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Whose Statehouse Democracy? Differential Responsiveness of State Parties to their Poor versus Wealthy Constituents

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ABSTRACT: Despite the well-accepted notion of "Statehouse Democracy" in which state-level differences in public opinion matter for state politics and policymaking, we know much less about the responsiveness of state elites to different segments of the state constituency. This paper extends a line of inquiry emerging at the national level, which identifies greater responsiveness to the opinions of higher-income Americans. We ask whether this failure to respond to the poor is imbedded within state parties – key institutions central to the translation of mass preferences into elite political behavior. In addition, we capitalize on variation across the states to test four potential explanations for why the poor are under-represented. We test these hypotheses using a cross-sectional dataset including estimates of each parties' ideological position (generated from NPAT data on nearly 10,000 candidates in the last three election cycles), public opinion by income group (estimated from the more than 100,000 respondents to either the 2000 and 2004 Annenberg National Election Survey), and measures of political participation estimated from the Census' Current Population Survey, November Supplement in 2000, 2002, and 2004. We find that although both parties are more likely to align their positions with the preferences of the wealthy, state-level patterns of voting and partisanship affect the responsiveness of Democratic Parties to the poor. In addition, Democratic Parties are more responsive to the poor on social issues (e.g., abortion, gay rights) than economic ones (e.g., minimum wage, health care, welfare). In contrast, Republican Parties remain more responsive to the rich than the poor regardless of these contextual factors and across issue areas.

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The relationship between voters' preferences and the decisions of their elected representatives has long been a scholarly concern (e.g. Miller and Stokes 1963; Fiorina 1974; Erikson 1978; Kingdon 1989; Erikson and Wright 1980; 2005; Erikson, Wright, and McIver 1993; Wright 1989; Wright and Berkman 1986). This line of research has established a strong relationship between mass and party elite ideology reinforcing the notion of a "Statehouse Democracy" in which state governments align their priorities with the ideology of their distinct constituencies (Erikson, Wright and McIver, 1993). However, these research efforts typically treat the "mass public" as one public, which masks any differences across responsiveness to different sub-groups of constituents. These differences are particularly important to uncover if they align along class lines and therefore compromise the ability of our electoral-representative system to equally represent groups that vary widely in economic resources (Bartels 2007; Skocpol and Jacobs, 2005).

In fact, recent research examining policy responsiveness to constituents of differing income groups suggests that American democracy does indeed fall short of the ideal of political equality with policymakers paying much more attention to wealthier constituents (Bartels 2007; Gilens 2006; Hill & Leighley 1994; Jacobs and Page 2004). In this paper, we build on this work by examining whether this failure to respond to the poor is also embedded in state party systems. Our focus on parties is based on their central role in any process of democratic representation. Parties aggregate individual constituents around coherent political alternatives, as well as discipline elected officials to pursue those alternatives once elected (Schattschneider 1942). In essence, parties are the "agencies that actualize – or fail to actualize – the ideal of reciprocity between voters and state elites on which the democratic idea rests" (Piven, 2006, p. 4). Due to this key role in linking social groups into the legislative process, parties' responsiveness to

different groups in the electorate is a critical ingredient in the process of equal political representation.

And our focus on states is more than simply a methodological approach for increasing our sample of Democratic and Republican parties. State parties are not simply smaller versions of national Democratic and Republican parties. Instead, as strategic actors, parties respond to state-level political ideology and moderate their positions in order to gain party identifiers and larger shares of legislative seats (Erikson, Wright and McIver, 1993).

Additionally, our focus on state parties allows for a comparison of party responsiveness when parties face different electoral calculus with regard to public opinion (Erikson, Wright and McIver 1993) and class-based patterns of political behavior (Brown 1995; Gelman, et al 2007). By examining these contextual factors that may shape responsiveness, we aim to illuminate mechanisms by which differential responsiveness may occur. Specifically, we test a set of hypotheses explaining why the poor may be under-represented. These include differences between socio-economic groups with regard to resources, voting, and partisanship patterns, as well as parties' responsiveness across issue area. We expect these factors to shape the responsiveness of state parties to different segments of the state population. For example, in states in which the poor vote at a rate similar to the wealthy, the ideological preferences of poor constituents may be weighed more heavily in parties' strategic calculus.

To test these hypotheses, we draw data from a survey of nearly 10,000 state legislative candidates conducted by Project Vote Smart during the last three election cycles (to measure state party positions) and the Annenberg National Election Surveys of 2000 (N=58,373) and 2004 (N=81,422) (to measure public opinion across income groups). We combine these large datasets to generate state-level estimates of constituents' preferences and the parties' positions.

Our analyses identify greater responsiveness to the preferences of the wealthy versus the poor for both parties. But, the two parties differed in the degree to which they responded to state-level factors hypothesized to affect the level of responsivenss to the poor. In particular, Republican Parties were most responsive to the wealthy regardless of the participation or partisanship patterns, as well as across social and economic policy issues. In contrast, the Democratic Parties were more responsive to the poor when the poor participated more, when the poor were less stratified by party, and for social (vs. economic) policy issues.

BACKGROUND

Party Politics and Representation of Poor

Party politics affect policy and economic outcomes for low-income Americans. Bartels (2007) concludes that when Democrats have controlled the federal government they have pursued high employment, taxes, and redistribution, while Republicans have done the opposite making the outcome of partisan struggles clearly consequential for both the rich and the poor. Analysis of the relationship between states' social welfare policy and party politics also tends to identify a relationship between party control and policy generosity (Rogers and Rogers 2000; Besley and Case 2003; Grogan 1994; Hill, Leighley and Hinton-Anderson 1995; Husted and Kennedy 1997; Grogan and Rigby 2008).

However, as discussed above state parties are not monolithic, but decentralized institutions that chart their own path to electoral success. This was well illustrated by the early puzzle in the state politics literature in which studies found that social policy choices did not seem to be affected by which political party was in power. For example, Winters (1976) found that party control had no systematic impact on welfare policies even though since the New Deal

realignment the Democratic Party has been viewed in national perspective as the party more favorable to the interests of the working class and poor. Instead, the decentralized character of the American party system permitted the individual state parties to chart their own paths. The states vary a great deal in their ideological preferences and the parties adapt to these state contexts rather than following lock-step with the national party platforms (Erikson, Wright, and McIver 1993). This is why candidates, for say, the Democratic Party in Texas take a different position on many issues than their counterparts in New York.

Since parties respond to state-level political ideology and moderate their positions in order to gain party identifiers and larger shares of legislative seats, we expect them to adopt positions in alignment with their constituents. In fact, research repeatedly confirms this notion of "Statehouse Democracy" in which state-level differences in public opinion relate closely with differences in elite opinion and policy output (Erikson, Wright and McIver 1993).

However, much less work has attempted to de-compose this relationship to test for different levels of responsiveness to opinion of sub-groups. Clinton (2006) identifies greater responsiveness of Members of Congress to constituents of the same political party. And those who have asked similar questions about responsiveness across income groups have identify troubling (at least for the norm of equality in political representation) patterns of differential responsiveness in which the opinions of the wealthy matter much more than the opinions of the poor (Bartels 2007; Gilens 2006; Hill & Leighley 1994; Jacobs and Page 2004). For example, Among U.S. Senators, Bartels (2007) finds responsiveness to constituents at the 75th percentile of the income distribution to be three times greater versus those at the 25th percentile, with virtually no responsiveness to opinion of voters in the bottom income quintile. Similarly, Gilens

(2006) finds little correlation between the public opinion preferences of low-income voters and the policies Congress enacts.

HYPOTHESES

Why the Poor Are Under Represented?

To explain this differential responsiveness, we identify four testable hypotheses – each providing a potential explanation for why state parties (as well as elected official writ large) may be more responsiveness to their wealthier constituencies. These hypotheses differentiate among income groups only (resource hypotheses), by participation (voting hypothesis), by partisanship (party coalition hypothesis) and by issue area (Kansas hypothesis), as described below.

The first hypothesis is the *resource hypothesis*. In looking at governmental responsiveness to the preferences of the rich versus the poor, it is clear, almost by definition, that the rich are advantaged. Resource theory (Brady, Verba and Schloztman 1995; Verba, Schloztman and Brady, 2006) can be read to argue that because they have an advantage on wealth, and therefore time, money and civic skills affecting knowledge and access, the parties necessarily will be more responsive to the rich. In this view representation is clearly proportional to resources, which in our categorical world means government will be (more) responsive to the rich regardless of contextual factors. [H1]

Our second hypothesis is related to the resource hypothesis but focuses in on the linkage between resources and voting. We call this the *voting hypothesis,* which explains differential responsiveness by noting the differential voting rates between the rich and poor. It is clear that voters are not a random subset of the population but instead are wealthier and have higher levels of education than non-voters (Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde 2005; Leighley 1995; Leighley and

Nagler 1992; Nie and Verba 1972, 1999; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). Therefore state parties tend to have constituencies that are wealthier than their state residents. This is further exacerbated by patterns of immigration in which large segments of the poor are non-citizens and therefore non-voters by definition (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006).

Across states this voting bias varies. And this variation has been linked to important consequences such as the generosity of welfare policy (Allen and Campbell 1994; Avery and Peveley 2005; Campbell, 2003; Fellowes and Rowe 2004; Hill and Leighley 1992; Hill, Leighley, and Hinton-Anderson 1995; Ringquist et al. 1997). These patterns of participation are likely to structure responsiveness of parties to different segments of the state population with the greatest responsiveness to the poor in states in which the poor are most likely to vote. [H2]

The third hypothesis is the *party coalition hypothesis* which stipulates that the parties have distinct coalitions based largely on income with the Republicans responding to the rich and the Democrats to the poor. This "income-party stratification" (McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2006) has increased over time leading to what Bartels (2003) characterizes as "a class cleavage in partisanship and voting behavior that is modest by European standard but considerably sharper than in the recent American past" (p. 3). This class-basis of partisanship likely has important implications for political conflict. As parties are generally presumed to represent the interests of their base constituencies, the income stratification should contribute to the parties pursuing very different economic policies.

Again, states vary on this dimension. We know that state party systems vary in the degree to which they organize around class-based dimensions (Jennings 1979; Brown 1995; Dye 1984; Erikson et al. 1993, Chap 5; Fenton 1966; Garand 1985). For example, a recent paper

examining Presidential voting showed how the income-vote slope varies across states from the strongest relationship in Mississippi in which the rich are much more likely to vote Republican to the least stratified state (Connecticut) in which there is almost no relationship between individuals' income and vote choice (Gelman, Bafumi, Shor, and Park 2006). We expect that this class-based political behavior matters for responsiveness and representation. In particular, we expect that parties facing highly stratified constituencies will pursue distinct agendas with the Republicans responsive to the rich and the Democratic Party responsive to the poor. [H3]

The final hypothesis draws on the thinking behind the popular book, *"What's the Matter with Kansas?"*(Frank 2004). It can be found as well in rough outline in the strategy of the Republicans' "southern strategy" and recent public opinion by Abramowitz and Sander. It further amends the resource theory by realizing the numbers of the non-rich and the need of the party of the rich to make additional appeals beyond economic issues on which is it badly out numbered. To over simplify, the winning strategy is to appeal to the rich on the economic dimension, thereby giving the high resource people what they want most, while picking up support of the non-rich on a set of non-economic issues. That way the poor may be "tricked" into voting against their economic self-interest. In this "Kansas" theory we expect the parties to respond to the rich on economic issues, but relatively more to the poor on social or morality issues. [H4]

DATA AND METHOD

Our primary interest is in responsiveness of state parties to the issue preferences of distinct income groups within their state, as well as how this responsiveness may vary under different conditions and across distinct issue areas. Answering these questions requires in-depth data on

state parties, constituent opinions, and political behavior. We bring together data from a range of separate studies in order to best estimate these relationships; and then we simply compare across state parties. We limit our sample to Democrat and Republican Parties in 47 states (excluding NE's non-partisan legislature and AK and HI who are excluded from the Annenberg data which we use to estimate public opinion). Our time frame is the early 2000s.

Estimating State Party Ideology

One option for assessing state party ideologies is to examine state party platforms (Coffey 2005; Paddock 1998). These are formal statements of what the state parties embrace, but not all the states regularly produce such platforms, and among those that do the platforms are not binding on candidates. A better approach, we believe, is to define state party ideology as the electoral ideology that emerges from the collective issue stances of the candidates that run for the state legislature under the Democratic and Republican Party labels. There are a couple of advantages. One is that the state party platforms, even when they can be obtained, vary a great deal in coverage and detail so achieving comparability is a challenge. A second is that the issue stances of the parties' candidates are significantly closer to the policy process than platforms and probably more visible to voters. They are what the candidates are promising to the electorate during the campaigns, and while not binding, they no doubt carry more force and are better predictors of what those elected under that party label will attempt to do than the seldom read official platforms.

To measure the state party ideologies, we draw on data gathered by Project Vote Smart (PVS) who administer a National Political Awareness Test (NPATs) to candidates' for federal and state office. PVS does these surveys as a public service to provide the voters unbiased information about the policy positions candidates support and provides the responses on their

website (http://www.vote-smart.org) and via a toll-free phone line. The staff of Project Vote Smart makes a concerted effort to formulate unbiased questions over the full array of expected legislative controversies as well as on issues of substantial public concern. In addition, these surveys are individualized for each state-election to capture issues emerging on the agenda. Yet, we focus on the overlap across issues common to many state-election years.[1] In cases in which a particular question is asked of most states and/or in most years but has some missing data, we use multiple imputation (ice command in STATA based on shared answers to other policy issues) to estimate respondents views on missing items.

This approach does not adequately deal with another form of missing data – non-response to the survey itself. The rates for the state legislative NPATs is a problem, running from 21 to 34 percent over the five election cycles with a mean rate of 29 percent. Given the high proportion of candidates who refuse to answer the NPATs there is a real danger that basing our measures only on those who did take the NPATs could yield seriously biased estimates (Brehm 1993). To attempt to control for some of this selection bias, we estimated Heckman selection models, which produced state-level ideology scores that were highly correlated (.94) with the ideology scores were generated without the two-stage process. In addition, when the estimated ideology scores are corrected for selection bias in this way we find little evidence that the respondents who answer the NPATs are ideologically unrepresentative of those who refused to participate. This does not prove the absence of selection bias, but instead of our ability to isolate it.

[1] In several instances for each set of NPATs we determined that, for practical purposes, questions that were not identical were close enough to yield the same results. In these cases those questions with slightly different wording are treated as equivalent core items. Most of these differences are due to idiosyncratic, but probably meaningless, differences in how particular items were entered onto the NPATS. Examples include instances in which a comma was dropped as in "incest, rape, or.." and "incest, rape or…" or "Abortions should always be legal" and "Abortions should always be legally available."[1]

Therefore, we omitted the two-stage model and simply estimated state-level averages of the factor scores.

The sample from which we are constructing our measures of state party ideology is the set of two-party candidates that ran for the state legislature from 2000-2005. The resulting data base has nearly 10,000 respondents distributed across the 49 states with partisan legislatures. Appendix A lists the items we include in our analysis, the number of cases with data for each item (prior to multiple imputation) and the years in which the item was asked. We generate a general liberalism scale by factor analyzing all the listed items (includes both economic and social policy). Factor analysis is particularly efficient for large datasets such as these. In addition, factor analysis allows us to include both dichotomous measures in which respondents are asked to endorse a policy proposal or does not endorse it), as well as the budget and spending items that offer six response options graduated from "eliminate" to "greatly increase." When we use techniques such as NOMINATE or the Heckman-Snyder factor analysis approach all items have to be dichotomized which means either reducing the three and six response time to dichotomies or making lots of dummy variables to capture the variation. Both sacrifice information that we retain with the factor analysis approach.

Finally, factor analysis produces results almost identical to alternative approaches. Erikson and Wright used the factor analysis approach we adopt here as well as NOMINATE to calculate ideology scores from the congressional NPATs. The two methods produced equivalent measures that are very highly correlated (r=.986) and would yield the same substantive conclusions from any imaginable analysis. When we use NOMINATE with the current state legislative NPATs the correlations are also above .98.[2]

[2] These results are obtained from drawing random samples from the NPATs for any given election cycle, calculating the NOMINATE scores for those and then correlating those scores with the factor scored measures. The w-

Figure 1 plots our estimates for general ideological liberalism for Democratic and Republican Parties, there is a good deal of plausibility in the numbers we obtain. The most liberal Democratic parties are in New York, California and Massachusetts while Louisiana, Arkansas and Mississippi define the other end of the Democrats' ideological range. The moderate Republican parties are among those informed observers would guess: New York and Connecticut while the strongest Republican conservatism resides in Georgia, Texas and Oklahoma.

Estimating Public Opinion

To estimate state-specific measures of public opinion for low-income, middle-income, and high-income constituencies, we take advantage of a recent national survey which captures campaign dynamics prior to each presidential election. This National Annenberg Election Survey (see Romer et al, 2006) was begun for the 2000 Presidential election with a similar methodology used for the 2004 election (and currently in the field for the 2008 election). In 2000, 58,373 respondents were interviewed with 81,422 additional respondents in 2004. Yet, these respondents were interviewed across a series of rolling cross-sectional surveys so data must be pooled across points in time. Further, missing data is a significant problem due to differences in question wording (as well as simply in what questions were asked) across surveys. To account for this missing data, we used a parallel method as that used for the NPAT data from Candidates. First, we identified questions about respondent's own position on policy issues across a range of policy areas: economic issues, health and human issues, social issues, energy and environment, and legal and ethnical issues that most closely aligned with those asked of the legislative candidates in the NPAT.

NOMINATE program could not handle the N of the NPATs for each time period. We know of no reason to suspect that if the program were tweaked to accommodate the larger data sets the results would not continue to be essentially identical.

After pooling data across all the cross-sectional surveys in both 2000 and 2004, we selected the questions with the most overlap of respondents and then used chained multiple imputation to estimate respondents' predicted views on missing items. Since our goal was to generate a scale capturing a latent construct (liberalism) rather than precise views on a particular issue (i.e. death penalty or corporate tax rates), this approach to missing data was deemed appropriate. Appendix B lists the specific items used in the analysis, as well as sample sizes (pre imputation) for each. To generate the scale, we conducted factor analysis, predicted each individual's factor score and then aggregated these scores by income within state (i.e. for low-income respondents in Alabama). Respondents were classified into one of three income categories: poor, middle-income, and rich, which roughly divide the ANES sample into thirds. Figure 3 presents three scatter plots that compare the state means for the opinion measures for two groups. The line represents the correlation between the two group's opinions (r=.81).

Testing Resource Hypothesis

Since our expectation of equal responsiveness across groups with different resources assumes similar-sized groups of constituents, we develop weighted measures of public opinion. By multiplying each group's mean opinion by the proportion of the state that is within that income group, we de-compose the average ideology effect into three parts. This approach is the same method used in recently published papers examining differential responsiveness (Bartels 2007; Clinton 2006) and allows us to estimate the influence of each income group relative to the others. In essence, the three coefficients (one for the opinion of each income group) now represent measures of how responsive the state party would be to an entire constituency made up of each of the three income group (or to a single constituent in each of the three income group) rather than the aggregate responsiveness to each income group confounded with its actual share

of the state constituency, which varies from state to state. If representatives are only responsive to the state's mean ideology than there should be no (or at least little) difference in coefficients across the three weighted opinion measures since responsiveness to each group is simply a function of responsiveness to the state constituency. However, if the coefficient for one group is substantially larger than the other, then the interests of that group's constituents are better reflected in state parties' policy positions. We expect that the coefficients will be largest for the groups with the most resources (i.e. the rich).

Testing Participation Hypothesis

We generate a measure of income bias in voting which is a function of the income distribution in the state (i.e. income inequality), the size and income-base of immigrants in the state, and rates of political participation among poor citizens (Husted and Kenny 1997; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2007). We estimate class bias using data from the 2000, 2002 and 2004 November Supplement of the Census Bureaus' Current Population Survey. The Current Population Survey (CPS) is a monthly survey of households conducted by the Census Bureau. Each month approximately 50,000 households are surveyed. Respondents are asked about the behavior of other household members, providing information on approximately 90,000 'respondents' per month. In November of even-numbered years (i.e. during election years), the CPS includes a short battery of questions on voter participation. In particular, respondents are asked whether or not they voted in that month's election.[3] Respondents were classified as *Rich* if their family income was equal to four or more times the poverty line for a family of that size for that year. *Poor* is defined as those individuals whose family income is equal to, or less than, one

[3] The basic sample for all the analyses was restricted to individuals at least 18 years of age, or older, with data on either voting or registration. Those whose responses are coded as "don't know," "refused," or "no response" are coded as not voting – but, those who are coded as "NA," "NIU," "non-interview," or "not reported" are coded as missing.

and a half times the poverty threshold. The percent of each group (e.g., rich, poor) that voted is calculated. And then, the vote bias measure was calculated by dividing the proportion of poor who voted by the proportion of rich who voted. The final measure ranged from 1.45 to 3.00 with a mean of 1.86.

To examine whether responsiveness varies under different levels of income-based bias in voting, we interact each of the three opinion measures with this measure of vote bias. A significant interaction identifies a different responsiveness slope under high versus low income vote bias. However, to illustrate the interactive effect, we present coefficients for each income group in states with low income bias and high income bias, with the most important calculation being the degree of relative responsiveness to the poor (vs. wealthy, as well as middle-income) in the state.

Testing Party Coalition Hypothesis

Using a similar logic as for vote bias, we calculate a measure to capture differences in partisan identification by income group. We calculate income-party-stratification using the method described by McCarty Poole and Rosenthal (2006) in which the proportion of the rich who identify as Republicans is divided by the proportion of the poor who do the same. However, we use the same sample of respondents from the Annenberg Election Study used to generate the public opinion measures. This allows us to categorize respondents by income using the same categories. This measure ranges from 1.02 to 2.06 with a mean of 1.51. Together these patterns of party identification and voting generate the class-based divides in vote choice identified by Brewer and Stonecash (2007), Gelman et al (2007), as well as others. We use this measure again in a set of three interactions (one for each opinion measure). Any significant interaction indicates a level of responsiveness that is conditional on the level of income-party

stratification in the state. And to illustrate these conditional effects, we generate coefficients for responsiveness under high and low stratification.

Testing Kansas Hypothesis

In the final set of analyses, we wish to compare the responsiveness of state parties to the opinions of different income groups – across issue areas. We generate issue-area specific measures of both state party positions and opinion of each income group within the state. We use the same method described above. However, first we limit the NPAT items (for state party position) and ANES items (for the public opinion measure) to those directly addressing economic/redistributive policy issues. We then generate parallel measures using only the items tapping social/moral policy issues. Not surprisingly, these measures are correlated and do not represent a first and second dimension. Instead, they represent two types of issues for which we expect different levels of responsiveness to the poor.

Figure 3 illustrates the placement of each state party on the two dimensions. The abbreviations with capital letters identify Democratic Parties and lower-case letters identify Republican Parties. Liberalism on economic issues and conservativism on social issues is negatively correlated (as expected, r=.83). And although Democratic Parties are more liberal on both, there is some overlap with Democratic Parties in some states being more conservative than Republican Parties in others. Figures 4a and 4b illustrate differences in opinion on these issues by poor and wealthy income groups (middle-income is omitted from the figure). Opinion across income groups was more highly correlated for social policy with economic policy issues showing greater divergence between the opinions of the rich and poor (with the poor being more liberal on these issues).

RESULTS

Tables 2 present results from OLS regression models predicting state party positions. The first set of models predicts liberalism among Democratic Parties with the second set predicting liberalism among Republican Parties. For each party we estimate four models: first a basic model which only includes one variable: the average state opinion on the scale in question. This establishes the expected relationship between party positions and state ideology well-documented in the literature. Model 2 substitutes the three population-weighted opinion measures (for each of the three income groups) for the average opinion measure. Here we are looking at the difference in coefficients across the three income-group opinion measures to test the resource hypothesis (in which differential responsiveness is related to economic resources). Model 4 tests the voting hypothesis by interacting the three opinion measures with the measure of vote bias described above. And Model 5 tests the party coalition hypothesis with parallel interactions between opinion and income-party-stratification. A positive and significant coefficient for any of these interactions identifies an even larger relative relationship between that group's opinion and party positioning under the particular class-based political behavior conditions (i.e. greater vote bias or income-party-stratification).

Not surprisingly, both parties are responsive to the average public opinion in the state (Models 1) and this single variable explains a good deal of the variation in state party liberalism (r squared of .39 for Democratic Parties and .45 for Republican Parties). When we substitute the income-specific measure of opinion, we find a similar relationship to that reported by Bartels (2007) in which the parties are more responsive to the opinions of groups with greater resources – middle and upper-income groups – and are not responsive to the poor. This is true for both political parties with the gap between responsiveness to the wealthy versus the poor being larger

for Democratic Parties (5.63) than for Republican Parties (1.94). These coefficients for responsiveness to each income group (given its size) are presented in Figure 5. The blue bars on the left represent Democratic Parties, while the red bars on the right represent Republican Parties. In addition to the gap in responsiveness between the wealthy and poor, the generally large responsiveness to the middle-income group is apparent in the figure – particularly for the Democratic Party.

Models 3 and 4 test the voting and party coalition hypotheses and find support for these factors shaping responsiveness among Democratic Parties. But, Republican Parties remain aligned with the state's wealthier residents regardless of variation in class-based political behavior. Model 3 interacts the opinion measures with the vote bias. The interaction for the poor is negative suggesting that as bias increases, the responsiveness to the poor decreases. And, the interaction for middle-income opinion is positive suggesting the opposite – greater responsiveness when the poor are underrepresented in the voting population. Figure 6 illustrates the estimated responsiveness coefficient for Democratic Parties in which class bias in voting is set to low (one standard deviation below the mean, 1.53), at its average across states (1.86) and at high (one standard deviation above the mean. 2.19). In general, class-based vote bias increases in gap in responsiveness between the poor and rich, which rises from 2.93 under low bias to 11.44 under average conditions, and 27.52 under high bias. The gap between the poor and middle class is actually negative (slightly higher responsiveness to the poor) under conditions of low vote bias, although rises quickly as bias rises.

Model 4 tests the party coalition hypothesis in which we expected income-party stratification to lead to bi-furcated patterns of responsiveness with the Republicans aligning with the rich and the Democrats with the poor. Instead, we see just the opposite among Democratic

Parties. The significant positive interaction between the opinion of the rich and stratification indicates that responsiveness to the rich is higher under higher stratification. In fact, the gap flips from a 4.44 larger responsiveness to the poor under low levels of stratification to a 4.22 larger responsiveness to the wealthy under high levels of stratification. Figure 7 presents this visually. Again, it compares coefficients under three conditions: low income-party stratification (1.29 in which the poor and wealthy are prevalent in both political parties), the average level (1.50), and high income-party-stratification (1.71) in which the poor are over-represented in the Democratic Party. Here we see the same pattern of large responsiveness to the middle-income opinion although that does not vary much as stratification varies. Instead, it is really the gap in responsiveness to the high-income vs. poor that varies by stratification with the poor better represented under conditions of low income-party stratification.

Our final analysis tests our so-called *Kansas Hypothesis* in which parties may be responsive to the poor on moral issues rather than redistributive issues (in which the rich win out). Table 3 presents basic models predicting state party positioning on general liberalism (same as Model 2 in Table 2 but included here for comparison), economic liberalism, and social policy conservatism. The models on the left are for the Democratic Parties and on the right for the Republican Parties. We see different patterns of responsiveness for both types of policy and both political parties. These coefficients are represented in Figure 8. The left set of bars are for economic liberalism in which there is no significant difference in responsiveness across Democratic Parties, but Republican Parties are most responsive to the middle-income followed by the poor. In contrast, social conservatism for Republican parties follows the same pattern as general ideology in which Republican align with the rich and not at all with the poor. But, for Democratic Parties, similar levels of responsiveness are found for the poor and the rich, which is

consistent with the Kansas Hypothesis of parties (at least Democratic Parties) representing the poor on social issues – but not economic ones.

CONCLUSION

These results confirm the primary finding of Bartels (2007) analysis of differential responsiveness among U.S. Senators. Although these data are from more than a decade later and focus on a different stage of the political process and a different level of government, we continue to find increased responsiveness to the views of the wealthy (and to some degree the opinions of those with middle-incomes) versus the poor. This pattern is most striking among Republican Parties whose liberalism aligns most closely with the opinion of rich residents of their state – consistent with the resource hypothesis. And for whom this relationship does not vary in states with different class-based patterns of political behavior. The only exception of this pattern was a heightened responsiveness to middle-income constituents on economic issues.

Differential responsiveness among state Democratic Parties operated somewhat differently. First, the income group whose opinions align most closely with the Democratic Parties are those with middle-incomes. This is followed by responsiveness to the rich with the smallest (in some cases negative) responsiveness to the opinions of the poor in the state. Second, unlike the Republican Parties, this pattern of responsiveness was sensitive to the class-based patterns of political participation and partisanship in the state. We found evidence to support both our voting and party coalition hypotheses as factors shaping the level of responsiveness to the poor. However, for the party coalition hypothesis, we found the dynamic to operate in the opposite direction as expected. Higher levels of income-party stratification shifted the responsiveness to the rich – with stratification increasing the responsiveness to the rich (and

therefore the gap between the rich and poor). We also found Democratic Parties to be much more responsive to the poor on social policy issues (versus economic issues or the general ideology scale). This is interesting since much of the research re-analyzing Frank's (2006) assertions have challenged the notion that poor Americans vote based on moral policy issues in conflict with their economic interests (see for example, Bartels 2007).

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Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*
Position of Parties				
General Liberalism				
Democratic Parties	0.59	0.28	-0.31	1.04
Republican Parties	-0.75	0.29	-1.25	-0.11
Economic Liberalism				
Democratic Parties	0.27	0.24	-0.20	0.68
Republican Parties	-0.41	0.34	-1.12	0.37
Social Conservativism				
Democratic Parties	-0.33	0.44	-1.12	0.66
Republican Parties	0.53	0.30	-0.18	0.98
Public Opinion				
General Liberalism				
Average	-0.01	0.09	-0.15	0.21
Poor	0.05	0.08	-0.09	0.24
Middle	-0.01	0.12	-0.20	0.37
Rich	-0.06	0.12	-0.26	0.31
Economic Liberalism				
Average	-0.01	0.05	-0.13	0.12
Poor	0.09	0.08	-0.09	0.31
Middle	0.00	0.08	-0.19	0.27
Rich	-0.09	0.07	-0.24	0.11
Social Conservativism				
Average	0.01	0.13	-0.30	0.26
Poor	0.03	0.04	-0.08	0.11
Middle	0.01	0.02	-0.05	0.04
Rich	-0.02	0.07	-0.17	0.10
Class-Based Politics				
Income Vote Bias	1.86	0.33	1.45	2.99
Income-Party Stratification	1.50	0.21	1.02	2.06

N=47 states (excludes AK, HI, NE); opinion measures are raw means rather than weighted means used in the analyses

Table 2. Predicting Parties' General Liberalism

	Democratic Parties					*Republican Parties*				
	(1)	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(4)*	*(5)*	*(1)*	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(4)*	*(5)*
Avg. Public Opinion	2.13 **					2.27 **				
	(0.39)					(0.37)				
Opinion of Poor		-2.76	-1.26	24.95 *	9.64		0.87	1.49	4.77	-24.81
		(2.17)	(2.11)	(11.80)	(13.79)		(2.18)	(2.37)	(13.30)	(16.19)
Opinion of Middle		6.12 +	7.44 *	-38.19	14.77		2.69	2.74	-17.21	0.82
		(3.47)	(3.18)	(24.80)	(22.72)		(3.48)	(3.56)	(28.10)	(26.68)
Opinion of Rich		2.87 *	1.10	17.99 +	-21.34 *		2.81 *	2.43	1.57	19.80 +
		(1.26)	(1.03)	(9.36)	(8.88)		(1.26)	(1.47)	(10.60)	(10.42)
Income Vote Bias			0.15 +	0.32 +				-0.07	0.02	
			(0.09)	(0.18)				(0.10)	(0.20)	
Bias X Opinion of Poor				-15.19 *					-2.14	
				(6.29)					(7.12)	
Bias X Opinion of Middle				24.99 +					11.33	
				(14.00)					(15.90)	
Bias X Opinion of Rich				-8.73					0.65	
				(5.27)					(5.97)	
Income-Party Stratification			-0.41 *		-0.15			-0.13		-0.63 +
			(0.17)		(0.27)			(0.20)		(0.32)
Strat X Opinion of Poor					-6.53					17.66
					(9.31)					(10.93)
Strat X Opinion of Middle					-4.35					1.11
					(15.14)					(17.77)
Strat X Opinion of Rich					14.05 *					-11.27
					(5.71)					(6.70)
Constant	0.61 **	0.72 **	0.99 *	0.13	0.88	-0.74 **	-0.70 *	-0.39 +	-0.74 +	0.19
	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.33)	(0.33)	(0.38)	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.37)	(0.37)	(0.45)
R-squared	0.39	0.46	0.58	0.60	0.66	0.45	0.46	0.47	0.49	0.52

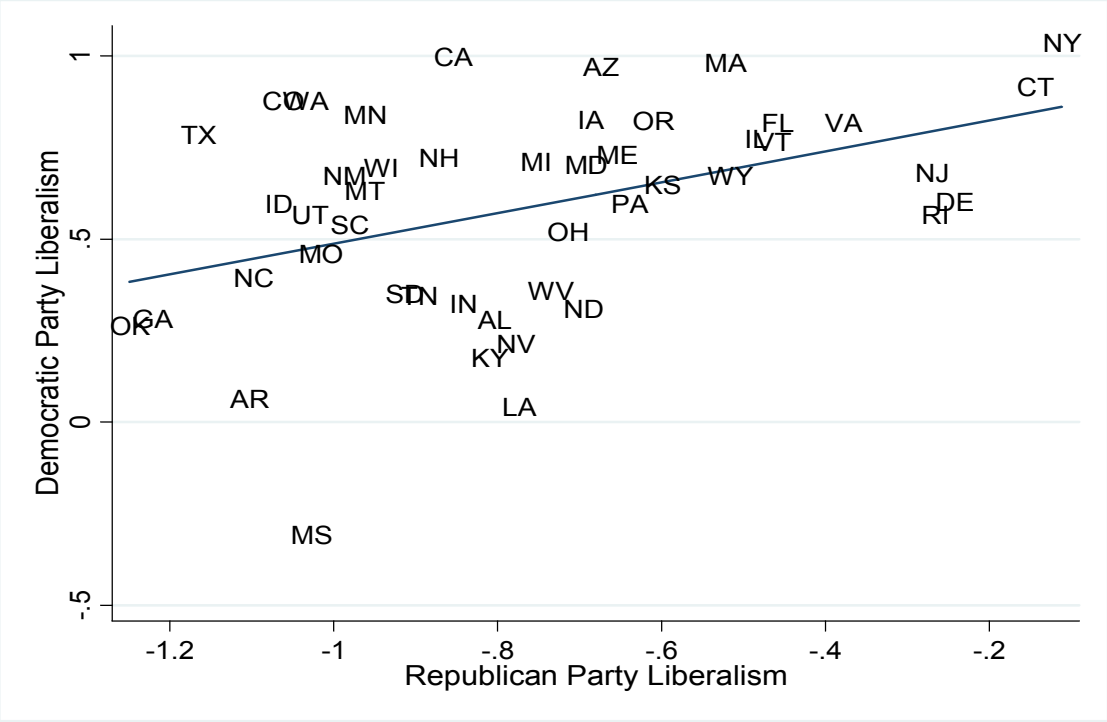
Note: N=47, excludes AK, HI, NE. Opinion measures are weighted averages that account for the relative size of each income group in the particular state. ** = p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Table 3. Variation in Parties Responsiveness across Issue Areas

	Democratic Parties						*Republican Parties*					
	General Liberlism		*Economic Issues*		*Social Issues*		*General Liberlism*		*Economic Issues*		*Social Issues*	
Avg. Public Opinion	1.98 **		1.94 **		3.10 **		2.00 **		4.37 **		1.90 **	
	(0.35)		(0.66)		(0.24)		(0.35)		(0.79)		(0.20)	
Opinion of Poor		-0.58		0.88		3.94 **		-0.04		1.96		0.06
		(1.74)		(1.50)		(1.27)		(1.74)		(1.76)		(1.00)
Opinion of Middle		0.72		5.92		0.59		1.54		11.35 *		0.77
		(1.45)		(3.66)		(3.57)		(1.45)		(4.30)		(2.83)
Opinion of Rich		5.79 **		0.89		3.47 *		4.34 *		3.05		3.44 **
		(2.10)		(1.66)		(1.36)		(2.09)		(1.94)		(1.08)
Constant	0.61 **	0.65 **	0.28 **	0.28 **	-0.37 **	-0.37 **	-0.73 **	-0.71 **	-0.38 **	-0.34 **	0.51 **	0.59 **
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.08)	(0.03)	(0.07)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.09)	(0.03)	(0.05)
R-squared	0.41	0.44	0.16	0.19	0.78	0.78	0.42	0.44	0.41	0.45	0.67	0.70

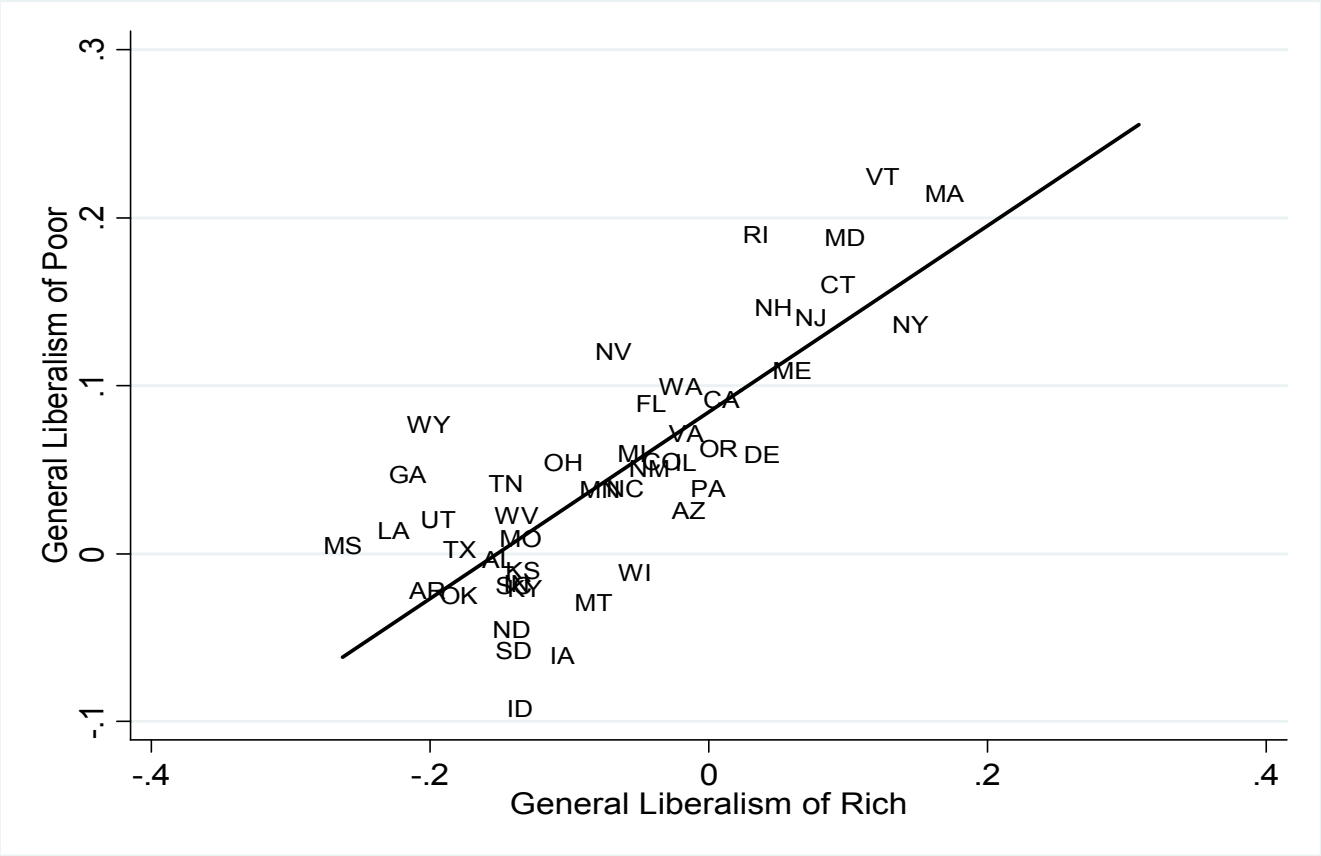
Note: N=47, excludes AK, HI, NE. Opinion measures are weighted averages that account for the relative size of each income group in the particular state. ** p<.01, *=p<.05, +=p<.10.

Figure 1. Liberalism of State Parties



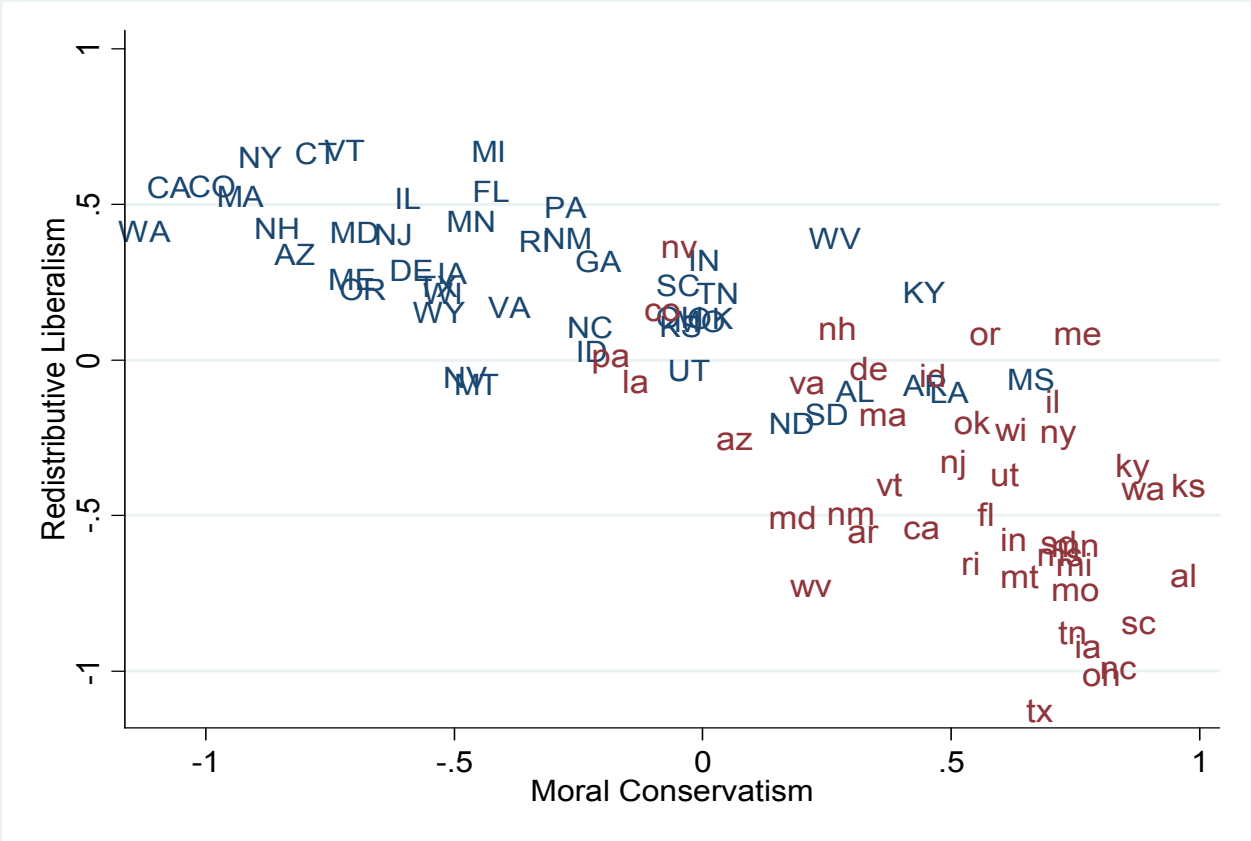
Notes: N=47, excludes AK, HI, NE. Party scores correlated (.81).

Figure 2. General Liberalism of Rich versus Poor in State



Notes: N=47, excludes AK, HI, NE.

Figure 3. State Party Positions on Economic and Social Policy Issues



Notes: N=47, excludes AK, HI, NE. Upper case blue abbreviations represent Democratic Parties while lower-case red abbreviations representing Republican Parties

Figure 4a. Economic Liberalism of Rich versus Poor in State

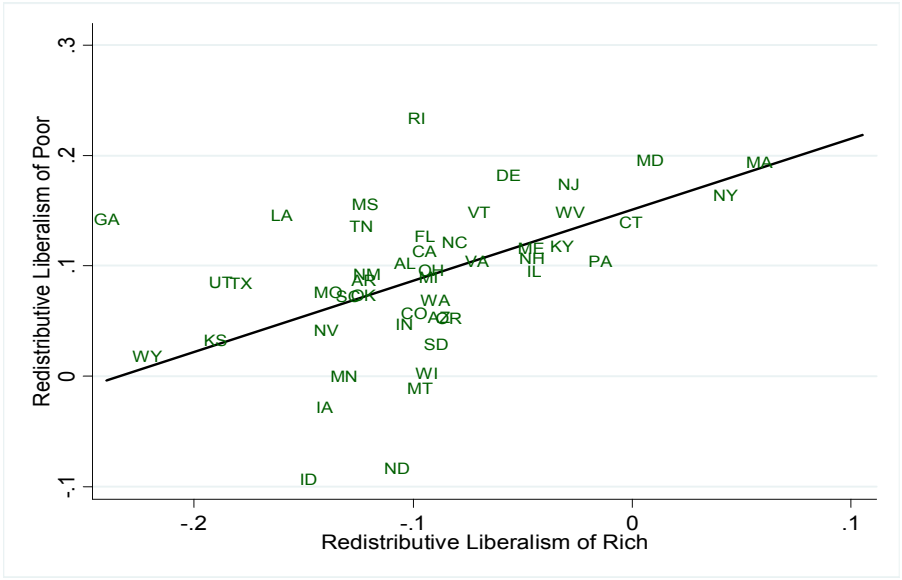


Figure 4b. Social Conservatism of Rich versus Poor in State

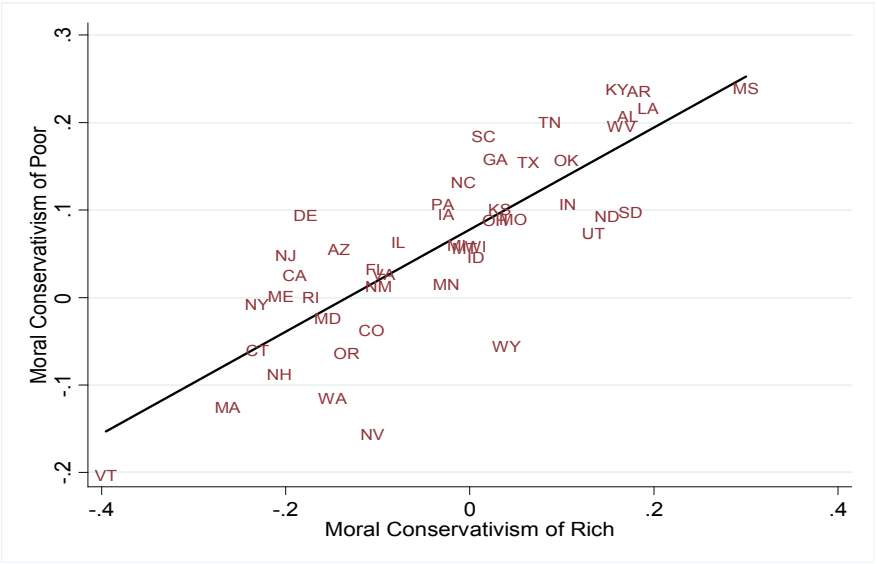


Figure 5. Coefficients for Party Responsiveness to Different Income Groups: General Ideology

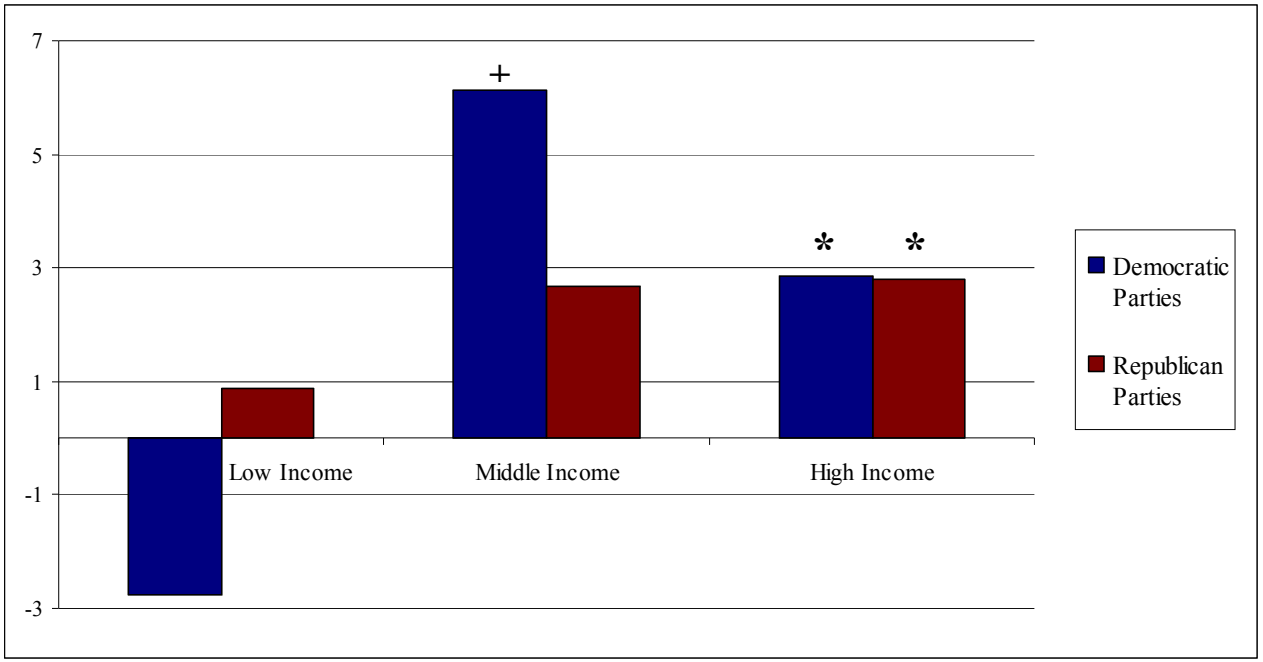


Figure 6. Coefficients for Democratic Party Responsiveness by Class Bias in Voting

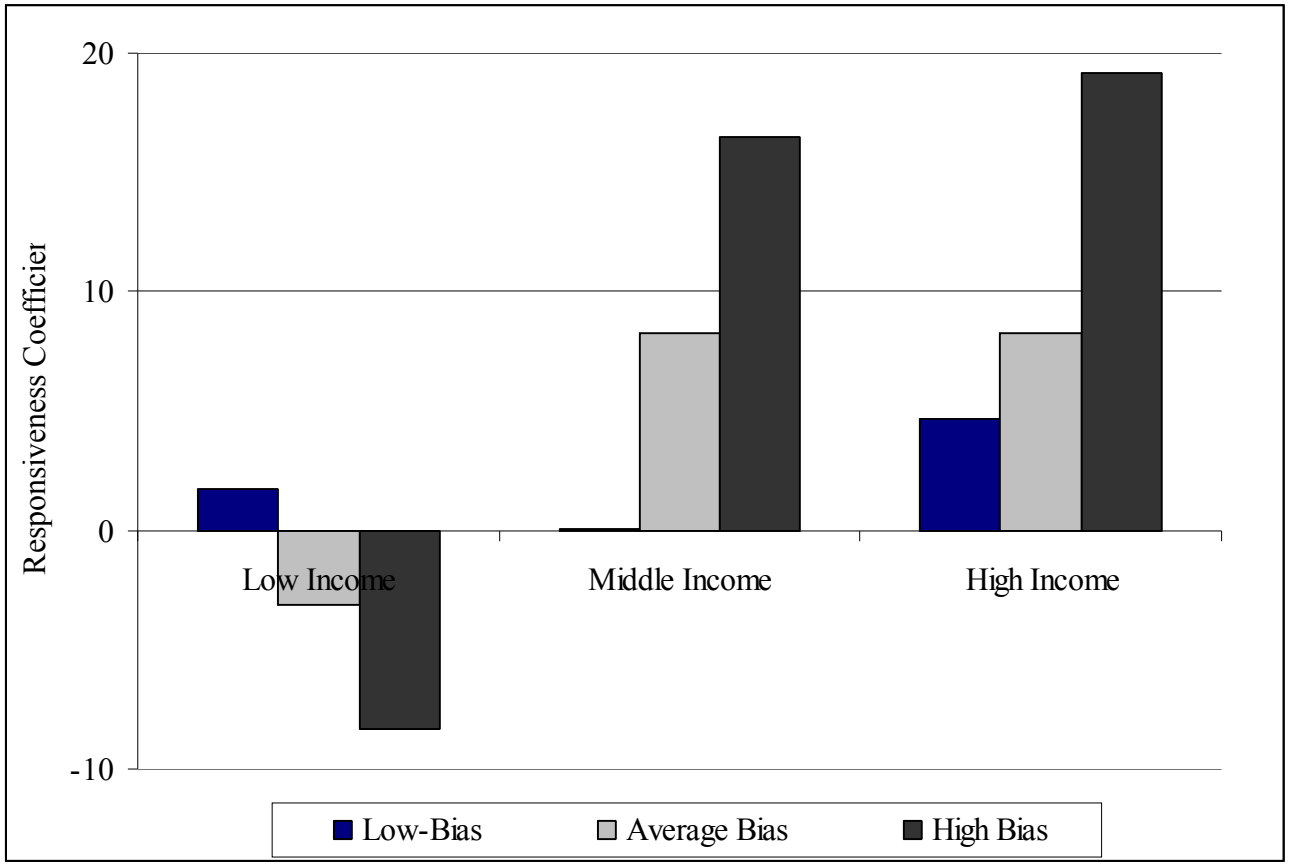


Figure 7. Coefficients for Democratic Party Responsiveness by Income-Party Stratification

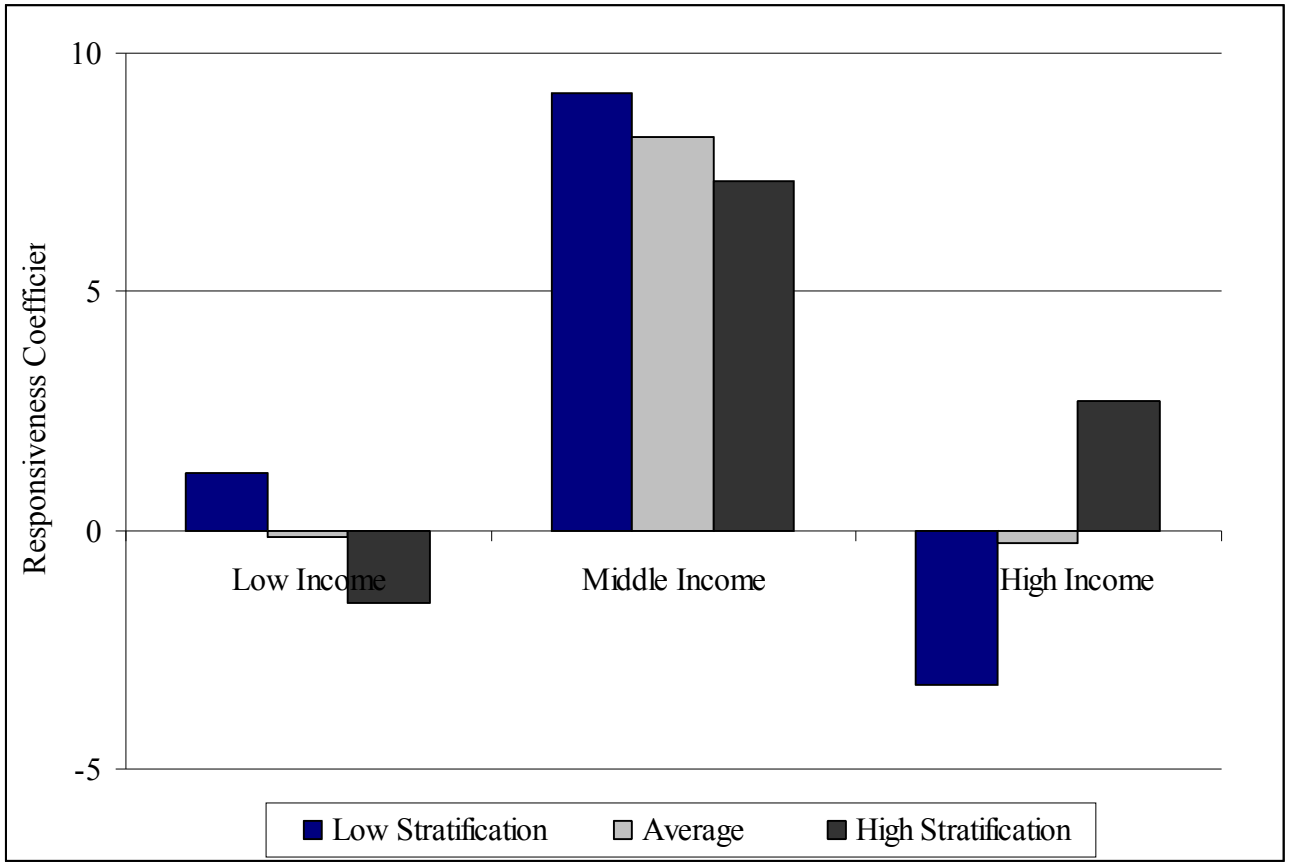
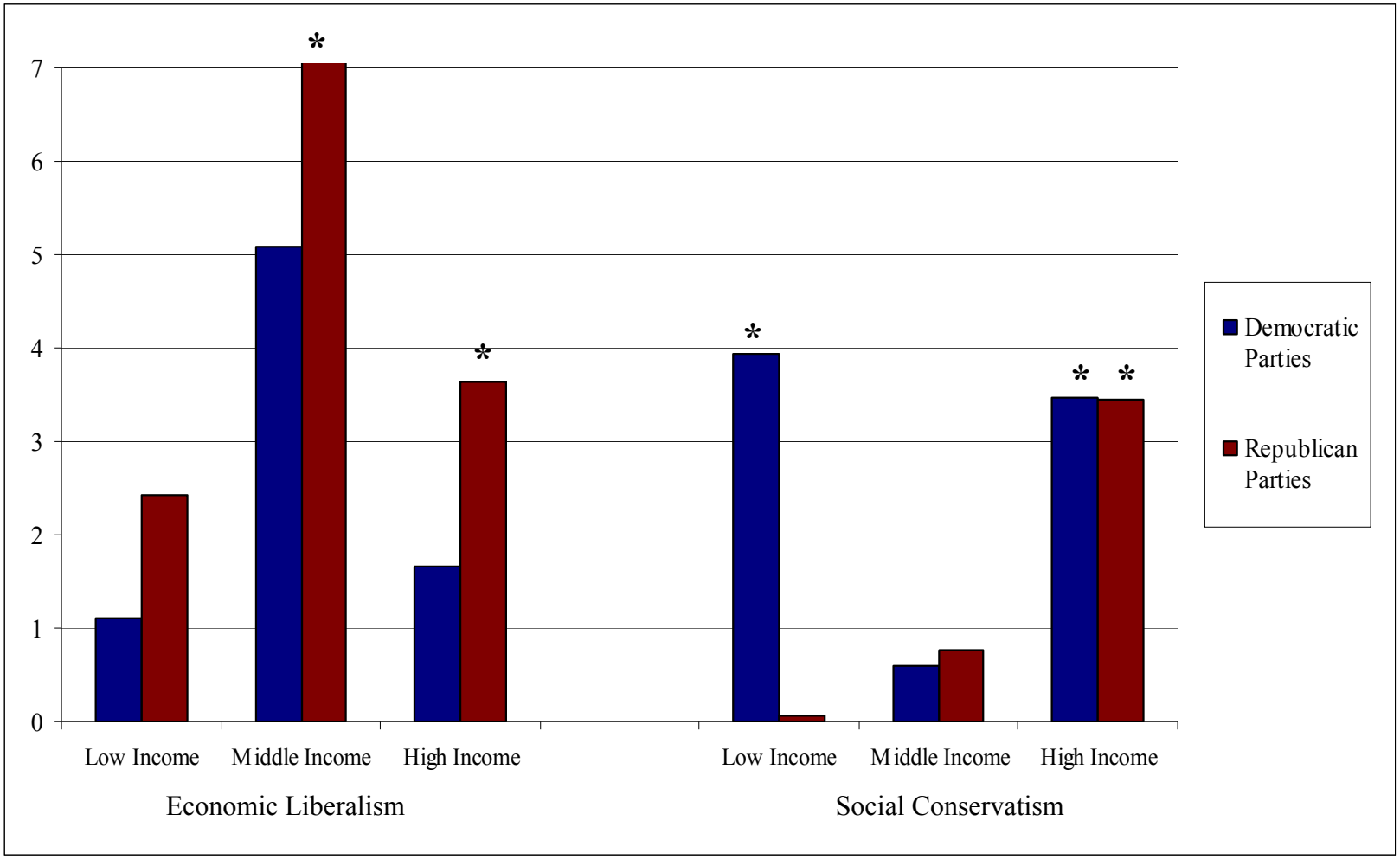


Figure 8. Coefficients for Party Responsiveness to Different Income Groups: Issue Areas



Appendix A. NPAT Items Used in Analyses

		N	2000-2001	2002-2003	2004-2005
Redistributive Policy Items					
r1	Increase/Decrease Corporate Taxes	7803	X	X	X
r2	Increase/Decrease Inheratence Taxes	7535	X	X	X
r3	Increase/Decrease Capital Gains	7030	X	X	X
r4	Increase/Decrease Taxes on those making more than 75K	5918	X	X	X
r5	Spending on Higher Education	8355	X	X	X
r6	Spending on K-12 Education	8461	X	X	X
r7	Spending on Health Care	8335	X	X	X
r8	Spending on Welfare	8149	X	X	X
r10	Spending to Hire More Teachers	8704	X	X	X
r11	Spending to Improve Teachers' Salaries	8841	X	X	X
r13	Spending for School Construction	8743	X	X	X
r14	Job Training for Displaced Workers	8968	X	X	X
r16	Should Ensure Health Care	8815	X	X	
r17	No Right to Health Care	8815	X	X	
r18	Expand Head Start	8848	X	X	X
r19	Expand Access to Community College	8941	X	X	
r20	Expand Access to College for At-Risk Kids	8919	X	X	X
r21	Expand Child Care Subsidies	8968	X	X	X
r22	Provide Tax Credits for Businesses that Provide Child Care	6089	X	X	
r23	Eliminate Welfare	8708	X	X	
r24	Job Training for Welfare Recipients	8708	X	X	
r25	Child Care for Welfare Recipients	5866	X	X	
r26	Transportation for Welfare Recipients	8576	X	X	
r29	Health Care for Welfare Recipients	5517		X	X
Morality Policy Items					
m1	Abortion Should Always be Illegal	8268	X	X	X
m2	Abortion Should always be Legal	8268	X	X	X
m3	Abortion Only in First Trimester	8268	X	X	X
m6	Abortion Only When Resulted from Rape	8268	X	X	X
m7	Prohibit Federal Funding for Abortions	8075	X	X	X
m9	Allow Prayer in Schools	8877	X	X	X
m10	Allow 10 Commandments in Schools	6005	X	X	
m11	Provide Vouchers for Private Schools	8828	X	X	X
m13	Allow Gay Marriage	8478	X	X	X
m14	Allow Civil Unions	8430	X	X	X
m15	Outlaw Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation	7646	X	X	X
m16	Allow Physician-Assisted Suicide	8672	X	X	X
m17	Support Family Cap in Welfare System	6033	X	X	X
m18	Allow Faith-based Social Program Providers	8708	X	X	X
m19	Abortion Only when Life in Danger	5153		X	X
m20	Support Abstience only Sex Ed	5664		X	X
m21	Support Sex Ed	5664		X	X
m24	Support Death Penalty	5864	X		X

Appendix B. Annenberg Survey Questions Used in Analyses

Year	Var	N	Question Wording
Moral Policy Questions			
2000	BD02	56,170	Federal government should give school vouchers - Give tax credits or vouchers to help parents send their children to private schools—should the federal government do this or not? Q38a
2000	BF02	55,468	Federal government should restrict abortion Make it harder for a woman to get an abortion— should the federal government do this or not?
2000	BF03	24,010	Federal government should ban abortion Ban all abortions—should the federal government do this or not? Q136a
2000	BG01	29,496	Do you personally favor or oppose the death penalty for some crimes? Q268b
2000	BG12	55,504	Favor death penalty Do you personally favor or oppose the death penalty for some crimes? Q268b
2000	BL01	27,955	Favor gays in military Do you personally favor or oppose allowing homosexuals to serve openly in the United States military? Q268c
2000	BL05	54,767	Federal government should expend effort to stop job discrimination against gays Trying to stop job discrimination against homosexuals—should the federal government do more about this, the same as now, less or nothing at all? Q110a
2000	BT03	24,139	Federal government should allow school prayer Make sure all public school students can pray as part of some official school activity—should the federal government do this or not? Q136d
2004	CC39	56,554	Question 23 The federal government giving tax credits or vouchers to help parents send their children to private schools—do you favor or oppose the federal government doing this?
2004	CE01	56,919	Question 20 The federal government banning all abortions—do you favor or oppose the federal government doing this? If favor/oppose: Do you strongly (favor/oppose) or somewhat (favor/oppose) the federal government doing this?
2004	CE05	22,040	Question 25 The federal government banning partial-birth abortions, also known as intact dilation and extraction—do you favor or oppose the federal government doing this? If favor/oppose: Do you strongly (favor/oppose) or somewhat (favor/oppose) the federal government doing this? Note: meged in wording 2 which uses term "late-term" in place of "partial birth"
2004	CE21	68,540	Question 17 Would you favor or oppose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution saying that no state can allow two men to marry each other or two women to marry each other? If favor/oppose: Would you strongly (favor/oppose) or somewhat (favor/oppose) the amendment? merged in cce17 & 18 with slightly different wording
2004	CE25	18,791	Question 657 Would you favor or oppose a law in your state that would allow two men to marry each other or two women to marry each other? If favor/oppose: Is that strongly (favor/oppose) or somewhat (favor/oppose)? Include similar wording in questions cce19, 20, & 24