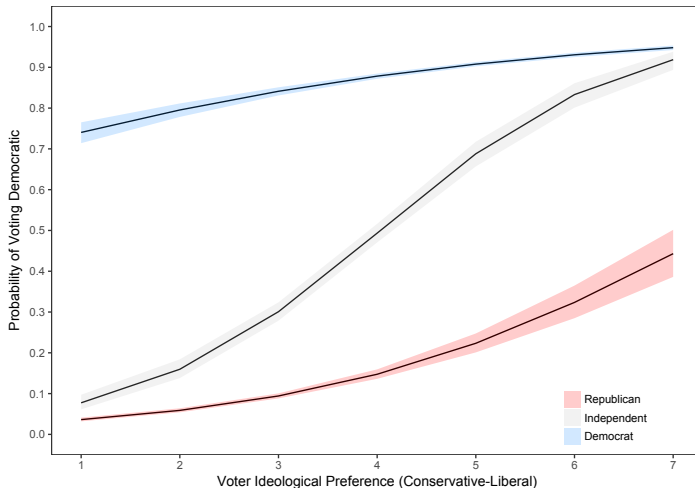
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Probability of Voting Democratic by Ideological Preference & Partisanship, 2016 Presidential Election (CCES)



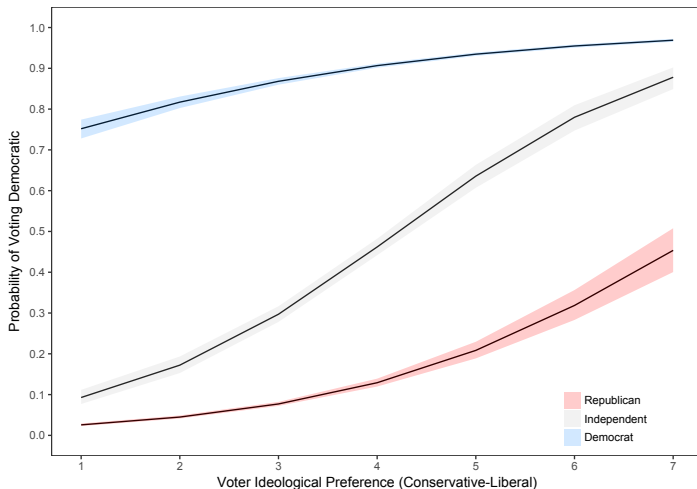
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Partisanship & “Correct” Proximity Voting

Party ID & Proximity Voting, 2016 Presidential Election

<i>Condition</i>	% of Sample	% Casting Proximity Vote
Party ID & Proximity Overlap	94.11%	97.78%
Strict Independents	16.81%	90.37%
Party ID & Proximity Conflict	5.89%	2.22%

Data: 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

Partisanship & “Correct” Proximity Voting

Party ID & Proximity Voting, 2016 Senate Elections

<i>Condition</i>	% of Sample	% Casting Proximity Vote
Party ID & Proximity Overlap	91.04%	96.75%
Strict Independents	16.81%	86.45%
Party ID & Proximity Conflict	8.97%	3.25%

Data: 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

Partisanship & “Correct” Proximity Voting

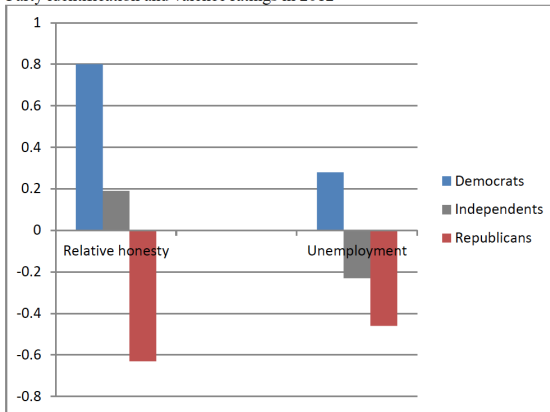
Party ID & Proximity Voting, 2016 House Elections

<i>Condition</i>	% of Sample	% Casting Proximity Vote
Party ID & Proximity Overlap	87.89%	97.25%
Strict Independents	16.81%	83.46%
Party ID & Proximity Conflict	12.11%	2.76%

Data: 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study

Partisanship & Valence Perceptions

Party identification and valence ratings in 2012

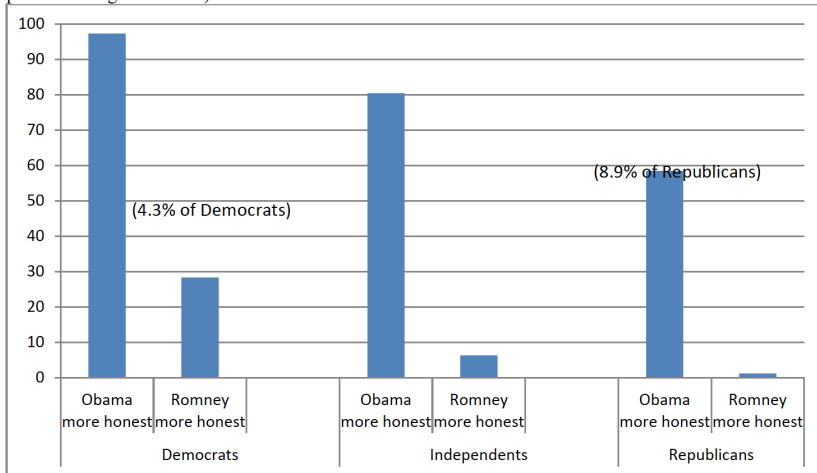


Note: Positive relative honesty scores indicate Obama rated more honest than Romney; negative scores indicate Romney rated more honest. Positive unemployment scores indicate respondents thought unemployment was going down; negative scores indicate respondents thought unemployment was going up.

Source: Stone (2015) UC Davis Pol 1 Seminar

Partisanship & Valence Perceptions

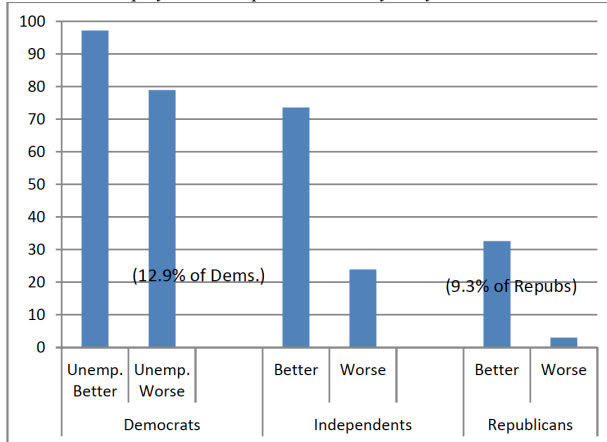
Relative candidate honesty ratings and voting for Obama by party identification (Bars indicate the percent voting for Obama)



Source: Stone (2015) UC Davis Pol 1 Seminar

Partisanship & Valence Perceptions

Effect of Unemployment Perceptions on Vote by Party Identification



Source: Stone (2015) UC Davis Pol 1 Seminar

Key Points:

- ▶ Parties help solve collective action in the electoral arena by providing voters with a focus on collective responsibility (through party brand) & partisan heuristic ↓ transaction costs to voting
- ▶ Levendusky finds evidence ↑ elite (partisan polarization) = ↑ consistency of issue beliefs (ideology)
- ▶ Parties are becoming more polarized & voters more partisan (intensity)
- ▶ Greater ideological consistency in both political parties (voters), decline of conservative Democrats & Liberal Republicans
- ▶ Strong relationship between vote-choice & ideological/partisan preferences (preferences highly correlated)
- ▶ When PID & ideological proximity (spatial model) overlap, voters cast “correct” votes
- ▶ Valence model limited by partisan biases of perceptions