Fall 10-1-2021

Mobilization and Partisan Identities: A Comparative Study of Partisanship under Compulsory and Voluntary Voting

Eli Gavin Rau

Yale University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, elirau2@gmail.com

Abstract

Mobilization and Partisan Identities: A Comparative Study of
Partisanship under Compulsory and Voluntary Voting

Eli Gavin Rau

2021

Partisan identification is intimately related to many central aspects of political behavior. It influences vote choice, voters' policy positions, and the manner in which voters process new political information. Partisanship has the power to undermine politicians' accountability and it can even trump voters' democratic values in polarized societies.

Yet large gaps remain in our understanding of the relationship between partisanship and another key subject of political behavior: voter participation. We know that partisans are more likely to turn out to vote than their non-partisan counterparts; but *why* are partisans more likely to turn out? Are partisans simply people who are more interested in politics (and, therefore, more likely to participate)? Or is there a direct, causal relationship between partisanship and turnout?

In this dissertation, I examine competing theories of why partisans participate more than non-partisans. With a series of novel empirical tests aimed at causal identification, I clarify the mechanisms underlying the relationship between partisanship and turnout. Partisanship mobilizes voters by introducing additional incentives to vote, separate from the intensity of their policy preferences. Partisanship generates expressive incentives to vote and engenders a sense of *partisan duty* — an obligation to do one's part to contribute to the party's success. When voters adopt partisan identities, they conceive of themselves as part of a larger group. These group identities fundamentally alter the calculus of voting, facilitating a cooperative logic of turnout.

In contrast to oft-made claims in the political behavior literature, I find that the causal chain does not run in both directions: voting does not foster partisan identities. Prior work posited that the act of voting makes people more likely to adopt partisan identities, either through a process of political learning or a desire to resolve cognitive dissonance. The hypothesis that voting fosters partisanship underlies the dominant theory of how compulsory voting laws shape partisanship. Thus, my finding that voting does not foster partisanship calls for a new approach to understanding partisan dynamics under compulsory voting.

Examining the institutional implications of these behavioral findings, I present a new theory of party-voter linkages under compulsory voting. In both compulsory and voluntary voting systems, parties face a breadth-versus-depth tradeoff in their outreach to voters. When voting is voluntary, parties prioritize depth: they work to build stronger partisan identification among a smaller subset of the population. These stronger partisan identities are necessary to ensure that a party's supporters are motivated to show up on Election Day. In compulsory voting systems, where parties need not concern themselves with extensive mobilization efforts, breadth becomes more important than depth. Parties competing in compulsory voting systems must win over a larger share of the population, since would-be abstainers are compelled by law to participate. But they don't face the same burden of mobilizing their supporters, so they don't need to invest in building ties as strong as those in voluntary systems. The result is that more voters identify with parties in compulsory voting systems, but the strength of their identification is, on average, weaker.

Mobilization and Partisan Identities: A Comparative Study of
Partisanship under Compulsory and Voluntary Voting

A Dissertation
Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of
Yale University
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Eli Gavin Rau

Dissertation Directors: Susan Stokes and Milan Svolik

December 2021

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Acknowledgements

Over the years, I have been fortunate enough to have many great mentors who have pushed me to think more carefully, write more clearly, and ask bigger questions. In many ways, the path to writing this dissertation began in an undergraduate seminar on clientelism that I ended up in purely by chance. It was my first exposure to comparative politics, and it sparked the interest in parties and voting behavior that brought me to this point. The course was taught by Mariela Szwarcberg Daby, who would later become an advisor, then mentor, then friend and collaborator. Mariela's unwavering confidence in my work helped me through many moments of uncertainty along the way.

Upon arriving at Yale, I quickly began working with Sue Stokes, whose guidance shaped my experience throughout graduate school. Amid every roadblock, Sue's intellectual insights and persistent positivity helped me push through and continue "onward and upward." Milan Svolik, my second advisor and co-chair, constantly challenged me to be more precise in my thinking. Emily Sellars joined my committee at a later stage, but always provided a fresh perspective.

In addition to having many wonderful faculty mentors, I benefited from the insights and support of my fellow graduate students, especially Shikhar Singh, Matt Graham, and David Froomkin. Whether they were providing detailed feedback on drafts, acting as a sounding board for early-stage ideas in Rosenkranz, or entertaining late-night conversations about partisanship and voting behavior over beers and whiskey, their intellectual contributions

Just over six years ago — at a time not dissimilar to this one, when I was preparing to submit my senior thesis — one of my undergraduate professors told me that my time in graduate school would comprise the best years of my life. Looking forward, of course, I hope that even better years are yet to come; but at this moment in time, his words ring true. Between the great friends I've made here, the moments of illumination and clarity I experienced while grinding through coursework and studying for comps, and the joys and frustrations of writing this dissertation, the past six years exceeded anything that came before them.

To my parents, who somehow found patience with a kid who refused to let any statement go unchallenged and constantly asked "why?" They never extinguished that relentless curiosity, but rather encouraged me to find my own answers.

Chapter 1

Introduction

> "[P]olitical parties created democracy and [...] modern
>
> democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties."
>
> – Schattschneider (1942:1)

In this dissertation, I take on two primary tasks. The first is to better understand the relationship between partisanship and a central subject of electoral studies: voter turnout. On the one hand, this relationship might seem like a settled issue: of course partisans are more likely to vote than non-partisans. Anyone who has even a passing familiarity with partisan elections can provide a plausible explanation for this pattern without much effort. Partisan identities and political participation are both outcomes of one's social network, or of one's innate interest in politics; people who show up to elections, town halls, debates, and other political events learn more about the parties and become partisans as a result of their political involvement; those who feel included in some political party's agenda have more reason to participate in elections; involvement in partisan organizations imparts a sense of duty to participate. But merely having a long list of plausible explanations does not mean that we understand a pattern, or the reasons it exists. For all the many explanations for partisan turnout, few empirical tests have succeeded in discriminating between competing theories. Thus, the first task of this dissertation is to examine the mechanisms behind

partisan turnout with novel empirical tests.

If the first part of this dissertation is oriented towards the questions "what" and "why" (what is the relationship between partisanship and turnout? why does it exist?), the second part speaks to the question of "so what?" It explores the implications of these behavioral findings for a particular electoral institution — compulsory voting. Taking what we have learned from a close study of partisanship and turnout, I investigate how mandatory voting affects voters' relationships with political parties. How does compelled participation influence voters' identities? How do parties' strategies for reaching voters change when they know that everyone is required to show up on election day? As I illustrate in my analysis of compulsory voting, our ability to make normative assessments about electoral institutions relies upon a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that animate the relationship between partisan identities and voter turnout.

1.1 Partisanship and Quality of Democracy

Recent newspaper headlines, TV news coverage, and scholarly research paint a bleak picture of the role that political parties and partisanship play in today's democracies. Experts as well as everyday citizens rightly express concern over democratic backsliding in recent years. In the various attempts to diagnose what has gone wrong in democracies under threat, much of the blame has been placed on partisanship. Voters begin to develop tribal allegiances to their party and these partisan identities form deep cleavages in society. Citizens begin to hate supporters of opposing parties, perhaps even supporting violence against them. Meanwhile, they tolerate corruption and abuses of power from politicians in their own party, because the inter-party fight becomes so existential that it crowds out other concerns, like safeguarding democratic norms.

Yet this alarming portrait is not the only view of partisanship in democracy. Echoing E. E. Schattschneider's quote in the epigraph to this chapter, many students of democracy have

argued that a requisite of a well-functioning democracy is a strong party system, wherein parties build long-standing ties to their voters. Parties introduce some semblance of structure to a chaotic system where voters' preferences are idiosyncratic and the set of issues that the government must settle is too long for even the most devoted citizen to keep track of all of them.

Even those who spend their lives studying politics and elections must make strong simplifying assumptions to begin to understand how politics works. The most ubiquitous model of democratic elections (Downs 1957) assumes that voters' preferences are unidimensional and monotonic; that is, one can array all voters' political preferences along a single number line. Substantially more complex models exist: but even these models generally expand to only two dimensions, and maintain the monotonicity assumption (Roemer 2001). We know that these assumptions do not hold (Niemi and Wright 1987; Lackner 2017). Voters' preferences are far more idiosyncratic, and political competition happens across so many distinct — yet often complexly inter-related — issue areas, that any story addressing only one or two or five "dimensions" is inevitably missing something.

The observation that political preferences are not as straightforward as prominent models assume is not a critique of the models — the very purpose of a model is to identify which details matter and discard the rest to enable us to understand the dynamics of complex systems. Rather, the point is that modern democracy is complex. And if experts require a way of collapsing many political issues into a lower-dimensional Euclidean space to understand how voters should or will behave, then certainly voters — who only have so much time to worry about politics while attending to their jobs and families and pursuing their own interests and passions — need a tool to reduce the cognitive load of politics and guide their voting decisions. For many voters, that tool is partisanship.

Framed as an informational shortcut that helps people sort through a complicated and ever-changing world, partisanship is valuable to democracy. Information-gathering has the

potential to be a very costly prerequisite for democratic participation (Downs 1957; Aldrich 1995). Voters face an overwhelming amount of information to sort through to arrive at a decision about which candidates they should vote for in elections; which policies they should support or oppose in referendums; which political objectives they should devote time and money to advancing.

To deal with the demands democracy places on their time and cognitive capacity, voters turn to heuristics that provide helpful information at little to no cost (Brody, Sniderman and Tetlock 1991; Popkin 1994; Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009). Such heuristics include a candidate's endorsement by trusted political or social groups; shared cultural background; or partisan affiliation. As Rahn (1993:473) observes, "In partisan elections, the most powerful cue provided by the political environment is the candidate's membership in a particular political party. [...] The cue provided by the party label is simple, direct, and [...] consequential in shaping individuals' perceptions and evaluations of political candidates."

In the absence of such cues, the daunting task of gathering all the necessary information to make an optimal voting decision would be enough to compel most rational individuals to simply abstain from voting altogether (Downs 1957; Snyder and Ting 2002). With this in mind, Foos and de Rooij (2013:6) argue that "political parties are widely seen as the most important heuristic used to overcome the information problem, lowering voting costs and increasing turnout" (see also Conover 1981; Snyder and Ting 2002; Schaffner and Streb 2002).

Partisanship plays a key organizing role in politics, but it also has potentially deleterious side effects. Partisanship has the power to undermine politicians' accountability (Besley 2006), enable corruption (Anduiza, Gallego and Muñoz 2013), generate discrimination against non-copartisans (Iyengar and Westwood 2015), and create biases in processing factual information (Jerit and Barabas 2012). Partisans may begin to view their rivals as illegitimate, and abandon norms that maintain stability in a democracy (Mickey, Levitisky

and Way 2017). In Orbán's Hungary, Erdoğan's Turkey, and Chávez's Venezuela, efforts to undermine democracy succeeded in part due to partisan allegiances: "these incumbents ask their supporters to trade off democratic principles for partisan interests" (Svolik 2019:23).

As democratic norms in the United States have eroded in recent years (Carey et al. 2019), much of the blame for this democratic backsliding has been directed towards partisanship (Graham and Svolik 2020). Attention-grabbing headlines have asserted that partisanship is leading people to support violence against members of the opposing party in large numbers.[1] On the eve of the 2020 US presidential election, Bright Line Watch asked voters whether violence would be justified if the other side won; among partisans, 40% said it would be at least a little bit justified (Carey et al. 2020).

These sobering conclusions about partisanship, however, have not gone unchallenged. Kalmoe and Mason (forthcoming) show that data on support for partisan violence must be interpreted with caution: when survey respondents are asked to think about concrete forms of violence, many who previously claimed that violence might be justified stand opposed to any concrete form of physical violence or even verbal attacks. And Bullock et al. (2015) provide a strong critique of the evidence on partisan bias in factual beliefs.

In the end, partisanship is neither purely good nor purely bad for democracy; but it undoubtedly plays a central role in modern democracies. To understand the challenges currently facing democracies throughout the world, we must deepen our understanding of partisanship. Careful studies, like Kalmoe and Mason (forthcoming) and Bullock et al. (2015), point to the importance of greater nuance when studying the causes and effects of partisan identities.

---

[1]See, e.g., "Americans Increasingly Believe Violence is Justified if the Other Side Wins" in Politico, October 2020; "When Partisans Endorse Violence" from the Niskanen Center, February 2021; "What you need to know about how many Americans condone violence — and why: A type of 'radical partisanship' is far too common for comfort" in the Washington Post (Monkey Cage), January 2021.

1.2 Compulsory Voting

At the same time that many political observers have argued that partisanship is tearing democracies apart, others have proposed institutional changes to strengthen democracy against these forces and other sources of weakness in democracy. Chile recently overhauled its legislative electoral system, introducing a more proportional system that created space for new parties and coalitions to compete at the national level. In the United States, criticism of the Electoral College has ramped up after multiple elections in which candidates failed to win the presidential election despite receiving the most support in the popular vote count. And many countries have moved towards seriously considering the introduction of compulsory voting laws.

Proponents of compulsory voting argue that it would make government more representative (Lijphart 1997); reduce polarization and improve the economy (Moyo 2019); and prevent the rise of authoritarian candidates (Alcorn 2019). In the United States, compulsory voting began to receive more attention after Barack Obama spoke about its supposed benefits in a 2016 speech. In 2020, a California state legislator introduced a bill to make voting compulsory in the state by 2022 (AB 2070, 2020).[2] And a recent report by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS) Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship recommended the adoption of compulsory voting to strengthen American democracy (American Academy of Arts and Sciences 2020:38–39). Recent polls in other countries show that a majority of Canadians favor adopting compulsory voting and nearly two-thirds of citizens in each of Germany, France, and the United Kingdom say that it is important that their government make voting mandatory (Connaughton and Schumacher 2021).

But in an age of alarm over the dangers of partisanship, one of the key arguments against compulsory voting is that it intensifies partisanship. There are few areas where the young

---

[2]This bill (which was never likely to pass) proposes a system similar to the one Chile used from 1988–2011: registration was voluntary, but registered voters could be fined if they abstained.

(but growing)[3] literature on compulsory voting has achieved some semblance of consensus. One is that compulsory voting increases turnout (Franklin 1996; Hooghe and Pelleriaux 1998; Jackman 2001; Fornos, Power and Garand 2004). Another is that compulsory voting creates a more partisan electorate (Singh and Thornton 2013; McAllister and Mughan 1986; Lundell 2007).

Yet the standard explanation for why compulsory voting would intensify partisanship relies on assumptions about the microfoundations of political behavior that have not been thoroughly tested. Scholars have argued that the act of voting fosters partisanship (Dalton and Weldon 2007). Thus, as a natural byproduct of increasing turnout, compulsory voting laws also intensify partisanship: more people develop partisan identities to begin with, and those partisan identities grow stronger through the experience of voting year after year (Singh and Thornton 2013).

Does compulsory voting actually produce more partisan electorates? And if it does, should this temper expectations about the potential to improve democratic performance by mandating electoral participation? The introduction of compulsory voting represents a fundamental change to the way that countries conduct elections. Major institutional changes have the potential to improve the quality of democracy; but they are not without risks. Often, institutions have unintended and unforeseen consequences. Making normative judgments about the implications of compulsory voting for democracy requires a broad understanding of its myriad effects. Thus, I build on the behavioral findings in this dissertation to illuminate the implications of compulsory voting for partisanship, challenging the conventional wisdom and presenting a new theory of how compulsory voting shapes partisanship.

---

[3]See Singh (2021) for a thorough summary of the literature.

1.3   Chapter Outline

I begin by establishing microfoundations of political behavior through a close examination of partisanship and voter turnout. Chapter 2 addresses inconsistencies in the literature on defining partisanship and discusses measurement challenges and solutions. Partisanship is alternately used to refer to a psychological attachment to a party; a set of preferences over parties' policies; and a social identity. Recent work has shown that partisanship often functions as a meaningful social identity and affects partisans' behavior both within and beyond the political arena. But classic survey measures of partisanship do not capture the social identity dimension of partisanship. Instead, new scales adapted from social identity theory can be used to capture partisanship as a social identity.

Chapters 3–5 discuss the relationship between partisanship and participation. Chapters 3 and 4 ask whether partisanship increases turnout. In other words: are partisans simply more likely to vote because the characteristics that predict partisanship are also the characteristics that affect one's propensity to turn out? Or is there something specific about developing a partisan social identity that makes partisans more likely to vote than their otherwise-similar non-partisan counterparts?

Chapter 3 reviews the immense literature on the determinants of voter turnout, discussing empirical predictors and theoretical models of turnout. The classical rational choice models of turnout imply that partisanship itself has no effect on turnout; according to these models, the robust relationship between partisanship and turnout stems from the fact that partisans tend to be those voters who have strong preferences for one party's platform over another's, and these strong preferences induce turnout. But alternative models of turnout imply that partisanship itself mobilizes voters, separate from any mobilizing effect of their policy preferences.

The first such model frames voting as an expressive act, rather than a purely instrumental one. Expressive voting models contend that votes can operate as "a means to express political

beliefs and preferences and, in doing so, to establish or reaffirm [one's] own political identity" (Schuessler 2000:88).

A partisan enjoys expressive benefits from voting regardless of whether her vote is pivotal to the result: she gains utility from the act of voting, not just the electoral outcomes. Even if a voter does not have strong preferences over policy platforms in the current election, if she identifies with one of the parties, she still gains utility from voting and reaffirming her identity as a partisan. And she enjoys these expressive benefits even if her vote is not observed by others: by voting for her party, she is acting in congruence with her partisan identity and reaffirming this aspect of her sense of self. Through this mechanism, partisanship increases the payoffs to voting and mobilizes voters who might otherwise stay home.

Achen and Sinnott (2007:9) draw parallels between turning out to vote and cheering for a favorite sports team: "Neither act is instrumentally rational, and thus they will seem mysterious to those whose explanatory repertoire is confined to self-interested motivations. But there is little doubt that people have a capacity for supporting inexpensive group efforts."

The willingness to participate in inexpensive group efforts can also be captured by purely instrumental models of turnout. Within the framework of rule-utilitarian models (Harsanyi 1980; Feddersen and Sandroni 2006; Coate and Conlin 2004) or Kantian optimization (Roemer 2019), instrumental voters rationally turn out when they maximize according to social or group welfare (rule-utilitarian) or individual welfare within a group of like-minded individuals (Kantian optimization).

Both of these frameworks have natural applications to voting as a partisan, formalizing a concept I term *partisan duty*. Partisan duty captures the sense of duty or obligation to do one's part to contribute to a partisan group's success. In a group rule-utilitarian model, elections are modeled as contests between distinct groups in which individuals "want to 'do their part' to help their group win" (Coate and Conlin 2004:1476). Coate and Conlin (2004) apply the model to referendums, but it has clear applications to partisan elections, where

the most relevant metric of group membership is partisanship.

In a Kantian model, an agent is entirely self-interested, but determines her best course of action by thinking about the strategy she would like everyone to play. I outline a Kantian model of partisan turnout, in which partisans apply this Kantian logic to themselves and their co-partisans. Those who identify as partisans see themselves as similar to other party supporters (Lupu 2016); thus, it is not unreasonable that they expect many of their co-partisans will be processing a similar turnout decision in a similar way as election day approaches. Each partisan recognizes that voting is more costly for some voters than for others, and determines an optimal cost threshold — if voting is more expensive than X, I will stay home (and so will other co-partisans facing high costs); if it is less expensive, I will show up to vote (and I expect other low-cost partisans to do the same).

Chapter 4 presents empirical evidence for these partisan turnout models. Using original survey data from Chile, I show that partisan duty is a widely espoused concept among those who have a partisan social identity. And when directly asking voters why they turn out to vote, partisan duty and expressive voting are among the most common explanations provided.

These survey data suggest that both partisan duty and expressive voting play a key role in mobilizing voters, as the models of partisan turnout predict. But it is one thing for a voter to state in a survey that she will pay the costs of voting in exchange for an expressive benefit; when those costs become real, are people actually willing to pay material costs in exchange for expressive benefits? Is the expressive utility of supporting one's party enough to mobilize partisans who might otherwise stay home?

Although expressive voting is a well-established concept in the theoretical literature on turnout, few have directly tested its empirical validity. I present further data from a novel survey measurement strategy with behavioral outcomes. The survey design allows us to measure how many partisans will send a costly signal of their partisanship by explicitly

linking the option to indicate one's preferred party with the wage received for completing the survey. In strong support of the expressive voting theory, a majority of partisans choose to take a lower wage in exchange for the opportunity to tell the researcher which party they identify with.

Chapter 5 considers another causal relationship between partisanship and turnout, testing whether electoral participation contributes to the development of partisanship. Scholars across multiple theoretical traditions have posited that voting plays a role in fostering partisan identification (see, e.g., Converse 1969; Mackerras and McAllister 1999; Acharya, Blackwell and Sen 2018; Lupu and Stokes 2010). Models of social learning and cognitive dissonance both imply that voting generates partisanship: when citizens vote, they learn about which parties align with their preferences and identities; and when an individual votes for a party year after year, she begins to think of herself as a partisan of this party.

Despite the existence of a well-developed theoretical literature on this phenomenon, empirical tests have been limited by problems of causal identification. Turnout and partisanship are two topics of great interest to political scientists, because they are so central to political behavior. But because these two subjects are closely related to so many other political identities, behaviors, and beliefs, scholars face serious challenges in isolating their causes and effects.

To overcome this causal identification problem, I leverage a unique historical-institutional arrangement in Chile. From 1989–2011, Chile combined compulsory voting with voluntary registration. Citizens could choose whether or not to register, but once they registered, they were obligated to vote in all future elections. The context of the first election under this system — a high-stakes plebiscite to determine whether an authoritarian leader would remain in power or be replaced by a democratically elected president — led to near-universal registration among those who were eligible. But registration rates fell rapidly after the plebiscite that removed General Augusto Pinochet from power. The result was a large age-

based discontinuity in voting histories, which I leverage to study the effects of voting on political identities. In many cases, whether an individual turned 18 just before or just after the 1988 plebiscite determined whether they voted in regular elections for over two decades, or reached their forties without ever having voted.

Surprisingly, these drastically different voting histories had no impact on partisan identification. Decades of voting experience made an individual no more likely to adopt a partisan identification than her counterparts who had never voted in their lives. And supporting evidence from panel surveys suggests that this finding is not specific to Chile — it extends to contexts with stronger and more polarized parties as well.

Chapter 6 explores the institutional implications of these behavioral findings and reconsiders the effects of compulsory voting laws on the interactions between parties and voters. Since 1800, at least 46 countries have enacted compulsory voting laws (Boveda 2013) — more than the number of democracies that hold primaries or that use single transferable vote (STV) systems. Today, 27 countries have compulsory voting laws on the books (IDEA 2020) and many others have recently considered compulsory voting legislation — including the United Kingdom, France, Bulgaria, and, at the state level, the United States.[4]

Many prominent scholars, politicians, and journalists have taken to arguing that compulsory voting should be widely adopted as a solution to problems plaguing modern democracies (American Academy of Arts and Sciences 2020; Alcorn 2019; Moyo 2019). The literature on compulsory voting has quickly expanded in the past decade, but many gaps remain in our understanding of the effects of compulsory voting. Before drawing normative conclusions about the value of compulsory voting for democracy, we must develop a clearer understanding of how these laws change behavior among parties and voters.

Chapter 6 highlights the importance of applying a general equilibrium approach to investigating institutional effects. That is, we cannot understand the effects of compulsory

---

[4]In February 2020, a CA state lawmaker introduced a bill to make voting compulsory in California by 2022 (AB 2070, 2020)

voting through static analyses of individual actors. Prior attempts to explain the dynamics of partisanship in compulsory voting systems focused exclusively on voters, asking how forcing an individual to vote shapes their partisan identity. But just as voters respond to major changes in electoral law, so too do political parties. Introducing compulsory voting changes the rules of the game in which parties compete. And their strategies — the ways that they market themselves and interact with voters — shift accordingly.

One of the most reliable effects of compulsory voting (beyond increasing turnout) is to increase the number of people who identify with a political party. But previous accounts of compulsory voting mischaracterized its implications for partisanship. Conventional wisdom holds that compulsory voting generates more widespread partisanship, because voting makes people more likely to adopt partisan identities (Singh and Thornton 2013; Dalton and Weldon 2007; Lundell 2007). But as the analysis in Chapter 5 illustrated, the act of voting does not foster partisanship.

In reality, compulsory voting sometimes generates more widespread partisanship, but other times it actually leads to fewer people identifying with parties. In the cases where compulsory voting does generate more widespread partisanship, it is not because voting fosters partisanship. Rather, the explanation lies with party strategy.

I present a novel theory of party strategy in compulsory versus voluntary voting systems, identifying a depth-versus-breadth tradeoff in parties' appeals to voters. In voluntary voting systems, parties prioritize depth: they focus their effort and resources on developing a smaller, more committed partisan base that they can count on to turn out on election day. But when voting is compulsory and parties no longer face the prospect of supporters abstaining, they aim to appeal to a larger set of voters, generating more widespread (albeit weaker) partisanship.

In a voluntary voting system, a party only needs to win over a majority of those who turn out on election day. But parties in compulsory voting systems must win a majority of

the entire voting-eligible population, not just the smaller group of "likely voters" they might target in a voluntary voting system.[5]

Parties in compulsory voting systems reach out to a broader group of voters, recognizing that they must shore up support among a majority of the entire voting-eligible population, not just the smaller group of "likely voters" they might target in a voluntary voting system.

I present preliminary empirical evidence of these dynamics, comparing partisan identification across countries with different voting rules. I first identify a key source of measurement error that biased previous cross-national tests of partisanship under compulsory voting. I correct for this bias and discuss the complications of interpreting cross-national patterns when using a binary measure of partisanship. Upon adjusting the statistical model to account for these complications, I find results in line with the theory that compulsory voting, through a depth-versus-breadth tradeoff in party strategy, produces more widespread partisanship that is weaker at the individual level.

Finally, Chapter 7 discusses the broader implications of this study and identifies future avenues for research, including opportunities for future data collection that would allow us to better study the nature of partisanship across institutional environments.

---

[5]For simplicity of exposition, I speak here in terms of a two-party system; the same principle applies to multi-party systems.

Chapter 2

Defining Partisanship

> "Few subjects in political science have received as much
> attention as party identification. Yet it is very difficult to
> find a single work that offers a clear explanation of what it
> is and why it behaves as it does."
>
> – Green, Palmquist and Schickler (2002:5)

Partisanship occupies a unique place in the study of mass political behavior. Scholars of American politics have argued that no other variable can tell us more about "the attitude and behavior of the individual as presidential elector" (Campbell et al. 1960). And its relevance is not limited to the United States; partisan identification has become a ubiquitous variable in studies of political behavior and public opinion throughout the world (Baker and Renno 2019).

Almost anyone who has responded to a political survey in the past 50 years will be familiar with some variation on the following questions:

"Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular party?" (American National Election Studies 2012 Post-election survey)

"Do you currently identify with a political party?" (Latin American Public

Opinion Project 2018 Jamaica survey)

"Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat, or what?" (British Election Study 2017 Post-election survey)

Partisanship is an empirically useful variable. It affects vote choice (Campbell et al. 1960), voters' policy positions (Samuels and Zucco 2014), and the manner in which voters process new political information (Bartels 2002). Partisanship has the power to undermine politicians' accountability (Besley 2006) and partisan preferences can even trump voters' democratic values in polarized societies (Svolik 2017).

A large body of literature has tested propositions about what partisanship *does*, yet a debate rages on to this day over what exactly partisanship *is*. What do the survey questions quoted above measure? Is it simply a set of preferences over different parties' policies or past performance? A psychological attachment to a party, passed down through generations? A fundamental social identity?

2.1 A Collection of Preferences or an Identity?

In 1960, Campbell et al. published *The American Voter*, a foundational text that introduced a new concept of partisan identification. Their approach to partisanship would drive scholarship on political behavior for decades to come. They eschewed the idea that partisans were limited to card-carrying, dues-paying members of political parties. Partisans might not even have consistent voting records. They defined partisan identification as a "psychological tie" to a political party. Partisan identification, they stressed, is defined by a sense of attachment to a party, not by behavior that evinces partisan allegiances.

The idea that partisanship is a psychological tie marked a stark departure from previous conceptions of partisanship. To many observers, partisans were the set of registered party members. They paid party dues, carried membership cards, and were actively involved in the

party's activities. Others believed that partisans encompassed a larger group, and included all voters who regularly voted for a party. But Campbell et al. (1960) argued that voting behavior and party membership were behavioral consequences of partisanship; these were not qualifying characteristics, but rather examples of the predictive power of partisanship.

This mode of thinking about partisanship, termed the "Michigan school," drew its fair share of critics. Many argued that the definition was too vague: what exactly did the authors mean by a "psychological tie"? Budge, Crewe and Farlie (1976:11) went so far as to write the whole thing off as borderline tautology: "how theoretically interesting is the statement that electors vote for the party to which they feel closest?" But to modern political psychologists, the authors' key insight was "a precursor of social identity theory years ahead of its time" (Greene 2004:36).

These reactions produced two distinct strains of research. Instrumentalists rejected the Michigan school's approach to partisanship and argued for a rationalist definition. Social identity theorists, by contrast, embraced the Michigan school's approach and sought to add nuance and specificity.

According to the instrumental approach, partisanship is defined by valence and spatial measures. A voter asks, "how competent is this party and how close are their ideological and policy preferences to mine?" Fiorina (1981) pioneered the idea of partisanship as a "running tally." Voters, he argued, keep a running tally of parties' past performance in office. If a voter assesses a party's performance positively year after year, that voter will increasingly identify as a partisan of that party. A single year of poor performance does not negate all prior years of positive performance, but it weakens the voter's partisanship. If such poor performance continues for many years, the voter will eventually lose her partisan identity (and possibly develop a new one with a different party). Similarly, Achen (2002) describes partisanship as a measure of the expected benefits a party will provide in the future — an expectation informed by past performance.

This concept of a running tally dealt with two of the main concerns that scholars had with the classic psychological model: the running tally outlined a clear model of partisanship and introduced a mechanism for change in partisanship over one's lifetime.

But people may have partisan preferences without partisan identities—and they often do. A voter may prefer the policies of the Christian Democratic Party in a given election without considering herself a Christian Democrat. Moreover, partisans frequently hold different ideological positions from their preferred parties or lack coherent ideological positions altogether (Campbell et al. 1960). The pure instrumental interpretation conflates partisan *preferences* and partisan *identities*.

An alternative, social interpretation contends that partisanship consists of more than just having policy preferences or believing that one party is more competent than the other. Partisan identification is not synonymous with partisan preference; rather, it constitutes a "genuine form of social identification" (Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002:ix). Citizens develop a sense of what types of people a party represents (the party's "brand") and whether they fit into such groups (Lupu 2016; Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002).

Partisan identification does not presuppose official membership (partisans need not be "card-carrying" members), nor any particular form of concrete involvement (one can identify as a Democrat without voting for Democrats in every election, donating to Democratic candidates, or attending meetings for local Democrats). It is, instead, defined by the way one conceptualizes one's relationship to partisan groups. Partisanship is a social identification whereby one sees oneself as a member of a group of individuals that support or are represented by a particular political party.

Empirical studies have shown that party identification influences attitudes and behavior in a manner similar to other fundamental social identities. The effects of partisanship extend beyond the political arena to everyday social settings (Alford et al. 2011). Partisans develop in-group/out-group biases that lead them to discriminate against non-copartisans (Iyengar

and Westwood 2015). And these in-group/out-group attitudes are not reliably predicted by policy preferences (Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012). As such, a purely instrumental understanding of partisanship provides an incomplete picture.

To be clear, defining partisanship as a social identity does not imply that it is devoid of rational policy comparisons. Many partisans identify with a party specifically because they prefer its policy positions. Consider Maria, a hypothetical union member in the United States who identifies as a strong Democrat. She observes that the Democratic party passes legislation that strengthens unions and the Republican party weakens them. Under Democratic governments, she expects greater economic protections. If the Democratic and Republican parties were to suddenly flip their positions on union laws, she would cease to identify with the Democratic party.

Why, then, do we call her partisanship "identification"? What transforms this relation from a set of preferences to a genuine social identity? Maria turns out to vote in every election to support the Democratic party. She does not spend time and money travelling to the polls because she believes her single vote will change the outcome of the election. Instead, she turns out to vote because she wants to express her support for the party. If you ask her, she will tell you that showing up to vote for Democratic candidates is simply "what a Democrat does."

This is why we describe her partisanship as an identity. It forms an important part of her self-conception, and she alters her behavior to reinforce that self-conception. The basis of her identity is a rational set of preferences comparing her economic situation under different parties' governance. But she moves from mere preference to identification when she internalizes a sense of group membership.

To further illustrate the distinction, consider one of Maria's hypothetical coworkers, John. He also shows up in every election and votes for Democratic candidates. When asked which party he feels closer to, he chooses the Democratic party. But his support for the Democratic

party is not a genuine social identity. He does not consider his support for the party to be an important part of who he is. John shows up to vote because he feels that it is his civic duty to participate in elections. His identity as a citizen in a democracy motivates him to turn out, not any partisan identity. Once he is standing inside the polling booth, he does not pay any additional costs to vote for either party. He knows that he has an infinitesimal chance of casting the pivotal vote, but he votes for the Democratic party because he prefers their policies and there is still a chance, however small, that his vote will affect the outcome.

It makes sense, both empirically and theoretically, to classify John as a partisan. He reliably votes for Democrats, and his preferences align with the party platform. His political behavior looks very different from that of a true independent, who may be swayed from one party to another each election cycle or even abstain out of distaste for all available options. But his partisanship is also qualitatively different from Maria's. The instrumental type of partisanship exemplified by John is akin to a partisan preference, whereas Maria's partisanship constitutes a genuine social identity.

2.2 Measurement

Classic survey questions about partisanship do not distinguish well between instrumental partisan preference and partisan social identities. Recall the questions cited at the beginning of this chapter. When asked, "Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular party?", both Maria and John would likely select the Democratic party. Yet only Maria has a genuine social identification with the party.

Many studies use one of these standard questions to measure partisanship and test theories about the behavior of partisans. But what kinds of partisans are they capturing? Is it simply the set of all people with partisan preferences and all people with partisan identities? In practice, it is not quite that simple. The questions capture some combination of those two groups, but the set of individuals that self-classify as partisans is sensitive to minor changes

in the wording of the survey question (Baker and Renno 2019).

To better understand the behavior of partisans, we must identify which people are partisans, and which of these partisans have a meaningful social identification with the party. One approach is to classify partisans according to "strong" and "weak" partisanship, and assume that weak partisans are usually those with a partisan preference but not a partisan identity, and that strong partisans socially identify with the party.

But this approach collapses two distinct, if correlated, dimensions. Political psychology and social identity theory provide alternative tools for measuring partisan identification more precisely. Greene (2002) highlights a key distinction between attitudes and group identification. An attitude is "a generalized and enduring positive or negative response to an object" (Greene 2002:172) — consistent with the "running tally" concept. But a group identification requires a sense of belonging — beyond simply having a positive response to a party, the individual must conceive of herself as belonging to a group defined by support for that party.

In an effort to better measure the social identity component of partisanship, scholars have imported measurement strategies from the social-psychological literature on group identification. Greene (1999) borrowed from the "Identification with a Psychological Group Scale" (Mael and Tetrick 1992) to develop a ten-item scale of partisan social identity. Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each statement, on a five-point scale:

- When someone criticizes this group, it feels like a personal insult

- I don't act like the typical person of this group

- I'm very interested in what others think about this group

- The limitations associated with this group apply to me also

- When I talk about this group, I usually say "we" rather than "they"

- I have a number of qualities typical of members of this group

- This group's successes are my successes

- If a story in the media criticized this group, I would feel embarrassed

- When someone praises this group, it feels like a personal compliment

- I act like a person of this group to a great extent

Green, Palmquist and Schickler (2002) implemented a similar, though pared-down, three-item scale in their study of partisanship in the United States:

- When I talk about [Democrats/Republicans], I usually say "we" rather than "they"

- When someone criticizes [Democrats/Republicans], it feels like a personal insult

- I don't have much in common with most [Democrats/Republicans]

More recently, Bankert, Huddy and Rosema (2017) implemented an eight-item scale for multi-party systems across three European countries:

- When I speak about this party, I usually say "we" instead of "they"

- I am interested in what other people think about this party

- When people criticize this party, it feels like a personal insult

- I have a lot in common with other supporters of this party

- If this party does badly in opinion polls, my day is ruined

- When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected with this person

- When I speak about this party, I refer to them as "my party"

- When people praise this party, it makes me feel good

When it comes to predicting political behavior, the data from these scales outperform traditional measures of partisanship, issue positions, and ideological self-placement (Huddy,

Mason and Aarøe 2015; Bankert, Huddy and Rosema 2017). And the Bankert et. al scale (as well as a shortened four-item version) has consistent measurement properties across multiple European countries in which it has been studied.

2.2.1 Comparative Fit

All of the measures discussed thus far refer to closeness in terms of a specific party. But partisanship is defined relative to a party system: voters compare different parties and determine their relative closeness. A voter who holds equally positive opinions about both parties in a two-party system is unlikely to identify as a partisan; despite her positive feelings towards each party, she is unlikely to identify with one over the other, because she does not feel closer to one party compared to the other.

In both the instrumental and the social identity approaches to partisanship, relative assessments are key. In the classic instrumental models of politics, voters are comparing outcomes when one party wins versus the other. The determining factor is not the voter's utility when party A wins. It is the difference between her utility when A wins and her utility when B wins. Similarly, when we consider partisanship as a social identity, we are interested in a voter's relative sense of closeness to one party or another. This concept of *comparative fit* is essential to social identity theory.

Social identity theory became a key part of social-psychological studies after a series of influential publications by Henri Tajfel (Tajfel 1978; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Tajfel argued that group identities formed an important part of one's sense of self; and in the context of inter-group conflicts, "group identity could become very salient, and may become the dominant way of perceiving the self and others" (Spears 2011:203). Early works in social identity theory outlined a process by which individuals categorize themselves into distinct groups and then engage in normative social comparisons across groups.

People can sort themselves into many different groups, but only some are salient. People

might develop a strong sense of group identity as a member of a specific profession, religion, or ethnic group. But we would not expect an individual with green eyes, for example, to develop a strong social identity as a green-eyed person, as distinct from those with blue or brown eyes. In theory, this is a distinctive characteristic, and we could sort people into groups based on eye color. But this categorization is generally not salient to people's identities.

The salience of one group identity over another depends largely on comparative fit: "the greater the difference between reference group and comparison group...the greater is the individual's feeling of being a member of the reference group; that is, the more salient is group identity" (Buss and Portnoy 1967:108). To put the concept more concretely, consider a hypothetical individual who teaches math to eighth-graders. She has a lot in common with other math teachers, and with other middle-school teachers. When she finds herself in a room of middle-school math and history teachers, she finds that she has much more in common with other math teachers than with history teachers. She develops a social identification as a "math teacher," not only because she is similar to other math teachers, but because she is comparatively dissimilar to history teachers.

By contrast, the same teacher might participate in an event for K–8 math teachers and observe that she has a lot in common with the other middle-school math teachers, and with the elementary-school math teachers. Her reference group — middle-school math teachers — remains the same, but she perceives less of a distinction between her reference group and comparison group (elementary-school math teachers). Thus, in this context, she is unlikely to develop a group identity based on self-categorization as a middle-school math teacher versus elementary-school math teacher. She has just as much in common with other middle-school math teachers as she ever did, but the sense of "comparative" fit is much lower in this context.

How does this concept of comparative fit transfer to political identities? Citizens learn about political parties and develop a sense of the "prototypical" partisan. Voters take in

information about the policies a party proposes, the people and organizations who publicly align themselves with the party, and the kinds of people they meet who support the party. All of these signals contribute to a party brand, giving voters a sense of the "prototypical party beneficiary" (Lupu 2016:3). People then consider how similar they are to each party's prototypical beneficiary. A voter who considers herself to be very similar to the prototypical Socialist supporter and very dissimilar to other parties' prototypes is likely to develop a strong social identification as a Socialist. But a voter who finds he is equally similar to multiple parties' prototypes may not identify with any of them because he has a low level of comparative fit with each.

Some measures of partisanship explicitly incorporate a concept of comparative fit. For example, in a two-party system, a researcher might collect feeling thermometer scores for both parties and define partisanship as the difference between these two scores. A respondent who gives a high score to one party and a low score to the other is a strong partisan. A respondent who gives low scores to both parties, or high scores to both parties, by contrast is not a strong partisan.

Comparing attitudes towards multiple parties to estimate partisanship is also important for capturing a phenomenon known as "negative partisanship." In some contexts, voters have strong partisan identities that stem primarily from distaste for a particular party, rather than great affinity for one.

In Brazil's multi-party system, for example, the two most salient partisan identities are arguably *petismo* and *antipetismo* — two identities defined by the voter's positive or negative feelings about the Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores* or PT) (Samuels and Zucco 2018). *Petistas* are avid supporters of the PT, and fit the classic image of a partisan. But *antipetistas*, who are animated more by an aversion to the PT than a particular affinity for any given party, also express a strong sense of social identity. Rather than behaving like non-partisans, they develop a group identity from their out-group status and their behavior

is driven by this (anti-)partisan social identity.

This negative dimension of partisan identification has recently received attention in the United States as well. In the United States, partisan polarization has increased over the past few decades, but voters do not express stronger positive feelings towards their own party. Instead, the growing partisan divide has come entirely from an increase in negative attitudes towards the opposing party (Pew Research Center 2016). If researchers simply measured attitudes towards one's preferred party over this time period to track the weakening or strengthening of partisan attachments, they would have missed the rise in negative attitudes towards opposition parties, and the data — showing no increase in support for one's preferred party — would seem to be at odds with the widespread observation of a growing partisan divide in the country.

Outside the context of two-party systems, explicitly measuring comparative fit to estimate the strength of one's partisanship is more complicated. If eight major parties compete, which difference is most relevant? The difference in scores assigned to the two most-preferred parties? The most-preferred and the least-preferred? The most-preferred and the average of the other seven parties? Beyond the theoretical questions, there are also practical questions for data collection practices — should researchers ask respondents to score every single party on a multi-item scale of partisan social identification to approximate levels of partisanship?

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to settle all of these open questions about measuring partisanship in multi-party systems; but these questions must be considered when analyzing survey data about partisanship, if for no other reason than to understand potential weaknesses of the data. However, if we take the literature on comparative fit seriously, then we have good reason to expect that this concept is implicitly factored into survey respondents' answers to partisanship questions, even when they are only rating one party.

When using a feeling thermometer, it is important to have respondents rate multiple parties — one can have a positive (or negative) general opinion of multiple groups. But

survey instruments that ask more directly about social identity are measuring an outcome that is determined by comparative fit. In other words, if comparative fit determines the strength and salience of a social identity, then two reasonable measurement strategies exist. Researchers can collect data about closeness and general attitudes towards each party, propose a functional form for comparative fit, and summarize the data to predict partisan identities. Alternatively, researchers can ask respondents which party they identify with, and then attempt to directly measure strength of identity with that party, borrowing survey measures from the social-psychological literature.

Before moving on from questions of measurement, it is worth briefly returning to discussion of the classic two-question measure of partisanship (in the United States: "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what?"; "Would you call yourself a strong [Dem/Rep] or a not very strong [Dem/Rep]?"). This survey measure has faced a fair bit of criticism as our understanding of partisanship and social identities has advanced over the years. Nonetheless, this same survey measure has persisted as the default way to measure partisanship for many decades. There are good reasons why the two-question measure has remained so popular in surveys — it does provide information, even if it is not the most precise. And it may be the most appropriate measure to deploy when partisan identification is not the central variable of interest in a study or large survey, taking into account the inevitable space limitations within a survey. Researchers interested in partisanship — its causes, content, and effects — would do well to incorporate more precise measures into their research, such as the social identity scales discussed in this section; but we should not simply ignore the mountain of data collected from the classic partisanship measures just because it is noisy.

2.3 The Origins of Partisanship

Having discussed the content of partisanship and approaches to measurement, an important related question is, where does partisanship come from? How do people develop their partisan identities? Initially, there were two main explanations for the origins of partisanship: the Michigan school argued that partisanship was generally passed down through families, whereas their rationalist critics argued that partisanship came from the running-tally assessment of party performance from year to year.

This initial divide in the literature led to a research agenda investigating the stability of partisan identities. The idea was that, if the Michigan school was correct, and partisanship was a real identity passed down through generations, it would be very stable over time; if their rationalist critics were correct, and partisanship was more accurately described as a simple summary of preferences for policy and valence characteristics, it would be volatile at the individual level.

Campbell et al. argued that partisanship was sticky: "only an event of extraordinary intensity can arouse any significant part of the electorate to the point that its established political loyalties are shaken" (1960:151). People generally inherited their partisan identities from their parents, and these allegiances rarely changed. But critics such as Fiorina (1981) and Page and Jones (1979) presented evidence that short-term performance evaluations often move voters' partisan identifications.

Many took this apparent instability in partisan identities as evidence for the instrumentalist model of partisanship, viewing partisanship as more of a running tally or summary of preferences than a full-fledged identity. But the conclusions of the instrumental literature did not go unchallenged. Recent work has cast doubt on the instability of partisanship, showing that much of this perceived instability was actually measurement error (Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002). Green and Palmquist (1990) showed that once researchers explicitly model measurement error in their models of political behavior, partisanship in the United

States shows remarkable stability at both the aggregate and individual level.

More recent work has taken seriously the idea that partisanship is a meaningful social identity, while also clarifying that partisanship is not the "unmoved mover" it was previously framed as:

> "it would be foolish to take the position that party attachments are altogether unwavering. Identification with a party wanes somewhat when, year after year, it presides over hard times or lacks effective leadership. The question is whether shifts in partisanship are sufficiently large and abrupt to call into question traditional views of realignment and the stabilizing role that party identification plays in a party system." (Green, Palmquist and Schickler 1998:896)

But these studies still maintained that partisanship was relatively stable over time (Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002).

It is important to note that the above literature has largely focused on partisanship in the United States. Comparative studies have clarified that partisanship can simultaneously constitute a meaningful social identity and lack stability over time, if the party system itself is unstable. If the reference points for partisan identities (the parties themselves) change rapidly, so too will partisan identities (Lupu 2016).

Returning to the initial question of where partisanship comes from, empirical studies in the United States (Easton and Dennis 1969; Glass, Bengtson and Dunham 1986) and beyond (Baker 1974; Zuckerman, Dasovic and Fitzgerald 2007) have found evidence that partisan affiliations are passed down through families, as young citizens begin to develop their political identities under the influence of their parents. Niemi and Jennings (1991) showed that many early studies overstated the effect of parental influence on partisanship, but still found evidence that it plays some role in the development of partisan identities (see also Kroh and Selb 2009 for another moderated conclusion on the role of parental influence).

More recently, scholars have advanced additional explanations for the origins of partisanship. One strain of the literature highlights a more active role for political parties: parties develop their policy platforms and seek out the support of individuals and groups with an eye toward developing a party "brand." When parties establish clear, well-defined brands, they create the conditions for strong partisanship in the population. These clear brands imply a well-defined prototypical party beneficiary, the reference point from which voters develop social identifications with parties (Lupu 2016). By contrast, when party brands converge — that is, when voters do not see clear distinctions between the parties, or when parties enter into alliances — or when parties dilute their brands through inconsistency — sudden shifts in policy or internal conflicts — mass partisanship tends to decline (Lupu 2016).

As parties develop brands, they organize other identities — such as race, class, occupational status, and geographic location — into a partisan continuum. A party may develop an image of being the party for working-class people if it pursues better working conditions and meets regularly with union leaders. In doing so, the party takes an existing identity — being a member of the working class — and sends a clear message to voters that their working class identity corresponds to a partisan identity as well. Granted, this process does not yield a neat one-dimensional continuum; voters may often face cross-pressures. Perhaps the "working-class party" described above stands staunchly opposed to LGBT rights. A gay member of the working class would then be pulled in different directions by different aspects of his or her identity. But parties have an interest in developing a clear brand that appeals to as many voters as possible, so they will tend to minimize salient cross-pressures, to the best of their ability. Thus, the process of building brands reduces dimensionality and makes the landscape of parties more legible to voters, inviting them to add partisanship to their various social identities.

Scholars have also argued that people develop partisan identities as part of a broader process of "social learning" that occurs when — particularly in young adulthood — people begin

to actively participate in politics (Converse 1969). According to Converse's social learning model, activities like voting lead people to develop partisan identities. When someone votes in an election, they learn a lot about the parties and go through a mental process of figuring out which party best represents them and their interests (Mackerras and McAllister 1999). After sorting themselves into a particular party's camp for this election, voters become more likely to develop a sense of identification with that party, now that they have established that this party reflects their interests and identity better than the alternatives.

Another burgeoning literature on cognitive dissonance in politics has questioned the traditional story that preferences are always causally prior to behavior; instead, people may behave a certain way out of habit or experimentation, and then adjust their preferences and self-conceived identities to justify this behavior (Acharya, Blackwell and Sen 2018). Partisan identities, then, might be the result of accumulated political activity, such as voting for a party multiple years in a row (Lupu and Stokes 2010). This theory has similar implications to the social learning model, but provides a different rationale. Whereas the social learning model posited that political activity causes people to learn more about the parties and develop a better sense of which party best fits their preferences, this theory posits that people actually adjust their preferences to explain their own behavior, which may or may not have met the definition of rational utility-maximizing behavior at the time.

Cognitive dissonance is a well-established concept in the field of psychology (see Festinger 1957 for a theoretical exposition). Cognitive dissonance simply refers to a state in which two or more pieces of information "psychologically do not fit together" (Festinger 1962:93). People seek to avoid the psychological discomfort of cognitive dissonance:

> "Cognitive dissonance is a motivating state of affairs. Just as hunger impels a person to eat, so does dissonance impel a person to change his opinions or his behavior." (Festinger 1962:93)

Evidence from many psychological experiments shows that people often change their

beliefs to alleviate cognitive dissonance (see, e.g., Festinger and Carlsmith 1959; Brehm 1956; Aronson, Fried and Stone 1991). More recently, political scientists and economists have tested the influence of cognitive dissonance on political beliefs. For example, Mullainathan and Washington (2009) show that the act of voting for a politician has a causal effect on the voter's future opinions of that politician. Comparing two individuals who were equally supportive of a presidential candidate on election day, one of whom was eligible to vote and another who was ineligible, the individual who was eligible to cast a ballot is more likely to re-affirm their support of this candidate in their job approval rating two years down the road. The authors explain this pattern by noting that "two years after an election, a citizen who voted for a candidate may hold a favorable opinion of that politician in part to avoid the internal discomfort of having voted for a person for whom the person has a poor opinion" (Mullainathan and Washington 2009:88).

Bølstad, Dinas and Riera (2013) also find evidence that voting influences party opinion among "tactical voters" — those who voted strategically for a party other than their most-preferred party. Voters who engaged in this tactical voting became more likely to report positive attitudes towards this less-preferred party after voting for it.

When thinking about the ways in which voting behavior might influence partisan identities, it is important to note that the theory of cognitive dissonance applies broadly, even to contexts in which one's behavior does not significantly deviate from one's prior beliefs or preferences:

> "Even when people vote for a party they clearly prefer to others, actually doing so may still lead them to think more highly of this party than before the election. In other words, even if there is no obvious conflict between behavior and attitudes, there may be a slight dissonance that can be reduced by changing attitudes so that they even more clearly favor the behavior exhibited." (Bølstad, Dinas and Riera 2013:432)

Thus, voters with no partisan identity might cast a ballot for the party that they weakly prefer; then, "the desire to resolve cognitive dissonance leads them to see themselves as partisans of this party" (Lupu and Stokes 2010:92).

2.4 Behavioral Implications

One of the reasons that scholars have devoted so much time to studying partisanship is that it has wide-ranging behavioral implications. Partisanship predicts vote choice and other explicitly political behaviors; it also predicts behavior outside the electoral context, such as treatment of non-copartisans in social settings. Partisanship may affect the way an individual processes new information, and influence their policy positions on new issues that arise in the future.

In reviewing the various behavioral implications of partisanship that scholars have identified, I discuss both causality and prediction. That is, some of the behavioral implications of partisanship are reasonably well-identified as causal effects of developing a partisan identity. Others may be merely reliable correlations — outcomes that are not caused by partisanship, but are well predicted by partisanship. These correlations are worth discussing, as they speak to the predictive power of a simple two-question survey measure, and they inform our understanding of how partisans differ from non-partisans.

When considering the causal effects of partisanship, it makes the most sense to speak of partisanship in the sense of a social identity, rather than in the pure instrumentalist sense. If by partisanship we simply mean the summary of a collection of preferences over policies, parties, and politicians, then it has no causal effect separate from the underlying preferences that make up one's "partisanship." But when partisanship is a social identity, we can speak of differences in behavior between individuals who have the same underlying preferences over policies, but who differ in their level of partisanship. Two individuals might prefer the same policies, but perhaps only one has been contacted by party activists, leading to the

development of a partisan identification. Or we might consider the behavior of a partisan in comparison to a hypothetical counterfactual voter who holds the same policy preferences but exists in a world where the parties have not developed strong brands, and therefore this counterfactual voter doesn't have a strong social identification as a partisan. Thus, "partisanship" is, at least theoretically, a distinct variable that we can imagine manipulating.

Empirically, it is very difficult to identify the causal effects of partisanship. An identity is not easily manipulable; even experimental interventions that seem to move partisanship tend to affect a "shallower" (Burden and Greene 2000:72) form of partisanship than the meaningful identity researchers wish to study. But for all the challenges inherent to studying the causal implications of a social identity, we can still learn from the empirical patterns with a combination of strong theory and creative empirical strategies.

2.4.1 Political Activity

Perhaps the most obvious behavioral implication of partisanship is vote choice: a partisan might occasionally vote against the party with which she identifies, but in general, no variable better predicts vote choice than partisanship (Campbell et al. 1960). There are multiple reasons for this pattern. The most obvious is not a causal effect of partisanship: partisans identify with a party that they believe best represents their interests, and voters want to elect politicians who will fight for policies that benefit them, so of course partisans are likely to vote for the party with which they identify. But there are also strong reasons to believe that partisanship may have a causal effect on vote choice. When a voter identifies with a party, she is likely to be more forgiving of poor performance in office in the short-term; non-partisans are more likely to make voting decisions based on short-term negative retrospective voting than their partisan counterparts (Lupu 2016). Thus, a partisan identity often generates more loyalty at the ballot box than mere policy-based preferences for a party.

Partisanship is also associated with political participation. Partisans are much more

likely to turn out to vote than non-partisans, a pattern that is consistent across both young and old democracies throughout the world (see, e.g., Smets and van Ham 2013; Carlin and Love 2015; Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita 2014; Resnick and Casale 2014; Campbell et al. 1960; Powell 1986; Heath 2007; Vowles 1994). Although prior research has not definitively established a causal relationship between partisanship and turnout, there are good reasons to believe that one exists. Chapters 3 and 4 examine in greater detail the theoretical and empirical evidence for a causal effect of partisanship on turnout, presenting a novel empirical test that supports the conclusion that partisanship mobilizes voters. To briefly summarize, identifying as a partisan increases the expressive benefits to voting, as casting a ballot for one's party allows one to express and re-affirm one's identity as a partisan. And partisans often feel a sense of "partisan duty" — a duty to do their part to contribute to their party's success.[1]

Partisans are also more likely to participate in campaigns: they donate time and money to candidates and political organizations at higher rates than non-partisans. Partisanship is a more reliable predictor of campaign activity than ideological positioning[2] or political sophistication[3] (Huddy, Mason and Aarøe 2015).

---

[1]Prior research has addressed the question of whether partisanship has a causal effect on turnout. Most notably, Gerber, Huber and Washington (2010) conducted an experiment where the treatment was a letter reminding voters that they must register with a political party if they wished to vote in an upcoming presidential primary election. The intent of this treatment was to increase partisan identification among the treatment group. Subjects who received the letter were slightly more likely to report identifying with a party and more likely to turn out for the primary. The authors interpret this result as evidence that partisanship has a causal effect on turnout. Their results are strongly suggestive, but the data do not provide the necessary information to confidently establish the direction of causality: post-treatment partisanship was only measured after the election. Thus, it might be that the treatment moved partisanship, which in turn moved turnout. Or, the treatment may have directly impacted turnout (by reminding treated subjects of an upcoming election and providing information on how to register), and voting may have increased partisan identification (through the cognitive dissonance mechanisms described in section 2.3).

[2]The authors measured "ideological issue intensity" by eliciting opinions on a series of policy questions and measuring how ideologically consistent a subject's responses were (where consistency is defined relative to existing party divides).

[3]Political sophistication was measured with a series of political knowledge questions.

2.4.2   Information and Beliefs

Another way that partisanship can induce greater party loyalty is through its effect on beliefs and information processing. A voter might develop a party identification based on congruence between her policy preferences and that party's platform, but new policy questions are always entering the political landscape. As new issues arise, partisanship often influences the positions that voters take. Partisans logically take cues from their party's position on new issues, as a voter has only so much time to learn about new and complex political questions from day to day.

For example, if a humanitarian crisis breaks out in another country, a debate might commence over whether to intervene in that country. The lines of debate would likely range from the broad and abstract (Is there a moral obligation to intervene to protect human rights abroad? Is intervention a violation of sovereignty?) to specific and practical (If we intervene, how likely are we to be successful? What unintended consequences might result?). A voter could begin studying questions of sovereignty, and reading up on all the details of the crisis: What precipitated it? What would be the likely approach to intervention? How much would it cost? How might the various actors involved respond to intervention? Or, the voter could make inferences from party positions: "I have generally been pleased with my party's approach to international issues and I trust their moral compass. Since my party opposes intervention, that means intervention is probably a bad idea, so I will oppose it too."

Empirically, the proposition that partisanship shapes policy preferences has found support in many contexts. The idea was famously developed in the context of American politics, where Campbell et al. (1960:135) argued for "the role of enduring partisan commitments in shaping attitudes toward political objects" (see also Downs 1957; Zaller 1992; Cavari and Freedman 2019). Since then, scholars have observed this phenomenon in many other contexts, including multi-party systems in Europe (Brader and Tucker 2012), and democracies with younger party systems such as Brazil (Samuels and Zucco 2014).

The influence of partisanship on beliefs extends beyond the example of using partisan cues to inform one's positions on new policy issues as they arise. Campbell et al. (1960:135) asserted that party identification "raises a perceptual screen through which an individual tends to see what is favorable to his partisan orientation." This perceptual screen affects both the set of information to which people are exposed and the way that they process this information. Campbell et al. (1960) were not alone in their observation — earlier work by Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee (1954), and later work by Stokes (1966) and Zaller (1992) advanced similar arguments about the role partisanship plays in changing perceptions of information. The normative implications differ depending on whether one interprets the effect of partisanship as a source of bias (Bartels 2002) or part of a rational Bayesian updating process (Gerber and Green 1999). Numerous survey and survey-experimental studies have suggested that these effects extend widely to people's beliefs about basic factual questions (Jerit and Barabas 2012; Shani 2009; Conover, Feldman and Knight 1986). But some of the apparent differences in factual beliefs between partisans actually reflect partisan cheerleading rather than sincerely held beliefs, especially on questions where respondents are unsure of the correct answer (Bullock et al. 2015).

2.4.3 Social Behavior

Partisanship not only influences political behavior; it also affects the way people behave in social contexts. Partisanship corresponds to both political and social divisions; and "[u]nlike race, gender and other social divides where group-related attitudes and behaviors are constrained by social norms...there are no corresponding pressures to temper disapproval of political opponents" (Iyengar and Westwood 2015:690).

One common approach to quantifying partisan animosity considers whether parents would disapprove of their child marrying a member of an opposing party. Half a century ago, Almond and Verba (1963) found that Americans were generally indifferent towards interparty marriages, whereas a small but notable number of Britons were upset by the prospect of

37

their children marrying someone from another party (12% of Conservatives and 3% of Labor supporters). More recently, those numbers have risen sharply in the United States: a 2010 survey found that 49% of Republicans and 33% of Democrats were upset by the prospect of inter-party marriage. A 2008 survey found a smaller increase among Britons, with 10% of Conservatives and 19% of Labor supporters opposing inter-party marriage for their children (Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes 2012). One might argue that this distaste for inter-party marriage stems from deeply held ideological beliefs, but Iyengar, Sood and Lelkes (2012) show that ideology and policy preferences are poor predictors of inter-party affect. Instead, partisans are driven by in-group/out-group dynamics.

Partisans are often willing to discriminate against non-copartisans (Iyengar and Westwood 2015) and are less likely to trust non-copartisans, including in contexts that are unrelated to politics (Carlin and Love 2018). Even in apolitical settings that highlight a different identity, partisans show favoritism towards their co-partisans. Engelhardt and Utych (2020) study in-group/out-group biases in the context of a college football game and show that partisan biases affect behavior even in settings where another social identity (which football team one supports) is seemingly more relevant. The authors conducted an experiment where participants were asked to consider hypothetical Craigslist offers for two extra tickets to an upcoming college football game, noting that whoever bought the tickets would be sitting next to the participant at the game. They find that positive attitudes towards co-partisans displaced negative attitudes towards supporters of the rival football team.

2.4.4   System-Level Implications

Moving beyond individual-level behavior, aggregate partisanship also has implications for the political system. Scholars have linked widespread partisanship to problems of accountability in government (Besley 2006; Eggers 2014). Partisans often tolerate corruption when it comes from their own party. As a result, in highly partisan contexts, corruption scandals often do not have the negative electoral consequences one might expect if elections are used to hold

politicians accountable (Anduiza, Gallego and Muñoz 2013).

Widespread partisanship has also been linked to democratic backsliding. Committed partisans may be willing to compromise on core democratic principles if it keeps their party in power (Svolik 2019). In particularly polarized contexts, partisanship can lead voters to view their rivals as illegitimate and create a justification for abandoning norms that maintain stability in democracies (Mickey, Levitisky and Way 2017).

Alternately, widespread partisanship can introduce a form of stability into the political system. When voters' partisan identities wane, they become less forgiving of poor performance in office, and employ more short-term negative retrospective voting. A party with committed partisan voters can often survive short-term failures — whether these negative outcomes stem from poor decisions the party made in office, or from factors outside the party's control. But parties without committed partisans can rapidly collapse in the face of scandal or weak economic outcomes. A lack of partisanship within the population is a key precursor to party system collapse, ushering in volatility and unpredictability in the political system (Lupu 2016).

2.5   Summary

The term "partisanship" has been used to describe both attitudes towards parties and genuine social identities. Each form of partisanship is a strong predictor of political behavior, though partisan social identities have more power to shape both political and non-political behavior and beliefs. Classic survey measures of partisanship are not well-suited to distinguishing between partisan attitudes and genuine social identities, but alternative measures adapted from social identity theory provide insight into the content of partisan identities and the extent to which they resemble other social identities.

Although partisanship is often passed down through families during early political so-

cialization, it is not a permanent characteristic. The stability of partisan identities depends largely on parties' success in building and maintaining consistent and well-differentiated party brands that give voters a clear reference point for developing a partisan social identity. When party brands are strong and partisan identities widespread, party systems are more stable and the political system less volatile; but voters might fail to hold parties accountable for their actions in office, and at times they will even trade off democratic principles to maintain party power.

Chapter 3

Partisanship as Mobilization: Theory

One of the most reliable empirical regularities in voting behavior is that partisans are more likely to turn out to vote than their non-partisan counterparts. The robust correlation between turnout and partisan identification appears across contexts, from the United States (Campbell et al. 1960) to Western Europe (Powell 1986), Africa (Resnick and Casale 2014), and Latin America (Carlin and Love 2015).[1] In Latin America, Carlin and Love (2015) find that partisan identification increases one's probability of turning out by 12-13 percentage points. Among the multitude of individual-level variables that they examine, only education has a larger effect on turnout. Similarly, Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita (2014) identify partisanship as one of the strongest predictors of turnout at the individual level and find consistent effects across eighteen Latin American countries.

In Chile, partisan identification has closely tracked with turnout since the return to democracy. In the early 1990's, approximately 75% of Chileans identified with a political party and more than 80% turned out to vote. Nearly three decades later, fewer than 25% identify with a party and fewer than 50% turn out to vote.[2] Cross-national comparisons in

---

[1]See also Clarke et al. (2004),Gerber, Huber and Washington (2010) and Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita (2014). Smets and van Ham (2013) conduct a meta-analysis of the determinants of voter turnout (90 studies) and show that partisan identification has a consistent effect on turnout across studies.

[2]Recall Fig. 5.2.

Europe reveal a similar pattern. Figure 3.1 plots turnout against the proportion of survey respondents identifying with a political party in fifteen countries included in the European Social Survey. It shows a strong positive correlation, with only one outlier: Switzerland, where frequent referendums make national elections less salient (Franklin 1996).

FIGURE 3.1. Turnout and Partisanship in Europe

Note: Voting age population turnout versus the proportion of respondents identifying with a political party. Turnout data comes from IDEA. Partisanship data comes from the European Social Survey Round 8.
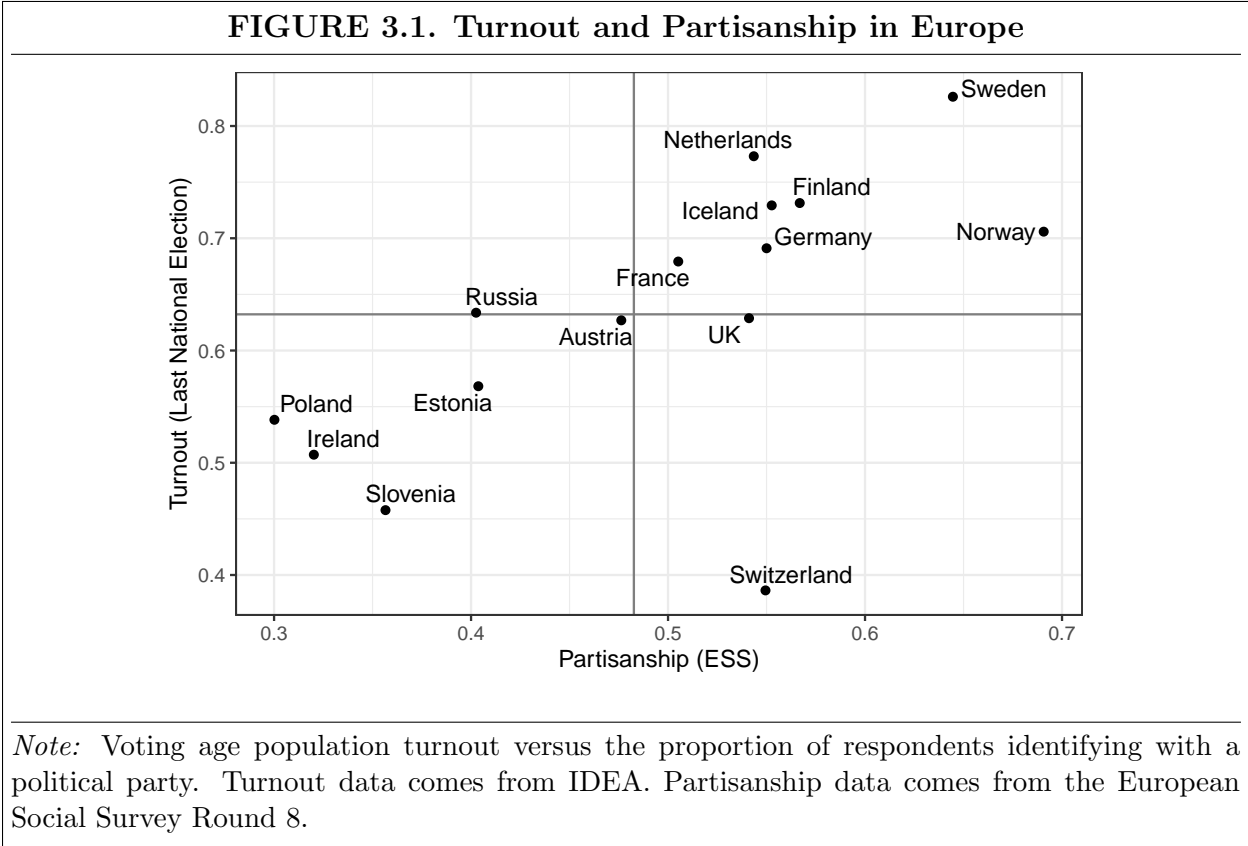
How should we understand this relationship? Are partisans simply people who are more interested in politics (and, therefore, more likely to participate)? Or does partisan identification actively mobilize individuals?

This distinction is key to understanding party strategy under compulsory and voluntary voting. If partisanship actively mobilizes voters, then it becomes a valuable tool for getting supporters out to the polls in voluntary systems. Parties might be willing to invest more effort and resources into fostering partisan identities in voluntary voting systems, compared with compulsory voting systems. But if partisans are merely more likely to participate because they have underlying characteristics that differ from non-partisans — such as a

general interest in politics — then partisanship is equally useful to parties in voluntary and compulsory voting systems as a pure persuasion tool.

To disentangle these two possibilities, we must consider individual-level models of turnout, and how partisanship fits into the logic of turnout. I begin with a brief summary of the voluminous literature on voter turnout. I review the most reliable empirical findings — *who votes?* — and influential models of voter turnout — *why does anyone vote?* — before turning to models that explicitly account for partisanship's influence on the calculus of voting.

Expressive voting models — which highlight non-instrumental payoffs to voting — help to explain partisan turnout. These models capture the internal payoff of expressing and reaffirming one's identity through the vote.

But expressive voting does not capture the full scope of partisanship's influence on the turnout calculus. Social identity theory points to another important dimension of partisan mobilization: the sense of oneself as part of a larger group. Partisans are more likely to see their party's successes and failures as personal successes and failures (Huddy, Mason and Aarøe 2015). According to the classic models of turnout, this tendency to internalize the group's successes and failures has no effect on turnout: regardless of how much importance a voter places on the outcome of an election, she has an infinitesimal chance of affecting that outcome with her one vote, so it should not factor into her decision to turn out or abstain. But the alternative frameworks of rule-utilitarianism and Kantian optimization show that this form of group-centric logic fundamentally alters the calculus of voting. I introduce the concept of "partisan duty" — a sense of duty to do one's part to contribute to a partisan group's success — in a rule-utilitarian (and a Kantian) framework and show that partisan social identities mobilize individuals who would otherwise stay home on election day.

When asked why they bother to turn out in large elections, voters often turn to some variant of the following explanation: "I know that my vote alone won't change who wins or loses, but imagine if everyone like me stayed home — surely, that would make a difference."

This logic is absent from the classic models of individually-rational behavior, but it is essential to understanding voting behavior, especially among partisans.

3.1 Who Votes?

The question of who votes in elections has been tackled by a staggering number of scholars. In a meta-analysis of the individual-level determinants of turnout, Smets and van Ham (2013) identified 90 different studies published in just ten top journals from 2000–2010. What's more, these 90 studies were only those that remained after eliminating studies of new and developing democracies, as well as limiting the sample to national parliamentary and presidential elections — excluding local elections, regional elections (such as EU elections), primaries, and midterm elections in presidential systems.

Upon broadening the scope to include both new and old democracies, and expanding the time frame for publications beyond the ten-year period considered in Smets and van Ham (2013), the number of relevant peer-reviewed publications quickly balloons. Across these many hundreds of studies, what have we learned about who votes and who stays home on Election Day?

3.1.1 Socioeconomic status

One of the most reliable findings is that income and education increase the propensity to vote (see, e.g., Nie, Powell and Prewitt 1969; Inkeles 1969; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Brady, Verba and Schlozman 1995; Lijphart 1997; Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita 2014). This finding holds in a variety of contexts, from stable and wealthy democracies like the United States (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980), to developing countries like 1960s Chile and India (Inkeles 1969), to even single-party states such as Tunisia in 1967 (Tessler 1972).

Nie, Powell and Prewitt (1969) argue that income and education contribute to an individual's propensity to turn out because those of high socioeconomic status become more

sensitized to political messaging and develop an increased competence for political engagement; moreover, they develop a normative predisposition towards participation, reflected in a sense of civic duty. Glaser (1958) points to social expectations or "role prescriptions," arguing that wealthier citizens are expected to vote and think about politics as a result of their social status. Other scholars have noted that the costs of voting are often less prohibitive for those of higher socioeconomic status because they have more free time (Brady, Verba and Schlozman 1995). In addition, political campaigns often do not focus on the issues of greatest concern among poor voters, instead differentiating themselves on issues most relevant to middle class and wealthier voters (Leighley and Nagler 2014). Poorer voters, then, perceive lower stakes in the electoral outcome than the middle class and wealthy voters that parties target with their platforms and messaging.

The strong positive association between individual-level socioeconomic status and turnout[3] appears in a wide variety of contexts; but in certain contexts, the relationship is weakened or (very occasionally) reversed. Kasara and Suryanarayan (2015) argue that the level of tax exposure of the rich (as determined by bureaucratic capacity and divergences in preferences between rich and poor) explains variation in the relationship between income and turnout. But Rau (2017) shows that two other factors explain cases in which poor voters turn out at rates rivaling or exceeding wealthy turnout: compulsory voting and clientelism. Compulsory voting usually decreases turnout inequality by virtue of increasing aggregate turnout (see Carey and Horiuchi (2017) for additional evidence, and Cepaluni and Hidalgo (2016) for a discussion of exceptions to this dynamic). And clientelism increases turnout among the poor, as clientelistic parties target those for whom the marginal utility of income is highest

---

[3]This relationship between socioeconomic status and turnout does not reliably scale up to the aggregate level: within a country, those of higher relative socioeconomic status are more likely to turn out, but economic development does not reliably increase aggregate turnout in a country. Some studies have shown that economic development increases turnout in industrialized countries (Blais and Dobrzynska 1998; Powell 1982); yet in developing countries, Radcliff (1992) finds that poor economic performance stimulates turnout. In a study of post-Communist Europe, Kostadinova (2003) does not find evidence of a relationship between economic performance and turnout. Similarly, Fornos, Power and Garand (2004) find no evidence of a relationship between turnout and GDP per capita, economic growth, or literacy rates in Latin America.

(see Stokes et al. 2013:158–163 for a review of the relationship between clientelistic appeals and voters' income in Latin America, Africa, and India).

3.1.2 Age

In addition to socioeconomic status, age is a reliable predictor of turnout: older voters tend to vote at much higher rates than young voters (Campbell et al. 1960; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Blais, Gidengil and Nevitte 2004; Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita 2014; Resnick and Casale 2014).

Some scholars have argued that a model of political experience, akin to Converse's (1969) model of political learning, might explain the higher turnout rates among older voters. The argument is that, as citizens age, they gain more experience with the political system; past voting experience as well as greater exposure to social pressure to vote make one more likely to turn out (Niemi, Stanley and Evans 1984; Rosenstone and Hansen 2003). But the bulk of the literature has argued for a social-ties explanation: young adults lack the social ties and residential stability (Conway 2000) of middle-aged citizens. But "[as] young Americans marry, have children, and develop community ties, their turnout tends to increase" (Abramson, Aldrich and Rohde 1998:76).[4]

Further evidence for the social-ties explanation comes from the functional form of the relationship between age and turnout. Most often, the relationship identified is curvilinear: turnout rises dramatically as young people approach middle age, followed by a modest decline among elderly voters (Nie, Verba and Kim 1974). Early studies argued that physical infirmities generated this decline among elderly voters (Milbrath and Goel 1977), but other scholars have challenged this claim (Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980) and found that disruption of social ties is central to turnout decline among the elderly (Bhatti and Hansen 2012). Withdrawal from the labor force, death of a spouse, and a greater tendency to live alone all

---

[4]Quoted in Highton and Wolfinger (2001), who challenge this explanation of the age effect.

diminish the social encouragement to vote among the elderly and contribute to abstention rates (Bhatti and Hansen 2012).

In addition to the aforementioned life-cycle effects, some scholars have also identified a generational effect (Gallego 2009; Blais and Rubenson 2013; Carlin 2006; Rubenson et al. 2004). In many parts of the world, turnout among young people today is lower than it was among past generations at the same point in their lives. Thus, assessing the effect of age on turnout from a snapshot of demographic patterns in a few elections leads to overestimates of the life-cycle effects. As an individual grows older, she becomes more likely to vote. But the differences in turnout across age groups are exaggerated by generational differences in attention paid to politics and the sense that voting is a civic duty (Blais, Gidengil and Nevitte 2004).

3.1.3   Other Demographic Variables

Other demographic variables have less consistent effects on turnout. Historically, men were more likely to turn out than women, but many studies argue that this gender gap has gradually disappeared in developed countries (see, e.g., Childs 2004; Inglehart, Norris and Ronald 2003). Others have argued that this convergence applies only to certain types of elections, with men still participating at higher rates in second-order or "less important" elections (Kostelka, Blais and Gidengil 2019; Dassonneville and Kostelka 2020). In Latin America, Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita (2014) find that women are significantly *more* likely to turn out than men, while Desposato and Norrander (2009) find that women are less likely to participate.

Some studies have also found that race and ethnicity play an important role in turnout (see, e.g., Hajnal and Trounstine 2005; Galandini and Fieldhouse 2019; Leighley and Nagler 1992). The usual argument is that racial and ethnic minorities often turn out at lower rates than majority groups because they have fewer resources (Smets and van Ham 2013) or

because they face higher costs of voting (Hajnal, Lajevardi and Nielson 2017). But Smets and van Ham (2013) find that race is only a significant predictor of turnout in 23% of studies that considered the variable.

3.1.4 Social Networks

Implicit in much of the research on turnout across age groups is the claim that social ties play an important role in determining who turns out and who abstains. Early studies of turnout in the United States showed that people who actively participate in nonpolitical voluntary groups — such as churches, clubs, or professional associations — are more likely to turn out than those who do not participate in these voluntary groups (Olsen 1972; Verba and Nie 1972; Sallach, Babchuk and Booth 1972). Scholars have theorized that participation in voluntary associations generates social pressure to turn out and facilitates discussions that reduce the information-gathering costs of voting (Rosenstone and Hansen 2003).

This finding was replicated in a variety of contexts beyond the United States, including Western Europe (Moutselos 2020) and Africa (Resnick and Casale 2014). But in their meta-analysis of individual determinants of voter turnout, Smets and van Ham (2013) find mixed results: group memberships, such as religious affiliation and union membership, do not have a reliable effect on turnout across studies. In Latin America, citizens are more likely to turn out if they are employed and if they are engaged in civic associations (Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita 2014). Church attendance, by contrast, has no effect on turnout (Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita 2014).

3.1.5 Political Variables

A handful of more explicitly political variables are also related to turnout. Unsurprisingly, interest in politics is a strong predictor of turnout (Rubenson et al. 2004). Those who express a sense of efficacy are also more likely to turn out (Norris 2004; Banducci and Karp 2009),

48

as are citizens with greater levels of political knowledge (Blais et al. 2002). Trust in election integrity also contributes to turnout (Carreras and İrepoğlu 2013). And those who turn out express higher levels of satisfaction with democracy (Norris 2011; Grönlund and Setälä 2007).[5]

Another important factor in turnout is mobilization and party contact. As Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) observed, those who don't participate fail to do so for three broad reasons: "they can't," "they don't want to," or "no one asked." When parties reach out to voters, they subsidize the information-gathering costs of voting (Rosenstone and Hansen 2003). They also create social incentives to participate, as parties reach out to voters through their social networks (Rosenstone and Hansen 2003). And in contexts such as Latin America (Carreras and İrepoğlu 2013) and West Africa (Vicente 2014), clientelism further mobilizes voters: parties often offer benefits to voters they worry will stay home on election day as a way of reducing the material costs of voting and turning out supporters (Nichter 2008; Gans-Morse, Mazzuca and Nichter 2014).

3.1.6 Voting as Habit

Another (unsurprising) empirical regularity is that past turnout predicts future turnout. That is, people who have voted in the past are more likely to vote in the future. Of course, this is to be expected if stable individual-level characteristics predict voting: a wealthy college-educated man with an interest in politics will likely remain a wealthy college-educated man with an interest in politics next year.

The empirical pattern that past turnout predicts future turnout, however, has a causal interpretation as well. It is not just that the kind of person who is likely to turn out

---

[5]As with partisan identification, the causal relationship between these more explicitly political variables and turnout is not obvious. For example, some hypothesize that satisfaction with democracy increases turnout (Kostadinova 2003); others argue that voting is what leads to satisfaction with democracy (Kostelka and Blais 2018). And it might also be that the kinds of people who express satisfaction with democracy are simply the kinds of people who vote, with no direct causal relation between the two.

to vote one year is also the kind of person who is likely to turn out in other years; the experience of voting in one election has a causal effect on one's likelihood of voting in the future, separate from whatever characteristics led this person to vote the first time around. A series of experimental studies have shown that voting is habit-forming (Gerber, Green and Shachar 2003; Coppock and Green 2016; Aldrich, Montgomery and Wood 2011). Even if an "unlikely" voter turns out one year for election-specific reasons, such as expected closeness (Indridason 2008) or perceived stakes (Aytaç and Stokes 2019) of a particular election, this person becomes more likely to continue voting in future elections (where the stakes might be lower or the competition less fierce) as a direct result of her participation in a prior election.

3.2   Modeling Voter Turnout

Running parallel to the large empirical literature on who votes, is an equally expansive theoretical literature that seeks to make sense of why people vote. Political scientists have devoted decades to developing and refining models of voter turnout, in an attempt to answer the question: Why do rational people undertake the costs of voting in a large democracy, when the chance that their vote will affect the outcome of the election is virtually zero? The Downsian model, one of the earliest and most ubiquitous models of turnout, yields the conclusion that no rational individual should vote in large elections, based on the simple observation that one vote has virtually no chance of changing the outcome, and there is always at least some cost to voting (Downs 1957).

The Downsian school of thought approaches turnout as an investment decision, wherein one compares probabilistic benefits of altering electoral outcomes with costs of voting. Applying the model to the empirical observation of rather high turnout relegates most people to the realm of irrationality. The probability of changing the outcome of a large election is always approaching zero. So in this model, where voting is purely instrumental and citizens are expected-utility maximizers, any minuscule cost is sufficient to make a voter abstain.

In an effort to solve the paradox, other scholars have introduced a utility benefit to the act of voting itself (Riker and Ordeshook 1968) or an expressive value of voting (Schuessler 2000; Fiorina 1976). And some have challenged the premise that rational choice means maximizing expected utility. In the minimax regret model, Ferejohn and Fiorina (1974) use an alternative decision rule, where the citizen seeks to minimize the maximum regret from his or her action in a state of uncertainty. Experimental work has investigated the role of social pressures on turnout decisions, and provided support for a conception of both instrinsic and extrinsic benefits from the act of voting (Gerber, Green and Larimer 2008).

Owing to the influence of the Downsian model, the formal theoretical literature has been largely preoccupied with the question of why anyone turns out at all, rather than the question of why certain types of people turn out more than others.[6] Indeed, these are two distinct questions. But the question of whether and why voting is rational for anyone must be addressed if we are to properly understand variation in turnout patterns. After all, how can we hope to understand why certain kinds of people vote more than others if we don't understand why anyone votes at all? However we resolve the latter question — often described as "the paradox of voter turnout" — has fundamental implications for the former.

3.2.1 The Downsian Model

The early model proposed by Downs (1957) in *An Economic Theory of Democracy* remains one of the most used and referenced models of turnout. The essence of Downs's model is captured by the following equation:

$$R = PB - C \tag{3.1}$$

---

[6]That is not to say that no one has written formal models in which the primary goal was to explain variation in turnout. But the question of rational voter turnout has so persistently puzzled scholars that Morris Fiorina once claimed that "turnout is the paradox that ate rational choice theory" (quoted in Grofman (1993:93)).

where P is the probability that voter i's vote will change the outcome of the election, B is the benefit of voter i's preferred candidate winning,[7] and C indicates the costs of voting. Where $R > 0$, it is rational to vote; where $R < 0$, it is irrational to vote; and where $R = 0$, rational voter i is indifferent between voting and not voting. The issue that Downs's model poses for empirical scholars of turnout is that it (virtually) always deems voters irrational for turning out. As long as C has a positive value (which, in any normal circumstance, it does),[8] PB must have a larger positive value for voting to be rational. Even where B is abnormally large, the value of $P \to 0$ as n increases, so in a large democracy, this term is essentially dropped.

A rather similar model was presented ten years later by Tullock (1967). Tullock presented the voting decision as:[9]

$$R = PBA_T - C \tag{3.2}$$

Where $-1 \leq A_T \geq 1$. Tullock alters Downs's model through the addition of an A_T term[10] which represents the voter's estimate of the accuracy of his or her judgment. He uses this term to back out of the model's implication that people are more likely to vote in local elections than in national elections because P becomes much greater in small, local elections. The rise in P is, according to Tullock, mitigated by a drop in A_T because information is much more difficult to obtain for the local election, so the voter's certainty of her judgment drops.

The Downs and Tullock models both deem voting irrational, predicting widespread abstention at odds with the empirical evidence. Downs postulates that if no one votes, people

---

[7]This benefit is measured relative to the "benefit" of the opponent winning: $B = U(C_1) - U(C_2)$.

[8]Costs may be quite small, and even if one does not incur some obvious costs of transportation to the polls, there is still the cost of the time it takes to vote.

[9]Tullock's presentation of the equation is actually $BDA - C_V = P$, where D is equivalent to Downs's P term, C_V is equivalent to Downs's C term, and P is equivalent to Downs's R term. As the Downsian model has been much more widely adopted in later works on turnout, it is easier to analyze Tullock's model when rewritten with Downsian notation

[10]I denote Tullock's A term as A_T simply to distinguish it from the A term of Riker and Ordeshook's more commonly discussed model, in which it carries an entirely different meaning.

will then have an incentive to vote because P will grow very large. Because everyone is following this same general logic, however, an equilibrium is never reached—once everyone plans to vote, P becomes very small again so no one plans to vote, but then P grows again as a result, and so on. To solve these problems, Downs suggests that citizens have an interest in maintaining democracy, which hinges on some level of participation. Those who vote, then, are rationally choosing to vote in order to fulfill the goal of long-term maintenance of democracy. This explanation suffers from some of the same problems that the original PB term faces, however: while maintaining democracy may be very important to the citizen, the chance that one person's decision to vote or abstain will determine the fate of the democratic system is even more remote than the chance of changing the outcome of the election.

3.2.2   The Riker-Ordeshook Formulation

Riker and Ordeshook (1968) refined the Downsian model by adding a new variable to allow for non-zero turnout rates. They consider four potential types of payoffs.[11] B, as in the Downsian model, refers to the benefits the voter receives conditional on her preferred candidate winning. Likewise, C continues to refer to the costs the voter incurs from voting, regardless of the outcome of the election. The new terms A and D refer, respectively, to the costs incurred conditional on the candidate winning, and the benefits the voter receives from voting regardless of the election outcome.

Thus, their refined version of the Downsian model is as such:

$$R = PB - C + D \tag{3.3}$$

where D refers to the benefits of voting received regardless of the outcome of the election.[12] The D term is often interpreted as a "civic duty" term, describing a personal benefit from

---

[11]The term "payoff" here is used in the game theoretic sense to include both positive and negative payoffs.

[12]A is excluded from the model on the grounds that it is complexly related to P and non-universal, such that adding it to the model would greatly complicate things while adding little additional information.

the act of voting as a fulfillment of one's civic duty. Riker and Ordeshook present D more generally, including satisfaction from affirming party allegiance, allegiance to the political system, political efficacy, social satisfaction from going to the polls, and satisfaction from informing oneself.

While the Riker and Ordeshook model allows for non-zero turnout predictions, it still falls short of predicting the type of turnout behavior observed empirically. B is still linked to P so that B drops out, and closeness of the election is never a relevant predictor of variation in voting behavior. Rather, turnout is predicted by considering the costs and benefits of the *act* of voting, separate from electoral outcomes. Empirical studies have shown that turnout is sensitive to the costs of voting (C) (see, e.g., Brady and Mcnulty 2011; Squire, Wolfinger and Glass 1987), but it is also sensitive to the expected closeness of elections (Indridason 2008; Aytaç and Stokes 2019) and the perceived stakes (B) (Brody and Page 1973; Adams and Merrill III 2003).

Moreover, the use of a "catch all D [term] to rescue the rationality of the decision to vote" (Ferejohn and Fiorina 1974:535) brings the Riker-Ordeshook reformulation "perilously close to the realm of tautology, or at least triviality" (Fiorina 1976:393). Nonetheless, this model served as a precursor to a significant literature on the expressive aspect of voting by challenging the notion that voting is merely an instrumental act.

3.2.3 Minimax Regret

Downs and Tullock conceptualize voting as an investment decision; Riker and Ordeshook conceptualize as a consumption decision. All three models, however, employ a common but limited interpretation of rational choice: maximizing expected utility. Ferejohn and Fiorina (1974:535) note a "simple but often overlooked point: the concept of rational behavior is more ambiguous than many of us take it to be." Rather than employing the conventional analysis of voting as decision-making under risk, Ferejohn and Fiorina (1974) analyze voting as decision-

making under uncertainty, which has altogether different implications. In voting under risk, voters calculate probabilities of various states occurring and seek to maximize their expected utility over these states, as weighted by the estimated probabilities. In decision-making under uncertainty, such probabilities are unknown or unknowable. Ferejohn and Fiorina employ a common procedure for decision-making under uncertainty: the minimax regret criterion.

This procedure compares "regrets" rather than outcomes. Beginning with a matrix of outcomes $\boldsymbol{U}$ where the $u_{i,j}$ outcome is the utility gained[13] from taking action i when the ensuing state of the world is j, a similar matrix of regrets can be calculated. Conceptually, regret is the difference between what the voter actually obtained given her action and the ensuing state, and the most that she could have obtained had she taken a different action (i.e., the outcome if the voter had known ahead of time what the ensuing state would be, and acted accordingly to maximize her utility). Mathematically, regret for (i, j) is calculated as such:

$$r_{i,j} = max(u_{*,j}) - u_{i,j} \tag{3.4}$$

Given a matrix $\boldsymbol{R}$ of regrets calculated by Eq. 3.4 on the original outcome matrix $\boldsymbol{U}$, a voter acting in accordance with the minimax regret criterion minimizes the maximum regret from their action. That is, the voter's ideal action A^* is the action such that over all actions i:

$$max(r_{A^*,*}) = min(max(r_{i,*})) \tag{3.5}$$

Or, in a more conceptual sense, the voter thinks in terms of worst-case scenarios, and seeks to make the worst-case scenario for their action as minimally bad as possible, "maximizing" over such worst-case outcomes.

The minimax regret approach succeeds in predicting positive turnout—Ferejohn and

---

[13]This utility "gain" need not be positive.

Fiorina calculate that citizens in a two-party system will rationally vote when the following inequality holds:

$$C < \frac{1}{4}B \tag{3.6}$$

where C and B retain their meanings from the Downsian equation.[14] Thus, they find that "under rather general circumstances it is rational for many citizens to vote even if they neither distort their individual impact nor place a direct value on the act of voting" (526). However, by analyzing voting decisions in a framework of uncertainty rather than risk, Ferejohn and Fiorina eliminate the role of probabilities entirely from the voter's calculus. According to the minimax regret model, the closeness of an election plays no role in determining the level of turnout, a prediction contradicted by empirical evidence (Blais 2000; Aytaç and Stokes 2019).

Later scholars have also pointed to theoretical problems with the minimax regret approach, and such reservations have been borne out, at least tentatively, in empirical studies.[15] One objection is that decision-making under uncertainty assumes no knowledge of the probabilities concerned, but any reasonable voter should be expected to understand that the probability of creating or breaking a tie with one's vote in a large election is extremely small (Beck 1975). Furthermore, many have pointed out that the minimax regret decision rule would result in "bizarre behavior when applied to other decisions or even when extended within the voting context" (Mueller 1989:353). A common illustration of this problem is that people acting in accordance with the minimax regret logic should never cross a street, due to the small chance that they will get hit by a car (Beck 1975). Similarly, one should not undertake the risk, however remote, of being killed on their way to the polls and should therefore abstain (Stephens 1975).[16]

---

[14]Ferejohn and Fiorina also assume, in calculating this result, that $C < \frac{1}{2}B$ holds reliably across citizens.

[15]Blais et al. (1995) find that approximately 71% of people agree with the statement that they would feel terrible if they abstained and their candidate lost by one vote. Moreover, those who agree with the statement are much more likely to vote (similar results are also found in Kenney and Rice (1989)). However, upon controlling for measures of civic duty, the apparent effect disappears and the minimax regret question loses significance (Blais et al. 1995).

[16]Even within the limited context of casting one's ballot, Tullock (1975) suggested that, according to the

3.2.4 Social Pressure

Recent work has also drawn attention to the impact of social pressure on turnout. Gerber, Green and Larimer (2008) conclude from the widespread over-reporting of voting that there are extrinsic incentives to vote. Working from the Riker-Ordeshook model, they decompose D into two component parts: D_I which is the intrinsic benefit (e.g., utility from fulfilling one's civic duty) and D_E which is the extrinsic benefit, understood in terms of social consequences. The authors D_E in terms of the probability π_r that others will observe the voter's decision to vote or abstain, and posit that the intrinsic benefit may have an interactive effect with D_E. Adding an indexing constant α, they develop a new model in which one votes if the following inequality holds:

$$PB + \beta_1 D_I + \alpha \pi_r + \beta_3 \pi_r D_I > C \tag{3.7}$$

Where the β terms are derived from a linear approximation of D as a function of D_I and D_E and the approximation of D_E in terms of D_I. Their experimental treatment shows no interaction between D_E and D_I, so Eq. 3.7 can simply be written as:

$$PB + \beta_1 D_I + \alpha \pi_r > C \tag{3.8}$$

By decomposing the D term into more precise components, the authors deepen the understanding of an often ill-specified D term, but their model does not escape the common problem of a vanishing PB term, leaving one with an equation that, although more precisely than in past models, amounts to: i will vote if the consumption benefits i attaches to voting exceed the costs. If one endogenizes the D terms to be dependent on the closeness of the election or the perceived distance between candidates to re-introduce these important factors, the vanishing P problem is merely relocated within the equation, but not solved.

---

minimax regret rule, any citizen who would like to be president should write in their own name.

3.2.5 Expressive Voting

While voting is often modeled as an instrumental act,[17] many have noted that voting can serve other purposes. The expressive voting literature contends that votes operate as "a means to express political beliefs and preferences and, in doing so, to establish or reaffirm [one's] own political identity" (Schuessler 2000:88).

Schuessler (2000) identifies two parameters which jointly determine the expressive utility derived from voting:

1. Who votes for a given candidate

2. How many people vote for a given candidate

For ease of operationalization, Schuessler focuses primarily on the second parameter. He argues that for a voter i, there is an optimal number of other supporters for the candidate X, such that i gains the maximum utility from also expressing support for X and thereby identifying with the group of other supporters. The proportion of the population supporting X which maximizes the voter's utility is $n_X^o \in (0, 1)$ and the function $f(n_X) = u_i$, which denotes the expressive utility of voting for X, is non-monotonic.[18]

The decision to vote or abstain thus depends on both the function $f(n_X)$ and the value of u_t, which denotes the threshold utility below which the voter will abstain. Some voters have functions $f(n_X)$ which lie above (or below) u_t across the entire domain, and such voters will always (or never) turn out to vote. Those for whom the line $y = u_t$ and $f(n_X)$ intersect, however, vote only when n_X falls within the subset of the domain for which $f(n_X) > u_t$. The variation among functions $f(n_X)$ and their relationship to u_t reflects the assertion that not all voters are expressive voters, and not all expressive voters are expressive in the same

---

[17]Riker and Ordeshook (1968) provide an early challenge to the notion with their D term.

[18]While Schuessler's illustration of this function as single-peaked and non-monotonic seems accurate, the particular explanation he provides is somewhat unsatisfing. He argues that this characteristic of the function is obvious by way of the equally meaningless notions of attachment at the endpoints, $n_X = 0$ and $n_X = 1$. There is, however, a clear difference between the expressive value of acting in conformity with an entirely unified population, in the latter case, and acting in opposition to it, in the former case.

way.

Another approach to expressive voting considers the expressive component in terms of a voter's party allegiance. Fiorina (1976) alters the Riker-Ordeshook model by introducing an expressive factor of the utility gain (or loss) from acting in accordance with (or contrary to) one's party allegiance. This expressive model builds on the argument that party identification encapsulates more than just one's positions on current issues and thus it is possible that $B = U(C_1) - U(C_2) > 0$ even for a voter who identifies as a member of candidate C_2's party. This leads to a classification of citizens as either consistents or cross-pressured. Consistents are those for whom the party differential (B) and party identification are consistent.[19] The cross-pressured are those who prefer the platform of their party's opponent. The expressive value of voting for one's own party is represented by a and the expressive costs of voting against one's party by d. This conceptualization of voting leads to two different equations, reflecting the possibility that the voter may vote for a given party even when $B < 0$ due to party allegiances. The "loyalists," which consist of all consistents and the sub-group of cross-pressured voters who vote for their party even though $B < 0$, choose to vote rather than abstain when the following holds:

$$a + (p_3 + p_4)\frac{B}{2} + N > 0 \tag{3.9}$$

Where p_3 represents the probability that voter i's vote breaks a tie, and p_4 represents the probability that voter i's vote creates a tie.[20] N represents the net fixed benefits of voting, such that N is equivalent to $D - C$ from the Riker-Ordeshook notation. In the case of a consistent voter, $B > 0$, and in the case of a cross-pressured loyalist, $B < 0$.

Cross-pressured disloyalists, who vote against their own party, vote for their party's

---

[19]This class also includes independents.

[20]Relatedly, $\frac{B}{2}$ is used in place of B because a coin toss is assumed in the case of a tie, so the expected utility of a tie is $\frac{1}{2}(B) + \frac{1}{2}(0) = \frac{B}{2}$ and the utility differential for breaking a tie is the difference between C_1 winning and tying: $B - \frac{B}{2} = \frac{B}{2}$, rather than the difference between winning and losing.

opponent rather than abstain when the following holds:

$$- (p_2 + p_3)\frac{B}{2} + N - d > 0 \tag{3.10}$$

Where p_2 represents the probability that voter i's vote creates a tie.[21] This model therefore predicts that cross-pressured loyalists are less likely to vote as B increases, while cross-pressured disloyalists are more likely to vote as B increases.

3.2.6 The Rule-Utilitarian Framework

The paradox of turnout arises from the observation that, in a large electorate, the probability of being pivotal is effectively zero, so any benefits derived from one's preferred candidate winning become largely irrelevant to the decision-theoretic turnout decision. One approach to solving the paradox is to identify payoffs from voting that are not linked to the electoral outcome (e.g., civic duty or expressive utility).

Another approach is to maintain the focus on instrumental motivations for voting, but find ways to move away from the pivotal probabilities conception of turnout. One such model is the rule-utilitarian model, in which the decision to vote does not hinge on being pivotal (Harsanyi 1980). Instead, a subset of the population receives a payoff from acting "ethically," which Feddersen and Sandroni (2006) define as voting in accordance with a social welfare maximization strategy (that is, a strategy that maximizes total social welfare if everyone follows it).

Voters in the rule utilitarian model are not identical — they vary in preferences over candidates, costs of voting, and agent type. Some agents are "ethicals," who receive a payoff from voting according to the welfare maximization rule. Depending on the rule and their costs, they may or may not vote. The second type are "abstainers," who receive no such

---

[21]While conceptually related, p_2 takes the place of p_4 in this equation because it refers to the subjective probability of a different state: that in which C_1 wins by one vote if i abstains, as opposed to the state considered in Eq. 3.9 in which C_1 loses by one vote if i abstains.

payoff and therefore always abstain.

An essential premise of the rule utilitarian model is that winning with lower turnout is better than winning with high turnout. Holding constant the turnout of candidate B, a supporter of candidate A would prefer that the number of voters who turn out to vote for A be as small as possible while still exceeding the number of votes for B. More specifically, the candidate A supporter would prefer that the sum of the costs incurred by voting be as small as possible while still maintaining a sufficient vote share to elect candidate A. The maximization rule, then, consists of a cost threshold: those whose costs exceed some value σ should abstain, while those whose costs are less than σ should vote. An ethical voter with $c < \sigma$ receives a payoff for voting, and an ethical voter with $c > \sigma$ also receives a payoff for acting in accordance with the rule and abstaining.

This model succeeds in predicting positive turnout, and provides more realistic comparative statics than previous models. Notably, rule-utilitarian models recover the relevance of close elections, a factor rendered irrelevant to the turnout decision in the classic Downsian model and many subsequent refinements.

Despite its desirable properties, the rule-utilitarian framework has faced criticism for its underlying logic, with critics arguing that the microfoundations of the rule utilitarian model require a counter-intuitive ethic that runs against empirical evidence (Aytaç and Stokes 2019). The central objection to the rule utilitarian model comes from the assumption that, all else equal, lower turnout is preferred or better for overall social welfare. This assumption ignores any legitimating effect of high turnout and is starkly distinct from the rhetoric around voting in democracies. Chapman (2015) argues that the "duty" to vote is derived from the normative preference for complete turnout. Attempts to empirically test classic duty models have routinely found that voters generally consider higher turnout to be a good thing (Chapman 2015), even under unlikely conditions: nearly half of those surveyed in the 1952 NES believed that people should vote even when they don't care about the

outcome (Campbell, Gurin and Miller 1954). Thus, however appealing the predictions of the rule utilitarian model may be, the steps taken to achieve these results are somewhat unconvincing as an account of how people actually act.

3.3 The Role of Partisanship

Where does partisanship fit into these calculations? In the classical models, partisanship can affect both C (the cost of voting) and B (the perceived benefits of one's preferred party winning the election). Partisanship often operates as an informational shortcut (Rahn 1993; Foos and de Rooij 2013), and information-gathering costs are among the most demanding costs of voting (Downs 1957; Snyder and Ting 2002). Moreover, partisanship can function as a perceptual screen. Partisans are likely to interpret news through a lens that favors their party. For example, if a non-partisan voter has no opinion on tariff policies, then when two parties announce opposing positions on tariffs, this is unlikely to affect her perception of the benefits of one party over the other. They have announced positions on an issue that is not important to her, and on which she has no strong opinion. But the partisan voter reacts differently. In the absence of prior information and preferences over tariff policies, he is likely to adopt his party's announced position (Zaller 1992; Cavari and Freedman 2019). As new issues become salient, he gradually adopts more positions congruent with his party. Over time, the value of B grows as a result of the partisan lens through which he gathers and processes information.

According to expressive voting models, partisanship mobilizes voters because it creates a direct personal benefit from voting. A partisan gains utility from expressing her identity. And this expression need not be public. Even in the privacy of the voting booth, she gains utility from re-affirming and reinforcing her own self-conception as a partisan.

Fiorina (1976) builds upon the basic framework of Downs (1957) and Riker and Ordeshook (1968) to introduce this expressive benefit of voting in alignment with one's party

identification. Fiorina's model emphasizes that partisans don't just prefer a given party's platform or performance in office. They internalize a sense of partisan membership (Greene 2002). When a partisan votes for her party, she gains expressive utility from re-affirming her identity, separate from any instrumental benefit of increasing the likelihood of electing a government whose policies she prefers.

This intrinsic expressive benefit of voting plays an important role in mobilizing partisans. But it is not the only reason that partisanship mobilizes voters. Another result of this internalized identity is that "the group's failures and victories become personal" (Huddy, Mason and Aarøe 2015:3). Membership in a partisan group, similar to membership in a sports team's fanbase, generates an emotional investment in the outcomes of political competition. Turning out to vote is often a low-cost way of joining in a group effort to achieve a collective victory. Achen and Sinnott (2007:9) draw parallels between turning out to vote and cheering for a favorite sports team: "Neither act is instrumentally rational, and thus they will seem mysterious to those whose explanatory repertoire is confined to self-interested motivations. But there is little doubt that people have a capacity for supporting inexpensive group efforts."

This sense of contributing to a group success is not adequately captured by classic models of turnout. Even if partisanship generates a deeper investment in the party's success, each voter still has an infinitesimal chance of casting a decisive vote that changes the electoral outcome.[22]

A partisan may care deeply about the social reputation of the party with which she identifies (Huddy, Mason and Aarøe 2015) but, again, her one vote will hardly affect that reputation on its own. Concern for the reputation of one's party is linked to the electoral results. In the context of classical turnout models, this factor is relegated to the same

---

[22]Fiorina (1976) incorporates expectations about the closeness of elections into his comparative statics. However, his formulation is subject to the same problems as the Downsian model: the probability of affecting the electoral outcome is always so small that it should have no discernible effect on behavior, if voters are optimizing in the way that the classic models postulate.

irrelevance as any other preference over the electoral outcome (B) — the chance that one person's vote will be decisive, determining the difference between her party winning or losing (or tying), is infinitesimal. Thus, it cannot possibly outweigh even minimal costs of voting.

In the case of party reputation, increasing vote shares have an effect separate from winning or losing. The reputation of a party that loses by a very small margin will fare much better than one that loses by huge margins. An individual vote for the party, even if it is not decisive, contributes to the party's reputation with certainty. But here too the effect is infinitesimal — the marginal effect of one additional vote on a party's reputation is negligible. To fully understand the importance of partisanship for turnout, then, requires a more fundamental innovation to the theoretical framework. True social identification with a party does not just provide another additive utility benefit to voting; it changes the way that a voter optimizes her utility. One of the primary reasons that partisanship is such a powerful mobilizing force is that it creates a sense of membership — partisans are "part of the team" and they behave as such.

I define *partisan duty* as the sense of duty or obligation to do one's part to contribute to a partisan group's success. Partisan duty can be modeled in the context of a group rule-utilitarian model (Coate and Conlin 2004). The group rule-utilitarian approach applies the same basic logic of the Feddersen and Sandroni (2006) model to subgroup welfare. Elections are modeled as contests between distinct groups in which individuals "want to 'do their part' to help their group win" (Coate and Conlin 2004:1476). Partisan duty is a natural extension of the rule-utilitarian framework. Seeing oneself as a member of one of the groups competing over electoral outcomes amplifies the incentives to turn out. The stronger a voter's party identification, the more likely she is to think about voting in terms of her role in a partisan group. And as rule-utilitarian models illustrate, this makes voters more likely to turn out. Even if a voter acknowledges that her individual vote will not change the outcome of the election, she votes because she wants to do her part to help her group win. And the rule-

utilitarian model shows that this group-based thinking is perfectly at home in a rational choice model of turnout, albeit not the classic Downsian approach.

As noted above, the rule-utilitarian framework is useful for thinking about turnout, but is not without limitations — in particular, the counter-intuitive ethic to stay home if the party already has enough votes to win the election. But the top-line results from the rule-utilitarian framework can be achieved even without this questionable assumption.

In an alternative model, I incorporate the concept of partisan duty within a framework of Kantian optimization. The Kantian model achieves a similar outcome to the rule-utilitarian framework but with a more natural underlying logic: people want to see large numbers of voters turning out to support their side, but they also want to minimize the personal cost to them individually. A partisan's social identification with a party is based in large part on a sense of common interests and characteristics among co-partisans. Thus, if a partisan attempts to free-ride by always abstaining, it would be irrational to expect that co-partisans who face the same decision calculus will do the opposite and turn out. Instead, voters in the Kantian model determine a reasonable threshold for participation that they and others will follow.

3.3.1 Kantian Optimization

How can one account for the sense of contributing to a group success in a rational choice model of voter turnout? I argue that when partisans decide whether to vote or abstain, they are thinking in both a competitive and a cooperative context. At the level of groups — parties competing against one another to win office — the election is clearly a competitive context. But at the level of individuals, there is a cooperative side to elections: each supporter of a given party wants their partisan group to cooperate to bring about their side's victory. A model of partisan turnout, then, must incorporate concepts of both competition and cooperation.

The standard approach to modeling turnout — and to game theory and rational choice models as a whole — focuses on competition. Nash equilibrium is the most central concept in game theory. The Nash approach takes all others' actions as given, and requires that each player ask how they can maximize their own utility, given what everyone else is doing. This logic turns cooperative behavior into a puzzle. We come to expect that all people will behave as free-riders whenever they have the chance, and collective action is hard to sustain. But empirically, we often observe cooperative behavior, whether in behavioral economics lab experiments, or in everyday life. To explain this cooperation, theorists taking a Nash approach must rely on complex punishment schemes, repeated interaction, or exotic arguments in an agent's utility function to capture a sense of altruism or a "warm glow."

With the concept of Kantian optimization, Roemer (2019) shows that cooperation can be sustained even among self-interested actors if we consider a different equilibrium concept. A Nash optimizer asks, "what should I do if I want to maximize my own utility, given what everyone else is doing?" But a Kantian optimizer asks, "what would I want everyone (including myself) to do, to maximize my own utility?"

In the following section, I model the turnout decision with a combined Kantian-Nash framework: partisans consider the game between parties from a competitive Nash perspective, and the game among copartisans from a cooperative Kantian perspective. A partisan conceives of herself as being part of the partisan group, and as being similar to other copartisans. Thus, when she makes a decision about whether she will vote or abstain, she considers the outcomes if others like her — copartisans — were to take the actions she considers. Her end goal is to maximize her own utility; she is not concerned with the utility of copartisans. She accomplishes this goal, however, by cooperating with copartisans to maximize the chances that her party wins the election.

3.3.2 Formal Model

Two parties L and R compete for election. Each voter i faces a cost of voting C_i, drawn from a uniform distribution: $C \sim [\alpha, \gamma]$ where $\alpha < 0, \gamma > 0$, and $-\alpha < \gamma$ (so $E[C] < 0$). The term C can be positive or negative: it is the sum of all positive and negative costs that are independent of the electoral outcome. This includes costs such as time spent waiting in line at the polls or the cost of gas to travel to a polling location. C also includes benefits of voting, such as the positive utility of fulfilling a civic duty.

After the cost of voting is revealed, a supporter plays one of three actions: vote for party L (V_L), vote for party R (V_R), or abstain (A).

A voter's expected utility is:

$$u_i(V) = \pi_L \nu_L + (1 - \pi_L)\nu_R + C_i$$

$$u_i(A) = \pi_L \nu_L + (1 - \pi_L)\nu_R$$

where π_L is the probability that party L wins the election and ν_j is the utility the voter gets from party j's victory (based on the policies j will implement, party j's competence, etc.).

I define two types of voters, based on their party preference. The set N consists of n voters for whom $\nu_L > \nu_R$. The set M consists of m voters for whom $\nu_R > \nu_L$.

A voter's strategy s_i is a cost threshold c_t. Prior to the realization of costs, voter i decides on a cost threshold for voting: if $c_i > c_t$, she votes for her preferred party. Otherwise, she abstains.

Simple Kantian Equilibrium

Voters behave as Kantian optimizers in relation to their copartisans, but Nash optimizers relative to non-copartisans. Within each partisan group, I apply the concept of simple Kantian equilibrium (SKE), where the voters within a given set (N or M) are identical. In the game between the two partisan groups, I apply the concept of Nash equilibrium.

An equilibrium is a set of strategies $S^L = \{s_1^L, ..., s_n^L\}$ and $S^R = \{s_1^R, ..., s_m^R\}$ such that:

1. Given S^R, S^L is SKE $\forall i \in N$

2. Given S^L, S^R is SKE $\forall j \in M$

The number of votes for each party $j \in \{L, R\}$ is a random variable $\mathbf{V_j}$. Each voter in set N is identical, so they will each play the same strategy in a SKE. For any c_t, the probability that a voter i casts a vote is $\frac{\gamma - c_t}{\gamma - \alpha}$. Define c_t^L as the cost threshold for voters $i \in N$ and c_t^R as the cost threshold for voters $j \in M$. Then the number of votes for each party are drawn from the following distributions:

$$\mathbf{V_L} \sim B\left(n, \frac{\gamma - c_t^L}{\gamma - \alpha}\right) \tag{3.11}$$

$$\mathbf{V_R} \sim B\left(m, \frac{\gamma - c_t^R}{\gamma - \alpha}\right) \tag{3.12}$$

Noting the CDF and PMF of a binomial distribution $B(n, p)$ to be:

$$\Pr(X \leq k) = \sum_{i=0}^{k} \binom{n}{i} p^i (1 - p)^{n-i} \tag{3.13}$$

$$\Pr(X = k) = \binom{n}{k} p^k (1 - p)^{n-k} \tag{3.14}$$

We can write π_L, the probability that party L wins election, as:

$$\pi_L = \sum_{k=0}^{n} \left[\left[\sum_{i=0}^{k} \binom{m}{i} \left(\frac{\gamma - c_t^R}{\gamma - \alpha} \right)^i \left(\frac{c_t^R - \alpha}{\gamma - \alpha} \right)^{m-i} \right] \left[\binom{n}{k} \left(\frac{\gamma - c_t^L}{\gamma - \alpha} \right)^k \left(\frac{c_t^L - \alpha}{\gamma - \alpha} \right)^{n-k} \right] \right] \quad (3.15)$$

An equilibrium is a pair of thresholds $\{c_t^{L*}, c_t^{R*}\}$ such that:

Given c_t^{R*}, c_t^{L*} solves:

$$\max_{c_t^L} \pi_L(\nu_L - \nu_R) + \frac{(\gamma - c_t^L)^2}{2(\gamma - \alpha)} \quad (3.16)$$

And given c_t^{L*}, c_t^{R*} solves:

$$\max_{c_t^R} \pi_L(\nu_L - \nu_R) + \frac{(\gamma - c_t^R)^2}{2(\gamma - \alpha)} \quad (3.17)$$

Solving the maximization problems, an equilibrium is a pair $\{c_t^L, c_t^R\}$ that satisfies:

$$\sum_{k=0}^{n} \left[\left[\sum_{i=0}^{k} \binom{m}{i} \frac{(\gamma - c_t^R)^i (c_t^R - \alpha)^{m-i}}{(\gamma - \alpha)^m} \right] \cdot \right.$$
$$\left. \left[\binom{n}{k} \frac{(y - c_t^L)^{k-1} (c_t^L - \alpha)^{n-k-1}}{(\gamma - \alpha)^n} \left(n(\gamma - c_t^L) - k(\gamma - \alpha) \right) \right] \right] (\nu_L - \nu_R) = \frac{\gamma - c_t^L}{\gamma - \alpha} \quad (3.18)$$

and:

$$\sum_{k=0}^{n} \left[\left[\sum_{i=0}^{k} \binom{m}{i} \frac{(\gamma - c_t^R)^{i-1} (c_t^R - \alpha)^{m-i-1}}{(\gamma - \alpha)^m} \left(m(\gamma - c_t^R) - i(\gamma - \alpha) \right) \right] \cdot \right.$$
$$\left. \left[\binom{n}{k} \frac{(\gamma - c_t^L)^k (c_t^L - \alpha)^{n-k}}{(\gamma - \alpha)^n} \right] \right] (\nu_L - \nu_R) = \frac{\gamma - c_t^R}{\gamma - \alpha} \quad (3.19)$$

3.3.3 Discussion

The Kantian model illustrates the importance of partisan group identities for turnout. When a citizen thinks about the voting decision from the classic individually-rational perspective, she will only vote when the intrinsic benefits of voting outweigh the costs. But when a citizen thinks of herself as part of a larger partisan group, she considers the joint effect of her decision, and the decisions of people like her, on the outcome. As a result, she is willing to turn out in many cases when the costs outweigh the intrinsic benefits of voting.

These top-line results are similar to those of a group rule-utilitarian model that considers partisanship. But the Kantian approach eliminates the unsatisfying underlying logic of the rule-utilitarian approach. In the rule-utilitarian framework, people prefer that the minimum necessary number of people turn out to secure their side's victory. This preference for low turnout runs counter to much of what we know about attitudes towards elections. The Kantian model achieves the same predictive properties with a more natural underlying logic: partisans want to maximize turnout for their party while minimizing their individual costs. Rather than attempt to free-ride by always abstaining and expecting, irrationally, that others facing the same decision calculus will do the opposite and turn out, voters in the Kantian model determine a reasonable cost threshold for participation that they and co-partisans will follow.

3.3.4 A Note on Partisanship versus Other Group Identities

The argument made here could be applied to many group identities besides partisan identities. Why do I focus specifically on partisanship, as distinct from the myriad other group identities one might have? Partisanship is similar to other identities, but it is unique in the electoral context. In elections, partisanship is the most salient identity, the one that maps most directly onto voting behavior, because there is no ambiguity over the mapping of identity to preferences. Even among groups that have relatively homogeneous preferences

over parties, there is room for debate and dissent. For example, in the United States, most African Americans prefer the Democratic party — over 80% identify as Democrats[23] and 89% voted for Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election.[24] But this preference is not unanimous: some prefer the Republican party. Historically, there were long periods where the majority of African Americans preferred the Republican party over the Democratic party. Even within groups that are very aligned with a particular party, that alignment is not inherent and can change over time without a change to one's identity. Party identification is distinct from other group identities in the electoral context, because partisanship inherently means identifying with a group of people that prefer that party.

---

[23]Gallup 2017
[24]Roper Center data

Chapter 4

Partisanship as Mobilization: Survey and Experimental Evidence

Expressive incentives and partisan duty mobilize partisans who might otherwise stay home. Chapter 3 examined the theoretical basis for a causal effect of partisanship on voter turnout; this chapter turns to the empirics, to test these propositions.

To the extent that partisanship is a meaningful social identity, it is not easily manipulated. Intervention-induced partisanship tends to be a shallow label rather than a meaningful identity. For example, Burden and Greene (2000) show that state party registration laws in the United States produce higher rates of reported partisanship. But they also find that partisanship in party-registration states is "shallower" (Burden and Greene 2000:72) and that partisanship in these states is less predictive of vote choice.

However, the theory of *why* partisanship mobilizes voters provides other key observable implications that are more readily testable. Partisans gain utility from expressing their partisanship, even in a private context where their expression has no bearing on electoral or policy outcomes (e.g., an anonymous ballot in a large election where one has a near-zero probability of casting a decisive vote).

I present evidence of a widespread sense of partisan duty and measure the real-world value to voters of partisan expression, drawing on data from two original surveys conducted in Chile. The first survey estimates the prevalence of partisan duty and expressive motivations for voting, using a quota-based sample of 598 eligible voters in Chile collected in March and April 2019.[1] The second survey, conducted with a sample of 635 Chilean partisans in August and September 2019, uses a novel experimental design with behavioral outcomes to probe the real-world relevance of expressive utility.

4.1 Prevalence of Expressive Motivations and Partisan Duty

In March and April of 2019, I surveyed 598 voting-eligible Chileans about their attitudes towards parties and voting. Respondents were asked about their partisan identification, the concept of partisan duty, and their reasons for voting.

Each respondent indicated the party with which they identified most strongly. The strength of that identification was then measured using the scale that Bankert, Huddy and Rosema (2017) developed for multi-party systems. The scale consists of eight questions, designed to measure social identification with a political party. Responses to the eight items were aggregated and scaled, to create an index measuring the strength of identification. The variable ranges from -1 to 1. A score of 0 means that the individual agreed with statements indicating social identification with a party as frequently as they disagreed with such statements. The sample distribution for this variable is illustrated in Fig. 4A.1 in Appendix 4A.

Respondents were also asked whether they felt a sense of partisan duty to help their party

---

[1]Quotas for gender, age, education, and region were determined from the most recent census data. Because the survey was conducted online, some populations were harder to reach, and the sample skews younger and more educated than the Chilean population at large.

succeed. Partisan duty was measured through agreement with the following statement:

> "As a supporter of [PARTY], I have a duty to turn out and vote in elections to help my party win."

FIGURE 4.1. Partisan Duty

Note: Proportion of survey respondents who express a sense of partisan duty, by strength of party identification. The results were fitted with a logit regression, with 95% confidence intervals. The curves do not always sum to 1 because respondents could also select "neither agree nor disagree."
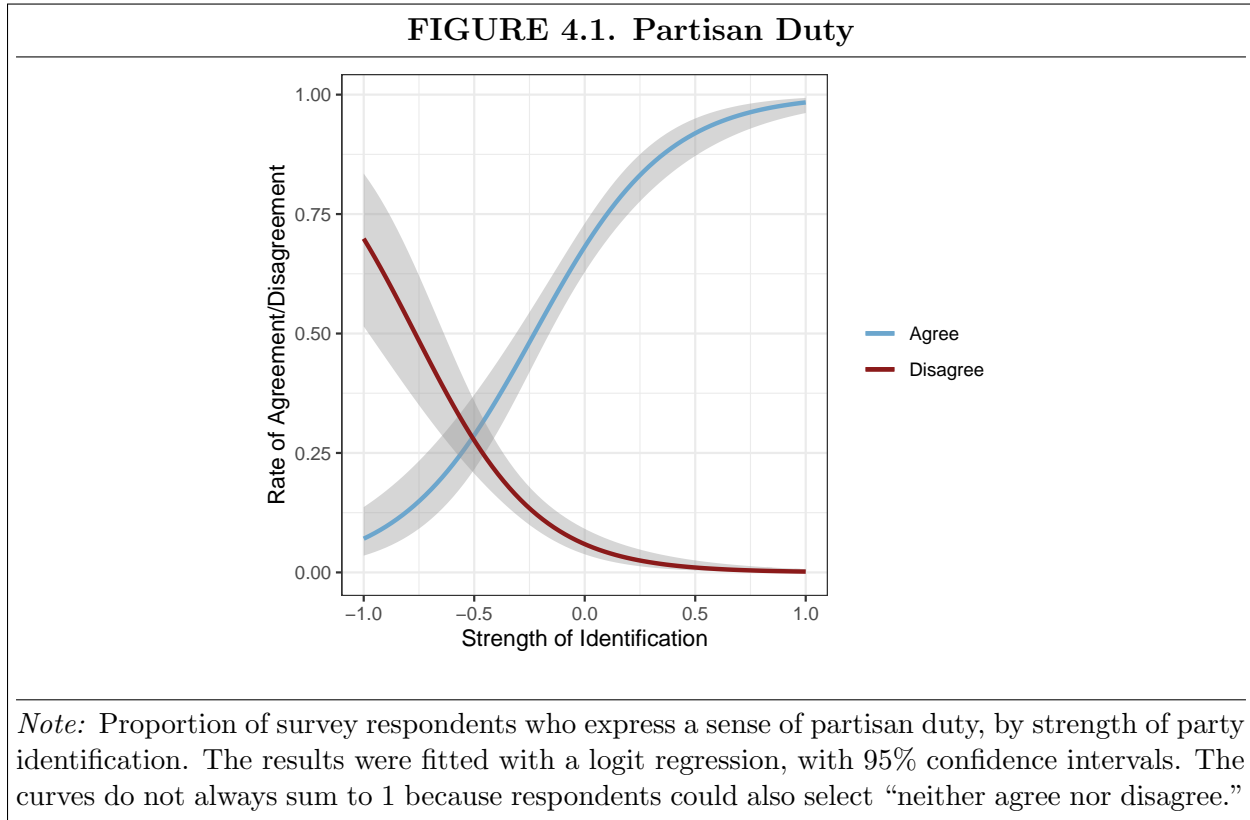
Respondents expressed widespread agreement with this statement. Figure 4.1 illustrates the rate of agreement across different levels of partisan identification. As the theory predicts, the rate at which respondents agreed with this statement increased with the strength of partisan identification. Among respondents with a partisan identification score above zero, 85% agreed with the partisan duty statement and only 2% disagreed (the remainder said they neither agreed nor disagreed).

Respondents were also asked to indicate the primary reason why they vote (with the option to indicate that they do not vote, if applicable). Table 4.1 lists the complete wording of each option presented to respondents. The set of options capture the primary factors in many of the most prominent models of turnout. The *expressive voting* option highlights the

direct benefit of expressing support for one's party. *Partisan duty* frames voting in terms of a contribution to a group success. *Pivotality*, by contrast, focuses on the possibility that an individual's vote could determine who wins the election (in other words, a voter's subjective assessment of P from the Downsian model). Another concept, labeled *group pivotality*, invites respondents to consider group-level behavior: an election might not be determined by a single vote, but it might be close enough that the behavior of an entire group with which the respondent identifies might change the outcome. Whereas the partisan duty option primes partisan group membership (using the phrase "my party," borrowed from the partisan social identification scale), the group pivotality option leaves open the possibility of other group memberships that might influence behavior. The *civic duty* option measures the importance of the central motivator in the Riker-Ordeshook formulation. Finally, the *social pressure* option captures extrinsic expressive benefits to voting, based on a concern for how one's peers would judge the decision to abstain.

TABLE 4.1. Reasons for Voting	
Label	Reason
Expressive Voting	To express my support for my party
Partisan Duty	To contribute to my party's electoral success
Civic Duty	To fulfill my civic duty
Pivotality	My vote could change the outcome of the election
Group Pivotality	Together, my vote and the votes of people like me could change the outcome of the election
Social Pressure	If I didn't vote, people would judge me
NA	I don't vote

Note: Respondents were asked to indicate the most important reason why they vote, from the options listed under "Reason."

Civic duty was the most commonly cited reason for voting. But among those who identify most strongly with political parties, both partisan duty and expressive voting rival civic duty in their importance. Figure 4.2 illustrates the relationship between strength of partisan identification and the importance of different reasons for voting. Twenty-four percent of

respondents with partisan identification scores above zero cited either expressive voting or partisan duty as the *most important* reason they vote.

FIGURE 4.2. Primary Reason for Voting

Note: Proportion of survey respondents who indicated that the primary reason they vote is either civic duty, partisan duty, or expressive voting, plotted by strength of partisan identification. The results were fitted with a logit regression, with 95% confidence intervals.
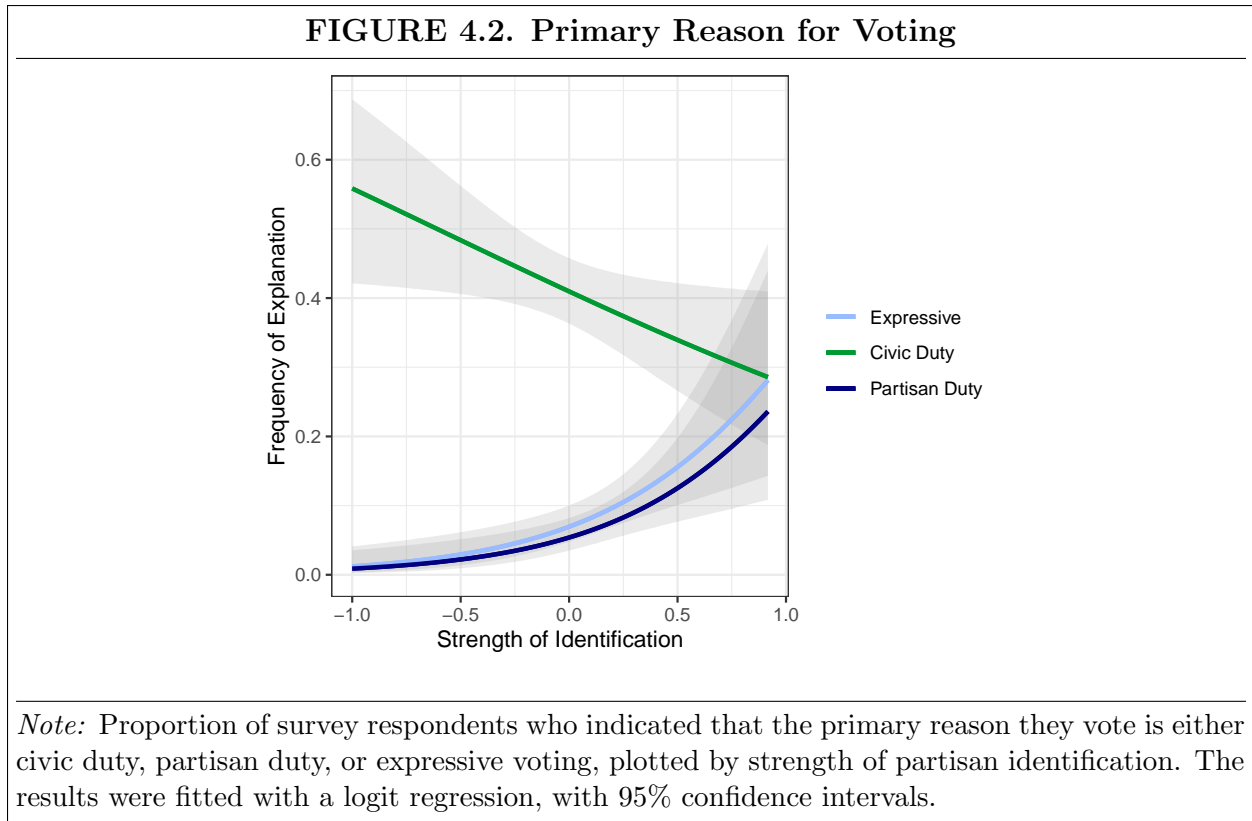
Those who abstained from any recent election also had the opportunity to explain why they chose not to vote. Table 4.2 summarizes the responses. Possible reasons included logistical challenges (I was too busy; I didn't know where to vote), attitudes towards democracy, general interest in politics, perceived effectiveness of voting, and attitudes towards political parties. By a wide margin, the most common response was "none of the parties represent me." Forty-eight percent of respondents cited this as their primary reason for abstention.

When directly asked about their decisions to turn out or abstain, respondents frequently turn to partisan explanations. Nearly half of those who abstain cite the fact that they don't feel represented by any party as the primary reason for their abstention. And those who vote frequently cite partisan duty and expressive voting among their primary motivations for turning out. But it is one thing for survey respondents to say that they value expression.

TABLE 4.2. Reasons for Abstention

Reason	Frequency	Proportion
None of the parties represent me	139	48%
I was too busy	43	15%
I didn't know how/where to vote	34	12%
I'm not interested in politics	22	8%
My vote wouldn't change the result	20	7%
All the parties/candidates are the same	18	6%
There are more effective ways to generate change in politics	7	2%
I don't believe in democracy	6	2%
I believed there would be electoral fraud	1	0%

Note: n=290

It is another for voters to pay real costs in exchange for these expressive benefits. I now turn to evidence from a second survey, where I use a behavioral outcome to show that voters are willing to pay real costs to express their partisan identification, even when there are no electoral or policy outcomes at stake.

4.2   Measuring the Value of Expression

The second survey uses behavioral outcomes and an experimental design to more rigorously test whether partisans will pay material costs in the real world to obtain these expressive benefits. I measure respondents' willingness to pay a cost, in terms of their time, to express their partisan identifications. The hypotheses and analysis plan were pre-registered in the EGAP registry.[2]

Participants were offered the choice between two surveys of differing lengths. They could either indicate which party they identified with, and complete a longer (10-minute) survey, or they could choose to skip the partisan identification question and complete a shorter (two-minute) survey. Participants were informed that regardless of which survey they completed, they would receive the same total payment. If they chose to express their

---

[2]EGAP Registration ID #20190822AB

partisan identification, they would have to devote five times as much of their time to earn the same payment they would receive from the shorter survey.

This choice of surveys was designed to impose a cost on expressing partisan identification. But we can't simply assume that the longer survey is costly to all respondents. For many respondents, surveys are an opportunity to earn money, and they prefer to maximize their wage (money earned per time spent completing a survey). For these respondents, expressing their partisanship comes at the cost of an 80% wage cut for this survey. But others genuinely enjoy taking surveys and sharing their thoughts (Graham and Huber 2021). For these respondents, a longer survey is an opportunity to spend more time doing something they enjoy. Measuring the proportion of respondents who opt in to the longer survey would surely over-estimate the proportion who are willing to send a costly signal of their partisanship.

To mitigate this threat to inference, I use an experimental design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three treatment groups. In the two expressive treatment groups, as described above, survey length is tied to the opportunity to express one's partisan identity. Participants may choose to express a preference for a party and complete a 10-minute follow-up survey, or choose not to express a preference for any party and complete a two-minute survey.

But in the baseline treatment group, survey length is the only differentiating factor between the two choices. Participants simply choose between a two-minute survey and a 10-minute survey; they do not indicate their partisan identification in either case. This baseline treatment allows me to estimate the proportion of the sample population that prefers longer versus shorter surveys. I can then compare the proportion of participants who opt in to the longer survey in the expressive treatment group versus the baseline treatment group to estimate the proportion who view the longer survey as costly but are willing to pay that cost to express their partisan identification.

The key to this design is that it maintains the opportunity for expressive benefits but

removes potential instrumental benefits of voting in an actual election. As in a real election, participants have the opportunity to express their partisanship by anonymously checking a box next to their party's name, and the cost is one's time and cognitive effort. But in the experiment, there are no electoral or policy outcomes to influence, and participants don't experience pressure to participate from their friends or family. Removing these other incentives isolates the potential expressive benefits and enables us to determine whether they add to the payoffs of voting.

Of course, spending time filling out a survey is by no means identical to the decision to turn out to vote. But by introducing real costs, this measurement strategy improves upon the common approach to testing theories about partisanship in surveys. Most often, scholars measure effects on turnout by simply asking respondents whether they would vote in an election — a costless response that is subject to well-known social desirability bias.[3] By implementing a behavioral outcome where indicating partisan preference is costly, I elicit more credible data about hypothetical behavior. This, in conjunction with direct questions about voting behavior and reasons for turning out, presents a compelling picture of the role that partisanship plays in mobilizing voters.

4.2.1   Design

The experiment was conducted in August–September 2019, using a Qualtrics panel of 635 respondents from Chile. Pre-treatment screening questions ensured that all participants were eligible to vote in Chile and identified with a political party (but did not give participants an opportunity to indicate which party). After completing the screening questions, each participant was randomly assigned to one of three treatment groups (using simple randomization, with equal probability of assignment to each group). Members of each treatment group saw a prompt, asking them to select one of two surveys to complete. Each prompt is reproduced

---

[3]Direct questions about turnout in real elections are also used in the survey experiment to check the validity of the results.

in Table 4.3.

TABLE 4.3. Experimental Conditions

Baseline

We are conducting a study about elections and political parties in Chile. You may opt in to this study in one of two ways.

1. You may select "Survey A" to complete a **10-minute** survey.

2. You may select "Survey B" to complete a **2-minute** survey.

If you complete either survey, you will receive the same payment, regardless of which survey you select.

Your responses will be completely anonymous.

Privately Expressive

We are conducting a survey about elections and political parties in Chile. You can participate in this project in one of two ways.

1. You may select one of the parties listed below to indicate your support and complete a **10-minute** follow-up survey about political parties and elections in Chile.

2. You may select "choose not to support any party" and complete a **2-minute** survey about elections in Chile.

If you complete either survey, you will receive the same payment, regardless of which survey you select.

Your responses will be completely anonymous. The total number of people who express identification with each party will not be made public.

Publicly Expressive

We are conducting a study about elections and political parties in Chile. We aim to predict which parties will be most competitive in the next elections. You may opt in to this study in one of two ways.

1. You may select one of the parties listed below to add to the tally of support for this party and complete a **10-minute** follow-up survey about political parties and elections in Chile.

2. You may select "choose not to support any party" and complete a **2-minute** survey about elections in Chile.

If you complete either survey, you will receive the same payment, regardless of which survey you select.

Your responses will be completely anonymous. The total number of people who support each party will be made public.

Note: To comply with the statements made in these treatments, the tally of support for each party from the Publicly Expressive Treatment is included in Appendix 4A (Table 4A.2).

The *baseline* treatment group simply faced a decision about whether to opt in to a longer or shorter survey for the same payment. The *privately expressive* condition links the longer survey to the opportunity to express one's partisanship, but frames this as a private act of expression: the participant is told that his or her response will be anonymized and that no aggregate data will be published about the number of supporters for each party. The *publicly expressive* condition also links the longer survey to the opportunity to express one's partisanship and maintains that individual responses will be anonymous. But the publicly expressive condition includes a competitive framing — researchers will be estimating which parties have the most support among Chilean voters — and notes that aggregate levels of support for each party will be made public.

The main outcome measure is survey selection: whether the respondent chose to complete a short survey or a long survey. This outcome variable is designed to mimic the kinds of costs people pay to turn out to vote. The costs of completing the longer survey are temporal and cognitive. So too are the most significant costs of voting: time to travel to the polls and wait in line, and time and cognitive effort to gather information and decide how to vote. And this outcome measure, as I show below, is a significant predictor of self-reported turnout.

The experimental design is necessary to properly identify the number of respondents who pay a cost to express their identification. Some people enjoy completing surveys, and they may not view the longer survey as a "cost," even though they are not earning extra money for their time. We must account for this when interpreting participants' motivations for completing the longer survey in each treatment group. The baseline treatment provides a reference point: it tells us how many people derive utility from filling out longer surveys.

If the mobilization hypothesis is correct, we would expect participants in the expressive treatment groups to opt in to the long survey at a much higher rate compared with the baseline. Both expressive conditions remove the major instrumental considerations present in an election. And in the privately expressive condition, only the researcher observes the

(anonymized) data. A significant effect under the privately expressive condition would be strong evidence of the internal incentives for expression: partisans want to reaffirm their identities, regardless of who (if anyone) can see. By contrast, if voters are only motivated by instrumental motivations, we would not expect the privately expressive condition to have an effect.

The publicly expressive condition introduces a competitive framework that may elicit a stronger response from those who are motivated by a sense of partisan duty. Partisans care about the social reputation of their party (Huddy, Mason and Aarøe 2015). They may be more motivated to pay a cost if they are contributing to the party's success, even if that success is just one positive polling number. If the same number of respondents opt in under the privately and publicly expressive treatments, this would cast doubt on the importance of partisan duty. Such results would imply that the motivating factor is simply the opportunity to reaffirm one's own identity, not the chance to do one's part for the group.

4.2.2 Results

I use a difference-in-means calculation to test the hypothesis that partisans are willing to pay a cost to express their partisan identification. The outcome measure is a binary variable, indicating whether the participant opted in to the longer survey ($y = 1$) or chose to complete the shorter survey ($y = 0$). I compare the opt-in rate for each expressive treatment with the opt-in rate in the baseline group, and use randomization inference to test for statistical significance. Figure 4.3 presents the rate at which respondents in each group opted in to the longer survey.

Each expressive treatment has a large and statistically significant effect. The privately expressive treatment increases the rate at which participants opt in to the longer survey by 51 percentage points ($p < 0.0001$). In other words, 51% of participants view the longer survey as a cost, but are willing to pay that cost to express their partisan identification. The

FIGURE 4.3. Experimental Results
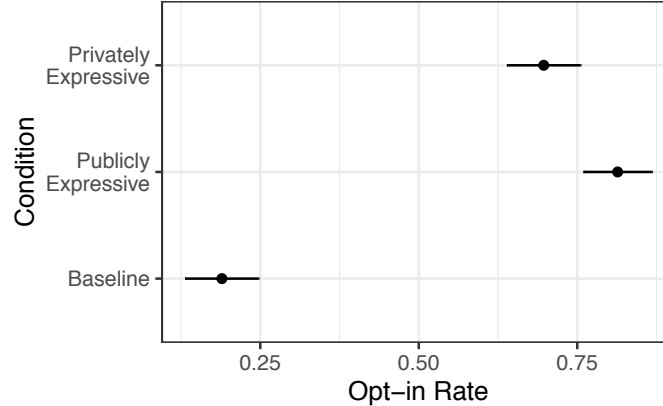
Note: Each point indicates the proportion of participants who opted in to the longer survey for a given treatment group. Each mean is presented with a 95% confidence interval. $n = 635$.

publicly expressive treatment has an even larger effect, motivating 62% of respondents to complete the long survey despite the cost to their time ($p < 0.0001$). The difference between these two treatments is also statistically significant — when the results will be public, a statistically larger group of partisans is willing to pay the cost to express their support ($p < 0.05$).

4.2.3 Supplemental Analyses

A series of additional tests support the substantive interpretation of these results, that partisans are motivated to turn out to vote by expressive benefits.[4] The supplemental analyses presented in this section are not independent tests of this causal proposition; rather, they are a series of tests designed to assess whether the experimental design operated as

---

[4]The empirical approach in this section deviates from the pre-registered analysis plan. The pre-analysis plan outlined a simpler approach which would directly compare those who opt in to the longer survey and those who do not. I present the pre-registered version of the analysis in Appendix 4A, and the results are substantively unchanged. I present the comparison of "expressive respondents" and "non-expressive respondents" in the main text because it is a more appropriate empirical test than the one outlined in the pre-analysis plan (see the discussion in Appendix 4A for a detailed explanation of the more desirable properties of this analysis approach).

intended, similar to manipulation checks.[5]

Those who are willing to pay the cost of completing the longer survey to express their partisan identification (*expressive respondents*) are more likely to report that they always vote in elections, compared to those who are unwilling to pay the cost to express their identification (*non-expressive respondents*).[6] Prior to treatment, respondents were asked about their voting histories. Those who were willing to pay the cost to express their partisan identification privately were 22 percentage points more likely to report always voting than non-expressive respondents ($p < 0.05$).[7]

Expressive respondents are also more likely to report feeling a sense of partisan duty and voting for expressive purposes. Respondents were given a series of possible reasons for voting and asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement.[8] These reasons included expressive voting and partisan duty, as well as civic duty, pivotality ("my vote could change the electoral outcome"), group pivotality ("together, my vote and the votes of people like me could change the electoral outcome"), a Kantian ethic ("I vote because it is what I would want others like me to do"), and social pressure.

The results are presented in Figure 4.4. The left-hand graph presents the overall rate of agreement with each statement. The right-hand graph illustrates the differences between expressive and non-expressive respondents. When expression is private, expressive respondents are 27 percentage points more likely to report voting out of a sense of partisan duty and 28 points more likely to report voting for expressive benefits. Non-expressive respondents are 12 points more likely to say that they vote because their vote might change the outcome of

---

[5]These tests are similar in spirit to manipulation checks, but are not exactly the same. The data presented in this section primarily inform our understanding of the properties of the outcome measure (whereas manipulation checks focus on the treatment).

[6]A third type of respondent exists: one who prefers long surveys and therefore does not perceive a cost to expressing their identification in the expressive treatments. We do not know how willing this type of respondent is to pay a cost to express their identification, so I exclude them from the comparison. See Appendix 4A for details on the procedures for identifying group means for each of these three groups.

[7]When expression is public, expressive respondents report voting at higher rates than non-expressive respondents, but this difference of 13 percentage points is not statistically significant.

[8]See Appendix 4A for the full text of each reason (Table 4.1).

FIGURE 4.4. Reasons for Voting
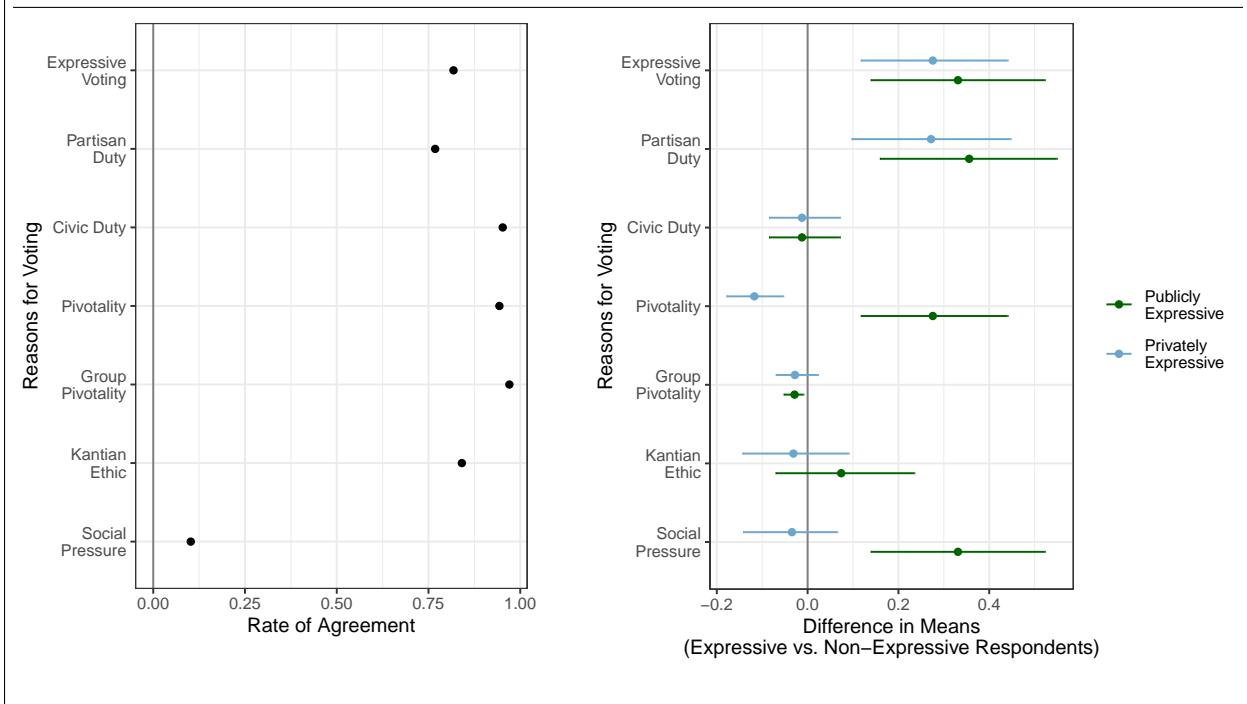
Note: Both graphs present data from participants who report that they vote at least occasionally (n=628). The left-hand graph illustrates the rate at which participants agree with each reason for voting (in reference to their own decision to vote). The right-hand graph illustrates the difference in means for each reason, comparing those who are willing to pay the cost of completing a longer survey to express their identification, with those who are unwilling to pay the cost (with 95% confidence intervals).

the election. In all other categories, expressive and non-expressive respondents are indistinguishable. This pattern of results conforms to expectations: those who are willing to pay a real cost to express their party identification in a survey are also more likely to see expressive utility as a reason to vote, and to feel a sense of duty to support their party.

When expression is public, expressive respondents are, again, more likely to cite partisan duty and expressive utility as reasons for voting. Expressive respondents are also more likely to report that they turn out because their vote might change the outcome (28 points) and because they experience social pressure (33 points). The publicly expressive treatment introduced a competitive framework, stating that the relative support each party received would be publicized. Those who are concerned with the social standing of their party and think that their decision to express their identification may improve their party's ranking

see greater benefits to opting in to the longer survey. By a similar logic, these expressive respondents are more likely to vote because they are concerned about the impact that abstention would have on their social standing or because there is a chance that their vote will change an electoral outcome.

4.3   Summary

In sum, many people who identify with a political party are motivated to turn out by expressive utility and partisan duty. When asked about the decision to turn out or abstain, citizens point to their partisan affiliation or lack thereof as a critical factor. Partisans overwhelmingly indicate that they feel a duty to do their part to contribute to their group's success in elections.

And the majority of participants in the experiment are *expressive respondents*: they are willing to pay a cost to express their partisan identification. As predicted, these expressive respondents are significantly more likely to indicate that partisan duty and expressive utility compel them to participate in elections. They also report voting more frequently than non-expressive respondents, a result that highlights the real-world importance of expressive utility for mobilizing voters.

Appendix 4A

Sample Information and Calculations for Experimental Analysis

Observational Survey

The survey was conducted online from March 21–April 10, 2019 on a sample collected through Qualtrics. The sample included 598 total respondents.

Figure 4A.1 presents the distribution of scores on the partisan strength scale. All respondents were asked which party they identified with most strongly. Those who indicated that they do not identify with any political party saw a follow-up question, asking which party they feel a little closer to. Some respondents (169) still refused to select a party, so they did not see the follow-up questions for the partisan scale.

The partisan scale was constructed by adding together the responses from eight questions, and re-scaling to a 0 to 1 scale. For each question, response options included "disagree strongly," "disagree somewhat," "agree somewhat," and "agree strongly."

Question wording: You indicated earlier that you identify most strongly with [PARTY]. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements, thinking about

FIGURE 4A.1. Strength of partisan identities.
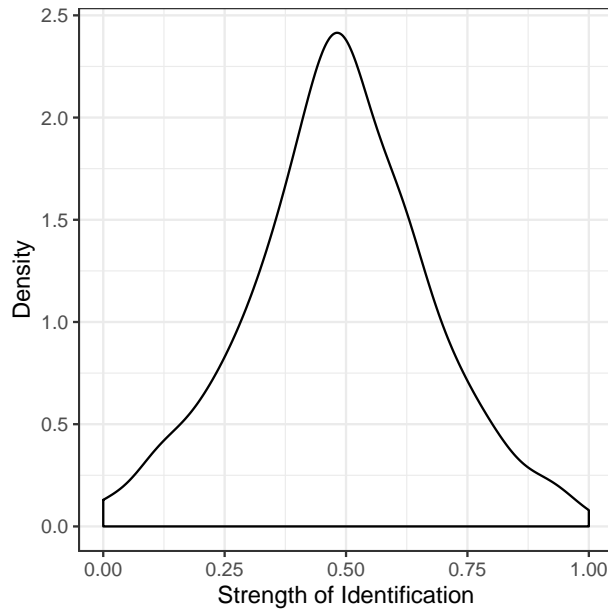
Note: Distribution of partisan strength scores (n=429).

[PARTY].

- When I speak about this party, I usually say "we" instead of "they."

- I am interested in what other people think about this party.

- When people criticize this party, it feels like a personal insult.

- I have a lot in common with other supporters of this party.

- If this party does badly in opinion polls, my day is ruined.

- When I meet someone who supports this party, I feel connected with this person.

- When I speak about this party, I refer to them as "my party."

- When people praise this party, it makes me feel good.

Survey Experiment

Participants in the survey experiment were recruited by Qualtrics. Surveys were conducted between August 23 and September 5, 2019. Compensation for all respondents was based on the rate for a survey of 10–15 minutes, even if they selected the 2-minute survey. Pilot results revealed that many survey respondents preferred to complete a longer survey, even in the baseline condition. While the design accounts for this (by including the baseline condition and measuring the outcome as a difference in means), I added an additional screening question to sort respondents into two groups (those who prefer long surveys and those who prefer short surveys) for the sake of optimizing the experiment's power. The only respondents included in the experiment analyzed in this chapter are those who (1) indicated that they identify with a political party and (2) indicated that, all else equal, they prefer shorter surveys.

Survey length preference was measured with the following question:

Suppose that you had the option to choose which survey to complete: a 2-minute survey or a 10-minute survey. You would receive the same payment for either survey. Which would you prefer to complete?

This question was posed at the beginning of the survey, and participants responded to a series of 4–6 demographic and political questions after this question but before treatment (to distance this question from the treatment). Among those who qualified on all other measures, 52% (635 of 1214) indicated that they prefer shorter surveys and were therefore included in the experiment.

Supplemental Analysis

In the supplemental analysis, I compare covariates among expressive versus non-expressive respondents. Expressive respondents are those who perceive the long survey as a cost, but

are willing to pay that cost to express their PID. Non-expressive respondents are those who perceive the long survey as a cost, and are unwilling to pay that cost to express their PID. These groups are defined in terms of potential outcomes. Expressive respondents will select the long survey in an expressive treatment ($y(1) = 1$) and the short survey in the baseline treatment ($y(0) = 0$). Non-expressive respondents will always select the short survey, regardless of treatment ($y(0) = 0$ and $y(1) = 0$). A third group exists: those who do not perceive the long survey as a cost ($y(0) = 1$ and $y(1) = 1$). We will call these types "survey lovers."

I assume that we do not have "defiers": respondents with $y(1) = 0$ and $y(0) = 1$. This would be an individual who prefers the long survey. In the expressive conditions, they are given the choice between completing their preferred survey (long) while getting the opportunity to express their identification, or completing their less-preferred survey (short) and not having the opportunity to express their identification. This individual would choose the latter option: completing their less-preferred survey and forgoing the opportunity to express their identification. I assume that respondents are not of this type. All respondents were screened to ensure that they identify with a political party prior to treatment. If a respondent did not want to share her party identification, she would likely respond "no" when asked if she identifies with a party (as "which party" is the natural follow-up question). Moreover, respondents could always select the "other" option if they really wished to avoid sharing the particular party with which they identify.

We never observe both potential outcomes for any individual, but we can estimate the group means for each of the three types (assuming we have no defiers). In the baseline condition, all respondents who select the long survey ($y(0) = 1$) are survey lovers. In the expressive condition, all respondents who select the short survey ($y(1) = 0$) are non-expressive respondents. The remaining groups that we observe empirically provide weighted averages for two types: the $y(0) = 0$ group is a mix of expressive respondents and non-

expressive respondents; the $y(1) = 1$ group is a mix of expressive respondents and survey lovers. The $y(1) = 0$ and $y(0) = 1$ groups provide estimates of the sample proportions of non-expressive respondents and survey lovers, as well as group means for any covariate. Using these estimates, we can algebraically solve for the proportion of expressive respondents, and the group mean for any covariate among expressive respondents.

The meaning of "expressive respondent" and "non-expressive respondent" are defined within the context of the experiment. I define an expressive respondent as one who is willing to pay this particular cost in exchange for this particular expressive opportunity. As such, these groups differ depending on the expressive condition. I calculate separately the group means for expressive vs non-expressive respondents when expression is private, and when expression is public. Indeed, the significant difference in the opt-in rates for these two conditions confirms that set of the people who are willing to pay the cost for private expression is not identical to the set willing to pay the cost for public expression. After computing these estimates, I generated 95% confidence intervals through bootstrapping.

In the absence of the no-defiers assumption, these quantities are unidentifiable. We could, alternatively, compare those who opt in to the long survey versus those who select the short survey, within the expressive treatments. While this does not require the no-defiers assumption, it also sacrifices the main benefit of the experimental design: it simply compares respondents who opt to express their identification and complete the long survey with those who refrain from expressing their partisan identification and complete the short survey. But it does not distinguish between those who express their identification at a cost (expressive respondents) and those who enjoy long surveys. This approach just allows us to measure how well the outcome measure (completing a long survey) correlates with other characteristics, such as self-reported turnout. I present the results for these calculations below, which are broadly consistent with the previously computed differences between expressive and non-expressive respondents. Note that this version of the analysis (simply comparing those who

FIGURE 4A.2. Reasons for Voting
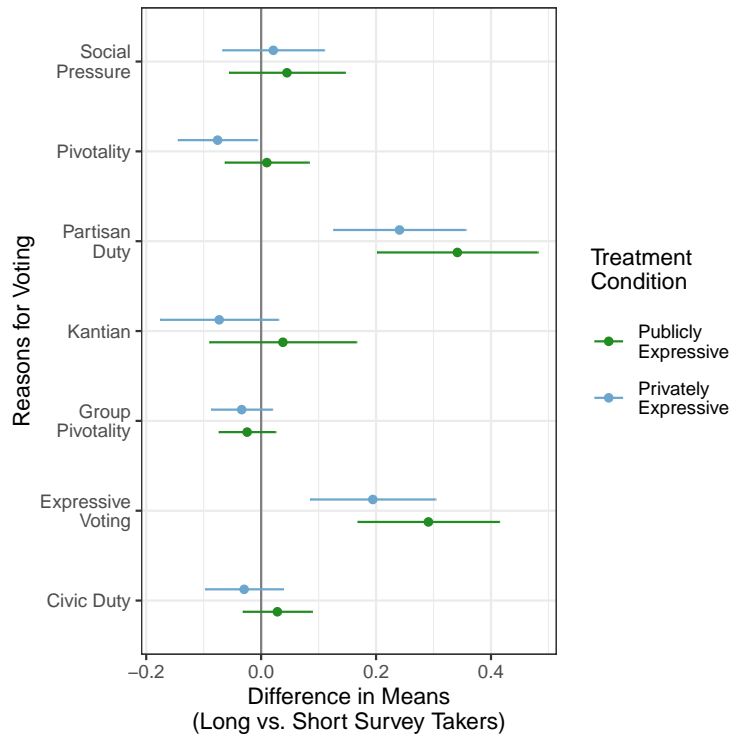
Note: Estimates come from bivariate regressions (reason for voting regressed on survey selection).

opt in and those who do not opt in) is the version of the analysis that was pre-registered.

With respect to self-reported turnout, those who opt in to the longer survey (in an expressive treatment) are 17 points more likely to report always voting ($p < 0.01$). If we separate respondents by the type of expressive treatment, we observe an effect of 20 points in the privately expressive group ($p < 0.01$). In the publicly expressive group, the difference is 13 points, but it is not significant ($p = 0.16$). Figure 4A.2 illustrates the difference in means estimates for each reason for voting, with 95% confidence intervals. Table 4A.1 lists the complete wording of each option.

TABLE 4A.1. Reasons for Voting	
Label	Reason
Expressive Voting	To express my support for my party
Partisan Duty	To contribute to my party's electoral success
Civic Duty	To fulfill my civic duty
Pivotality	My vote could change the outcome of the election
Group Pivotality	Together, my vote and the votes of people like me could change the outcome of the election
Kantian Ethic	I vote because it is what I would want others like me to do
Social Pressure	If I didn't vote, people would judge me

Note: Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed/disagreed with each reason when thinking about their own decision to vote. The sample was limited to those who indicated that they vote at least occasionally.

TABLE 4A.2. Party Identification in the Publicly Expressive Condition	
Party	Frequency
Renovación Nacional (RN)	33
Partido Socialista (PS)	28
Unión Demócrata Independiente (UDI)	25
Partido Comunista (PC)	20
Partido por la Democracia (PPD)	16
Revolución Democrática (RD)	14
Evolución Política (EVOPOLI)	11
Partido Demócrata Cristiana (PDC)	10
Frente Amplio (FA)	3
Partido Radical (PR)	2
Partido Humanista (PH)	1
Federación Regionalista Verde Social (FREVS)	1
Padechi	1
Independent	1

Note: Respondents had a "write-in" option. All write-ins are listed in this table, including non-party entities (e.g., Frente Amplio is a coalition of parties).

Chapter 5

Does Voting Foster Partisanship?

> "[A]ctions do not necessarily reflect the fixed preferences
> of individuals; they instead may be chosen for a variety of
> reasons, including imitation, experimentation, and habit.
> Preferences then adjust to justify the behaviors that were
> adopted."
>
> – Acharya, Blackwell and Sen (2018:400)

Political behavior rarely forms a straight line from immutable preferences and identities to actions. Attitudes and self-conceived identities are fluid; they change in response to experiences. These experiences are not limited to things that happen *to* an individual. On the contrary, an individual's own actions can lead her to change her preferences, and to rethink her identity.

For example, the act of voting can increase an individual's interest in politics and support for democratic norms (Quintelier and Van Deth 2014). Voting for or against a particular candidate affects future assessments of that candidate's performance in office (Mullainathan and Washington 2009). When a citizen votes for the winning candidate, she becomes more likely to approve of that elected official's performance in future years, compared to a counterfactual world in which she held the same pre-election preferences over candidates but didn't

94

get the chance to actually cast her vote. The converse is also true: voting against the winning candidate makes a voter more likely to disapprove of that official's future performance, independent of her pre-election preferences.

Might voting have a similar effect on partisanship? The *identity-formation hypothesis* posits that voting makes citizens more likely to adopt partisan preferences and identities. According to this hypothesis, the effect that voting has on preferences and identities explains the tight correlation between partisanship and turnout (or at least a substantial portion of the correlation).

There exists a strong theoretical foundation for this proposition (Converse 1969; Festinger 1957; Acharya, Blackwell and Sen 2018; Mackerras and McAllister 1999; Lupu and Stokes 2010). But attempts to empirically validate the identity formation hypothesis face serious hurdles. Voting is not assigned at random, and most factors that lead one citizen to vote while another stays home are plausibly related to their general attitudes towards politics and parties. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the empirical evidence for this argument.

5.1   Previous Studies

Confronting the challenges of causal identification, a handful of studies have employed clever empirical strategies to assess the question of whether voting induces partisanship. The results of these tests are mixed. Dinas (2014) and Leon and Rizzi (2016) both use age-based discontinuities to compare individuals who were over or under eighteen at the time of an election. Dinas (2014) finds evidence that voting in the 1968 US presidential election strengthened existing partisan ties. Leon and Rizzi (2016) find that Brazilians over eighteen at election time are more likely to report extreme left-wing preferences and support the Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB), but they observe no significant effects on support for other parties.

Both of these studies have similar limitations. They can only study effects among very young voters, who often behave differently from the broader population. Political identities are more malleable during the first few years of adulthood. These studies are also limited to examining short-term effects. The difference between "treatment" and "control" groups in these studies is participation in a single election.

Voting as a young adult might give one a "head-start" in developing political or partisan identities, but would this effect persist as both voters and non-voters grow older? Or would it be a short-term, localized effect? As each group ages, they are more likely to develop partisan identities (Converse 1976; Lisi 2015). By the time they reach the age of 30, these two groups might converge to a very similar rate of partisanship.

I present a novel empirical strategy to study the effects of turnout over a longer period of time, and among older voters. Similar to previous studies, I leverage an age-based discontinuity in participation, which stems from a registration cutoff in Chile. But the duration of this discontinuity distinguishes it from previous tests. In this study, the participation gap persists for two decades, including nearly a dozen elections. Thus, we can study the long-term effects of voting or abstaining throughout the course of one's life.

5.2 Historical Context: The 1988 Plebiscite in Chile

On the morning of September 11, 1973, the Chilean Air Force bombed the Chilean presidential palace (*La Moneda*) and overthrew the democratic government of President Salvador Allende. By the end of the day Allende was dead, and Chile, previously one of the oldest and strongest democracies in the world (Valenzuela 1989) entered a 17-year period of authoritarian rule under General Augusto Pinochet.

After seven years of violent repression, the military government sought to institutionalize the regime's power by passing a new constitution. In 1980, the government held a popular

referendum on the constitution they had crafted. The referendum served to legitimate the constitution, but was conducted in an atmosphere of confusion. Voters were uncertain of exactly what the constitution contained and what its passage would mean for them. Some articles were so "brilliant, convoluted, and Machiavellian" that even experts struggled to understand them (Constable and Valenzuela 1991:139). The referendum passed when officials announced that 67% voted in favor of the new constitution, although many of these votes were generated fraudulently (Constable and Valenzuela 1991:138).

The 1980 Constitution institutionalized the military government's sweeping and repressive powers, but it also laid the groundwork for the eventual end of the regime. According to the transitory articles, the commanders of the armed forces would designate a new president for an 8-year term (1990–1997) and citizens would either approve or reject the new president in a plebiscite vote. Pinochet sought to designate himself as the continuing president and, despite some challenges within the regime, was put forth as the official selection in 1988.

Non-Marxist political parties, which had been suspended throughout the dictatorship, were legalized in March 1987.[1] The opposition parties were initially unsure of how to approach the plebiscite. Many feared that participation would amount to legitimation. Even if the opposition was successful in ousting Pinochet from the presidency, he would remain commander of the armed forces until 1997 under the existing framework. Thus, in the lead-up to the plebiscite, a handful of opposition parties pushed for free, competitive elections instead of the plebiscite outlined in the constitution. When these efforts failed, most centrist and leftist parties concluded that participating in the plebiscite campaign was their best shot at ousting Pinochet and bringing about a return to democracy.

Seventeen parties opposing the Pinochet regime joined to form the Coalition of Parties for NO (*Concertación de Partidos por el NO*, or simply *Concertación*). The Concertación

---

[1]Marxist parties remained banned, so the left created a "non-ideological 'instrumental' party", the Party for Democracy (PPD) as a vehicle for Socialists to participate in politics during the transition (Roberts 1995:507).

included parties with diverse ideological leanings, drawing from both the center and the left. Despite their many differences, however, the parties were united by their opposition to the Pinochet regime. The No campaign is remembered for its TV spots and catchy jingle (*Chile, la alegría ya viene*; translating to "Chile, joy is coming"). But just as important were the registration drives that the Concertación parties conducted.

Many people originally did not plan to register to vote in the plebiscite because "they believed it would be futile to vote in a context that was so prone to fraud and coercion, and they did not want to legitimize an undemocratic exercise" (Roberts 1995: 518). The Concertación parties believed that the majority of the population would agree with them, but feared that many would stay home due to widespread skepticism and resignation (Tironi 1990:47). The potential success of the No campaign would depend on turnout: it could only win if turnout was high. To this end, the parties of the Concertación devoted immense effort to a large registration drive (Roberts 1995).

These mobilization efforts were effective. Ninety-two percent of the eligible population registered to vote, and, in a shock to regime officials, 56% voted "No" on Pinochet (Constable and Valenzuela 1989). The rejection of Pinochet triggered a competitive election for president, held in 1989. The two major right-wing parties nominated Hernán Büchi, former minister of finance under Pinochet. The Concertación nominated Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin. Aylwin defeated Büchi by a margin 26 percentage points and was sworn in as president on March 11, 1990, marking the end of dictatorship in Chile.

5.3 Empirical Strategy

Registering to vote in the 1988 plebiscite constituted a long-term commitment to voting. From 1988 to 2011, Chile combined compulsory voting with voluntary registration. Voters could choose whether or not to register, but once they registered, they were obligated to vote in all future elections. The compulsory voting rule was enforced, and turnout among

registered voters was about 90% through 2010 (Corvalan and Cox 2013). Nearly every eligible voter registered for the plebiscite, but registration rates fell rapidly after the return to democracy. At the time of the 1993 presidential election (the first presidential election after the return to democracy), only 55% of newly eligible voters reported registering to vote.[2]

If voting were voluntary, many of those who registered for the plebiscite would have abstained in future, lower-stakes elections. In a 1992 survey, 34% of those who were registered said that they would abstain from the upcoming municipal election if voting were voluntary.[3] But they were obligated to keep voting. Younger Chileans, on the other hand, faced a very different decision. Those who came of age after the plebiscite were not registering to oust an authoritarian regime. They were simply choosing to vote (or not) in democratic elections. This generated a large age-based discontinuity in turnout that we can exploit to test the causal effect of voting.

Consider a hypothetical individual who was born in December 1970. At the time of the plebiscite, she was 17 years old and, therefore, ineligible to register for the vote. Once she did turn 18, suppose she chose not to register. She might have had no interest in voting in regular democratic elections. Or any interest she had might have been outweighed by the substantial cost imposed by the compulsory voting rule: she would be accepting a legal obligation to vote in every national and local election for the rest of her life (or until some point in the distant future when the rule might be changed). Thus, like many Chileans of her cohort, she chose never to register. By the time of the 2009 election, she would have been approaching age 40 having never voted in her life.

Yet if she had been born just three months earlier, in September 1970, her voting history

---

[2]Newly eligible voters are those who were eligible to vote in 1993 but not in 1989. This estimate (55%) comes from the CEP November 1994 survey, and it overestimates registration among newly-eligible voters. Social desirability bias generates higher reported turnout than official electoral data. But data from the Chilean electoral service is not granular enough to precisely measure this age group.

[3]Estimate comes from the CEP April 1992 survey.

might have looked very different. Having come of age just in time, she would have registered for the 1988 plebiscite. Whereas the stakes of regular elections between democratic candidates were not enough to compel her to register, the stakes of the plebiscite were much higher. Her desire to vote for or against the continuation of Pinochet's regime, combined with the mass registration drives conducted by the political parties, were sufficient to outweigh the costs of registering. Thus, she registered to vote in 1988 and, because of the compulsory voting rule, continued to vote in every national and local election through 2010.

The combination of a unique set of voting and registration rules, and the high stakes of the 1988 plebiscite, generate a rare case of exogenous variation in voting histories. Some citizens who came of age after the plebiscite, of course, registered to vote in later elections (and a very small number who were eligible chose not to register for the plebiscite). But many citizens looked like the individual described above: they were willing to register for the plebiscite but, given the choice, would not register to vote in subsequent elections. Among this subset of the population, small shifts in one's birthdate meant the difference between a lifetime of regular electoral participation, and complete abstention from all elections (through 2010).

If turning out to vote does indeed make one more likely to adopt a partisan identity, then by 2010, those who were born in time to vote in the plebiscite should be far more likely to identify with a party than those who were born later. Those who were eligible for the plebiscite were more than twice as likely to be registered to vote in the 2009–2010 election than those who came of age after the plebiscite.[4] In spite of this huge difference in registration rates, we observe that those who were eligible for the plebiscite are no more likely to adopt a partisan identity than those who were ineligible. This result is even more striking

[4]According to self-reported registration rates from CEP surveys 2008–2010, Chileans eligible for the plebiscite were 2.13 times more likely to be registered. In fact, this underestimates the difference. Among those who were eligible for the plebiscite, 95% report being registered to vote. This exceeds the official registration numbers at the time of the plebiscite by three percentage points. Some individuals might have registered in later years, but the over-reporting rate here is no larger than 3pp. The aggregate registration rate in 2009 was only 68%; in the survey sample, 77% report being registered to vote, yielding an aggregate over-reporting rate of 9pp, the majority of which must come from those who were ineligible for the plebiscite.

when we consider the duration of treatment: those who were eligible for the plebiscite voted in not one additional election, but eleven elections over the course of two decades.

5.3.1   Political Parties in the Post-Authoritarian Years

One of the key benefits of this design is that treated subjects voted regularly in many elections over an extended period of time, rather than in just one election. Thus, the treatment dosage (or intensity) is high. The extent to which this constitutes a favorable test, however, depends upon the nature of the party system. Consider a series of five elections. If the same set of parties contest (and are competitive in) each of these five elections, then participation in all five elections constitutes a strong treatment. Participating in only one of these elections may make one more likely to identify with a party, but voting in all five elections constitutes a more sustained engagement with the party system and is more likely to generate partisanship.

But if, between each election, the existing parties collapse and new parties are formed, then participation in the first four elections may have little bearing on one's propensity to identify with a party at the time of the fifth election. In this scenario, the party system with which one engaged in the previous elections no longer exists at the time of the fifth election.

Party breakdown is a common occurrence in modern Latin American democracies. Lupu (2016) estimates that one-quarter of established parties in Latin America broke down between 1978 and 2007. But in contrast to many other Latin American countries during this period, the party system in Chile remained very stable, with not a single instance of breakdown among competitive parties. Figure 5.1 plots the vote share in every election from 1989 to 2009 for each party that ever reached 5% of the vote.[5] During the post-authoritarian period, there were shifts in popularity among the parties—most notably the decline of the Christian

---

[5]The data presented here come from legislative elections. Lupu (2016) calculates the prevalence of party collapse using executive elections, but the coalitional nature of Chilean politics makes this an ill-suited measure. Parties within the two major coalitions (generally) agreed upon a single candidate to represent the coalition. This meant that most of the major parties in any given year did not run a presidential candidate (but rather endorsed the candidate of another party in the coalition).

Democrats (PDC) and the rise of the Independent Democratic Union (UDI)—but the set of competitive parties remained constant. In 1993, five parties earned at least 10% of the vote.[6] Those same five parties (and no others) reached this threshold in every election through 2009.

FIGURE 5.1. Party System Stability in Chile, 1989–2009

Note: Vote shares in every legislative election from 1989 to 2009 are plotted for all competitive parties. A competitive party is defined as a party that achieved a vote share of at least 5% in any single election during this period. See fn. 6 for additional details on the PS and PC before 1993.
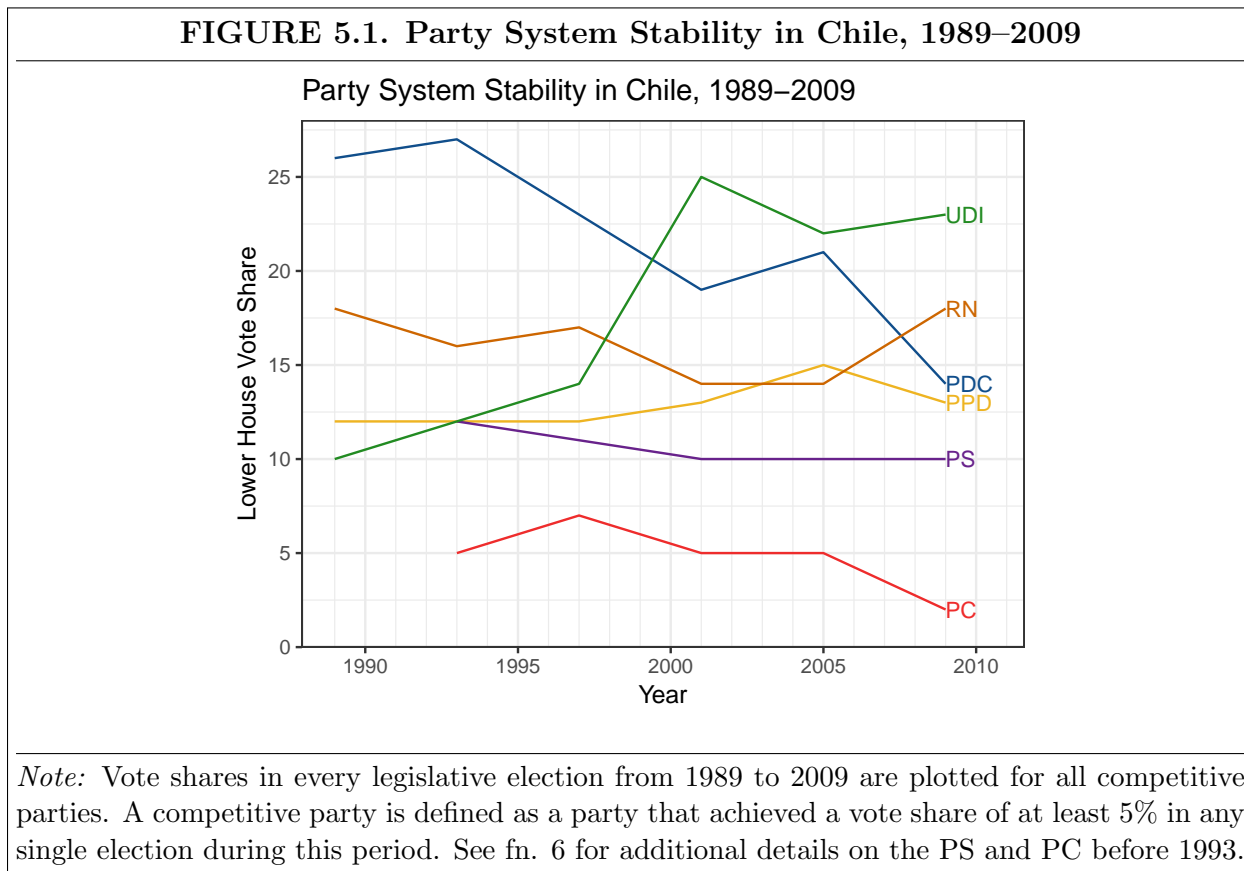
Only one other party, the Communist Party (PC), ever received at least 5% of the vote. The PC reached the 5% threshold in every election until 2009, when its vote share fell to 2%. But the PC remained a politically-relevant party even then: their 2009 presidential candidate received over 6% of the vote. And in the next legislative election, the PC was finally incorporated into the major center-left coalition of parties, and rebounded to 4% of

---

[6]Vote shares are rounded to the nearest percentage point. The Communist Party (PC) and Socialist Party (PS) did not officially compete in the 1989 election. As the two major parties of Salvador Allende's Unidad Popular coalition immediately preceding the coup d'état, both parties were politically and historically significant. However, they were not officially re-formed until after the 1989 election. The PC had been banned under the dictatorship, and was excluded in 1989 due to its positions on violence during the Pinochet regime (see Angell and Pollack (1990)). Members of the PS were fragmented between the new Party for Democracy (PPD) and the Broad Party of the Socialist Left (PAIS) for the 1989 election. PAIS was dissolved in 1990 when the PS was reunified, as most PAIS members returned to the PS, but the PPD remained a competitive party.

the lower-house vote share.

Entry and exit was virtually non-existent in the Chilean party system during the post-authoritarian period through 2010. But while the party system was stable, the rate at which citizens identified with the parties declined significantly during the post-authoritarian period. Figure 5.2 plots the downward trend in partisanship (as well as the concurrent decline in turnout). In the early 1990's, approximately 75% of Chileans identified with a political party. By 2010, fewer than 50% did.

This decline was caused, at least in part, by the parties' targeting strategies. Parties preferred not to mobilize newly-eligible voters, and instead focused their efforts on those who were already registered (Venegas 2016). As registration rates fell, this was an ever-shrinking proportion of the population. In my own interviews with legislative candidates and campaign strategists, a common refrain was that candidates simply "go where the voters are." The parties had a sense of who had turned out in the past, and they focused all of their efforts on reaching and persuading those individuals and ignored potential new voters.[7] The massive registration drives that characterized the 1988 plebiscite were never repeated in subsequent elections.

These targeting strategies create an even more favorable testing environment for the theory that voting generates partisanship. Voters themselves may engage with the parties more than those who abstain, as a natural byproduct of casting a ballot and determining one's electoral preferences. They may be more likely to seek out information on the parties as they make their voting decisions. And even if they do not gather much information prior to election day, they are induced to think about the parties when they cast their ballots. Existing theories highlight these differences in *voter* behavior as a source of differential rates of partisan identification. But *party* behavior amplifies this difference. Those who were not registered to vote received little to no attention because parties thought that attempts to

---

[7]Interviews were conducted in March and October 2018 by the author, Danissa Contreras Guzmán, and Andrés Cruz Labrín.

FIGURE 5.2. Partisanship and Turnout in Chile
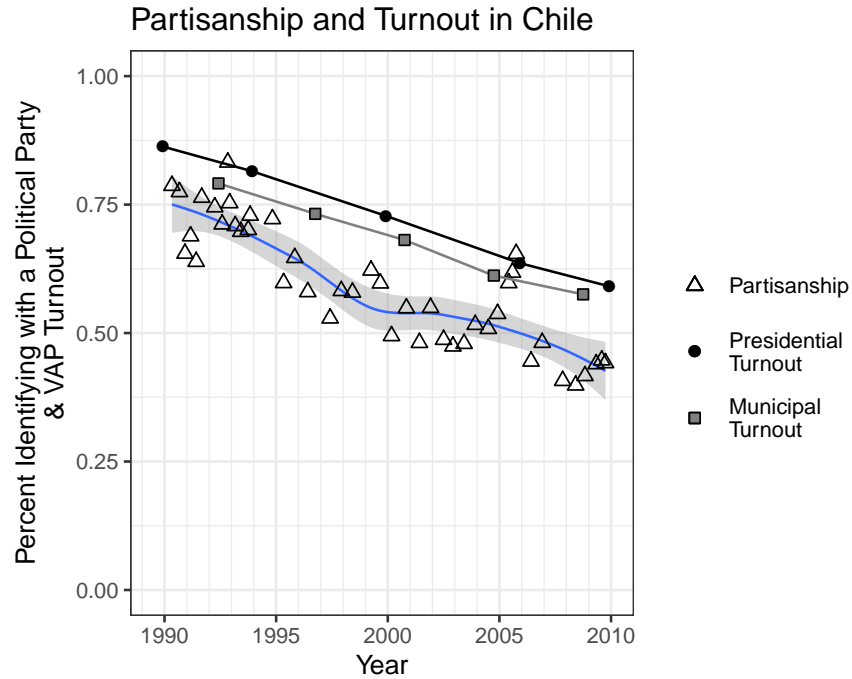
Note: Triangles indicate the proportion of respondents identifying with any political party in in regular public opinion polls conducted by CEP (Centro de Estudios Públicos). The trend in partisan identification is estimated with LOESS (with 95% confidence intervals). Circles indicate the voting age population (VAP) turnout in presidential elections, and squares indicate the VAP turnout in municipal elections. For presidential elections, first-round turnout is used. All elections plotted here were conducted under the compulsory voting-voluntary registration rule.

mobilize them were fruitless, and therefore that they gained no political benefit from building ties with them.

5.3.2 Participation After the Plebiscite

As illustrated in Figure 5.2, turnout declined consistently after the plebiscite. The compulsory voting rule ensured that nearly all registered voters would continue to participate in elections, but registration among newly-eligible voters declined rapidly. The large-scale registration drive that yielded such high turnout in 1988 was unique to the plebiscite. Parties did not devote the same efforts to registering voters in later elections.

For those who came of age after the plebiscite, the stakes were notably lower, but regis-

tering to vote still carried with it a substantial cost. Anyone who registered was imposing a legal obligation on themselves to show up for every future election, both national and local. Whereas 92% of the eligible population registered to vote in 1988, only 55% of newly eligible voters reported registering for the 1993 presidential election. And these numbers, while pointing to a dramatic decline in registration, actually mask the magnitude of the decline. The number of 1988 registrants comes from the official electoral data, but the registration estimate among newly eligible 1993 voters comes from self-reported registration in surveys. Survey data routinely overestimates turnout and registration. Survey respondents who do not participate in elections often misreport their participation, owing to social desirability bias. Official electoral data on registration by age is not sufficiently granular to precisely determine the registration rate among this sub-population (individuals who were eligible in 1993 but not in 1989), but comparing the survey data to aggregate registration numbers, it is clear that social desirability bias inflated these numbers.[8]

But those who were eligible for the plebiscite continued to vote over the following decades. In 1992, more than one-third of registered voters said that they would abstain from the upcoming municipal election were it not for the compulsory voting rule. But they continued to turn out, year after year, because the law required it. Turnout among registered voters held steady at approximately 90% over the entire compulsory voting era (Corvalan and Cox 2013).

As time went on, a striking age gap emerged in Chilean electoral participation, which many observers blamed on the compulsory voting law. In the years following the 1988 plebiscite, the proportion of registered voters among the voting age population (VAP) fell 24 points to a low of 68% in 2009 (Barnes and Rangel 2014). In the first presidential election (1989), 30% of the electorate consisted of voters aged 18 to 29; in the 2008 municipal elections, voters aged 18 to 29 comprised only eight percent of the electorate (Barnes and Rangel 2014). The size of the age gap in participation varied across socioeconomic groups (largest among

---

[8]See Appendix 5A for further details on the estimated rate of over-reporting.

the least educated, smallest among the most educated), but it consistently formed a vast chasm. The difference in registration between those who came of age before and after the 1989 election ranged from around 50 percentage points among those with 13 or more years of education to nearly 70 points among those with 3 years of education or fewer (Contreras and Navia 2013).

5.3.3 Regression Discontinuity Design

I use survey data collected between June 2006 and December 2011 to estimate a regression discontinuity.[9] In 2012, the legislature passed a new voting law that made registration automatic and voting voluntary. I focus on the last few years of the compulsory voting regime to conduct the most favorable test for the theory that turnout generates partisanship. By the time these data were collected, Chileans who registered for the plebiscite had voted in regular national and local elections for two decades. Even if the causal effect of turnout on partisanship occurs slowly as voters accumulate experience with the political system, any potential effects should show up within this long timeframe.

Moreover, using data collected approximately 20 years after the plebiscite limits the possibility of a compound treatment. Those who voted in the plebiscite participated in a historic political event. If we were to use data from the first few years after the return to democracy, any effect we observed might stem from either (1) the general experience of voting or (2) the particular experience of voting in the plebiscite. But as we move forward in time, the experience of voting in the plebiscite grows more distant. At the same time, the treatment of voting in elections grows stronger, as registered voters were obligated to vote in many elections throughout these two decades.

The dataset comprises a representative sample of Chileans and includes four key variables for each individual. First, the exact birthdate of each respondent allows me to determine their

---

[9]The data was collected by the *Centro de Estudios Públicos* as part of their regular public opinion surveys.

eligibility for the plebiscite. Birthdate is the running variable for the regression discontinuity. Respondents were also asked whether they identify with any political party, which serves as the main dependent variable. In addition, all respondents were asked whether they identify with a coalition. Since coalitions play such a central role in Chilean politics, I use this as an alternative dependent variable for robustness tests.

Finally, I have the self-reported registration status of every respondent at the time of the survey. This variable is not included in the main equation: the identification strategy hinges on using date of birth (eligibility for the plebiscite) as the independent variable instead of reported voting history. I use self-reported registration status in a separate equation to estimate the proportion of compliers in the sample (those individuals who would register to vote if and only if they were eligible for the plebiscite) and provide a substantive interpretation of the main result.

For the main analysis, I estimate the following model:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 d_i + \beta_2(a_i - c) + \beta_3(a_i - c)d_i + \epsilon_i \qquad (5.1)$$

Where y_i is a binary variable, indicating whether i identifies with any political party; d_i is a binary variable indicating whether or not i was eligible for the plebiscite; a_i is i's birthdate; and c is the cutoff for plebiscite eligibility (October 5, 1970). The parameter of interest is β_1: this tells us what effect plebiscite eligibility had on partisan identification, separate from the general effect of age. β_2 and β_3 estimate the effect of age on partisanship, conditional on one's eligibility status. Here, I use the term $a_i - c$ (rather than just a_i) so that β_2 and β_3 drop out of the equation as $a_i \to c$. Therefore β_1 directly estimates the jump (or discontinuity) in predicted partisanship from plebiscite eligibility.[10]

With respect to the theoretical question at hand—does voting make people partisan?—

---

[10]See Imbens and Lemieux (2008) and Gelman and Imbens (2019) for discussions of why local linear regression is the ideal model for this discontinuity test.

β_1 is the intent-to-treat (ITT) estimate. The ITT estimate tells us the effect of plebiscite eligibility on future partisanship. I present the results primarily in this form, because we do not know the precise number of compliers in the sample (in this context, a complier is an individual who would register to vote if and only if they were eligible for the plebiscite). However, I also present a local average treatment effect (LATE) interpretation of the main result, using self-reported registration status to generate a conservative estimate of the number of compliers. The LATE directly estimates the effect of voting in an election on future partisanship.

5.3.4 Interpreting the Discontinuity Estimate

What kind of results would we observe if turnout has a causal effect on partisanship? Figure 5.3 illustrates the regression discontinuity with a series of hypothetical datasets. Each graph plots an estimate of Eq. 5.1. The vertical dashed line indicates the cutoff for eligibility to vote in the plebiscite: everyone to the left of the dashed line was eligible for the plebiscite; everyone to the right was ineligible.

Panels 1 and 3 are examples of the kind of results we could observe if voting does not affect partisanship. In Panel 1, voters of all ages are equally likely to identify with a party. In Panel 3, older voters are more likely to identify with a party, but this is unrelated to plebiscite eligibility. Panels 2 and 4, by contrast, are examples of data that strongly support the identity formation hypothesis. In Panel 4, like Panel 3, age is positively correlated with partisanship in general. But in contrast to Panel 3, we observe a clear discontinuity around plebiscite eligibility. The experience of regularly voting in elections for two decades increased partisan identification, separate from the general effect of aging on partisanship.

These graphs highlight the value of the regression discontinuity design. If partisanship is positively correlated with age, as in Panel 3, a simple difference in means would yield a false positive result. Similarly, if partisanship were negatively correlated with age, we could end

FIGURE 5.3. Hypothetical Results and Interpretation

Panel 1
No Voting Effect, No Age Effect

Panel 2
Positive Voting Effect, No Age Effect

Panel 3
No Voting Effect, Positive Age Effect

Panel 4
Positive Voting Effect, Positive Age Effect
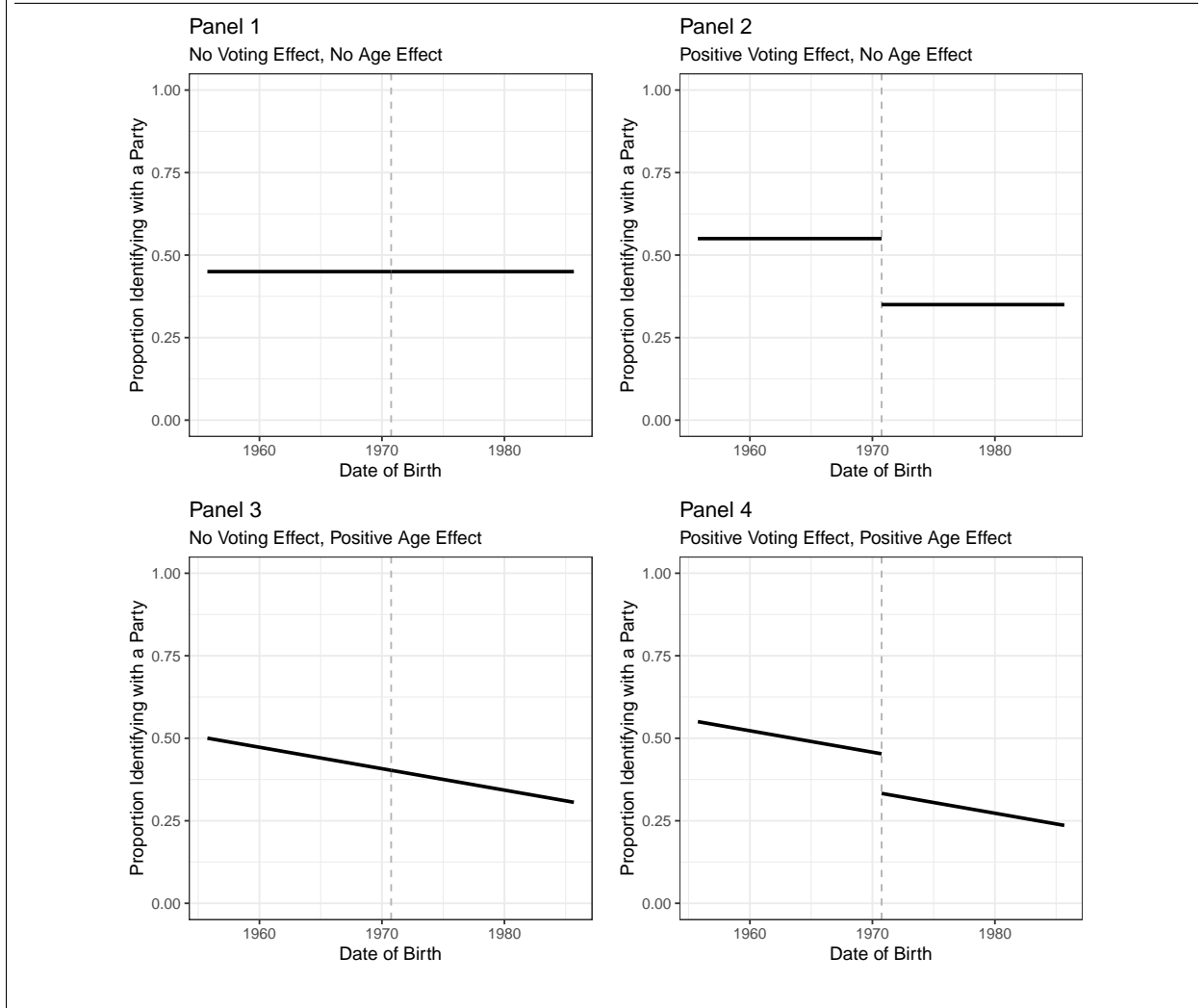
Note: Each graph plots an estimate of Eq. 5.1 from hypothetical data. The dotted line marks the cutoff for eligibility to vote in the plebiscite: anyone born to the left was eligible, anyone born to the right was ineligible.

up with a false negative. The RDD allows us to control for any general relationship between age and partisanship, and use the discontinuity in registration status to isolate the effect of voting.

5.4 Results

In the dataset used for the analysis (collected from 2006–2011), 94% of those who were eligible for the plebiscite report that they are registered to vote. Among those who were ineligible for the plebiscite, only 42% report that they are registered to vote. Subject to a minimum sample size of 1219 observations, the discontinuity in self-reported registration is significant ($p < 0.05$) at all possible bandwidths.

Despite the large effect of eligibility on registration status and voting history, we observe no discontinuity in partisan identification. Regardless of the bandwidth selected, we never observe a positive effect of plebiscite eligibility on partisan identification. Figure 5.4 displays the model fit with a 15-year bandwidth. Each black dot represents the proportion of people born in a given year who identify with a political party (the gray dots represent the monthly averages). These averages are overlaid with the model fit from Eq. 5.1, presented with 95% confidence intervals. If turnout induced partisanship, then we would expect to see a significant discontinuity at the eligibility cutoff (Oct. 5, 1970). The predicted probabilities just to the left of this cutoff would be significantly higher than those to the right of it (as in Panel 2 of Fig. 5.3). Instead, the estimate resembles a straight line, with no discontinuity.

This finding is not specific to the 15-year bandwidth. Figure 5.5 presents the point estimate of β_1 with 95% confidence intervals for all possible bandwidths from one year to 25 years (increasing in increments of one day). We do not observe a discontinuity in any of these models. In all cases, β_1 is indistinguishable from zero. The failure to identify a statistically significant effect under any specification is striking, especially when considering the statistical power of the test. The Imbens and Kalyanaraman (2012) algorithm indicates that the optimal bandwidth is 8484 days. At this bandwidth, the study is well-powered to detect an effect of $\beta_1 = 0.041$ or larger at the 95% confidence level.[11]

---

[11]I use the conventional power level of 80% and a one-tailed test of β_1. See Appendix 5A for details on the statistical power of other bandwidths.

FIGURE 5.4. RD Test: Plebiscite Eligibility
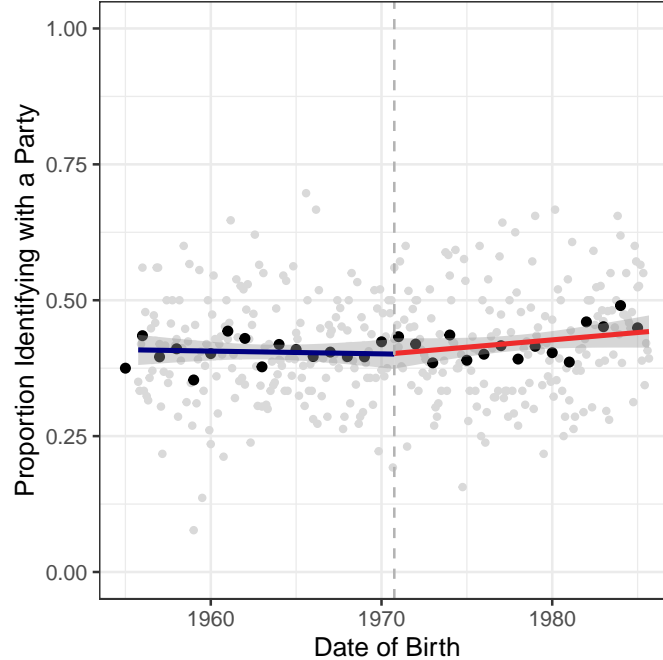
Note: OLS estimate of Model 5.1 with a 15-year bandwidth and 95% confidence intervals (n=9699). Each point indicates the average rate of partisan identification for respondents born in a given year (black) or month (gray). The vertical dotted line indicates the cutoff point for eligibility to vote in the plebiscite (those to the left of the line were eligible to vote; those to the right were ineligible). Surveys were conducted from June 2006 to December 2011.

Power analysis allows us to confidently place an upper-bound on any possible effect and assess whether a result of this size would be substantively meaningful. For this substantive interpretation, it will help to convert the ITT estimate (β_1) to a LATE estimate. That is, rather than estimating the effect of eligibility for the plebiscite on partisan identification, we want to estimate the effect of voting in an election on partisan identification. Two key pieces of data are necessary to make this calculation. We need to know (1) how many elections occurred between the plebiscite and the survey collection and (2) the proportion of compliers in the sample.

The first data point is easily identified. Depending on the time of the survey, between 12 and 15 competitive elections had occurred after the plebiscite: 13.3 on average. The second data point—the proportion of compliers—is harder to identify. We do not know exactly how

FIGURE 5.5. RD Coefficient Plot
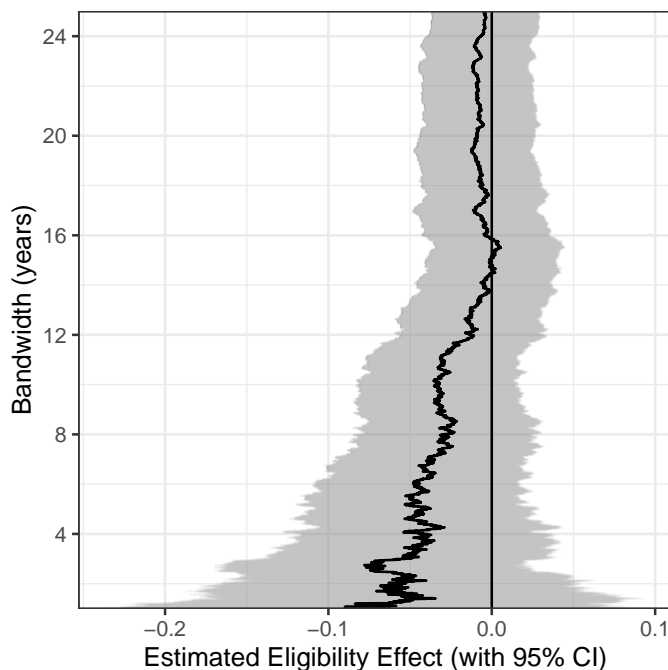
Note: Coefficient plot for each estimate of Model 5.1, using bandwidths from 1 to 25 years (increasing in intervals of one day). For each bandwidth, I plot the point estimate of β_1 with a 95% confidence interval. Surveys were conducted from June 2006 to December 2011.

many individuals would register if and only if they were eligible for the plebiscite. But we can use survey data to estimate this figure.

I estimate Eq. 5.1 with self-reported registration as the dependent variable. This gives us a very conservative estimate of the proportion of compliers at 17% of the population. We know that the number of compliers is larger than this because there is significant over-reporting of registration status in the surveys, and the vast majority of this over-reporting comes from those who were ineligible for the plebiscite. When adjusting for over-reporting (using official data on aggregate registration rates), I find that the proportion of compliers is 71–144% higher than the raw numbers indicate.[12]

Using the most conservative estimate of compliers (17%), how can we interpret an ITT of $\beta_1 = 0.041$? This would be equivalent to saying that voting in an election has a 2.0% chance

---

[12]See Appendix 5A for further details.

of making one a partisan. If we adjust for over-reporting in the complier estimate, this translates to an effect in the range of 0.76% to 1.1%. But even without this adjustment, it is clear that the results of the regression discontinuity calculations are substantively meaningful. If voting had even a 2% chance of making one a partisan, the test would be well-powered to detect it at the 95% confidence level. Yet we find no such effect. If any effect does exist, it is far too small to explain the extremely strong relationship between partisanship and turnout identified in prior studies.

5.4.1 Robustness Tests

We observe the same results if we look at a simple difference-in-means comparison across the treatment (eligible for the plebiscite) and control (ineligible for the plebiscite) groups. Figure 5.6 illustrates the difference in means for all bandwidths up to 8 years. Across all of these bandwidths, we never observe a positive treatment effect.[13] At the smallest bandwidths, we observe noisy estimates due to small sample sizes, with a handful of large negative (generally insignificant) effects.[14] The effect quickly trends towards zero as the sample size increases. This test is well-powered to detect ITT effects smaller than 0.04 at about a 5-year bandwidth (see Fig. 5A.3 in Appendix 5A for power estimates across bandwidths).

Finally, I run the regression discontinuity with an alternative dependent variable: identification with a coalition. Political competition in the post-authoritarian years centered around stable coalitions of parties. These coalitions were so important to Chilean politics that some have even described them as "de facto parties" (Carey 2002). Perhaps we've found this result because coalitions, not parties, are the relevant reference group in Chile.

---

[13]When we use the difference-in-means comparison, rather than the RD setup, we must make assumptions about similarity in relevant covariates across the sample. Treatment assignment (a birthdate before or after the plebiscite cutoff) must be orthogonal to other factors that affect partisan identification. Within treatment groups, we do not observe any significant relationship between age and partisanship (see Fig. 5.4). Nonetheless, the necessary assumptions become stronger as the bandwidth increases, so I focus on smaller bandwidths here than the RD optimal bandwidths.

[14]Of the 2917 bandwidths tested, 16 produce statistically significant effects (all negative). These occur at bandwidths from 27 to 49 days (with 51 to 102 observations).

FIGURE 5.6. Effect of Eligibility on PID

Effect of Eligibility on PID
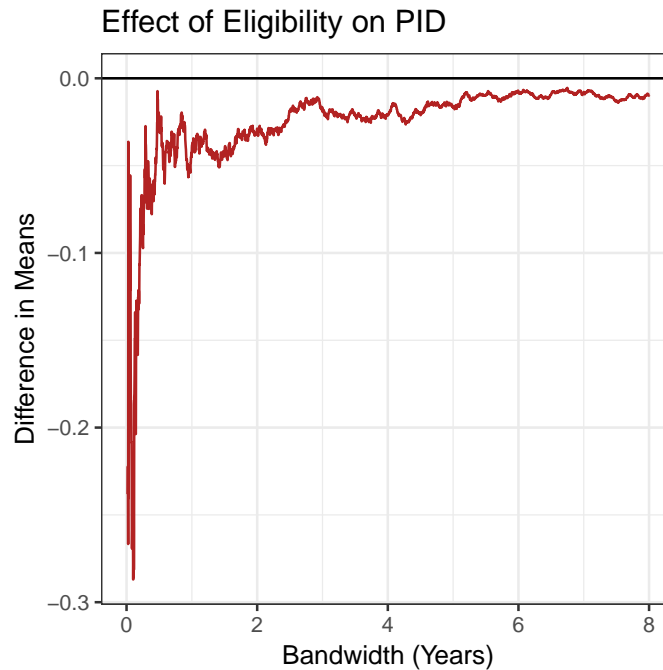
Note: Effect of plebiscite eligibility on partisan identification using the raw difference in means. All possible bandwidths (increasing by one-day intervals) up to 8 years are presented here.

To address this concern, I estimate the same regression discontinuity, using identification with a coalition as the outcome variable. This specification does not produce qualitatively different results. At the optimal bandwidth, we observe a statistically insignificant negative effect. And across all bandwidths, we never observe a significant positive effect of eligibility on coalition identification (see Fig. 5A.5 in Appendix 5A).

Despite the large effect of plebiscite eligibility on voting history, it had no effect on partisan (or coalition) identification. Many factors make this a favorable test-case for the theory that voting makes people more partisan. The treatment effects are sustained over decades. Political parties focused their efforts on reaching out to those who were registered, and not on mobilizing un-registered citizens,[15] so there were many more opportunities for

---

[15]This strategy was explained in many interviews with representatives in the Chamber of Deputies, their campaign managers, and party leaders (conducted by the author in March and October 2018). See also Venegas (2016).

those who registered to vote to interact with the parties at election time. Parties were stable throughout the decades examined, making the environment conducive to the long-term development of party identities. But even in this context, we observe no effect.

5.5   Do the Results Travel? United States Panel Data

Chile is a useful case for studying the causal relationship between partisanship and turnout. Its unique electoral institutions and history allow for a rare, well-identified test of the identity formation hypothesis. But any single-case study must grapple with the possibility that its findings are specific to that case alone. To allay these concerns, I analyze panel data from the United States. The US was selected because it differs from Chile in important ways: partisanship is more widespread in the US; fewer Americans than Chileans distrust political parties; and the US has a two-party system, rather than a large multi-party system. Evidence that voting fails to encourage partisanship in the US, as it also failed to do in Chile, will help allay concerns that the Chilean results might be particular to a low-partisanship electorate.

The Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) conducted pre- and post-election surveys in every even-numbered year from 2006 to 2018.[16] Respondents were asked whether they identified with a political party in both the pre- and post-election wave. In addition to collecting pre- and post-election identification, CCES has the benefit of providing validated turnout data. Respondents were matched with official voter files to verify whether or not they actually voted in that year's election.

I present two results from each survey. First, I regress post-election partisanship (using a binary measure) on validated turnout:

$$\text{PostElectionPID} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Vote} + \varepsilon \tag{5.2}$$

---

[16]The pre-election surveys were conducted from late September to late October. The post-election surveys occurred in November.

The coefficient β_1 is simply the correlation between partisanship and turnout that we would observe in cross-sectional studies, and gives us a frame of reference for the main result. I then run the same regression, but I control for partisan identification in the pre-election survey:

$$\text{PostElectionPID} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Vote} + \beta_2 \text{PreElectionPID} + \varepsilon \tag{5.3}$$

In this equation, β_1 estimates the extent to which participation in an election generated new partisanship that did not exist prior to the election.

If the results from Chile travel to the US, β_1 will be a large positive number in Eq. 5.2, but it will be close to zero in Eq. 5.3. These results would indicate that partisanship and turnout are closely related, but that turning out did not generate partisanship.

5.5.1   Results

The results from the CCES data are presented in Figure 5.7. When we do not control for pre-election partisan identification, we observe that voters are, on average, 7 percentage points more likely to identify with a party after the election than non-voters. But controlling for pre-election partisanship, voters were actually 0.4 percentage points *less* likely to identify with a party than those who abstained.

If voting had a causal effect on partisan identification, we would expect to observe a consistent increase in partisanship among voters, after controlling for pre-election identification. Although post-election partisanship is consistently correlated with turnout across all seven election years, this effect generally disappears once we control for pre-election partisanship. In 2006 and 2008, there is a small positive effect. In the next five election years (2010–2018), the effect turns slightly negative. The small magnitude and inconsistent direction of the effect casts serious doubt on the theory that voting makes people more likely to identify with parties in the United States.

FIGURE 5.7. Voting and Partisanship: US Panel Data
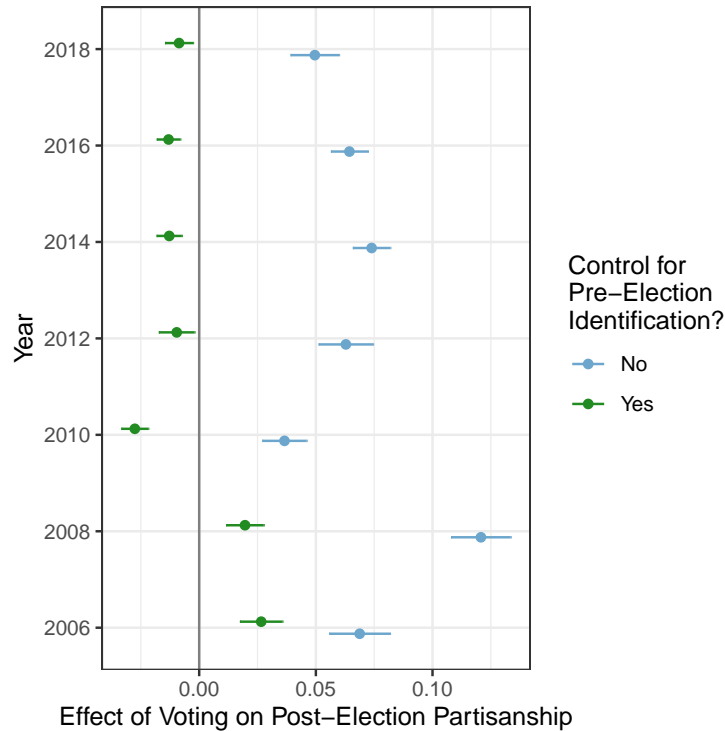
Note: For each election year, point estimates for the effect of voting on post-election partisan identification are estimated twice: once from a simple bivariate regression of post-election iden-tification on turnout (light blue points), and again with a control variable for pre-election party identification (dark green points). All point estimates are presented with 95% confidence intervals. Data comes from the Cooperative Congressional Election Survey.

This doubt is amplified by the space for upward bias that the panel design introduces. The panel design eliminates many, but not all, confounders. There are still short-term events that may simultaneously mobilize voters and generate a sense of partisan identification. Party workers go door to door ahead of election day, urging potential supporters to get out to vote while appealing to their connections to the candidate's party. And the converse can also occur: unfavorable news stories about one's preferred party may leave supporters disenchanted, questioning their identification with the party and less motivated to vote. Any such event that occurs between the two survey waves would create the appearance of a causal effect.

Nonetheless, we observe no consistent effect of voting on partisanship. Even in the US, a

country in which partisanship is more widespread and trust in parties is higher than in Chile, electoral participation does not increase one's likelihood of adopting a partisan identity.

5.6 Discussion

The unique history of electoral institutions in Chile provides a well-identified opportunity to test for a causal relationship between partisanship and turnout. The evidence presented in this chapter strongly refutes the idea that simply turning out to vote makes people more likely to adopt a partisan identification.

One might have lingering concerns, however, about the explanatory power of Chile. Given the reputation of Chilean parties as "uprooted" (Luna and Altman 2011) and disconnected from voters, one might worry that parties are not sufficiently relevant to political behavior in Chile to allow for a strong test of the hypothesis that voting fosters partisanship. Additional analysis, however, allays this concern. Panel data from the United States suggests that the results travel to a very different context, a two-party system where partisanship is a stronger force.

Moreover, partisanship and turnout are just as closely related in Chile as they are in other countries. Table 5.1 presents the results from an OLS model, regressing registration for the 2009–2010 election on partisan identification. Among Chileans who were born before October 1970 (and therefore eligible to vote in the plebiscite), partisanship and registration are unrelated. This lack of correlation is expected. As discussed above, nearly everyone who was eligible for the plebiscite registered to vote, regardless of partisan identification. Because turning out did not transform non-partisans into partisans, this relationship did not change over time.

The key test is whether partisanship and turnout are related among those who were ineligible for the plebiscite. Indeed, among Chileans who were born after October 1970 (and

TABLE 5.1. Partisanship and Registration Status

	Dependent variable: Registered for 2010 Election	
	Eligible for plebiscite (Born before Oct. 1970)	Ineligible for plebiscite (Born after Oct. 1970)
Party ID	0.002	0.113**
	(0.015)	(0.043)
Constant	0.946	0.330
	(0.010)	(0.027)
Observations	911	515

$^*p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{***}p < 0.001$ (two-tailed)

therefore made the registration decision after the plebiscite), partisanship has a strong and significant effect on registration: partisans were 11 percentage points more likely to register than non-partisans.[17]

And once Chile abolished compulsory voting, partisanship became a strong predictor of turnout across the entire population, increasing turnout propensity by 18 percentage points (see Table 5A.3 in Appendix 5A). Moreover, the empirical results presented in Chapter 4 bolster the findings from the regression discontinuity, revealing that partisanship is fundamental to political behavior and electoral participation in Chile.

The data show that partisanship is a powerful mobilizing force when it consists of a meaningful social identity, but that repeated experience voting does not generate these identities. Beyond the lessons for voting behavior, these two facts inform party strategy and explain key differences in the ways that parties interact with voters in compulsory versus voluntary voting systems. In the next chapter, I explore the positive and normative implications of these behavioral findings for the institution of compulsory voting.

---

[17]These results are robust to minor shifts in the cutpoint (e.g., subsetting on eligibility for the 1989 election versus the 1988 plebiscite).

Appendix 5A

Power Calculations and Robustness Tests

The regression discontinuity was estimated using survey data from the Centro de Estudios Públicos (CEP) survey project. Table 5A.1 lists the survey waves that were used in the RD calculations, along with the dates of data collection and the number of observations. Table 5A.2 lists the date and type of each election held after the 1988 plebiscite (through the 2010 election). Each respondent was surveyed after 12–15 post-plebiscite elections had occurred (with an average of 13.3 elections).

TABLE 5A.1. Survey Data		
Wave	Dates	Observations
52	Jun–Jul 2006	1417
54	Dec 2006	1438
55	Jun 2007	1426
56	Nov–Dec 2007	1397
58	Nov–Dec 2008	1417
59	May–Jun 2009	1069
60	Aug 2009	1438
61	Oct 2009	1428
62	Jun–Jul 2010	1417
63	Nov–Dec 2010	1322
64	Jun–Jul 2011	1446
65	Nov–Dec 2011	1473
Total		16,688

TABLE 5A.2. Elections (post-plebiscite)	
Date	Type
Dec 14, 1989	Presidential
Jun 28, 1992	Municipal
Dec 11, 1993	Presidential
Oct 27, 1996	Municipal
Dec 11, 1997	Parliamentary
Dec 12, 1999	Presidential (first round)
Jan 16, 2000	Presidential (second round)
Oct 29, 2000	Municipal
Dec 16, 2001	Parliamentary
Oct 31, 2004	Municipal
Dec 11, 2005	Presidential (first round)
Jan 15, 2006	Presidential (second round)
Oct 26, 2008	Municipal
Dec 13, 2009	Presidential (first round)
Jan 17, 2010	Presidential (second round)

Estimating Compliance

Using the self-reported registration data, we can estimate the proportion of compliers in the sample. But we know that respondents over-report electoral participation, due to social desirability bias. Thus, Figure 5A.1 presents three separate estimates of the discontinuity

in registration rates. The first graph simply uses the self-reported registration status of respondents. The second and third graphs, however, use official registration numbers to estimate over-reporting and adjust the data accordingly.

When adjusting for over-reporting, I limit the sample to surveys conducted after the 2009-2010 election (n=5511). We know the actual registration rate among the entire population in 2010, and among those eligible for the plebiscite in 1988. We also know the proportion who were eligible for the plebiscite. Using these three pieces of information, we can calculate the over-reporting rate among citizens eligible for the plebiscite, and among citizens ineligible for the plebiscite.

FIGURE 5A.1. Discontinuity in Registration

Note: Effect of plebiscite eligibility on registration for the 2009–2010 presidential election. Surveys were conducted from June 2010–December 2011 (n=5511). The left-most graph presents self-reported registration data, with no adjustments. The other graphs adjust the self-reported registration rates, using official data to estimate social desirability bias.

Ninety-four percent of those eligible for the plebiscite report that they were registered to vote in the 2010 election, but only 92% of the population registered for the plebiscite. I assume that if someone was eligible for the plebiscite and chose not to register in 1988, then they did not register in later years. Previous empirical studies of registration in Chile have shown that this is a reasonable assumption (Corvalan and Cox 2013). It is also a conservative assumption: it uses the lower-bound on registration within the treatment group

(where the registration rate within the treatment group represents the sum of compliers and always-takers).

Across the full sample, 74% of respondents report registering to vote, but overall registration for the 2009–2010 elections was only 68%. Sixty-two percent of respondents were eligible for the plebiscite. If plebiscite-eligible voters registered at a rate of 92%, then plebiscite-ineligible voters must have registered at a rate of 29% to yield an aggregate registration rate of 68%. Those who were ineligible for the plebiscite report that they registered at a much higher rate: 42%.

We can adjust the self-reported registration rates to account for this over-reporting in either of two ways. First, we can apply a proportional adjustment. If 42% of plebiscite-ineligible citizens report registering to vote when only 29% did, then there is a 31% chance that any particular self-reported registrant is actually un-registered. So to adjust the registration rates, I randomly assign 31% of self-reported registrants (in the plebiscite-ineligible group) to un-registered status. Similarly, 2.1% of self-reported registrants in the plebiscite-eligible group are assigned to un-registered status (0.02/0.94).

Second, we can apply a flat adjustment: we take the trend line from the self-reported registration data and simply shift it down by the over-reporting rate. For plebiscite-eligible voters, this rate is 2% (0.94-0.92). For plebiscite-ineligible voters, this rate is 13% (0.42-0.29).

Using the raw, unadjusted numbers, we get the most conservative estimate of the discontinuity: approximately 17 percentage points. Applying the proportional adjustment yields an estimated effect of 40 percentage points. And applying the flat adjustment yields an estimated effect of 28 percentage points. Recall that these figures are estimates of the proportion of compliers in the sample—those citizens who would register to vote if eligible for the plebiscite, but would not register otherwise.

Power Analysis

Figures 5A.2 and 5A.3 illustrate the statistical power of the regression discontinuity test using local linear regression and the difference in means. The curve plots the minimum effect size that the test can detect at 80% power for each bandwidth ($p < 0.05$, one-tailed tests). Each curve was generated through simulations.

FIGURE 5A.2. Statistical Power: RD Test

Note: 80% power at each bandwidth for the regression discontinuity estimated in Fig 5.5.

FIGURE 5A.3. Statistical Power: Difference in Means

Note: 80% power at each bandwidth for the difference in means estimated in Fig 5.6.
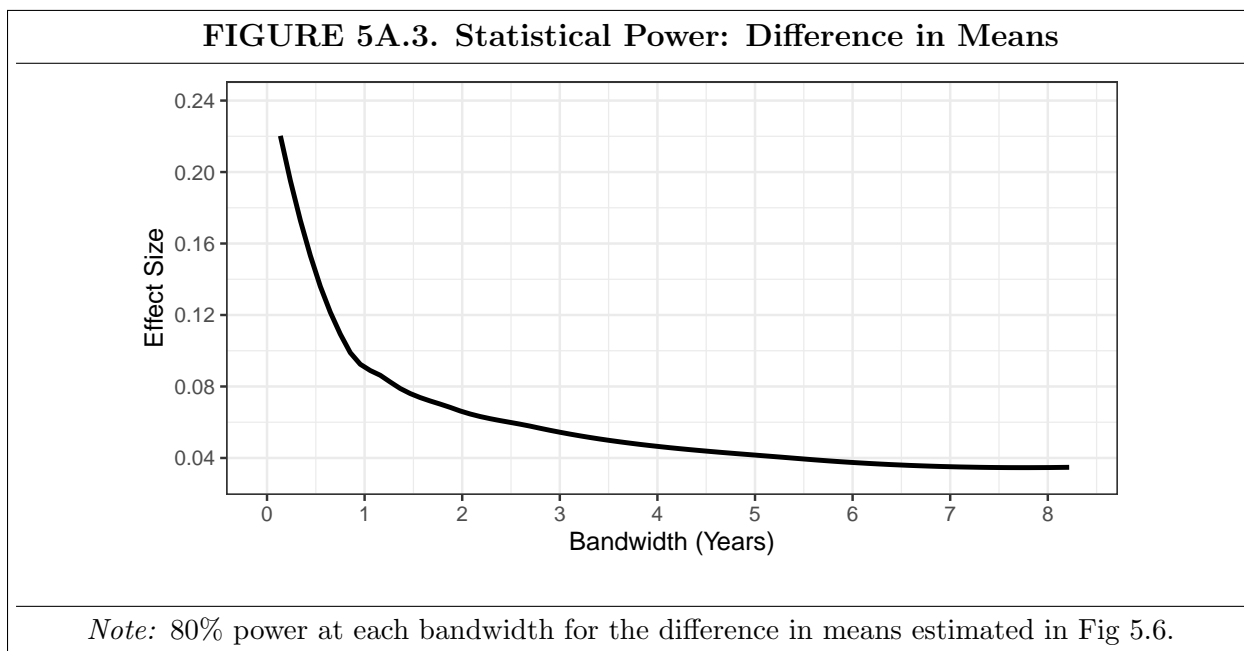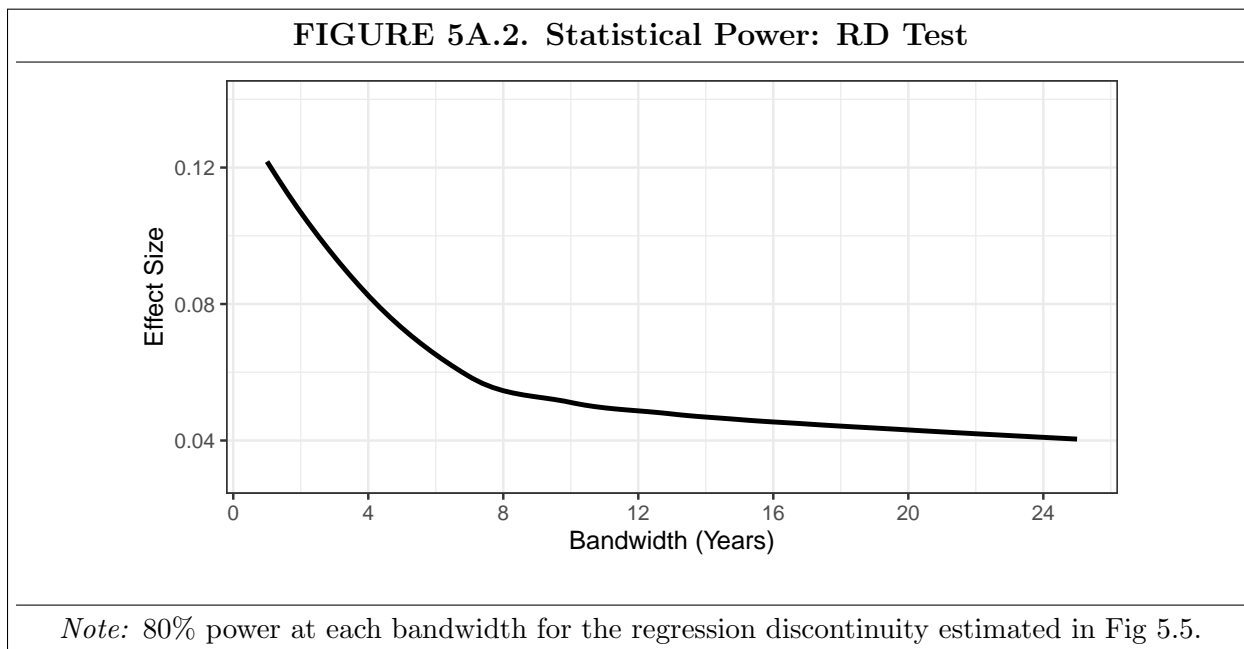
Additional Robustness Tests

Figures 5A.4 and 5A.5 replicate the main analysis (Fig. 5.5) with alternative specifications. Figure 5A.4 uses the same model as the main analysis, but introduces a series of dummy variables to control for the survey wave. Figure 5A.5 uses the same model as the main analysis, but uses identification with a coalition as the dependent variable (in place of identification with a party).

FIGURE 5A.4. RD Coefficient Plot: Survey Wave Control

Note: Coefficient plot for each estimate of Model 5.1, using bandwidths from 1 to 25 years (increasing in intervals of one day). For each bandwidth, I plot the point estimate of β_1 with a 95% confidence interval. In this model, I control for survey wave (using a dummy for each different survey wave).
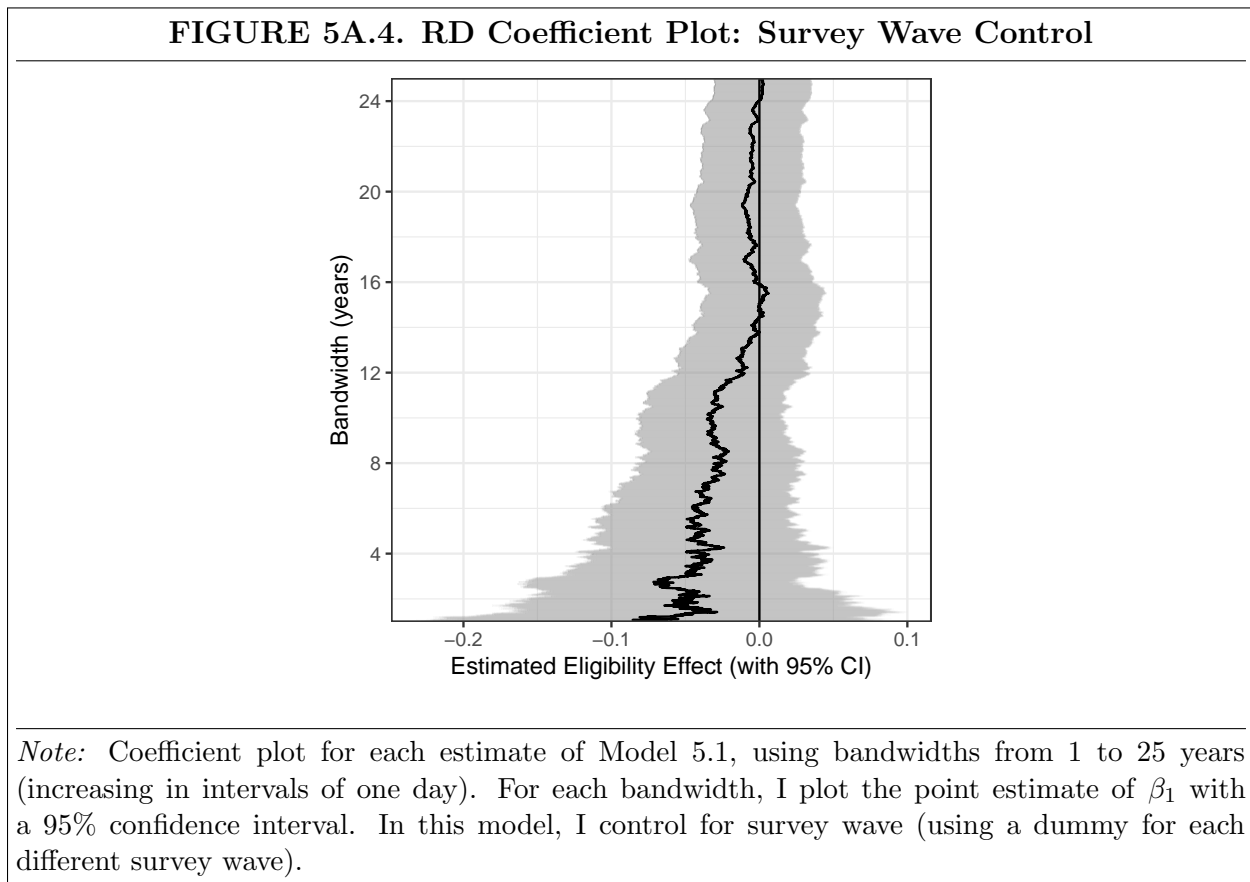
FIGURE 5A.5. RD Coefficient Plot: Coalition Identification
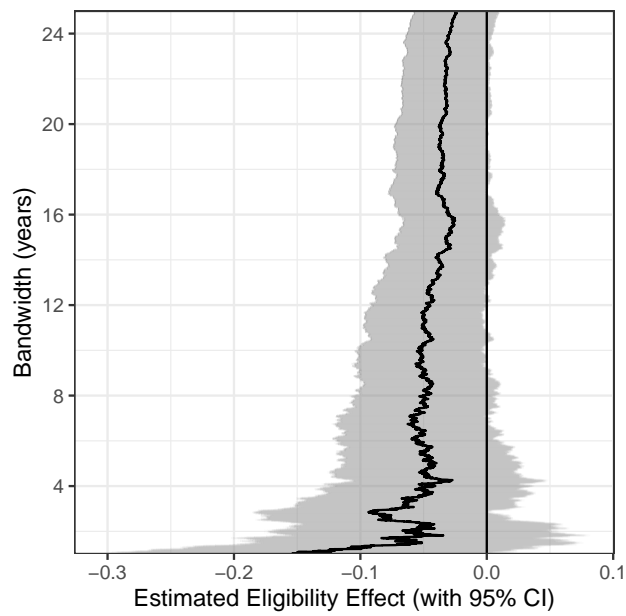
Note: Coefficient plot for each estimate of Model 5.1, using bandwidths from 1 to 25 years (increasing in intervals of one day). For each bandwidth, I plot the point estimate of β_1 with a 95% confidence interval. In this model, I use coalition identification as the dependent variable (instead of party identification).

TABLE 5A.3. Partisanship and Turnout

	Dependent variable:	
	Voted in 2013 Election	
	OLS	logistic
	(1)	(2)
Party ID	0.175***	0.889***
	(0.028)	(0.149)
Constant	0.632	0.539
	(0.015)	(0.066)
Observations	1,350	1,350
R^2	0.028	
Adjusted R^2	0.027	
Log Likelihood		−827.981
Akaike Inf. Crit.		1,659.962

Note: $^*p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{***}p < 0.001$
Data: CEP November 2014

TABLE 5A.4. Partisanship and Registration Status (Logit)

	Dependent variable:	
	Registered for 2010 Election	
	Born Before 1971	Born After 1971
	(1)	(2)
Party ID	0.050	0.480**
	(0.303)	(0.186)
Constant	0. 2.869	−0.708
	(0.191)	(0.120)
Observations	911	515
Log Likelihood	−187.979	−337.295
Akaike Inf. Crit.	379.959	678.590

Note: $^*p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{***}p < 0.001$

Chapter 6

Institutional Implications: Compulsory Voting

> "It is ordered by our king and our queen from Jerusalem and from Sicily, that every man over 14 years of age, shows up tomorrow, after the morning mass, in the royal palace of the city of Toulon, in the presence of the bailiff, against a fine of 12 deniers, in order to create and nominate the councillors and the other officers of the said city."
> –Edict issued by Robert of Anjou on April 18, 1340[1]

To those living in countries with no formal obligation to vote in elections, compulsory voting laws might seem strange, a unique electoral institution that only exists for Australians and citizens in a handful of other democracies. But throughout history, many polities have required that their citizens participate in elections under threat of penalty. Debates over whether voting should be an obligation for members of a democracy, or a right that citizens are free to exercise or refrain from exercising, stretch back to Ancient Greece, and early instances of compulsory voting rules go as far back as the 14th century. Since 1800, at least

---

[1]Translated by Malkopoulou (2011:26) from the French record in Teissier (1868:13–14). Malkopoulou (2011) characterizes this edict as one of the earliest instances of compulsory voting.

46 countries have enacted compulsory voting laws (Boveda 2013) — more than the number of democracies that hold primary elections or that use single transferable vote (STV) systems.

In the year 2000, the Australian Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters estimated that 17% of democracies worldwide (24 countries) were using some form of compulsory voting rules (Jackman 2001; Australia 2000). As of 2020, 27 democracies have compulsory voting laws on the books (IDEA 2020).[2] And many other countries have recently considered compulsory voting legislation — including the United Kingdom, France, Bulgaria, and, at the state level, the United States.[3] Figure 6.1 identifies the countries in which compulsory voting currently exists, as well as countries that previously mandated voting and have since abolished the rule. The countries coded as having compulsory voting vary in the extent to which they actually enforce sanctions for non-voting, but they all include a provision for sanctions in the compulsory voting legislation. By contrast, the Mexican constitution defines voting as an obligation but does not specify any sanction for non-voting in the law. Thus, I do not code Mexico — or other such cases of "constitutionalization" (Boveda 2013:18) — as having compulsory voting.[4]

Many prominent scholars, politicians, and journalists argue that compulsory voting should be widely adopted as a solution to problems plaguing modern democracies. A recent NYTimes article suggested that compulsory voting would improve the US economy and create a less divided society (Moyo 2019). Another article, appearing in The Guardian, argued that "Australia's compulsory voting saved it from Trumpism" (Alcorn 2019). And a recent report by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS) Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship recommended the adoption of compulsory voting (American

---

[2]Of these 27 countries, 13 actively enforce sanctions (IDEA 2020). Some scholars have argued that the severity and enforcement of sanctions are essential to increasing turnout under compulsory voting (Panagopoulos 2008; Singh 2011), but Birch (2009) observes that compulsory voting laws are often very effective even in the absence of strong enforcement.

[3]In February 2020, a CA state lawmaker introduced a bill to make voting compulsory in the state of California by 2022 (AB 2070, 2020).

[4]Mexico is often coded as a case of compulsory voting, but as Boveda (2013) observes, this is a mischaracterization of the Mexican political reality. Boveda (2013) and Dunning and Stokes (2007) note that Mexican citizens do not believe that they have any legal obligation to vote.

FIGURE 6.1. Countries with Compulsory Voting

Currently Enforced   Abolished or Not Enforced

Note: Compiled from IDEA (2020) and Boveda (2013)
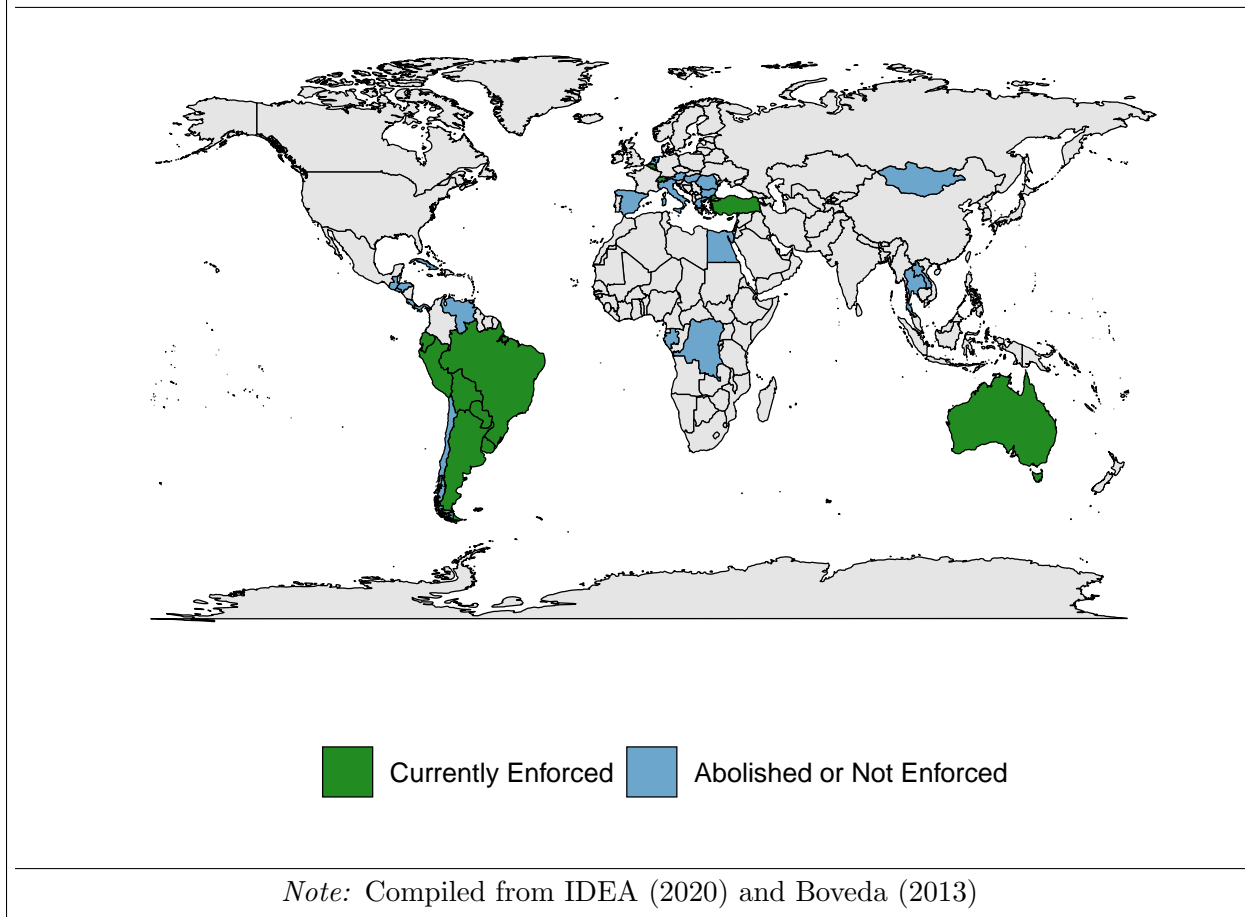
Academy of Arts and Sciences 2020:38–39).

In late 2019, the Chilean legislature considered a bill to re-introduce compulsory voting (after eliminating it in 2012). The effort was abandoned in the wake of protests and unrest, but as the country gears up to re-write its constitution, compulsory voting once again seems like a possibility. Recent polls in Canada suggest that the idea has some traction there as well: a majority of Canadians polled in September 2019 said that they favor compulsory voting for Canada.

Amidst these widespread debates over new election law, compulsory voting is an institution that students of democracy cannot afford to ignore. The introduction of compulsory voting represents a fundamental change to the way that countries conduct elections. Major

institutional changes have the potential to improve the quality of democracy; but they are not without risks. Often, institutions have unintended and unforeseen consequences. Making normative judgments about the implications of compulsory voting for democracy requires a broad understanding of its myriad effects. Beyond the most immediate effect of increasing turnout, how does compulsory voting change the political arena?

Scholars have repeatedly noted that partisanship tends to be more widespread when voting is compulsory. Singh and Thornton (2013) find that people are 29 percentage points more likely to identify with a party when voting is compulsory (the authors employ a multi-level model to account for both system- and individual-level factors that influence partisan identification). Lundell (2007) and Dalton and Weldon (2007) also find a large positive effect of compulsory voting on partisan identification.[5]

Explanations of this pattern have thus far focused on individual-level mechanisms: for a variety of reasons, scholars have proposed, the act of voting fosters partisanship. And because compulsory voting increases participation, it has a downstream effect of increasing partisanship. But, as shown in Chapter 5, the empirical evidence does not support these proposed microfoundations of political behavior.

This presents a puzzle: if voting does not foster partisanship at the individual level, why have scholars routinely found that compulsory voting increases partisanship at the aggregate level?

One simple explanation is that prior studies drew incorrect conclusions about the effect of compulsory voting on partisanship. Despite the best efforts to control for other system-level factors that influence partisanship, compulsory voting has never been randomly or as-if-randomly assigned, so any causal claims must rely on weak evidence.

---

[5]A notable exception is Birch (2009), who finds no significant difference in partisanship under compulsory versus voluntary voting. However, Birch's results should be interpreted with caution. She includes countries such as Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Chile in her sample of compulsory voting systems. Boveda (2013) argues that Mexico and the Dominican Republic have never had compulsory voting. Chile is an unusual case: voting was compulsory for registered voters until 2012, but registration was voluntary (see Barnes and Rangel 2014 for further discussion).

Yet an individual-level effect of voting is not the only pathway by which compulsory voting might change patterns of partisanship. When a country implements a compulsory voting rule, they are introducing a fundamental change to the rules that govern elections. They are altering the strategic game in which both voters and elites participate. It is only by studying the dynamic interactions among key actors that we can make sense of these system-level changes. Studying the effects of a rule change on one actor in isolation does not suffice; instead, a general-equilibrium approach is necessary to clarify the complex implications of institutional change.

I use what we have learned about voting behavior and consider the strategic actions of parties to build a more comprehensive theory of how compulsory voting affects partisanship, and party-voter interactions more broadly.

The empirical challenges of testing these propositions are immense: selection problems plague efforts at causal identification, and current data limitations preclude comprehensive tests of the full theory. Nonetheless, preliminary tests provide tentative support for my argument, which is that compulsory voting introduces a breadth-versus-depth tradeoff for parties, leading to more widespread partisanship that is weaker at the individual level.

6.1   Partisanship as an Electoral Tool

Partisanship is an important electoral tool for parties. When a voter's partisanship constitutes a "genuine form of social identification" (Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002:ix), it mobilizes the voter to turn out on election day (Rosenstone and Hansen 2003; Gerber, Huber and Washington 2010; Rau 2021). Citizens pay costs to cast a vote: it takes time to get to the polls and wait in line; they may need to buy a bus ticket or pay for gas to get to the polling station. Classical rational choice models suggest that even modest costs will stop rational citizens from voting (Downs 1957; Fiorina 1990). This argument is built on the premise that rational voters see their vote purely in terms of its ability to change the

electoral outcome. An individual vote is so unlikely to change who wins the election that rational voters can't possibly be motivated to pay even minor costs to cast a vote.

But developments in rational turnout models point to other factors that motivate people to vote, independent of their ability to change the electoral outcome. Those who identify with a political party place value on the opportunity to express and reaffirm this identity by voting (Fiorina 1976; Carlin and Love 2015). The empirical testing in Chapter 4 showed that partisans are willing to pay material costs for the opportunity to express their partisan identity, even in private contexts like the voting booth. Partisans who identify very strongly with a party also reference a sense of *partisan duty*, an obligation to "do one's part" to help the party succeed. These strong partisans are operating like rule-utilitarians (Feddersen and Sandroni 2006; Coate and Conlin 2004) or Kantian optimizers (Roemer 2019). They look past their individual impact on the electoral outcome and consider the broader effect of people like them.

Partisanship also affects vote choice. When parties cultivate a sense of partisan identification, rather than mere party preferences, they can insulate themselves against negative retrospective voting after poor performance in office (Lupu 2016). Among low-information voters, partisanship predicts vote choice better than policy preference (Jessee 2010). The effects of partisanship even extend to non-partisan elections, where voters use partisan cues as heuristics (Bonneau and Cann 2015), and to elections in new party systems (Conroy-Krutz, Moehler and Aguilar 2016).

If a voter does not identify with any particular party, we expect that she will vote for her preferred party in the current moment. But partisanship introduces stability to her vote choice over the longer term. When voters identify as partisans, they often filter new information through a partisan lens that is biased in favor of their party (Bartels 2002; Jerit and Barabas 2012). They are less likely to abandon the party after a term of poor performance in office, because they have internalized a sense of group membership and have

become invested in the party's success (Huddy, Mason and Aarøe 2015; Lupu 2016).

Partisanship is a useful electoral tool for parties, but it's also an investment that requires the use of finite resources that might otherwise be devoted to other electorally beneficial activities. The time and effort used to build partisanship among voters could alternatively be used to pursue policy goals, attract fundraisers, or recruit candidates.

The extent to which a party invests in partisanship and the type of partisanship it seeks to build, then, are strategic decisions. These decisions depend on how the party prioritizes its goals and the resources to which it has access. And, crucially, the rules of the game — electoral institutions — have a profound effect on the strategic calculus.

6.2 The Depth-versus-Breadth Tradeoff

When parties attempt to build partisanship among potential supporters, they face a tradeoff in the depth versus breadth of their reach. A party can develop a very clear and specific party brand that generates intense identification among a small subset of the population; or the party can develop a more ambiguous and diffuse brand that generates weaker identification among a broader base.

Maintaining a clear, well-differentiated brand allows a party to build strong partisan identities among a band of committed supporters. Injecting some ambiguity into the brand might weaken these identities, but it can also create space for more voters under the party's umbrella. If voters identify a party's prototype as one very specific type of person, then people who match that description are likely to identify very strongly with the party, but few people will match that description. A "big tent" party might not attract the kind of fervent support of a more narrowly focused party, but the ambiguity in its brand makes it possible for many more voters to develop a social identification with the party, even if that identification is weaker.

A similar tradeoff exists in on-the-ground organizing: a party can focus on building strong, meaningful connections with voters, but this is a time- and resource-intensive process — the party will only be able to invest in making these deep connections with so many voters. Given the same resource budget, the party could instead decide to make contact with twice as many voters, but give each voter only half of the attention they would have allocated in the first example. The party likely succeeds in winning over more supporters, but the level of party loyalty from each individual voter will be lower.

This tradeoff is essential to understanding party strategy in compulsory versus voluntary voting systems. Parties competing in voluntary voting systems will focus their efforts on building very strong partisan identifications among a smaller subset of the population. They concentrate their efforts on fewer individuals, because they need to ensure that their supporters care enough to actually turn out to vote. If the party tries to reach everyone, it runs the risk of spreading itself too thin, creating only weak party preferences that are not strong enough to mobilize people.

But when voting is compulsory, parties do not need to worry about mobilizing voters. As a result, they can trade depth for breadth: they need to appeal to a larger share of the population (because everyone will vote), but they don't need to create the same intense preferences that motivate people to pay the costs of voting. Instead, they simply need to create weak preferences among their supporters. Parties in compulsory voting systems still benefit from investing in partisanship. Shocks occur that could cause a party's support to crater (such as corruption scandals or economic recessions). Partisanship helps parties to weather these shocks. But partisanship is doubly important for parties in voluntary voting systems. Partisanship among their supporters not only stabilizes support in terms of vote choice; it also helps to ensure that their supporters actually show up to express that choice.

6.2.1 Voluntary Voting

When voting is voluntary, a party must win the support of a majority of the voting popu-
lation. To be clear, they need not win over a majority of the voting-*eligible* population: if
only 50% of those eligible vote in elections, a party can win with the support of only 25% of
the population.

The proportion of people who actually turn out to vote in an election, of course, is not a
constant. Some people will turn out to vote in any election, regardless of who the candidates
are, what issues are at stake, or how campaigns operate. These might be voters who feel a
strong sense of civic duty, and who face very low turnout costs. But many voters show up
in some elections but not others. Their participation hinges on factors such as how big a
difference they perceive between candidates, how close they believe the election will be, or
how strongly they identify with a political party.

In a voluntary voting system, parties can use partisanship as a tool to mobilize marginal
voters — those citizens for whom the costs of voting might exceed the perceived benefits
by a small or moderate margin. But for some voters, the perceived costs of voting so far
exceed the benefits, that even the additional incentive of expressive benefits derived from
partisanship would not be enough to mobilize them. In a voluntary voting system, parties
will generally ignore these reliable non-voters. Past research has shown that parties do not
invest much in trying to mobilize voters who have reliably abstained from all past elections
(Rosenstone and Hansen 2003; Karp, Banducci and Bowler 2008).

While conducting fieldwork in Chile, I frequently heard about this strategy of ignoring
non-voters. In interviews with politicians and campaign workers, a common refrain was that
they simply "go where the voters are."[6] One Senator with whom I spoke insisted that the
parties know who votes and who doesn't vote, and they don't concern themselves with the
people who don't vote. They don't make an effort to mobilize them, and they don't consider

---

[6]Author interviews, March and October 2018.

their preferences when developing a party platform or deciding which policies to pursue in government.[7]

For parties competing in voluntary voting systems, the usual strategy is to concentrate effort and resources on those citizens who are likely to turn out — reliable voters and marginal voters, but not reliable non-voters. They seek to build partisan identities among their supporters who vote, as a way of insuring against future negative shocks as well as mobilizing marginal voters.

When parties work to mobilize marginal voters, they have an interest in developing strong party loyalties among those that they mobilize. By mobilizing a new voter, the party is potentially introducing more volatility into this and future elections. During the years when Chile combined compulsory voting with voluntary registration, parties were reluctant to mobilize new voters out of fear of volatility. Recall that voters were not obligated to register, but once a voter chose to register for one election, she was obligated to continue voting in all future elections. The Chilean system functioned as an extreme version of habit-forming voting: if a party mobilized a new voter for one election, that voter was virtually guaranteed to keep voting in all future elections.[8] Parties better understood the preferences and character of those who had voted in past elections; by mobilizing new voters about whom they knew less, they were introducing more volatility into the electoral system (Venegas 2016). A party might mitigate this risk of volatility by investing substantial effort in establishing strong partisan ties with the new voters they mobilize, to stabilize their support. Or they might simply focus on strengthening their ties with existing supporters and persuading a handful of swing voters who will definitely turn out to vote.

---

[7]Author interview, Member of the Chilean Senate and Independent Democratic Union (UDI) party, October 19, 2018.

[8]A less extreme version of this habit-forming dynamic has been identified in many voluntary voting systems (see, e.g., Coppock and Green 2016).

6.2.2   Compulsory Voting

When voting is compulsory, a party's primary electoral task is to persuade a majority of the voting-eligible population to support it. Knowing that everyone (or nearly everyone) will turn out on election day, the party does not need to concern itself with mobilization efforts: the state mobilizes citizens through a mandatory obligation to vote.

Parties in compulsory voting systems do not face the risk of losing with majority support simply because their supporters were not committed enough to show up on election day. As long as 51% of the population has at least a weak preference for the party by the time they reach the ballot box, the party will win election. Whereas parties in voluntary systems use partisanship as a tool to mobilize support, parties in compulsory systems only need to maintain the weakest level of support among their voters on election day.

But parties in compulsory voting systems still have an interest in fostering partisan identities, even though they don't need the mobilization boost. Developing some level of partisanship among the party's supporters stabilizes support for the party. If negative news about the party breaks during the campaign period — say, a scandal or negative jobs report — voters who lack any partisan attachment might abandon the party and vote for the opposition. But when a party's supporters identify as partisans, they are more likely to look past short-term negative valence shocks, and even interpret new information in a more positive light for the party.

By increasing the number of citizens who vote, compulsory voting rules increase the burden on parties to appeal to a wide base of support. And by eliminating the need for party mobilization, compulsory voting rules also give parties more opportunity to reach out to more voters. When voting is voluntary, parties must devote significant effort to ensuring that their supporters actually show up to the polls. When voting is compulsory, law enforcement takes care of mobilization, which frees up party resources. This enables parties to reach a broader set of voters and foster a sense of identification among citizens

that they might not otherwise reach out to at all.

6.2.3 Empirical Implications

When comparing electoral strategy under compulsory and voluntary voting rules, parties must react to two key distinctions. In compulsory voting systems, parties are freed from the need to mobilize their supporters. But this also means that more people vote, so parties in compulsory systems need to win a larger absolute number of votes to win election.

When it comes to building partisanship, the party's strategic focus shifts depending on whether it competes in a compulsory or voluntary system. The major expectation is that parties will trade off depth for breadth when voting is compulsory. So voters in a compulsory voting system will be more likely to identify with a party, but that identification will be, on average, weaker.

Figure 6.2 illustrates the concept with a hypothetical electorate. The x-axis represents a set of voters within the electorate, and the y-axis the strength of their partisanship. The blue curve indicates the strength of partisanship each voter would develop in a voluntary voting system, and the red line indicates the levels of partisanship they would develop in a compulsory voting system. In a compulsory system, the party develops a relatively weak level of partisanship among all 100 voters. This protects the party against negative shocks, ensuring that their supporters will not change their vote choice in response to one piece of bad news about the party. In the counterfactual voluntary voting system, by contrast, the party focuses on a smaller segment of the population, among which it fosters stronger partisan identification. The party aims protect itself against the same negative shocks that might shift voters' opinions, as well as against the risk of abstention among its supporters.

In this hypothetical example, the area under the two curves is identical. If we were to think of partisanship in terms of transferable units of strength, the total number of units across the population is identical in both scenarios. But the distribution differs. Of course,

FIGURE 6.2. Partisanship under Compulsory and Voluntary Voting
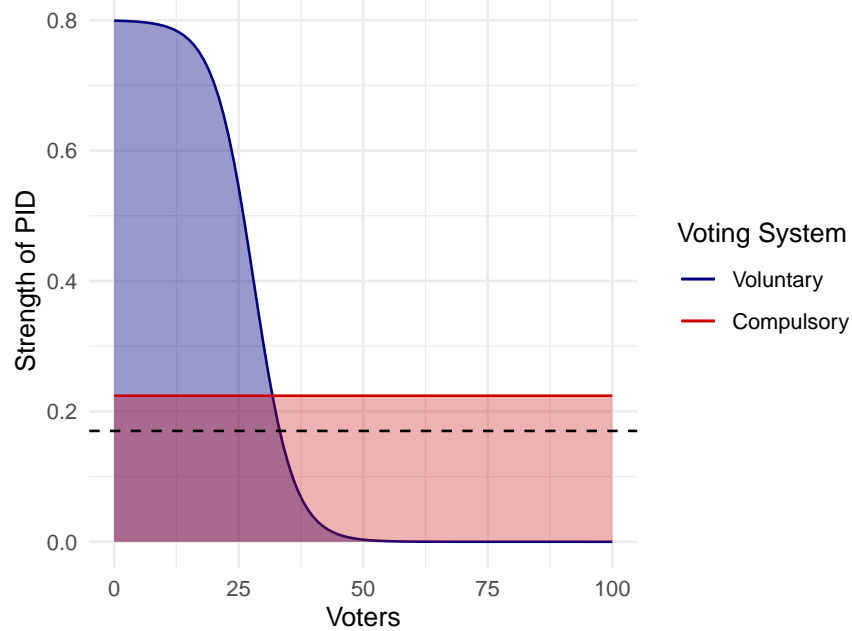
Note: Each curve reflects the level of partisanship among a hypothetical set of 100 voters in a compulsory versus voluntary voting system, as predicted by the party strategy dynamics outlined in this chapter. The dashed line represents a cutpoint, corresponding to the binary survey measure of partisanship (any voter with partisanship above this dashed line will register as a partisan in surveys, while those with weaker attachments will be identified as non-partisans)

this example is not a perfect representation of reality — it is not the case that every single partisan in a compulsory voting system has exactly the same level of attachment to the party (as the horizontal red line would imply). In reality, outcomes will be much noisier.[9] This is merely a stylized example to highlight the main point, that party strategy will generate more widespread but weaker partisanship in compulsory voting systems, compared with voluntary systems.

The dashed line in Figure 6.2 represents the measurement of partisanship in surveys. When studying partisanship with binary survey measures, we do not have access to the level of detail presented in Figure 6.2. Instead, we have only a binary measure for each respondent:

---

[9]The blue curve could alternatively be presented as a step-wise function to mirror the noiseless world of the compulsory voting line. I have drawn it as a curve in part to capture the idea that voters in a voluntary system vary in their innate propensity to turn out — the level of partisanship needed to mobilize one voter over another will differ.

partisan or non-partisan. Thus, there exists a threshold above which respondents will register as partisans and below which they will register as non-partisans.[10] If standard partisanship questions are capturing social identification as well as weaker partisanship, we should expect to observe more widespread partisanship in compulsory voting systems, in line with the patterns prior empirical studies have identified.

6.3 How Compelling is the Evidence of Increased Partisanship?

Major studies showing that partisanship is more widespread under compulsory voting have used cross-national survey evidence, collected as part of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). Singh and Thornton (2013) and Dalton and Weldon (2007) show that citizens in compulsory voting systems are more likely to identify with political parties, even when controlling for other country- and election-level variables.

But prior studies suffered from a key form of measurement error. The CSES surveys do not measure partisanship in the same way across all countries. In most countries, enumerators ask respondents,

> "Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?"

But in some countries, the question is framed differently. In Australia, for example, respondents are asked,

> "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as Liberal, Labor, National
>
> or what?"

---

[10]In the figure, I have drawn this threshold as a straight line. It is conceivable that it may not be a straight line — respondents may interpret survey questions differently, leading to variation across respondents in the position of the threshold. Moreover, we can expect some level of measurement error, such that the threshold "point" could actually be a series of points with differing probabilities (e.g., at $y = 0.14$, respondent i will indicate partisanship with probability $p = 0.5$, and at $y = 0.15$, i will indicate partisanship with probability $p = 0.8$).

There are two key distinctions between these questions. First, the Australia question lists the major parties; the other question (which I will refer to as the *standard* question)[11] omits party names. Second, the standard question explicitly introduces a non-partisan option, framing the question in terms of *whether* one identifies with a party. The Australia example, by contrast, allows the respondent to refuse identification with any of the parties, but does not explicitly present a non-partisan option; instead of asking whether the respondent is a partisan, it asks which kind of partisan the respondent is.

These distinctions might seem trivial, but they have profound effects on the way that respondents categorize themselves. Consider two survey projects conducted in Chile. The Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) asks respondents,

"Do you currently sympathize with a political party?"

The Centro de Estudios Públicos (CEP), by contrast, presents a list of parties and asks respondents,

"With which of these parties do you identify or sympathize with most?"

Comparing surveys from these two projects conducted in the same years, the CEP surveys regularly find rates of partisan identification twice as high as those estimated by LAPOP. A similar pattern emerges in Mexico, comparing LAPOP data with surveys from the Mexico Panel Studies, which asked respondents, "In general, do you consider yourself a panista, priista or perredista?" (referring to the major parties PAN, PRI, and PRD).

Baker and Renno (2019) systematically studied these question-wording effects, examining major survey projects such as these, in addition to collecting experimental data. They randomly assigned respondents to see different variations of common partisanship questions and identified a large and significant effect of question wording. The authors establish a two-by-two classification system for partisanship questions. The first dimension indicates

---

[11]The designation of the *standard* question merely serves to distinguish terminologically between the two types of questions, and is not a commentary on the validity of one version over the other.

whether the question presents a list of party names (p1) or not (p0). The second dimension indicates whether the question explicitly includes an option to identify as a non-partisan (n1) or not (n0). Note that even when responding to n0-type questions, respondents may refuse to identify with a party, but this option is not presented to them explicitly in the question wording.

This variation in question wording introduces considerable measurement error in comparative studies of partisanship. And when using the CSES surveys to study compulsory voting and partisanship, the problem is severe: the partisan-encouraging questions (type p1n0) were much more commonly asked in countries with compulsory voting than in those with voluntary voting. In waves 1 and 2 of the CSES surveys, 38% of compulsory voting cases used the partisan-encouraging wording of type p1n0, while only 2% of voluntary voting cases used this wording.

With this in mind, I conduct a new set of tests that account for differences in question wording. I compiled data from 516 surveys collected across 71 countries as part of the CSES, Comparative National Elections Project, LAPOP, European Social Survey, Afrobarometer, American National Election Studies, and Australian Election Study. I calculate the proportion of respondents in each survey who identify with any political party and code each survey's partisanship question according to the 4-type scheme developed in Baker and Renno (2019). Combining data from across surveys allows for a more precise estimate of the question-wording effect: the sample includes within-country variation in question wording.

A simple regression of partisan identification on compulsory voting and question wording fails to identify any significant effect of compulsory voting (see Table 6.1). Question wording has a very large effect: the type of question that CSES asks in Australia (p1n0) is associated with a 35 percentage point increase in partisan identification, but compulsory voting appears unrelated to partisanship. Incorporating controls for level of development and other electoral institutions does not change these results.

TABLE 6.1. Compulsory Voting and Partisanship

	Dependent Variable: Partisanship Rate			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Wording: p1n0	0.35***	0.38***	0.29***	0.37***
	(0.08)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.05)
Wording: p1n1	0.09	−0.04	0.06	−0.05*
	(0.06)	(0.03)	(0.09)	(0.03)
Compulsory Voting	−0.05	−0.02	0.02	0.02
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Log GDP per capita		0.04*		0.03
		(0.02)		(0.02)
Gini Coefficient		−0.002		−0.003
		(0.002)		(0.002)
Presidential			−0.13***	−0.06
			(0.03)	(0.05)
Open Lists			−0.05	−0.06*
			(0.04)	(0.03)
District Magnitude			−0.0001	−0.0001
			(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Constant	0.45	0.13	0.51	0.34
	(0.02)	(0.21)	(0.02)	(0.20)
N	516	358	438	327

$^*p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{***}p < 0.001$ (two-tailed tests)
Standard errors in parentheses, clustered by country

6.4 Empirical Limitations of Partisanship as a Binary

The results presented in Table 6.1 would seem to imply that compulsory voting has no effect on patterns of partisanship: voters are no more or less likely to identify with political parties when voting is compulsory versus voluntary. But a key limitation of this test is that it uses a binary measure of partisanship, whereas the theory is built around the concept of partisanship as a continuous spectrum.

Consider the conceptual figure from section 6.2.3 (reproduced below on the left-hand side of Fig 6.3). The empirical prediction that we will observe more widespread partisanship under compulsory voting requires an important assumption. The placement of the dashed

line, indicating the threshold for responding positively to a survey question about partisan-ship, implies that surveys will detect the weaker form of partisanship that parties build in compulsory voting systems. But this assumption might not hold in all cases.

What if parties have very limited resources for building partisanship? In a compulsory voting system, the primary purpose of partisanship is to stabilize vote choice against shocks that most often affect many voters at once (e.g., news of a corruption scandal). Thus, once a party identifies the number of votes it needs to win, it optimizes by using its resources to develop a consistent level of partisanship across each of these voters.

A simple example clarifies the point: suppose a party has 100 resource units, and needs to win over ten voters to win the election. Each resource unit can be invested to develop one unit of partisanship in a voter. The party invests ten units per voter. If the party experiences a negative shock prior to the election, it can still win as long as the shock is not strong enough to change the vote of an individual with a partisanship level of ten. The party's probability of victory is equivalent to the probability of experiencing a shock $\omega > -10$.

Now suppose the party faces the same electorate with only 60 resource units. How does the party allocate its resources? It could allocate ten resource units each to five voters, and allocate only two resource units apiece to the remaining five. But this would not safeguard the party against a shock $\omega > -10$. The party would lose with a shock of only $\omega = -3$, because this shock would be enough to flip the five voters with weaker partisanship. The party optimizes by allocating six units to each voter, and insuring itself against any shock $\omega > -6$.

This stylized example highlights the simple point that parties facing resource constraints in compulsory voting systems will pull back on their outreach efforts across the board, scaling back their investment in each voter. If the left-hand panel of Figure 6.3 represents the level of partisanship we observe in the first scenario where the party was resource-rich, the right-hand panel illustrates the outcome with a resource-poor party.

FIGURE 6.3. Party Strategy and Binary Measures of Partisanship
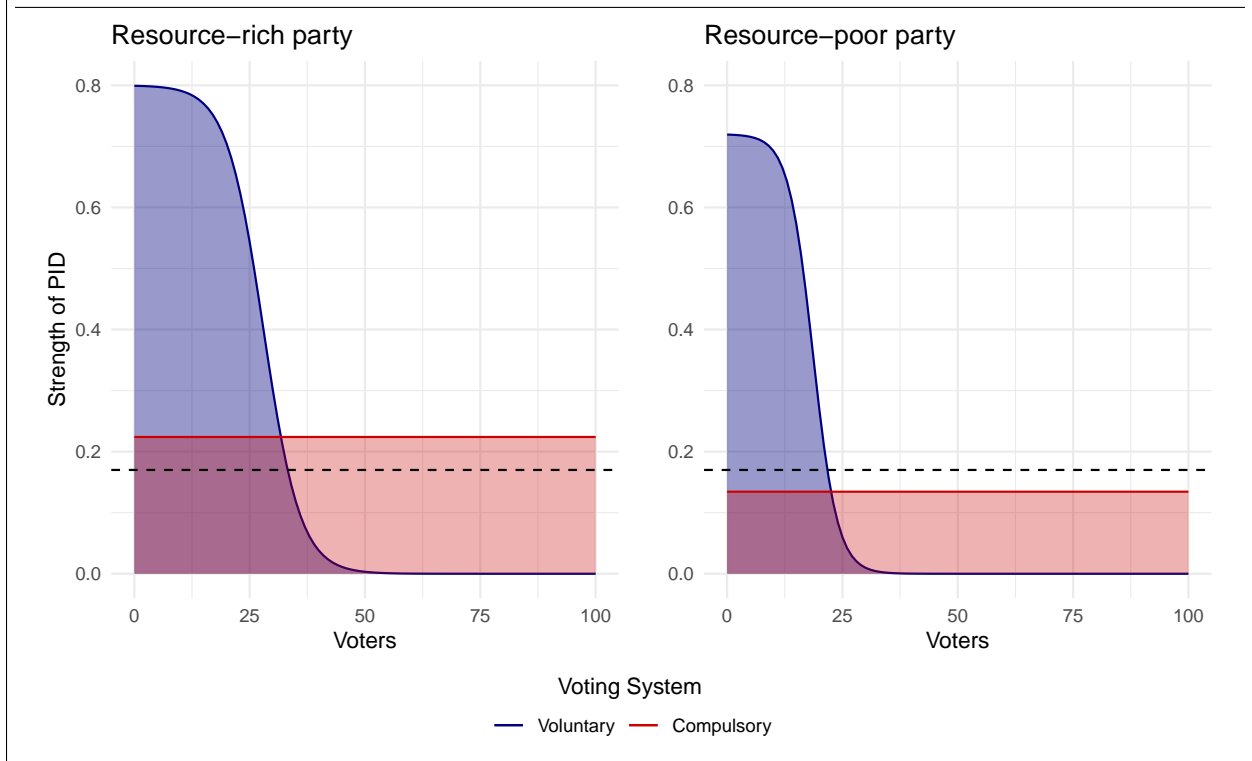
When we have access to full information about voters' partisanship, as in Figure 6.3, we can clearly see the pattern implied by the theory in the case of a resource-rich and resource-poor party: partisanship is weaker but more widespread in the compulsory voting system. But when we only have access to a binary measure of partisanship, the apparent relationship between compulsory voting and partisanship is reversed in the resource-poor case. In the resource-rich case, we observe higher rates of binary partisan identification under compulsory voting (approximately 100 versus 25). But in the resource-poor case, we observe the opposite: none of the voters in the compulsory voting system have strong enough partisan identities to register on the binary measure, so partisanship appears more widespread under voluntary voting.

Although more granular measures of partisanship exist (such as the social identity scale used in Chapter 4), the standard binary measure of partisanship is the only one that has been used consistently across a large enough set of cases to facilitate tests of the relation-

ship between compulsory voting and partisanship. How, then, can we get around the issue illustrated in Figure 6.3?

Separating cases by the aggregate strength of partisanship is neither feasible nor appropriate. The data do not provide enough information to make those determinations, and even if it were possible to draw distinctions by the average strength of partisan identification, it would be a scientifically dubious approach. The theory I have laid out distinguishes between outcomes in compulsory and voluntary voting systems on the basis of the distribution of partisanship, rather than the aggregate level (the area under the curves in Fig. 6.3 are identical across systems, within each graph). But aggregate partisanship is unquestionably an outcome of party strategy, and a centerpiece of competing theories.

A more compelling empirical strategy would be to identify a reasonable variable that helps us to estimate the resource level of parties, and distinguish cases by this estimated level of party resources. Thus, I conduct another test in which I interact the voting system with the average age of political parties.

The average age of parties is a compelling measure for estimating party resources, particularly when referring specifically to resources for building partisanship. Partisanship takes time to develop, and requires that parties establish clear brands and make connections with voters. Newer parties generally have more limited resources. Established parties have had many years to signal their effectiveness, drawing contributions from interest groups, lobbyists, and individuals and firms that are invested in ensuring certain policy outcomes or securing kickbacks from the party upon victory. In addition to a material resource advantage, established parties also have more extensive networks and name recognition, making it easier to disseminate a party brand.

Moreover, when the average age of parties in a system is low, it points to a system with frequent entry and exit. This instability in the party system poses a challenge for even the most skilled parties when it comes to brand-building. Party brands are defined relative to

147

other parties, and partisanship originates from a sense of comparative fit. A given party might be very stable over time in its positions, but if it is constantly facing new competitors each staking out a new image, voters' sense of comparative fit with the stable party will be unstable. In other words, when it comes to party brands, the reference points are other parties. When the average age of parties is low, the system-wide effect is a level of instability in the definition of partisan prototypes and groups.

The average age of parties, then, helps to capture the dynamics of Figure 6.3. In general, we expect to observe higher rates of partisan identification in older, more established party systems. And compulsory voting laws will amplify this effect, generating higher rates of partisanship as captured by the binary survey measure (illustrated in the leftmost graph in Fig. 6.3). But in young party systems, compulsory voting will depress the rate of survey-measured partisanship (as illustrated in the rightmost graph in Fig. 6.3).

I test these predictions with the same dataset of 516 election surveys used in the previous section. For the models presented in this section, I interact compulsory voting with age of party system. The age of party system variable comes from the Database of Political Institutions, which calculates the average age of the major parties. Figure 6.4 illustrates this interaction. The vertical distance between the two lines estimates the relationship between compulsory voting and partisanship at a given party system age.

Consistent with expectations, partisanship increases with with party system age; partisanship is higher under compulsory voting than voluntary voting when parties are old; and partisanship is lower under compulsory voting than voluntary voting when parties are young. The leftmost graph in Figure 6.4 uses the raw partisanship data, simply taking the proportion of partisans in each survey. The rightmost graph presents the rates of partisanship after adjusting for question wording.[12]

---

[12]In the rightmost graph of Fig. 6.4, all partisanship estimates were normalized to the p0n1 version of the partisanship question (this is the most common version in the surveys, and the base category in the regressions presented in Table 6.1. For a p1n0 survey, the partisanship estimate was adjusted by subtracting the coefficient estimate for "Wording: p1n0" from Model 1 in Table 6.1 (and similarly for p1n1 surveys).

FIGURE 6.4. Age of Party System and Partisanship
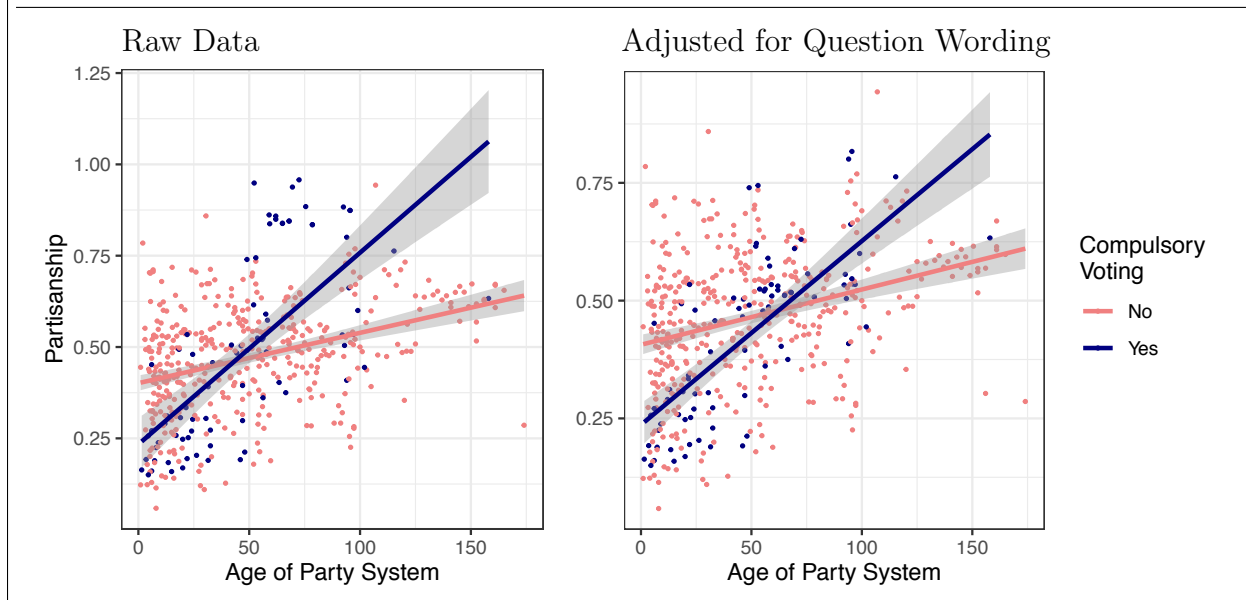
Table 6.2 presents the full regression results from a series of models incorporating institutional and economic controls. Across all models, the (non-interacted) compulsory voting term has a significant negative effect on the proportion of people identifying with a political party; party-system age has a significant positive effect; and the interaction of these two variables is significant and positive. This matches the expectations laid out in Figure 6.3. Parties concentrate their efforts on a smaller subset of the population in voluntary voting systems. So when parties have more resources (older party system), partisanship appears more widespread under compulsory voting, using a binary survey measure of partisanship. But when parties are strapped for resources and aggregate partisanship is lower (younger party system), the weaker but more widespread partisanship they develop in compulsory voting systems doesn't always register on the binary survey measure. Thus, partisanship actually appears more widespread in voluntary systems.

The turning point — the party-system age at which the measured effect of compulsory voting flips from negative to positive — is approximately 47 to 57 years. That is, in contexts where the major parties are on average less than 47–57 years old, compulsory voting depresses survey-measured partisanship. In contexts where they are more than 47–57 years

149

old, compulsory voting increases survey-measured partisanship.[13]

<table>
<tr><td colspan="5" align="center">**TABLE 6.2. Age of Party System and Partisanship**</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="4" align="center">Dependent Variable: Partisanship Rate</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>(1)</td><td>(2)</td><td>(3)</td><td>(4)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Wording: p1n0</td><td>0.27***</td><td>0.31***</td><td>0.24***</td><td>0.31***</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>(0.07)</td><td>(0.03)</td><td>(0.06)</td><td>(0.04)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Wording: p1n1</td><td>0.03</td><td>−0.05</td><td>0.01</td><td>−0.06</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>(0.04)</td><td>(0.03)</td><td>(0.06)</td><td>(0.03)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Compulsory Voting</td><td>−0.17***</td><td>−0.14***</td><td>−0.10*</td><td>−0.10*</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>(0.04)</td><td>(0.04)</td><td>(0.04)</td><td>(0.05)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Party System Age</td><td>0.001*</td><td>0.001***</td><td>0.001**</td><td>0.001**</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>(0.0004)</td><td>(0.0004)</td><td>(0.0004)</td><td>(0.0004)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Compulsory Voting X</td><td>0.003***</td><td>0.003***</td><td>0.002***</td><td>0.002***</td></tr>
<tr><td> Party System Age</td><td>(0.001)</td><td>(0.001)</td><td>(0.001)</td><td>(0.001)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Constant</td><td>0.41</td><td>0.43</td><td>0.45</td><td>0.62</td></tr>
<tr><td>Log GDP per capita</td><td></td><td>0.01</td><td></td><td>−0.01</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>(0.02)</td><td></td><td>(0.02)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Gini Coefficient</td><td></td><td>−0.004</td><td></td><td>−0.003</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>(0.002)</td><td></td><td>(0.002)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Presidential</td><td></td><td></td><td>−0.11***</td><td>−0.07</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(0.03)</td><td>(0.05)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Open Lists</td><td></td><td></td><td>−0.04</td><td>−0.04</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(0.03)</td><td>(0.03)</td></tr>
<tr><td>District Magnitude</td><td></td><td></td><td>0.0002</td><td>0.0002</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(0.0002)</td><td>(0.0006)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>(0.02)</td><td>(0.19)</td><td>(0.03)</td><td>(0.17)</td></tr>
<tr><td>N</td><td>470</td><td>348</td><td>437</td><td>326</td></tr>
</table>

$^*p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{***}p < 0.001$ (two-tailed tests)
Standard errors in parentheses, clustered by country

    These results are in line with the theory of party strategy under compulsory and voluntary voting systems, but they should be interpreted with caution. A simple observational cross-national regression design has its limitations — there are many factors that vary across countries and time, and we can never state with full confidence that we have accounted for all relevant factors. But the question at hand — how a major institutional change affects

_____

[13]The figure of 47–57 years comes from simply dividing the magnitude of the coefficient for compulsory voting by the coefficient on the interaction term.

party strategy and political behavior — is not well-suited to experimental approaches as a solution to problems of causal identification. Thus, if we wish to learn about the effects of major institutional changes, the best opportunities are in developing strong theory and testing as many of a theory's empirical implications as possible with the observational data available. The test presented here is consistent with one of the main empirical implications; but future data collection efforts aimed at testing other predictions will be necessary to fully assess the theory's empirical support.

The research reported in this dissertation advances our understanding of partisanship under different electoral systems by more rigorously testing the microfoundations of voting behavior that prior theories posited. However, the new theory I have developed makes assertions not only about voting behavior, but also about party strategy. Going forward, then, it will be necessary to apply the same level of rigor to testing whether parties actually behave the way I have argued they do.

This will likely involve a combination of field research — observing electoral campaigns and interviewing party operatives about their strategic calculus — and large-scale survey data collection — employing continuous measures of partisanship in cross-country comparisons and asking voters to describe the nature and extent of their interactions with parties.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

In his 1996 Presidential Address to the American Political Science Association, Arend Lijphart termed inequality in political participation "democracy's unresolved dilemma." Certain groups — particularly the poor and less educated — are systematically less likely to vote in elections. This inequality in turnout translates to inequality in representation, where the most well-off citizens have outsized political influence, and it weakens the quality of democracy. The best remedy for turnout inequality, Lijphart argued, is to increase overall turnout.

As the research reported here shows, one important tool for increasing turnout is establishing a sense of partisanship among citizens. The concept of partisanship has received much bad press recently, as experts have argued that it enables corruption and, in sufficiently polarized contexts, contributes to the erosion of certain democratic norms. These problems must be taken seriously, but they should not blind us to other, more positive implications of partisanship. For all its downsides, partisanship also offers the benefit of making politics more legible to everyday citizens and bringing more people into the political process. A widespread sense of partisan identification generates widespread participation in politics, thereby diminishing turnout inequality and contributing to more equal representation.

Partisanship helps voters to organize their various other social identities within the political sphere and identify the best representatives of their interests. While some have framed partisan information-processing as a dangerous source of bias, it can also be seen as a reasonable form of Bayesian updating that helps voters improve their decision-making. In a context of limited time and information, voters will never have complete certainty over which policy solution will best serve their interests on every dimension of political conflict. At the end of the day, voters must make their best guesses about a complex set of issues, and partisanship can serve as a heuristic to improve those best guesses.

Partisanship not only aids voters in making decisions about policy proposals; it also mobilizes voters who develop a true social identity with a party. Partisanship generates expressive benefits to voting — partisans obtain utility from re-affirming their partisan identities at the ballot box, even when no one else observes their behavior.

And partisanship also re-frames the turnout decision as one of a group effort, rather than merely a self-regarding instrumental action. When citizens identify with a partisan group, they begin to conceive of their electoral behavior within the context of that group's influence. Partisans consider their own behavior with reference to how they expect and want their copartisans to behave. The result is a sense of partisan duty — a feeling of obligation to contribute to the success of one's party in a cooperative framework.

These behavioral findings have important implications for real-world decisions facing practitioners. When Lijphart identified inequality in participation as democracy's unresolved dilemma, he argued forcefully for the adoption of compulsory voting as an institutional remedy to this fundamental problem facing modern democracies. As a byproduct of increasing overall turnout, he observed, compulsory voting would decrease turnout inequality.

The introduction of compulsory voting represents a fundamental change to the way that countries conduct elections. Major institutional changes have the potential to improve the quality of democracy; but they are not without risks. Often, institutions have unintended and

unforeseen consequences. Making normative judgments about the implications of compulsory voting for democracy requires a broad understanding of its myriad effects. Beyond the most immediate effect of increasing turnout, how does compulsory voting change the political arena?

Advocates for compulsory voting have argued that it promises to solve many problems facing democracies: it will increase turnout; make elections more representative of the population's preferences; foster positive attitudes towards democracy; and increase political engagement beyond voting, to name a few. We know that the first proposition is true: compulsory voting successfully increases turnout rates. But every other proposition has faced serious empirical challenges.

The empirical findings in the first part of this dissertation — that partisanship mobilizes voters, but voting does not foster partisanship — called into question the dominant theory of how compulsory voting shapes partisanship within a polity. As a result of examining the causal relationship between partisanship and turnout, and subsequently reconsidering the dynamics of partisanship under compulsory voting, this research put forth new conclusions about the broader impacts of an important political institution.

Across the world today, politicians, journalists, and citizens are discussing whether compulsory voting might solve the problems facing their democracies. As concerned citizens read headlines about the threat of authoritarianism at home and experts search for the sources of a breakdown in democratic norms, some have posited that mandatory participation might be just the thing to stem the tide of democratic backsliding. If everyone votes — rather than just the most ideologically fervent citizens — might that limit the prospects of extremist candidates and temper the polarization and conflicts of political life? If parties are forced to compete over the voters that they would otherwise ignore — the citizens who would never show up to vote in a voluntary voting system — won't politics become more representative? And if governments better represent the interests of their citizens, would this not increase

confidence in democracy and the sense of urgency to reject anti-democratic actions from individual leaders?

And yet, as Timothy Power (2009:98) observed,

> "[C]omparatively uncommon electoral institutions such as the single transferable vote (STV) have garnered significant attention from comparativists, yet mandatory voting — which occurs more frequently among contemporary democracies — languishes in relative obscurity."

Power continues, noting that more than half of all contemporary cases of compulsory voting are in Latin America, and concludes that "If this shortcoming is to be redressed, the burden must fall heavily on Latin Americanists."

The research reported here does not provide a final word on the normative value of compulsory voting. Rather, it challenges what seemed like settled issues and identifies key questions that must be considered moving forward.

Prior studies established that compulsory voting fails to make voters more knowledgeable about or interested in politics, but succeeds in making them more partisan. Conventional wisdom held that voting makes people more likely to adopt partisan identities, often as an informational shortcut; and thus, when compulsory voting increases turnout, a rise in partisanship is a natural byproduct.

But a careful analysis of the microfoundations of partisanship and voting behavior calls for revision of these propositions about compulsory voting's implications for politics. What appeared to be a story of uninformed voters adopting identities that make them more likely to discriminate against non-copartisans and tolerate anti-democratic actions and corruption, is actually a story of parties reaching out to voters they would otherwise ignore and bringing more people into the political process. As a result of compulsory voting, parties develop ties with a larger group of citizens and offer platforms that represent the interests of people who

were previously neglected by government.

7.1   Behavioral Lessons

In the absence of a legal mandate to turn out to vote, partisanship plays a crucial role in bringing voters to the polls and encouraging widespread participation in democracy. When citizens don't feel represented by any of the political parties, they often withdraw from politics. And this widespread abstention only worsens the existing representational problems.

But when citizens develop a social identification with a political party, they are more likely to think about their role as part of a group and to turn out and express their preferences, even in an election where they know one vote will not be decisive. The experiment presented in Chapter 4 provides concrete evidence of partisans' expressive motivations for participation. The expressive voting model has long been a staple of the theoretical literature on turnout, but the empirical evidence of expressive utility as a mobilizing force has lagged behind theoretical developments. The data presented here show that expressive motivations are real, and that they are strong enough to outweigh material costs like those associated with the decision to turn out and vote.

And beyond the expressive benefits of voting, partisans also experience a sense of partisan duty, an obligation to do one's part to contribute to the party's success. When a voter conceives of herself as part of a group, that group identity shapes the way that she decides whether to vote or stay home. Classic models of turnout predict that a rational voter will attempt to free-ride on the efforts of others by staying home on election day and hoping that enough people who share her preferences will pay the costs of voting instead. But a rational voter recognizes the similarities between herself and the copartisans with whom she identifies. Rather than attempt to free-ride and (irrationally) expect that similar individuals facing the same set of costs and benefits will behave differently, she is inclined to adopt a cooperative strategy. She considers what strategy, if played by herself and others like her,

would yield her most-preferred outcome, and follows this strategy.

Through each of these mechanisms — expressive motivations and partisan duty — partisanship has a causal effect on voter turnout, separate from an individual's policy preferences. The very fact that a partisan's *preferences* have led her to form an *identity* changes her calculus of voting and makes her more likely to turn out than a non-partisan with equally intense preferences over the parties' proposed policy platforms.

In contrast to oft-made claims in the political behavior literature, I find that the causal chain does not run in both directions: electoral participation does not foster partisan identities, whether through a process of political learning or a desire to resolve cognitive dissonance. But the strategic choices that political parties make during elections — the policies they propose, the way they market themselves, the citizens they reach out to during campaigns — play a crucial role in the development of these partisan identities.

7.2   Understanding Party Strategy

The idea of introducing compulsory voting in countries that have historically made voting optional is commonly evoked as a solution to many of democracies' shortcomings. But the effects of compulsory voting are not limited to a discrete list of immediate outcomes — increasing voter turnout, changing the representativeness of the electorate. Introducing compulsory voting constitutes a fundamental change to the rules of the game in a political system, and these rules shape the way the both voters and political parties behave. Such institutional changes generate new equilibria through complex processes, which can only be understood in the context of strategic interactions.

In an effort to build an understanding of these complex processes, I examined the ways in which compulsory voting changes the partisan makeup of a population and proposed a more nuanced relationship between compulsory voting and partisanship. In response to voting

rules, parties adapt their distribution of resources to optimize their electoral prospects. With regards to building partisanship, parties face a depth-versus-breadth tradeoff. In short, depth is more valuable under voluntary voting whereas breadth is more valuable under compulsory voting.

Parties competing in voluntary voting systems concentrate their efforts on building stronger partisanship among a smaller subset of the population. They do so because they need to ensure that their voters show up on election day, and they use partisanship as a mobilization tool. Moreover, they can win without majority support across the population — they only need majority support within the set of citizens who turn out. When turnout is not universal, parties can win with smaller bases of support.

But parties competing in compulsory voting systems benefit from building a more diffuse base of support. Rather than investing in the development of strong partisan identities among a comparatively small group of voters, they target a wider base of support, within which they build weaker partisan identities. Parties in compulsory voting systems need not worry about using strong social identification to mobilize voters — the law takes care of mobilization for them. Parties are merely using partisanship as a tool to stabilize support and an insurance against negative shocks. Parties can often achieve these goals with a weaker form of partisanship, so they instead focus on developing weak partisanship among a larger set of voters, owing to the fact that they must now win a majority of the voting-eligible population to win elections.

The empirical tests presented in this dissertation support the theory, but further investigation is needed. Future research would benefit from a large-scale data collection effort, incorporating social identity scales of partisanship into cross-national comparative survey projects. This type of continuous measure of partisanship would facilitate more thorough tests of the theory's implications (as well as inform other behavioral research on the sources and implications of partisan social identities).

When using binary survey measures of partisanship, we have only a single data point for each case considered — what proportion of citizens identified with a political party when the survey was conducted? Analyzing these individual data points, the pattern that emerges supports the theory laid out above. But the theory has implications for each case that extend beyond this single data point. As Figure 6.3 in the previous chapter illustrated, the theory tells us about a broader distribution of partisanship in the population — its prevalence as well as its strength. The binary survey-measure of partisanship collapses each curve representing the distribution of partisanship to a single point — the point at which the curve intersects with a horizontal line representing the cutpoint that a binary measurement produces. The binary measure of partisanship reduces the dimensionality in the predictions and sacrifices additional testable implications.

Even with more granular data about partisanship, cross-national comparisons of outcomes under compulsory and voluntary voting will still face important selection problems. Political parties support institutional changes that they believe will benefit them electorally, and oppose those they believe will disadvantage them. Thus, where compulsory voting laws are passed, the party system and the skills that parties have will likely look quite different from those where voting is voluntary. A handful of recent studies have helped to illuminate the determinants of compulsory voting and the strategic calculation parties make when they support or oppose its enactment. But we still lack a complete picture of the data-generating process. To develop more confidence in the conclusions of observational studies that aim to explain the effects of compulsory voting, we must develop a deeper understanding of how compulsory voting laws come to be, and account for this process when testing its effects.

Moving beyond tests of the top-line empirical prediction, other empirical and theoretical tasks are necessary to build a more complete understanding of the ways that compulsory voting might change the nature of party-voter interactions and relationships. From a theoretical perspective, a more comprehensive game-theoretic formalization of the theory, accounting

159

for the interactions between parties, would paint a fuller picture of electoral strategy under compulsory versus voluntary voting. The theory advanced in this dissertation pushes our understanding forward by moving from a static analysis of a single actor — the voter — to a more dynamic analysis of the strategic interactions between voters and parties. Yet a formalization of this theory would help to better capture the full scope of the strategic environment under each voting law.

From an empirical perspective, the data presented on voting behavior and partisanship should be complemented by future data collection on party behavior. The conventional wisdom that I challenge in this dissertation — that compulsory voting increases partisanship because voting fosters partisanship — was established from a theoretical proposition whose aggregate empirical implication was tested (that compulsory voting is associated with higher rates of partisanship). But it was not until the microfoundations — that voting fosters partisanship — were closely examined (and refuted) in the behavioral part of this dissertation that the explanation's shortcomings became clear.

By the same token, the alternative theory I advance makes predictions about partisanship among voters, but these predictions rely on claims about party behavior that can and should be investigated empirically. Both qualitative field research and future survey data collection can clarify the empirical support of these claims.

Including questions in voter surveys about the frequency and content of voters' interactions with parties will help to establish whether the distinctions in party strategy proposed by the theory are borne out in actual campaigns. When and how frequently do parties reach out to different voters? What is the nature of the contact they make with these voters? And qualitative field research, including campaign observation and interviews with party strategists will help clarify the motivations of elites. What strategic calculations are they making? Do they perceive the tradeoffs in breadth versus depth as outlined in the theory?

An important dimension of this additional research will be the inclusion of unstable party

160

systems. The literature on compulsory voting over-represents older, more developed democracies with stable party systems, with a disproportionate focus on Australia and Western Europe. But the lessons learned from party behavior in these countries might not tell us much about how compulsory voting operates in a country like Peru, for example. After complete party-system collapse in the 1990s, parties in Peru became so weak and unstable that the phrase "democracy without parties" is often invoked in discussions of contemporary Peruvian politics (see, e.g., Levitsky and Cameron 2003; Crabtree 2010; Levitsky 2018).

The empirics in Chapter 6 incorporated party-system age as a means of roughly estimating party resources, to deal with a measurement challenge. But the stability of the party system might also have more fundamental implications for the substantive effects of compulsory voting. Further investigation of these dynamics will enrich our understanding of political competition, and hopefully guide decisions about institutional change.

Bibliography

Abramson, Paul R., John H. Aldrich and David W. Rohde. 1998. *Change and Continuity in the 1996 Elections.* Washington: CQ Press.

Acharya, Avidit, Matthew Blackwell and Maya Sen. 2018. "Explaining Preferences from Behavior: A Cognitive Dissonance Approach." *The Journal of Politics* 80(2):400–411.

Achen, Christopher H. 2002. "Parental Socialization and Rational Party Identification." *Political Behavior* 24(2):151–170.

Achen, Christopher and Richard Sinnott. 2007. Taking sides: Learning and voting. In *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association.*

Adams, James and Samuel Merrill III. 2003. "Voter turnout and candidate strategies in American elections." *The Journal of Politics* 65(1):161–189.

Alcorn, Gay. 2019. "How Australia's compulsory voting saved it from Trumpism." *The Guardian* . March 07, 2019. URL: https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/mar/08/how-australias-compulsory-voting-saved-it-from-trumpism.

Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties?: The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America.* University of Chicago Press.

Aldrich, John H., Jacob M. Montgomery and Wendy Wood. 2011. "Turnout as a Habit." *Political Behavior* 33:535–563.

162

Alford, John R., Peter K. Hatemi, John R. Hibbing, Nicholas G. Martin and Lindon J. Eaves. 2011. "The Politics of Mate Choice." *The Journal of Politics* 73(2):362–379.

Almond, Gabriel Abraham and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations.* Princeton University Press.

American Academy of Arts and Sciences. 2020. *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century.* Cambridge, MA: American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Anduiza, Eva, Aina Gallego and Jordi Muñoz. 2013. "Turning a blind eye: Experimental evidence of partisan bias in attitudes toward corruption." *Comparative Political Studies* 46(12):1664–1692.

Angell, Alan and Benny Pollack. 1990. "The Chilean Elections of 1989 and the Politics of the Transition to Democracy." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 9(1):1–23.

Arceneaux, Kevin and Robin Kolodny. 2009. "Educating the Least Informed: Group Endorsements in a Grassroots Campaign." *American Journal of Political Science* 53(4):755–770.

Aronson, Eliot, Carrie Fried and Jeff Stone. 1991. "Overcoming denial and increasing the intention to use condoms through the induction of hypocrisy." *American Journal of public health* 81(12):1636–1638.

Australia, Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters. 2000. The 1998 Election: Report of the Inquiry into the Conduct of the 1998 Federal Election and Matters Related Thereto. Technical report.

Aytaç, S. Erdem and Susan C. Stokes. 2019. *Why Bother?: Rethinking Participation in Elections and Protests.* Cambridge University Press.

Baker, Andy and Lucio Renno. 2019. "Nonpartisans as False Negatives: The Mismeasurement of Party Identification in Public Opinion Surveys." *The Journal of Politics* 81(3):906–922.

Baker, Kendall L. 1974. "The Acquisition of Partisanship in Germany." *American Journal of Political Science* 18(3):569–582.

Banducci, Susan A. and Jeffrey A. Karp. 2009. Electoral systems, efficacy, and voter turnout. In *The comparative study of electoral systems*, ed. Hans-Dieter Klingemann. Oxford University Press pp. 109–134.

Bankert, Alexa, Leonie Huddy and Martin Rosema. 2017. "Measuring Partisanship as a Social Identity in Multi-Party Systems." *Political Behavior* 39(1):103–132.

Barnes, Tiffany D. and Gabriela Rangel. 2014. "Election Law Reform in Chile: The Implementation of Automatic Registration and Voluntary Voting." *Election Law Journal: Rules, Politics, and Policy* 13(4):570–582.

Bartels, Larry M. 2002. "Beyond the Running Tally: Partisan Bias in Political Perceptions." *Political Behavior* 24(2):117–150.

Beck, Nathaniel. 1975. "The paradox of minimax regret." *American Political Science Review* 69(3):918–918.

Berelson, Bernard R., Paul F. Lazarsfeld and William N. McPhee. 1954. *Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Besley, Timothy. 2006. *Principled agents?: The political economy of good government.* Oxford University Press.

Bhatti, Yosef and Kasper M. Hansen. 2012. "Retiring from Voting: Turnout among Senior Voters." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 22(4):479–500.

164

Birch, Sarah. 2009. *Full Participation: A Comparative Study of Compulsory Voting.* Manchester University Press.

Blais, André. 2000. *To Vote Or Not to Vote?: The Merits and Limits of Rational Choice Theory.* University of Pittsburgh Press.

Blais, André and Agnieszka Dobrzynska. 1998. "Turnout in Electoral Democracies." *European Journal of Political Research* 33(2):239–261.

Blais, André and Daniel Rubenson. 2013. "The Source of Turnout Decline: New Values or New Contexts?" *Comparative Political Studies* 46(1):95–117.

Blais, André, Elisabeth Gidengil and Neil Nevitte. 2004. "Where does turnout decline come from?" *European Journal of Political Research* 43(2):221–236.

Blais, André, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau and Neil Nevitte. 2002. *Anatomy of a liberal victory: Making sense of the vote in the 2000 Canadian election.* University of Toronto Press.

Blais, André, Robert Young, Christopher Fleury and Miriam Lapp. 1995. "Do People Vote on the Basis of Minimax Regret?" *Political Research Quarterly* 48(4):827–836.

Bølstad, Jørgen, Elias Dinas and Pedro Riera. 2013. "Tactical Voting and Party Preferences: A Test of Cognitive Dissonance Theory." *Political Behavior* 35(3):429–452.

Bonneau, Chris W. and Damon M. Cann. 2015. "Party Identification and Vote Choice in Partisan and Nonpartisan Elections." *Political Behavior* 37(1):43–66.

Boveda, Karina Cendon. 2013. Making People Vote: The Political Economy of Compulsory Voting Laws PhD Thesis. Yale University.

Brader, Ted and Joshua A. Tucker. 2012. "Following the Party's Lead: Party Cues, Policy Opinion, and the Power of Partisanship in Three Multiparty Systems." *Comparative Politics* 44(4).

Brady, Henry E. and John E. Mcnulty. 2011. "Turning Out to Vote: The Costs of Finding and Getting to the Polling Place." *The American Political Science Review* 105(1):115–134.

Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond Ses: A Resource Model of Political Participation." *The American Political Science Review* 89(2):271–294.

Brehm, Jack W. 1956. "Postdecision changes in the desirability of alternatives." *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 52(3):384.

Brody, Richard A. and Benjamin I. Page. 1973. "Indifference, Alientation and Rational Decisions: The Effects of Candidate Evaluations on Turnout and the Vote." *Public Choice* 15(1):1–17.

Brody, Richard A., Paul M. Sniderman and Philip Eyrikson Tetlock. 1991. *Reasoning and choice: Explorations in political psychology.* Cambridge University Press.

Budge, Ian, Ivor Crewe and Dennis Farlie. 1976. *Party identification and beyond: Representations of voting and party competition.* ECPR Press.

Bullock, John G., Alan S. Gerber, Seth J. Hill and Gregory A. Huber. 2015. "Partisan Bias in Factual Beliefs about Politics." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 10(4):519–578.

Burden, Barry C. and Steven Greene. 2000. "Party Attachments and State Election Laws." *Political Research Quarterly* 53(1):63–76.

Buss, Arnold H. and Norman W. Portnoy. 1967. "Pain tolerance and group identification." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 6(1):106–108.

California Legislature. Assembly. 2020. *Elections: compulsory voting.* 2019–2020 Regular Session, A.B. 2070.

Campbell, Angus, Gerald Gurin and Warren Edward Miller. 1954. *The Voter Decides.* Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson, and Co.

Campbell, Angus, Philip Converse, Warren Miller and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. University of Chicago Press.

Carey, John. 2002. Parties, Coalitions, and the Chilean Congress in the 1990s. In *Legislative Politics in Latin America*, ed. Scott Morgenstern and Benito Nacif. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Carey, John M., Gretchen Helmke, Brendan Nyhan, Mitchell Sanders and Susan Stokes. 2019. "Searching for Bright Lines in the Trump Presidency." *Perspectives on Politics* 17(3):699–718.

Carey, John M., Gretchen Helmke, Brendan Nyhan and Susan C. Stokes. 2020. American Democracy on the Eve of the 2020 Election: Bright Line Watch October 2020 surveys. Technical report.

Carey, John M. and Yusaku Horiuchi. 2017. "Compulsory Voting and Income Inequality: Evidence for Lijphart's Proposition from Venezuela." *Latin American Politics and Society* 59(2):122–144.

Carlin, Ryan E. 2006. "The decline of citizen participation in electoral politics in post-authoritarian Chile." *Democratization* 13(4):632–651.

Carlin, Ryan E. and Gregory J. Love. 2015. Who is the Latin American Voter? In *The Latin American Voter: Pursuing Representation and Accountability in Challenging Contexts*, ed. Ryan E. Carlin, Matthew M. Singer and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. University of Michigan Press.

Carlin, Ryan E. and Gregory J. Love. 2018. "Political Competition, Partisanship and Inter-personal Trust in Electoral Democracies." *British Journal of Political Science* 48(1):115–139.

Carreras, Miguel and Néstor Castañeda-Angarita. 2014. "Who Votes in Latin America? A Test of Three Theoretical Perspectives." *Comparative Political Studies* 47(8):1079–1104.

Carreras, Miguel and Yasemin İrepoğlu. 2013. "Trust in elections, vote buying, and turnout in Latin America." *Electoral Studies* 32(4):609–619.

Cavari, Amnon and Guy Freedman. 2019. "Partisan Cues and Opinion Formation on Foreign Policy." *American Politics Research* 47(1):29–57.

Cepaluni, Gabriel and F. Daniel Hidalgo. 2016. "Compulsory Voting Can Increase Political Inequality: Evidence from Brazil." *Political Analysis* 24(2):273–280.

Chapman, Emilee Booth. 2015. "There is a Duty to Vote: Grounds for the 'Folk Theory of Voting Ethics'." Working Paper.

Childs, Sarah. 2004. "A British gender gap? Gender and political participation." *The political quarterly* 75(4):422–424.

Clarke, Harold D., David Sanders, Marianne C. Stewart and Paul Whiteley. 2004. *Political choice in Britain.* Oxford University Press.

Coate, Stephen and Michael Conlin. 2004. "A Group Rule—Utilitarian Approach to Voter Turnout: Theory and Evidence." *American Economic Review* 94(5):1476–1504.

Connaughton, Aidan and Shannon Schumacher. 2021. "Many Western Europeans think mandatory voting is important, but Americans are split.".

Conover, Pamela Johnston. 1981. "Political Cues and the Perception of Candidates." *American Politics Quarterly* 9(4):427–448.

Conover, Pamela Johnston, Stanley Feldman and Kathleen Knight. 1986. "Judging Inflation and Unemployment: The Origins of Retrospective Evaluations." *The Journal of Politics* 48(3):565–588.

Conroy-Krutz, Jeffrey, Devra C. Moehler and Rosario Aguilar. 2016. "Partisan Cues and Vote Choice in New Multiparty Systems." *Comparative Political Studies* 49(1):3–35.

Constable, Pamela and Arturo Valenzuela. 1989. "Chile's Return to Democracy." *Foreign Affairs* 68(5):169–186.

Constable, Pamela and Arturo Valenzuela. 1991. *A Nation of Enemies: Chile Under Pinochet.* New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Contreras, Gonzalo and Patricio Navia. 2013. "Diferencias generacionales en la participación electoral en Chile, 1988-2010." *Revista Ciencia Política* 33(2):419–441.

Converse, Philip E. 1969. "Of Time and Partisan Stability." *Comparative Political Studies* 2(2):139–171.

Converse, Philip E. 1976. *Dynamics of Party Support: Cohort Analytical Party Identification.* SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

Conway, M. Margaret. 2000. *Political Participation in the United States.* 3rd ed. Washington: CQ Press.

Coppock, Alexander and Donald P. Green. 2016. "Is Voting Habit Forming? New Evidence from Experiments and Regression Discontinuities." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(4):1044–1062.

Corvalan, Alejandro and Paulo Cox. 2013. "Class-Biased Electoral Participation: The Youth Vote in Chile." *Latin American Politics and Society* 55(3):47–68.

Crabtree, John. 2010. "Democracy without Parties? Some Lessons from Peru." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 42(2):357–382.

Dalton, Russell J. and Steven Weldon. 2007. "Partisanship and Party System Institutionalization." *Party Politics* 13(2):179–196.

Dassonneville, Ruth and Filip Kostelka. 2020. "The Cultural Sources of the Gender Gap in Voter Turnout." *British Journal of Political Science* pp. 1–22.

Desposato, Scott and Barbara Norrander. 2009. "The Gender Gap in Latin America: Contextual and Individual Influences on Gender and Political Participation." *British Journal of Political Science* 39(1):141–162.

Dinas, Elias. 2014. "Does Choice Bring Loyalty? Electoral Participation and the Development of Party Identification." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(2):449–465.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy.* New York: Harper & Row.

Dunning, Thad and Susan C. Stokes. 2007. Persuasion vs Mobilization. In *Conference on Elections and Distribution.* New Haven, CT: Yale University. Conference Paper.

Easton, David and Jack Dennis. 1969. *Children in the Political System: Origins of Political Legitimacy.* McGraw-Hill.

Eggers, Andrew C. 2014. "Partisanship and Electoral Accountability: Evidence from the UK Expenses Scandal." *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 9(4):441–472.

Engelhardt, Andrew M. and Stephen M. Utych. 2020. "Grand Old (Tailgate) Party? Partisan Discrimination in Apolitical Settings." *Political Behavior* 42(3):769–789.

Feddersen, Timothy and Alvaro Sandroni. 2006. "A Theory of Participation in Elections." *The American Economic Review* 96(4):1271–1282.

Ferejohn, John A. and Morris P. Fiorina. 1974. "The Paradox of Not Voting: A Decision Theoretic Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 68(02):525–536.

Festinger, Leon. 1957. *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance.* Stanford University Press.

Festinger, Leon. 1962. "Cognitive Dissonance." *Scientific American* 207(4):93–106.

Festinger, Leon and James M. Carlsmith. 1959. "Cognitive consequences of forced compliance." *The journal of abnormal and social psychology* 58(2):203.

Fiorina, Morris P. 1976. "The Voting Decision: Instrumental and Expressive Aspects." *The Journal of Politics* 38(02):390–413.

Fiorina, Morris P. 1981. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*. Yale University Press.

Fiorina, Morris P. 1990. Information and Rationality in Elections. In *Information and Democratic Processes*. University of Illinois Press.

Foos, Florian and Eline A. de Rooij. 2013. "The Heuristic Function of Party Affiliation in Voter Mobilization Campaigns: Informational Short Cut or Source Cue?" Working Paper.

Fornos, Carolina A., Timothy J. Power and James C. Garand. 2004. "Explaining Voter Turnout in Latin America, 1980 to 2000." *Comparative Political Studies* 37(8):909–940.

Franklin, Mark N. 1996. Electoral Participation. In *Comparing Democracies: Elections and Voting in Global Perspective*, ed. Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris. SAGE Publications pp. 216–235.

Galandini, Silvia and Edward Fieldhouse. 2019. "Discussants that mobilise: Ethnicity, political discussion networks and voter turnout in Britain." *Electoral Studies* 57:163–173.

Gallego, Aina. 2009. "Where Else Does Turnout Decline Come From? Education, Age, Generation and Period Effects in Three European Countries." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 32(1):23–44.

Gans-Morse, Jordan, Sebastián Mazzuca and Simeon Nichter. 2014. "Varieties of Clientelism: Machine Politics during Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(2):415–432.

Gelman, Andrew and Guido Imbens. 2019. "Why High-Order Polynomials Should Not Be Used in Regression Discontinuity Designs." *Journal of Business & Economic Statistics* 37(3):447–456.

Gerber, Alan and Donald Green. 1999. "Misperceptions about perceptual bias." *Annual Review of Political Science* 2:189–210.

Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green and Christopher W. Larimer. 2008. "Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment." *The American Political Science Review* 102(1):33–48.

Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green and Ron Shachar. 2003. "Voting May Be Habit-Forming: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment." *American Journal of Political Science* 47(3):540–550.

Gerber, Alan S., Gregory A. Huber and Ebonya Washington. 2010. "Party Affiliation, Partisanship, and Political Beliefs: A Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 104(4):720–744.

Glaser, William A. 1958. "Intention and Voting Turnout." *The American Political Science Review* 52(4):1030–1040.

Glass, Jennifer, Vern L. Bengtson and Charlotte Chorn Dunham. 1986. "Attitude similarity in three-generation families: Socialization, status inheritance, or reciprocal influence?" *American Sociological Review* 51:685–698.

Graham, Matthew and Gregory Huber. 2021. The Expressive Value of Answering Survey Questions. In *The Politics of Truth.* Oxford University Press.

Graham, Matthew H. and Milan W. Svolik. 2020. "Democracy in America? Partisanship, Polarization, and the Robustness of Support for Democracy in the United States." *American Political Science Review* 114(2):392–409.

Green, Donald, Bradley Palmquist and Eric Schickler. 1998. "Macropartisanship: A Replication and Critique." *American Political Science Review* 92(4):883–899.

Green, Donald P., Bradley Palmquist and Eric Schickler. 2002. *Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters.* Yale University Press.

Green, Donald Philip and Bradley Palmquist. 1990. "Of Artifacts and Partisan Instability." *American Journal of Political Science* 34(3):872–902.

Greene, Steven. 1999. The psychological structure of partisanship: affect, cognition, and social identity in party identification. PhD Thesis. The Ohio State University.

Greene, Steven. 2002. "The social-psychological measurement of partisanship." *Political Behavior* 24(3):171–197.

Greene, Steven. 2004. "Social identity theory and party identification." *Social Science Quarterly* 85(1):136–153.

Grofman, Bernard. 1993. Is Turnout the Paradox That Ate Rational Choice Theory? In *Information, Participation, and Choice: An Economic Theory of Democracy in Perspective.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press pp. 93–103.

Grönlund, Kimmo and Maija Setälä. 2007. "Political Trust, Satisfaction and Voter Turnout." *Comparative European Politics* 5(4):400–422.

Hajnal, Zoltan and Jessica Trounstine. 2005. "Where Turnout Matters: The Consequences of Uneven Turnout in City Politics." *The Journal of Politics* 67(2):515–535.

Hajnal, Zoltan, Nazita Lajevardi and Lindsay Nielson. 2017. "Voter Identification Laws and the Suppression of Minority Votes." *The Journal of Politics* 79(2):363–379.

Harsanyi, John C. 1980. "Rule Utilitarianism, Rights, Obligations, and the Theory of Rational Behavior." *Theory and Decision* 12(2):115–133.

Heath, Oliver. 2007. "Explaining Turnout Decline in Britain, 1964–2005: Party Identification and the Political Context." *Political Behavior* 29(4):493–516.

Highton, Benjamin and Raymond E. Wolfinger. 2001. "The First Seven Years of the Political Life Cycle." *American Journal of Political Science* 45(1):202–209.

Hooghe, Marc and Koen Pelleriaux. 1998. "Compulsory voting in Belgium: an application of the Lijphart thesis." *Electoral Studies* 17(4):419–424.

Huddy, Leonie, Lilliana Mason and Lene Aarøe. 2015. "Expressive Partisanship: Campaign Involvement, Political Emotion, and Partisan Identity." *American Political Science Review* 109(01):1–17.

IDEA. 2020. "Compulsory Voting | International IDEA.". URL: https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout/compulsory-voting.

Imbens, Guido and Karthik Kalyanaraman. 2012. "Optimal Bandwidth Choice for the Regression Discontinuity Estimator." *The Review of Economic Studies* 79(3):933–959.

Imbens, Guido W. and Thomas Lemieux. 2008. "Regression discontinuity designs: A guide to practice." *Journal of Econometrics* 142(2):615–635.

Indridason, Indridi H. 2008. "Competition & turnout: the majority run-off as a natural experiment." *Electoral Studies* 27(4):699–710.

Inglehart, Ronald, Pippa Norris and Inglehart Ronald. 2003. *Rising tide: Gender equality and cultural change around the world.* Cambridge University Press.

Inkeles, Alex. 1969. "Participant Citizenship in Six Developing Countries." *The American Political Science Review* 63(4):1120–1141.

Iyengar, Shanto, Gaurav Sood and Yphtach Lelkes. 2012. "Affect, Not Ideology: A Social Identity Perspective on Polarization." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 76(3):405–431.

174

Iyengar, Shanto and Sean J. Westwood. 2015. "Fear and Loathing across Party Lines: New Evidence on Group Polarization." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3):690–707.

Jackman, Simon. 2001. Voting: Compulsory. In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences.* Vol. 24 New York: Elsevier pp. 16314–16318.

Jerit, Jennifer and Jason Barabas. 2012. "Partisan Perceptual Bias and the Information Environment." *The Journal of Politics* 74(3):672–684.

Jessee, Stephen A. 2010. "Partisan Bias, Political Information and Spatial Voting in the 2008 Presidential Election." *The Journal of Politics* 72(2):327–340.

Kalmoe, Nathan P. and Lilliana Mason. 2022. *Radical American Partisanship: Mapping Violent Hostility, Its Causes, and What It Means for Democracy.* University of Chicago Press.

Karp, Jeffrey A., Susan A. Banducci and Shaun Bowler. 2008. "Getting Out the Vote: Party Mobilization in a Comparative Perspective." *British Journal of Political Science* 38(1):91–112.

Kasara, Kimuli and Pavithra Suryanarayan. 2015. "When Do the Rich Vote Less Than the Poor and Why? Explaining Turnout Inequality across the World." *American Journal of Political Science* 59(3):613–627.

Kenney, Patrick J. and Tom W. Rice. 1989. "An Empirical Examination of the Minimax Hypothesis." *American Politics Quarterly* 17(2):153–162.

Kostadinova, Tatiana. 2003. "Voter turnout dynamics in post-Communist Europe." *European Journal of Political Research* 42(6):741–759.

Kostelka, Filip and André Blais. 2018. "The Chicken and Egg Question: Satisfaction with Democracy and Voter Turnout." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 51(2):370–376.

Kostelka, Filip, André Blais and Elisabeth Gidengil. 2019. "Has the gender gap in voter turnout really disappeared?" *West European Politics* 42(3):437–463.

Kroh, Martin and Peter Selb. 2009. "Inheritance and the Dynamics of Party Identification." *Political Behavior* 31(4):559–574.

Lackner, Marie-Louise. 2017. "On the likelihood of single-peaked preferences." *Social Choice and Welfare* 48:717–745.

Leighley, Jan E. and Jonathan Nagler. 1992. "Individual and Systemic Influences on Turnout: Who Votes? 1984." *The Journal of Politics* 54(3):718–740.

Leighley, Jan E. and Jonathan Nagler. 2014. *Who Votes Now?: Demographics, Issues, Inequality, and Turnout in the United States*. Princeton University Press.

Leon, Fernanda Leite Lopez de and Renata Rizzi. 2016. "Does forced voting result in political polarization?" *Public Choice* 166(1-2):143–160.

Levine, Marc. 2020. "Elections: compulsory voting.". AB 2070, California Legislature (2019–2020 Regular Session).

Levitsky, Steven. 2018. Peru: The Institutionalization of Politics without Parties. In *Party Systems in Latin America*. 1 ed. Cambridge University Press pp. 326–356.

Levitsky, Steven and Maxwell A. Cameron. 2003. "Democracy Without Parties? Political Parties and Regime Change in Fujimori's Peru." *Latin American Politics and Society* 45(3):1–33.

Lijphart, Arend. 1997. "Unequal Participation: Democracy's Unresolved Dilemma." *The American Political Science Review* 91(1):1–14.

Lisi, Marco. 2015. "Partisanship and age effects in recent democracies: Southern Europe from a comparative perspective." *Comparative European Politics* 13(4):493–513.

Luna, Juan Pablo and David Altman. 2011. "Uprooted but Stable: Chilean Parties and the Concept of Party System Institutionalization." *Latin American Politics and Society* 53(2):1–28.

Lundell, Krister. 2007. Partisanship and Political Support: The Impact of Compulsory Voting. In *European Consortium for Political Research.*

Lupu, Noam. 2016. *Party Brands in Crisis: Partisanship, Brand Dilution, and the Breakdown of Political Parties in Latin America.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lupu, Noam and Susan Stokes. 2010. "Democracy, interrupted: Regime change and partisanship in twentieth-century Argentina." *Electoral Studies* 29(1):91–104.

Mackerras, M and I McAllister. 1999. "Compulsory voting, party stability and electoral advantage in Australia." *Electoral Studies* 18(2):217–233.

Mael, Fred A. and Lois E. Tetrick. 1992. "Identifying organizational identification." *Educational and psychological measurement* 52(4):813–824.

Malkopoulou, Anthoula. 2011. Democracy's Duty: The History of Political Debates on Compulsory Voting PhD Thesis. University of Jyväskylä.

McAllister, Ian and Anthony Mughan. 1986. "Differential turnout and party advantage in British general elections, 1964–83." *Electoral Studies* 5(2):143–152.

Mickey, Robert, Steven Levitisky and Lucan Ahmad Way. 2017. "Is America Still Safe for Democracy: Why the United States Is in Danger of Backsliding Present at the Destruction." *Foreign Affairs* 96(3):20–29.

Milbrath, Lester W. and Madan Lal Goel. 1977. *Political participation: How and why do people get involved in politics?* Rand McNally College Publishing Company.

Moutselos, Michalis. 2020. "Praying on Friday, voting on Sunday? Mosque attendance and voter turnout in three West European democracies." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46(11):2275–2292.

Moyo, Dambisa. 2019. "Opinion | Make Voting Mandatory in the U.S." *The New York Times* . October 15, 2019. URL: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/15/opinion/united-states-voting-mandatory.html.

Mueller, Dennis C. 1989. *Public Choice II: A Revised Edition of Public Choice.* Cambridge University Press.

Mullainathan, Sendhil and Ebonya Washington. 2009. "Sticking with Your Vote: Cognitive Dissonance and Political Attitudes." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 1(1):86–111.

Nichter, Simeon. 2008. "Vote Buying or Turnout Buying? Machine Politics and the Secret Ballot." *The American Political Science Review* 102(1):19–31.

Nie, Norman H., G. Bingham Powell and Kenneth Prewitt. 1969. "Social Structure and Political Participation: Developmental Relationships, Part I." *The American Political Science Review* 63(2):361–378.

Nie, Norman H., Sidney Verba and Jae-on Kim. 1974. "Political Participation and the Life Cycle." *Comparative Politics* 6(3):319–340.

Niemi, R G and R Wright. 1987. "Voting cycles and the structure of individual preferences." *Social Choice and Welfare* 4:173–183.

Niemi, Richard G., Harold W. Stanley and C. Lawrence Evans. 1984. "Age and Turnout Among the Newly Enfranchised: Life Cycle versus Experience Effects." *European Journal of Political Research* 12(4):371–386.

Niemi, Richard G. and M. Kent Jennings. 1991. "Issues and inheritance in the formation of party identification." *American Journal of Political Science* 35(4):970–988.

Norris, Pippa. 2004. *Electoral engineering: Voting rules and political behavior.* Cambridge University Press.

Norris, Pippa. 2011. *Democratic deficit: Critical citizens revisited.* Cambridge University Press.

Olsen, Marvin E. 1972. "Social Participation and Voting Turnout: A Multivariate Analysis." *American Sociological Review* 37(3):317–333.

Page, Benjamin I. and Calvin C. Jones. 1979. "Reciprocal effects of policy preferences, party loyalties and the vote." *The American Political Science Review* pp. 1071–1089.

Panagopoulos, Costas. 2008. "The Calculus of Voting in Compulsory Voting Systems." *Political Behavior* 30(4):455–467.

Pew Research Center. 2016. Partisanship and Political Animosity in 2016. Technical report.

Popkin, Samuel. 1994. *The Reasoning Voter: Communication and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Powell, G. Bingham. 1982. *Contemporary Democracies: Participation, Stability, and Violence.* Harvard University Press.

Powell, G. Bingham. 1986. "American Voter Turnout in Comparative Perspective." *American Political Science Review* 80(1):17–43.

Power, Timothy J. 2009. "Compulsory for Whom? Mandatory Voting and Electoral Participation in Brazil, 1986-2006." *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 1(1):97–122–122.

Quintelier, Ellen and Jan W. Van Deth. 2014. "Supporting Democracy: Political Participation and Political Attitudes. Exploring Causality using Panel Data." *Political Studies* 62(S1):153–171.

Radcliff, Benjamin. 1992. "The Welfare State, Turnout, and the Economy: A Comparative Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 86(2):444–454.

Rahn, Wendy M. 1993. "The Role of Partisan Stereotypes in Information Processing about Political Candidates." *American Journal of Political Science* 37(2):472–496.

Rau, Eli Gavin. 2017. "Reconsidering Turnout Inequality: The Explanatory Power of Clientelism." Working Paper.

Rau, Eli Gavin. 2021. "Partisanship as Cause, Not Consequence, of Participation." *Comparative Political Studies* .

Resnick, Danielle and Daniela Casale. 2014. "Young populations in young democracies: generational voting behaviour in sub-Saharan Africa." *Democratization* 21(6):1172–1194.

Riker, William H. and Peter C. Ordeshook. 1968. "A Theory of the Calculus of Voting." *The American Political Science Review* 62(1):25–42.

Roberts, Kenneth M. 1995. "From the Barricades to the Ballot Box: Redemocratization and Political Realignment in the Chilean Left." *Politics & Society* 23(4):495–519.

Roemer, John. 2001. *Political Competition: Theory and Applications.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Roemer, John E. 2019. *How We Cooperate: A Theory of Kantian Optimization.* Yale University Press.

Rosenstone, Steven and John Hansen. 2003. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America.* Pearson Education, Inc.

Rubenson, Daniel, André Blais, Patrick Fournier, Elisabeth Gidengil and Neil Nevitte. 2004. "Accounting for the Age Gap in Turnout." *Acta Politica* 39(4):407–421.

Sallach, David L., Nicholas Babchuk and Alan Booth. 1972. "Social Involvement and Political Activity: Another View." *Social Science Quarterly* 52(4):879–892.

Samuels, David and Cesar Zucco. 2014. "The Power of Partisanship in Brazil: Evidence from Survey Experiments." *American Journal of Political Science* 58(1):212–225.

Samuels, David J. and Cesar Zucco. 2018. *Partisans, Antipartisans, and Nonpartisans: Voting Behavior in Brazil.* Cambridge University Press.

Schaffner, Brian F and Matthew J Streb. 2002. "The Partisan Heuristic in Low-Information Elections." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 66:559–581.

Schattschneider, E. E. 1942. *Party Government.* New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Schuessler, Alexander A. 2000. "Expressive Voting." *Rationality and Society* 12(1):87–119.

Shani, Danielle. 2009. "Knowing your colors: Information, partisan bias, and political perceptions." Working Paper.

Singh, Shane. 2011. "How Compelling is Compulsory Voting? A Multilevel Analysis of Turnout." *Political Behavior* 33(1):95–111.

Singh, Shane. 2021. *Beyond Turnout: How Compulsory Voting Shapes Citizens and Political Parties.* Oxford University Press.

Singh, Shane and Judd Thornton. 2013. "Compulsory voting and the dynamics of partisan identification." *European Journal of Political Research* 52(2):188–211.

Smets, Kaat and Carolien van Ham. 2013. "The embarrassment of riches? A meta-analysis of individual-level research on voter turnout." *Electoral Studies* 32(2):344–359.

Snyder, James M. and Michael M. Ting. 2002. "An Informational Rationale for Political Parties." *American Journal of Political Science* 46(1):90–110.

Spears, Russell. 2011. Group Identities: The Social Identity Perspective. In *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*, ed. Seth J. Schwartz, Koen Luyckx and Vivian L. Vignoles. New York, NY: Springer pp. 201–224.

Squire, Peverill, Raymond E. Wolfinger and David P. Glass. 1987. "Residential Mobility and Voter Turnout." *The American Political Science Review* 81(1):45–65.

Stephens, Stephen V. 1975. "The paradox of not voting: Comment." *American Political Science Review* 69(3):914–915. Publisher: Cambridge University Press.

Stokes, Donald E. 1966. Party loyalty and the likelihood of deviating elections. In *Elections and the Political Order*, ed. Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes. New York: John Wiley & Sons pp. 125–135.

Stokes, Susan C, Thad Dunning, Marcelo Nazareno and Valeria Brusco. 2013. *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism: The Puzzle of Distributive Politics*. Cambridge University Press.

Svolik, Milan W. 2017. "When polarization trumps civic virtue: partisan conflict and the subversion of democracy by incumbents." Working Paper.

Svolik, Milan W. 2019. "Polarization versus Democracy." *Journal of Democracy* 30(3):20–32. Publisher: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Tajfel, Henri Ed. 1978. *Differentiation between social groups: Studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations.* Academic Press.

Tajfel, Henri and John C. Turner. 1979. An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, ed. William G. Austin and Stephen Worchel. Brooks Cole Publishing.

Teissier, Octave. 1868. *Le Suffrage Universel et le Vote Obligatoire à Toulon.* Paris: Demoulin.

Tessler, Mark A. 1972. "The Application of Western Theories and Measures of Political Participation to A Single-Party North African State." *Comparative Political Studies* 5(2):175–191.

Tironi, Eugenio. 1990. *La Invisible Victoria: Campañas Electorales y Democracia en Chile.* Santiago de Chile: Ediciones SUR.

Tullock, Gordon. 1967. *Toward a mathematics of politics.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Tullock, Gordon. 1975. "The paradox of not voting for oneself." *American Political Science Review* 69(3):919–919.

Valenzuela, Arturo. 1989. Chile: origins, consolidation, and breakdown of a democratic regime. In *Democracy in Developing Countries: Latin America*, ed. Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset. Vol. 4 Lynne Rienner Publishers pp. 159–206. Publisher: Lynne Reinner Boulder, CO.

Venegas, Juan Ignacio. 2016. *¿Por qué los jóvenes chilenos rechazan la política?: desafección política juvenil en el Chile postransición.* RiL editores.

Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman and Henry E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and equality: Civic voluntarism in American politics.* Harvard University Press.

Verba, Sidney and Norman H. Nie. 1972. *Participation in America: political democracy and social equality.* Harper and Row.

Vicente, Pedro C. 2014. "Is Vote Buying Effective? Evidence from a Field Experiment in West Africa." *The Economic Journal* 124(574):F356–F387.

Vowles, Jack. 1994. "Dealignment and demobilisation? Nonvoting in New Zealand 1938–1990." *Australian Journal of Political Science* 29(1):96–114.

Wolfinger, Raymond E. and Steven J. Rosenstone. 1980. *Who Votes?* Yale University Press.

Zaller, John R. 1992. *The nature and origins of mass opinion.* Cambridge university press.

Zuckerman, Alan S., Josip Dasovic and Jennifer Fitzgerald. 2007. *Partisan Families: The Social Logic of Bounded Partisanship in Germany and Britain.* Cambridge University Press.