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Reconceptualizing Divided Government

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Reconceptualizing Divided Government

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Dedication

To Elizabeth, for all your continued support and sacrifice, I thank you. Without you, this would never have been possible.

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Reconceptualizing Divided Government

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Abstract: In this dissertation, I explain why scholars are unable to conclusively find evidence that divided government is the main determinant of legislative gridlock. I argue this unsettled debate is largely attributable to an imprecise conceptual view of inter-branch tensions, and that these conceptual limitations are exacerbated by unrefined measurement practices. I argue refined measures such as party polarization and gridlock intervals better explain institutional behavior than divided government. Using unique datasets estimating legislator preferences on domestic and foreign policy, findings show that when compared to more refined measures, split-party government is not the sole or even the most important source of partisan conflict. In addition, compared to other studies on divided government, I argue the reason the distinction between unified and divided government is often blurred is that a number of underlying political and institutional pressures make sweeping policy change difficult even for most unified governments. These factors contribute to the public's growing dissatisfaction with government's inability to solve many economic and social problems.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Since World War II, Americans have grown increasingly dissatisfied with Washington politics. Opinion polls measuring the public's satisfaction with the way the country is governed found in 1983 that 55% of the public was pleased with government. By 2013, however, that figure was only 18% (Gallup 2013). Another poll measuring the public's trust in the federal government to do the right thing found that in as early as 1965, 75% of Americans did in fact trust the government to solve the nation's problems. Five decades later, trust in government fell to a dismal 19% (Pew 2013). These findings, of course, should come as little surprise to students of American politics. Gridlock, stalemate, government shutdowns, and fiscal cliffs are a small sampling of the partisan politics broadcast nightly into American homes. With real concerns over economic recessions, stock market crashes, rising prices, falling wages, and domestic terrorism, the lack of confidence in the federal government is directly linked to Washington's inability to put aside partisan differences to in order to solve the nation's problems. As Americans continue to lose faith in government, scholars search for causes into this erosion of confidence.

One view is that government's inability to address the needs of the country parallels the rise of divided government[1] since the 1970s. With government split for 29.5 of the last 42 years, many began to associate increased partisanship with the fact neither party effectively controlled the legislative agenda. Presidents, forced to share power with

[1] It also bears mentioning that a second strain of research also analyzes the causes of divided government (Alesina and Rosenthal 1995; Born 1994; Fiorina 1992; Frymer 1994; Greer et al. 2004; Jacobson 1990; Norpoth 2001; Petrocik 1991).

a Congress controlled by a hostile opposition party, face diminishing returns enacting their policy initiatives the longer they negotiate with a party that would rather see them fail than succeed (Sundquist 1988). Moreover, because the public is often confused as to whom to blame for government inaction during divided government, presidents are inevitably less responsive to the needs of the public (Coleman 1999). Armed with enough probable cause, scholars developed a research agenda that attempted to lay bare these partisan trends.[2]

My focus in this dissertation is to challenge the case against divided government and to suggest alternative methods for selecting evidence supporting the conceptual underpinnings of divided government research. Continuing with this trial metaphor, I hope to demonstrate that the arguments accusing divided government for the crime of legislative gridlock are circumstantial, since insufficient evidence has been brought against the defendant. Testimony shows some research finds that split-party government influences policy outcomes, while others find this effect is not as great as theory may lead us to expect. With growing fears of a mistrial, this project reexamines the evidence against divided government and reformulates the case by introducing a unique dataset and new methodological approaches to better understand this complex case. My goal is not to show whether divided government is, or is not, necessarily the main contributing

[2] In building a case for divided government as a factor contributing to legislative gridlock, scholars developed the methodological blueprint for classifying and ranking legislation, as well as operationalizing the concept of divided government as a measure. These contributions cannot be overstated. Legislative rankings, for example, are now discussed across all American political research. From policy studies (Jones and Baumgartner 2005) to state-level analyses (Bowling and Ferguson 2001), scholars are debating, using, and improving these rankings. Even more influential, is the now ubiquitous divided government indicator used in practically all studies interested in controlling for the effect of divided government on institutional behavior.

factor in legislative gridlock, but to show that the conceptual foundations of the literature contribute to the confusion in this case. Assembling a proper case should begin to show the conditions under which split-party government causes gridlock.

The Research Record on Divided Government

The difficulty in analyzing divided government is that the literature rarely deviates from a set research approach. Scholars not only view divided government with the same conceptual understanding, they also test its effects with the same methodological strategies. Since David Mayhew's (1991) seminal work in *Divided We Govern*, the number of studies that incorporate and improve his rankings of landmark legislation, or model divided government with his dichotomous indicator, is truly staggering. I estimate well over 400 individual studies follow the basic research design in Mayhew's book, and that perhaps only half find evidence divided government slows the legislative process. While listing these works would overwhelm this dissertation, I mention them to give the reader fuller sense of the overarching state of why divided government seems to fail as concept and measure. I argue that these mixed findings (Chapter 2) can be attributed to two points.

First, the notion that one can test the complexities of institutional politics with only a simple dichotomous indicator ignores the complex attributes of inter-branch politics. No single factor, in other words, is likely to provide enough empirical support for the myriad happenings in government. For this fact, I consider divided government a puzzle. The challenge of solving this puzzle is recognizing that the distinction between

unified and divided government is not always matched by events in the political world. Where split-party governance may account for some features of inter-branch politics, it is not necessarily suited to capture others. Second, the usual methodological approaches used in the literature are far too limiting for such a complex puzzle. Recognizing this fact allows one to tap alternative measures that may provide increased leverage in determining both where and when divided government actually matters.

The Puzzle of Divided Government

While the case against divided government as a potential cause for gridlock is certainly compelling, scrutinizing the historical record exposes three theoretical faults.

First, divided government is not unique to contemporary politics. Across American political history, political parties have shared control of government many times: sometimes for only brief interludes, other times for much longer. Both the 19th and 20th centuries exhibit similar political cycles in relation to the frequency and pattern of divided government. Not only do both timespans experience divided government exactly twenty times, each undergoes transformations from stable governing coalitions at the beginning of each century to fractured coalitions by centuries' end. For example, in the early 1800s, Democrat-Republicans dominated the political landscape, while Republicans were as successful a century later. Also, where partisanship has grown markedly since the 1970s, the same pattern emerged earlier in the 1870s. Table 1.1 presents the historical

Table 1.1 Partisan Composition of the National Government, 1801 - 2000

Congress	House	Senate	President	Result	Congress	House	Senate	President	Result
19th Century					20th Century				
7	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	57	R	R	R	Unified
8	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	58	R	R	R	Unified
9	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	59	R	R	R	Unified
10	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	60	R	R	R	Unified
11	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	61	R	R	R	Unified
12	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	62	D	R	R	Divided
13	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	63	D	D	D	Unified
14	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	64	D	D	D	Unified
15	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	65	D	D	D	Unified
16	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	66	R	R	D	Divided
17	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	67	R	R	R	Unified
18	D-R	D-R	D-R	Unified	68	R	R	R	Unified
19	A-J	J	A-J	Divided	69	R	R	R	Unified
20	J	J	A-J	Divided	70	R	R	R	Unified
21	J	J	J	Unified	71	R	R	R	Unified
22	J	J	J	Unified	72	D	R	R	Divided
23	J	A-J	J	Divided	73	D	D	D	Unified
24	J	J	J	Unified	74	D	D	D	Unified
25	D	D	D	Unified	75	D	D	D	Unified
26	D	D	D	Unified	76	D	D	D	Unified
27	W	W	W	Unified	77	D	D	D	Unified
28	D	W	W	Divided	78	D	D	D	Unified
29	D	D	D	Unified	79	D	D	D	Unified
30	W	D	D	Divided	80	R	R	D	Divided
31	D	D	W	Divided	81	D	D	D	Unified
32	D	D	W	Divided	82	D	D	D	Unified
33	D	D	D	Unified	83	R	R	R	Unified
34	O	D	D	Divided	84	D	D	R	Divided
35	D	D	D	Unified	85	D	D	R	Divided
36	R	R	D	Divided	86	D	D	R	Divided
37	R	R	R	Unified	87	D	D	D	Unified
38	R	R	R	Unified	88	D	D	D	Unified
39	R	R	D	Divided	89	D	D	D	Unified
40	R	R	D	Divided	90	D	D	D	Unified
41	R	R	R	Unified	91	D	D	R	Divided
42	R	R	R	Unified	92	D	D	R	Divided
43	R	R	R	Unified	93	D	D	R	Divided
44	D	R	R	Divided	94	D	D	R	Divided
45	D	R	R	Divided	95	D	D	D	Unified
46	D	D	R	Divided	96	D	D	D	Unified
47	R	D	R	Divided	97	D	R	R	Divided
48	D	R	R	Divided	98	D	R	R	Divided
49	D	R	D	Divided	99	D	R	R	Divided
50	D	R	D	Divided	100	D	D	R	Divided
51	R	R	R	Unified	101	D	D	R	Divided
52	D	R	R	Divided	102	D	D	R	Divided
53	D	D	D	Unified	103	D	D	D	Unified
54	R	R	D	Divided	104	R	R	D	Divided
55	R	R	R	Unified	105	R	R	D	Divided
56	R	R	R	Unified	106	R	R	D	Divided

Party codes: D-R = Democrat Republicans, A-J = Anti-Jacksonians, J = Jacksonians, W = Whigs, D = Democrats, R = Republicans

pattern for all unified and divided governments between 1801 and 2000. The argument that our era is unique due to the increased frequency of divided government is not entirely correct. In all, government was divided 80 of 200 years.[3]

Second, legislative accomplishment and government success between unified and divided government is not always as easy to recognize as theories suggest. For example, the legislative record reveals many instances where divided control exceeds expectations. A brief listing of important legislation highlights this point: organized crime reduction,[4] equal employment against racial discrimination,[5] income tax reduction,[6] budget controls on government spending,[7] welfare reform,[8] and even campaign finance reform.[9] Equally impressive are the legislative achievements that occurred before the New Deal. Civil service reform (1882), creation of the Interstate Commerce Commission (1887), establishment of the Department of Agriculture (1889), the inclusion of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Washington into the union (1889),[10] funding the Panama Canal (1912), and establishment of the Department of Labor (1912), all provide enough

[3] Theoretically, this pattern would look entirely different for the 19th century if we subtract the Era of Good Feelings and the Civil War and Reconstruction periods since the Democratic-Republicans and Republican parties effectively gained political control of government with no political opposition.

[4] Organized Crime Act of 1970

[5] Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972

[6] Economic Recovery Act of 1981

[7] Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act of 1986

[8] Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996

[9] Both the Federal Election Campaign Act Amendments of 1974, and the Campaign Reform Act of 2002

[10] The admission of states into the union is especially telling for illustrating legislative accomplishment during periods of divided government. Nolan et al. (2002) describe how partisan differences in the admission of states into the union needed to occur in pairs since neither party wanted to give the other an upper hand in congressional representation if only one state was admitted. In a word, bipartisanship was needed to pass these bills.

of a picture to suggest important legislation can pass during divided government.[11] Table 1.2 presents a listing of major domestic and foreign policy laws passed during the 19th and 20th centuries (Stathis 2003). Though unified government seems to meet expectations in a number of instances, evidence does not always show a clear distinction between both governing regimes. Relying solely on this metric may paint a false picture of why and when legislation passes.

Finally, these patterns suggest that divided government makes the politics of our contemporary era different from past political eras. That is, divided government creates tense political environments. Yet, early scholarship on inter-branch relations shows that partisanship during periods of divided government was in fact different than partisanship under split-party governance after the 1980s. In his influential work on political parties in the early 20th century, Schattschneider (1942) complained that the two parties were too conciliatory in governmental politics. In his analysis of enacted legislation between 1907 and 1938, he found little difference in productivity levels across both government types. Binkley (1958) describes in his narrative of American political parties in the divided government years of the 1950s the frustrations of conservative Republicans who felt Eisenhower's programs were too New Deal-like and not conservative enough. Galloway (1961) writes in his history of the House of Representatives that relations between Eisenhower and Democrats controlling Congress were "frequent and regular," especially

[11] Of course, the same patterns occur for unified governments as well. Where some single-party governments are held as the benchmark of government accomplishment others have fallen short in meeting expectations. The point to note is the divided government classification is not always an accurate depiction of institutional behavior.

Table 1.2 Landmark Legislation, 1801 - 2000

Congress	Type	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Congress	Type	Domestic	Foreign	Total
19th Century					20th Century				
7	Unified	8	1	9	57	Unified	5	3	8
8	Unified	6	0	6	58	Unified	2	1	3
9	Unified	4	0	4	59	Unified	12	1	13
10	Unified	2	2	4	60	Unified	6	0	6
11	Unified	2	1	3	61	Unified	7	0	7
12	Unified	3	12	15	62	Divided	7	0	7
13	Unified	4	6	10	63	Unified	6	2	8
14	Unified	7	4	11	64	Unified	10	3	13
15	Unified	8	2	10	65	Unified	6	11	17
16	Unified	6	0	6	66	Divided	7	0	7
17	Unified	1	2	3	67	Unified	10	4	14
18	Unified	1	1	2	68	Unified	10	1	11
19	Divided	0	1	1	69	Unified	6	0	6
20	Divided	0	1	1	70	Unified	7	1	8
21	Unified	2	2	4	71	Unified	3	1	4
22	Unified	2	2	4	72	Divided	7	0	7
23	Divided	3	0	3	73	Unified	26	2	28
24	Unified	6	0	6	74	Unified	18	1	19
25	Unified	6	1	7	75	Unified	14	0	14
26	Unified	1	0	1	76	Unified	8	2	10
27	Unified	8	0	8	77	Unified	4	12	16
28	Divided	5	1	6	78	Unified	6	7	13
29	Unified	6	3	9	79	Unified	12	3	15
30	Divided	3	2	5	80	Divided	5	5	10
31	Divided	5	2	7	81	Unified	6	6	12
32	Divided	4	0	4	82	Unified	3	7	10
33	Unified	4	3	7	83	Unified	13	0	13
34	Divided	3	0	3	84	Divided	10	5	15
35	Unified	3	1	4	85	Divided	12	2	14
36	Divided	6	0	6	86	Divided	5	3	8
37	Unified	15	4	19	87	Unified	15	2	17
38	Unified	10	0	10	88	Unified	12	2	14
39	Divided	9	0	9	89	Unified	24	1	25
40	Divided	8	1	9	90	Unified	14	3	17
41	Unified	15	0	15	91	Divided	23	2	25
42	Unified	12	0	12	92	Divided	17	2	19
43	Unified	6	0	6	93	Divided	21	1	22
44	Divided	3	1	4	94	Divided	20	0	20
45	Divided	7	0	7	95	Unified	24	2	26
46	Divided	1	0	1	96	Unified	15	6	21
47	Divided	8	3	11	97	Divided	17	2	19
48	Divided	7	0	7	98	Divided	19	5	24
49	Divided	10	0	10	99	Divided	15	4	19
50	Divided	4	0	4	100	Divided	20	4	24
51	Unified	14	0	14	101	Divided	18	4	22
52	Divided	4	0	4	102	Divided	15	8	23
53	Unified	6	0	6	103	Unified	20	1	21
54	Divided	1	2	3	104	Divided	18	0	18
55	Unified	7	6	13	105	Divided	17	3	20
56	Unified	4	5	9	106	Divided	11	1	12

Data source: Stathis (2003).

in foreign affairs. While Koenig (1968) also noted a conciliatory atmosphere during Eisenhower's six years of divided government, suggesting that since Eisenhower sought a bipartisan relationship with Democrats, Senate majority leader Lyndon Johnson and Speaker Sam Rayburn were more sympathetic to the president than Republican Senate leader William Knowland.[12] Clearly, having divided government does not necessarily equate to higher partisan tension and gridlock. Other factors must play a part in this story.

The puzzle for any new research on the effect of divided government is that it needs to account, on the one hand, for the fact that conventional theoretical expectations may not match political reality, while on the other hand, recognizing the importance for effectively organizing the various explanatory pieces into a coherent picture. Where divided governments such as the John Quincy Adams Administration (1825 - 1829), or the 113th Congress (2013 – 2014), for instance, closely match our expectations of what a gridlock should look like, unified governments such as the first two years of the James Buchanan presidency (1857 - 1859), or the weak domestic policy accomplishments of the 82nd Congress (1951 – 1952), can flip our expectations on its head. Solving the complex puzzle of inter-branch politics requires an effective research strategy that accounts for moments when the lines separating gridlock are often blurred.

[12] Even former President Taft recognized the ambiguities between unified and divided government. After his third place finish in the election of 1912, Taft (1916) wrote a series of lectures on the presidency mixing personal accounts with descriptions of the enumerated powers of the office. Writing on divided government, Taft concluded that this governing arrangement was not necessarily bad since mid-term repudiations provided the nation with a moment for digesting the passage of bad laws, enabling government time to correct the defects of hastily passed legislation common in unified governments.

Researching Divided Government

Research on divided government follows one of three strategies. The first approach found in the literature specifically operates within the parameters of this debate. Scholars are generally divided into opposing camps and argue against the opposing side. Research within this approach follows a scripted format. First, a study usually describes why the opposing viewpoint is theoretically improbable given evidence to the contrary, and then critiques its methodological merit by refining some measurement aspect of the study. The two sides in this debate consist of those who find enough evidence to support theories that split-party government does slow the legislative process (Coleman 1999; Edwards et al. 1997; Kelly 1993; Groeling and Kernell 2000; Howell et al, 2000; Thorsen 1997) and those that find little evidence, or convincingly argue there is no real significant difference between the two (Cohen 2011; Fiorina 1996; Jones 1994; Jones 2001; Mayhew 1991; Quirk and Nesmith 2006). Though both sides in this debate make some valuable inroads to the overall research agenda, the common trend across most, though not all, of these studies is they tend to use the same modeling approach. The main difference is how they operationalize their dependent variable.

The second wave of research in the literature, generally tests the effect of split-party government on various aspects of legislative politics. These studies are largely unconcerned with the unsettled debate within the divided government literature, and are only interested whether their hypotheses are supported by empirical fact. The breadth of

topics is diverse. Federal spending (McCubbins[13] 1991), presidential support in the Senate (Conley 1997), budget estimates of the OMB and CBO (Engstrom and Kernell 1999), the confirmation of federal judges (Binder and Maltzman 2002), senatorial blue slips (Sollenberger 2010), agenda size (Shipan 2006), presidential approval (Lebo 2008), congressional investigations (Partker and Dull 2009), and executive orders (Fine and Warber 2012), are but a few of the many subjects on which scholars test divided government.

The final strategy for researching divided government recognizes the limitations of the previous approaches and introduces new conceptual and methodological advances to the debate. These studies are actively engaged in furthering the debate and argue for including entirely new indicators that tap some new perspective on inter-branch politics (Binder 1999, 2003; Chiou and Rosenthal 2003; Krehbiel 1998). While this select group of research makes significant advances to this larger debate on measurement and effect, these strategies fail to build on two features of divided government research in need of improvement: dependent variable selection and units of measure. The next section describes how I incorporate these features into this dissertation and why I argue these measurement practices are important.

The Contribution of This Study

In this dissertation, I contribute to the divided government debate in two notable ways. First, I build on this third approach by placing divided government under further

[13] This list does not include the countless studies that only use divided government as a control variable.

conceptual and methodological scrutiny.[14] Where studies under this heading add new perspectives to this debate, none explores the concept of divided government, nor introduces new units of analysis. These studies simply use a spatial proximity explanation of U.S. lawmaking, yet use the same methods as the previous approaches. I argue that while new research needs to incorporate the underlying logic of this third wave of analysis, it also needs to reconceptualize divided government so we can develop new measurement techniques that advance our knowledge on inter-branch politics. This likely requires temporarily setting aside the research strategies from the first two waves of scholarship but circumstances require such a move since, in my opinion, this research is stalled

The second contribution of this dissertation is that I use both unconventional dependent variables to test the effect of divided government, as well as introduce unique units of measure. Where the popular strategy to model split-party government tends to center on the number of significant pieces of legislation enacted into law, I break with tradition and introduce measures such as chamber support and the percent-change in the amount of distributive spending states receive from the federal government. Though not a substitute for landmark legislation, these measures provide an alternative vantage point that sheds some light on institutional behavior past studies may have overlooked. For units of analysis, l break with the literature and separate the conventional congressional-level, or biannual, approach into smaller units such as yearly, quarterly, and even by a

[14] When I began this project, I envisioned placing this dissertation in the second research strategy where I would pick a side in the debate and present my findings. I quickly became dissatisfied with this approach and the limited possibilities of the first research strategy and opted, instead, to better understand the conceptual foundations of divided government as an analytical concept.

vote-to-vote sequential analysis. I argue that since politics is continually changing, aggregating all political behavior into biannual metrics may overlook not only the nuanced movement of politics, but also important changes as well.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is separated into two parts. The first two chapters analyze the strengths and weakness of divided government as a concept, exploring alternative statistical methods in an effort to gain needed leverage as to why split-party government is not necessarily well suited to explaining all political and institutional behavior. The last two chapters incorporate alternative dependent variable selections and units of analysis. Throughout all four chapters, I use different measures of institutional behavior as a proxy for inter-branch politics, since direct measures between Congress and the president are not always available.

In Chapter 2, *Gradations of Divided Government*, I explore the conceptual foundations of divided government as a measure. The chapter explains why divided government is ill-equipped to capture most aspects of the legislative process. Drawing on nearly 200 published articles that control for divided government, I find that slightly more than half find little or mixed evidence that divided government slows the legislative process. Building on this finding, I compare the divided government against more refined indicators such as polarization and gridlock intervals, and measure its reliability on chamber support of all domestic final passage legislation in the House of Representatives between 1947 and 2013. Findings show that regardless of policy area or importance of

each law, divided government is not always a reliable predictor of institutional behavior. Moreover, in the few instances where divided government is reliable, the effect is often in the incorrect direction.

Chapter 3, *Placing Divided Government in Time*, examines divided government across time. I argue the literature's commitment to dichotomous indicators poses a serious limitation on accurately measuring legislative gridlock. The conventional approach to divided government research is largely dependent on distinguishing between the existence of unified and divided government as a determinant of legislative success, while largely ignoring government's place in time. Not only does this approach miss exogenous political factors, it assumes, for instance, that all split-party governments are similar; where each occurs in history is irrelevant to the broader conceptual framework. In other words, the divided government concept is invariant to time. Using a quarterly time series of chamber support on all domestic final passage legislation between 1947 and 2010, I find that in most cases divided government is a poor predictor of legislative gridlock. Outside of presidential vetoes, no distinguishable pattern emerges to suggest the concept of divided government has much predictive value.

In Chapter 4, *Consensus or Conflict: Unified Government, Divided Government, and Distributive* Spending, I argue the traditional dependent variable, the passage of landmark law, is problematic for divided government research. Since most rankings of important legislation are inherently imprecise, there is no way of accurately gauging the level of comparability in these laws across and within time. This is critical when comparing unified and divided government. To circumvent this issue, I incorporate

measures of federal spending distributed to the states. This indicator is superior to measures of substantive legislation since federal funding is quantifiable and, when adjusted for inflation, comparable across time. Using a state-level data set between 1983 and 2010, I find little evidence to suggest the amount of funds that are distributed to the states varies between unified and divided government. In fact, using a unique dataset that recovers ideal point estimations on legislator appropriations voting, legislator preferences often follow similar distributive patterns, regardless of government type. The findings also show polarization is one factor that can depresses the distribution of federal funds to the states.

Chapter 2: Gradations of Divided Government

Should political science use a dichotomous indicator to distinguish between unified and divided government as measure of institutional behavior? According to the most influential and highly cited research on the subject (Coleman 1999; Edwards et al. 1997; Howell et al. 2000), this straightforward conceptualization provides a realistic metric for measuring government productivity. Not only is this indicator theoretically intuitive, supporters argue, it adds ample explanatory leverage to the broader discussion of partisan government and democratic responsiveness.

Despite its increased popularity over the last few decades, the continued use of this measure is somewhat surprising given the many theoretical and methodological questions an oversimplified measure is likely to rise. Not only does this approach disregard much of the political bargaining commonly found in a separation of powers system, it also ignores the rich contextual history evident in the various political actors and complex policy issues that comprise American government. Moreover, while this conceptualization overlooks many examples of bipartisan compromise that occurs during periods of divided government (Jones 1994), it is also inattentive to the availability of fine grained data that may aid in explaining much more of the variability a dichotomous indicator is likely to miss.

One potential consequence of this conceptualization is highlighted by the unsettled debate over the impact of divided government on the legislative process. While a handful of studies do recognize the theoretical limitations of classifying complex political processes dichotomously (Brady and Volden 2006; Chiou and Rothenberg 2003,

2009; Krehbiel 1998), scholars of divided government tend to focus most of their time and attention debating the merits of competing findings. Unlike other fields in political science where rigorous debate over concepts and measures is quite common (Alvarez et al. 1996; Bollen 1993; and Elkins 2000, are excellent debates over the concept of democracy), concerns over the conceptual limitations of the divided government measure is largely absent in the literature.

This concern with the broader conceptual view of divided government, however, is not motivated by a desire to refute the merits of split-party government as an explanatory factor, or, for that matter, to challenge the divided government literature. My goal, instead, is to suggest we measure institutional behavior in a more complex way so as to provide the profession with firmer ground on which to match theory with statistical modeling. The reader should consider this study, for this reason, as distinct and in no way a part of the ongoing disagreement in the literature. Instead, one should view this chapter as the first to place divided government under rigorous examination by providing some practical leverage as to why the distinction between single and split-party government is often blurred.

My intention is to convince the reader that because American institutions are complex, explanations associated solely with divided government are likely only one piece of a larger puzzle. Admittedly, this chapter is not unique in recognizing this fact. The contribution of this chapter, rather, is that it is the first to conduct a set of reliability tests on the theoretical strength of the divided government indicator against more refined measures of institutional behavior such as party polarization and equilibrium gridlock

intervals. Using an extended dataset comprising final passage votes on domestic policy in the House of Representatives from 1947-2010, I analyze these indicators through a series of roll calls, including votes on which the president takes a public position, roll calls on all final passage votes, legislation defined as important by influential raters, and roll calls by specific policy area. Overall, results support the argument for graded measures.

Conceptual Foundations of Divided Government

The conceptual antecedents of the divided government indicator, both in theoretical vision and methodological form, can be traced to two early studies: James Sundquist's (1988) *Needed: A Political Theory for the New Era of Coalition Government in the United States* and David Mayhew's (1991) *Divided We Govern*. In many respects, these seminal works developed not only the foundational approach to researching split-party government, but also a broader semantic and definitional framework. They are responsible, for designing the conceptual blueprint that would influence scores of researchers in how to view and measure the distinction between split and single-party control of government.

Though lesser-known of the two studies, Sundquist's article played an important role in developing a theoretical mindset on divided government. While not the first to lament both the real and potential consequences of split-party government (Wilson 1885; Burns 1963; Key 1964), Sundquist's contribution articulated the need to view legislative outputs as an association between responsible party governance and the separation of powers. Because Sundquist viewed the increased frequency of divided government as a

primary contributor to legislative gridlock, he concluded, and indeed challenged, the profession to view the lawmaking process as conditional on the partisan character of government control. The key, he concluded, is to develop a theoretical perspective that placed responsible, unified parties as the answer to bridging the constitutional hurdles of the separation of powers.[15]

In a contemporary partisan setting, this view of politics makes intuitive sense given the profession's understanding of parties as a group of rational, likeminded individuals competing for control of government (Downs 1957; Key 1964; Aldrich 1995). The goal of political parties is to fulfill its responsible oath by meeting the various needs of voters (Schattschneider 1942; APSA Committee on Political Parties 1950; Ranney 1954), so as to aid one's reelection prospects (Mayhew 1974). But to a majority of scholars at the time of Sundquist's writing, the connection between parties and government performance was largely absent. Interestingly, while divided government was not an uncommon political event, students of American government focused their attention on explaining institutional behavior in a procedural context. Presidential studies, for one, mainly viewed the executive in personal terms (Barber 1972; Buchanan 1978; Edwards 1989; Neustadt 1990), researching the individual decisions of presidents and the successes of those decisions. Similarly, congressional scholars tended to research congressional procedures and decorum, the influence of constituency pressure (Asher 1973; Fenno 1977; Mathews 1959; Miller and Stokes 1963; Polsby 1968), or impact of

[15] See Coleman (1999) for an articulate summary of party responsiveness as it pertains to divided government.

congressional committees on policy output (Cooper 1960; Rohde and Shepsle 1973; Shepsle and Weingast 1987). Moreover, studies interested in inter-branch relations often viewed politics from the perspective of presidential success (Bond and Fleisher 1990; Edwards 1980; Lowi 1985; Peterson 1990; Polsby 1976). Thus, even into the early 1990s, Sundquist's view of divided government was largely absent from the scholarly vernacular.

As the more widely known of the two studies, Mayhew's work is primarily responsible for developing the now ubiquitous dichotomous indicator used in American political science. Although some earlier works did measure partisan control of government dichotomously (Bond and Fleisher 1980; Copeland 1983; Lee 1975; Lowery and Berry 1983), these measures were merely ancillary control variables and conceptually distinct from present research.[16] Instead, Mayhew's work is a lucid conceptual approach differentiating unified and divided government that satisfied Sundquist's call for evaluating government performance. Mayhew's work, in other words, is the first to make Sundquist's theoretical challenge a methodological reality. Equally important, Mayhew's central finding that little substantive difference exists in the enactment of important legislation and the number of congressional investigations between both government types inspired a host of works challenging his claim; creating, in effect, a subfield dedicated to advancing Sundquist's initial theoretical concerns.

[16] A more telling metric of the influence of these studies is their reference count. At the writing of this chapter, *Google Scholar* reported Lee's article has 58 references, Bond and Fleisher 50, Lowery and Berry 109, and Copeland 68. Mayhew, in contrast, has 1035.

Conceptual Limitations of Divided Government

A reevaluation of the divided government concept suggests a number of limitations in both its theoretical underpinnings and measurement practice. Theoretically, the assumption that politics is easily reduced to simple distinctions is insensitive to the complex political structures that comprise governing in a system of separated powers. This view overlooks the multifaceted attributes of inter-branch and inter-party bargaining, as well as the coalitional arrangements on which studies previously focused (Burns 1963; Lowi 1979; Neustadt 1990; Schattschneider 1960; Truman 1951). In fact, this commitment to partisan dichotomies is largely misplaced, I argue, since it confuses the structural design of American government with party-centered governments common in other western democracies. In other words, the divided government approach seeks to explain a Madisonian model of government, based largely on pluralism, with a parliamentarian view of government based on strong, unified parties. The divided government paradigm, then, discounts much of the randomness inherent in American government and replaces it with rigidly defined goals of government, unified or divided, simply cannot meet.

From a research perspective, this view of American government is further complicated when applied as a statistical control. Does this concept translate into a good statistical measure? At first glance, a preliminary diagnostic suggests this indicator is not a reliable indicator. Table 2.1 presents a summary of 188 published articles[17] from seven

[17] These articles cover a wide breadth of subjects but are specifically confined to American politics.

journals[18] between 1960 and 2012 that use, in one degree or another, a dichotomous measure for divided government. Results show, contrary to conventional wisdom, that the conceptual foundations of divided government are only supported in slightly over a third of all studies. Most show either no effect or publish mixed results.[19]

Table 2.1 Sample of Articles Using Divided Government as a Dichotomous Indicator

	#	Negative	Positive	Mixed	No Effect	Other
American Political Science Review [a]	13	5	2	3	2	1
American Journal of Political Science [b]	41	12	4	8	17	0
Journal of Politics [c]	36	17	2	9	8	0
Political Research Quarterly [d]	27	12	0	4	11	0
Legislative Studies Quarterly [e]	33	12	0	11	8	2
Presidential Studies Quarterly [f]	20	8	3	2	7	0
Congress and the Presidency [g]	18	3	0	8	7	0
Totals	188	69	11	45	60	3
%		36.51	5.82	23.81	31.91	1.59

Note: Journal Timeline (Impact score): a: 1960-2012 (5.44), b: 1973-2012 (4.48), c: 1960-2012 (2.19), d: 1960-2010 (1.30), e: 1976-2012 (1.44), f: 1977-2012 (n/a), g: 1990-2012 (n/a).
Impact score scource: Giles and Garand (2007)

This observation highlights the unsettled debate in the literature over the consequences of divided government on the legislative process. Following Mayhew's controversial findings, many studies adopted his measure in an attempt to reevaluate his findings on inter-branch politics. Rather than address issues over the conceptual underpinnings of divided government as a measure, scholars left this question largely unanswered, introducing evidence that either refuted Mayhew's central finding that divided government does not slow the legislative process (Coleman 1999; Edwards et al. 1997; Kelly 1993; Groeling and Kernell 2000; Howell et al, 2000; Thorsen 1997) or found evidence supporting his central claim (Chiou and Rothenberg 2003; Cohen 2011; Fiorina 1996; Jones 1994; Jones 2001).

[18] I choose these journals since they seem to represent a wide range of academic achievement from the most widely read journals to those of lesser fame.
[19] Half the studies find evidence supporting the claim that divided government negatively affects some outcomes.

A Reconceptualization of Divided Government

Implicit in the Sundquist conceptualization is the premise that the divided government indicator explains, in varying degree, core political characteristics of American government, including partisanship, institutional structures, and ideological preferences. The key point to recognize, however, is that though most of the literature openly discusses partisan control as the source of interest, scholars that rely solely on divided government as an indicator are to some effect attempting to explain many these political attributes.

The reader, naturally, may question this interpretation and argue that I am painting a brighter picture of some new take on institutional politics, or, to put it differently, putting a spin onto this conceptualization that simply is not there. In many respects, I defer to this criticism. However, if there is a possibility that my reading of the literature is on the one hand incorrect, or on the other, only partially correct, this suggests that the concept of divided government may actually be even weaker than I claim. That is, the possibility scholars view divided government as a causal mechanism, absent of alternative explanations, paints a weak theoretical picture of the literature. Instead, I choose to accept the more inclusive view of this indicator, highlighting the fact that its methodological features are too limiting to the task of fully explaining inter-branch behavior in American government.

Relying on a rich research record on congressional politics, Figure 2.1 presents alternative typologies that I use to explain U.S. lawmaking. Beginning on the left with *Government Type*, each successive explanation is a further refinement of a number of

potential legislative outcomes under different political constraints. Where the literature easily explains outcomes in the first two typologies, *Government Type* and *President's Coalition*, the last two typologies, *Party Polarization* and *Gridlock Interval*, require further explanation.

Recent work on the growth of party polarization in American government provides important insight into a theoretically compelling alternative to the traditional divided government explanation. First, with the rise in the frequency of split-party governance since the 1970s, many recognized a concomitant increase in an intensity of political views. Not only did the public elect divided government, but entire sections of the nation view politics from competing ideological spectrums (Abramowitz 2010; Gelman 2009; McCarty et al. 2006). While some find increased polarization in the electorate is somewhat overhyped (Fiorina 2011; Levendusky 2009), others recognize an obvious increase in partisan polarization in government (Mann and Ornstein 2008; Sinclair 2006; Theriault 2008). It seems logical to conclude, regardless if polarization is election-based, partisan-centered, or even attributable to the Republican (Theriault and Rohde 2012) or Democratic (Brewer et al. 2002) parties, polarization is a plausible substitute to divided government (Jones 2001). Furthermore, because polarization scores are measured as ratios, it is better designed to capture the variability of inter-branch tensions than a dichotomous indicator. So, where gridlock can occur under both high and

low[20] levels of *Party Polarization*, it is a theoretical impossibility for gridlock not to exist in a system with high levels of polarization.

Figure 2.1 Cell Probabilities Explaining Causes of Legislative Gridlock

	Plausiable Explanatory Factors Contributing to Legisaltive Gridlock					
	Government Type		Party Polarization		Gridlock Interval	
	Divided	Unified	High	Low	Wide	Narrow
Gridlock Present	*a*	-	*a*	*b*	*a*	*b*
Gridlock Absent	-	*d*	-	*d*	*c*	*d*

Note: Each letter represents possible outcomes considering the given explanatory factor.

In a political system designed on separate institutions sharing power, institutional checks also influence legislative productivity. In an innovative study of U.S. lawmaking, Krehbiel (1998) argues that in order to understand lawmaking, one must realize that while gridlock occurs, often it does not always occur, and that a good theory should identify conditions when gridlock is broken. Divided government, among other explanations, falls short in satisfying this criterion. One must account, then, for the ideological preferences of key "pivots" in lawmaking such as the 60th filibuster-breaking vote in the Senate, the supermajority preferences in both chambers (Brady and Volden 2006), and even the preferences of the median voter in both chambers (Binder 1999,[21] 2003). Building on this work, Chiou and Rothenberg (2003) expand on these features accounting for a number of partisan effects including party unity and presidential leadership. Where past studies merely calculate the ideological position of key pivots, Chiou and Rothenberg create equilibrium gridlock intervals which incorporate the

[20] In this case, a fine line likely exists between legislative compromise and stalemate.

[21] Chiou and Rothenberg (2007) challenge Binder's findings, arguing the conclusions in this article are incorrect due to the application of imprecise ideology measures.

furthest ideological position of each party, regardless of the pivot. For the purposes of this study, a measure that incorporates features of the separation of powers, partisanship, and ideology seems appropriate. Methodologically, this measure is a further refinement on the divided government indicator since, like polarization; it is also calculated as a ratio.

With this in mind, I argue that scholars of divided government would be better positioned in this debate if they separated these causal processes so as to gain a better understanding of the full effect of how these different attributes influence institutional behavior. Unlike the traditional, deterministic view of divided government, where, for example, the strongest claims for its conceptual merit comes in the absence of split-party government, an updated conceptualization treats divided government's effect on institutional behavior as only one potential cause in a range of possibilities.

Data and Method

This section explains specific data collection and operational procedures for both the dependent and independent variables. It also details model specifications, measurement validity, and reliability assessment.

The Dependent Variable

With the theoretical considerations introduced, the principle challenge in this chapter is to develop a dependent variable that taps, as closely as possible, a conceptually sound measure of political gridlock. Traditionally, most works on divided government (Mayhew 1991; Kelly 1993; Edwards et al. 1997; Coleman 1999; Epstein and O'Halloran

1999; Binder 2003; Howell et al. 2000; Chiou and Rothenberg 2003), utilize, to some degree, count variables of legislative success on the congressional unit of analysis. The intuitive logic of these studies centers on the notion that governments which pass the most important laws or exhibit fewer instances of legislative gridlock are superior to those that fail to meet these benchmarks. A common criticism of this selection methodology, however, is these scores are subject to imprecision as the metric that determines "significant" or "important" legislation is often vague and imprecise (Clinton and Lapinski 2006). With these limitations in mind, the choice of a dependent variable is conditional on a measure of bipartisanship. Because this chapter's main focus is to gauge the conceptual merits of divided government as a predictive explanation of institutional behavior, the popular metric of important legislation is inappropriate. Sweeping this tradition aside, I opt for a new measure of partisan tension.

The selection criterion for the dependent variable is relatively straightforward. To begin, the unit of analysis is all final passage votes[22] on domestic[23] policy in the House between 1947 and 2010. I calculate this metric as the overall percentage of bipartisan chamber support on each final passage vote. However, because I am concerned with capturing the overall level of partisan tension, I compress these votes to accurately reflect disagreements between the parties. Votes that receive less than 50 percent chamber support are recalibrated since, realistically, low chamber support for a bill is also

[22] Final passage votes are classified as all bills, conference reports, veto overrides, constitutional amendments, and votes to recede and concur with the Senate. Excluded votes are all procedural votes including amendments to bills, and votes on House and Senate procedures. I also exclude all bills passed under suspension of the rules.

[23] In some instances I do include votes classified as foreign policy by the *Policy Agendas Project*. However, these votes are large omnibus bills usually across both domestic and foreign policy.

indicative of higher levels of bipartisanship. All votes comprise a range between 0.5 and 1.0.

I justify this measure on two grounds. First, the large sample size used in this chapter allows me to avoid many of the small sample problems mentioned above. Where the sample size for this chapter is 4761 individual votes, the average size of most studies is roughly 24 units. A more pressing concern, however, is the large number of explanatory variables modeled, given the scarcity of available observations. With an average predictor size of roughly six, the chance of finding a significant relationship is reduced.[24] Of course, a small sample size in no way suggests these findings are inaccurate.

Second, the use of all non-commemorative votes provides flexibility for understanding the reliability of divided government as an indicator of interest. Where traditional studies of divided government are limited by the metric of important laws, in this chapter I have no such constraint. I can separate votes by policy area, by presidential action, and even by bills classified as important or significant. Each option provides a multi-faceted and detailed view of American government.

The Independent Variables

Divided Government: For the measurement specifications of the divided government dummy variable, I follow conventional practice and code periods of split-party government as 1, and all other periods as zero.

[24] Using these averages, I perform Cohen's f^2 test to determine an appropriate sample size for testing legislative productivity at the congressional level. Formally calculated as: $\lambda = f^2(\rho + \nu + 1)$ and based on an R^2 of .75, I find that a more convincing model would need a sample size of at least 72 observations.

Polarization: Since the dependent variable is calculated using final passage votes, creating polarization scores proved a daunting challenge. The first obstacle centered on selecting proper ideal scores that reflected these votes. Unfortunately, none exist. While the industry standard DW-Nominate estimates (Poole and Rosenthal 2007) are highly popular, these scores are inappropriate as they include all votes over a two-year period. To account for this, I estimate ideology scores using Jackman's Bayesian IDEAL program (Clinton et al. 2004) for both the House and Senate. To guard against comparability issues that are likely to occur when creating ideology scores across time (Bailey 2007; Groseclose et al. 1999), I develop an optimal classification, based on Treier's (2011) bridge-vote technique,[25] allowing me to compare votes across both time and chamber. Measured on a yearly level of analysis, I then calculate polarization scores.[26]

Gridlock Interval: Following Chiou and Rothenberg's (2003, 2009) formal representation of an inclusive gridlock interval that compensates for institutional "pivots" and partisanship, I adjust this methodology to account for the dynamics of intra-party defectors—ideological divergent partisans who cross party lines. Applying the same

[25] The main issue with using this technique is selecting the main anchor votes of individuals who voted consistently between 1947 and 2010. Of course no such person exists. Trier argues that one way to sidestep this issue is to use ADA and ACU votes since it is theoretical plausible that these organizations are ideologically consistent across time. However, because these organizations comment on very few votes one's sample size is drastically reduced. To compensate, I also create anchor votes based a number of "extreme" members. Here, I select actual 'extreme' members of the House on a quarterly basis. To compensate for the natural variation across time, I measure the correlation between the voting records of each member used in this sample. Overall, the voting similarity between all bridge actors is quite high—generally over 0.85. Moreover, I calculated scores on a yearly, congressional, and quarterly scale to determine if any significant differences existed, and compared these scores against DW-Nominate estimates. All scores correlate above 0.80.

[26] I rely on Jessee and Theriault's (2012) polarization equation.

ideology scores used to calculate polarization, I determine the ideological makeup of each vote. I accomplish this by totaling the scores of members who vote yes on each bill and determine the winning voting coalition. For instance, if a particular vote is supported by a conservative voting block—Republicans and southern Democrats—then the median ideology score for that vote would be much more conservative than the standard chamber median. The gridlock interval, then, would actually shrink if the president is also conservative. Using this technique allows me to account for the ideological pivot of the senate and president, creating a robust and highly variable gridlock interval. This also provides substantive weight to a House-only dependent variable as the gridlock interval estimates the effect of outside voting preferences on the House.

Estimation

Given that the dependent variable is constrained between zero and one, standard linear regression techniques are problematic. Papke and Wooldridge (1996) argue the issue with linear regression is that the 1 x *K* vector of explanatory variables, $x \equiv (x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_k)$, where β, a *K* x 1 vector, and formally expressed as $E(y|x) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \cdots + \beta_k x_k = \mathbf{x\beta}$, is not the best description for a bounded dependent variable, $0 \leq y \leq 1$, since the effect of any particular x_j cannot be constant throughout the range of x without transforming the linear model with non-linear functions of x. Moreover, even if the researcher successfully augments their linear model, there is no guarantee that the values will lie in the unit interval. To solve this issue, Papke and Wooldridge develop an extension of the generalized linear model using a quasi-likelihood function for

fractional response variables. Also known as a fractional logit model, I perform all estimations under the binominal family of generalized linear models with a logit link function and robust standard errors.

Measurement Validity and Reliability Assessment

As previously stated, the focus of this chapter centers on a disagreement with the divided government literature over what I feel is a conceptually flawed view of inter-branch politics. My central claim is that with a proper sample size and reasonable dependent variable, a dichotomous indicator may not be a strong predictor of institutional behavior. We can say that the traditional divided government measure likely lacks construct validity, or nomological validity (Adcock and Collier 2001; Zeller and Carmines 1980). My goal, then, is to use the standard of nomological validation, to assess the performance of this chapter's indicators to explain the causal hypotheses of inter-branch tension in order to gain leverage on evaluating the validity of these measures.

Also, while a discussion over conceptualization is in some sense an abstract theoretical view of articulating inter-branch politics, what we are attempting to gauge is the comparative reliability of these measures from which we can judge their validity. I calculate the reliability of each indicator provided by Carmines and Zeller (1979), formally expressed as $1 - [VAR(e)/VAR(x)]$. This expression shows that if the variance of a particular indicator exhibits high random error, then its reliability is lower than indicators with less error. This is the main contribution of this chapter to the divided government literature.

Findings

To begin, Table 2.2 presents estimates for a saturated model—the entire dataset with a complete set of control variables. Of the three indicators of interest, only divided government fails to reach statistical significance. The refined measures, in contrast, are highly significant and in the correct predicted direction, supporting the claim that fine-grained indicators explain more variability in the legislative process than the divided government measure. Moreover, assessing the comparative reliability of the three scales, calculations show refined measures are highly reliable (0.929 and 0.996). The reliability score for divided government, on the other hand, is essentially nil; meaning, this indicator exhibits high random error.

Teasing out the effect of party polarization and the gridlock interval a bit further, the odds ratio of a one-unit increase in polarization reduces the odds of chamber support on all votes in the sample by roughly 14 percent, while the effect for the gridlock interval is twice as large at nearly 31 percent. Though not presented here, to better understand the effect of these indicators across time, I also separate the sample by pre- and post-Reagan Administrations. All three indicators are in the negative predicted direction, yet only the gridlock interval reaches conventional levels of statistical significance ($p < 0.000$). Here, a one unit increase in the size of the gridlock interval reduces the odds of chamber support by 63 percent (reliability = .999). Interestingly, there is no substantive difference in the post-Reagan sample with the results fairly similar to the pre-Reagan sample.

Table 2.2 Chamber Support on All Votes

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Divided Government	0.043	(.042)				
Polarization			-0.154	(.040)***		
Gridlock Interval					-0.370	(.023)***
Controls						
(Lag) Unemployment	-0.063	(.010)***	-0.073	(.010)***	-0.124	(.010)***
(Lag) CPI	-0.002	(.000)***	0.000	(.000)	-0.001	(.000)**
War	0.137	(.036)***	0.081	(.036)*	0.070	(.033)*
(Lag) Homocide Rate	0.039	(.010)***	0.020	(.011)^	0.083	(.010)***
Democrat President	-0.111	(.042)**	-0.145	(.031)***	-0.215	(.0330***
Δ Presidential Approval	-0.007	(.003)*	-0.008	(.003)*	-0.007	(.003)*
Election Time	0.116	(.045)*	0.099	(.045*	0.097	(.045)*
(Lag) Public Mood	-0.029	(.007)***	-0.026	(.007)***	0.016	(.008)*
Constant	3.242	(.467)***	3.527	(.468)***	0.985	(.498)*
LL	-1809.309		-1808.277		-1791.267	
AIC	0.764		0.764		0.757	

***p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10. Robust Standard errors in parentheses. N = 4761

Finally, returning to Table 2.2, the models include a number of control variables as a gauge of the relative impact of economic,[27] social,[28] and electoral[29] factors. The only notable control with a large substantive effect is a measure for Democratic presidents. In the polarization model, holding all else constant, the odds of lowering chamber support on all votes is 13 percent greater than those of Republican presidents, fairly comparable to polarization. For the gridlock interval, on the other hand, the effect is 19 percent. This effect signifies that because more Republican presidents governed during divided government, it is plausible to assume that these final passage votes are compromises,

[27] Economic indicators include the lagged unemployment rate and the lagged consumer price index.
[28] Social indicators include a dummy variable for votes that occur during a major war (Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, and the War on Terror) and the yearly lagged homicide rate per 100,000 people.
[29] Electoral variables include a dummy variable for votes on which the president is Democratic, the percent change in the president's approval rating (Gallup), a dummy variable for votes that occur during an election cycle (September, October, and November), and the yearly lagged public mood indicator (this measure is an average of the yearly policy mood as created by Stimson and the *Policy Agendas Project*).

unlike the bills passed into law during single-party government. This finding, however, does not suggest all bills that could pass during unified governments get the same chance when the president shares power with the opposition party. Since none of other variables match the statistical effect of the main indicators of interest, I defer to the reader to review these findings at their leisure.

Inter-Branch Votes

Table 2.3 presents a number of pared-down models that identify votes directly associated with presidential action. Also, I reduce the number of controls to a handful of core explanatory variables, so as to not overwhelm and lose sight of the primary goal of this study. The controls used are the lagged unemployment rate, the percent-change in the president's approval ratings, and the lagged public policy mood.

Beginning with votes the president publicly supported, results illustrate a perplexing finding. Contrary to expectations, divided government has a positive and strong, statistically significant effect ($p < 0.000$) on chamber support on final passage voting. In fact, holding all else constant, the odds of divided government increasing chamber support is twice that of unified government. These findings are in stark contrast to both the polarization and gridlock interval indicators which perform to expectation and show a negative effect on chamber support. Calculating the reliability scores of these indicators, both divided government and the gridlock interval are equally reliable (.968 and .979, respectably) while polarization is slightly lower (.784).

Table 2.3 Chamber Support on Presidential Position Taking

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Presidential Support (N = 1021)					
Divided Government	0.308	(.059)***				
Polarization			-0.106	(.050)*		
Gridlock Interval					-0.431	(.078)***
Controls						
(Lag) Unemployment	-0.089	(.017)***	-0.085	(.017)***	-0.010	(.017)***
Δ Presidential Approval	-0.010	(.006)	-0.009	(.006)	-0.009	(.006)
(Lag) Public Mood	-0.069	(.010)***	-0.061	(.012)***	-0.031	(.012)**
Constant	5.672	(.599)***	4.932	(.689)***	3.947	(.654)***
LL	-399.552		-401.230		-398.383	
AIC	0.792		0.796		0.79	
	Presidential Opposition (N = 700)					
Divided Government	-0.047	(.120)				
Polarization			-0.225	(.046)***		
Gridlock Interval					-0.123	(.037)***
Controls						
(Lag) Unemployment	0.012	(.019)	-0.020	(.020)	-0.004	(.020)
Δ Presidential Approval	-0.014	(.006)*	-0.010	(.006)	-0.014	(.006)*
(Lag) Public Mood	-0.040	(.013)**	-0.005	(.014)	-0.014	(.014)
Constant	3.232	(.830)***	1.850	(.860)*	1.946	(.897)*
LL	-298.956		-297.771		-298.435	
AIC	0.868		0.865		0.867	

***p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10. Robust Standard errors in parentheses.

At first glance, these results may question my reconceptualization of divided government, since the indicator is substantively as powerful as the refined measures. Despite this observation, these results in fact support my argument. First, my central claim is refined that measures should explain more variation than the dichotomous measure. In this case, however, divided government is actually in the incorrect position, supporting the argument that this measure is not sufficient, in most cases, to match conventional theories of government output under competing partisan control. The fact that this coefficient has a positive effect on the chamber support of final passage votes on which the president takes a public position only shows how imprecise, given the

expectations of this concept, this indicator actually is. Moreover, these findings illustrate, from the perspective of these particular votes, how concrete evidence to support this concept is still elusive. The refined measures used in this study, especially the gridlock interval, more effectively highlight sources of partisan tension. Had this study only used the traditional divided government measure, my conclusions would likely be entirely counter to the main narrative of this chapter.

Turning to bills presidents publicly oppose, results show all three indicators are in the correct predicted direction. Substantively, the findings highlight that presidents tend to oppose legislation when partisan disagreements are high. However, while divided government fails to reach conventional levels of statistical significance, the results support the overall position on this chapter: refined measures can explain more variability than the traditional conceptualization. In this case, polarization is the more reliable indicator (.962) with the largest effect. Holding all else constant, a one-unit increase in the level of party polarization decreases chamber support by 20 percent, compared to the gridlock interval at 11.5 percent.

Important Legislation

For a number of decades, scholars have tried to gauge the impact of divided government on the legislative process by analyzing the number of important laws passed by both governing types. While some controversy surrounds the imprecision in classifying these laws, the fact remains that these datasets are still highly influential. To directly compare the methodology of this chapter with studies on important enactments, I

parse my dataset to match these classifications. Table 2.4 presents results using Clinton and Lapinski's (2006) empirical judgment of scholarly ratings. Dissatisfied with the subjectivity inherent in classifying significant laws, Clinton and Lapinski develop a robust dataset of all legislation between 1877 and 1994. Their study is unique because it places a large number of influential retrospective and contemporaneous evaluations of legislation, including Mayhew (1991) and Howell, at al. (2000), into one easily interpretable dataset. Applying this classification, I divide laws by Clinton and Lapinski's breakdown of the top 500 and 3500 laws since 1947.

Results for both the top 500 and 3500 laws reveal a similar pattern to the findings presented for chamber support of bills presidents took a positive, public position on. In both cases, divided government shows a positive statistical relationship for increasing chamber support of these votes. In fact, for the top 3500 laws, the effect for divided government and polarization is essentially the same, only in opposite directions. For the top 500 laws, the gridlock interval shows the largest effect. A one-unit increase in the size of the gridlock interval decreases chamber support by over 33 percent. Reliability scores for divided government, polarization, and the gridlock interval under the top 500 rubric is .626, .868, and .926, respectably. However, for the top 3500 law category, these scores are .971, .966, and .932.

Table 2.4 Chamber Support on Clinton and Lapinski Laws

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Top 500 Most Important Laws (N = 285)					
Divided Government	0.179	(.107)^				
Polarization			-0.284	(.098)**		
Gridlock Interval					-0.406	(.118)**
Controls						
(Lag) Unemployment	-0.167	(.035)***	-0.154	(.035)***	-0.157	(.036)***
Δ Presidential Approval	-0.020	(.011)^	-0.020	(.011)^	-0.240	(.011)*
(Lag) Public Mood	-0.065	(.019)**	-0.046	(.021)*	-0.036	(.023)
Constant	5.989	(1.756)***	5.440	(1.65)***	4.643	(1.30)***
LL	-106.547		-106.227		-105.866	
AIC	0.783		0.780		0.778	
	Top 3500 Most Important Laws (N = 1471)					
Divided Government	0.317	(.054)***				
Polarization			-0.315	(.059)***		
Gridlock Interval					-0.165	(.045)***
Controls						
(Lag) Unemployment	-0.088	(.016)***	-0.048	(.016)**	-0.062	(.016)***
Δ Presidential Approval	-0.001	(.006)	0.000	(.006)	-0.002	(.006)
(Lag) Public Mood	-0.044	(.009)***	-0.130	(.011)	-0.020	(.011)^
Constant	4.419	(.566)***	3.090	(.602)***	3.163	(.664)***
LL	-527.67		-527.95		-529.13	
AIC	0.724		0.725		0.726	

***p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10. Robust Standard errors in parentheses.

Additional Tests

Table 2.5 presents a summary of additional tests under various categories. Due to the large number of tables needed to present these results, to conserve space I omit the coefficients for the main indicators of interest as well as all control indicators. Results are presented in a simple plus and minus format to distinguish between positive and negative statistical relationships. Indicators that reach statistical significance are noted with conventional *p*-value markers. Also, reliability scores are provided only for statistically

Table 2.5 Additional Tests of House Chamber Support

	Indicators of Interest						
	Divided Government		Polarization		EGI		N
Presidents							
Vetoes	+		-**	0.924	-***	0.956	361
First 100 Days	+		-		-***	0.938	173
Laws							
Public Laws	+***	0.984	-***	0.959	-***	0.980	2536
Non-Laws	+^	0.706	-***	0.971	-***	0.976	2225
Mayhew	-		-		-*	0.757	302
Mayhew (Update)	+		-*	0.760	-***	0.934	430
Howell (A)	+		-		-		269
Howell (B)	+		-**	0.869	-**	0.916	301
Howell (C)	+***	0.921	-**	0.916	-**	0.861	844
Tight Votes	+		-*	0.981	-^	0.643	1374
Lop-Sided Votes	+^	0.812	+		-***	0.960	3387
Policy							
Macro Economy	+^	0.682	-*	0.800	-***	0.979	358
Civil Rights	+		-		-		153
Heath	+		-***	0.664	-		192
Agriculture	-		+		-		204
Labor	-		-*	0.832	-***	0.977	259
Education	+*	0.794	-		-*	0.880	148
Environment	+**	0.846	-^	0.774	-		149
Energy	+**	0.872	-**	0.911	+		138
Transportation	-		-		-***	0.931	312
Law	+**	0.863	-		-**	0.890	165
Social Welfare	+		-		-**	0.903	149
Community Dev.	+^	0.716	+		-		129
Banking	+		-		-**	0.924	221
Science	+		+		-		138
Government Ops	-		-***	0.971	-***	0.983	1095
Public Lands	+		-		-^	0.665	381

***p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10.

significant coefficients. The list of dependent variables is as follows. Under the presidential rubric, I include tests on bills the president vetoes, as well as votes that occur during the first 100 days of all new and reelected administrations. In order to maintain

consistency with the divided government literature, besides including votes on bills that do and do not become law, I test the important laws used in Mayhew's (1991) original study in addition to an extended dataset that incorporates important laws up through 2008.[30] I also include the classifications of Howell et al. (2000) which capture votes between 1947 and 1994, as well as lopsided and tight roll call distinctions of Snyder and Groseclose (2000).[31] Finally, for the policy rubric, I use the *Policy Agendas Project* to separate each roll call by specific policy area.

Of the 27 different categories listed, the divided government indicator fails to reach conventional levels of statistical significance 21 times. In fact, in six models where it does manage to have an effect, the results are in the incorrect direction. Only Mayhew's classification, agriculture, labor, transportation, and government operations policy are in correct direction, signifying the weak position of this indicator. Performing to expectation, party polarization reaches statistical significance 12, times while the gridlock interval performs the best, reaching statistical significance 17 times.

Conclusion

On August 22, 1996, President Clinton signed into law the largest welfare reform bill enacted since welfare was first adopted in 1935. This law would fundamentally restructure the scope of welfare in the United States, shifting authority from the national to state governments. Aside from the law's specific provisions, this law is an important example for this chapter because it passed during a period of heightened partisan

[30] Mayhew's updated laws are available at http://davidmayhew.commons.yale.edu/books-with-datasets-2/.
[31] See Snyder and Groseclose (197, 2000) for a breakdown of these classifications.

tension—that is, during divided government. The passage of this bill, however, defies convention, since previous Democratic unified governments made no efforts to significantly reform welfare, while Republicans were never able to force stringent welfare concessions on the public, since they rarely controlled all the levers of government at once. Moreover, at the beginning of the 104th Congress in 1995, pundits and scholars alike were quite sure that major policy enactments would be few and far between. The newly elected Republican congressional majority, guided under the tutelage of firebrand Newt Gingrich, vowed to change the role of government not only by reducing its size, but also by reversing the Liberal tide of cradle-to-grave policies. Bill Clinton, the last line of defense for the Liberal agenda would surely stop such bills from becoming law, it was believed. It was no surprise when Republicans pushed for welfare reform in late 1995 that President Clinton vetoed—halted—the Republicans plans. Divided government, to the relief of Liberal Democrats, prevailed. Yet, eight months later, stringent welfare reform passed.

This essay attempts to answer why divided government is sometimes ill-equipped to explain complex political processes. My goal is to convince the reader that a simple dichotomous partisan view of government is conceptually limited. That is, a dichotomous indicator, on average, is less reliable than more refined or sophisticated measures. I argue that the traditional view of divided government erroneously associates the impact of these moments as determinant of legislative gridlock. In contrast, I argued that divided government is likely only one in a host of many factors that contribute to legislative gridlock. Yet, I also conceded that a well-rounded and holistic conceptual approach to

governmental politics understands that at certain moments, and during certain events, divided government may indeed have an effect on partisan tensions. The findings in this essay supported this claim.

The contribution of this chapter is twofold. First, this study demonstrated, using an alternative methodological vantage point, the interpretative challenges posed by the traditional divided government conceptualization. Repeatedly, this indicator either failed to have an effect or presented findings contrary to expectations. Second, the refined measures used in this chapter, in and of themselves, are not necessarily that important. Instead, the point I am trying to convey is that refined measures, regardless of origin, should be used to some degree. Relying solely on the traditional divided government indicator is a potential mistake: American government is far too complex to be modeled using limited concepts.

Chapter 3: Placing Divided Government in Time

For some time now, scholars have conceptualized divided government from a largely ahistorical perspective, placing most of their attention designing a research agenda explaining how the structures of institutions shape partisan behavior. The constitutional limits of American institutional government, it is argued, frame the strategic behavior of the parties in such a manner that most actions are predictable regardless of whether a particular event is connected to a larger temporal process. Research on divided government, in sum, is time invariant.

Of course, this approach is understandable given the profession's extensive research on such subjects as law-making in a system of separated powers (Jones 1994; Krehbiel 1998), the nature of party competition (Aldrich 1995; Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005), and the influence of ideological preferences (Chiou and Rothenberg 2003), where, naturally, many studies suggest compromise between the parties is less likely when the president co-governs with an opposition-led Congress (Coleman 1999; Edwards et al. 1997; Sundquist 1988). While this research agenda has advanced the profession's knowledge of divided government, its inattentiveness to historical explanations, whether institutional, social, or electoral, raises important questions. In particular, this commitment to institutional affects is, I argue, a likely one reason for disagreements in the literature over the impact of divided government on policy outputs.[32]

[32] See Mayhew (1991) for the main work challenging the assumption that divided government is less productive than unified government and Coleman (1999) for counter findings.

This insensitivity to temporal context, furthermore, is surprising considering the many examples of political change in post-World War II America. The Cold War, civil rights, the push for social equality, economic booms and busts, among others, are but a glimpse of the myriad issues attributed to America's growing unease with contemporary politics. Yet, unlike other sub-fields in American politics that seek to explain current political phenomena as a consequence of past political action (Orren and Skowronek 2004; Pierson 2004), work on divided government ignores, for the most part, many of the contemporary causes of partisan disagreement that likely influence conflict. In addition, despite a host of studies that posit alternative explanations of institutional behavior, such as bicameralism (Binder 2003), party polarization (Theriault 2008), income inequality (McCarty et al. 2006), and ideology (Poole and Rosenthal 2007), research that incorporates, to some extent, the temporal dynamics of recent American political history, divided government theorists continue to act as if a single theory or behavioral law provides sufficient explanatory power.

My goal in this chapter is to both challenge this conceptual view as well as introduce a time series-centered view of divided government. First, I hope to convince the reader that a dichotomous conceptualization of American government is ill-suited for capturing temporal dynamics. Specifically, by arguing that all divided governments are similar, despite the vast differences in political time, actors, issues, and events that make each moment unique, this explanation is an oversimplification of the diverse political circumstances that comprise a separation of powers system in a dynamic representative democracy. Second, I argue that an institutional approach, while important, cannot

account for all temporal change in government since institutional rules, both constitutional and procedural, are relatively static and not commensurate with the dynamic processes of electoral and political change. Instead, I argue political science often overlooks the importance of political coalitions, especially intra-party factions, that challenge both party's agenda control Moreover, these coalitions can provide important insight into why some unified governments fail to meet conventional expectations and why, at times, divided government can exceed the dire predictions placed on it.

Using Poisson autoregressive models to determine changes in government behavior between 1947 and 2010, I analyze a number of datasets including counts of regular and landmark legislation, bipartisan voting in the House of Representatives, and presidential vetoes. I test these series against the most common and convincing explanations of gridlock: divided government (Edwards et al. 1997; Howell et al. 2000; Mayhew 1991), polarization (McCarty et al. 2006; Theriault 2008), partisan gridlock intervals (Chiou and Rothenberg 2009), and party coalitions (Bond and Fleisher 1990; Rohde 1991; Smith 2007). Findings reveal three important points. First, the temporal dynamics of each series rarely correlates with divided government, or, for that matter, any other noticeable trend. Second, though a link exists between presidential vetoes and divided government, coalitional explanations show the best overall fit in most series. Finally, this study provides a substantive glimpse into the complexities of American politics. Since divided government is the political norm of contemporary politics, this study is a reminder that caution is often the wisest path to interpreting complex political processes.

Divided Government in Time

Before exploring the conceptual underpinnings of the divided government literature, it is important to highlight how the literature places divided government in time. The reader should note, however, some points before I continue. First, this discussion is focused only on studies of divided government or divided government-centered research with time components. Works that discuss or measure time but view divided government as an ancillary indicator are not discussed. Second, there are surprisingly few studies that attempt to explain or measure time so the following review is an attempt to encapsulate common tends in studies that do account for time. In the following literature review, I classify studies, both qualitative and quantitative, into three distinct categories: historical narratives, control or individual-level studies, and those applying more advanced time series analysis.[33]

The first practice found in the literature, those I classify as historical narratives, place contemporary episodes of split-party government in historical perspective by comparing the frequency of modern divided government across time (Cox and Kernell 1991; Silbey 1996). While historical in character, the goal of these studies is to illustrate the commonality of contemporary divided government in an effort to argue either little difference exists between past and current divided governments, or to suggest there is a fundamental difference, and the current era of divided government is in some way a reflection of a deeper political defect in the American system (Sundquist 1988). Put another way, some use these larger historical narratives to illustrate the dysfunctions of

[33] The bulk of divided government studies, in contrast, fall outside of these categories.

modern American government, while others use them to show little difference exists between unified and divided government in American history. More commonly, the reader is likely to find this historical commentary as an introduction to some larger argument and generally not a research centerpiece.

The second body of research that accounts for temporal variation is those I classify in the control or individual-level methodological camp. The common trend in this line of research is a rudimentary accounting of time, though still acknowledging the dynamics of time in some form. Moreover, studies that approach time from this methodological perspective, in some cases, do not necessarily discuss history or long-term political change in any broad sense of the definition. They simply account for time as an ancillary measure. One approach is to control for an element of time within the broader hypothesis of a research design. Here, the researcher simply measures a historical determinant by applying some form of intervention analysis[34] to distinguish if an exogenous shock other than divided government affects the dependent variable (Chiou and Rothenberg 2009; Cohen 2011; Lebo 2008).

Another approach under this classification is to compare governments that share similar characteristics—all unified versus all divided governments—regardless of its place in time. Here, the researcher uses individual-level measures to determine the attributes of unified and divided government. The most common method is to survey

[34] Intervention analysis is a time series technique that Enders (2010, 272) describes as "allowing the time path of the dependent variable to be influenced by the time path of an independent or exogenous variable." The idea is the researcher has theoretical justification for assuming that some moment or moments in time will influence the path of a series. For example, the one could use a dummy variable to divide the spending on defense before and after the events of September 11, 2001.

partisan behavior by breaking down the long-term dynamics of American history by, say, specific Congresses and to compare the attributes of each member of Congress as a way of drawing conclusions about a larger understanding of divided government (Jacobson 1996; Rieselbach 1996). Conley (2003), on the other hand, takes this approach a step further and analyzes presidential leadership by the strength of the president's governing coalition in Congress. In juxtaposing, say, the unified governments of Carter and Clinton, or the divided governments of Truman and Eisenhower, Conley determines that presidents are constrained when they share power with an opposition-led Congress. While these types of studies are both informative and innovative, and, not to mention, they discuss politics historically, these are not, however, accurate depictions of time series analysis since they use a single cross-sectional analyses as a narrative of long-term historical dynamics.

Finally, the last category, research sensitive to time series measurement, combines, in some form, time into the analysis of split-party government. However, the bulk of these studies are not methodological similar to time series analysis. That is, these studies focus primarily on first-order autocorrelation issues common in ordinary least squares, suggesting that time, in whatever functional form it is defined, is more of a concern over the strength of statistical fit rather than centering attention a true discussion of politics in time (Binder 1999, 2003; Chiou and Rothenberg 2003, 2007; Edwards et al. 1997; Saeki 2009).[35] Lebo (2008), on the other hand, introduces a sophisticated time

[35] The reader should note that I include these works under this heading not to diminish their findings especially since they are both important and influential in the study of divided government, but rather to

series analysis of divided government and presidential approval but this study is somewhat limited since it is only covers a ten year range and never actually measures the effect of divided government on the legislative process. It divides it analyses in a manner similar to those in the second category. Another study that addresses divided government and time is Howell et al.'s (2000) work on legislative accomplishment and divided government. Though this article falls short of successfully bridging the gap between ahistorical and historical studies,[36] it is notable since it is the first to use time series techniques to study the impact of divided government on the law-making process.

In all, these studies highlight two important trends in the literature. First, they reflect a theoretical and methodological contradiction in their approach to time and history. That is, excluding those studies that ignore time entirely, we see a discussion on divided government's place in political time and the impact of party behavior on this change. However, we also see a relative shortage of dynamic measures that do attempt to explain long-term change. The second trend is the literature's conceptual view of unified and divided government heavily influences how it accounts for, and measures, time. For the most part, theorists of split-party government base their understanding of partisan politics, both in time and space, on the distinction between unified and divided control, arguing, whether or not they find evidence to support the claim divided government causes gridlock, that since the American political system is designed to separate power

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illustrate the relative lack of an effective approach to studying split-party government and partisan behavior across time.

[36] The articles main shortcoming is it uses time as a methodological tool and fails to engage in an active discussion of how and why the various classifications of laws they create either influence or are influenced by partisan politics in government over time.

between two lawmaking bodies, passing laws of any type is difficult even under the most auspicious of circumstances. Divide power between competing political parties and these hurdles are only magnified (Sundquist 1988). And it is here, in the understanding that legislative productivity is discernible as a simple dichotomy, that the temporal limitations of this theoretical distinction are most noticeable. The disadvantage of this view is highlighted by its inability to capture temporal variation in partisan politics.

Time in Divided Government

The conceptual underpinnings of the divided government literature and its ahistorical perspective are closely associated with the broader theoretical construct of *new institutionalism*, and more specifically, *rational choice institutionalism*. Developed in response to the then dominant approach in political science, *behavioralism* (Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1964), a host of political scientists shifted attention to the study of institutions, arguing that rules and procedures play important roles in structuring political behavior (March and Olsen 1984, 1989; North 1990). Rational choice scholars extended this thinking to include theories of preference ordering and collective action (Arnold 1990; Arrow 1951; Downs 1957; Olson 1965, Riker 1980) into this institutional approach, arguing that because parties calculate the costs and benefits of available choices, institutions frame the strategic behavior of the political parties (Shepsle 1989; Shepsle and Weingast 1987; Weingast and Marshall 1988). Naturally, the intellectual marriage of institutional constraints and partisan preferences fit neatly into theories of divided government. Scholars of divided government, moreover, created deductive

theories to explain how the institutional rules of the game, beginning with the Constitution, stress partisan tensions.

With this theoretical marriage in place, all future work on split-party government shifted from discussions over its theoretical merits to discussion centered on the accuracy of these behavioral laws (Coleman 1999; Edwards et al. 1997; Howell et al. 2000; Kelly 1993; Mayhew 1991). Rarely did scholars discuss alternative theoretical constructs of partisan tension in American government (see, for example, Binder 1999; Brady and Volden 2006; Chiou and Rothenberg 2009; Krehbiel 1998). The consequence of a commitment to a dichotomous, historically random measure of non-periodic events is that this research design ignores the political context associated with each instance of divided government, not to mention the specific issues, actors, and historical determinants that comprise each era. Moreover, if, as the literature suggests, divided government is capable of explaining most of the variation in government behavior, then other political explanations should matter little.

This theoretical separation between history and divided government, then, is not necessarily a problem of time, or a lack thereof, especially since many studies associate their theories to anecdotal narratives within some historical context. It is, more likely, a problem of a commitment to the dichotomous distinction between unified and divided government. Consider a frequent trend in the literature that I call theory support with selective historical events. It is not uncommon, for example, for proponents of unified government to point to the accomplishments of the New Deal and Great Society in order to bolster theories that divided government reduces policy output. These successes, they

would admit, are not due entirely to the talents of lawmakers, but are attributable, instead, to the significant majorities FDR and LBJ held in Congress. Of course, research failing to find similar connections argue these 'hallmarks' of accomplishment are the exception and not the rule (Jones 1994; Mayhew 1991). Despite these different views, the point to note is that the conceptual construct is always the same—the distinction between unified and divided government is essential to the explaining partisan behavior. And it is for this reason, a divided government theorist would argue, time is inconsequential to the broader understanding of government and partisan behavior. Therefore, it does not matter that the accomplishments of FDR and LBJ are separated by thirty years, or that the connection between certain successful divided governments span different moments in time. Their comparability is connected by the similarity of their governing majorities.

This problem of ahistorical dichotomies still persists, however, even if one incorporates the theoretical practice of historical institutionalism as a method for gaining causal leverage and explanatory power. Here, the goal is to combine the strengths of institutionalism and history as a way to explain how the temporal origins of political institutions shape future behavior (Hacker 2002; Orren and Skowronek 1994; Pierson and Skocpol 2004; Skocpol and Somers 1980; Thelen 2004). Yet, in relation to divided government, there seems scant evidence to suggest politicians learn from past experience or that the decisions of past divided governments have much bearing on future divided governments. If path dependence plays a role in institutional behavior, or, put another way, if the decisions one faces at time $t + 1$ is limited by the decisions at time t, meaning that all subsequent behavior is dictated by time t, then certain obvious patterns should

develop across time. Beginning, then, with early post-WWII divided government,[37] and depending on whether partisan tensions were low or high, that is, the parties bargained and compromised on policy, all future politicians during divided government would likely learn from the actions of their predecessors and adopt a successful governing practice.[38] Meaning, all future divided governments would exhibit moderate or polarized governing practices, depending on what worked before. Otherwise, if future divided governments are different than the past, we can hypothesize there is a limited historical component to the dichotomous nature divided government research.

Admittedly, this characterization is far from fair. As with rational choice institutionalism, certain features of historical institutionalism seem ill-equipped to explain the randomness of split-party government. For one, proponents of this scholarship analyze broad, macro explanations on the effects of institutions and rules. While easily transferable to subjects such as differences in public and private social policy (Hacker 2002), the critical junctures and political life of presidential political coalitions (Skowronek 1993), state and labor relations (Hattam 1993), and the birth of the American welfare state (Skocpol 1995), the critical juncture or antecedent affect that starts the contemporary era of divided government is less clear. This is the conceptual basis of my criticism of the divided government literature and the primary impetus for this chapter. The second limitation is that while its proponents make a convincing case for adopting its many attributes when studying historical change, these largely qualitative studies are

[37] Of course, one can reverse this logic for unified government.

[38] The idea is that politicians would adopt the strategy that first, maximizes their reelection chance and then second, allows them to realize their policy goals.

methodological abstract and lack a clear direction on how to actually measure cause and effect. Again, the problem is not with historical institutionalism, but rather with the ahistorical nature of the divided government conceptualization.

A Theory of Coalitional Government

The main challenge for any alternative theory of partisan behavior is that, at a minimum, it needs to account for three basic factors: historical context, institutional dynamics, and electoral forces. First, if the partisan character of government does vary over time then this theory should be sensitive to historical change. More importantly, it would need to account for both macro[39] and micro[40] explanations. For example, both Tulis (1987) and Schickler (2001) contend that institutional change is always partial and somewhat incomplete as micro causes influence political concerns of the moment. On the other hand, the rules and procedures of past generations are embedded in the rules and norms of subsequent decisions, illustrating the macro foundations of long-term change. From the perspective of this study, an alternative theory should account for this variation. Second, an alternative theory should also account for the importance of institutions by measuring potential constitutional checks such as supermajority pivots (Brady and Volden 2006; Krehbiel 1998). Finally, this theory should account, in some way, for an electoral connection in how elected officials adjust their preferences (Mayhew 1974).

[39] A macro approach is concerned with large contextual explanations of partisan behavior. That is, the factors that influence the parties actions.
[40] Micro-level explanations are centered on individual-level factors.

I argue the inter-play between ideological and electorally divergent factions within a party provide important insight into partisan dynamics. Inter-party factions play not only a vital role in shaping long-term partisan behavior they also alter the position of the median legislator in Congress, as well as reflect the diversity of electoral coalitions. Scholarly interest in party factions, both in and out of government, marks a long tradition in American political science (Black and Black 1992, 2002; Bond and Fleisher 1990; Burns 1963; Key 1964; Milkis 1999; Schattschneider 1960). Yet despite these foundational works on party factions, as well as studies that measure the long-term dynamics of party change (Cox and McCubbins 2002; Lebo et al. 2007; Roberts and Smith 2003; Schickler 2000), no study combines theories of factional coalitions and historical analysis to understand divided government.

Intra-party factions are also important in this context since they can both represent the dynamics of electoral politics, as well as alter the median preferences of partisan politics. From an electoral perspective, the ideological diversity of voters in many ways shapes the preferences of those they elect. Trende (2012) highlights this relationship arguing that despite a scholarly tradition inclined to view electoral politics as slow-moving social transformations where voters create stable systems of consistent partisan choice, these electoral coalitions are actually quite unstable since national politicians themselves, especially presidential candidates, attract different sections of society to support them. Where narrow coalitions, such as President Obama's support base of minorities, the poor, high-income intellectuals, women, and young voters, provide a fairly tight governing coalition in Congress, many past electoral coalitions were much wider,

which in turn dispersed, and even depleted, governing coalitions, making intra- and inter-party bargaining a necessary part of national politics.[41] The first hypothesis for this chapter, then, contends that a measure accounting for factional politics will capture more variation across time than divided government.

Additional Explanatory Factors

Since I am attempting to explain long-term partisan dynamics, it is necessary to include additional explanatory factors. One such explanation, for example, is the growing interest in party polarization. Over the past few decades, scholars noticed that American politics has become increasingly polarized, and that the attributes of politics in some past time is entirely different from the politics of today. Whether one views polarization from a government (Mann and Ornstein 2008; Sinclair 2006; Theriault 2008,) or electoral (Abramowitz 2011; Gelman 2009) perspective, the general consensus is politics has changed for the worse. If, as the polarization literature argues, the politics of today is indeed different from past political behavior then this potential explanatory factor might

[41] Evidence of these factions and their effect on the ability of both parties to govern comprise much of the post-WWII political record. Patterson (1967), in a study of the rise of the conservative coalition during the New Deal, argues that FDR's strong Democratic majorities during his early administration was permanently fractured after he and fellow liberals altered the scope of their universal distributive policies. Where funds and programs were widely shared across all regions of the nation to battle the Depression, by 1938 much of these funds were targeted directly to urban centers, upsetting southern Democrats. From this point on, FDR rarely won on domestic policy as the conservative faction within his party repeatedly joined with Republicans, moderating the ideological impact on virtually all legislation for decades. Galloway (1961) shows that these conservative coalitions were especially strong in controlling the Rules Committee in the House of Representatives, effectively altering the ideological scope of all legislation passed in that chamber. Although the profession tends to focus its attention on the famous (or infamous) conservative coalition, intra-party factions at times have played an entirely opposite role where strong ideologues within the parties forced their moderates out of the party and shifted the ideological position of their party in a more polarized direction (Sundquist 1981, Rhode 1991, Rae 1989, 1994, Brewer et al. 2002, Rhode and Theriault 2012).

also explain institutional politics over time. The next hypothesis contends that party polarization will capture more variation across time than divided government.

The final alternative factor I include is a variant of Choiu and Rothenberg's (2003) equilibrium gridlock interval. In this inventive measure, the authors create a variable that is capable of simultaneously accounting for ideological preferences, institutional pivot points, and party unity. They argue that single measures of ideology (Poole and Rosenthal 2007), institutional pivots (Krehbiel 1998), and party unity are, individually, poor predictors of partisan politics, and that a fuller explanation of U.S. lawmaking should account for each of these factors. The last hypothesis contends that the equilibrium gridlock interval will capture more variation across time than divided government.

Data

The Unit of Measure

In this study, I break with political science tradition and divide my dataset into quarterly time units. By using a quarterly level measure on all domestic legislation between 1947 and 2010, my dataset has a number of advantages over studies that measure institutional behavior on a Congress or yearly basis. First, with a larger sample size I likely increase the precision of my estimates. My quarterly dataset is expanded to 256 discrete points, far larger than most studies on divided government with sample sizes

of less than 30.[42] Moreover, this series increases statistical explanatory power since much of the temporal variation that naturally occurs over time is potentially lost with a Congress-level measure. Finally, even though congressional scholars explain politics in two-year cycles, in reality, practically all research outside of political science is conducted in smaller discrete units. For example, economic time series analysis is generally measured in daily, monthly, or quarterly units.

The Dependent Variables

Regular and important laws: One of the more widely accepted measures of government productivity is the number of important legislation enacted into law. Originally developed by Mayhew (1991) to determine the difference between unified and divided government politics, this approach set the standard defining successful governments. Where others have challenged, improved, and even expanded Mayhew's classification of important laws (Binder 1999, 2003; Coleman 1999; Edwards et al. 1997; Howell et al. 2000), I, instead, use a count of Clinton and Lapinski's (2006) classification of laws as a basis of determining legislative productivity across time. Because this measure tests the classification of all legislative rankings by two dozen raters, it is a fairly accurate depiction of regular[43] and important[44] laws.[45]

[42] See Colman and Parker (2011) for a discussion on the need for increasing sample sizes in divided government research.
[43] Regular laws are those Clinton and Lapinski classify as the top 3500 laws in their dataset.
[44] Important laws are those they classify as the top 500 laws.
[45] Because this series ends in 1994, I utilize Mayhew's extension of important laws to 2010.

Bipartisanship: This dependent variable is a count of the number of final passage votes[46] in the House[47] where 90% of the voting chamber votes against the remaining 10%.

Presidential Vetoes: The most visible inter-branch weapon in the president's legislative toolbox is his ability to veto laws. As a critical check on the excesses of the legislature in a separation of powers system, the founders argued the veto "not only serves as a shield to the executive, but it also furnishes an additional security against the [enactment] of improper laws." And even if, as some argued at the time, the executive vetoed good bills form becoming law, "the injury which may possibly be done by defeating a few good laws will be amply compensated by the advantage of preventing a number of bad ones" (*Federalist 73*). While the president can use the veto for political gain, it is really a bargaining tool for negotiating with Congress since the president has few tools at his disposal to influence the legislative process (Cameron 2000; Neustadt 1990). This variable is a quarterly count of executive vetoes on all domestic legislation. Figure A2.1 presents the graphs of each dependent variable.

The Independent Variables

The main explanatory variables are divided government, party polarization, a gridlock measure, and majority party cohesion measure. Control variables include a lagged measure of the public's policy mood, a dummy variable distinguishing between

[46] These exclude votes under suspension of the rules, amendments, and all procedural votes.
[47] I also focus primarily on the House since a host of congressional studies build most of their theories form partisan behavior in this chamber (Cox and McCubbins 1993, Canes-Wrone and de Marchi 2002, Polsby 2004)

Democrat and Republican presidents, the quarterly change in the president's public approval, a dummy variable accounting for the six months of each election period, the quarterly lagged unemployment rate, and a dummy variable indicating when the country is involved in war. A complete description of these measures is presented in this chapter's appendix. All variables are standardized and descriptive statistics are presented in Table A2.1.

Method

Because the unit of measure is counts of institutional behavior across time, I utilize a Poisson Autoregressive model developed by Brandt and Williams' (2001) for estimating stationary mean reverting count models. The common practice for modeling count data in political science research is to use either standard Poisson models, which assume events are independent, and thus memory-less, or models such as a negative binomial or generalized event count models, which assume the data follow a particular dependence. Lagged endogenous count indicators are also inappropriate for count data as this method is more indicative of a growth rate model for non-stationary or trending event counts. Because I focus on counts of important and regular legislation, vetoes, and congressional bipartisanship, the strength of the Brandt and Williams Poisson autoregressive model is that it properly accounts for data that are time dependent. This model is essentially an *AR(p)* process with a negative binominal predictive distribution for a linear time processes that accounts for dependence across time.

Empirical Analysis of Domestic Legislation, 1947 - 2010

Table 3.1 presents the estimates for the Poisson autoregressive models. Beginning with important legislation, the parameter estimates for the main indicators of interest in the saturated model (column 1) shows only majority cohesion reaches conventional levels of statistical significance is ($p < 0.000$). Comparing both the long and short-run multiplier[48] effects, results show that a one-unit quarterly increase in the level of intra-party ideological cohesion (the party is less cohesive) expands the number of important pieces of legislation by more than six laws over the entire series (macro effects), showing that the ideological moderation of the majority party sifts the chamber's median preference point to incorporate minority support. The instantaneous impact (immediate micro effects), on the other hand, equates to an increase of slightly more than three important laws.

Overall, the total percentage change in the number of important laws over the entire series is 81.93%. Further results show that a more leftward public policy mood, holding all else constant, increases the number of important laws by 2.788 while the immediate effect is slightly more than one law, a 26.7% increase over the entire series. Two other indicators to note, change in the president's public approval and elections, show a modest effect, though these estimates do not reach conventional levels of statistical significance ($p < 0.10$).

[48] A multiplier simply measures how a one-unit change in an independent variable causes a dependent variable to change by *M* units where *M* is the multiplier. See Brandt and Williams (2001, 7) for further details.

Table 3.1 Determinants for Important and Regular Laws, 1947 - 2010

	Important Laws									
	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se
Divided Government	0.382	(.322)	0.108	(.214)						
Polarization	0.346	(.240)			-0.168	(.175)				
Equilibrium Interval	-0.222	(.195)					-0.22	(.224)		
Majority Cohesion	0.739	(.201)***							0.572	(.179)**
Public Mood(Lag)	0.305	(.133)*	0.013	(.132)	0.071	(.148)	0.088	(.169)	0.206	(.125)^
Dem. President	0.326	(.321)	0.292	(.188)	0.22	(.162)	0.173	(.177)	0.082	(.174)
Presidential App.	-0.247	(.130)^	-0.229	(.145)	-0.246	(.145)^	-0.206	(.138)	-0.293	(.139)*
Election	0.181	(.097)^	0.281	(.081)***	0.274	(.071)***	0.315	(.077)***	0.168	(.091)^
Unemployment	0.014	(.159)	-0.024	(.135)	0.025	(.157)	-0.057	(.162)	0.014	(.185)
War	0.27	(.169)	0.386	(.170)*	0.303	(.153)*	0.241	(.195)	0.178	(.185)
Intercept	0.117	(.178)	0.317	(.174)^	0.307	(.181)^	0.333	(.190)^	0.162	(.189)
p (1)	0.155	(.064)*	0.16	(.073)*	0.169	(.072)*	0.179	(.074)*	0.166	(.066)*
p (2)	0.023	(.062)	0.008	(.072)	0.024	(.072)	0.019	(.071)	0.041	(067)
p (3)	0.112	(.060)^	0.122	(.066)^	0.119	(.065)^	0.128	(.065)^	0.118	(.061)^
p (4)	0.251	(.073)***	0.268	(.077)***	0.269	(.076)***	0.281	(.077)***	0.26	(.074)***
LL	-363.27		-371.154		-370.78		-370.65		-365.69	
AIC	754.541		764.309		763.562		763.292		753.382	
Wald	25.831		22.54		25.728		26.433		30.1	
p	0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000	
	Regular Laws									
	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se
Divided Government	0.001	(.040)	0.062	(.038)						
Polarization	-0.027	(.039)			-0.062	(.029)*				
Equilibrium Interval	0.028	(.043)					-0.007	(.043)		
Majority Cohesion	0.079	(.038)*							0.088	(.028)**
Public Mood(Lag)	-0.011	(.026)	-0.046	(.032)	-0.019	(.027)	-0.025	(.032)	-0.007	(.023)
Dem. President	0.025	(.041)	0.066	(.037)^	0.032	(.030)	0.032	(.032)	0.014	(.029)
Presidential App.	-0.01	(.027)	-0.009	(.021)	-0.015	(.025)	-0.021	(.023)	-0.008	(.025)
Election	0.033	(.026)	0.047	(.027)^	0.041	(.027)	0.045	(.027)^	0.036	(.026)
Unemployment	0.053	(.036)	0.035	(.041)	0.062	(.037)^	0.06	(.041)	0.045	(.035)
War	0.047	(.035)	0.075	(.037)*	0.059	(.032)^	0.073	(.032)*	0.042	(.031)
Intercept	1.618	(.055)***	1.619	(.057)***	1.619	(.056)***	1.621	(.059)***	1.619	(.055)***
p (1)	-0.013	(.034)	-0.006	(.034)	-0.01	(.035)	-0.004	(.035)	-0.012	(.034)
p (2)	-0.046	(.032)	-0.041	(.032)	-0.044	(.032)	-0.041	(.033)	-0.043	(.032)
p (3)	0.049	(.033)	0.057	(.033)^	0.054	(.033)	0.059	(.033)^	0.05	(.032)
p (4)	0.131	(.034)***	0.142	(.033)***	0.139	(.032)***	0.144	(,032)***	0.131	(.033)***
LL	-652.679		-655.859		-654.59		-656.28		-653.08	
AIC	1333.358		1333.717		1331.18		1334.56		1328.17	
Wald	19.004		24.55		24.963		26.348		20.406	
p	0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000	

Note: Estimates are Poisson Autoregressive coefficients. Standard errors are in parenthesis.
Degrees of freedom = 16, 13. N = 256.
****p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10*

Scanning the table further, two notable observations reinforce this chapter's hypotheses. First, despite failing to reach statistical significance, results show that the divided government estimate has a potential positive effect on the passage of important laws. While caution dictates further speculation, at a minimum, the poor statistical

strength of this indicator comports with Mayhew's (1991) central claim that there is likely little difference in the passage of important laws between unified and divided government. This finding is further substantiated by the pared-down model which also shows a positive though insignificant effect. Second, the findings of the saturated model are fairly consistent across each of models where public mood, change in the president's public approval, and elections play a primary role in the passage of important legislation. Notably, changes in the ideological cohesion of the majority party shows the strongest overall model fit. For example, comparing the Akaike information criterion (AIC) scores of the polarization and faction models, the polarization model, the second best fit, is only .007 times as probable as the faction model to minimize information loss. In other words, the faction estimator has the strongest effect, and its model loses the least amount of information.

Moving on to the passage of regular legislation, we see several similar patterns as those for important laws. First, the saturated model shows that only the factional estimator reaches conventional levels of statistical significance. Long-run multipliers indicate that a one-unit increase in the loss of ideological cohesion of the majority party results in a 0.500 increase in the passage of regular legislation, while the instantaneous effect is 0.438, an overall increase in the mean of the series by 7.14 %. Second, none of the control indicators reach conventional levels of statistical significance which, in stark contrast to important legislation, is highly indicative that exogenous forces play a smaller role in the decisions of lawmakers for regular legislation. Finally, the pared-down models

illustrate only the factional coalition model reaches statistical significance. In fact, this model shows the best overall fit, surpassing even the saturated model.

Presidential Vetoes and Congressional Bipartisanship, 1947 – 2010

In the second set of tests, I shift attention to the analysis of presidential and congressional behavior. The goal of this section is to not only highlight alternative explanations of partisan behavior outside of the broader debate on legislative accomplishment, but also to tap the final stages in the legislative process before the passage of legislation. While legislative productivity is an important metric in understanding the differences between governments and how they vary across time, the intensity of the partisan battles in the legislative process is often lost in debates over productivity.

The estimates presented in Table 3.2 further support this point. Beginning with the full model, the estimate for divided government shows a strong statistically significant effect in the positive direction. The long-run impact of divided government on the presidential use of vetoes is almost six vetoes. Equally significant, the instantaneous effect of divided government on the use of the veto is five vetoes, suggesting that the mere presence of split-party government is enough to force the executive to object to the legislative agenda of the opposition party. The model also shows a strong positive effect for the factional coalitional estimate showing that while the impact of this estimate is roughly half the divided government finding (long and short-run impacts of 3.84 and 3.06, respectively), holding all else equal, when the ideological gap in the majority party

widens between defectors and loyalists, it seems presidents will actually increase their likelihood to veto legislation.

Table 3.2 Determinants of Partisan Action, 1947 - 2010

	Presidential Veto									
	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se
Divided Government	0.946	(.194)***	0.866	(.175)***						
Polarization	0.257	(.195)			-0.138	(.227)				
Equilibrium Interval	0.158	(.127)					0.315	(.131)*		
Majority Cohesion	0.635	(.187)***							0.287	(.146)*
Public Mood(Lag)	-0.051	(.153)	-0.211	(.134)	-0.094	(.225)	-0.439	(.154)**	-0.016	(.169)
Dem. President	0.235	(.178)	0.176	(.167)	-0.292	(.149)*	-0.216	(.170)	-0.34	(.151)*
Presidential App.	-0.368	(.122)**	-0.258	(.186)	-0.313	(.133)*	-0.307	(.152)*	-0.339	(.134)*
Election	0.244	(.079)**	0.311	(.080)***	0.348	(.089)***	0.358	(.079)***	0.319	(.078)***
Unemployment	0.106	(.129)	0.053	(.131)	-0.098	(.167)	-0.094	(.131)	-0.081	(.166)
War	0.06	(.131)	0.14	(.145)	-0.321	(.158)*	-0.159	(.155)	-0.333	(.164)*
Intercept	-0.424	(.157)**	-0.288	(.167)^	-0.042	(.183)	-0.079	(.176)	-0.041	(.175)
p (1)	0.202	(.095)*	0.304	(.097)**	0.456	(.098)***	0.432	(.096)***	0.445	(.096)***
LL	-277.894		-283.128		-294.356		-292.122		-293.338	
AIC	577.788		582.256		604.711		600.244		602.677	
Wald	4.301		9.455		20.85		19.657		20.823	
p	0.038		0.002		0		0		0	
	Bipartisan Votes									
	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se	Est	se
Divided Government	0.303	(.112)**	0.105	(.067)						
Polarization	0.008	(.072)			-0.045	(.033)				
Equilibrium Interval	0.367	(.063)***					0.191	(.073)**		
Majority Cohesion	0.472	(.095)***							0.326	(.136)*
Public Mood(Lag)	-0.185	(.059)**	-0.082	(.048)^	-0.085	(.043)*	-0.16	(.075)*	-0.147	(.069)*
Dem. President	0.168	(.100)^	-0.007	(.041)	-0.017	(.035)	-0.011	(.046)	-0.117	(.085)
Presidential App.	-0.063	(.045)	-0.009	(.023)	-0.01	(.020)	-0.018	(.027)	-0.018	(.045)
Election	-0.229	(.085)**	-0.125	(.084)	-0.096	(.069)	-0.161	(.095)^	-0.217	(.117)^
Unemployment	0.152	(.052)**	0.088	(.046)^	0.065	(.044)	0.095	(.048)*	0.094	(.061)
War	0.314	(.066)***	0.168	(.078)*	0.085	(.048)^	0.183	(.070)**	0.23	(.114)*
Intercept	2.332	(.078)***	2.446	(.076)***	2.457	(.075)***	2.432	(.079)***	2.363	(.111)***
p (1)	0.236	(.031)***	0.269	(.029)***	0.263	(.029)***	0.278	(.030)***	0.258	(.031)***
p (2)	-0.045	(.028)	0.021	(.029)	0.032	(.027)	0.011	(.029)	0.001	(.027)
p (3)	0.103	(.030)***	0.102	(.028)***	0.108	(.027)***	0.095	(.028)***	0.112	(.031)***
p (4)	0.37	(.031)***	0.347	(.032)***	0.339	(.031)***	0.357	(.032)***	0.364	(.031)***
LL	-1050.492		-1082.107		-1083.146		-1080.131		-1077.28	
AIC	2128.983		2186.213		2188.293		2182.262		2176.56	
Wald	283.076		388.874		353.126		398.974		302.37	
p	0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000	

Note: Estimates are Poisson Autoregressive coefficients. Standard errors are in parenthesis.
Degrees of freedom = 16, 13. N = 256.
****p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10*

Despite the strong effect of divided government, a handful of control indicators shed even more light on presidential veto politics. As expected, presidents who enjoy

increased popularity exercise their veto pen less often than beleaguered executives. Interpreting the effect of this estimate shows that the long-run impact for a one-unit increase in the change in presidential approval equates to a reduction of over two vetoes while the immediate effect is -1.78 vetoes. The effect of election periods, meanwhile, shows a positive statistically significant effect where the third and fourth quarter of each election year results in an increase of 1.47 vetoes (macro), compared to an instantaneous effect of 1.18 vetoes.

Overall, these findings comport with the theoretical expectations of this essay and are consistent across the saturated and single-factor models. It is important to remember that my central argument does not exclude the possibility of divided government having a significant effect on partisan behavior. In fact, I included this dependent variable to show exactly when divided government influences partisan behavior. But the findings show alternative measures, though of a lesser magnitude, also play a hand in veto politics. Finally, the findings in this section not only lend support to the theoretical expectations of presidential veto politics, it also shows how the interplay between vetoes, divided government, and election periods explain temporal dynamics (Groseclose and McCarty 2001).

What are the causes for these patterns? The findings presented in Table 3.2 show that the strongest predictor of bipartisanship in Congress is the ideological deviation between coalition defectors and party loyalists. As the strongest predictor, results indicate that a one-unit increase in the standard deviation of the majority party's ideological cohesion equates to an increase of over 18 bipartisan votes over the long-run of the series,

a 38% increase over the mean of the entire series, while the instantaneous effect for bipartisan voting is more than six votes. Thus, as the standard deviation of the ideological cohesion within the majority party expands from one quarter to the next (that is, the majority party is less ideologically cohesive), the findings show an immediate and lasting impact on bipartisan voting.

Shifting attention to the divided government and the gridlock interval estimates, we see that both are in the positive direction suggesting the likelihood of bipartisanship in Congress during periods of divided government is more common than votes that occur during unified government (long-run multipliers show an 11.56 increase in bipartisanship while the short-run effect is an increase of nearly four votes), and that a one-unit increase in the gridlock interval of pivotal institutional positions increase the long and short-run effects of bipartisan voting by 14 and 4.7 votes, respectively. In other words, when we consider a count of votes where 90% of the House voted in unison, normal explanations of partisan disagreement have no effect on, or actually aid bipartisanship, counter to expectations.

Results for the control variables show that public mood, elections, unemployment, and major military engagements reach conventional levels of statistical significance ($p < 0.001$), indicating that while a more liberal policy mood decreases the long-run effect of bipartisan voting by more than seven votes, holding all else constant, increases in the unemployment rate and major military commitments have a long-run positive impact of 5.8 and 11.98 votes, respectively. Not surprising, elections decrease the level of bipartisan voting by almost nine votes over the long-run of the series, supporting the

theory that while the parties seek to prove to competence to their constituents by passing big laws during elections, they are more likely to disagree. Finally, findings for the stripped-down models show very similar results to the saturated model, with the notable exception that divided government is no longer statistically significant, polarization, though still failing to reach significance, is in the negative direction, and the effects of elections and unemployment vary across each model. Of the four models, the coalition model shows the best overall fit.

Electoral Realignments and Institutional Effects

In a final test, I estimate various electoral and institutional effects on the main indicators of interest, intra-party cohesion and divided government, in an attempt to account for potential historical factors to better gauge if these indicators change with time. For electoral effects, I rely on the popular though disputed claim that critical elections are a direct result of when emergent tensions in the political order constitute immediate and lasting change in American government (Burnham 1970; Key 1955; Sundquist 1983). The electoral forces that initiate this change, it is argued, are followed by consolidated shifts in the policy direction of government. While many of these great electoral realignments are easily discernible, the timeline of this chapter complicates including many of these periods. As such, I include a simple intervention analysis of three potential electoral realignments since the New Deal: 1968,[49] 1980,[50] and 1995.[51]

[49] While some argue 1968 is, or at least should be, the logical point of an electoral realignment, others claim that finding a direct link to these shifts after 1968 is rather difficult (Mayhew 2002).

For institutional measures, I include a dummy variable signifying the major institutional reforms of the House where the party leadership was given substantial control over the policy agenda (Rohde 1991). Finally, I also include a dummy variable capturing an important change in American monetary policy, the 1971 executive order (Nixon) removing the dollar from the gold standard (Garber 1993).

Table 3.3 presents findings for important and regular legislation for the majority party cohesion measure. The Poisson autoregressive estimates show that across both important and regular legislation intra-party cohesion is positive and statistically significant. For important legislation, only the 1995 and fiat currency interventions reach statistical significance and both have a positive effect on the passage of these laws. The long and short-run multipliers show an increase of 3.73 and 2.54 important laws for the 1995 estimate and 1.90 and 0.92 increase for fiat currency. In contrast, the impact multipliers for the intra-party cohesion estimates show that a one-unit increase results in a nearly five law increase for the 1995 model and a 3.42 increase for the fiat currency model. Also important to note, the AIC measures show that the 1995 model is a stronger overall statistical fit.[52]

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[50] I include 1980 since many argue the Reagan Revolution heralded a new age of conservatism in America where voters who came of age during this era tend to vote Republican more often than those born in previous generations (reference).

[51] Here, I seek to capture what many describe as the obstructionist conservative agenda following the Republican takeover of Congress after the 1994 midterm elections (reference).

[52] The reader should note, however, the potential of rater error regarding this finding since I combine the Mayhew classification of laws after 1994 as the Clinton and Lapinski (2006) scores end at 1994.

Table 3.3 Historical Determinants for Important Legislation, 1947 - 2010

	Important Laws						Regular Laws		
Δ Majority Cohesion	0.636	0.702	0.809	0.506	0.696	0.673	0.248	0.32	0.284
	(.066)**	(.204)***	(.125)***	(.195)**	(.205)***	(.200)***	(.053)***	(.055)***	(.051)***
Public Mood(Lag)	0.372	0.242	0.188	0.231	0.314	0.324	0.026	-0.011	-0.023
	(.163)*	(.127)^	(.099)^	(.124)^	(.142)*	(.14)*	(.044)	(.040)	(.040)
Dem. President	0.246	0.167	0.113	0.171	0.202	0.256	0.047	0.025	0.042
	(.160)	(.161)	(.099)	(.122)	(.154)	(.152)^	(.037)	(.034)	(.035)
Presidential App.	-0.3	-0.301	-0.216	-0.248	-0.287	-0.288	-0.052	-0.044	-0.048
	(.134)*	(.139)*	(.110)^	(.155)	(.140)*	(.132)*	(.034)	(.034)	(.034)
Election	0.11	0.093	0.053	0.065	0.113	0.101	0.062	0.069	0.061
	(.103)	(.114)	(.104)	(.112)	(.100)	(.098)	(.028)*	(.027)*	(.028)*
Unemployment	-0.078	-0.079	-0.035	-0.054	-0.118	-0.157	0.023	-0.026	-0.035
	(.170)	(.178)	(.101)	(.139)	(.184)	(.0186)	(.037)	(.039)	(.041)
War	0.166	0.211	0.064	0.168	0.214	0.196	0.113	0.178	0.15
	(.160)	(.165)	(.105)	(.129)	(.162)	(.159)	(.038)**	(.038)***	(.037)***
1968	0.295						0.222		
	(.169)^						(.062)***		
1980		0.326		0.285					
		(.207)		(.201)					
1995			0.628						
			(.138)***						
1980 * Defectors				-0.331					
				(.175)^					
Rules					0.336			0.294	
					(.183)^			(.056)***	
Fiat Money						0.373			0.277
						(.176)*			(.056)***
Intercept	0.162	0.16	0.177	-0.002	0.148	0.148	1.539	1.529	1.536
	(.169)	(.175)	(.116)	(.180)	(.167)	(.163)	(.042)***	(.040)***	(.040)***
p (1)	0.161	0.155	0.1	0.129	0.16	0.163	-0.085	-0.093	-0.094
	(.066)*	(.065)*	(.069)	(.067)^	(.066)*	(.066)*	(.032)*	(.028)***	(.029)**
p (2)	0.014	0.028	-0.037	-0.003	0.02	0.012	-0.104	-0.103	-0.104
	(.069)	(.067)	(.068)	(.067)	(.071)	(.070)	(.029)***	(.027)***	(.028)***
p (3)	0.11	0.119	0.076	0.095	0.11	0.105	0.054	0.05	0.053
	(.063)	(.061)^	(.067)	(.064)	(.064)^	(.064)^	(.035)	(.035)	(.035)
p (4)	0.255	0.254	0.182	0.233	0.239	0.234	0.241	0.22	0.229
	(.076)***	(.074)***	(.086)*	(.079)**	(.076)**	(.076)**	(.046)***	(.044)***	(.044)***
LL	-364.39	-364.51	-359.08	-363.1	-364.18	-363.73	-655.73	-649.86	-651.19
AIC	752.78	753.012	742.159	752.197	752.366	751.467	1335.45	1323.72	1326.38
Wald	25.769	27.208	9.452	16.974	23.357	22.11	45.414	55.383	55.136
p	0.000	0.000	0.050	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Note :Estimates for Poisson Autoregressive coefficients.
Standard errors are in parenthesis. N = 256.
***p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10

Shifting attention to the passage of regular laws, this classification illustrates a number of differences. First, the only electoral indicator to reach statistical significance ($p < 0.000$) is the 1968 measure. This finding, of course, comports with the regime model

which shows a high probability of a significant though short-lived increase in the number of regular laws following 1968. Second, the rules measure also reaches statistical significance ($p < 0.000$), reinforcing the work of congressional scholars who argue that the strong agenda control of party leadership in the House likely equates to a cohesive voting majority. This seems certainly true for the top 3500 laws in this series, suggesting that agenda control heightened the passage of legislation after this procedural change. This indicator shows the best overall fit. Finally, the impact multipliers for the intervention effects, holding all else constant, are essentially equal to those of the intra-party cohesion indicators, underscoring the importance of modeling historical change.

Where the findings for the passage of important and regular legislation are relatively straightforward the results for presidential vetoes reveal several interesting conclusions. Table 3.4 presents statistically significant intervention effects for executive vetoes for the divided government indicator. To begin, we see again that split-party control of government is the single strongest predictor of presidential vetoes. However, while over the long-term of the series divided government has a positive effect on presidential vetoes, the interventions show a negative effect on the president's use of the veto, both after 1980 and 1995. Another interesting finding to support this conclusion is the interaction effect between divided government and the 1995 indicator. Here, the interpretative implication for this effect shows that when government is divided after 1995 the slope of the coefficient turns in the negative direction. Thus, while the divided government indicator tests for differences in the level of presidential vetoes, it tells us little about the slope of the effect. The interaction effect shows that after 1995 the impact

of presidential vetoes is in the negative direction when combined with divided government.

Table 3.4 Historical Determinants for Presidential Vetoes, 1947 - 2010

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Divided Government	1.095	1.494	1.392
	(.201)***	(.233)***	(.201)***
Public Mood(Lag)	-0.005	-0.005	-0.005
	(.139)	(.074)	(.058)
Dem. President	0.398	0.929	0.973
	(.197)*	(.252)***	(.192)***
Presidential App.	-0.074	-0.017	-0.01
	(.076)	(.019)	(.013)
Election	0.346	0.274	0.274
	(.067)***	(.084)**	(.075)***
Unemployment	0.327	0.213	0.138
	(.129)*	(.130)	(.127)
War	0.126	0.281	0.213
	(.129)	(.142)*	(.135)
1980	-0.525		
	(.121)***		
1995		-0.637	-0.466
		(.185)***	(.173)**
1995 * Divided Gov't			-0.356
			(.170)*
Intercept	-0.414	-0.576	-0.556
	(.150)**	(.193)**	(.153)***
p (1)	0.202	0.191	0.193
	(.090)*	(.090)*	(.078)*
LL	-276.25	-277.66	-275.878
AIC	570.493	573.328	571.757
Wald	4.853	4.376	5.874
p	0.027	0.036	0.015

Note :Estimates for Poisson Autoregressive coefficients.
Standard errors are in parenthesis. N = 256.
***p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10

Moving to Table 3.5, results for bipartisan congressional voting, we see a large number of statistically significant intervention effects. Starting with electoral realignments, each of the controls show a strong and positive, though diminishing effect

Table 3.5 Historical Determinants for Bipartisan Voting, 1947 - 2010

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Δ Majority Cohesion	0.382	0.54	0.442	0.271	0.455	0.51	0.448	0.482
	(.049)***	(.108)***	(.104)***	(.024)***	(.094)***	(.052)***	(.043)***	(.047)***
Public Mood(Lag)	0.023	-0.073	-0.188	0.013	-0.132	-0.054	-0.083	-0.084
	(.044)	(.069)	(.063)**	(.024)	(.066)*	(.042)	(.037)*	(.038)*
Dem. President	0.002	-0.075	-0.104	-0.01	-0.074	-0.035	-0.01	-0.017
	(.030)	(.065)	(.062)^	(.018)	(.058)	(.033)	(.028)	(.030)
Presidential App.	0.067	-0.049	-0.014	-0.026	-0.043	-0.054	-0.06	-0.065
	(.029)*	(.047)	(.046)	(.016)	(.049)	(.030)^	(.026)*	(.027)*
Election	-0.086	-0.25	-0.248	-0.043	-0.232	-0.092	-0.075	-0.08
	(.035)*	(.101)*	(.115)*	(.024)^	(.095)*	(.038)*	(.030)*	(.031)*
Unemployment	-0.064	-0.097	0.023	-0.03	-0.09	-0.155	-0.178	-0.187
	(.034)^	(.076)	(.060)	(.024)	(.072)	(.043)***	(.037)***	(.039)***
War	0.001	0.22	0.133	-0.009	0.125	0.127	0.077	0.07
	(.034)	(.080)**	(.075)^	(.022)	(.070)^	(.037)***	(.030)*	(.031)*
1968	0.581			0.5				
	(.055)***			(.061)***				
1980		0.455			0.467			
		(.112)***			(.115)***			
1995			0.313					
			(.119)**					
1968 * Defectors				0.157				
				(.023)***				
1980 * Defectors					-0.231			
					(.070)***			
1995 * Defectors								
Rules						0.594		
						(.052)***		
Fiat Money							0.611	0.684
							(.045)***	(.060)***
Money * Defectors								-0.082
								(.037)*
Intercept	2.371	2.364	2.379	2.408	2.247	2.378	2.38	2.329
	(.042)***	(.085)***	(.086)***	(.043)***	(.090)***	(.041)***	(.035)***	(.047)***
p (1)	0.135	0.244	0.255	0.074	0.238	0.154	0.101	0.101
	(.032)***	(.030)***	(.030)***	(.027)**	(.030)***	(.032)***	(.033)**	(.032)**
p (2)	-0.075	-0.012	-0.004	-0.015	-0.022	-0.075	-0.093	-0.092
	(.028)*	(.027)	(.027)	(.022)	(.027)	(.028)*	(.028)***	(.027)***
p (3)	0.07	0.114	0.108	0.056	0.106	0.094	0.082	0.083
	(.029)*	(.029)***	(.029)***	(.022)**	(.029)***	(.029)**	(.029)**	(.029)**
p (4)	0.287	0.375	0.367	0.15	0.377	0.284	0.262	0.273
	(.033)***	(.030)***	(.030)***	(.034)***	(.030)***	(.032)***	(.032)***	(.032)***
LL	-1027.7	-1067.2	-1073.7	-1024.1	-1061.7	-1028.8	-1011.4	-1008.9
AIC	2079.31	2158.39	2171.35	2074.19	2149.36	2081.54	2046.74	2043.71
Wald	109.945	408.706	369.631	22.978	375.9	141.781	101.673	112.7
p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Note :Estimates for Poisson Autoregressive coefficients.
Standard errors are in parenthesis. N = 256.

***p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10

on bipartisan voting. Two central findings support this claim. First, each of the progressive time counters show a weaker statistical fit than the previous intervention. The strongest effect, the critical election of 1968, surpasses the effect of not only the 1980 and 1995 realignments but even the cohesion estimate (the long-run effect for 1968 is 13.48 votes compared to 8.87 for intra-party factions). The effect, on the other hand, for 1980 and 1995, is much smaller than the cohesion estimate. Second, the interaction effect for the cohesion and 1980 realignment indicators show a statistically significant change in the slope of bipartisan voting from a positive to a negative direction, supporting the claim that as ideological cohesion tightened over time the parties became more embattled and less cooperative. The interaction effect for intra-party factions and fiat currency further support this argument.

Conclusion

The findings in this chapter reveal a number of important facts regarding the historical footprint of divided government. First, results show that when compared to split-party government, party cohesion is the strongest predictor of legislative accomplishment and bipartisan voting. As the majority party becomes less cohesive ideologically the likelihood of passing important laws and bipartisan voting increases. Second, while findings show divided government has a positive effect on bipartisan voting it is, on the other hand, the strongest predictor of presidential vetoes. Third, analyses of electoral realignments and institutional effects show that, as expected, the interactive effects of intra-party cohesion indicate a negative impact. This suggests that as

the parties purged moderate members from their ranks the result was a move toward polarization. Fourth, the effect of party polarization and gridlock interval show surprisingly mixed results suggesting further research in this area.

Overall, the findings support this chapter's main argument that divided government, in most cases, is a poor predictor of temporal variation in institutional behavior. This conclusion, however, does not exclude divided government as potential explanatory factor. As the results for presidential vetoes illustrate, the key to understanding divided government, and partisan politics in general, is to model the conditions when split-party government best explains partisan politics. The main point of this chapter, then, is not to cast aspersions on one measure or another, or to endorse specific measures or empirical tests, but rather to draw attention to the risk of relying on a sole explanatory factor to describe temporal dynamics. History is much too complex and variable to leave to one determinant.

Chapter 4: Consensus or Conflict:
Unified Government, Divided Government, and Distributive Spending

Does split-party control of government decrease the level of federal spending distributed to the states? Can unified government aid political parties with an advantage in the procurement of federal funds? Surprisingly, with public discourse fixated on deficits and the national debt, scholars of divided government have paid little attention to these questions, building, instead, a research tradition focused on the classification and selection of government's top legislative achievements. For its part, government spending, a function comprising almost four of every ten dollars spent in the economy,[53] is rarely considered as a measure of legislative productivity.

Though this usual focus on legislative productivity has led to many advances in divided government research, inattention to the politics of distributive spending ignores key features of the legislative process. Where landmark legislation, for one, tends to occupy only part of the policy space in Washington, the budget and appropriations process, on the other hand, comprises nearly half of Congress' legislative agenda; encompassing, at times, over a third of all roll-call voting (Orenstein et al. 2008). Moreover, with a steady rise in partisan polarization since the 1980s (McCarty et al. 2006; Theirault 2008), rhetoric over the role, scope, and magnitude of federal spending suggests these disagreements are also reflected in the appropriations process. In many

[53] Though discretionary spending is a much smaller part of national spending, I only mention this statistic as an illustrative point.

respects, federal spending has moved discussions over public policy solutions into debates over deficits and the debt.

Notwithstanding these observations, studies sensitive to the politics of federal spending also add new theoretical and methodological contributions to the divided government debate. Theoretically, the difference between measures of distributive politics and the classification of substantive legislation hinges on the level of democratic accountability both theories explain. That is, while the latter theory places more weight on large, sweeping policy changes (Adler and Wilkerson 2012) the former is geared toward capturing long-term political difference, since legislators vote on the same group of appropriations annually. Where measures of important legislation provide information about the preferences of government at one particular moment, there is little detail, however, about how those preferences transfer to other laws. The benefit of applying distributive politics in a divided government context is this approach provides an alternative vantage point for understanding institutional behavior, while providing a stable estimate of partisan preferences over time.

The methodological benefit of incorporating federal spending into a divided government research design is that federal funds are easier to compare than measures of landmark legislation. While a common criticism of notable legislation centers on the level of imprecision inherent in their construction,[54] this is, in many respects, ancillary over concerns of comparability essential to measuring the variability of institutional behavior across both unified and divided governments. Measures of significant

[54] See Clinton and Lapinski (2006) for an articulate accounting of this criticism.

legislation particularly fall short in this area since many of laws are quite distinct from one another (Lapinski 2008). For example, there is no effective way of gauging the difference between an important civil rights bill and law designed to alleviate economic hardship due to recession. In comparison, when adjusted for inflation, federal spending is easily comparable. Not only do large changes in spending have substantive meaning, these changes are sensitive to political pressures that influence the legislative process.

Borrowing from the distributive politics literature, I utilize the *Consolidated Federal Funds Report* (CFFR) data between fiscal years 1983 and 2010, and analyze the annual percent change in federal spending at the state level across a number of domestic spending categories. Leveraging these indicators against ideology estimates recovered specifically from roll calls on appropriations, evidence suggests that the effect of the distributive tendency on changes in federal spending mutes most differences between unified and divided government. Moreover, tests show control indicators such as exogenous shocks exhibit a strong, albeit, not uniform, effect on changes in federal funding. Overall, the United States appropriation process is more indicative of consensus than conflict.

Substantive Legislation and Divided Government

In recent years, advances in measures of legislative accomplishment tend to base their work on David Mayhew's (1991) rankings of significant legislation. While certainly not the first work to gauge government performance through the lens of legislative success (Castel and Gibson 1975; Gordon 1966; Sundquist 1968; Truman 1959),

Mayhew's study is the first to develop a methodological standard for classifying important laws, influencing scores of researchers interested in testing theories of the legislative process. From studies of legislative gridlock (Binder 1999, 2003; Chiou and Rothenberg 2003, 2009; Coleman 1999; Edwards et al. 1997; Howell et al. 2000; Howell 2003; Krehbiel 1998) to research on congressional behavior and presidential success (Barrett and Eshbaugh-Soha 2007; Cameron 2000; Edwards and Barrett 2000; Epstein and O'Halloran 1999), the broad appeal of this approach centers on an intuitive understanding of how landmark legislation can explain government accomplishment.

Mayhew's approach was especially welcome to students of split-party government, since it provided scholars with a straightforward method to judge legislative productivity between unified and divided government. Until this time, most work on government outcomes tended to focus on presidential success (Edwards 1980, 1989), or on congressional support of the president (Bond and Fleisher 1990; Peterson 1990), rather than on the productive output of government. Mayhew reasoned that if divided government stalled the legislative process as many claimed (Sundquist 1988) then the ranking of important law is a practical tool for studying this question, since measures of presidential success, for instance, told only one part of the legislative story.

Despite the popularity of these rankings, the classification of significant legislation poses a number of theoretical and methodological limitations. One criticism of these rankings focuses on the level of imprecision common in most selection criteria

(Clinton and Lapinski 2006).[55] Not only is the manner of how raters conceptualize "notable" laws inherently vague, the degree of inter-rater reliability across classifications is questionable as well. Where some studies use overlapping news sources to develop their rankings, direct comparisons are difficult since no two lists are created from the same set of sources.[56] Furthermore, since many of these studies only consider legislation deemed important (Howell et al. being one exception), all other legislation is ignored. This selection process overlooks large numbers of law that may provide additional information on U.S. lawmaking (Alder and Wilkerson 2012; Grant and Kelly 2008).

However, while these criticisms shed light on some important conceptual limitations, these concerns are largely secondary to the issue of comparability. What I mean here, is the ability of a measure to have the same interpretive value within and across time. This is especially important for research on divided government, where measureable comparisons are necessary to determine the success of each governing type. Not only are many of the laws in these rankings substantively different in both policy content and bureaucratic function (Lapinski 2008), they are also temporally divergent.

[55] Clinton and Lapinski argue that while the loose conceptualization of these laws seem to provide some ex post validity, they question the relationship between classification parameters and whether the laws that meet these criteria are accurately reviewed by contemporary news sources. The difficulty in operationalizing these laws is that factors such as the degree of controversy surrounding a law may also influence media coverage, potentially distorting its substantive value.

[56] Mayhew, for one, uses editorials of the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, where Howell et al. (2000) include rankings by the *CQ Almanac*. Binder (1999), on the other hand, weighs Mayhew's laws against the number of items introduced into the legislative agenda as described only by the *Times*.

These rankings, in other words, lack a fixed point of reference from which to judge whether the quality of a law passed at one period is equal to those passed at another.[57]

This issue of comparability is especially problematic in the degree of accuracy one can conclude about how unified and divided government compare not only to each other, but also in how the two governing regimes compare across time. The quality of inference needs to be qualified against the understanding that while empirical findings may suggest one interpretation, it is implausible to draw the same general conclusions across all institutional behavior, and across all political time. For instance, one could infer two different unified governments, similar only by the fact that one party controls all of government, share a common bond because both enact a similar number of notable laws. However, inferring that two governments are similar because of the number of important pieces of passed legislation oversimplifies the legislative process, since the political actors, political conditions, and the willingness of the polity to accept notable legislation is never similar across time.

Connecting Distributive Politics to Divided Government

Unlike rankings of landmark legislation, measures of federal spending are particularly well-suited to estimate the effect of divided government on legislator preferences. In addition to an abundance of available data, federal spending highlights important features of contemporary American politics, namely the electoral advantage

[57] As a case in point, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Alaska Lands Preservation Act of 1980, underscores this concern. While the latter may play a crucial role in many Americans lives, few would doubt that its "importance" pales in comparison to the former.

incumbents derive by appropriating federal funds to their states. Simply put, political responsiveness, or, more realistically, political credit-claiming, seems more applicable to federal appropriations than landmark legislation. This is because the tangible benefit of purchased goods is far less abstract than, say, civil rights, clean water, or anti-terrorism legislation. Of course, Americans are likely to extrapolate gains from large sweeping legislation, but since many of these laws are parochial in function, yet national in scope, few Americans may actually benefit directly from these laws.[58] The point to note is not that landmark legislation lacks interpretive value, but to suggest that since many of these laws benefit targeted constituents in a similar manner as appropriations, one can circumvent the theoretical and methodological issues of the rankings exercise with those of federal spending. Three lines of argument support this claim.

First, appropriations bills are continually debated and amended throughout the legislative process (Oleszek 2004; Schick 2007). Partisan conflict that surrounds the funding of a specific program or department is likely to persist until new political equilibriums alter the dynamics of the policy space. This process, in other words, works especially well for measuring the long-term preferences of legislators since Congress annually appropriates funds to maintain the operation of twelve budget authorizations.[59] On the other hand, legislation addressing healthcare reform, for example, rarely receives the same periodic attention in Congress. In fact, until the Affordable Care Act, all

[58] For example, the nation's unemployed may receive cut-off extensions on their benefits or a racial minority may rightfully have barriers to the franchise removed, but few Americans may actually feel the direct benefit of such laws.

[59] See Woon and Anderson (2012) for a refinement of this general conclusion.

previous legislative attempts at reforming the healthcare system generally occurred only once every decade (Johnson and Broader 1995).

In addition to the legislative timing of the appropriations process, government spending is also relatively straightforward to measure. Since money is measured in divisible units, when adjusted for inflation, government spending is comparable across vast distances of time. As Davis et al. (1966, p.544) articulate, "[Spending] provides units of analysis that are readily amenable to formulating and testing propositions statistically." Equally important, spending amounts are easy to interpret. Where the difference between one dollar and one million dollars has intuitive meaning about the value of goods and services, appropriations also provide information about the preferences of elected officials. Changes in spending, for example, signal clear shifts in the preferences of legislators, while budgetary stasis is suggestive of a stable or gridlocked status quo.

Finally, federal spending provides a direct, measurable link between policy preferences and policy outcomes. Compared to landmark legislation where long-term preferences are difficult to discern, federal spending provides a fairly consistent accounting of the underlying attributes of legislator preferences. This is not to say elite voting preferences on individual landmark legislation is unmeasurable, but to argue, rather, that one never gets a true sense of whether the long-term preferences across all significant legislation is pressured by party (Cox and McCubbins 2006), ideology (Poole and Rosenthal 2007), voters (Mayhew 1974), or some combination of each, for example. If one chooses to test theories of divided government with rankings of significant legislation, one should exercise caution since it is unlikely that the political pressures

comprising a particular law at one moment are the same for laws at other moments. In contrast, the assumption of this chapter is that the political preferences associated with distributive spending are fairly consistent across and within each spending bill, since politicians can directly credit-claim on the quantifiable goods they provide their constituents.

Expectations

Taken together, theories found in the distributive politics literature provide a number of testable hypotheses from which to measure institutional behavior between unified and divided government. The reader should note, that the theoretical expectations I present below are an amalgam of competing perspectives and approaches within the literature. Many of the works cited incorporate, in some cases, entirely different datasets and concepts of measures. For the purposes of this study, I am only interested in the broad, thematic views of how the preferences that surround spending are influenced by the character of changes in government control. I test three theories found in the distributive literature.

First, a number of scholars have tended to view legislator behavior through the direct, electoral benefits incumbents receive by distributing federal funding to constituents (Evans 2004; Ferejohn 1974). Because members of Congress, it is argued, are inherently risk-averse, they attempt to insure their electoral survival by distributing the available pool of discretionary dollars widely across most members of Congress (Kiewiet and McCubbins 1985; Mayhew 1974; Ray 1980; Shepsle and Weingast 1981;

Weingast 1979; Weingast and Marshall 1988). Concerns over reelection transcend, in many respects, the traditional cleavages that define partisanship. This form of universalism is especially important for incumbents who face quality challengers, are elected by a narrow margin, and are elected to an open congressional seat (Bickers and Stein 1996).[60] The first hypothesis for this chapter, then, captures the idea that incumbent concerns for reelection mute the distinction between unified and divided government.[61]

> *Universalism*: Regardless of whether government is unified or divided, there is little difference in the change of federal spending to the states.

A number of scholars, in contrast to the universalism perspective, argue the amount of federal spending constituents receive is dependent on party control of government. Because the linkage between electoral survival and federal spending is obvious to legislators, natural conflict between the parties over which party receives the bulk of discretionary spending creates winners and losers. Levitt and Snyder (1995), for instance, find that distributional benefits are skewed in favor of districts with large shares of Democratic voters, while Bickers and Stein (2000) find incumbent Republicans extract more spending when the funding categories comprise contingent liabilities.[62] In addition, others find that not only does the majority party in Congress manipulate spending to its advantage (Bella et al. 2002: Carroll and Kim 2010; Casey and Rundquist 1999) but more senior members extract spending benefits as well (Ferejohn 1974; Lee 2003). It seems

[60] A number of studies draw opposite conclusions and argue there is little evidence to suggest vulnerable members of Congress benefit from distributive politics (Frisch 1996; Stein and Bickers 1994b), though Lazarus (2009) adds that this is true only for members of the minority party.

[61] An additional perspective on the universalism approach is provided by McCubbins (1991) who contends that members of both parties actually increase spending rather than risk losing out on funding altogether.

[62] Contingent liabilities are direct loans, guaranteed loans, and federal insurance programs—programs generally favored by Republicans.

likely, that if partisanship affects a legislator's calculus on federal spending then the composition of government control should matter. Based on this logic, I predict the following relationship:

> *Party Polarization*: The higher the degree of partisan difference, changes in federal funding are more likely to decrease during divided government and increase when government is unified.

Scholars of distributive politics have also sought to understand how incumbents extract funds for constituents by analyzing differences in chamber affiliation. Because the two chambers operate under different rules, procedures, and norms, the amount of funds representatives and senators obtain may be determined by one's institutional vantage point. Lee (1998), for one, finds that because of equal representation in the Senate, party leadership can buy the votes of senators from small states more cheaply than senators from larger states. Moreover, it is much cheaper to buy one senator from a small state to reach a supermajority coalition than to buy off a handful of representatives (Ansolabehere et al. 2003).[63] While geographic boundaries limit the need for the party leadership in the House to consider such practices, the strength of partisanship in the lower chamber, it is argued, exerts enough pull on members to reach majority-winning coalitions (Cox and McCubbins 1993). The difference in the amount of funds extracted between the chambers, then, may alter institutional behavior between unified and divided government.

> *Bicameral Difference*: Compared to the House, party polarization in the Senate will have less of an impact on changes in the amount of funds states receive, regardless of whether government is unified or divided.

[63] Some studies, however, find little difference between the chambers. Shepsle et al. (2009), for one, find that differences in House and Senate electoral cycles determine when the leadership provides earmarks to the rank-and-file. Lazarus and Steigerwalt (2009), on the other hand, find that members of the majority party in both the House and Senate obtain more earmarks for their constituents.

Data

The following describes data used in creating the dependent variables and explanatory indicators. The appendix at the end of this chapter details how all indicators are operationalized. Table A4.1 lists all descriptive statistics. Estimation techniques used in recovering ideal point scores are discussed in the Methods section.

The dependent variables used in this chapter are compiled from the *Consolidated Federal Funds Report* (CFFR) between fiscal years 1983 and 2010. The unit of analysis is the percent change in the state-level distribution of funds.[64] The specific spending categories analyzed are all general grants,[65] all domestic procurement contracts,[66] unemployment, Planned Parenthood, funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Department of Transportation.[67] All data is adjusted for inflation to 2010 dollars.

The justification for selecting CFFR data on a state-level unit of analysis is as follows. First, because I am interested in the effect of unified and divided government on funding outcomes, I need a consistent measure of spending from which to gauge the preferences of elite behavior. While most studies on distributive politics focus attention on congressional earmarks as the closet link between legislator credit-claiming and constituency benefits, this option is too restrictive for long-term temporal studies. For example, until recently, data limitations on congressional earmarks constrained most

[64] I exclude the District of Columbia.

[65] Programs under the general grant heading are vast. Programs cover such spending as Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance, the Airport Improvement Program, Social Behavioral and Economic Sciences, and the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program, to name but a few.

[66] These are all contracts other than those for defense and the US Postal Service.

[67] Spending under the Department of Transportation heading includes general grants, and procurement contracts, not to mention programs specifically designed for transportation purposes.

studies to fairly narrow time spans. Because of this, contemporary research on legislative pork tends to focus on 21st century congressional behavior. More important, the nature of the distribution of pork makes it difficult to discern why legislators receive more or less rewards across congresses. Scholars have made inroads understanding the determinants of legislator success in the rewards process, but because these studies analyze specific appropriation periods, how well these theories hold for a longer time series is still in question. For its part, though the CFFR data is far from perfect, it does provide a consistent metric to estimate differences between unified and divided government.

Second, since CFFR data is listed by county, there are relatively few options from which to estimate and compare legislator preferences. While an individual-level analysis is possible with county data, such an analysis would likely bias the results in favor of the Republican Party since all urban congressional districts are generally compressed within and across counties. As a result, this study is measured on a state-level unit of analysis. While the reader may question how state-level delegations[68] can extract funding to a particular state, no real operational method exists to bridge the gap between the individual-level metric of congressional earmarks that are temporally limited, to annual government spending that is easy to compare across time but is difficult to measure at the individual level. The dataset used in this chapter is a combination of both approaches. The reader should note that I am more concerned with how divided government affects changes in the distribution of funds across time. Because I incorporate various programs

[68] State-level delegations are not uncommon in political discourse—politicians and pundits constantly describe states as conservative, liberal, or moderate.

and departments in this analysis, aggregate ideological differences should matter for changes in the distributions of funds.

An obvious challenge with operationalizing a state-level unit of analysis based on the distribution of federal funds is that large states tend to receive more funds than smaller states. Geography and population size dictate this fact.[69] The amount of funds California and Rhode Island receive is quite different. For example, for transportation funds, California receives, on average, almost eighteen times as great as Rhode Island. Clearly, using actual dollar amounts would bias distributive spending in favor of larger states. To account for this disparity, I calculate the annual percent change in the amount of funds distributed to each state.[70] As a result, all states are directly comparable. This is critical for measuring changes between unified and government since this metric provides a direct quantifiable baseline of institutional behavior.

Finally, I include a number of independent indicators including election years, the percent change in the annual national unemployment rate,[71][72] and an exogenous shock measure capturing economic recessions, war, and post-9/11 counters. As an additional political measure, I use the annual change in the public's policy mood as a gauge of national sentiment toward government spending. I select these control indicators since these seem to be the more popular variables used in the divided government literature.

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[69] See Alvarez and Saving (1997, 57-9) for a similar discussion.

[70] To avoid excessive outliers, I compress the data set to changes of no greater than 100% for an easy comparison between spending categories.

[71] I also ran tests with a number of alternative economic indicators including the yearly change in the national GDP, publicly held debt, deficits, and tax revenues. Most of these measures perform poorly and are omitted.

[72] I also use state-level unemployment rates as well.

Ideal Point Estimation Method

Since this study is primarily interested in domestic federal spending, votes used to create all ideal points need to reflect, as close as possible, these votes. Unfortunately, few options are available outside of existing datasets. For example, the industry standard ideology scores of Poole and Rosenthal (2007) are inappropriate for appropriations voting since their estimates are created using all roll call votes, regardless of policy context and vote type. Even studies that use appropriations voting to estimate legislator preferences fail to meet the requirements of this chapter, since they either estimate ideal points for different time spans or divide votes differently. Crespin and Rohde (2010), for one, estimate legislator preferences for appropriations bills, but their timeline is shorter than this chapter and they separate spending bills by jurisdiction in order to analyze the dimensionality of voting on policy content. Since this chapter is entirely unique in its requirements, using any other estimates may introduce a high level of imprecision that could bias results.

Using roll call data on all domestic appropriations[73] votes between FY 1983 and 2010, I adjust for this challenge and recover ideal point estimates with the Bayesian IDEAL program developed by Clinton et al. (2004). The dataset is formatted for optimal classification based on Trier's (2011) method of aligning bridge and anchor votes so as to compare roll calls across time and between legislative chambers. However, where the Trier technique provides an easy-to-use formatting structure to recover estimates, my

[73] One challenge in compiling these measures is that periodically Congress combines appropriations bills into larger pieces of legislation. Because of this, I am forced to use bills that are, for example, defense related but include domestic-level programmatic spending.

concern is selecting acceptable legislator 'anchor' votes to use as a base for comparison. As with all studies that estimate ideal points using roll call votes, an overarching concern is selecting legislators to serve as a fixed point of reference from which all subsequent scores are estimated (Bailey 2007; Groseclose et al. 1999; Martin and Quinn 2002). The main challenge in this chapter, centered on selecting these anchors, since matching corresponding votes between the House and Senate is a reasonably straightforward exercise. Specifically, recovering estimates on domestic appropriation votes poses two obstacles.

First, despite a relatively short time span of 26 years, even though a handful of Senators and Representatives served consecutively during this period, no one or group of legislator(s) recorded a near perfect attendance record during this time span. Using any of these members as anchors would result in a diminished sample size.[74] Second, even with a decent number of actors to fill the role of anchor, many legislators cross party lines so selecting the perfect liberal or conservative is not as easy as one would expect.

Following the suggestions of Bailey (2007), I do not assume member preferences are fixed and instead use party unity as a point of reference. I essentially create two fictitious legislators as an anchor based on three different party unity criteria: 50%, 25% and 10% voting differences between the parties, with the 10% classification capturing the most votes. In each instance, I calculate the absolute value of the difference in support for a bill and create an anchor based on which party shows the highest support. For example,

[74] Here, I only mean that if the two legislators I constrain vote the same or are absent, I am forced to delete that observation from the sample.

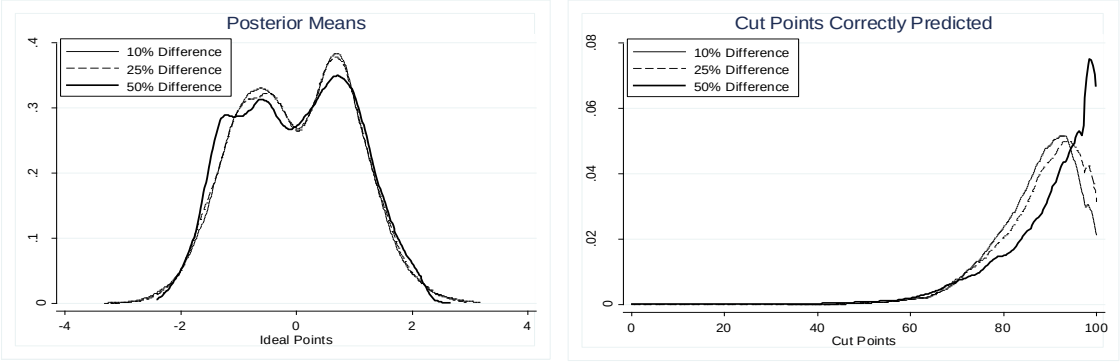
in the first classification, if 50% of the Democratic Party votes together in support of a measure with no Republican support, then all votes that support the measure are classified as Democratic and all votes in opposition Republican. Votes that fail to meet the criteria of each classification were omitted from the estimation procedure.

I justify this bridging schema on two grounds. First, because the timeline of this dataset is relatively small, it is highly probable that party unity on appropriations voting is fairly, though not completely, consistent. For example, party unity scores on appropriations during the entire 98th Congress scored 83% and 75% unity for Democrats and Republicans. Jumping to the 111th Congress, these scores are 96% and 83%. So, while party unity voting increased overall, the difference between both parties remained relatively stable. Second, I calculate party cohesion scores of the longest serving members in this series as a robustness check. Results show that regardless of which party controls their chamber, the majority party's unity score for the longest serving members never falls below 92%, and in most cases is above 95%. On the other hand, scores are more variable for the minority party, with scores roughly 10 to 15% lower. Thus, the party unity method essentially matches the unity votes of the longest serving members when their party is in the majority, but improves the classification when they are in the minority. Naturally, the downside of this technique is I am not constraining the records of two legislators. The upside, however, is this method more closely taps the ideological spending platforms of both parties since the 1980s.

Figure 4.1 presents the posterior mean ideal estimates, and the percent of votes correctly predicted, for all appropriations votes under the 10%, 25%, and 50% rubrics.

Beginning with the graph on the left, the mean ideal estimates for all members in the House and Senate, the graph illustrates the fairly close distribution of each set of ideology scores. This suggests there is no difference in using the more inclusive 10% party unity classification than the conventional 50% party unity metric. A drawback of using this inclusive measure, though, is the more votes included in the estimate, the lower the total percent of all votes correctly predicted given the anchor selection. The right hand graph shows that the 50% classification correctly predicts, overall, more votes above the 90% range than the lower methods. While this may imply the 10% classification is inferior to the stricter party unity measure, these roll calls, in fact, more closely reflect the true picture of actual appropriations voting.

Figure 4.1 Graphical Illustration of Appropriations Ideal Estimates



Note: Estimates are recovered using 6,400 node Dell PowerEdge C8220 Cluster supercomputer and a smaller 96 node Dell cluster supercomputer in long que.

Results

To begin, Figure 4.2 presents density functions of the dependent variables sorted by unified and divided government. Overall, findings confirm the alternative hypothesis that the distributive outputs on these spending categories are essentially the same for both government types. In fact, figures that do exhibit slight differences in the distributional

change of spending to the states are generally higher on average during periods of divided government, suggesting the parties, when forced to co-govern, likely share a positive increase in spending rather than adopt brinksmanship strategies. It seems that during periods of unified government, reductions in spending are more common. Perhaps the increases in programs favorable to the majority party are not high enough to offset reductions in other programs to mark a noticeable difference when compared to divided government. Another potential conclusion to draw from Figure 4.2 is that changes in spending may be indicative of structural patterns that transcend any governing regime. That is, for both parties, the annual appropriations process is simply a mechanism for distributing federal funds to constituents, both personal and corporate, that partisan shifts in governing control may be unable to alter without excessive or radical politics. Though not presented here, as a further test, distributional patterns for actual dollar spending show no difference between the two governing regimes.[75]

As a preliminary test of the effect of divided government on changes in distributive spending, I perform a multivariate panel regression analysis using a Generalized Estimating Equations (GEE) model (Fitzmaurice et al. 2004). In this modeling structure, the data is organized at the state level and across time.[76] Table 4.1 presents the findings.

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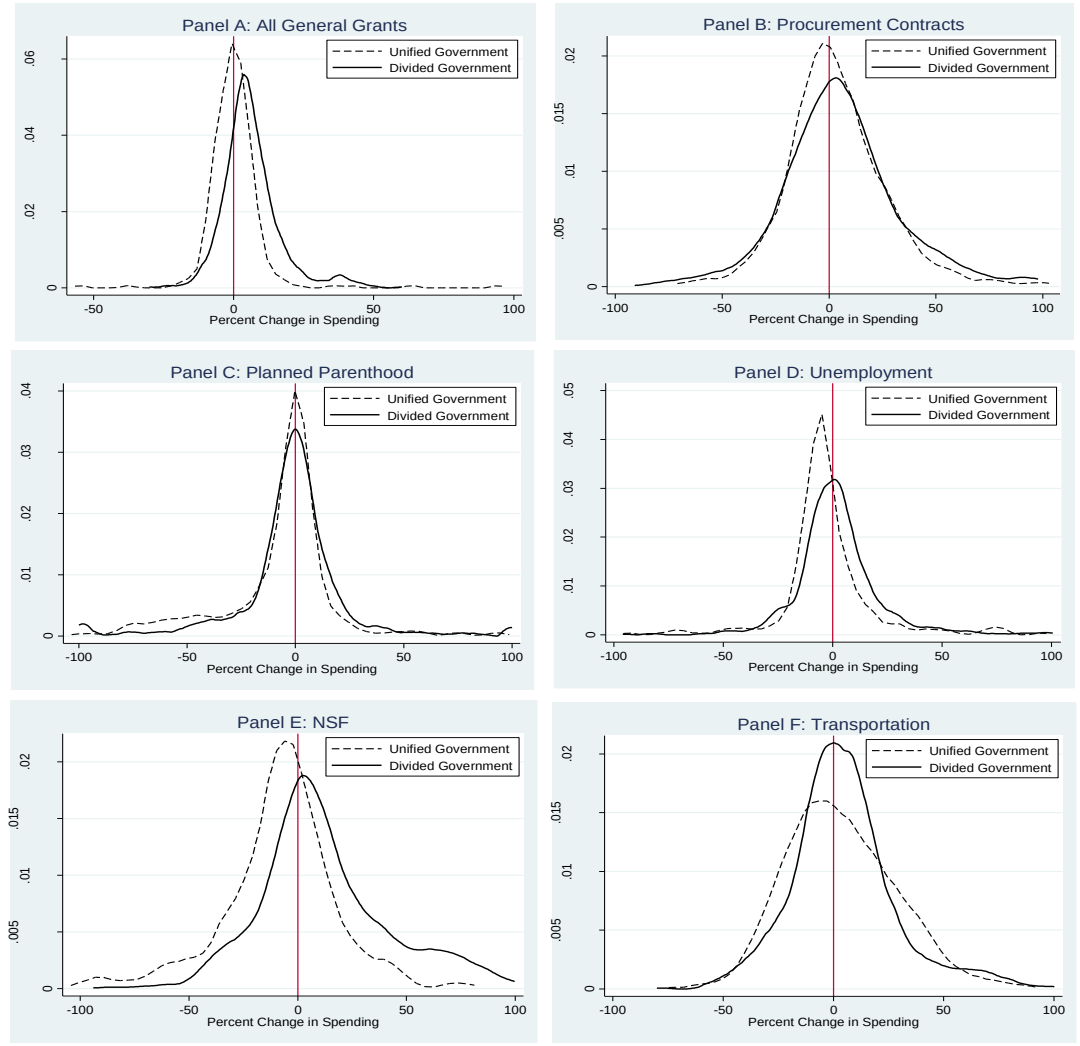
[75] The distributional patterns for all categories follow a positive skew since there is little negative spending.

[76] A benefit of the GEE panel approach is it accounts for the lack of independence in repeated measurements by assuming a working correlation exists in the structure of the data. In other words, one can control of the correlation structure as a covariate. The basic model is summarized as follows:

$$Y_{it} = \beta_0 + \sum_{j=1}^{J} \beta_{1j} X_{itj} + \cdots + CORR_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

Figure 4.2 Congressional Support on Appropriations, FY 1984-2010



where Y_{it} are observations of the dependent variable for state *i* at time *t*, β_0 is the intercept, X_{itj} represents an independent variable *j* for state *i* at time *t*, β_{1j} is the regression coefficient for an independent variable *j*, *J* is the number of independent variables, *t* is time, $CORR_{it}$ is the working correlation structure, and ε_{it} is the error term for state *i* at time *t*. For each model presented, I use an exchangeable correlation structure which assumes a constant correlation among the repeated measures. All results presented in the following section are calculated with the Huber-White sandwich estimator.

First, the overall model fit for each classification is strong and statistically significant ($p < 0.000$). Supporting Figure 4.2, divided government is positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) indicating when government is under split-party control the percent change in funding to the states is appreciably higher than during unified government. For example, for all general grants, states receive roughly a nine percent increase in the distribution of federal funds, while for procurement contracts that figure is almost four percent. Interestingly, states receive nearly a 30% increase in NSF funding during periods of divided government than any other period.

Remaining on Table 4.1, a number of statistical controls also influences the level of funding states receive. For exogenous shocks, instances or war, September 11th, or economic recession, the higher the number of events, increases spending across in all dependent variables to the states. Not surprisingly, elections have a statistically positive effect in changes to federal funding to the states for general grants, unemployment, and transportation funding; three policy areas we would expect more responsive government action. On the other hand, elections have a negative impact on Planned Parenthood and NSF funding than nonelection periods, while the effect is positive, as we would expect, for unemployment and transportation.

Table 4.1 Base Comparison of Distributive Spending for Unified and Divided Government

	General Grants		Procurement		Unemployment		Planned Parenthood		NSF		Transportation	
	coeff	se	coeff	se	coeff	se	coeff	se	coeff	se	coeff	se
Election Time	2.771	(.478)***	-1.119	(1.823)	5.47	(1.195)***	-4.111	(1.413)***	-10.077	(1.534)***	10.709	(1.225)***
Chg Public Mood	-1.212	(.201)***	-0.442	(.626)	-0.938	(.357)**	-2.572	(.444)***	-2.311	(.536)***	-0.603	(.409)
Δ Unemployment	0.047	(.026)^	0.165	(.083)*	0.029	(.045)	-0.182	(.050)***	-0.029	(.058)	-0.114	(.049)*
Exogenous Shock	1.807	(.222)***	1.646	(.902)^	4.598	(.522)***	1.254	(.673)^	5.242	(.722)***	5.025	(.532)***
Divided Gov't	9.181	(.690)***	3.909	(1.909)*	10.035	(1.356)***	10.467	(1.980)***	29.724	(1.746)***	5.933	(1.491)***
Constant	-4.571	(.691)***	1.566	(2.243)	-12.719	(1.385)***	-9.385	(1.711)***	-13.861	(1.802)***	-9.358	(1.748)***
Wald	491.51		49.16		198.77		61.94		460.33		215.67	
p	0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000	
N	1349		1318		1328		1300		1297		1340	

Note: Estimates are Generalized Estimating Equations for time series cross-sectional data grouped on states. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Degrees of freedom = 5.
***p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10

Despite these preliminary findings, they in fact tell us little about the preferences of party on changes in federal funding to the states. Figure 4.3 presents density functions for the state-level average[77] of all recovered ideal point estimates for both chambers of Congress. Contrary to expectations, not only are the distributions nearly identical for unified and divided government in the House of Representatives, but the distributions are normally distributed, suggesting partisan differences are not as great as conventional theory would lead us to expect. If partisan differences existed, the distributions would likely follow a bimodal form, meaning that party ideology is markedly distinct over changes in federal funding to the states. Figure A4.1 (Appendix) further illustrates this point. This figure replicates the findings in Figure 4.2 but sorts spending by state party control. Across all categories, changes in the distribution of federal funding are the same for states controlled by each party. The Senate graph reveals a slight dissimilarity, while the variance between the two regimes shows a smaller spread for periods of divided government and a wider range for single-party government.

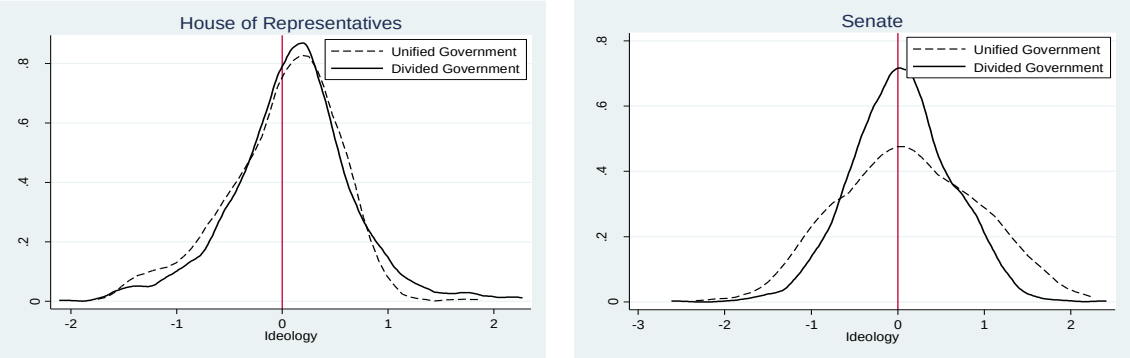
Leveraging these estimates against the actual distribution of funds, Figure 4.4 presents scatter plots with linear predictions across each spending category, separated by government type, for the House of Representatives.[78] Reinforcing earlier findings, four of the six graphs show essentially no difference in the linear predictions between unified and divided government when controlling for state average ideology on spending. Of the

[77] I also look at the kernel densities of individual member ideal estimates for both unified and divided government and, again, find little difference between the two regimes. However, the shapes of the distributions are different with the House illustrating a slightly bimodal pattern. Because the multivariate analysis is conducted at the state-level, I opted to show the corresponding formatted data.

[78] Results for the Senate are omitted to save space as the findings are nearly identical.

four, the predictive direction for both governing regimes is primarily flat and averaged on zero, indicating that even when one particular state receives a large increase or decrease in funding, the difference in the intensity of ideology for those states during single or split-party government is not strong enough to affect the overall changes in funding. For the final two graphs, Planned Parenthood and NSF funding, contrary to traditional expectations, findings indicate a positive trend in a conservative direction. When government is unified, there is a positive change in Planned Parenthood funding for more conservative states as well as for NSF funding during divided government.

Figure 4.3 Partisan Preferences on Appropriation Voting - State-Level Average, FY 1984-2010

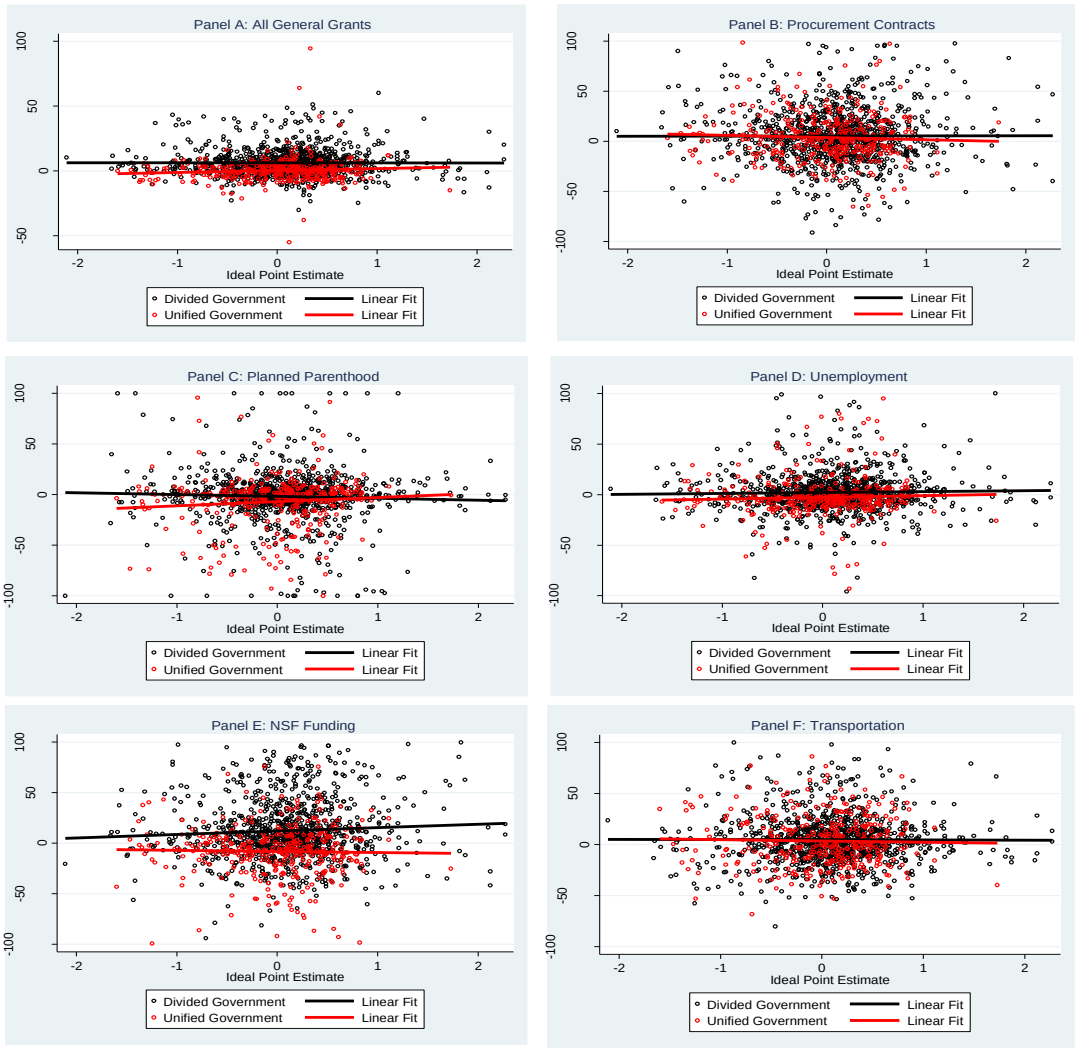


Building on Figure 4, I calculate yearly polarization scores for both chambers using the individual-level ideology estimates and apply these scores to each state. This indicator captures chamber-level effects on spending across all states in a given year. Since creating polarization scores at the state-level is near impossible, I account for polarization using this readily available data.[79] Table 4.2 presents the results for each

[79] The primary difficultly of creating state-level polarization scores is some states do not have members from the opposition party from which to calculate estimates.

category by unified and divided government. All models, except Procurement Contracts during unified government, show a strong statistical fit ($p < 0.000$).

Figure 4.4 Congressional Support on Appropriations, Unified and Divided Government, FY 1984-2010



Note: Negative ideal points represent less support for spending.

Beginning with polarization in the House, the first noticeable similarity between the two governing regimes is that, except for Planned Parenthood and unified government, polarization has a negative effect on spending changes to the states. Interpreted broadly, when polarization increases in the House, states see a decrease in the

overall amount of funding they receive. In some cases the size of the decrease is much larger during periods of unified government than for split-party governance. However, this trend is different in the Senate, where during periods of divided government, the effect is positive, even for coefficients that do not reach conventional levels of statistical significance. Put differently, party polarization, contrary to expectations in the literature, actually increases the amount of funding states receive in the Senate, except for unemployment, NSF, and transportation funding, during unified government.

Moving to the control indictors,[80] results show exogenous shocks and change in the public's mood hold across all funding categories. Exogenous shocks have a positive effect on funding to the states. Thus, when the number of events that comprise this rubric increases, states receive, holding all else constant, positive changes in the amount of funding than had these events not transpired. Surprisingly, the effect of the percent change in public mood is largely negative. This suggests, contrary to expectations a more Liberal society encourages spending, that as the public's mood shifts in a liberal

[80] I conduct a number of additional tests to analyze alternative explanations scholars argue may influence changes in federal spending. To save space, I exclude these results. For one, I test the number of members each state has on the Appropriations Committee to determine if relationships exist between committee assignments and federal spending (Alvarez and Saving 1997; Fenno 1966; Ferejohn 1974) and seniority level. Findings reveal none of these indicators have a statistically significant effect on distributional funding to the states.

In addition, I test each category by presidential administration to determine if spending is different across executive tenure. Evidence shows no noticeable pattern between unified and divided government. As an example, under the rubric of transportation funding, both Reagan and Obama have a strong negative statistical effect on the amounts states receive, while the George H. W. Bush presidency, both of Clinton's unified and divided governments, as well as George W. Bush's unified and divided governments, all show a positive effect.

Finally, I also look at the effect of party on the distribution of funds states receive by sorting the categories by minority, majority, and mixed party affiliations in the Senate to determine if, for example, states associated with the minority party receive less funding during periods of unified than divided government. Multivariate findings are too variable to present while graphical illustrations show spending for both unified and divided government show only slight differences in overall distributional patterns.

Table 4.2 Partisan Comparison of Distributive Spending During Unified and Divided Government

	All General Grants		Procurement		Unemployment		Planned Parenthood		NSF		Transportation	
	Divided	Unified	Divided	Unified	Divided	Unified	Divided	Unified	Divided	Unified	Divided	Unified
Election	1.351	-21.546	-4.896	0.552	2.089	-168.464	-13.387	59.451	-13.256	-123.166	11.011	-135.778
	(.486)**	(18.929)	(2.247)*	(32.572)	(1.508)	(40.512)***	(1.788)***	(32.513)^	(1.929)***	(24.053)***	(1.373)***	(29.570)***
Δ Public Mood	-0.544	-3.75	-2.716	3.677	-0.463	-46.717	-4.645	-20.117	-9.225	-25.799	-1.568	-51.094
	(.272)*	(4.528)	(1.169)*	(7.229)	(.715)	(10.831)***	(.610)***	(7.746)**	(.863)***	(5.981)***	(.755)*	(7.709)***
Δ Unemployment	0.256	-1.371	0.195	0.105	0.21	-10.695	-0.171	0.733	0.195	-7.581	0.223	-9.058
	(.032)***	(1.112)	(.108)^	(1.792)	(.059)***	(2.399)***	(.063)**	(1.946)	(.089)*	(1.441)***	(.074)**	(1.699)***
Shocks	2.389	21.104	1.816	5.785	5.667	164.845	3.368	-34.338	1.877	125.269	5.726	105.025
	(.296)***	(17.860)	(1.311)	(29.134)	(.749)***	(36.232)***	(.916)***	(32.202)	(1.041)^	(23.313)***	(.792)***	(26.064)***
House Polarization	-3.026	-34.208	-7.899	-22.266	-9.112	-165.803	-21.666	142.719	-13.187	-138.814	-12.738	-8.111
	(1.185)*	(21.874)	(3.284)*	(37.952)	(2.267)***	(35.509)***	(2.498)***	(42.606)**	(3.648)***	(28.595)***	(2.232)***	(28.994)
Senate Polarization	0.953	-13.572	1.419	6.832	3.399	-186.176	1.415	-15.102	-0.809	-85.275	3.259	-190.315
	(.323)**	(19.486)	(1.209)	(31.104)	(.679)***	(45.628)***	(1.130)	(32.707)	(1.222)	(24.351)***	(.800)***	(32.488)***
Constant	11.358	126.76	28.196	56.8	16.979	831.27	64.072	-449.407	63.255	527.448	26.247	378.085
	(2.798)***	(101.125)	(7.709)***	(167.568)	(5.949)**	(190.363)***	(5.643)***	(182.040)*	(8.524)***	(124.008)***	(4.983)***	(143.256)**
Wald	889.77	103.73	51.2	9.18	200.42	35.59	226.79	181.53	732.41	172	291.5	511.11
p	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.163	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
N	1000	349	976	342	986	342	953	347	947	350	995	345

Note: Estimates are Generalized Estimating Equations for time series cross-sectional data grouped on states. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Degrees of freedom = 6.
***p < 0.001, ** p < 0.01, * p < 0.05, ^ p < 0.10

direction, these coefficients show a negative effect on the amount of funding states receive. Finally, constituent-centered explanations hold for the percent change in the national unemployment rate,[81] at least for divided government. Here, we can see across all spending categories, with the exception of Planned Parenthood and unemployment, positive changes in the level of spending. For those coefficients that reach statistical significance, the effect is opposite for single-party government.

Robustness Check

In order to answer the potential criticism that a state-level unit of measure summarizing legislator preferences is an inaccurate depiction of legislator preferences, I present the reader with an alternative view of the data used in this chapter. As discussed in the Data section, the CFFR accounting procedures summarize distributive spending at the county level. The challenge with using this dataset rests on properly aligning individual legislator preferences with changes in spending to the states. Aggregating all measures to a state-level unit of analysis makes intuitive sense, since accurately dividing county statistics to account for senatorial preferences seems too imprecise to make an effective measure. For example, what is the best practice for aligning the amount of funds a state receives at the county level with the preferences of both liberal and conservative senators? Even more difficult, which counties do I assign to senators with voting preferences that are similar? Where Lee and Oppenheimer (1999) note that the size of a

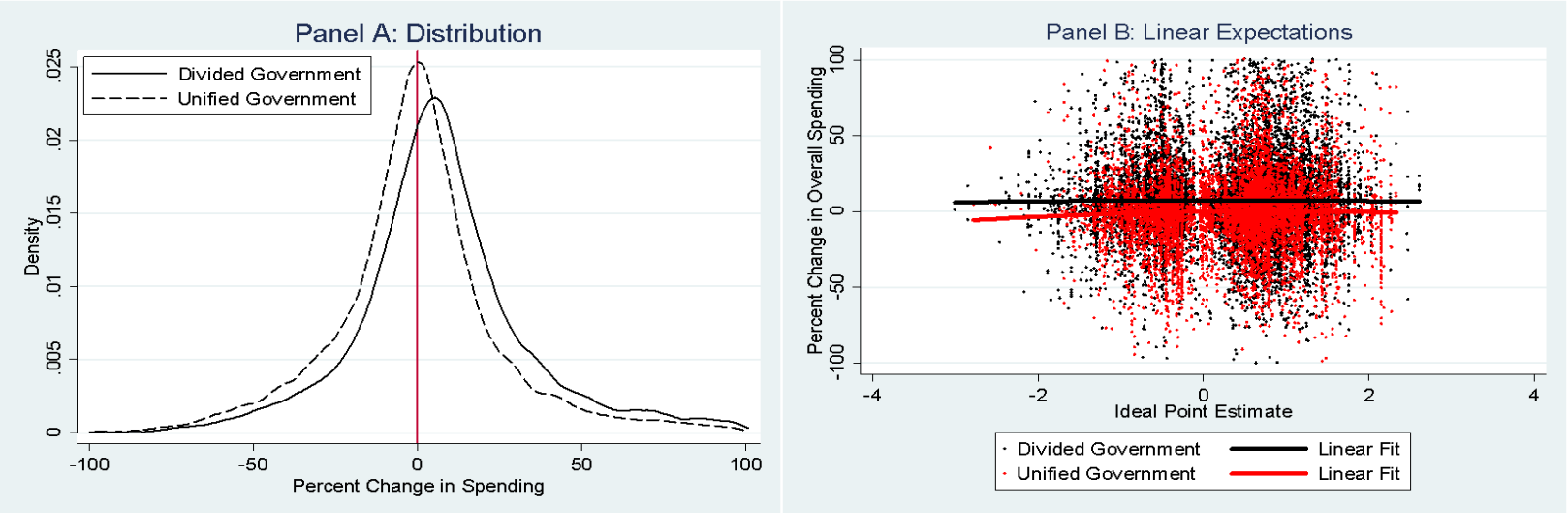
[81] I also estimate the state-level unemployment rate but that effect fails to reach conventional levels of statistical significance.

state's population affects the benefits individual states receive from the national government, their study also finds that the quality of the senator-constituent relationship is negatively impacted for large states, since there are too many people for both senators to effectively represent. This finding is important for this chapter since it highlights the difficulty of aligning senatorial preferences with changes in federal spending at the county level. Because of this, Figure 4.5 illustrates changes in federal spending for a sampling of counties on all general grants between FY 1994 and 2010 in the House.

The data used in Figure 4.5 represents only a small sampling of the entire dataset used in this chapter.[82] Panel A, again, shows that the overall distribution in the change of federal spending to the states is largely identical to Panel A in Figure 4.2. Here, we see that changes in federal spending for unified government averages zero while changes in spending for divided government is, on average, slightly positive. Panel B, on the other hand, highlights the increased sample size compared to the state-level data presented in Figure 4.4. Placing that observation aside, the linear predictions for the county-level data is, in the end, no different than the results presented in Panel A for Figure 4.4. Overall, this small sampling of county-level data suggests that the findings presented in this chapter are an accurate representation of how little divided government affects changes in spending to the states.

[82] As the footnote in Figure 4.5 explains, the data used in these graphs is only a small sampling of all the dependent variables used in this chapter as well as a smaller sampling of states. I opt not to incorporate additional spending categories since the size of the county-level data is massive. I estimate that between FY 1994 – 2010 the number of individual lines of data surpasses 57,000,000 data points. I also exclude data before FY 1994 since the CFFR report is unclear as to specific counties. Finally, I only use a sampling of states counties that include major metropolitan areas cross a number of congressional districts, hindering an accurate accounting of where specific dollars are distributed. This problem does not exist for conservative states. As such, I limit the number of conservative states in order not to bias the results.

Figure 4.5 County-level Data For House Memebrs on All General Grants, FY 1994 - 2010



Note: Figures represent sampling of 33 states and 1186 counties. Total sample size = 18138.

Discussion and Conclusion

Over the past few decades, scholars have made greats strides to understand the linkage between split-party government and legislative outputs. While these studies greatly expanded our knowledge of the legislative process, a new group of research (Cohen 2011; Fine and Warber 2012; Jones 2001; Kriner and Schwartz 2008; Lebo 2008; Parker and Dull 2009; Rose 2004; Schollenberger 2010; Shipan 2006) has tried to move past the macro-political concerns of these seminal works to answer more nuanced and targeted questions concerning partisan conflict. To gain better footing in this debate, I build on this new tradition by analyzing the change in federal funding to the states in conjunction with the political preferences of the national legislature.

This essay contributes to the divided government debate in two ways. First, it introduces a quantifiably robust and comparable measure, one quite different from the imprecise dependent variables that are popular in the divided government literature. The primary dependent variable used in this essay is the yearly percent change in federal funds distributed to the states. Findings show that partisan preferences, when constraining extreme voting to overall party unity, lack much of the conflict generally associated with contemporary political parties.

Second, evidence points to a broad and surprising behavioral pattern within American government in need of exploring. Unexpectedly, the observation that little difference exists in the preferences between the parties over government spending raises serious political questions. If this discovery is true, and future research will need to confirm it, then how can Republicans, for one, claim they are the party of fiscal rectitude

when government funding to the states is as large as their progressive opponents? Also, how can Democrats claim Republicans are obstructionist on spending when conservative preferences on appropriations match fairly closely to their own? It is possible that this trend is changing in a post-Obama political world, but the evidence suggests Republicans, if their rhetoric matches their voting record, would need to drastically alter how they approach government spending. In the end, I conclude that government spending is more akin to the depiction of the Tragedy of the Commons. That is, since appropriators have no real ownership over the money being spent, there is no incentive for them to stop spending. Everyone in Congress, in other words, distributes federal spending, whether they admit it or not.

While this essay sheds some new light on the divided government debate, suggestions for future improvements should focus on two areas of improvement. First, the findings presented in this chapter analyze very few federal spending categories. A recent criticism of studies using distributive politics (Kramon and Posner 2013) argues that because scholars tend to focus on a few specific spending categories, one should be cautious about the overall merits of their findings since spending in one policy area may not necessarily reflect spending in others. Second, while the CFFR data provides a window into government spending, a better measure of partisan preferences is the distribution of federal earmarks. Future work should try to leverage political preferences against legislative earmarks to better estimate how legislators vote on appropriations.

Chapter 5: Incumbent Preferences, Foreign Policy, and Divided Government

One of the more common research practices in congressional studies is to analyze the legislative process on a congressional-level basis. From behavioral approaches on the study of Congress (Binder 1997; Cox and McCubbins 1993; Fenno 1966, 1973; Krehbiel 1998; Lee and Oppenheimer 1999; Polsby 1968; Rohde 1991; Schickler 2001; Theriault 2008), to research measuring legislator preferences (Bailey 2007; Clinton et al. 2004; Clinton 2007; Heckman and Snyder 1997; Groseclose and Snyder 1999; Jackman 2001; Poole and Rosenthal 2007), scholars developed a successful research agenda that aggregates entire periods of legislative action into discrete, biannual units. Not only does this measurement approach make direct comparisons of political events intuitive and easy to interpret, it also provides scholars with an intuitive backdrop to compare entirely different political processes, such as congressional investigations, roll calls, presidential vetoes, and even electoral vote share, in order to gain a fuller picture of institutional politics. Since Congress is naturally constructed to respond to frequent and periodic elections, analyzing government action through this a biannual timeline is quite natural, given the inherent scholarly interest in democratic processes and government responsiveness.

Of course, many things happen in a two-year period, and biannual measures of aggregate behavior may overlook some of the finer details that surround decisions in a dense political institution such as the U.S. Congress. Take, for example, the political uncertainty surrounding the early Obama presidency. Elected to office on a tide of

Progressive sentiment, the new president and Democratic leaders in the 111th Congress promised an ambitious policy agenda that included health care, energy, financial, and political reform. However, after a number of unforeseen episodes that included over-investing political capital on health care reform, the large amount of federal funds spent to hasten the road to economic recovery, the Administration's perceived inability to act on limiting the Deepwater Horizon's oil spill into the Gulf Mexico, as well as the Left's frustration over Obama's failure to close the Guantanamo Bay detention center and end military operations in Iraq, the political landscape changed dramatically over the course of two years. So, while aggregate measures of congressional behavior during the 111th Congress are informative, the ideal estimates of legislator preferences, or the total number of landmark legislation enacted into law, provide only some detail about the dynamics of political behavior across this two-year period.[83]

The usual approach to studying American political institutions is particularly problematic for research on divided government. As with most congressional studies, the bulk of divided government research is analyzed and presented in a Congress-by-Congress format. Beginning with Mayhew's (1991) seminal work, scholars of divided government tend to measure the effects of partisan government on legislative productivity across Congresses. And despite a number of notable advances in divided government research over the past decades (Chiou and Rothenberg 2003; Howell et al. 2000; Krehbiel 1998), efforts to move beyond the traditional measurement practices of

[83] One can imagine the absurdity on comparing, say, the average sales of a company with a 10% annual growth rate that nearly goes bankrupt one month yet recovers sales commensurate with its yearly projections. It would be important to know why the company nearly lost everything at that exact month.

the subfield have not been outstripped by new work on divided government (Fine and Warber 2012; Jones 2001; Kriner and Schwartz 2008; Lebo 2008; Thorsen 1998). Though many 'new' studies on split-party government recognize the empirical limitations of a Congress-based metric, little discussion exists over exactly why new approaches are a healthy addition to understanding the effects of divided government on the legislative process.

A compelling argument for reinventing the approach to divided government research rests on the mixed research record on the exact impact of split-party rule on legislative outputs. Where a number of studies have found evidence showing unified government outperforms divided government in the quality and quantity of legislation produced the overall the research record shows this difference is not as significant as some suggest. I argue that one potential cause of this disagreement is likely traced to a biannual accounting of institutional behavior that sacrifices complexity for parsimony in theory building. Because the relationship between institutions, constituents, and exogenous events changes rapidly, it makes sense to create measures that tap deeper into these political dynamics.

In this chapter, I present a sequential ideal point estimation of incumbent House members across five-year intervals on all defense and foreign policy votes between 1947 and 2006. The benefit of utilizing defense votes in a sequential format is twofold. First, sequential estimates of member preferences across time are more sensitive to changes in the governing structure that may occur due to divided government. Second, while the usual approach to divided government research is largely satisfied with measuring

biannual change as a metric for determining the effect of split-party government, a sequential method is likely to capture changes in legislator preferences that can occur within a governing moment that may have little to causal relationship to shifts between unified and divided government. After recovering the sequential ideal point scores, I estimate changes in the preferences of incumbent members with a Markov regime switching model. Results show while overlap occurs on votes between regime classifications and the traditional unified and divided government distinction, there is little evidence to show that these changes occur as a direct result of government type.

Mixed Evidence and the Two-Year Congressional Cycle

Scholars of divided government have long recognized the need for easily recognizable and replicative units of measure. As the progenitor of modern divided government research, Mayhew (1991) was keenly aware that effective research required methodologically sound data that made both intuitive sense and answered core political questions. Yet, developing a subfield with its theoretical foundations rooted in congressional research[84] came at the expense of unique units of measure capable of tapping the intricacies of a dynamic political system. In short, the natural proclivity of scholars to compress all political action into congressional-level measures raises a number of important issues regarding the link between theory and measures. It is my contention that while scholars have the underlying theory of institutional behavior

[84] Practically all research on divided government is conducted by congressional scholars.

correct, improvements in measurement would aid in laying bare a number of complex political questions.

By and large, practically all scholars of divided government tend to argue that the effect of institutional barriers, party influence, and divergent ideological beliefs, complicate governing in a separation of powers system. Disagreements in the divided government literature, however, stem not over these individual explanations per se, but center, instead, on whether party alone is the main determinant of institutional gridlock. A common trend in the literature is a consensus over the same political question: does split-party government impact the legislative process. Where scholars disagree, though, is on the actual substantive merits of their findings.

Proponents of a partisan explanation find that divided government is largely responsible for diminishing government output. Government is plagued, for one thing, by inaction when the parties are forced to co-govern. Instead of forming bipartisan agreements, each party lambasts the faults of the opposition, confusing the public as where to place blame on government inaction (Cutler 1988; Groeling and Kernell 2000). Gridlock, in other words, is commonplace when government control is divided since both sides can effectively stall the policy agenda of the other (Sundquist 1988); and, no matter the outcome, be it legislative gridlock (Binder 1999, 2003), the enactment of notable laws (Howell et al. 2000), presidential support of congressional legislation (Edwards et al. 1997), or oversight hearings (Kriner and Schwartz 2008), divided government is little match for the synergy and responsiveness one finds during unified government (Coleman 1999; Pfiffner 1991).

Others, on the other hand, present evidence countering the notion divided government is primarily responsible for hindering the legislative process. Mayhew (1991), for example, shows relatively little difference exists between the quantity and quality of legislation passed between both types of government. While important legislation repeatedly passes when government is unified, the fact government is sometimes divided does not mean important legislation will fail to pass. Others support Mayhew's findings and question whether divided government is in fact the main hurdle to legislative success (Cohen 2011; Jones 1994; Jones 2001; Malbin 1994; Quirk and Nesmith 2006; Rieselbach 1996; Silbey 1996). In addition, other studies theorize legislative gridlock as merely a question of the spatial positioning of key pivot actors in the lawmaking process where the effect of party control may have much less of an effect on legislative outcomes (Brady and Volden 2006; Chiou and Rothenberg 2003; Krehbiel 1998).

Though this debate raises questions over how scholars define their data selection process, what is especially unclear is the extent to which congressional-level measures provide enough explanatory power to this debate. For example, not only is there disagreement surrounding which landmark enactments best represent measures of legislative accomplishment,[85] but the biannual standards on which scholars build measures is even more vague. This is especially critical given most events occur under different timelines and political conditions. Take the ranking of important legislation, in

[85] See Mayhew (1991), Kelly (1993) and Howell et al. (2000) over definitional differences in selecting important legislation.

Mayhew's (1991) dataset, two congresses in particular warrant closer inspection, the 83rd (1953-54) and 89th (1965-66). In the latter case, Mayhew lists 23 notable enactments at the height of the Great Society. However, only five of these laws passed in 1966, while in the former case, only one out of a total of nine laws passed in 1953. The point is that while these differences may not amount to much, in reality, the true substantive effect may be quite different if we introduce metrics such as a yearly or monthly unit of analysis.[86] Indeed, we may gain valuable insight to shifting political dynamics that a biannual measure may miss.

A New View of Congressional Action

Disaggregating congressional-level measures in order to capture more of the variance across and within each Congress introduces a number of challenges. First, what metric should one use? Naturally, the answer to this question is dictated by theory, but the researcher does have a number of viable options. One benefit of accounting for more of the statistical noise that a congressional-level measure is likely to miss is the unique perspective such measures provide. Whether one parses data in a yearly, monthly, daily, or individual-level format, the ability to match specific events with exact changes in the institutional behavior of Congress is a strong advantage over biannual measures. As an example, take the partisan-shift of Senator Jim Jeffords (VT) from the Republican to the Independent Party on June 6, 2001, which single-handedly moved control of the Senate

[86] One can easily extend this logic to congressional investigations, executive orders, and presidential vetoes, for example.

to the Democratic Party (Den Hartog and Monroe 2008). With a congressional-level measure, sorting Jeffords' party preference-ordering becomes difficult. Moreover, how do we classify the 107th Congress: unified or divided? Sorting the 107th Congress by a smaller unit of measure would obviously account for this political change.

Yet disaggregating data does not come without challenges. One obstacle centers on accounting for the variability of institutional action. Congress adjourns for breaks throughout the calendar year and the president takes vacations, so what is the best strategy for presenting one's data? The first option is to organize data on discrete time series and extrapolate missing data points. Given the discontinuous nature of political science data, this strategy is sometimes the only option available. The second option is to ignore any time disparities and organize one's data sequentially, making events a singular series. For example, executive orders are never announced on any measurable time span. Days, weeks, and months can separate the president's ordering of federal bureaucracy. However, if one is interested in the changing politics of presidential action, it makes sense to sort executive orders sequentially.

In this chapter, I adopt a similar strategy for all defense and foreign roll calls in the House of Representatives. As a highly politically-defined policy sphere, the rich research record on the role of the president[87] and Congress[88] in foreign policy suggests

[87] Prior the 1960s, the scholarly view on presidential influence in foreign affairs was largely focused on the interconnection of war and the opportunities they provided the executive. Presidents, it seems, were opportunists who used their constitutionally mandated power as commander in chief to expand their influence during wartime in domestic and foreign policy (Corwin 1957, Rossiter 1960) since president retain the benefit of information asymmetry relative to Congress (Dahl 1950). The Constitution provides the president, these studies argue, with the impetus to center power within their sphere of influence—the Office of the President—so as to control foreign policy and protect the electoral destiny of the

that both inter-branch relations and the reactions to unforeseen events, is simply too dynamic for a conventional biannual study. Because the interplay between institutional action and reactions to events on the world stage can move quite rapidly, and because votes on foreign policy can span long distances in time within a Congress, an effective method for understanding institutional behavior in foreign policy requires a deeper accounting of legislator preferences across time.

Another challenge of sidestepping a traditional biannual measurement approach is how to extend measures across congresses. One limitation of a sequential metric is correctly aligning legislator votes in one Congress with different legislators of another. This is especially critical for understanding how and if divided government influences legislator behavior. Put another way, if we really want to know how divided government affects legislator preferences, it is necessary, then, to measure the changes in long-serving

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president. Without the existence of a major military conflict, though, expansion of power seemed unthinkable: Caesar can never be Caesar if there is no war to exploit.

Since the Vietnam War, scholarly attention of executive aggrandizement in foreign policy shifted to questions over the institutional role of Congress. Studies suggested Congress's limited ability to resist the president is mainly due to an imbalance within the separation of powers. That is, because of his constitutional advantage in foreign affairs, this perceived imbalance confuses Congress by forcing it not to challenge the presidency, regardless of the member's party affiliation (Wildavsky 1966, Koh 1990, Ely 1993, Peterson 1994, Hinckley 1994, Fisher 2000, 2004, Schlesinger 2004, Rudalevige 2006). The general consensus is the expansion of presidential power is a two-way street: Congress gives and the president takes. But this give and take is not necessarily a party phenomenon, as Canes-Wrone et al. (2007) explain; the logic rests on the institutional features of the separation of powers. Since the Constitution gives the president strong influence in foreign affairs, he operates with "first-mover advantage," forcing Congress to recognize and submit to the presidents requests because law and precedent require it.

[88] Where some studies take exception to the idea Congress is complacent in foreign policy (Sundquist 1981, McCormick and Wittkopf 1990, Lindsey 1994, 2003, Marshall and Prins 2002), others articulate a positive or active role of Congress vis-à-vis the president, especially in oversight and investigatory powers (McCubbins and Schwartz 1984, Kriner 2009, Parker and Dull 2009). Building on this view, others argue Congress's use of the media is also an effective restraint against the executive (Howell and Pevehouse 2007, Howell and Kriner 2009, Kriner 2010).

incumbent legislators as these members continually face numerous political pressures. This is another reason why a biannual measure is limiting. One never gets a true sense of how disparate political challenges alter congressional voting. Foreign and defense policy is well-suited for this exercise since it is reasonable to assume that legislators are likely to feel the dual pressure of divided government as well as presidents with conflicting foreign policy agendas.

We can expect, then, given arguments in the divided government literature that if split-party government is a strong predictor of congressional action, legislator preferences should shift with changes between unified and divided government and the intensity of partisan differences should be higher during periods of divided government. The alternative hypothesis argues that if there is little change in legislator voting, the ideological intensity of preferences is stable across regime types, or changes in fact exist but at different moments from normal shifts in partisan control of government, then divided government is a poor predictor of the voting preferences of incumbent members.

Roll Call Selection

The votes collected in this chapter are all foreign policy and defense votes between 1947 and 2006. Because I am primarily interested in changes in legislator preferences across different government types, I use roll calls on incumbents voting in the House for those who serve ten consecutive years. Members with large amounts of missing data are omitted from the dataset. Votes are compiled in ten-year intervals for a total of six different datasets.

One limitation of a dataset measuring legislator preferences across long stretches of time is a number of legislators are excluded from the analysis. While this approach could theoretically result in biased estimates, I justify this methodology on two grounds. First, there seems little reason to assume that long-serving members of the House are overly pressured to alter their preferences by newly elected junior colleagues. This is especially unlikely in the House where the rigid leadership structure not only sets the legislative agenda but also assigns newly elected members important and coveted committee positions (Cox and McCubbins 1993).[89] Include the distribution of earmarks as an inducement to cooperate (Evans 2004) and it is highly unlikely that the omitted junior members have a substantive effect on the sample used in this analysis. Second, as a robustness check on this assumption, I recover the preference estimates of all legislators in a random sampling of specific congresses to compare against the incumbent estimates of this study. Results are fairly consistent for incumbent members, suggesting that the estimates are not biased or that the results in this study would be significantly different had I included non-incumbent members. As an example, the estimates of incumbent members in the 80th Congress correlate at .972.

To gauge the preferences of incumbent members across different congresses, I recover estimates with a sequential ideal point estimation method. Using Jackman's Bayesian IDEAL program (Clinton et al. 2004), I constrain the start values of each vote to the traditional hawk versus dove distinction. To account for a fixed point of reference

[89] The current controversy with Tea Party Republicans influencing long-serving members of the House may be one case that challenges my assumptions.

for all votes (Bailey 2007; Groseclose et al. 1999; Martin and Quinn 2002), I create a fictitious hawk and dove to serve as the bridge anchors. My logic for using this point of reference is that both parties have a tradition of aligning with or against an expansive military and aggressive foreign policy. Though intra-party factions may deviate from this demarcation, or exogenous events such as 9/11 may induce doves into a hawkish stance, overall, the traditional alignments seem to hold fairly steady over time. As such, I calculate these references as the absolute difference in support on all roll calls by each party and use all votes that are greater than a 10% difference. This method allows me to use more votes compared to more restrictive bridge anchors, such as individual members themselves[90] or tighter voting unity differences.[91]

With the anchor votes selected, the unique quality of a sequential estimation method is that I can recover an ideology score for each legislator on every successive roll call. This means that each legislator receives a unique score for every vote they participate in individually. For example, if incumbent members vote on 500 roll calls in a given period, each member receives an estimate for every roll call. Needless to say, the size of the amount of estimates recovered can be quite large. For estimates in a single dimension, a matrix with 500 roll calls and 200 legislators would result in 100,000 individual scores.[92] This is large, considering traditional studies recover 435 unique

[90] The difficulty with using real members is that it is difficult to find the two super-Republicans and Democrats who vote on every roll call and who likewise oppose each other on every vote.

[91] Restricting party unity measures to, say, 50% differences, drastically lowers the amount of useable roll calls.

[92] Even if one were to perform this method on all votes in a single Congress, say the House of Representatives for the 95th Congress, the amount of estimate recovered would be massive. That is, 1540 roll calls for 435 members would result in 669,900 individual estimates recovered.

estimates for each House. Because of the sheer size of the data, I recover estimates using a 96-node Dell cluster supercomputer, in long queue, at the *Texas Advanced Computing Center*. To give the reader a sense of this undertaking, Table 1 presents the number of legislators used, the number of useable roll calls, and the number of estimates recovered.

Table 5.1 Descripitive Statistics for Sequential Estimation Method

	Legislators	Useable Roll Calls	# of Estimates
80 - 84 Final	188	55	10,340
80 - 84 Amendment	188	78	14,664
85 - 89 Final	186	70	13,020
85 - 89 Amendment	186	79	14,694
90 - 94 Final	204	170	34,680
90 - 94 Amendment	204	286	58,344
95 - 99 Final	191	160	30,560
95 - 99 Amendment	191	581	110,971
100 - 104 Final	180	118	21,240
100 - 104 Amendment	180	522	93,960
105 - 109 Final	261	114	29,754
105 - 109 Amendment	261	473	123,453

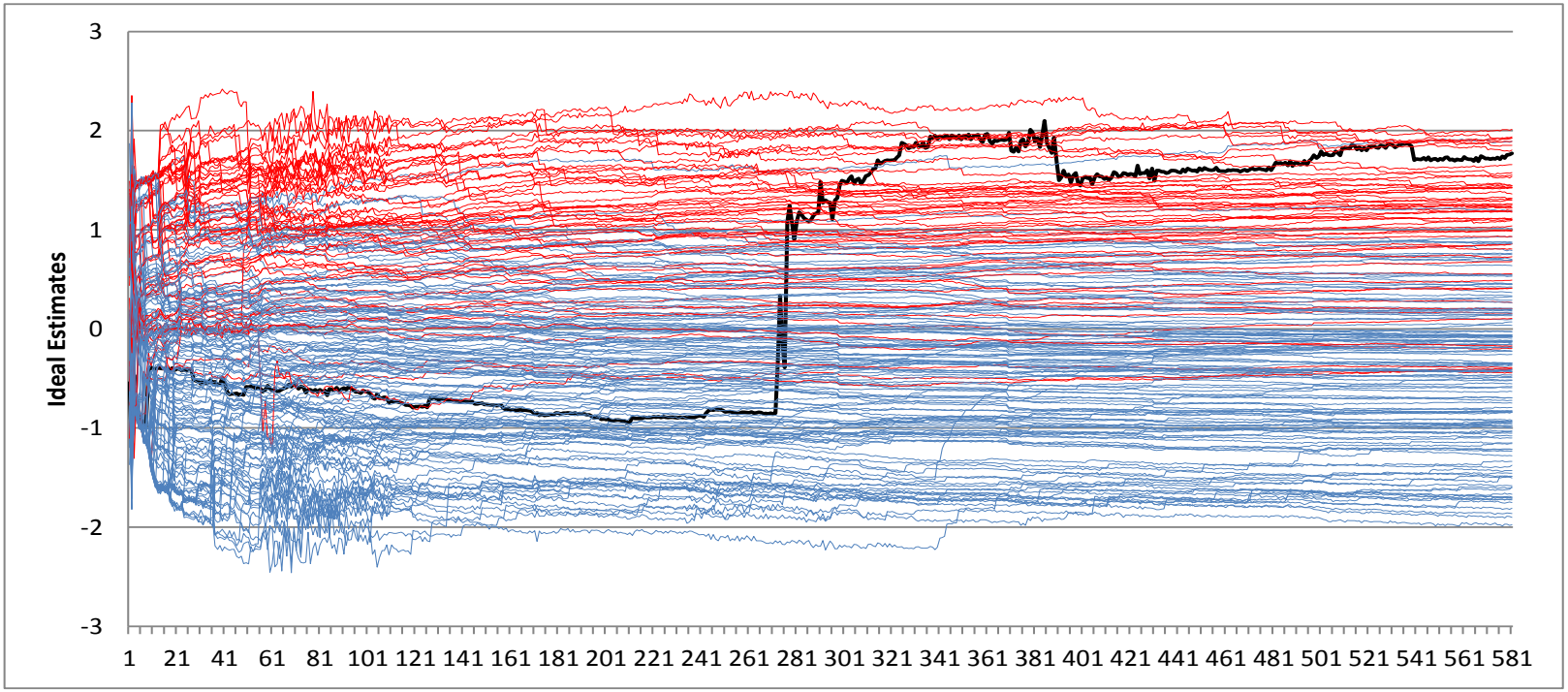
In an effort to better understand incumbent preferences on defense and foreign policy voting, I separate roll calls by final passage and amendment/procedural voting. I adopt this procedure since scholars convincingly argue that legislator preferences and party differences are actually fairly distinct between final passage and other votes (Lee 2009; Roberts 2007; Theriault 2008). Clinton (2012) nicely articulates many of the challenges of using roll call estimates to model political behavior. He argues that when creating a model of partisan preferences, the difficultly entails distinguishing between sincere (true) from strategic (latent) voting. If one creates a model based on an

assumption of sincere voting, for instance, yet strategic voting occurs, then those estimates are more likely to be biased. I assume, then, that on hawk versus dove issues, we are likely to see more ideological divergent views on sincere (amendment and procedural votes) than on strategic (final passage) voting.[93]

To give the reader a better sense of what the estimates of how a sequential voting model looks, Figure 5.1 presents the preferences for incumbent members on amendment and procedural voting between the 95th and 99th Congress (1977 to 1986). After the initial five roll calls or so, the data shows that both pure and weak ideologues quickly fall into their preferred ideological positioning. Neither party, in other words, reaches a pure ideological median in fewer votes than the opposition, suggesting that the incumbents in one party are no more ideologically rigid on defense and foreign policy than the other party. Results also show a high number of partisans whose preferences match closely with the opposition party. Bob Stump (AZ), on the one hand, a Democratic member from Arizona's 3rd congressional district, recorded estimates that hover between 1.8 and 2 for most of the votes recorded which is more conservative, in fact, than Ronald Reagan. On the other hand, Stewart McKinney (CT), a Republican member from Connecticut's 4th congressional district, recorded estimates similar to those of a strong Liberal voting record, averaging about -0.5 across the entire sample.

[93] John Kerry's claim during the 2004 presidential campaign that he "voted against before voting to support the Iraq War," perfectly illustrates the difference between sincere and strategic voting.

Figure 5.1 Sequential Ideal Estimates on NonFinal Defense Votes, 95th to 99th Congress



The most important point to note from this graph is that the difference between unified and divided government is mostly indistinguishable. This is evident by the bolded, black line which represents the preferences of both Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan. The most noticeable change in presidential ideology is the sharp structural break at vote 277. This is where Ronald Reagan's ideal position takes shape for the remainder of the sample. However, the shift from Democratic unified government to split-party control occurs at vote 273, yet the preferences of all incumbent legislators are unresponsive to this important governing change. This finding suggests two potential explanations. First, defense and foreign policy voting transcends the usual distinctions between unified and divided governments. A number of scholars argue that Congress regularly defers to the president in this policy area (see notes 89 and 90) which implies legislators are largely indifferent on these votes. Where one can infer, for example, that congressional abdication (Fisher 2000; Schlesinger 2004) would result in noticeable shifts in the preferences of legislators, it is more reasonable to assume that these preferences are flat, as each member would likely pick a position and hold that position. Second, parsing data from a congressional-level metric of institutional behavior to a sequential-level study may provide an entirely different vantage point from which to leverage against general conceptualizations of American politics, such as the distinction between unified and divided government.

Method

To gain a better understanding of sequential estimation techniques, I use a Markov regime switching model to gauge any shift in the data across each time period. Regime switching models are helpful in this exercise since it allows me to ascertain transition differences in a series that nonstructural break time series and ordinary linear regression cannot.[94] Developed by Hamilton (1989, 2004) as a way of capturing the long term business trend in the nation's Gross National Product (GNP), economists apply this statistical technique as a way of characterizing external shocks to economic data, such as government intervention in the economy. The main idea of regime switching is to allow the coefficients of a time series to be regime-dependent in combination with transition probabilities between the regimes. In other words, one can empirically determine the probability of one regime period over another. Written formally as:

$$y_t = \mu(s_t) + \rho y_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t,\ \varepsilon_t \sim N[0, \sigma^2],$$[95]

s_t represents a random variable denoting each regime. The functional characteristic of this model is it compares each new time period against the last and measures any statistical difference in the mean trend. As one could guess, this technique can be extremely beneficial in the analysis of political science, as American politics exhibits

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[94] Regime switching models help identify two possibilities in a time series. First, regime switching can determine if a time series displays relative stability across a long period of discrete units. In political science parlance, for instance, one could determine if party unity scores are stable across some period of time. The second benefit is these models can account for unusual or abrupt changes in a series.

[95] These models are also represented as $y_t = \mu(s_t) + \rho y_{t-1} + x_t\beta + \varepsilon_t$, where x_t signifies a matrix of explanatory variables. Furthermore, these models can be adjusted to account for ARMA(p, q) processes as well.

repeated and frequent cycles of change.[96] In this study, I use a two-regime model to distinguish between unified and divided government.

Of course, the estimates recovered in the sequential method do not fit neatly into a normal, discrete time series that is divided by fixed time lengths. I concede to that potential criticism. Despite this fact, the point of this chapter is to gauge how the preferences of incumbent legislators shift over time for defense and foreign policy votes. The unbalanced nature of the data is a simple fact of congressional voting and an inherent challenge of sidestepping congressional-level measures. The reader should consider the regime switching models as if every roll call used in this study are independent of each other. That is, even though time and different policy votes separate the estimates of the sequential analysis, the assumption for this chapter is each member distinguishes between votes on, say, social welfare, the macro economy, and foreign policy (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Lee 2009). The distance between each vote is assumed not to have an effect.

Results

Does divided government alter an incumbent's long-term preferences on defense and foreign policy voting? Using a vote-level polarization measure,[97] Table 5.2 compares the regime classifications for Markov switching models against votes that occur in both

[96] Studies that use regime modeling in political science include Freemen et al. (2000), Hays et al. (2003), and Leblang and Mukherjee (2006).

[97] One downside of including presidential position-taking in a sequential estimation method is president do not express their opinion on every vote, especially procedural roll calls. Since the Bayesian statistical method is not hindered by missing data, the program is able to approximate these votes. While this is not necessarily a problem for recovering one estimate from a group of votes, this does seem to be a problem for presidents who miss many votes. The end result is wild variation in presidential ideal points. Because of this, calculating the distance between the president and a group of legislators is inappropriate.

unified and divided government. I calculate the number of votes that correctly match between votes that occur during unified and divided government with the regime classifications for party polarization. Votes that do not align correctly mean, for example, that lower levels of polarization actually occur during divided government when we would expect the opposite. Or, higher levels of polarization occur during periods of unified government. The results are fairly mixed across both final passage and non-final passage voting. For the final passage rubric, party polarization regime classification matches well with divided government for the 85 – 99, 95 – 99 and 105 – 109 congressional timelines (78.6%, 100%, and 69.7%). Under the unified government range, however, only the 100 – 104 span (100%) matches well with the regime classification.

Where these statistics show the exact number of votes in each regime that match under the unified and divided government classifications, a closer inspection highlights that when we account for shifts in regimes with actual governing changes, we see an entirely different picture. Few transitions match well across regime and government type. Of the twelve separate datasets, only the regimes classifications for the 90 – 94 Congress match fairly close. For final passage votes, the shift from unified to divided government occurs between votes 15 and 16. The regime model lists votes 19 and 20 as a transition period. The difference of four votes suggests a slight lag in the polarization measure. Other transitions that correspond closely is the change from divided to unified government of the 80th and 81st Congress (one vote difference in the sequence) and the change from the 103rd to 104th Congress (four vote difference). All other transitions show no discernable pattern.

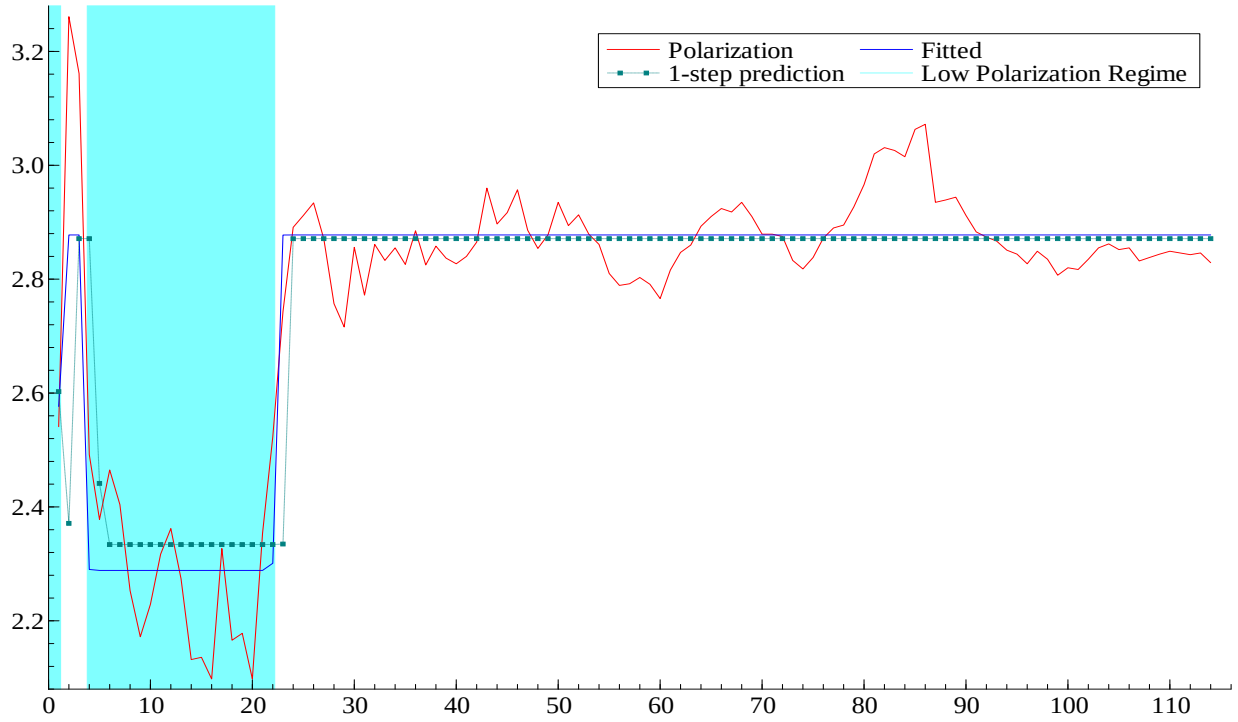
Table 5.2 Votes Classifications for Divided Government and Markov Regimes

Congress	Government Type		Regime Classifications		% Correctly Matched	
Range	Divided	Unified	Low Conflict	High Confict	Divided	Unified
			Final Passage Voting			
80-84	1 - 11, 43 - 55	12 - 42	1 - 12	13 - 55	42.1	2.8
85-89	1 - 14	15 - 70	1 - 3, 41 - 70	4 - 40	78.6	42.8
90-94	16 - 170	1 - 15	1, 20 - 170	2 - 19	2.6	6.7
95-99	90 - 160	1 - 89	7 - 24, 31 - 55	1 - 6, 25 - 30, 56 - 160	100	51.7
100-104	1 - 62, 85 - 118	63 - 84	12 - 89	90 - 118	30.2	100
105-109	1 - 66	67 - 114	1, 4 - 22	2 - 3, 23 - 114	69.7	0
			Amendment and Procedural Voting			
80-84	1 - 9, 67 - 78	10 - 66	1 - 6, 33 - 78	7 - 32	14.3	59.6
85-89	1 - 25	26 - 79	1 - 2, 38 - 79	3 - 37	92	77.8
90-94	28 - 286	1 - 27	1 - 2, 31 - 286	3 - 30	1.5	7.4
95-99	273 - 581	1 - 272	1 - 3, 7 - 154, 317 - 335	4 - 6, 155 - 316, 336 - 581	93.8	44.5
100-104	1 - 315, 405 - 522	316 - 404	1- 135	136 - 522	68.4	0
105-109	1 - 161, 168 - 230	162 - 169, 231 - 473	1 - 95	96 - 473	58	0

Moreover, some of the classifications reveal an utterly dismal picture for the unified and divided government distinction showing that incumbent voting preferences tend to move counter to theoretical expectations in the literature. Figure 5.2 presents a graphical representation of a regime switching model for the 105 – 109 House and shows unified government accounts for voting between the 67 and 114 roll calls. Yet the polarization estimate never returns to a low regime, revealing that unified government, by itself, is incapable of altering voting patterns for incumbent members in Congress. Moving on to non-final passage voting, we see a similar pattern emerge. Practically all the unified and divided government classifications fail to match regime estimates.

Table 5.3 presents the Markov regime estimates associated with the regime classifications already mentioned. The second column shows the mean polarization score for the low regime while the third column shows the mean score for the high polarization regime. Scores comport with conventional expectations. Where the difference in the means between the low and high categories on final passage voting is nearly double (80^{th} and 94^{th} Congresses), this ratio decreases as the dataset progresses further in time. For the remaining final passage and amendment votes, the difference between the low and high regime classifications is generally much smaller. Columns four and five list the estimates for the regimes. Numbers closer to one indicate regimes persist longer than numbers further from one.

Figure 5.2 Markov Regime Switching Graph on Final Passage Voting, 105 - 109 Congress



Using the estimates from columns four and five, we can calculate the regime transition probabilities[98] for each dataset to show the length of time (number of votes) each regime persists, given that it occurs. Beginning, for example, with final passage

Table 5.3 Markov Regime Estimates for Party Polarization

Congress	μ_0	μ_1	σ	ρ_{00}	ρ_{11}	LL	AIC	N
	Final Passage Voting							
80-84	0.946	1.852	0.272	0.923	0.97	-9.296	0.483	55
	(.090)***	(.044)***	(.026)***	(.074)***	(.000)***			
85-89	0.519	0.99	0.116	0.968	0.972	42.529	-1.072	70
	(.022)***	(.024)***	(.010)***	(.031)***	(.027)***			
90-94	0.991	1.797	0.086	0.993	0.941	165.551	-1.889	170
	(.007)***	(.020)***	(.004)***	(.006)***	(.056)***			
95-99	1.623	1.832	0.101	0.951	0.982	125.829	-1.51	160
	(.019)***	(.010)***	(.006)***	(.034)***	(.012)***			
100-104	2.495	3.028	0.185	0.987	0.975	24.233	-0.326	118
	(.022)***	(.033)***	(.012)***	(.012)***	(.025)***			
105-109	2.288	2.877	0.095	0.922	0.989	95.491	-1.587	114
	(.023)***	(.010)***	(.006)***	(.064)***	(.011)***			
	Amendment and Procedural Voting							
80-84	2.474	2.994	0.188	0.981	0.958	11.909	-0.177	78
	(.027)***	(.040)***	(.015)***	(.019)***	(.041)***			
85-89	2.696	4.124	0.436	0.977	0.971	-54.2	1.498	79
	(.075)***	(.087)***	(.0350***	(.023)***	(.029)***			
90-94	1.473	2.394	0.158	0.996	0.963	111.038	-0.741	286
	(.010)***	(.035)***	(.007)***	(.004)***	(.0350***			
95-99	1.879	2.112	0.08	0.982	0.995	620.637	-2.119	581
	(.007)***	(.004)***	(.002)***	(.010)***	(.018)***			
100-104	2.998	3.505	0.268	0.992	0.98	-57.615	0.236	522
	(.023)***	(.014)***	(.008)***	(.007)***	(.000)***			
105-109	3.645	4.188	0.36	0.989	0.97	-191.292	0.826	473
	(.039)***	(.019)***	(.012)***	(.010)***	(.000)***			

voting, the 80 – 84 congresses show that the transition probability for the low polarization regime persists for 12.98 votes while the high polarization regime persists

[98] This is calculated as $1/\left(1-\hat{p}_i^*\right)$, where $\hat{p}$ is the transition probability.

for 33.33 votes. The high polarization regime persists for more than twice as long as the low polarization regime. Interestingly, for a number of other timespans the effect of divided government on party polarization is not as pronounced as we would expect. Where the 90 – 94 congresses are divided for over 90% of the votes in the final passage sample and 53% of the amendment votes, the low polarization regime persists far longer than the high polarization regime—the effect is nearly seven times as large in the final passage sample and over eight times as large for amendment and procedural voting. For the 100 – 104 timespan, where four of the five congresses are divided, a similar pattern emerges, though the effect is smaller at nearly twice the size. However, for the 95 – 99 timespan, the Carter and Reagan Administrations, the high polarization regime has a larger effect than the transition probabilities for the low polarization regime.

As an additional test of the divided government's effect on incumbent preferences, I present the actual ideal points for both Democrats and Republicans in a Markov regime model. In an effort to save space, estimates are presented in Table A5.1 and A5.2. To aid the reader, Table 5.4 shows the regime transition probabilities for party polarization, Democratic, and Republican ideal estimates. Results show that in 7 of the 12 timespans, the median party ideology of incumbent members moves in opposite directions. That is, regime persistence for votes in which ideology is highest for one party is sometimes lower for the opposition. Take, for example, the 100 – 104 timespan for final passage voting. Results show that for Democratic incumbents, the high ideology regime persists for more than twice as long as the low ideology regime, meaning incumbent ideology for Democrats was higher across more votes than votes with lower

ideology. The effect for Republican incumbents, on the other hand, is quite the opposite with ideology persisting in the low regime at more than nine times the high ideology estimate. Overall, the findings show that for timespans with a majority of votes occurring with divided governments, for instance the 100 – 104 dataset, there is no evidence to suggest split-party control contributes to these trends.

Table 5.4 Regime Transition Probibilities

	Polarization		Democratic Ideology		Republican Ideology	
Congress	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
	Final Passage Voting					
80-84	12.987	33.333	37.037	9.174	58.824	13.889
85-89	31.250	35.714	35.714	40.000	7.937	52.632
90-94	142.857	16.949	52.632	20.000	111.111	50.000
95-99	20.408	55.556	43.478	20.833	9.259	142.857
100-104	76.923	40.000	16.949	40.000	47.619	5.988
105-109	12.821	90.909	4.000	166.667	21.277	34.483
	Amendment and Procedural Voting					
80-84	52.632	23.810	4.367	71.429	25.000	12.500
85-89	43.478	34.483	37.037	40.000	52.632	23.256
90-94	250.000	27.027	50.000	40.000	250.000	11.111
95-99	55.556	200.000	166.667	90.909	66.667	500.000
100-104	125.000	50.000	111.111	333.333	90.909	2.681
105-109	90.909	33.333	40.000	333.333	100.000	12.048

Conclusion

Previous research on divided government has largely understood inter-branch politics on a biannual metric. This conceptual approach has provided political scientists with a number of important advances that cross a number of subfields within American politics research. This chapter shows, however, that biannual aggregate measures are in many respects ill-suited to accounting for the dynamics of institutional behavior that occurs within these and across these metrics. The central argument for this chapter is that

while a biannual measure may accurately gauge dramatic differences between two congresses, a smaller unit of measure captures much more political variability.

Using a sequential ideal point estimation strategy, I recover estimates for incumbent members of the House of Representatives on all defense and foreign policy votes between 1947 and 2006 in 10-year timespans. Calculating party polarization scores for each vote, I estimate the change across data range with a regime switching model. Results show that while high polarization regimes match evenly with periods of divided government, actual transitions do not match well. That is, shifts in the intensity of party polarization occur at different vote intervals than votes that define changes between unified and divided government. This is also the case for the impact, or transition probability, of each regime. In all, these findings are important since it shows that preferences of incumbent members on defense and foreign policy voting are fairly constant.

To further understand how sequential estimation methods can aid in divided government research, a number or improvements are needed. First, since this chapter only estimates the preferences of a small number of legislators, one improvement should include more members on a 10-year moving average. This would increase the number of legislators in the analysis. Another improvement should estimate the sequential voting patterns by each Congress to not only include all members but to also provide a robustness check to his incumbent-only analysis. Finally, this study does not account for exogenous factors as to why regime transitions are markedly different from shifts between unified and divided government. Future research should include indicators that

measure, for example, instances of war. However, an important step would be to account for the influence of the president on legislator preferences. As the architect of foreign policy, a more nuanced accounting of when presidents influence policy would greatly aid in parsing out the findings in this chapter.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

On March 1, 2013, the United States government instituted across-the-board reductions in its spending authority to nearly all discretionary federal programs. The result of a longstanding disagreement between the Republicans and Democrats over future cuts in federal spending, budget sequestration and the fiscal cliff became another example of how divided government sets conditions for legislative gridlock. Not surprisingly, many argued that had Democrats controlled both chambers of Congress, the president could easily have negotiated a legislative deal, avoiding many of the arbitrary funding cuts affecting defense and welfare programs alike.

While this explanation of partisan gridlock is certainly compelling, the story of divided government, however, is much more complex than this example suggests. In fact, long before Democrats and Republicans pushed the nation closer toward the fiscal cliff and economic doom, both parties agreed on a compromise that actually created sequestration.[99] In an effort to avoid the United States falling into default on its debt, both parties agreed to increase the debt ceiling on the condition that automatic cuts to most federal programs would take effect if the parties failed to reach a long-term plan on deficit reduction. This grand bargain, as it was heralded at the time, illustrates an entirely different image of partisan politics during a period of divided government; one that poses serious conceptual questions to our understanding about the predictive power of explaining partisan action through the lens of divided government.

[99] The law is known as the Budget Reconciliation Act of 2011.

Obvious questions to ask: Is split-party government the sole condition for legislative gridlock? What are the political conditions under which bipartisan compromises occur at one moment yet fail during others? How should we measure the effect of divided government on legislative output across governing regimes? Why do some divided governments seem able to pass noteworthy legislation while some unified governments appear ineffective at navigating legislative gridlock?

This dissertation focuses on these very questions, teasing out many of the conceptual and methodological limitations commonly found in the divided government literature in an effort to better understand the political attributes of institutional behavior. My main criticism of divided government research, and the impetus for this project, is primarily rooted in two core limitations prevalent throughout most of the divided government literature. First, practically all work on split-party government centers on a weak conceptual framework that views institutional politics as a dichotomous relationship between the partisan character of government and legislative success. This traditional approach is an unsatisfying explanation because it often overlooks, as I illustrate above, many of the complex political processes that mark contemporary politics. Where scholars constantly debate and research topics such as party polarization, alternative explanations of institutional behavior are rarely mentioned in the divided government literature.

My second criticism centers on the failure of researchers to further explore why, in many cases, divided government often fails meet theoretical expectations. Surprisingly, scholars never question the underlying source of their findings, regardless

of whether or not they find support that split-party government slows the legislative process, ignoring a host of alternative factors that may further aid in gaining needed leverage as to why governments succeed and fail. Put simply, scholars of divided government have failed to notice why the debate on divided government provides an excellent foundation for a more expansive view of government success. Rather than provide little to American politics research, a new and refined accounting of divided government is actually an untapped resource that answers many the contemporary issues in American politics.

My goal in this concluding chapter is to describe how the work in this dissertation lends some needed insight to this second criticism. While I primarily address the first criticism in this dissertation, my argument is that before one can address the latter concern, the conversation needed to first concentrate on issues that surround concepts and measures. I detail how this project leads to a new view of institutional behavior in three ways. First, after reacquainting the reader with the central arguments and findings of this project, I describe how the essays in this dissertation further contribute to our understanding of divided government. I then place this dissertation within the larger context of the divided government debate by describing where this project stands within the existing disagreement in the literature. Finally, I provide the reader with some suggestions for directions on future research that may provide additional leverage to why governments succeed and fail.

Contributions to the Divided Government Literature

Throughout this dissertation I argue studies that attempt to explain complex political processes with simplified measures are especially problematic for building and testing theories of legislative success. The difficultly in using a simplified conceptualization of complex political processes, I contend, is we can never be absolutely sure that empirical findings are indicative of a proper measurement approach, or simply a statistical artifact of some underlying correlative factor. This fact is likely why we find such conflicting evidence to whether divided government impacts the legislative process throughout the literature. I argue that to properly account for any of the variance in institutional behavior we need to abandon not only the dichotomous indicator representing the concept of divided government found in virtually all studies, but we also need to refine many of the dependent variables used to gauge government success. Moreover, to gain needed insight into institutional politics, it is also necessary to use entirely new and unique units of measure in order to tap the dynamic attributes of American institutional politics.

To reacquaint the reader with some of the findings in this dissertation, results show that divided government is not only less reliable compared to more refined metrics, but little difference exists between unified and divided government on roll call voting across time, on changes in federal spending to the states, and on incumbent legislator preferences for foreign policy issues. These findings are important because it shows that these measures are fairly consistent across all four essays, indicating that regardless of how I measure institutional behavior the findings are fairly robust. In fact, a common

finding in most multivariate tests is that divided government performs opposite to our expectations. That is, for example, on chamber support for final passage legislation, on the number of important and regular pieces of legislation enacted into law, and even on changes in the level of federal pending states receive, these affects increase rather than decrease as we would normally expect to occur during periods of divided government.

One contribution of this dissertation is that these findings not only provide valuable insight into divided government research, but this project also introduces a new vantage point for approaching, measuring, and explaining why the concept of divided government should, at a minimum, be qualified against more refined concepts and measures. Also, this dissertation is an important advancement in divided government research since this study is the first to place the concept of split-party government under exacting scrutiny. This is particularly notable since this project restarts a conversation largely neglected by the profession. Not have discussions on split-party government been largely marginalized by this unsettled theoretical debate, no serious effort to revisit this subject has occurred in nearly two decades—surprising, considering government has been divided in 14.5 of the last 20 years.

Finally, where the essays in this dissertation are, of course, about the substantive effect of divided government on institutional behavior and lawmaking, implicitly, these essays can also provide a theoretical starting point from which to build further empirical analyses on why all governments, both unified and divided, seem incapable of creating policy change a majority of Americans can support. To put it differently, the second contribution of this dissertation suggests that rather than provide a confusing picture of

institutional politics, the fact that the findings in the divided government literature are often mixed points to evidence that other underlying explanations may influence institutional behavior. This dissertation merely suggests that such a possibility is likely to exist given the evidence presented in these essays, as well as the poor legislative performance record of both unified and divided governments over the last 50 years.

Placing This Dissertation within the Divided Government Literature

While the contributions of this dissertation add a number of new perspectives to divided government research, it is necessary to place this project within the larger theoretical discussion that tends to dominate the literature. What I mean is that because scholars continually disagree over how divided government affects institutional behavior, any new study, regardless of how active it is in this debate, is invariably a part of this longstanding conversation. While I agree this is also the case for this dissertation, I take the position that the essays in this study are actually a stepping-off point for transcending this debate into new research directions.

The reader may recall that in each essay I take a relatively neutral stance in this debate. This is because I felt it was more important to first reevaluate the concepts and measures used in the literature so as to better gauge the substantive impact on divided government's effect on the legislative process. Upon further reflection, I am confident this dissertation plays an important role in the divided government debate. While on the one hand, the findings presented in these essays support David Mayhew's position that divided government has little substantive impact on the overall quality and level of

legislative outputs, on the other hand this project is actually well-equipped as an actual arbiter in this longstanding disagreement. Because this dissertation is uniquely positioned as a study criticizing many of the concepts and measures used in divided government research, the strong evidence presented in this dissertation suggests that this disagreement is in fact more settled than previously thought.[100] That is, while I find overwhelming evidence to support Mayhew, the refinements presented in this study show that divided government is an entirely incorrect approach to the study of institutional behavior. Furthermore, while this conclusion not only puts to rest many of the issues that surround this debate, it also suggests that scholars should look to alternative explanatory factors besides divided government.

Where past research in the Mayhew tradition tend to argue for and present findings supporting either side in the debate, none attempts to explain why a null finding may provide an important glimpse into alternative explanations that influence government performance. As an arbiter in this debate, I take the provocative position that divided government provides little substantive value except that the disagreements in the literature are actually indicative of a deeper political narrative now lost within the nuances of this debate. Where scholars usually disagree over such topics as the merits of

[100] The reader may question this conclusion on two grounds. First, there is the possibility that the estimators used in this dissertation are incorrect and that the findings presented are statistically biased. I argue this is not the case since all the estimators used in this dissertation were rigorously checked with alternative tests. In each instance, the estimator used shows the strongest statistical fit since all estimates have the smallest standard errors compared to other more popular tests. The second potential criticism of this conclusion is I since use measures that are quite distinct from those found in the literature the conclusions I draw may not accurately answer the same political questions. Problems of ecological fallacy are of course a serious concern for studies introducing new measures. However, because I use measurement variants of most divided government studies, the likelihood that this dissertation is measuring and interpreting different data is fairly remote.

particular measurement practices, none asks the important question of why these substantive disagreements began in the first place. The evidence presented in this dissertation suggests that in addition to refined measures such as, for example, party polarization, explanatory factors outside of government control may provide valuable insight to furthering this debate. This unique view, in other words, lays the foundation for a new theoretical direction that moves beyond the issues common in divided government research, while also recognizing that the mixed record is in fact the true theoretical impetus for this new proposed approach. In the next section, I suggest a number of alternative avenues for researching topics that move beyond divided government.

Future Directions for Divided Government Research

Over the last 30 years, the public has grown increasingly dissatisfied with government's legislative performance. With confidence in government falling to historic lows, the inability of government to solve many of the nation's problems highlights a deepening political pathology in Washington. The failure to enact meaningful and lasting policy change a majority of Americans accept is not only symptomatic of a governing process degraded by competing ideological and partisan pressures but one likely atrophied by immovable institutional forces neither party seems willing or able to address. Equally troubling, when sweeping policy is enacted, most Americans disagree with both party's conception of change. Put simply, the state of Washington politics is in a bad way.

Where the essays in this dissertation are, of course, about the substantive effect of divided government on institutional behavior and lawmaking, implicitly, these essays also suggest the existence of an underlying political narrative that may provide insight into why our theoretical expectations for divided government are sometimes not met. It is my contention that governing challenges common in contemporary politics are not entirely attributable to divided government, gridlock intervals, agenda setting, or even which party controls the levers of government,[101] but to other institutional and political forces that underlie a deepening pathology prevalent in modern government. The fact that the public has grown increasingly dissatisfied with government's legislative performance, combined with the poor predictive power of divided government as an explanatory factor, suggests other political forces may play an important role in this narrative. The following examples are merely suggestions on some issues that may provide insight to the public's growing apathy with government, and why the distinction between unified and divided government is sometimes hard to define.

One possible explanation for the perception of government inaction may be due to a political system that is constantly slowed by a massive legislative and regulatory state. Initiating change under such conditions is often difficult for both governing regimes, even unified control, and this may indicate why findings in the divided government literature are often difficult to discern. Not only do entrenched interests protect their political power by crafting and lobbying for special legislation, but the addition of any

[101] This is not to say that these factors do not or never matter, but to say that the explanations presented in this chapter are very important in understanding governing over the last 50 years.

new legislation included on top of existing statue likely has no effect on the overall policy direction of the nation, since it is often hard sweep away past regulations. Because the effect of divided government on the legislative process is sometimes blurred, I argue that scholars need to further analyze the conditions for why change is often difficult to achieve. The divided government literature is insightful for this approach since it often shows specific policy areas where the limited legislative effect of unified party control on altering statue occurs.

A second factor in why the distinction between unified and divided government is often blurred may be directly associated specifically to the underlying institutional conditions on which both parties tend to agree. One institution that generally receives strong bipartisan support is the monetary policies of the Federal Reserve. Because both parties overwhelming support the Fed, the parties are largely incapable of initiating important policy changes that fall under the sphere of its influence. That is, efforts to reduce income inequality, for example, are nearly impossible since it is the Fed's policies that dictate many of the conditions of income accumulation, especially in capital markets. This may be important for studies of institutional politics because null findings in the divided government literature, particularly in fiscal policy, may point to forces outside of government control.[102]

More work will need to be done to further tease out and test these propositions, but they do provide a good foundation on which to start. This is not to say that the issues

[102] This is not to say that either party fails to make economic arguments to the public. It is, however, difficult to untangle partisan posturing from viable policy solutions on economic debates.

I mention are the only factors that influence institutional behavior. As I discuss throughout this dissertation, American legislative institutions are far too complex for single explanatory measures. Of course, I fully acknowledge the importance of the Constitution as a hurdle in lawmaking, as well as the rules, norms, and decorum that make each branch of government singular in its place within the constitutional order. In short, overcoming the checks inherent in the Constitution is, of course, a prerequisite for enacting policy. But the conditions I discuss point to a deeper political pathology that could transcend the number of issues directly related to the debate on unified and divided government.

One should note that even if these suggestions I introduced are only partially correct, understanding the sources of when and why these effects are important, moves the field of divided government research in an entirely new and exciting direction. Despite the many limitations commonly found in split-party government research that I discuss in this dissertation, perhaps the most glaring shortcoming is the failure of scholars to delve deeper into possible causes as to why these mixed findings persist. By not asking the question, the study of divided government has, in effect, become irrelevant to more popularized concepts and explanations of why contemporary politicians are incapable of governing. The marginalization of the divided government literature, surprisingly, comes at a moment in political history when split-party government occurs regularly, partisan tensions are at its highest on record, and even parties under unified government fail to use the advantages of their governing position to move policy in an effective way. It is time for the contribution of divided government to move beyond a mere control indicator to a

subfield that contributes to a better understanding of American political institutions. This dissertation sets the stage for a reconceptualization of divided government.

Appendix

Chapter 3: Independent Variables

Divided Government: Following the tradition of the literature, I use a dichotomous indicator to differentiate unified from divided governments. All instances of split-party government are labeled "1" and all other periods "0."[103]

Polarization: While a quarterly measure of partisan behavior is a new approach to viewing temporal dynamics, it did introduce a number of challenges. The first challenge centered on selecting proper polarization scores on a quarterly level. Unfortunately, the industry standard DW-Nominate (Poole and Rosenthal 2007) are inappropriate, since these scores comprise all votes over a two year period. To account for this, I develop specialized ideology scores for the House, Senate, and president, using Jackman's Bayesian IDEAL program (Clinton et al. 2004, Clinton and Jackman 2009). To account for any comparability issues that are likely to occur when creating ideology scores from different Congresses (Groseclose et al. 1999), I develop my own optimal classification, based on Treier's (2011) bridge-vote technique.[104] The benefit of this practice is it not

[103] Because this is a quarterly time series study, I am able to account for senator Jim Jeffords switch from the Republican Party on June 24, 2001 to an Independent. This shift effectively gave majority control of the Senate to the Democrats. However, because this shift occurred at the end of the second quarter in 2001, I do not label government divided until the third quarter.

[104] The only issue with using this technique is selecting the main anchor votes or individuals who voted consistently between 1947 and 2010. Of course no such person exists. Trier argues that one way to sidestep this issue is to use ADA and ACU votes since it is theoretical plausible that these organizations are ideologically consistent across time. I too use incorporate these scores. However, because these organizations comment on very few votes my sample size in turn is drastically reduced. To compensate, I also create anchor votes based on fictitious "extreme" members. That is, I determine which party has the highest percentage of support for a bill to classify my extreme members. On votes where no clear difference existed, I scanned each vote common extreme members who dissented. If extreme members

only allows me to compare votes across time and chamber it provided me with the opportunity to select specific votes, such as final passage on domestic legislation unavailable with the popular DW-Nominate scores. After I calculate these ideology scores, I then incorporate Jessee and Theriault's (2012) specification for calculating polarization measures.

Equilibrium Gridlock Interval: Appling the same ideology scores used to calculate the polarization measures, I calculate, based on Choiu and Rothenberg's (2003) formal classification, a gridlock interval. To obtain this measure, I applied this method to every vote in the dataset, 4761 final passage votes on domestic legislation, and calculated the quarterly gridlock interval.

Coalitional Defectors: As stated in the theory section of this essay, the literature suggests that inter-party factions can shift the policy preferences of the majority party, since these members are more likely to defect to the opposition party on electoral and ideological issues. To create a measure that captures these dynamics, I use the standard deviation of the quarterly change in the ideology score for the majority party.

Public Mood: Consistent with past work on divided government (Binder 1999; Coleman 1999; Mayhew 1991), I include a quarterly lagged measure of public mood complied from the *Policy Agendas Project*.

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from both parties dissented from the majority of the chamber, than I scored the extreme members similarly. Moreover, I calculated scores on a yearly, congressional, and quarterly scale to determine if any significant differences existed. I also compared these scores against DW-Nominate. All scores correlate above 0.80.

Democratic President: As a control for the partisan affiliation of the president, I include an indicator that labels all quarters with a democratic president as "1" and "0" otherwise.

Change in Presidential Approval: Maintaining scholarly tradition, I include the quarterly change in the longstanding *Gallup* poll, since it is argued changes in presidential approval affects a president's ability to effectively negotiate with Congress (Brody 1991; Muller 1970). Here, change is simply a one quarter difference in presidential approval.

Election Time: This variable is a dichotomous indicator signifying a biannual election period in the third and fourth quarter of every even year. Quarters coded as "1" indicate an election period, while all other quarters are labeled "0."

Unemployment: To account for economic impacts on legislator preferences, I include a quarterly-lagged measure of the national unemployment rate from the *Bureau of Labor Statistics*.

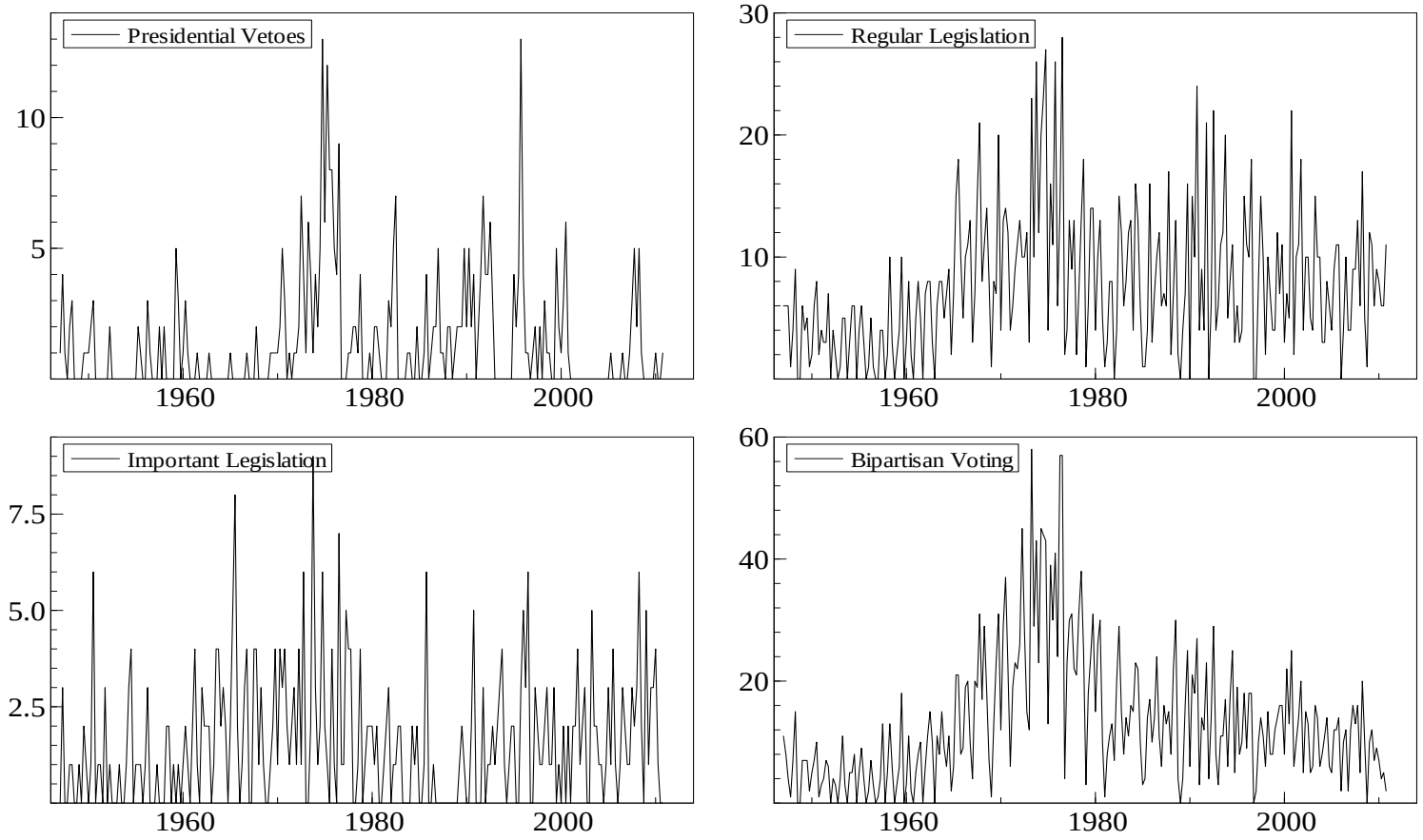
Major War: The last control variable is a quarterly indicator of all major wars or military engagements since 1947. These engagements include: The Korean War, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War, and the War on Terror. All quarters where the American government was officially involved are coded "1" while all others are coded "0."

Table A3.1 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	sd	Min	Max
Dependent Variables				
Executive Orders	10.105	4.974	1	26
Vetoes	0.777	1.208	0	8
Presidential Yeas	3.988	3.923	0	20
Presidential Nays	2.734	3.881	0	19
Regular Laws	5.223	4.334	0	22
Important Laws	1.211	1.373	0	6
Lop-sided Votes	13.23	10.904	0	58
Tight Votes	5.367	4.189	0	19
Independent Variables				
Divided Government	0	1	-1.187	0.839
Polarization	0	1	-2.435	2.332
Gridlock Interval	0	1	-1.309	3.434
Factional Coalition	0	1	-1.246	5.342
Public Mood	0	1	-1.858	1.337
Democratic President	0	1	-0.88	1.131
Δ Presidential Approval	0	1	-3.733	5.215
Election Time	0	1	-0.423	3.53
Unemployment	0	1	-1.849	3.174
War	0	1	-0.783	1.293

Note: Independent Variables are standardized for direct comparison.

Figure A3.1 Time Series Graphs of Dependent Variables



Chapter 4: Independent Variables

*1.**Election Time*** is a dichotomous indicator signifying "1" for an election year and "0" for all other years.

*2. **ΔPublic Mood*** is the percent change in the yearly public policy mood measure developed by the *Policy Agendas Project* in conjunction with James Stimson.

*3. **ΔUnemployment Rate*** is the percent change in the yearly national unemployment rate as provided by the *Bureau of Labor Statistics*.

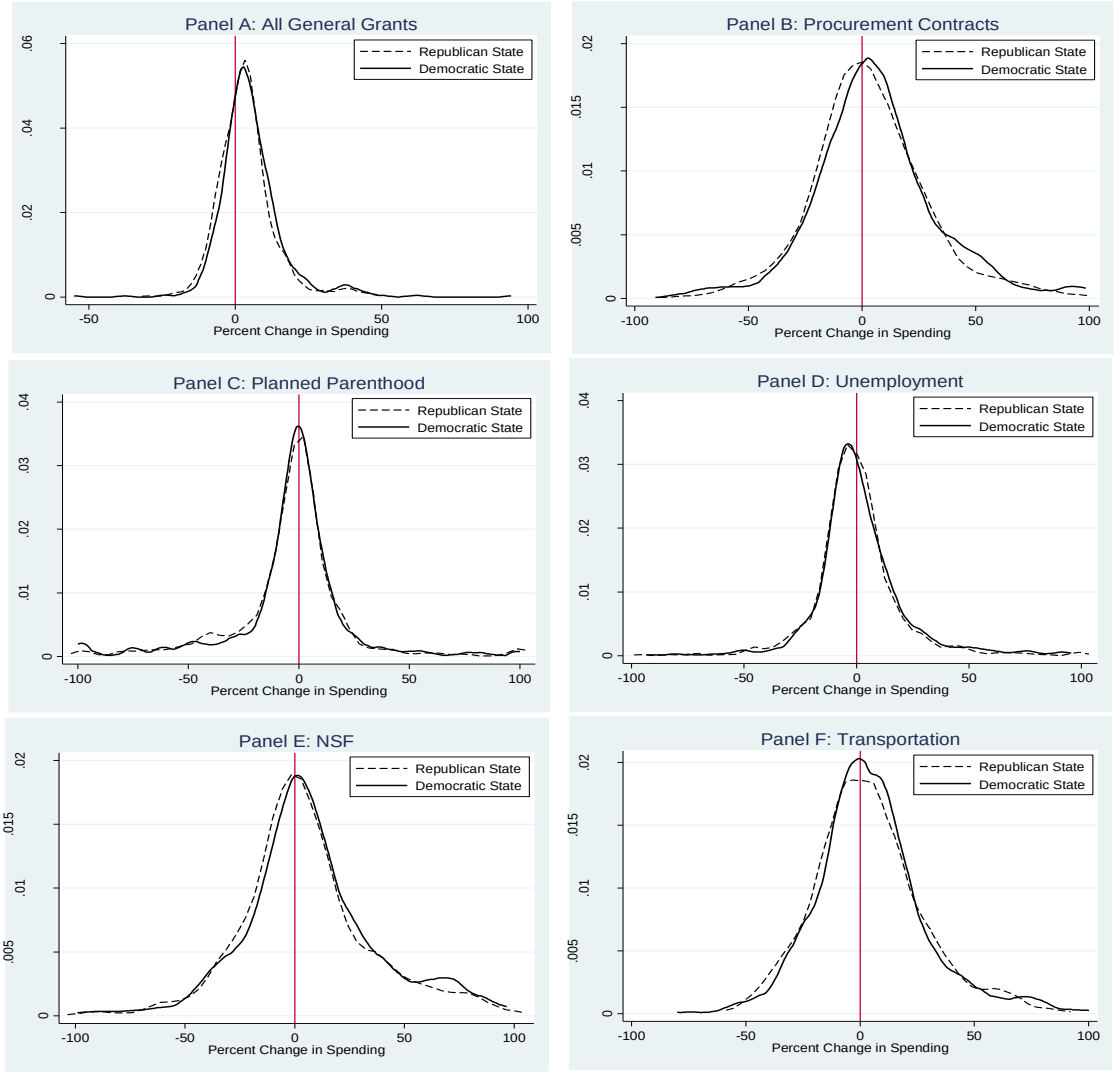
*4. **Exogenous Shocks*** is an ordinal indicator designed to capture three specific traumatic events: economic recessions, war, and a control for post-9/11, on a zero through three ranking. Events labeled "0," indicate non-traumatic events, while those labeled "3" indicate all events occurring simultaneously.

5. **Polarization** is an individual-level score calculated on a yearly series.

Table A4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variables	Mean	sd	Min	Max
General Grants	4.805	11.244	-54.954	135.849
Procurement Contracts	9.587	45.307	-90.879	799.547
Planned Parenthood	0.126	35.187	-317.199	298.953
Unemployment	3.192	28.161	-106.298	246.807
NSF	12.525	43.683	-99.08	452.886
Transportation	5.503	28.142	-80.073	279.068
Independent Variables				
Election Time	0.481	0.499	0	1
Chg Public Mood	0.282	1.51	-3.841	4.148
Chg Unemployment	-1.152	13.399	-28	37.634
Exogenous Shock	0.852	1.079	0	3
House Ideology	0.071	0.564	-2.11	2.27
Senate Ideology	0.065	0.647	-2.615	2.41
House Polarization	2.998	0.523	2.119	4.068
Senate Polarization	2.223	1.085	0.501	4.497
Sorted Variables				
Divided Government	0.741	0.438	0	1

Figure A4.1 Congressional Support on Appropriations, Sorted by Party - FY 1984-2010



Chapter 5: Additional Markov Regime Estimates

Table A5.1 Markov Regime Estimates for Democratic Party Ideology

Congress	μ_0	μ_1	σ	ρ_{00}	ρ_{11}	LL	AIC	N
	Final Passage Voting							
80-84	-0.441	-0.834	0.115	0.973	0.891	38.12	-1.241	55
	(.044)***	(.017)***	(.011)***	(.000)***	(.103)***			
85-89	-0.015	-0.53	0.066	0.972	0.975	85.331	-2.324	70
	(.012)	(.010)***	(.005)***	(.000)***	(.024)***			
90-94	-0.474	-0.753	0.059	0.981	0.95	236.719	-2.738	170
	(.005)***	(.014)***	(.003)***	(.050)***	(.049)***			
95-99	-0.474	-0.551	0.028	0.977	0.952	329.13	-4.052	160
	(.003)***	(.004)***	(.001)***	(.016)***	(.028)***			
100-104	-0.636	-0.74	0.044	0.941	0.975	188.39	-3.108	118
	(.014)***	(.006)***	(.003)***	(.042)***	(.018)***			
105-109	-0.656	-0.898	0.032	0.75	0.994	226.032	-3.895	114
	(.003)***	(.019)***	(.002)***	(216)**	(.000)***			
	Amendment and Procedural Voting							
80-84	-0.529	-0.739	0.027	0.771	0.986	162.45	-4.037	78
	(.012)***	(.003)***	(.002)***	(.014)***	(.014)***			
85-89	-0.421	-0.575	0.058	0.973	0.975	103.91	-2.504	79
	(.009)***	(.009)***	(.005)***	(.025)***	(.024)***			
90-94	-0.428	-0.658	0.04	0.98	0.975	507.69	-3.522	286
	(.002)***	(.007)***	(.002)***	(.024)***	(.024)***			
95-99	-0.368	-0.413	0.035	0.994	0.989	1101.72	-3.775	581
	(.003)***	(.004)***	(.001)***	(.010)***	(.007)***			
100-104	-0.645	-0.717	0.032	0.991	0.997	1036.64	-3.953	522
	(.003)***	(.002)***	(.001)***	(.003)***	(.009)***			
105-109	-0.789	-0.872	0.035	0.975	0.997	.899.44	-3.782	473
	(.004)***	(.002)***	(.001)***	(.002)***	(.002)***			

Table A5.2 Markov Regime Estimates for Republican Party Ideology

Congress	μ_0	μ_1	σ	ρ_{00}	ρ_{11}	LL	AIC	N
	Final Passage Voting							
80-84	0.207	0.682	0.133	0.983	0.928	29.316	-0.92	55
	(.038)***	(.021)***	(.013)***	(.000)***	(.069)***			
85-89	0.212	0.427	0.04	0.874	0.981	114.85	-3.138	70
	(.011)***	(.005)***	(.003)***	(.083)***	(.019)***			
90-94	0.412	0.629	0.062	0.991	0.98	222.88	-2.563	170
	(.006)***	(.010)***	(.003)***	(.008)***	(.020)***			
95-99	0.74	0.986	0.052	0.892	0.993	236.16	-2.895	160
	(.018)***	(.004)***	(.003)***	(.100)***	(.007)***			
100-104	0.845	0.947	0.028	0.979	0.833	248.75	-4.148	118
	(.003)***	(.013)***	(.001)***	(.162)***	(.152)***			
105-109	0.846	0.942	0.03	0.953	0.971	223.414	-3.832	114
	(.005)**	(.003)***	(.002)***	(.032)***	(.020)***			
	Amendment and Procedural Voting							
80-84	0.735	0.832	0.031	0.96	0.92	145.89	-3.613	78
	(.004)***	(.006)***	(.002)***	(.027)***	(.054)***			
85-89	1.267	1.553	0.159	0.981	0.957	27.281	-0.564	79
	(.024)***	(.038)***	(.013)***	(.019)***	(.019)***			
90-94	0.765	1.232	0.047	0.996	0.91	454.66	-3.144	286
	(.003)***	(.014)***	(.002)***	(.004)***	(.004)***			
95-99	1.026	1.132	0.036	0.985	0.998	1097.27	-3.76	581
	(.003)***	(.002)***	(.001)***	(.002)***	(.002)***			
100-104	1.003	1.282	0.029	0.989	0.627	1098.37	-4.189	522
	(.001)***	(.029)***	(.001)***	(.002)***	(.002)***			
105-109	0.918	1.025	0.035	0.99	0.917	902.58	-3.799	473
	(.001)***	(.011)***	(.001)***	(.083)***	(.080)***			

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