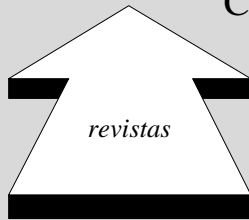


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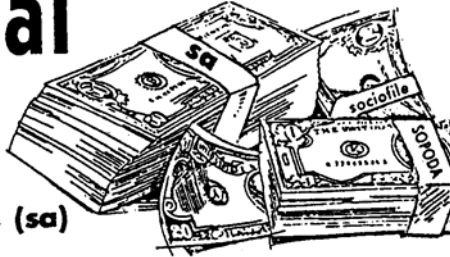
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Número 39, Junio 1993

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POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

Volume 15, Number 1

March 1993

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Political Behavior, Vol.15, N° 1, 1993

REASSESSING THE «FRESHMAN EFFECT»: The Voting Bloc Alignment of New Justices on the United States Supreme Court, 1921-90

Terry Bowen and John M. Scheb, II

Part of the conventional wisdom about the United States Supreme Court is the presumed existence of a «freshman effect», a distinct pattern of behavior thought to be associated with newly appointed justices. Among other things, freshman justices are thought to be less likely than their senior colleagues to vote with established ideological blocs on the Court. The empirical evidence for the freshman effect in voting on the Court is somewhat ambiguous, however. In order to test for a freshman effect in the voting behavior of new justices on the Supreme Court, we examined the behavior of all justices on the Court between 1921 and 1990. Voting blocs were determined from the justices' interagreement scores, using the widely employed criterion developed by Sprague (1968). We found no evidence of a freshman effect during the time frame under study. Freshman justices do not differ from their senior colleagues with respect to bloc voting. We conclude that the freshman effect hypothesis is erroneous, at least with respect to the supposed nonalignment behavior of neophyte justices.

THE PRIVATE AND SOCIAL VALUE OF INFORMATION IN MAJORITY DECISIONS

Hans Gersbach

The paper contrasts the value of information at the private level with the social values when all voters have access to information. A sequence of examples illustrates how the private and social value of information changes as the distribution of benefits and costs derived from a project varies across individuals and states of the world.

STRATEGIC RETIREMENTS: A Political Model of Turnover on the United States Supreme Court

Timothy M. Hagle

The president's ability to nominate justices to the United States Supreme Court is one of his most powerful tools for advancing his policy goals. To maximize the use of this tool it is important that he be able to determine how reasonable it is to expect

a retirement from the Court during his presidency. Prior research is inconclusive as to whether Court retirements are politically motivated. In this study I develop and test a political model of Court retirements. The results from estimating the model using exponential Poisson regression show there to be an identifiable political element relating to the timing of retirements from the Court.

IS GROUP MEMBERSHIP A PREREQUISITE FOR GROUP IDENTIFICATION?

Jeffrey W. Koch

The purpose of this research is to examine the theoretical considerations and empirical evidence for the operationalization of an important concept. I attempt to determine if group membership is a necessary condition for group identification and discuss the role of group identifications for translating political interests into political preference.

MODELS OF ATTITUDE CONSTRAINT IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mark Peffley and Jon Hurwitz

A relatively recent innovation in research on attitude constraint is the specification of hierarchical models of mass belief system, where general orientations are assumed to determine or constrain more specific policy attitudes. But while this research has been able to demonstrate a strong correlation between general and specific idea elements, the causal direction of the relationship has been assumed rather than tested. Using panel data collected during a period of constancy in the international environment, we attempt to untangle the causal ordering of general orientations and specific policy attitudes in the realm of international politics. In accord with hierarchical models, we find, first, that general orientations (e.g., militarism and containment postures) are more stable than many specific policy preferences (e.g., attitudes toward defense spending and U.S. involvement in Central America) and, second, much of the over-time consistency in policy attitudes is generated by these more general orientations. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of this work for studies of attitude constraint, one of which is the *general applicability of the procedure* for investigating top-down versus bottom-up models of constraint in domains outside the international realm.

POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

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Political Behavior, Vol.15, N° 2, 1993

CONGRESSIONAL RESPONSIVENESS TO PRESIDENTIAL POPULARITY: THE ELECTORAL CONTEXT

Stephen A. Borrelli and Grace L. Simmons

A number of recent studies have reported that the influence of the president's public approval rating on congressional support is not substantial. We hypothesize that this unexpected finding might be the result of the inappropriate application of an approval-driven model of legislative voting to the entire Congress. Specifically, we argue that members from certain kinds of electoral contexts—constituencies where the president's, or their own, electoral standing is in doubt—should be especially likely to vary their support for the president with changes in his approval rating. Although the patterns of presidential support scores between 1977 and 1991 do not confirm our specific hypotheses, they do suggest that the electoral context from which a legislator emerges does shape his or her responsiveness to changes in national presidential approval.

THE CALCULUS OF DISSENT: PARTY DISCIPLINE IN THE BRITISH LABOUR GOVERNMENT, 1974-1979

Brian J. Gaines and Geoffrey Garrett

The strength of political parties is taken to be one central difference between the political systems of the United States and the United Kingdom. We analyze defection from party line voting within the British Labour Party in the House of Commons between 1974 and 1979 to suggest that this dichotomy is overdrawn. In fact, the analysis shows that the dynamics of legislative behavior are quite similar in the two systems, notwithstanding the significant institutional differences between a separation of powers system and the Westminster model. Members of Parliament, like American Congressmen, balance the demands of their constituents, activists within their local party, and party leadership, as well as wage intraparty battles over the direction of policy.

PARTISANSHIP AND THE VOTE IN AUSTRALIA: CHANGES OVER TIME 1967-1990

Gary N. Marks

This investigates the influence of partisanship on the vote in Australia between 1967 and 1990. The investigation is in the context of a model of electoral choice based on the «revisionist» elaboration of the Michigan model of electoral choice. The model specifies direct effects of partisanship, and both issues and leader evaluations. The major finding is a decline in the influence of partisanship on the vote. This decline occurred in the presence of stable levels of partisanship in the electorate. Furthermore, the decline in the impact of partisanship appears to precede

the declines in the proportion of strong identifiers. This decline was coincident with a moderate increase in the influence of issues with issues particularly strong at the 1980 election. The effects of leader evaluations show no consistent patterns over time suggesting that Australian politics has not become more «presidential». The reciprocal effects of issues and leaders evaluation on partisanship, were greater during the 1980s than during the late 1960s. The decline in the partisanship-vote relation was steeper when these reciprocal effects are taken into account.

PUBLIC OPINION and HEURISTIC PROCESSING of SOURCE CUES

Jeffery J. Mondak

If the American citizen is capable of constructing reliable political judgments without engaging in extensive cognitive deliberation, then criticism that public opinion is largely vacuous in character may overstate the implications of a politically inattentive citizenry. Heuristic processing, reliance on simple rules of judgment, provides a cognitive mechanism that may enable citizens to advance informed yet efficient issue appraisals. More specifically, application of heuristic processing to source cues –references to prominent political leaders– can allow individuals to extend evaluations of those leaders to the policies and issues with which they are associated. In this paper, discussion of heuristic principles of judgment facilitates specification of the expected relationship between source cues and two component processes of individual-level public opinion: opinion holding and opinion direction. Separate quasi-experimental analyses yield evidence consistently supportive of the heuristic perspective.

JUDGING PRESIDENTIAL CHARACTER: the demise of gary hart

Laura Stoker

This article investigates the public reaction to the scandal which effectively ended Gary Hart's quest for the 1988 Democratic presidential nomination. Employing NES panel data covering the period in which the scandal surfaced, and integrating arguments drawn from research on attitude change, media priming, and candidate evaluation, this analysis of the Hart case illuminates more general questions about how citizens respond to media communications during the course of an election campaign and of the factors that facilitate or inhibit attitude change. The investigation lends support to contemporary theories of attitude change that emphasize citizens' levels of political involvement and prior predispositions: uncovers evidence of media priming as views about controversial standards of morality were newly engaged in defining citizens' post-scandal evaluations of Harts; and yields evidence that negative responses to Hart in the wake of the scandal were tempered among citizens who typically weigh policy criteria alongside candidate characteristics when formulating their overall candidate evaluations.

POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

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Abstracts

Political Behavior, Vol.15, N° 3, 1993

FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS AND CANDIDATE PREFERENCE AMONG AMERICAN WOMEN, 1972-1988

Elizabeth Adell Cook

Recent research has suggested that women with a feminist consciousness differ from non-feminists in their attitudes and values. This paper investigates the impact of feminist consciousness on candidate preference and vote choice in presidential

elections from 1972 to 1988. In those elections in which candidates took divergent positions on feminist issues, feminism was a significant predictor of candidate preference after controls for demographic variables, political attitudes, and partisanship. In elections in which the candidates took similar positions, however, feminism did not affect candidate preference. The 1980 election was the exception: in that election, feminists cast reluctant ballots for Carter, while rating John Anderson higher.

CONSISTENCY AND CHANGE IN AMERICAN PERCEPTIONS OF CHINA

Matthew S. Hirshberg

The cold war dominated American perceptions of the People's Republic of China during the 1950s and 1960s, and opinions of China were correspondingly negative. Improved Sino-American relations, accompanied by domestic reforms in China, led to a gradual improvement in American attitudes toward China during the 1970s and 1980s. By the late 1980s, Americans held positive perceptions of China and its relations with the United States, but continued to view the People's Republic as communist and undemocratic. This sort of inconsistency is characteristic of periods of cognitive transition: some established perceptions are slower to change than others, and this results in structural imbalance. The Tiananmen Square massacre of June 1989 interrupted this transitional process and sent perceptions of China shooting back toward balanced, cold war stereotypes. The massacre set the Chinese government in a clear symbolic struggle against freedom and democracy. This rekindled latent cold war images of China and elicited disapproving rhetoric from American leaders. The result was a quick reversion to negative perceptions of China, structured by a lingering cold war schema. These processes are demonstrated through the presentation of a study that explores the cognitive structure of perceptions of China both before and after the massacre.

AN EXAMINATION OF HOW VOTERS FORM IMPRESSIONS OF CANDIDATES' ISSUE POSITIONS DURING THE NOMINATION CAMPAIGN

Patrick J. Kenney

There is increasing evidence that issues influence voter preferences during the nomination campaign (Bertels, 1985; Bertels, 1988); however, only Bertels (1988) and Conover and Feldman (1986, 1989) have examined how partisans forge perceptions of candidates' positions on issues prior to the general election

campaign. The goal of this paper, then, is to examine how individuals develop perceptions of candidates' issue positions during the crucial months leading to the nominating conventions. Relying on theories developed in social-psychology, I tested five competing hypotheses known to influence individuals' perceptions of candidates' issue positions. An examination of the findings revealed that there is strong support for one of the hypotheses and modest support for three additional hypotheses. In summary, it appears that voters are quite ingenious in forming impressions of where candidates stand on the issues. They rely on stored information about politics, they actually adjust candidates' true positions to relieve cognitive inconsistencies, they evoke their own issue positions to assume candidates they like agree with them and candidates they dislike disagree with them, and finally they evoke their own issue positions to assume candidates agree with them even when they hold no sentiment toward the candidate.

JUSTIFYING CONTROVERSIAL POLITICAL DECISIONS: *HOME STYLE* IN THE LABORATORY

Kathleen M. McGraw, Richard Timpone, and Gabor Bruck

Elected officials are not passive bystanders in the electoral process. Rather, they try to influence their constituents' perceptions of events through a variety of strategies, including explanations. Fenno's case studies reported in *Home Style* (1978) have yielded important insights into the explanations representatives provide to their constituents to account for unpopular or controversial decisions. This paper reports an experimental analysis of the effectiveness of two principled justifications taken from Fenno's *Home Style* interviews: individualistic and communitarian appeals to conscience. We also present a theoretical framework for the analysis of political accounts, conceptualizing them as a type of persuasive communication. The impact of the two justifications on a number of important judgments is examined within this framework, including reactions to controversial policies, attributions of responsibility, perceptions of political character, and evaluations of public officials.

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